



# GENDER EQUALITY THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF FOOTBALL:



# LESSONS AND PROSPECTS CONCLAVE REPORT

22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2022

India International Centre, New Delhi

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## INTRODUCTION

In 2010, CEQUIN had organized a national level conference on gender-based violence in public spaces in India. The rationale was to develop a collective understanding on the issue and build advocacy. The huge focus of the women's movement in the previous decade had been on domestic violence, resulting in the milestone legislation of 2005, and critical efforts towards its effective implementation in the subsequent years. We felt that the need of the hour was to shift focus on the public space. The take away from the conference was that public spaces were structured by patriarchy in a way that excluded women and girls. Lack of mobility led to lack of access to resources, thereby keeping women and girls trapped in a state of underdevelopment and making them vulnerable to violence.

Following the conference, we went back to the drawing board, to design an intervention which would strongly challenge the gendered public-private divide that curtails women and girls. We were hoping for two outcomes for women and girls- firstly, to enhance mobility and secondly, challenging gender stereotypes. That is how our football programme for adolescent girls' empowerment *Kickstart Equality* initiated in 2011 in Jamia, New Delhi.

***Football was the perfect tool for intervention. As an outdoor sport, it ensured girls' visible presence in local public grounds. As a team sport, it gave the girls strength in numbers, to assert their rights. As a game perceived as 'masculine', it was a powerful blow to gender stereotypes.***

A lot of progress has been made in the last decade. Thousands of girls have been part of our programme. Many new organisations have introduced similar initiatives. There is a steadily growing body of work to demonstrate the efficacy of football as a tool to bring about gender equality. In 2021, CEQUIN partnered with international organization *Laureus Sports for Good*. They have been conducting a multi-city intervention entitled Model City, using *sport for development* as a framework. Local stakeholders are identified to use sports for their cities' development goals.

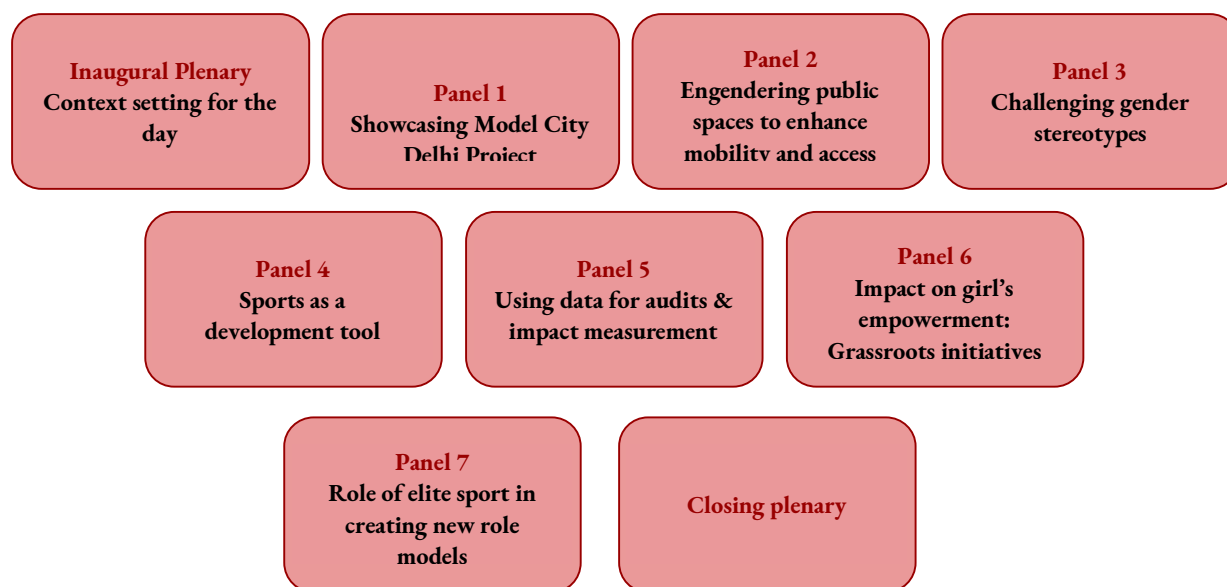
In India, Seemapuri was selected for the site of the '*Model City Delhi*' project. CEQUIN is one of the implementing partners on ground. This project provides us an excellent platform to synergise our Kickstart Equality programme with the Model City Delhi (MCD) initiative to demonstrate how powerful football can be, as a tool for gender equality.

In our baseline survey conducted with young girls in Seemapuri as a part of the MCD initiative, most of them were found to have high aspiration of completing their education and accessing livelihoods. In a scenario where women's labour force participation rate in India is as low as 19% at the national level, and a mere 10% in Delhi (World Bank), the likelihood of these girls achieving their ambitions at present may appear bleak. Scaling up initiatives like Football for Girls Empowerment can be a game changer in this regard. With enhanced mobility, high levels of mental and physical fitness, self-confidence and wide social networks, these girls will be in a much

better position to translate their education and skills into viable careers and participation in all aspects of public life.

In this backdrop CEQUIN organized a day long national level conference in New Delhi on 22 March, 2022. The conference brought together gender experts, sports for development experts, football administrators, players, coaches, international agencies, officials, media and the youth. The multi-stakeholder gathering provided a vibrant, enriching environment for exchange of ideas and knowledge sharing.

### Session brief:



The meeting opened with the inaugural session, with participation from prominent heads of agencies. A short documentary film on the efficacy of football as a tool for adolescent girl empowerment and breaking gender stereotypes was presented. It covered important themes such as the agency of girls, their access to public spaces and negotiating for themselves through the medium of football. All that is needed for this sport is a ball and has empowered many girls from marginalized communities at the grassroots to come forth and envision a better life. This helped set the *context* and lay out the expected outcomes from the day's deliberations.

The first panel showcased the *Model City Delhi initiative*, which uses football for promoting gender equality, with participants from Seemapuri talking about the project being rolled out in Seemapuri, New Delhi.

This was followed by a session on *engendering public spaces* that included the conversation on *mobility, leisure, women occupying public spaces and the right to city*. This discussion was deepened with the next session on *challenging gender stereotypes*. A theoretical understanding of what gender stereotypes are was built, and the potential of sports such as football, in challenging these stereotypes were explored.

This was followed by the fourth panel focusing on the *sports for development framework*. The discussion aimed at building a common understanding of the framework and how different organisations have applied it.

The fifth panel delved into the significance of capturing data through *innovative methodologies*, to be able to capture learnings in the context of gender equality through the medium of football. It was a learning session on how to sharpen interventions through audits and measure impact for better advocacy.

The sixth panel showcased various successful projects using *football for gender equality*. The session provided an opportunity to learn from various different models from across the country.

The seventh session was an introduction to *role models for girls*, showcasing elite sportswomen at national level. The session highlighted the importance of sports in creating new role models for girls to emulate. The closing session was a short showcase of *women's football in India and the commitments in the future*.

## DISCUSSION & HIGHLIGHTS

### Inaugural Plenary:

**Speakers** - Praful Patel, Member of Parliament and President, AIFF; Susan Ferguson, Country Representative, UN Women; Sara Abdullah Pilot, Chairperson CEQUIN;

The Inaugural Plenary set the stage for the rest of the discussions. The speakers established the context for the conference and focused on issues such as equal pay for women in sports, using football as a medium of development, Under 17 FIFA to be held later this year and so on.



**Susan Ferguson, Country Representative, UN Women**

*“Many girls don’t grow up playing sports and in India, only 29% of girls play sports at grassroots. UN Women now has created generation equality forum and sports is one of the areas where countries want an equal playing field. It is important to look at women demonstrating leadership in sports which will extend to other areas in life. Unlike anything else, sports can unite us across cultures, religions, sports can equalise the fault lines.” - Susan Ferguson, Country Representative, UN Women*

### Themes covered:

- Equal pay for women in sports
- Sports as a unifier of cultures, religions, classes etc
- The multiplier effect of sports supporting young girls in education, health & livelihood
- Sports as a relief to mental isolation
- Women’s safety, participation and equal pay
- Women in sports often defy gender stereotypes and hence we have role models for us- it is fun, healthy and it unites us.

*“Women’s football till 15 years back was a distant dream for many of us sitting here but as the world is progressing, we see more participation of women in every field of life so football cannot be far behind. I can see that at every level, everyone feels passionate about women’s game as much as men, that’s a good & a healthy sign. We have now taken a holistic approach to build a national team & we want to ensure that girls can make a career out of football. 1983 changed the face of cricket, in the coming years, we will see that happen for football, for both boys and girls.”*

**-Praful Patel, Member of Parliament & President, AIFF**



**Praful Patel, Member of Parliament & President, AIFF**



**Themes covered:**

- Women’s football team in India & the efforts of AIFF to bring it to the forefront
- Asian Women’s Championship
- Under 17 World Cup
- Football as a profession for women
- Holistic approach to build a national team for girls starting at age 6

*“It is a great honour and privilege that India will be hosting under 17 FIFA World Cup for women this year. It is so much more than just a tournament. It symbolises both the strides that we have taken towards gender equality and is also a reminder of how much more there is to be done but it is only when we all come together that we can achieve that all the girls and women in our country can reach their full potential.”*

**-Sara Abdullah Pilot, Chairperson, CEQUIN &**



***Sara Abdullah Pilot, Chairperson, CEQUIN & Chairperson, Women’s Committee, AIFF***

**Themes covered:**

- The growth of women’s football from strength to strength over the years
- The importance of creating a roadmap of how dreams of young girls can be achieved
- Using sports as a tool to development, their lives have changed.
- All girls who did not get married as kids; they are very clear that they want to create a life for themselves. They know they have a choice and are determined to put that in action. They have the ability to decide what’s right for them. It’s not about rebelling or shunning traditions but it’s about their life.
- Holistic program- physical and mental wellbeing, livelihood, claiming public spaces, it’s about tackling that game called life.

## Panel 1: Showcasing Model City Delhi Project

**Speakers-** Naseem Khan, Programme Manager, CEQUIN; Farhan Khan, Programme Manager, Pardarshita; Model City Delhi Coalition members including Shabnam, Sonam, Palak



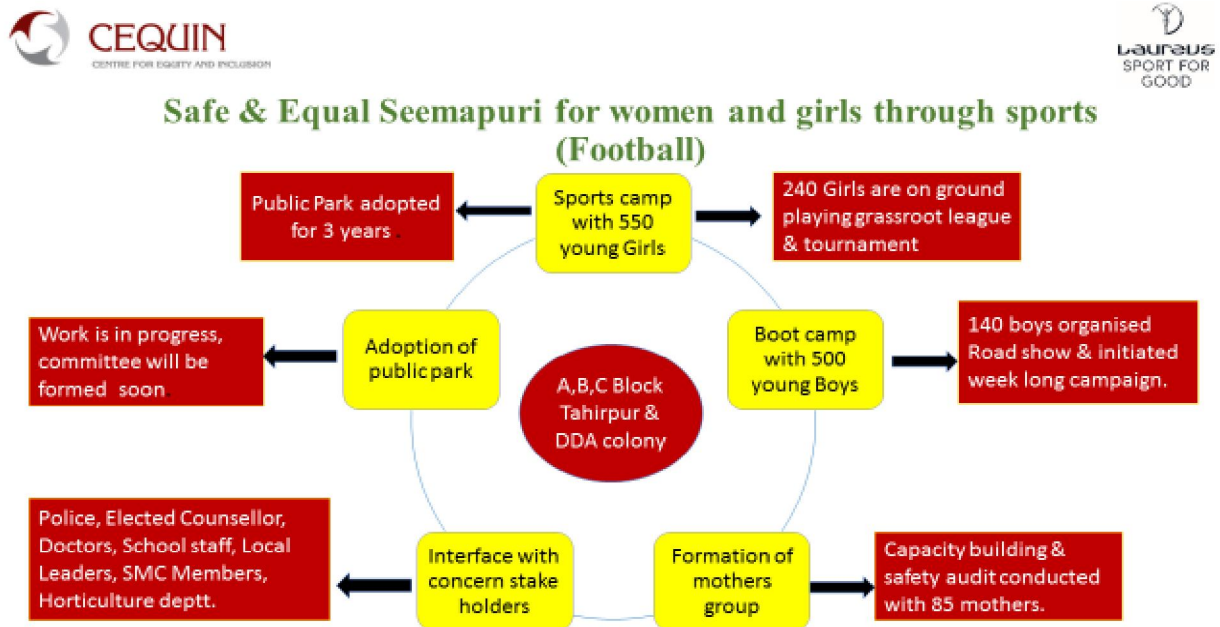
*Model City Delhi Project Members*

“The issues related to gender are very sensitive and Model City Delhi is an intervention that approaches the issue with a community-based approach. The best part of the program is keeping the voices from the community at the center of the intervention. The solutions also come through the engagement of the community. Sports for Development was a critical lens for us, for which we collaborated with the local organisations and stakeholders.” - **Farhan Khan, Programme Manager, Pardarshita**

The panel focused on showcasing and explaining the Model City Delhi Project. The discussion began with Naseem Khan, Programme Manager CEQUIN, setting the context about the project and introducing the team. It was followed by Farhan Khan’s presentation, who is the Programme Manager at Pardarshita, one of the community based organisations running the project in Seemapuri. His presentation focused on the journey of Model City Delhi Project in Seemapuri from the conception stage including research to the implementation. The research that was carried out identified some of the key issues that are faced by women such as high rates of gender based violence



(GBV), low rates of accessing education, low employment rates, high rates of child marriage etc. and hence, the intervention was designed keeping in mind all of these key aspects. Different stakeholders have brought in different expertise on the table. He ended the presentation by discussing the impact of the project as demonstrated in the following graphic:



The presentation was followed by elaboration on the project by other young coalition members. One of the critical discussion points was the continuation of the project during the pandemic through creation of an online curriculum in the form of videos and sessions.

“The intervention challenged gender roles. Football is considered a sports for men, which is what we wanted to challenge. We did a ground mapping and figured out that there are 12 parks in total in Seemapuri. Now our girls are playing football in 8 of them. We also kept talking to the boys for establishing access. We also adopted a park but then the elections came and this was seen as an agenda. We faced many challenges but we continued with perseverance. The boys who used to create problems have become agents of change.” - **Shabnam, Model City Delhi Coalition Member**

“For us, one critical aspect of the intervention is engaging multiple stakeholders for impact - NGOs, MLA, Horticulture department. We were hesitant earlier to talk to authorities but we now feel confident due to capacity building.” - **Sonam, Model City Delhi Coalition Member**

## Panel 2: Engendering Public Spaces to enhance mobility & access

**Speakers-** Kalpana Vishwanath, Co-Founder & CEO, Safetipin; Suhela Khan, Country Programme Manager, WeEmpowerAsia, UN Women

The session brought attention to women occupying public spaces and their mobility. The vision shared by both the speakers was of building safe and gender friendly cities. Kalpana Vishwanath, the founder of Safetipin<sup>1</sup> brought attention to issues such as *freedom from violence and fear, opportunities for work and leisure, physical and social infrastructure, institutional responses towards women* and so on. She also discussed the right to the city for women and the need to

“The society creates less space for women and sports need space. As women, we often contract ourselves. Right to the city, the right to leisure and play makes space for women in public spaces and impacts them holistically.” - **Kalpana Vishwanath, Co-Founder & CEO, Safetipin**



**Kalpana Vishwanath, Co-Founder  
CEO, Safetipin**



“Sports are exclusively seen as male dominant spaces and here, many forms of subtle discrimination that are based on patriarchal notions become visible in the field. These gender boundaries need to be challenged. In a five-year long intervention related to livelihoods, we learnt that any livelihood program needs to integrate the strategies to work on gender otherwise we won’t be able to see the kind of change we want in women’s lives.”

- **Suhela Khan, UN Women**

**Suhela Khan, Country Programme  
Manager, WeEmpowerAsia, UN  
Women**

<sup>1</sup> Safetipin is a social organisation working with a wide range of urban stakeholders including governments to make public spaces safer and more inclusive for women. The organisation collects data using 3 mobile phone applications (My Safetipin, which is available on the app store and play store; Safetipin Nite and Safetipin Site) and present this to relevant stakeholders with recommendations. They also generate a safety score based on the data they collect and provide it in the My Safetipin app for users to make safe and informed decisions about their mobility. (Source: <https://safetipin.com/>)

**Suhela Khan** shared her experience of working with Pradhan on a project supported by the UN Women on livelihoods. During the course of the intervention, they realised the gap in the intervention of not being able to take into consideration issues faced by women in their day to day lives such as GBV. The project was focused on enabling women to become independent agents of change who are economic actors with decision making power and could challenge structural, patriarchal oppression in private as well as public spaces. To achieve this goal, they partnered with another organisation working on the issues of gender through feminist principles called *Jagori*<sup>2</sup>. This led to the team members working with the community to unlearn many of their own gender-related experiences, especially, in case of subtle discrimination based on socialisation. To challenge gender stereotypes, they started organising football matches. Suhela shared the photo of women in sarees playing football and challenging gender stereotypes. Her presentation focused on establishing the fact that how critical it is to create an ***enabling environment for women in both private and public spaces.***

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<sup>2</sup> A feminist organisation operating on feminist principles and working on the issue of livelihoods

### Panel 3: Challenging Gender Stereotypes

**Speakers-** Dr. Rukmini Sen, Professor, School of Liberal Studies, Ambedkar University; Shipra Jha, Head of Asia Engagement, Girls Not Brides

The session focused on gender roles and stereotypes in society. The topic was discussed from various perspectives on the imagination of the role of women as being a wife, mother, role of Early and Forced Marriage, imagination of the State and so on. Both the speakers, based on their own experiences, shared how sports can be an important medium to challenge the existing patriarchal structure, Rukmini through her insights on various initiatives such as Pinjra Tod, Why Loiter, Need to Sleep etc. and Shipra through her presentation on ‘Change the Game.’



***Dr Rukmini Sen, Professor,  
Ambedkar University***

*“I wonder why it is more acceptable for women to play badminton but something like football is not that well accepted. Collective sports such as football are not just sports, they help women to form groups, create a space of reflection & taking action, perhaps that’s why there is a difference in the attitude of people regarding the two sports.”*

**-Dr Rukmini Sen, Professor, Ambedkar University**

*“Girls are looked at like assets and hence are married off early. There is a control of religion and caste over marriage & related concepts. Sports is coming up as a medium to challenge gender norms, girls are able to negotiate for themselves because of the intervention of sports.” - Shipra Jha, Head of Asia Engagement, Girls Not Brides*



***Shipra Jha, Head of Engagement, Girls  
Not Brides***

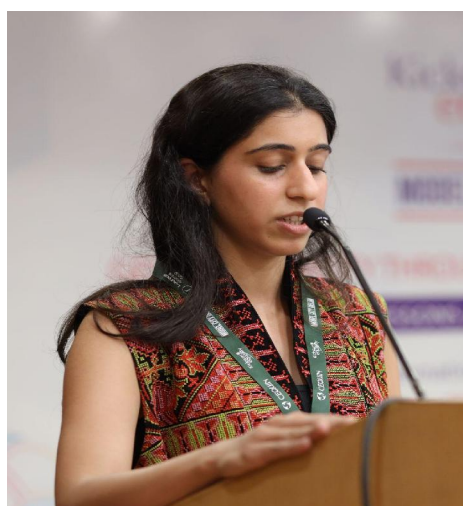
#### Panel 4: Sports as a development tool

**Speakers-** Suheil Tandon, Director-Founder, Pro Sport Development; Aishwarya Sehgal, Programme Associate, Social & Human Sciences Unit, UNESCO; Lora K. Prabhu, Co-Founder & Executive Director, CEQUIN



*Left: Lora Prabhu, Center: Suheil Tandon, Right: Aishwarya Sehgal*

The panel focused on the examples of organisations that are working on ground and are using sports as a medium of development. Aishwarya Sehgal from UNESCO focused on investing in sports for better well-being of girls and children. Suheil Tandon, through the example of Pro Sport Development explained how S4D (***Sports for Development***) can be used in an ***intentional*** manner for bringing about social change through a participatory approach. It was followed by Lora Prabhu's presentation on CEQUIN's journey. She talked about the gender lens in sports and the need for ***advocacy*** and ***systemic change***.



“We all know that by disregarding both geographical boundaries and social differences, sports promote social inclusion and shared values across cultural and political aspects. Sports helps to build social-emotional resilience critical for navigating our rapidly transforming society. - ***Aishwarya Sehgal, Programme Associate, Social & Human Sciences Unit, UNESCO***”

Aishwarya Sehgal shared about UNESCO’s flagship programme for transforming sports to be used mindfully towards **public health outcomes**. The programme focuses on development of school curricula, creation of policies related to sports keeping the youth at the center of it all. In her talk, she shared about the impact that COVID-19 has had on the physical, mental and emotional well-being of children and girls, especially those with disabilities. She focused on the urgent need to focus on Physical Education for promoting well-being through behavioural and systems level change to unleash the power of sports. She shared about UNESCO’s program **‘Fit for Life’** to achieve this goal designed to activate **smart investments** in sports. It connects international, national and regional partners to support the COVID recovery and enhance well-being of all people, beginning with youth.

In his presentation, Suheil Tandon from Pro Sport Development provided an overview of the Sports for Development (S4D) framework. He shared how sports can be used in an intentional manner for social change. He talked about access, inclusivity and integrity towards social change. He also talked of the value of creating **safe spaces** for girls. He shared that S4D is a very broad domain and it includes everything that promotes health and well-being through sports from gully sports to competitive sports including paying attention to how the spaces in the cities are built for recreational activities such as cycling. It also includes indigenous sports and competitive, professional sports. Sports is a part of all societies and cultures and can be leveraged for promotion of social messaging. He shared his own experience of implementing the S4D project in Seemapuri and the importance of working systemically through a participatory approach through the Model City Project.



Sports is a reflection of society so the problems that exist in society also show up in the domain of sports. Therefore, we need to create an enabling environment and opportunities for girls in sports to tackle the discrimination that trickles down from other societal structures, it has to be intentional. - **Suheil Tandon, Pro Sport Development**



Lora Prabhu's presentation focused on CEQUIN's journey of working on gender equality. She shared that CEQUIN's work has focused on gender-based violence (GBV) as well as access of girls and women to public spaces. When the journey started, the team was trying to look for innovative strategies to work on the issues related to gender and identified sports as a medium to do that. The work was initiated in 2011 and primarily the team went in with a gender lens. The core of the intervention was promoting the agency of girls and women by challenging gender roles and stereotypes. It was a conscious decision for CEQUIN to pick football as a medium that could promote this change. Being an outdoor sport, it could be used for claiming public spaces and it did not require much investment. The sport also had to have a potential for growth for women. She shared examples of

CEQUIN's work in the community through an inclusive, contextual, holistic and scalable approach in Jamia, Seemapuri, Mewat and so on. She also shared the importance of stakeholder collaboration such as mothers, boys, schools etc. to create an enabling environment.

“When we started our journey, all these concepts & ideas were very new but over a period of time, we have received support from many stakeholders. In the community, the boys who were earlier opposed to the idea of girls playing football are Agents of Change today.” - **Lora K. Prabhu, CEQUIN**

**Panel 5: Using data for Audits & Impact Measurement: Innovative practices**

**Speakers-** Meena Vaidyanathan, Founder, NIITI Consulting Pvt Ltd; Ankita Kapoor, Assistant Program Manager, Safetipin

The session focused on data and using it for making informed choices towards development especially keeping gender at the center. While Ankita introduced Safetipin’s work of using map based apps for auditing a city through stakeholder engagement. She shared about the safety audits that are carried out by the public, about their perception of safety in the city and then shared with the government.



**Left: Meena Vaidyanathan, NIITI Consulting Pvt Ltd, Right: Ankita Kapoor, Safetipin**

This includes various marginalised groups such as women, people with disabilities and so on. Ankita’s presentation pointed out reasons for girls and women to perceive a place as unsafe- isolated or deserted public spaces, sale of drugs or alcohol in the vicinity, lack of police or security, lack of adequate lighting etc. She emphasized that it is critical to use data to build a case for women’s safety and mobility and design informed interventions & policies.

“There is a need to make the environment in the public spaces safe for women rather than restricting them. The city and the environment around us needs to change and this is where data plays a huge role. Everyone in the city should have equal access to the city and we use apps to achieve this goal.” - **Ankita Kapoor, Assistant Program Manager, Safetipin**

“Creating safe spaces is not just lighting and physical safety, it is also about inclusion especially in urban spaces. Innovation using data is critical & one must keep the local context in mind. Least common denominator should be focused on even if it is not the norm. I encourage having a gendered lens to evaluation & looking at evaluation as a culture as opposed to a practice.” - **Meena Vaidyanathan, NIITI Consulting**

Meena focused on Niiti’s work on how to make data meaningful and dynamic for organisations. She shared Niiti’s journey of being operational through the virtual mode for the last 13 years and having built the organisation’s capacity to use data and evaluation in innovative ways to improve project effectiveness. She shared the example of the work they are doing with CEQUIN. Their team comes together for projects and believes in working along with the organisations rather than for them. The work is not carried out in isolation which is an important aspect especially for the development sector where the people are at the center of the intervention.



### Panel 6: Impact on girl's empowerment: Grassroots initiatives

**Speakers-** Dr. Abhijeet Barse, CEO, Slum Soccer, Nagpur; Anirban Ghosh, Co-founder, Khel Khel Mein Foundation, Delhi; Padma, Mahila Jan Adhikar, Ajmer; Ajay Kumar Jaiswal, Founder & Secretary, ASHA, Ranchi, Jharkhand



*Left: Dr. Abhijeet Barse; Center 1: Anirban Ghosh; Center 2: Ajay Kumar Jaiswal, Right: Padma from Mahila Jan Adhikar Samiti*

The session aimed at bringing together the experiences of different grassroots organisations that are using sports for development. Dr. Abhijeet Barse shared his experience of the project **'Shakti Girls'** and highlighted how critical it is to **listen to the community** rather than imposing the views of a project on them. He spoke about how it is easier for boys and men to derive inspiration from each other but women have fewer role models in sports due to structural barriers.

“In our intervention, we always included girls, they never came in as an afterthought but it was slightly difficult. These issues related to gender are neither new nor surprising. Each community has different context and barriers to accessibility which is the most important thing to keep in mind- context. We must go about a project piece by piece.”- *Dr. Abhijeet Barse, CEO, Slum Soccer, Nagpur*

Anirban Ghosh from Khel Khel Mein talked about the experience of working in two locations and building an **ecosystem for athlete development** and taking a holistic approach including exposure to girls who are involved in playing football and kho kho. That includes physical and dietary changes as well as behavioural changes such as leadership, working in teams and so on. He talked about WHO's model for children as to how much they should play everyday and what are some of the parameters for enabling that, such as the condition of grounds in schools. He shared about the data from the sub-continent for the condition of sports in general and elaborated on the barriers to enter sports professionally. He emphasized on the value of working systemically and promoting both access and excellence.

“The highest number of football matches women have played in a year continues to be very low and we must work on the incentives that will enable girls and women to take on football professionally.” - **Anirban Ghosh, Khel Khel Mein Foundation**

Padma who presented on behalf of Mahila Jan Adhikar Samiti talked about football for **freedom, unity & solidarity**. She spoke of the organisation's systemic approach to challenge gender stereotypes and at the same time, creating a nurturing & supportive environment for the girls in their respective communities. She also talked about the organisation's intent to enable girls and women to tackle GBV as well as enable them to become active citizens. The aim is to use football as a tool as a means to an end for an improved health as well as decision making. She emphasized that the girls have started looking at sports as a profession which enables them to practice their agency and are able to bring about a social change as well.

Ajay Kumar Jaiswal shared about ASHA's work with low-income tribal communities in Naxal-affected areas in Jharkhand through a video presentation. Many patriarchal practices and structural violence is still prevalent in the State and Association for Social and Human Awareness (ASHA) was initiated in the year 2000 to work on these issues. The organisation observed trafficking and harassment of girls and women from the tribal communities to be widespread and that became one of the areas of focus to work on. Using sports for development, especially football, has helped the ASHA to put up a fight against it. They work with young girls from vulnerable communities and support them with education, nutrition and so on, to enable a safer environment for them. Football has helped them to build their reach and form a connection with the girls which was earlier a challenge. More than 4000 girls have been positively impacted through the initiative and have developed leadership skills. One of the girl leaders, for instance, started two football teams in the community. Some of the girls were selected for Under 17 Football in 2020, however due to COVID-19, they could not go ahead. The girls have indeed made a mark and are inspiring other girls in the area to join them in the journey.

**Panel 7: Role of elite sport in creating new role models****Speakers-** Jyoti Burret, Football Player; Indu Choudhry, Sr. Manager, AIFF

*Left: Lora K. Prabhu, Center: Indu Choudhry, Right: Jyoti Burret*

This was an interactive session with two successful sports women in the country, Jyoti Burret who is an international level footballer and Indu Choudhry who is the Senior Manager of Women's Football at the AIFF. The girls who are building their career in the field got an opportunity to ask questions and share views with the speakers. Both Jyoti and Indu shared their own journey of being in the field, shaping up of their individual careers, and how the condition of football for girls and women has improved over the years. On being asked who has been a role model for them, Jyoti shared, ***“Now that I think back, I think I only had men as role models but I wish I had more women.”*** For Indu, all the women who have strived against injustice and have paved their path have been an inspiration for her.

### Closing Plenary:

**Speakers-** Kushal Das, General Secretary, AIFF; Dr. Shama Mohamed, Member of Women's Committee, AIFF



*Left: Sara Abdullah Pilot, Center: Kushal Das, Right: Dr. Shama Mohamed*

The closing plenary consisting of AIFF members, Dr. Shama Mohamed and Kushal Das focused on sharing AIFF's plans in the future. The highlight was the Under 17 FIFA Women's World Cup to be organised in October this year. They spoke about enhancing the structure for women's participation in football and increasing the representation and making it a niche for women. Dr. Shama Mohamed shared her own experience of loving and playing the sport as well as recognising football as a social unifier. The day culminated with an energetic closing performance by MCD project beneficiaries.

“Football is the most popular sport in the world but it is more than an entertaining sport. It is a powerful tool that can bring about profound social change especially for women. Unlike any other sport, football does not require expensive equipment, all it requires is a ball and yourself. It is indeed a social unifier.” – ***Dr. Shama Mohamed, Member of Women's Committee, AIFF***

“Women's football is an established world sport now. India has been lagging behind for various reasons including the COVID-19 challenges but we are all pumped up to put in more money in the sport. Our focus has been on women's football and we are putting in efforts to bring it to the forefront.” - ***Kushal Das, General Secretary, AIFF***

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Sports is an effective medium to be used for holistic development of young people. Football, a collective sport that requires very limited investment, is a social unifier and should be promoted as it will enable young girls in the country to occupy public spaces as well as support them in decision making.
- Over the years, football and sports in general have been used in various local contexts from urban, semi-urban to rural areas. It helps in challenging gender roles and stereotypes.
- Sports can also be used to create more safe spaces for girls and women as well as their mobility. There is a need to create safer cities, safer villages and so on. Technology can play a major role in doing this.
- Stakeholder engagement including the government, local institutions as well as families and communities become a critical part of any intervention geared towards gender.
- It is high time to work towards systemic change so that sports can be played professionally by girls and women and both civil society and organisations such as AIFF have a huge role to play in this.

## ANNEXURE 1

### AGENDA

9.00am - 9.30am	<b>Registration</b>
9.30am - 10.30am	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Inaugural Plenary</b></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b>  <b>Susan Ferguson</b>, Country Representative, UN Women  <b>Praful Patel</b>, Member of Parliament &amp; President, AIFF  <b>Sara Abdullah Pilot</b>, Chairperson, CEQUIN and Chairperson Women's Committee, AIFF</p>
10.30am - 11.15am	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Panel 1 - Showcasing Model City Delhi Project</b></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b>  <b>Renu Yadav</b>, Community Coordinator Model City Delhi, Laureus Sports for Good  <b>Naseem Khan</b>, Programme Manager, CEQUIN  <b>Farhan Khan</b>, Programme Manager, Pardarshita  <b>Model City Delhi Coalition members</b>, Shabnam, Sonam, Palak  <b>Project beneficiaries</b> Amna</p>
11.15am - 11.30am	<b>Tea Break</b>
11.30am - 12.15pm	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Panel 2 - Engendering Public Spaces to enhance mobility and access</b></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b>  <b>Kalpana Vishwanath</b>, Co-Founder and CEO, Safetipin  <b>Suhela Khan</b>, Country Programme Manager, WeEmpowerAsia, UN Women</p>
12.15pm - 12.45pm	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Panel 3 - Challenging Gender Stereotypes</b></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b>  <b>Dr Rukmini Sen</b>, Professor School of Liberal Studies, Dr B R Ambedkar University  <b>Shipra Jha</b>, Head of Asia Engagement, Girls Not Brides</p>
12.45pm - 1.15pm	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Panel 4 - Sports as a development tool</b></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b>  <b>Suheil Tandon</b>, Director-Founder, Pro Sport Development  <b>Aishwarya Sehgal</b>, Programme Associate, Social and Human Sciences Unit, UNESCO  <b>Lora K. Prabhu</b>, Co-Founder &amp; Executive Director, CEQUIN</p>
1.15pm - 2.00pm	<b>Lunch</b>
2.00pm - 2.30pm	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Panel 5 - Using Data for Audits and Impact Measurement: Innovative practices</b></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b>  <b>Meena Vaidyanathan</b>, Founder, NIITI Consulting Pvt Ltd</p>

	<i><b>Ankita Kapoor</b>, Assistant Program Manager, Safetipin</i>
<b>2.30pm - 3.15pm</b>	<p><b>Panel 6 - Impact on girls' empowerment: Grassroots initiatives</b></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b>  <i><b>Dr. Abhijeet Barse</b>, CEO, Slum Soccer, Nagpur</i>  <i><b>Anirban Ghosh</b>, Co-Founder Khel Khel Mein Foundation, Delhi</i>  <i><b>Indira Pancholi</b>, Director, Mahila Jan Adhikar Samiti, Ajmer</i>  <i><b>Ajay Kumar Jaiswal</b>, Founder and Secretary, Association for Social and Human Awareness (ASHA) Ranchi, Jharkhand</i></p>
<b>3.15pm - 3.45pm</b>	<p><b>Panel 7 - Role of elite sport in creating new role models</b></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b>  <i><b>Jyoti Burret</b>, Football player</i>  <i><b>Dalima Chhibber</b>, Football Player</i>  <i><b>Aveka Singh</b>, Football Player</i></p>
<b>3.45pm - 4.15pm</b>	<p><b>Panel 8 - Women's Football in India and globally</b></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b>  <i><b>Indu Choudhary</b>, Sr. Manager- All India Football Federation (AIFF)</i>  <i><b>Abreshmina Sayeed Quadri</b>, Sports Journalist, News 18</i></p>
<b>4.15pm- 5.00pm</b>	<p><b>Closing Plenary</b></p> <p><i><b>Dr. Shama Mohamed</b>, Member of Women's Committee, AIFF</i></p> <p>Spotlight on FIFA World Cup 11<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> Oct, 2022 &amp; Closing address:  <i><b>Kushal Das</b>, General Secretary, AIFF</i></p> <p>Closing performance by MCD project beneficiaries</p> <p>Vote of Thanks:  <i><b>Lora K. Prabhu</b>, Executive Director, CEQUIN</i></p>
<b>5:00pm – 5:30pm</b>	<i><b>High Tea Reception</b></i>

## ANNEXURE 2

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