

Sports for Community Wellbeing

Creating spaces for learning,
leadership and connection

● THE CHALLENGE

Children and youth from coastal communities face interconnected challenges that not only affect their health and wellbeing, but also limit their horizons

Photo credits: Kapilpk Shrivastan



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● THE CHALLENGE

These challenges include lack of access to quality education, parental care, good nutrition and healthcare during developmental stages. Mental health challenges arising from social and climatic factors, restrictive gender norms and lack of role models exacerbate conditions that lead to poor quality of life. Income insecurity in families often forces children to drop out of school to start earning at a young age and exposes them to early substance use and abuse.

Children and youth often have limited access to safe and inclusive spaces where they can build confidence, develop leadership skills and participate meaningfully in community life. Addressing these challenges requires approaches that engage people beyond conventional health and development interventions.

Dakshin uses sports as an entry point to create these spaces. Through sports, children, youth and adults engage in conversations and action around health, wellbeing, gender inclusion, leadership and environmental stewardship. These spaces support participation, learning, leadership and personal development, while helping communities address broader social and environmental challenges.

● OUR APPROACH

Part of Dakshin's SeaChange framework

Sports sits within Dakshin's SeaChange framework, which seeks to improve community wellbeing while strengthening resilient communities and ecosystems.

Engage children and youth

Use sports and recreational activities to create safe, inclusive spaces where children and youth can learn, participate and connect.

Empower through diverse skills

Build confidence, leadership, teamwork, communication and life skills through structured training, mentorship and peer learning.

Enable community-led change

Use these spaces to engage communities on broader issues such as health, gender equality, wellbeing, environmental stewardship and community-based resource management.

● WHAT WE DO

Sports, training and supporting wellbeing



- **Sports and youth development**

We conduct regular football and ultimate frisbee camps that create opportunities for children and youth to develop physical skills, teamwork, leadership and confidence.

- **Training and capacity building**

We train coaches, facilitators and community members to lead sports programmes, strengthening local ownership and creating pathways for long-term participation.

- **Community wellbeing**

We use sports-based engagement to initiate conversations on health, mental wellbeing, gender inclusion, life skills and environmental awareness, helping build resilient coastal communities.



● WHERE WE WORK

Across India's coasts and islands



● KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Three girls from Wandoor and Junglighat, ANI, were selected for the Sports Authority of India (SAI) Full Residential Football Programme.
- Girls participating in Dakshin's sports programme in ANI represented the region at national football tournaments in Karnataka, Nagaland and Chhattisgarh.
- 100+ youth have been capacitated in leadership skills.
- Over 200 children from Wandoor and Junglighat, ANI, participated in structured football sessions.
- Seven girls from coastal Odisha participated in a six-day all-women Ultimate Frisbee coaches' training camp in Hyderabad.
- Mixed gendered youth teams from the Ultimate Frisbee programme in Odisha participated in 2 external tournaments over 2025-26.
- Dakshin conducted the first-ever mixed-gender football tournament in ANI in June 2026.
- Dakshin expanded its community-driven sports programme to Palk Bay, Tamil Nadu.



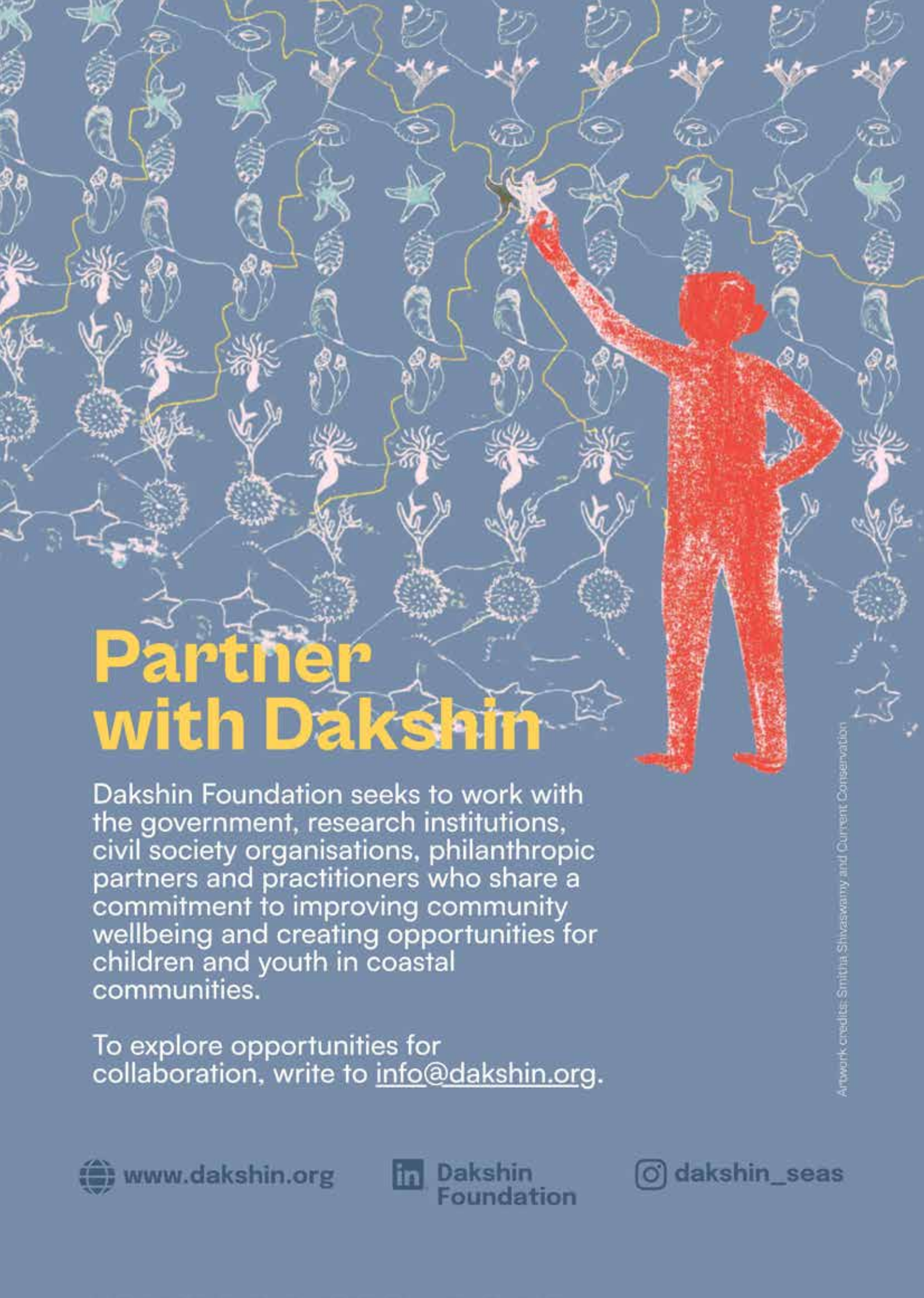


Primary institutional donors



Key thematic donors

- Australian Consulate, Chennai
- Accenture Solutions Private Limited



Partner with Dakshin

Dakshin Foundation seeks to work with the government, research institutions, civil society organisations, philanthropic partners and practitioners who share a commitment to improving community wellbeing and creating opportunities for children and youth in coastal communities.

To explore opportunities for collaboration, write to info@dakshin.org.

Artwork credits: Smitha Shivaswamy and Current Conservation



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