

# ★ STAR INTERVIEW

## MARIAM MPAATA

# HAVING 34 TEAMS WAS A RECORD FOR GLOBAL GOALS WORLD CUP

*The highly anticipated edition of the Global Goals World Cup Kampala qualifiers was held early this month. Fans, participants and sponsors were left with several impressions. What was the view of the head of organisation, Mariam Mpaata? She explained in this interview.*

By Charles Mutebi

**Q** On a scale of one to ten, how would you rank the Ugandan edition and why?

I give it an eight, because for one, we hosted it on Women's Day which gave us the opportunity to celebrate ordinary women doing extra ordinary things in their own little ways. The team registration was overwhelming, having 34 teams was a record within the Global Goals World Cup history.

It is also important to note that the team of volunteers that came out to support the initiative was an outstanding aspect. Volunteering is the spirit of sports events without which much cannot be accomplished. Of course being able to see women

from all walks of life play together was astonishing. We can not underestimate the power of unity, at a time like this when coronavirus is threatening our existence we need such memories to remind us of the great things we can accomplish together to make the world a better place.

### What stood out for you?

Being able to convince grandmothers to play football still blows my mind away. I remember the first day I first talked to them about joining the event they were resistant. They insisted that they would never do that because the young girls and women might injure them during the tournament. But it was amazing that after having two meetings with them and explaining what the Global Goals World Cup was all about, they agreed to register their team.

They practiced twice a week, sometimes I would visit them and find them practising on a full pitch. It took time to make them understand that the tournament would be different from the usual football. Their coach adjusted their training sessions to a smaller pitch.

Seeing them on the pitch that day with all the vigour was truly incredible. They brought a lot of hope and magic. They reminded us that one is never too old to try out new adventures and be part of a bigger cause.



Mariam Mpaata, hosted the Global Goals World Cup 2020 in Uganda

### What were the biggest challenges?

Initially the biggest challenge was introducing a new way of playing football to the teams and stakeholders. The Global Goals World Cup is an amateur tournament for women and girls above 18 to play for sustainable development goals.

The tournament is played using a four point system which rewards points for action for the goal picked, creativity for the outfit, crowd pulling and of course the football score. It was both exciting and challenging having to introduce this to people who are used to the competitive nature of football. However it was absolutely magical that most teams grasped the idea and enjoyed the day. The colours and themes of the day

were a testimony of this.

The other challenge was insufficient funding because a tournament of this nature requires massive support. However it became a reality because of partners like UNDP Uganda, FUFA, Uganda Tourism Board, Coca-Cola, National Council of sports, KCCA Football Club, Uganda Olympic Committee, Centenary Bank, FINCA Uganda and of course media support from *New Vision* and other media platforms made this event a success.

### What were the major lessons learned?

One major lesson is that information can indeed disseminated using all tools. Using sports and

## ABOUT GLOBAL GOALS WORLD CUP

The Global Goals World Cup (GGWCup) is created by Eir Soccer, a Danish organisation with a big idea: Create sports events that inspire amateur athletes to become world champions of United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals and drive progress and change in their communities. It is headquartered in Copenhagen, Denmark, and has an office in Detroit, US.

This new type of world cup will leverage the universal power of sport to excite and unite, and to direct that power towards realising the UN Sustainable Development Goals and continue the work it has done for women in football since 2004.

From 2004 until 2015 Global Goals was hosting all-women football tournaments with the core purpose of pushing the agenda of gender equality.

Since 2010 they have been organising weekly football training in Red Cross refugees camps in Denmark. The league 'Asylum United' is run day-to-day by female players and coaches.

In 2008 they launched the first football scientifically adjusted to fit female players - of

course suitable for any player. In 2015 Global Goals teamed up with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and created the first SDG Ball.

GGWCup is an alternative 5v5 global football tournament for women with alternative ideas to help people and planet to flourish.

Guided by the Global Goals it invites women from all walks of life, across all regions of the world onto the field and advocate for the Goal that is most invigorating for them, for their families, and community. The all-women teams qualify to play by advocating for one Goal and showcase concrete ideas and examples on how they will undertake the action and achieve impact.

According to Majken Gilmartin, the innovator of Global Goals, the aim of the goal is to create awareness for the 17 sustainable development goals.

The sustainable development goals (SDGs) to transform our world are:

- GOAL 1: No Poverty
- GOAL 2: Zero Hunger
- GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being

- GOAL 4: Quality Education
  - GOAL 5: Gender Equality
  - GOAL 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
  - GOAL 7: Affordable and Clean Energy
  - GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
  - GOAL 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure
  - GOAL 10: Reduced Inequality
  - GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
  - GOAL 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
  - GOAL 13: Climate Action
  - GOAL 14: Life Below Water
  - GOAL 15: Life on Land
  - GOAL 16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions
  - GOAL 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal
- GGWCup has partnerships with Royal Danish Embassy, UN Global Compact, SAP Next-Gen, Global Citizen, Project Everyone/World's Largest Lesson and 20+ other global and local corporate and strategic partners.

Source: ggwcup.com



Majken Gilmartin, the innovator of Global Goals