



# **IMMAF**

## **MMA FOR ALL EVENT LEGACY POLICY**

**CAPITALISING ON INTERNATIONAL  
IMMAF CHAMPIONSHIPS TO INITIATE  
LEGACY FOR HARNESSING MIXED  
MARTIAL ARTS AS A SOCIAL TOOL  
FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH &  
WELLBEING, WORLDWIDE.**

**2021**

# **“EVENT LEGACY” WHAT DOES THIS MEAN AND WHY?**

## **WHAT**

**The implementation of legacy projects are essential for host nations of IMMAF championships as community projects, aims and budgeting for initiatives become a part of the IMMAF event bidding process. The creation of championship legacies will require the coming together of the IMMAF member services and events teams, and host nation organisers, complete with their national membership base and partner organizations, to support and build upon legacy initiatives that show how MMA is making a specific long-term impact with tangible benefits to the country beyond the organization of events.**

## **WHY**

**With much of our focus towards the development of amateur MMA, athletes, coaches and events, it is easy to think that our responsibility stops there. This is not the case, as we see globally within our counterparts, such as soccer, basketball or karate, our responsibility is to harness the stewardship we have of MMA as a sport towards build nations and impacting communities. This is what it means to be a recognized sport body.**



# OUR VISION

A real sport has the potential to be accessible to all, demonstrate **social impact** and prove itself at the **community level**. MMA as a fast-growing sport can encourage a healthy and positive lifestyle and we want communities around the world and in all member nations, regardless of age, gender, background or ability, to be engaged within the legacy of IMMAF events and see the sport of MMA as an opportunity for enjoyable physical activity, open to all and capable of adapting for different needs.

Alongside our host nations the IMMAF wants to set an inspirational legacy by enabling widespread options for engagement in MMA as an accessible sport for all. Legacy goes beyond elite level competition and reaches out to share experiences and impact new people. Our sport can reach outside of its internal bubble to affect lives and become a force for **social good**, worldwide.



Kerrith Brown,  
IMMAF President

# EXAMPLE AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Working together, legacy can demonstrate the value of MMA as a community tool, focussing on examples for instigating change within areas of:

- **INACTIVITY**
- **YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**
- **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**
- **THE ENVIRONMENT**
- **EQUALITY & OPPORTUNITY**

**“OUR LEGACY MUST  
INTRODUCE MMA  
TO NEW PEOPLE”**

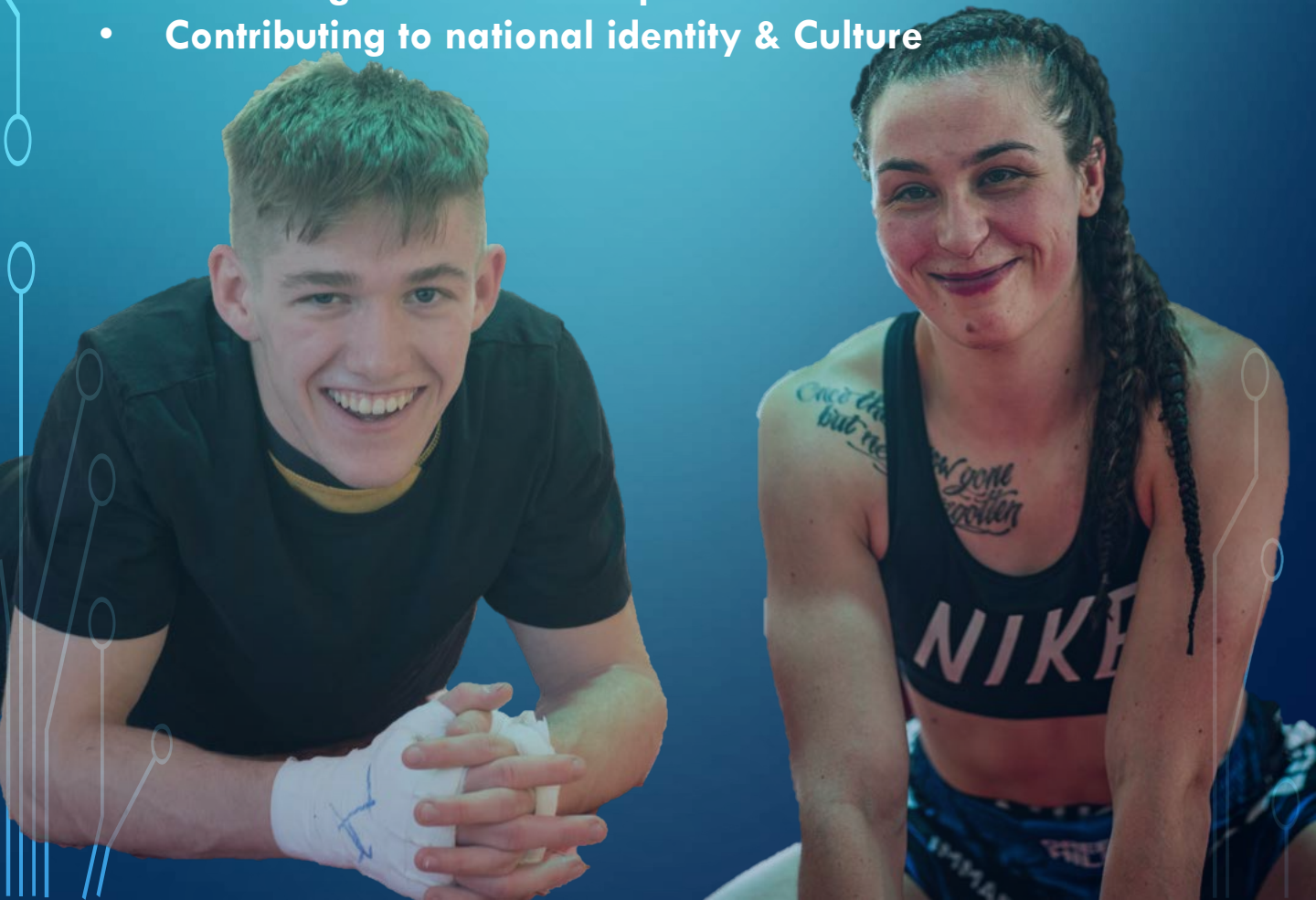




# LEGACY OUTCOMES

Legacy projects will be an essential part of the bidding process for nations to host IMMAF championships. Drawing upon historic sport legacy examples and shared interests of world governments; the IMMAF, its members and host nations must use the championships platform to showcase how the sport of MMA can reach new people and be utilized as a **tool for public community outcomes** at a national level, in ways such as the following:

- Improving physical and mental health of individuals
- Enabling personal development
- Enabling collective social and community development
- Increasing environmental protection and awareness
- Contributing to national identity & Culture



## INACTIVITY

International reports show that governments are concerned with the millions of individuals classed as “inactive”. This raises global health concerns for future generations and proves the need for creative community outreach. Many people drop in and out of sport and face a broad range of barriers to being more physically active and healthy. These barriers can be both emotional and practical. Engagement in MMA through easy and welcoming means should be considered in demonstrating MMA as a social tool. The impact of enjoyable and physical activity will have great effect within people’s lives.

## YOUTH & FAMILY

Family involvement should be encouraged. Studies show that exposure to diverse enjoyable sport from a young age can result in sustained physical activity in later life. An introduction of MMA to children as young as five can be a fun and beneficial source of an active life while also bringing families together. Working with children demonstrates MMA as a positive recreational activity and through young participants will engage the interest of parents, bringing families closer together and growing MMA as a family sport.

Various programs around the world have seen MMA enter the education sector and cater to young individuals under suitable specifications.

## EQUALITY & OPPORTUNITY

Benefiting individuals must be at the heart of legacy and our action. It is important to understand issues within communities and social groups, particularly within areas of low income, inequality, ethnic minorities and other hurdles which under-represented groups, families, adults, and youth face in reaching an active life with MMA.



**IMMAF's global membership has great potential as a collective, but also a social responsibility to use sport and MMA to make a real impact. While disparity of resources exists amongst nations, and as we bounce back together from the global pandemic, our legacy projects will see IMMAF work with host nations to outline **tailored action** based on each region's **unique situation and needs**.**



Densign White,  
IMMAF CEO

# INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLES

**FIFA Women's World Cup Legacy – development of women in sport (India):**

**<https://www.news18.com/news/football/sneak-peek-into-fifas-legacy-projects-ahead-of-u-17-womens-world-cup-in-india-2506493.html>**

**Youth to Benefit from World Cup legacy projects – HIV education and opportunity for low-income communities (Africa):**

**<https://sports.ndtv.com/football/videos/youth-to-benefit-from-world-cup-legacy-projects-147096>**

**Olympic legacy, historic examples:**

**<https://www.olympic.org/olympic-legacy>**

**Nike Pro Hijab Donations Helps Wrestling Grow in New York City: <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Wrestling/Features/2019/August/29/Nike-Hijab-donation-grows-wrestling-in-NYC>**

**Recycling and waste reduction; How the Sports Industry is Playing Ball with the Planet: <https://eco-age.com/magazine/how-sports-industry-playing-ball-planet/>**



# POSITIVE HABITS FOR LEGACY & DEVELOPMENT

## LEGACY ENGAGEMENT:

- Reach out to inactive people and new participants.
- Promote positivity and peace among young people.
- Create a diverse team of volunteers.
- Promote inclusion for different needs with a clear route to taking part in MMA.

## MAKING AND IMPACT:

- Make your decisions based on the communicated needs of those you wish engage
- Improve your standards of good governance
- Be efficient with your energy and finances
- Consider diverse revenue generation and new partners
- Create leadership with diverse knowledge and experts

A woman with braided hair, wearing a dark blue MMA jersey with white stripes on the sleeve, is shown in profile, looking towards the left. The background is blurred, showing other people in a similar setting. The entire image has a teal overlay with white circuit-like lines on the left and right sides.

# LOCAL COLLABORATION

Within each host nation is a National Federation with a **knowledgeable team** and membership network of local gyms and **leaders**. Legacy must inspire collaboration in order to **penetrate communities** while **sharing innovation** and approaches of best practise.

While money can be hard to come by in the world of non-profit sport, dedicated members and **volunteers** serve as a core enabler for sport organisations. Consider how volunteering within MMA can **benefit the individual** as a life-style choice that brings reward and fulfilment. Pay close consideration to the motivations and needs of your volunteers, long-term and short-term.

Means of development will be subject to the **context and culture** in which it takes place, such as **urban vs rural**, high income and low income, communities where children and adults live and work will be a significant factor in their choices and **ability to access MMA**. Communities face a spectrum of differing issues within each nation and should be listened to from the bottom-up. Member gyms will be vital to sustaining long-term legacy in providing and understanding local opportunities.



# TRACK AND PROMOTE YOUR RESULTS

Addressing the previously mentioned aspects will present significant **fulfilment and growth** for the sport of MMA demonstrating its legacy and place in the sport community. The impact of physical activity has great effect within people's lives and as a result can provide significant data of improvements that MMA federations can present.

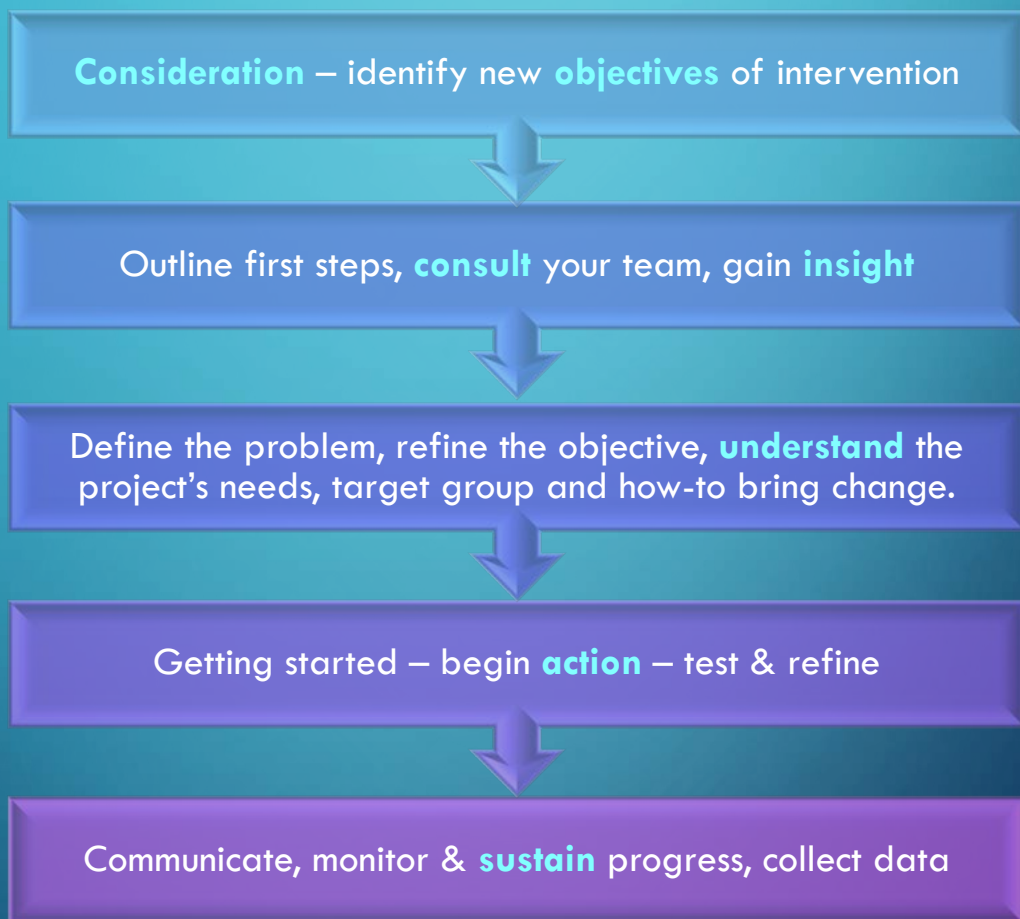
Presenting **data** and performance indicators towards a **greater outcome** will **highlight MMA's worth to the local community** and economy, raising the interest of government, investors and partners.

# A MODEL FOR NEW ACTION

CONSIDERATION – CONSULT – UNDERSTAND – ACTION – SUSTAIN

The below model for new action features six stages of initiating projects which can define MMA's future and legacy within communities.

Project leaders can move between stages when necessary. Be patient, consider the need for a long-term and sustained approach. Make sure to document progress as you advance. Set clear Objectives that can be served well through insight and detailed evaluation.



The MMA For All Legacy will expand on our attention to govern and care for participants already within the sport, to also understanding how communities overall can be reached and engaged by the sport of MMA. This will bring valuable research and data from which a true grass roots expansion of MMA can flourish.



# **PRINCIPLES OF LEGACY: EVALUATION, REACH OUT TO NEW PEOPLE & UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS, IDENTIFY RESOURCES, REVIEW**

**Investment in legacy is not always financial. For many contributors and national federations, investment will be in the form of volunteered time and capable expert knowledge with a view to showing how hard work and dedication can change the landscape of MMA in the community. This leadership will give confidence to potential investors that MMA can work with the sport sector and that it is worthy of investment from government, charities, philanthropists and new partners.**

**Whether it be through dedicated finances or a volunteered effort, your investment should consider the following principles for investment when using the New Action Model.**



## EVALUATION

**Establish a clear focus and how it contributes to your target outcome within an area such as physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development or social and community development. What are the key performance indicators (KPIs)? Evaluation will help to make a difference in wider outcomes, as well as measuring increased engagement.**

## UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS

**Evaluate, understand and prioritise groups faced with the most barriers, such as low-income families, women, ethnic minorities or the disabled. Distribution of investment must determine a manageable split that sustains the sport's current participants and those who are already active, while looking towards those who require encouragement to be involved.**

## IDENTIFY RESOURCES

**A community project does not always require financial aid in order to begin. Consider your assets and supporters, federation gyms and coaches are essential and can provide volunteer time and facilities, in addition to enquiring to make use of community leisure facilities.**

## FACILITIES

**The world's "fastest growing sport" needs to be accessible for people and can demonstrate this across a multitude of settings. In addition to gyms, consider making use of current public investments such as leisure centres, schools, and even parks and outdoor spaces to promote appreciation of the environment around us. Would certain settings benefit certain people more than others, in terms of comfort, familiarity, travel or ease of access?**

## REVIEW

**Review your investment projects frequently. Consider increasing investment in progressing and analyse areas of low performance for consideration of reduced investment or terminated if critically failing (but do not give up, return to the model for new action and evaluate new strategy).**



# INDICATORS OF PROGRESS TOWARDS LEGACY OBJECTIVES

- **Objective:** Increase the volume of youth age 5-15, from low-income households, engaging in sport/MMA.

**Progress indicator:** Statistics of young participants engaging in more physical activity than in their previous daily routine.

**Progress indicator:** A recognised growth in youth engaging in MMA as a source of enjoyment.

- **Objective:** Sourcing diverse volunteers

**Progress Indicator:** Overall increase of volunteers on record.

**Progress Indicator:** Volunteers from contrasting backgrounds and experience, representative of the community.

- **Objective:** Easy access to fun physical activity in MMA

**Progress Indicator:** Increased activity in alternative locations: indoor/outdoor, the gym, park, schools, at home or online.

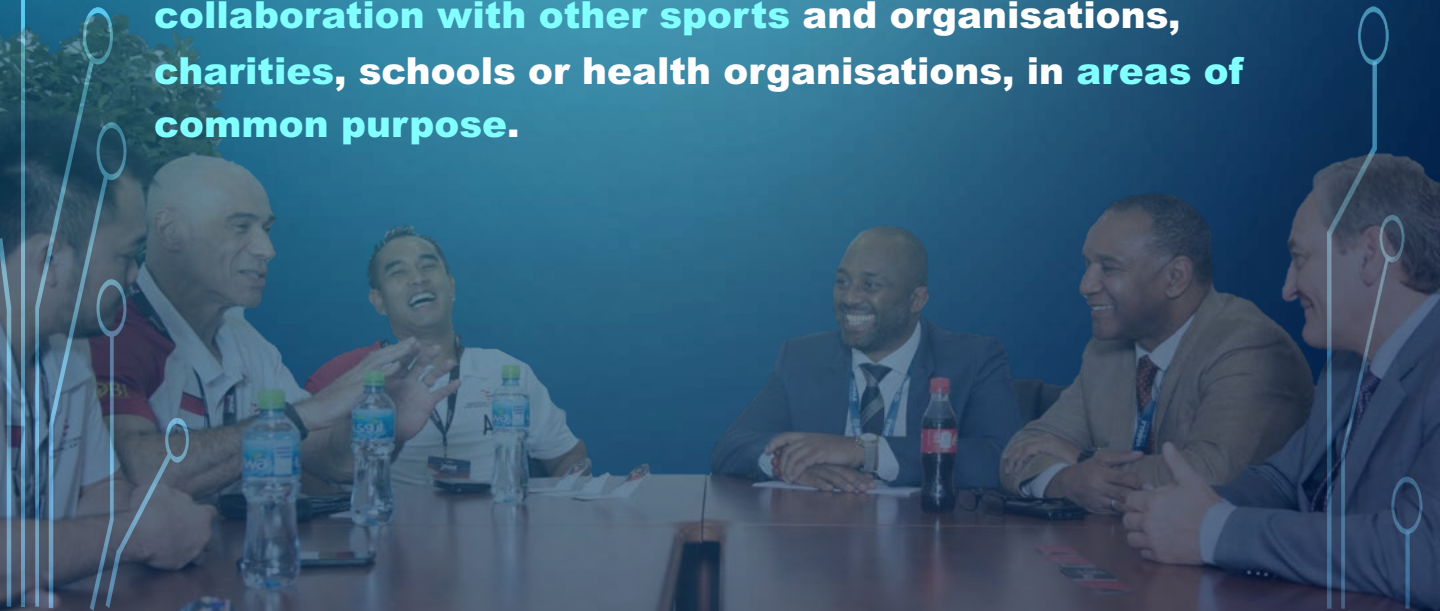
**Progress Indicator:** Identify use of activity locations and low-cost opportunity tailored for different groups.

# IMPRESS YOUR GOVERNMENT – HOST NATIONS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Opportunity for effective community work is widely recognised and welcomed in different ways by governments around the world.

While initial recognition of national governing bodies may focus on internal sport governance and structure, governments make it clear that **greater support will significantly depend on the governing body's contribution to designated national outcomes**. It's not about what you are, but what you can do for your country and what legacy will remain. In addition to this document, host nations should **research your government's national sport strategy** and review areas you believe MMA can contribute towards.

Governments are enthusiastic to consider **new and innovative ways with which to bring positivity to the nation**. MMA is a fast-growing beast within the sport sector with significant power in appealing to youth. This is an early advantage in achieving government attention and local grants. Consider how you can help to solve community problems in ways that are different to the core business of the federation and **consider collaboration with other sports and organisations, charities, schools or health organisations, in areas of common purpose**.







## **IMPRESS YOUR GOVERNMENT - OUR LEGACY CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

**Assume that your government will be interested to review the effectiveness of your legacy in relation to efficiently meeting universal national outcomes. It will be important to collect relevant data, stats and insight. Try to avoid approaching governments with an empty box and cap-in-hand. If correct planning is in place and volunteers are ready, do not be afraid to begin work and make independent progress.**

**Remember, basic standards of governance and transparency will be required to receive recognition of results and funding, and so these foundation standards must not be overlooked. Make sure to review your national governance code or consult IMMAF guidelines for good governance.**