



Introduction

The International Mixed Martial Arts Federation (IMMAF) is committed to promoting gender equality and addressing the barriers that prevent women and girls from fully participating in mixed martial arts (MMA). Building on the insights from the "Engaging Women and Girls in MMA" guide and the ongoing work of the Women's Commission, this policy outlines IMMAF's approach to fostering an inclusive and empowering environment.

Aims

IMMAF aims to:

- **Ensure gender balance** in leadership, decision-making roles, and representation across the organisation.
 - **Promote inclusive environments** that actively encourage women and girls to participate and excel in MMA.
 - **Remove barriers to entry** by addressing cultural, practical, and social challenges.
 - **Foster a culture of respect** where all individuals, regardless of gender, are equally valued.
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Commitments

IMMAF commits to:

1. **Measurable Gender Equality Targets**
 - Set clear, measurable goals for female representation in leadership, coaching, and athlete participation.
 - Regularly review progress and publish updates in annual reports.
2. **Inclusive Training Environments**
 - Encourage MMA gyms and clubs to offer:
 - Women-only sessions to build comfort and confidence.
 - Increased recruitment and development of female coaches.
 - Sportswear options that accommodate cultural or religious preferences.
3. **Safety and Mental Health Support**
 - Provide confidential mechanisms to report gender-based discrimination and harassment.

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- Promote mental health resources tailored to the needs of women and girls in combat sports.
 - Collaborate with experts to introduce trauma-informed coaching practices.
4. **Mentorship and Networking**
- Establish a mentorship programme pairing experienced female athletes, coaches, and leaders with aspiring participants.
 - Develop an IMMAF Women's Network to connect and empower women in MMA globally.
5. **Recognition and Visibility**
- Highlight the achievements of women in MMA through campaigns, media, and events.
 - Create awards to celebrate outstanding contributions by women in the sport.
6. **Inclusive Event Management**
- Ensure IMMAF events include gender-balanced participation and representation.
 - Actively showcase female athletes, coaches, and leaders in panel discussions, workshops, and media coverage.
7. **Support for Female Coaches and Leaders**
- Provide leadership development programmes and training opportunities for women.
 - Offer resources to support the career progression of female coaches.
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Objectives

IMMAF will:

1. **Encourage Equal Participation:** Work with national federations, gyms, and stakeholders to promote opportunities for women and girls in MMA.
 2. **Raise Awareness:** Use campaigns and events to challenge stereotypes and celebrate women's achievements in MMA.
 3. **Address Barriers:** Actively tackle cultural perceptions, safety concerns, and the lack of visible female role models as outlined in the "Engaging Women and Girls in MMA" guide.
 4. **Collaborate and Learn:** Engage with the Women's Commission and other stakeholders to refine and implement best practices.
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Current Initiatives

IMMAF proudly supports the following gender equality initiatives:

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1. **The Women's Commission:** Established to provide expert guidance and advocate for gender equality across IMMAF's operations.
 2. **Engaging Women and Girls in MMA Guide:** A flagship initiative offering guidance for engaging women and girls at grassroots levels.
 3. **Women in MMA Campaigns:** Regularly celebrating the achievements of women in MMA through media, events, and storytelling.
 4. **Targeted Athlete Support:** Special programmes designed to address the unique needs of women athletes, including access to resources, training opportunities, and mentorship.
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Monitoring and Evaluation

IMMAF will:

- **Track Progress:** Collect and analyse data on gender participation and representation annually.
- **Report Outcomes:** Publish findings and recommendations to ensure transparency and accountability.
- **Refine Policies:** Use feedback from the Women's Commission and other stakeholders to improve gender equality measures continually.