



From idea *to impact*

Celebrating a collaborative journey
towards safer, inclusive Pacific Sport

A case study documenting the OIN journey 2022 – 2026

FOUNDING PARTNERS





Contents

4 Introduction

6 Highlights

8 Section One – Our Story

9 Background

9 The Challenge

10 The Opportunity

10 The Partners

12 The Solution

12 Timeline

14 How OIN Works

16 What's Worked Well

16 Workstreams

17 Achievements

20 Section Two – The Theory

21 The Theory of Change

22 Why an Impact Network

24 Section Three – What's Next





Tēnā Kōuto, Tēnā Kōtou,
Tēnā Kōtou Katoa.

Bula, Talofa, Kia Orana,
Malo a lei lei, Halo, Alii.

Warm Pacific Greetings to you all.



Over the past four years, the Oceania Impact Network (OIN) has grown from a conversation between partners working alongside each other to make sport safer, more inclusive and more equitable to a thriving Impact Network.

This journey has confirmed a shared understanding among the partners: that *sustained, authentic impact happens when organisations come together around a common cause with a shared set of strategies and outcomes*, rather than working in isolation.

This work matters deeply. Sport holds enormous influence across the Pacific. It can unite communities, develop leaders and create opportunity. Yet sport also reflects the inequalities present in society – particularly gender inequality, exclusion and violence.

From the outset, OIN partners recognised that *no single organisation has the mandate, reach, resources or authority required to generate the individual, organisational and societal change* needed to address these interconnected challenges at scale. Prevention, safeguarding and survivor centred responses must be connected across systems.

Through OIN, we have been able to pool our strengths, mandates and resources to respond collectively strengthening safeguarding practices, supporting women's leadership, advancing inclusion and influencing broader systems.

Working together has brought clear benefits. Collaboration has allowed us to learn faster, reach further and respond more coherently than any of us could alone. It has also reminded us that sustained impact is built through relationships, shared accountability and the willingness to evolve as we learn.

Working as an impact network has enabled us to **scale impact, not organisation** – strengthening trust based relationships and learning through action as our understanding of what works continues to evolve.

We developed this case study to reflect on our journey so far – what we set out to do, what has worked, what has challenged us, and what has become possible through collaboration. We share it as both a record of collective effort and an invitation to others exploring new ways of working together for impact in complex systems.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our partners Oceania National Olympic Committee (ONOC) Equity Commission (ECO), IOC Olympic Solidarity, Olympism 365, the Australian Government's sport for development programme, Team Up, and UN Women MCO Fiji. We thank President Baklai Temengil and the team at ONOC for their support and leadership. We also acknowledge the contribution of the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) and the New Zealand International Development Cooperation (IDC) Programme, as well as the New Zealand Olympic Committee (NZOC).

Thank you.

Liz Dawson

Andrew Lepani







One Shared Vision

An inclusive and safe sport 'ecosystem' that contributes to a Pacific region free from violence and discrimination.

Three shared goals

- Women and girls can safely participate in sport.
- Sport is safe, equitable and unifying.
- Policies and networks support and celebrate gender equal and inclusive sport.

Four Years of Collective Action

From an inspired idea to a fully formed action network, with 18 collaborative Pacific projects delivering real results.

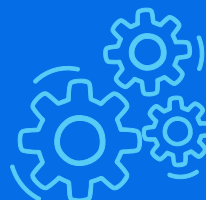
We're ready to share our story.



**23 Nations
and Territories**
5 Partners



1 Shared Vision
**3 Collective
Goals**



6 Workstreams
**18 Collaborative
Pacific Programmes**

1 Impact Network

And an ocean of
opportunity and potential



Section One

Our Story

“Every athlete, every coach
and every young person in the
Pacific deserves to take part
in sport **free from harm, abuse
and discrimination.**”



Background

Across the Pacific, sport plays a powerful role in community life. It brings people together, strengthens identity, supports wellbeing and creates pathways to leadership. Sport reaches people and places that many other systems do not.

At the same time, sport does not operate separately from society. The inequalities present in Pacific communities – including gender inequality, violence against women and girls, exclusion of people living with disability, and unsafe power dynamics – are also reflected in sporting environments.

These realities have shaped the Oceania Impact Network's (OIN) journey from its inception: recognising both the influence of sport and its responsibility to contribute to safer, more inclusive systems.



The Challenge: Violence Against Women and Girls in the Pacific

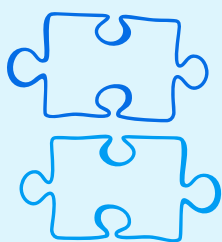
Across the Pacific region, violence against women and girls remains one of the most pervasive and deeply entrenched social challenges. The Pacific has among the highest rates of violence against women globally, with national data in some countries indicating that up to 68 per cent of women experience physical violence in their lifetime. These realities shape women's and girls' safety, mobility, participation and leadership across all areas of society, including sport.

Sport does not sit outside these conditions. Evidence referenced in the case study shows that fear of violence is a significant barrier to women's and girls' participation, while emotional violence such as verbal abuse, harassment and intimidation is widespread in some sporting environments. These experiences restrict

access to the benefits of sport, including health, social connection, leadership pathways and visibility, particularly for women, girls and people living with disability.

Importantly, harm in and through sport is not the result of isolated incidents. Violence and exclusion emerge from the interaction of social norms, unequal power relations, weak safeguarding systems and limited connections between sport organisations and national prevention and response frameworks. At the same time, sport can act as a strategic entry point for prevention – where norms can be challenged, safeguarding embedded, and stronger pathways created between community participation and formal systems of protection and support.

This dual reality sits at the heart of OIN's work.



The Challenge

- Across Oceania, women, girls and people with disabilities face systemic challenges.
- Gender inequality, violence against women and girls, exclusion of people with a disability, and unsafe sport environments are deeply interconnected.
- Sport in the Pacific brings people together, but the issues present in society are also reflected on and around the field of play.



The Opportunity

Before OIN was formed, many organisations were working across similar issues and in many of the same Pacific contexts. These organisations shared values and goals related to gender equality, safeguarding, inclusion, and violence prevention – yet much of this work occurred in parallel, often duplicating approaches

No single organisation had the mandate, reach, resources, or influence required to address these interconnected challenges alone. Opportunities for shared learning, coordinated action and system level influence were limited by institutional boundaries and sectoral silos.

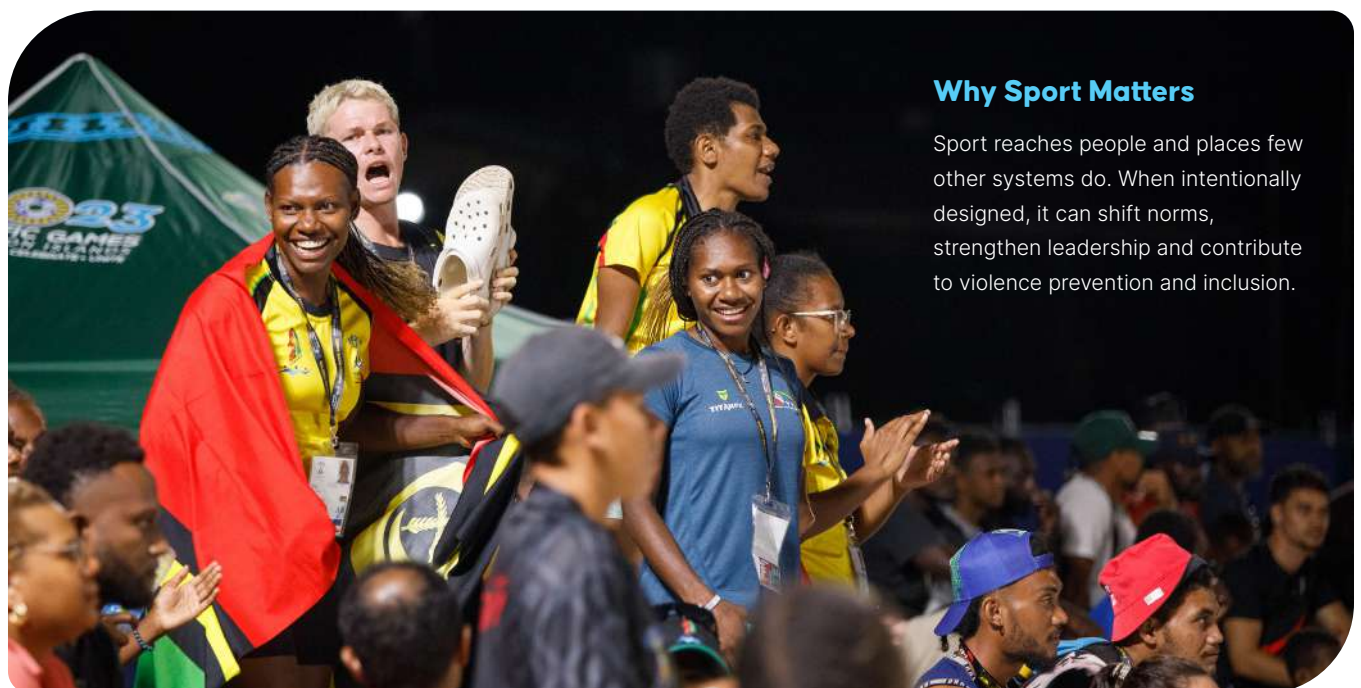
The opportunity was clear: if these organisations could work together in a more deliberate and structured way, their combined impact could be significantly strengthened.

The Partners

The organisations that came together to form the OIN shared complementary mandates, regional reach and deep experience across sport, gender equality, safeguarding, disability inclusion and violence prevention. Within the OIN, each partner retains its own identity, systems and accountabilities, while committing to shared outcomes and collaborative ways of working.

Senior leaders have reinforced strategic backing for OIN, praising its rapid progress and advancing practical resource-sharing frameworks. Now the priority is to sustain momentum on the ground – keeping the network agile and action-oriented at the operational level.

This diversity – across global, regional and national institutions – has become a strength of the network, enabling coordinated action across multiple system levels.



Why Sport Matters

Sport reaches people and places few other systems do. When intentionally designed, it can shift norms, strengthen leadership and contribute to violence prevention and inclusion.

Meet Our Partners



ONOC Equity Commission (ECO)

- Founding OIN partner providing regional leadership in women and equity in sport.
- Convenes partners, provides strategic oversight, hosts coordination, and supports Pacific led leadership and safeguarding initiatives.



UN Women (Fiji Multi Country Office/Pacific Partnership)

- Provides gender equality, violence prevention and systems expertise in the Pacific.
- Leads social norms change, safeguarding, policy engagement and survivor centred, gender transformative sport based prevention work.



Team Up – The Australian Government’s sport for development programme

- Team Up delivers grassroots, safeguarding and inclusion initiatives.
- Leads safeguarding capacity building, administers Play for Equity Fund, and supports community led gender and disability justice.



IOC – Through Olympic Solidarity and Olympism 365

- IOC development arm supporting NOCs with funding and capacity building; enabling NOC participation and safeguards systems, strengthening sustainability and accountability across Oceania sport structures.
- IOC strategy using sport to advance sustainable development. Through co-investment of OIN initiatives, scales inclusive programmes, supports innovation, and links Pacific practice with global learning on safe, inclusive sport.



Acknowledging ONOC’s Support and Leadership

The foundational support of ONOC leadership has been significant to success of the project. From background knowledge to an early understanding of the idea to galvanising and taking action, the OIN team acknowledge their important contribution.



The Solution:

Bringing the Oceania Impact Network to Life

At the IWG Conference in Auckland, New Zealand in 2022 partners sat down for a cup of coffee and saw an opportunity ahead.

As a result, the OIN came to life as a Pacific led impact network designed to align effort, learn through practice and strengthen systems for safer, more inclusive sport.

Early on, partners were able to:

- identify shared goals and outcomes
- choose an impact network approach rather than create a new organisation
- establish clear principles for collaboration
- ground global influence in Pacific leadership, values and practice

From separate organisations with aligned interests in 2022, OIN evolved into an action network with defined outcomes, six workstreams and early evidence of system influence by 2026.

Timeline





2025

OIN members join forces at the *Olympism in Action* conference in Lausanne



The **GolKipa** pilot is launched by UN Women and supported by OIN partners.

As the network grows in capability and scope, a full-time coordinator is employed.

UN Women signs a MOU with Oceania Football Confederation to expand their impact through sport.



Wāhine Toa Oceania Pacific women's leadership training programme for retired athletes, developed by the NZOC and MFAT, is launched as a pilot. It is endorsed by ECO and the OIN with additional funding from Olympic Solidarity.

2026



All eyes are set on IWG 2026 in Birmingham, UK – four years after the OIN network was first discussed as an idea, the team are ready to showcase the story so far and share ideas and models for others to follow.

How OIN Works in Practice

Today, the OIN operates as an impact network, not a standalone Collective Partners retain their own mandates, governance and funding arrangements while working together toward shared outcomes.

Work is organised through six interconnected workstreams, each led and supported by partners with relevant expertise. Activities build on existing programs, avoid duplication and enable scale.

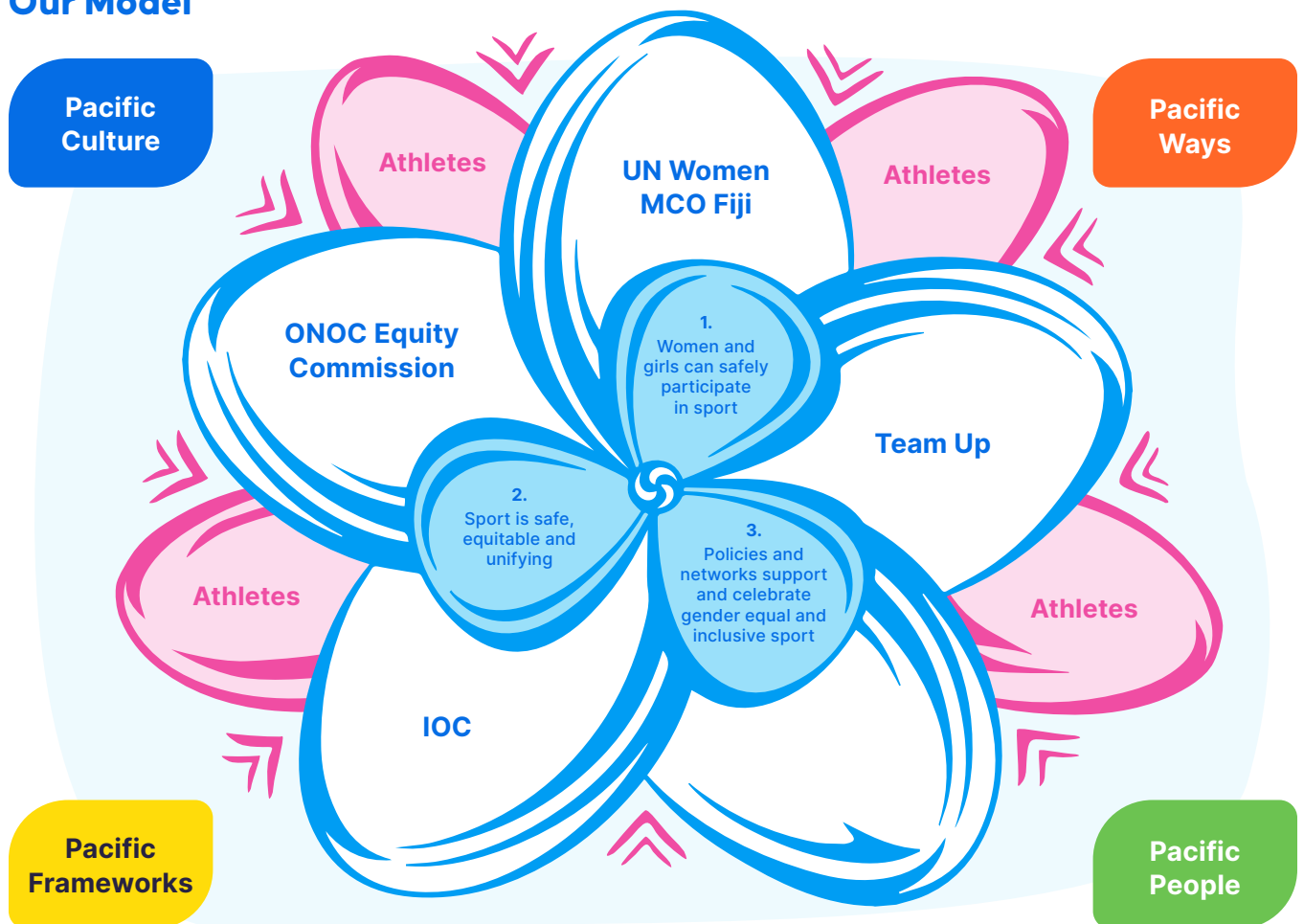
Resourcing flows through co investment, parallel financing and in kind contributions; and external party funding. A dedicated backbone coordination role (full-time, based in Fiji) supports alignment, learning, safeguarding integrity and accountability.

In practical terms, OIN is funded through shared and distributed resourcing rather than a central budget. Coordination is funded by Olympic Solidarity and hosted by ONOC, while activities are delivered through parallel financing, co funding and in kind contributions, with partners funding work through their own systems.

Practice informs strategy, allowing OIN to adapt, test approaches and strengthen system influence over time.

“Working in Pacific ways means prioritising relationships, trust and shared purpose.”

Our Model



Oceania Impact Network – united for the Pacific, in the Pacific, of the Pacific, around our three OIN outcomes

How It Comes Together – An Overview



An inclusive and safe sport ecosystem.
Contributing to a Pacific region free from
violence and discrimination.



1.

Women and
girls can safely
participate in sport

Women and girls have the
resources and social support
to access sport and have
high-quality experiences.

2.

Sport is safe,
equitable and unifying

Sport organisations
apply policies and
processes to build a
culture that is safe and
where everyone belongs.

3.

Policies and networks
support and celebrate
gender equal and
inclusive sport

Communities and
governments understand
the value of sport and
promote, and invest in,
gender equal and inclusive
and safe sport experiences.

The OIN's shared vision, goals and outcomes.

Shared vision and three outcomes guide collaboration

- Six workstreams organise action and learning
- Partners lead delivery through existing systems
- Collaborative Governance and Management
- Resource Sharing and leveraging via co investment and parallel financing
- Backbone coordination enables alignment and safeguarding
- Learning through practice informs adaptation and scale



What's Worked Well

Experience to date highlights several strengths:

- clarity of shared purpose
- trust based relationships (Yalo Dua)
- balance between informality and structure
- Pacific led coordination
- starting small and learning by doing
- building evidence through practice
- creating space for innovation and new collaborative action

"Momentum comes not from having the perfect plan but from *building trust and understanding* by trialling small ways of working together."

The Six OIN Workstreams

1.

Effective Women Leaders In Sport - At All Levels

Developing confident, capable women leaders across Pacific sport systems.

2.

Educated For Safe Sport With Regional Qualification

Regional training and qualifications embedding safeguarding and inclusion.

3.

Building Safeguarding Capability

Systems, policies and communities of practice for safe sport.

4.

Inclusive Grassroots Sport Advances Gender And Disability Justice

Community level sport advancing gender and disability justice.

5.

Social Norms Change through Advocacy And Communications

Advocacy and communication to challenge discrimination and violence.

6.

Policy and Investment for Prevention

Government engagement to embed sport in violence prevention frameworks.





Collaboration in Practice: What We Have Achieved So Far

Through initiatives such as the Regional Safeguarding Workshops, Wāhine Toa Oceania and the Play for Equity Fund, the Oceania Impact Network has demonstrated how collective, networked action can strengthen systems for safer, more inclusive sport in the Pacific.

To date, more than 18 collaborative programmes and activations have been developed and delivered across the network, spanning leadership development, safeguarding capability, inclusive grassroots sport, social norms change and policy engagement. While diverse in form and scale, these initiatives are united by a shared commitment to prevention, protection and inclusion.

These activities operate across multiple system levels – building individual capability, strengthening organisational practice, and contributing to increased recognition of sport as a legitimate and effective setting for violence prevention, safeguarding and inclusion at national and regional levels.

Rather than functioning as isolated interventions, this work illustrates how OIN's impact network approach intentionally links **community level action** with **organisational governance** and **national prevention and response systems**. Learning has been generated through practice, not imposed frameworks, reinforcing an adaptive and relational way of working.

The network has also enabled aligned support from partners outside OIN, including New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, which funded the Wāhine Toa Oceania programme through the **New Zealand International Development Cooperation (IDC) Programme** and via the New Zealand Olympic Committee.

Together, these initiatives reflect a core insight underpinning OIN's approach: when intentionally designed and coordinated, **sport can function as a bridge** – enabling earlier prevention, safer disclosure, stronger referrals and more coherent survivor centred responses across systems.



Wāhine Toa Oceania



Pacific led leadership programme for retired elite female athletes

- Builds leadership capability, safeguarding knowledge, governance skills and regional networks
- Six Pacific nations represented
- With New Zealand Olympic Committee, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand International Development Cooperation (IDC) Programme

Workstream: Leadership

Partners: New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) (with support from the New Zealand International Development Cooperation Programme); New Zealand Olympic Committee (NZOC); ONOC Equity Commission (ONOC ECO); Olympic Solidarity (with support from the New Zealand International Development Cooperation Programme)

Regional Safeguarding Workshops (2023–2025)



Strengthening safeguarding practice across Pacific sport systems

- Annual regional workshops strengthening safeguarding knowledge, reporting and survivor centred practice
- Brings together National Olympic Committees, sport federations, civil society and frontline service providers
- Participation grew to over 80 participants from 11 Pacific countries by 2025

Workstream: Safeguarding

Partners: ONOC Equity Commission (ONOC ECO); Olympic Solidarity; Team Up; UN Women – Pacific Partnership for Prevention

Play for Equity Fund



Participatory grants for inclusive community sport

- Small grants supporting gender equality and disability justice through community led sport
- Accessible, participatory application process enabling individuals and grassroots organisations to apply
- By Phase 4, supported initiatives across 14 Pacific countries

Workstream: Inclusive Grassroots Sport

Partners: Team Up; IOC Olympism 365; ONOC Equity Commission (ONOC ECO); UN Women





Get Into Rugby Plus

Gender transformative rugby for violence prevention

- Uses rugby as a platform to challenge harmful social norms and prevent violence against women and girls
- Integrates participation, safeguarding education and social norms change for girls and boys
- Delivered in Fiji and Samoa with documented institutional and governance reform outcomes

Workstream: Inclusive Grassroots Sport

Partners: UN Women, Oceania Rugby and ChildFund, Team Up and IOC–Olympism 365



Pacific Games 2023 Safeguarding & Gender Equality Campaign

Safeguarding and social norms change at a major regional sporting event

- High profile safeguarding and gender equality campaign during the Solomon Islands Pacific Games
- Engaged athletes, officials, volunteers and spectators on safeguarding responsibilities and respectful behaviour
- Normalised violence prevention and safeguarding discourse within regional sport settings

Workstream: Social Norms and Advocacy

Partners: UN Women; ONOC Equity Commission (ONOC ECO); Team Up



Paris 2024 Olympic Games – Safeguarding Officers

Safeguarding systems for Pacific athletes at a global sporting event

- First dedicated safeguarding presence for Oceania athletes at an Olympic Games
- Pacific Safeguarding Officers embedded within athlete services to support prevention, reporting and response
- Demonstrated system level impact of regional safeguarding capacity building in a global setting

Workstream: Safeguarding

Partners: Olympic Solidarity; ONOC Equity Commission (ONOC ECO); Pacific Safeguarding practitioners (delivered through OIN coordination)



Section Two

The Theory



The Theory of Change

OIN's Theory of Change recognises that violence against women and girls, gender inequality, exclusion and unsafe sport environments are not isolated problems. They are produced and sustained by interacting systems – including social norms, power relations, organisational cultures, safeguarding mechanisms and national policy environments.

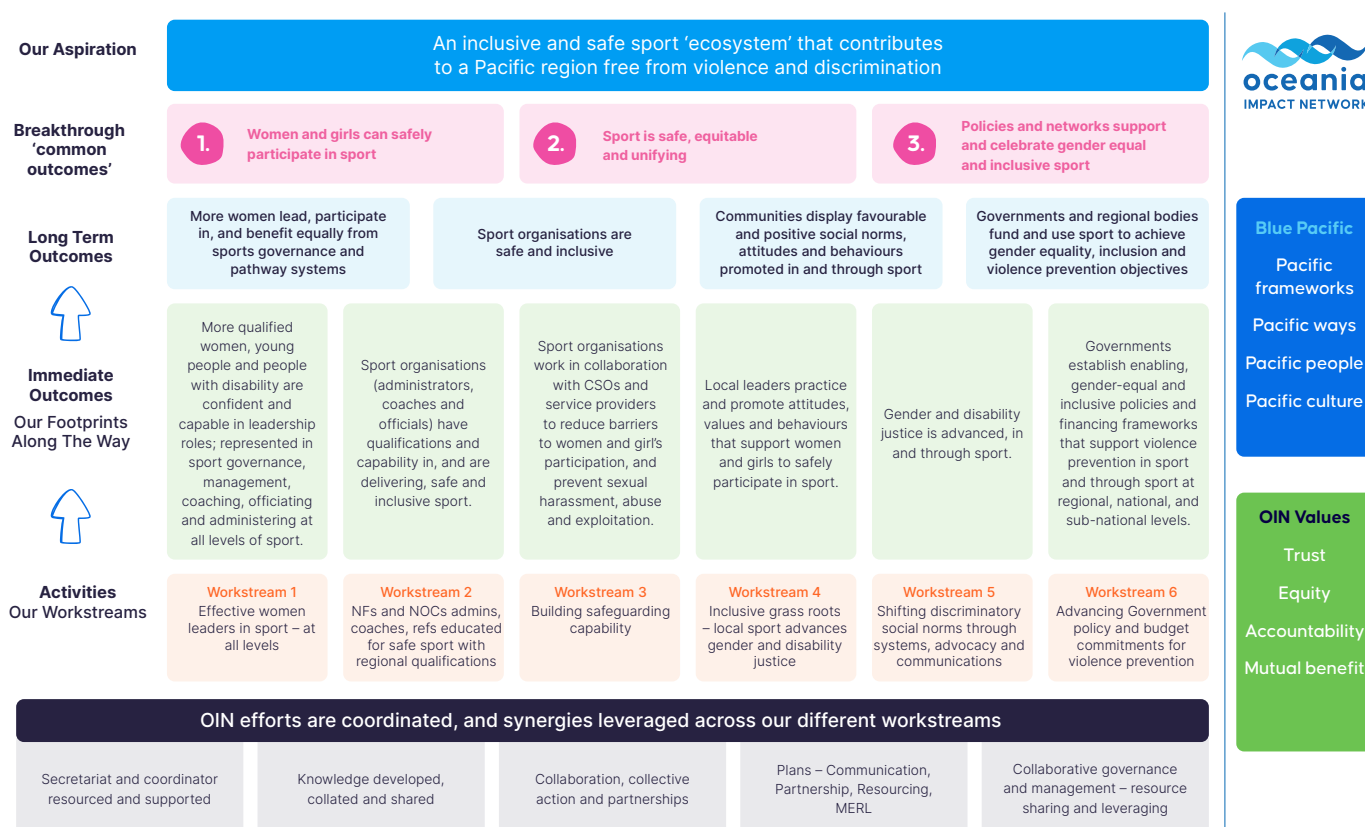
These challenges are systemic rather than behavioural. No single intervention, organisation or program can shift these dynamics alone. Sustainable change requires coordinated action across multiple levels of the system, from individual attitudes and behaviours to organisational governance and practice, through to policy, investment and accountability frameworks.

Within this framing, sport holds a dual role. It can mirror and reinforce inequality and harm, but it can also function as a strategic bridge – connecting community level participation with broader prevention, protection and response systems. This insight underpins OIN's Theory of Change.

OIN's collaborative action is therefore designed to:

- strengthen prevention and safeguarding within sport settings,
- shift harmful social norms and power dynamics,
- build organisational capability and accountability, and
- connect sport more effectively with national violence prevention and response frameworks.

Rather than working sequentially or in isolation, OIN's Theory of Change assumes progress happens through aligned, reinforcing action across these system levels over time.



Oceania Impact Network Theory of Change



Why an Impact Network Approach

The Case Study draws on impact network theory to explain why a networked approach is better suited to this challenge than traditional program delivery or bilateral partnerships.

Impact networks are designed to operate in conditions of complexity and uncertainty, where:

- causes and effects are not linear,
- outcomes emerge over time rather than on a fixed schedule, and
- no single actor has sufficient authority, reach or resources to act alone.

OIN applies this approach by prioritising:

- shared outcomes rather than organisational visibility,
- coordination without centralised control, and
- trust based relationships rather than compliance driven structures.

This explains why OIN did not establish a new organisation or pooled fund. Instead, the network intentionally works through existing partner systems, enabling scale, legitimacy and sustainability while avoiding duplication.

Key Elements of an Impact Network (as applied by OIN)

The OIN case study highlights several core elements that enable effective networked action:

Shared purpose and outcomes

OIN partners align around clearly defined, shared outcomes. These outcomes act as the primary organising force, guiding decisions about collaboration, resource use and learning.

Coordination as relational infrastructure

Coordination within OIN is not administrative alone. The Case Study emphasises coordination as relational and protective infrastructure – supporting alignment, learning, safeguarding integrity and accountability as activities expand.

Trust based collaboration

OIN is built on what partners describe as “radical trust”: a willingness to share risk, credit, learning and influence. This trust enables partners to experiment, adapt and work across mandates that would otherwise remain siloed.

Learning through action

The network’s theory assumes that learning emerges through practice. Rather than waiting for perfect designs, OIN tests approaches, reflects on what is working, and adapts. Evidence is built iteratively, not only through formal evaluation but through lived experience across the network.

Attention to power and inclusion

Power dynamics within partnerships and systems are important. OIN’s theory therefore prioritises Pacific leadership, gender transformative practice and the inclusion of women’s and disability led perspectives as essential to legitimate and effective change.





From Action Network to Movement Network

The Case Study describes OIN's evolution from an action network – focused on coordinating existing initiatives – to the early stages of a movement network.

As a movement network, OIN's influence extends beyond specific activities. It helps to:

- normalise safeguarding and violence prevention within sport,
- spread shared practice across organisations and countries,
- support the emergence of new collaborative action aligned to the same outcomes, and
- contribute to system level shifts in how sport is positioned within prevention frameworks.

This transition does not imply rapid expansion or institutional growth. The theory emphasises intentional restraint: protecting trust, maintaining coherence and scaling influence rather than structure.

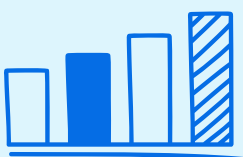
Why this Theory Matters in Practice

By grounding its work in this Theory of Change, OIN is able to:

- act across multiple system levels at once,
- remain adaptive in diverse Pacific contexts, and
- sustain collaboration over time in the absence of centralised control.

The theory does not replace practice; it explains and strengthens it. It articulates why OIN focuses on relationships, coordination and learning, and why progress is measured in system influence as well as program outputs.

This theoretical grounding is what allows OIN to “go further together” – not by doing more of the same, but by working differently in response to complex, deeply embedded social challenges.



Scaling impact, not the organisation

OIN's theory prioritises strengthening systems, norms and relationships over building new structures – recognising that sustainable change requires influence, not institutional growth.



Section Three

What's Next



Deepening Impact and Considering New Partnerships

As the Oceania Impact Network looks ahead, partners have identified a number of concrete opportunities to consolidate learning, extend influence and contribute to safer, more inclusive sport systems across the Pacific and beyond.

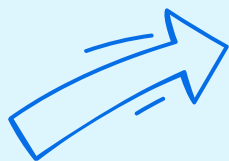
OIN will continue to **leverage major regional and global sporting milestones** as platforms for learning, advocacy and system influence. In particular, upcoming Olympic and Paralympic Games – including **Los Angeles 2028** and **Brisbane 2032** – present opportunities to strengthen safeguarding practices, elevate gender equality and inclusion, and support Pacific leadership within global sport systems. These moments create visibility not only for elite sport, but for the prevention, protection and systems strengthening work underpinning safe sport at all levels.

Alongside this, OIN partners are committed to strengthening **knowledge sharing, monitoring, evaluation and learning**, ensuring evidence generated through collaborative practice informs future action and contributes to broader regional and global learning. This includes aligning OIN's work with existing regional and global frameworks, including the **Blue Pacific Strategy 2050**, the **Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration**, and relevant **Sustainable Development Goals**, particularly those relating to gender equality, health, reduced inequalities and partnerships.

As interest in the network grows, OIN also recognises the potential for **new partnerships and collaborations**. The Case Study is clear, however, that any expansion must be approached with care. OIN has been deliberately built as a trust based, Pacific led impact network, and rapid or unselective growth risks undermining the relationships, coherence and safeguarding integrity that make the network effective.

For this reason, partners emphasise that future partnerships should be guided by **shared values, clear alignment to OIN outcomes, and a demonstrated commitment to collective action**. Growth will be pursued to strengthen impact and system influence – **not for scale or visibility alone**. Protecting what has been built, while enabling thoughtful expansion, remains central to OIN's future direction.





Looking ahead, with purpose

OIN will leverage major sporting milestones, strengthen learning and evidence, and align with Pacific and global frameworks – growing partnerships carefully to protect trust, integrity and impact.

Top Tips – from our team to yours

- Identify a shared problem and common outcomes
- Invest in trust and relationships
- Prioritise coordination capacity
- Learn through action
- Allow structures to emerge over time
- Scale impact, not organisations
- Share leadership and credit

“Networks are precious and need protecting – even if that means going more slowly.”





"Sustained, authentic impact happens when a group of people come together around a common cause with a shared set of strategies and metrics."

Get Involved

If you share these aspirations and are interested in collaboration or learning, connect with us or scan the QR code to learn more.

oin.oceanianoc.org



FOUNDING PARTNERS

