

SPORTS EQUITY LAB · TAFISA WORLD CONGRESS WEBINAR

No One on the Sidelines

Intersectionality and the Missing Voices in Sport for All

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21 July 2026



BEFORE WE BEGIN

Close Your Eyes for a Moment



Picture a surgeon.

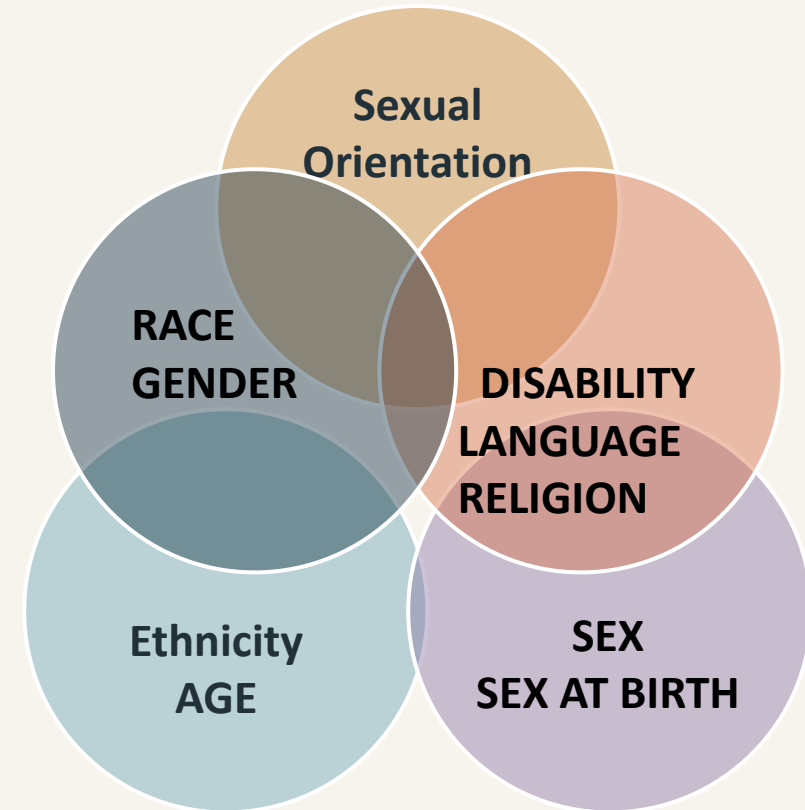


**Picture an Olympic
swimming champion.**

Who did you picture? Open your eyes — let's talk about why that matters.

Intersectionality

While each aspect of identity presents its own risk factors for IV, there is potential risk based on the intersecting aspects of identities.[74](#) As Gurgis *et al* [108](#) contend, critical safe sport topics to address, such as racism, ableism, sexism, misogyny and heterosexism, can uniquely define (un)safe experiences of sportspeople.[108](#) Systemic discrimination remains a significant threat to individual welfare, thus, an intersectional approach should be used when striving for safe sport: a reality which might not yet be possible across sports, cultures, or contexts, or experienced equally by those with differing intersecting identities.[105](#)
[106](#) [125](#)



— ITuakli-Wosornu YA, Burrows K, Fasting K, et al. IOC Consensus Statement, (2024)

THE EVIDENCE

A Global Safeguarding Standard

IOC Consensus Statement on Interpersonal Violence (IV) and Safeguarding in Sport, 2024



SOGIESV

Sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, or sex variations



Race & Ethnicity

A person's background and cultural identity



Age

Younger and older athletes can face different risks



Dis/ability

Physical, sensory, or cognitive difference

These factors sit at the innermost level of sport's safety system — where they meet, risk can multiply.

IOC Consensus Statement

Section 3: Individual and interpersonal determinants of IV in sport

A wide array of individual and interpersonal variables shape the nature of human responses. Recent literature identifies an added layer of complexity: the intersection of overlapping forms of oppression and discrimination. Intersectionality has been adopted to facilitate the multilayered understanding of socially constructed experiences that cannot be understood simply by examining individual aspects separately,[73](#) which are greater than the sum of their parts.[74](#) This section explores individual/interpersonal-level variables such as sexual orientation, gender identity/expression or sex variations (SOGIESV), race/ethnicity, age and dis/ability, as they relate to IV experiences in sport which function at the innermost level of the socioecological model.

Tuakli-Wosornu YA, Burrows K, Fasting K, et al. IOC consensus statement

We honor her memory — and the voices of every Rebecca.

Rebecca Cheptegei

Olympic Marathon Runner

National Record Holder

Mother of Two

Sergeant, Uganda People's Defence Force



Elite athletes are at higher risk of abuse than non-elite. Other especially **vulnerable groups** include: youth, the disabled, LGBTQ athletes, and other marginalized populations (immigrants, international athletes abroad, students beholden to college scholarships – and others).

[Olympic athlete Rebecca Cheptegei dies after being set alight by ex-boyfriend | BBC News](#)

THE POLICY LANDSCAPE

United States (U.S.) of America and International



Title IX (1972): a U.S. law banning sex discrimination in any school program that receives federal funding — including sports.

1972

1974

2024

2025

Title IX signed into law

Regulations extended to
intercollegiate athletics

IOC Consensus Statement
on safeguarding

Title IX guidance on
athlete pay revoked

Legal protections for athletes continue to change. Staying informed is part of safeguarding.

Building Fairer Systems: The Three C's



Culture

Shifting norms so every athlete is seen and valued.



Connection

Building a global network of partners and changemakers.



Care

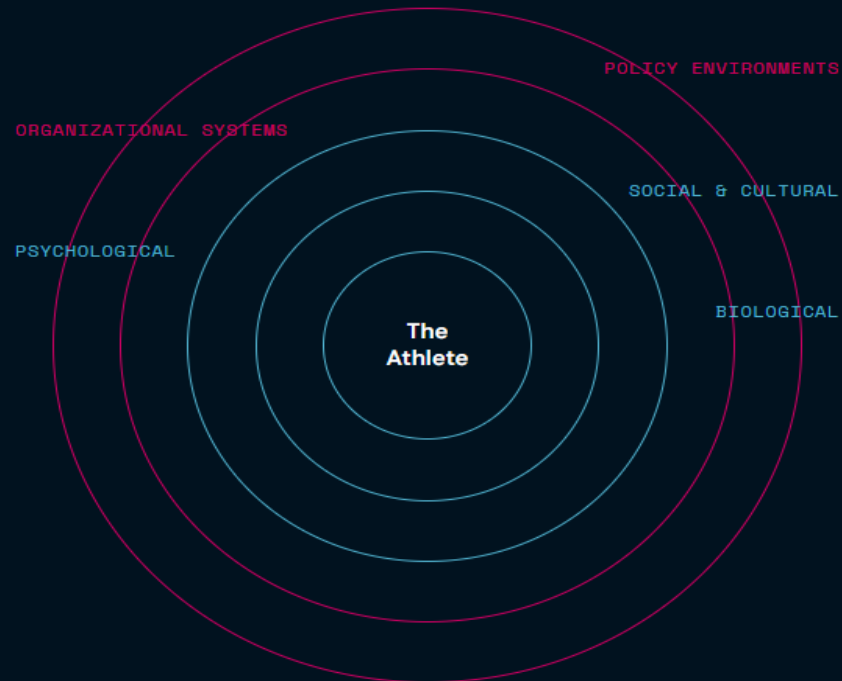
Centering the human being behind every athlete.

“The conditions from which sustainable excellence emerges.”

Sports Equity Lab: 100% Athlete Led

High Performance as an Ethical Outcome

Through rigorous, multidisciplinary research and its translation into convening, storytelling, and product innovation, the Center conceptualizes high performance as an *ethical, inclusive, and sustainable outcome of caring systems* — generating evidence, practices, and leaders capable of strengthening the conditions for excellence within sport and across society.



ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS MODEL OF SPORT

How We Take Action



Education

Training and resources for coaches, families, and athletes.



Storytelling

Lifting up real voices and lived experiences in sport.



Summits

Gathering changemakers to build solutions together.



Innovation

Trying bold, unimagined ideas — and being brave enough to test them.

CALL TO ACTION

Refuse to Do Nothing

Join a global community of changemakers working toward sport that is safer and fairer for everyone.

sportsequitylab.org

References

- Tuakli-Wosornu YA, Burrows K, Fasting K, et al. IOC consensus statement: interpersonal violence and safeguarding in sport. Br J Sports Med. 2024;58(22):1322-1344.
- Sports Equity Lab. sportsequitylab.org. Accessed July 2026.
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. [justice.gov](https://www.justice.gov).
- Lavigne P. Dept. of Education revokes guidance on Title IX and athlete pay. ESPN.com, Feb 2025.
- Olympic athlete Rebecca Cheptegei dies after being set alight by ex-boyfriend. BBC News.

Thank You

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