

FINAL REPORT

January, 2026



**ADVANCING MOBILITY JUSTICE,
GENDER EQUITY, CLIMATE JUSTICE,
AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
THROUGH SPORT SYMPOSIUM**

Toronto, October 15-17, 2025



Thank you to our event partner and sponsors

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Executive Summary

York University DREAMING in Sport Collaboratory, housed in the School of Kinesiology and Health Science, hosted a three-day symposium, October 15-17, 2025. The purpose of the symposium, *Advancing Mobility Justice, Gender Equity, Climate Justice, and Sustainable Development Through Sport*, was to bring together leading scholars, academics, and stakeholders to engage in dialogue where they might envision a future that is more equitable, and one where climate mobility justice, gender justice, and sustainability are at the forefront of conversation.

This final report highlights the overarching goals of the symposium, an overview of each of the three days, including the themes and topics covered each day, and emphasizes standout sessions that occurred throughout the week.

Throughout the document, we also summarize the knowledge mobilization and dissemination tactics that were featured throughout the symposium, including launching three policy briefs focused on sport, gender equity and climate mobility justice, and an online social media campaign.

Introduction

On October 15th – 17th, York University's DREAMING in Sport Collaboratory, housed in the School of Kinesiology and Health Science, held a high-impact, three-day international symposium at York's Keele Campus. The symposium, *Advancing Mobility Justice, Gender Equity, Climate Justice, and Sustainable Development Through Sport*, served as one of the first international events to bring together leading academics, scholars, industry leaders, and more, to connect and dialogue towards envisioning a future where mobility and gender justice, and sustainability are at its core.

This three-day in-person event convened global champions of climate mobility justice and gender equity to explore how sport, leisure, recreation and movement can advance social and environmental change across diverse local and global contexts. The symposium focused specifically on sport (for development and social justice) oriented initiatives in Canada, the Global South, and beyond. A number of panels also narrowed in on the bicycle explicitly.

The goals of the symposium were threefold:

- To convene a global network of scholars, NGOs, policymakers, and practitioners to exchange expertise and co-develop strategies for inclusive mobility.
- To spark intersectoral dialogue among researchers, government officials, educators, and community leaders to improve access and infrastructure for women (*including cis and trans, as well as non-binary people), and equity-deserving groups (e.g., BIPOC, 2SLGBTQ+, people in poverty).
- To reimagine the role of sport and bicycles in international development through deeper collaboration between academic institutions, grassroots organizations, and global partners.

Overall, the symposium grappled with pressing and emergent tensions at the intersection of sport-based programming and mobility justice, ranging from key policy gaps and climate adaptation challenges to grassroots organizing and anti-colonial planning.

This report provides a breakdown of the symposium's overall goals, key insights and deliverables, tangible outcomes, and next steps, which will inform future event planning, research decisions, and coalition building-related developments.



Summary of Event and Goals

Across the three days, the symposium featured over 60 panellists, presenters and attendees from 11 countries. The event featured a wide range of presenters and panellists from across disciplines and sectors, including:

- Leaders from Bicycles for Development (BFD) organizations (organizations that use bicycles as accessible, low-cost tools to advance social, economic, and mobility justice goals – e.g., gender equity, education, health, and livelihoods – particularly in under-resourced or marginalized communities).
- A representative from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- International non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (e.g., Free to Run, Skateistan)
- Leading academics in feminist mobility justice, decolonial theory, public health, urban planning and transportation equity
- Commonwealth Sport Canada
- Union of Hope (Uganda)
- Charlies FreeWheels (CFW, Toronto)
- Comision Mujer Joven (CMJ, Nicaragua)
- Global Observatory for Gender Equality and Sport



Attendees represented a wide range of fields, including mobility justice, transportation planning, public health, traffic engineering, sport management, gender and feminist studies, sociocultural sport studies and sustainable development.

We had participants in attendance from across the globe, including:

- Sub-Saharan Africa (Kenya, Uganda)
- Latin America (e.g., Colombia, Nicaragua)
- Global North countries (e.g., Canada, United States, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Switzerland, Aotearoa New Zealand)

Together, these leaders generated critical synergies to explore how sport, movement, and bicycles specifically can serve as powerful tools for addressing pressing social and environmental issues and inequities across diverse local and global contexts.

The overall intention behind the event was to confront and bridge the persistent siloing and disconnection that often separates work on mobility, justice, sport (including leisure, recreation, physical activity and movement), and climate action. The symposium aimed to create a safe space for vulnerable and relational discussions on a myriad of topics such as feminist ethics and mobilities of care; mobility justice as both an academic field of inquiry and an activist practice; South-North cooperation; and South-North policy learning across urban mobility, active transportation, gender-equitable sport systems, environmental sustainability, and community

safety. Through these discussions, the symposium sought to identify key policy innovations and generate new insights to address the intertwined global challenges of climate mobility justice and gender (in)equity within and through sport, including leisure, recreation, and movement.

Key Partners Involved

The successful planning, coordination, and execution of the symposium, could not have been possible without support from the following partners:

- CITY Institute at York University
- The LaMarsh Centre for Child and Youth Research at York University
- York University
- School of Kinesiology and Health Science
- Office of the Vice-President Research and Innovation (VPRI)
- School of Arts, Media, Performance and Design (AMPD)
- Global Sustainable Sport

The following funders made this event possible:

- The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC)
- Partnership Development Grant, Connection Grant, Insight Grant
- Global Research Excellence (GRE) Fund
- VPRI - Funding for Scholarly Events and Outreach Activities
- York University Research Chairs Program (Tier 2 in Sport, Gender & Development and Digital Participatory Research)

Symposium Topics and Themes

Through careful planning and a commitment to addressing emergent global and local issues (e.g., gendered mobility injustice, climate (im)mobilities and displacement, the inequitable design of urban mobility and sport systems), the symposium dedicated each event day to a specific theme. This section of the report provides a brief breakdown of each day.

Day 1 (October 15th) - Reclaiming Spaces: Anti-Colonial Journeys and Grassroots Movements

The aim of the first day of the symposium was to anchor conversations around cycling and mobility (in)justice through the utilization of the bicycle, and benefits of bicycle-based programs more explicitly. While cycling is one form of movement deeply relationship with the land, it is often shaped by histories of colonial exploitation and displacement. Day 1 therefore examined how cycling – like other outdoor activities – can both reproduce and resist these dynamics.

Participants examined how cycling, as one of many forms of movement deeply connected to the land, can be explored through film and arts-based methodologies to spark conversation on environmental stewardship and advocacy. The day concluded with a screening of *Dirt Relations*, a documentary co-created with the Indigenous Youth Mountain Bike Group from British Columbia, Canada. The film highlights the connections between mountain biking, trail building, reconciliation, and healing from intergenerational trauma.



Day 2 (October 16th) - Changing Gears: Gender Equity, Climate Action, and Global Perspectives on Mobility Justice

The second day of the symposium focused on the importance of centering movement and mobility justice through intersectional and decolonial feminist approaches. Conversations throughout the day highlighted how inclusive planning, design, and decision-making are essential for creating safer, more equitable and inclusive mobility and environmental systems.

Panelists and attendees examined key issues at the intersections of mobility, gender equity, and climate (in) justices, drawing connections between global and local perspectives in dialogue with one another. Attendees also engaged in discussions highlighting the need for intersectional approaches to planning, design, and decision-making to create safer and more inclusive mobility environmental systems for all. The sessions emphasized the value of centering global and local perspectives in dialogue with one another. The day also featured a screening of the documentary *Changing Gears*, which illustrates how mobility through bicycling is shaped across Toronto, Canada; Ometepe, Nicaragua; and Lira, Uganda). The documentary was produced in collaboration with Charlie's FreeWheels, Union of Hope, CMJ, and the DREAMING in Sport Collaboratory.

Day 3 (October 17th) - Creating Sustainable Futures: Policy, Climate Justice, and Collective Action

The third and final day of the symposium brought together the key insights from earlier sessions and focused on the policy challenges and opportunities involved in creating equitable systems of movement. This day culminated with an interactive workshop where participants co-developed a collective action plan outlining practical, care-centered strategies - rooted in care, joy, and reflexive humility – to address climate and mobility injustices globally.

Day 3: Workshop Brief Overview: 'Turning Dialogue into Action - Next Steps for Mobility Justice, Gender Equity & Climate Action through Sport'

The symposium concluded with a workshop that aimed to ignite cross-sectoral dialogue and collaboration by imploring participants to share insights, explore complementarities, and identify opportunities for joint action. Co-led by Carly Gilbert-Patrick (Team Lead, Active Mobility, Digitalisation & Mode Integration, United Nations Environmental Programme) and Dr. Christina Kwauk (Co-Founder, Unbounded Associates), participants reflected, shared, and mapped concrete ways various sectors can unite through movement to drive sustainable mobility and collective action through sport, physical activity, leisure, movement and recreation. The workshop produced a set of actionable recommendations, packaged cross-sectoral insights, created new partnerships and networks, and co-created a mission statement capturing the shared ambition for accelerating just and sustainable mobility.



Spotlight on Notable Sessions

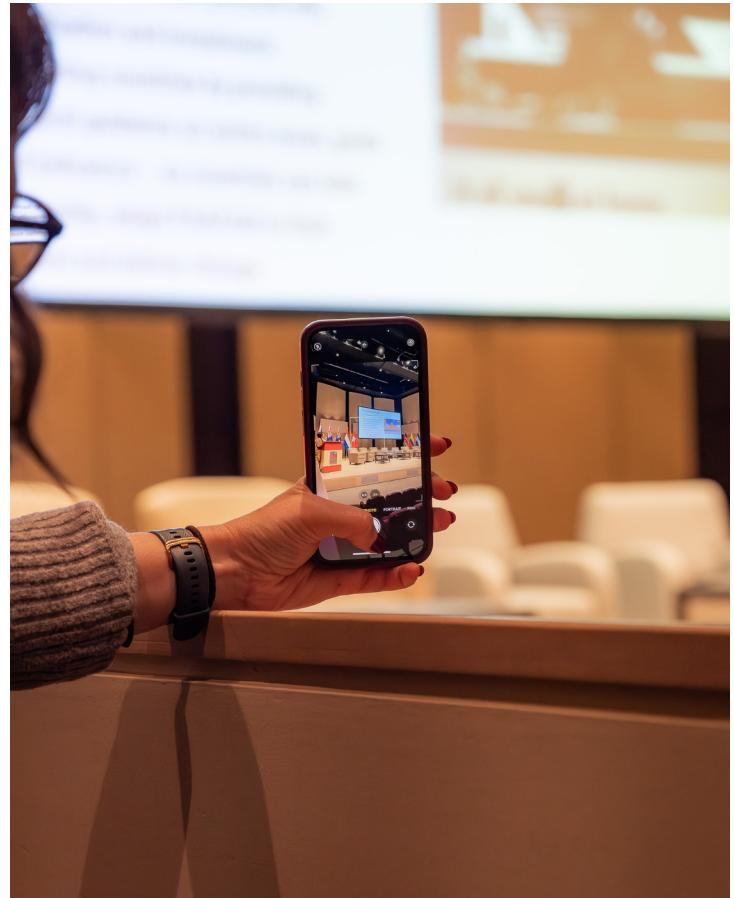
Importantly, it was not only the presentations and sessions that stood out – it was the conversations over meals, in hallways and during coffee breaks among sport leaders, mobility justice organizers, public health scholars, transportation equity advocates. Folks from different backgrounds coming together for the same reasons: making mobility systems that are anchored by care, equity and justice, ultimately transforming how movement, mobility, and climate action intersect.

Though the symposium featured multiple panels and presentations on a myriad of topics; according to our post-event survey data, there were a few sessions of particular interest. Many of the panels addressed transnational inequities in intersectional classed, raced and gendered mobilities, as well as larger injustices in 'macro-mobilities' relating to questions of who has access to clean water, food and energy and who is most vulnerable to climate disruption and displacement at the planetary scale (see Castañeda et al., 2024).

A standout session was the methodological panel on participatory action research (PAR), *Advocacy Through Participatory Research Methodologies: Photovoice, Arts-based Research, Digital Storytelling, & GIS*. This panel examined how feminist and intersectional geograph(ies) can be paired with community-based methods to explore how place and space shape access to health-promoting services for those communities experiencing climate injustice.

Maddy Shepphard-Perkins (Carleton University) explained the utility of participatory visual tools, including story maps and GIS, to advocate for equitable recreation access. She emphasized how these data-supported visuals can pinpoint locations most affected by climate change and help guide governmental responses.

Dr. Holly Thorpe (University of Waikato) focused on creative methods and shared insights from an art exhibition titled, 'Out of the Darkness,' used as a form of knowledge mobilization. The exhibition conveyed powerful visual narratives of climate impacts, ecological devastation and the strength of rangatahi (youth) voices amplified through participatory research in Aotearoa New Zealand.



Among the many powerful discussions, two panels stood out – according to a post-symposium survey filled out by 34 respondents – for their depth and impact.

Climate Action, Sport, and the Environment featured Dr. Mark Doidge (Loughborough University), Dr. Rob Millington (Brock University), Dr. Holly Thorpe (University of Waikato), and Dr. Maddy Orr (University of Toronto). Dr. Orr cited compelling strategies for mobilizing global sport institutions, including: 1) leveraging legal frameworks; and 2) using the “mortality costs of carbon” to hold organizations accountable for the urgent consequences of climate change. Both Drs. Orr and Thorpe called upon academics to embrace and pursue activism, courage and bravery in using research as a tool advocacy.



Another panel, *Climate Action and Leisure: Grassroots Perspectives* featured Cyprine Odada (Women Shaping Cities), Alison Carney (Consultant, Gender Inclusion in Sport), and Sana Mahmud (Free to Run), offered an inspiring conversation about the emotionally embodied labour that predominantly female volunteers undertake as they work to foster more equitable, safe, and resilient communities.

Workshop

One of the symposium's main objectives was to provide tangible outcomes for practitioners, academics, governance entities, and organizations to consider in their operations, policymaking, and programming. The workshop – “Turning Dialogue into Action: Next Steps for Mobility Justice, Gender Equity & Climate Action through Sport” – was led and co-created by Carly Gilbert-Patrick from the United Nations Environmental Programme, Dr. Christina Kwuak from Unbounded Associates, Dr. Lyndsay Hayhurst, Dr. Teresa Hill and Isra Iqbal from York University. The workshop provided space for attendees and presenters to reflect, share, and map

ways that various sectors can unite through movement to drive sustainable mobility and collective action through sport, physical activity, leisure, movement and recreation.

The purpose of the workshop created an interactive, forward-thinking space for cross-sectoral reflection and collaboration, where participants shared knowledge, explored how mobility intersects with climate, gender, and equity, and identified opportunities to complement each other's work. By the end of the workshop, participants co-developed a set of actionable recommendations, forged new partnerships, and built a network of contacts to help accelerate collective efforts for sustainable and just mobility. Each participant who took part in this workshop brought unique expertise and perspectives; as such, this workshop offers the opportunity to combine these insights into a shared vision and shared agenda.

The following four objectives guided the workshop:

- Spark cross-sector dialogue and collaboration by connecting participants from diverse sectors to share insights, explore complementarities, and identify opportunities for joint action.
- Explore how sport, leisure, recreation, physical activity and movement can address the gendered impacts of the climate crisis and how other sectors can contribute to mobility justice, equity, and inclusion.
- Identify strategies for centring women (*including cis and trans, as well as non-binary people), girls, gender-diverse people and vulnerable groups in climate action, and develop cross-sector recommendations for integrating equity into transport and urban policies.
- Deepen and account for diverse understandings of climate mobility justice and transportation equity as global issues and identify policy pathways, funding pathways and recommendations to address inequities in access, safety, and sustainability – and inform collaborative approaches across sectors (Giacomelli & Musarò, 2025).



Outcomes, Knowledge Dissemination, Social Media, and Next Steps

The symposium was grounded in creative arts-based methods, which supported the production of knowledge mobilization initiatives that will inform future research and organizational outcomes.

First, the symposium celebrated the launch of three policy briefs regarding mobility justice across the globe, [accessible here](#).

- Decolonial Feminist Climate Justice and 'Bicycles for Development': Using Bicycles to Combat Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, Promote Gender Equality, and Encourage Gender-Sensitive Climate Activism in Nicaragua.
- Mobility Justice and Gender Equity in Uganda: Policy and Organizational Recommendations from Eight Years of Research into Bicycles-for-Development.
- Pedal Progression? Critically Examining Toronto's Cycling Policies and Bicycle for Development Discourses.

These three policy briefs critically explored movement and mobility justice across three sites using empirical data from our SSHRC and CFI-funded studies over the past eight years with community partners in Canada, Uganda, and Nicaragua. Each policy brief proposes key recommendations for sport-based and bicycle-based NGOs, government officials, funders, movement organizers and policymakers on best practices to make communities accessible to women, girls, and marginalized groups.

Second, a social media campaign (led by Collaboratory members Maha Iqbal and Keiron Cobban), served as a sustainable knowledge-dissemination initiative, providing a platform to share key findings from the symposium. The campaign enabled participants to engage in digital conversations and build connections. Before filming and posting content, consent was obtained from attendees.

On the DREAMING in Sport Collaboratory Instagram page, we tracked the following analytics and digital interactions:

- from October 14th to the 17th, we gained 23 followers;
- 1162 views across all posts;
- 45 interactions (i.e., comments, likes, and shares);
- 150 to 400 views on our story updates

On the Collaboratory's LinkedIn account, we also tracked the following analytics and digital interactions:

- from October 14th to 17th, we gained 17 followers;
- 4065 views across all posts;
- 426 interactions (i.e., comments, reactions, shares, reposts, and clicks).

Overall, the knowledge and content gained from the symposium will inform targeted knowledge mobilization through a variety of means, including: 1) the development of a digital 'Mobility Justice Toolkit,' 2) the formation of new inclusive networks dedicated to mobility justice, especially for BIPOC, 2SLGBTQ+ communities, and self-identified women and girls; and 3) strengthening global research collaborations and the generation of policy recommendations rooted in feminist, decolonial, and participatory approaches.

References

Castañeda, P. (2024). Gender and mobility: engaging women's mobile lives. In Handbook on Gender and Cities (pp. 356-365). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Giacomelli, E., & Musarò, P. (2025). Climate Mobility Justice. Narratives and Visual Politics of the Panicocene. Springer.

Key Links & Resources

Changing Gears documentary: <https://changinggearsdoc.wordpress.com>

Dirt Relations documentary: <https://iymbp.ca/dirt-relations-documentary/>

Policy briefs: <https://bicyclesfordevelopment.ca/knowledge-translation-activities/>

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