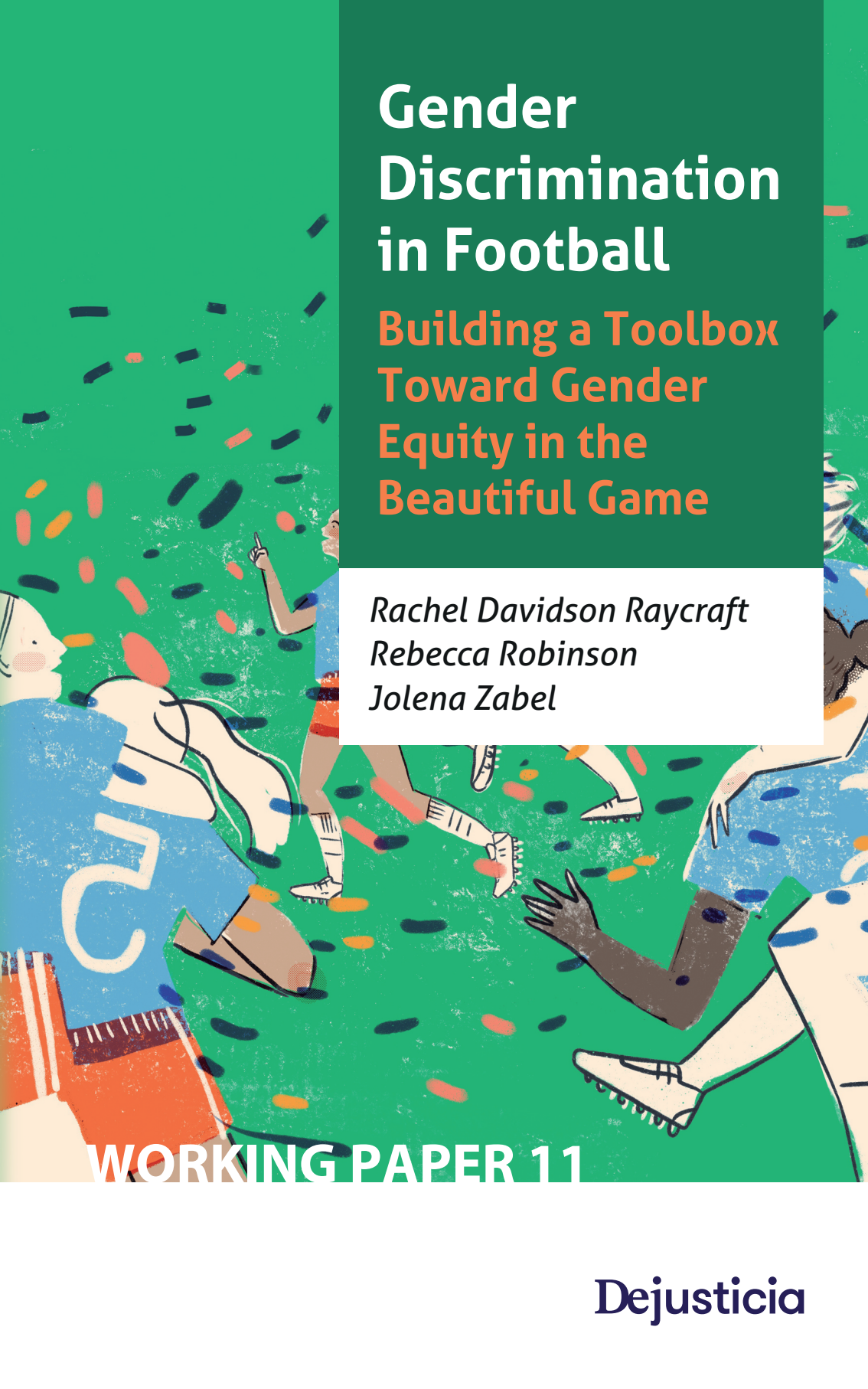


An illustration of soccer players in action on a green field. The players are depicted in a stylized, almost abstract manner with bold outlines and flat colors. One player in the foreground is wearing a blue jersey with the number '17' and orange shorts. Another player is in a white jersey with a green stripe. The field is scattered with colorful confetti in shades of orange, red, and black. The background is a solid green color.

Gender Discrimination in Football

Building a Toolbox Toward Gender Equity in the Beautiful Game

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WORKING PAPER 11

Dejusticia

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Gender Discrimination and the Fight for Equity in the World of Football

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On behalf of the University of Virginia School of Law International Human Rights Clinic, the authors would like to thank our partners at Dejusticia for allowing us the opportunity to conduct this urgent and necessary analysis of gender discrimination in football.

Acronyms

AFA:	Argentine Football Association
AFF:	Afghanistan Football Federation
ANJUFF:	[Chilean] Association of Women Football Players
CAS:	Court of Arbitration for Sport
CBA:	collective bargaining agreement
CEDAW:	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
DRC:	Dispute Resolution Chamber
FAI:	Football Association of Ireland
FFA:	Football Federation of Australia
FIFA:	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
ICESCR:	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IWG:	International Working Group on Women and Sport
NBA:	National Basketball Association
NDRC:	national dispute resolution chamber
NWSL:	[US] National Women's Soccer League
PSC:	Players' Status Committee
RSTP:	Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players
UDHR:	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UEFA:	Union of European Football Associations
UN:	United Nations
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
USSF:	United States Soccer Federation
USWNT:	United States Women's National Team
WNBA:	[US] Women's National Basketball Association

WOMEN WHO WEAR CLEATS

Nina Chaparro, María Ximena Dávila, and Camilo Sánchez

The history of women's football is still being written. There are many facets yet to be uncovered, many women's names yet to become household words, and many milestones yet to be commemorated. In some countries, women's football fills stadiums, boasts professional teams, and is transmitted on television. But like all women's stories, the story of women's football is punctuated by struggles against machismo and stereotypes. None of what we celebrate today in some countries—women's world cups, tournaments, teams, stars—would exist without the struggle for gender equality within the sport. For decades, female players have decried the unequal and discriminatory conditions permeating the world of football, exposing the wage disparities, lack of opportunities, sexual harassment, lesbophobia, and paltry institutional and financial support that they must endure. Women's football has historically been defined by its otherness, by its position vis-à-vis its opposite: men's football, which many people wrongly see as the main sport, the “real” one. Against this backdrop, women footballers have tirelessly clamored for a non-subordinate place in the annals of history. Today, equality remains a field of contention, one being nudged in the right direction by female players themselves.

The struggle of female footballers is about more than equal conditions. It is also about freedom and emancipation—about being whom you want to be, regardless of whether that idea falls within socially constructed boundaries of femininity and masculinity. It is a call for conquering spaces that have traditionally been monopolized by men. Female footballers are fighting to be able to play with the ball, put on a jersey, represent a team, and make a living wage while doing this. They are fighting for all of these