



CEQUIN KICKSTART EQUALITY

PROGRAM IMPACT
REPORT

2020



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Executive Summary

Gender Equality is enshrined in the 5th Sustainable Development Goals, and specifically outlines the need to eliminate the occurrence of child marriage, and correcting socio-economic disadvantages stemming from discrimination between genders. This discrimination is manifested in the inability of all genders to use public spaces optimally, and more often than not, unequal participation in the workforce. The aim of this report has been to determine the impact of the CEQUIN led Kickstart Equality programme that leverages sports in general, and football in particular, in reaching these goals. The programme that includes running football training for girls and school-based workshops to reach out to young girls and boys and leverage these interventions to improve their confidence, self-identity and agency, has been active in some districts of Delhi and Mewat since 2011.

This evaluation study attempted to answer the following questions:

- Have the sports interventions by CEQUIN impacted girls enrolled in the programme with improved negotiation skills and confidence levels?
- Has participating in the programme changed the outlook of the girls towards how they see and use public spaces?
- Has the intervention changed the perception for women around the age of marriage and their own physical and mental health?
- Have the interventions improved their outlook on the types of livelihood they would like to pursue?
- Has it led them to challenge stereotypes and initiate social change?

A stylized, high-contrast portrait of Nelson Mandela in a golden-brown color, showing his face and a slight smile. It is positioned on the left side of the page, partially overlapping the dark background.

“

Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire...It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope where once there was only despair

- Nelson Mandela

”



The study found that the interventions, especially the football training and actively getting engaged in competitive sports has helped improve the girls' confidence and instill a higher awareness in them of their self-identity. This confidence has helped them resist early marriage and the chance to expand themselves. The study found that girls who had actively participated in competitive football, traveled out of their communities and state for matches, and having had the chance to interact with others were better at asserting themselves and also better at negotiating for their rights.

The study found that despite initial resistance from the families, playing and winning matches has had a huge impact on their view on girl's and their potential to play roles beyond the traditional. However, this mindset change amongst families

and communities, in general is still nascent and the programme could really be catalysed if more interventions with communities and families could be deployed within the existing programme framework.

The study showed that despite early apprehensions and also initial ridicule they faced within the community, once they used their school playground or other open spaces to start playing matches, the girls discovered a way to establish their presence within the community and use public spaces to express themselves. The study found ample evidence that interactions between genders in the same age group was much better if they occupied public spaces together.

The study found that overall, all the girls in the community fall short of the health parameters outlined by Indian Academy of Paediatrics (IAP). The girls enrolled in the football programme, however, showed better awareness about the need to stay fit and healthy. There was evidence to show that when the girls have the opportunity to make food choices, they almost always chose food that was better for health, demonstrating that the interventions had improved their overall health seeking behaviour.

All girls in the community who were surveyed showed a reasonably high degree of awareness about the

importance of delaying the age of marriage. The girls who had either participated in football training or attended school camps organised by CEQUIN showed higher awareness of their self and higher aspirational goals for themselves beyond marriage. Most of the girls who had participated in competitive football were more confident about the path they were going to follow to realise their aspirations. This was evidenced by the number of girls pursuing higher education, or a vocation of their choice that could give them an opportunity to be self-reliant and financially independent.

The choice of vocation ranged from traditionally well-accepted careers for women like being a teacher or joining an established company, to non-traditional ones like sports or arts. Within the sports-aligned vocations, being a football coach, joining a professional sports club and becoming a physical education instructor were among the most cited vocations.

Overall, the study found that participating in competitive matches provided the participating girls a strong foundation and gave wings to their aspirational dreams.



There was some evidence to show that girls participating in the programme had experienced a behaviour change themselves, and had influenced to a limited extent their immediate ecosystem, namely siblings and friends, but there wasn't adequate evidence to demonstrate that the participants had initiated a large scale social change. Perhaps, if adequately scaled, the programme could have a much larger impact. The study

found that the interventions within the programme framework have the potential to drive large scale change. In addition to scale, the evaluators would also like to recommend increased focus on interventions with the family members and associated community members whose role could be critical to help realise the true potential of the programme.



Manisha

(First-year B.A. student,
participated in CEQUIN's
Football School Camp in 2017-18)

Manisha & her football team initially encountered gender stereotyping by their male classmates, who used to tease them saying "football is not meant for girls." However, they continued regardless and once the girls started winning matches, there was a change in the boys' attitude and they not only cheered for them, but even taught them game techniques.

Manisha is a dance enthusiast and aspires to pursue dancing professionally. She feels her football training has made her physically fit and more health conscious. The diet and exercising tips she learnt in the camp come handy in her pursuit to become a professional choreographer.

Her father however, has not been always supportive and she yearns for his approval and support. She says that he stopped objecting to her football playing and pursuit of dance as a vocation when she started winning medals and got selected for TV shows like India's Got Talent.

Manisha is clear that she will only marry a person who can understand her aspirations and support her. Till the time she finds such a person, she is focusing on building her career.

Background

In recent years, the issue of gender parity has gained traction as a key metric of development of a country. Legally, women are granted equal rights as men, as according to the Indian Constitution¹, and enjoy certain provisions to safeguard their interests. Yet, women face

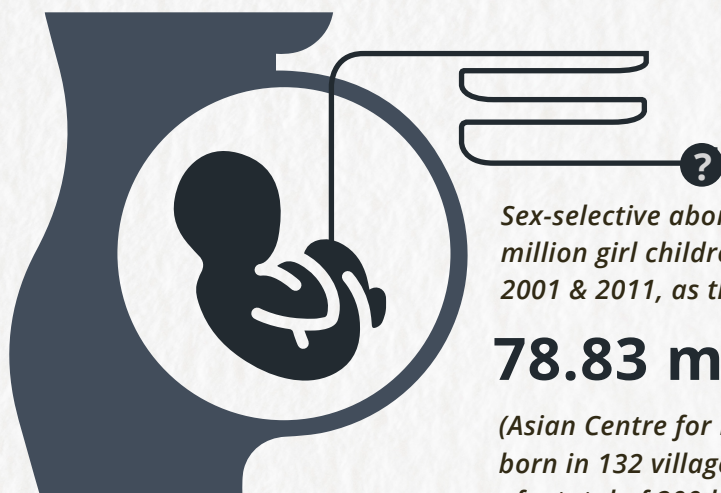
gender discrimination in almost all facets of life: including familial, educational, economic, and societal, and objectification and violence are more the norm than the exception.²





Several strides have been made in addressing the more overt inequities (including educational gaps, employment, etc.) by the state and several philanthropic initiatives over the years, yet most of the problems continue to plague society. Most of them stem from the social structure,

cultural norms & expectations, all of which are deeply entrenched in the Indian psyche. Laws and policies are inadequate to address these and innovative and sustained interventions are needed at the grassroots to bring about this paradigm shift.



Sex-selective abortions, while outlawed, are still prevalent. 3 million girl children are estimated to have been “lost” between 2001 & 2011, as the number of girl children reduced from

78.83 million to 75.84 million

(Asian Centre for Human Rights, 2016)³. No girl children were born in 132 villages in Uttarakhand, between May-July 2019, out of a total of 200 births in the villages.⁴

*The literacy level of women, according to the 2011 Census, is 65.5%⁵ and an estimated **40%** of adolescent girls (15-18 years) do not attend educational institutions (NCPCR, 2017).⁶ Marriage & housework are the top reasons why girls are usually prevented from attending or completing their education.⁷ India has the dubious distinction of being home to the largest number of child brides in the world, contributing 1/3rd of total child brides in the world (UNICEF, 2020)⁸*



According to the McKinsey Foundation (2015), women in India only contribute towards 17% of the economic output. Much of what women do is unrecognised and unappreciated.

Increasing women's participation in the organised labour market can realistically result in a

16% *increase in India's GDP, an increase of 0.7 trillion dollars.⁹*

Sports as a driving force of an equitable society

Several studies show that India is not really a sporting nation. Only 29% of women in India participate in any kind of sport or physical activity.¹⁰ A UNDP (2015) study on workforce aspirations found that only 4.4% in urban, 0.8% in peri-urban, and 1% of women in rural expressed interest in pursuing sports or performing arts.¹¹ Even if they

get past all these hurdles and do find themselves involved with sports, girls drop out of sports at double the rate that boys do.¹² These numbers are symptomatic of a larger problem, and an indicator of the need to pave the path towards increased awareness of the self and having greater and equitable access to public spaces.







“

On the field, it is not about who you are, where you are from, and how long it has taken you to get there. Sports allow us all to dream a little.

- Swapna Barman,

*Indian heptathlete and 2019
Arjuna awardee*

”

Over the past few years, sports have been identified as a powerful tool to empower young girls and women. Shining examples like Mary Kom, Dhutee Chand and Geeta Phogat have inspired many young girls across the country to take up sports as a vocation and often use sport as a medium to assert their identity. They have inspired several films where the narrative of sports being a driver of gender equality have been showcased. Several initiatives by the government and civil society organisations have demonstrated that pursuing active sports in the early stages of life could create an environment where young girls can form social connections that can help them expand their worldview beyond their homes and communities, and provide boys with the sensitisation essential for a gender balanced society.



Engaging in sports builds self-esteem amongst adolescents

Several studies have identified low self-esteem as a common problem among young adults in India, especially as they approach adolescence. The drop in self-esteem is highest between primary and secondary school, and girls' self-esteem drops at three times the rate of boys their age, resulting in over 71% of girls who are dissatisfied with the way they are.¹³ If left unaddressed, girls are more likely to grow up to be women

with low self-esteem as well.

Several studies have shown the positive correlation between sports and self-esteem in girls. Girls who participate in sports have a greater feeling of psychological well-being and are oftentimes shown to have a better sense of body image and an enhanced level of physical fitness.¹⁴ Girls that play sports also have been shown to experience less depression throughout their lives.¹⁵



Correlation between sports and cognitive and mental wellbeing

Engagement in extracurricular activities and sports has been shown to have a direct correlation with improved psycho-social functioning and healthy mental behaviour among adolescents¹⁶. Children who participated in goal-driven physical activity were

reported to have a lower rate of inappropriate speech & better social health.¹⁷ Studies have also shown that girls who participate in sporting activities are more content with their lives when compared to those who do not.¹⁸



Sports provides a platform for healthy interaction between genders

For a lot of girls and women, participation in sports provides an arena in which they can outgrow any social isolation by meeting peers who are similar to them, and share knowledge and experiences that can help in their growth.¹⁹ Female athletes often benefit more from sport participation than male athletes²⁰. The social benefits of sport participation

encompasses unity, community participation, youth development, and more.²¹ According to a UN (2007) study on women, sports and gender equality, sports also open new arenas of socialization for adolescent girls, who have few opportunities to create new bonds above and beyond traditional family structures.²²



Building a new generation of leaders and fostering social change.

Sport has always been a preferred domain to foster leadership skills.²³ On and off the field, sports can play a key role in cultivating leadership skills, decision-making power, resilience, and the confidence needed to succeed, lead and deliver for their communities and countries.²⁴

This can be especially rewarding for girls from underprivileged backgrounds, where they might have fewer opportunities to be assertive, and be recognized for the same. It could perhaps create the environment for women to become social change agents.²⁵

***Lora Prabhu,
- Co-Founder, CEQUIN***

"There was a lot of conversation about why there was no playing opportunities for girls, so we tied up with the Delhi State Association to create a girls' league, to create those opportunities. We wanted the girls to play in their schools, we wanted other girls to be in the audience, cheering them on. It's pretty tangible what happens in the schools, once they get used to the girls being competitive, it becomes normalized. A lot more girls start aspiring for a better future. It also changes the attitude of the boys."

Reaching the goal through football

In 2011, the CEQUIN team conceptualised and executed Kickstart Equality, a programme that leveraged football as a driver of change. The objective of the programme was to empower young

girls, especially those from vulnerable communities. The programme was kickstarted with a handful of girls from underprivileged, conservative and predominantly Muslim communities being introduced to football.





Once the initial project saw success, it was built into a holistic programme, with its scope expanding from sporadic individual matches to professional, sustained football training and remedial tuition classes that also imparted

life skills training and career counselling for the girls. CEQUIN's theory of change is that football can not only act as an avenue for physical activity, but as a pathway for young girls to dream of a better future.

Why Football?

As Lora Prabhu, co-founder, CEQUIN says, "Most public spaces in India are utilised by women for work or education or other utilitarian purpose and seldom beyond that. How women use & are permitted to use public spaces is representative of the power structure and reshaping this use would be an important step towards achieving gender equity in a more holistic manner." CEQUIN believes that a team sport like football could help change mindsets in girls and the ecosystem around them on the equitable use of public spaces in a community. The programme envisioned

by the team sought to create spaces where girls could engage in active self-expression & creation, expand their social circle, and build leadership skills at an individual and collective level.

The focus was not just reclaiming public spaces for women, but on reclaiming it for the purpose of leisure. It was also seen as a way of a "visible" intervention that could also impact communities around them by normalizing active participation of girls in a contact sport perceived to be a masculine activity.

Mala,
- Age 24

"I had never even thought about playing football. A friend told me about CEQUIN. But once I started, I got hooked on to it. I feel good that I became the first girl in CEQUIN who played state and national levels."



Low Cost

Football is a low-cost sport that requires minimal infrastructure and initial investment compared to other sports.

Potent tool to break gender stereotypes

Women's participation in sports is marred by a lot of stereotypes (e.g., sports are 'unfeminine' or unsafe).²⁶ Encouraging girls to participate in a sport like football is a potent way of challenging and rebut these stereotypes.

Higher Self Esteem Boost

Studies show that teenage girls who play football feel more confident than girls who do not play any sport, or even girls who play other types of sport.

Improved health & physical activity

The combination of sprinting, running, kicking involved in football provides a lot of physical benefits, including increased stamina, better cardiovascular health & muscle strength, reduced body fat, and more.

Team support & encouragement

Team sports can be more encouraging, as the team members are able to check-in on each other (an important factor, particularly in vulnerable communities, when girls can be restricted from practice for several reasons).²⁷

Fostering social connections

Girls who participate in football have attributed a lot of new friendships and mentorships to the game. Research found that girls valued the relationships formed through football more than the relationships created through other activities.²⁸

Holistic well-being

Football has no age restrictions, thereby making it a great vehicle to empower girls from a young age. Being a part of a team has been shown to alleviate anxiety, promote positive body image, and promote goal-oriented behaviour.

As of 2020, Kickstart Equality is a robust program that does not only equip girls at an individual level but also focuses on developing a holistic ecosystem centred on football as a tool of empowerment.

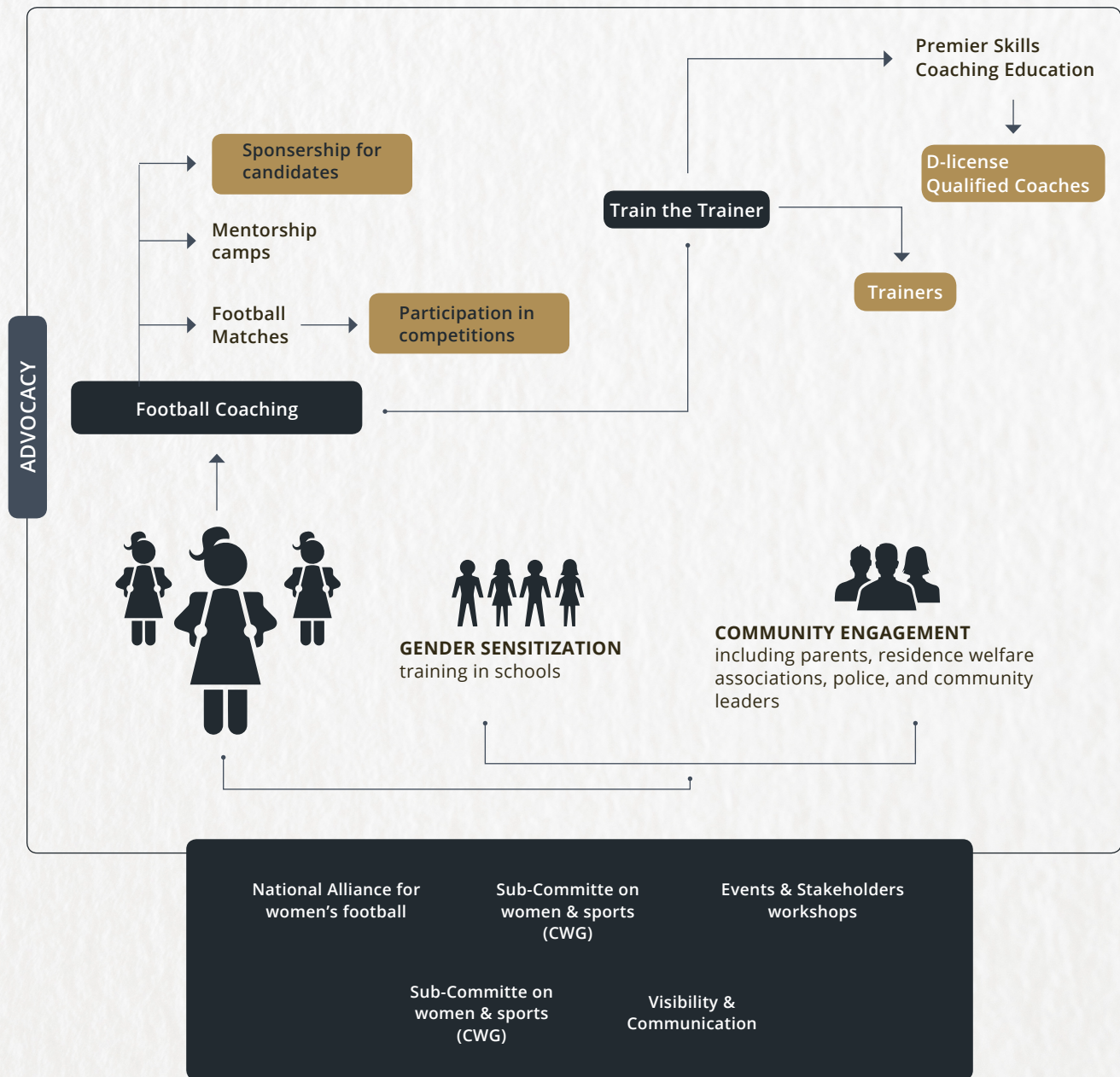


Kickstart Equality: Intervention Toolkit Reaching the goal through football

The programme looks at professional football coaching, gender sensitisation and life skill training in schools and community mobilisation as its three pillars of execution. The

programme also has many advocacy activities built into its intervention model that helps connect it with regulators and influencers.





- **Individual & Team:**
Football & related training for girls (15-20 years) & trainers
- **Organizational Engagement:**
Interventions at organizational level, at schools, committees, and alliances (local, national, and international)
- **Community Mobilization:**
Engagement with larger community (including parents, local stakeholders like RWA, police, local leaders, volunteers through advocacy, mentorship, and competitions)





Timeline of activities

Since its launch in 2011, Kickstart Equality has scaled its impact across multiple cities, stakeholders, and avenues.

2011 | 2012



Individual & Team

- Weekly practice sessions for 40 girls at the Jamia Milia Islamia grounds
- Leadership workshops held in collaboration with PWESCR (Programme for Women's Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights)



Organizational Engagement

- Initiation of Sub-Committee on women and sports, in partnership with UN Agencies and CWG 2010.
- First exhibition matches in Sanskriti School (with Rahul Bose, actor, as a guest of honour), and Modern School (with Ranjan Shodhi, trap shooting silver medallist, as guest of honour)



Community Mobilization

- Exhibition tournaments organized to promote awareness about the programme, and popularize women's football

2013 | 2014



Individual & Team

- Life Skills training and workshops held with football girls, to facilitate learning about patriarchy, economic empowerment, self-defence.
- CEQUIN's football girls participated in Self Defence training organized by the special Police Unit of women & Children department held at the Jamia University.
- CEQUIN's Footballers participated in International Yoga Day Celebration organised by Jamia Millia Islamia
- A friendly match with CEQUIN organized by Goals for Girls USA, (an international programme that connects girls from the US with their peers across the globe) and the match was won by CEQUIN team
- Premier Skills Coach Educators collaborated with, CEQUIN and conducted 'Training of Trainers' Camp enabling the coaches to become competent
- The Delhi Dreams Football Tournament, Supported by AVFC (Action Villa football club) and Save the Dream, organised by CEQUIN at Sanskriti School, comprising of ten girls football teams from Delhi schools. Competitive matches were held on a knock-out basis.
- Two of the most talented footballers in the team, mala & Afreen, were given a fully funded scholarship
- Team participated in numerous football matches across schools in Delhi including the likes of Sanskriti School and American Embassy School, and more.
- CEQUIN team members provided tuitions and extra academic support for the football girls appearing for board exams, to improve academic performances and lower drop-out rates.
- Representatives from Save the Dream (an International Centre for Sports Security initiative) provided technical training and motivation to the football girls
- Health camps organized to promote awareness on health & related behaviour and practices.



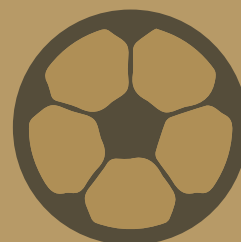
Organizational Engagement

- Sara Abdullah Pilot, co-founder, appointed the chairman of All India Football Federation Women's Committee.
- First Round Table on '*Roadmap for Women's Soccer in India*' organized with support from UNDP, involving the government, AIFF, FIFA, NGOs, and corporates



Community Mobilization

- Friendly match with Magic Bus, with Ms. Monika Stabbs (FIFA Consultant) as the chief guest.
- Advocacy through the round table to promote women's football in India.
- Raising awareness about the team by participating in the Modern School Fashion Show



2014 | 2015



Organizational Engagement

- Sara Abdullah Pilot, Co founder of CEQUIN received an award from ASSOCHAM, which enabled her to fund two full scholarships for the CEQUIN football team
- CEQUIN participated in FIFA Regional Women's Football Development Seminar



Community Mobilization

- Sanskriti School Football Festival organized by CEQUIN in partnership with Aston Villa Football Club (AVFC). Coach Corinne Mitchell and star player Jade Richards from AVFC introduced the school girls to football



2015 | 2016



Individual & Team

- Aveka Singh & Pratibha Singh (the two best performers at the tournament) were sponsored by Save the Dream, to attend a week-long football camp at Aston Villa, UK
- 4 senior footballers from the team obtained their D-license (in partnership with AIFF), making them qualified football coaches
- CEQUIN team placed 3rd at the Slum Soccer Women's National Championships in Kolkata
- CEQUIN's sports coordinator commenced with a 'Training of Trainers' camp with a goal of creating peer coaches who can earn their livelihoods as a coach, while giving back to the community
- The team received international exposure by meeting with the Australian Women's Cricket T20 team



Organizational Engagement

- CEQUIN's director Ms Lora Prabhu was interviewed by Radio BBC
- CEQUIN's football project film screening showcased on a giant screen in front of a packed stadium just before the commencement of a Premier League match
- Delhi Dreams', a Save the Dream Foundation project (in partnership with CEQUIN) was screened in New York, followed by a presentation on CEQUIN's initiatives



Community Mobilization

- CEQUIN engaged with the parents and families of the football girls to ensure continual support
- Save the Dream had gifted 50 Android mobile phones to the CEQUIN football girls and a photography workshop, conducted by the well known Indian Photographer Mr. Sohrab Hura, was organised for these girls
- CEQUIN expanded its Football Program in New Friends Colony, Canal Colony Okhla Head, Gaffar Manzil and partnership with The Creative thinker NGO for girls community football
- Hindustan Times' Great India Football Action featured the CEQUIN team competing with the boy's team and giving them stiff competition
- Kickstart Equality campaign conducted gender sensitization training in 10 prominent Delhi Schools
- The Kickstart Equality social media campaign was led by young students from various Delhi schools and was launched at the Australian High Commission

2016 | 2017



Individual & Team

- Multiple rounds of football camps held for girls across government schools in Mewat
- CEQUIN's peer coaches (Anne, Mala, Afreen, Somi, Anjali, Madhu, Mamta) attended Premier Skills Coach Education training Programme at Mumbai
- Goals for Girls Interaction with CEQUIN's Football Girls and CEQUIN organised exhibition match at Gaffar Manzil, Jamia Nagar
- Learning visit to CEQUIN by 32 Trainers from CREA, Jamia Nagar
- Field visit by Jackie Skinner, Director of Goals for Girls, USA, organized a friendly match at Dhobi Ghat Jamia Nagar
- Two of CEQUIN's girls (Shaista & Shazia) got a Bachelor's degree program scholarship from Rai University, Ahmedabad Gujarat
- FIFA delegation came to CEQUIN's and they met footballers & organized Friendly matches in New Friends Colony
- The girls participated in International Day of the Girl Child & International Yoga Day
- Arshaha an under 10 footballer, was sponsored by AGS Four Winds
- Senior footballer and coach, Anne Aiza Khan was awarded 'Best New Referee' at the National Inclusion Cup in Mumbai
- Anne Aiza Khan also represented India at the Homeless World Cup in Oslo, Norway
- Mala played inter University, state level, Women's senior National Championship & National Championship Tournament
- Afreen played inter University, state level, & National Championship Tournament
- Namrata, Tuba, Anne, Fatima & Aaliya played State level in Gujarat
- Anjali played National Championship Tournament
- Rani played U-15 Sub Junior National Level, Junior national level, School National level & Khelo India U-17 state level



Organizational Engagement

- The football programme was introduced in Mewat, Haryana (a male-dominated district with few opportunities for girls), aiming to build confidence among the girls and shatter stereotypes associated with the sport
- District level inter-school girls' football tournament was organised in Mewat. the match was covered with media coverage by Radio Mewat.



Community Mobilization

- CEQUIN provided inputs to the strategic meeting held by Premier Skills training in Mumbai and focused on leveraging grassroot level talent and create more opportunities for young adolescent girls which will make them aspirational
- Harshini Rathore (Intern) conducted Yoga class with CEQUIN's Football girls
- Conducted Self defence trainings with girls in 5 KGVs in Mewat Haryana
- CEQUIN expanded its Football Program in Haji Colony for girls community football

2017 | 2018



Individual & Team

- 5 girls from the CEQUIN team were invited to train 45 underprivileged girls from UP & Bihar, in partnership with CREA
- CEQUIN partners with Jamia Millia Islamia to commemorate International Yoga Day
- CEQUIN's Mala & Afreen participated in a self defence training organised at the Vasant Vihar Police station
- This was done as a part of 'Leadership Building and Empowerment through Sports
- The football players and coaches attended a 'Youth League Programme' organized by Slum Soccer



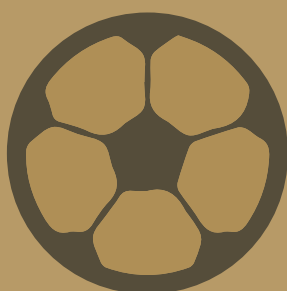
Organizational Engagement

- CEQUIN ran football camps in 4 government schools in Delhi, culminating in a football tournament. These camps did not only focus on technical football skills, but also on gender, education, livelihoods, health, and more
- Sara Abdullah Pilot, co-founder of CEQUIN was a panel member at the Australian High Commission's workshop on 'Women in Sports'
- Lora Prabhu was invited to speak at 'CII Scorecard 2017', annual sports conference on importance of sports as a tool of leadership, empowerment, and gender equality
- CEQUIN conducted football camps with 25 Govt. Schools in Delhi. The main focus on technical football skills, but also on gender, education, livelihoods, health, self Defence training and more



Community Mobilization

- CEQUIN convenes a National Alliance for Women's Football in India
- Sara Pilot also met with HRH Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex, who was keen to learn more about the football initiative
- Tablets were provided to the students so as to make their learning effective and fun
- Gender and sports awareness sessions conducted in Mewat, with out-of- school girls, with an intention of encouraging adolescent girls to aspire beyond the home



2018 | 2019



Individual & Team

- The CEQUIN team was invited to the 'Goals for Girls Leadership, Summit' in Utah, USA, a partnership that opened a number of opportunities for the girls
- The senior footballers got the opportunity to work as coaches, pitch & venue managers in the 'Football for Girls'
- Empowerment Project', funded by the Government of Australia
- Three footballers & Lora Prabhu interviewed on RJ Rich's Big FM radio show



Organizational Engagement

- First ever Under- 13 Delhi School Girls Football League was organised by CEQUIN with 32 teams from government and private schools, providing opportunities for girls from vulnerable backgrounds to compete on an equal platform . This was in collaboration with Football Delhi State Association & Delhi Dynamos Football Club
- Lora Prabhu was invited to be a member of the CII National Committee on Sports



Community Mobilization

- CEQUIN organized the National Alliance Conclave (with participants from AIFF, state associations, clubs, academies, UNESCO, UNDP, UN
- Women, bilateral agencies, media, NGOs, and corporates). The objective was to identify how football can be used to enhance women's empowerment across the country
- CEQUIN also participated in several meetings with government officials, ministries, UN Bodies and High Commissions to spark discussions on breaking stereotypes regarding women in sports
- These meetings resulted in India deciding to bid to be the host of FIFA U- 17 Women's World Cup (2020) in India, with the hopes of popularizing football in the country



2019 | 2020



Individual & Team

- 10 girls from CEQUIN became D-License qualified football coaches
- CEQUIN football players, along with Sara Abdullah Pilot, were invited as speakers on Women Economic Forum, where they highlighted how football can empower a girl's life. The footballers got the opportunity to meet with the Hon'ble German Ambassador Mr Walter J Lindner
- The girls also got the opportunity to interact with Australian and German national football players, and learn various techniques from them
- Aveka Singh, who had been scouted by CEQUIN, was made the vice-captain of the U-17 Indian Women's Team, and was awarded the young player of the year award by Football Delhi
- Two Footballers (Mantasha & Nusrat) participated SELF ACADEMYLife Skill workshop organized by CREA NGO in Lucknow
- 23 girls from CEQUIN participated in the "United We Play selection trails"
- FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup India-2020 organized Kick off the Dream-Football Carnival. 40 CEQUIN girls participated in this Festival



Organizational Engagement

- CEQUIN was awarded by FICCI for its efforts in women's empowerment through sports,
- CEQUIN received the 'Best NGO in Football Development' award by Football Delhi
- Sara Pilot was a part of the Indian Delegation at the 69th FIFA Congress at FIFA Women's Football Convention at Paris
- Sara Abdullah Pilot was invited to speak on CII platform on CSR- A Commitment to Fitness, on how sports can be used for upliftment
- CEQUIN was a part of scoping study Laureus Sports for Good
- CEQUIN participated as a resource in the conference "Changing the Game: Sport for Gender Equity and Ending Child Marriage", organized by Pro Sports Development & Girls Not Bride



Community Mobilization

- The Strategy & Planning Conclave for the National Alliance for Women's Football was organized, with support from Australia in India & UNESCO New Delhi
- CEQUIN's advocacy through the National Alliance resulted in India winning the bid for hosting the U-17 FIFA Women's World Cup in 2020
- The National Alliance for Women's Football Round Table Meeting was held, with multiple state associations. Critical challenges, strategies, and action plans were identified to further women's football in the country
- CEQUIN first time initiated "community grassroot girls football league" (CGGFL-19) in Jamia community Haji Colony, 5 teams continuously participating
- CEQUIN expanded its Partnership with Sakshi NGO for football in Jasola Village
- CEQUIN celebrated International Women's Day with 40 Football Girls in Jamia Nagar with a friendly match





Touchpoints across stakeholders

Delhi (2011-2019)

10,882

participants in football matches & tournaments
5047 girls attended practice sessions and camps
4529 girls trained through regular school camps between 2017-19

Mewat (2017-18)

2203 impacted through football camps

16,740 people impacted indirectly

14 recipients of D-license trainings, making them licensed football coaches

465 girls received regular (at least thrice a week) training
1745 beneficiaries of life skills, career counselling, and leadership training workshops

15861 reached through the Kickstart Equality Campaign

Evaluating Impact of Kickstart Equality: 2011-2020

To evaluate the impact of the 'Kickstart Equality' programme on communities where it has been running over nearly a decade, CEQUIN invited niiti consulting.²⁹ The team at niiti consulting started with a thorough literature review and reviewing documents, as well as detailed interviews with

the programme team, based on which a monitoring and evaluation design was prepared. The evaluation methodology adopted for the study is explained in the following section.



Evaluation Methodology :

Primary Research Methodology ¹

The in-depth survey had the following aims:

- To identify direct and indirect impacts on health, or health-seeking behaviour in participating young girls.
- To identify the impact on academic and career aspirations, as well as the development of productive interests.
- To identify the program's direct effects towards kindling interest in sport, and in the development of supportive attributes of camaraderie, competition, and self-confidence.
- To undertake an exploration of parental and societal expectations, community, and gender stereotypes, and to compare these with the girls responses to these issues.
- To assess community inclusion, participation, mobility, and independence of girls in the program, vis-à-vis their peers from the same socio-economic, and geographical background.
- To identify CEQUIN's immediate role in creating opportunities for young girls, and in providing crucial support and guidance to the girls and the community at large.



¹Due to the unexpected lockdown following the spread of coronavirus, all FGDs and detailed interviews were conducted via video calls. Survey questionnaires (google forms) were sent to respondents online.

Sampling

289

girls surveyed (all based in Delhi) :

192 girls who are current/former participants of CEQUIN football program, as the treatment group.

97 non-participants, as a control group.

Three age groups determined

- Age 11 & under
- Age 12-16 (both included)
- Age 17 & above

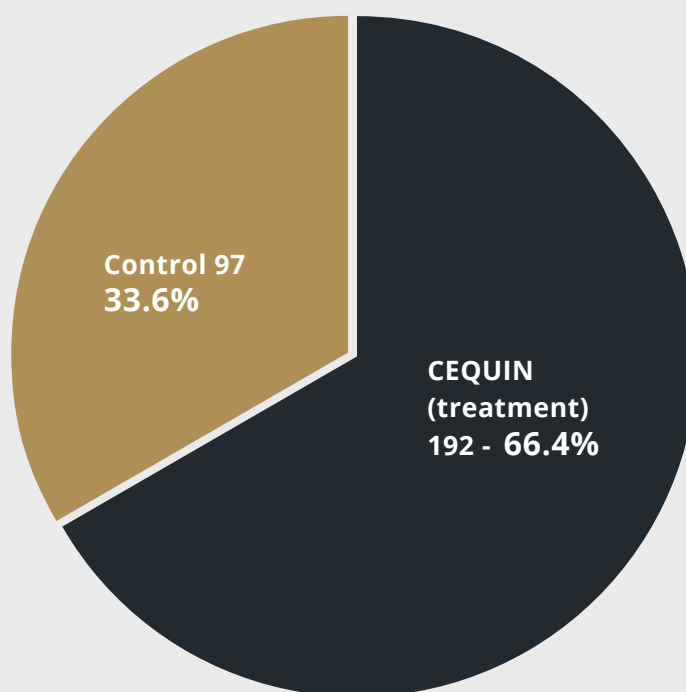


Some questions were omitted for the youngest category of participants, as they were either inapplicable to girls in this age bracket (e.g., questions related to menstrual hygiene), or were too mature for the age (e.g., questions on marital aspirations). Since a baseline study was not conducted by CEQUIN at the inception of the program, for comparison purposes, niiti developed a similar survey for non- participants - 'Control' group (n=97).

The aim was to collect at least 50% of the surveys conducted for the intervention group, but the lockdown and travel restrictions prevented access to communities. This control group consisted of another pool of girls from the same social, economic, and geographical background. This helped us in evaluating indicators that might have other influences, such as age and changing social norms. The Control group was surveyed on questions of general applicability within the community. The responses from the control group were used as a benchmark to compare and identify the causal linkages from the intervention to the impact. Girls in the control group were not asked the questions relevant specifically to the football program.

Post-survey, the other overall age distribution for both groups was similar, but at the extremes, there are a few differences. The youngest Control group girl was 9 years old, while the youngest Treatment group girl was 7 years old. Likewise, the oldest C-girl was 21 y/o, but the oldest T-girl was 27 y/o.

Survey Sample





Research Methodology

Indicators specific to the program were analysed using simple descriptive statistics while the more generally applicable indicators were analysed by comparing the group-wise percentage responses of CEQUIN football girls vis-à-vis the Control group.

Sub-categorizations based on age as well as responses to other questions were used to enable a granular comparison. The validity of quantitative analysis was verified with the extensive qualitative inputs received during the FGDs and interviews.

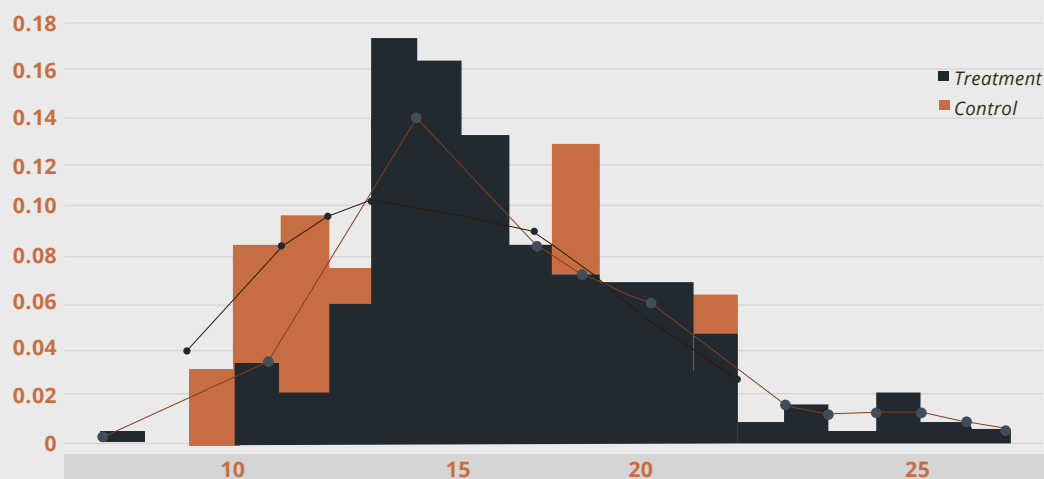
Development of a Logic Model (Log Frame)

A logic model was devised to assess the role played by CEQUIN in furthering the interest of the girls in the sport to improve physical, emotional and social standing. It was prepared based on

background research carried out by niiti along with inputs from CEQUIN. The log frame was finalised after joint discussions between niiti and CEQUIN teams including field staff.

Activities	Output	Outcomes	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment of professional female coaches and participants to conduct football training Facilitators convince parents to let girls be in public spaces Provision of safe public spaces and gender rights training in schools Advocacy initiatives to improve facilities and competitive opportunities for girls Life skills coaching and training to become professional coaches Participation in local, state, national and international events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better physical and mental health amongst the girls Enhanced educational outcomes Improved mobility /use of public spaces Improved decision making and agency (asserting their opinion) Social networks beyond their families and neighbourhood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved mobility and enhanced comfort in public spaces Girls develop ability to assert and express their opinion Late marriage and better health and hygiene Increased exploration of opportunities to make them financially independent Inspiring girls to take up sports and vocations Interaction with all genders without any inhibition Demonstration of leadership qualities and broadened horizon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of young girls into self-aware and confident women Realisation by girls on the importance of having a self-identity Transformation of girls into youth who look at genders equitably in words, thoughts, and actions Pursuing opportunities as a step towards financial independence Setting a precedent in their own communities as change agents

Age Distribution of Respondents



Data Collection

Data was collected by the niiti staff through online channels (online surveys, video calls, phone) and was facilitated by the CEQUIN field staff. The data collected in the surveys was triangulated with the

qualitative evidence received through exploratory interviews and focus group discussions and the same has been analysed and documented in this report.



Exploratory interviews:

Conducted for the 10 girls from the initial pool who got regular football training. The girls were randomly chosen from the pool of survey respondents. The aim was to gather anecdotal evidence to identify critical parameters that were not made obvious through the initial survey. The girls were asked questions about their experience with the programme, learnings, and journey, with a focus on identifying how the girls viewed themselves & how their overall outlook changed.



Focused Group Discussions (FGDs):

To understand the perspective of girls who attended the school camps, 3 FGDs were held. The girls who participated in the FGDs had attended the school camp in the last 3 years. The girls were asked questions about their experience, learnings and feedback on the school camps organized by CEQUIN, where they underwent intense training almost on a weekly basis throughout the year. The interactive method allowed the team to explore how the girls differed in terms of their learning, and their takeaways compared to the regular players who received a more intense and professional football training.



The Power of Football: Analysing Kickstart's Impact

Impact on Health

The impact of health is one of the most crucial (and desired) effects of football. The study tracks the effect of football & the CEQUIN programme on the girls' health through the following four elements:

- Height
- Weight
- Food and Dietary Habits
- Menstrual Hygiene



“

When women take care of their health, they become their best friend.

- Maya Angelou

”

Height Comparison

At first look, it seemed like there is not much of a variation when it comes to the height

of both groups, but careful analysis throws lights on some significant differences.

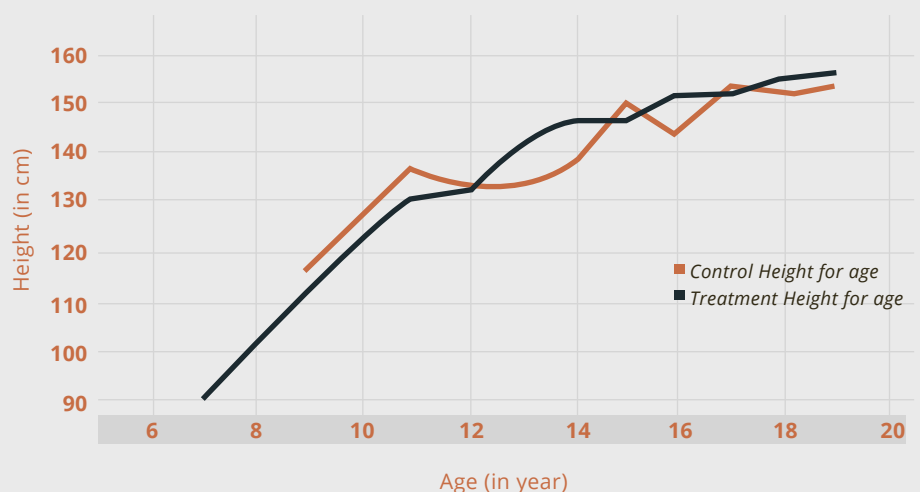


The girls who play football are shown to have a more consistent growth in height, when compared to girls who do not play football (who are likely to have much sharper rises and declines in height growth).

The graph plots the average heights of girls at each age, for both groups. The plot has been redacted for those above the age of 19. While there does not appear to be a major difference in the heights of the groups, it can be seen that during the

formative pubescent years of 12-17, the growth curve of the girls in the participant group displays a more consistent rate of growth, while that of the Control group seems to lose pace and flatten.

Height Comparison Treatment v/s Control



The dotted lines represent the growth reference chart for girls, as published by the Indian Academy of Paediatrics (2015).

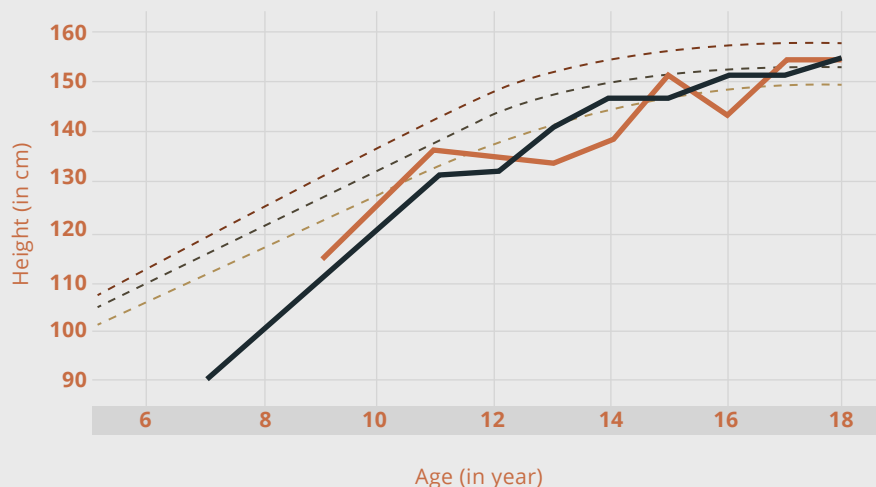
³¹ As seen in the chart, for ages 13 & above, the average height of the Treatment group increases above the lowest 10 percentile, and aligns with the 25% reference rate by age

16. This shows that there is some visible improvement in growth rates, in comparison to the average heights in the community & control group. This leaves the possibility of improvement in the future, with an aim towards the 50-percentile reference line.

■ Control Weight for age
■ Treatment Weight for age

--- 10% ref
--- 25% ref
--- 50% ref

Mean Height Comparison (Treatment v/s Control)

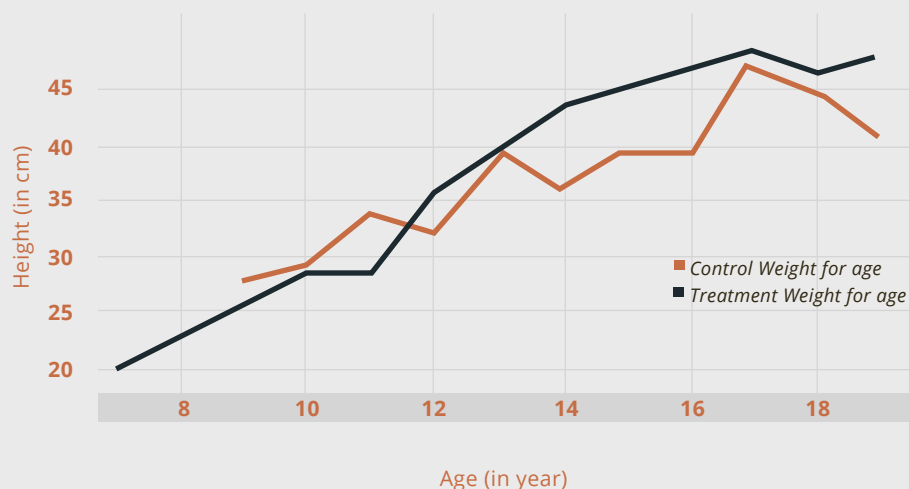


Weight

Comparing with the average weight across the ages for both the groups along with

the IAP national average (IAP, 2015), the results are quite encouraging.

Weight Comparison Treatment v/s Control





The weight comparison between girls actively participating in the programme and the control group also tracks like the height comparison. The weight of girls who play football grows at a more consistent rate, when compared to the other group.

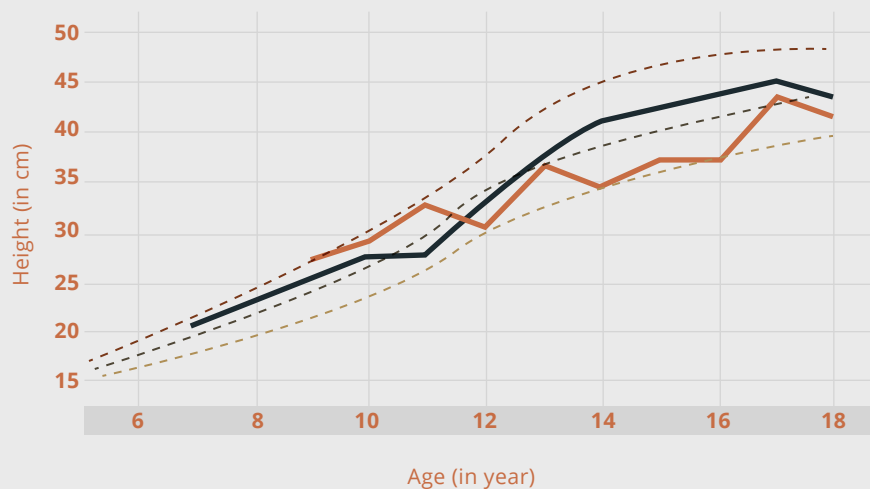
The girls who are a part of the football program has a better weight than the control group, during the formative years. The girls from the control group also do not put on enough weight as the years go on, which is not an issue found in the treatment group. 50.2% of adolescent girls in India are underweight ³², so the result

among the treatment group is quite encouraging, as it shows that despite belonging to marginalized communities, the girls in the treatment group are able to develop to a healthy weight. Girls in the treatment group also reported that their appetites had increased since they started the program.

■ Control Weight for age
■ Treatment Weight for age

--- 10% ref
--- 25% ref
--- 50% ref

Mean Weight Comparison (Treatment v/s Control)



Anne,
- Age - 23

"I was quite weak & fell ill frequently. My family told me not to play football. But I insisted and joined the programme. Once I started playing, I took better care of my diet and stopped eating junk food. Now I hardly fall ill."

Food and Nutrition

Both the groups were asked to rate from 1-5 (based on the Likert scale), how often in a

week they would eat a certain type of food.

Types of Food



Pulses & vegetables



Dairy Products such as Milk, paneer, cheese, etc.



Chicken, Meat, eggs, or any such non-vegetarian protein sources



Street food such as pani puri, bhelpuri, biryani, pav bhaji, etc.



Sweets, chocolates, ice-cream, or candy

The girls participating in the football training sought out healthy foods and were very aware of the impact of food consumption and nutrition on their bodies. This aligns with published research on dietary habits of adolescent athletes vs. non-athletes.³³ However, the girls were restricted by their ability to determine

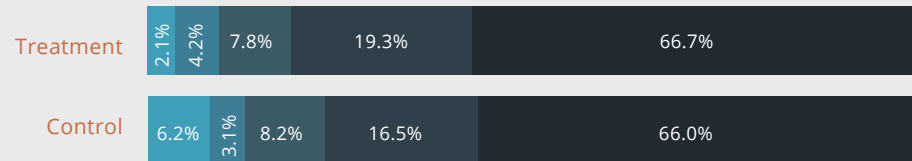
what they ate, since they were dependent mostly on the nature and quantity of food consumed in their families. There was adequate evidence received during the exploratory interviews on what the girls would prefer to consume, should they have the financial independence to make the choice.



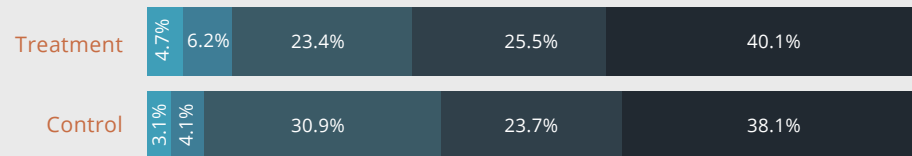
Both groups consume similar foods at home, but the difference lies in 'outside food' consumption. When the girls are given the option to choose what they eat, the girls who play football demonstrate much better knowledge of good nutrition and refrain from eating junk food. Their behaviour and leaning was towards consuming more healthy foods and taking care of their fitness and stamina when compared to the girls who do not play football.



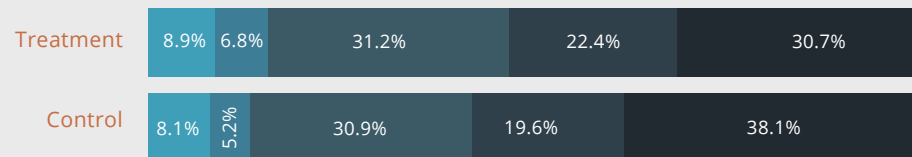
How often in a week do you eat pulses & vegetables?



How often in a week do you eat dairy products?



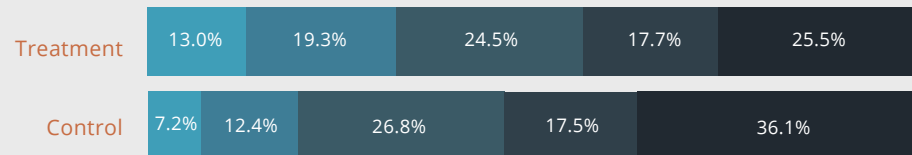
How often in a week do you eat Chicken, Meat or Eggs?



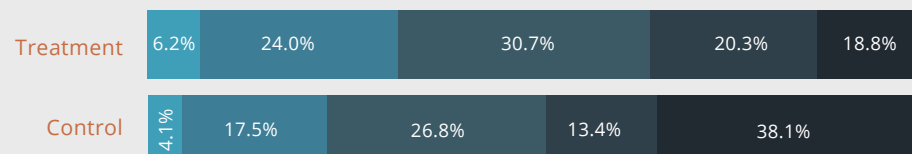
We can see that for the first three items (pulses, vegetables, and dairy products), there is not much of a variance between the two groups.

This can be attributed to the traditional north Indian food palette, which is usually abundant in pulses, vegetables, milk, paneer, chicken, eggs, etc.

How often in a week do you eat street food?



How often in a week do you eat sweets, chocolates and candies?



The variation is much more significant when comparisons are made with regards to food that one would usually not get at home. While 36.1% of the control group reports to have consumed some form of street or junk food almost every day, only 25.5% of the treatment group seem to consume street food on a daily basis. Similarly, while 32.3% of the control group reported to 'never' or 'rarely' consume junk food, only 19.6% of the control group falls in this category.

Similar patterns can be seen in the consumption of sweets.

While 51.5% of the control group reported consuming sweets, chocolates, and candy 'often' or 'almost every day', only 39.1% of the treatment group does the same. In the heat map, darker colours represent higher frequency of consumption, and lighter colours represent lower consumption frequency.

*Iqra Khanam,
Age-27
(tuition teacher, mother)*

"When I was playing football, I was conscious about healthier food as I knew I have to keep myself fit. Now that I don't play anymore, I don't pay so much attention to my diet."

	Dietary Habits (Treatment)					Dietary Habits (Control)				
	Sweets & candy	Street food	Chicken, Meat & Eggs	Dairy Products	Pulses & Vegetables	Sweets & candy	Street food	Chicken, Meat & Eggs	Dairy Products	Pulses & Vegetables
Never	6	13	8	4	2	4	7	8	3	6
Rarely	23	19	6	6	4	17	12	5	4	3
Sometimes	30	24	31	23	7	26	26	28	30	8
Often	20	17	22	25	19	13	17	19	23	16
Always	18	25	30	40	66	38	35	38	38	65





Menstrual Hygiene

Girls who are a part of the programme are more aware of menstrual hygiene and use menstrual hygiene materials at a slightly higher rate compared

to the control group. Moreover, both groups use menstrual products at a much higher rate than the national average as well.



The girls who are part of the programme were active during their periods and shared that they actively played even while menstruating.

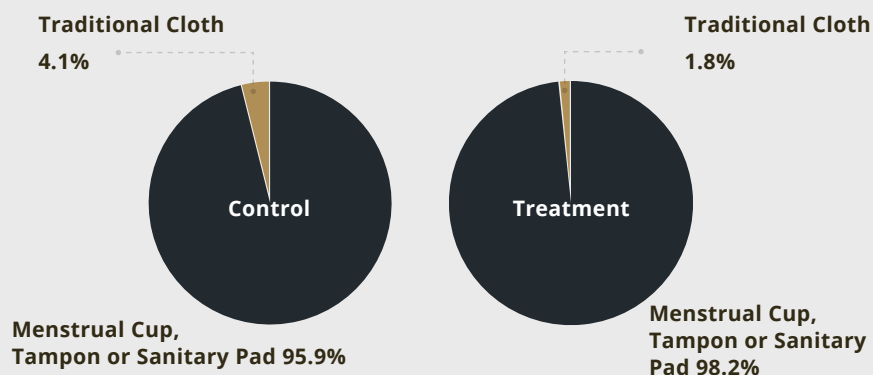
The evidence that the girls were active and played even during their periods is a significant point of interest, as menstrual taboos play a big role when it comes to participation in sports. Parents, and oftentimes, the girls themselves, feel that girls should not participate in sports while menstruating³⁴. Regular

exercise can definitely improve menstrual health through regulation of weight and reducing cramps, so it could be inferred that this change of mindset would have a positive impact on a lot of girls as they grow into women and bear children.

Jannat
Age-17

"Earlier, I used to sit in the corner during my periods, but now I feel it is OK to play. I can run continuously, for as much time as the coach instructs, even during my periods."

Menstrual Hygiene Material



This question was only asked to girls who were above age 12. Of these, some reported that they have not commenced menstruating yet. Though the data is similar among both groups, the treatment group fares slightly better, with only 1.8% using traditional cloth, as compared to the 4.1% in the control group. It is to be

noted that both groups fare much better than the national average (where 45.5% use cloth or cloth pads).³⁵ This could be attributed to them living in a metropolis with adequate awareness about the use and availability of menstrual hygiene products.

Education

Education is an important metric of the programme, which aims to increase opportunities for the girls involved, and enable them to explore opportunities for self-growth & financial independence. Adolescent girls, in particular, are at a risk of dropping out (due to work, household chores, marriage, and more), as evidenced by the fact that 39.4% of adolescent girls in the country being

out-of-school.³⁶ Girls who are a part of the programme pursue higher education at a higher rate (when compared to the control group). More significantly, playing football has increased their attention spans, and their ability to manage time.

Jyoti
Age-15

“While I was playing football, I was constantly told that it will affect my studies. I feel playing regularly actually helped me manage time better and I concentrated better when I was studying. Now that I am not playing, studies are being taken for granted.”

Treatment
Control

Percentage of girls pursuing Higher Education (of age 17 & above)

Treatment

48.4%

Control

30%

The Same
A bit more attentive
A lot more attentive

Do you feel more attentive in school since you have started playing football?

12.0%

24.5%

63.5%

As can be seen, a larger portion of the treatment group has either completed or is currently pursuing higher education (48.4%), in comparison to the control group (30%). A significant part of the program focuses on developing aspirations among the girls. This is done by giving them exposure to people from various backgrounds & by building valuable soft skills. The higher percentage of girls pursuing higher education is a result of this aspiration building; not just a spontaneous next step.

Amongst the treatment group, an overwhelming 88% felt that their attentiveness had increased, with 63.5% claiming they were a lot more attentive

than before they started the sport. A review of 22 studies analysing the relationship between cognitive strength & attention and cardiorespiratory exercises showed that there is a significant connection between the two; and the survey's findings are compliant with the research.³⁷

This is significant because both parents and teachers harbour the misconception that sports would distract from studies, and would make the students suffer in class, but both research and the lived experience of the girls proves otherwise.



Sadiya
Age-15
(a first year B.A an English Hons student)

"Studying is important. I want to study a lot...I want to be a professional employee in a good company. I want to work hard."



Samreen,
Age- 14

Samreen carries the confidence and clarity of mind which even 25-year olds may not have. She started playing football with CEQUIN at the age of 11 and has been efficiently managing her academics along with football since then.

She aspires to become a pilot and knows which stream to opt for & has figured out that she needs to work on her English-speaking skills, to turn her dream into reality. 5 feet 4 inches tall Samreen, one of the tallest in her class is elated about her height and knows that since she is still in a growing phase, she will become taller.

When one speaks to her, it indeed seems that she will grow into a young woman who moves ahead with confidence and inspires with her being.

Thoughts and choices on marriage

Marriage is one of the main reasons why girls drop out of school or discontinue their preferred hobbies and extracurricular pursuits. Parents are reluctant to allow their adolescent daughters to pursue football or any form of public activity after a particular ('marriageable') age. The same was observed in this study. To identify whether the programme had an impact on the girls' aspirations when it comes to marriage (especially regarding their right to choose), this question was posed to girls above age 12 who were

unmarried at the time of the survey.

As we can see, the difference between the two groups is noticeable. The number of girls who feel they would have a say in their marriage, or have the ability to assert themselves is roughly the same for both groups. However, a larger proportion of girls in the treatment group feels they would have some control over the decision in comparison to the control group (59% vs 50% respectively).

Mohammed Amin
(Project Officer, KickStart Equality)

"The girls are told 'Sure, go finish 10th-12th, study, play football, but then you need to know how to do housework, and then you need to get married'- this is a major issue that we grapple with."



The girls in the treatment group seem to have an understanding that a delayed marriage is better for them, and given their age and relatively higher maturity are able to negotiate better with their families

The girls were asked what age they would like to be married, if at all. It is interesting to see here that for the first three bars, which represent lower age, the control group responses tower above the responses of the treatment group, in percentage terms.

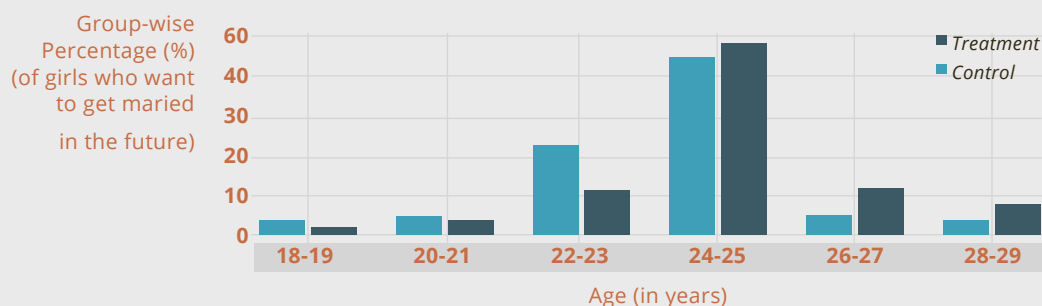
However, this pattern reverses for higher age groups.

Girls from both treatment and

control groups seem to have similar orientations in the family towards marriage, but the girls in the treatment group seem to desire marriage much later than girls in the control group.

When the girls were also asked- "At what age do girls in your community usually get married?". The mean and median answer to this question was 21.7 and 22, respectively.

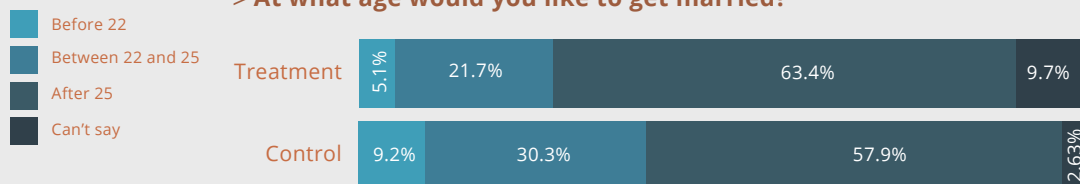
At what age would you prefer to get married? (Responses by girls of age 12 and older)



It is significant to note that a much higher percentage of girls (9.7%) in the treatment groups chose to respond with a “Can’t say” to the question on the age when they would like to be married, when compared to the girls in the control group (2.6%).

This could be interpreted, based on evidence collected during the exploratory interviews and FGDs that they wanted to wait and make the choice based on the options.

> At what age would you like to get married?



As can be seen on the graph, only 5.1% of the treatment group desired to be married before the average community age (22 years), in comparison to 9.2% in the control group.

At the other end, 63.4% want to be married after 25 in the treatment group, and 57.9% for the control group.

Manisha
Age-19
(Graduate Student)

“If my parents find a suitable boy for marriage who does not allow me to work, I will not marry that guy. I want my future husband to accept me as I am and support me in realising my aspirations.”



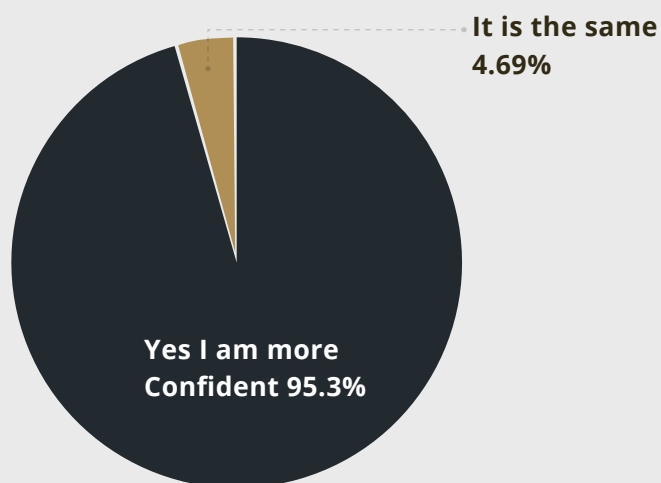
Confidence & Gender-Identity

95.3% of the girls in the CEQUIN participant group claimed that the football program has directly led to an increase in their self-confidence.

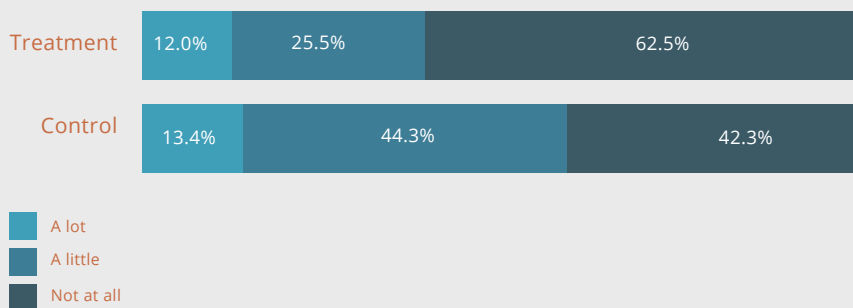
Girls in the community often have extremely limited and restricted interactions with the opposite gender, so we also asked both the Control, and the Treatment groups if they felt self-conscious while interacting with boys.

While the proportion of girls who responded that they feel very self-conscious is about the same in both groups, we see a stark contrast when we consider the proportion of girls who responded that they do not feel any hesitation at all while interacting with boys. While only 42.3% of the Control group gave this response, a whopping 62.5% of the Treatment group answered that they feel no qualms during interactions with the opposite gender.

Do you feel your confidence has improved?



Do you feel self-conscious in front of boys?





**Anne Aiza Khan,
Player in Slum Soccer World Cup 2017 in Norway**

Anne Aiza Khan started playing football at the age of 13 and in the past 10 years has been recognised and rewarded for her talent and hard work. Among other medals and accolades, she values the opportunity to represent India as a forward player in Slum Soccer World Cup 2017 in Norway as her crowning glory. She is a graduate in History and a professional football coach now, training football teams at CEQUIN, The British School, Delhi Football Club etc.

She challenged her own barriers during her journey, since she was driven to get what she wanted- to keep playing football. Her family was not supportive when she used to feel the fatigue from the practices, consequently, she stopped expressing the same to her family. She used to wear leggings below her shorts initially, which were uncomfortable, and so she just took the courage and played only in shorts in a Kolkata tournament a few years back. She says it was liberating in many ways.

Anne is determined to give back to the community as she says her experience with football has taught her that. She started an NGO Fairy Fari Foundation at the age of 18, initially to provide a channel to underprivileged school dropouts to focus on constructive activities instead of whiling away their time smoking and playing cards. She donates Rs. 40,000 per month to her NGO from her monthly earnings.

Family

Family is a key stakeholder in the CEQUIN programme, as they are the earliest decision-makers in the girls' lives. Some of the biggest barriers to girls' entry and advancement in sports has been the parents' attitude towards the same, especially due to assumptions about sports being 'unfeminine' or 'lacking in opportunity', or even 'unsafe'.

Mohammed Amin, the project officer, explains the significant challenges in convincing parents to allow their girls to participate in the programme and mobilizing communities.

Parents tend to be concerned about letting girls play football, especially after a particular age (believing the girls would be opening themselves up to "harmful circumstances").

Some parents also have an issue with girls being “absent from home”, the perception

being that their focus on completing household chores is reduced.



There's a limited difference between the two groups in terms of decision-making within the family. This indicates a potential area of interest for future programmes. Focus on the family can help expand the impact of the program, by enhancing the girls' say in everyday decision making, as a part of the household.

Jyoti
Age-15

"I really like playing football, but I am not being supported by my parents. They let me play when I was in junior grades. But now they feel I should focus on my studies. If they allow me, I will resume playing football, as I really enjoy it"

We did find evidence that many girls, especially those who were not supported by their parents, were pressured to quit playing the sport, despite their personal aspirations being otherwise.

Attribution rate from pursuing their aspirations would be a critical parameter for CEQUIN to focus if they want a more sustainable impact.

We recommend a deeper focus on community mobilisation and interventions with parents as the programme scales to address this challenge.



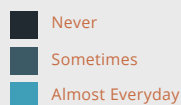
Jaya
Age-19

"I fight with my brother about him being let off easier when it comes to participating in household chores. I tell him 'Don't try to avoid household work just because you're a boy. Will you treat your future wife and daughter also like this?'"

This question around the ability to assert themselves was posed to girls above the age of 12.

Similar to the data on decision making freedom on marital decisions, there

is some perceptible but not a remarkable difference between the percentages of girls in treatment group vs. control group in terms of how much say they have in family decisions.



Does your family talk to you before making important family decisions?



'This can be a key area of focus in the future. Decisions, especially regarding education, employment, and marriage are often made by the family.'

The study has brought out sharply that all the parameters where the family has a higher say, the ability of the girls to go against and assert themselves

becomes limited.

The family also acts as a stepping stone between the individual and society. Since one of the overarching goals of the program are to promote social change through sport, the family should be a key player.

Samreen
Age-14

"I was always an under confident person, but now, I face no issues in asserting myself in a group. My community is not very supportive of girls going out, but I am extremely blessed that my family is so supportive of me."

Increasing Mobility

Mobility is an important aspect to consider, when it comes to assessing confidence, and agency to access public spaces. It also is a critical parameter of the extent of exposure the girls get as a part of the programme. Being mobile and the ability to travel at will, increases their independence as well as provides them with a wider range of exposure than they would have access to, if they were restricted to traveling only between their homes and schools.

The hope is that the exposure would allow the girls to aspire to greater heights.

At a societal level, CEQUIN's focus on increasing the girls' mobility is also about reclaiming public spaces for women. Usually, when women do engage with public spaces, it is for more 'accepted' tasks, like school, tuition, work, or shopping, and it is restricted to 'respectable' hours.

Lora Prabhu,
- Co-Founder, CEQUIN

"We were looking at sports as an intervention to build girls' capacities to negotiate, navigate and claim public spaces; arm them with effective tools to break barriers to their public access and to challenge traditional gender roles. It was a deliberate decision."

CEQUIN sought to challenge this dichotomous public/private divide and normalize the idea of women going out for leisure purposes.

competitions or events, has had a significant impact on their own confidence and ability to be independent and mobile.

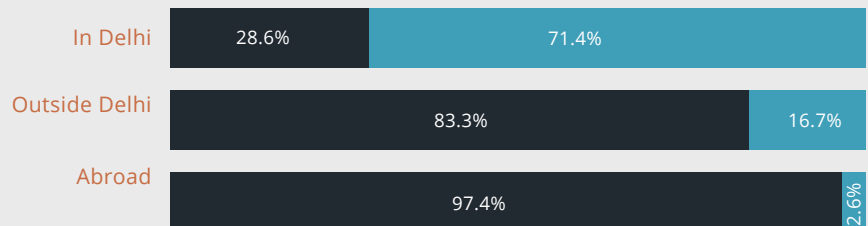
Participation in football, especially travelling out for



Girls who are a part of the programme are also more independent than their counterparts, traveling alone and in greater frequency.

 No
 Yes

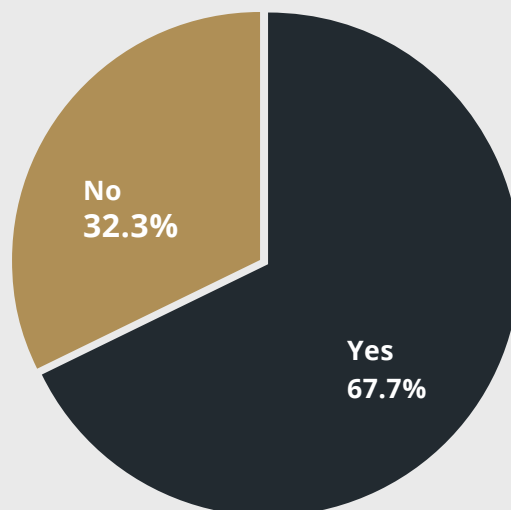
Have you travelled outside for football matches?



Namrata,
Age-26

"I started traveling alone after I finished school. I can travel even interstate by myself. I was scared initially, but travelling out for football tournaments, especially as a coach made me realise that I can do it."

Have you participated in any tournaments?



Out of the 192 girls in the treatment group, a vast majority has participated in football tournaments. 71.4% of the girls responded that they have travelled within Delhi to participate in football matches, whereas 16.7% have travelled outside Delhi, and 2.6% have travelled out of the country to participate in or attend matches. The programme seems to have given some amount of mobility & exposure to a majority of the girls.

The study could find a high degree of correlation between the exposure the girls get when travelling outside familiar spaces (through travelling for matches), and their ability to navigate public spaces independently, without inhibitions and apprehensions.

To understand whether the girls' mobility was impacted

by football, this question was posed to all the girls above the age of 12.

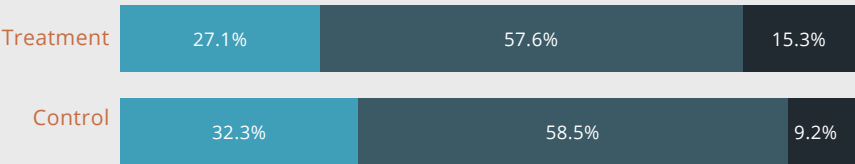
When compared as a whole, there seems like there is no variation, but when split into two age groups 12-17 and 18 & above, the differences become obvious. Among the girls who are 18 years & older, and are a part of the programme, there's a marked increase in the level of mobility when compared to the Younger girls, conforming to the normal patterns for teenagers who experience more mobility when they get older.



How often do you go out other than to school, college, tuition or sports practice?



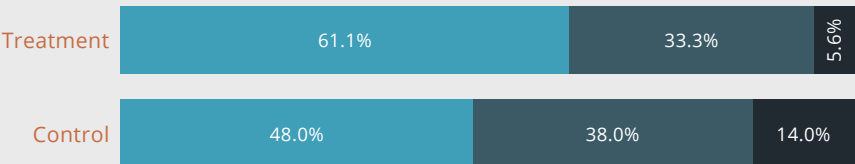
How often do you go out other than to school, tuition or sports practice (Age 12-17)?



An interesting thing to note here is that among the Control group, the number of girls who ‘never’ go out increases significantly after they turn 18,

mostly because the families disallow non-essential movement once the girls become older.

How often do you go out other than to school, college, tuition or sports practice (Age 18+)?



A key result of improved mobility is greater independence, and this can be seen in the number of Kickstart’s girls that take public transport on their own. 58.4% of the girls who have participated in the CEQUIN programme travel using public transport on their own (compared to the 37.2% in the control group).

When asked who accompanies them when they go out, we found that girls in the control group are more reliant on their family for venturing outside (with a significant 45.2% going out only with their families), as compared to the 30.8% of CEQUIN’s girls doing the same.

UNDER 13 FOOTBALL DELHI GIRLS SCHOOL LEAGUE

#DELHIGIRLSFOOTBALLLEAGUE

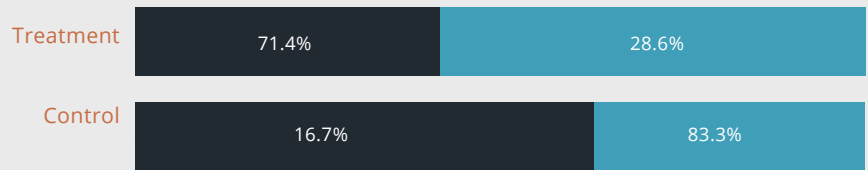
#KICKSTARTEQUALITY

CEQUIN KICK-START EQUALITY

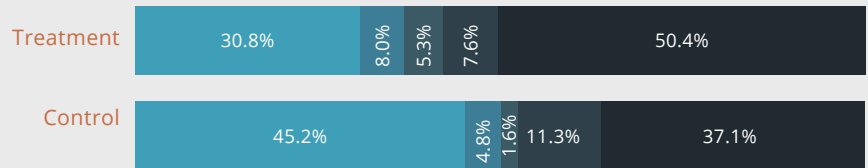




Do you use public transport for yourself?



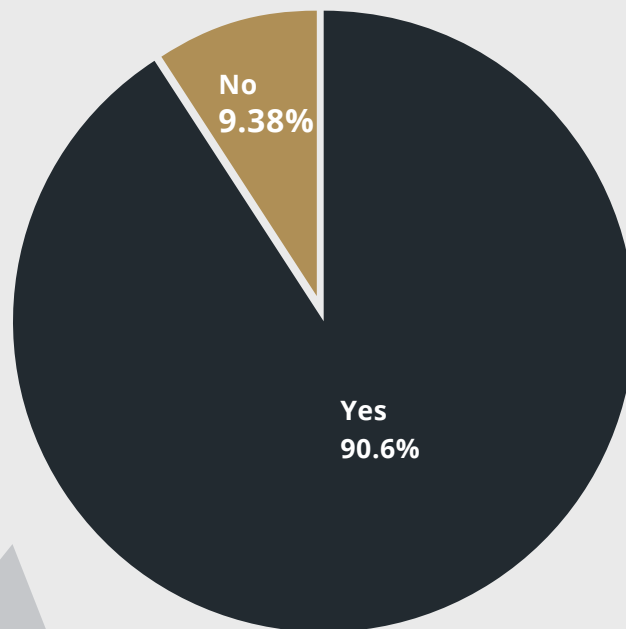
Who usually accompanies you when you go out?



Do you wish to continue playing sports?

An overwhelming proportion (90.6%) of the girls interviewed want to continue participating in sports in the future as well.

Do you wish to continue playing sports?



Media Consumption

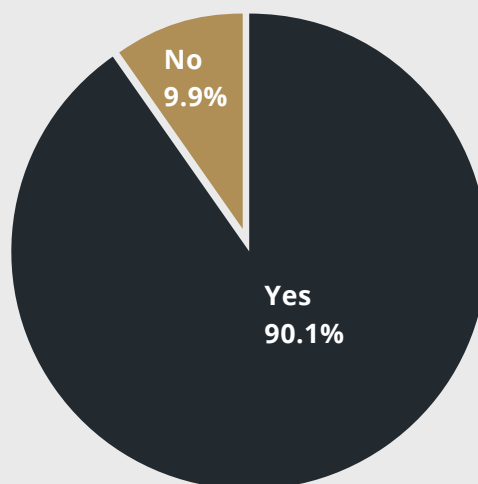
Participation, while being the most direct way of engaging with a sport, is still only one dimension. Holistically speaking, consumption and representation should also be considered equally, especially because media representation and consumption of women's sports has always been low³⁸, thereby reinforcing the stereotype that women's sports do not matter as much.

Media can provide valuable resources to girls, by giving them access to knowledge, strategy, and goals.

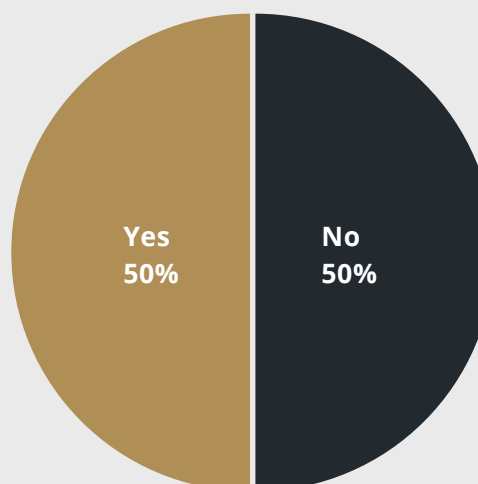
The representation in media can provide motivation (for the girls and the family) in the form of role models and introduce the concept of 'women in sports' into the mainstream.³⁹

The difference between the percentage of Kickstart girls who read or watch sports & sports news & the percentage of control group girls that do is staggering. While a whopping 90.1% of the former consume sports media, only 50% of the latter do.

Do you like watching sports and reading sports news?



Treatment

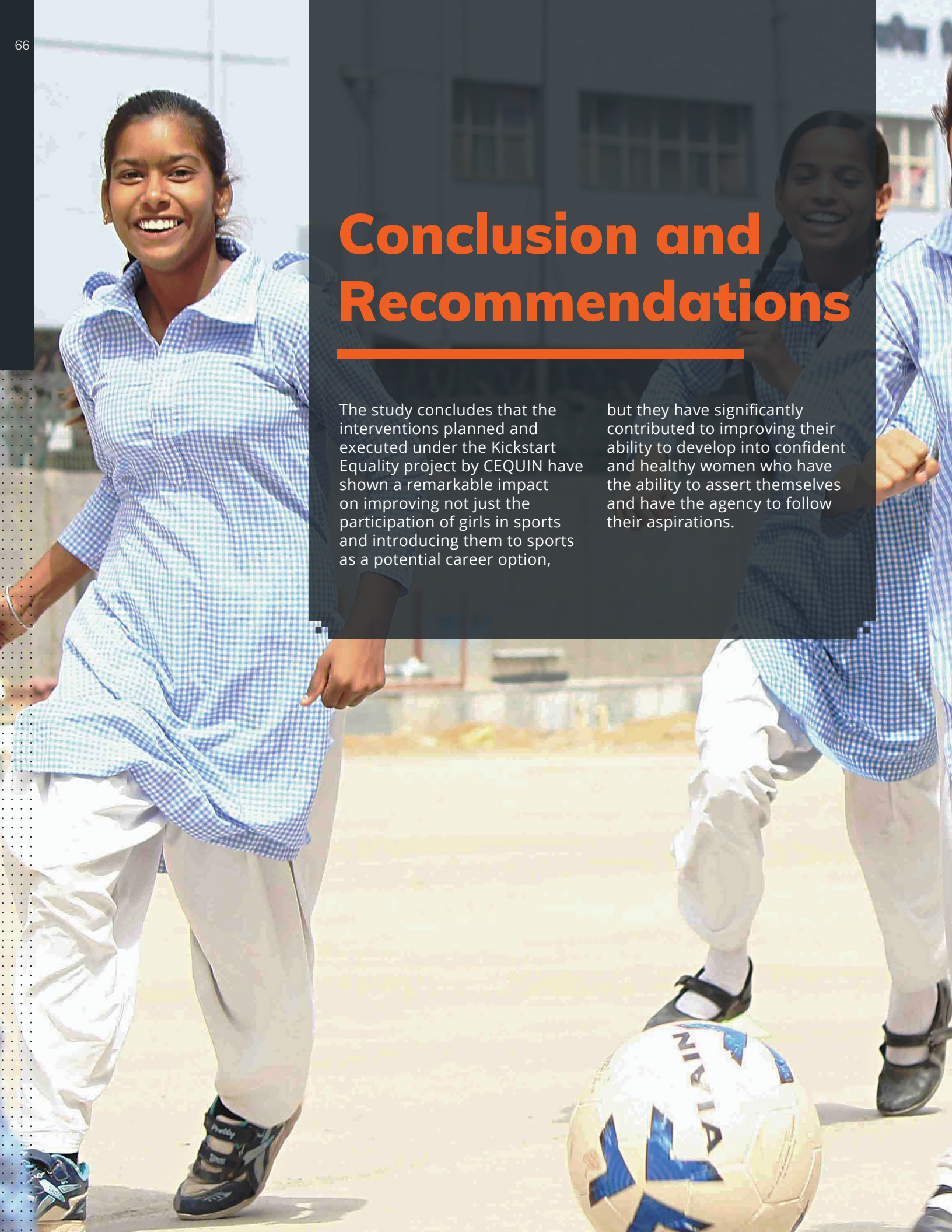


Control

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concludes that the interventions planned and executed under the Kickstart Equality project by CEQUIN have shown a remarkable impact on improving not just the participation of girls in sports and introducing them to sports as a potential career option,

but they have significantly contributed to improving their ability to develop into confident and healthy women who have the ability to assert themselves and have the agency to follow their aspirations.





A significant number of girls that were covered by this study showcased a strong sense of self-identity and were acutely aware of their own potential to be change agents. There was reasonable evidence to highlight their ability to look at genders equitably and their ability to interact with members of all genders within and outside their communities was high.

The girls who participated in school camps as well as those who trained more professionally under coaches not only shared their aspirations for the future but also shared the strong role family support played in helping them realise those aspirations. Compared to other girls from a similar background in the community, girls

participating in this programme were conscious of the need to be financially independent and a significant number of them also knew the path they needed to chart to do that.

The exposure that participating in competitive football helps girls to navigate public spaces for themselves and gives them the confidence to be mobile. They demonstrated leadership qualities and many of them have taken up or are in the pursuit of taking up sports as a vocation.

Even those who did not show interest in pursuing sports as a vocation demonstrated an expanded understanding of the kinds of vocations they could pursue.



The study found that the girls were able to convince and inspire their siblings and friends to participate in the programme or engage in sports, but if given more visibility, their ability to impact a wider range of peers, and be agents of change could be enhanced. The study also observed several challenges, both practical, and systemic. Some of the practical challenges observed, and recommendations for overcoming them as the programme scales are shared below:

- Lack of adequate public spaces where football could be played that are easily accessible is a point that came across frequently during conversations with respondents. This could be addressed by working closely with the local municipal bodies and better engagement with schools in the area that have access to these spaces which will enable better access.
- The number of schools where the gender sensitisation trainings are organised could be ramped up significantly, and resources could be raised by partnering with the state government and other philanthropic institutions
- More numbers of coaches could be brought into the programme to reduce overtaxing the coaches currently part of the programme. More girls who show promise within the programme could be encouraged to take up professional training and become coaches as the programme expands.

An important systemic challenge is the need to engage better and more deeply with the families of those who are participating in the programme as well as the communities they reside in. This will ensure that the impact of the programme is sustained and becomes a catalyst for scaling or replicating the programme. We recommend that family-focussed workshops be a significant part of the intervention toolkit. Higher visibility to some of the successes of the programme will also help in encouraging more families to be supportive of their girls and contribute to the impact the programme has already demonstrated. The study observed that there are coaches available, but many are underutilised because of a paucity of funds. The operational ramp up recommended for scaling up and diversifying interventions is also in part dependent on the availability of adequate resources.

Another systemic challenge is to build the programme into a scalable and holistic model, that is built into the school curriculum. The Kickstart Equality programme has demonstrated the robustness to sustain impact over a period of time, exploring the opportunity to deliver a more systemic impact would have far reaching consequences in building gender-sensitive communities.

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niiti consulting Pvt. Ltd.



info@niiticonsulting.com | <https://niiticonsulting.com>

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