

Quarterly Newsletter

January - March 2026 (Vol - 14)

We are pleased to present the January–March 2026 edition of our quarterly newsletter, capturing key progress and impact across our programs. This quarter, we continued to strengthen athlete development and advance a more inclusive sporting ecosystem, with a strong focus on women and young athletes.

Through a combination of on-ground initiatives and strategic partnerships, our work expanded across geographies and stakeholders. Our integrated approach spanning women’s health, nutrition, mental well-being, and physical activity remains central to enabling holistic athlete development and performance.

This edition highlights key programme outcomes, athlete journeys, and partnerships from the quarter, reflecting our continued commitment to building informed, supportive, and sustainable pathways in sport.



Key Highlights



Strengthened program delivery across regions



Improved cross-functional collaboration



Enhanced monitoring and evaluation systems



Continued focus on partnerships and capacity building

Program Highlights



1) Women in Sports

1.1 Health Program

The program focused on delivering integrated initiatives across women's health, nutrition, mental well-being, and physical activity. Key efforts included sessions on menstrual health, athlete nutrition, and mental health support, alongside holistic workshops combining these themes. It also extended to grassroots engagement and athlete tracking, strengthening overall awareness and support systems for athletes and coaches.

Impact



36

Workshop
Conducted



14

Organisations
engaged



8+

states covered



450

Athletes and Coaches
Impacted

Sessions covered menstrual health, nutrition, mental well-being, and physical activity, through both in-person and online formats. Over 800 resources were distributed across field visits, including the Meri Khel Yatra health tracker, Simply Period handbook, and Meri Udaan, Meri Pehchaan booklet.

The Menstrual Health and Sports Performance program

reached multiple cohorts of athletes and coaches across January to March. On 31 January, 30 women athletes from the Adidas Runners Club attended a session at Lakshyan Academy, Bengaluru, focused on understanding menstruation and its impact on sports performance. This was followed by two online sessions in February on 10 February with 30 coaches from the Badminton Pan Am Confederation and on 18 February with 30 coaches from Padukone Sports Management. In March, outreach expanded further, with a session for 50 athletes from the Maharashtra State Lawn Tennis Association in Pune on 8 March, three sessions conducted by ASI Pune between 7 and 10 March engaging 50 athletes and 50 coaches, and a session in Jaipur on 15 March where 60 coaches participated at Sports Kartail.



The Female Athlete Nutrition Program

continued this quarter through online sessions with the Krafton Podium Foundation, focusing on supplements, recovery, and return-to-sport, with 15 athletes per session. Phase 2 of the UP Nutrition Intervention, conducted across Lucknow, Ayodhya, and Gorakhpur from 26 January to 3 February, delivered seven workshops reaching 169 athletes and 8 coaches. Building on Phase 1 screenings, centre-specific reports guided discussions, while 107 athletes were assessed pre- and post-workshops. Over 200 copies each of the Meri Khel Yatra health tracker and Simply Periods handbook were distributed. The programme ensured nutrition guidance was tailored to identified needs and strengthened athletes' understanding of fuelling and recovery for performance.

The Mental Health program addressed both performance and transition challenges faced by athletes. On 19 January, a goal-setting session with the Krafton Podium Foundation helped athletes identify barriers to consistency and build routines that can be sustained across training cycles. On 2 February, a one-on-one session with a female athlete at Godrej created space to explore the transition from sport to a corporate environment, including identity shifts, loss of structure, and often unacknowledged pressures. On 8 February, 17 female athletes from the PIVOT programme completed assessments on emotional intelligence and career orientation, enabling them to reflect on their strengths and consider future pathways. In parallel, a mental health research programme with Samiksha has commenced, with the research design and overall study plan currently under development.

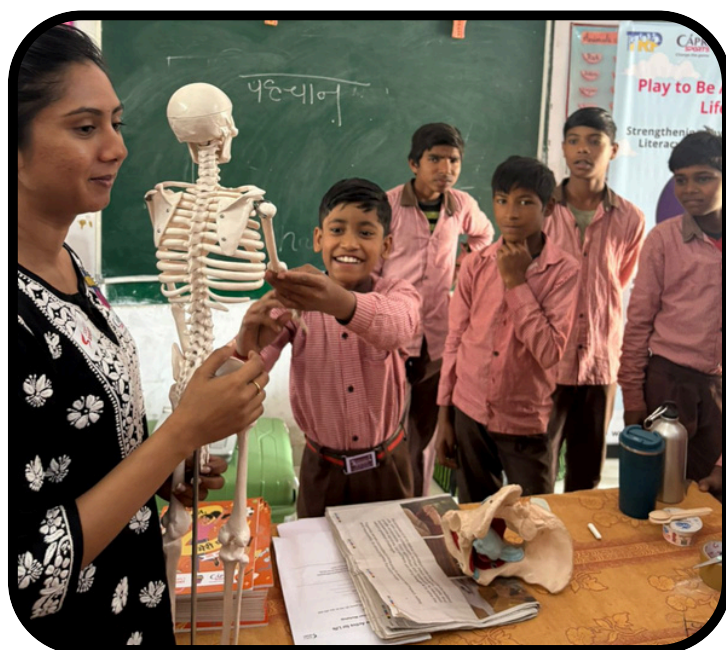




The Integrated Workshops under the Women's Health Initiative combined menstrual health, nutrition, and mental well-being into a unified program format. On 10 January, the IOA Kiosk at the National Games in Ahmedabad engaged 100 participants through the Play Without Pause format, delivering key messages in an event-based setting. On 28 and 29 March, sessions at Mrida Education Society in Madhya Pradesh reached 60 female athletes and 25 coaches across three sessions. Simultaneously, at Great Goals in Ranipet, Tamil Nadu, four sessions covered all three themes for 70 athletes and 12 coaches, with a Training of Trainers module included to enable coaches to extend the learning to their own groups. Reports for both the UP Nutrition Intervention and the UP Physical Activity initiative are currently under development and will capture program outcomes and learnings in detail.

The Physical Activity program, Play to Be Active, was implemented between 8 and 20 February across Lucknow, Kanpur Dehat, and Barabanki in Uttar Pradesh, reaching a total of 306 participants. The initiative distributed over 400 copies of the Meri Udaan, Meri Pehchaan handbook, along with stickers to reinforce key messages and encourage continued engagement beyond the sessions.

Finally, a Simply Berry Tracking review visit was conducted at the JRD Tata Sports Complex in Jamshedpur from 14 to 16 January. Across three sessions, 21 female athletes participated in a detailed review of six months of menstrual tracking data. Individual records were analysed, patterns were identified, and structured feedback was provided to both athletes and their support staff to support more informed training and health decisions.





1.2 Grassroots Development Program

The Foundation's programs focused on strengthening grassroots sport, partnerships, and holistic athlete development. Key efforts included inclusive sporting events, continued partner engagement, and the introduction of sports science sessions on nutrition and psychology. Scholarship athletes showed strong progress in academics and sport, while the Grassroots School Stars Programme delivered structured coaching and concluded with an inter-school tournament celebrating participation and growth.

Partner Highlights

Anantapur Sports Academy successfully organised a Mixed Gender Hockey Festival, promoting gender inclusivity in sports by ensuring representation of boys and girls. The festival catered to participants across the U8 and U10 age categories, with a total of 168 participants comprising an equal number of boys and girls.

Mrida Education and Welfare Society concluded the sixth edition of the Raja Hriday Shah Football League for the 2025–26 season in February. The league witnessed strong participation, with 75 teams drawn from the Mandla and Dindori districts engaging 711 players, in which 257 were girls. Over the course of the season, more than 160 matches were held every Sunday, reflecting sustained community engagement and enthusiasm for the sport.

Sanskriti Samvardhan Mandal was supported with the development of a structured safety survey questionnaire aimed at assessing the safety and well-being of female teachers and students within the organisation.

Mahila Jan Adhikar Samiti maintained regular and continued engagement with the Foundation during this period. While no major programme activities were undertaken in this quarter, the organisation remained actively connected with ongoing Foundation initiatives.



The Grassroot School Stars Program, supported by Social Panga and Eatfit, the 2025–26 programme ran across four government schools in Bengaluru, delivering 280 volleyball and throwball sessions to 85+ students aged 10–12, with 90% attendance and 85% retention. Students showed strong improvements in skills, fitness, and overall development. The program concluded with the Grassroot School Stars Tournament on 21 February at GHPS Kodathi, where 85+ athletes competed, GHPS Kodathi led the tally, and all participants were recognised for their efforts.

Scholarships Distributed

Athletes under the Girls Scholarship Program demonstrated strong performance across academics and sport. Nearly half scored above 70% in their mid-term examinations, while several athletes competed at district, state, national, and international levels, achieving national selections and international medals. These outcomes highlight the programme’s impact in enabling excellence both on and off the field.

Sports science interventions were delivered in collaboration with volunteers, focusing on sports nutrition and sports psychology. These sessions helped athletes understand the role of nutrition in performance and recovery, while also introducing practical strategies to build focus, resilience, and confidence. The interactive format encouraged reflection and adoption of improved habits, contributing to a more holistic approach to athlete development.

Impact



870+

Events & Tournaments
Beneficiaries



350+

Equipment Beneficiaries



85+

Grassroots School Stars
Tournament Beneficiaries



95

Training Sessions
Delivered



1.3 PIVOT

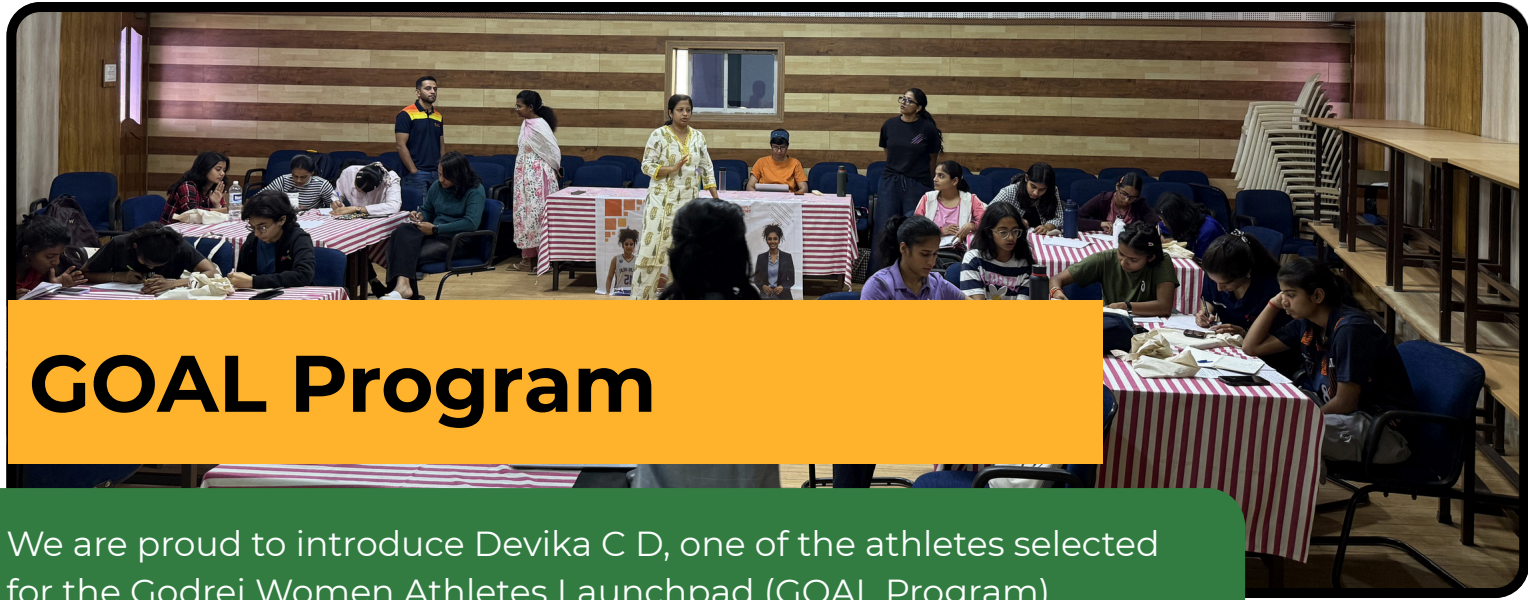
The PIVOT program focused on supporting athletes through structured career transition pathways beyond sport. Key components included digital skill-building, career exploration, and mentorship, along with an in-person bootcamp to build clarity, confidence, and direction. The programme also combined practical learning with guided reflection to help athletes identify strengths and future pathways. It further strengthened engagement through continuous learning and expert-led sessions, reinforcing the need for holistic support systems as athletes prepare for life beyond sport.

Out of **185 applicants, 18 athletes were selected for the first cohort of PIVOT, a 9-month hybrid athlete career transition program** designed to build skills, clarity, and confidence for life beyond sport. The program commenced in January with an inaugural session by founder Kanika Nagori, followed by an intensive digital literacy phase in which athletes completed 11 certification courses over three weeks, covering tools such as Google Suite, AI basics, Word, and Excel.

The cohort then participated in a 3-day residential bootcamp at the Anantapur Sports Academy, where sessions focused on gender in sport, athlete identity, psychometric and career-fit assessments, goal setting, and vision-building. For many athletes, this was their first opportunity to openly explore career aspirations beyond sport and the pathways to achieve them. A key addition was the introduction of one-on-one mentorship sessions with experts, including **Aditi Mutatkar, Dr Chaitanya Sridhar, Ayesha Billimoria, and Darshan NK.**

Following the bootcamp, the programme continued online with sessions on English communication and visual storytelling using Canva, **along with a personal branding session conducted in collaboration with Social Panga.** Upcoming modules will cover project management, AI, networking, and strategic goal setting. The cohort has shown strong engagement, with over 85% attendance and nearly 90% completion of assignments and certifications, highlighting the relevance of structured career transition pathways for athletes.





GOAL Program

We are proud to introduce Devika C D, one of the athletes selected for the Godrej Women Athletes Launchpad (GOAL Program), marking an important step in her journey beyond competitive sport. An accomplished cross-country runner from Bengaluru, Devika has consistently demonstrated dedication, discipline, and excellence. She has represented her university at national-level competitions, including the KIIT Bhubaneswar Inter University and All India Inter University Championships. She also secured first place in the Inter Collegiate Athletic Meet in both the 10,000m and cross-country events, highlighting her endurance and competitive strength.

As she begins her professional journey with Godrej Consumer Products in a sales role, Devika brings with her the resilience, focus, and work ethic shaped through years of training and competition. This transition reflects her readiness to take on new challenges beyond the track while continuing to grow and excel.

Through the GOAL Program, Simply Sport Foundation remains committed to supporting athletes in building sustainable careers beyond sport. We are proud to be part of Devika's journey and wish her continued success as she steps into this exciting new chapter.





2) Simply Sport Badminton Academy

The academy recorded strong progress across athlete performance, rankings, and program development. Competitive presence continued to grow at both national and international levels, alongside expansion of the talent pipeline and grassroots initiatives.

A key highlight was the onboarding of Coach Sameer, who joined the academy to lead the Junior Development Program. This was complemented by the launch of a structured Junior Academy, focused on grassroots development, building a long-term athlete pathway, and enhancing competitive readiness.



The academy's athletes delivered strong performances, highlighted by podium finishes and significant ranking milestones. Saneeth Dayanand secured a Bronze medal at the Uganda International Challenge and reached a career-best BWF World Ranking of 75, while Tasnim Mir earned a Bronze at the All India Senior Ranking Tournament (Bangalore 2026) and climbed to a career-high ranking of 50. Alap Mishra also secured a Bronze at the All India Senior Ranking Tournament (Bangalore 2026), achieving a BWF Ranking of 93 alongside consistent international performances. Additionally, Orijit Chaliha attained a career-best ranking of 156, demonstrating steady progress at the international level.

The academy conducted a successful selection trial, attracting **25+ athletes** from multiple states across India. Following a rigorous evaluation process, **15+ athletes** were selected and onboarded into the training program, strengthening the talent pipeline. The new intake includes a balanced group of **5 female athletes** and **10 male athletes**.



3) Athlete Achievements

Vedant Patel

Vedant Patel received comprehensive support, including nutrition, logistics, and high-performance training, to enhance his competitive development. He participated in the Little Masters Willingdon Open, a 4-Star SRFI International tournament held from 16–20 January 2026, where he delivered a strong performance by reaching the Round of 16. Building on this, he secured first place at the Chiripal Ahmedabad Squash Open, a 2-Star National Circuit tournament, highlighting his growing presence on the national squash circuit.



Dharamveer Choudhary

In a continued commitment to nurturing elite athletic talent, we renewed the contract with Dharamveer Choudhary for the year 2026–27, in supporting his journey at the highest levels of competitive athletics. Dharamveer is expected to represent India in the 4x400m relay team at two of the most prestigious events on the international calendar, the **Commonwealth Games** and the **Asian Games**. In the immediate term, he is gearing up for two key national competitions:

- **7th Indian Open 400m Meet, March 21, Thiruvananthapuram — Secured 6th place with a timing of 46.61s**
- **3rd National Open Relay Championships, March 28, Chandigarh - Secured 1st place in 4x400M relay with timing of 03:01:43**



New Partnerships

A new partnership with Samiksha Sports has been established to advance mental health support for female athletes in India. This collaboration focuses on building awareness, generating evidence-led insights, and creating practical support systems within the sporting ecosystem.

Over the next two years, the initiative will develop relevant learning resources and deliver expert-led support through on-ground engagement, contributing to safer and more supportive environments for female athletes.



socialpanga.com

We are proud to collaborate with Social Panga as a CSR partner for the PIVOT Program—an initiative focused on supporting young athletes from diverse backgrounds as they prepare for opportunities beyond sport. Through this partnership, 6–7 athletes are being supported in strengthening their skills and shaping their future pathways.

Social Panga is also enabling greater visibility for athlete journeys and delivering sessions on branding and Canva, equipping athletes with essential tools to present themselves confidently. Together, this collaboration is creating meaningful opportunities and empowering the next generation of sporting talent.



Events at SSF

On 10 January 2026, Simply Sport Foundation participated in India's first-ever IOA Athletes' Forum in Ahmedabad, advancing the conversation on women athlete health at a national level. Through the Play Without Pause booth, athletes engaged with interactive resources on menstruation, nutrition, and overall well-being, encouraging open dialogue and awareness.

The strong response reflected a growing recognition of the importance of athlete health in performance systems, marking a meaningful step toward a more informed and supportive sporting ecosystem for women in India.



Raja Hriday Shah Football League

The 6th edition of the league, organised by Mrida Education & Welfare Society, concluded on 27 February 2026 across Mandla and Dindori, Madhya Pradesh. It featured 711 players (including 257 girls) competing in U10 and U14 categories, with matches held every Sunday. Patadei won both U10 and U14 titles, while Mungwani and Umardih were U10 runners-up. Beyond results, the league boosted community engagement and grassroots football development in the region.

Mixed Gender Hockey Festival

The Mixed-Gender Hockey Festival at Anantapur Sports Village brought together 18 teams (84 girls and 84 boys) in U8 and U10 categories. Aimed at promoting early participation and challenging gender stereotypes, the event enabled boys and girls to compete together. Kalyandurgam Hockey Club won both categories, with Gotluru Hockey Club (U8) and Duradakunta Hockey Club (U10) as runners-up. The festival saw strong community turnout, boosting support for youth sport and social cohesion.



Grassroots School Stars Tournament 2026

The tournament, held on 21 February 2026 at GHPS Kodathi in Bengaluru, brought together 85+ students from four government schools to compete in Volleyball and Throwball across Boys and Girls categories. Supported by Social Panga and Eatfit, it marked many students' first experience of a formally organised sporting event. GHPS Kodathi led the medal tally with three golds, while GMPS Gunjurpalya won gold in Girls Throwball. Chief Guest Arvind Bhat inspired participants, and every child was recognised with a trophy, medal, or certificate.

Inspire Cup

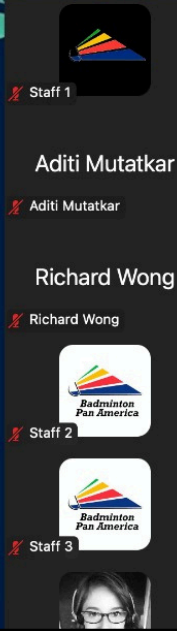
The 5th Inspire Cup, a national U-17 girls' football tournament organised by Anantapur Sports Academy with the La Liga Foundation and supported by Simply Sport Foundation, was held from 4–10 January 2026 at Anantapur Sports Village. It featured 252 players from 14 teams across 10 regions, reflecting strong growth since 2022. Narmada Valley FC retained their title, defeating Magan Singh Rajvi FC 2–1 in the final. The tournament continues to create long-term impact, with 50+ alumni progressing to top clubs and national teams.





Stories

MENSTRUACIÓN Y RENDIMIENTO DEPORTIVO



Global Coach Education on Female Athlete Health

Simply Sport Foundation was proud to contribute to a global coach education initiative on 10 February, when our Head of Women Initiatives, Aditi, delivered a session on Periods and Sport Performance as part of the Badminton Pan Am Confederation (BPAC) Coach Corner Programme, in collaboration with the Badminton World Federation.

The session brought together 30+ coaches from across multiple countries, reflecting a growing international interest in practical, evidence-informed discussions around female athlete health.

The focus of the session was on helping coaches understand how menstrual health can influence training, recovery, and performance, and how they can respond more effectively in their day-to-day coaching practice. The discussion aimed to translate emerging research into clear, coach-friendly insights that can be applied directly within training environments.

Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive, with 88% of coaches rating the session as excellent, highlighting the relevance and importance of the topic.

For Simply Sport Foundation, this engagement reflects a broader commitment to normalising conversations around menstrual health in sport, equipping coaches with the right knowledge and tools, and ensuring that female athletes are supported with science, awareness, and empathy.

From grassroots programs in India to global coach education platforms, our belief remains clear: women's health is central to performance, not peripheral to it.

Welcoming New Team Members

Cheryl Xavier - Program Lead

Cheryl Xavier, a Sports Psychologist at Simply Sport Foundation, focuses on the intersection of performance, mental health, and social impact. With a background in psychology and an MSc in Sports and Exercise Psychology, she has worked across both high-performance and grassroots settings, including with rowing athletes and institutions such as SDAT and Gun for Glory.

At the Foundation, she leads mental health initiatives, designing and delivering workshops on emotional wellbeing, athlete identity, and menstrual health, while creating safe spaces for athletes. An athlete herself, she actively engages in running and CrossFit, bringing both professional and personal insight to her work.



Ipsita Basu - Program Lead

Ipsita Basu is a strategic content leader with 20+ years of experience in brand storytelling, digital transformation, and creative operations. She most recently served as Senior Director at YourStory, leading content and creative strategy for global brands and high-growth startups.

Her expertise spans strategic storytelling, campaign development, and building scalable content ecosystems, complemented by a strong people-first leadership approach and focus on innovation.



Impact Stories Development



[Watch now!](#)

This short film highlights the journey of athletes at the grassroots, shedding light on the challenges that often go unseen—especially for young girls in sport. It captures the work being done to support athlete health, provide opportunities, and build pathways beyond competition.

Through real stories and experiences, the film reflects a growing effort to create a more inclusive and supportive sporting ecosystem.



[Watch now!](#)

PIVOT Athlete Voices: Real Impact Athletes across India describe PIVOT as a turning point, helping them build skills, confidence, and explore careers beyond sport. They are gaining exposure to digital tools, communication, and real-world experiences through mentorship and hands-on learning.

For many, PIVOT is more than a programme—it is a support system that is helping them reimagine their future beyond competition.



**PARTNER
WITH US**

GIVE YOUR HELP

Are you interested in collaborating with us or participating in a workshop?



We're always open to building meaningful connections, sharing knowledge, and growing together. As part of our commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), we welcome opportunities that foster learning, innovation, and positive social impact. Whether it's through skill-building workshops, joint initiatives, or knowledge exchange, we believe in the power of collaboration to create lasting value.

WANT TO JOIN US IN MAKING A DIFFERENCE?

Support grassroots female athletes in sports!

Your donation can help empower young women through access to training, equipment, and opportunities they might not otherwise have. By supporting grassroots female athletes, you're investing in talent, equality, and the future of sports.



DONATE NOW