

4th FIFA
**Women's Football
Symposium**

Shanghai, 28 and 29 September 2007

Overcoming Cultural Barriers

How are cultural barriers that discourage women and girls from being involved in football – be overcome?

How is this being done?

Key findings about overcoming cultural barriers

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Key finding 1: Introducing opportunities for girls to play football in **schools** endorses females participating in sport

This has proven to be very effective for **many** reasons. **Why?**

- Provides **organised access** to a **large population of children** - good opportunity to have **widespread impact**
- Activities in **schools** are generally deemed to be **socially acceptable**. Adding football to the curriculum and including girls helps to **change perceptions all involved** (boys, girls, teachers, parents)

Key findings about overcoming cultural barriers

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Key finding 2: Involve high-profile individuals, particularly women, in women's football initiatives and on your women's football committee

- Provides not only **media attention**, but also the benefits of their **power** and **influence** in society and in government
- Co-opting or involving **key members** of **local, regional** or **national governments** in your **women's committee** provides essential links to needed government relationships (e.g., ministry of education)
- Use of **female members** of **royal families** is particularly notable

Key findings about overcoming cultural barriers

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Key finding 3: Use the men – they can help tremendously

- **“Credentialises”** and **provides media exposure** to women's football, as well as helps to build recognisable names for members of your women's national team
- Recognisable names & faces → **female role models** → ***acceptance***
- **Available, cost effective,** and ***effective***

Same image – different meaning

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Key findings about overcoming cultural barriers

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Key finding 4: Develop your own resources - recruit female coaches, referees and administrators and find ways to secure your own facilities

- **Key element** in many countries and cultures **in persuading parents to allow their daughters to participate**
- **"Own" facilities** can also be **important**

Key findings about overcoming cultural barriers

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Key finding 5: Educate the media to support women's football

- The media **plays a key role** in helping to present women's football as a sport that is **socially or culturally acceptable**
- Women and girls are **more likely to participate** if they **know opportunities** to do so – **exist!** Media networks in schools, regional, etc can be instrumental to getting the word out.
- Hard **work to develop media relations – pays off.** Events (competitions) that involve the media or are media-friendly – helps. Media **seminars** are particularly **effective.**

Case Study: Pakistan

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***Establishing a national
championship to
stimulate interest in the
game and encourage
participation in women's
football in Pakistan***



Rubina Irfan

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**Member
Provincial Assembly (MFA)**

***Balochistan Provincial
Government***

Pakistan



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Development of Women's Football in Pakistan

Introduction

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- Until 2004 there was no women's football in Pakistan
- From encouragement by FIFA and AFC, the PFF planned to start a women's football programme in Pakistan
- With assistance from the government media and support from FIFA Development Office in Colombo, a strategic decision was made to start women's football by launching first ever national championship in 2004

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**Stages for Women's Football
Development in Pakistan**

Stage I

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As a first step, the PFF Women's Wing was established and Ms. Rubina Irfan was elected as its first chairperson in 2005.

Stage II

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After 6 months preparations/deliberations by PFF, the 1st National Women Championship was organized in September 2005 in which eight (8) women football teams participated and a history was therefore made.

The first ever national championship was held in 2005 and it made a huge impact in launching women's football in the country. It was made possible through support from FIFA particularly from Mohsen Gilani from the DO Colombo and also the presence of Christina Ramos member of FIFA Women's Football committee.

Stage II

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- The final was telecasted live on national television!
- PFF covered the cost of transportation and accommodation for all participants
- For the first time female referees were introduced
- This event received unexpectedly high coverage in the news papers including photos on the front page
- A one-day seminar was also organized in conjunction with the championship, where parents, players, government officials and media were invited. This proved to be a big success

Stage III

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The 2nd National Women Championship was organized from 18 August to 28 August 2006 in which 12 teams participated.

During this championship, the 2nd seminar for the development of women's football in Pakistan was also organized with the help of FIFA representative Dr. Aneesa Al-Hitmi from Qatar.

Stage III

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FIFA organized Football for Hope clinics in Earthquake affected areas with German coach Holger Obermann and girls were included in these clinics.

FIFA supported PFF in establishing it's national Women's Futsal team and assisted in sending the team to Jordan for first ever international competition.

Stage IV

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The services of German Women Coach Monika Staab were provided by FIFA from 20 July to 28 August for the development of technical skills of Women's Football players in Pakistan. The the German coach held 4 coaching clinics in different parts of Pakistan before the start of 3rd National Women Championship and helped Pakistan Football Federation to select its Women's National Team.

Stage IV

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The 3rd National Women Championship organized from 16 August to 24 August 2007, saw 14 technically developed women football clubs competing with each other including Afghanistan National Women Football Team

In 3rd National Women Championship final, Superior Sciences Women FC won the gold medal by beating Afghanistan Women National Team

Stage IV

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In collaboration with Mohsen Gilani from FIFA DO Colombo, PFF established for the first time a strategic plan for development of Women's Football in the country. Based on assessment conducted by FIFA the plan identifies the targets and goals for future development and defines activities required to meet these goals. This plan will serve as a model for Women's Football in Pakistan.



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MEN'S FOOTBALL SYMPOSIUM

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Strengths and weaknesses of women's football in Pakistan

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a. Strengths

- Women/girls are very keen to take active part in women football.
- PFF women department is functioning efficiently/professionally for the development of women football in Pakistan.
- A dedicated professionally motivated chairperson exists in PFF women wing/department.
- Government is fully supporting PFF for the development of women football in Pakistan.
- PFF is extending full support to women department for the development of women football in all parts of the country.
- FIFA and AFC are extending all out support to PFF for the development of women football in Pakistan.

Strengths and weaknesses of women's football in Pakistan

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b. Weaknesses

- Very late start (2005).
- Cultural and social barriers.
- Lack of women coaches and referees.
- Lack of financial resources (FIFA allocates only 10% budget for women development) therefore, additional expenses have to be born by PFF out of it's men's budget.
- Lack of facilities.
- No properly organized club/departmental team.

Mission of the Pakistan Football Federation

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To build on the success of National Championships and establish football as a sport for women to promote, to develop and to create awareness of women's football in Pakistan and to provide access to all females to play football in Pakistan.

Strategic Planning Steps

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- **STEP-1 ACCESS & PARTICIPATION:-** Increase the number of female playing football and establish football as a sport for females.
- **STEP-2 FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE:-** Provide greater access for females to football facilities.
- **STEP-3 COMPETITION:-** Increase the competitions and to introduce new tournaments other than yearly National Championships.
- **STEP-4 PROMOTION:-** Create greater awareness about women football through symposiums, coaching/refereeing courses, etc.
- **STEP-5 PLAYERS DEVELOPMENT:-** Establish player development programme

Strategic Planning Steps

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- **STEP-6 CLUB DEVELOPMENT**
- **STEP-7 TEACHING AND CERTIFICATION:-** Courses for Coaches & Referees
- **STEP-8 MARKETING:-** Attract sponsors to women's football
- **STEP-9 STRUCTURE:-** Appointment of full time administrator for women football department
- **STEP-10 NATIONAL TEAM:-**
 - Selection of National Team
 - Appointment of coaches, managers and physiotherapist
 - Training camp to play 2-3 friendly matches with SAARC Region Women Football National Teams

Thank you!

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- PFF is thankful to various stakeholders who helped start and develop Women's Football in Pakistan, in particular FIFA especially FIFA Development Office Colombo and also AFC
- We need their continued support for future development of WF and to make our dreams come true

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