

**7th International Women's Group World Conference on Women & Sport
17th – 20th May 2018
Gaborone, Botswana**

The main theme of the conference was “*Determine the future. Be part of the change.*” With the sub-topics of:

- ❖ Being Well to Play Well
- ❖ Safe Space: Protecting women in sport
- ❖ Tell Their Story: Leveraging media to advocate for women's sport
- ❖ Welcome and Empower All through sport
- ❖ Sport Without Borders: Cross-cultural collaboration
- ❖ Let Them Lead: Changing the leadership landscape of sport

Many of the topics discussed at the conference were familiar ones with, as usual, the main focus being on how to increase female representation in sport at all levels – as participants, leaders, journalists, decision-makers. It is somewhat disappointing to attend conferences on women in sport that continually talk about the same problems, seeing that change is happening, but all too slowly, and recognising so many of these challenges are ones that we also face in Floorball.

There was a couple of presentations, in particular, that were very informative and provided access to a lot of resources that can be utilised by the IFF in policy & strategy development:

1) Norwegian Olympic & Paralympic Committee & Confederation of Sports

They are one of the leading organisations in the world in regards of developing policies around sexual harassment and abuse in sport, with great information on how to prevent it and how to deal with cases. They have a lot of material that they are freely sharing and encouraging other organisations to use

2) World Rugby, FIFA, ICC

This was a joint presentation on the approach of each of these federations to changing the leadership landscape in their games. All three sports have made great developments, not just in the strengthening of their female competitions, but also in the inclusion of women to leadership roles. They have several strategic policy documents that they have made available for use by other federations

Since attending the last IWG Conference in Helsinki in 2014 and the European Women in Sport Conference in Stockholm in 2016, there are some positive steps that Floorball has taken that we can be proud of:

- ❖ Introduction and continued promotion of the IFF GoGirls! Floorball initiative
- ❖ IFF Guidelines on Discrimination & Harrassment
- ❖ IFF Policy Statement on Discrimination, Harrasment & Abuse
- ❖ Strengthening of the enforcement of the Licensing system which sets certain requirements that affect female participation
- ❖ Record number of teams registering for Women's U19 WFC 2018 (18 teams)

However, there are still many areas that we are not succeeding at:

IFF Committees

- ❖ Female representation on IFF committees is low, at an average of 15% (14/92 people), and with only two committees chaired by a woman:
 - Central Board – 16% (2/12) NED / NOR
 - Appeal Committee – 25% (1/4) with female chair SWE
 - Disciplinary Committee – 25% (1/4) SWE
 - Ethics Commission – 66% (2/3) CAN / GER
 - Entourage Committee – 0% (0/4)
 - Medical Committee – 40% (2/5) AUS / FIN
 - Referee Committee – 0% (0/5)
 - Referee Observers – 8% (2/25) FIN / NOR
 - Rules & Competition Committee – 11% (1/9) EST
 - RACC Jury – 14% or 19% (3 or 4/21) EST / LAT / SWE / CHN?

There is just one committee where IFF has a fixed equal representation, being the Athletes' Commission. This is the only committee where affirmative action has been taken by the IFF in regulating that there must be 4 female + 4 male representatives, plus a chair which is appointed by the Central Board. The current ATC has 55% (5/9) female representation with a female chair. FIN / JPN / NED / POL / SWE

National Associations

- ❖ Female leadership in National Associations is extremely low:
 - President – 4% (3 - Nigeria, Cameroon & Great Britain)
 - Vice President – 11% (8 – AUS, DEN, ITA, NOR, SWE, CHN, CIV, KEN)
 - Secretary General – 8% (6 – AUT, BEL, FRA, NED, CIV, IRL)
- ❖ Of the 17 countries that have competed at the last Men’s & Women’s WFC final rounds, and must therefore be regarded as our leading countries, just 4 of these have females in executive positions – AUS, DEN, NOR, SWE all with Vice Presidents

In regards of the IFF committees, we are constrained in meeting our goals of increased female representation on these committees as we rely on the National Associations to nominate people for the positions. Until the member associations increase their own level of female representatives then they will also be limited in the people available to nominate. Strategies need to be put in place to address this problem. There must be a political will to change.

When resources are limited it is generally women who lose out. It is fair to say that the IFF definitely has limited resources so we need to be conscious of this when making allocations and still endeavouring to pursue a policy of equality.

Sarah Mitchell
IFF Equality Officer