

GENDER EQUITY TOOLKIT

Gender equity in the organising of Flying Disc Sports tournaments. A Tournament Directors Toolkit.

Produced by the WFDF Women in Sport Commission

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GENDER EQUITY CHECKLIST / QUESTIONS FOR TOC's

- Familiarize yourself with some basic gender equity information. Read the [Primer](#)
- Consider adding a role of [Gender Equity Coordinator or Gender Equity Committee](#) to your list of Key Management Staff (KMS) (outlined in the Tournament Directors Manual)
- Consider [proportional budgeting](#), not equal budgeting
- Ensure [communications](#) and [marketing](#) are inclusive and appropriate for all genders
- Use [site visits](#) to ensure facilities are safe for all involved
- Ensure fair allocation of fields and scheduling during [competition](#)
- Consider [venue facilities](#) take into account different needs and circumstances of gender
- Organise a [gender equity workshop](#) (if feasible)
- Have [safeguarding](#) policies against harassment and abuse

PREFACE

Gender equity is a global topic across all realms of our lives, including in sport and Flying Disc Sports.

You may have heard of the terms “gender equality” and “gender equity”, but ...

- What are they and what are their differences?
- Why is this important to sport and Flying Disc Sports?
- Why is gender equity needed for hosting events?
- What needs to be considered?

This Tournament Directors Toolkit (“TDT”) provides Tournament Organising Committees (“TOCs”) with some information about gender equity, and some ideas / strategies for consideration in order to stage events that are *more* gender equitable.

Many of the suggestions are posed as questions. They are ideas for TOCs to consider, but are not intended to be mandatory. It would though, be *ideal* to have them.

Achieving gender equity in Flying Disc Sports will take time and patience. Taking a step-by-step process to start thinking about what it means and initiating the conversations within your community, then, implementing a deliberate and actionable strategy to promote gender equity goes a long way to achieving the goal. Also, don’t hesitate to contact the Women in Sport Commission with questions or resources.

This toolkit supplements the Tournament Directors Manual (“TDM”), which gives more guidelines on the overall organizing of a major WFDF event. This toolkit should be used *in conjunction* with TDM, so please refer to both.

This TDT does not attempt to cover in detail every aspect of gender equity as this is a complicated topic and around the world there is no single approach. Local customs, culture, events and business practices must be considered.

This document is a working document, which may be updated over time.

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PRIMER ON GENDER EQUITY

What are gender equity and gender equality?

Gender equality entails *equal* rights, visibility, empowerment, and participation of all genders. It implies equal access to and distribution of resources and opportunities to all genders. It assumes the treatment of everyone the same, but does not take into account that individuals have different backgrounds, contexts, needs, capacities, abilities, interests, resources and such.

In the context of sport, gender equality ignores the fact that historical underrepresentation of women in sport has resulted in women -- generally -- starting from a lower foundation.

On the other hand, gender equity is the process of giving *fair treatment* to all individuals based on their needs, interests, experiences, irrespective of gender. When there is equity, all individuals receive the support they need to be on an equal platform. It is therefore crucial to achieve equity before achieving equality, because equity will lead to equality.

To sum, "Equality focuses on creating the same starting line for everyone. Equity has the goal of providing everyone with the full range of opportunities and benefits – the same finish line."¹

All genders benefit from gender equity, and is important across all domains and global communities, be it in politics, business and economics, technology, sciences, including sport. Gender equity is not a term du jour. It is not simply about social justice and treating everyone with dignity and respect, but is an economic and political opportunity for all.

VC Ultimate has a resource that you can additionally read:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B8cl17rKPXBsZnZwT1o5aFF6OUNOcDdKNHZqOU9VYkREQ3Vz/view>

What is gender (versus sex)?

Biologically, humans are *usually* born male or female, i.e., born with female or male genitalia, and at birth, are assigned a sex based on their biology. In some instances (less than 2% of births globally), there are individuals who are born intersex (have both female and male genitalia).

Sex frequently determines gender (e.g., those born with male genitalia are determined to be men), however, some individuals do not identify with their assigned gender. Please refer to WFDF guidelines on transgender athletes.²

¹ "What is Gender Equity?" -- CAAWS, <https://www.caaws.ca/gender-equity-101/what-is-gender-equity/>

² WFDF Transgender Policy Proposal 2016:

http://www.wfdf.org/files/WFDF_Transgender_Policy_FINAL_with_Explanation_for_web_F.pdf

Gender is a social construct where certain behaviours, appearances, attitudes and roles have been imposed and are expected of men and women. Throughout history, constructed gender roles have influenced the opportunities of men and women in all spheres of life -- including in sport -- resulting in differences in access to opportunities and resources, certain stereotypes, bias and preconceived notions and ideals of men and women.

What does gender equity in sport mean?

Sport has always been stereotyped and inequalities remain entrenched in both overt and subtle ways.

Women and men have different needs, expectations and circumstances when it comes to sport. Gender equity in sport means acknowledging there have been historical contexts and differences, and approaching all aspects of organising sports fairly to give individuals and groups the support and opportunities necessary to help them be successful.

In terms of organising sports, it could mean addressing:

- Access to and participation for all genders at all levels and in all areas of sports
- Access to responsibilities and decision-making roles for teams, clubs, competitions
- Access to resources (financial and non-financial) and facilities
- Publicity and media coverage
- Sexism and gender-based violence such as harassment and abuse

Providing an environment in which all who participate can feel safe, free and equal is necessary to achieving a gender equitable outcome.

Why is gender equity in disc sport necessary?

Gender equity in Flying Disc Sports is necessary to be in line with overall developments in global sports. Other reasons include:

- Gender equality and diversity are strategic goals³ of WFDF; inclusiveness is a value.
- Consideration of Flying Disc Sports to be included in the Olympics.
- Narrowing the participation gap by gender.
 - A 2017 WFDF survey showed 87% of respondents said men dominate everything in terms of gender relationships in gender mixed sports
 - Approximately two out of three Flying Disc players in the world are men. The number of female players increased from 29.2% to 33.9% between 2014 to 2019

³ WFDF 2019 - 2024 Strategic Plan: <http://www.wfdf.org/news-media/news/press/2-official-communication/922-wfdf-announces-strategic-plan-for-2019-2024>

- Economic contribution to teams, clubs and competitions. Having increased participation by gender can result in more event fees, investment and sponsorships, media coverage and more.
- Being representative of country demographics. In many countries, women and girls are approximately 50-50 of the population but are under represented in participation in sport.
- Better performance in terms of organisation and administration of clubs and teams, as it has been shown that diversity of perspectives can lead to improved decisions, mutual understanding, and higher rates of collaboration and motivation.
- The reality that women are increasingly expressing interest in involving themselves across all the various roles associated with Flying Disc Sports: as athletes, coaches, spectators, commentators, managers, sponsors and more

Why is gender equity important for organising tournaments?

Gender equity in tournament organisation goes beyond simply reviewing gender ratio and giving equal playtime by gender ratio.

It touches on all areas of consideration in tournament organisation (outlined in TDM):

- TOC organising team
- Commercial
- Public relations and marketing
- Administration and athlete services
- Competition
- Venue facilities
- Logistics and operations
- Protocol

The organizing of tournaments should give all involved a positive experience and extends far beyond looking after athletes who play the sport, but also considering tournament staff and volunteers, and those who spectate*.

** After all, many TOC staff members and volunteers play Flying Disc Sports or have family and friends who play. Many athletes start from a young age and go on to coach or come back to spectate. Athletes can be fathers and mothers. The needs and expectations change over time based on individuals' roles and involvement in Flying Disc Sports.*

Language use of Gender Equity

Around the world, gender remains a sensitive topic. There has been debate about the use of “womxn” (in English) and equivalent (other languages) to be inclusive of transgender women and non-binary women, as well as using gender-neutral nouns, pronouns and verbs such as they / them / their.

Use language that is inclusive and gender sensitive. Refrain from using words or phrases that *only* refer to his / him / he especially when there are other genders involved. An example in the Players’ Briefing Book.

Compare this phrase:

- “Each athlete can collect his player’s pack at the registration desk” to
- “Player packs can be collected at the registration desk” or
- “Athletes can collect their player pack at the registration desk.”

The second phrase does not allude to gender and the third phrase does not allude to athletes being only men. The last two phrases are preferable.

In some locations with the inclusion of transgender athletes there has also been the consideration of not using terms such as “you guys” or “you ladies / girls.”

ORGANISATION AND PERSONNEL

Consider including a position of Gender Equity Coordinator or creating a Gender Equity Committee. The role of Gender Equity Coordinator could also be included within an existing committee with a compatible mandate e.g. Spirit of the Game committee. This individual or committee should have a direct line of communication to the tournament director as well as relevant WFDF committees and staff present at the event.

Suggested responsibilities this person or committee would have:

- Develop the strategy and vision statement on gender equity
- Outline objectives of what TOC wants to accomplish in terms of gender equity.
- Keep statistics on women’s participation (players, coaches, managers, advisers, spectators etc.) if available.
- Gender equity training as needed
- Ensure all aspects of tournament planning and the treatment of all are as gender equitable as possible. This could include:
 - Outlining acceptable and unacceptable behaviour
 - Imagery and media guidelines to ensure communications are free from gender stereotypes, biases or discrimination

- Safeguarding policies
- Handling complaints against harassment and abuse
- Receiving feedback and suggestions

Because TOCs operate in different countries where progress in gender equity differs, it's important to have a plan and strategy that is appropriate for your country's context. A strategy that works in Country A may not work in Country B.

TOC should in no way ever discriminate against a person due to gender. It is not only preferred that the KMS be split 50:50 by gender, but to consider:

- Gender make-up of the roles
- All genders are consulted and heard
- Decision-making includes the voices of all genders. For example:
 - A tournament schedule is not decided upon only by one gender group
 - If there is voting, the process and procedures should be gender inclusive

In some countries, TOCs may find it difficult to achieve 50:50 men to women staff. Research has indicated that women are less likely to apply for certain positions if they do not feel they can meet 100% of the job description⁴, and they are less likely to step up to take on leadership positions. Some questions to consider in the recruitment of Key Management Staff (KMS):

- What are your recruitment channels?
- Are candidates nominated or invited or do they need to apply?
- Are job descriptions inclusive and free of biases?
- Are specific actions being taken to attract women?
- What is the working culture of the TOC?
- Is there training for the various roles?
- What are the rules and processes for decision-making?

To attract female staff consider a mentoring program for interested women so that they understand the duties of staff roles, gain more confidence in being able to fulfil the roles, and will apply when an opportunity arises.

COMMERCIAL

Consider allocating budgets and resources relative to the needs of the various genders and divisions to achieve a more balanced outcome by gender and division.

⁴ Harvard Business Review, Why Women Don't Apply for Jobs Unless They're 100% Qualified, 2014, <https://hbr.org/2014/08/why-women-dont-apply-for-jobs-unless-theyre-100-qualified>

Example:

Historically, the open's division has garnered more attention (measured by viewership) than the mixed and women's division. To attract the same amount of attention for the mixed and women's division as for open's division, TOCs may need to allocate more budget and resources for media campaigns to publicize the mixed and women's division.

Suggestion:

Consider allocating a part of the budget specifically for women's and girls' division, such as clinics, workshops, leadership training, coaching and such. This could be beneficial in places where there is an especially wide participation gap in Flying Disc Sports by gender.

Sponsorship:

Approach potential sponsors being clear that gender equity is important in Flying Disc Sports and seek those who are in alignment.

- Communications with sponsors should be free from gender stereotyping and biases (see below section on Public Relations and Marketing).
- Sponsors of WFDF sanctioned events should be aware their sponsorship supports all genders and divisions (i.e. not gender or division specific).

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING

Research shows, globally, women make up 40% of sports participation, but only 4% of sports media coverage⁵. When promoting and marketing Flying Disc Sports events, it is crucial to promote *all* divisions and *all* genders. Promote the athletes / teams / divisions in a balanced way that does not perpetuate stereotypes or sexualise athletes. This includes:

- Written (such as press releases, newspaper and magazines)
- Verbal (such as radio interviews, podcasts)
- Visual (such as event logo, videos and photos)

Examples:

If men are portrayed for their ability to run fast and jump high, portray women in the same way. Event logo should be free of reference to gender and sexual innuendos.

⁵ Tucker Centre, 2014, Media Coverage & Female Athletes
<https://www.cehd.umn.edu/tuckercenter/projects/mediacoverage.html>

Resource:

The International Olympic Committee has some [portrayal guidelines](#) that you can refer to.

Women have also tended to be covered / broadcasted at time slots that garner less attention. Another piece of research indicated that less than 10% of sports-news is written by female journalists⁶. The world is paying more attention to women's sport and viewership of women's sports (by all genders) has been increasing. Now is an opportune moment to raise the visibility of women in Flying Disc Sports.

TOCs should have a communications strategy dedicated to raising the profile and visibility of female athletes in Flying Disc Sports, with stories and images of the individuals and teams, *and* written by women.

- However, it is important not to:
 - Make comparisons between genders, such as “she throws like a women” or
 - Use gender-qualifying terms such as a “*female* disc sport athlete” -- all disc sport players are athletes regardless of gender.
- It is acceptable to refer to the division they play in.
- Avoid gendered descriptions such as girly / manly / feminine / masculine.
- Where feasible, organise a gender equity training / workshop for media

Social media and website:

- Ensure you use photos of all genders and divisions
- Schedule content for all genders and divisions
- Design a strategy such that all genders and divisions are given fair opportunity to be seen. For example, in website design, consider the use of carousel sliders for images and photos and alternate post schedules.
- Any hashtags used should be appropriate for all genders.

ADMINISTRATION AND ATHLETE SERVICES

The official working language of WFDF is English and the local language will also be used as necessary. The meaning and choice of words are important to be mindful of; any communication in the local language should take into account the cultural context of gender.

Site visits should assess if the facilities are sufficient and inclusive for all genders. Some questions for TOCs to include:

- Toilet and changing room facilities
 - Are there facilities that are inclusive for various gender identities?

⁶ International Sports Press Survey 2011

- Are there facilities for lactating mothers*?
- Are there baby-changing stations*?
- What are the sanitation standards?
- Are there more toilets for women than for men?
- Child care services*
 - Are there services / facilities at the venue (or nearby) that are accessible?
 - If there aren't readily available services / facilities, is it possible to arrange?
- Lighting in and around venue
 - Especially when it gets dark, is there sufficient light?
 - Does the lighting extend to the periphery / outskirts of the venue?
- Location of the venue
 - How far is the venue from city centres or transportation links?
 - Is it easily accessible by transportation?
 - What is the surrounding neighbourhood? Is it safe?
- Transportation links
 - Do they require a long walk?
 - Is the transportation frequent and adequate?
- Parking
 - Can there be designated spots closer to playing fields and the main tournament area for pregnant or disabled staff and spectators?
- Camping
 - If there is camping, can there be men-only, unisex and women-only areas?

* Tip: Ask teams if there will be babies / children in the tournament. TOCs can also survey needs and accommodate to the extent it's practical (e.g., children's camps or activities).

Include in the Players Briefing Book:

- Clear and practical information on any gender-specific policies TOC have.
- Set expectations for all athletes to be inclusive and prevent any form of gender based sexism or violence.
- Communicate what is acceptable and not acceptable behaviour and language.
- Inform all athletes what are consequences if not followed.
- Provide tips on precautionary measures for all at all times. For example:
 - Travel in groups or have a buddy system, especially at night
 - Teammates inform each other and coaches what plans are outside of games
 - Check-in system / curfew (for younger players)
 - Use tournament transportation or designated providers as much as possible
- Include contact details for any complaints and how to proceed.

COMPETITION

Showcase games

- Games should encompass all divisions.
- Take into account the signalling effect of scheduling.
 - In many events historically, the open's division has been allocated the most visible time slot.
 - TOCs may consider alternating the schedule.

Fields and playing schedule

Allocate time slots and fields fairly across all divisions:

- Access to the “best quality” or “most visible” field and times
- Access to toilets and changing room facilities and tournament central

Streaming and commentating

- Ensure all divisions are equally streamed and commentated.
- Fairly distribute the streaming schedule by divisions.
- If there is more than 1 commentator, have gender representation from all genders. Ensure commentators are trained as to what is appropriate and acceptable language, what is gender sensitive and how to avoid comparisons by gender.
 - Be aware to be gender sensitive
 - Avoid comparisons by gender.
 - If coaches or players are interviewed at half time, or there is a pre- and post- event press conference, ensure representation of all genders.

If athletes are rewarded, ensure equal prizes and awards for all divisions.

VENUE FACILITIES

Not only should there be sufficient toilets, cleanliness, and proximity to fields but there should be consideration for gender specific needs.

Consider having toilets and changing rooms that are inclusive of all genders, or certain stations that are unisex, and or private / standalone / single.

- Women often need longer to use the toilet; so there should be more toilets for women?⁷
- If toilets are unisex or portable toilets, is there both a urinal and toilet bowl?

⁷ <https://time.com/3653871/womens-bathroom-lines-sexist-potty-parity>

Toilets and changing room facilities are typically indicated with images of men and women. TOCs may consider gender inclusive signage (for example, imagery for men, women and transgender).

Sufficient toiletries such as paper are mandatory, as are soap, bins for menstrual products and waste, and the ability to purchase sanitation and menstrual products.

Particularly at events where TOCs expect mothers to join (as athletes or spectators), consider the availability of clean lactation rooms.

- If not, can TOCs provide a designated tent / space that is spacious and private?

Many athletes bring young children.

- Are there baby-changing facilities, or family-suitable toilets?
- Are baby-changing facilities available for all genders to use?

Medical services

- Include both male and female medical staff, physiotherapists, chiropractors etc.
- Medical facilities should be safe for all genders, including access to privacy for treatment as needed.

SAFEGUARDING AGAINST HARASSMENT, ABUSE AND VIOLENCE

It is mandatory to create an environment where all participants can play sports, all tournament staff and volunteers can work, and all spectators can watch games comfortably and freely.

TOC -- and specifically the gender equity coordinator or committee -- can set up procedures to mitigate any form of harassment, abuse or violence.

- In the event of such situations, there should be reporting and oversight mechanisms in place. For example:
 - Handling reports or complaints
 - Investigation and review procedures
 - Setting up a judiciary or disciplinary committee, and any consequences or punishment.

Suggestion:

TOCs can consider setting up a post-event process to understand if participants and staff felt the tournament treated all genders fairly. Any feedback can also be used as learning opportunities for the future. Current TOCs can then use any information to help set up a strong foundation and precedence for future TOCs to further gender equity in disc sport events and share ideas with WFDF.

PROTOCOL

Event ceremonies

- Flag bearers should include all genders (especially as additional bearers are allowed).
- There should ideally be at least two Masters of Ceremonies, with representation from all genders.

Closing ceremony

- Often, the open's division receive their awards last, signalling and giving a perception this is the most important division.
 - TOCs can consider alternating the presentation schedule.
- Volunteers and medal presenters should include representatives of all genders for all roles (for example, avoid having only women be medal bearers and men present medals).

Social events

While socials and parties are a fantastic opportunity for athletes and staff to meet and mingle, they need to be in a fun, safe environment for all genders to interact with each other.

Gender equity workshops

At the 2018 WUCC and 2019 AOUGC Championships, TOCs organised workshops for all interested in learning more about gender equity and how to transform Flying Disc Sports into being more gender equitable. For the organizing of any future Flying Disc Sports events, while not mandatory, TOCs can also consider hosting similar topics. Such workshops and events can be helpful for delegates to learn from each other, share perspectives and ideas as well as take charge to lead the gender movement in their prospective countries.

WFDF Women in Sport Workshop hosted at AOUGC 2019

The WFDF Women in Sport Commission held its first ever regional workshop at the Asian-Oceanic Ultimate and Guts Championship (AOUGC 2019) in Shanghai on July 25, 2019. The event was well attended with 50 attendees from 13 regional countries, with men making up a third of the group.

The aim of the workshop was to help people understand the importance of gender equality and equity in Disc Sports, so that they can help develop their communities back home.

"This session was a good realisation of where we are now and what we have accomplished, said Map Pangilian, Team Captain Philippines Women's Team. "I know there is a lot of work to be done

still. But we are making progress in terms of building female leaders, creating opportunity for more females to be active in these sports and to build a culture that is highly encouraging for males and females alike. And it makes me really proud."



Photo credit: [Philippine Ultiverse](#)

END NOTE

To complete the Gender Equity Quiz go to <https://tinyurl.com/qrl28py>

If you would like to comment, contribute or contact the World Flying Disc Federation Women in Sport Commission please e-mail womeninsport@wfdf.sport



The World Flying Disc Federation is the international sports federation responsible for world governance of flying disc (frisbee) sports, including Ultimate, Beach Ultimate, Disc Golf, Guts, and Individual Events. WFDF is a federation of member associations that represent flying disc sports and their athletes in more than 88 countries. WFDF is an international federation recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), and the International University Sports Federation (FISU), a member of the Global Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF), the Association of IOC Recognised International Sports Federations (ARISF), the International World Games Association (IWGA), and the International Masters Games Association (IMGA), and it is a registered not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation in the state of Colorado, USA.



“We must raise both the ceiling and the floor.” - Sheryl Sandberg

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