

Creating space for girls to aspire, negotiate and grow



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PARIVARTAN athletes had ...

- Higher aspirations
- Better negotiation skills
- Ability to challenge gender norms
- Greater access to public space
- Parental support



The Setting in a Mumbai slum

- ⊗ A slum community in Mumbai with >600,000 population
- ⊗ Mostly migrants from mixed ethnic groups, with a higher proportion of Muslims families



Social expectations from girls

- 🌀 Women and girls should give priority to household chores
- 🌀 Public space is only for men & boys
- 🌀 Women and girls are custodians of morality and family honour



Introducing sports for girls

Engaging girls and young women in a sports-based program provides opportunities for developing life skills, and makes them aware of their rights



Girls' participation in sports increases their visibility in the community and gives them the opportunity to claim space as a group.



Theory of Change

Assumption

By participating in sports, girls will increase their **confidence and self-esteem**. By aspiring to a collective goal they will learn **negotiation skills and team work**, and become **more powerful to claim space as a group**. These competencies will transfer into their individual lives and ultimately translate into continued education and delayed marriage.

Female mentors participate in sport & gender transformative training workshop

Trained mentors run weekly sessions with girls (Kabaddi & gender curriculum)

Reflection groups with parents on gender, girl's education and barriers (restricted mobility)

Engage community leaders & institutions by involving them in the dialogue

Community mobilization through public education events, and tournaments

Intervention components

Parivartan for Girls

Kabaddi sessions

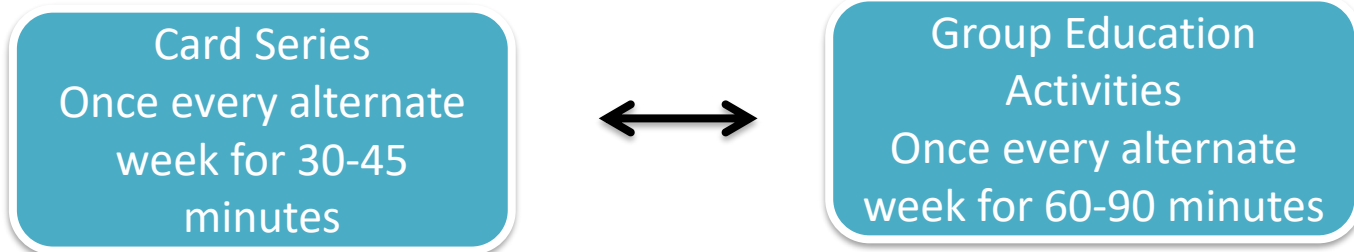
- ☉ 10 groups of 10-15 girls (age 12-16 years) over 15 months
- ☉ Kabaddi is a contact team sport



- ☉ Kabaddi sessions held every Sunday

Gender reflection sessions

- ⊗ Apart from kabaddi each week, there was a day/afternoon session reflecting on gender
- ⊗ Topics on life skills: dealing with emotions, goal setting, enhancing self-esteem; gender equality, gender roles and discrimination



- ⊗ Topics introduced in card sessions were reflected on through role play and games the following week.

Giving visibility to girls playing sports

- 🌀 Official launch in Nov 2014
- 🌀 Tournaments in public space in the community
 - 🌀 First one in January 2016
 - 🌀 Graduation tournament in December 2016

Longitudinal Case Studies

❁ To document the pathways and processes of change

- ❁ What motivates athletes?
- ❁ What boosts their confidence
- ❁ What are the challenges of being part of sport program
- ❁ How did they overcome challenges around safety and security?



Data collection

- 🌀 In-depth interviews with 15 athletes (3x)



- 🌀 Purposive selection of athletes by mentors initial perception
- 🌀 Interviews lasted 45-70 minutes

Challenging norms starts at home



Athletes develop 'capabilities' in reflective and sports sessions



They have space to reflect, question expectations, and practice negotiation skills



Practice communication and negotiation at home, enrolling parents in personal aspirations for education and career.

Resisting social expectation once parents 'understand'

“This program has not only helped me to understand why as a girl I am treated differently from boys. It helped me to be assertive with my family in a way that they will understand what I am asking for. Once my parents realised the importance, I did not bother about what others said.”

Female Athlete, 16, Studying in class X

When there is little family support

“There is so much that we have learned in these sessions. The problem is that my brothers still don’t understand. I attend these sessions without them knowing... when they are at home I miss my sessions. If they ever come to know about this, all they and my grandmother will think of is getting me married. But I still think attending these sessions is worth the risk.”

Female Athlete, 18, Orphaned, School Drop out

Mentors as role models: main motivators

- ⊗ Positive deviant young women from within the slum
- ⊗ Intimate knowledge of restrictions leads to appropriate strategies for change
- ⊗ Teach and model
- ⊗ Formed relationships with parents of the athletes through regular interactions
- ⊗ Became important part of the reference group of both the girls and their parents

Building support networks

- 🌀 Networking with co-athletes and mentors
- 🌀 Connection to Apnalaya
- 🌀 Resourcefulness as a group – collective agency
- 🌀 Support builds naturally through a changing reference group

Increase in Mobility and Visibility



“We girls when we grow up and have to be out, we have to be clad in a burkha. If we don’t than they blame our families.”

-Athlete, 17 school drop out

“Now I can go out alone. Earlier I was scared to go out I always wanted my sister or some one from the family to accompany me, even when I went to the shop in my lane. But now I can go to the market place alone too. I am not scared. I am confident to say something back to someone who says anything to me.” (refers to anticipated harassment on the street)

-Athlete, 15 studying class IX

Visibility in sports and on the street



“This was the first time in my life that I played in a ground with so many people... man and boys also watching us. All because of Parivartan.”

-Athlete, 17 school drop out

 Streets become safer

 Safety is created in the mind

Educational and Career aspirations



"I have always wanted to continue with my education but after my father left my mother there was no one to take care of my younger brother as mother had to go to work."

-Athlete, 17 yrs, Drop out

"these sessions have made me think and now I am taking my studies seriously. I want to become an airhostess and I have to complete my graduation for it."

-Athlete 16 yrs, Schooling (External)

Change in Communication

THEN

- Girls not expected to question
- No communication with male family members

NOW

- Assertive questioning
- Direct communication with male family members
- Positive response from the family members

TO COME

- Still more communication
- Become part of the decision making process in the daily household matters



Negotiations around marriage

THEN

- Early marriage, little discussion
- Girls not asked for their consent

NOW

- Negotiate age at marriage
- Confident to express expectations from their partners or choice of partner.
- Marriage is viewed as a responsibility

TO COME

- More negotiations for buying in time.
- Option not to marry

Challenges in Engaging Girls

⊗ Not all girls benefited

- ⊗ 150 parents consented for daughters to participate in Parivartan
- ⊗ 136 actually joined - further drop-off in attendance to about 80 by the end

⊗ Engaging fathers not easy

- ⊗ many did not give consent
- ⊗ others: from silent approval to championing

⊗ Limited power of mothers to make final decision

Change happens in waves

- ⊗ Through reflection and interacting with role models, girls raised **aspirations** and developed **competencies**
- ⊗ Changes become sustainable through
 - ⊗ changing dynamics at home
 - ⊗ **increased networking in community** and **increased visibility** in public space
- ⊗ By the end, a few fathers ready as ‘advocates’
- ⊗ New **reference group** of girls and families within the community to model changes for others



Thank you!