

= Saudi Arabia women 's national football team =

The Saudi Arabia women 's national football team would be the national team representing the kingdom in international football . However , the team does not yet exist because of influence of religious leaders in Saudi Arabia and systematic discrimination against women 's sport , active opposition of political leaders and sport administrators . International pressure has come to bear on the country to field a women 's team , and FIFA now allows the hijab to be worn in competition . A meeting at the College of Business Administration in Jeddah was seen as a possible first step in a team eventually being created .

Despite a lack of official support for a national team and women 's football in general , women have self @-@ organised their own teams and play games out of the sight of men . Created in 2006 , King 's United women football club was the first women 's football club in the country . No official data is kept regarding participation rates for women football players .

= = Team = =

In 1985 , almost no country in the world had a women 's national football team including Saudi Arabia , who have not played in a FIFA @-@ recognised match as of June 2012 . In 2008 , based on the influence of conservative religious leaders in the country , the creation of a FIFA recognised women 's national team was banned by law . In June 2012 the team was not ranked in the world by FIFA and no team from the country has ever been FIFA ranked .

Growing the game and having an opportunity to have a women 's national team has been hindered by the systematic discrimination that all women 's sport is subject to in the country . Saudi Arabia 's Olympic Committee head Nawaf bin Faisal is quoted as saying that the committee should " not be endorsing any female participation at the moment " . In November 2011 , Ahmad Eid Al @-@ Harbi , vice president of the Player Status Committee for the Saudi Arabian Football Federation , said of the creation of a women 's national team : " Saudi society is a very conservative one , even when it comes to men 's clubs . No one can imagine his daughter playing in front of thousands of people wearing shorts , such as in soccer . " Leaders in Saudi Arabian sport held a meeting in mid @-@ 2011 at the College of Business Administration in Jeddah where they discussed women 's sport and possible participation of women as part of the Saudi Arabian national team at the Olympic Games . They were inspired by the example of seven other Arab nations having successfully created women 's national football teams . During 2012 opposition to women 's participation in sport softened with the national Olympic Committee and the Saudi Embassy in London announcing that women 's participation at the 2012 Summer Olympics would be permitted if they were invited .

No Saudi women 's national football team will be competing at the 2012 London Olympics , despite extensive pressure from the International Olympic Committee . Still , in 2012 , the national federation was quietly arguing with the International Football Association Board not to allow women 's participation if they were wearing the hijab while playing . The logic they followed was that if FIFA allowed women to wear the hijab in recognised matches , it would be much more difficult for the federation to prevent a national team from being created . There is a lot of pressure being put on the sporting community to allow for national representation of women on the international team as the kingdom will likely be the last nation in the world to prohibit women from competing at the Olympics . If the Saudis can successfully argue the hijab cannot be worn in competition , it would make them less isolated internationally as other teams in the Arab world would be less likely to compete in the upcoming FIFA Women 's Under @-@ 17 World Cup . PRI 's The World said in late 2011 : " Who knows . In 10 years Saudi Arabia might just have a formidable national women 's soccer team . " A current female football player in the country said of the situation as it pertains to the national team : " Our generation started the game , the leagues , the structure . The next generation will have it on a silver platter . We may not get to play for a national team but we 're laying the groundwork . "

= = Background and development = =

The national federation was created in 1956 and became a FIFA affiliate in 1956 . However women 's football is not included in the country 's FIFA coordinated Goals ! project . By 2011 , inside the Saudi Arabia Football Federation , there has been an effort to create women 's football programs at universities . Input had been sought on how to do this from other national federations including ones from the United States , Germany , Brazil and the United Kingdom . On the men 's side of the game , the national federation has funded efforts to improve the quality of the Saudi Arabia men 's national football team .

Founded in 2006 , King 's United women football club was the first women 's football club in the country . In 2009 , they trained in Jeddah . The team was initially sponsored by Prince Alwaleed bin Talal but facing scrutiny in the face of intense media coverage , he withdrew his support in 2009 . In 2012 , the team trained three times a week outside the sight of men , with players wearing traditional football kit of short sleeved shirts and shorts . The team is coached by Reema Abdullah who also is the team 's striker . It has 35 players who range in age from 13 to 35 . Other women 's teams have been created in the country in cities like Riyadh and Dammam and a tournament was held in 2008 , with seven teams competing and the event being won by King 's United . The first match between two female teams in the country occurred in January 2008 when the Prince Mohammad bin Fahd University team beat Al @-@ Yamamah College in a match played at Dammam 's 35 @,@ 000 @-@ spectator capacity Prince Mohamed bin Fahd Stadium in a shootout victory before an all @-@ women audience . The player of the match was Al @-@ Yamamah College 's goalkeeper . In March 2009 , a women 's charity football match was held between a team called " University " and a team called " Barcelona " that was attended by 400 female fans and no men . The game was won 2 ? 1 by University and earned SR81,000 ( \$ 21 @,@ 598 ) to go towards people with disabilities in the eastern part of the kingdom .

As of 2006 , no data was available for the number of women 's football players in the country . In 2006 , there was international uproar when Saudi authorities sought to prevent women from attending a game between the Saudi Arabia national football team and the Sweden national football team . In 2008 , the situation for women 's football in the Middle East was said by author Gary Brecher to be up there in popularity of freedom and democracy in the region . An all @-@ women 's school sporting competition was held at Effat University in 2010 . The tournament was investigated by Saudi authorities because , according to Ahmed al @-@ Zahrani , director of the Girls Education Department in Jeddah , the country does not have " any regulations that say that it 's okay for girl schools to hold sports classes or training " . In 2011 , women 's football was seen as a way to combat a growing problem of obesity in the country .