

4 Drawing up an action plan to achieve gender equality in sport



► **To effectively achieve gender equality, change gender norms and stereotypes that might inform behaviours, decisions and indeed systems.**



- Making gender inequalities visible (by collecting data that show existing gender inequalities)
- Taking proper action in each aspect and at each stage
- Involving all stakeholders, in particular groups that are less engaged in the sports world



Gender is relevant to every aspect of our lives, as well as all aspects of sport. That is why a gender-sensitive approach to sport cannot be achieved with just one action here and there. Change can only come about by being systematic and comprehensive in our actions. A gender equality action plan is the right tool to keep you on track.

Your action plan in three steps:

1. On your marks

Get all stakeholders on board and build ownership and awareness to tackle gender inequalities.



2. Get set

Understand the situation in each sport, identify your target group(s), fix your objectives, and define your actions and how to monitor your progress.



3. Go

Get your action plan validated and implement the actions.

ON YOUR MARKS

- Gather relevant stakeholders to join the planning process, for example, representatives from sport federations, athletes (women and men), policy makers, schools, sport clubs, youth and women's organisations, etc. Participation guarantees involvement and engagement and creates ownership.
 - Make sure there is gender expertise in the planning team and/or provide awareness training on gender equality and sport. Inviting a gender equality expert could be valuable to the quality of your plan.
 - If it is an action plan that involves multiple sports, make sure ALL sports are represented (and not only the popular male-dominated sports). Also make sure both team and individual sports are represented if relevant (as women tend to practise sport individually more than men).
 - If stakeholders provide representatives, ask them to provide one person of each sex.
 - Use participatory planning methods to involve all participants, so that all voices and opinions can be heard. Involve an expert facilitator if necessary.
 - Set rules to make sure that sexist attitudes and remarks or ridiculing (women's) needs during meetings are avoided.
 - Organise the planning session in a location that is safely accessible, at a time convenient for all. If need be, also organise online consultations with under-represented groups.
- With all stakeholders on board, the action plan can now be designed.

GET SET

Generally, inequalities between women/girls and boys/men can remain invisible in sport. If data are not provided to support claims of inequality, the claims can easily be dismissed. So, the first thing to do is to collect data that demonstrate the existence of inequalities. These data will then serve as a basis for building an action plan.

Data gathering

Data collection is the basis of planning. First gather data that already exist and if needed, collect new/more data on your target groups with a breakdown by sex and by any other relevant variable (age, education level, etc.). If possible and relevant, also include a third gender category (x). Ensure that all statistics include women and men who practise sport outside sports clubs (for example, those who access free-to-use facilities, recreational runners, etc.).



TIP: Publish data regularly and distribute those data to the relevant stakeholders.

■ Gather sex-disaggregated data on different aspects of sport, such as:

- ▶ The number of men/women, girls/boys practising sport.
- ▶ The needs and preferences of women as regards the practice of sport and physical activity throughout their lives (see Factsheet 8).
- ▶ The reasons why women, girls, men and boys stay or drop out of sporting activities and organised or competitive sport.
- ▶ The number of men/women in leadership positions, in coaching (paid and volunteer), acting as referees/officials/judges.
- ▶ Money issues (gender pay gap, prizes).
- ▶ Employment issues (types of employment contract, salaries, non-paid volunteers) (see Factsheet 5).
- ▶ The barriers faced by women and girls or by any disadvantaged group who may face multiple discrimination, in their access to and participation in sports, including elite sports. Identify also the barriers to accessing coaching, management and leadership positions (see Factsheet 5).
- ▶ The prevalence of gender-based violence.



Differences between individuals are an added value to society. Diversity is OK!

However, when a difference leads to an inequality, it is unfair and should be changed. Eliminating gender inequalities is what your action plan should aim for.

■ In some cases, gathering new data to highlight specific gender-related problems will be required.

- ▶ For example, it has not been done before, start gathering sex-disaggregated data on prize money for all competitions and events.
- ▶ Communicate your data requirements to all stakeholders, distribute checklists or provide templates to fill in.
- ▶ Promote and support research on women and girls in sport and in women's sport in particular, including systematic gender analysis.

Data analysis

- ▶ Identify the female/male/x differences in the data.
- ▶ Determine which of these differences are in fact inequalities. For example, the fact that women compete with other women and men with men is not an inequality but based on biological differences that may be appropriate in specific contexts/for specific sports. However, if the prize money in women's football is lower than in men's football for the same competition, that is an inequality.

Define your target groups

Identify two types of target groups:

- ▶ End target groups: girls/women and boys/men (potentially) involved in the sports world.
- ▶ Intermediary target groups: stakeholders you want to work with to attain an outcome beneficial to the end target group (decision makers, coaches, sports federations, sports clubs, media, sponsors, etc.).



TIP: Make sure to highlight under-represented and vulnerable target groups.

- ▶ Make the diversity among women and men visible (by highlighting different age categories, pregnant women, women with disabilities, migrant women, etc.).

For example: a hockey federation wants to increase the number of girls playing hockey. Potential female hockey players are the end target group. Hockey clubs are the intermediary target group. Girls with a migrant or minority background would be a vulnerable target group.

Fix your objectives

Decide what you want to achieve with your action plan in relation to your target group(s). A clear objective defines the positive outcome that you want to reach for a specific target group.

For example: girls (including those with a migrant or minority background) have the opportunity to play hockey and, if willing, to join a competitive team.

Define actions

Translate every objective into concrete actions that describe who does what, when, how, the resources allocated, etc. It helps if you make your actions SMART (Specific, Measurable, Acceptable, Realistic and Time-related).

For example:

- ▶ Organise free hockey events for girls (define who, where, when).
- ▶ Set up a hockey team in a refugee centre and have them join in regular competitions (define who, where, when).
- ▶ Make it obligatory for boys' hockey clubs to set up a girls' team if they want to receive subsidies (define who, where, when).

Your action plan should follow two complementary approaches: gender mainstreaming and positive actions.

Reminder: while positive actions aim to correct existing inequalities and improve the situation of women or disadvantaged target groups, gender mainstreaming takes into account both the women's and men's situations and concerns in a systematic manner by transforming policies and working methods. This in turn will improve everybody's situation while decreasing existing and avoiding new forms of inequality.

Example: to increase girls' participation in hockey, the following specific actions and gender mainstreaming actions can be taken:

- ▶ Positive action: organising a summer camp for girls with a migrant background who want to start playing hockey.
- ▶ Gender mainstreaming: organising a hockey tournament with equal numbers of girls' and boys' games, ensuring the same media attention and prize money for both groups.

GO

Validate the action plan at a political level and/or by the managing authority.

Implementation

- ▶ Brief all stakeholders on your actions and confirm what everybody should do.
- ▶ Appoint/recruit a co-ordinator and ensure that she/he has the necessary skills and knowledge about gender equality.
- ▶ Set up a working group to monitor progress. Make sure the participants in this working group are experienced in gender equality issues, are as close to a gender balance as possible and reflect the diversity of stakeholders.

TIP: You can keep working with the group set up in phase 1 "On your marks".

- ▶ Take quick remedial action to adapt activities if they do not seem to be on track.

Monitoring and evaluation

Choose the indicators that will measure your progress.

- ▶ Indicators can measure an activity (did you do what you set out to do?), but also the impact of an activity (are the beneficiaries happy about the activity? What is the result? Has the number of women/girls increased?).
- ▶ Be clear on what you want to measure to assess progress. For example, if your objective is to tackle gender-based violence, progress may actually be measured by an increase in the number of complaints about violent behaviour.
- ▶ Make sure to use your indicators throughout the whole process, to demonstrate progress.

Gather all data and analyse them in terms of gender equality. This evaluation should contain:

- ▶ the indicators and an assessment of the progress made;
- ▶ identification of the remaining inequalities;
- ▶ recommendations for the next planning round.

Share the results of your actions as widely as possible.



EXAMPLES

INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE GENDER EQUALITY REVIEW PROJECT – ACTION PLAN

Organisation: International Olympic Committee
Target group: Olympic Movement Stakeholders

Example from the Recommendation related to Sport, number 6, under “Coaches” – “Balanced gender representation for coaches selected to participate at the Games”.

► **Actions:** The Working Group recognises the importance of supporting the participation of more female coaches at the Games. The Working Group recommends the IOC coordinates the development of an action plan in collaboration with Olympic Movement stakeholders for more women to be eligible and selected to participate at Olympic Games level. It is also recommended that a baseline for female entourage members at the Olympic Games is established.

► **Timeline:** Project Lead to work with Olympic Solidarity and Sport (Entourage) on an action plan. Initial findings and action recommendations reported to IOC Athletes’ Entourage, Olympic Solidarity and Women in Sport Commissions by December 2018.

Available at:

<https://stillmed.olympic.org/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/News/2018/03/IOC-Gender-Equality-Report-March-2018.pdf>

GENDER SURVEY

Organisation responsible: The Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF)

Country: Norway

Target group: Women in leadership

Content: The NIF has developed a barometer for leadership on boards at different levels. The report is meant to be used by special federations, so they can develop their own projects to achieve gender balance.

A GUIDE TO GENDER MAINSTREAMING FOR LOCAL SPORTS POLICIES

Project leader: Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP)

Country: Spain

Partners: sports and gender equality experts, technical staff of local sports bodies

Project period: 2009

Target groups: Spanish municipalities and provinces

Sports: a wide range of sports

In 2009, aware that sports grounds are among society’s most male-oriented settings, the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces decided to produce a guide to help local sports bodies to take into account gender issues. It aims at describing instances of discrimination in various sports at local level, providing tools to identify such cases and giving advice on the development of public sports policies based on gender and gender equality issues. In the opinion of the project initiators, five aspects need to be taken into account when assessing discriminatory practices: local sports organisations and their structure; sports policies; the presence of women on governing bodies and organisations; budget level and allocation; communication.



For more information on these examples and to find out about other practices and resources, take a look at the ALL IN online library¹.

¹ . <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/gender-equality-in-sport/online-library>

ALL IN: Towards gender balance in sport (Erasmus +)

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