



DeafKidz  
INTERNATIONAL



EVALUATION OF

DEAFKIDZ

GOAL!

PILOT

Key Findings  
Summary Report

September 2023

Funded by:



Submitted by:







**DeafKidz**  
INTERNATIONAL

## ABOUT SLUM SOCCER

Slum Soccer, founded by retired social worker Vijay Barse, is a FIFA awarded charitable organisation that uses the power of football to bring about a change in the lives of underprivileged children and youth. Through various projects, and specially designed curricula and activities, participants are mobilised and engaged towards learning and fitness, and to combat homelessness. Its core focus is on SDGs 3rd, 4th, 5th, 10th, 13th, and 17th.

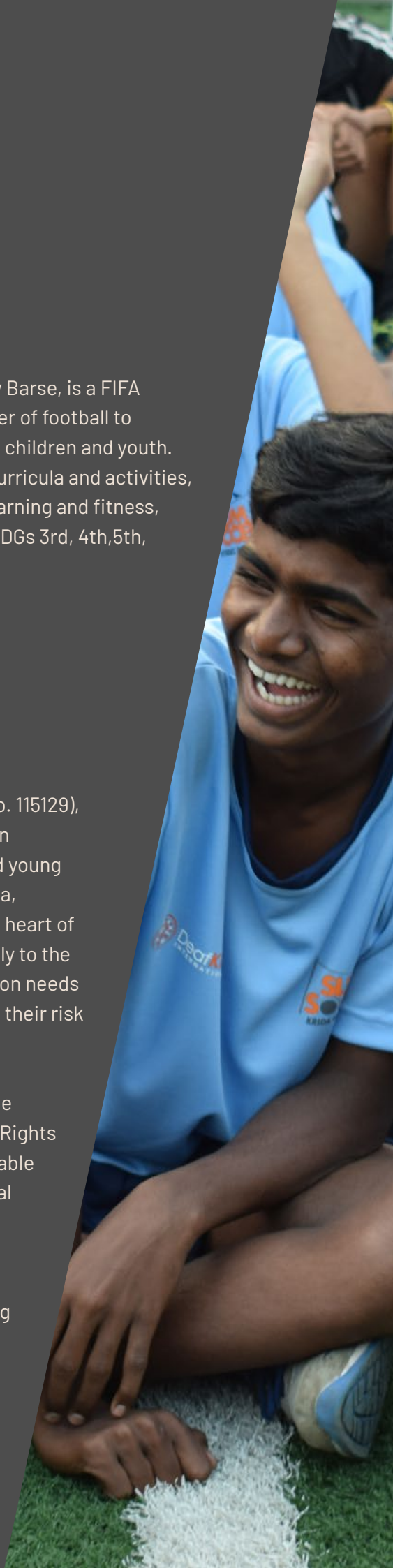
[www.slumsoccer.org](http://www.slumsoccer.org)

## ABOUT DEAFKIDZ INTERNATIONAL

DeafKidz International is a UK registered charity (no. 115129), working in low resourced and complex humanitarian geographies globally, to empower deaf children and young people (CYP) to live safely and without fear of stigma, discrimination and abuse. With safeguarding at the heart of all we do, our work aims to respond comprehensively to the protection, health, wellbeing and access to education needs of deaf children, young people and adults, reducing their risk and vulnerability to abuse.

Drawing its authority from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which guide international development agendas, DeafKidz International aims to promote and realise the rights of deaf people as enshrined, endorsed and promoted in international legislation. Our aim is to ensure deaf children, young people and adults are never left behind and can enjoy their rights in a fully inclusive society while able to live safely, access health and education, secure a livelihood and sustain their futures.

[www.deafkidzinternational.org](http://www.deafkidzinternational.org)





# ABOUT DEAFKIDZ GOAL! PROJECT

In 2019, DeafKidz International and Slum Soccer developed a strong partnership to deliver a 3-year pilot project in Nagpur, DeafKidz Goal!, funded by Comic Relief. Its aim was to break down barriers, promote inclusion and ensure equal opportunities for deaf boys and girls, empowering them with vital life skills including how to keep safe, through the platform of football. The project employs a holistic and inclusive approach by training both deaf men and women to become football coaches, who then go on to deliver life skills training sessions to deaf children and young people, in their first language (Indian Sign Language), through the platform of football.

niiti Consulting Pvt. Ltd. is an independent social enterprise contracted to carry out the final evaluation of the DeafKidz Goal!.

# IMPACT

The DeafKidz Goal! project wins the



at the World Football Summit, 2022



*Dr Abhijeet Barse, CEO Slum Soccer among the Award Winners at the World Football Summit, 2022*

# 285

deaf children and young people impacted through the pilot

# 170



families, carers, school staff notice improvement in life skills





170



changemakers  
became deaf  
aware

20



families  
learn basic  
Indian Sign  
Language



66

Deaf CYP ( Children  
and young people)  
became ambassadors  
for the project

65 deaf girls

become aware about Menstrual  
Hygiene Management (MHM),  
Gender Based Violence and  
Sexual and Reproductive Health



5



## Inclusive tournaments

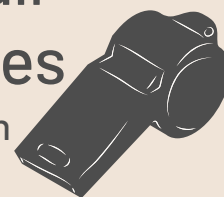
played where deaf and hearing played  
together

22

deaf young  
people became

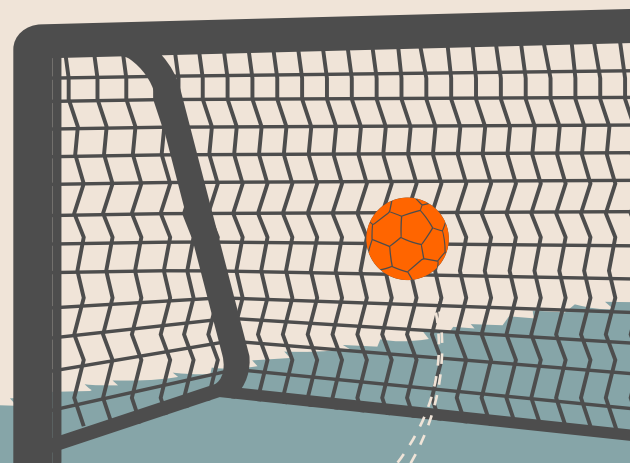
certified  
(E-License)  
football  
coaches

for children  
under 12  
years



48

deaf children and young people  
progressed from the Life Skills  
programme to complete the  
Leadership course



## THE APPROACH

DeafKidz Goal! sought to achieve transformation of deaf children and young adults, **using football as a means of development.**



*Tayyaba in action on-field*

### **Tayyaba, includes herself first and deaf peers for a more integrated society**

Tayyaba, a profoundly deaf girl born to a family of 7 living in a slum in the fringes of Nagpur was left to grow up in isolation. Though she went to a deaf school, her parents (especially her father) rarely communicated with her. She was 17 years old and yet she didn't know what her father did. Once empowered through the Slum Soccer interventions, Tayyaba wanted the

interpreters to help her douse her curiosity about her father's profession first. On realising the need for communication, an empowered

**Tayyaba now creates new pathways of gender equality and inclusion for herself and her deaf peers.**



**“**I never imagined my daughter would take me to task by complaining to her coaches Chhaya and Shiba about my not communicating with her sufficiently and for ignoring her needs. Now, she is also interested to know how we make ends meet!”

**-Tayyaba's Father**

## HOW IT BEGAN

For Jaz Mann, a Senior Programmes Lead at DeafKidz International and a profoundly deaf person himself, the shortcomings of being a deaf person are a lived experience. Thus, Jaz makes constant effort through a variety of means to improve the lives of the deaf people, especially in underprivileged societies where the missed opportunities of life usually magnify. To Jaz, an Indian by birth, who himself played for the Derby Deaf Football Club in the UK, empowering the deaf people in India through football was almost a natural choice. Slum Soccer a not-for-profit

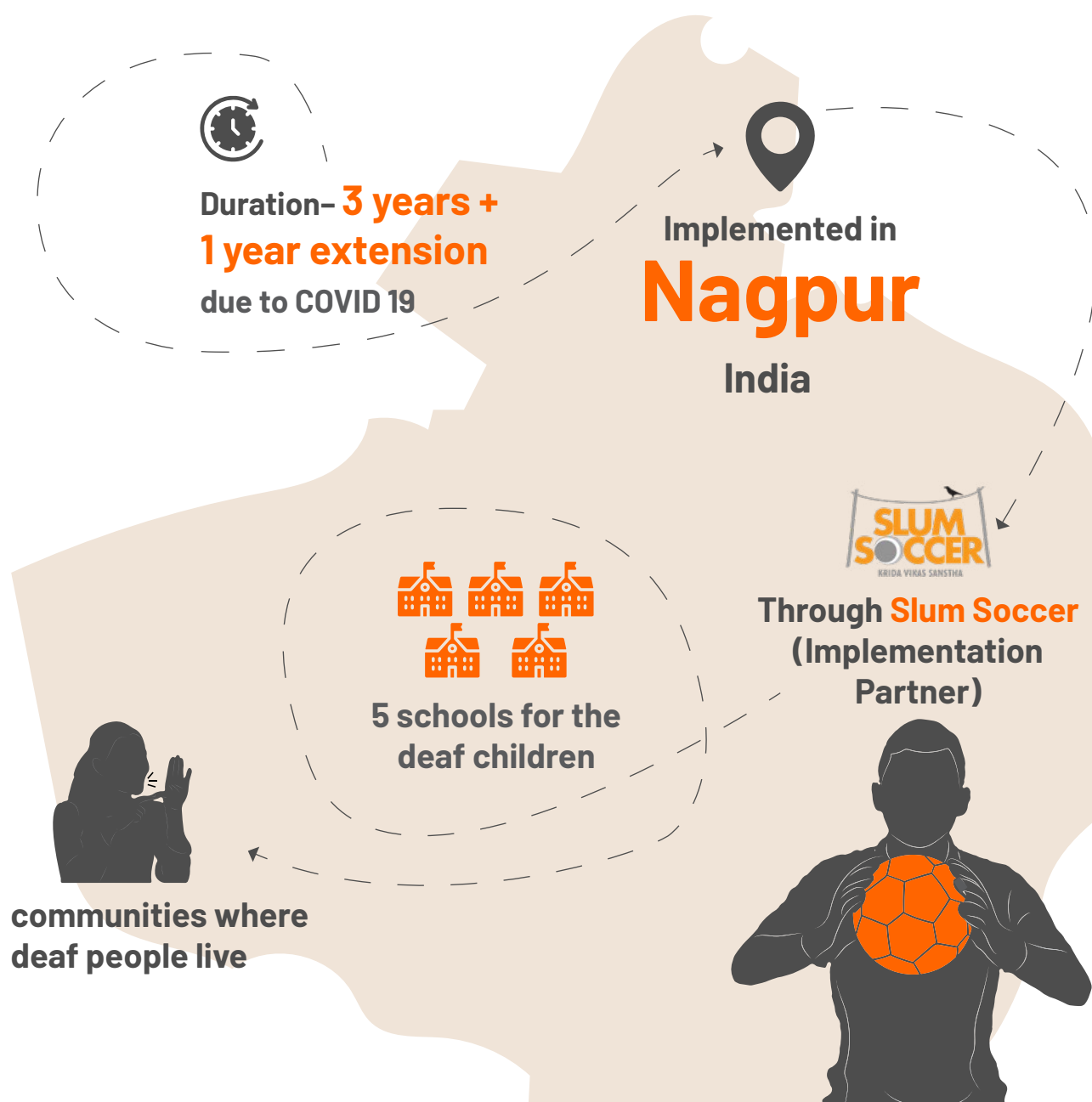
organisation headquartered out of a tier 2 city called Nagpur in India that had proven how football can transform the lives of children and youth, was found to be a good fit for piloting the project. Thus began the story of the project "DeafKidz Goal!" in India.

**The collaboration between DeafKidz International and Slum Soccer to roll out the project successfully over 4 years was a grand success.**



*Jaz Mann, Senior Programmes Lead at DeafKidz International*

The intent, flexibility and hard work of both organisations made the pilot successful.



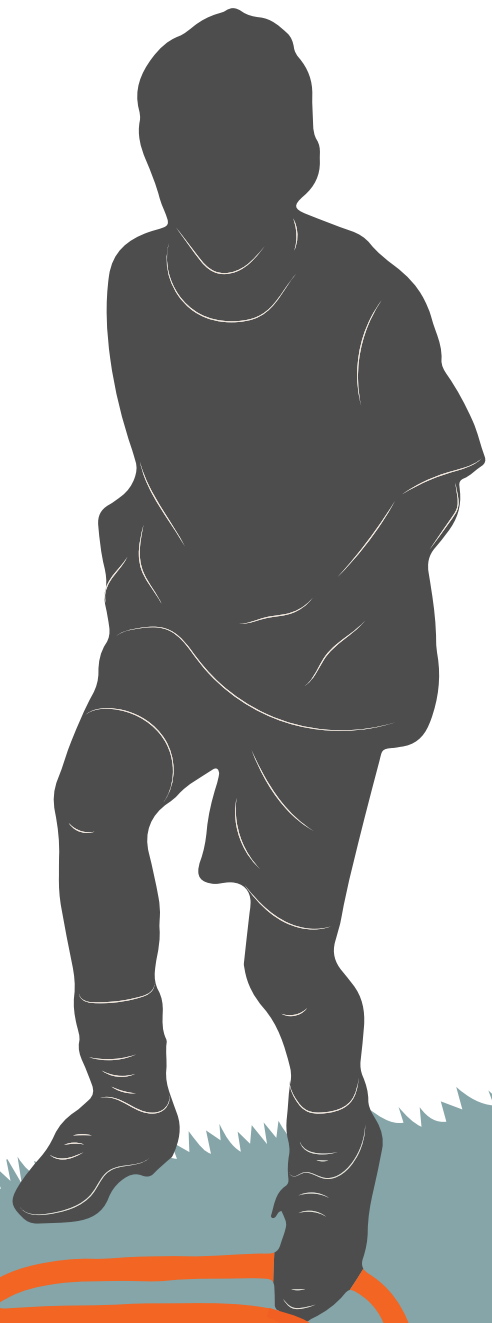
## THE INTERVENTION STRATEGY

- Increase deaf awareness among changemakers
- Motivate and mobilise the deaf children and young people
- Influence their parents, teachers, and communities in different extents
- Use football to include, preach and teach
- Further their education with life skills
- Augment confidence through leadership skills development
- Build ambassadors

## DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

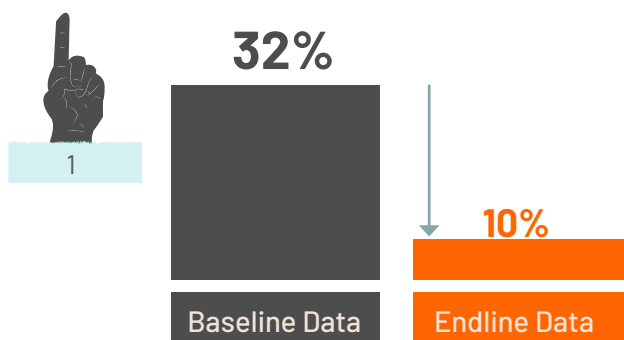
**The data collection tools used to collect primary data included:**

- Survey
- Focus Group Discussions
- Key Informant Interviews
- Demonstration of Life Skill Session
- Demonstration of Mixed Group (boys and girls) football match





# FINDINGS FROM A SURVEY DURING EVALUATION



Deaf CYP feeling they are not equal to hearing children

**Confidence improved for Deaf CYP across categories.** The percentage of deaf CYP feeling they are not equal to hearing children **dropped from 32% to 10% in the endline.**

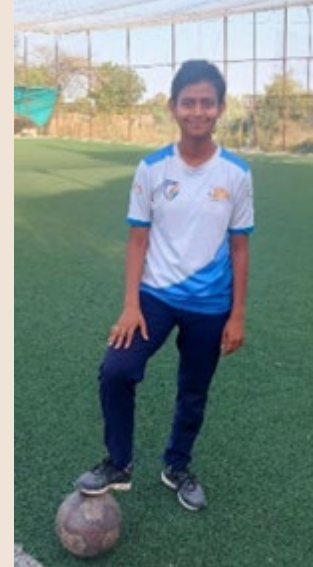


*Nidhi with her mother & aunt, at her home*

## Deaf Sensitisation through Indian Sign Language training for parents

Learning to communicate with a deaf child is the greatest gift that any parent can give to their deaf heir. It is well known that language development of a child happens at an early stage of life and it is important to develop the communication skills of a deaf child as early as possible, so that the learning trajectory in life proceeds uninterrupted. Nidhi's mother, a graduate, gave her child Nidhi this gift right from the beginning. She sat with Nidhi during her lessons in school to learn sign language, natural language of the deaf people. Nidhi, today is a national champion in athletics. She competes not only with the deaf

people but also with her hearing counterparts. Her father, who has a Masters in English Literature is their guiding light who never felt disheartened for a single day ever since Nidhi's birth. her parents have remained conscious about her studies, her diet and her overall upbringing, working towards their ambition of having their daughter win a medal at the Paralympics.



*Nidhi posing with football at Slum Soccer field & at her home with her runner medals & trophies*



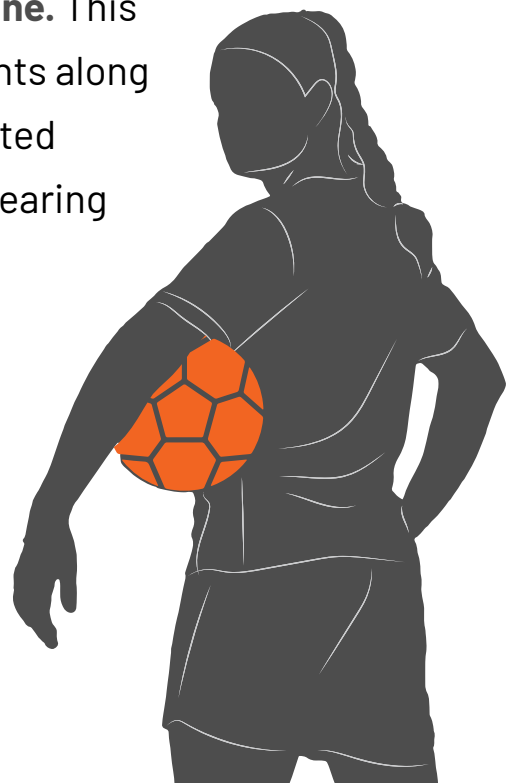
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**Understanding about football improved.** Choice for team captain **changed from friends to 'Best Football player'** when baseline & endline results were compared.



3

**In endline, majority deaf children were sure that hearing people respected them, with only 14% claiming otherwise, as against a significant 35% during baseline.** This reflects that football tournaments along with other interventions promoted integration between deaf and hearing participants.





*Glimpses of Inclusion matches in progress*

### **Inclusion through football**

They love playing with the hearing...because the match is more competitive.

When asked individually Arbaz, Gaurav, Harshad, Aamir, Alok, Juned and Manish were of the same opinion. These boys acknowledge that the hearing people are more skilled than they are and agreed to play a football match in a format that the deaf CYP could follow.

In the inclusion match organised by Slum Soccer, there were 4 referees with flags of different colors to indicate to the players. Most deaf CYP were placed in forward positions and thus the hearing passed the football to them to strike the goal.

This kind of inclusion introduced through a game of play has had a phenomenal influence on the minds of both the deaf and the hearing people. Understanding and acknowledging differences in perspectives is something they have learnt. That the objective of the project was to play and feel liberated rather than play and win was very clear.

"During the evaluation, when a deaf group (a mix of girls and boys) demonstrated a game of football for some 10 minutes, it was observed that girls were placed as goalies. Suman, one such goalie, missed defending a few easy shots...but it was heartening to see none of the boys discouraged her from trying."

**– Evaluator, niiti Consulting**





4

A huge change: **97% of the deaf CYP were aware of their fundamental rights as a citizen**, no one stated that they weren't aware, as **against 2% during the baseline.**



2%

Baseline

97%

Endline



5

A Supportive Environment Created: **During endline, only 10% deaf CYP** responded that they were not comfortable sharing their issues, as **against 72% during the baseline.**

#### A life Coach: Shiba

Shiba Markas is one of the coaches who underwent deaf awareness & ISL training as a part of the DeafKidz Goal! Throughout the project implementation period, she has learnt a great deal about how to motivate both deaf children and their parents. In fact, now, she has become a mediator between parents and deaf kids whenever a problem arises between them. She counsels the

parents when they won't let the children take sporting lessons. She also counsels the children on personal issues affecting them. A phenomenal example of how language barriers can be broken, Shiba is a role model for all of us to follow.



*Shiba (left-most person) assisting communication on field*

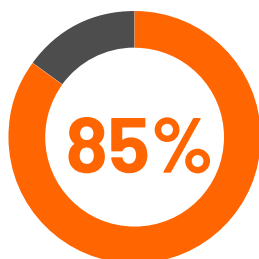




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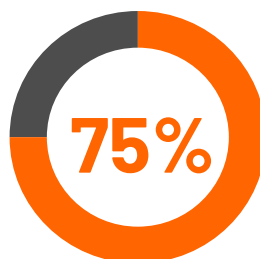
Increased Physical Fitness and Mental Wellbeing. A majority of the deaf CYP realised the positive changes in themselves ever since they started attending football and lifeskills sessions organised at the Slum Soccer Academy.

Over



of the respondents saw an increase in their physical fitness,

whereas over



felt the sport encouraged positive thinking.



7

Increased Aspirations about the Future.

# 65%

deaf CYP wish to financially support families, indicating aspirations of a productive & independent future.



# “

We follow a holistic teaching approach for our deaf students, making them confident & interactive. However, a deaf child, Rijoy Tandekar, wasn't getting involved either in studies or sports or other activities. We just thought he was an introvert child. However, after his participation in DeafKidz Goal!, he became very active, was selected in the main team and improved a lot in studies.”

- Mrs. Mahashabde (Headmaster, Mook Badhir Nivasi Shala, Saoner)



8

More of Deaf & Hearing people started following ISL. The project succeeded in creating an inclusive environment **for the deaf where they freely communicated in ISL** not only with other deaf, but with many hearing people.

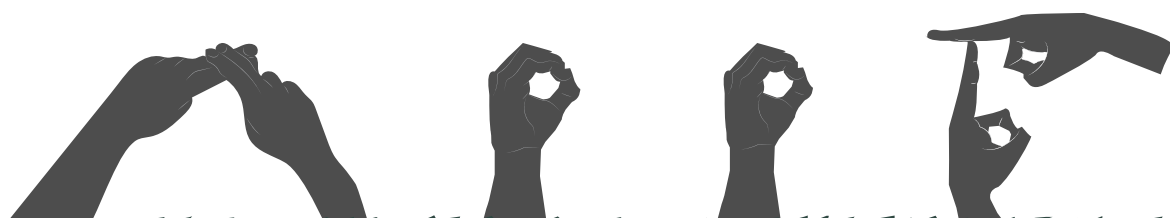
### **Slum Soccer has Shivani who is proficient in Indian Sign Language**

An ex-student of Slum Soccer, Shivani Chaudhari was so inspired by the project that she did a fulltime 2-year Interpretation Course at Ali Yavar Jung National Institute Of Speech And Hearing Disabilities Divyangjan in Mumbai. Slum Soccer sponsored this young lady who is now an asset to the organisation. She is a qualified interpreter as well as a football coach in the DeafKidz Goal! project.

Most importantly, she is a 'friend' to most deaf CYP associated with DeafKidz Goal!.



*Shivani assisting a football coaching session on-field*







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The efficacy of deaf coaches in instructing deaf children has been observed. **The project has thus created ambassadors or role models for the deaf CYP.**



**Deaf Football Coaches- Shyam Raghushe & Sheetal Kimmatkar**

### **Sustenance – Accolades to the Deaf Coaches**

A good project is successful only if it can sustain itself beyond the project period. It seems that Slum Soccer was very clear with the objective of sustainability right from the initial days of the project. With an innovative approach and a clear understanding that the deaf youth could mature into coaches, Slum Soccer gave them first a leadership training and then sent them to Mumbai to qualify for the E License of football coaching that would enable them to coach other deaf children below 12 years of age. A team of 15 coaches are now ready and are gradually taking charge of the challenge of continuing to teach football to deaf CYP. Slum Soccer has already tested this model by training Sheetal Kimmatkar and Shyam Raghushe, both deaf people who have been traveling to different schools to teach life skills and football to the deaf children. In a city where sign language interpreters are lacking, Sheetal, otherwise a deaf magician and Shyam who earns his living by ironing clothes in a laundry shop have fulfilled the vacuum. They train the children and the youth and act as referees during the matches. The young boys who have obtained the E License learn from Shyam and Sheetal- the first two Deaf Football Coaches at DeafKidz Goal!, the skills of motivation apart from football coaching.





The program extended beyond football, **teaching English and computer skills to enhance earning potential.**

### **Deaf children and young people (CYP) have developed leadership skills**

Meet these two brothers from Saoner and you know that they are born leaders. While attempting the survey during the endline evaluation, Vijay took 10 minutes to answer 70 MCQs and then promptly got up from his seat to help others who were slower than him.



“I want to prove to the society to vest faith in our abilities and give us opportunities to learn and prove ourselves worthy. I would also like to continue encouraging more deaf children to adopt an active life, help them break the barrier of disability and bring new perspective in their parents mind.”

- Vijaydas



Also, when asked by the evaluators as to who was his favourite at Slum Soccer, this astute young man with diplomacy skills immediately named the evaluators who he had just met. Ravi, the elder of the two brothers said that he felt capable as much as the hearing of his age. In fact, it was the deaf brothers who had taught their father and uncle the ills of tobacco and alcohol and stopped them from consuming them. Their father humbly says that I learn from my sons every day.

*Ravidas in an on-field life-skills session (top) & Vijaydas posing in his football gear (bottom)*

“My sons, who are deaf, now teach me to not consume tobacco & alcohol. They tell me their ill-effects. Consequently, I have quit all kinds of addictions.”

- Father of Deaf brothers- Vijaydas & Ravidas

## RECOMMENDATIONS



**Scale up the project in the present geography and initiate it in new geographies in India:** This pilot has demonstrated a model for replication. There are many deaf children and young people whose life skills can be improved along with their inclusion in society if this project is scaled up.



**Prioritise and champion Indian Sign Language:** The Deaf Kidz Goal! pilot achieved much more than expected because it delivered the services in sign language and by the deaf people. This is strongly recommended for all projects with the deaf. Further it is recommended that the project should advocate for use of sign language among other platforms meant for the deaf people like the deaf schools for deaf children.



**Explore further avenues to improve football skills and life skills:** Some deaf children may be talented in the sport. Thus, the project could enhance their football skills further.



**Play matches where the deaf and the hearing people play together:** This is an impactful method of increasing awareness about deafness and showcasing that capabilities of deaf people are equal to that of hearing, when given equal opportunities.



**Career guidance can be integrated into the project in future:** Many deaf people involved in the project were young people who need guidance on what to do next in their lives. Integrating some employability skills for those interested will increase their employment opportunities beyond menial work.







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