

# Instruments Of Change

How Social Finance  
can transform India's  
Sporting Landscape



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## FOREWORD

### Can corporate India transform the country's sports landscape?

SRIKRISHNA SRIDHAR MURTHY (KRISHNA)  
Co – Founder & CEO, Sattva Consulting



In 2014, India became the first country in the world to mandate corporate social responsibility. As we reflect on a decade since the CSR mandate came into effect, it's clear that the role of CSR has expanded significantly. CSR is now seen as a vehicle for innovation, often employing mechanisms such as innovative finance to attract further investment and enhance the scale and sustainability of solutions. Corporates are not only deploying funds but are also playing a catalytic role by engaging in collaborative partnerships and creative financing models with other corporates, government, academic institutions, incubators, NGOs, and other stakeholders to unlock resources and drive systemic transformation.

What could this mean for the sporting ecosystem in India? With our large youth population, and with the growth of highly successful sporting leagues over the last few years, we are seeing several measures being taken towards developing an investment-led sporting culture in the country. With a 64% increase in CSR funding for sports-related projects in FY 2022-23, contributions have surged to ₹477 crore- up

from a modest ₹58 crore in 2014-15. (Source: <https://indiadatainsights.com/csr-a-catalyst-for-systemic-change/>) This is a significantly different situation from a decade ago, when allocations towards sports ecosystems were largely government-led. Resources as well as efforts therefore to create and nurture a sporting ecosystem were few and far between. This isn't just corporate support-it's a bold step towards building a stronger, more competitive India.

Today, the opportunities for corporate India to re-imagine traditional grant-giving and evolve a more catalytic approach to deploying CSR funds are multi-fold. Take the example of 360 ONE Foundation, the CSR arm of 360 ONE, a leading wealth advisory and asset management firm, and among the very few organisations pioneering blended finance models in India. Their approach serves to unlock further capital and recycle funds, while maintaining a strong focus on measured outcomes.

This paper from GameChanger Law Advisors on 'Instruments of Change- How Social Finance can transform India's Sporting Landscape' therefore, could not

have come at a more critical time than this. The paper looks at the benefits of blended finance structures, including outcome-based contracts, developmental bonds and social stock exchanges as innovative mechanisms for the nation to not just raise more capital but also drive higher awareness for sports and our athletes. It highlights the need to look at sports as a pathway for development, beyond just health benefits or high-performance goals, as sports can also drive developmental

goals such as inclusivity, equity and education.

As India harbours the ambitious dream of hosting an Olympics in the future, what we need is a creative re-imagining of our country's sporting landscape. I am optimistic that this paper will provide the impetus to kickstart important conversations and nudge the country towards this dream.



*Srikrishna Sridhar Murthy (Krishna)*

Co-Founder & CEO, Sattva Consulting

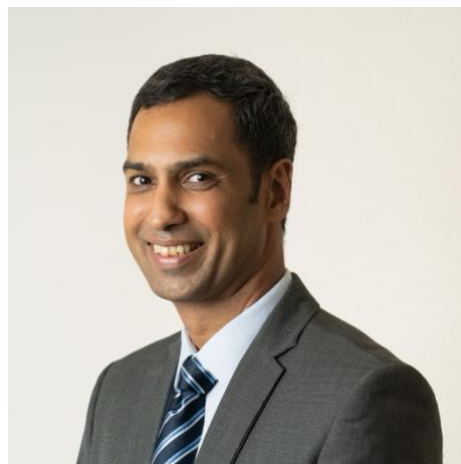
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Amrut Joshi founded GameChanger Law Advisors in 2011. He has been recognized as an expert corporate and commercial lawyer, sought after by leading startups, venture capital firms, consulting firms, impact investors, angel investors, and sportspersons across the world.



Over a period of 22 years, Amrut has built deep expertise in advising clients on mergers and acquisitions, venture financings and impact investments, while also building sector-specific expertise in the deeptech, healthcare and sports and social enterprises sectors. Amrut's articles on various legal issues have been published both nationally and internationally. He has also been invited to share his insights on reputed television channels and digital platforms. In addition, he regularly conducts workshops, aimed at educating and nurturing the Indian startup ecosystem.

Amrut is a mentor at the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Platforms (C-CAMP) since 2018, and at NSRCEL, IIM Bangalore's incubator (since 2022)., He has been a consultant for the Stanford Seed Transformation Program since 2020, and completed an Impact Investment Fellowship with AVPN in 2021.

Amrut read law at the National Law School of India University, Bengaluru and graduated with a B.A. LLB (Hons.) degree in 2003.

### SAMHEETA RAO

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Her impactful work for clients such as Sattva Consulting, Catalyst Group and ImagineH2O highlight her deep expertise in India's Social Enterprises sector. Samheeta spearheaded the Firm's work on the Life Skills Collaborative project- a collaborative of 18 leading organizations to enable integrates life skills into India's public education system.

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## **MAHIT ANAND**

**Partner**

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Mahit Anand is a Partner at GameChanger Law Advisors. He has more than a decade of extensive experience in General Corporate Advisory, Commercial Contracts, Sports Law and Social Enterprises Law.

Mahit has represented clients on transactions in the technology, education, healthcare, sports and social impact sectors, which stands as a pointer to his versatility. He has adeptly managed numerous mergers, acquisitions, and venture capital investments in India, notably representing a top UK-based impact investment fund focused on the edtech and agritech sectors.

Beyond transactional endeavors, Mahit is dedicated to supporting the startup ecosystem, often facilitating legal workshops and individual sessions at leading incubators and ecosystem players. Mahit provides legal advisory services to all portfolio companies of the Yunus Social Business Fund Bengaluru (YSB). A former third division football club player, Mahit has also provided specialist legal assistance to leading Indian football clubs on various contracting and governance issues.

Mahit read law at the School of Law, Christ University, Bengaluru and graduated with a B.A. LLB degree in 2014



## OUR KNOWLEDGE PARTNER



We are privileged to have Sattva Consulting, a global impact consulting firm working with communities, business and government to achieve societal impact at scale, join us in our endeavour as a Knowledge Partner.

We would like to convey our sincere thanks to the following team members of Sattva Consulting for their contributions to this White Paper.

1. **Mr. Srikrishna Sridhar Murthy**  
Co-Founder and CEO, Sattva Consulting;
2. **Ms. Rukmini Pandit**  
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4. **Ms. Chatura Padaki**  
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Since 2014, we have had the privilege to serve as external legal counsel to Sattva Consulting and advise them on a range of marquee impact consulting projects, including the Life Skills Collaborative Project, and in advising them on the launch of their impact-targeted verticals such as the India Partner Network and Sattva Knowledge Institute.





CHAPTER 1

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**Sport as a greenfield for  
development of  
Social Finance Instruments**



If there is one sector in India that has witnessed *visible, drastic* change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it has to be that of sports. Consider this- at the turn of the century, India was considered as a *one-sport nation*, namely, a cricketing nation. Even in cricket, India was for most part, an “also-ran”. If you were to read any media coverage of India’s sports sector in the 90s and the early 2000s, you would notice an oft-repeated lament that Cricket in India grabbed all the eyeballs and investments, and all other sports were in a state of poverty. While much of the lament was true then, the narrative has been changing slowly, yet progressively over the last 25 years.

While some may argue that success stories in the realm of *high-performance sport* by Indian athletes/teams are like islands, only someone living under a rock will not know that since the turn of the century, sports other than cricket have witnessed huge successes. To name, just a few:

- India has produced 3 world chess champions (2 men and 1 woman);
- India has produced Individual Olympic Gold Medallists in Shooting and Javelin Throw;
- The Indian Men’s Badminton Team has won the Thomas Cup once;
- The Indian Men’s Cricket Team has won the ODI World Cup twice;
- Indian Women Badminton Players have been Olympic Medallists at 3 successive Olympic Games; and
- India’s overall performance at successive Olympic Games, Paralympic Games and Asian Games have progressively improved.

In addition, the growth and success of “*franchise sport*” in India in the last decade or so, through professional leagues such as the Indian Premier League (IPL) and the Women’s Premier League (WPL) in cricket, the Indian Super League (ISL) in football, the Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) in kabaddi, the Hockey India League (HIL) in field hockey, and the Global Chess League in chess, are today served up as examples of the benefits of *commercialization of sport* that have simultaneously created livelihoods and inculcated a sporting culture within India.

It is also heartening to note that India is slowly but steadily witnessing the growth of a fairly robust *Sports for Development (S4D)* ecosystem. The Government lists “top sporting nation” as a key pillar of its vision of “India at 100” in 2047. Equally important is the work of several not-for-profit organizations that have committed themselves to the cause of creating social impact through the medium of sport. The Government has also signalled its commitment to S4D through the recently released draft National Sports Policy, 2024. Specific States, like Haryana and Odisha, have pioneered and adopted a S4D approach, which is based on *inclusion, equity, access, and participation* alongside sporting success<sup>1</sup>. Consequently, there is now an acknowledgement from virtually every stakeholder in the ecosystem, from policymakers, administrators, healthcare professionals, educators, corporates, development organizations to laypersons, of the broader social canvas that can be painted through the medium of sport- *fostering social cohesion, uplifting underprivileged sections of society, improving educational and health outcomes, and promoting a sense of national identity.*

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<sup>1</sup> **CSR and Sports in India: Emerging Trends and Implications.** Authored by PACTA and Sports and Society Accelerator (Available at: [www.pacta.in/CSR\\_and\\_Sports\\_in\\_India\\_Pacta-SSA\\_Apr\\_2023.pdf](http://www.pacta.in/CSR_and_Sports_in_India_Pacta-SSA_Apr_2023.pdf))

Global evidence has shown that sports programs and initiatives have the potential to address key socio-economic needs and build *healthier, fitter, more inclusive, and empowered societies*. Regular physical activity has been shown to *reduce the risk of several non-communicable diseases* including coronary heart disease, diabetes, certain cancers, obesity etc., thereby enhancing a sense of wellbeing and community, and increase productivity<sup>2</sup>. Countries like the UK, Australia, and Canada are increasingly S4D and *population-scale physical activity approaches in sport and health policy* based on the recognition that sport is not just an end but an effective instrument to achieve larger development goals, especially health and productivity.

Since the turn of the century, we have also seen increased collaboration between various stakeholders i.e. governments (both at the union and state government levels), sports' governing bodies, corporates (through CSR programs), corporate sponsors, NGOs working in the field of sport, sporting franchises and athletes. Several success stories in Indian sport have been achieved on the back of **improved access to funding**, be it through government grants, philanthropic support, corporate social responsibility programs or corporate sponsorships.

And yet, the success stories in Indian sport also serve as a reminder that for India to become a “sporting nation” that nurtures both sporting champions as well as a healthy society, there needs to be a synergistic tango between the actors who drive **high performance sport, franchise sport and S4D** and the investors who fuel each of these ecosystems.

Hence, there will always be a perennial need for investors of all types to collaborate and make sustainable investments at all levels of Indian sport to eliminate the maladies that plague it, including poor sports governance, corruption, inadequate access to high-class sporting facilities and nutrition, failure to create a “grassroots sports culture” or making sports a viable economic and social activity. **It is our belief that there needs to be a more efficient mechanism to match different types of funders with different types/levels of sport.**

This White Paper explores how such multi-stakeholder collaboration, matching and funding can happen. In answering the “how”, we have discussed various blended finance approaches case studies derived from their deployment in other social sectors, which could be adapted and deployed for raising funding within the sporting ecosystem, be it for building sporting infrastructure or for developing community sport or for achieving Olympic/Paralympic glory. Within the Indian context, the advent of the Social Stock Exchange provides for yet another exciting social financing mechanism to be explored in the days ahead. We also provide two recent example of Social Stock Exchange listings for readers to assess this platform’s potential.

Read on to understand how sport is a virtual greenfield for the development of social finance structures in India, with lessons extending to walks of life beyond the playing fields!

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<sup>2</sup> **CSR and Sports in India: Emerging Trends and Implications.** See above.



CHAPTER 2

# Demystifying Social Finance Jargon



Over the last two decades, the world has become increasingly familiar with “Socially Responsible Investing” (SRI) or “Social Finance” and refer to investment strategies that are adopted keeping in mind the ethical, social and/or environmental impact of an investment, apart from the financial considerations that were the traditional driving force behind private investments. SRI is a canopy term that can also cover impact investments, as well as upcoming and innovative blended finance structures that are gaining popularity in various regions across the world, often with a view to assist in the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals.

- ◆ **Impact Investing:** *Intentional investments (typically of private capital) which are influenced equally by the potential financial return from such investment, as also the investment’s potential to provide measurable social and/or environmental impact.*
- ◆ **Blended Finance:** *Pooling of public, philanthropic and private funding into specially designed structures that are aimed at achieving objective social outcomes, while also providing financial returns to private investors.*
- ◆ **OBCs/Outcomes-Based Contracting or Pay for Success:** *Blended finance structures where the funder is obliged to provide funding only if, and after, pre-agreed social outcomes are met (as verified by measured data and verified independently).*

## A. What is Impact Investing?

The Global Impact Investing Network defines “**Impact Investments**” as “*investments made with the intention to generate positive, measurable social and environmental impact alongside a financial return*” and is characterized by four core characteristics:<sup>3</sup>

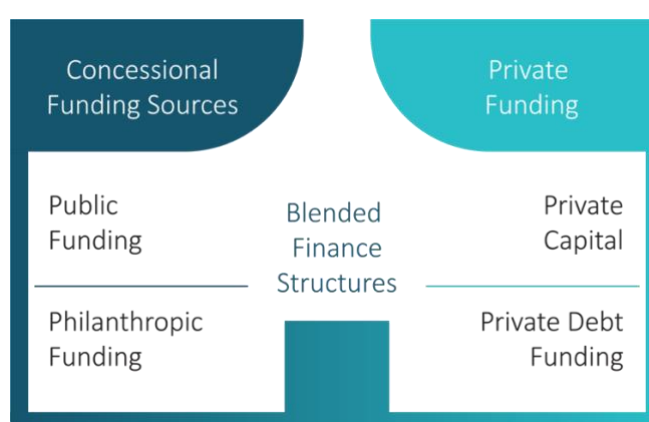
- **Intentionality** to contribute to measurable social or environmental benefit. Impact investors aim to solve problems and address opportunities. This is at the heart of what differentiates impact investing from other investment approaches which may incorporate impact considerations;
- **Use of Evidence and Impact Data in Investment Design** to drive intelligent investment design. Investments are not to be designed on the basis of hunches, and impact investing needs to use evidence and data where available.

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<sup>3</sup> **What you need to know about Impact Investing** published by the Global Impact Investing Network (Available at: [thegiin.org/publication/post/about-impact-investing/](https://thegiin.org/publication/post/about-impact-investing/))

- **Managing Impact Performance** towards the stated intention of the investment, including having periodic information feedback and sharing, status checks, etc, to ensure that the investment is on track to achieve the stated intention.
- **Contributing to the Growth of the Industry** where investors with credible impact investing practices use shared industry terms, conventions, and indicators for describing their impact strategies, goals, and performance. They also share learnings where possible to enable others to learn from their experience as to what actually contributes to social and environmental benefit.

## WHAT IS BLENDED FINANCE?



As illustrated above, “**Blended Finance**” is a pooling of capital/funding from public and private sources through appropriate instruments/structures. It is a structuring approach that allows organizations with different objectives to invest alongside each other, while achieving their own objectives (whether financial return, social impact, or a blend of both).<sup>4</sup> Blended finance structures are able to overcome perceived investment barriers for private investors such as high risk and “poor” returns as compared to market returns, while also allowing government or philanthropic funders a higher chance of success in achieving their stated social outcomes.

### B. What are “Outcomes-Based Contracting” or “Pay For Success”?

In traditional investment agreements, funding is provided upfront for a project/venture, which is thereafter utilized for the stated purposes. The investment agreement would outline the outcomes that the parties intend to achieve, which can then be measured. However, in such frameworks, there is always the risk/chance that the desired outcomes and impact may not be achieved by the contracting parties. On the other hand, in outcomes-based contracting (also referred to as “**OBCs**” or “**Pay for Success**” models), the outcome funder only provides its

<sup>4</sup> See: **What is Blended Finance** published by Convergence (Available at [www.convergence.finance/blended-finance](http://www.convergence.finance/blended-finance))

funding once the pre-agreed outcomes or services are met/provided. An OBC is also a classic example of a blended finance structure that combines funding from two kinds of investors: (a) a “*risk investor*” who provides upfront funding (often a financial institution or private capital, which may provide a loan or other funding facility), and (b) an “*outcomes funder*” who provides the funding only after the outcomes are achieved (as verified through measured and objective data and criteria and has been independently certified), and whose funding is utilized to return the principal (and interest/returns, as applicable) to the risk investor. Examples of blended finance instruments (which are also OBCs) are social impact bonds (SIBs), development impact bonds (DIBs) and social success notes (SSNs).

In Chapter 5, we will describe a few blended finance and OBC structures with examples of how they have been used to achieve specific social impact goals in other sectors across the world, and how they could potentially be explored to fund Indian sport as well.



CHAPTER 3

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# Why Indian Sport is a promising playground for Social Impact Financing



Time and again, sport has proved that it has the ability to foster inclusion, education, gender equality, and economic empowerment, and in a country such as India, where deep-rooted social challenges such as poverty, gender disparity and limited access to education persist, sport has the potential to act as a transformative catalyst to drive significant social change in the broader realm of society. The Indian Government has, over the years, implemented programs such as Khelo India, Fit India Movement, Target Olympic Podium Scheme, National Sports Development Fund, etc., which are aimed at developing sports infrastructure, fostering talent, and promoting physical activity across communities.

It is also heartening to note that the draft National Sports Policy, 2024 (“NSP”) recently

released by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports sets out a robust roadmap that is aimed at developing a sporting culture that is accessible, inclusive and excellence-driven. It places an emphasis on S4D, aiming to leverage sport as a means to achieving broader social goals such as community cohesion, empowerment and inclusive growth while also improving public health and enhancing the quality of life.

While the policy brings several positive reforms, it falls short of sufficiently addressing the financial needs of sport in general, and also overlooking the financial needs of sports that lack mass media appeal or corporate sponsorship. The result is a sporting ecosystem where some sports thrive, while others struggle to survive.

- ◆ *Inadequate sporting infrastructure which is unable to keep pace with India’s growing youth and demand for such infrastructure.*
- ◆ *Absence of focused, sustained and long-term investments in grassroots programs across regions and sport.*
- ◆ *Inequality of investments/funding, and concentration of private funding/sponsorships in a few sports or regions.*

## A. Sporting Infrastructure Deficit versus India’s Youth Demography

India’s population, which exceeds 1.4 billion people represents one of the largest and most diverse markets for sport globally. The country’s youth demography is particularly significant, as it accounts for more than 50% of the general population.<sup>5</sup> As the younger generation becomes more engaged in sporting activities, the demand for better grassroot development

<sup>5</sup> **Think Sports: Unlocking India’s \$130B Sports Potential** (Available at: [www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/in/Documents/technology-media-telecommunications/in-TMT-ThinkSports-Unlocking-India%27s-\\$130B-Sports-Potential-noexp.pdf](http://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/in/Documents/technology-media-telecommunications/in-TMT-ThinkSports-Unlocking-India%27s-$130B-Sports-Potential-noexp.pdf))

programs, training facilities and professional leagues has grown proportionately, which in-turn has triggered a necessity for more accessible and modern sports infrastructure.

India's sports infrastructure challenges are multi-dimensional. While large cities and metropolitan areas generally have access to basic sporting facilities, rural and remote regions continue to lack even the most fundamental resources. This is ironic because India's glory in the international stage is largely owed to athletes coming from rural and underserved regions.

Nevertheless, inadequate availability of quality stadiums, training centres, fitness equipment, and sports academies in these rural and underserved regions creates a major barrier to discovering and nurturing athletic talent. Moreover, the uneven distribution of infrastructure contributes to disparities in sports opportunities, with only a fraction of India's youth able to access the resources necessary for elite-level training. The lack of infrastructure is further compounded by issues of outdated facilities, inadequate maintenance, and a shortage of well-trained coaches. Even when state-of-the-art infrastructure exists, it often remains underutilized due to limited access and unavailability of financial resources to maintain these facilities. As a result, athletes, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, struggle to achieve their full potential.

## B. Under-developed Grassroot Programs

Global data consistently highlights a strong connection between grassroots sports involvement and sustainable development. Research on the social returns generated through sports reveals that every \$1 invested in a sports initiative can yield between \$3 and \$124 in value. However, sport continues to be underappreciated and overlooked as a domain of investment.<sup>6</sup>

Over the last five years, India's sports budget has grown by 1.6x, swelling from \$260 million in 2019 to \$405 million in 2024. As part of the National Infrastructure Pipeline, India currently has sports projects worth \$2.39 billion in development. However, the country's sports budget per capita amounts to \$0.30 in 2024 – with a sizable deficit from larger sporting economies (e.g. UK's \$9 and Australia's \$11 in 2023)<sup>7</sup>. Additionally, these figures pale in comparison to the currently pending sports development projects in India which are worth \$2.39 billion<sup>8</sup>.

A comparison with the model adopted by the United Kingdom is instructive for stakeholders in India, as to what needs to be done if India is to fulfil its dream of becoming a sporting superpower. The United Kingdom has been on a 25-year mission to improve its international sporting performance, taking a “no-compromise” approach that saw the country spend more

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<sup>6</sup> Impact Investment in Sport: Innovating the Funding of Sport for Development (Available at: [unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000386193](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000386193))

<sup>7</sup> Think Sports: Unlocking India's \$130B Sports Potential (Available at: [www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/in/Documents/technology-media-telecommunications/in-TMT-ThinkSports-Unlocking-India%27s-\\$130B-Sports-Potential-noexp.pdf](https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/in/Documents/technology-media-telecommunications/in-TMT-ThinkSports-Unlocking-India%27s-$130B-Sports-Potential-noexp.pdf))

<sup>8</sup> Think Sports: Unlocking India's \$130B Sports Potential. See above.

on just preparing its athletes for the Tokyo Olympics (\$480 million) than India spent on its entire sports budget for 2022-23 (\$399 million). With this funding (sourced from the money brought in by the National Lottery in the UK), the UK finish third in total medals in 2012, second in 2016, and fourth in 2020 after winning just one gold medal at the 1996 Olympic Games<sup>9</sup>.

A fundamental obstacle to grassroots sports development is the lack of infrastructure. Building and maintaining sports facilities is a costly affair, and many local governments struggle to allocate enough funds for sports development. Even though facilities are constructed, the quality of these facilities often falls short due to poor maintenance and lack of resources. Moreover, traditional funding models have proven to be inadequate in addressing the challenges at the grassroots level. While there are government grants, corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds, and some private sector contributions, these financial resources are often dispersed and insufficient to create a consistent and comprehensive approach to grassroots sports development.

### C. Lack of Sponsorship and Private Sector Engagement

While the nation has shown promise in various international sporting arenas—from cricket to badminton to athletics (to a limited extent)—the growth of sports outside of a few major disciplines remains stagnant. In a country that boasts over 1.4 billion people, it seems counterintuitive that sports outside of cricket have not seen the same level of financial backing and corporate interest. The Indian Premier League (IPL) has transformed the cricketing landscape, attracting billions of dollars in sponsorship, advertising, and media rights. While this success is commendable, it also highlights a stark disparity. Limited television coverage, lack of media exposure, and less developed fan bases make it difficult for sports such as football, tennis, volleyball and other non-mainstream sports to generate significant revenue or attract corporate interest.<sup>10</sup> As a result, sports organizations often struggle to find the funding required for development, training facilities, and competitive programs.

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<sup>9</sup> **Sports Landscape and Policy in India** (Available at: [www.swaniti.com/sports-landscape-and-policy-in-india/](http://www.swaniti.com/sports-landscape-and-policy-in-india/))

<sup>10</sup> **Making India a leading Sporting Nation** (Available at: [kpmg.com/in/en/blogs/2024/09/making-india-a-leading-sporting-nation.html](https://kpmg.com/in/en/blogs/2024/09/making-india-a-leading-sporting-nation.html))

A chessboard with a wooden frame and a black and white checkered pattern. The board is set up with pieces in their starting positions. The pieces are made of dark wood and light wood. The board is placed on a dark wooden surface.

CHAPTER 4

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# Understanding the current landscape for Sports Funding in India

*In his seminal textbook titled **Sports Funding and Finance**, Prof. Bob Stewart makes a very pertinent point that not only has sport become more commercialized and professionalized over the last 50 years, but it has also delivered several significant inequalities.*

This statement is exemplified by the state of Indian sport today where many clubs, associations and leagues have become very wealthy while many other sport enterprises are barely making ends meet. Various factors may contribute to the sustainability of a sporting organization, such as industry structure, organization structure, access to resources, entry barriers, innovation, administrative processes, use of science and technology, with there being a strong correlation between on-field performance and off-field performance.

It is precisely these inequalities that also present an opportunity for *Samaaj, Sarkaar and Bazaar* (Society, Government and Markets) to collaborate and provide a **continuum of capital** to athletes and organizations involved at different levels of sport- from those operating in the sphere of community sport to those involved in professional sport. In this chapter, we review the current primary sources of funding for Indian sport, namely, government funding and private sector engagement through CSR funds.

- ◆ *Government funding is the primary source for funding for Indian sport, led by the flagship “Khelo India” program providing much needed funding for holistic development of the sporting ecosystem. Funds mobilized and deployed through the National Sports Development Fund (NSDF) and the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) have also made valuable contributions to the development of sporting talent in the country.*
- ◆ *The other significant source of sports funding has been the private sector, which remarkably increased their funding for Indian sports after the introduction of mandatory corporate social responsibility spends in 2014. Several leading corporate powerhouses and public sector undertakings have contributed their CSR funds towards Indian sport, which have created sporting legacies with extensive social impact beyond just the sport or the sportsperson.*

## A. Government Funding and Grants

### *Khelo India Scheme*

*“The Khelo India movement has evolved over the years and is more than just a sports development programme; it is a strategic initiative that aligns with the country’s long-term goal of hosting the Olympic Games in 2036. As we look towards 2036, the impact of Khelo India will be measured not just by medals won but by the millions of lives it has impacted, the grassroots revolution it has fostered, and the culture of sports and fitness it has embedded in Indian society.” – Mr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India*

- ◆ Launched in 2018 by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, the **Khelo India Scheme** is a flagship initiative aimed at transforming the country’s sporting landscape. At its core, the Khelo India Scheme seeks to (a) establish a framework that identifies, trains, and nurtures talent from the grassroots to the professional level, (b) make sports an integral part of India's education system and culture, encouraging participation from every segment of society<sup>11</sup>, and (c) promote sports as a career option and to foster a generation of athletes who can perform at international competitions, including the Olympics, Asian Games, and World Championships.
- ◆ The Khelo India Scheme was allocated a lion’s share of ₹1,000 crores for the financial year 2025-26 (which is ₹200 crores more than the grant of ₹800 crore in the financial year 2024-25)<sup>12</sup>. As of July 2024, the Government has released a total of ₹2,168 crores for the development of sports infrastructure in India under the Khelo India Scheme. It is also relevant to note that in the recently announced Union Budget announced on February 1, 2025, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has been allocated ₹3,794 crores- an overall jump of ₹351.98 crores<sup>13</sup>.

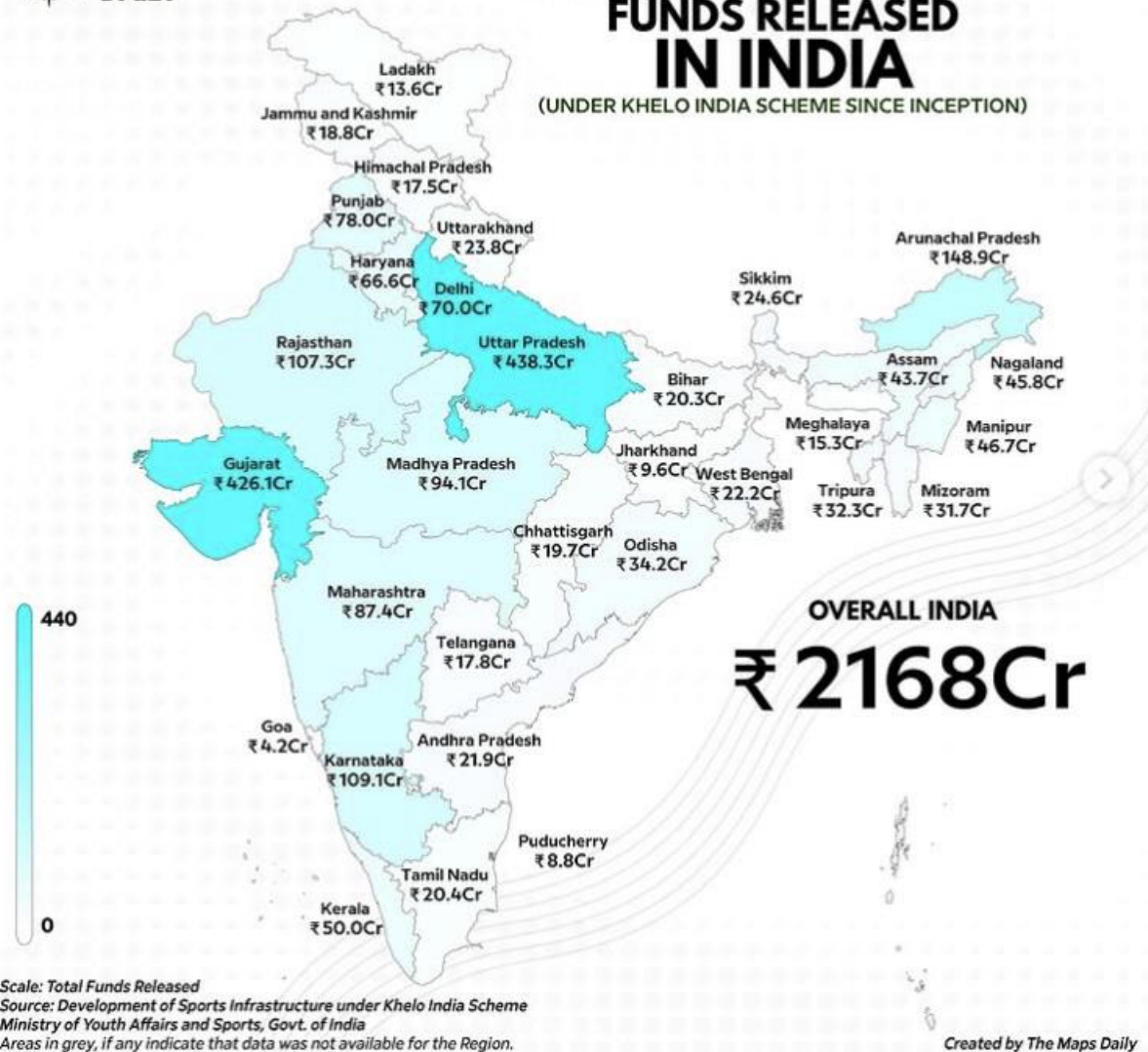
<sup>11</sup> Khelo India Schemes (Available at: [yas.nic.in/sports/khelo-india-national-programme-development-sports-0](https://yas.nic.in/sports/khelo-india-national-programme-development-sports-0))

<sup>12</sup> Union Budget: Sports and Youth Affairs budget raised by over ₹ 350 Crore, Khelo India gets biggest Share (Available at: [economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/sports/union-budget-sports-budget-raised-by-over-rs-350-crore-khelo-india-gets-biggest-share/articleshow/117826184.cms?from=mdr](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/sports/union-budget-sports-budget-raised-by-over-rs-350-crore-khelo-india-gets-biggest-share/articleshow/117826184.cms?from=mdr))

<sup>13</sup> Sports Budget raised by over ₹ 350 crore, Khelo India gets Biggest Share See above.

# SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDS RELEASED IN INDIA

(UNDER KHELO INDIA SCHEME SINCE INCEPTION)



14

- ◆ Importantly, under the Khelo India Scheme, the Government established the Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG), the Khelo India University Games (KIUG) and the Khelo India Winter Games (KIWG) as annual national sports competitions. These games have seen a sharp rise in number of participants, where young athletes, representing their states and universities, respectively have showcased impressive performances across various sporting disciplines. A few big names to have competed in these events include ace sprinter Dutee Chand and archers Parth Salunkhe and Komalika Bari<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> Development of Sports Infrastructure under the Khelo India Scheme: State-wise Allocation of Funds for Sports Infrastructure under the Khelo India Scheme (as of July 2024) (available at: [pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=2035327](http://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=2035327))

<sup>15</sup> Khelo India: All you need to know about the Youth Games, University Games and the Winter Games (Available at: [www.olympics.com/en/news/khelo-india-games-youth-university-school-history-winners](http://www.olympics.com/en/news/khelo-india-games-youth-university-school-history-winners))

*“Seven years ago, we ignited a movement with the launch of the Khelo India School Games (KISG). Today, as I look at how far we’ve come, I am filled with pride — not just for the medals won, but for the way Khelo India has transformed the very fabric of sports in our nation.”<sup>1</sup> – Mr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India*

- ◆ Recognising the immense potential within school-level competitions, the Khelo India School Games (KISG) *has created a structured pathway for young athletes to transition from inter-school competitions to national and international sporting events*. Over the years, this initiative has identified and nurtured thousands of athletes, some of whom have gone on to represent India at the Olympics and Asian Games. The best example is that of ace shooter Manu Bhaker, who transitioned from School Games to University Games to becoming a double bronze medallist at the Paris Olympics.
- ◆ With the expansion of KISG into the broader Khelo India Games framework, grassroots talent identification has become more robust. Since its inception, Khelo India has conducted 16 editions – six Youth Games, four University Games, five Winter Games and one Para Games. Each edition has introduced new dimensions to India’s sporting landscape, and the expansion has ensured a seamless transition for athletes across different levels of competition, reinforcing India’s sporting pipeline.<sup>16</sup>
- ◆ Khelo India has evolved beyond just an athlete identification programme and now encompasses multiple stakeholders, including corporates, state governments, private academies, and grassroots organisations. The role of the private sector has grown significantly with corporations investing in sports development through sponsorships, infrastructure projects, and athlete mentorship programmes. The “*One Corporate, One Sport*” initiative is being introduced to further enhance corporate engagement in sports by ensuring targeted support through partnerships with the Government, National Sports Federations (NSFs), and corporate entities. State governments have also taken the initiative, proposing Khelo India Centres (KICs) based on regional sporting priorities, ensuring that sports development is aligned with local needs.<sup>17</sup>
- ◆ It is also heartening to note that the budget allocation towards the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and the Khelo India Scheme has seen an increase despite the absence of a major sporting event in the next year (such as the Olympics, Commonwealth or Asian Games). Thus, the funds can be meaningfully utilized to establish world-class, high-performance training centres across different zones of the country which will enable elite athlete training, including for Olympic and Paralympic sports as also for indigenous sports, equipped with state-of-the-art sports infrastructure, sports science, and sports medicine facilities.

<sup>16</sup> Khelo India, the catalyst for creating champions. See above.

<sup>17</sup> Khelo India, the catalyst for creating champions. See above.



### Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS)

- ◆ TOPS was launched by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in 2014 under the Sports Authority of India (SAI), to enhance India's performance in the Olympics and other major international sporting events, following India's lacklustre performance at the 2012 London Olympics, where the country managed to secure only six medals. TOPS is: (a) designed to focus on identifying and nurturing athletes who have the potential to win medals at the Olympic Games, and (b) targeting preparing athletes to compete at the highest level, and to provide financial, infrastructural, and provide technical support to athletes in their journey to the podium.<sup>18</sup> A large portion of the funding for TOPS comes from the National Sports Development Fund (NSDF) which receives Government funding for different programs, including athlete training, international exposure, and infrastructure development.
- ◆ A snapshot of the allocation of funds to TOPS from the NSDF between 2019 and 2023 is given below<sup>19</sup>:

Financial Year	Amount (in ₹ crores)
2019-20	8.50
2020-21	5.51
2021-22	28.08
2022-23	26.02

- ◆ Under the Union Budget, 2025, SAI, which is responsible for national camps and managing TOPS for elite athletes, received ₹830 crores (up from ₹822.60 crores in the previous year)<sup>20</sup>. The continued success of TOPS will largely depend on sustained and growing investments from the government, corporate sponsors, and international organizations.

### National Sports Development Fund (NSDF):

- ◆ The NSDF was established by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports to encourage and promote the development of sports in India and receives contributions from government and private donations, thus providing a good illustration of public-private collaboration. Private contributors can also choose how their contributions will be deployed, i.e., across

<sup>18</sup> **Target Olympic Podium Scheme** (Available at: [sportsauthorityofindia.nic.in/sai/target-olympic-podium](https://sportsauthorityofindia.nic.in/sai/target-olympic-podium))

<sup>19</sup> See Government's response to Parliamentary questions. [sansad.in/getFile/annex/259/AS375.pdf?source=pqars#:~:text=\(c\):%20Funds%20earmarked%20for,ANSWERED](https://sansad.in/getFile/annex/259/AS375.pdf?source=pqars#:~:text=(c):%20Funds%20earmarked%20for,ANSWERED)

<sup>20</sup> **India's Sports Budget 2025: A Strategic investment in Future Success** (Available at: [sportsmintmedia.com/indias-sports-budget-2025-a-strategic-investment-in-future-success/](https://sportsmintmedia.com/indias-sports-budget-2025-a-strategic-investment-in-future-success/))

general sports promotion or of specific sports, sports infrastructure, training of specific sportspersons, research or upgradation of SAI centres.

- ◆ The funds are used (a) to provide financial assistance to athletes, coaches, and organizations involved in sports promotion, (b) to offer financial support for athletes' preparation for international competitions, (c) to upgrade sports infrastructure, (d) for sports research and development. As is illustrated below, the NSDF is charged with deploying its funds for the promotion of sports in general, as also for specific disciplines and sportspersons, imparting training to sportspersons, coaches and specialists, construction and maintenance of sport infrastructure, procuring sporting equipment and research and development into sporting excellence.<sup>21</sup>



- ◆ The NSDF portal states<sup>22</sup> that it has raised more than ₹485 crores in contributions, and some of the major contributors include individuals (for example, Indian cricket legend, Mr. Kapil Dev), State Governments (Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Maharashtra), public sector or government owned entities (Steel Authority of India, Bank of Baroda, Board of Control for Cricket in India) as well as corporates (Jaypee Sports International Limited). However, the contribution towards the NSDF under the Union Budget continued to be at ₹18 crores for a second successive year<sup>23</sup>.

## B. Funding through Corporate Social Responsibility (“CSR”) Initiatives/Programs

In 2014, India became the first country to mandate corporate social responsibility spending as a statutory obligation. While the path-breaking law was lauded, it was also met with scepticism in equal measure with fear around how this spending would be used, monitored and implemented to drive measurable change.

<sup>21</sup> National Sports Development Fund, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (Available at: [yas.nic.in/sports/national-sports-development-fund-0](http://yas.nic.in/sports/national-sports-development-fund-0))

<sup>22</sup> National Sports Development Fund – Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. See above.

<sup>23</sup> How govt plans to use ₹3,794 crore of sports budget (Available at: [www.cnbctv18.com/sports/explained-how-govt-plans-to-use-%E2%82%B93794-crore-of-sports-budget-19550912.htm](http://www.cnbctv18.com/sports/explained-how-govt-plans-to-use-%E2%82%B93794-crore-of-sports-budget-19550912.htm))

Almost a decade later, CSR has become an independent function in most organizations, with almost large corporates having a clearly defined vision, priority sectors, and frameworks to identify projects that they want to fund, and thereafter to track spending and measure the impact, thereby covering the entire lifecycle from writing the check to receiving the “return”, in kind. In fact, several companies that are not statutorily mandated to spend towards CSR still spend a percentage of their net profits towards nation-building and, of course, to positively impact the brand. At the other end of the spectrum, legacy companies are spending well beyond the stipulated 2% of net profits.

The legal framework for CSR has been formalized under the Companies Act, 2013 and the accompanying Rules framed thereunder. The introduction of CSR marked a significant shift, positioning India as the first country to mandate CSR activities for eligible companies. All firms/private enterprises with a net worth above ₹500 crores, or turnover over ₹1,000 crores, or net profit over ₹5 crores are required under Section 135 of the Companies Act to spend at least 2% of their annual profits (averaged over the last 3 financial years) towards CSR activities/initiatives – which includes activities relating to “*training to promote rural sports, nationally recognized sports, Paralympic sports and Olympics sports.*”<sup>24</sup>

While this sounds great, double-click on the funds spent by India Inc. across all CSR focus areas over the last 7 – 8 years, and one would find that ***the CSR spend towards sports in India is slightly above 1% of the total CSR spends.*** Historically, Indian decision makers have viewed sports primarily as an outcome, measuring success by achievements of athletes and teams at marquee events.

CSR Spends- Data speak: Not surprisingly, education and healthcare have consistently been top CSR priorities (*and rightfully so given the country’s socio-economic profile*), with education being the largest recipient of CSR funds between the financial years 2013-14 to 2022-23, securing 29.07% of the total allocations, followed by healthcare at 21.83%. Nevertheless a notable shift appears to be emerging as corporates in India are directing their CSR funds toward sectors such as sports promotion<sup>25</sup>. This is evidenced by the data recorded on the National CSR Portal, specifically providing data on CSR spends towards ‘Encouraging Sports’ between the financial years 2013-14 to 2022-23<sup>26</sup>.

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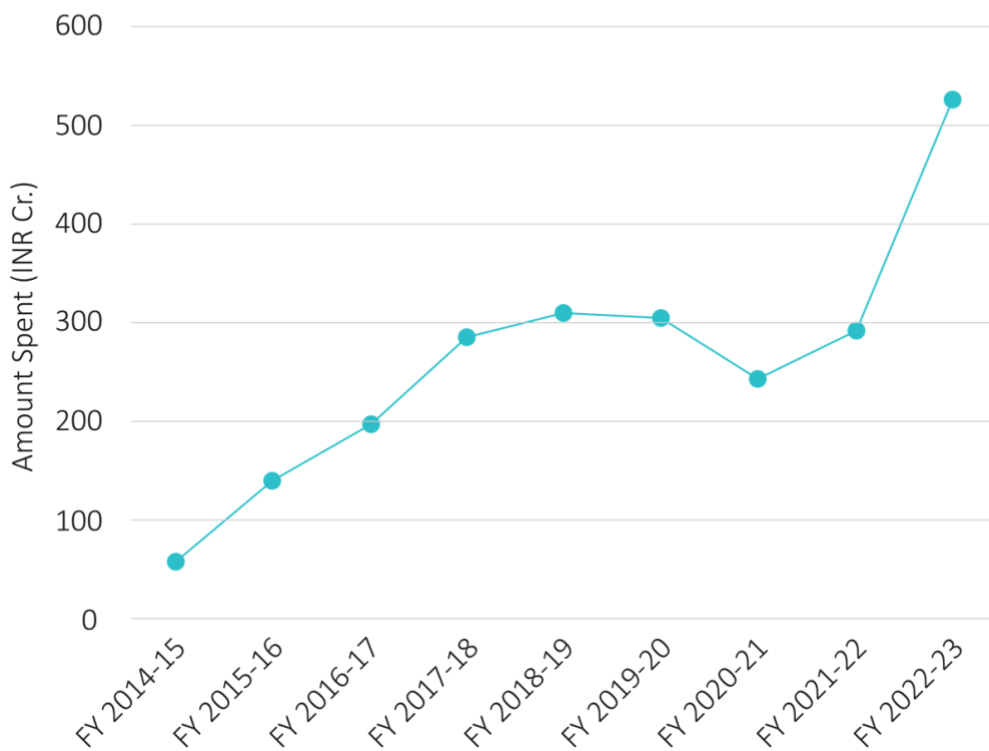
<sup>24</sup> Schedule VII, Companies Act, 2013 ([ca2013.com/schedule/schedule7-3/](https://ca2013.com/schedule/schedule7-3/))

<sup>25</sup> CSR: A Catalyst for Systemic Change (Available at: [indiadatainsights.com/csr-a-catalyst-for-systemic-change/](https://indiadatainsights.com/csr-a-catalyst-for-systemic-change/))

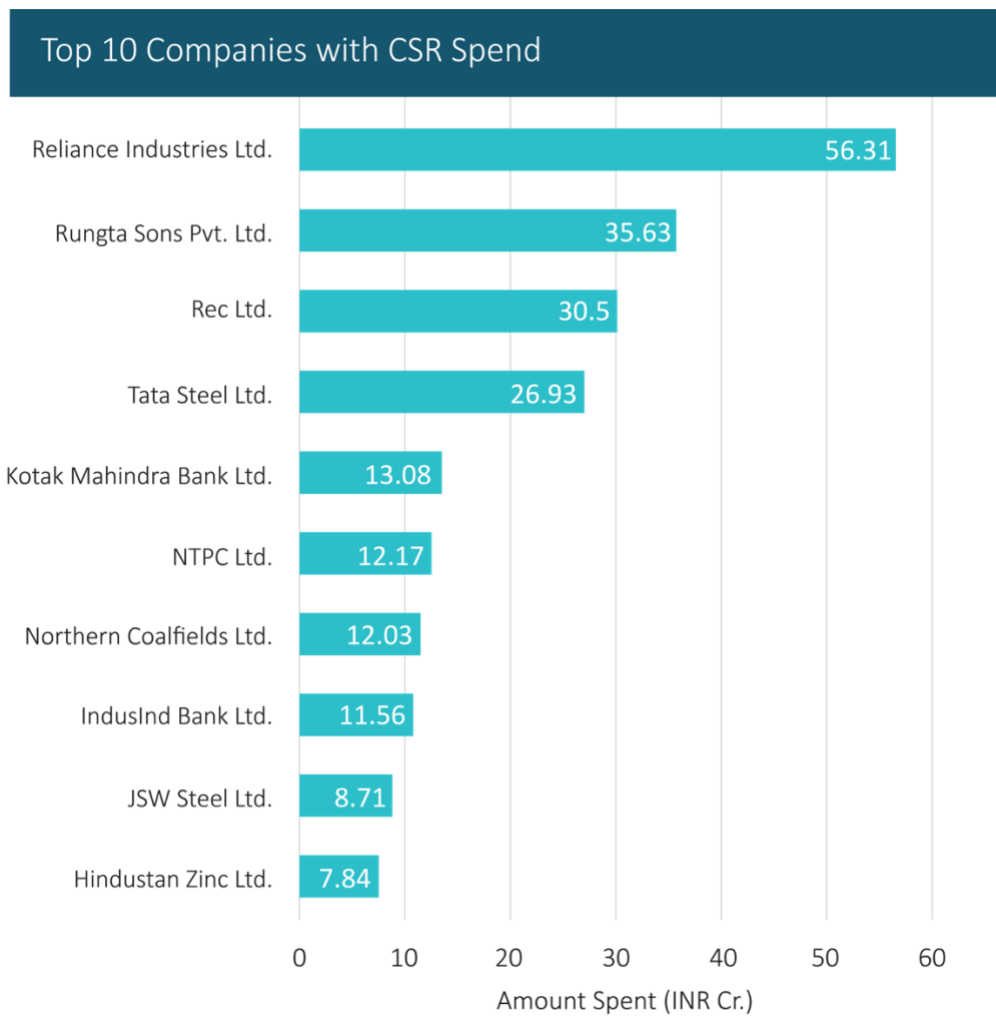
<sup>26</sup> National CSR Portal – CSR Spent towards Encouraging Sports (Available at: [www.csr.gov.in/content/csr/global/master/home/home/csr-spent--development-sector-wise.html?=&Encouraging%20Sports=FY%202022-23](https://www.csr.gov.in/content/csr/global/master/home/home/csr-spent--development-sector-wise.html?=&Encouraging%20Sports=FY%202022-23))

Financial Year	Total CSR Expenditure for Encouraging Sport (in ₹ crores)
2014-15	57.62
2015-16	140.12
2016-17	197.00
2017-18	285.41
2018-19	310.16
2019-20	304.00
2020-21	243.39
2021-22	291.75
2022-23	526.14

## Comparative Report

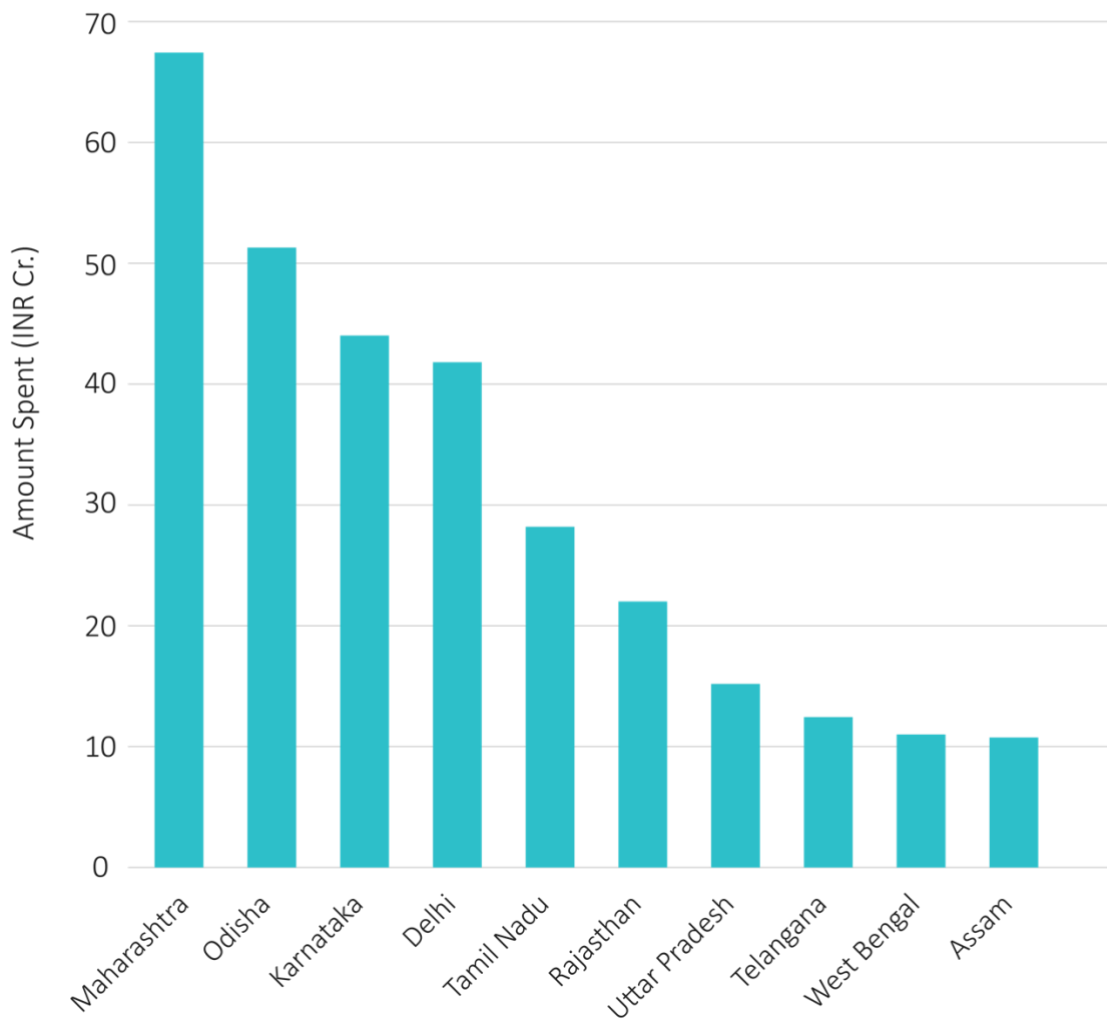


The below graph showcases the top ten companies that have contributed towards CSR spending for sports in the financial year 2022-23.



State-wise split: Amongst the states, Maharashtra, Odisha, and Karnataka lead in terms of CSR spending for sports in 2022-23.

### State-wise Split for CSR Spend in Sports



Examples of CSR led Intervention in India Sport: Outlined below are some of the CSR initiatives undertaken by 3 of India’s largest corporate houses that are working towards the broader objective of making a difference in India’s sporting ecosystem, encompassing sporting infrastructure, community and grassroots development as well as development of individual athletes/sportspersons.

<b>Tata Steel<sup>27</sup></b>	
<b>Creation of Sporting Infrastructure</b>	In line with Jamsetji Tata’s belief that sports is a tool for the betterment of life, Tata Steel has created the infrastructure for several sports, particularly football, hockey, archery and kabaddi, while also opening up opportunities for local communities, using sport. Promising performers at grassroots/community sport are sponsored by Tata Steel when they graduate to elite academies, supporting their boarding, training, etc. Other aspiring sportspersons are also assisted in finding other opportunities, such as in the army, etc.
<b>Promotion of Indigenous Sports</b>	Tata Steel encourages tribal sports like Kati, Sekkor and Chur in a manner in which the community continues to own the sport and the outcome through several means, such as codification of rules of these sports through collaboration with tribal leaders which contributes to popularizing these tribal sports, thereby reinforcing indigenous identities even today. Tata Steel has also organised and co-sponsored leagues in these sports (such as the Kati League and Sekkor Premier League), in which tribal youngsters from Jharkhand and Odisha competed at the village and block levels, giving an impetus to these tribal sports.
<b>Sport for Development</b>	Beyond training youngsters for a sports-related career, Tata Steel is also focused on S4D, by deploying its funds for meeting the educational and nutritional requirements of aspiring athletes. They offer a bridge education course for young athletes who need assistance before they enter the formal education system. The coaches, who act as mentors ensure that every child is enrolled in school, thereby aiming to reduce school dropout rates. The children also go through leadership and skill development camps, and are also provided nutritional supplements where required, thereby attending to nutritional needs of the children.

<sup>27</sup> See [www.tatasteel.com/corporate/our-organisation/csr/](http://www.tatasteel.com/corporate/our-organisation/csr/)

## Reliance Foundation<sup>28</sup>

<b>Reliance Foundation Youth Sports</b>	<p>Started in 2016, the <a href="#">Reliance Foundation Youth Sports</a> (RFYS) aims to lay a strong foundation for India’s sporting future through the development of sports in schools and colleges, through inter-institutional competitions at all levels, scholarships for athletes, grants to institutions for sporting infrastructure as well as provisions for equipment and training of coaches. Today, RFYS is a prominent scouting platform for sporting talent in the country and has so far reached out to 90 lakh youth and children across 26 States and Union Territories. During the pandemic, RFYS continued engaging the athletes and coaches with 44 virtual sessions on variety of sport training and related topics attended by 9,500+ people.</p>
<b>Reliance Foundation Jr. NBA Program</b>	<p>The Jr. NBA initiative aims to tap India’s basketball talent by identifying and supporting development of players during the school years. Since its inception in 2013, the programme has engaged with over 1.1 crore (11 million) youth from 13,500 schools nationwide and trained over 13,000 physical education instructors. During the financial year 2022, a 12-week viewing series was organised, which saw aspiring athletes interact with NBA and NBA G League players, legends and coaches. With 2,700 registrations, the series had a total digital reach of 3.3 million. Further, a Junior NBA Global Championships virtual clinic was conducted for 20 Most Valuable Players (MVPs) identified from the series.</p>
<b>Reliance Foundation Olympics Initiatives</b>	<p>The Reliance Foundation Olympics initiative began in 2019 with an aim to improve the country’s performance at Olympics and other prestigious international events, and to eventually elevate India’s sporting profile and enhance its engagement with the Olympic movement. Reliance Foundation has partnered with the Odisha Government for operation of a High Performance Center for Athletics in Bhubaneswar (HPC) with the objective to produce in-house trained national and international medalists and development of athletics in the state of Odisha while becoming a national center for athletics and create a template for long term athlete development and elite athletes training in athletics.</p>

<sup>28</sup> See [reliancefoundation.org/sports-for-development](https://reliancefoundation.org/sports-for-development)



JSW Group	
Inspire Institute of Sport (IIS) <sup>29</sup>	Established in 2018 in Bellary, Karnataka, IIS is India's first privately funded high-performance training centre which offers world-class infrastructure and training facilities in disciplines like boxing, wrestling, athletics, judo, and swimming.
JSW Sports Excellence Program <sup>30</sup>	Launched in 2012, this program is focused on nurturing and supporting young athletes. It identifies and fosters talent across a wide range of sports, helping them reach their full potential. Through this program, JSW has supported athletes who have gone on to achieve success at both national and international levels. The program provides athletes with essential support, including training, funding, and international exposure.

Innovative structures utilizing CSR funds: It is noteworthy to mention that in the last 2 to 3 years, corporates and foundations are keen to explore innovative ways of deploying CSR funds, moving away from the traditional “donation to beneficiaries” mode, where the funds are channelled (directly, or through the implementation agency) to the ultimate beneficiaries. For instance, 360 ONE Foundation has deployed CSR funds to be used to provide partial risk guarantees, first loss default guarantees and for outcome based payments<sup>31</sup>.

As businesses increasingly recognize the role of sports in fostering social development and national pride, CSR funding as a source of sports financing has significant potential for exponential growth, if promoted as a multi-dimensional investment avenue, highlighting the macro and micro benefits to the communities, minorities, and individual athletes.

<sup>29</sup> [www.jswsports.in/inspire-institute-sports](http://www.jswsports.in/inspire-institute-sports)

<sup>30</sup> [www.jswsports.in/about](http://www.jswsports.in/about)

<sup>31</sup> [www.360.one/Content/Report/CSR-Brochure.pdf](http://www.360.one/Content/Report/CSR-Brochure.pdf)

CHAPTER 5

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# Exploring Outcomes-Based Contracts for Sporting Success

The GIIN estimates that over 3,907 organizations currently manage \$1.571 trillion in impact investing assets under management worldwide.<sup>32</sup> This research is based on a global database of impact assets under management managed by organizations deploying an impact investing strategy, including investment managers, pension funds, development finance institutions, foundations, sovereign wealth funds, family offices, amongst others *The aforesaid GIIN report highlighted that nearly 40% of the organizations are new players, and predicts that the impact investing market will evolve in an escalating manner due to need (supply side) and investor interest (demand side).*

In India, equity capital of more than \$37 billion was invested in impact-focused enterprises from 2010 to the first half of 2024, of which close to \$19 billion (i.e., more than 50%) was invested in the period 2021–2024, a very evident indication of impact investing’s growth in India<sup>33</sup> in the just the last four years.

For Indian sport to be consistently competitive, while the government can be a significant stakeholder, it cannot be the *only* stakeholder. If India is to harbour any dream of sustained sporting success at the global stage, that dream needs to be nurtured by a range of stakeholders, including the government, corporates, not-for-profit organizations, impact investors Given the availability of multiple sources of funding, outcomes-based contracting provides a fertile ground for achieving a comprehensive sports ecosystem that supports athletes from the grassroots to the elite level and even thereafter, while also ensuring that such social impact spending contributes to the achievement of SDGs. Moreover, strategic partnerships between sports bodies and private companies can lead to the establishment of world-class facilities, training programs, and sports management systems, all of which are necessary for the growth of professional sports in India.

In this chapter, we explore a few popular outcomes based contracts with a brief description of successful examples of each kind. In short:

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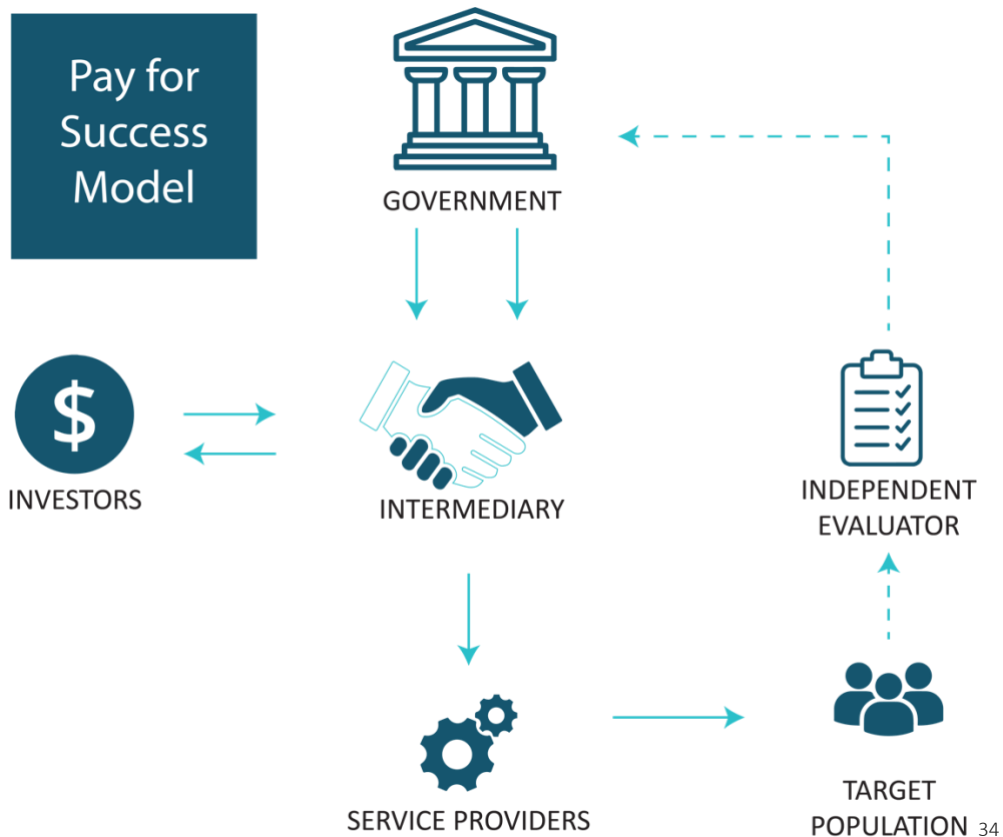
<sup>32</sup> Hand, D., Ulanow, M., Pan, H., Xiao, K. (2024). **Sizing the Impact Investing Market 2024**. The Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN). New York.

<sup>33</sup> **India’s impact investing journey: 2010 to 2024** published by the **Impact Investors Council** in their publication **“The India Story: Celebrating 10 years of the IIC”** (Available at [iic.in/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/IIC-Decennial-Coffee-Table-Book.pdf](https://iic.in/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/IIC-Decennial-Coffee-Table-Book.pdf))

- ◆ *Social Impact Bonds or SIBs are results-based contracts in which one or more private investors provide working capital for social programs, implemented by service providers (such as not for profits with expertise in that sector), and one or more outcome funders (usually the government or a development agency) pays back the risk investors their principal plus a return if these programmes succeed in delivering results.*
- ◆ *Development Impact Bonds or DIBs are similar to SIBs, with one key difference - in a SIB, the outcome payer is typically the government, while in a DIB the outcome payer is typically a private donor or aid agency.*
- ◆ *In a Social Success Note, an investor offers a loan to a for-profit small/medium sized social enterprise that can service debt and has a proven impact model. If enterprise achieves the pre-determined social outcome, a philanthropic outcome-payer provides both, the risk investor and the social enterprise an additional incentive based on the outcomes achieved.*
- ◆ *However, as highlighted in this Chapter, readers will also need to factor the disadvantages associated with outcomes based contracts, including the risk of “gaming”, the absence of sufficient evidence to demonstrate the social and economic feasibility of outcomes based contracts, and the “measurement challenge” within the context of sport.*

## A. Social Impact Bonds (SIBs)

SIBs are results-based contracts in which one or more private investors/financiers provide working capital (often on concessional terms) for social programs, implemented by service providers (e.g. NGOs), and one or more outcome funders (e.g., the municipal corporation or other government agencies) pays back the investors their principal plus a return if, and only if, these programmes succeed in delivering results.



In 2020, the first sports-based SIB, **the DCMS Life Chances Programme**<sup>35</sup>, was launched in England as part of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Life Chances Fund. The Chances Programme funded under the DCMS’s Life Chances Fund (LCF) is the first SIB that used sport as the tool to deliver outcomes, whereby local councils pay only upon the successful outcomes are achieved by local voluntary and community services sport and physical activity providers (VCS). The programme uses sport and physical activity to support young people considered. The Chances programme aims to re-engage young people from complex backgrounds through sport activities, and support them in increasing their school attendance, achieving qualifications, and reducing offending. 22 councils were involved as outcome funders, with Sport England and the DCMS Life Chances Fund also contributing towards outcome payments.

In India, the Skill Impact Bond, launched in 2021, is an example of a successfully implemented Social Impact Bond aims at increasing the employability of 50,000 Indian youth, involving the National Skills Development Corporation and the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation as the risk investors. The Skill Impact Bond’s coalition of partners comprises a long and impressive list: the British Asian Trust, Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, Children’s Investment Fund Foundation,

<sup>34</sup> **Social Impact Bonds: More Than One Approach** by Gary Painter, Kevin Albertson, Chris Fox and Chris O’Leary published in the Stanford Social Review, December 28, 2018 (Available at [ssir.org/articles/entry/social\\_impact\\_bonds\\_more\\_than\\_one\\_approach](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/social_impact_bonds_more_than_one_approach))

<sup>35</sup> **The Chances Programme Social Impact Bond (SIB): Sport and physical education for youth engagement** (Available at [www.local.gov.uk/case-studies/chances-programme-social-impact-bond-sib-sport-and-physical-education-youth-engagement](http://www.local.gov.uk/case-studies/chances-programme-social-impact-bond-sib-sport-and-physical-education-youth-engagement))

JSW Foundation, HSBC India, Dubai Cares, United States Agency for International Development, UK Government's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, Dalberg Advisors and Oxford Policy Management. On the implementation side, Learnet Skills Ltd, Magic Bus India Foundation, and PanIIT Alumni Reach For India Foundation delivered the services/solutions. The employment outcomes are independently verified by a third party evaluator, after which the outcome funders repay the risk investors up to \$14 million over four years. This results in maximum impact for money spent, aligned incentives between partners, thus creating measurable social impact that spur social change. As per the data available at the Skill Impact Bond website (dated as of May 2023)<sup>36</sup>, over 29,000 persons have enrolled in the program across 18 States, and 74% of the enrolled individuals are women.

## B. Development Impact Bonds (DIBs)

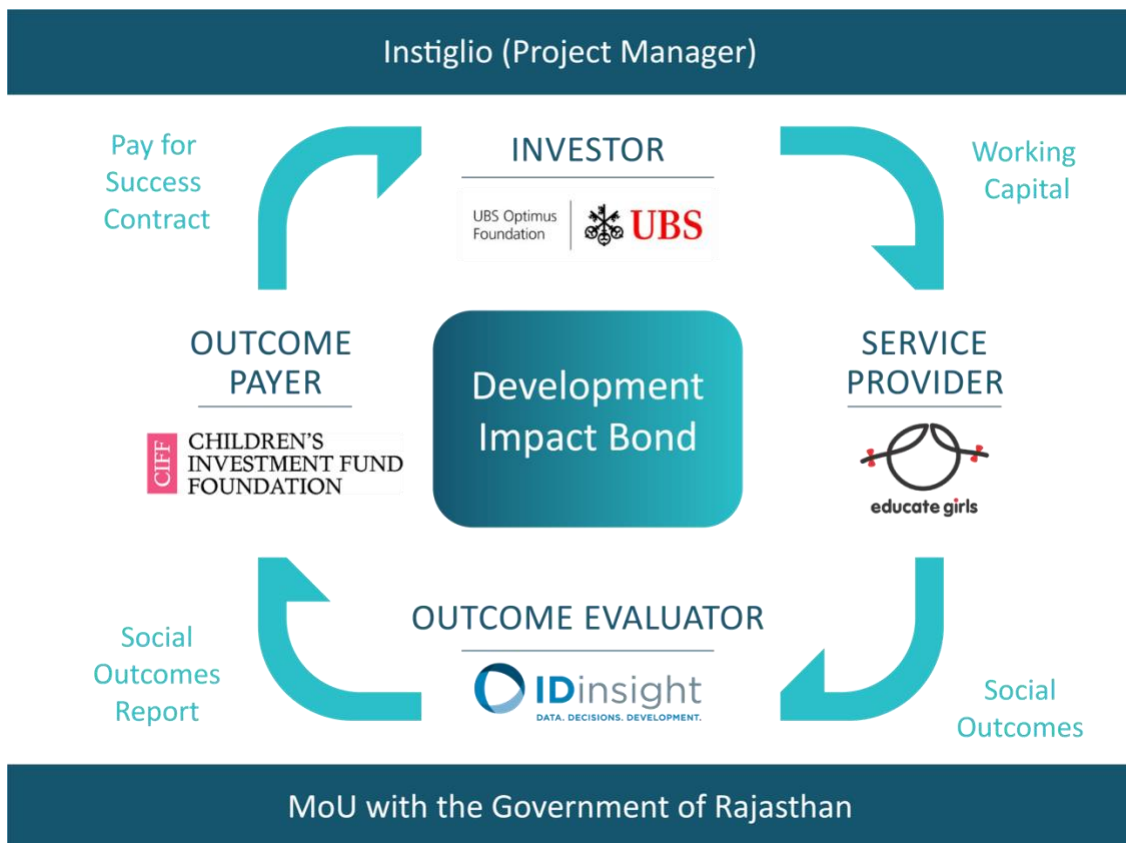
DIBs are results-based contracts similar to SIBs, with one key difference, i.e., in SIB, the outcome payer is typically the government, while in a DIB the outcome payer is typically a private donor or development aid agency.

The Educate Girls DIB<sup>37</sup> was the first DIB to launch worldwide in 2015, that sought to improve enrolments and learning outcomes for close to 15,000 girls in Rajasthan, India. With \$270,000 in upfront capital from the [UBS Optimus Foundation](#), the service provider, [Educate Girls](#) identified and encouraged enrolment for out-of-school girls, as well as providing learning interventions focused on a child-centric curriculum. [Instiglio](#) provided performance management support to Educate Girls throughout the course of the DIB, and the final results were verified by evaluator [IDinsight](#).

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<sup>36</sup> [nsdcindia.org/sib](https://nsdcindia.org/sib)

<sup>37</sup> [www.educategirls.ngo/dib/](https://www.educategirls.ngo/dib/)



The DIB measured progress against agreed targets for the number of out-of-school girls enrolled into primary and upper primary schools as well as the progress of girls and boys in English, Hindi and Math. Educate Girls tailored its approach using a performance-management system, while IDinsight, the independent evaluation firm, compared results to those of similar schools in the control group, enabling course corrections. IDinsight found that Educate Girls (EG) surpassed the DIB targets for both learning gains and enrolment. The effects of Educate Girls' program on learning gains were large and statistically significant over the three-year program:

- Students in EG schools gained on average an additional 1.08 learning levels, or 28% and 0.31 standard deviations, compared to students in control schools; and
- By the end of the three-year project, Educate Girls had enrolled 768 out-of-school girls, representing 92% of all identified out-of-school school girls eligible for enrolment. Educate Girls thus exceeded the enrolment target of 79% by 16%.

Consequently, the outcome funder, the [Children's Investment Fund Foundation](#) agreed to pay UBS their principal, along with an internal rate of return of 15%. In addition to determining final payments, midline results from IDinsight's evaluation enabled Educate Girls to fully realize the flexibility in programming provided by the DIB set-up and made effective, data-driven course corrections along the way. The success of the world's first DIB has enabled Educate Girls to secure more funding to scale up its proven program. It has also been subsequently deployed as a blended finance structure in other jurisdictions, including the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom, in tackling diverse issues ranging from homelessness, criminal justice, maternal health and aboriginal affairs.

### C. Social Success Notes (SSN)

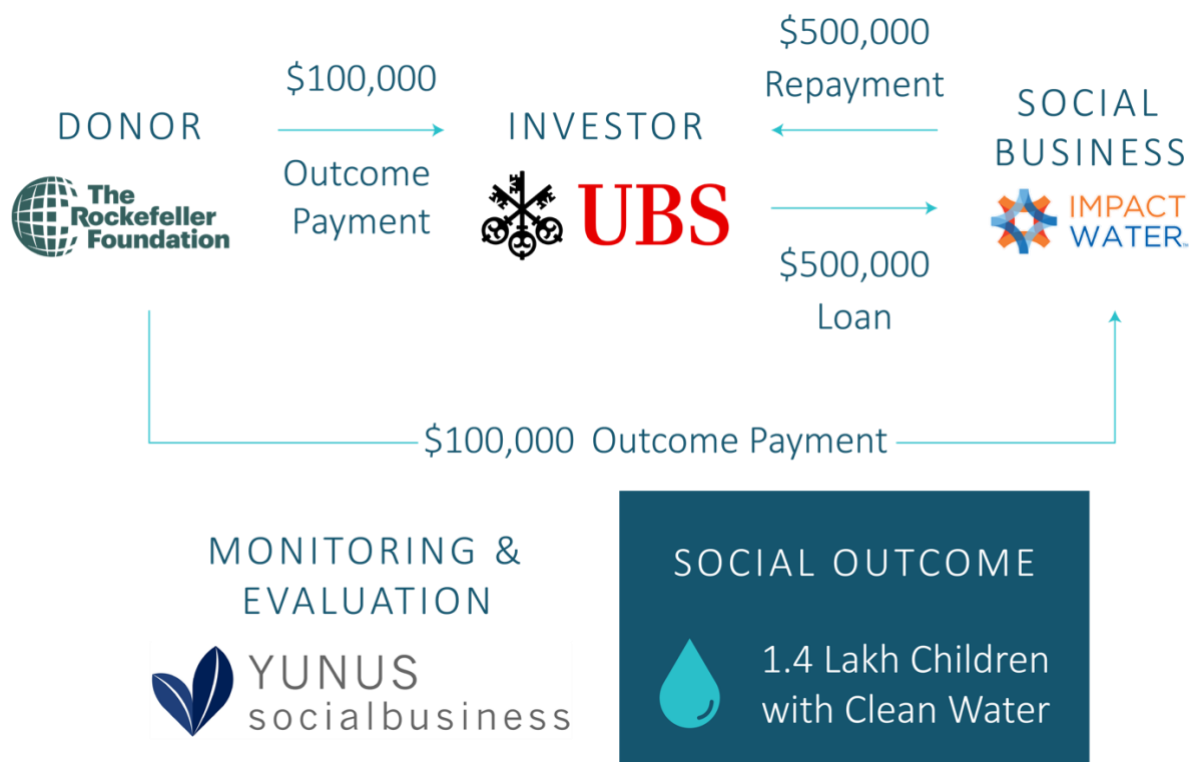
In a Social Success Note, an investor offers a loan to a for-profit small/medium sized social enterprise that can service debt and has a proven impact model. It is sector agnostic, ultimately seeking to build a larger pool of both investment and outcome funding.” For the model to succeed, the impact outcomes of the social enterprise should be quantifiable and easily measurable. If the investee (social enterprise) achieves the pre-determined social outcome, a philanthropic outcome-payer provides both, the risk investor and the investee an additional incentive based on the outcomes achieved. This helps the risk investor achieve a market rate of return and lower the interest burden for the investee.

The Impact Water Social Success Note<sup>38</sup> is a leading example of a SSN, which was designed to increase the reach of clean and safe drinking water in schools in Uganda, with a view to reducing the death rate caused by diarrhoea and reducing the rising absenteeism caused due to water borne illnesses. UBS Optimus Foundation (“**UBS**”) teamed up with Rockefeller Foundation and Yunus Social Business to offer a SSN. UBS, as the risk investor, provided a loan of US\$500,000 at 5 % (below market rate) to Impact Water, a local agency in Uganda, which works in the clean water space, by providing safe drinking water to local schools. The loan was disbursed in September 2018 for a period of 5 years. With the funding from UBS, Impact Water procured UV filters which were installed in schools. The Rockefeller Foundation agreed to make a fixed maximum outcome payment of US\$200,000 at a cumulative target of 3,600 performing water systems installed over 5 years. If targets were met, this would effectively increase UBS Optimus’ return and reduce the cost of debt for Impact Water.

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<sup>38</sup> [www.yunusfb.com/articles/innovative-new-financing-solution-the-social-success-note](http://www.yunusfb.com/articles/innovative-new-financing-solution-the-social-success-note)





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UBS chose SSN instead of a conventional grant to fund Impact Water, as the latter had the ability to service a low cost loan given its revenue model. From a risk perspective, the SSN model would leave the bank only with a “typical” credit risk as the lower rate of interest offered to Impact Water is compensated for by outcome payments offered by the Rockefeller Foundation. Thus, UBS as an impact investor got the opportunity to achieve a market-rate of return with this investment. On the other hand, the Rockefeller Foundation, as the outcome payer, was only obligated to pay if the stipulated social outcomes were met.

From the perspective of the implementing agency, Impact Water, they are able to achieve the same level of impact by leveraging their capital to mobilise return seeking capital. Thus, they achieve a significant leverage of 2.5x over a more traditional method of financing (grant funding), since a grant would have costed them at least \$500,000. The SSN allowed them to efficiently use their philanthropic capital to augment their mission and scale their impact considerably. Overall, the model also ensures that the investor’s capital/ bank loan and the outcome payer’s capital are fully aligned towards the social mission of Impact Water.

#### D. Challenges Associated with Outcomes Based Contracts

For all the benefits of Outcomes-Based Contracts (OBCs) that we have espoused in this White Paper, we remain acutely cognizant of the fact that in its short history of less than two decades, critics have challenged its overall social and economic feasibility. However, the mere fact that

<sup>39</sup> **Social Success Note** published by Yunus Social Business (Available at [www.yunussb.com/articles/innovative-new-financing-solution-the-social-success-note](http://www.yunussb.com/articles/innovative-new-financing-solution-the-social-success-note))

OBCs have failed in other nations/contexts should not deter Indian policymakers from experimenting, even if at a small scale, with OBCs. The success of the Educate Girls Development Impact Bond suggests that if the OBCs are designed such that they take into account the criticisms outlined based on evidence and research, we see no reason why they cannot be used within the sporting context in India.

Drawing from those criticisms, we do want to present a balanced view and acknowledge that the application of OBCs within the specific context of the sports sector may not be the panacea to cure all funding ills. We outline some of these arguments/challenges in this section, so that organizations can make a rational and considered assessment of the use cases of different types of OBCs. It is our argument that OBCs are an interesting option that has not yet been explored within the context of Indian Sport.

***The challenge of “creaming, parking, churning and gaming”:*** Eleanor Carter, Research Director and Nigel Ball, Former Executive Director of the Government Outcomes Lab (GO Lab) summarize the arguments against OBCs/ payment-by-results schemes in their chapter titled *“Social outcomes contracting: Seeding a more relational approach to contracts between government and the social economy?”*<sup>40</sup> where they argue as follows:

*“In practice, payment-by-results schemes carry a well-known risk of providers opportunistically taking advantage of their knowledge of the on-the-ground situation to increase their revenue under the contract. Such practices have come to be labelled with a curious mix of dairy and motoring metaphors: **creaming; parking; churning.** Unscrupulous providers might ‘cream’ the easy cases, ‘park’ people who are perceived as more challenging to support, and ‘churn’ the same users through the programme to claim payment repeatedly. Such moral hazard is well established in contract theory and is not unique to payment-by-results (Holmström, 1979), but may be exacerbated by the use of such contracting techniques due to their deliberate lack of detailed service specification and any monitoring thereof. International literature makes clear that the design specificities of programme governance and accountabilities can play a key role in either facilitating or buttressing against these negative provider practices.”*

***Disincentivizing Comprehensive Evaluation:*** A few other key arguments against OBCs, more specifically Social Impact Bonds, were articulated by Nadine Pequenza in her article for the Stanford Social Innovation Review<sup>41</sup>. Pequenza, who made a documentary film, *The Invisible Heart*, about Social Impact Bonds, after more than three years of research on the topic, argued that *“the need to return profits in a timely fashion to investors has deterred the kind of comprehensive program evaluation that leads to possible program improvement.”* Citing the example of Activate, Canada's SIB-financed program to prevent hypertension, Pequenza

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<sup>40</sup> Eleanor Carter and Nigel Ball, *Social outcomes contracting. In: Social Economy Science*. Edited by: Gorgi Krlev, Dominika Wruk, Giulio Pasi, and Marika Bernhard, Oxford University Press. © Oxford University Press (2023).

<sup>41</sup> Nadine Pequenza, “The Downside of Social Impact Bonds”, at [https://ssir.org/articles/entry/the\\_downside\\_of\\_social\\_impact\\_bonds#](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/the_downside_of_social_impact_bonds#).

discovered that the program was remarkably similar to HATICE, a government-funded, multi-national study in Europe. Both interventions provide internet-based lifestyle coaching to reduce the risk of hypertension, but Pequenza found that HATICE offered far greater value in terms of impact metrics and program outcome attribution. The European study evaluated its success by tracking participants' blood pressure, cholesterol, weight, and healthy lifestyle changes. Activate has just two metrics: enrollment numbers (regardless of whether participants attend or complete the program) and maintenance of blood pressure. Activate's investors were to earn a 6.7 percent return if these two targets are met. Hence, Pequenza concluded that the need to return money to investors favoured payment triggers that in her view were milestones, not outcomes, which in turn disincentivized rigorous evaluation and program improvement.

***Undermining basic human rights:*** Pequenza's other argument was that *"The SIB model necessitates that we commodify individuals by weighing every service they consume against every outcome they produce. This commodification fundamentally alters our commitment to basic human and democratic rights."* She cited an egregious example in the form of a SIB program to reduce the number of people sleeping on the streets of central London that incentivized the deportation of homeless people.

***The measurement challenge in the context of sport:*** The UNESCO's Report on *"Impact Investment in Sport"*<sup>42</sup> highlights some of the challenges associated with using different forms of impact investment within the context of sport. The Report states as follows:

*"Research also recognizes the contribution of sport to several SDGs (Hatton et al., 2020). Notable among these are good health and wellbeing (SDG 3), quality education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8) and reduced inequality (SDG 10). In addition, sport contributes to sustainable consumption and environmental sustainability, which relates to responsible consumption and production (SDG 12), climate action (SDG 13), and peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16), including the safeguarding of athletes and participants from abuse and violence (which can be related to SDG 5 and SDG 16).*

*However, the causal links underlying these contributions have yet to be consistently articulated or evidenced, (Sport England, 2017; Taylor et al., 2015), although notable improvements have been made in recent years (Noble and Coleman, 2020; Peachey, Schulenkorf and Spaaij, 2019). There is also confusion about how the more granular measurement of outcomes, such as physical and mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development, connects to the SDGs (UK Government, 2015). Furthermore, the benefits of sports have not translated into sustained action and funding at a systemic level, as highlighted by data on the scope and scale of sport impacts (WHO, 2022).*

*The status quo presents three main challenges. First, while Agenda 2030 described sport as an enabler of sustainable development (Palathingal, 2018), it remains under-recognized and*

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<sup>42</sup> **Impact Investment in Sport: Innovating the Funding of Sport for Development** (Available at: [unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000386193](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000386193))

*under-utilized as a domain of, and driver for, development investment. Private investment has largely bypassed sport and, as such, has failed to capitalize on the important grassroots-driven and inclusive mechanisms for transformation that sport represents.”*

CHAPTER 6

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# Unlocking Funding through the Social Stock Exchange

4x400

400  
4x100

*In July 2019, the Finance Minister stated that “I propose to initiate steps towards creating an electronic fund raising platform – a social stock exchange - under the regulatory ambit of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for listing social enterprises and voluntary organizations working for the realization of a social welfare objective so that they can raise capital as equity, debt or as units like a mutual fund”. – Ms. Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, Government of India*

Fast forward to 2023, the Social Stock Exchange (SSE) was launched and offered a first-of-its-kind platform to social enterprises, non-profits, and organizations focused on generating positive social and environmental impact to raise funds akin to a profit making entity raising funds on a stock exchange. As on December 31, 2024, a total of 111 Not- for- Profit Organizations (NPOs) have registered on the SSE segment of both the Stock Exchanges i.e. National

Stock Exchange and the Bombay Stock Exchange. Further, 10 NPOs have raised funds amounting to ₹22 crores through the SSE by issuing Zero Coupon Zero Principal instruments, which is the only permissible security that can currently be issued by issuers on the SSE.

This chapter briefly describes the steps involved in a NPO listing on the SSE and the attendant benefits of listing.

- ◆ *Listing and raising funds through the SSE is regulated by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), which has laid down the eligibility conditions, disclosure requirements, reporting and other compliances to be followed by entities seeking to list on the SSE.*
- ◆ *Since its launch in 2023, the SSE is slowly, but surely, gaining the trust and confidence of several NPOs, following the successful listing of 10 NPOs and is likely to witness several more listing, especially given the significant push and backing from the Government, which is actively promoting the SSE.*
- ◆ *A successful fund-raise on the SSE signals donor confidence in the NPO, its management and programs, creating a ripple effect on the NPOs work. This is evidenced by NPOs seeking to tap the SSE for a second time, after the first successful listing.*

As has been stated in its founding statements by the Indian Finance Minister, the SSE is envisaged to unlock funding for NPOs through a credible and transparent manner, using standardized norms of disclosure and impact measurement, aiming to address the oft repeated twin laments of the social sector, namely, of being shrouded in secrecy and opaqueness and also suffering from a lack of uniform and recognized impact measurement norms. On the other hand, the SSE assists NPOs in building their internal governance and operational processes,

since the registration and listing process requires a significant amount of rigor and discipline, from the initiation of registration to completion of all post-listing compliances, which continue until the end of the project term. Further, successfully listed NPOs increase their visibility for future fund raises, thereby setting in course a virtuous cycle.

As per the SEBI (Issue of Capital and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2018 (“**ICDR Regulations**”) the following entities are eligible to access the SSE<sup>43</sup>:

- a charitable trust registered under the public trust statute of the relevant state;
- a charitable society registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860;
- a company incorporated under section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013; or
- any other entity as may be specified by SEBI.

An eligible NPO is also required satisfy additional criteria, to qualify to register and thereafter list on the SSE:

- At least 67% of its activities should be “eligible activities” (*which also includes training to promote rural sports, nationally recognised sports, Paralympic sports and Olympic sports*<sup>44</sup>) as supported by its revenue and expenditure for the past 3 financial years or at least 67% of their targeted beneficiaries have benefitted from the eligible activities/programs;
- They should be validly registered under the Income Tax Act, 1961 (under Section 12A/12AA/12AB and 80G);
- Their annual spending in the last financial year must be at least ₹50 lakhs; and
- Annual funding in the last financial year must be at least ₹50 lakhs.

NPOs looking to list on the SSE are required to first register themselves with the relevant stock exchange, namely, the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) or the National Stock Exchange (NSE). Upon successful registration, which is valid for a period of 1 year, the NPO can thereafter prepare its draft fund raising document (DFRD) which sets out in detail, its establishment, its promoters/governance, its donors/funders, its work and the specific project for which it is seeking to raise funding. In addition, the DFRD will contain other information similar to a prospectus issued by a for profit entity seeking to list on a stock exchange, such as risk factors, issue related information, management information, financials, etc.

The DFRD is required to be filed with the relevant stock exchange for their review, and updated with their comments, if any, after which the final fund raising document is filed with the relevant stock exchange. Upon receipt of the in-principle approval from the relevant stock exchange, the issue opens for subscription for the specified duration. Upon issue closure, the Zero Principal Zero Coupon security is credited to the account of the successful applicants.

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<sup>43</sup> Regulation 292 A (e) of the ICDR Regulations

<sup>44</sup> [www.bsesocialstockexchange.com/static/eligibility.aspx](http://www.bsesocialstockexchange.com/static/eligibility.aspx)

While the successful listing ensures that the NPO has raised requisite funds for its stated program, the NPO is also required to comply with post listing requirements as set out in the ICDR Regulations, including periodic disclosures of the status of the program, utilization of funds as certified by a social auditor, etc. thereby increasing its overall credibility and transparency.

To summarize:



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In December 2023, India witnessed its first-ever listing on the SSE, with SGBS Unnati Foundation (“SUF”) becoming the first entity to take this route to avail financing. SUF, a not-for-profit (registered as a Section 8 Company under the Companies Act, 2013) engaged in providing vocational training for the underprivileged and unemployed youth in the age group of 18 years – 25 years, raised ₹1.8 crore from four investors – which included brokerage firm Zerodha and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

<sup>45</sup> **Toolkit for Navigating the Social Stock Exchange** published by Sattva Knowledge Institute (Available at [www.sattva.co.in/ski/toolkit-not-for-profit-organisations-social-stock-exchange](http://www.sattva.co.in/ski/toolkit-not-for-profit-organisations-social-stock-exchange))



*“We hope that this will change the social fabric of the country. We have a point to prove because every major country, whether it is the US, UK, Canada or Singapore, have attempted this in various formats and failed. In the social stock exchange, we hope that we will be the real ‘jagatguru’” – R. Balasubramaniam, Chairman, Social Stock Exchange Advisory Committee.*

More significantly, and following from the successful listing in 2023, Unnati has again filed a draft fund-raising document in January, 2025 **for a second listing**, seeking to raise ₹50 lakhs to train up to 3,000 graduating youth from government colleges and to assist them in employment placement through their UNXT programme.

In August 2024, Swades Foundation (*Formerly known as SHARE: Society to Heal Aid Restore Educate*), a not-for-profit organization founded by Ronnie and Zarina Screwvala that works towards empowering rural lives through a unique 360-degree development model centred around Health & Nutrition, Education, Water & Sanitation and Economic Development<sup>46</sup>, successfully raised ₹10 crore through the Social Stock Exchange (SSE), making it the largest Zero-Coupon Zero-Principle (ZCZP) bond issue on the SSE to date.<sup>47</sup>

In January 2025, the SEBI issued a Consultation Paper, with the objective of seeking comments/views/suggestions from the public and other stakeholders on various proposals of the Social Stock Exchange Advisory Committee (SSEAC) to review the framework for Social Stock Exchange (SSE). Key recommendations include:

- Expansion of NPOs that are eligible to be registered and listed on the SSE, to include trusts, societies and “Section 25 companies” (the predecessor to the Section 8 company);
- Given that only 10 out of 111 registered NPOs have listed as of December 2024, SEBI is proposing to increase the validity of registration from 1 year to 2 years, allowing more time for registered NPOs to ultimately list on the SSE, without having the need to renew their registration;
- Broadening the list of eligible activities that NPOs should be engaged in, and a corresponding expansion of targeted beneficiaries to include “intangibles”, such as the environment, improvement in natural ecosystems, protection of culture and heritage, etc.;
- Easing the 67% eligibility requirement, by only requiring those NPOs whose business income exceeds 20% in the most recent financial year to comply with this condition; and
- Changes to the reporting requirements and timelines for listed NPOs, ostensibly to ease the regulatory reporting burden.

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<sup>46</sup> [swadesfoundation.org/](https://swadesfoundation.org/)

<sup>47</sup> Ronnie Screwvala says Swades Foundation’s ₹ 10-Cr fundraise from Social Stock Exchange gives ‘a different high’ (Available at: [yourstory.com/2024/08/ronnie-screwvala-swades-foundations-rs-10-cr-social-stock-exchange](https://yourstory.com/2024/08/ronnie-screwvala-swades-foundations-rs-10-cr-social-stock-exchange))



CHAPTER 7

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## **Conclusion**

Social Finance presents interesting options -  
Not a Panacea  
for all ills that plague  
Indian Sport

The multitude of case studies discussed in the preceding chapters is indicative of several facts.

- ◆ *First*, the landscape for all forms of sport (high-performance, franchise as well as S4D) in India has evolved, and continues to evolve rapidly, operating in a dynamic environment. World over, there is enough evidence to suggest that sports increasingly plugs in to a larger ecosystem that comprises of *communities, education, financing, governance, health, law, medicine, media and technology* to deliver an outsized *financial and social impact*. **In the days ahead, what we anticipate is not just a blending of financial structures but also a blending of sectors to deliver a potent financial and social mix!**
- ◆ *Second*, there is a greater realisation amongst various stakeholders on the role that financing can play in shaping the success of India as a sporting nation. Such awareness has spurred a progressive increase in different forms of financing available for Indian sport and sportspersons. Despite such growth, there is equally an awareness that India does lag behind several other nations in terms of (a) its ranking at high-profile sporting events such as the Olympic Games or world championships for various high-performance sports; (b) the creation, development and financing of franchise-based leagues for sports other than cricket; (c) the support (both financial and non-financial) that it provides to the S4D ecosystem, grassroots sports, women's sport, paralympic sport, indigenous sport, and programs that utilise sport as a medium to improve health, education, and livelihood/skills outcomes for large sections of its society. While traditional financing models, such as government funding and corporate sponsorships, have played a critical role in propelling Indian sport thus far, these models have their limits and will not by themselves, be sufficient to meet the diverse and expanding needs of the sports ecosystem.
- ◆ *Third*, in the last 15 years, the world has witnessed the rise of social financing mechanisms. Many other nations and sectors have reaped the benefits offered by such innovative financing structures. We see no reason why stakeholders in India's sports sector in India cannot learn from the experiences of such other nations and sectors, and tailor contextual and innovative solutions for the benefit of sport as well as other sectors that will increasingly use sport to achieve their desired social and economic goals.

The rise of innovative funding avenues, including innovative CSR programs, outcomes-based financing instruments such as SIBs, DIBs and SSNs as well as the SSE, present a promising alternative to conventional methods. These approaches not only provide innovative ways to fund athletes, infrastructure, and grassroots development but also allow for a more inclusive, transparent, and community-driven model of sports promotion, which is likely to be more equitable and sustainable. Social financing bridges the gap between traditional investors and the emerging talent pool in India, fostering a sense of ownership and collective responsibility toward a broader development of India as a nation.

However, as we have outlined before, it is not our intent to blindly advocate the use of outcomes based contracts (OBCs)- there are certainly legitimate concerns around their use, backed by data and evidence that they could be prone to “gaming”, that they disincentivize comprehensive program evaluation, and that through some egregious examples, they could be seen to be undermining human rights.

For investors, these financing options offer a unique opportunity to align funding/capital with social and economic impact. Whether through public-private partnerships, or community-based initiatives, investors can engage directly with local communities and athletes, and contribute to long-term, sustainable growth in the sports sector. The diverse options available — from equity (or quasi-equity) investments in sports startups to financing local sports infrastructure — allow investors to choose the level of involvement and risk they are comfortable with, while making a significant difference in the lives of athletes and the sporting community, while at the same time receiving financial returns.

The use cases for OBCs need to be thought through carefully. There is some evidence to suggest that an explicit focus on measured outcomes can promote a continuous improvement mindset and a learning culture (and ensure sufficient resource is allocated to data for performance improvement)<sup>48</sup>. If stakeholders in Indian sport can design OBCs carefully, these models can present considerable potential for scalability and adaptation. What sports policy makers in India also need to realise is that given the funding gaps that exist in Indian sport currently, the use of OBCs is at best, an additional tool in their arsenal. If data from a few carefully designed OBCs throws up evidence against their social and economic feasibility, they can either be refined so as to address such challenges, or in the worst case, be discarded.

However, for these alternative financing methods to realize their full potential, it is essential to give such options a chance to succeed, by ensuring transparency, establishing clear regulatory frameworks, and building trust among investors and contributors. Funding structures must be designed to provide measurable returns not only in monetary terms but also in terms of social impact, fostering a win-win scenario for both investors and the wider sporting community, and hence, should prioritize data driven decision making and disclosures.

It is also crucial to educate all stakeholders, from athletes to investors, on the mechanisms, risks, and rewards associated with social financing. By embracing innovative financing models, India can build a robust sports ecosystem that supports the development of athletes, strengthens infrastructure, and drives greater participation. It is our fervent hope that social financing will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of sports, ensuring that talent, regardless of background or geography, has the opportunity to shine on the global stage.

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<sup>48</sup> Eleanor Carter and Nigel Ball, *Social outcomes contracting. In: Social Economy Science*. Edited by: Gorgi Krlev, Dominika Wruk, Giulio Pasi, and Marika Bernhard, Oxford University Press. © Oxford University Press (2023).

