

March 2019

Connect regions and women through sport

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Yk06H3S8E&feature=youtu.be>

Hosted at the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence in Redfern (Sydney, Australia), 'beating heart of urban Aboriginal Australia', [Football United's](#) Sportswomen for Change Leadership forum for emerging leaders welcomed eight women from Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, Qatar, and Bahrain and eight Australian women, who are working to build and improve their communities through sport, to develop leadership skills and promote cross-cultural bonds.

The sixteen delegates supported the delivery of a football festival for over 150 girls at the state-of-the-art facilities at Valentine Sports Park, celebrating Female Football Week; participated in several leadership and sport for social change game design and delivery workshops; participated in an evening discussion panel hosted by Moya Dodd at Gilbert+Tobin facilitated by Tracey Holmes; participated in a beach and surf safety session with Surf Life Saving NSW; and took part in a powerful Hyundai A-League Harmony Round flag march supported by Sydney FC.

It is thanks to our partnership with the Commonwealth through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's The Council for Australian-Arab Relations, UNSW School of Public Health and Community Medicine, Creating Chances, our key partners Football NSW, Sydney FC and Gilbert + Tobin.

International delegates were identified through our membership with streetfootballworld and connections to organisations including: Spirit of Soccer (Iraq), Palestine Sport for Life, Fingerprint of Change, Right to Play (Jordan), Generation Amazing and other networks with Royal Life Saving Bahrain and GIZ Sport for Development (Jordan).

Some feedback from delegates

It was an honor for me to participate with you kind people. As a result, I gained a lot of useful knowledge from this event; it has surely changed me for the better.

Indeed it was a great day in my life! I got to see many people happy with delight smiles on their faces and it was as a result of your efforts to bring people together and making the world a better place through football

*Being surrounded by amazing passionate women has made this forum a special one for me. The knowledge that I got and the experience that I have gained is priceless .*

### **Day 1:**

Sportswomen for Change Leadership Forum 2019 kicked off with a warm Welcome to Country by Aunty Beryl from the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence followed by some encouraging words by Maria Poulos member of DFAT Sydney Office.

Workshops included an introduction to Sport for Development and Social Change and took part in an activity on how Rugby can be used to raise awareness about domestic violence in Australia, by the NRL Community Team. The day finished off with an inspiring workshop with Sirine Demachkie sharing tips on Presenting with Impact and embracing your authentic self. Delegates shared their inspirational stories and why sport for social change is important to them

### **Day 2:**

Starting with a Self Awareness through Self Defence workshop run by Rose & Elle Smith, Philotimo Freestyle JiuJitsu Martial Artist Champions and Trainers, followed by a trip to Ultra Football for a Sports for Social Change Game Design & Delivery workshop delivered by 2018 SWFC delegates, Eve Wilcox, Head Facilitator Creating Chances and Natasha Hill, Community Program Coordinator, Creating Chances & Football United. The delegates designed a game which they later had to deliver back to the group, a great way for reflection and learning. The day concluded with an Event for Social Change planning workshop delivered by Pauline Fourmond, Creating Chances Program & Events Coordinator.



1 Delegates pose with Rose from Philotimo Jujitsu after a self awareness and self defence session



*2 Delegates enjoying some free time and showing off some acrobatic skills at Ultra Football prior to the Sport for Social change workshop*

### **Day 3:**

Delegates supported the delivery of Football United's Girls Football Festival - INSPIRE CONNECT PLAY. Over 150 girls across Sydney, from diverse backgrounds, some with lots of experience in football, others with zero experience in football came together to celebrate football for all. Teambuilding activities were delivered by the delegates before the tournament kicked off. Mixed teams provided the opportunity for the participants to truly connect and meet new people. Sydney FC, Football NSW, Trudy Burke (W-league star), and the local school and volunteers were instrumental to make this day a success.



*3 Delegates gather for a team photo before the students arrive for the Girls Football Festival at Valentine Sportspark*

#### **Day 4:**

The theme of the morning was "Women in Leadership in Sport" with Keynote Speakers Jo Fernandes from Football NSW and FIFA General Coordinator, sharing her experiences at the FIFA World Cup, followed by Amna K-Hassan from the Lebanese Muslim Association on her involvement with community AFL club, Auburn Giants. The next workshop was a Future Pathways session delivered by Stuart Meney, Pathway and Training Manager at Creating Chances where the delegates had a chance to identify their individual skill-sets which could help reach their goal before being taken through an in depth 'Sports Advocacy' workshop with Asmaah Helal, Operations Manager at Creating Chances & Football United.

The day concluded with an evening "Women in Sport for Social Change" panel hosted by Moya Dodd and long-term partners Gilbert + Tobin. ABC journalist, Tracey Holmes, facilitated the discussion with Australian and Arab women (Sameera Al Bitar and Yasmeen Shabsough) as they shared their experiences, challenges, and strategies about how they use sport to contribute to developing positive social change in their communities.



*4 Future Pathways workshop with Stuart Meney, Creating Chances - delegates created building blocks of their skills, values and goals*

#### **Day 5:**

Exploring the city of Sydney was on the agenda beginning with a trip to Tamarama Beach for a Surf Life Saving information session delivered by the Surf Life Saving NSW. The delegates learnt about the history of women in surf life saving in Australia, how to identify rips and danger in the water before heading down onto the beach for a practical demonstration on surf rescue.

The iconic Sydney Opera House was the next destination on the agenda and was the starting point of the Sportswomen For Change Forum Amazing Race. Delegates were formed into teams and given a two hours to perform as many challenges at iconic landmarks, museums and local points, before

making their way back to the Opera House to unlock the final code and be crowned the #SWFC2019 Amazing Race Champions



*5 Delegates jumping in front of the Opera House prior to commencing the Amazing Race*



6 Delegates chilling out in front of the Opera House



7 Delegates visited Tamara Surf Life Saving Club for beach and surf safety session organised by Surf Life Saving NSW

**Day 6:**

The final day included reflections and celebrations and ending with a trip to Leichhardt Oval for the Sydney FC vs Melbourne City A-League Harmony Round. Delegates and Football United participants took part in a pre-match flag march and formed the guard of honour to celebrate Harmony Day (The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination) and the rich tapestry of cultures and backgrounds in Football United and across the nation. It was also an opportunity to announce Football United's two Sydney FC player ambassadors Alex Brosque and Teresa Polias.



*8 Delegates and Football United participants at Leichhardt Oval, taking part in a pre-match flag parade for the Sydney FC Harmony Round match*