

48TH FIH CONGRESS WOMEN IN SPORT COMMITTEE

5 November 2022

On behalf of the FIH Women in Sports Committee, I am pleased to report on the Committee's activities since our last Congress in May 2021.

The Committee has continued throughout these 18 months to assist the FIH Executive Board in raising awareness about gender equality, inclusion and promotion of diversity in sports practice and governance.

This year, the focus was put on finding opportunities to increase the visibility of this essential cause among diverse stakeholders.

NOVEMBER 2021: EHF webinar: Unveiling the complexities of gender equality

The fourth webinar in the series exploring gender equality within hockey took place online, producing a wide and inspirational range of discussion points and shared experiences.

The panellists were drawn from key people within the European Hockey Federation (EHF) and from an array of hockey backgrounds, all brought together through this joint initiative from the FIH Women in Sports Committee, the EHF and the FIH Academy. This seminar followed a global webinar, where the initiative was introduced, and then two continental webinars focused on gender balance issues within the Pan American Hockey Federation and the African Hockey Federation.

Among the topics discussed were the importance and benefits of gender balance and diversity to an organisation; some of the barriers to equality; examples of good practice; and how to overcome stereotypes.

Among the key pieces of advice to emerge from the lively debate were the necessity of a strong mentoring process and the importance of role models.

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JANUARY 2022: Appointment of a new FIH Women in Sport Committee Secretary

In January, Marianela O'Mahony, FIH Marketing Manager, has joined the team. In her role as Secretary, she has been assisting Marijke and coordinating diverse activities to help the Committee attain its objectives on Women in Sport.

FEBRUARY 2022: SportWorks Online Webinar

SportWorks, in partnership with FIH, organized the Gender Equality in Sport event. It brought together a panel of experts from across the international scene who shared the perspective of their respective international federations.

The discussions were summed up in three key points:

- A change of **culture** is necessary.
- **Education** is the best tool to bring about this change.
- Implementing this change is a **shared responsibility** of society as a whole.

MARCH 2022: FIH Women in Sport Committee Meeting

The first Committee meeting of the year gathered all its members to discuss online about the challenges ahead. The conclusions of the meeting were: Visibility: the importance for women stories to be properly communicated within the region and as further as possible.

More female participation and representation: the importance of giving further opportunities for women to become coaches or commentators.

Education: How can we create opportunities for girls to access their role models?

Athletes: Take advantage of the Women Junior World Cup event to raise awareness of the WiSC (through the Athletes' Committee).

MARCH 2022: ASOIF Gender Equality Survey

The annual survey has been successfully completed.

OCTOBER 2021 – SEPTEMBER 2022: Gender and governance at the FIH – University of Lausanne study

The International Hockey Federation (FIH) has been selected by the University of Lausanne as part of a larger project funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation. This three-year project seeks to understand the role of International Federations in advancing gender equality in governance and leadership.

Among its topline conclusions, it states that the FIH has made significant advances in achieving gender equality on the playing field and improving the gender balance of international hockey. Furthermore, it highlights six ways that the FIH has gone beyond formal policy changes and towards

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wider cultural change within the sport: (1) structural change for gender equality; (2) normalizing gender equality; (3) gender equality as part of the FIH brand; (4) FIH as a thought leader on gender equality; (5) culture of women working together; and (6) the Women in Sport Commission as an effective intervention.

APRIL 2022: FIH Hockey Women's Junior World Cup 2022

We've taken the opportunity of this event to raise awareness of the Committee by handing out a presentation to the participating athletes. We've highlighted the objectives of the Women in Sports Committee and invited these athletes to contact us. We've also taken the chance to do several interviews with young women players referring to the women in sports' cause which were later posted on social media.

JULY 2022: FIH Hockey Women's World Cup Terrassa

The Women in Sports Committee organised a webinar during this important worldwide event to raise awareness of the challenges, and especially the solutions, of women in sports.

It was led by Marijke Fleuren with the participation of a distinguished panel of hockey professionals:

Marijke Fleuren: President of the European Hockey Federation and Chair of the FIH Women in Sport Committee.

Mutsa Bera: Zimbabwe's Captain at the 2022 FIH Hockey Women's Junior World Cup

Mireia Gali Reyes: President of the hockey section – Atlètic Club Terrassa HC

Berta Bonastre: Tournament Director of the 2022 FIH Hockey Women's World Cup and former Spanish international player

Janneke Schopman: Head Coach of India's Women's Team

Adrian Lock: Head Coach of Spain's Women's Team

The conversation evolved around the **solutions** that could be identified for three key challenges that women face in sports: **Leadership barriers, lack of role female models, cultural stigmas.**

Some key take-outs of the discussion included:

- The need to consider gender equality as part of other overarching themes such as inclusion, diversity and sustainability and where men are also part of the discussion.
- The notion that governance is not only about setting rules but about women becoming true role models for others.
- The importance of continuing to ensure visibility for women in sports and offer opportunities to girls and women to speak up.

- The emphasis that should be given to initiating and developing grassroots hockey. Building opportunities for hockey to be seen and played, especially by girls and women.

Streamed live on the FIH Youtube channel, the webinar enjoyed 2.6k views.

SEPTEMBER 2022: FIH Sustainability Strategy

We have been contributing with the “People” section of the FIH Sustainability Strategy by collecting case studies of existing activities around the hockey world in Gender Equality. We have identified Key Performance Indicators for this workstream to drive the strategy forward and set targets for the 2-3 years to come to monitor and report our progress in making hockey increasingly gender equal. The result of our work will be presented at this Congress.

Marijke Fleuren

Chair Women in Sport Committee

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