

# GENDER EQUALITY THROUGH SPORT



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

A GIRLS' AND WOMEN'S  
RIGHTS NGO

[www.maitrayana.in](http://www.maitrayana.in)



# Recognition for Maitrayana



“

This award is a recognition of the achievements and the courageous leadership journeys of the thousands of young leaders from Maitrayana's Young People's initiative!

”

- CEO Kalyani Subramanyam has recently been presented with the Red Bangle Award by the Women's Education Project as a woman 'who by her life and accomplishments demonstrates the indomitable eloquence of the human spirit'.
- Maitrayana was shortlisted for the Martha Farell award for Excellence in Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality.
- Kalyani Subramanyam has been awarded the Women Empowerment Program - Social Justice and Empowerment at the Women Who Lead National Consortium, supported by the Government of India and Government of Maharashtra

Amidst our journey of empowerment, we've been humbled by the recognition bestowed upon us. These honors serve as reminders of the collective impact we're making together, igniting hope and fostering change in every corner of our communities. With boundless gratitude, we continue to stride forward, driven by the indomitable spirit of progress and empowerment."

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# VISION

A gender equal society in which girls & women\* can exercise their rights.

\* girls & women explanation and \*sport explanation - please move them below the sentences and make it a smaller font as they are used to explain what we mean with 'girls & women' and 'sport'

# MISSION

Leverage the power of sport\* to create ecosystems that empower girls & women to fulfil their potential

\*sport - Maitrayana uses the definition of the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace (2003) 'all forms of physical activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental well-being and social interaction, such as play, recreation, organized or competitive sport, and indigenous sports and games.'

# VALUES

INTEGRITY – DOING THE RIGHT THING

TRANSPARENCY – THE RIGHT WAY

RESPECT – WITH DIGNITY

INCLUSION – FOR ALL, WITH ALL



# Maitrayana's goals



## GOAL 1

Adolescent girls and young women access their rights towards sexual reproductive health & GBV, economic justice

By

Empowering adolescent girls and young women to build their agency to make decisions about their own lives and influence change in their family/community.

## GOAL 2

Families and communities work together to enable their daughters to access their rights and make decisions about their lives.

By

Synergizing with families and communities to build ecosystems in communities to enhance adolescent girls'/young women's outcomes and leadership.



## GOAL 3

Stakeholders in the society will take measures to advance gender equality

By

Creating collaborations for systemic change with the government, businesses, NGOs by allocating more resources, policy change, programme design.



# OBJECTIVE 1

Empowering adolescent girls and young women to build their agency to make decisions about their own lives and influence change in their family/community.

## 01 THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S INITIATIVE (YPI) PRAGATI

3683 adolescent girls (10 – 15 year) in schools and communities in Mumbai, Delhi and Bengaluru have participated in YPI Pragati, Maitrayana's netball and life skills programme. It consists of 27 lifeskills- and 27 netball sessions which have been conducted during the academic cycle 2023 – 2024. The girls have completed all four modules of Maitrayana's curriculum Be Yourself, Be Healthy, Be Empowered and Be Money Savvy.

They have played an internal netball tournament in their school/community and a representative participated in Udaan, a tournament for all YPI Pragati sites in their respective cities. Girls have graduated from the programme in February/March. About 700 YPI alumni will continue playing netball in 2024 – 2025.

Among the participants, 184 adolescent girls have been elected as leaders by their peers in YPI Pragati. Staff has guided this process and trained the young leaders in their roles and responsibilities as well as the 'action projects' methodology. These are projects that the leaders have implemented in their schools/communities in which they have addressed issues that they face in their schools/communities such as lack of clean water or clean toilets in the school/sites, changing rooms etc. During their graduation, the leaders presented their projects. They shared the problems that they had identified, how they have addressed them and what the results where.

As part of Maitrayana' young women's leadership pathway, 34 Community Sports Coaches (CSCs) were selected and trained to co-facilitate sessions with participants in YPI Pragati & the clubs. Most of the CSCs are alumni from YPI Pragati and this year saw an increased number of (former) club leaders who continued their journey as interns as CSCs.

The CSCs participated in sessions to develop their hard skills (English and computer skills in Delhi), soft skills and employability skills. The internship experience was not always an easy one as the young women had to overcome different challenges such as parents not being comfortable with their daughters traveling through the cities during early mornings or in the evenings, and/or having less time for household work etc. All CSCs graduated at the end of the academic cycle/financial year after which new CSCs for the 2024 – 2025 will be recruited.



## 02 CLUBS

728 club players have come together for weekly practices and monthly league matches led by their club leaders with support from Maitrayana coaches in Delhi and Mumbai. The girls in Bengaluru participated for the first time this year in a one-day tournament.

- The netball clubs are girls' led. In 2023 – 2024, progress has been made by giving girls more opportunities to make decisions about what their club would look like. Elections have been held and the 44 chosen leaders have taken up their roles supported by Maitrayana staff. Besides training in their role, they have been guided in problem solving and conflict management. The club leaders from Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore have come together online in the National Conference and in person in the different cities. Training sessions for referees and first aiders have been reviewed, made more accessible and useful for young leaders.

## 03 OLDER GIRLS

In order to build a longer and deeper engagement with adolescent girls and young women, Maitrayana is developing a trajectory for alumni, might or might not be club players, toward the programmes Economic Justice Programme for 18 – 25 year olds. The first module was developed in 2023 – 2024. A series of nine series was developed with as topic Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights with sessions on gender and sexuality, conception, contraception, consent and healthy relationships. The module has successfully been piloted with 60 young women in Delhi and Mumbai



## 04 ECONOMIC JUSTICE PROGRAMME (EJP)

Two batches with a total of 46 young women have done an internship with Decathlon, the largest, global sports retail company. They learned the essentials of working in the retail sector, including how to handle customers effectively and organize the layout in an organized manner. They had a chance to experience what it is to be part of a workplace culture and to develop professional network contact within Decathlon.



The young women were supported by Maitrayana staff who conducted soft skills sessions with them to support them in overcoming barriers that they face in pursuing their goals, train them in employability skills (such as managing time, giving and receiving feedback, team work etc) and enable them to develop their English speaking and computer skills. The EJP team also offered them job application sessions and individual mentoring.



In this period:

- 9 young women have secured part-time positions at Decathlon.
- 5 young women have secured jobs in different sector like: retail, bakery, salon etc.

# OBJECTIVE 2

Synergizing with families and communities to build ecosystems in communities to enhance adolescent girls'/young women's outcomes and leadership.

## 01 PARENTS MEETINGS

Although engaging with parents has always been part of the YPI programme, this year, the first session of the parents' curriculum has been designed and piloted. The curriculum aims at girls and women can use their skills, voice and agency to exercise their rights and fulfil their potential within an understanding and supportive ecosystem.

The objectives were for the parents to understand Maitrayana and the YPI Programme, to start discussions about gender equality and create understanding and support for girls' empowerment through the YPI. Staff was trained and sessions with 503 parents have been held. The sessions have been successful as the responses have been positive and parents were open to discuss the aspirations that they have for their daughters and their lives. The pilot has been reviewed and learnings (regarding recruitment, content, facilitation etc) will be incorporated in the further development of the curriculum which contain of 3 sessions for all parents of YPI Pragati participants.

Clubs leaders have held meetings, with support from Maitrayana staff, within their clubs. The aim was to create an ecosystem of supportive parents by explaining them the purpose of the club, the benefits for their daughters when playing in the club and how it fits into all Maitrayana's activities. About 200 parents have been reached.



## 02 SAMITI'S

A plan and strategy for the establishment of Samitis has been made and kicked off by the end of 2023 – 2024 in 3 netball clubs in Delhi and Mumbai. Samiti's are platforms to advance girls' outcomes with a focus on increasing girls' access to opportunities and rights and girls' participation as right holders in communities.



In its nature, the samiti's are girls centered, meaning that girls should set the agenda and identify stakeholders for the Samiti. These stakeholders are adults with attitudes, skills and networks to support girls to access opportunities, ensure that their rights are being heard and/or those who are in a position to challenge the current status quo.

## 03 INTERNATIONAL DAYS



International Days were celebrated with community events such as the International Day of the Girl and International Women's Day with about 300 community members attending. Topics discussed were the importance of investing in girls and women. On March 8, community events were held where female role models in non-traditional professions shared their journeys.

# OBJECTIVE 3

## Creating Collaborations for systemic change with the government, businesses, NGOs by allocating more resources, policy change, programme design.

- One of Maitrayana's key partnerships is with the government. Maitrayana received permission from the Delhi Government to conduct YPI Pragati with 2000 girls in 2023 – 2024 in government schools in Delhi.
- Teams have implemented YPI Pragati in collaboration with NGOs in slum areas and in residential settings for vulnerable girls and young women. This has enabled Maitrayana to reach out to those who need the programme most.
- Maitrayana's work with trust run and government schools has enabled staff to have discussions about the importance of development of female leadership and safeguarding children in school and programmes. They also stressed the advantages of experiential learning and holistic development. Discussions were held with principals about the role that Maitrayana could play with the National Education Policy implicating that teaching should improve children's life skills as well as that sexual reproductive health and rights needs to be discussed with students.
- Team members have contributed in several webinars and research projects on different topic for policy development by sharing data, experiences and lessons learned in its work with a focus on adolescent girls and young women rights through the sport for development approach.
- Maitrayana established (in 2022) and leads The Collective Safeguarding Children in Sport which brings sport for development organisations together.

Objectives are:

- Identify the areas of strengths and gaps within the Collective members own Child protection systems and processes.
- Strengthen Internal Capacity by sharing resources and best practices
- Sharing Learning with the extended ecosystem
- Advocate for processes and policies ensuring safe sport for children with the relevant bodies.

In 2023 - 2024, led by Maitrayana, the Collective has recruited new members for this group that discusses best practices to ensure that participants are safe in programmes. It discussed best practices, how to manage participants with 'difficult behaviour' and it celebrated the International Day of Safeguarding Children in Sport with an open discussion about one of the most discussed cases on sexual harassment in topsport in India.

Maitrayana participated in research from Napier University in Scotland on what 'safe spaces' mean. The research has resulted in a document that defines the concept of Safe Spaces and provides guidelines for the same.



## EMPLOYEE/VOLUNTEERS ENGAGEMENT

Employees from Ramboll, a global engineering, architecture and consultancy company, in Delhi:

- Oriented 200 adolescent girls and young women to their right to (decent) work by speaking to students about the advantages of choosing STEM education.
- Hosted 50 girls in their offices to meet female engineers, listen to their stories and understand what it would require to become an engineer.
- Guided 50 young women on their economic pathway through mentoring, facilitation of soft/employability skills sessions, English and computer skills

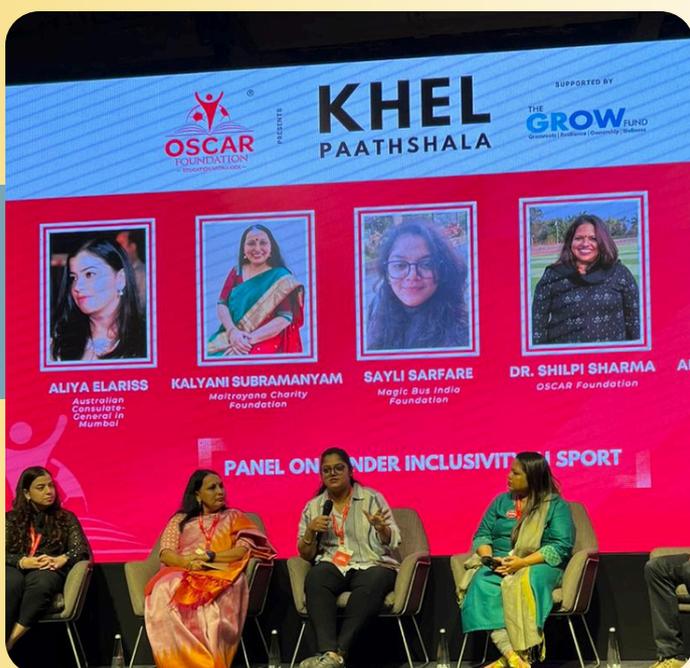
## REPRESENTATION OF MAITRAYANA ON NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL FORUMS

- Maitrayana's CEO Kalyani Subramanyam served another year as member on UNICEF's Safeguarding Children in Sport Board. It is an overarching Initiative that brings together sport federations and NGOs on a global level to promote the use of and adherence to the International Safeguards for Children in Sport.
- She also served as the External/NGO representative on the Internal Committee for POSH for Vidya Shilp University.



### Speaking engagements:

- CEO Kalyani Subramanyam facilitated a session on POSH act and prevention and redressal with the 1st year students of Vidya Shilp university in July 2023.
- She also conducted an online session on POSH with the staff of the NGO Prayatna on 22nd August 2023.
- She shared her Leadership Journey, the transition of the YPI and the process of setting up Maitrayana at a panel discussion at the Dasra Social Impact Programme in Mumbai at the Taj Land's End Hotel on 10th December 2023.
- She spoke on a panel on Gender Inclusivity in Sport at KHEL Paathshala, a conference organized by Oscar Foundation on 11th March 2024 in Mumbai. She shared how Maitrayana is Building Girls and Women's leadership through sport and the challenges faced and strategies used.
- She shared her Leadership journey in a forum organized by NGO- TIDE (Technology Informatics Design Endeavour) for all the staff in the different cities to help build leadership and inspire them.



# Maitrayana's Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028

The year 2023 – 2024 was the first year of Maitrayana's strategic plan 2023 – 2028. It consists of six goals.

## 1 DEVELOP A NEW STRATEGY

In 2023 – 2024, the strategic plan has been shared with staff, board members and other stakeholders for their inputs and developing their understanding. Core team members have made workplans and are responsible for progress on the strategic goals.

## 2

### STRENGTHEN INSTITUTIONAL FOUNDATION

- A big step in building a strong foundation was to ensure compliance as per the Indian laws. In this period, Maitrayana got its FCRA license - within 3 years of operations. It designed and started implementing its resource strategy that aims at funding diversification. Core team members participated in various fundraising webinars and courses.
- Individual well-wishers have supported Maitrayana financial, in-kind or through establishing connections. Runners in Delhi and Mumbai have connected themselves to Maitrayana and the cause it serves by promoting Maitrayana and raising funds through the Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon and Tata Mumbai Marathon.

## 3

### STRENGTHEN & EVOLVE PROGRAMME APPROACHES

- Based on programme reviews and impact reports, plans have been made to strengthen Maitrayana's programmes. In 2023 – 2024, model groups have been set up to ensure programme alignment across the cities, to build staff perspective, to include implementing staff in planning for staff capacity building, solving operational challenges, develop the programme methodology further, increase stakeholder participation etc.
- In 2023 – 2024, a Trainer of Trainers model was developed and implemented for staff training in both the netball- and life skills methodology for Maitrayana's largest programme YPI Pragati.

## 4

### DEVELOP PEOPLE & CULTURE (P&C) STRATEGY

Maitrayana has been certified as Great Place to Work by Great Place to Work® Institute, India for the year 2023 – 2024. It took several initiatives to make Maitrayana an even better place to work with providing staff with insurance in case of accidents, quarterly team building sessions, monthly staff meetings, holding quarterly POSH meetings. No POSH incidents were reported.



# Maitrayana's Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028

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## INFLUENCE

Read more about Influence under Goal 3.

Maitrayana coined the 'Day of Sport for Girls' which in its first year – on Monday 26th February 2024 - became an international day with partners from India, Europe and Africa participating in a webinar. Young leaders from Maitrayana shared the barriers that girls are facing in accessing sport. They also led a call to action in which they asked duty bearers to adopt their detailed requests. Maitrayana staff and participating NGOs pledged their support which will be followed up towards the Day of Sport for Girls in 2025

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## LEARNING

- Programme and impact reviews were carried out and the learnings were taken forward. With a participatory approach, it was staff across the cities that decided upon the programme priority areas to be addressed in 2023 – 2024.
- Various learning opportunities were available for staff such as the bi-monthly 'League of Learners' webinar where staff members shared their learnings from webinars, seminars, courses with their colleagues e.g. round gender equality, community leadership, mental health, why girls drop out of sport etc. Besides their own personal learnings, they also share recommendations to be adopted by Maitrayana.
- The annual retreat served as staff capacity workshop/learning platform where participants learned about the strategic goals, pitching Maitrayana to stakeholders, as well as getting to know individual staff members leadership journey's. During the retreat, the one-year project 'Gender Journey' was kicked off with an episode from the series 'Modern Love Mumbai' followed by group discussions. The Gender Journey is developed as a foundation course for staff to create perspective on gender, sexuality, gender equality in order to support participants in their empowerment process.



# THANK YOU

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our supporters, partners, and stakeholders for their unwavering commitment and dedication to Maitrayana's mission. Your generous contributions and belief in our vision empower us to continue making a meaningful difference in the lives of adolescent girls and young women. Together, we are building a future where every girl can realize her potential and lead with confidence. Thank you for being an integral part of our journey.

VISIT OUR SOCIAL MEDIA



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