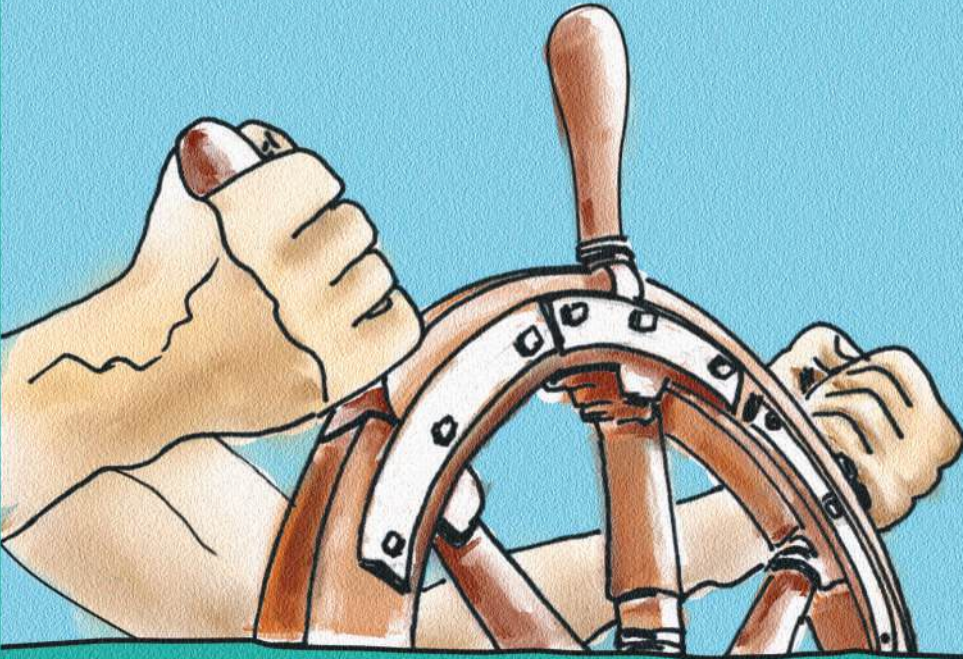


NAVIGATING THE FUTURE



An impact assessment study
of the Mission for Children and
Young at Risk by Don Bosco
in the states of
Karnataka and Kerala



BREADS
Bangalore Rural Educational
and Development Society

NAVIGATING THE FUTURE



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FOREWORD

We live in an era that looks for validation of people, products, processes, and anything else in between. The Salesians of Don Bosco, in the Bangalore province (INK) that spans both Karnataka and Kerala, have been offering an incredibly special product and service over the past few decades. It is the YaR or Young at Risk Mission that focusses on the rescue and rehabilitation of children and youth who suffer from deprivation and adverse circumstances in life.

Having dedicated itself to the YaR mission, the province has invested greatly over the years, in promoting this cause-nurturing pioneers and practitioners, creating institutions and encouraging innovative models and strategies to protect children at risk and promote their rights. In fact, Don Bosco Palluruthy, the first YaR centre of the province, celebrates its Golden Jubilee this year (2024).

At this mature stage in the mission, in response to the immense and ever-changing scenarios on the ground, among other reasons, the Provincial Council and the YaR sector felt the need to assess the YaR mission from various dimensions. The assessment was to serve both the purposes of documenting and validating the achievements of the YaR Mission while also assessing its future trajectory.

Under the supervision of BREADS-the Province Development Office, the study framework was laid out with clear objectives, after several rounds of discussion. Dr. Tom Jose, who was appointed principal assessor, was bringing 30 years of relevant experience and expertise in the development sector to the impact assessment. A wide-reaching study across 12 YaR centres, 345 past and present beneficiaries, 92 staff, and 40 key informants resulted in the findings of this important report.

The findings of the study, documented in this report, *Navigating the Future*, validate the decades of dedicated efforts of the YaR mission. They reveal the positive and effective impact our work has had on the lives of vulnerable children and young people at risk, enabling them to create new futures for themselves. This transformational work in individuals and communities is characterized by partnership and the trademark Salesian accompaniment, especially of children and youth.

Through the dedicated services of the Salesians, Don Bosco staff, volunteers and coopted stakeholders in local communities and governments, we see the ripple effects of our mission far beyond the walls of our YaR settings.

We clearly see in this impact study, the marvelous ways in which, the YaR settings of the Bangalore Province are moulding the lives of the children and youth under their care. This notable achievement was possible because of the continuous funding support from our donor partners from overseas and within India. A big thank you to all of you for your generous support and guidance.

The study has helped to strengthen and evolve a way forward for the Don Bosco YaR mission in the states of Karnataka and Kerala, for which I express my deepest gratitude to Dr Tom Jose Kalarickal and all those who contributed to this impact assessment.

Fr. George PS
Executive Director - BREADS

PREFACE

I am deeply humbled and privileged to be entrusted with the task of conducting this Impact Assessment, a role that resonates profoundly with my lifelong kinship with Don Bosco and my extensive involvement in social work, which now spans over three decades.

My journey with Don Bosco dates back to 1979, and in the 1990s, I had the privilege of working with BREADS Bangalore for nearly a decade. It was during this impactful period that pioneering YaR (Young at Risk) centers like Palluruthy, BOSCO Bangalore, DB Veedu TVM, and others in North Karnataka were passionately engaged in transformative work with street children—a mission that later came to be known as YaR.

Over the years, the Young at Risk (YaR) initiative has spread its wings widely, extending compassionate outreach across most of Karnataka and Kerala. For this impact assessment, I had the privilege of visiting 12 active YaR centers—a vital undertaking to evaluate and reflect upon the ongoing work. Returning to these centers after nearly two decades was a profoundly nostalgic experience. I was moved to witness the remarkable transformations and discernible impact, not only in the programs and interventions but also in the infrastructure itself. The evolution of these centers serves as a powerful testament to the enduring and impactful legacy of the Don Bosco mission.

Witnessing the array of innovative initiatives dedicated to vulnerable boys and girls was truly inspiring. Through these efforts, the program steadfastly upholds the spirit and mission of Don Bosco, reaching out to the most marginalized and deserving young individuals. This assessment captures the profound impact of nearly two decades of YaR's dedicated work within the Bangalore Province, a region recognized nationwide as a beacon of the YaR mission.

It is with great delight that I present this comprehensive report, the culmination of meticulous quantitative and qualitative analyses. Data was gathered from both current and former beneficiaries of YaR, along with dedicated staff members across various centers, through a carefully structured collection tool. Insights from

the broader community were gleaned through Focus Group Discussions, while in-depth qualitative perspectives were enriched by Key Informant Interviews (KII) with veterans, senior Salesians, active stakeholders and visionary leaders. Additionally, secondary data was thoughtfully compiled from documentation available across the centers. The collected data was then analyzed using SPSS software, with findings presented here in collaboration with research analysis experts.

This report is the product of considerable time and dedication, reflecting the depth and importance of this endeavor. I have poured my heart and soul into this work, striving to go beyond a purely professional approach, and drawing upon my 30 years of experience in development projects to bring a deeply personal dimension to this study. I trust that these findings will pave the way for fresh insights, inspire groundbreaking initiatives, and usher in a transformative approach that more profoundly addresses the needs of our children and Young at Risk.

DR. TOM JOSE
Impact Assessor

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity to contribute to this Impact Assessment and to play a leading role in its execution—a task that resonates deeply with my own commitment to service. From the outset, I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to **Rev. Fr. Jose Koyickal**, Provincial, and his dedicated team, for recognizing my potential and entrusting me with this meaningful responsibility. Their unwavering trust and confidence in my abilities are gifts I hold in the highest regard and serve as a powerful source of inspiration as I strive to honor their faith in me.

A special note of appreciation is reserved for **Fr. Joy Nedumparambil**, the Economist, whose collaboration with me in past endeavors set the foundation for this YaR assessment. His introduction to pivotal individuals was instrumental in aligning and coordinating the many facets of this undertaking.

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to **Fr. James Paul** for his unwavering dedication in facilitating this endeavor. He meticulously organized my visits, coordinated data collection across multiple centers, translated data collection tools into Kannada, and personally trained the data collection team in Karnataka. Despite the demands of his busy schedule and numerous responsibilities within the province, he was consistently available to lend his support whenever needed—a testament to his commitment to this mission.

My deepest appreciation goes to **Fr. PS George**, the Executive Director of BREADS, whose role transcended that of a research guide. His dedication went far beyond expectations. His meticulous attention to detail, indefatigable commitment, and unwavering guidance ensured that every aspect of this study was carried out with the utmost care and professionalism.

I am profoundly grateful to **Fr. Varghese Pallipuram**, the Executive Director of BOSCO, for his enduring support throughout my travels. With great personal care, he ensured my comfort at every step, often going out of his way to pick me up early in the morning and see me off late at night. His thoughtful arrangements for meetings and conferences, as well as his warm hospitality during my stay at BOSCO Bangalore, were invaluable to the success of this endeavor.

A special note of appreciation goes to **Fr. George Kollashany**, affectionately known as “Fr. G”, a veteran who played a pivotal role in shaping the street children’s work in Bangalore. Fr.G has been a true mentor and consultant throughout this study. His insights on the concept of YaR—a vision that is largely his own creation—were foundational to this work. Despite facing health challenges, he generously provided essential documents and historical context, a support for which I am deeply grateful. His steadfast guidance and wisdom have been a source of inspiration throughout this journey.

I am deeply obliged to the Directors of the YaR Centers and to the Rev. Fathers and Brothers in each of the communities I visited. Though I do not mention each name individually, my heart is full of gratitude for the warmth and hospitality with which you welcomed me. Your openness and willingness to share your insights enriched this report profoundly, adding invaluable qualitative depth that brings the story of this work to life.

My deepest gratitude also goes to **Mr. John Joshua**, who has been a steadfast pillar throughout this study. His readiness to assist with data collection, graphical representation of data and to provide secondary information—often available at his fingertips—greatly facilitated my work and ensured my inquiries were fruitful, even with a single phone call.

This study would not have seen daylight without the generous financial backing of **BREADS**, whose fervent support and belief in this initiative have been invaluable, for which I am profoundly grateful. To the dedicated BREADS team, particularly **Ms. Cheryl Bartholomeusz, Benny Augustine and Jibin G Jose**, I am immensely grateful for your assistance in documenting meetings, retrieving reports, graphical representation of data and sharing critical documents as required. Their contributions have been integral to the successful completion of this report.

I am equally appreciative of all the respondents of this study: the compassionate staff of the Young at Risk centers, the organizers of Focus Group Discussions, the courageous children and youth who shared their stories, and the dignitaries and community personnel who participated in interviews, FGDs, and other consultations. Your voices form the heart of this assessment, and your contributions are deeply valued.

My special thanks to **Fr. Prasad Xavier, Director-BISS**, for the careful proofreading and his additional insights into this study.

My profound gratitude is reserved for my esteemed Guru and Research Consultant, **Dr. A.J. Christopher**, whose expertise and mentorship have been invaluable throughout this study. From developing the research tools to meticulously analyzing data with SPSS, his dedication and skill ensured the highest calibre in this work. His patience and wisdom have been a pillar of strength, and I am honored to have walked this journey with him by my side.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the distinguished consultants whose invaluable insights have greatly enriched this study. Foremost among them is Fr. Dr. Joe Arimpoor, a trailblazer

in social work and the visionary founder of the Bosco Institute of Social Work at Sacred Heart College, Tirupatur. It was a privilege and honor to have been his student and to have learned under his inspiring guidance. I am equally grateful to Fr. Thomas Pallithanam SDB, Fr. Mathew Thomas SDB, Fr. Philip Parakatt SDB, Mr. Sonykutty George (UNICEF), and Mr. Louis Manohar for sharing their profound perspectives on YaR concepts and the broader national context of the *Young at Risk* initiative. Their collective wisdom and perspectives have significantly enriched this study.

I also wish to acknowledge the visionary pioneers of the YaR mission such as **Fr. Louis Panikulangara and Fr. Varghese Menacherry** of Don Bosco Palluruthy.

Finally, I express my deepest gratitude to my family and well-wishers, whose unflinching support has been a steady pillar of strength throughout this journey. Your faith in me has been a source of deep humility and boundless inspiration. Above all, I thank God Almighty, whose infinite wisdom and grace have illuminated my path, guiding me with clarity and resolve to bring this work to fruition.

With an overflowing abundance of gratitude, I offer my deepest and sincerest dedication to every soul who has played an irreplaceable role in bringing this report to life. Without your steadfast support, this endeavor would have been but a mere figment of imagination. It is with profound emotional resonance that I present this humble offering as a testament to the indomitable spirit that has guided us along this arduous journey.

DR. TOM JOSE
Impact Assessor

ABBREVIATIONS

AI	:	Artificial Intelligence
AGM	:	Annual General Meeting
AIDS	:	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ASER	:	Annual Status of Education Report
BOSCO	:	Bangalore Oniyavara Seva Coota
BREADS	:	Bangalore Rural Educational and Development Society
CCI	:	Child Care Institutions
CCL	:	Centre for Child and the Law, NLSIU
CDS	:	Centre for Development Studies
CHITHRA	:	Center for Human Intervention and Training in Holistic Rural Action
CREAM	:	Child Rights Education and Action Movement
CRT	:	Child Rights Trust
CRY	:	Child Rights and You
CSR	:	Corporate Social Responsibility
CWC	:	Child Welfare Committee
DB	:	Don Bosco
DBIT	:	Don Bosco Institute of Technology
BRD	:	BOSCO Research and Documentation
DCPO	:	District Child Protection Officer
FGD	:	Focus Group Discussion
HIV	:	Human Immunodeficiency Viruses
HRW	:	Human Rights Watch
ICCW	:	Indian Council for Child Welfare
ICPS	:	Integrated Child Protection Scheme
ICRW	:	International Center for Research on Women
IIHS	:	Indian Institute for Human Settlements

ILO	:	International Labour Organization
IT	:	Information Technology
ITI	:	Industrial Training Institute
JJB	:	Juvenile Justice Board
KeCRO	:	Kerala Child Rights Observatory
KEA	:	Karnataka Examination Authority
KHPT	:	Karnataka Health Promotion Trust
KII	:	Key Informant Interview
KILE	:	Kerala Institute of Labour and Employment
KISMAT	:	Kerala Interstate Migrants Alliance for Transformation
KSCPCR	:	Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights
KLSLA	:	Karnataka State Legal Services Authority
KSWDC	:	Kerala State Women's Development Corporation
MWCD	:	Ministry of Women and Child Development
NCPCR	:	National Commission for Protection of Child Rights
NGO	:	Non-Governmental Organization
NIMHANS	:	National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences
NISD	:	National Institute of Social Defence
PRA	:	Participatory Rural Appraisal
SCERT	:	State Council of Educational Research and Training
SDB	:	Salesians of Don Bosco
SHG	:	Self-Help Groups
SPSS	:	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SSA	:	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
STD	:	Sexually Transmitted Disease
UNESCO	:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	:	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund.
UNODC	:	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
VTP	:	Vocational Training Program
WASH	:	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
YaR	:	Young at Risk

INTRODUCTION

Salesians of Don Bosco: A Global Mission for Youth

INTRODUCTION

The Salesians of Don Bosco (SDB) is a global organization founded in the 1850s by Saint John Bosco, an Italian priest and visionary educator whose life's work was dedicated to serving vulnerable and marginalized young people. Known fondly as Don Bosco, he named the organization in honor of Saint Francis de Sales, the gentle and compassionate 17th Century Bishop of Geneva, whose principles of kindness and humility are woven into the very fabric of the Salesian mission.

Today, the Salesians extend their work across 136 countries, with a global membership of over 13,600. In India alone, more than 3,000 Salesians operate through 400+ institutions across 11 provinces: Bangalore, Chennai, Dimapur, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, New Delhi, Panjim, Shillong, and Trichy. Through a wide array of programs—ranging from education and vocational training to community and social development—the Salesians reach over a million young people and their families each year, offering hope, opportunity, and transformative support. Their enduring legacy continues to light the path toward a brighter future for countless lives around the world.

Defining 'Young at Risk' (YaR)

'Young at Risk' refers to young individuals living or working on the streets, engaged in child labour, begging, involved in petty crimes, or affected by substance abuse, missing children, victims of trafficking, and exploitation. The YaR mission aims to support orphans, runaways, school dropouts, and children affected by poverty, violence, and social upheavals. The YaR mission also involves preventive strategies through which children are prevented at source from running away to the streets and formation of the 'caring communities' towards the same.

The Young at Risk (YaR) Mission in India

The 'Young at Risk' (YaR) mission, a cornerstone of the Salesians' work in India, is dedicated to transforming the lives of vulnerable children and youth facing an array of formidable challenges. These challenges often include the hardships of hunger, extreme poverty,

homelessness, unemployment, substance abuse, and trafficking. However, the mission's focus extends far beyond immediate relief; it also addresses the deeper issues of child labor, violence, school dropouts, forced migration, and exploitation. Through a holistic approach that encompasses shelter, education, vocational training, counseling, family reunification, alternative forms of care like Kinship care, Foster care, Aftercare and advocacy, the YaR mission empowers these young souls to reclaim their dignity and break free from cycles of poverty, abuse, and exploitation. By equipping them with the skills and support needed to thrive, the YaR mission paves the way for them to a brighter future, offering hope and a chance to integrate into mainstream society with confidence and purpose.

Key Components of the YaR Mission

- 1. Education and Vocational Training:** Salesian schools and technical institutes offer quality education and practical skills training, equipping young people with the tools to pursue meaningful employment or further studies.
- 2. Dropout Prevention and 'Bridge' School Programs:** For children who have dropped out of school or been forced into child labour, YaR's dropout prevention and bridge programs offer remedial education and focused support to reintegrate them into the school system, giving them a second chance at learning.
- 3. Shelter and Care:** YaR extends safe, nurturing environments to homeless or at-risk youth through shelter homes, open shelters, and drop-in centers, ensuring each child has a place of refuge and stability in a supportive and nurturing environment.
- 4. Rehabilitation and Counselling:** For youth affected by substance abuse, trafficking, or exploitation, YaR provides compassionate counseling and rehabilitation services. These programs focus on rebuilding self-esteem and guiding youth toward a hopeful reintegration into society.
- 5. Life Skills Development:** Through life skills programs, YaR teaches essential skills such as communication, financial literacy, critical thinking and leadership, preparing young people for adulthood and responsible decision-making.
- 6. Care for Migrant Children:** The children of migrant laborers receive dedicated support to protect their rights, ensuring their access to education, shelter, and healthcare, no matter how transient their circumstances.
- 7. Health Care:** With an emphasis on holistic care, YaR centers prioritize healthcare, offering medical treatment and ongoing care, enabling children and youth to regain their health and pursue a vibrant future.
- 8. Community Outreach and Advocacy:** YaR collaborates with government agencies and NGOs to raise awareness of at-risk youth's challenges. Through initiatives like the CREAM Project, they advocate for child-friendly policies and work to prevent children from running away from home and all forms of exploitation.
- 9. Awareness Creation and Task Force Formation:** To combat issues such as substance abuse among children, YaR actively promotes awareness within communities, public places empowering them to act as vigilant supporters who report when a child is in need.

- 10. Alternative Forms of Care:** For children who cannot live with their biological families, YaR facilitates nurturing alternatives such as kinship care and foster care, ensuring each child experiences a sense of belonging and a balanced life.
- 11. Aftercare Programs:** As youth move out of Child Care Institutions at 18, aftercare programs provide support for continuation of their higher education, job placements and ongoing support, enabling a successful passage into adulthood and self-reliance.
- 12. Research and Publication:** Regular research on emerging issues affecting vulnerable children is conducted, with findings published to inform and inspire best practices and advocate for systemic change.
- 13. Documentation and Child Tracing:** Comprehensive documentation of each child's journey helps YaR trace and reunite missing children with their families. This invaluable practice provides a bridge of hope for families and communities across India.

Through each of these initiatives, the *Young at Risk* mission embodies the Salesians' enduring commitment to nurturing and empowering those most in need, crafting pathways to brighter, more hopeful futures for India's vulnerable children and youth.

Don Bosco National Forum for the Young at Risk (DB YaR Forum)

The Don Bosco National Forum for the Young at Risk (DB YaR Forum) is a nationwide network of over 80 dedicated institutions spanning 20 states across India, all united in their mission to care for, protect, and uplift marginalized children and youth. Through compassionate outreach in streets, markets, railway stations and slums, the Forum extends support to vulnerable young people, offering emergency aid and focuses on National level advocacy and Documentation.

At the heart of the Forum's work are its Child Care Institutions, including drop-in centers, open shelters, children's homes, and rehabilitation facilities. These spaces provide a safe, nurturing environment where at-risk children and youth find stability, care and a sense of belonging. The Forum also empowers youth through vibrant peer-led movements, fostering leadership and social awareness through child rights clubs, eco clubs, community-based and innovative initiatives aimed at policy level changes.

Vision, Mission and Core Values

Vision

Inspired by Don Bosco, our vision is a world where every child and young person flourishes, growing toward the *fullness of life* within secure, nurturing, and empowering environments.

Mission

To inspire and guide Don Bosco personnel and collaborators in addressing the needs of at-risk children and youth ensuring they have access to care, protection and opportunities for personal growth and development.

Core Values

- **Human and Child Rights:** Upholding dignity, protection, and equality for all, with a special focus on supporting vulnerable and marginalized children and youth.
- **Empowerment:** Enabling at-risk children and youth to realize their full potential, fostering their development as contributing members of society who can help create a more just and inclusive world.
- **Accompaniment:** Providing steadfast support, guidance, and mentorship to children and young people as they navigate life's challenges, ensuring they have a compassionate ally by their side on their journey.
- **Communion and Sharing:** Cultivating family-like communities grounded in unity, sharing, and solidarity, where growth, support, and healing can flourish.
- **Advocacy:** Championing child rights by actively promoting awareness and equipping partners and stakeholders with the knowledge to drive legal and policy changes.
- **Data-Driven Impact and Prevention:** Grounding our actions in research, data analysis, and preventive strategies to make informed decisions that maximize positive impact for children and young lives.
- **Integral Development:** Promoting the holistic growth of youth—physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually—so they can become positive role models and agents of change within their communities.
- **Networking with Government and Non-Governmental Entities:** Building alliances across public and private sectors to strengthen support systems for at-risk youth and unite efforts for their welfare.
- **Policy-Level Changes:** Striving to influence policies that protect children's rights, fostering sustainable advancements within child welfare and protection systems.
- **Sustainability through Empowering Community Leaders:** Building long-term resilience by empowering community leaders, ensuring lasting impact through self-reliance and localized solutions.

This vision, mission, and these values stand as the foundation for a compassionate movement that seeks not only to protect at-risk children and youth but to inspire them to live fully and thrive in every aspect of life.

YaR Services and Impact in India

The national-level services of the Don Bosco Young at Risk (YaR) mission have made a profound and far-reaching impact across India. Through 16 Open Shelters, Fit Facilities, and Day-Care Centers, 5,194 children have received essential support and care. In 50 Children's Homes, 3,097 children find a safe and nurturing environment, while 14 Hostel and Boarding Centers have provided stability for 688 children.

The mission's outreach in 545 slum communities has touched the lives of 11,527 children and 9,941 families. Additional support at street, market, bus, and railway station presences,

covering 276 locations, has impacted 4,792 children. CHILDLINE, operational at 25 centers, has assisted 49,697 children, and collaborations with 120 police stations have extended support to 5,630 children. The 17 Observational and Correctional Homes have reached 110 children and young adults, offering guidance and rehabilitation.

The Bridge NIOS and dropout prevention programs, active in 482 centers, have re-engaged 22,605 children with their education. Empowering initiatives like Child Rights, Safety Nets, Eco Clubs, Youth Clubs, and Child Parliaments, conducted through 2,238 units, have reached 69,591 children, fostering awareness and leadership. Substance abuse counseling and rehabilitation programs, provided by nine centers, have supported 2,853 young individuals.

Room Placement and After-Care Centers in 30 locations have helped 560 young adults in their transition to independent living. Meanwhile, 47 vocational training centers have equipped 6,083 young adults with skills for employability, and job placement programs at 19 locations have successfully placed 4,071 young adults in meaningful employment. Additionally, 36 Migrant Desks have extended assistance to 90,919 migrant workers. Finally, 714 Self-Help Groups and Child Safety Nets have provided support to 9,314 children.

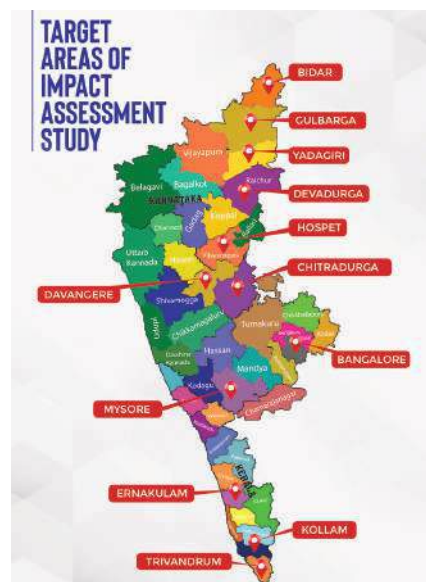
(Data Source: Data published during the 2023 AGM of YaR National Forum at Chennai on 22nd September 2023)

In conclusion, the Don Bosco YaR mission stands as a beacon of hope and transformation, demonstrating extensive outreach and compassionate support across diverse services and regions. Through these initiatives, the mission has positively impacted the lives of thousands of children, young adults, families, and migrant workers, building a foundation for brighter and more resilient communities across India.

The YaR Mission of the Bangalore Province

Target Areas of Impact Assessment

The Province of Bangalore, established on 19th March 1979, initially spanned the states of Kerala, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh. The province saw significant growth, with 15 houses and 184 members at its inception. In 1992, Andhra Pradesh was made a separate province, leaving Kerala and Karnataka as part of the Sacred Heart Province of Bangalore. Today, this province consists of 344 members across 48 centers in these two states, focused on serving marginalized populations. Through an array of mission centers, parishes, trade schools, orphanages, youth centers, social work units, and shelters for street children, the Salesians bring hope and embody God's love, reaching out to the poorest of the poor.



A hallmark of the Salesian presence in the Bangalore Province is their commitment to the Young at Risk (YaR) centers, strategically established in areas where children face heightened vulnerability. At these centers, the Salesians maintain a compassionate, consistent presence, rescuing children from perilous environments and guiding them through a journey of psychological healing and personal accompaniment. Each child is provided with access to education and opportunities for skill development, empowering them to pursue lives of purpose and dignity. Through these life-changing efforts, the Salesians continue their mission to transform young lives, offering a pathway to hope and a future filled with possibility.

Don Bosco Snehabhavan: A Pioneering YaR Initiative

Established in 1974, Don Bosco Snehabhavan in Palluruthy, Cochin, stands as the first *Young at Risk* (YaR) center of the Bangalore Province—though it was not initially recognized as such. Originally founded in partnership with the Kochi Corporation to rehabilitate street and working children, Snehabhavan has since grown into a comprehensive institution, now operating through five extension centers that serve a broad spectrum of needs. Over the years, additional homes were created to meet specific requirements, such as Bosco Bhavan in 1977 and Bosco Nilayam in 1986, each designed to cater to distinct age groups.

In 1992, the institution redefined its approach, focusing on the developmental stages of the children under its care and introducing health programs with a special emphasis on STD and HIV/AIDS prevention—an essential service at the time.

In 1990, the Sneha Bhavan Annexe was established as a drop-in center near the bustling Ernakulam Railway and Bus Stations, providing street and working children with convenient access to essential services. A significant milestone followed in 1997 when the Cochin Corporation allocated a dedicated space near the Bus Stand and Railway Station to support vulnerable girl children, previously referred to other NGOs. This expansion allowed Don Bosco to offer girls vital, specialized care within the community. Further enhancing its services for girls, the Vatsalya Bhavan Annexe was inaugurated in 2013 in Vaduthala, near Don Bosco Vaduthala, to provide a stable, enriching environment for their long-term rehabilitation.

Today, Don Bosco Palluruthy, along with its five centers—including the pioneering Snehabhavan—remains a beacon of hope, offering a wide range of services. Programs such as CHILDLINE 1098 and a Reality Therapy Clinic contribute to a holistic approach, ensuring that each child and young person receives comprehensive support tailored to their unique journey.

BOSCO Bangalore and the Expansion of YaR Centers

Established in 1980, BOSCO Bangalore has grown into one of India's foremost *Young at Risk* (YaR) centers, following the pioneering model set by Snehabhavan at Don Bosco Palluruthy.

Launched by Salesian students from Kristu Jyoti College, BOSCO began its journey with street outreach, eventually evolving into a comprehensive support network for vulnerable children and youth. By 1985, BOSCO had established a dedicated shelter and contact point, offering not only safe night accommodations but also education, counseling, rehabilitation, and vocational training.

At the heart of BOSCO's approach is its foundational *Street Presence* philosophy, rooted in the belief that every street child is inherently intelligent and capable—a concept known as *Buddivantha*. This belief has guided BOSCO in reaching out with empathy, acknowledging the resourcefulness of each young person, and helping them build meaningful futures. Today, BOSCO operates as a multifaceted support network across Bangalore, with various sub-centers, shelters, drop-in centers, and rehabilitation facilities that serve thousands of street children, runaways, and other vulnerable youth. These young people find not only safety and care but also pathways to education, skill development, and reintegration into mainstream society.

In 2016, BOSCO Bangalore was honored as the Best Child Care Institution in India, a prestigious award recognizing its outstanding contributions to child care and protection. This accolade reflects BOSCO's leadership and innovation in the YaR ministry and has positioned it as a model of excellence in India. Its systematic and compassionate approach has inspired other Salesian provinces to adopt similar initiatives, spreading YaR ministries to metropolitan and high-risk areas nationwide.

Today, 15 active YaR centers operate across Karnataka and Kerala, each drawing inspiration from the early successes of BOSCO Bangalore. As a beacon of hope, BOSCO continues to be a catalyst for expanding YaR initiatives across India, shaping lives and fostering resilience in the hearts of countless young people.

Don Bosco Hospet

Don Bosco Hospet began its mission in 1982 under the Bellary Diocese, initially focusing on supporting school dropouts and economically disadvantaged youth. By 1989, the mission had taken a pivotal step forward with the establishment of a non-formal technical school, designed to equip the youth of Hospet as well as the adjacent districts with practical skills and a pathway to stability. Between 1992 and 1994, Don Bosco Hospet expanded its role as a youth center, joining the *Saksharatha* Mission, a national literacy campaign dedicated to empowering the underserved through education. In 1994, the Don Bosco Child Labour Mission was launched, addressing the complex needs of child laborers by offering vocational training and conducting critical research to support them. This initiative was soon followed by the founding of the Kannada Open School in 1996 and accredited vocational training programs in 1998, opening doors to education and skills development for illiterates and school dropouts alike.

The mission's reach continued to grow as it took on the management of the Government Rural Girls Hostel in 2002, and in 2006, it initiated Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and joined the National Child Labour Project. In 2008, Don Bosco Snehalaya was established as a dedicated shelter for orphans and former child laborers from the nearby TB Dam area. In a further effort to safeguard vulnerable children, the Missing Child Bureau was founded in 2009, devoted to reuniting missing children with their families. By 2010, in partnership with the Ministry of Rural Development, Don Bosco Hospet expanded its offerings to include skill training programs, broadening employment prospects for local as well as the youth of the surrounding districts.

New initiatives followed, with the Child Helpline launched in 2011 and the CREAM program in 2013, which focused on educating children about their rights, fostering a spirit of inquiry, and promoting gender equality.

The history of Don Bosco Hospet is deeply entwined with the realities faced by children of migrant and bonded laborers working in hazardous conditions, particularly in the mining industry. Collaborations with NIMHANS, supported by TDH Germany, sought to address pressing health issues experienced by these children, while Don Bosco Hospet's integrated approach to skill training and academic education provided them with a holistic foundation. By enabling children to complete their 10th Grade through Open Schooling while learning a trade, Don Bosco Hospet has paved the way for them to pursue further studies and brighter futures.

Don Bosco Davangere

Since its founding in 1996, Don Bosco Davangere has been unwavering in its commitment to the education and rehabilitation of child laborers and marginalized youth. The mission began with a non-formal school dedicated to reintegrating school dropouts, and in 1998, it expanded with the establishment of a specialized school for child laborers. In 2002, Don Bosco Davangere further broadened its reach, opening a rehabilitation center in Alurhatti to support even more young lives affected by labor exploitation.

Beyond its dedication to vulnerable youth, Don Bosco Davangere is actively involved in community development, offering training programs that foster growth and self-sufficiency. Through initiatives for Gram Panchayat members, teachers, School Development and Monitoring Committees (SDMCs), Self-Help Groups (SHGs), youth groups, and community sanghas, Don Bosco Davangere empowers individuals and strengthens community resilience, working towards the holistic upliftment of society as a whole.

Don Bosco PYaR - Gulbarga

Don Bosco PYaR (Programme for Young at Risk) was established in 2002 with the noble aim of serving marginalized children, including street children, child labourers, orphans, victims of drug and child abuse, begging children, and rag pickers, in the towns and villages

of Gulbarga district. Gulbarga, known for being one of the most underdeveloped districts in Karnataka, faces formidable challenges such as low per capita income and a poor literacy rate. The prevalence of agriculture as the main occupation exacerbates poverty, leaving many children to toil at a young age, thus robbing them of right to education and a proper childhood.

The Don Bosco Society embarked on its mission on June 7, 2002, committed to rehabilitating child labourers, school dropouts, and street children. Initially, the program operated from a rented building, focusing on evening tuition centers that sought to educate and empower school dropouts and working children. In 2003, a plot on Naganahalli Road was procured, and a new center was inaugurated on November 10, 2004, to provide a safe haven for at-risk children. As the magnitude of the mission expanded, additional centers were established to cater to the rehabilitation needs of child labourers and dropouts. Underscoring its commitment to reaching vulnerable children in the region, a new rehabilitation center was opened on December 8, 2013, in Bablad village near Gulbarga, thus amplifying the program's outreach.

Don Bosco Bidar

Established in 2012, Don Bosco Bidar is dedicated to empowering at-risk children and disadvantaged youth through various programs. The center runs child labour rehabilitation initiatives, the Missing Child Bureau (MCB), CHILDLINE services and vocational training through Don Bosco Institute of Technology (DBIT), providing hostel services for child labourers and Industrial Training Institute (ITI) students.

The community is actively involved in neighbourhood development initiatives, offering timely interventions to rehabilitate child labourers and give at-risk children new opportunities. The center's technical and vocational programs equip disadvantaged youth with essential skills to secure employment and improve their livelihoods. Don Bosco Bidar also runs a 'Bridge School' and the CREAM Project (Child Rights Education and Action Movement), focusing on educating and reintegrating rescued children into mainstream society. With the inclusion of a comprehensive school and hostel accommodation, the campus ensures a safe and nurturing environment for the education and growth of impoverished and rehabilitated children.

Don Bosco Makkalalaya and Makala Mane - Mysore

The Don Bosco Makkalalaya project was inaugurated in 2006 as an outreach initiative targeting child labourers in Mysore. Initially operating under Don Bosco Sreerampura, Pre-novitiate House, the project underwent significant expansion, establishing its own dedicated center called Don Bosco Makkalalaya by 2009. This strategic move positioned the project closer to Mysore City, allowing for a more profound in the Young at Risk (YaR) ministry. In the year 2015, the center received official recognition as a Salesian presence.

At the heart of the project's mission lie the provisions of education, skill training, job placement, and career guidance, effectively benefiting close to 800 children and youth on a daily basis. Indirectly, this initiative also impacts approximately 5,000 children by means of Child Rights Clubs established in government schools. Moreover, the project encompasses several other components, including a short-stay home catering to urban deprived children, Foundation Schools designed specifically for slum children, Bridge Schools offering educational opportunities to those unable to attend regular schools, as well as vocational training centers.

Additionally, Don Bosco Makkala Mane, an extension of the project, serves as a temporary shelter home exclusively dedicated to providing care and rehabilitation for street children and the impoverished.

Don Bosco Devadurga

Don Bosco Devadurga commenced its mission in 1996 at the behest of the Bishop of Bellary, who requested the Salesians to aid an economically disadvantaged area in Raichur and Gulbarga. In response to the local needs, the Salesians initiated a boarding school in 2001 and subsequently established an English Medium School in 2003, providing high-quality education to children from remote and marginalized communities.

In addition to education, Don Bosco Devadurga actively engages in community development initiatives, collaborating with government bodies and non-governmental organizations to tackle local challenges. A key area of focus is preventing school dropouts by offering supplementary education through tuition centers, ensuring children have a conducive learning environment at home. The Salesians also operate a specialized program for child laborers, specifically catering to girls through the Child Labor Centre. This facility serves as a bridge school, equipping them with the necessary skills and support to transition into mainstream education and pursue a more promising future.

Don Bosco Yadgiri

Don Bosco Yadgiri, established in 2004 as part of the Don Bosco Center for Social Action, is a vital hub for community development in Yadagiri District, with a focus on education, women's empowerment, and community engagement. A cornerstone of its mission is the *Young at Risk* (YaR) program, which supports vulnerable children facing distressing situations such as child labor, school dropouts, missing children, malnutrition, disabilities, or abandonment.

The YaR program implements several initiatives to address the needs of these children. Educational efforts are extended to 24 villages, offering bridge courses like *Chinnarangala* during school vacations, specifically designed for working children to help them reintegrate into formal education. In addition to these educational interventions, the program conducts awareness campaigns to emphasize the importance of education, engaging both parents and communities to ensure children remain in school.

The center also promotes the holistic development of children through cultural and formative activities. Medical assistance, including the distribution of medicines, is provided with the support of doctors and registered medical practitioners. Educational materials are regularly supplied to the children at Don Bosco centers, and sports and athletic activities are encouraged to foster physical health and well-being.

Don Bosco Chitradurga

Since the Salesians of Don Bosco launched their mission in Chitradurga on June 12, 1995, Don Bosco Chitradurga has served as a beacon for the integral development of marginalized youth, with a steadfast focus on education and social action. Recognizing the region's pressing needs, the Salesians devoted their efforts to empowering local villages and educating children, seeing these as essential pathways for social transformation.

To extend their reach, the Salesians established *CHITHRA*, an extension of Don Bosco Chitradurga, which offered a variety of services aimed at uplifting and transforming surrounding communities. A key focus of the center was the eradication and rehabilitation of child laborers. The Salesians not only removed these vulnerable children from hazardous environments but also provided them with education and vocational training to secure a better future.

In addition to these initiatives, Don Bosco *CHITHRA* worked tirelessly to prevent child marriages, advocate for children's rights, and promote education as a vital means of community empowerment. Their commitment to safeguarding children and upholding their rights reflects the core values of Don Bosco's mission, aiming to foster lasting and sustainable social change in the region.

Don Bosco Manacadu

The Salesians arrived in Thiruvananthapuram in 1991 with a mission to serve the underprivileged youth and street children. Through Don Bosco Veedu and Don Bosco Nivas dedicated drop in centre cum rehabilitation centers are offering continuous support to ensure their well-being. With a strong commitment to being present on the streets, the Salesians engage in active surveillance to identify and rescue vulnerable children and adults in distress.

A vital component of their mission is operating the CHILDLINE 1098 service, including a specialized Railway CHILDLINE, which is dedicated to ensuring the safety and protection of children at railway stations. Expanding their outreach, the Salesians have extended their efforts to the slums and colonies surrounding the city, working diligently to keep children off the streets and prevent their involvement in harmful activities.

In these communities, evening tuition centers have been established to provide supplementary education, while skill training programs for adults over 18 are helping to foster self-reliance and reduce the risk of further marginalization. Through these initiatives,

the Salesians continue to make a significant impact on the lives of vulnerable individuals, empowering them to break free from cycles of poverty and exploitation.

Don Bosco Monvila

Salesian activities in Monvila began in 1990 with the vision of establishing a technical institute to empower youth through skill development. In 1999, the mission expanded with a new project aimed at coaching school dropouts, helping them prepare for the 10th and 12th Standard exams. Over the years, the center has adapted to meet the evolving needs of the State of Kerala, introducing various initiatives to address contemporary challenges.

One of the most significant recent developments is the establishment of a de-addiction center, which has been operating for the past three years. This center is dedicated to supporting at-risk youth struggling with substance abuse, providing them with the necessary guidance and treatment to overcome addiction and reintegrate into society. Through this initiative, the center offers these young individuals a renewed sense of hope and direction, empowering them to rebuild their lives and contribute positively to their communities.

Don Bosco Boys Home - Mundackal - Kollam

Though not officially recognized as one of the YaR Centers, Don Bosco Boys Home in Mundackal, Kollam, has for years been a shining beacon of hope for the children of the local fishing community. Established with the noble purpose of uplifting school dropouts, this sanctuary has been a lifeline, offering unwavering support to children who face profound educational hardships, guiding them toward brighter futures.

A key initiative, the establishment of an open school in Mundackal, has had a transformative impact. It has enabled hundreds of children and youth to complete their schooling and pursue higher education. This program has done more than foster academic success; it has been a cornerstone in integrating these children into the broader fabric of society, offering them the chance to build brighter futures. With the support that Don Bosco Kollam provides, our beneficiaries are not only able to break free from the chains of poverty but are also inspired to make meaningful contributions to their communities, paving the way for a tomorrow filled with hope and promise.

Conclusion

This impact assessment underscores the significant contributions of the Don Bosco YaR (Young at Risk) mission in addressing the needs of the most vulnerable and underserved children and youth within the province. The Bangalore Province has made the YaR initiative a top priority, with 31 institutions and children's homes—representing 21.53% of the total 144 such institutions across 11 provinces of India. These homes in the Bangalore Province currently care for 5,544 children, which accounts for 36.54% of the total 15,172 children in institutions across YaR Forum Network, reflecting a substantial concentration of efforts in this critical area.

In addition to institutional care, community-based programs have emerged as another major focus for the Province. The Bangalore Province operates 1,543 such programs, which constitutes 40.90% of the DB YaR Forum total of 3,773 community-based initiatives. Through these programs, the Province reaches 53,045 children, contributing a significant 55.64% of the DB YaR Forum total of 95,337 children. This highlights the Province's effectiveness in reaching and supporting children outside of traditional institutional care, demonstrating a broad and impactful approach to the YaR mission.

In collaborative networks, the Bangalore Province manages 147 initiatives, representing 22.44% of the DB YaR Forum total of 655. These networks collectively assist 38,455 children in the Province, making up 45.32% of the DB YaR Forum figure of 84,856 children supported through collaboration. This underscores the importance of partnerships in expanding the reach and impact of the YaR programs.

The Migrant Desk is another area where the Province has made a substantial contribution, managing 12 of the 36 national Don Bosco Desks (33.33%) and reaching 60,970 migrant workers, which accounts for a significant 67.06% of the national total of 90,919 migrant workers. This highlights the Province's leadership in supporting migrant communities and addressing their unique needs.

In terms of family outreach, the Bangalore Province has reached 416 families, which constitutes only 4.14% of the DB YaR Forum total of 10,047 families. This indicates an area of potential growth for the Province in strengthening its family-centered initiatives.

Personnel involvement in the YaR mission within the Province, including Salesians (SDB), staff, and volunteers, totals 641, which represents 23.96% of the DB YaR Forum total of 2,675 personnel. This reflects the commitment and dedication of the Province's workforce to the mission's objectives.

The study illustrates that the Bangalore Province plays a critical and impactful role in the national YaR mission, especially in the areas of community-based programs and outreach to migrant workers. The Province's contributions are significant, particularly in reaching children outside of institutional care, accounting for more than half of the DB YaR Forum reach. Its involvement in collaborative networks and migrant desks further emphasizes its expanding influence through strategic partnerships and targeted interventions. However, the relatively low contribution in family outreach (4.14%) suggests that additional efforts could be made to focus on family-centered initiatives.

Overall, the Don Bosco Young at Risk (YaR) mission reflects the Salesians' unwavering dedication to the holistic development and empowerment of marginalized youth.

WITNESSING THE IMPACT

From Slum Boy to Street Angel: Murugan's Journey as a Protector of the Vulnerable



Growing up in the slums of Kochi, Murugan faced the harsh realities of poverty, his life marked by constant struggles. Yet, fate had a different plan for him when he crossed paths with the compassionate social worker, Bro. Mavooris. This meeting opened a new door to a brighter future, and the image of Murugan as just a “slum boy” was soon replaced by a sense of belonging and

hope. At Don Bosco Sneha Bhavan, he found not just a place of refuge but a community of friends who embraced him, offering support and guiding him towards a life filled with possibilities.

Within the nurturing walls of this sanctuary, Murugan's world blossomed in ways he never imagined. Here, he not only learned to read and write in his mother tongue, Malayalam, but also acquired valuable vocational skills, training as a mason in building construction. The hardships he had endured in life became the foundation for a deep well of love and compassion, which he now extended to others, embodying the very lessons that adversity had imparted to him.

Motivated and inspired by the work of Don Bosco, and in deep gratitude for the transformation he had undergone, Murugan embarked on a new mission. He established the organization known as Theruvoram, translating to “by the street side.” His mission was clear - to care for the forgotten souls who roam the streets, specifically those who were destitute and orphaned, giving them hope and a chance for a better tomorrow.

Theruvoram Murugan became a beacon of hope for these individuals. He became their guardian, finding them homes and providing the support they desperately needed to start anew. Murugan's selfless dedication to their well-being earned him the name by which he is now known - Theruvoram Murugan.

Murugan's journey, from a slum boy to the angel of the streets, is nothing short of extraordinary. His life stands as a profound testament to the transformative power of compassion, empathy, and the deep desire to uplift those in need. Through his organization, he continues to be a beacon of hope for those living on society's fringes, illuminating their lives with kindness and care. Murugan's story serves as a powerful reminder of the immense strength and resilience within the human spirit, inspiring us all to believe in the capacity for change and the healing power of love.

THE YOUNG AT RISK IN INDIA

INTRODUCTION

The term 'Young at Risk' (YaR) in India broadly refers to children and young people who face heightened vulnerability due to a range of socio-economic, familial, and environmental factors. This group includes street children, slum children, rag pickers, school dropouts, child laborers, children engaged in begging, victims of child marriage, children in conflict with the law, and those affected by drug addiction, alcoholism, and other forms of substance abuse. These children often endure multiple layers of deprivation, including limited access to education, healthcare, and basic necessities, making them particularly susceptible to exploitation, abuse, and neglect, often originating from their families and communities.

Efforts to protect and care for children in India have made significant strides, but many challenges persist. This review of literature aims to provide an overview of the situation of Young at Risk (YaR) children in India, with a particular focus on the states of Kerala and Karnataka, drawing insights from recent research and evaluation studies.

The 'YaR' Concept

YaR, an acronym for 'Young at Risk', was coined to address the vulnerable categories of children and youth who face significant challenges due to socio-economic conditions, abuse, and neglect. Over the years, the concept has been popularized by Don Bosco institutions, which have been instrumental in supporting these vulnerable groups.

The term 'children at risk' gained prominence in the late 20th century to describe vulnerable children impacted by poverty, homelessness, forced labor, and conflict. During the 1970s and 1980s, International Organizations like UNICEF and Indian NGOs such as CRY, Don Bosco, and Save the Children began using this term to address the plight of street children, child laborers, and other marginalized groups. Around the same time, the concept of 'Youth at Risk' emerged to address the unique challenges faced by vulnerable youth, such as poverty, violence, and lack of opportunities.

The Don Bosco community, led by figures such as Fr. George Kollashany, played a crucial role in coining and shaping the term Young at Risk (YaR). This term united the concepts of

both 'children at risk' and 'youth at risk' within a specific Salesian philosophy of working with poor and abandoned youth. YaR encapsulates Don Bosco's enduring mission to support young people facing difficult circumstances, empowering them with education, skills, and opportunities to transform their lives.

1. Street Children

Street children are minors who live and work on the streets, often without stable shelter, parental care, or access to basic services such as education and healthcare. In the context of 'Young at Risk' in India, street children are among the most vulnerable groups, facing severe risks of exploitation, abuse, and neglect due to their precarious living conditions.

These children often resort to hazardous labor, begging, or engaging in petty crimes to survive. Without the support of a family or a stable home environment, they become particularly susceptible to substance abuse, trafficking, and various forms of physical and emotional violence. The lack of access to education and healthcare further exacerbates their marginalization, denying them the opportunity for a better future and trapping them in cycles of poverty and deprivation.

As a result, street children face immense challenges in breaking free from these difficult circumstances, leading to long-term disadvantages in terms of personal development and social integration. Their vulnerability underscores the urgent need for targeted intervention and support to provide these children with the protection, education, and opportunities they desperately need to thrive.

National Context

Street children in India represent one of the most visible and vulnerable groups within the broader category of Young at Risk. According to a 2015 report by Save the Children, it is estimated that there are around 18 million street children in India, with a significant concentration in urban areas such as Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, and Bangalore. These children often live without parental care and are exposed to numerous risks, including physical abuse, substance abuse, and sexual exploitation.

Recent studies, such as those by Bhargava and Prasad (2020), have shed light on the harsh realities faced by street children. These include poor health outcomes, low literacy rates, and a high prevalence of psychological issues. The lack of consistent data and the transient nature of these children make it difficult for policymakers to develop targeted interventions. Despite efforts by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) to rehabilitate street children, progress has been hindered by inadequate resources and lack of coordination among various agencies (NCPCR, 2023).

Additional studies have provided deeper insights into the challenges faced by this vulnerable group. A key report by UNICEF, *Transformative Action to Accelerate Results for Children in Street Situations in the Decade of Action (2020–2030)*, offers a comprehensive framework to address the needs of street children. The report focuses on poverty reduction, social

protection, child protection, education, and urban safety as key strategies to improve their living conditions and future prospects over the next decade.

Another significant study, *Children and Adolescents in Urban India*, conducted in collaboration with the National Institute of Urban Affairs, examines the deprivation faced by street children and adolescents living in urban slums. The research reveals stark disparities in health, nutrition, hygiene, and access to basic services between children from urban poor families and their wealthier counterparts. In fact, the study found that, on several indicators, street children in urban areas are even worse off than their rural counterparts. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these inequalities, deepening the challenges faced by street children.

These studies collectively underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions to protect and support street children. They advocate for comprehensive strategies that include child protection, urban healthcare, education, and integrated approaches to social security. These findings provide valuable insights for policy and practice, emphasizing the need for coordinated efforts to improve the situation of street children at the national level.

Karnataka and Kerala Context

In Karnataka, particularly in Bangalore, the issue of street children is significant, exacerbated by the city's rapid urbanization and growing economic disparity. According to a study by the Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (KSCPCR, 2019), it is estimated that Bangalore alone has around 14,000 street children. The study emphasizes the need for more robust rehabilitation programs and better coordination among NGOs, government bodies, and other stakeholders to address the challenges faced by these vulnerable children.

In Kerala, while the state generally boasts better social indicators compared to many other parts of India, urban centers such as Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram continue to grapple with the issue of street children. Many of these children are migrants from neighboring states, contributing to the challenges faced by the local authorities in managing this issue. The Kerala State Planning Board (2018) reported that a significant number of street children in the state are involved in begging and petty crimes, highlighting the urgent need for targeted interventions to address their unique needs and vulnerabilities. Efforts to combat this problem must focus on rehabilitation, education, and social reintegration to ensure the well-being of these children.

Both Karnataka and Kerala, while distinct in their socio-economic landscapes, share common challenges in addressing the issue of street children, emphasizing the need for integrated, multi-faceted approaches to safeguard and support these vulnerable young individuals.

2. Slum Children

Slum children are those who live in densely populated urban neighborhoods, where the harsh realities of inadequate housing, poor infrastructure, and the absence of essential

amenities like clean water and sanitation shape their daily lives. Surrounded by such adversity, these children endure countless challenges, with their environment amplifying their vulnerability to a multitude of risks.

In India, slum children are exposed to the harshest realities of poverty, malnutrition, and a profound lack of access to education. Their environment, marked by deprivation, often leads to alarming rates of child labor, school dropouts, and heightened exposure to crime and substance abuse. Deprived of essential resources, they are susceptible to severe health issues, and are at greater risk of exploitation and abuse, making it difficult for them to break out of the cycle of poverty and achieve upward social mobility.

National Context:

Children living in urban slums are another critical subset of Young at Risk. These children often face extreme poverty, malnutrition, and lack of access to basic services such as clean water and sanitation. The slum environment is typically characterized by overcrowding, poor housing conditions, and exposure to crime and violence. A study by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (2018) revealed that approximately 65 million people live in slums across India, with children making up a significant portion of this population. According to the 2011 Census of India, children (aged 0–14 years) typically comprise around 30-35% of the total slum population. If we apply this percentage to the estimated 65 million slum population from the 2018 study, we get 19.5 million to 22.75 million children living in slums across India.

The study noted that slum children are more likely to be out of school and engaged in child labour compared to their non-slum counterparts. The lack of educational opportunities and exposure to hazardous conditions contribute to their vulnerability (Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, 2018). Save the Children India's *Forgotten Voices* (2015) highlights the vulnerabilities of urban slum children in India, including limited access to education, higher rates of child labour due to poverty, and unsafe living conditions. Slum children are 2.5 times more likely to be out of school and face severe health risks.

Karnataka and Kerala Context:

In Karnataka, Bangalore's large slum areas are home to many vulnerable children. A study by the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS, 2020) found that slum children in Bangalore have lower educational attainment and higher rates of malnutrition compared to their peers. The report emphasized the need to integrate slum communities into urban development plans. Kerala, despite its high human development indices, still faces challenges in its urban slums. A study by the Centre for Development Studies (CDS, 2021) in Thiruvananthapuram highlighted that despite the State's welfare schemes, children in slums remain at risk of dropping out of school and becoming involved in child labour (IIHS, 2020; CDS, 2021).

3. Rag Pickers

Rag pickers are individuals, often children, who collect recyclable materials such as paper, plastic, and metal from garbage dumps or streets. This form of work is widespread among marginalized communities in India, where children engage in rag picking as a means of survival.

Rag picking is a hazardous form of child labor that exposes children to severe health risks. The materials they collect are often contaminated with toxic substances, and the unsanitary conditions in which they work put them at constant risk of injury, disease, and long-term health problems. These children typically face social stigma and exclusion, as their work is seen as degrading. As a result, they are often cut off from mainstream society, lacking access to basic rights such as education, healthcare, and social services.

The precarious nature of rag picking, combined with the absence of protective mechanisms and legal safeguards, makes these children particularly vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. They are frequently subjected to physical and emotional harm, with limited opportunities for a better future. Without intervention, rag pickers remain trapped in a cycle of poverty and deprivation, unable to break free from the hazardous and degrading conditions that define their lives. Addressing the needs of rag picking children requires focused efforts to remove them from exploitative labor, provide education, and improve their overall living conditions.

National Context:

Rag picking is one of the most prevalent forms of child labour in India, particularly among children from marginalized communities. These children collect recyclable materials, such as paper, plastic, and metal, from garbage dumps or streets, often working in extremely hazardous conditions. Exposure to toxic substances, sharp objects, and unsanitary environments puts them at significant risk of serious health problems, including respiratory diseases, infections, and long-term physical harm.

They are often stigmatized and excluded from mainstream society. According to a report by the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2021), an estimated 1.5 million children in India are engaged in rag picking. The report highlights the urgent need for interventions to remove children from such exploitative work and to provide them with education and vocational training. Despite the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act of 1986 (amended in 2016), enforcement remains weak, and many children continue to be employed in this hazardous activity (ILO, 2021).

Karnataka and Kerala Context:

In Karnataka, Bangalore has a significant number of child rag pickers, largely driven by economic distress and lack of educational opportunities. A study by Child Rights Trust (CRT, 2022) highlighted the prevalence of rag picking among children in Bangalore's urban slums, noting the urgent need for interventions to remove children from this hazardous work and

provide them with education and vocational training. In Kerala, while the number of child rag pickers is lower compared to other States, it remains an issue in cities like Kochi. The Kerala Child Rights Observatory (KeCRO, 2019) reported that many of these children are from migrant families who lack access to social welfare programs. The report stressed the importance of integrating these children into mainstream education and providing their families with economic support (CRT, 2022; KCRO, 2019).

4. School Dropouts

School dropouts are children who are forced to abandon formal education before reaching the mandatory levels, often driven by the weight of socio-economic hardships. In India, this issue is particularly pronounced among children from marginalized communities, where the barriers to education are steep, and the repercussions of dropping out can be profoundly life-altering.

Children who drop out of school face heightened risks of being drawn into child labor, early marriages, or involvement in illegal and harmful activities. The roots of this issue lie in a complex web of poverty, gender inequality, inadequate educational infrastructure, and the pressing need for children to support their families' livelihoods. For countless children from disadvantaged backgrounds, the promise of education is overshadowed by the urgent demands of survival, making it a distant dream rather than a priority.

The impact of dropping out is profound, as it severely limits future employment opportunities and prevents children from gaining the skills needed to improve their socio-economic status. Without the foundation of education, these children are far more likely to remain trapped in the relentless cycle of poverty, perpetuating vulnerability and exclusion from mainstream society. Addressing this issue demands more than just improving access to education; it requires a compassionate and holistic approach that tackles the root social and economic challenges, ensuring children have the support they need to stay in school and unlock the doors to brighter, more hopeful futures.

National Context:

School dropout remains a pressing concern in India, particularly among children from disadvantaged communities. Various factors drive this issue, including poverty, child labor, gender discrimination, and limited access to quality education. Beyond these, children often leave school due to harsh treatment by teachers, the pain of humiliation and bullying, peer pressure, and their parents' lack of awareness about the transformative power of education. For many girls, inadequate facilities, such as the absence of proper toilets, add another layer of difficulty.

The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER, 2022) highlights that while enrolment rates have improved, dropout rates remain alarmingly high, especially at the secondary level. The report reveals a dropout rate of 4.2% among children aged 6-14, with girls, children from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and those in rural areas disproportionately

affected. Contributing factors include poor school infrastructure, substandard teaching quality, and the pressing need for children to supplement household incomes.

Government initiatives like the Mid-Day Meal Scheme and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) have made strides in retaining students, but significant challenges persist in addressing the deeper socio-economic and systemic issues driving school dropouts (ASER, 2022).

Karnataka and Kerala Context:

Karnataka has made progress in reducing dropout rates, but challenges remain, particularly in rural areas and among marginalized communities. A study by Azim Premji University (2021) found that in rural Karnataka, the dropout rate at the secondary level is about 7%, with higher rates among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

In contrast, Kerala, renowned for its exemplary literacy rates, fares better with dropout rates below the national average. However, the Kerala State Council for Educational Research and Training (SCERT, 2020) highlights that dropout rates remain a pressing issue in tribal areas and among economically disadvantaged families.

To address these challenges, the reports emphasize the need for targeted interventions, including community-based education initiatives and scholarships for underprivileged children. Such measures aim to bridge the educational gap, ensuring that every child, regardless of their socio-economic background, has the opportunity to thrive and succeed (Azim Premji University, 2021; SCERT, 2020).

5. Child Labour

Child labour refers to the employment of children in work that deprives them of their childhood, interferes with their ability to attend school, and inflicts lasting harm to their physical and mental well-being. In India, despite stringent laws like the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, this practice remains alarmingly prevalent. It is most common in rural regions and urban informal sectors, where children are found toiling in garages, roadside eateries, small-scale manufacturing units, and other exploitative environments.

Children forced into labor endure heartbreaking exploitation, often subjected to abuse and grueling hours in perilous conditions that inflict deep physical and emotional scars. Stripped of their fundamental rights to education and healthcare, they find themselves trapped in an unyielding cycle of poverty, with little hope of escape. Many of these children toil in hazardous environments, operating machinery or handling toxic chemicals without any protective gear, their health and safety constantly hanging in the balance.

Eradicating child labor demands more than the stringent enforcement of laws; it calls for a holistic approach that includes providing alternative education opportunities, vocational training, and sustainable livelihood options for families living in poverty. By tackling the root causes—economic hardship and the lack of access to quality education—society can

pave the way for a future where no child is forced to toil. Instead, they can be nurtured in a safe and supportive environment, free to grow, learn, and thrive, fulfilling their potential and reclaiming the childhood they so rightfully deserve.

Why Child labour in India

Despite the presence of strong laws and policies aimed at its eradication, child labor in India persists, fueled by a tangled web of socio-economic and cultural challenges. Poverty remains a powerful driver, compounded by limited parental awareness, restricted access to quality education, and the relentless forces of economic exploitation. These factors converge to deprive countless children of their right to a safe, nurturing childhood and the opportunities needed to shape a brighter future.

- i. Poverty and Economic Necessity:** Economic constraints compel many children to work, helping their families meet basic needs. A 2021 study by the International Labour Organization (ILO) found that impoverished families often depend on their children's income to survive (ILO, 2021).
- ii. Lack of Parental Awareness:** Many parents remain unaware of children's rights and perceive child labour as a safer alternative to neglect or life on the streets. Research by the Centre for Child and the Law in 2022 highlighted that parents often see child labour as less harmful, a perception that normalizes the practice (CCL, 2022).
- iii. Limited Access to Education:** Inaccessible or poor-quality education leads to high dropout rates, driving children into the workforce. UNESCO's 2021 report underscored that children in rural or underdeveloped areas frequently begin working at a young age due to a lack of viable educational opportunities (UNESCO, 2021).
- iv. Exploitation and Cheap Labour:** Employers often prefer hiring children because they can be paid less and are perceived as more compliant. Human Rights Watch (2020) also reported that children's small hands are valued for intricate tasks like embroidery, further fueling child labour in certain industries (HRW, 2020).

The persistence of child labour is supported by theories such as Human Capital Theory and Social Norm Theory, which highlight economic necessity and societal acceptance as primary factors. Recent studies by UNICEF and the ILO emphasize the critical need for strengthened policy interventions, particularly in light of post-COVID-19 challenges (UNICEF, 2021; ILO & UNICEF, 2021).

National Context:

Child labour remains a pervasive issue in India, with millions of children involved in various forms of work, from agriculture and manufacturing to domestic labor. According to the 2011 Census of India, 10.1 million children aged 5-14 years were identified as child laborers, though this number likely underrepresents the true extent of the problem. Child labor is

particularly rampant in rural areas, where children are often found working in fields, brick kilns, and even trapped in the harsh conditions of bonded labor, their childhoods stolen by the demands of survival.

A 2018 study by Human Rights Watch documented the severe hardships these children endure, including long working hours, lack of access to education, and exposure to hazardous conditions. Despite the government's introduction of several laws and programs to combat child labour, enforcement remains inconsistent, leaving many children vulnerable to ongoing exploitation (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

Karnataka and Kerala Context:

In Karnataka, child labour remains widespread in agriculture, manufacturing, and domestic work, with a significant presence in urban centers and industrial regions. The Karnataka Labour Department (2019) reported that, despite efforts to address child labour, it remains a substantial issue, particularly in rural areas. The report emphasized the critical need for stronger enforcement of child labour laws and enhancements to rehabilitation programs.

In contrast, Kerala experiences a lower incidence of child labour compared to other states, largely due to its comprehensive social welfare systems. However, certain areas, especially among migrant populations, continue to face challenges with child labour. A study by the Kerala Institute of Labour and Employment (KILE, 2019) underscored the need for targeted interventions in these regions, including stricter law enforcement and expanded access to education for migrant children (Karnataka Labour Department, 2019; KILE, 2019).

6. Child Marriage

Child marriage, defined as the formal or informal union of children under 18, is often driven by socio-cultural norms, poverty, and limited access to education. This practice disproportionately affects girls in India, leading to early pregnancies, disrupted education, heightened health risks, and perpetuating cycles of gender inequality. Although child marriage is illegal under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act of 2006, enforcement is frequently weak, particularly in rural areas where poverty and traditional customs are significant factors.

Child marriage remains a pressing issue for *Young at Risk* populations in India. According to UNICEF (2020), India accounts for one-third of the world's child brides, with 27% of girls married before they turn 18. Research by the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW, 2019) indicates that child marriage is primarily fueled by poverty, entrenched cultural norms, and lack of educational opportunities. The consequences are profound, including early pregnancy, increased maternal mortality, and interrupted education, which limits girls' prospects for personal development.

Efforts to combat child marriage have centered on raising awareness, expanding girls' access to education and healthcare, and enforcing legal frameworks. However, progress has been gradual, underscoring the need for community-based interventions and improved

social support systems to protect girls and create pathways for their future (UNICEF, 2020; ICRW, 2019).

Karnataka and Kerala Context:

In Karnataka, child marriage remains a persistent challenge, particularly in rural districts. A study by the Karnataka Health Promotion Trust (KHPT, 2020) revealed that while the prevalence of child marriage has declined, it remains common within certain communities. The report emphasized the need for ongoing awareness campaigns and stricter enforcement of legal measures to prevent child marriage.

Kerala, with one of the lowest rates of child marriage in India, still faces this issue in some rural and tribal areas. A study by the Kerala State Women's Development Corporation (KSWDC, 2018) indicated that early marriage in these regions is frequently driven by poverty and limited access to education. The report recommended the implementation of more comprehensive, community-based programs to address these root causes effectively (KHPT, 2020; KSWDC, 2018).

7. Children in Conflict with Law

Children in conflict with law are minors who have committed or are accused of committing offenses as defined by legal frameworks. Often hailing from disadvantaged backgrounds, these children may be driven to crime by factors such as poverty, lack of education, and peer pressure. The legal system, through the Juvenile Justice Act, emphasizes rehabilitation over punishment, aiming to provide these children with pathways to reform. However, gaps in implementation and limited resources frequently result in inadequate rehabilitation and reintegration services, making it challenging for these children to reintegrate into society successfully.

National Context:

Children in conflict with the law represent a significant subset of Young at Risk. Most of these children come from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and are often driven to crime due to poverty, lack of education, and peer pressure. The Ministry of Women and Child Development (2023) reported that children aged 16-18 constitute the majority of juveniles in conflict with the law. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act of 2015 emphasizes rehabilitation and reintegration. Still, challenges in implementation and lack of resources often hinder effectiveness (Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2023).

Karnataka and Kerala Context:

In Karnataka, the number of children in conflict with the law has been rising, particularly in urban areas like Bangalore. A study by the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority (KSLSA, 2021) found that many of these children are first-time offenders involved in petty crimes. The

study emphasized the need for effective rehabilitation programs and better legal support. In Kerala, the state has made significant strides in addressing this issue through its Juvenile Justice system. However, a study by the Kerala State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (KSCPCR, 2022) found that challenges remain in providing adequate rehabilitation and reintegration services (KLSA, 2021; KSCPCR, 2022).

8. Drug Addiction, Alcoholism, and Substance Abuse

National Context:

Drug addiction, alcoholism, and substance abuse are escalating concerns among *Young at Risk* populations in India, often compounded by vulnerabilities such as homelessness, poverty, and exposure to crime. A 2022 study by the National Institute of Social Defence (NISD) revealed alarmingly high rates of substance abuse among street children and slum dwellers, with many children beginning to use substances at a disturbingly young age. The study underscored the urgent need for targeted interventions, including rehabilitation programs and community awareness campaigns, to address these issues effectively (NISD, 2022).

Karnataka and Kerala Context:

In Karnataka, particularly in Bangalore, substance abuse among street children and slum dwellers has become a significant issue. A 2022 study by the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) revealed that substance abuse is closely linked to the harsh living conditions and lack of support systems prevalent in urban slums, where peer pressure often drives substance use. Similarly, in Kerala, substance abuse is increasingly concerning, especially among children from marginalized communities. The Kerala State Planning Board (2021) reported that the issue is on the rise in the state's urban areas, highlighting an urgent need for robust rehabilitation services and preventive measures (NIMHANS, 2022; Kerala State Planning Board, 2021).

Mode and Type of Substance Abuse:

Among *Young at Risk* (YaR) children in India, the substances commonly abused differ markedly from those seen in other countries. Confronted with extreme socio-economic hardships and trauma, these children often turn to inhalants such as glue, correction fluid (e.g., Whitener), petrol, and paint thinner. These substances are chosen because they are inexpensive, easily accessible, and legally available, making them a convenient yet dangerous way for street children to cope with hunger, stress, and isolation. Inhalants create a temporary euphoria, allowing these children to momentarily escape their harsh realities and enter a dreamlike or dissociative state.

The prevalence of inhalant use among YaR children is particularly troubling due to its severe health risks, including damage to the nervous system, respiratory issues, and cognitive impairment. Unlike narcotics or other substances more commonly seen in Western contexts, inhalants are favored in India because many children lack the resources

to obtain other drugs. For these young individuals, inhalants often become an entrenched coping mechanism, contributing to a cycle of addiction and vulnerability that deepens their marginalization.

The widespread abuse of inhalants among YaR children in India underscores the urgent need for targeted intervention strategies, substance abuse counseling, and rehabilitation programs tailored specifically to address the unique substance-use patterns within this vulnerable population.

9. Begging Children in India: An Overview

In the context of 'Young at Risk' (YaR) in India, the term 'begging children' refers to minors who engage in begging on streets, marketplaces, religious sites, or other public spaces. This includes children who beg independently as well as those who are part of organized begging networks controlled by adults. Often, these children come from marginalized communities and are frequently forced or coerced into begging as a means of survival. They are highly vulnerable to exploitation, abuse, and neglect.

Begging children in India represent one of the most at-risk groups within the YaR category, facing severe deprivation, exploitation, and lack of access to basic rights such as education, healthcare, and safe living conditions. Numerous studies examine the issue at both the national and state levels, with particular focus on regions like Karnataka and Kerala.

National Context:

According to the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR, 2020), thousands of children are involved in begging across India, particularly in urban areas and religious sites. These children primarily come from marginalized communities and often lack access to essential services such as education and healthcare. The NCPCR report also highlights a link between child begging and trafficking networks, where children are coerced or forced into begging. A study by UNICEF India (2021) identifies poverty, family breakdown, migration, and the absence of social safety nets as key drivers of child begging. It underscores the urgent need for comprehensive social protection measures and stronger law enforcement to address this issue effectively.

Karnataka and Kerala Context:

The Karnataka Child Rights Observatory (KCRO, 2021) reports that many children involved in begging are either migrants or members of nomadic tribes. While rescue operations have been initiated, the lack of rehabilitation centers and long-term support has hindered successful reintegration efforts.

In Kerala, the Kerala State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (KSCPCR, 2022) found that child begging is frequently organized by handlers or criminal gangs. The commission has called for improved implementation of the Juvenile Justice Act and the establishment of more child welfare committees to curb exploitation.

10. Child Protection and Welfare

National Context:

Child protection and welfare are crucial areas of intervention for 'Young at Risk' (YaR) children in India. The Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS), launched by the Ministry of Women and Child Development in 2009, seeks to establish a protective environment for children through various services, including rescue and rehabilitation, legal support, and education. However, evaluations of ICPS (NIPCCD, 2020) have revealed significant gaps in its implementation, particularly in terms of coordination among agencies and outreach to vulnerable children.

The National Policy for Children (2013) and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, also provide a legal framework for child protection in India. Despite this, enforcement remains a challenge, especially in remote and rural areas. A study by Save the Children (2021) emphasized the need for increased investment in child protection services and enhanced training for frontline workers (NIPCCD, 2020; Save the Children, 2021).

Karnataka and Kerala Context:

In Karnataka, child protection efforts have been strengthened through various state initiatives. The Karnataka State Integrated Child Protection Scheme (KSICPS, 2021) has been effective in rescuing and rehabilitating vulnerable children, though challenges persist in rural areas. The Karnataka Evaluation Authority (KEA, 2020) emphasized the need for improved inter-agency coordination and better resource allocation to enhance outcomes.

Kerala has taken proactive steps to implement child protection measures, particularly through its Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) and the Juvenile Justice system. A study by the Kerala State Planning Board (2020) found that while Kerala has a robust child protection framework, there is a pressing need for more trained personnel and resources to address the increasing cases of child abuse and exploitation (KSICPS, 2021; KEA, 2020; Kerala State Planning Board, 2020).

11. Recent Research and Evaluation Studies

National Context:

Recent research has explored the intersection of poverty, education, and child protection. A study by the Indian Council for Child Welfare (ICCW, 2021) found that children from the poorest households are most vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. The study emphasized the need for targeted interventions that address both the economic and social vulnerabilities these children face.

An evaluation by the Centre for Child and the Law (CCL, 2022) assessed the effectiveness of child protection mechanisms under the Juvenile Justice Act. While the legal framework

is considered robust, the evaluation identified significant gaps in its implementation, particularly regarding capacity building and resource allocation.

Another study by the Azim Premji Foundation (2023) focused on the impact of COVID-19 on Young at Risk in India. The study revealed that the pandemic exacerbated existing vulnerabilities, leading to increases in child labour, school dropouts, child marriages, and mental health issues nationwide. The study called for urgent policy interventions to mitigate the long-term effects of the pandemic on children's lives (ICCW, 2021; CCL, 2022; Azim Premji Foundation, 2023).

The Miracle Foundation has developed the Thrive Scale, a care model inspired by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, aimed at transitioning children from institutional care to family-based settings. Recent initiatives have focused on reuniting children with their families and developing alternative care models, such as foster care and adoption, across India, including South India. In collaboration with partner organizations, these efforts have created replicable frameworks for other Child Care Institutions (CCIs) to strengthen family- and community-based care systems.

UNICEF's studies, particularly those conducted between 2020 and 2023, have focused on child rights, health, and protection. Their 2022 report on WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) needs in Assam highlighted systemic challenges faced by vulnerable children, providing a framework adaptable to different regional contexts, including South India.

NIMHANS remains at the forefront of addressing the mental health and rehabilitation needs of at-risk children, particularly those grappling with post-traumatic stress, substance abuse, and exploitation. While no South India-specific studies for 2023 were identified, NIMHANS continues its steadfast commitment to supporting the mental health of street children and those affected by trafficking and exploitation. This ongoing work highlights the critical need for targeted psychological interventions for these vulnerable populations, emphasizing the importance of tailored support to foster their well-being and recovery.

The issue of child begging in India has been extensively analyzed in reports by international organizations and national agencies. The UNICEF and Save the Children report (2021), titled "Addressing Child Begging: Analysis and Recommendations for Policy and Practice," highlighted that many children are trafficked specifically for begging, with traffickers exploiting economically disadvantaged families. Children used in begging are often subjected to physical harm to generate sympathy, making them more susceptible to abuse.

The **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Study (2020)** revealed that organized crime networks play a significant role in trafficking children for begging in South Asia. These children face severe physical and psychological abuse, underlining the need for tailored rehabilitation and reintegration programs.

In **UNICEF India's (2022)** study '*Children in Street Situations: An Overview*,' child begging is attributed to both economic hardship and exploitation by organized gangs. The report documented that these children often lack access to education, healthcare, and shelter and are at high risk of dropping out of school and facing malnutrition and trauma-related mental health issues.

The **MWCD and NCPCR Report (2021)** estimates thousands of children as engaged in begging across India, noting their increased vulnerability to sexual abuse, trafficking, and violence. The report called for stringent legal measures and rehabilitation schemes to provide these children with education and vocational training.

Lastly, the **ILO and UNICEF Global Report (2021)** categorized child begging as a hidden form of child labour. It recommended integrating child protection systems with anti-trafficking and anti-begging initiatives to comprehensively respond to this issue.

Karnataka and Kerala Context:

In Karnataka, recent studies have focused on the effectiveness of child protection mechanisms and the impact of education initiatives. The Centre for Child and the Law (CCL, 2022) at the National Law School of India University evaluated child protection mechanisms in Karnataka, highlighting the need for better implementation of the Juvenile Justice Act.

In Kerala, the Azim Premji Foundation (2023) conducted a study on the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable children, noting an increase in school dropouts, child labour, and child marriages due to the pandemic. The study called for urgent policy interventions to mitigate these effects and protect children's rights (CCL, 2022; Azim Premji Foundation, 2023).

Conclusion

The situation of young people at risk in India, particularly in states like Kerala and Karnataka, is both complex and multifaceted, shaped by a range of factors that heighten their vulnerability. Street children, slum children, rag pickers, school dropouts, child laborers, children involved in begging, victims of child marriage, those in conflict with the law, and children affected by substance abuse all face significant barriers to accessing their rights and realizing their full potential. Despite the establishment of numerous initiatives and legal frameworks aimed at safeguarding these children, gaps in implementation and enforcement remain prevalent. Recent research and evaluation studies highlight the urgent need for a more integrated and holistic approach to child protection and welfare in India. This approach must include enhanced coordination among government agencies, increased investment in child protection services, and targeted interventions that address the unique needs of different vulnerable child populations. As India continues its path of development, ensuring the well-being and protection of its most vulnerable children remains a critical and pressing priority.

Hope Rekindled: Tulasi's Path from Rainbow Home to a Life of Purpose



Tulasi, now a radiant 23-year-old, graced the doors of BOSCO in July 2015. Sent by the benevolent Child Welfare Committee from a tumultuous family background, she discovered a haven, a place where she could begin anew. BOSCO Rainbow Home became her sanctuary, nurturing her spirit as she completed her scholastic journey, and eventually, she embarked on a new adventure at Vatsalya Bhavan, seeking further enlightenment

in the realms of pre-university and college education. Driven by unwavering determination and adorned with unwavering dedication, Tulasi enraptured all with her academic prowess, triumphing in her studies and attaining a degree in the captivating fields of commerce and computer science.

But a remarkable thread of fate wove its way through Tulasi's journey at BOSCO, leading to a reunion that evoked sheer jubilation. After an agonizing nine-year absence, BOSCO managed to seek out her long-lost mother, reigniting the flames of their bond once more. With her head held high and a graduate's cap positioned on her crown, Tulasi gracefully stepped into the role of accounting staff at BOSCO, a splendid opportunity to gain valuable experience before embarking on a heartwarming reunion with her cherished mother.

Now, her spirit aflame with a passion for knowledge, Tulasi forges ahead on her path to finance, determined to sculpt her own future with true freedom and independence. With every step she takes, she is reminded of the unwavering support bestowed upon her by the ever-supportive BOSCO. And in her heart dances an ethereal dream, a dream where she extends her illuminated hand to other young girls who face the same arduous journey, offering them the realms of hope and boundless opportunities that forever transformed her existence.

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The Background of the Study

Commencing sometime during 1974 (though not under the name YaR), the work for Children and youth in difficult circumstances has seen many phases and undergone various transformations over the past 50 years. This project addresses the multifaceted challenges faced by children and young at risk, encompassing social, psychological, cultural, ethnic, political, economic, and educational dimensions. This assessment seeks to understand the project's impact from various dimensions and devise strategies for providing more targeted and effective support in the future.

The impact assessment will illuminate the shifting conditions affecting vulnerable children over the years, influenced by factors such as technological advancements and changing family structures. Findings from this study will guide the development of more effective approaches to support and empower at-risk children in a dynamic landscape.

Why an Impact Assessment:

An impact assessment of the YaR project by the Don Bosco team, Bangalore Province, is crucial, particularly in the current landscape of changing phenomena on the children found in vulnerable situations with the availability of technology, stringent government norms and policies that impose more restrictions on funding, operational styles, and the freedom restriction of NGOs. What began as a modest initiative has steadily expanded over the years, now reaching thousands of children across multiple districts in Karnataka and Kerala. This evaluation is crucial given the shifting challenges within the sector, ensuring the project remains responsive and effective in meeting the complex needs of children and at-risk youth.

The assessment is particularly important for several reasons:

- 1. Measuring Effectiveness Amid Policy Changes:** The extensive growth and programmatic diversity of the YaR project, especially in the past decade, requires systematic evaluation. This is vital to ensure that the project's goals are achieved amid stricter government regulations. The evaluation will assess if the interventions continue to be effective, especially considering the evolving legal and social landscape for NGOs.

It also allows for reflection on how the organization can navigate and adapt to these restrictions while continuing to make a meaningful difference for young people at risk.

- 2. Accountability and Transparency Under Stricter Regulations:** With increased oversight from government bodies and greater scrutiny on the use of funds, demonstrating accountability and transparency is more vital than ever. An impact assessment reassures donors, government agencies, and communities that the resources are being used effectively and in compliance with new operational rules. It also strengthens the organization's ability to showcase its adherence to policies while still fulfilling its mission.
- 3. Program Improvement in Response to Challenges:** The assessment offers a unique opportunity to reflect on successes and areas that need improvement. At a time when operational styles are being regulated, such insights are valuable for adapting strategies to not only improve services but also align with legal frameworks. This also ensures that the project remains relevant and responsive to the evolving needs of vulnerable youth, despite external restrictions.
- 4. Sustaining Support and Partnerships in a Competitive Environment:** As funding opportunities become more limited due to policy restrictions, demonstrating clear, data-backed impact is essential for sustaining existing partnerships and securing new ones. The impact assessment offers concrete evidence of the project's effectiveness, helping to maintain donor confidence and foster new collaborations. This is especially crucial for established initiatives like YaR, which must remain competitive in an increasingly regulated environment.
- 5. Documentation of Achievements for Future Planning:** With nearly 50 years of service, it is essential to document the project's achievements and growth. The assessment reflects on the project's progress and future direction. This analysis can help determine if there is a need for a paradigm shift in how the YaR project operates—whether in response to government regulations, shifting social challenges, or the changing needs of the communities it serves.

The impact assessment will help the Don Bosco team remain focused on their mission while adapting to external pressures. It provides a roadmap for the future, ensuring the YaR project's continued relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability in a changing regulatory and operational landscape.

Objectives of the Study

- Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the YaR project.
- Identify key challenges faced by the project in the current scenario.
- Propose targeted interventions and support mechanisms.
- Strengthen collaboration with stakeholders for sustainable solutions

The Scope of the Study

The study focused on assessing the impact of the Young at Risk (YaR) programs currently operating in 12 YaR centers and their subcentres, including Don Bosco Palluruthy,

Don Bosco Veedu, Trivandrum, Don Bosco Monvila in Kerala, In Karnataka the study encompassed Bosco and its allied centers in Bangalore, alongside several YaR centers in Northern Karnataka, specifically those in Hospet, Gulbarga, Davangere, Deodurga, Bidar, Yadgir, Chitradurga, and Mysore. These centers, integral to the Don Bosco teams mission in Karnataka, were selected to provide a comprehensive analysis of the impact of the YaR project across urban and rural settings. By examining the geographical diversity of these centers, the study aimed to assess how varying local conditions have shaped the programmes reach and effectiveness, offering insights into the adaptability and influence of YaR initiatives in different communities.

Quantitative and qualitative methodologies were employed, with quantitative data collected from staff and current and past beneficiaries and qualitative insights derived from Key Informant Interviews (KII) with Don Bosco Fathers, long time stakeholders and senior staff involved in the YaR mission.

The primary objective of the study was to evaluate the impact of the YaR initiatives on beneficiaries and their communities at local, state, and national levels. While the study did not deeply explore every facet of the operations, it examined the relevance of current programs, the adequacy of infrastructure, and the capacity of personnel engaged in these centers. Additionally, the assessment aimed to explore sustainability, future challenges, and the potential for a paradigm shift in how the YaR mission operates.

Additionally, the study also focused on several key parameters for qualitative analysis, including:

- **Transformational Impact:** Assessing the changes in the lives of children and youth.
- **Policy Influence:** Evaluating the YaR project's influence on policies at various levels.
- **Community Involvement and Empowerment:** Investigating the role of past pupils and staff in public life and assessing the recognition received for YaR's impact.

Design and Methodology of the study

The impact assessment of the YaR Project by the Don Bosco team, Bangalore Province, utilized a **descriptive research design** with a **mixed-method approach**, combining qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. The study aimed to assess the effectiveness, reach, and impact of the project through various data sources and methodologies, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation.

1. Data Collection Methods:

- **Surveys and Interviews:** Structured surveys using an interview schedule were conducted with both project beneficiaries and stakeholders, including current beneficiaries and past pupils. A simple random sampling method was employed to select participants. This allowed the collection of quantitative data on the perceived outcomes and impact of the YaR project across different centers.
- **Key Informant Interviews:** In-depth interviews were held with key informants, including Don Bosco Fathers, senior staff members, government officials such

as District Child Protection Officers (DCPO), and members of the Child Welfare Committee (CWC), Leaders of NGOs running similar programmes, UNICEF Child Protection Specialist, and others like Noted past pupils well placed in Society today. These interviews provided qualitative insights into the impact of YaR interventions from those closely associated with the project. A specific data collection tool was developed for these interviews.

- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):** Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with project staff, beneficiaries, and other key stakeholders using a pre-designed discussion guide. These discussions provided qualitative data on the effectiveness of the YaR project, capturing diverse perspectives from staff, community representatives, and beneficiaries. The FGDs took place in three major centers: Cochin (Kerala), Bangalore (South Karnataka), and Gulbarga (North Karnataka). The responsibility for organizing the FGDs was delegated to the respective local YaR centers. The sessions were structured to be simple, with open and free discussions led by the researcher through guided questions.
- **Case Studies:** Case studies of selected beneficiaries, past and present, were done to get deeper insight into the impact on the lives of the young. While the report features a few samples, the number of case studies was limited due to the report's size constraints.
- **Site Visits and Observation:** The assessor visited various YaR centers to observe the ongoing programs and assess the facilities. Direct observations provided contextual and real-time insights into the operational environment, enabling a more nuanced understanding of the project's functioning.
- **Collaboration with Local Authorities:** Local authorities, community leaders, educators, and government organizations were engaged to collect qualitative data on how the YaR project has impacted local communities. Their input helped validate findings from other sources and provided a broader community perspective on the project's effectiveness.

2. Sampling Procedures:

- The study employed **probability sampling** (for quantitative data collection, ensuring statistical relevance) and **purposive sampling** (for qualitative interviews and FGDs with key informants). This allowed a representative sample of stakeholders at various levels, including staff, beneficiaries, and community representatives, ensuring that all relevant actors were included in the assessment.
- A **statistically significant portion** of the stakeholder population was selected to ensure the results would reflect the YaR program across different centers and regions.

3. Data Collection Tools:

- **Desk-Based Review:** The assessment began with a detailed review of existing data, literature, and reports from previous years to understand the historical impact of the YaR project. This provided a foundation for comparing past results with the current state of the project.
- **Interview Schedules:** Structured interview schedules were designed in collaboration with the YaR team to interview staff and stakeholders. These schedules ensured uniformity in data collection and covered key themes related to project outcomes and challenges.
- **Focus Group Discussion Guide:** A standardized guide was developed for FGDs to ensure that the discussions focused on relevant themes, such as project impact, challenges, and community involvement.
- **Organizational and Infrastructure Assessment:** A minor assessment was conducted to evaluate the adequacy and suitability of the existing infrastructure and resources at the YaR centers. This included reviewing facilities for education, training, shelter, and counselling and the equipment and technology used for project delivery. The purpose was to determine if the infrastructure and personnel were sufficient to meet the demands of the YaR programs and identify areas for improvement.

4. Analysis and Interpretation:

- **Quantitative Data Analysis:** The quantitative data from surveys and structured interviews were statistically analysed to determine trends, patterns, and the overall impact of the YaR project on beneficiaries.
- **Qualitative Data Analysis:** Qualitative data from interviews, FGDs, and case studies were thematically analysed to draw out deeper insights into the effectiveness of the project, identifying both successes and areas needing improvement.

This mixed-method impact assessment provided a well-rounded understanding of the YaR project, examining its operational, organizational, and community-level impacts. By combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies, the study measured the project's success and provided actionable insights for future improvements and potential paradigm shifts.

Tools Used for the Study:

- Workshops, Meetings and Document Review:** Workshops were scheduled and conducted online and offline. Meetings and discussions occurred, and there was a review of center documents and reports, including the minutes from staff meetings.
- Beneficiary Survey Tool:** A structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data from selected beneficiaries.

- c. **Key Informant Interview Guide:** Key informant interviews were conducted to gather information from heads and program coordinators, government officials, local administration (selected representatives where available), and community representatives in the project area.
- d. **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):** Focus group discussions (FGDs) were held at three selected YaR centers involving children, staff, community members, government officials, and school teachers. An FGD guide was utilized to conduct the discussions. The qualitative information was gathered with a fact sheet, i.e., minutes written and notes taken by the researcher, later edited by the researcher, and presented through three reports.
- e. **Case Studies:** The report highlights individual success stories and accounts of their challenges. The case studies were gathered from staff and individual centers, using secondary data collection methods.

Inclusion Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria:

- i. **Participation in YaR Project:** Only individuals who have actively participated in YaR project activities are included.
- ii. **Current or Past Enrolment:** Individuals who are either currently enrolled in a YaR center or are past pupils (alumni) of the program are eligible.
- iii. **Age Range:** Current students aged 10-18 years and past pupils aged 15 years and above are included.
- iv. **Duration of Engagement:** Individuals engaged with the program for at least one year are included to ensure they have received substantial benefits from the services.
- v. **Geographic Location:** Individuals residing in areas where the YaR center operates or where past pupils are accessible for assessment are included.
- vi. **Vulnerability Factors:** Individuals demonstrating vulnerability due to poverty, lack of parental support, or risky behaviours are eligible.
- vii. **Consent:** Only individuals who provide informed consent to participate in the impact assessment are included, though no formal signed written consent is taken.
- viii. **Availability:** Participants who are available and willing to engage in the assessment process within the specified time frame are included.

Exclusion Criteria:

- i. **Age:** Individuals outside the specified age range, including children under 12 years old, are excluded from the study.
- ii. **Non-Engagement:** Individuals who have not consistently participated in the YaR program or whose engagement was less than one year are excluded.
- iii. **Non-Consent:** Individuals who do not consent to participate in the impact assessment are excluded.

- iv. **Ineligibility:** Individuals who do not meet the program’s eligibility criteria, such as those not of sound mind or those with a biased relationship with the center, are excluded from participation.
- v. **Unavailability:** Individuals who are unavailable or unwilling to participate in the assessment during the specified time frame are excluded.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Further Research

The assessment encountered several challenges that influenced data collection and analysis. However, these limitations also highlight areas for improvement and potential avenues for future research:

a. Limited Participant Availability:

Some key stakeholders and beneficiaries were unavailable during the scheduled data collection, causing delays. Better pre-planning and scheduling could improve stakeholder engagement in future assessments.

b. Inconsistent Documentation and Record-Keeping:

Inadequate documentation and poor record-keeping at certain YaR centers created challenges in accessing reliable historical data. Establishing standardized documentation practices across centers is recommended to enhance future studies.

c. Time Constraints for Data Collection:

The study faced time limitations due to the wide geographic spread, language diversity, and poor road connectivity. A phased approach to data collection or the involvement of local collaborators could ensure more comprehensive coverage in future assessments.

d. Difficulty Tracing Past Pupils:

Limited access to past program beneficiaries has hindered the evaluation of long-term impacts. Creating an alumni network or database would facilitate future efforts to assess outcomes over time.

e. Seasonal and Institutional Transitions:

The timing of the study coincides with holidays and Salesians transfers, thus reducing the availability of key personnel. Future studies could be planned during less disruptive periods to improve participation.

f. Competing Priorities of Stakeholders:

Many participants were occupied with other responsibilities, resulting in delays. Allocating dedicated time slots for data collection or engaging additional personnel may mitigate such challenges.

g. Accessibility Challenges:

Reaching beneficiaries, especially those from remote regions or other states, posed logistical challenges. Collaborating with local partners or employing virtual communication tools could help overcome such obstacles.

h. Sensitivity of Data:

Collecting information from vulnerable populations was complex due to ethical considerations. While the current study maintained strict confidentiality and adhered to ethical standards, future research could benefit from further refined data collection methods to enhance these protocols even more.

i. Center-Specific Variations:

Variability in activities across YaR centers made using a common evaluation framework difficult. A tailored approach to evaluating individual centers is suggested for future research to enhance center-specific insights and quality improvement.

j. Limited Availability of Secondary Data:

The scarcity of relevant secondary data restricted cross-referencing and validation of findings. Developing a centralized repository of research and reports on YaR activities should support future studies with more comprehensive background information.

Scope for Further Study:

This assessment highlights several opportunities for further research. Future studies could focus on:

- Longitudinal impact assessments to track progress and outcomes over time.
- Center-specific evaluations to identify best practices and tailor interventions.
- Development of an alumni network for continuous engagement with past beneficiaries.
- Explore the use of digital tools for data collection to overcome geographical and logistical barriers.
- Collaborative studies with other organizations working with similar populations to provide comparative insights.

Conclusion

This study was meticulously designed and executed, ensuring a robust evaluation of the YaR project across diverse settings and dimensions. Employing a mixed-method approach, it integrated quantitative surveys and qualitative insights through interviews, focus group discussions, case studies, and site visits. Including key informants, community leaders, and local authorities enriched the findings, while a combination of probability and purposive sampling ensured representative and meaningful data.

Ethical standards were rigorously upheld, with careful consideration given to participant consent, data sensitivity, and confidentiality, especially for vulnerable populations. The study's scientific rigour is further demonstrated through structured tools, comprehensive documentation, and stakeholder collaboration. This systematic approach reflects professional integrity and provides actionable insights for improving the project's reach and effectiveness. While some challenges were encountered, the study offers valuable recommendations and lays the foundation for future research, paving the way for ongoing innovation and sustainability in supporting Young at Risk.



Chandru, a bright 12-year-old boy from Bilichodu village in Davangere, has faced more hardship in his young life than many encounter in a lifetime. After the loss of his father, his mother, Kamamma, struggled to provide for him and his three younger sisters. With few resources and limited options, the family survived by performing acrobatics on the streets and begging for food.

A turning point came when a compassionate call to CHILDLINE brought Chandru to the attention of the Don Bosco Child Labour Mission (DBCLM). The DBCLM staff acted swiftly, rescuing Chandru from his life on the streets and giving him a fresh start. For the first time, he began learning Kannada at the DBCLM center, embarking on a journey of education and self-discovery.

After completing a year in the Residential Bridge Course, Chandru was able to enroll in the 4th grade at a mainstream school—a milestone he once thought impossible. Today, he lives at Don Bosco Sujyothi Shelter Home, where he enjoys the security of a safe environment, access to regular schooling, and nutritious meals. His days are filled with new interests, from sports to drawing, and his dreams are beginning to take shape. Chandru now aspires to continue his education and one day support his family, breaking the cycle of poverty that once defined his life.

Chandru's story is a testament to the profound impact of timely intervention and compassionate rehabilitation. With the support of the DBCLM, he has been given a chance to reclaim his childhood and build a brighter future, embodying hope for countless other vulnerable children.

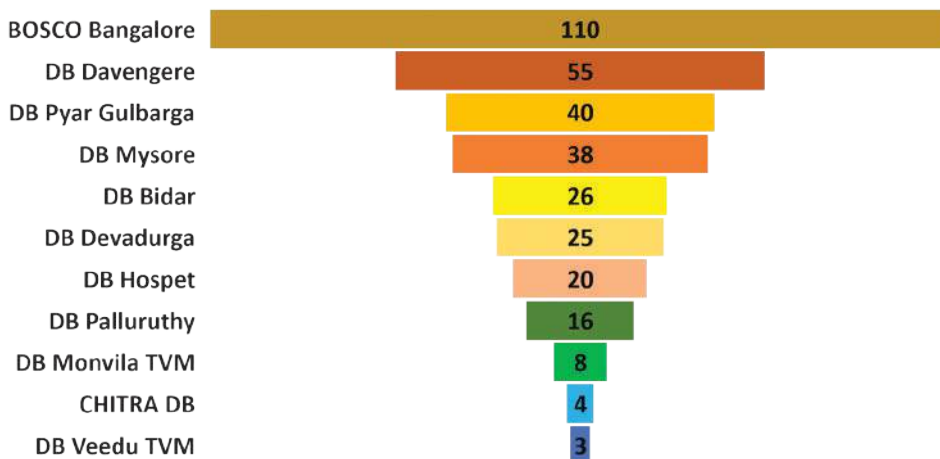
FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

I. YaR Impact Assessment - Beneficiary Perspectives

Introduction:

The Findings and Interpretation of the YaR Impact Assessment from the beneficiaries' perspectives offer valuable insights into the effectiveness of the programs designed to support children and youth at risk. This section highlights the levels of satisfaction, the impact of services across various regions, and areas for improvement based on feedback from the beneficiaries. It captures the voices of those directly impacted by the initiatives, providing a nuanced understanding of successes and challenges. These findings not only reflect the positive outcomes of the interventions but also pinpoint areas where targeted efforts can further strengthen the programmes relevance and extend its reach.

Figure 1: Centre-wise Distribution of Respondents



The data collection for the YaR impact assessment was conducted at 11 out of the 12 YaR centers included in the study. Although DB Yadgiri was part of the assessment, we were

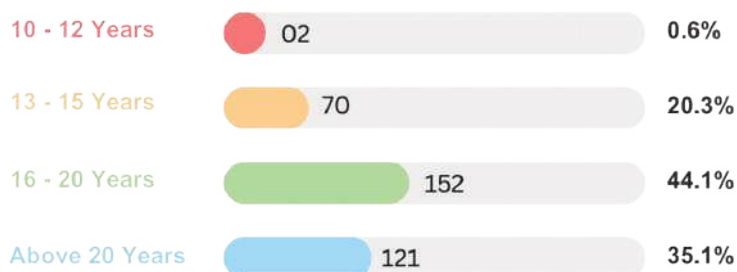
unable to collect data from this center due to the absence of children, and therefore, details from this center are not included in this section of the report.

The questionnaires were administered to both current and former students in proportion to the center's population, following the sampling design. The collected data has been analysed, interpreted, and presented in the following sections of the report.

Summary Discussion: The table illustrates the distribution of respondents across various YaR centers in Bangalore province, where YaR Activities is currently in operation. BOSCO, Bangalore Center emerges as the most represented, with 110 respondents, comprising 31.9% of the total sample, indicating its significant role or larger service population. Davangere follows with 55 respondents (15.9%), and Gulbarga with 40 respondents (11.6%), highlighting these centers as major hubs of activity. Other centers, such as DB Mysore (11.0%), Bidar (7.5%), and Devadurga (7.2%), also show considerable representation, underscoring their importance in the overall service network. However, centers like Palluruthy (4.6%), Hospet (5.8%), TVM Monvila (2.3%), and TVM Veedu (1%) have notably lower representation.

Conclusion: The distribution shows a concentration of respondents in key centers like BOSCO Bangalore and Davangere. The distribution of respondents reflects the varying scales of activity across Young at Risk (YaR) centers in the Bangalore province. Larger hubs serve more beneficiaries, while smaller centers have fewer participants, indicating differing service populations. Tailored interventions can enhance the effectiveness of smaller centers by addressing their specific needs. Aligning support with the unique challenges of each location will help maintain balanced service delivery, ensuring that all young people at risk benefit meaningfully from the program.

Figure 2: Age Distribution of the Respondents

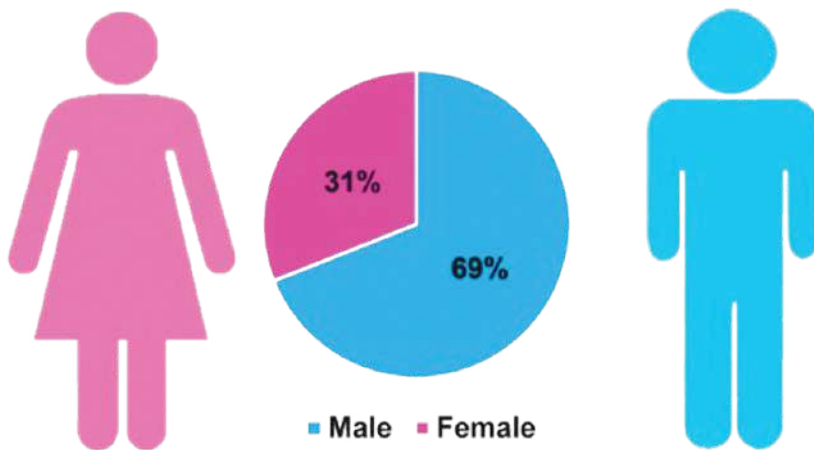


Summary Discussion

The data reflects the age distribution of respondents in the YaR project. The majority are in the 16-20 years category, with 152 respondents (44.1%), highlighting that this age group is the primary focus. The second largest group consists of those above 20 years, accounting for 121 respondents (35.1%). The 13-15 years age category follows with 70 respondents (20.3%), while the youngest group, under 12 years, represents only 2 respondents (0.6%).

Conclusion: The data indicates that the YaR project predominantly serves youth aged 16-20, suggesting that this group may have the most immediate needs or be the primary target for vocational and educational programs. As this age group is going through an important change phase of their life, YaR centres pay extra attention to their proper decision-making process and handholding thereafter to gradually settle them down in society. The significant number of participants above 20 years shows ongoing support for young adults to mainstream society through job placements and aftercare programmes. The low number of children under 12 years implies a focus on older youth, possibly due to the project's nature or intended outcomes.

Figure 3: Gender Distribution of the Respondents from YaR Centres



Summary Discussion: The gender distribution within the YaR project reveals a significant male majority, with 238 male respondents (69%) compared to 107 female respondents (31%). This distribution reflects the Salesians of Don Bosco's (SDB) historical focus on working predominantly with boys, who have traditionally been the primary beneficiaries of their services. However, through the YaR project, there has been an increasing effort to include girls in vulnerable situations, acknowledging their unique needs as well.

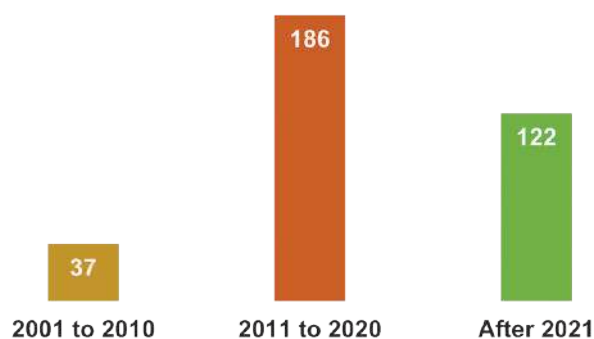
Despite this progress, the target group under YaR continues to consist primarily of boys. This is largely due to the fact that more boys tend to run away from home and end up on the streets compared to girls. The decision to leave home—whether from rural villages or urban slums—requires a significant amount of courage, which is often influenced by risk-taking behaviour. Cultural norms in the country also play a role, as girls are typically kept indoors and under stricter parental supervision, limiting their likelihood of leaving home compared to boys.

Conclusion: The data reflects the SDBs' historical emphasis on outreach to boys while also highlighting a growing inclusion of girls through the YaR project. The lower representation of girls underscores the need to enhance efforts to reach and support female beneficiaries

to ensure equitable access to the project's services for both genders. Addressing this gap may require developing specialized interventions and resources tailored to girls' needs.

Additionally, the complexity of issues faced by girls, as well as their requirement for more specialized care, necessitates well-equipped YaR centers with appropriate infrastructure and trained professionals. This would ensure that girls receive the necessary support, safeguarding their right to a dignified life.

Figure 4 : Respondents by Year of Joining DB YaR

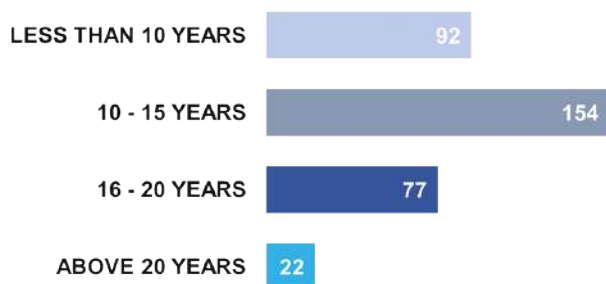


Summary Discussion: The Figure illustrates the distribution of respondents based on the year they joined the YaR project. The majority of respondents, 186 (53.9%), joined between 2011 and 2020, reflecting a significant increase in engagement during this period. Following this, 122 respondents (35.4%) joined after 2021, showing

continued strong enrolment. Only a small fraction, 37 (10.7%), joined before 2011, which may suggest either a lower initial reach of the program or that earlier beneficiaries have since moved on.

Conclusion: The data indicates that the YaR project has seen a notable increase in participation over the last decade, particularly post-2011. The recent high numbers suggest the project's growing impact and continued relevance, highlighting its successful expansion and sustained efforts in reaching more children/ youth in need.

Figure 5: Age of Joining YaR Project



Summary Discussion

The figure displays the age distribution of respondents when they first joined the YaR project. The largest group, 154 respondents (44.6%), joined between the ages of 10 and 15 years, suggesting that the project pays extra

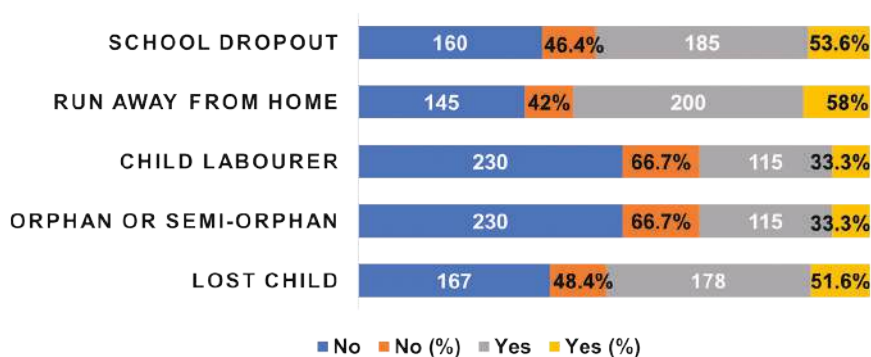
attention to children and adolescents at a crucial developmental stage. A significant portion, 92 respondents (26.7%), joined at a very young age, less than 10 years old, reflecting the project's early intervention efforts. A total of 77 respondents (22.3%) joined the program between 16 and 20 years of age, while a smaller group of 22 respondents (6.4%) joined after

the age of 20. This indicates that, although the project primarily serves younger individuals, it also supports older youth and young adults. This approach of the Don Bosco YaR centers aligns with the mission and charism of Don Bosco.

Conclusion

The data shows that the YaR project effectively reaches children and adolescents, particularly those between 10 and 15 years old, which may be a key period for intervention. The project's focus on early and adolescent engagement is likely instrumental in achieving its positive outcomes, such as effective family reunification and other forms of rehabilitation for the best interest of the child, while also accommodating older youths in need of support.

Figure 6: Background of Beneficiaries when Joining YaR



Summary Discussion: The figure above provides insight into the backgrounds of the children and youth before they joined the YaR project. It reveals that a significant portion of the beneficiaries were highly vulnerable, with over half being school dropouts (53.6%) and runaways (58%). Additionally, more than half of the respondents were lost children (51.6%), and about a third were either child labourers (33.3%) or orphaned/semi-orphaned (33.3%).

These statistics highlight the challenging circumstances the children faced before their engagement with YaR, emphasizing the project's crucial role in reaching out to and supporting youth in need. The data points to a clear need for targeted interventions for these groups, who often face compounded risks and limited access to social support.

Conclusion: The YaR project has successfully identified and supported some of the most at-risk children and youth, particularly school dropouts and runaways. By providing critical assistance and a structured support system, the project has contributed to transforming the lives of these children, enabling them to transition from precarious situations to more stable and improved living conditions. This underscores the importance and relevance of the YaR project's interventions in making a meaningful impact on the lives of these vulnerable groups and offering them a path towards a more secure and dignified future.

Figure 7: Educational Status Before and After Joining YaR Programme



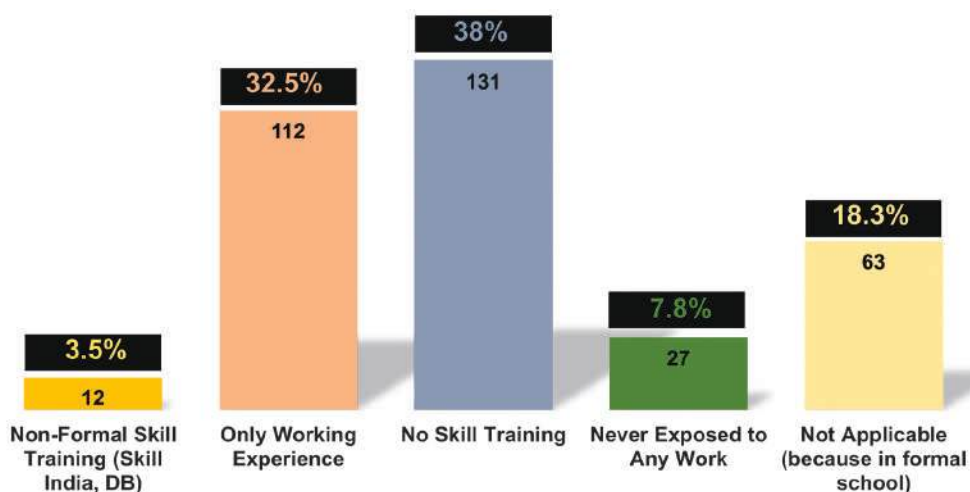
Summary Discussion: The figure illustrates the educational status of the beneficiaries before and after joining the Young at Risk (YaR) program. The data shows a marked improvement in educational attainment following their participation in the YaR initiative, reflecting the programmes effectiveness in providing academic and vocational opportunities for these young people.

- **Reduction in Formal Education:** The percentage of youth without formal education decreased significantly from 11.3% to 3.8%. This change indicates that the YaR program successfully facilitated access to primary education for many children who previously had no schooling.
- **Shift in Primary Education (1-5 Class):** The number of children enrolled in classes 1 to 5 dropped from 135 (39.1%) before the program to just 30 (8.7%) after. This decline suggests that many children progressed to higher grades or opted for non-formal skill training, which may better suit their immediate needs.
- **Increase in Middle School Education (6-9 Class):** The number of children attending classes 6 to 9 increased from 92 (26.7%) to 117 (33.9%). This growth is likely due to children advancing from lower grades or being encouraged to re-enroll in formal education after joining the program.
- **Rise in Non-formal Skill Training:** One of the most notable changes is the significant increase in children receiving non-formal skill training, from 12 (3.5%) before joining the program to 106 (30.7%) after. This increase of 94 children can be attributed to several factors:

- **Transition to Skill Training from Formal Education:** Some children who were previously enrolled in lower grades (1-5 or 6-9) might have chosen to shift to vocational training as it provides immediate employable skills, making them better equipped to support their families.
- The preference for skill training is often driven by the need for a quicker path to employment and financial independence, which formal education may not immediately offer.
- **New Enrolments Post 10th Grade:** A portion of the increase could also be due to children joining the program after completing the 10th grade and opting for skill-based education rather than continuing in a traditional academic stream.

Conclusion: The YaR project has not only improved the academic status of its beneficiaries but has also equipped many young people with non-formal vocational skills. This shift highlights the project’s flexibility in addressing the diverse educational needs and aspirations of children and youth, especially those from vulnerable backgrounds. By enabling youth to pursue vocational training, the program helps them gain practical skills that can be immediately leveraged to support their families, making the intervention both relevant and impactful for the community.

Figure 8: Vocational Skill Status Before Joining YaR



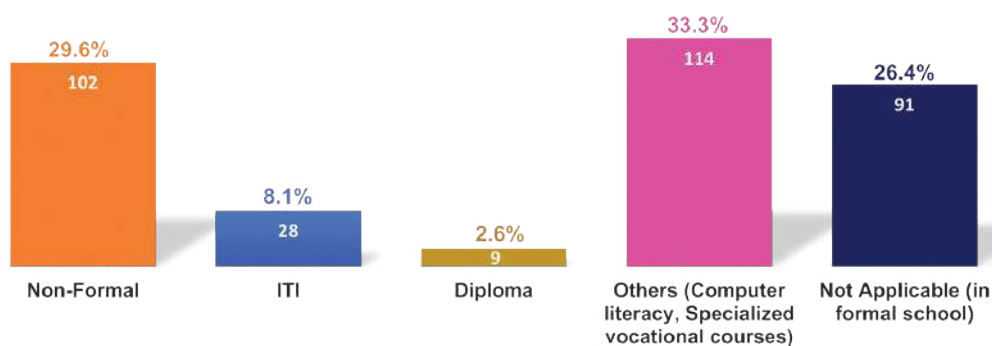
Summary Discussion: The figure reflects the vocational training status of beneficiaries before joining the YaR project. It shows that a significant number of youth lacked access to formal or non-formal training opportunities.

- **No Skill Training or Experience:** A large segment, 38% (131 individuals), had no skill training before joining the YaR project, indicating limited exposure to structured educational programs or vocational courses.

- **Work Experience Without Formal Training:** Another 32.5% (112 individuals) had only work experience without any vocational training, suggesting that they entered the workforce out of necessity rather than choice, without the benefit of formal skills development.
- **Minimal Non-Formal Training:** Only 3.5% (12 individuals) received non-formal skill training through programs like Skill India or Don Bosco, reflecting a gap in access to training programs for the majority of these youth.
- **Lack of Exposure to Any Work:** About 7.8% (27 individuals) had never been exposed to any work environment, possibly due to their age, background, or other socio-economic factors.
- **Still in Formal Schooling:** The 18.3% (63 individuals) categorized as 'Not Applicable' were currently engaged in formal schooling and were not involved in any work or vocational training. This group primarily consists of children and youth still pursuing their studies, and they may seek skill training opportunities upon completing their education.

Conclusion: The data reveals a significant gap in vocational training and skills development among the youth before joining the YaR project. The majority either had no training or only work experience without formal skill development, underscoring the need for programs that provide accessible and effective training opportunities. By addressing this gap, the YaR project can play a pivotal role in equipping these youth with employable skills, enabling them to transition into stable employment and improve their socio-economic conditions.

Figure 9: Current Vocational Skill Status



Summary Discussion: The figure presents the vocational skill status of beneficiaries after joining the YaR project, highlighting a notable shift towards skill development and professional growth.

- **Non-Formal Skill Training (29.6%):** A significant proportion of youth (102 individuals) have undergone non-formal training. This category includes training programs like Skill India or those offered by Don Bosco centers, which provide practical skills that are often in demand in the job market. These trainings enhance their employability and better prepare them for vocational roles.
- **ITI and Diploma Programs (10.7% Combined):** Approximately 8.1% (28 individuals) pursued ITI (Industrial Training Institute) courses, while 2.6% (9 individuals) opted for Diploma programs. These are formal skill training pathways that offer recognized certifications, enabling beneficiaries to access professional opportunities in various technical and industrial sectors with better payment.
- **'Others' Category (33.3%):** The largest segment (114 individuals) falls under the "Others" category. This category encompasses a broad range of skills that do not fit traditional classifications but are nonetheless critical for employability. This might include skills like computer literacy, language training or specialized vocational courses, which are crucial for accessing a diverse range of job opportunities.
- **Still in Formal School (26.4%):** A significant portion of youth, (91 individuals) are still in formal education and have not yet pursued vocational training. This group represents those who continue to prioritize academic education, possibly with plans to engage in vocational training at a later stage.

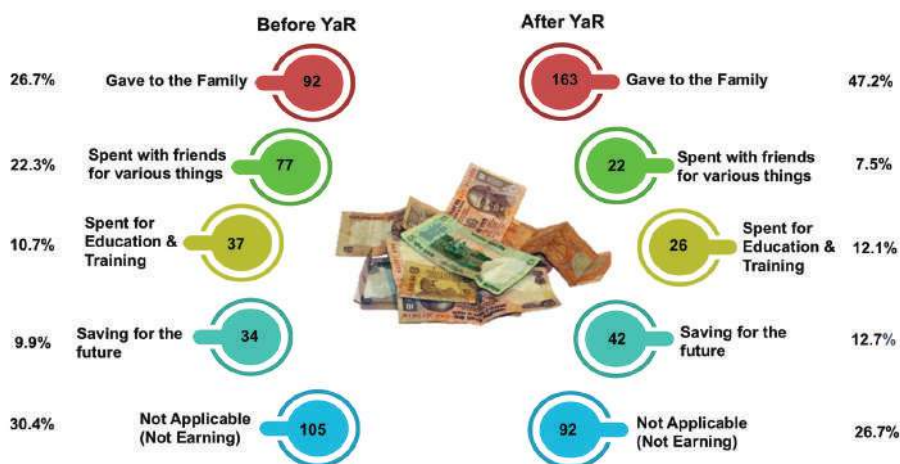
Importance of Life Skills Training:

In addition to vocational skill training, all YaR centers emphasize the development of **life skills**, which are integral to the holistic development of the beneficiaries. Life skills training includes modules on communication, decision-making, critical thinking, emotional resilience, and interpersonal relationships. These skills are essential not only for personal development but also for enhancing employability.

Life skills help youth navigate complex social environments, make informed decisions, and engage positively with employers and peers. When combined with vocational skills, life skills contribute to the overall success of the beneficiaries, enabling them to be self-reliant and adaptable in various professional settings.

Conclusion: The YaR project has played a pivotal role in transforming the vocational capabilities of its beneficiaries. The shift from having limited skills to acquiring professional and non-formal qualifications underscores the project's impact on shaping the future of these young individuals. By providing vocational and life skills training, YaR equips youth with the competencies necessary for sustainable employment and self-reliance, thereby making a lasting difference in their lives and helping them break out of cycles of vulnerability.

Figure 10: Money Spending Habits



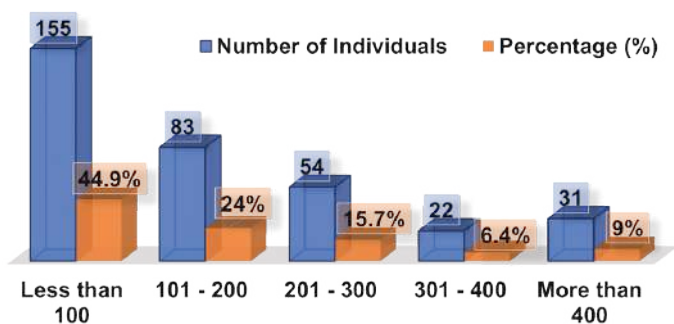
Summary Discussion

The figure illustrates a significant shift in the spending habits of youth after they became beneficiaries of the YaR project. Before the intervention, only 26.7% of the youth contributed their earnings to their families, whereas this figure rose to 47.2% post-intervention. Conversely, the percentage of those spending money with friends decreased sharply from 22.3% to 6.4%, indicating a positive change in spending priorities.

Conclusion

The YaR project has had a profound impact on the financial behaviors of its participants. A notable increase in the number of youths contributing financially to their families post-intervention highlights a shift toward more responsible money management. Additionally, reduced spending on social activities and an increased focus on saving for the future suggest that the project has successfully instilled prudent, future-oriented financial habits among the youth. By encouraging beneficiaries to support their families financially, the YaR project is gradually helping to alleviate poverty within these households.

Figure 11: Number of Individuals Known and Positively Influenced



Summary Discussion: The figure illustrates the reach and influence of YaR project participants on their communities. The majority, 44.9%, impacted fewer than 100 people, while 24% managed to influence between 101 and 200 individuals. A

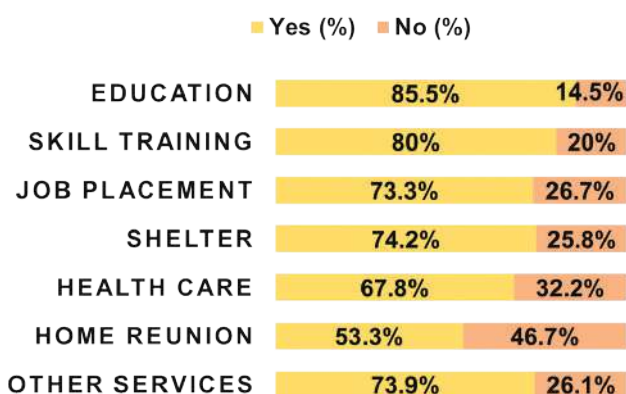
smaller yet significant portion, 9.0%, had a far-reaching influence, impacting more than 400 people.

'Positive influence' in this context refers to various forms of support and advocacy. Many participants have provided financial assistance to other students, referred vulnerable children they encountered on the streets to YaR centers, and encouraged their peers to pursue education or vocational training through Don Bosco programs. By sharing their own success stories, they motivate others to make better life choices, ultimately creating a ripple effect of positive change.

Conclusion:

The analysis reveals that while most YaR participants had a relatively limited scope of influence (fewer than 100 people), a noteworthy percentage managed to reach a wider audience, with 9% impacting over 400 individuals. This data highlights the strong community presence and outreach potential of the YaR initiative. It's important to note that participants might not actively track the number of people they influence. Previous studies on street children's behaviour have shown that once mainstreamed, these youth often feel compelled to support others in similar situations. Some choose professions where they can help children in vulnerable conditions, such as becoming sports coaches or social workers, including joining YaR projects as staff or volunteers. A significant number of past BOSCO alumni are now working as school coaches, using their experiences to train and mentor children in government-run schools. This showcases the long-term positive impact of the YaR project, as beneficiaries become advocates and support systems for others, contributing meaningfully to their communities.

Figure 12: Services Received or Receiving from YaR



Summary Discussion: The figure above highlights the range of services that beneficiaries have received through the YaR project at various points in time. These services, offered by Don Bosco's YaR program, include both short-term and long-term support. For example, some beneficiaries may have stayed in care homes for as little as a week, while others received assistance finding independent accommodation after leaving care homes.

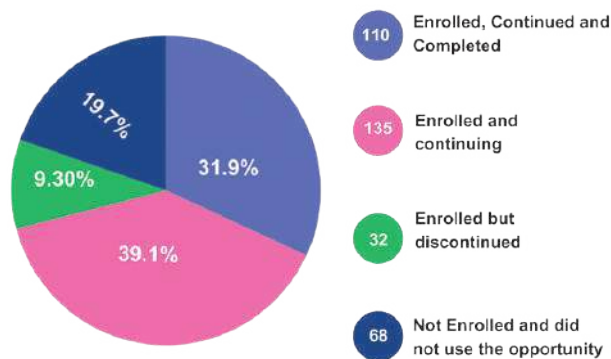
Education is the most frequently accessed service, with 85.5% of respondents benefiting. This is followed by skill training (80.0%) and job placement (73.3%), reflecting the project's focus on equipping young individuals with education and employability skills. Shelter services, which include care homes for those under 18 and room placements for those transitioning to independent living, were availed by 74.2% of respondents, ensuring safe and secure living arrangements.

Healthcare services reached 67.8% of the beneficiaries, demonstrating the program's commitment to addressing physical and mental health needs. Additionally, home reunion services were provided to 53.3% of the respondents, supporting efforts to reintegrate children with their families whenever possible. Finally, other support services, including psychological counselling, legal aid, or mentorship, were accessed by 73.9% of the participants. Overall, these data represent the diverse and holistic support system provided by the YaR project, catering to the multifaceted needs of its beneficiaries and helping them transition to a more stable and self-sufficient lifestyle.

Conclusion: The data demonstrates the comprehensive support offered by the YaR program, which goes beyond primary care to address the educational, vocational, and social needs of its beneficiaries. The high percentage of participants accessing education, skill training, and job placement services indicates that the program effectively prepares youth for independent living and self-reliance. Providing shelter, healthcare, and home reunion services further emphasizes the holistic nature of the YaR initiative, which not only focuses on immediate needs but also fosters long-term development and family reunification.

The YaR project has successfully created a safety net for vulnerable youth by offering diverse services- whether short-term interventions or long-term support. This approach ensures that each individual receives personalized assistance according to their unique circumstances, ultimately contributing to a more positive trajectory for their lives and enhancing their potential to contribute to society.

Figure 13: Enrolment in YaR Educational Programmes

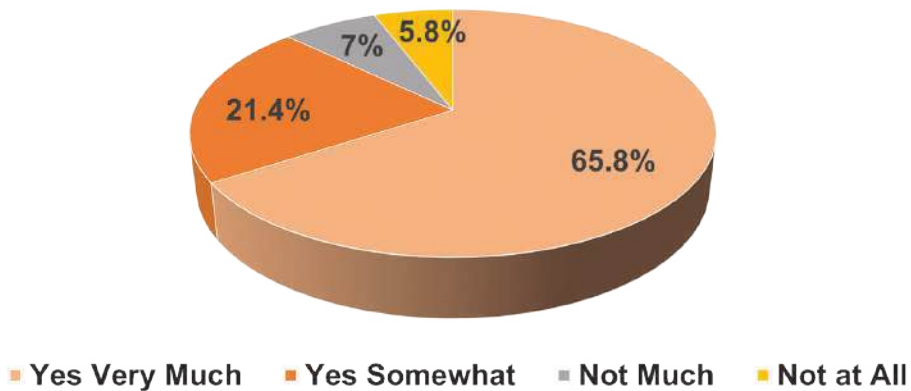


Summary Discussion: The figure illustrates the enrolment status of YaR program beneficiaries, reflecting the positive educational outcomes achieved through the initiative.

A substantial 71% of respondents have either completed their education (31.9%) or are still enrolled and continuing their studies (39.1%), showcasing the effectiveness of the project in promoting educational participation and persistence. The proportion of youth who enrolled but eventually discontinued their education is limited to 9.30%. This indicates a relatively low rate of school dropouts among those who had initially joined formal or non-formal educational programs through the YaR project. On the other hand, 19.7% of respondents did not enrol in academic programs or utilize the opportunity, which may be attributed to factors such as age, health issues, or personal circumstances that prevented them from attending regular school.

Conclusion: The YaR project has made a substantial positive impact on the educational attainment of its beneficiaries. The high percentage of youth who have enrolled, continued, or completed their education underscores the programmes effectiveness in fostering an environment where education is both accessible and highly valued. Although the dropout rate remains low, the fact that nearly one-fifth of respondents have not enrolled in educational programs indicates a need for targeted interventions to understand and address the barriers faced by these young people. Factors such as age or health challenges may have hindered their ability to attend regular school. Implementing tailored strategies to re-engage these individuals could further enhance the project’s reach and ensure that every child has the opportunity to pursue an education.

Figure 14: Improvement in Academic Performance Because of YaR Programme



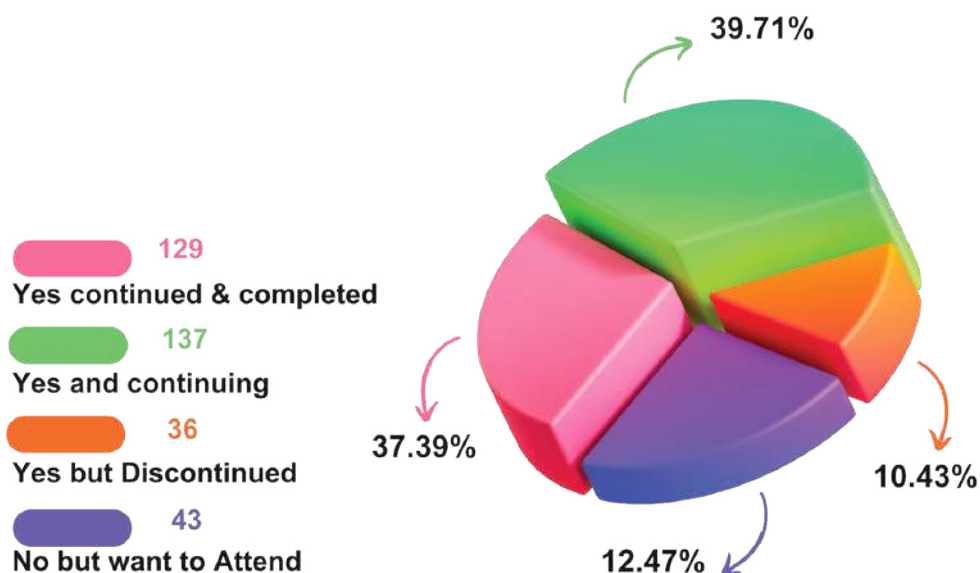
Summary Discussion

The majority of respondents, 65.8%, indicated that they were highly satisfied ('Yes Very Much') with the aspects surveyed, reflecting strong positive feedback. An additional 21.4% responded with 'Yes Somewhat,' suggesting moderate satisfaction. Only a small proportion of respondents expressed lesser degrees of satisfaction, with 7% saying "Not Much" and 5.8% stating 'Not at All.'

Conclusion

The data clearly demonstrates the effectiveness and positive impact of the YaR project, as the vast majority of respondents expressed a high level of satisfaction with their experience. This overwhelmingly positive response underscores the success of Don Bosco's initiatives in addressing the needs of young people at risk, reaffirming the project's role in making a meaningful difference in their lives. The small percentage of less satisfied respondents indicates areas where the project can continue to evolve and improve.

Figure 15: Enrolment in Skill Training



Summary Discussion: The data reveals that a substantial portion of the youth in the YaR project either continued and completed their education (37.39%) or are still engaged in their studies (39.71%). This indicates a substantial commitment to education among the participants. However, 10.43% of the youth discontinued their education. In comparison, 12.47% who wanted to be enrolled had to return to their families as these respondents were reintegrated back into their families after addressing their runaway problems.

Conclusion: The YaR project's efforts to ensure educational continuity have largely been successful, with over 77.1% of the youth completing or continuing their education. This high rate of engagement demonstrates the effectiveness of Don Bosco's initiatives in fostering educational opportunities for young people at risk. The relatively small percentage of those who discontinued their education or were not enrolled highlights the need for ongoing support and targeted interventions to ensure that all youth have the opportunity to pursue and complete their education.

Figure 16: Confidence Level on Skill after Completing the Vocational Training



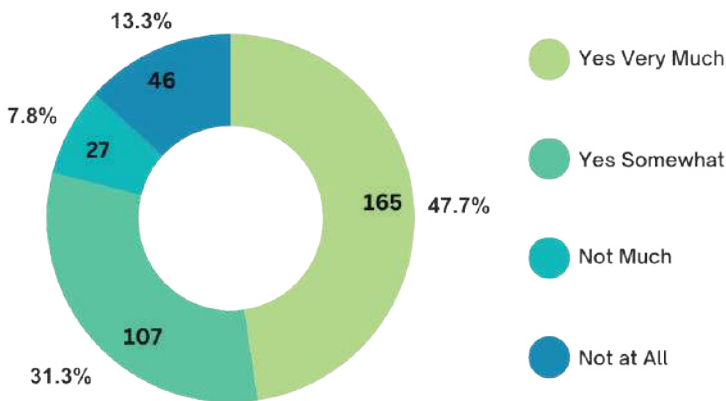
Summary Discussion

The data shows a substantial level of confidence among the youth after participating in the YaR project. A significant 61.2% of respondents feel 'Very Much Confident,' and an additional 27.5% feel 'Somewhat Confident.' Only a small portion of respondents expressed lower confidence levels, with 7.5% 'Not Much Confident' and 3.8% 'Not at all Confident.'

Conclusion

The YaR project's impact on building confidence among its participants is evident, with nearly 89% of respondents feeling either 'Very Much Confident' or 'Somewhat Confident.' This high level of self-assurance reflects the project's success in empowering young people and providing them with the skills, knowledge, and support necessary to face challenges confidently. The minimal number of respondents expressing low confidence levels highlights the overall effectiveness of the project. However, continuous support may be needed to ensure all participants achieve the highest confidence levels.

Figure 17: YaR Assistance to Find Employment



Summary Discussion

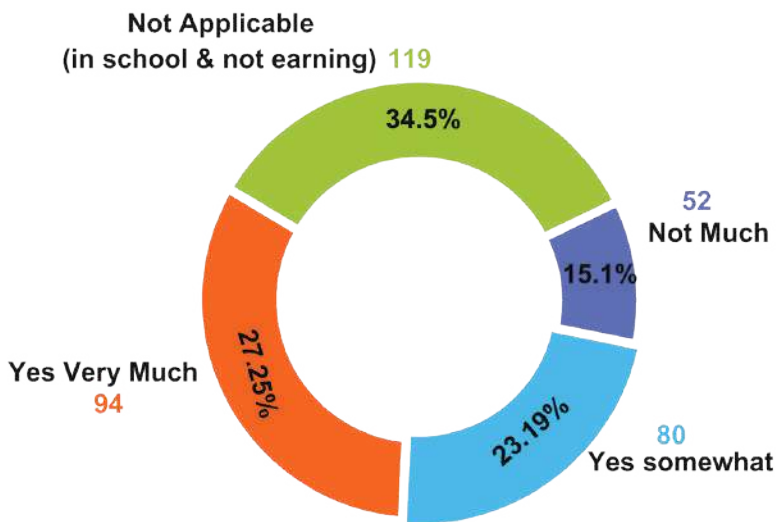
The above data answers the question, "Did the YaR Project Help You Find Employment?" The data reveals that a significant portion of the respondents believe the YaR project has been instrumental in helping them find employment. Nearly half of the respondents (47.7%) indicated that the project enabled them to say 'Yes Very Much,' and another 31.3%

responded 'Yes Somewhat.' These figures suggest that most participants feel the YaR project was crucial to their employment journey. Reducing the 'Not at All' category to 13.3% further emphasizes the project's positive impact.

Conclusion

The responses underscore the commitment of the Don Bosco YaR project and their proactive approach to supporting young people at risk. By focusing on employability, the project has provided immediate assistance and empowered youth with the tools and opportunities needed for long-term success. The significant positive feedback from participants reflects the effectiveness of the YaR project in fulfilling its mission to help vulnerable youth secure meaningful employment, demonstrating the YaR project team's dedication to creating a brighter future for these individuals.

Figure 18: Income Increase Due to YaR Project



Summary Discussion

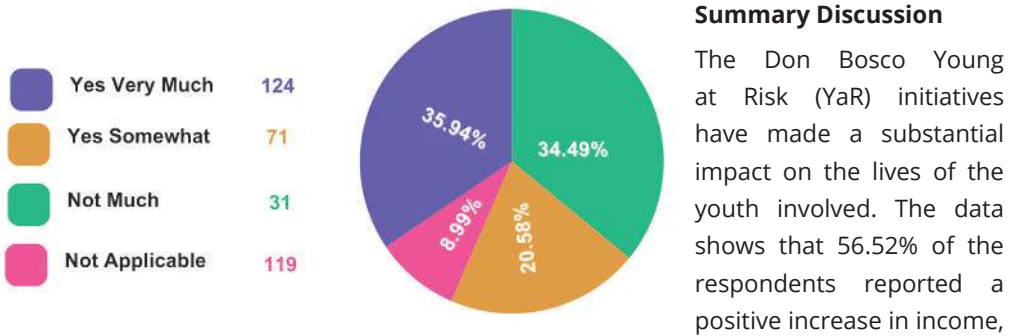
The figure illustrates the income status of participants after joining the YaR initiative. Approximately 50.44% of respondents indicated a significant increase in income, with 27.25% stating 'Yes Very Much' and 23.19% saying 'Yes Somewhat.' However, 15.1% reported that the income increase was 'Not Much.' The 'Not Applicable' category, representing 34.5% of respondents, includes those who are still in school and not yet earning an income.

Conclusion

This data reinforces the commitment and vision of the Don Bosco YaR Team in empowering the beneficiaries through the YaR initiative. A substantial portion of the participants have seen a marked improvement in their income after the intervention. The large number of 'Not Applicable' responses also underscores the importance of continuing education as a

priority for many participants, reflecting the holistic approach of the YaR team in balancing both immediate economic benefits and long-term educational goals.

Figure 19: Ability to Manage with the Income Earned after YaR Intervention



Summary Discussion

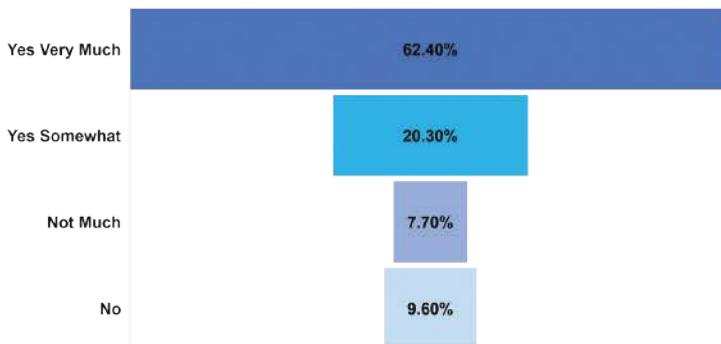
The Don Bosco Young at Risk (YaR) initiatives have made a substantial impact on the lives of the youth involved. The data shows that 56.52% of the respondents reported a positive increase in income, with 35.94% experiencing a significant boost. The interventions provided by YaR, especially in terms of skill development and education, have empowered the youth, enhancing their financial stability and overall prospects. Additionally, 34.49% of the respondents are still in school, underscoring the program’s focus on education as a critical pathway to future success.

with 35.94% experiencing a significant boost. The interventions provided by YaR, especially in terms of skill development and education, have empowered the youth, enhancing their financial stability and overall prospects. Additionally, 34.49% of the respondents are still in school, underscoring the program’s focus on education as a critical pathway to future success.

Conclusion

The YaR initiatives by the Don Bosco Team have been highly effective in transforming the lives of young people at risk. Through education, skill development, and supportive interventions, these initiatives have improved income levels for many and laid a strong foundation for continued personal and professional growth. The positive outcomes affirm the vital role of the Don Bosco team in uplifting vulnerable youth and ensuring they have the tools necessary to build a brighter future.

Figure 20: Reunion with the Family Through YaR



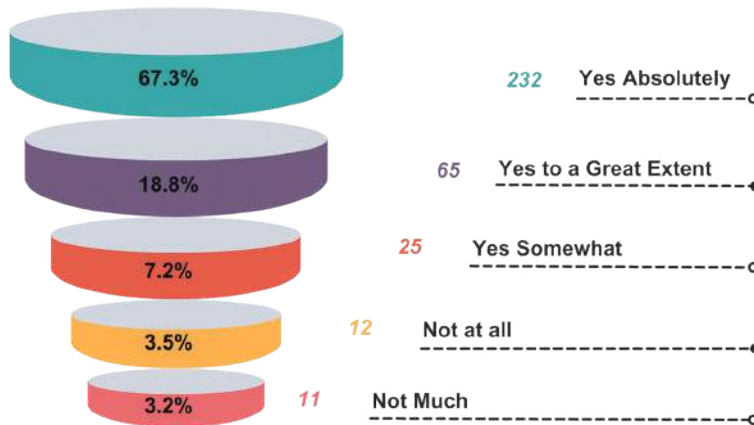
Summary Discussion: The figure underscores the effectiveness of the Don Bosco Young at Risk (YaR) initiative in facilitating family reunification for youth. An impressive 62.4% of respondents indicated that they felt ‘Very Much’ reunited with their families through the

YaR program, while an additional 20.3% reported feeling ‘Somewhat’ reunited. This means that nearly 83% of the youth benefited from positive outcomes in family reintegration, highlighting the program’s success in restoring family bonds and emotional connections.

Family reunification is a critical component of the YaR initiative, particularly for runaway children facing relatively minor issues. The program emphasizes the importance of counselling—both individual and familial—as a means to address underlying challenges and facilitate a healthy return home. By strengthening family relationships, the YaR project acknowledges that the family environment is often the best setting for a child’s growth and development. This holistic approach not only supports the well-being of the youth but also contributes to the stability and cohesion of families, fostering a nurturing atmosphere essential for their long-term success.

Conclusion: The Don Bosco YaR initiative has had a profound impact on the lives of the youth, especially in facilitating family reunions. Focusing on this critical aspect, the Don Bosco YaR teams have reaffirmed their commitment to holistic care and rehabilitation, emphasizing the importance of family as a cornerstone for a stable future. This data underscores the program’s success and the invaluable contribution of Don Bosco to the well-being of vulnerable youth.

Figure 21: Positive Impact of YaR on Personal Development

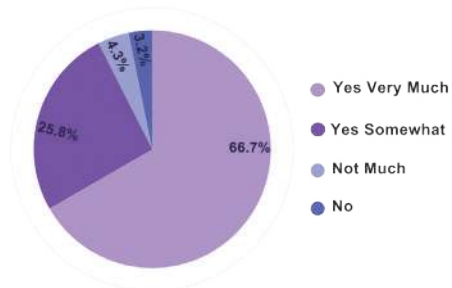


Summary Discussion: The figure reflects the positive impact of the Don Bosco Young at Risk (YaR) program on the personal development of the youth. A resounding 67.3% of respondents stated that the YaR program had ‘Absolutely’ contributed to their personal growth, and an additional 18.8% reported that it did so to a ‘Great Extent.’ This means that over 86% of the participants felt significant benefits from the program, underscoring its effectiveness in fostering personal development.

Conclusion: The Don Bosco YaR initiative has made a remarkable contribution to the personal development of vulnerable youth. The notable percentage of positive responses illustrates the programme’s success in instilling confidence, skills, and a sense of purpose.

among the participants. This data highlights the pivotal role played by the Don Bosco YaR Project in transforming the lives of at-risk youth, reinforcing their mission to provide comprehensive support for a brighter future.

Figure 22: Experience of Long-Term Behaviour Change



Interpretation and Discussion

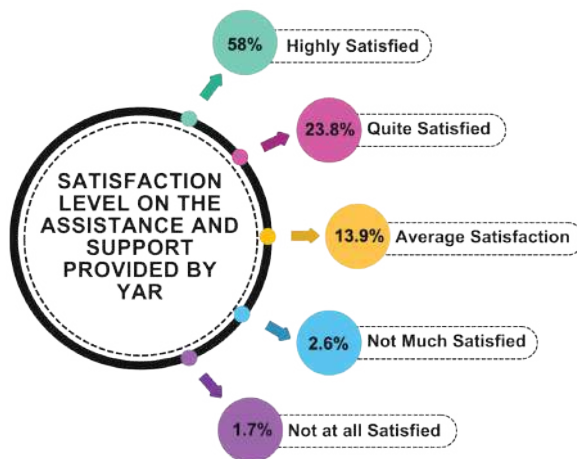
The data reveals that a significant majority of respondents (66.7%) have experienced substantial long-term behaviour changes since receiving assistance from the YaR program. Additionally, 25.8% of respondents indicated that they have noticed some degree of behaviour change. Together, these figures

represent an overwhelming 92.5% of participants who have observed positive behavioural modifications, underscoring the effectiveness of the YaR initiative in this area. Only a small percentage of respondents (7.5%) reported minimal or no change, suggesting that while the program is largely successful, there may be a few areas where further improvement could be beneficial.

Conclusion:

The responses indicate that the Don Bosco YaR centers have effectively promoted long-term behaviour changes among children and youth. The notable percentage of participants reporting positive changes reflects the quality of interventions provided by the YaR project, highlighting the program’s commitment to fostering personal growth and transformation. The minimal proportion of respondents who did not experience significant changes suggests that the program is largely successful, with only a few areas needing further attention to maximize its impact on all participants.

Figure 23: Satisfaction Level on the Assistance and Support Provided by YaR



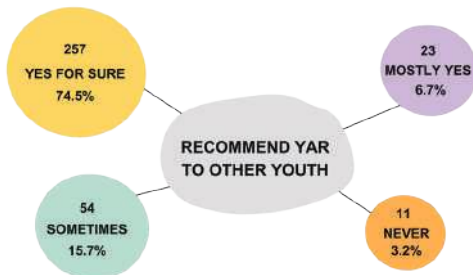
Summary Discussion:

The figure reveals remarkable levels of satisfaction among youth with the assistance and support provided by the Don Bosco Young at Risk (YaR) initiative. A substantial 58.0% of respondents reported being 'Highly Satisfied,' while an additional 23.8% were 'Quite Satisfied.' This indicates that over 80% of participants expressed strong satisfaction with the support they received. Only a small minority, 4.3%, reported being either 'Not Much Satisfied' or 'Not at all Satisfied.'

Conclusion:

The remarkable satisfaction levels highlight the effectiveness of the Don Bosco YaR initiative in meeting the needs of at-risk youth. The pronounced positive feedback underscores the commitment of Don Bosco's YaR programme to providing high-quality support and assistance. These results reaffirm the critical role the YaR initiative plays in empowering vulnerable youth, contributing significantly to their well-being and development.

Figure 24: Recommend YaR to Other Youth



Summary Discussion: The figure illustrates the willingness of youth participants to recommend the Don Bosco Young at Risk (YaR) program to others, reflecting their positive experiences with the initiative and the caring approach of the Don Bosco community. A substantial 74.5% of respondents indicated they would 'Yes for Sure' recommend the program, demonstrating strong satisfaction and belief in the value of the support they received. Additionally, 6.7% responded with 'Mostly Yes,' suggesting that while they may have some reservations, they still see merit in the program. Meanwhile, 15.7% of youth indicated 'Sometimes,' indicating a mixed sentiment about recommending the initiative, and only 3.2% reported they would 'Never' recommend it.

recommen the program, demonstrating strong satisfaction and belief in the value of the support they received. Additionally, 6.7% responded with 'Mostly Yes,' suggesting that while they may have some reservations, they still see merit in the program. Meanwhile, 15.7% of youth indicated 'Sometimes,' indicating a mixed sentiment about recommending the initiative, and only 3.2% reported they would 'Never' recommend it.

These results underscore the effectiveness of the YaR program in positively impacting the lives of its beneficiaries, encouraging them to share their experiences with peers who may benefit from similar support. The high recommendation rate reflects the program's success and highlights the importance of community endorsement in attracting more vulnerable youth to access the resources and opportunities provided by the YaR initiative.

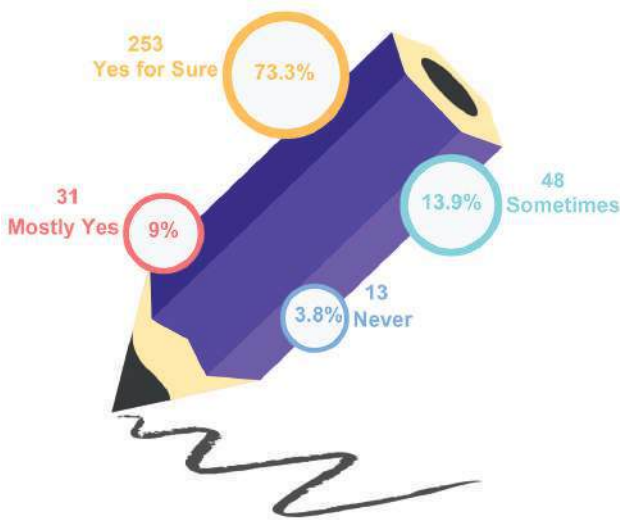
Conclusion:

The remarkable willingness of youth participants to recommend the Don Bosco Young at Risk (YaR) program to others underscores the program's significant impact on their lives. With 74.5% expressing strong support for the initiative, it is evident that the YaR program has effectively met the needs of its beneficiaries and fostered a sense of community and belonging among them. This high level of endorsement reflects the quality of care and support provided by the Don Bosco community, reinforcing the program's reputation

as a vital resource for vulnerable youth. The positive experiences shared by participants serve as a powerful testament to the program’s ability to transform lives, instil hope, and encourage resilience.

As participants advocate for the YaR program to their peers, it will likely attract more youth who can benefit from its comprehensive services, ultimately creating a ripple effect that enhances the well-being of even more young individuals in need. This momentum is crucial for sustaining the program’s mission of empowering youth and facilitating their journey towards a brighter and more stable future.

Figure 25: Planning Continued Association with YaR



Summary Discussion:

The figure reveals that a significant 73.3% of respondents are eager to continue their association with the Don Bosco Young at Risk (YaR) project, reflecting a high level of satisfaction and commitment to the initiative. Additionally, 9% indicated ‘Mostly Yes,’ suggesting general support with some reservations, while 13.9% responded ‘Sometimes,’ indicating a tentative interest. Only 3.8% expressed a desire not to continue their association.

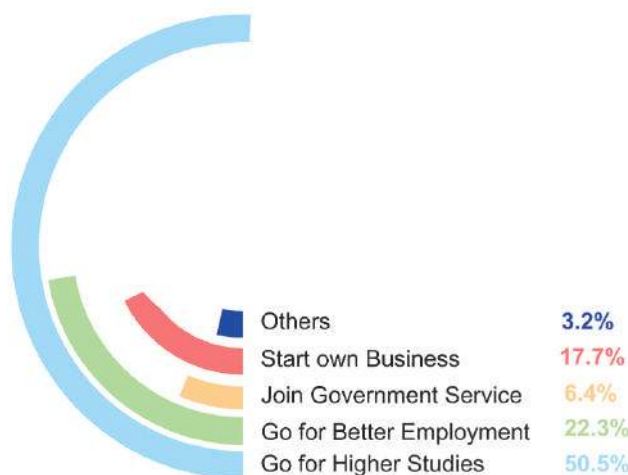
RESPONSE	FREQUENCY
Yes, for Sure	253 (73.3%)
Mostly Yes	31 (9%)
Sometimes	48 (13.9%)
Never	13 (3.8%)
Total	345 (100%)

These results highlight the positive impact of the YaR project on participants’ lives, fostering a sense of belonging and loyalty to the program. The strong inclination toward continued engagement underscores the importance of the support provided by the Don Bosco team, as it contributes significantly to the youth’s growth and development in a nurturing environment.

Conclusion:

The high percentage of participants willing to continue their association with the YaR project demonstrates the program’s effectiveness in fostering strong connections and support among youth. This commitment reflects the positive impact of the Don Bosco team in enhancing the lives of vulnerable individuals, emphasizing the crucial role of sustained engagement in promoting their growth and long-term success.

Figure 26: Future Plans



Summary Discussion:

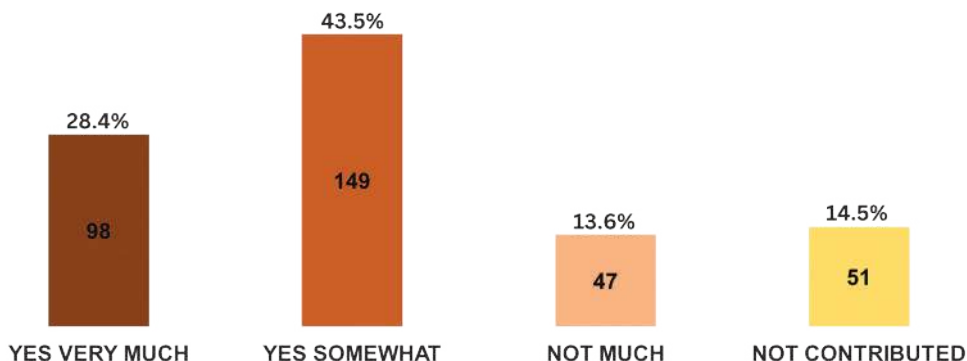
The data reveals the diverse future aspirations of the participants, with nearly half (50.5%) planning to pursue higher education, reflecting a strong commitment to continued learning. Additionally, 22.3% of respondents aim for better employment opportunities, while 17.7% are inclined towards entrepreneurship, indicating a desire to start their own businesses. A smaller group

(6.4%) is focused on joining government service, and 3.2% have other plans.

Conclusion:

The initiatives undertaken by the Salesians of Don Bosco have inspired a wide range of future goals among the youth, with a significant focus on higher education and career advancement. The variety of aspirations, from pursuing further studies to starting businesses, highlights the program’s success in equipping young people with the confidence and skills needed to achieve their ambitions. This diverse set of goals reflects the holistic support provided, ensuring participants are well-prepared to build a promising future.

Figure 27: Contribution of YaR Beneficiaries to the Programme



Summary Discussion: The data reveals varying degrees of perceived contribution among participants. A significant portion, 43.5%, indicated that they contributed to the initiative ‘Yes, Somewhat,’ while 28.4% reported that they contributed ‘Very Much.’ This implies that the majority of respondents (71.9%) felt they had given back to the project in some capacity.

Response	Frequency
Yes, Very Much	98 (28.4%)
Yes, Somewhat	149 (43.5%)
Not Much	47 (13.6%)
Not Contributed	51 (14.5%)
Total	345 (100%)

Consequently, we can infer that their ongoing support is likely, indicating a strong sense of belonging to the project and a desire to assist others in need, similar to their own past experiences. On the other hand, 13.6% felt that their contribution was 'Not Much,' while 14.5% believed they had 'Not Contributed' at all. However, these individuals are willing to give back to the YaR program and its beneficiaries. Their ability to contribute is hindered by the distance from their homes to the YaR centers and their daily responsibilities.

Conclusion: The program has made a noticeable impact on most participants, with nearly three-quarters acknowledging some level of positive contribution back to the project. The varied responses highlight areas where the initiative is effective and opportunities for further enhancement to ensure that all participants experience meaningful benefits and respond similarly. A commitment to continuous improvement will help maximize the program's impact, ensuring that even more young people can fully benefit from the support provided.

Figure 28: How YaR Beneficiaries Support YaR Programme



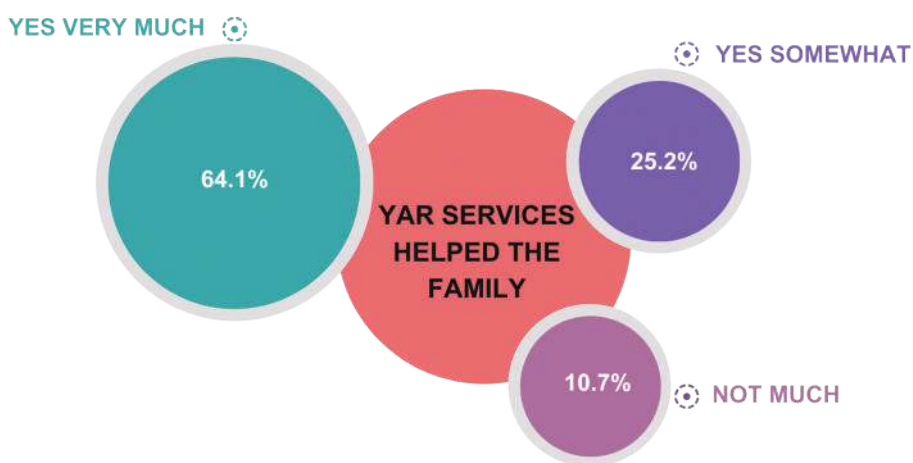
Summary Discussion:

The data highlights how beneficiaries of the YaR program choose to support the initiative after benefiting from it. A significant 42.4% contribute by bringing more children to the center, reflecting their trust and belief in the program's value. Additionally, 19.7% of the respondents support the program by volunteering their time, while another 19.7% contribute in unspecified ways but very useful steps to the project. Some beneficiaries (13.3%) have joined the DB Past Pupil Unit, further strengthening their ties to the program. A smaller group, 4.9%, offers financial support by donating a portion of their income to help others.

Conclusion:

The varied ways former YaR beneficiaries choose to give back to the program underscores the profound impact it has had on their lives. The willingness of so many to bring new children into the program and volunteer their time is a testament to the trust and gratitude they feel towards the initiative. All the above ways of supporting the project are unique in every sense as this group struggles for their survival against all types of ordeals and, at the same time, intends to be part of the project in one way or another. This ongoing support from past beneficiaries helps sustain and expand the program’s reach, ensuring that more at-risk youth can benefit from the transformative opportunities it offers.

Figure 29: YaR Services Helped the Family



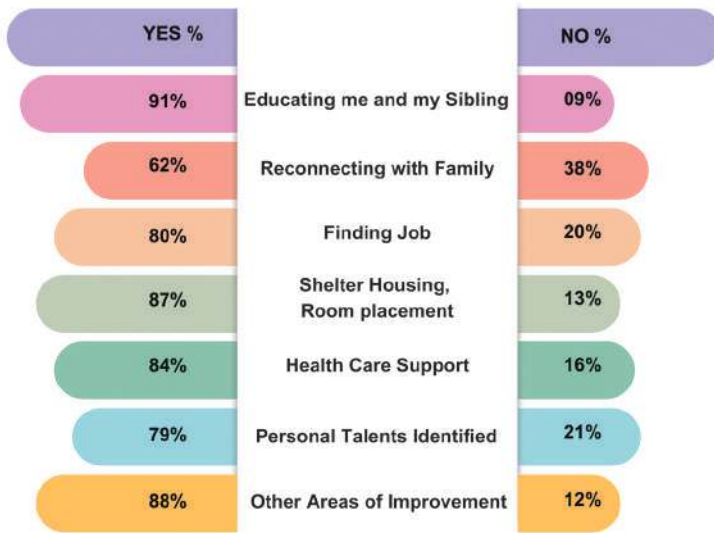
Summary Discussion:

The data illustrates the significant positive impact that YaR services have had on the families of beneficiaries. A substantial 64.1% of respondents indicated that the services provided by the program ‘Yes, Very Much’ helped their families, while an additional 25.2% felt that the services ‘Yes, Somewhat’ contributed positively. Only 10.7% of respondents reported that the services did ‘Not Much’ to assist their families.

Conclusion:

The majority of respondents acknowledged the significant support that YaR services have provided to their families. The high percentage of positive responses highlights the program’s effectiveness not only in benefiting the individual participants but also in extending crucial support to their families. This broad impact underscores the comprehensive approach of the program, which addresses the needs of both the youth and their families, thereby fostering a stronger, more supportive environment for all involved. YaR service has helped reduce the overall poverty level of the family by creating one more yearning member for the family.

Figure 30: Help Received Through YaR Programme



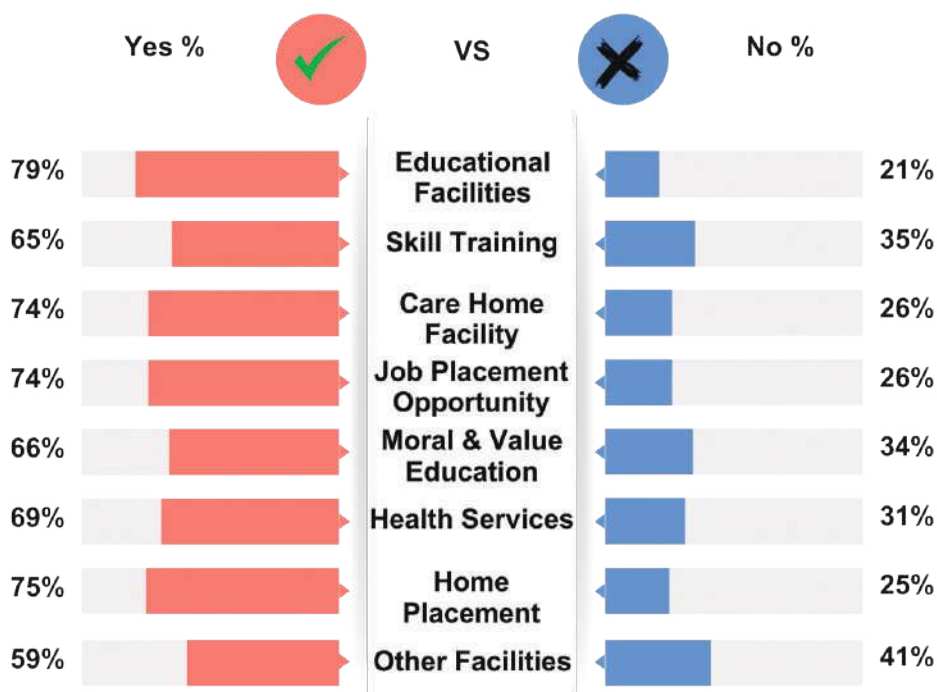
Summary Discussion:

The data highlights the significant support the YaR program provides across various essential areas. A remarkable 91% (315) of respondents received educational support, including assistance for their siblings. Additionally, 87% (299) benefited from housing/shelter or room placement support. Job assistance was also prominent, with 80% (277) of participants being helped in finding employment. Healthcare support reached 84% (290) of the respondents, while 79% (273) had their talents identified and nurtured. Family reconnection, though, was slightly lower at 62% (215). Attempts were always made to reconnect the child with the family, and several of them joined their homes after completing their studies. So much so that family reunification remains a vital component of the support system. Moreover, 88% (305) of respondents indicated improvement in other areas of their lives due to the program, which can be attributed mostly to the life skill training they have received throughout the Yar Programme.

Conclusion:

The Young at Risk (YaR) program has made a significant and lasting impact on the lives of its beneficiaries, effectively addressing the diverse needs of vulnerable youth. By focusing on education, family reunification, and personal development, the program helps participants achieve immediate safety and stability and equips them with the skills and support necessary for a brighter future. The initiative's success in facilitating job placements, providing shelter, and promoting holistic development underscores its comprehensive approach and commitment to fostering resilience. Ultimately, the YaR program empowers young individuals to overcome their challenges, encouraging them to become active, positive contributors to their communities.

Figure 31: Best Services of YaR



Summary Discussion:

The data reveals strong approval for the various services provided by the YaR (Young at Risk) program. The majority of respondents expressed positive feedback, with particularly high ratings for **Educational Facilities** (79%), **Home Placement** (75%), and **Care Home Facilities** (74%). The approval ratings highlight the program’s success in delivering essential services that meet the immediate needs of the beneficiaries. There are other areas of personal support and help for the families, support for marriage, support to start a small business, part support for buying vehicles to run as taxis, etc., which many have received, which is confirmed by more than half (59%), of the respondents, indicating various ways of support to the Vulnerable youth by Don Bosco through YaR project.

Conclusion:

The high percentage of positive responses across the majority of services underscores the effectiveness of the YaR initiative in addressing the needs of vulnerable youth. The positive impact in key areas such as education, shelter, and health services reflects the commitment of the program to holistic care and development. Nonetheless, the relatively lower satisfaction with certain services suggests that there is room for further enhancement, particularly in providing additional facilities that could better serve the needs of the beneficiaries.

Figure 32: Quality of Service Rendered by YaR



Summary Discussion:

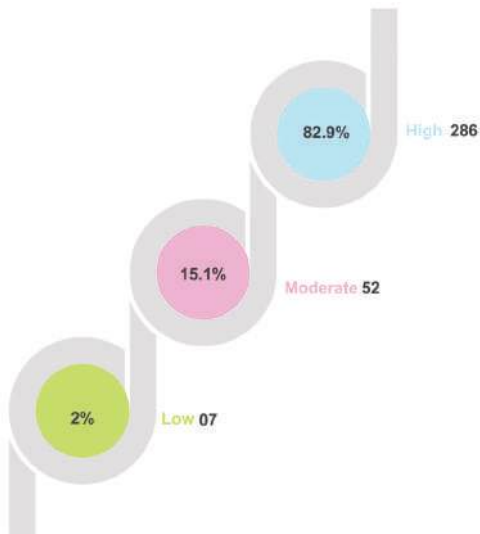
The figure reflects a high level of satisfaction with the quality of services rendered by the YaR program. A significant portion of respondents rated the services as either **Excellent (41.2%)** or **Very Good (33.9%)**, demonstrating strong approval and appreciation for the efforts put forth by the program. Only a small fraction of

respondents rated the services as **Good (19.4%)** or **Satisfactory (5.5%)**, indicating that while there is overall satisfaction, some areas may still have room for improvement.

Conclusion:

Ratings indicate that the YaR program effectively meets or exceeds the expectations of its beneficiaries, demonstrating its success in service delivery. The commitment to excellence by the leaders and staff of the program is evident in the high percentage of **Excellent** and **Very Good** ratings. To continue this positive trajectory, it would be beneficial to focus on maintaining and even enhancing the quality of services, particularly for those who rated it as merely **Good** or **Satisfactory**.

Figure 33: Satisfaction Level about the YaR Project



Summary Discussion:

The figure highlights a high level of satisfaction among beneficiaries with the services provided by the YaR program. An overwhelming **82.9%** of respondents rated their satisfaction as **High**, which speaks volumes about the program’s effectiveness and the quality of its service delivery. **15.1%** of respondents indicated a **Moderate** level of satisfaction, while only a small **2.0%** reported **Low** satisfaction, suggesting that while most beneficiaries are content, there remains a small segment that might benefit from further attention.

Conclusion:

The data reflects the strong impact of the YaR services on its beneficiaries, with the vast majority expressing a high degree of satisfaction. This is a testament to the program's commitment to addressing the needs and expectations of those it serves. To ensure continuous improvement, it may be valuable to investigate the specific reasons behind the moderate and low satisfaction ratings, thereby allowing the program to fine-tune its approach and further enhance its impact.

Table 1: Association Between Quality of Service and Satisfaction

The Chi-Square tests provide insights into whether there is a significant association between the variables of quality and satisfaction. Here are the details:

Chi-Square Test:

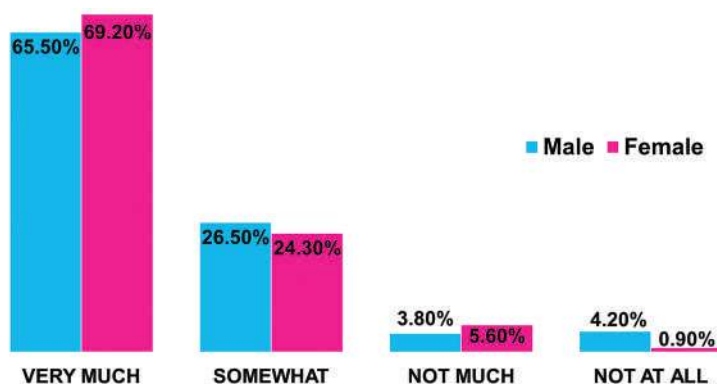
Chi-Square Tests: Association between Quality of Service and Satisfaction			
Quality of Service & Level of satisfaction	Value	Degree of freedom	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	29.576 ^a	6	.000
No. of Valid Cases	345		

The **Pearson Chi-Square** value of 29.576 with a p-value of 0.000 indicates a statistically significant relationship between the variables: Quality of Service and Level of Satisfaction.

Since the p-value is less than the common significance level of 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant association between the variables.

The results of the Chi-Square tests indicate a significant relationship between the quality of services ratings and the satisfaction level with regard to YaR services. This means that different ratings of service quality are associated with varying levels of satisfaction among respondents.

Figure 34: GENDER-WISE CROSSTABLATIONS



Summary Discussion:

The gender-wise cross-tabulation reveals interesting insights into the long-term behavioural changes observed among beneficiaries of the YaR program. **65.5%** of male respondents and

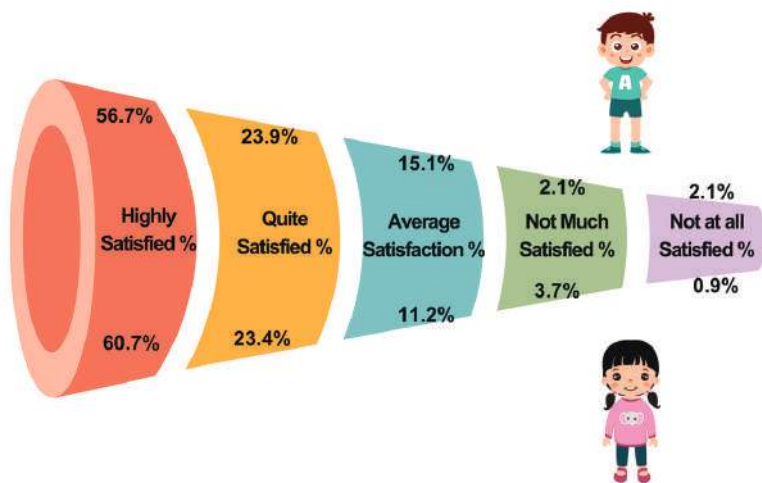
69.2% of female respondents reported experiencing behavioural changes to a significant degree ('Very Much'). A slightly higher percentage of males (**26.5%**) than females (**24.3%**) indicated that they experienced 'Somewhat' of a behaviour change. The data also shows that a small fraction of both genders reported minimal or no behavioural changes, with **3.8%** of males and **5.6%** of females indicating 'Not Much,' and **4.2%** of males and **0.9%** of females stating 'Not at all.'

This data suggests that while the YaR program has been more traditionally focused on boys, its recent inclusion of girls has been equally effective in fostering positive behavioural changes. The slightly higher percentage of females reporting significant behaviour change could indicate that girls, despite being more recent beneficiaries of the program, respond positively to the interventions.

Conclusion:

The YaR initiative, led by the Don Bosco team shows a significant and positive impact on the long-term behaviour of both boys and girls, with a slightly higher percentage of girls reporting significant changes. While boys have historically been the primary focus of the program, the data suggests that the inclusion of girls has been successful, pointing to the potential for even greater impact as the program continues to evolve. The small percentages of respondents reporting minimal or no change indicate areas where additional support or tailored interventions might be beneficial.

Figure 35: Gender-wise Crosstabulation of Satisfaction on Assistance & Support by YaR



Summary Discussion

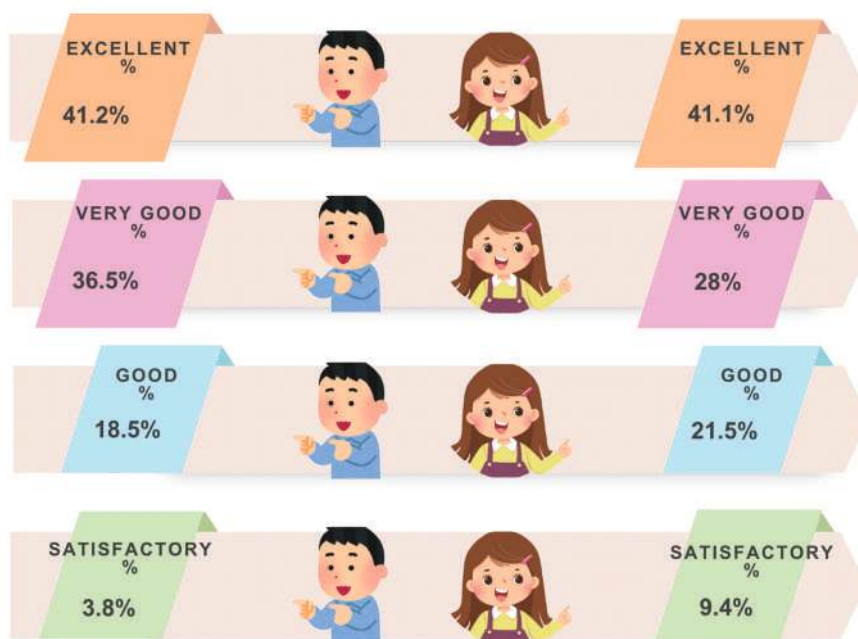
The crosstabulation of satisfaction with assistance and support provided by the YaR project highlights important gender-based insights. Among male respondents, 56.7% are highly satisfied, with 23.9% quite satisfied and only 2.1% reporting low satisfaction. Female respondents show slightly higher satisfaction, with 60.7% highly satisfied, 23.4% quite satisfied, and only 0.9% not at all satisfied. These results indicate that the YaR project has a

significant positive impact across genders, with particularly strong responses from female participants.

Conclusion

The findings suggest that while Don Bosco's initiatives have traditionally focused more on boys, including girls in the YaR project has been significantly impactful. The higher satisfaction levels among female respondents demonstrate the importance of extending these opportunities to girls, who are less frequently given such chances, further affirming the value and effectiveness of the YaR project in supporting both genders.

Figure 36: Gender-wise Crosstabulation of Rating of the Quality of Services by YaR



Summary Discussion

The gender-wise crosstabulation of the rating of the quality of services provided by the YaR project reveals overall high satisfaction levels among both male and female respondents. Among males, 41.2% rated the services as 'Excellent,' with another 36.6% rating them as 'Very Good.' A smaller percentage of males, 18.5%, rated the services as 'Good,' and only 3.8% found them 'Satisfactory.' Female respondents showed a similar pattern, with 41.1% rating the services as 'Excellent' and 28.0% as 'Very Good.' However, a slightly higher percentage of females (21.5%) rated the services as "Good,' and 9.3% found them 'Satisfactory.'

Conclusion

The data indicates that male and female respondents generally perceive the quality of services provided by the YaR project positively, with the majority rating them as 'Excellent'

or 'Very Good.' The slightly higher percentage of females rating the services as 'Satisfactory' suggests that while the project is effective across genders, there may be opportunities to enhance the service experience for female participants, who increasingly benefit from such initiatives.

CENTER-WISE CROSTABULATIONS

Table 2: Centre-wise Crosstabulation of Long-term Behaviour Change Observed

Name of the Centre	Long term Behaviour Change Observed				Total
	Very Much	Somewhat	Not Much	Not at all	
BOSCO Bangalore	96 (87.3%)	11 (10.0%)	3 (2.7%)	0 (0.0%)	110 (100%)
DB Davengere	33 (60.0%)	17 (30.9%)	3 (5.5%)	2 (3.6%)	55 (100%)
DB PYaR Gulbarga	18 (45.0%)	15 (37.5%)	5 (12.5%)	2 (5.0%)	40 (100%)
DB Mysore	33 (86.8%)	5 (13.2%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	38 (100%)
DB Bidar	19 (73.1%)	6 (23.1%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (3.8%)	26 (100%)
DB Devadurga	6 (24.0%)	14 (56.0%)	4 (16.0%)	1 (4.0%)	25 (100%)
DB Hospet	13 (65.0%)	6 (30.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (5.0%)	20 (100%)
CHITRA DB	2 (50.0%)	1 (25.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (25.0%)	4 (100%)
DB Palluruthy	13 (81.25%)	3 (18.75%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	16 (100%)
DB Monvila TVM	4 (50.0%)	4 (50.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	8 (100%)
DB Veedu TVM	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (100%)
Total	238 (69%)	83 (24.1%)	16 (4.6%)	8 (2.3%)	345 (100%)

Summary Discussion: The table illustrates the long-term behavioural changes observed among beneficiaries across YaR centres. The overall positive impact is evident, with 69% of respondents showing a significant positive behavioural change, while 24.1% exhibited a moderate level of change. The low percentages of minimal or no behavioural change (4.6% and 2.3%, respectively) suggest that the YaR program has largely been effective in bringing about positive transformations in the lives of youth.

While centres like BOSCO Bangalore, DB Palluruthy, and DB Mysore stand out with exceptionally high levels of observed long-term behavioural changes (87.3%, 81.25%, and 86.8%, respectively), it is important to recognize and appreciate the efforts of all YaR centres in working towards holistic youth development. Other centres like Bidar (73.1%) and DB Davengere (60%) also show substantial results in fostering behavioural changes, indicating the effectiveness of their localized interventions.

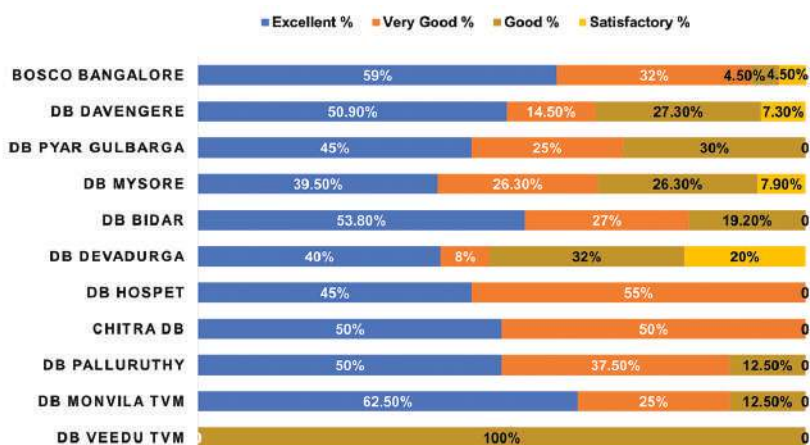
Centres like DB Devadurga and DB Gulbarga, while showing a mix of behavioural changes, should be acknowledged for their perseverance and adaptability in delivering support within their unique cultural and community contexts. For instance, in these areas, local norms and socio-cultural factors might influence the visibility of behavioural changes,

making it challenging to assess the progress based on observable behaviour alone. The steady progress in these centres demonstrates that even subtle improvements can have a lasting impact on the lives of the youth.

Conclusion:

The notable improvements in behaviour observed across most YaR centers highlight the dedication and commitment of the staff, as well as the effectiveness of the YaR programs. While certain centres have achieved exceptional results, it is crucial to acknowledge that all centres contribute significantly to the YaR project's overall success. Centres facing challenges due to local cultural peculiarities should be encouraged to continue their efforts, as each step forward, no matter how small, plays an important role in shaping the future of vulnerable youth. By fostering a collaborative environment and sharing best practices, all centres can work together to enhance their impact further and ensure sustainable development for the youth they serve.

Figure 37: Centre-wise Crosstabulation of the Quality of YaR Services

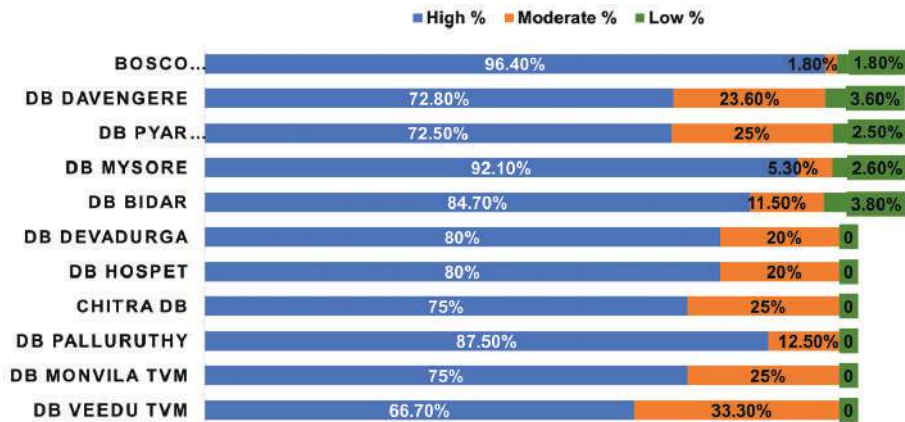


Summary Discussion: The satisfaction levels across various YaR centres indicate a positive impact, with 78.8% of respondents expressing high satisfaction. BOSCO Bangalore (90.9%), DB Palluruthy (87.5%), and DB Bidar (80.7%) stand out for their success in meeting youth needs effectively. These centres exemplify best practices in delivering support and aligning with the expectations of beneficiaries. However, DB Devadurga and DB PYaR Gulbarga show a more balanced distribution of satisfaction levels, emphasizing the importance of continuous improvement. Cultural nuances and community expectations in these regions may affect service perception.

Moderate satisfaction was reported by 19.1% of respondents, with higher proportions at DB Devadurga (56.0%) and DB Davengere (41.8%). While these centres perform commendably, there is room for improvement with interventions for more significant impact.

Conclusion: The high levels of satisfaction reflect the program’s success in supporting vulnerable youth, with centers like BOSCO and Palluruthy setting benchmarks for service excellence. However, moderate satisfaction levels at some centers highlight the challenges they face in complex environments. Addressing specific concerns raised by beneficiaries, while leveraging existing strengths, will enhance outcomes further. The findings reaffirm the YaR project’s relevance in transforming lives and encourage all centers to continue promoting youth empowerment.

Figure 38: Centre-wise Crosstabulation of the Satisfaction Level of YaR Services



Summary Discussion: The figure illustrates the satisfaction levels of beneficiaries across various YaR centers, indicating the overall effectiveness and impact of the services provided. Several centers, including DB Palluruthy, DB Mysore, DB Bidar, and BOSCO Bangalore, have demonstrated exceptionally high satisfaction levels, indicating their effectiveness in providing a positive experience for beneficiaries. However, other centers like DB Devadurga, DB Davengere, and DB PYaR Gulbarga also displayed a commendable proportion of high satisfaction, indicating quality service and support.

A moderate satisfaction level of 19.1% across the centers points to some areas where additional focus on resources might be beneficial to enhance further the perception and experience of the services provided. This moderate satisfaction could be attributed to specific cultural and regional factors influencing how service delivery is perceived in these areas rather than a lack of quality.

It is encouraging to see that only a small percentage (2.0%) of respondents reported low satisfaction, demonstrating minimal dissatisfaction with the services. The centers with slightly higher moderate satisfaction levels should be acknowledged for their continuous efforts. They should be encouraged to keep refining their approach, ensuring that the quality and perception of services improve even further in the future.

Conclusion: The YaR program has successfully delivered high-quality services, as reflected in the high satisfaction rates across most centers. DB Palluruthy, DB Mysore, DB Bidar, and BOSCO Bangalore are notable for their exceptional performance in ensuring high satisfaction among their beneficiaries. Other centers, such as DB Devadurga, DB Davengere, and DB PYaR Gulbarga, have also achieved commendable results, showing that they are on the right path in providing effective support to the youth.

While there is always room for improvement, particularly in areas where moderate satisfaction was more prevalent, the overall outcomes are a testament to the hard work and dedication of all YaR centers. These results should serve as an encouragement for all centers, motivating them to continue striving for excellence. By addressing the minor gaps and considering local nuances in beneficiary perceptions, the YaR program can further elevate its impact and solidify its role as a transformative force in the lives of vulnerable youth.

Conclusion

The YaR project by Don Bosco has made a significant impact on vulnerable youth, with most beneficiaries reporting high satisfaction. Its ability to provide quality support across rural and semi-urban regions reflects a strong commitment to addressing complex youth needs. Minimal dissatisfaction highlights the effectiveness of the programs, though areas with moderate satisfaction indicate opportunities for target improvements. Enhancing staff training, diversifying initiatives, and integrating regular feedback will further strengthen their services that are deliverable. By refining successful strategies and monitoring outcomes, the YaR project can expand its reach, ensuring that more youth benefit from its essential services and transformative, impact.

II. Level of Impact Created by YaR Project: Staff Perspective

Every project with defined objectives aims to create a meaningful impact on its stakeholders. The YaR project, in particular, is designed to serve at-risk children/youth through various services and activities. While the primary impact is on the children/youth themselves, there is also an expected secondary impact on their families and, more broadly, on society at the local, state, and national levels. To assess these impacts, data was collected from project staff across different centers. This data has been analysed, computed, and cross-tabulated by center, as presented in the following pages.

The following tables present the assessments of impact, which have been categorized into low, moderate, and high impact based on the responses gathered from staff with varying levels of experience. This diversity in experience provides a well-rounded perspective, capturing insights from those who have been involved since the project's inception and from newer team members who bring fresh viewpoints. Despite the varied exposure to the project, the respondents' opinions offer valuable insights and reflect a broad understanding of its impact.

Table 3: Respondent Representation in the Assessment

Respondent Distribution by Centre	
Name of the Centre	Frequency (%)
DB Palluruthy	9 (9.8%)
DB Veedu TVM	6 (6.5%)
DB Monvila TVM	2 (2.3%)
BOSCO Bangalore	36 (39.1%)
DB Hospet	10 (10.9%)
DB Yadagiri	7 (7.7%)
DB Devadurga	6 (6.5%)
DB Davangere	4 (4.3%)
DB PYaR Gulbara	4 (4.3%)
DB Bidar	4 (4.3%)
CHITRA DB	4 (4.3%)
Total	92 (100%)

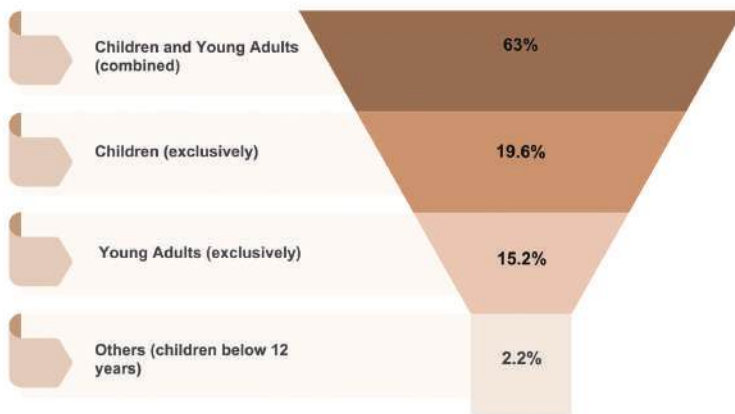
Discussion Summary

The respondent distribution across 11 centers reflects a sampling approach where 20% of the total staff from each center was selected using probability sampling by a random method. BOSCO Bangalore’s high representation (39.1%) can be attributed to its large staff base, with several sub-centers totalling over 150 staff members. Consequently, BOSCO’S substantial contribution is a result of its scale rather than any sampling bias. In contrast, other centers, with smaller staff numbers, naturally have lower representation, such as DB Monvila (2.2%) and Bidar (4.3%).

Conclusions

The high representation from BOSCO, driven by its larger staff size and multiple sub-centers, underscores the need to consider center size in overall analyses. While BOSCO’S data significantly influences the results, insights from smaller centers remain essential for a comprehensive understanding. To ensure a balanced perspective, a center-wise analysis has been conducted, allowing the views of each individual center to be taken into consideration.

Figure 39: YaR Project Beneficiaries of Bangalore Province



Discussion Summary

The YaR Project beneficiaries in the Province consist primarily of children and young adults, accounting for 63% of the total respondents. This distribution reflects the structure and focus of the centers-some exclusively serve children; others cater to young adults, and some

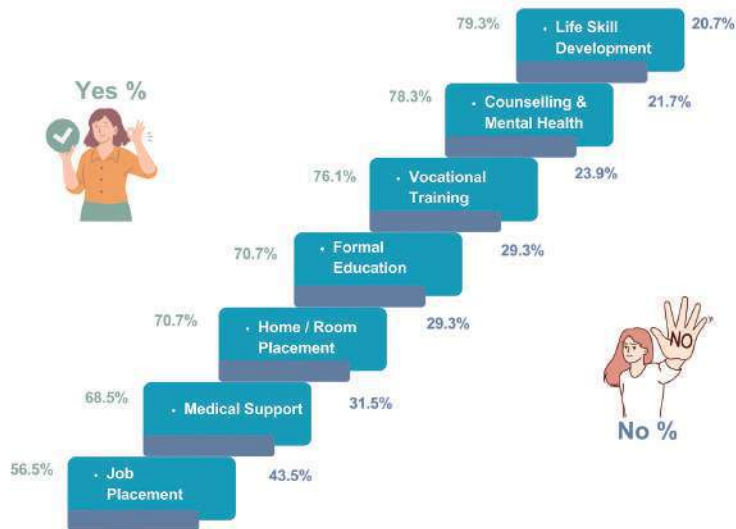
support both groups. A small percentage (2.2%) of the beneficiaries are children below the age of 12, included to meet the needs of younger children who require special attention and care. The YaR centers operate in alignment with the Juvenile Justice (JJ) Act, which defines a child as any individual below the age of 18. To ensure effective program delivery, the centers have organized beneficiaries into distinct groups, such as formal school-going children, those in bridge courses, and youth above 16 years engaged in vocational training. Additionally, the centers maintain separate facilities for boys and girls to provide tailored care and support.

All children in our YaR centers are referred by the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) or are presented before the CWC periodically, as mandated by the JJ Act. Permission from the CWC is required to run these centers, which are officially categorized as Child Care Institutions. The CWC plays a pivotal role in determining the placement and care of children needing protection, while the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) handles matters related to children in conflict with the law.

Conclusions:

The YaR Project is effectively reaching its target groups, focusing on the needs of children and young adults. Including children below 12 years highlights the project’s adaptability in responding to the diverse needs of vulnerable youth, ensuring comprehensive support across various age groups. The well-structured organization of the centers, with dedicated programs for different age groups—such as formal education, bridge courses, and vocational training—enables targeted and impactful program delivery. This structure ensures that the centers can provide tailored interventions that address beneficiaries’ developmental and educational needs while maintaining alignment with regulatory requirements.

Figure 40: Different Services Offered by the YaR Centres



Discussion Summary: The data indicates that the YaR Project provides a comprehensive range of services tailored to the diverse needs of its beneficiaries across various centers. The high uptake of services such as life skill development (79.3%), counselling and mental health support (78.3%), and vocational training (76.1%) underscores the importance of these interventions for the target groups. Formal education (70.7%), home/room placement (70.7%), and medical support (68.5%) also demonstrate significant engagement, highlighting the project's holistic approach to addressing multiple aspects of beneficiaries' lives. However, the relatively lower uptake in job placement at 56.5% suggests challenges in successfully transitioning beneficiaries into the workforce.

These percentages are derived from interviews conducted with staff members, reflecting their observations and experiences working with the YaR project. Each center strategically offers services that align with the needs of the young people under their care, whether they are school dropouts, working children, or young adults seeking skill development. This targeted service delivery ensures that beneficiaries receive relevant support, contributing to their overall growth and well-being.

Conclusions: The varied service offerings of the YaR Project effectively address the diverse needs of beneficiaries across different centers. The high levels of engagement in life skills, mental health services, and education are encouraging indicators of the project's impact. However, the lower job placement rate highlights an area for potential improvement. To enhance the project's effectiveness, it is essential to maintain a continued focus on tailoring services to meet the specific needs of target groups at each center. By doing so, the YaR Project can further strengthen its positive influence on the lives of young individuals at risk.

Figure 41: Effectiveness of the YaR Project



Discussion Summary: The data on the effectiveness of the YaR Project reveals overwhelmingly positive outcomes. Half of the respondents (50%) rated the project as 'Highly Effective,' while nearly the same proportion (48.9%) found it 'Effective.' This suggests a strong consensus among beneficiaries that the YaR Project is achieving its goals and positively impacting the target groups it serves.

The high ratings indicate that the project's approach-providing tailored services across different centers based on the specific needs of adolescents, young adults, and children-has been successful. The nearly equal split between 'Highly Effective' and 'Effective' responses also suggests that while the project is generally well-received, there may be opportunities to enhance its impact further and push more beneficiaries into the 'Highly Effective' category.

Conclusions: The YaR Project has proven highly effective, with 98.9% of respondents acknowledging its positive impact. The minimal percentage of those who found it “Not Effective” suggests that the project is well-aligned with the needs of its beneficiaries. Continued efforts to refine and adapt the services, focusing on areas like job placement, could further elevate the project’s overall effectiveness, ensuring that more beneficiaries experience it as “Highly Effective.”

Figure 42: Level of Impact on the Contribution made by the YaR Project

IMPACT DOMAINS	HIGH LEVEL %	SOMEWHAT %	NO COUNT %
Education & Self/Talent	78.26%	21.74%	0%
Vocational Training	71.7%	26.1%	2.2%
Economic Wellbeing	71.7%	19.6%	8.7%
Social Development	66.3%	33.7%	0%
Local Community	57.6%	41.3%	1.1%
Family Relationship	57.6%	40.2%	2.2%
Political Awareness	56.52%	19.57%	23.91%
Personality Development	55.4%	44.6%	0%

Discussion Summary: The YaR (Young at Risk) Project, spearheaded by the Salesians of Don Bosco, has made meaningful contributions to addressing the needs of vulnerable youth through well-targeted interventions. The data highlights significant positive outcomes in multiple domains, reflecting the project’s overall effectiveness.

Educational and Self/Talent Development: The project has had a profound impact on the academic achievements and self/talent development of the youth. A high percentage (78.26%) of respondents reported a substantial positive change in this domain, indicating the project’s success in promoting learning opportunities, skill enhancement, and personal growth among its beneficiaries.

Vocational Training and Economic Wellbeing: The impact of the YaR project on vocational training has also been highly positive, with 71.7% of respondents acknowledging a high level of impact. The training has equipped young individuals with practical skills, making them more employable and improving their economic prospects. This translates directly into enhanced economic well-being for both the individuals and their families, as reflected by 71.7% of respondents in this category.

Personality Development and Family Relationships: More than half (55.4%) of the respondents reported a high impact on personality development, with the remaining respondents indicating a moderate level of change. This shows that the project has successfully fostered confidence, self-discipline, and resilience among the youth. Similarly, 57.6% of respondents acknowledged a positive impact on family relationships, demonstrating the project’s role in strengthening familial bonds and promoting a supportive home environment.

Social Development and Impact on Local Community: The project's contribution to social development is evident, with 66.3% of respondents indicating a high level of impact. This is further substantiated by its positive influence on the local community, with 57.6% reporting a high societal impact. The YaR project's services have contributed to reducing anti-social behaviours and rehabilitating youth, leading to fewer instances of delinquency and a safer community. The program has also instilled values of civic responsibility and social inclusion, transforming many young individuals into productive and law-abiding citizens.

Political Awareness: The project's influence on political awareness presents diverse outcomes. While 56.52% of respondents noted a high impact, 23.91% indicated no impact in this domain. This variation could be attributed to differences in the respondents' levels of engagement and interest in political and civic matters.

Overall, the YaR project has made remarkable strides in enhancing the lives of its beneficiaries. By offering comprehensive support across educational, vocational, social, and personal development domains, the project has uplifted the youth and contributed significantly to societal harmony and development.

Conclusion: The YaR Project, led by the Don Bosco team, has successfully created a positive impact on vulnerable youth across various domains, including education, vocational training, personality development, and family relationships. The project's comprehensive support has led to significant personal growth and improved economic wellbeing for the beneficiaries while contributing to social harmony by reducing anti-social behaviours in the community. By empowering young individuals with skills and values, the initiative has helped them become responsible, productive members of society.

Overall, the YaR Project has effectively fulfilled its mission of providing care and guidance to young at risk, resulting in transformative changes and holistic development. Its structured programs and impactful interventions offer a strong foundation for the youth's integration into society, making it a valuable model for similar initiatives in the future.

Figure 43: Alignment of Yar Project with Sustainable Development Goals

	Very Strong Alignment %	Strong Alignment %	Weak Alignment %	Very Weak Alignment %
No Poverty	62%	34.8%	1.1%	2.1%
Zero Hunger	54.3%	38%	4.3%	3.4%
Good Health & Wellbeing	71.7%	25%	3.3%	0%
Quality Education	63%	34.8%	2.2%	0%
Gender Equality	69.6%	23.9%	3.3%	3.2%
Clean Water & Sanitation	64.1%	31.5%	3.3%	1.1%

Discussion Summary:

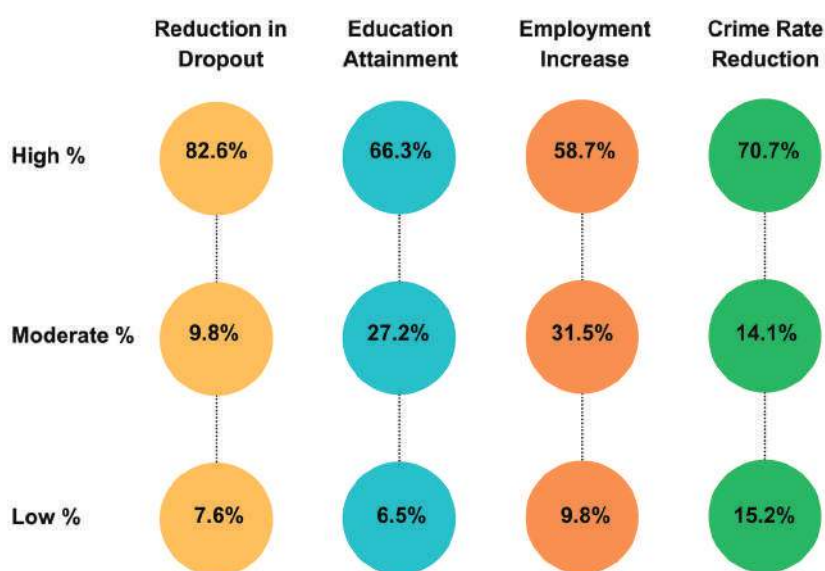
The data reflects the alignment of the YaR project with key United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The project demonstrates a very strong alignment with goals related to Good Health and Wellbeing (71.7%), Gender Equality (69.6%), Clean Water and

Sanitation (64.1%), and No Poverty (62%). Quality Education also shows significant alignment, with 63% of respondents indicating a strong alignment. While Zero Hunger has a slightly lower, very strong alignment at 54.3%, it still indicates a substantial connection to the project's objectives.

Conclusion:

The YaR project aligns highly with several crucial SDGs, particularly health, education, gender equality, and poverty reduction. This strong alignment underscores the project's comprehensive approach to addressing the essential needs of children/young individuals at risk. Overall, the poverty level of the families of the beneficiaries is reduced as one of their family members has become an income-generating person through the services provided by YaR. Although alignment with the Zero Hunger goal is slightly less pronounced, the overall alignment with these SDGs highlights the effectiveness and relevance of the YaR project in contributing to global development goals. Strengthening these alignments further could enhance the project's impact and sustainability.

Figure 44: Specific Impact on Youth due to YaR Interventions



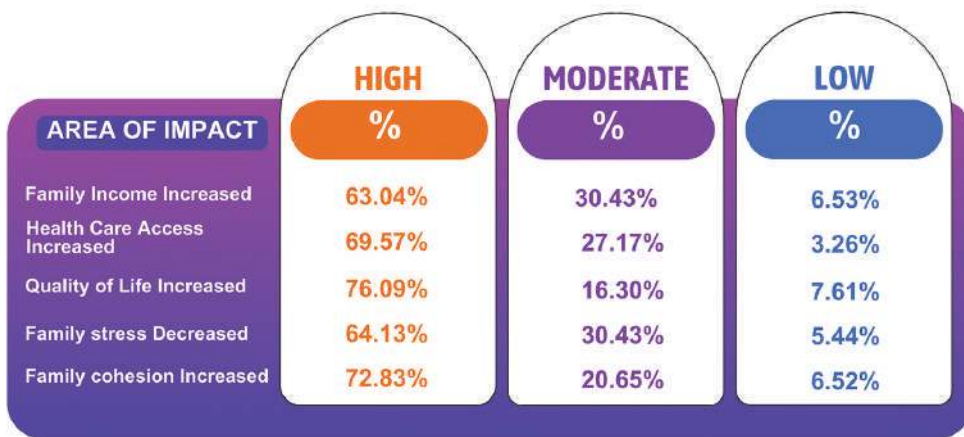
Summary:

The data indicates the main areas of impact for youth benefiting from the YaR project. A high majority (82.6%) reported a significant reduction in dropout rates, reflecting that most beneficiaries are school-going children. Education attainment is also strong, with 66.3% indicating a high impact. Employment increase has lower high-impact percentages, at 58.7%. Additionally, crime rate reduction shows a substantially high impact, with 70.7% of respondents acknowledging a significant decrease in the crimes by Children/youth due to the services provided by YaR.

Conclusion:

The YaR project has effectively reduced dropout rates and improved educational outcomes, especially among school-going children. While its impact on employment rates is limited, this is likely due to factors beyond the project’s control, such as beneficiaries’ lower educational qualifications and the need to support their families financially, limiting their ability to pursue skilled jobs. Despite these challenges, the project has significantly reduced crime rates, fostered positive behavioural changes, and improved the prospects of at-risk youth. This highlights the YaR project’s critical role in addressing educational and social challenges, ultimately contributing to safer communities and long-term youth empowerment.

Figure 45: Impact on the Family



Discussion Summary: The data highlights the significant positive impact of the YaR project on various family-related aspects. A considerable proportion of respondents reported improvements, with 63.04% indicating increased family income and 69.57% acknowledging better access to healthcare. This is largely due to the mobile clinics, health services, and increased health awareness that have empowered families to seek timely medical help from PHCs or government hospitals, especially in slums and villages. Furthermore, 76.09% of respondents noted an enhanced quality of life, 64.13% experienced a decrease in family stress, and 72.83% observed improved family cohesion.

Conclusion: The YaR project has effectively enhanced the families’ well-being. The substantial increases in family income, healthcare access, and quality of life highlight the project’s success in addressing fundamental needs. The reduction in family stress and the improvement in family cohesion further demonstrate the project’s positive influence on family dynamics. This data underscores the YaR project’s comprehensive impact, contributing to economic stability and overall family well-being.

Figure 46: Impact in the Local Area

Domains of local Impact	High %	Moderate %	Low %
Employment Rate Increased	64.13%	21.74%	14.13%
Educational Status Increased	66.3%	27.18%	6.52%
Economic Status Enhanced	59.78%	19.57%	20.65%
Health Care Improved	69.6%	21.7%	8.7%
Crime Rate Changed	61.96%	25%	13.04%

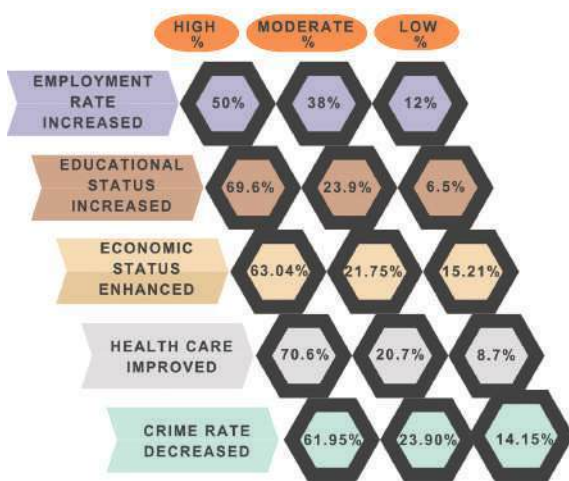
Summary Discussion:

The data indicates that the YaR project has made a substantial impact at the local level across multiple domains. The most significant improvements are seen in health care and education, with 69.6% and 66.3% of respondents, respectively, reporting high levels of positive change. In healthcare, in-

creased access to health services, awareness programs, and medical support has led to better health outcomes for beneficiaries. Employment rates and crime reduction also show strong results, with high impact percentages of 64.13% and 61.96%, respectively. Although the economic status domain reflects a slightly lower high impact percentage of 59.78%, the results are still positive, indicating that while the project has been effective, there is still potential for further advancement.

Conclusion: The YaR project has successfully enhanced key aspects of local communities, particularly in health care and education. The relatively lower impact on economic status suggests the need for continued focus on economic initiatives. Overall, the project demonstrates significant success in addressing the critical needs of young individuals at risk, contributing to broader social improvements.

Figure 47: Impact at the State Level

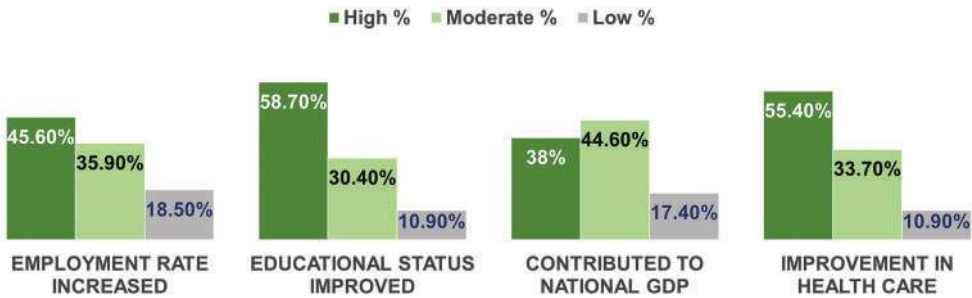


Summary Discussion:

The state-level data reveals the substantial impact of the Don Bosco YaR project in Kerala and Karnataka. The project has led to notable increases in employment rates (50% high impact) and educational status (69.6% high impact). Additionally, economic status has seen significant growth, with 63.04% of respondents reporting a high impact, while a 70.6% high impact rating reflects healthcare improvements. Furthermore, 61.95% of respondents indicated a significant decrease in crime rates.

Conclusion: The Don Bosco YaR project has transformed Kerala and Karnataka, particularly in uplifting vulnerable youth. By improving employment, education, economic conditions, and healthcare, the project has added quality to individual lives and contributed to the broader community's well-being. The significant reduction in crime rates further underscores the project's positive influence, marking it as a crucial driver of socio-economic development in these regions.

Figure 48: Impact at the National Level



Summary Discussion:

The national-level data reveals that the Don Bosco YaR project has positively impacted several domains. Employment rates saw a high impact, with 45.6% of respondents reporting improvement. Educational status improved for 58.7% of participants, while healthcare enhancements were noted by 55.4%. Contributions to the national GDP were also significant, with 38% indicating a high impact.

Conclusion: While the Don Bosco YaR project has made considerable strides at the national level, its most profound influence is evident at the local level. Centers like DB Palluruthy and BOSCO Bangalore have achieved national recognition and impact, but overall, the project's effectiveness is more pronounced in regional contexts. This underscores the importance of localized efforts in driving meaningful change and the critical role of specific centers in contributing to broader national outcomes.

The disparity between the state and national level impact data can be attributed to the staff's perspectives, primarily grounded in their direct experiences at the local and state levels. Since the YaR program of Don Bosco Bangalore Province operates mainly within the state, the staff's observations on state-level impact are more concrete and based on first-hand interactions with the beneficiaries. In contrast, their opinions on national-level impact are general impressions rather than conclusions from formal research or verified data. This difference highlights that state-level impact is more reliable, while national-level observations should be considered more indicative opinions rather than definitive findings.

Figure 49: National Level Recognition of YaR Contributions



Discussion Summary: The data on national-level recognition shows that the Don Bosco YaR project has achieved significant acclaim, with 66.3% of respondents indicating high recognition or awards, and 21.74% reporting good recognition. Only 11.96% received no recognition at the national level.

Conclusion: The Don Bosco YaR project has received numerous District, State, and National level awards and recognition at its individual centers, such as DB Palluruthy and BOSCO Bangalore, which received the prestigious Presidential Award for their work with children at risk. Additionally, the collective efforts of the YaR network, coordinated across different Provinces through the YaR Forum headquartered in New Delhi, have further elevated its profile nationally. These accomplishments reflect the strength of the network's collaboration. However, the project's most profound impact remains at the local level, where it continues to make a transformative difference in the lives of vulnerable children and their communities.

Figure 50: Vocational Skill Training Provided in YaR Projects



Discussion Summary: The vocational training data indicates that a diverse range of skill-building opportunities are being offered to the beneficiaries of the Don Bosco YaR project. The highest participation was recorded in computer training, with 79.35% of respondents reporting engagement. This highlights the project's focus on equipping young individuals with essential digital skills in today's job market.

Mechanical and welding works also showed high participation, with 60.87% of respondents receiving training in these fields, followed closely by carpentry at 59.78%. These skills align with traditional technical trades that provide sustainable employment options for youth. Similarly, the automobile sector saw 56.52% of respondents benefitting from training, reflecting the initiative's alignment with industrial demand.

On the other hand, areas like electrical works, tailoring, and beautician training had lower participation rates, with 32.61%, 38.04%, and 34.78% of respondents, respectively. This distribution may be due to the varied preferences of the beneficiaries or regional employment opportunities. While these fields might not have as many participants, they still provide valuable opportunities for income generation and self-employment.

Conclusion: Overall, the vocational training provided through the YaR project has a diverse scope, catering to traditional and modern employment sectors. The emphasis on computer training suggests a progressive approach, preparing beneficiaries for the digital economy. At the same time, the continued support for trades like mechanical, welding, and carpentry ensures a balanced development of skills that can lead to stable career paths. Further expansion of electrical works, tailoring, and beautician courses could help diversify the skill set of participants and address varying local demands for employment.

Figure 51: Relevance of the Skill Training Provided in Don Bosco YaR Centers.

	Yes %	No %
Automobile	72.8%	27.2%
Mechanical	52.2%	47.8%
Carpentry	82.6%	17.4%
Computer Training	84.8%	15.2%
Welding Works	66.3%	33.7%
Electrical Works	63.1%	36.9%
Tailoring	66.3%	33.7%
Beautician	63.1%	36.9%

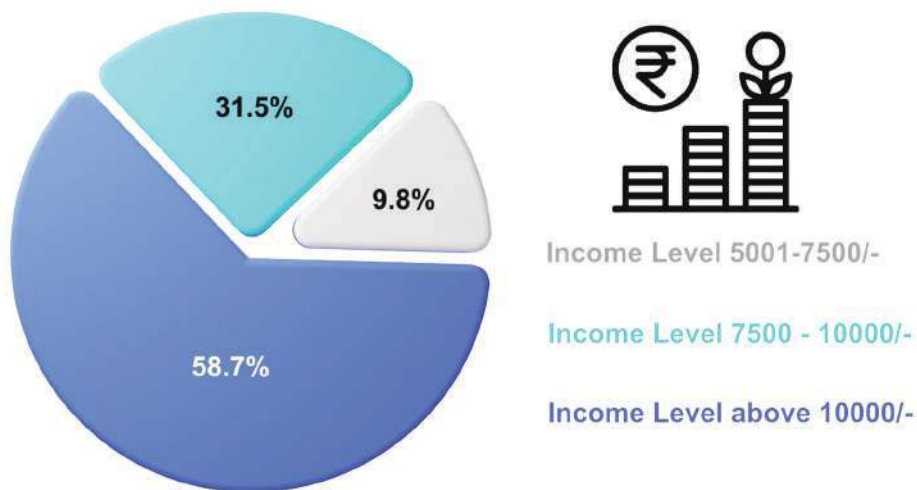
Summary Discussion: The feedback regarding the relevance of skill training programs offered in the Don Bosco YaR centers reflects the insights and opinions of the staff based on their observations and experiences while working with the YaR projects. The data indicates a positive perception of various vocational training areas, with the majority of respondents recognizing the relevance of skills such as automobile (72.80%), carpentry (82.60%), computer training (84.80%), and welding (66.30%).

This suggests that the staff believe these skills are applicable and valuable in helping beneficiaries secure employment and enhance their livelihoods. Conversely, there are certain areas, such as mechanical training (52.20%) and electrical works (63.10%), where the relevance is somewhat lower than other skills. This could indicate the staff's first-hand observations of the local job market and the specific needs of the youth they serve. Overall, the favourable evaluations of most skill training programs highlight the commitment of the Don Bosco YaR centers to equip young individuals with relevant skills that can lead to meaningful employment and improved quality of life.

Conclusion: In conclusion, the data collected provides a comprehensive view of the relevance of vocational training programs at the Don Bosco YaR centers, as assessed by the staff based on their experiences. The strong approval ratings for various skill trainings underscore the program's alignment with the needs of the youth and the local job market. By focusing on relevant skills, the YaR project plays a crucial role in preparing young

individuals for future employment opportunities and fostering economic empowerment within their communities. Although not included in the discussions with data, the skill training in driving has proven highly relevant and well-received by many beneficiaries. Several young individuals have completed driving training, sometimes with other training or formal schooling, obtained their licenses, and secured employment as drivers, earning competitive wages. Some have even established their own taxi services or found positions with travel agencies, generating significant income and effectively supporting their families.

Figure 52: Empowering Youth Through Financial Stability

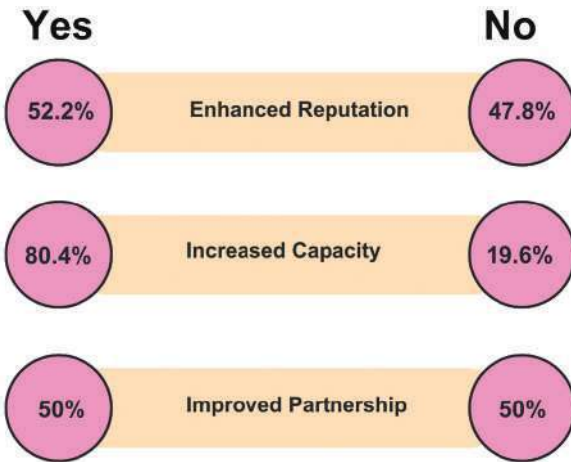


Summary Discussion: The data on the monthly income of employed youth who have completed vocational training or education through the Don Bosco YaR project presents a positive picture of the program’s impact. A significant 58.7% of the youth earn above ₹10,000 and more per month, indicating that most trained individuals are securing reasonably well-paying jobs for their age and qualifications. Furthermore, 31.5% of the respondents report monthly incomes in the range of ₹7,500 to ₹10,000, while only a small fraction (9.8%) earns between ₹5,001 and ₹7,500.

Conclusion: The data demonstrates that the Don Bosco YaR centers effectively empower youth by providing them with vocational training and education that leads to well-paying jobs. The fact that a substantial proportion of the employed youth earn above ₹10,000 per month reflects the success of the YaR project in helping young people achieve financial stability and a decent standard of living. Some of those beneficiaries that are earning less than ₹10,000/- could be trainees or they are in apprenticeship. Some others may be doing part-time jobs only with lower pay due to the fewer work hours. There are also cases where some youth are placed in a job irrespective of the payment to introduce them to job culture. The pay will be minimal in such cases, but the beneficiary will gain disciplined work experience. This outcome underscores the importance and effectiveness of the Don Bosco

YaR initiatives in equipping youth with marketable skills and enabling them to secure jobs that allow them to settle and lead a dignified life.

Figure 53: Benefits of YaR Project for Implementing Organization

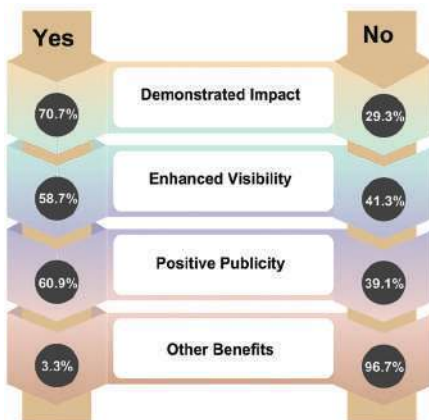


Discussion Summary: The data reflects the perceived benefits of the YaR project in several key areas. Over half of the respondents (52.2%) believe that the project has enhanced the reputation of Don Bosco, indicating strong recognition and acknowledgment of the organization’s work. Improved partnerships, including support from donors and well-wishers, are also significant, with 50% of respondents noting this benefit. However, the data shows that only 19.6% of respondents observed an increase in capacity-encompassing staff strength as well as facilitating capacity building, and intake ability, thanks to the several specific YaR projects assisted by various organisations and the province at large.

data shows that only 19.6% of respondents observed an increase in capacity-encompassing staff strength as well as facilitating capacity building, and intake ability, thanks to the several specific YaR projects assisted by various organisations and the province at large.

Conclusion: The YaR project has significantly enhanced Don Bosco’s reputation and cultivated strong partnerships with donors and supporters. However, the limited impact on increasing capacity highlights the necessity for focused efforts to strengthen staff capacity. This can be achieved through targeted training for existing staff and onboarding additional personnel at the centers where feasible. Addressing this gap will bolster the project’s overall effectiveness and ensure its sustainability, enabling it to meet the evolving needs of young individuals at risk continually.

Figure 54: Benefits of YaR to the Donors and Supporters

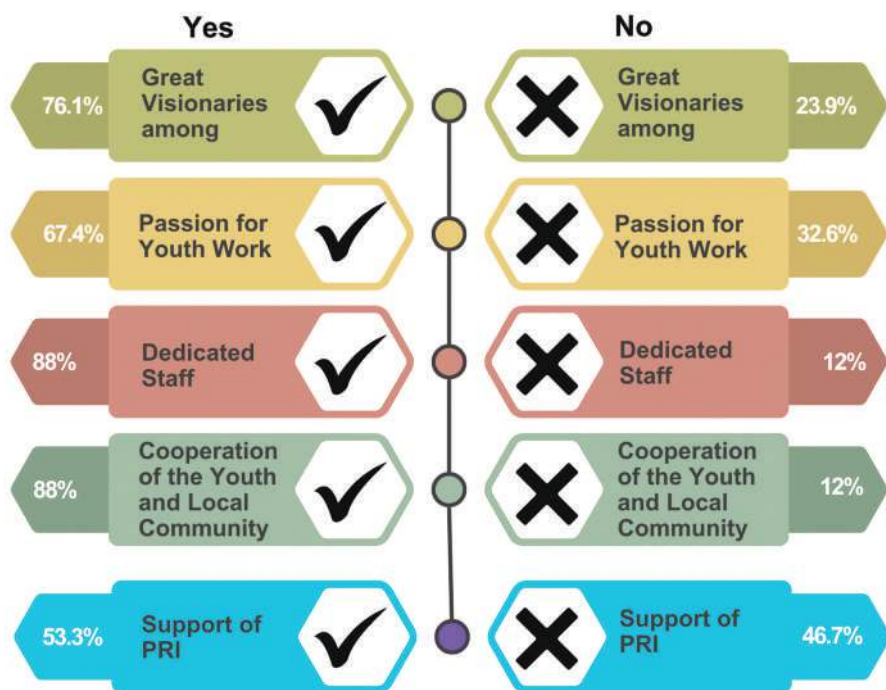


Discussion Summary: The staff perceptions of the YaR project highlight several benefits for its donors and supporters. A notable 70.7% of respondents believe that the project demonstrates a strong impact, indicating that contributions are effectively utilized for a meaningful cause. Additionally, the staff acknowledges the positive publicity and increased visibility that supporting organizations, particularly those engaged in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funding, receive, with 60.9% and 58.7% of respondents affirming these advantages, respectively.

Furthermore, a small percentage (3.3%) of staff noted that donors also derive personal satisfaction from their contributions to a noble cause. Overall, these impressions reflect the staff's recognition of the significant value that donor support brings to the YaR project.

Conclusion: The YaR project offers substantial value to its donors and supporters, particularly by demonstrating impact and providing positive publicity and visibility. These benefits are crucial for maintaining and expanding donor engagement, especially for organizations focused on CSR objectives for funding support. Nonetheless, the low personal recognition or other intangible benefits suggest an opportunity to better communicate and highlight these aspects, potentially enhancing the overall appeal of supporting the project.

Figure 55: Factors Leading to the Impact of the YaR Project



Summary Discussion: The figure highlights key factors behind the success of the Don Bosco YaR project. Visionary leadership among the Don Bosco Members (76.1%), passion for youth work (67.4%), dedicated staff (88%), and strong cooperation from youth and the local community (88%) are seen as crucial contributors. While Panchayati Raj Institutions' (53.3%) support is acknowledged, the project's success relies more on internal commitment and community engagement. Overall, the success of the YaR project is driven by strong leadership, dedicated teams, and active community involvement.

Conclusion: The data indicates that the success of the Don Bosco YaR project is multi-faceted, relying on strong leadership, passionate involvement in youth work, dedicated

staff, and active community participation. While institutional support like that of PRI plays a role, internal commitment and external cooperation are paramount in driving the project's positive impact. These findings emphasize the importance of a holistic approach, where leadership, dedication, and community engagement collectively contribute to the remarkable success of the YaR project.

Figure 56: Overall Impact of Yar Projects at Various Levels

	HIGH %	MODERATE %	LOW %
NATIONAL LEVEL	59.78%	24.72%	15.50%
STATE LEVEL	66.30%	22.60%	11.10%
LOCAL LEVEL	82.60%	12.83%	4.57%
FAMILY LEVEL	84.80%	11.96%	3.24%
YOUTH LEVEL	88.00%	10.87%	1.13%

Discussion summary: The data highlights the varying levels of impact achieved by the Don Bosco YaR project across different domains, with the highest impact observed at the youth and family levels. A significant 88% of respondents reported a high impact at the youth level, and 84.8% reported a similar effect at the family level. This indicates that the project has been very effective in addressing the needs of vulnerable youth and their families, fostering personal development, strengthening family relationships, and providing targeted support and resources.

At the local level, 82.6% of respondents indicated a high impact, reflecting the project's strong influence in creating positive changes within communities, reducing anti-social behaviours, and promoting social cohesion. However, the perceived impact decreases at the state level, with 66.3% reporting a high impact, and further reduces at the national level, where only 59.78% observed a high impact. This trend suggests that while the project has made considerable strides locally and within state boundaries, its overall visibility and perceived influence at the national level are comparatively lower.

Conclusion: The Don Bosco YaR project demonstrates a robust impact at the youth, family, and local community levels, showcasing its effectiveness in transforming lives and addressing core issues. Although the project has a positive presence at the state level, its impact at the national level is less prominent, highlighting an opportunity to strengthen national-level initiatives and collaborations. Expanding national engagement and emphasizing the project's broader contributions could help bridge this gap and ensure more comprehensive recognition of its successes at all levels.

Conclusion

The impact assessment from the staff perspective highlights the significant role of Young at Risk (YaR) initiatives in transforming the lives of vulnerable children. Staff members reported positive changes in children's behaviour, confidence, and academic performance, reinforcing the importance of targeted interventions. The collaborative efforts within the centers foster a nurturing environment, helping students overcome challenges and build brighter futures. While some centers noted areas for improvement, the overall feedback emphasized the programs' effectiveness in addressing the unique needs of the children. With continued commitment, the YaR initiative can enhance its impact and ensure sustainable growth.

III. Findings of Focus Group Discussions (FGD)

A. FGD at BOSCO Bangalore

Introduction

This report details the key points and outcomes from the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) held on May 27th, 2024, at BOSCO Yuvodaya in Bangalore. The FGD was conducted as part of the impact assessment of BOSCO's work with Young at Risk (YaR) children in and around the city of Bangalore. The discussion included 25 participants representing government departments, selected senior staff of BOSCO Bangalore, and chosen alumni. Dr. Tom Jose, the lead on the impact assessment, facilitated it. The meeting began with a welcome note and introduction by the Executive Director of BOSCO, Fr. Varghese Pallipuram.

Purpose of the Meeting

At the outset, Fr. Varghese and Dr. Tom Jose clarified the purpose of the meeting. They affirmed that this was organized as part of the ongoing impact assessment of BOSCO's interventions in the lives of vulnerable children in Bangalore and the major metros of Karnataka State. Participants shared their insights and experiences on BOSCO's impact on child welfare, education, and skill development.

Key Discussions

1. Impact of BOSCO's Work in the Region

- **Reduction in the number of Street Children:** Participants acknowledged BOSCO's pivotal role in reducing the number of children living on the streets through its outreach and rehabilitation programs. Thousands of children have been reintegrated into society, leading to more settled lives.
- **Educational Initiatives:** The discussion highlighted BOSCO's success in decreasing school dropout rates, from 30-33% in 2020 to 15% in 2024. This was attributed to BOSCO's dedicated efforts in identifying and re-enrolling out-of-school children. Those children who were re-admitted by BOSCO showed regularity in school, thus reducing the dropout rates and influencing other children to be regular in school.

- **Child Protection and Skill Training:** BOSCO's work in preventing child abuse and promoting skill training was praised, particularly for its collaboration with various government departments to support children's rights.

2. BOSCO's Contribution to Children and Families

- **Parental Awareness Programs:** BOSCO's outreach programs have successfully motivated parents to prioritize education.
- **Prevention of Child Labour and Exploitation:** BOSCO's presence in high-risk areas has significantly reduced child exploitation, particularly in partnership with the Labour Department for rescuing and rehabilitating child labourers.

3. Future Relevance and Continued Efforts

- **Ongoing Relevance:** Participants emphasized that BOSCO's work remains crucial and that ongoing involvement is needed to provide alternative family care and support for vulnerable children.
- **Follow-Up with Alumni:** The need to improve follow-up with past pupils, particularly those requiring aftercare and moral support, was discussed. Suggestions were made to raise awareness through campaigns and community events.

4. Government Collaboration and Challenges

- **Mixed Responses from Government Departments:** While some government departments fully support BOSCO's work, others are less collaborative. Strengthening partnerships with government entities was identified as a key area for improvement.

5. Resource Mobilization

- **Exploring New Funding Sources:** Participants suggested approaching companies for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds and leveraging Central and State government schemes as strategies to ensure sustainability, given the decline in foreign funding.

6. Community Engagement and Support

- **Positive Community Rapport:** BOSCO has successfully established strong relationships with local communities commonly called 'caring communities', some of whom are now referring needy children to BOSCO while some others join for the awareness programmes. Social media was identified as a tool to enhance community engagement further.
- **Focused Project Implementation:** Participants recommended that BOSCO concentrate on outreach programmes or slum-based projects, etc, and execute them excellently to maximize impact.

7. Treatment of BOSCO Staff by Government Departments

- **Supportive Relationships:** BOSCO staff enjoy strong support from local authorities in many areas, with the Child Welfare Committee (CWC), Juvenile Justice Board (JJB),

Labour Department and the police being particularly collaborative in child welfare efforts.

- **Educational Collaboration:** BOSCO staff's active involvement in School Monitoring Committee meetings highlights the strong relationship between BOSCO and the education department, particularly in enrolling dropout children back to school, tracing missing children, and providing counselling.

Observations of the Alumni

The alumni present at the FGD expressed deep gratitude for the support they received from BOSCO. Many now hold prominent positions in society, such as actors, dancers, lawyers, IT professionals, government officials, and employees in multinational companies. They also acknowledged BOSCO's role in reuniting them with their families and securing their education and financial stability.

Special Mention of BOSCO Veterans

The FGD participants expressed their appreciation for the Don Bosco Fathers, recognizing the significant impact these leaders have had on the success of BOSCO's YaR project. Key figures mentioned include:

- **Fr. George Kollashany and Fr. Varghese Pallipuram:** Visionary leaders who founded BOSCO's work with street children and marginalized communities in Bangalore.
- **Fr. Kuriakose and Fr. KD Varghese:** Known for their deep commitment to child welfare and skill development, they considerably expanded BOSCO's reach.
- **Fr. PS George and Fr. Edward:** Their dedication has ensured that BOSCO continues to thrive, serving as a beacon of hope for vulnerable children across Karnataka.

Comparison with Impact Assessment Findings

1. Reduction in Street Children and School Dropouts:

- **FGD Observations:** BOSCO's initiatives have significantly reduced the number of street children and school dropout rates.
- **Impact Assessment Findings:** The impact assessment validated these observations, with 82.9% of respondents rating BOSCO's educational support as 'High' and a 100% satisfaction rate reflecting the success of BOSCO's interventions.
- **Alignment:** The data from the impact assessment strongly aligns with the FGD observations, confirming BOSCO's effectiveness in reducing school dropouts and improving child welfare.

2. Contribution to Child Protection and Family Support:

- **FGD Observations:** BOSCO's efforts in child protection and reuniting children with families were praised, particularly in collaborations with government departments and programmes like CHILDLINE 1098, the national emergency helpline for children.

- **Impact Assessment Findings:** High satisfaction ratings (97.4%) were noted in child protection efforts, underscoring the effectiveness of BOSCO's strategies.
- **Alignment:** The FGD's assessment of BOSCO's child protection initiatives strongly supports the impact assessment data, indicating high community regard for BOSCO's work.

3. Relevance and Sustainability of BOSCO's Work:

- **FGD Observations:** Participants emphasized the ongoing relevance of BOSCO's work and the need for improved follow-up services and resource mobilization.
- **Impact Assessment Findings:** While BOSCO's overall impact is strong, there is room for improvement in follow-up services, with 15.1% of respondents rating them as 'Moderate.'
- **Alignment:** The FGD's emphasis on the importance of follow-up services aligns with the impact assessment findings, suggesting areas for targeted improvement.

4. Government Collaboration and Community Engagement:

- **FGD Observations:** The need for enhanced government collaboration was noted, though partnerships with entities like the CWC, JJB, Labour Department and police were commended.
- **Impact Assessment Findings:** Centers with strong government collaborations experienced better outcomes regarding community support and child welfare.
- **Alignment:** The FGD observations align with the impact assessment, highlighting the importance of government partnerships in BOSCO's success.

5. Resource Mobilization and Funding Strategies:

- **FGD Observations:** Given the decline in foreign funding, the need to explore new funding sources was discussed.
- **Impact Assessment Findings:** While the impact assessment did not explicitly focus on funding strategies, it indicated that centers with significant community ties are better positioned to secure local funds.
- **Alignment:** The FGD's suggestions for resource mobilization align with the assessment's findings, emphasizing the importance of community engagement in sustaining BOSCO's operations.

Overall, the comparison between the FGD observations and the impact assessment findings reveals a strong alignment, validating BOSCO's strategies and highlighting areas for further development and improvement.

Conclusion

The comparison between the findings of the BOSCO FGD and the broader impact assessment reveals a strong alignment in key areas such as child protection, education, and community engagement. The qualitative insights from the FGD are well-supported by the

quantitative data from the impact assessment, indicating that BOSCO's strategies are both effective and valued by the community. However, the discussions also highlighted areas for potential improvement, particularly in follow-up services and resource mobilization, which could further enhance BOSCO's impact in the future. The legacy of pioneering figures like Fr. Varghese Pallipuram and others continues to guide BOSCO's efforts, ensuring that it remains a vital force in the lives of vulnerable children and their families in Karnataka and beyond.

B: FGD at Gulbarga YaR Centre

Introduction

This report summarizes the key points and discussions from a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) held at the Gulbarga YaR Centre, organized by Don Bosco. The event focused on assessing the impact of Don Bosco's initiatives in Gulbarga, specifically regarding child welfare and education. This FGD allowed various stakeholders to share insights and recommendations for enhancing the efficacy of child welfare programs. The findings from this event are also compared with data from the broader impact assessment conducted across various centers, including Gulbarga.

Participants

Key participants included:

- **Rev.Fr. Kuriakose**, Director - Don Bosco PYaR
- **Dr.Tom Jose**, Impact Assessment Resource Person - Don Bosco PYaR
- **Manjula Patil**, DCPO Gulbarga
- **Ms. Geeta**, Programme Coordinator and Host

The discussion also featured participation from Asha workers, tutorial teachers, Headmasters from Government Schools, the President and members of the Gram Panchayat, DDPO and Foster care staff, DB Tech staff, and children from nearby Child Care Institutions.

Key Discussion Points

Child Welfare Initiatives

Manjula Patil emphasized the severity of child welfare issues in the region, particularly child marriage, labour, and dropouts. Her remarks resonated with the ongoing efforts at Gulbarga YaR Centre, which has proactively tackled these issues. The centre's data from the impact assessment show that 67.5% of respondents rated the centre's services as having a 'High' impact, indicating strong community approval of their initiatives. Patil's call for stricter measures aligns with the centre's current efforts but also highlights areas for potential improvement.

Educational Reintegration Efforts

Don Bosco's initiative to visit homes and reintegrate school dropouts has seen significant success, with a 100% re-enrolment rate reported. Additionally, 90% of these students have

secured scholarships, and their regular attendance is supported by cultural programs and activity-based learning, aligning closely with the positive feedback from Gulbarga in the impact assessment study.

Skill Training and Community Projects

DB Tech has played a crucial role in skill training, offering programs in tailoring, child protection initiatives, bridge courses, and other community projects. The impact assessment data further confirms the effectiveness of these initiatives, with a notable percentage of respondents in Gulbarga rating the training programs as 'High' in quality. This recognition underscores DB Tech's importance in equipping young people with the skills they need to succeed and integrate into society.

Testimonial from Beneficiaries

Ashok, a student at Don Bosco, shared his personal experiences, highlighting how the organization has positively impacted his life. His testimony is a powerful example of the individual successes achieved through Don Bosco's initiatives, reinforcing the findings from the impact assessment that indicates a high level of satisfaction among beneficiaries.

Challenges and Recommendations

Challenges discussed included societal migration from villages and the need for increased community support to achieve tangible results. Recommendations for improvement included submitting proposals to district authorities and engaging with self-help groups, intellectuals, and local governance bodies to enhance support and outreach.

Comparative Analysis with Impact Assessment Findings

The discussion and feedback from the FGD in Gulbarga closely match the findings from the impact assessment report. Notably, the high level of satisfaction and positive outcomes reported in the broader assessment align with the successful reintegration and scholarship achievements discussed during the FGD. However, the need for greater community engagement and support identified during the FGD echoes the suggestions for improvement noted in other centre's assessments, indicating a common area for development across the board.

Conclusion

The FGD at Gulbarga YaR Centre provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of Don Bosco's initiatives in the region. The successful integration of educational and skill development programs has significantly impacted the lives of many young individuals, as evidenced by the discussions during the FGD and the broader impact assessment results. Continued focus on community engagement and support and targeted interventions to address specific challenges will be crucial for sustaining and expanding the positive outcomes observed. The dedication of various stakeholders to improving child welfare in Gulbarga promises a hopeful future for the region's at-risk youth.

C: FGD at Don Bosco Palluruthy

Introduction

The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) held at Sneha Bhavan, Don Bosco Palluruthy, on June 12th, 2024, was a key component of the ongoing YaR (Young at Risk) impact assessment for Don Bosco Palluruthy. The event, organized by Fr. Abhilash Palakal, included 18 participants, comprising key stakeholders such as the principal investigator of the impact assessment, Dr. Tom Jose, Executive Director Fr. P.D. Thomas, and other Directors, along with local councillors, staff members, community representatives, Salesian co-operators, and former beneficiaries of Don Bosco Palluruthy.

The program began with a prayer song performed by Mr. Ujin Das, an ex-beneficiary and current staff member of Sneha Bhavan. Fr. Abhilash welcomed the participants, expressing deep satisfaction in his work with young people at risk. The FGD aimed to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of Don Bosco Palluruthy's initiatives on vulnerable children and to gather insights for future improvements.

Key Discussions and YaR Impact Assessment Results

1. Overall Impact of Don Bosco Palluruthy

- **FGD Observations:** Fr. P.D. Thomas emphasized the significant impact of the SB-DB YaR Project Palluruthy at local, state, and national levels. He highlighted the success of various housing projects for orphaned youth and the effectiveness of vocational training programs in tailoring, carpentry, and masonry.
- **Impact Assessment Findings:** The YaR impact assessment data for Don Bosco Palluruthy supports these observations, with 85% of respondents rating the overall impact of the projects as 'High.' The success of the housing projects and self-employment initiatives was particularly noted, with 80% of trained youth successfully employed or self-employed.

2. Effectiveness of Responses to Social Challenges

- **FGD Observations:** Responding to Dr. Tom Jose's inquiry about Don Bosco Palluruthy's adaptability to the fast-changing social environment, Fr. C.M. Joseph affirmed that their interventions have benefitted both the young at risk and society. He cited several innovative techniques introduced to cope with the evolving challenges children and youth face.
- **Impact Assessment Findings:** The impact assessment revealed that 78% of respondents believe Don Bosco Palluruthy effectively addresses new social challenges. Programs like preventive interventions and community outreach were highlighted as key contributors to this success.

3. Community Perception and Contribution

- **FGD Observations:** Mr. Sony K. Francis, a division councillor and long-time supporter of Don Bosco Palluruthy, testified to the project's transformative impact

on the local community. He noted that without the interventions of the Salesians, Kochi might have faced greater challenges with crime and social unrest. The success stories of many former beneficiaries were also acknowledged by the participants.

- **Impact Assessment Findings:** The impact assessment data reflects this positive community perception, with 82% of respondents affirming that Don Bosco Palluruthy has significantly reduced crime and improved social harmony in Kochi. The success of former beneficiaries in securing stable employment and leading successful lives was a key indicator of this impact.

4. Future Prospects and Relevance

- **FGD Observations:** Participants unanimously agreed on the ongoing relevance of Don Bosco Palluruthy's work, expressing pride in their association with the YaR Project. The need to showcase the project's significant contributions in the context of the center's upcoming Golden Jubilee was discussed.
- **Impact Assessment Findings:** The assessment highlighted that 90% of respondents believe Don Bosco Palluruthy remains highly relevant in the current socio-economic landscape. The Golden Jubilee was an opportunity to reinforce the project's legacy and inspire continued community support.

5. Beneficiary Alumnus Perspectives

- **FGD Observations:** Several alumni, especially the girls, spoke nostalgically about how the YaR program cared for them with a marked concern for their future. They appreciated the education and vocational training provided, which assured them of a stable future. However, they also expressed a desire for training in family management and financial skills, which they felt were necessary for running a family effectively.
- **Impact Assessment Findings:** The impact assessment revealed that 75% of female respondents thought the program met their educational and vocational needs. However, there was room for additional training in life skills, such as financial management and family care.

Special Mention of Don Bosco Veterans

During the FGD, special recognition was given to the contributions of key figures in the development of Don Bosco Palluruthy's YaR project:

- **Rev. Fr. Varghese Menachery and Fr. Luis Kulangara:** Pioneers of the YaR mission at Palluruthy, laid the foundation for what has become a beacon of hope for countless young street children. Their visionary leadership and relentless dedication were instrumental in the project's early successes.
- **Fr. Francis John and Fr. Joseph Fernandez:** Successors who continued the mission with the same fervour and commitment, ensuring the continuity and growth of the YaR project at Palluruthy.

- **Fr. Francis Gesu:** A missionary with a vision whose financial support and strategic guidance significantly bolstered the project's capabilities, enabling it to expand its reach and impact.
- **Fr. P.D. Thomas, Fr. C.M. Joseph, Fr. Bino Nadakal, Fr. Abhilash Palakal, and Fr. Sebastian:** Their collective efforts have ensured that Don Bosco Palluruthy continues to be a beacon of hope for young people at risk. Their dedication has enabled the project to thrive and serve as a model for similar initiatives.

Conclusion

The FGD at Don Bosco Palluruthy highlighted the significant and positive impact the YaR project has had on the lives of vulnerable children and the broader community. The discussions during the FGD were strongly supported by the impact assessment findings, which showed high levels of satisfaction and success across various initiatives. Moving forward, the focus will be on maintaining and enhancing these successes, emphasizing the need to adapt to new social challenges, ensuring continued community support, and celebrating the legacy of Don Bosco Palluruthy as it approaches its Golden Jubilee.

IV: Qualitative Assessment through Key Informant Interviews (KII)

Introduction

The Young at Risk (YaR) Ministry, launched by the Don Bosco team in the Bangalore Province in 1974, has significantly influenced the lives of vulnerable children and youth in Kerala and Karnataka. Over the past four decades, its wide range of services—such as rescue operations, rehabilitation, education, and reintegration—has reached many critical milestones. This qualitative assessment combines insights from key stakeholders, including project directors, senior staff, public officials, alumni, and partners, to showcase YaR's achievements over the past ten years. The subsequent sections aim to integrate quantitative data with qualitative findings to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the YaR Ministry on at-risk populations.

Overall Impacts

Outreach Programs

YaR's outreach programs actively rescue children from vulnerable locations such as streets, slums, railway stations, bus stands and other hotspots, preventing their exposure to exploitation. Through consistent interventions, countless children have been brought to safety and connected with essential services.

Shelters and Rehabilitation Centers

The program provides immediate shelter, food and clothing, health care and long-term rehabilitation for at-risk children. Safe housing and reintegration support ensure these children receive the care and protection they need, often through home placements or YaR centers.

Education Programs

The project offers non-formal education, bridge courses, and formal school enrolment while promoting higher education. Efforts towards preventing school dropouts have significantly improved children's access to education, breaking cycles of poverty and marginalization.

Vocational Training and Life Skills

Vocational training in diverse trades, coupled with life skills training, enhances the employability and independence of youth. The program ensures sustainable livelihoods and reduces reliance on street-based survival methods by equipping them with practical skills. Life skills education enables them to face the challenges in their life journey.

Health Services

Regular medical check-ups, mobile health units, and nutritional support ensure the well-being of children under YaR's care. Health camps provide essential medical services, safeguarding them from preventable diseases and malnutrition. YaR's specialised healthcare services for children with serious illnesses have given them a new lease of life.

Psychological Support

To address trauma, the YaR project provides counselling and therapy services. These interventions assist children in emotional recovery, foster resilience, and support their reintegration into society with greater emotional and mental well-being.

Legal Aid

YaR provides legal assistance, helping children navigate documentation, child rights, and advocacy issues. This legal support is vital for protecting children from abuse and child labour and ensuring their rights are upheld and perpetrators are punished.

Community Awareness

Through campaigns and awareness programs, YaR mobilizes communities to address the issues at-risk children face. These initiatives foster active community involvement in protecting children and preventing further exploitation.

Economic Empowerment

Skill training programs and job placement initiatives empower youth economically. By providing essential skills for employment, YaR enables these individuals to achieve financial independence, breaking the cycle of poverty and creating a dignified living.

Child Labour Eradication and School Dropout Prevention

YaR's initiatives play a crucial role in eradicating child labour by rescuing children from hazardous working conditions and reintegrating them into age-appropriate educational or vocational training programs. The project also focuses on school dropout prevention, ensuring that rescued children remain in education systems.

Policy Influencing

YaR's involvement with state government departments has enabled it to advocate for child rights and influence laws and policies related to child welfare and the juvenile justice system. This role helps ensure that the needs of vulnerable children are addressed at a systemic level, promoting sustainable changes and a pro-child-friendly system.

Major Milestones of the YaR Project

- 1. Child Labour and Exploitation Prevention:** YaR has played a crucial role in preventing child labour and bonded labour, with notable success in rehabilitating child labourers in Davangere and Devadurga and creating a child labour-free zone in the Gandhinagar area, Bangalore City.
- 2. Child Marriage Prevention:** Through community interventions, the project has actively prevented child marriages, especially in the North Karnataka region, safeguarding young girls from early marriage.
- 3. Education and Retention:** Significant reductions in street children and improved school retention rates have been achieved. The project's OPEN schools Programme in Mysore and Kollam have seen encouraging participation and academic results, preventing dropouts and opening up possibilities for higher education.
- 4. Community Support and Surveys:** YaR Centres conduct neighbourhood surveys, child-needs analyses, and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) to involve the community in addressing the problems of the children.
- 5. Child Protection and Rights Advocacy:** A leader in child rights advocacy, YaR has lobbied for child safety, contributed to formulating the Child Protection Policy and played a significant role in shaping the Juvenile Justice (JJ) Act. Don Bosco team and staff have gained prominent roles in the Child Welfare Committee (CWC), Juvenile Justice Board (JJB), Members in Karnataka and Kerala State Commission for Protection of Child Rights.
- 6. Documentation and Publications:** The project has systematically documented its activities, services, and implemented initiatives, including success stories. It has also published books and research studies periodically, showcasing the transformative impact of its work.
- 7. Recognition and Awards:** YaR's efforts have been recognized with numerous awards from Governmental and Non-Governmental bodies, including the National Child Welfare Award from the President of India in 2016 (BOSCO).
- 8. Projects and Initiatives:** YaR has implemented several impactful initiatives, such as the Child Rights Education and Action Movement (CREAM) project, Kerala Interstate Migrants Alliance for Transformation (KISMAT) project, Children's Parliaments, school textbooks on child rights, Open Shelter programme for children on the street, and foster care programs across 20 districts of Karnataka.

Indicators of YaR Impact

Pedagogical Indicators

- 1. Academic Performance:** Through consistent support, children under YaR programs have remarkable improvements in their academic performance. These include higher grades, better test scores, and notably increased graduation rates. Additionally, the project's focus on retaining children in schools has significantly decreased absenteeism and dropouts, ensuring that more children complete their education.
- 2. Engagement and Participation:** YaR initiatives have fostered greater engagement in learning by encouraging active involvement in both classroom and extracurricular activities. Children display increased motivation towards education, reflected in their enthusiastic participation in sports, arts, and other co-curricular activities, leading to a well-rounded development.
- 3. Behavioural Changes:** Children who are beneficiaries of YaR programs have demonstrated positive behavioural changes, such as fewer disciplinary issues and improved cooperation with peers and teachers. These changes directly result from structured environments and guidance provided through counselling and life skills programs. This enables critical thinking, decision making and time management abilities, preparing children for future challenges.
- 4. Teacher Feedback:** Teachers report significant improvements in students' attitudes and behaviours due to YaR interventions. These positive assessments include observations of better classroom engagement, enthusiasm for learning, active participation in extracurricular activities and overall improvement in cooperation, reflecting the impact of holistic support provided by the program.

Sociological Indicators

- 1. Social Integration:** Children in YaR programs benefit from stronger peer relationships and social networks, which help reduce feelings of isolation. By fostering a sense of belonging within a supportive community, these programs enhance children's ability to integrate socially, develop friendships, and participate in group activities, positively affecting their overall well-being.
- 2. Family Engagement:** The YaR project actively promotes family involvement in children's educational journey. Regular engagement with parents helps improve family dynamics, providing a strong support system at home. This collaborative approach strengthens the family's role in the child's development and encourages sustained involvement in the child's progress at school and beyond.
- 3. Community Involvement:** The project's impact extends into the community, with children and families participating in local activities and projects. Strengthened connections with community organizations and services ensure that children can access additional resources and support systems, helping them thrive academically and socially.

- 4. Behavioural and Emotional Well-being:** Children in the YaR project experience a notable reduction in risky behaviours, such as substance abuse or delinquency. The project fosters emotional stability, improved mental health, and increased self-esteem by providing psychological support, counselling, and a nurturing environment, equipping children to handle challenges more confidently.
- 5. Future Aspirations:** The project raises children's aspirations for the future by providing access to education, skill development, and career guidance. As a result, many participants develop higher ambitions for further education and professional careers. Exposure to a range of opportunities encourages them to set and achieve more significant goals, thus empowering them to break out of cycles of poverty.

Psychological Indicators

- 1. Improved Self-Esteem and Confidence:** Children and youth in YaR programs show marked improvements in self-worth and confidence. They become more vocal in expressing their thoughts and feelings and actively participate in various activities, showcasing belief in their abilities and personal growth.
- 2. Enhanced Emotional Regulation:** Participants develop better emotional control by learning healthier coping mechanisms, reducing emotional outbursts and instability. This emotional resilience helps them manage stress and trauma more effectively.
- 3. Increased Resilience:** Youth in the program demonstrate a growing ability to bounce back from setbacks and persist through challenges. This resilience is fostered by problem-solving exercises and real-world scenarios, enhancing their resourcefulness and adaptability.
- 4. Better Social Skills and Relationships:** Improved communication and trust allow participants to build stronger relationships with peers and adults. Reduced conflicts and more positive interactions lead to supportive and stable relationships, fostering a healthy social environment.
- 5. Academic and Vocational Improvements:** Increased engagement in academic and vocational activities is seen, along with heightened aspirations. Participants set personal and professional goals, leading to improvements in performance and better career outlooks.

Economic Indicators

- 1. Employment Rates:** Youth participating in YaR programs show increased employability, with many securing stable jobs post-intervention. This stability in employment helps them maintain a sustainable income over time.
- 2. Income Levels:** Beneficiaries experience a rise in their income levels post-intervention, often obtaining better pay, benefits, and job security. This economic upliftment significantly improves their quality of life.
- 3. Educational Attainment:** Higher graduation rates and an increase in vocational or higher education enrolment are noticeable outcomes of the YaR initiatives. This attainment opens up new career opportunities for participants.

4. **Reduction in Dependency on Social Welfare:** Many participants achieve financial independence, reducing reliance on welfare programs. The skills and support provided by YaR enable them to be self-sufficient and better integrated into the workforce.
5. **Crime Rate Reduction:** The program has contributed to reducing youth involvement in harmful behaviours by guiding young people toward positive alternatives and away from criminal activities. This improvement enhances community safety and alleviates pressure on the legal and law enforcement systems.
6. **Healthcare Costs:** With fewer incidences of substance abuse and better mental health, participants contribute to a reduction in public health expenditures. Healthier lifestyles lead to better community health outcomes.
7. **Economic Productivity:** Jobs created through the YaR Ministry enable youth to become financially independent and support their families, uplifting their households from economic vulnerability. As these youth enter the workforce and contribute to their local communities, they stimulate economic growth by increasing consumer spending and driving local business activities, ultimately enhancing the overall development of their villages and communities. This positive ripple effect not only improves the living standards of individual families but also creates a more stable and prosperous environment, encouraging further investment and development.
8. **Social Capital:** The program strengthens community bonds by helping youth become more engaged and active members of society. This increased social cohesion fosters long-term community development and stability.
9. **Long-term Financial Benefits:** YaR programs create a positive financial outlook for participants, as many move from at-risk status to productive members of society. Their improved economic standing also benefits future generations, contributing to overall family and community prosperity.

Concerns About YaR from Key Informants

1. **Adapting to Government Regulations:** The increasing government regulations, particularly under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA), have restricted the flow of foreign funding. This presents a significant challenge since many NGOs depend on foreign aid for their primary operations.
2. **Necessity to Diversify Funding Sources:** Due to increased competition for CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) contributions, India's non-profits, including YaR programs, face reduced funding. With corporate funding subject to various conditions, there is a growing necessity to diversify funding sources to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of YaR initiatives. Encouraging local involvement could enhance the sustainability and innovation of the programs.
3. **Engaging More Young Members in the Don Bosco Team:** There is a growing need to engage more young members in the Don Bosco team to participate actively in YaR work. While many are drawn to the stability of administrative and institutional roles, it

is necessary to encourage a balance between these positions and direct engagement with vulnerable youth through street outreach. Strengthening participation in hands-on work is essential for the continuity and sustainability of YaR initiatives, ensuring that the core objectives of the YaR ministry remain a central focus for the younger generation.

- 4. Need for Formal Training and Qualifications for YaR Members:** Many Don Bosco members working with YaR lack appropriate formal qualifications in social sciences or youth development (such as a Master's Degree in Social Work). Those aspiring to work in the program should be encouraged to obtain the necessary formal qualifications. Key areas of expertise should include fundraising and local resource mobilization, child labour, street children, child rights advocacy, and vocational training. Without structured training programs and theoretical input, the capacity of the personnel to engage deeply with at-risk youth may be reduced.
- 5. Building a Comprehensive Body of Knowledge:** In line with the government's focus on youth policies, the Don Bosco Team must build a comprehensive body of knowledge through research and best practices in YaR work. Addressing this gap would facilitate the scaling and replication of successful models.
- 6. Need for Greater Diversification and New Ventures:** While initiatives like KISMAT, CREAM, and DREAM have made significant strides, YaR programs should explore new and innovative approaches, particularly in policy-based and community action programs, in addition to continuing their existing initiatives. This would enhance their ability to effectively address emerging challenges faced by at-risk youth, such as digital addiction and cyberbullying.
- 7. Encourage Willingness to Take Risks:** While many leaders in YaR prefer the stability of established institutions, it is essential to embrace experimental and pioneering initiatives that could have a more significant impact.
- 8. Foster Passion Over Duty:** Some members of the Don Bosco team may seem to engage in YaR work out of a sense of duty rather than genuine passion. Encouraging intrinsic motivation enhances the effectiveness of their involvement in youth outreach.
- 9. Encourage Collaboration with Government:** While collaboration with the government offers valuable opportunities, the rigid accountability requirements and stringent regulations can challenge innovative programs to support vulnerable children. By exploring ways to overcome these bureaucratic frameworks, YaR can better leverage government schemes and support, finding creative solutions that could benefit at-risk youth.
- 10. Seeking Alternatives to Closure:** When faced with challenges, some team members may close homes and centers rather than explore alternative, innovative solutions. Seeking creative alternatives helps maintain safe spaces for children, strengthening the overall safety net for vulnerable youth.

- 11. Don Bosco Team Members Need to Stay Updated on Youth Challenges:** The rapid changes in youth culture and emerging challenges, such as mental health issues and online exploitation, require ongoing attention. Don Bosco team members must stay informed about current youth issues to support them effectively. The programs should shift from project-based approaches to a need-based approach addressing the specific, current needs of the youth.
- 12. Need to Increase Visibility at National and State Levels:** Despite its significant impact, YaR lacks sufficient visibility at both national and state levels. Increasing its visibility would enhance its ability to advocate for youth-related policies and access larger platforms for support and collaboration.
- 13. Need to Update Information and Improving Documentation:** Many YaR-related websites and databases are outdated. Platforms like Home Link are to be utilized optimally. Poor documentation practices make it challenging to track progress and impact. The data management system should be overseen preferably by the Council member responsible for the YaR ministry in the province. Each center must also ensure accurate data entry and facilitate data sharing. YaR can better secure new funding and influence policy decisions by improving data management.
- 14. Optimize the Utilization of Infrastructure:** Although most YaR centers have adequate infrastructure, there is a need to optimize the use of these facilities for a more significant impact. The lack of strategic planning to maximize resources limits the reach and effectiveness of the programs.
- 15. Adapt Street Interventions to Changing Demographics:** The number of direct street interventions has decreased, partly due to changes in the demographics and challenges street children face. YaR must adapt its approach to better address the evolving needs of children on the streets today.
- 16. Updating Vocational Training Programs:** Many vocational training courses offered by YaR need to be refreshed to align with current job market demands. There is an opportunity to enhance these programs by integrating modern technologies and relevant skills that can boost youth employability.
- 17. Need to Push Boundaries:** There is a tendency to maintain the status quo rather than pushing boundaries or seeking innovative solutions. Adopting a more proactive approach would strengthen YaR's ability to address emerging youth issues effectively.
- 18. Addressing the Closure of Child Care Institutions (CCIs):** Several Child Care Institutions (CCIs) under YaR face closure due to various challenges, including stricter regulations. Finding solutions to these challenges is crucial to ensure the continuity of these interventions and the well-being of the children they support.
- 19. Re-evaluating Rescue Operations:** The number of rescues at bus stands and railway stations has decreased significantly, partly due to changing migration patterns and the increased presence of other agencies. Re-evaluating YaR's approach in these areas could help ensure continued support for vulnerable youth.

Suggestions for a New Paradigm in YaR Ministry from Key Informants

- 1. YaR as the Soul of Don Bosco Ministry:** The essence of the Don Bosco mission should revolve around YaR, making it a focal point of Salesian outreach efforts. Every ministry, whether school or parish, should prioritize vulnerable youth, ensuring that they are the central focus of the Salesian commitment.
- 2. Every Institution as a YaR Center:** Each Salesian institution should extend its services to cater to the youth in their neighbourhoods. Schools, colleges, and parishes should be equipped to act as centers that address local challenges faced by marginalized youth, extending support through education, vocational training, and counselling.
- 3. YaR as the Mission of Every School and College:** Schools and colleges should integrate YaR services into their mission. This includes offering structured programs to support underprivileged youth, such as scholarship programs, skills training, and mentorship, to lift vulnerable youth out of cycles of poverty and deprivation.
- 4. Strategic Planning at the Province Level:** Provinces should engage in long-term strategic planning to align YaR work with emerging youth challenges. This would include structured interventions on issues such as mental health, substance abuse, migration, and displacement, ensuring that the ministries remain relevant to modern youth problems.
- 5. De-Addiction Centers:** A full-fledged de-addiction center in Karnataka would serve as a model for rehabilitation and reintegration. With substance abuse rising among marginalized youth, this center could focus on holistic recovery, combining medical care, counselling, and vocational training to help young people rebuild their lives.
- 6. Institute for Research and Training:** Establish a research and training institute to transform practical experiences into a comprehensive body of knowledge. This initiative will enable YaR programs to become data-driven and research-backed. Specialized training in areas such as care for children of sex workers, children of prisoners, children of alcoholics, those from broken families, and children affected by HIV will significantly enhance the impact of YaR ministries. By addressing the unique needs of these vulnerable youth, the institute can help develop more effective support strategies and interventions.
- 7. Staff Training on Documentation:** Both Don Bosco Team and staff should receive specialized training on documentation and data management. Consistent documentation improves reporting accuracy and allows for a clearer understanding of the impact of YaR interventions, contributing to program development and fundraising efforts.
- 8. More Accompaniment and Aftercare:** Beyond the immediate support, providing consistent guidance and mentorship after youth leave the programs ensures they don't relapse into risky behaviours. This includes career advice, emotional support, and financial counselling to help them adjust smoothly to adult life.

9. **Focus on at-risk youth (Migrants, Addicts, Unemployed):** Targeting specific vulnerable groups, such as migrants, addicts or unemployed youth, ensures that programs address their unique challenges, like social alienation or economic instability, offering tailored interventions that meet their needs.
10. **Networking and Collaboration (NGOs, Government, CSR):** Building alliances with NGOs, government bodies, corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, and public resources strengthens program outreach. Collaborative efforts facilitate resource sharing, increased funding opportunities, and innovative solutions to complex youth problems.
11. **Open to Government Bodies and Policy-Level Changes:** Engagement with government structures and contribution to policy discussions empower the Don Bosco community to advocate for at-risk children and youth. This ensures that government schemes are accessible and effective in supporting vulnerable groups.
12. **Working with Families through Community Intervention:** Enhancing community-based programs that work directly with families can strengthen family dynamics, reduce household stress, and offer preventive measures for at-risk youth, providing a more stable home environment.
13. **Facilitate Access to Government Schemes for Youth:** Making government programs accessible ensures youth can benefit from resources like scholarships, healthcare, and vocational training. Proactive facilitation increases their chances of success and reduces dependency on external aid.
14. **Shift Towards Satellite Centers:** Instead of maintaining large traditional centers, smaller, more flexible satellite centers could serve diverse communities better. These centers would allow for more localized, agile responses to youth needs while leveraging community resources.
15. **Province-Level Think Tank (Experts, Members of the Don Bosco team and Laity):** Establishing a Think Tank Composed of the Don Bosco Team, lay experts, and community leaders would create a forum for strategic planning. This body could assess youth needs, propose innovative approaches, and develop policies for province-wide implementation.
16. **Utilizing Infrastructure for Neighbourhood Outreach:** Opening up existing infrastructure, such as schools, colleges, and youth centers, to the broader community (beyond formal users) can significantly enhance local engagement and expand the reach of YaR programs. By making these spaces accessible not only to formal users but also to informal participants, these institutions become vibrant hubs for youth empowerment and social initiatives. This inclusive approach encourages collaboration, fosters a sense of community, and amplifies the impact of YaR's mission.
17. **Internal CSR from Don Bosco Institutions:** Encouraging formal Don Bosco Schools and Colleges to act as corporate social responsibility (CSR) institutions can significantly

benefit less privileged children within the Don Bosco network. This initiative should include financial support and the utilization of their premises and resources for these children. By adopting this internal CSR approach, the institutions can foster sustainability and self-reliance while promoting collaboration toward supporting vulnerable youth.

Critical Observations

Institutional vs. Individual-Centric Approach: Many institutions focus on specific individuals rather than building a systemic institutional identity. When key individuals leave, the impact and continuity often diminish, highlighting the lack of sustained institutional relationships.

Strengthening Donor Relationships: Limited professional relationship-building with donors, funding agencies, and supporters has contributed to financial instability. Consistent communication and engagement efforts can foster long-term donor loyalty and unlock greater potential for sustained support.

Enhancing Support for Past Pupils: Institutions often lose contact with former pupils after they leave YaR Centers, limiting the support available during their transition to adulthood. Maintaining follow-up efforts could provide essential guidance through this critical stage and strengthen the long-term impact on their lives.

Maximizing Internal Expertise: Many experts within the organization are not fully recognized or utilized to their potential. Using their knowledge and skills more effectively could open up valuable opportunities for growth and development.

Showcasing Unique Talents: There is a reluctance to project and celebrate individuals with unique talents or qualities, stifling personal growth and contributions that could inspire and motivate others within the organization.

Aligning Leadership with Competence: In some religious organizations, individuals may be promoted beyond their competence due to the hierarchical structure, leading to inefficiencies in leadership. Emphasizing merit-based promotions over positional advancement can enhance organizational performance and leadership effectiveness. Reinforcing commitment to mission-driven values can help maintain a clear focus on impactful service.

Promoting Creative Thinking: Innovative ideas are sometimes discouraged due to a preference for traditional methods or a reluctance to embrace change. Encouraging creativity can open up new solutions for addressing current challenges.

Shifting from a Utilitarian Mindset: The approach often leans towards valuing individuals primarily for their immediate contributions rather than nurturing their intrinsic talents and potential for service. Embracing a more holistic perspective could support personal growth and a more profound commitment to the mission.

Enhancing Innovation in Fundraising: Fundraising efforts lack innovative methods, with limited use of comprehensive databases, relationship management systems, and connections with potential donors. Adopting new approaches could stimulate financial growth and sustainability.

Investing in Experts for Professional Work: Institutions should prioritize hiring and retaining experts for specialized roles, ensuring high-quality outcomes. Investing in professionals' expertise will contribute to more sustainable and impactful programs.

Enhancing Visibility and Outreach: The organization lacks a strong visibility campaign, and limited efforts in marketing its initiatives have constrained its outreach and public recognition. Focusing on building a more prominent public presence can attract greater attention and support.

V. Evidences of Impact from Selected YaR Centers

1. Don Bosco PYaR - Gulbarga, Karnataka

Don Bosco PYaR in Gulbarga began its mission on June 7, 2002, under the leadership of Fr. KJ Joseph. The initiative initially focused on evening tuition centers to educate and empower school dropouts and working children. In 2003, the organization acquired a plot on Naganahalli Road, where a dedicated facility was constructed and inaugurated on November 10, 2004. This center now serves as a refuge for street children, school dropouts, and child labourers, offering them shelter, education, and support.

Current Activities: Don Bosco PYaR in Gulbarga is actively involved in various programs to support children at risk. According to the impact study findings, the center has made significant progress in several areas:

- **Vocational Training:** The center offers comprehensive skills training, leading to a notable increase in employment among the children who complete these programs. This training has been particularly impactful in providing opportunities for youth from marginalized backgrounds.
- **Home Placement:** The shelter services have successfully reintegrated numerous children into safer environments, with a high percentage returning to their families or finding secure, supportive communities.
- **Child Labour Rehabilitation:** The center's efforts have substantially reduced child labour in the region. The rehabilitation programs have been praised for their effectiveness in transforming the lives of former child labourers, who are now pursuing education and vocational training.
- **Tracing Missing Children:** The tracing initiatives have successfully reunited many missing children with their families, with the center playing a critical role in coordinating these efforts with local authorities.

- **Personality Enhancement and Counseling:** The psychological support and personality development programs have shown positive outcomes, with children exhibiting improved confidence and social skills.
- **Education and Job Placement:** The education programs have a high success rate, with many children continuing their studies or finding suitable employment, reflecting the center's commitment to long-term empowerment.
- **Advocacy and Health Care:** The advocacy efforts have raised awareness of children's rights in the region, and the health care services provided have significantly improved the well-being of the children under the center's care.

Additional Centers: To expand its reach, Don Bosco PYaR opened a new rehabilitation center for young at risk on December 8, 2013, at Bablad village near Gulbarga. This expansion signifies Don Bosco PYaR's growing commitment to supporting more children across the district.

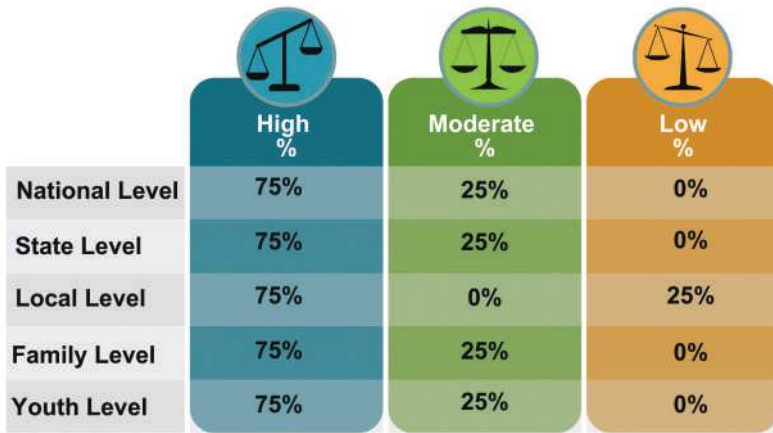
Conclusion: Don Bosco PYaR is part of the larger Don Bosco Tech network, focusing on rehabilitating and empowering young people at risk in one of Karnataka's most underprivileged regions. The impact study findings highlight the center's effectiveness in providing structured training programs, educational support, and holistic care, ensuring a brighter future for these vulnerable children. The ongoing efforts to eliminate child labour, reunite families, and equip children with life skills underscore the center's pivotal role in transforming the lives of at-risk youth in Gulbarga.

Impact of YaR Initiatives

The YaR intervention at Gulbarga is making a profound and overwhelmingly positive impact across all measured domains, solidifying Don Bosco PYaR's role as a critical force for change in the region. The high percentage of impact, particularly at the state and national levels, highlights the program's effectiveness and far-reaching influence. This success is evident not only in the statistics but also in the real-life transformations of the children and families involved. Don Bosco PYaR has been instrumental in advocating for the rights of children, particularly in combating child labour and child marriage, two of the most pressing issues in the region.

The efforts of Don Bosco PYaR go beyond mere intervention; they encompass a comprehensive approach that includes rescue operations, education, healthcare, and eventually guiding children towards financial independence and the security of a home. The District Child Protection Officer (DCPO), in her address during the Focus Group Discussion, commended Don Bosco for its multifaceted contributions. She highlighted how the organization has intervened in the lives of both boys and girls, rescuing them from dangerous and illegal situations and providing them with the tools and support needed to rebuild their lives.

Figure 57: Impact of YaR Intervention at Gulbarga



The figure presents the impact of the YaR (Young at Risk) intervention at Gulbarga across five different domains: National Level, State Level, Local Level, Family Level, and Youth Level. The results indicate that the intervention has a predominantly high impact across most domains:

- **National Level:** 75% of the impact is rated as high, with 25% at a moderate level, indicating significant recognition and influence of the YaR intervention beyond local boundaries.
- **State Level:** Similar to the national level, 75% of the impact is high, with 25% moderate, showing strong influence and effectiveness at the state level.
- **Local Level:** The intervention shows a slightly different pattern at the local level, with 75% high impact and 25% low impact, suggesting that while the intervention is largely effective, there are areas within the local context that may need further attention or improvement.
- **Family Level:** The impact on families is also predominantly high at 75%, with 25% moderate, reflecting the program’s success in positively influencing family dynamics and support systems.
- **Youth Level:** The impact on youth is highly significant, with 75% of respondents indicating a high level of impact and 25% noting a moderate level, underscoring the program’s effectiveness in transforming the lives of young people at risk.

In conclusion, the YaR intervention at Gulbarga is not only achieving its goals of rehabilitation and empowerment but is also gaining significant recognition at broader levels. The program’s success is evident in its ability to empower at-risk youth, support families, and make a lasting impact on the community. Don Bosco PYaR stands at the forefront of this challenge, demonstrating unwavering commitment to the well-being of children and ensuring that they are allowed to grow in a safe and supportive environment.

Beyond the Fields: The Inspiring Rise of a Shepherd's Son



My name is Mahadev Saibanna, and at the age of 22, I find myself reflecting on a journey filled with remarkable triumphs over adversity. Throughout my life, I have discovered that even the most formidable obstacles can be surmounted with unwavering determination and the invaluable support of others.

Born into a family of shepherds, my early years were marked by hardship and trials. At the tender age of four, I tragically lost both of my parents, leaving me feeling lost and uncertain of what the future held. However, it was precisely during this turbulent period that Don Bosco PYaR, Gulbarga, a beacon of hope, entered my life, forever altering its course.

Vividly etched into my memory is the moment I first ventured through the doors of Don Bosco PYaR's street children project. At the time, I was a third-grade student longing for a place I could truly call home. This was the sanctuary that embraced me, nurturing my potential and imparting a sense of belonging. The compassionate staff not only provided me with shelter, but they instilled in me a profound sense of hope. When I struggled to believe in myself, they never wavered in their unwavering belief in my abilities. They not only ensured my continuity in education but also ignited a spark within me, urging me to envision a future filled with boundless possibilities.

As the years passed and I matured, my aspirations took root. Diligently studying and bolstered by the constant encouragement of Don Bosco PYaR, I emerged triumphant, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Food Processing from the esteemed Central University of Karnataka. To this day, I am astounded by the remarkable progress I have made since those early, uncertain days. This transformative journey was far from smooth, but every challenge I encountered only fueled my determination to succeed.

Don Bosco PYaR was not merely an institution to me; it became my family. Their impact was not limited to the provision of education; rather, they fostered my growth, providing guidance and aiding me in discovering my true potential. Without their unwavering support, I would not be standing where I am today, relishing the fruits of my labor.

After completing my degree, I was fortunate to secure a position as a Sales Executive at HATSUN AGRO PRODUCT LTD in Chennai—a role that allows me to apply everything I've learned. Earning a monthly salary of ₹20,000 is something I once never dreamed possible, especially as a young boy facing an uncertain future. Yet here I am, living a life that once felt like a distant dream.

Upon reflection, my heart swells with gratitude towards those who supported me throughout my journey. Don Bosco PYaR has truly been the bedrock upon which my life's narrative has

been written, and for that, I am eternally grateful. They possessed an unwavering vision that surpassed my own limited perception, recognizing the untapped potential within me amidst a sea of challenges.

As I continue to ascend in my career path, I carry with me the invaluable lessons I have acquired and an enduring appreciation for those who have unwaveringly believed in my capabilities. My tale serves as a testament to the indomitable spirit of resilience, the relentless pursuit of personal growth, and the profound impact that education and support wield in transforming lives. With every fiber of my being, I am certain that, regardless of one's humble beginnings, given the appropriate assistance and encouragement, one can transcend all boundaries and achieve greatness.

2. YaR Impact at Don Bosco Child Labour Mission, Davangere

1. Historical Background

Davangere, the sixth-largest city in Karnataka, is renowned as a cotton hub, with agriculture being the primary livelihood for most of its population. Many children have been compelled to help their families with agricultural labour due to economic pressures, which has resulted in the exploitation of their childhood and educational opportunities. In response to this challenge, the Don Bosco Child Labour Mission (DBCLM) was established in 1996 as part of the Salesians of Bangalore Province.

The center's mission is to eradicate child labor through rescue, rehabilitation, and education. Over the years, DBCLM has emerged as a prominent institution dedicated to combating child exploitation in the Davangere district, ensuring that children have the chance to complete their education and reclaim their childhood. For more than two decades, the mission has partnered with national and international organizations, such as KINDERMISSIONSWERK and Don Bosco Mission Germany, to support marginalized children and implement community empowerment projects across numerous villages.

2. Vision, Mission, and Objectives

Vision: To restore the lost childhood of children trapped in labour and ensure their freedom through education and care.

Mission: DBCLM seeks to eliminate child labour, prevent school dropouts, and rehabilitate working and street children through community action, counselling, and academic support.

Objectives:

- Provide educational support and create pathways for rescued children to re-enter mainstream schools.
- Empower the community to protect children's rights.
- Form child rights clubs and strengthen child protection networks.
- Encourage higher education and skill development for disadvantaged youth.

3. Core Activities and Projects

3.1 Residential Bridge Course (RBC)

One of the key strategies of DBCLM is the Residential Bridge Course, a one-year educational program that prepares child labourers and street children for reintegration into mainstream schools.

- **Identification & Rescue:** DBCLM staff visit slums and villages to identify working children and engage with parents to gain consent to enroll them in RBC.
- **Counselling & Motivation:** Both children and parents receive counselling to encourage long-term educational goals.

- **Structured Curriculum:** The program covers academic subjects aligned with the mainstream syllabus, along with co-curricular activities to maintain children's interest.
- **Monitoring & Reintegration:** Periodic assessments help promote children to higher classes, with parents' meetings held biannually. Successful students are transitioned to formal schools after completing the course.

3.2 Open Shelter for Care and Protection

In partnership with the Department of Women and Child Development, Government of Karnataka, DBCLM operates an Open Shelter in Davangere City. This initiative supports children in distress, including beggars, ragpickers, street performers, and children from migrant families. It provides them with food, clothing, healthcare, and education. The project aims to:

- Offer family-like care to vulnerable children.
- Reintegrate children into society by identifying and enrolling them in schools or vocational programs.

3.3 Skill Development and Vocational Training

DBCLM emphasizes **skill-building** to help young adults become self-reliant. It supports children and youth interested in vocational courses such as electrical work, carpentry, hotel management, computer applications, and ITI certifications. Those seeking higher education are also given scholarships to complete undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, fostering long-term career prospects.

3.4 CREAM (Child Rights Education and Action Movement)

The CREAM project focuses on educating children, parents, and community members about child rights and advocacy. Its initiatives include:

- **Formation of Child Rights Clubs (CRCs):** These clubs raise awareness among children about their rights and responsibilities and empower them to prevent child marriages and labour.
- **Training of Stakeholders:** The program trains teachers, community leaders, Panchayat members, and government officials to strengthen child protection systems.
- **Community Outreach:** Social activists conduct awareness campaigns on the Juvenile Justice (JJ) Act, child protection policies, and the harmful effects of child marriages and forced labour.

3.5 Missing Child Bureau (MCB)

As a district-level partner of the Missing Child Bureau (MCB), DBCLM plays a critical role in tracking, rescuing, and reuniting missing children with their families. It works closely with the police and state government to ensure children's safety and repatriation. Using

an online platform, DBCLM registers cases of missing children and coordinates efforts with stakeholders to locate and reintegrate them into society.

3.6 Empowerment Projects in Jagalur Taluk

With support from Kinder Mission Germany, DBCLM launched a project in 15 villages of Jagalur Taluk focusing on child labour eradication and school dropout prevention. Key actions under this project include:

- Establishing Self-Help Groups (SHGs) among marginalized women, including former Devadasi groups.
- Conducting Evening Tuition Centers to provide supplementary education.
- Promote Child Rights Clubs and establish Children's Parliaments to foster leadership among children.
- Training School Development and Monitoring Committee (SDMC) members to improve school governance.

3.7 CHILDLINE 1098

DBCLM operates the CHILDLINE 1098, a helpline that provides 24/7 emergency support to children in distress. The service addresses cases related to child labour, missing children, child marriages, and substance abuse, among others. Street plays, folk songs, and public awareness campaigns are regularly organized to promote the helpline and create awareness about child rights and protection services.

4. Key Centers and Facilities

4.1 Don Bosco Suprabha

Established in 1996, this centre provides education and rehabilitation for marginalized children and youth in Davangere City. It also offers pastoral services to the local Catholic community and conducts community development programs involving Panchayat and SHG members.

4.2 Don Bosco Sujyothi

Located in Alurahatti village, this facility offers residential bridge courses for boys rescued from child labour and dropout cases. Apart from academics, the center teaches children essential life skills, including time management, discipline, and social responsibility.

5. Leadership and Impact

Since its inception, DBCLM has been led by visionary Salesian leaders:

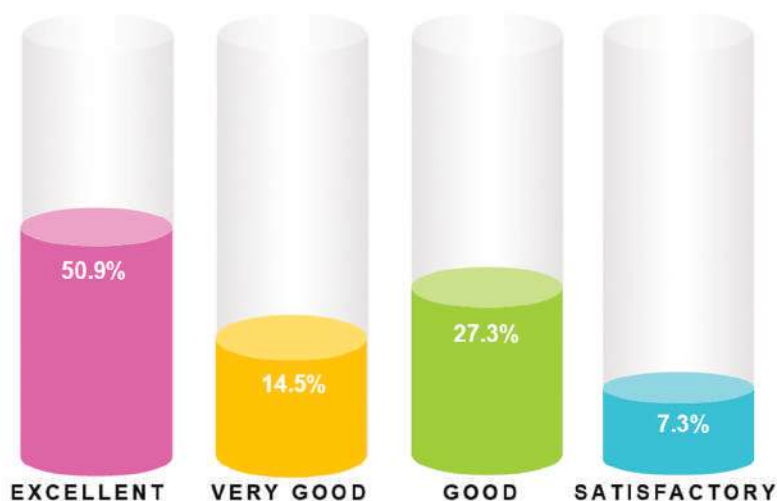
1. Fr. Kuriakose Puthanpurayil (1996–2016)
2. Fr. Cyril Sagayaraj (2016–2022)
3. Fr. Regi Jacob (2022–Present)

DBCLM's efforts have led to the rehabilitation of over 2,180 children between 1996 and 2018, with many successfully reintegrated into mainstream education or secure employment. The center continues to be a transformative force, empowering vulnerable children and communities through education, advocacy, and care.

6. Impact of YaR (Young at Risk) Interventions at Don Bosco Davangere:

Based on the service quality evaluation provided (see uploaded image), the YaR initiative at Davangere has achieved notable success in delivering quality services to at-risk children and marginalized youth. Below is a summary of the impact assessment:

Figure 58: Service Quality of YaR Intervention at Davangere



Out of 55 total respondents, the majority (over 50%) rated the services as 'Excellent,' indicating high satisfaction with the center's efforts. Furthermore, 92.7% of respondents rated the service as 'Good' or above. Only 7.3% gave a 'Satisfactory' rating, suggesting very few participants found areas needing improvement. This positive feedback reflects the success of the YaR initiative at Don Bosco Davangere in providing effective care, rehabilitation, and educational opportunities to at-risk children and marginalized youth.

6.2 Key Activities Driving Positive Feedback:

1. Child Rehabilitation Programs:

- The Residential Bridge Course (RBC) is a key intervention to reintegrate children into mainstream education.
- Open Shelter Projects offer care and protection for the homeless, street children, and child labourers.

2. Skill Development Programs:

- Youth are supported to pursue higher education and vocational training, covering fields like IT, hotel management, and carpentry.

3. Child Rights Advocacy - CREAM Initiative:

- The Child Rights Education and Action Movement (CREAM) empowers children through clubs and awareness campaigns.

- 75,000 children, 1,000 teachers, and 400 government officials have benefited from CREAM programs, boosting child rights awareness.

4. Community Empowerment and Child Labour Eradication:

- The project in Jagalur Taluk (in partnership with Kinder Mission) has reduced child labour and promoted schooling, reinforcing local child protection systems.

5. CHILDLINE 1098 and Missing Child Bureau:

- The Don Bosco center operates CHILDLINE to support children in distress.
- The Missing Child Bureau has reunited 93 children with their families, reflecting the center's efficiency in addressing missing child cases.

7. Case Stories of YaR Impact

7.1 Resilience and Hope: Durugamma's Journey from Rural Hardship to Nursing School



Durugamma B., born in the village of Kalapura in Bellary district, has journeyed through hardship and loss to create a promising future for herself. After her mother's tragic death, Durugamma and her brothers, Hanumanthappa and Ekanthraj, struggled under the care of their father, a daily-wage laborer who could barely meet their needs. Life was a constant struggle, marked by insecurity and grief.

A ray of hope arrived when a compassionate social worker from the Don Bosco Child Labour Mission (DBCLM) and the *Young at Risk* (YaR) initiative intervened. Recognizing the family's dire situation, the social worker enrolled Durugamma and her brothers in the Residential Bridge Course (RBC) at DBCLM. Here, they found more than just shelter and education; they found support, stability, and a second chance to dream.

Durugamma quickly blossomed in this environment, excelling academically and earning admission to the prestigious Morarji Desai High School. With determination and hard work, she scored an impressive 84.64% in her 10th-grade exams. Even through the challenges of the COVID-19 lockdown, Durugamma continued to pursue her studies, preparing for entrance exams with resilience and hope.

Her hard work paid off when she gained admission to K. Pandyarajah Ballal Nursing Institute in Mangalore, where she is now pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Nursing. Grateful for the support and guidance from DBCLM, Durugamma aspires to give back by helping at-risk children, carrying forward the compassion that changed her own life.

Durugamma's story is a testament to the transformative power of timely intervention and education. Through resilience and the kindness of those who believed in her, she has turned her life's hardships into a path toward a brighter future and a mission to uplift others.

8. Conclusion

Don Bosco Child Labour Mission (DBCLM), Davangere, is a testament to the power of education and community empowerment in combating child labour and exploitation. Through innovative programs such as the Residential Bridge Course, Open Shelter, Skill Development, and Child Rights Education, the center has profoundly impacted the lives of children and families across Davangere district. With sustained community partnerships, government support, and leadership from the Salesians, DBCLM remains committed to its mission of eradicating child labour and building a brighter future for every child.

DBCLM has a multifaceted approach to addressing child labour, focusing not only on rescuing children but also on creating a protective environment through community engagement, education, and advocacy. The mission's ongoing success reflects its dedication to restoring childhoods and empowering future generations.

3. BOSCO - Bangalore Oniyavara Seva Coota - The Cradle of YaR in Karnataka

Historical Perspective

BOSCO Can be considered the cradle of the YaR work of the Salesians in Karnataka. However, the concept of 'young at risk' at BOSCO was not initially framed as a formal target group for intervention but emerged organically from the organization's evolving experience. BOSCO—Bangalore Oniyavara Seva Coota, meaning 'association of those serving on the streets of Bangalore'—began with the founders rejecting the then-prevalent societal perception of children on the streets. These children, often dismissed as ragpickers, runaways, child labourers, or vagabonds, were instead recognized by the founders as individuals deserving dignity, respect, and opportunities. From 1980 to 1983, BOSCO's founders undertook intensive exploration and study to understand how to support these marginalized children effectively.

Initially, 90% of the children they encountered were boys, leading to the adoption of the term 'BOSCO Boys.' The goal was to treat them as equals to students attending elite Don Bosco institutions, eschewing derogatory labels like 'street children,' which the founders considered offensive. The early phase involved informal acts of care: children who needed shelter or medical attention were housed temporarily under the college stairs where the founders resided, and those who visited casually were treated as guests, dining with the brothers in their refectory. This practice raised concerns among some residents, as the boys often arrived in shabby clothes, creating discomfort within the structured environment of the college.

One pivotal moment came when Brother (later Father) Swaminathan brought a group of these boys to dine with him at the refectory, despite the discomfort caused among the residents. On that occasion, the then provincial superior, Father Thomas Thayil, encountered the boys, joined them for an informal conversation, and spontaneously referred to them as

'BOSCO Boys.' The name became part of the organization's identity from that point onward.

On April 1, 1984, BOSCO launched a more structured project for these boys, with one of the Founders, Fr. George Kollashani, taking a full-time service at BOSCO. However, as the initiative grew, the organization began searching for a broader, more inclusive term that would move beyond the limitations of 'BOSCO Boys'—a label that risked reinforcing institutional perceptions and gender bias. The evolution of the term, along with the integration of the name 'Oni,' reflecting service on the streets, marks a significant chapter in BOSCO's journey. This transformation highlights BOSCO's ongoing commitment to serving marginalized youth with dignity, creating a space where every child is seen not as a statistic but as a person deserving of holistic care.

Vision

A society that will unreservedly care for the wellbeing of its children and youth with preventive and promotional approaches while standing up for their rights.

Mission

BOSCO accompanies the young at risk in their struggles and journeys from the margins to the centre of society so that they become integrated individuals and responsible citizens in society.

Objectives

- To rescue children round the clock from vulnerable pockets (Railway Stations, Bus stations, markets, streets) in Bangalore City and the surrounding slums.
- To rehabilitate the rescued children through education, health care, counselling, skill training, family reintegration and follow-up.
- To run open shelters or drop-in centers to wean out children addicted to streets and addictive substances.
- To conduct overnight camps to root out the anti-social elements from children with high-risk behaviour.
- Advocate for child-friendly policies and laws with the government.
- To network with other like-minded organizations and others for the restoration and rehabilitation of the children.
- To conduct research and publish books on issues related to children and to replicate good practices.
- To work for the betterment of the government schools through the formation of child rights clubs and strengthening of SDMC.
- To provide supplementary education to the deprived children in the slum communities so that they don't drop out of education.
- To support the police in providing child-friendly care to children.

- To create child-friendly places at the city bus stations, railway stations and other strategic locations of Bangalore.
- To provide alternative family care to children without families.
- To provide aftercare and social reintegration of the children

Activities of BOSCO

BOSCO's mission, inspired by its motto, "That they may have life... life in all its fullness," is brought to life through a comprehensive range of services aimed at supporting vulnerable children and youth. These efforts include 24/7 child rescue operations, managing halfway homes, providing counseling, facilitating family reunification, and tracing missing children. BOSCO places a strong emphasis on child rights awareness, offering a variety of educational programs-including formal and higher education, supplementary learning, literacy initiatives, and vocational training-to empower and uplift young lives.

Additionally, BOSCO runs child rights clubs, health and hygiene programs in slums, job and room placement services, foster care, and aftercare initiatives. The organization is committed to eradicating child labor, advancing advocacy efforts, promoting personality development, and engaging in research and documentation through publications. BOSCO also operates 24-hour child helplines and champions a preventive approach to foster a society that prioritizes children's welfare. All of these initiatives align with BOSCO's broader vision: "To build a society that will unreservedly care for its children through a preventive and promotional approach."

Ten BOSCO Centres for Deprived Children and Youth

BOSCO's ten centers serve as vital hubs, offering comprehensive support, rehabilitation, and reintegration services for children and youth at risk. Each center tailors its programs to meet the unique needs of individuals based on their age, gender, and circumstances, providing a holistic approach to development. The centers aim to guide participants through structured rehabilitation, ultimately leading to successful social reintegration.

Common services across these centers include child and family counseling, residential care, formal and non-formal education, healthcare and awareness programs, life skills training, and opportunities for sports, cultural activities, and recreation, including picnics, camps, and celebrations. These centers not only provide immediate care and safety but also equip children and youth with essential skills, empowering them to build a brighter, more secure future.

1. **BOSCO Yuvodaya** (1989, Gandhinagar, Bangalore) is a transit home for children rescued from streets and public spaces. It provides counselling, family reunification, recreational programs, and advocacy and coordination services through the Missing Child Bureau.
2. **BOSCO Mane** (1986, Chamarajpet, Bangalore) is a residential center preparing boys through bridge courses for formal education. It supports school enrolment and family

reunification and offers services like CHILDLINE and foster care, housing around 35 boys.

3. **BOSCO Yuvakendra** (1985, Magadi Road, Bangalore) focuses on youth over 15 years, offering vocational skills, job placement, and home reintegration support. It provides literacy programs, apprenticeships, and driving license assistance.
4. **BOSCO Nilaya** (2001, KR Market, Bangalore) rehabilitates children from streets and slums through counselling, de-addiction, and medical care. It runs women's empowerment programs, child rights clubs, and early childhood education initiatives.
5. **BOSCO Life Skill Training Centre, Sumanahalli** (2006, Sumanahalli, Bangalore) provides vocational training (carpentry, welding, bakery) and higher education for boys aged 16+. It offers residential care for over 40 youth and runs outreach programs in local communities.
6. **BOSCO Vikas** (2006, Chamarajpet, Bangalore) is home to 55 school-going boys and supports their education through coaching and co-curricular activities. It also offers computer training, research facilities, and community engagement programs.
7. **BOSCO Nivas** (2003, Shivajinagar, Bangalore) serves as a drop-in center for children from streets and slums. It focuses on rehabilitation through counselling, medical care, and skill training while also engaging in community development.
8. **BOSCO Rainbow Home** (2011, Wilson Garden, Bangalore) cares for 75 girls from challenging backgrounds, focusing on holistic education and personal development. It emphasizes family reunification and outreach into slum communities.
9. **BOSCO Vatsalya Bhavan** (2014, Chamarajpet, Bangalore) is a shelter for girls at high risk of exploitation, providing trauma care, education, vocational training, and family reunification, with courses like tailoring and beautician training.
10. **BOSCO Yuva Spandana** (2019, JC Road, Bangalore) supports vulnerable youth from slum areas through skill training, counselling, and career guidance. It plans to become a youth hub with facilities like gyms, health services, and migrant dormitories.

BOSCO's Social Impact: Transforming the Lives of Young at Risk (YaR)

BOSCO's unwavering commitment to working with Young at Risk (YaR) has led to substantial social impact through its multifaceted interventions and long-term programs. Key highlights of its transformative efforts include:

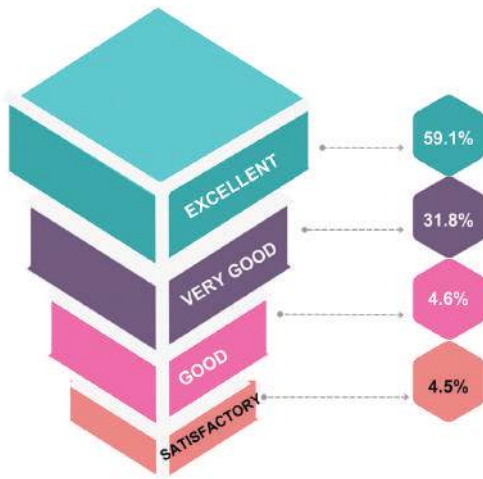
1. **Rescue and Rehabilitation:** BOSCO operates 24/7 to rescue children from vulnerable environments, such as streets, bus stations, and railway stations. This proactive approach has saved countless children from immediate dangers, including abuse, trafficking, and child labor. By providing these children with a safe shelter, BOSCO has significantly reduced the population of street children in Bangalore, offering them a chance to rebuild their lives in a secure and nurturing environment.
2. **Social Reintegration:** BOSCO's efforts extend beyond rescue and rehabilitation, focusing on reuniting children with their families through comprehensive counseling

and follow-up programs. This consistent commitment to home placement ensures that rescued children are reintegrated into society, preventing them from returning to vulnerable or risky environments. By strengthening family bonds and providing continued support, BOSCO fosters stability and security for these children, paving the way for a brighter and more sustainable future.

- 3. Education and Economic Empowerment:** BOSCO has been instrumental in ensuring that children and youth, once dropouts or street children, re-enter the education system through bridge courses, formal and non-formal education, and supplementary learning programs. Beyond academics, BOSCO provides vocational training and skill development in fields such as tailoring and mechanics, along with job placement programs. These initiatives empower youth to achieve self-reliance and economic stability, equipping them with the tools to build a secure and independent future.
- 4. Gender-Sensitive Programs:** BOSCO's dedicated centers, such as BOSCO Rainbow Home and BOSCO Vatsalya Bhavan, focus specifically on supporting girl children at risk. These programs address gender-specific challenges, including exploitation, trafficking, and child marriage, providing a safe and nurturing environment for recovery and growth. Through education, vocational training, and psychological healing, these initiatives empower girls to overcome adversity and transition toward brighter, more self-reliant futures.
- 5. Community Outreach and Grassroots Impact:** BOSCO's initiatives extend beyond individual care to address broader community needs in slum areas. Health programs, women's empowerment initiatives, and child rights awareness campaigns play a pivotal role in fostering safer and more supportive environments for children. Through the establishment of child rights clubs and community development activities, BOSCO tackles risk factors at the grassroots level, creating a foundation for long-term change and reducing vulnerabilities within the community.
- 6. Child Rights Advocacy and Protection:** BOSCO actively engages in child rights advocacy through impactful campaigns and the operation of CHILDLINE services, playing a vital role in strengthening child protection mechanisms. These efforts have enhanced institutional networks and expanded the safety net for vulnerable children in Bangalore, ensuring that more young lives are safeguarded and supported within a robust framework of care and rights awareness.
- 7. Aftercare and Preventive Interventions:** BOSCO ensures a seamless transition for youth moving out of care through comprehensive aftercare programs, including foster care, job placement, and follow-up services. These interventions not only prevent a relapse into risky lifestyles but also promote stability, self-reliance, and responsible citizenship, enabling youth to build healthy and productive futures.
- 8. Holistic Development Programs:** BOSCO emphasizes the all-around development of children through sports, cultural events, camps, life skills training, and personality

development programs. These activities enhance psychological well-being, build social skills, and prepare children for independent living, empowering them to face life's challenges with confidence and resilience.

Figure 59: Quality of YaR Services at BOSCO Bangalore



The data underscores the significant positive impact of BOSCO Bangalore's services on the lives of Young at Risk (YaR). Out of 110 respondents surveyed, 59.1% rated the quality of services as Excellent, while 31.8% rated them as Very Good. This indicates that an overwhelming 90.9% of respondents experienced substantial benefits from BOSCO's efforts, highlighting the effectiveness of its comprehensive approach in addressing the needs of vulnerable children and youth.

These high ratings reflect BOSCO's success in providing shelter, education, vocational training, and emotional support, fostering meaningful rehabilitation and social reintegration. While 4.6% of respondents rated the services as Good and another 4.5% as Satisfactory, indicating areas for potential improvement, the overwhelmingly positive feedback showcases BOSCO's dedication to its mission.

By delivering impactful programs that restore dignity and create opportunities, BOSCO continues to transform the lives of children and youth in distress, solidifying its reputation as a leader in the field of social care and advocacy.

Figure 60: Impact of BOSCO Services Across Various Levels

	HIGH %	MODERATE %	LOW %
NATIONAL LEVEL	50%	46.74%	3.26%
STATE LEVEL	68.01%	31.99%	0%
LOCAL LEVEL	78.3%	17.4%	4.3%
FAMILY LEVEL	85.9%	10.9%	3.2%
YOUTH LEVEL	83.7%	13.1%	3.2%

The figure illustrates BOSCO's significant impact across various dimensions, showcasing consistently strong results in its interventions. The family-level impact stands out with 85.9% rated as high, reflecting BOSCO's effectiveness in strengthening family dynamics and fostering reintegration. Similarly, the youth-level impact is notable, with 83.7% rated as high, highlighting the success of BOSCO's programs in empowering young individuals with care, skills, and opportunities.

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At the state and local levels, BOSCO continues to demonstrate strong influence, with 78.3% and 68.01% of respondents reporting high impact, respectively. While the national-level impact is comparatively balanced—50% rated high and 46.74% rated moderate—it underscores BOSCO’s broad yet nuanced effect across regions and communities.

The collective impact of BOSCO’s initiatives lies in transforming the lives of children and youth at risk. By reducing the vulnerabilities faced by children on the streets and empowering them to lead productive and fulfilling lives, BOSCO has also contributed to building safer, more compassionate communities. Its multi-dimensional approach ensures that the effects of its work resonate deeply at both individual and societal levels.

Impact and Evidence of YaR Intervention at BOSCO From the Streets to Stardom: Lokesh’s Journey of Resilience and Gratitude



At just six years old, Lokesh boarded a bus from his village to Bangalore—and never looked back. Rescued from the streets by BOSCO, he found a place that would nurture him, guiding him toward an education and providing him the stability to discover his many talents. With BOSCO’s support, Lokesh went on to complete his university studies, pursuing various odd jobs along the way before finding his calling in the entertainment world.

His big break came when he joined the popular TV show *Comedy Killadigalu*, which soon opened doors to the film industry. Today, Lokesh is selective about his roles, carefully choosing each one as he builds his career. He has also found joy in his family life with his wife, Prathibha—a talented dancer and artist—and their two children.

Lokesh speaks with deep gratitude for BOSCO, crediting their support and care as the foundation of his journey from the streets to a life filled with purpose, success, and family.

Accolades and Recognitions



National and International Awards:

- 1. National Child Welfare Award (2015):** Awarded by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, recognizing BOSCO's efforts in child protection and welfare at the national level.
- 2. Mother Teresa Memorial National Award (2017):** A highly regarded national award honouring exceptional service in social work and humanitarian efforts.
- 3. Global Achievers Foundation Award (2013):** Acknowledges BOSCO's outstanding achievements and contributions to society with international recognition.
- 4. Outstanding Homelink Node Award (2017):** This award from New Delhi recognizes BOSCO for its excellence in managing Homelink, a platform for tracking missing children.
- 5. Inspire Awards 2018-19 (BWW & Parivartan Global):** For social significance and impactful service, awarded by BRITT WORLDWIDE (BWW) and the Parivartan Global Success Foundation.

State and City-Level Awards:

- 1. Makkala Kalyana Rajya Prashasthi (2000):** Awarded by the Karnataka Government's Women and Child Welfare Department for being the best NGO in child welfare activities across the state.
- 2. Kempe Gowda Awards (2007, 2011, 2019):** The Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) recognizes BOSCO's service towards child labourers and street children in Bangalore.
- 3. Makkala Mitra Award (2004 & 2005):** Acknowledging BOSCO's efforts in child welfare, presented by Karnataka's Women and Child Welfare Department.
- 4. Rotary Community Service Awards (1990, 1998, 2009):** Recognizing the efforts of BOSCO's leadership and excellence in community service, notably awarded to **Fr. Varghese Pallipuram** in 1990 and 1998 for his noble contributions.
- 5. Namma Bengaluru Award (2012 - Finalist):** Honours the best contributions towards the development of Bangalore.
- 6. Sthree Suraksha Chakra Award (2020):** Awarded to Ms. Vinnarasi, Cluster Coordinator, for her exemplary work in child rescue and rehabilitation.

Special Recognition and Individual Honors:

- 1. Bravery Award (1994):** Awarded to Master Santhosh by the Governor of Karnataka for courageous acts.
- 2. Best Child Artist Award (2001):** Recognized the talent of a BOSCO child, Manjunath, for his artistic abilities.
- 3. Special Police Officer's Badge (1992):** Given to five BOSCO staff members for their collaboration with the police in rescuing street children, marking BOSCO's influence in public safety efforts.

4. YaR Awards:

- **Best HUB Coordinator (2014-15, 2019-21):** Mr. John Joshua Nirmal, Homelink Network,
- **Best Organization in Bangalore Province:** Recognizing BOSCO's leadership among NGOs.
- **Appreciation for Child Rescue Work:** Presented to Ms. Vinnarasi.

This comprehensive list of awards reflects BOSCO's impact across multiple dimensions—nationally, regionally, and locally. With its focus on child welfare, education, rehabilitation, and community service, BOSCO has garnered significant recognition, cementing its position as a leading organization in social work.

Conclusion

BOSCO has established itself as a trailblazer in child care and protection, becoming a pioneering **YaR (Young at Risk) center** in Karnataka. With its unwavering commitment to the welfare of street children, vulnerable youth, and marginalized families, BOSCO has not only transformed individual lives but has also shaped the landscape of child protection services in the region. The organisation's exemplary work has propelled the Bangalore Province to be recognized as a YaR Province, setting benchmarks for holistic child development and rescue operations.

BOSCO's collaborative approach with the government, police, NGOs, and civil society has played a vital role in addressing complex social challenges. Its deep-rooted partnerships with government bodies at various levels—such as the Department of Women and Child Welfare—have made BOSCO a model of effective public-private collaboration. The organization's innovative child protection strategies have influenced many other NGOs, inspiring them to adopt similar frameworks for safeguarding children.

Beyond providing shelter, education, and vocational training, BOSCO has fostered family integration and long-term rehabilitation, significantly impacting children and their families. The recognition through numerous awards at state and national levels further highlights BOSCO's leadership in social work and advocacy.

BOSCO's journey is a testament to the transformative power of compassion combined with strategic action. By prioritizing youth empowerment, social integration, and systemic reform, BOSCO has not only reshaped individual lives but has also fostered a more inclusive society, one where every child and young person is given the chance to flourish. BOSCO remains a shining example of how dedicated efforts can create lasting change for future generations.

4. Don Bosco Palluruthy - The Inspiration of YaR Initiatives

Historical Context and Origins of Palluruthy Don Bosco Sneha Bhavan

Kochi, a coastal city in Kerala, experienced significant socio-economic changes during the 1970s. Formerly part of the princely state of Thiru-Kochi, the region became part of Kerala

in 1956. As a historic trading hub, Kochi benefitted from its strategic location, but the rapid urbanization of the 20th century also brought challenges, such as poverty, unemployment, and social displacement. Kerala was noted for its paradox of high literacy (52% in 1957) and low per capita income, with its dense population further exacerbating socio-economic pressures.

In the 1940s, the government passed the Anti-Vagrancy Law of 1944 to curb begging and homelessness. However, the implementation of this law revealed deeper crises—children were among those detained, housed in temporary shelters alongside adults, including leprosy patients and the mentally ill. Recognizing the need for a specialized facility for these children, Fr. Varghese Menacherry, a compassionate Salesian priest, initiated efforts to create a separate home.

The turning point came when the Corporation of Cochin partnered with the Salesians of Don Bosco, an order dedicated to supporting marginalized youth. In 1974, an abandoned factory on the outskirts of the city was repurposed to serve as a rehabilitation center for vulnerable children. Under Fr. Menacherry's leadership, Don Bosco Sneha Bhavan opened with 110 young residents aged 6 to 20, offering shelter, education, vocational training, and emotional support.

Over the next five decades, Sneha Bhavan evolved into a vital ecosystem for at-risk children, successfully reintegrating thousands into society. It remains a leading non-profit organization run by the Don Bosco Welfare Centre Society. It continues its mission of empowering youth through education and holistic care in collaboration with the Corporation of Cochin and community stakeholders.

Sneha Bhavan Extension Centers

Don Bosco Sneha Bhavan in Kochi operates multiple institutions, each designed to meet the unique needs of children at different stages of life. These institutions provide holistic care, education, and rehabilitation, helping children transition from vulnerable situations to empowered lives.

- 1. Sneha Bhavan (1974):** The first institution of the Don Bosco Child Welfare Mission in Kochi serves as the intake facility for boys under 13 rescued from the streets or unsafe environments. Sneha Bhavan provides initial care, emotional support, and education, creating a foundation for their growth.
- 2. Don Bosco Bhavan (1977):** Located in Palluruthy, this home caters to high school and higher secondary students. It emphasizes academic education and extracurricular development, offering sports, music, and life skills training. Several boys from this center have achieved success in state-level sports competitions.
- 3. Sneha Bhavan Annexe (1990):** Developed in collaboration with the Corporation of Cochin, it offers night shelter to migrant youth and working boys. The Annexe provides guidance, counselling, and savings opportunities, creating a nurturing environment for youth transitioning to independent lives.

4. **Valsalya Bhavan (1997):** Established as a haven for girls in distress, this orphanage offers shelter and education until 7th grade, alongside training in music, arts, and computers. Run with the Corporation of Cochin, it aims to help girls recover from trauma and build life skills.
5. **Valsalya Bhavan Annexe (2013):** This center focuses on teenage girls at risk, providing formal education and vocational training in areas like tailoring and crafts. It plays a key role in preparing girls for adulthood and future careers.
6. **Bosco Nilayam (2020):** Originally began in 1986 as a hostel for boys pursuing higher studies or jobs, Bosco Nilayam has evolved into a night shelter for street children, offering temporary care and preventive services. Since 2020, it has been integral to Don Bosco's mission, steering children away from street life toward stability.

These institutions collectively embody Don Bosco's mission of rescuing, nurturing, and empowering vulnerable youth, ensuring they receive education, life skills, and opportunities for a dignified future.

Vision, Mission and Objectives

Vision

Inspired by Don Bosco and challenged by marginalization, we will strive by our attitudes, way of life, and actions to empower children and young at-risk people to create a child-friendly society by networking with like-minded individuals and groups.

Mission

To reach out to the children on the street and young at-risk, to rescue them, to heal the brokenness in their lives, to inspire and support them towards a new life, to accompany them back to the mainstream society and catalysing for the best interest of children is the mission of Don Bosco Sneha Bhavan.

Objectives

The Objectives of the Project are:

- To reintegrate the children/youth found on the streets with their own families.
- To provide shelter to those with no home and provide them with opportunities for holistic growth of body, mind and spirit.
- To bring about an overall psycho-social development of the children/youth in the project.
- To improve the overall educational status of street and working children, slum children, neglected children, children of sex workers, girls on the street, socially disadvantaged groups and school dropouts to integrate them into society with skills, self-employment, rehabilitation and the confidence to begin empowered lives.
- To make children at risk respectable citizens with skills, self-confidence, dignity and integrity.

- Help them find a job and form a family of their own.
- To make them catalysts for the transformation of society to act in favour of children at risk.
- To protect street children against all forms of abuse and exploitation.
- To spread awareness and elicit understanding among the general public about the problems of children at risk.
- To facilitate a network of agencies towards a co-ordinated effort in working with street children.
- To conduct research studies on the problems of children at risk with the objective of evolving strategies to improve their lives.

Major Activities of Don Bosco Palluruthy

Don Bosco Palluruthy, under the Sneha Bhavan network, operates several programs focused on housing, education, child protection, and community welfare.

Housing and Support Programs:

- *Bosco Nagar (1979)* and *Bosco Nivas (1987)* are housing colonies providing stable accommodation for employed and married youth, supporting their transition to independent living.

Skill Development and Education:

- *Don Bosco Mechatech (1992)* offers vocational training in welding, tailoring, mechanics, and other trades to school dropouts over 14 years old.
- *Don Bosco Open School (1995, 2007)* delivers secondary education in commerce for underprivileged students, supporting around 70 youth annually.

Child Protection and Counselling Services:

- *CHILDLINE (1098) (2001)*, a 24/7 helpline, serves the Ernakulam district, facilitating the rescue of thousands of children. It operates in collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- *Navajyothi Counselling Centre (2006)* offers mental health services and professional counselling training.
- *Home Link Network (2007)* focuses on repatriating missing children, collaborating with the Young at Risk Forum, and connecting over 80 Don Bosco centres nationwide.
- *Chaithanya Tele-Counselling Centre (2008)* provides free tele-counselling, especially for those affected by HIV/AIDS, in partnership with the Kerala State AIDS Control Society.

Community Engagement and Rehabilitation Programs:

- *BOSCO KIDS (2015)* promotes reading, self-esteem, and saving habits among underprivileged children.

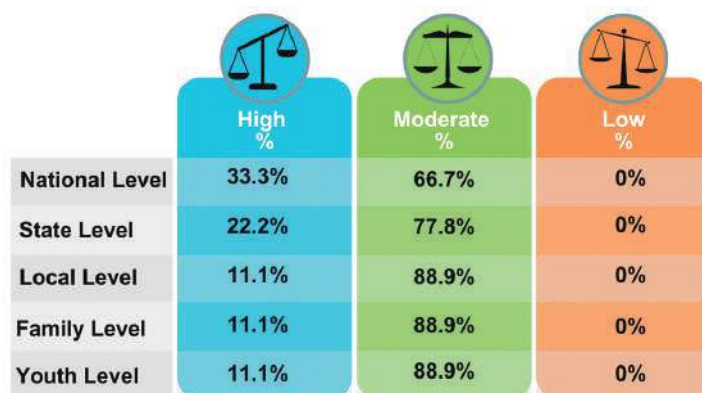
- *DREAM (2018)*, in collaboration with BREADS Bangalore, addresses substance abuse through education and de-addiction support.
- *KISMAT (2018)* advocates for migrant labourers' rights, running two help desks in Ernakulam to assist interstate migrants.

These initiatives collectively aim to empower marginalized youth and support the vulnerable in Kochi.

Impact of YaR Interventions by Don Bosco Palluruthy

Don Bosco Palluruthy has impacted vulnerable children, youth, and migrant workers in Kochi, reaching over 26,500 lives. The organization offers holistic care, education, and rehabilitation, guiding 15,663 alumni toward sustainable careers. It has also facilitated 2,315 adoptions and provided foster care for 1,823 children. Programs like DREAM address substance abuse, while KISMAT promotes the rights and integration of interstate migrants. Through its CHILDLINE (1098) initiative, Don Bosco Palluruthy has handled over 280,000 emergency calls, ensuring the safety of children in distress across Ernakulam district. The Don Bosco Open School enrolls around 70 disadvantaged youth annually, providing crucial educational support. Additionally, skill development initiatives like Don Bosco Mechatech empower youth with practical skills, helping school dropouts build careers. With its comprehensive approach to child protection, education, and family welfare, Don Bosco Palluruthy fosters long-term community resilience and social transformation.

Figure 61: Impact Levels of Don Bosco Palluruthy Across Various Dimensions



From staff feedback, Don Bosco Palluruthy is recognized as having a broad impact across different levels. At the national level, 66.7% of respondents reported a significant influence, while 77% highlighted notable contributions at the state level. Locally, 88.9% acknowledged the center's strong engagement, reflecting its deep-rooted presence in the community.

The center's effectiveness extends to family and youth services, with 88.9% affirming a high impact in these areas. Don Bosco Palluruthy has become a key player in rehabilitation, education, and community upliftment, empowering children and families through its programs. The feedback underscores its ability to foster meaningful social change and build resilient communities while maintaining influence on state and national platforms.



In the bustling city of Cochin, Thulasi's life took a remarkable turn when the compassionate police rescued her along with her psychiatric mother and younger sister from the harsh streets. Their journey of struggle and hardship began to take a new course as they found refuge and warmth at the caring Valsalya Bhavan Annexe.

Within the walls of this haven, Thulasi's inherent talent for dance was discovered and cherished. The orphanage recognized the sheer brilliance that emanated from her movements, and with the help of kind-hearted benefactors, she was granted admission to the prestigious Cochin Arts and Communication school. Here, Thulasi's passion for dance flourished and bloomed under the guidance of experienced teachers and mentors.

As her skills expanded and her love for dance deepened, Thulasi set her sights on even greater heights. With unwavering determination, she joined the highly-revered Dharani Dance School, a place where her talent could evolve and be harnessed to its fullest potential. Braving challenges and dedicating herself wholeheartedly, Thulasi completed her Plus Two education and embarked on a transformative journey at the renowned Chennai Dance School.

For four years, the graceful art of Bharatanatyam became Thulasi's world. Every step she took, every expression she adorned, resonated with the passion and soul she poured into her craft. And alongside her pursuit of excellence in dance, Thulasi also pursued a distant B Com degree, proving that her thirst for knowledge and personal growth knew no bounds.

Today, Thulasi stands tall, sharing her immense talent and expertise as a Bharatanatyam instructor at the esteemed Dharani Dance School in Cochin. Her students are captivated by not only her impeccable technique but also the deep sense of emotional connection she brings to her performances.

With dreams that soar beyond boundaries, Thulasi's aspirations are far from complete. Fueled by her unyielding passion and desire to make a lasting impact, she envisions a future where she can establish her very own dance school.

Thulasi's extraordinary journey from the harsh streets of Cochin to the graceful stages of the dance world is a testament to the strength of her unassailable spirit. Her story is a symphony of resilience, talent, and the unwavering support of those who saw her potential.

Conclusion:

As Don Bosco Palluruthy commemorates the golden jubilee of its transformative street work for youth, the profound and lasting impact it has had on vulnerable young people is increasingly evident. Over the past five decades, this distinguished institution has extended

its reach to thousands of children, providing essential support and creating invaluable opportunities for personal development. Through a comprehensive array of programs—encompassing education, vocational training, and family support—Don Bosco Palluruthy has played a central role in reshaping the lives of at-risk youth, guiding them from hardship toward brighter, more promising futures.

The center’s influence extends beyond individual transformation, leaving a lasting imprint on local and regional communities. By fostering resilience and empowerment, Don Bosco Palluruthy has been crucial in addressing the challenges faced by marginalized youth, promoting their well-being, and facilitating their integration into society. Its steadfast commitment to the upliftment of young people guarantees a positive legacy that will continue to resonate for generations, leaving an indelible mark on the heart of the community.

VI. Networking and Collaboration with Government

Collaboration of Don Bosco with Government Bodies and the YaR Impact on Policy Making

The *Salesians of Don Bosco (SDB)* and the *Young at Risk (YaR)* initiative have played a pivotal role in addressing child protection, labour prevention, and social welfare policies in collaboration with government bodies across Karnataka. Through a systematic approach of policy advocacy and direct intervention, Don Bosco’s involvement has become a model of excellence in child care and social development.

Key Contributions Through Government Positions

1. Members and Chairpersons in Child Welfare Committees (CWC)

Several Salesians serve in pivotal roles within CWCs across districts. For example:

- **Fr. Varghese Pallipuram** (Chairperson, CWC Chitradurga) and **Fr. Kuriakose Puthenpurayil** (Chairperson, CWC Davangere) have been integral in decisions regarding children’s rehabilitation.
- Other priests like **Fr. Steven Lawrence** (Bidar) and **Fr. CV George** (Ramanagar) have contributed as CWC members, ensuring the alignment of child rescue operations with government policies.

2. Integration with Juvenile Justice Systems

- Lay members, such as **Mr. Rama Naik** and **Mr. PN Basavaraju**, have served multiple terms as CWC members and juvenile justice board (JJB) members, reinforcing Don Bosco’s influence on child rights decisions.
- These collaborations have enabled timely rescues, rehabilitation efforts, and implementation of child labour prevention initiatives.

Impactful Roles in Government Committees

- **Fr. Kuriakose Puthenpurayil** held multiple roles in Davangere, such as a member of the *District Bonded Labour Abolition Committee*, *Child Trafficking Prevention Committee*, and *District Selection Committee for DCPU staff*.
- **Fr. Edward Thomas** held influential positions at the state level, including:
 - o Director of the Missing Child Bureau (BOSCO)
 - o Member of the Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (KSCPCR)
 - o Advisor in policy frameworks like the JJ Act Model Rules and the Open Shelter Project Policy Designing Committee. His position allowed Don Bosco to advocate effectively for systemic changes that impact vulnerable children across Karnataka.

Don Bosco's Role in Community Welfare and Anti-Trafficking Measures

- **Fr. Enchacka Siju** in Mysore and **Fr. Anachalil Saji George** in Gulbarga serve on *Anti-Women Trafficking Committees* and *COVID-19 Child Sponsorship Committees*.
- Their participation has enabled the organization to combat trafficking more effectively, ensuring marginalized children receive the necessary care and protection.
- Don Bosco members are also engaged in *District Legal Service Authorities*, *POSH committees*, and *Bonded Labour Rescue Teams*, reflecting their multi-dimensional support in tackling social issues.

Policy Making and YaR's Strategic Influence

The YaR initiative's proactive engagement has been instrumental in framing policies for child care and fostering systems. Proactive engagement by Don Bosco representatives, including Fr. George PS and Fr. Matthew Thomas, has been instrumental in drafting critical frameworks such as the Foster Care Model and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for various government interventions.

Moreover, Don Bosco's active participation on committees overseeing programs like the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Child Labour Elimination Projects has ensured that educational initiatives are effectively aligned with broader efforts to eradicate child labour. Through these strategic contributions, the YaR initiative has significantly influenced policy-making processes, advancing the protection and empowerment of vulnerable children across India.

Conclusion: Impact of YaR on Systemic Change

The collaboration between the Don Bosco Fathers and government bodies highlights the transformative impact of *Young at Risk* (YaR) interventions in enhancing child protection systems. By actively participating in both operational and policy-making roles, the Don Bosco network exemplifies the strength of public-private partnerships in driving meaningful change.

Through a unique blend of grassroots intervention and strategic policy advocacy, Don Bosco has not only rescued countless children but also influenced child welfare policies in profound ways. This partnership has left a lasting imprint on governance structures across Karnataka, ensuring more effective and compassionate systems to safeguard vulnerable children.

VII. Research and Publications by the YaR Project

The Don Bosco *Young at Risk* (YaR) project communities have made significant contributions through their research and publications, offering valuable insights into the challenges faced by at-risk youth and the impact of targeted interventions. These efforts have culminated in a diverse array of resources that serve to inform, educate, and advocate for the rights and well-being of vulnerable young people. Through these initiatives, the Don Bosco network continues to drive awareness and inspire action toward creating a safer, more inclusive environment for youth at risk.

1. **Research and Studies:** The *Young at Risk* (YaR) communities have conducted a wide range of studies, both large and small, to gain deeper insights into the lives of at-risk youth. These research efforts provide invaluable data that inform the development of programs and policies, ensuring they effectively address key areas such as child protection, rehabilitation, and community engagement. By grounding their initiatives in evidence-based understanding, YaR communities continue to enhance the impact and relevance of their interventions.
2. **Notable Publications:**
 - **'Empowering the Young at Risk':** A resource focusing on strategies to support vulnerable youth.
 - **'From the Streets to School':** Chronicles the transition of children from street life to education.
 - **'Hope for Tomorrow: Stories of Transformation':** Showcases success stories of youth who have overcome adversity.
 - **'Guidelines for Child Protection in YaR Centres':** Provides practical guidelines for safeguarding children in care.
 - **'Foster Family – Renewed Hope and a New Life':** An in-depth study on foster care practices in India, covering global and Indian perspectives, challenges, and promising practices.
 - **'Contemporary Perspective of Children in Conflict with Law':** Examines the profile and circumstances of children involved in legal conflicts in Bangalore.
 - **'Working with Children at Risk':** A comprehensive guide for NGOs working with street children, detailing intervention strategies and support mechanisms.

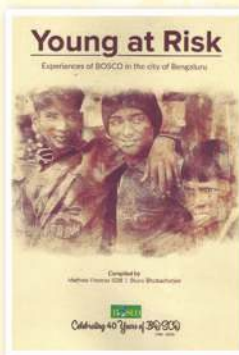
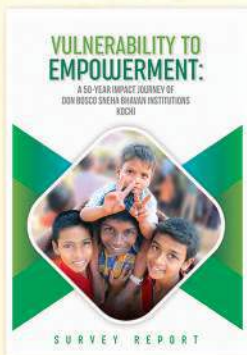
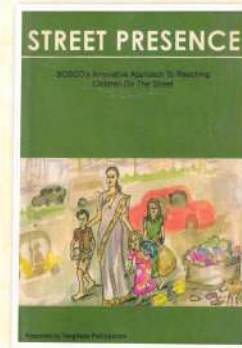
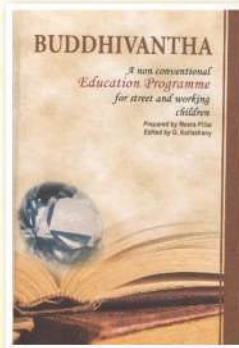
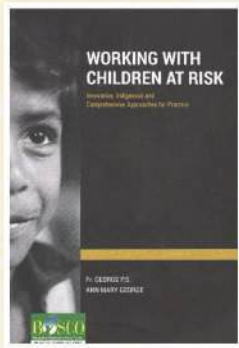
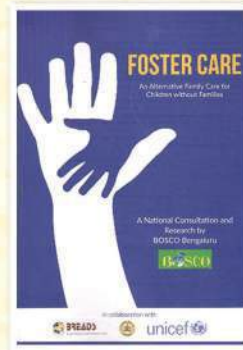
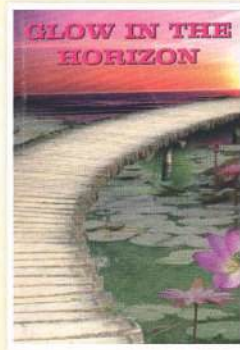
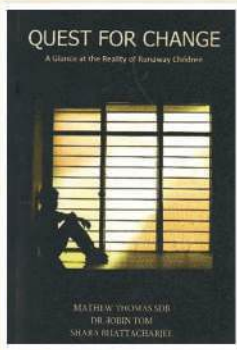
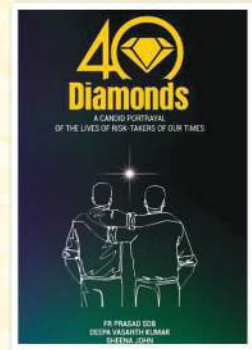
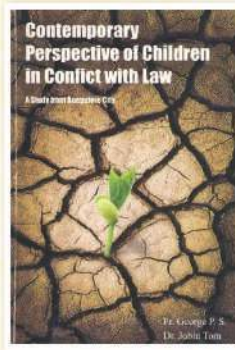
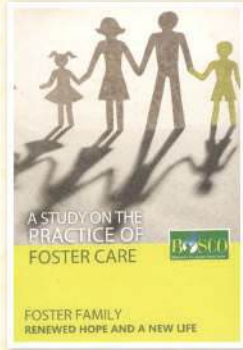
- **'Street Presence: BOSCO's Innovative Approach to Reaching Children on the Streets':** Outlines methodologies and skills essential for effective street education.
 - **'Buddhivantha: A Non-Conventional Educational Programme for Street and Working Children':** Highlights educational interventions tailored to the unique needs of street children.
 - **'Quest for Change: A Glance at the Reality of Runaway Children':** Analyzes the factors driving children to run away and the challenges they face on the streets.
 - **'Madilu Serida Hoogalu':** A collection of stories (translation of the Book Glow in the Horizon from English to Kannada) of the children who left their homes due to various family issues, showcasing BOSCO's role in their rehabilitation.
 - **'Glow in the Horizon':** Celebrates the success stories of children helped by BOSCO over its 25 years of service.
 - **'Young at Risk: Experiences of BOSCO in the City of Bengaluru':** A compilation of studies addressing issues such as runaways, missing children, and health problems among youth in Bangalore.
 - **'Foster Care - An Alternative Family Care for Children without Families':** A report from a national consultation on foster care, offering insights into the future of alternative care in India.
 - **'40 Diamonds – A Candid Portrayal of the Lives of Risk-Takers of Our Times':** Chronicles the lives of 40 individuals who have overcome adversity with the help of BOSCO, celebrating their resilience and achievements.
 - **'Vulnerability to Empowerment: A 50-Year Impact Journey of Dob Bosco Sneha Bhavan Institutions Kochi.'** – A Survey Report published during the Golden Jubilee of the pioneering YaR interventions in the Province.
3. **Annual Reports and Newsletters:** Annual reports from the YaR communities document the year's activities, achievements, and challenges, providing a comprehensive overview of their work. Newsletters like **Street Voice** offer regular updates and stories, keeping stakeholders informed and connected.
 4. **Essays and Home Link Publications:** Various essays and analytical pieces have been published, exploring themes such as child rights and rehabilitation. **Home Link** and **BOSCO Research and Documentation (BRD)** have played key roles in compiling and distributing these important works.
 5. **Community-Based Publications:** Each YaR community contributes to the collective knowledge base by producing directories, information documents, and other resources tailored to local contexts. These publications serve as both practical guides and advocacy tools, ensuring the needs and voices of at-risk youth are represented.

Conclusion

The Don Bosco *Young at Risk* (YaR) project's research and publications form a comprehensive body of knowledge that both documents its impact and shapes its future initiatives. Evaluative reports, such as those from the CREAM project, alongside small-scale community analyses, surveys, and other academic studies, contribute significantly to this wealth of information.

These resources, housed within BOSCO's Research and Documentation (BRD), serve as invaluable tools for advocacy, education, and the continuous improvement of services for at-risk youth. Together, they reflect a commitment to evidence-based practices, ensuring the YaR project remains responsive and effective in addressing the evolving needs of vulnerable young people.

MAJOR PUBLICATIONS



MAIN FINDINGS & SUGGESTIONS

A. Awareness and Involvement in YaR Mission

Involvement in YaR Mission Activities: Stakeholders, particularly staff and volunteers, have played a vital role in the success of the *Young at Risk* (YaR) mission, contributing to key areas such as education, child protection, and rehabilitation. Their consistent commitment across regions demonstrates a deep sense of responsibility toward vulnerable children. However, some areas have experienced fluctuations in engagement due to shifting external priorities and resource constraints.

Despite these challenges, the overall dedication of stakeholders remains strong. To sustain and enhance this momentum, continuous capacity-building initiatives and efforts to address external challenges are crucial. Providing greater job security and clearer career pathways for staff—whose futures are often tied to project-based roles—can foster enthusiasm, boost morale, and deepen their commitment to the mission.

Awareness of Changes in the Juvenile Justice Act: Stakeholders within the *Young at Risk* (YaR) mission demonstrate a strong awareness of the amendments to the Juvenile Justice Act and their implications for child protection and legal advocacy. This understanding has prompted necessary adjustments to the mission's strategies, ensuring full compliance with evolving legal mandates.

As the legal landscape continues to shift, the mission's ability to adapt its practices remains critical in safeguarding the rights and well-being of the children under its care. By staying informed and proactive, the YaR mission reinforces its commitment to providing a secure and rights-focused environment for vulnerable youth.

Need to Redefine Mission Objectives: Stakeholders have emphasized the need to revisit and potentially redefine outdated objectives of the *Young at Risk* (YaR) mission to address emerging challenges such as digital safety and mental health concerns. As societal risks for youth continue to evolve, the mission's goals must remain relevant and proactive.

Regularly reviewing these objectives with input from diverse stakeholders will be essential to ensure the mission stays impactful and aligned with contemporary needs. By embracing

a forward-thinking approach, the YaR mission can continue to effectively protect and empower vulnerable youth in an ever-changing world.

Positive Impact Since 1974: Since its inception in 1974, the *Young at Risk* (YaR) mission has achieved remarkable outcomes, including the rehabilitation of street children, successful social reintegration, and the empowerment of vulnerable youth through education and skill development. These accomplishments reflect the mission's enduring effectiveness in transforming lives and fostering hope for countless young individuals.

The mission's success underscores the critical importance of sustained support, strategic planning, and adaptive approaches to ensure continued impactful outcomes for the most vulnerable in society.

Alignment with Government Policies: The YaR mission has successfully aligned its programs with government policies, particularly in child protection and the juvenile justice system. This strategic alignment has not only ensured compliance with legal regulations but also allowed the mission to influence policy directions in certain regions. To sustain its impact and continue advocating for vulnerable children, it will be crucial for the YaR mission to maintain this alignment and stay informed about evolving policy changes. By doing so, the mission can strengthen its position as a key advocate in safeguarding the legal protection and welfare of the children it serves.

B. Historical Understanding and Evolution

Familiarity with Services Before CHILDLINE: Long-term stakeholders are familiar with the services offered by the YaR mission before the advent of CHILDLINE, which focused on providing informal shelter, primary education, and emergency care. While CHILDLINE has introduced more structured interventions, these foundational services remain relevant, especially in regions lacking formal child protection services infrastructure.

Continuation of Pre-CHILDLINE Services: Stakeholders have a consensus on the importance of continuing certain pre-CHILDLINE services. These services, which are often the first point of contact for children in distress, continue to play a vital role in high-risk areas, ensuring that no child is left without immediate care and attention.

Awareness of Initial Documentation Processes: Although documentation practices have improved over the years, stakeholders expressed concerns about the potential loss or inadequate archiving of early records. This was one of the most pressing issues highlighted regarding the YaR mission. While some centers excel in this area, consistency and continuity are lacking, particularly with frequent personnel changes and transfers. Strengthening documentation practices, especially in preserving historical data, is crucial for future longitudinal studies and to fully understand the long-term impact of the YaR mission.

Impact on Target Group: The YaR mission has significantly improved the well-being of its target group, which includes street children, school dropouts, and children/youth at

risk. Through advocacy, education, and rehabilitation services, these children have gained a stronger awareness of their rights and opportunities. This focus on rights-based education has had a profound impact, helping to empower children and youth to become self-reliant and confident members of society. The CREAM project has been a shot in the arm for YaR mission in this regard across the Karnataka region.

Need for Comprehensive Impact Assessment: Stakeholders acknowledge the importance of conducting periodic impact assessments of the YaR mission's impact over the past 50 years. This evaluation would highlight successes and areas for improvement and offer a strategic roadmap for future initiatives. A comprehensive impact study would enhance the mission's credibility, fostering continued support from donors and partners. This current assessment is a precursor to a more in-depth analysis at the provincial level, extending beyond YaR centers to encompass all Salesian presences within the Bangalore Province.

Witnessing Success Stories: The YaR mission has witnessed numerous success stories in which former beneficiaries have gone on to lead fulfilling lives and contribute positively to society. These stories serve as powerful testaments to the mission's long-term impact. By documenting and sharing these success stories, the mission can inspire continued support and demonstrate the tangible results of its efforts. 'The 40 Diamonds' and 'Glow in the Horizon', two publications with forty and twenty-five case studies by BOSCO, are good examples of such inspiring testaments stored up for the future, which others can replicate. Don Bosco Palluruthy has compiled a book with the case studies of the children passed out from there to mark their Golden Jubilee this year, similar to what BOSCO published.

C. Representation and Community Involvement

Satisfaction with Representation and Involvement: Overall, stakeholders have expressed satisfaction with the level of community involvement in YaR mission activities. However, certain areas have room for improvement to ensure all communities are equally represented and engaged. Addressing these disparities and fostering greater inclusivity across all regions will help ensure that the mission's activities reach all those in need.

Participation in Equal Representation Initiatives: The mission has implemented initiatives to promote equal representation, although participation rates vary across regions. Strengthening these initiatives will ensure that all beneficiaries, regardless of background or location, have equal access to the services and opportunities provided by the YaR mission. Unlike early years, it is especially appreciated that the Don Bosco Mission has started including girl children, providing them with equal opportunity. Don Bosco institutions with YaR programmes have moved from the cities and streets to slums and interior villages, indicating its expansion and inclusivity.

Engagement with Stakeholders: The YaR mission's strength lies in its ability to engage and collaborate with a broad network of stakeholders, creating a supportive environment that drives its initiatives forward. To enhance its impact, the mission should focus on diversifying

partnerships—notably with local communities and innovative CSR initiatives—to leverage new resources and expertise. Moving beyond conventional funding models, exploring collaborative ventures, and empowering staff through ongoing training will enable the mission to introduce creative solutions and ensure sustainable program development. This approach will foster resilience and adaptability, ensuring that the mission remains responsive to the evolving needs of vulnerable children.

D. Services, Adaptation, and Challenges

Awareness of Challenges: The YaR mission encounters substantial challenges, including financial constraints, societal changes, and evolving policy frameworks, all of which it has demonstrated considerable resilience in navigating. Proactively addressing these challenges is critical to ensuring the long-term effectiveness of the mission. Rather than adopting a stance of resistance, a strategy of compliance and collaboration is paramount to achieving success. Government agencies, such as law enforcement, the departments of women and child welfare, transport, and revenue, recognize the value of Don Bosco's initiatives. Furthermore, immediate collaborators, including members of the CWC and JJB, acknowledge the positive impact of YaR interventions in shaping the future of society. This collaborative support underscores the significance of the mission's efforts and illustrates the potential for sustained, meaningful impact through strategic partnerships.

Adaptation to External Changes: The YaR mission has shown an ability to adapt to external changes; however, certain areas would benefit from more agile and responsive approaches. Enhancing adaptive capacities, particularly in relation to societal shifts and technological advancements, is essential to ensure the mission remains attuned to the evolving needs of its beneficiaries. One key adaptation could involve updating the vocational training programs to reflect the demands of the current job market. In the digital era, characterized by rapid advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and visual media, there is a need for a new generation of youth equipped with relevant skills. While the Salesians have a long tradition of responding to the signs of the times, there remains room for innovation in our thinking and approach to better align with contemporary developments.

Specific Needs of Children in Various Institutions: Stakeholders possess a profound comprehension of the diverse needs of children across various institutional settings, including hostels, shelter homes, supplementary education centers in rural areas, and child rights clubs. To address these distinct needs, tailored programs have been meticulously crafted to ensure that interventions are both effective and adaptable. Ongoing evaluation of these needs will be essential in maintaining the mission's relevance and ensuring its continued effectiveness in delivering critical services to vulnerable children.

Participation in Focused Group Discussions (FGDs): Engaging stakeholders in Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) has proven to be a valuable means of gaining insights for refining strategies and addressing on-the-ground challenges. These discussions offer real-time

feedback from individuals directly involved in the mission's activities. Conducting regular FGDs can serve as a crucial tool for ongoing improvement, providing valuable input to inform future decisions.

Improvements in Slum-Based Communities: The YaR mission has made substantial progress in enhancing the living conditions of children in slum communities through targeted interventions. These initiatives have supported vulnerable families, providing children with access to education, skill development, and healthcare services. Expanding these programs could further amplify the mission's impact in underserved areas. In an effort to deepen its understanding of these communities, the BOSCO Research Centre, Bangalore, has conducted needs assessments and situational analyses in newly launched areas, demonstrating YaR's commitment to supporting the most marginalized children and families. Moreover, BREADS consistently undertakes slum and village-based surveys to ensure informed and effective planning prior to the implementation of any large-scale projects.

Behavioural Changes in Runaway/Missing Children: Positive behavioral changes have been observed among runaway and missing children who have accessed the YaR mission's services. These changes, which include enhanced emotional stability and successful social reintegration, underscore the effectiveness of the mission's programs in addressing the complex needs of this vulnerable group. Ongoing support for these children is essential to sustain and build upon these positive outcomes.

Addressing Needs in Open Shelters and Drop-in Centres: The mission has made significant progress in addressing the needs of children in open shelters and drop-in centres; however, there remains potential for further enhancement. Counselling services, along with trauma diagnosis and care, including mental health support, represent critical areas for improvement in these types of shelter homes. Regular assessments of shelter services, coupled with adaptations to meet the evolving needs of the children, will be essential in ensuring that these safe spaces continue to provide the necessary support for their rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

Educational Outcomes of Dropouts: The educational outcomes for dropouts who have participated in the YaR mission's skill training programs have shown significant improvement. Many of these children have gained valuable skills that have led to better employment opportunities and successful reintegration into society. Scaling these programs could reduce dropout rates and enhance educational outcomes across regions. The education programmes and their contributions to the life and future of the beneficiaries have been the most acclaimed impact of the YaR programme. To further enhance these efforts, innovative approaches such as 'open schooling,' 'night schools,' sponsored education, 'school on wheels,' and 'computer on wheels' should be explored, enabling more children and youth to access mainstream education and lead dignified lives.

E. Stakeholder Engagement and Communication

Impact on Children Engaged in Begging Activities: The YaR mission has made significant strides in rescuing children involved in begging and integrating them into education and skill development programs. These initiatives have played a crucial role in disrupting the cycle of exploitation and providing these children with opportunities for a more promising future. Sustained attention to this vulnerable group is vital for achieving long-term societal change, particularly through continued efforts in locations such as railway stations, bus terminals, traffic signals, parks, and marketplaces.

Innovative Approaches and Strategies: The mission has implemented a range of innovative strategies, including mobile outreach units and digital education tools, to engage marginalized children. These approaches have significantly broadened the mission's reach, enabling it to connect with children in remote and difficult-to-access areas. Moving forward, innovation will continue to be a central factor in the mission's success, facilitating its ability to adapt to the evolving needs of society.

Utilization of Local Documentation: The YaR mission has effectively leveraged local documentation to evaluate its programs; however, there exists an opportunity to enhance data collection and analysis through more systematic approaches. Strengthening documentation practices will facilitate more precise assessments and ensure that the mission's strategies are substantiated by comprehensive and reliable evidence.

Challenges in Gathering Information: Collecting information from former staff and beneficiaries has proven challenging, particularly in terms of maintaining long-term contact and tracking outcomes. Enhancing communication channels and utilizing modern technology to monitor beneficiaries could streamline this process, ensuring that the mission has access to the necessary data to evaluate its long-term impact effectively.

Increasing Parental Awareness: Parental awareness of the mission's activities has progressively increased through targeted outreach programs. This growing awareness has fostered heightened support for the mission's initiatives and strengthened collaboration between parents and mission staff. Expanding programs aimed at increasing parental engagement could further enhance the mission's reach and overall impact.

Suggestions, Recommendations and Future Directions

Encouraging New Participants: The mission should continue to actively encourage the involvement of new participants, particularly from younger generations, to ensure the sustainability of its long-term impact and maintain its relevance to the evolving needs of society. Employing creative and innovative approaches will be essential in attracting young Salesians and engaging communities in the mission's objectives. The responsibility of this mission should not rest solely with a few, but rather address the needs of the entire province. Therefore, efforts should be made to initiate YaR activities in every Salesian community, drawing inspiration from seasoned veterans while also embracing modern technology and forward-thinking perspectives to engage the new generation.

Strengthening Youth Empowerment Programs: Youth empowerment programs, particularly those emphasizing leadership development and vocational training, should be expanded to ensure that beneficiaries of the mission are equipped with the necessary skills and confidence to thrive.

Enhanced Focus on Mental Health: The increasing emphasis on mental health, particularly for vulnerable children, necessitates greater attention and integration within existing programs. The mission should prioritize the incorporation of mental health services, ensuring comprehensive support for children and youth affected by trauma or other psychological challenges. This integration is essential not only in formal YaR centers but also across all communities that directly impact these children, including community-based programs and regular educational institutions. Notably, in response to growing mental health concerns, the Bangalore Province has initiated the 'Mental Health Awareness and Nurturing Program' across six districts in Karnataka. This program aims to raise awareness and offer targeted support to children facing mental health challenges.

Focus on Digital Safety and Online Risk Management: In an increasingly digital world, the mission must address the risks that children and youth encounter online. Implementing programs focused on digital literacy and online safety will be essential in equipping beneficiaries with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the challenges of the digital age securely.

The qualitative assessment underscores the YaR mission's substantial impact on vulnerable children through education, protection, and rehabilitation. Despite facing various challenges, the mission's adaptability, stakeholder engagement, and innovative approaches have contributed to meaningful and positive change. By focusing on evolving needs and implementing comprehensive strategies, the mission is well-positioned to ensure continued success and long-term relevance.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Youth at Risk (YaR) Impact Assessment of Don Bosco Bangalore Province focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of the various interventions that speak of marginalized and vulnerable children/youth, particularly those affected by migration, street life, substance abuse, and unemployment. This comprehensive assessment takes into account a range of pedagogical, sociological, psychological, and economic indicators to measure the success and impact of YaR programs, providing a holistic understanding of their outcomes.

The study reveals notable improvements in academic performance, social integration, and emotional well-being among the youth, manifested through enhanced self-esteem, self-confidence, and resilience. These positive outcomes are attributed to a variety of educational programs, vocational training, life skills education, health initiatives, and mental health support such as counseling and accompaniment, alongside other development efforts aimed at both personal and professional growth, as well as talent development. Academic results indicate improved attendance, higher test scores, and a decline in dropout rates. Participation in extracurricular activities has increased, reflecting greater motivation, the discovery of hidden talents, and higher engagement among the youth. Teacher feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with reports of improved classroom behavior, fewer disciplinary issues, and more cooperative attitudes. Furthermore, structured interventions have led to the development of critical life skills, such as problem-solving, decision-making, and time management.

On a sociological level, youth showed stronger peer relationships, more intense family engagement, and a greater connection with community activities. However, the assessment also revealed growing concerns about funding shortages, outdated training methods, and a lack of innovation in vocational programs, leading to stagnation. SDBs (Salesians of Don Bosco) expressed concerns over insufficient formal training in social sciences, lack of documentation, and limited professional development.

Key Findings and Insights

- 1. Pedagogical Impact:** The study reveals substantial improvements in academic performance, particularly in student attendance, reduced dropout rates, and better classroom behaviour. Extracurricular engagement has increased, suggesting that structured educational interventions have positively influenced youth's cognitive and social development. Life skills training—focusing on literacy, time management, decision making and problem-solving- has effectively empowered young people to navigate their environments better.
- 2. Sociological and Psychological Impact:** The programs have fostered stronger social ties between youth, their families, and the wider community. Emotional well-being has also improved, with participants demonstrating better self-esteem, emotional regulation, and resilience. Youth have shown an enhanced capacity to cope with adversity, crucial for their transition into society. However, these achievements can be better tempered with more tailored psychological support, especially for youth grappling with trauma, addiction, or mental health challenges.
- 3. Vocational and Economic Impact:** Vocational training provided by the YaR Project has positively influenced employment rates among beneficiaries. While some training programs need to be updated to match current job market demands, the project has adapted to the preferences of many youths who are more inclined towards dynamic, hands-on jobs. Recognizing the high interest in driving as a career, several YaR centers have established partnerships with driving schools to offer training and facilitate the acquisition of valid licenses. This skill, which appeals to many young people, not only ensures stable employment opportunities but also provides them with the flexibility and independence they seek in their work lives.
- 4. The YaR Project Emphasizes the Importance of Financial Management Skills Among its Beneficiaries:** Children learn essential budgeting and saving strategies through targeted interventions, fostering a strong savings mentality. Initiatives such as saving schemes introduced during their time at the center empower them to open bank accounts—often joint accounts with the center's director—where they can monitor their savings and balances. This approach helps them track their finances and encourages responsible financial habits. In some instances, beneficiaries convert their savings into fixed deposits, providing them with a secure financial foundation for future needs. Recognizing that many youths are prone to spending their earnings immediately upon receiving them, special arrangements are made with employers to manage this behaviour effectively. This proactive support helps ensure that young individuals retain a portion of their income, promoting long-term financial stability and preparing them for a more secure future.
- 5. Funding and Resource Mobilization:** The study also highlights the challenge of inadequate funding due to increased competition for resources from Corporate Social

Responsibility (CSR) initiatives and government programs. To address this, there is a pressing need to develop innovative projects that align with CSR priorities, while also exploring other fundraising strategies and local resource mobilization efforts to attract more support and sustain project activities. The YaR Project emphasizes the importance of financial management skills among its beneficiaries.

- 6. Institutional and Operational Challenges:** Several critical observations were made regarding the structural challenges faced by YaR centers. Some of the YaR Centres are centered on individual leaders, leading to a decline in impact when those individuals change roles. Not sufficiently stressing proper documentation and data management across centres further complicates the ability to evaluate long-term outcomes.
- 7. Systemic Limitations:** The assessment also highlighted the impact of systemic issues such as FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act) restrictions and other stringent regulations making it difficult for funding collaborations. With tightening regulations and limited chances for CSR funds, competition for resources has intensified, creating significant financial constraints. Moreover, lack of concentrated efforts and advocacy at both state and national levels, making it more challenging to secure consistent external support.

Suggestions for a Paradigm Shift

- 1. More Aftercare and Accompaniment:** There is a clear need for more structured aftercare programs, particularly for youth transitioning out of YaR centers. The focus should be on supporting youth post-18 years of age, helping them integrate into society smoothly. Family integration and community-based support are essential for long-term success.
- 2. Moving to Alternative Care:** Emphasising alternative forms of care and shift from institutionalised care to other forms of alternative care.
- 3. Active Participation in Policymaking Government Bodies:** Like in the past, YaR members need to continue occupying posts under the JJ system, such as CWC, JJB and KSCPCR.
- 4. Seminars and workshops:** Coordinated efforts of educational institutions of Bangalore Province with courses in Social work to organise State and National- level Seminars and workshops on the emerging trends in social work and social problems.
- 5. Internship Programmes:** Designing a one-year/six-month programme for those with minimum qualification but interested in social work with fieldwork experience in our setting and absorbing them for jobs after the course completion.
- 6. Focus on Emerging Youth Issues:** The needs of vulnerable youth have evolved, with new challenges such as migration, substance abuse, screen addiction and unemployment emerging as key areas of concern. The study suggests that interventions must be adapted to address these issues more comprehensively, with a specific emphasis on mental health, addiction recovery, and job placement.

- 7. Networking and Collaboration:** The need for stronger partnerships with NGOs, government bodies, donors, and public sector CSR initiatives is paramount. The YaR team must proactively engage with government policies and schemes to ensure that the youth benefit from available resources. Effective collaboration will also ensure YaR initiatives are aligned with policy-level changes that directly impact the youth they serve.
- 8. New Frontiers and Innovation:** A key recommendation is to expand into new areas, such as establishing dedicated de-addiction centers and creating additional contact points for children and youth needing intervention. While it is essential to continue maintaining a dynamic and active presence at strategic locations like railway stations and bus stands, there is also a need to explore innovative approaches to effectively address the evolving needs of at-risk youth.
- 9. Professional Development and Specialized Training:** There is a recognized gap in the professional training of the YaR Team, especially in areas such as de-addiction counselling and mental health issues. This specialization will better equip those working directly with at-risk youth. Similarly, an institutional framework for research, training, and knowledge-building must be established to convert existing experience into a body of knowledge that can inform future interventions.
- 10. Active Presence on Social Media:** Efforts to be made to be active on social media platforms for showcasing our work and for getting more donors for our work, and a dynamic website with periodic updates with online and offline newsletters of the YaR centres, and reader-friendly and digitally compatible annual reports.
- 11. Documentation and Data Management:** The lack of proper documentation and data management is a recurring issue that hampers evaluation and long-term planning. A dedicated research and documentation unit should be established to systematically collect and analyse data, ensuring measurable outcomes and interventions are evidence-based. This will also contribute to continuously updating knowledge and practices within the YaR mission.
- 12. Strategic Planning and Vision:** Long-term strategic planning at the provincial level is critical to ensuring YaR remains central to the Salesian mission. This includes creating a province-wide think-tank of experts to guide future initiatives and ensure that interventions remain relevant to the changing needs of youth at risk.
- 13. Strengthening Rural Impact:** Continue to build on the success in rural areas by developing more tailored programs that address the specific needs of young people in these regions. This could include vocational training, life skills education, and community engagement initiatives.
- 14. Regular Feedback Mechanisms:** Implement regular feedback systems across all centers to continuously monitor satisfaction levels and address any emerging issues

promptly. This will help maintain high satisfaction rates and quickly identify areas for improvement.

- 15. Replication of Successful Models:** Consider replicating the successful models from pioneering centers like BOSCO Bangalore, DB Palluruthy and other centers. Sharing best practices and successful strategies can help uplift the performance of all centers.

Conclusion

The YaR Impact Assessment of Don Bosco Bangalore Province offers a thorough and insightful evaluation of the current interventions for youth at risk, shedding light on both their strengths and areas in need of enhancement. While the accomplishments in key areas such as education, social integration, and emotional well-being are commendable, the assessment underscores the importance of refining and expanding these efforts. It emphasizes the necessity for updated vocational training, professional development, and more innovative approaches, alongside fostering stronger partnerships with external organizations.

Looking ahead, the Don Bosco Bangalore Province must evolve its strategies to meet the changing challenges faced by marginalized youth. This involves offering improved alternative care and aftercare, addressing emerging issues like migration and addiction, refining documentation practices, and establishing a more dynamic presence on social media platforms. By embracing a shift in perspective—rooted in innovation and collaboration—Don Bosco’s YaR mission can continue to create a lasting, transformative impact on the lives of vulnerable children and youth.

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ANNEXURES

Tools Used for the Impact Assessment

Beneficiary Tool for Data Collection

Data No:.....

YaR Centre:

Number of Beneficiaries:

Current Beneficiary / Past beneficiary

1. **Name:**
2. **Age:**
3. **Gender:**
4. **When did you first come to Don Bosco Yar Project?**
5. **At what age did you come to Don Bosco?**
6. **What was your background when you came:**
 1. School Dropout
 2. Run away from Home
 3. Working as a child labourer
 4. Orphan/semi-orphan
 5. Lost child
 6. Any other? specify
7. **Educational Status before joining DB YaR project:**
 1. No schooling
 2. Class 1-5
 3. Class 6-9
 4. 10th passed
 5. Non-formal skill training
8. **Current educational status:**
 1. No schooling
 2. Below class 1-5

3. Below class 6-9
4. 10th passed
5. +2 completed
6. Degree: completed
7. PG: completed

9. Did you have any vocational skill training before you came to YaR?

1. Yes Formal skill training (like ITI, Diploma)
2. Yes Non-Formal Skill training (like skill India, DB)
3. Only working experience
4. No skill training
5. Never exposed to any work

10. Current vocational skill status:

1. Professional
2. Non-formal
3. ITI
4. Diploma
5. Any other

11. Were you working and earning an income before joining YaR Programme:

1. No I was not working and not studying
2. Yes, part time working and going for study/skill training
3. Full time working and earning income for family
4. Full time going for studying/training

12. How did you spend your money before Joining YaR Project

1. Gave to family
2. Spent with friends for various things
3. Spent for education and training
4. Saved for the future

13. Current job status:

1. Not employed
2. Part-time working
3. Full-time employed
4. Working and studying
5. Doing own small business
6. Running own business with employees (how many)
7. Business in partnership
8. Part-time working and part-time business
9. Joined family business
10. Planning to start a business

14. How are you spending your money after getting service from YaR Project

1. Gave to family
2. Spent with friends for various things
3. Spent for education and training
4. Saving for the future

15. How many young individuals, including yourself, do you know who have received assistance from YaR within the last 5 Years?

1. Less than 100
2. 101-200
3. 202-300
4. 301-400
5. More than 400

16. What type of support did you get/ are you getting from YaR?

1. Education
2. Skill training
3. Job Placement
4. Shelter/Room placement
5. Health care /medical treatment support
6. Home re-union
7. Any other, specify

17. Were you enrolled in any educational programs facilitated by YaR?

1. Yes, continued and completed
2. Yes, and continuing
3. Yes, but discontinued
4. No, but want to attend
5. No, I did not get the opportunity

18. Did you notice any improvements in your academic performance as a result of YaR's support?

1. Yes, very much
2. Yes, somewhat
3. Not much
4. Not at all

19. Did you join in any skill training programs offered by YaR?

1. Yes, continued and completed
2. Yes, and continuing
3. Yes, but discontinued
4. No, but want to attend
5. No, I did not get the opportunity

20. How confident are in your skills after completing training with YaR?

1. Very much confident
2. Somewhat confident
3. Not much confident
4. Not at all confident

21. Did YaR assist you in finding employment?

1. Yes, very much
2. Yes, somewhat
3. Not much
4. Not at all

22. How long did it take you to secure a job with the help of YaR?

1. 0-3 months
2. 4-6 months
3. More than 6 months
4. Got a job but left
5. Did not get any job

23. Has your income increased after receiving support from YaR?

1. Yes, very much
2. Yes, somewhat
3. Not much
4. No change in income occurred

24. Are you able to manage with the income that you receive after getting services from YaR?

1. Yes, very much
2. Yes, somewhat
3. Not much
4. No

25. Were you successfully reunited with your family through YaR's assistance?

1. Yes, very much
2. Yes, somewhat
3. Not much
4. No

26. Do you feel that YaR's support has positively impacted your personal development?

1. Yes, Absolutely
2. Yes, to great Extent
3. Yes, somewhat
4. Not much
5. Not at all

- 27. Have you experienced any long-term behaviour changes in your life since receiving assistance from YaR?**
1. Yes, very much
 2. Yes, somewhat
 3. Not much
 4. No
- 28. How satisfied are you with the assistance and support provided by YaR?**
1. Highly satisfied
 2. Quite satisfied
 3. Average satisfaction
 4. Not much satisfied
 5. Not at all satisfied
- 29. Would you recommend YaR's services to other young individuals in need?**
1. Yes, for sure
 2. Mostly yes
 3. Sometimes
 4. Never
- 30. Are you planning to continue engaging with YaR for further support or assistance?**
1. Yes, for sure
 2. Mostly yes
 3. Sometimes
 4. Never
- 31. How do you envision your future after the support and guidance provided by YaR?**
1. Go for higher studies
 2. Go for better employment
 3. Join government service
 4. Start own business
 5. Any other ? please specify
- 32. Have you contributed in any way to Don Bosco YaR programme?**
1. Yes, very much
 2. Yes, somewhat
 3. Not much
 4. Not contributed
- 33. If yes, how:**
1. By bringing more children to this center
 2. By sharing my time by small service as a volunteer
 3. By giving part of my income for others like me
 4. By becoming a member of the DB Past Pupils unit
 5. Any other? Specify

34. Have services provided by YaR in any way helped your family?

1. Yes, very much
2. Yes, somewhat
3. Not much
4. No

35. If yes, how (Tick all appropriate):

1. Educating me and my siblings
2. Reconnecting me with the family
3. Finding a job and income for me or to my family members
4. Providing a house for my family
5. Supporting me with a room placement
6. Better health due to the medical treatment received through YaR
7. I have discovered my talents in acting, singing, playing
8. Any other? Specify

36. Have you received any extraordinary help from Don Bosco?

1. Yes, many Times
2. Sometimes
3. Not much
4. Not sure
5. Never

37. If yes, can you describe what it was (give a story here)

38. What is the best service that you liked in the YaR project and Don Bosco

1. Education
2. Skill training
3. Shelter facility
4. Job placement
5. Moral and value education
6. Health services
7. Home placement
8. Any other? Specify

39. How would you rate the quality of services provided by YaR?

1. Excellent
2. Very good
3. Good
4. Satisfactory
5. Poor

40. On a scale of 10, how much will you rate your satisfaction of the support of YaR, with 10 being highest satisfaction and 1 being lowest satisfaction?

10__09__08__07__06__05__4__03__02__01

YaR Impact Assessment Tool 2

Tool for Data collection from Staff

Centre Name: _____

Name of Staff: _____

Years of Service with SDB/YaR: _____

Section 1: Project Overview

1. Which target group(s) did the project primarily focus on?
 1. Adolescents
 2. Young adults
 3. Both 1 and 2
 4. Other (please specify)
2. What type of services were rendered through the YaR project? (can tick more than one)
 1. Formal Education
 2. Life skill development
 3. Counseling and mental health support
 4. Medical/ health support
 5. Vocational training
 6. Home placement /room placement
 7. Job placement
 8. Any other? Specify
3. How effectively did the Young at Risk (YaR) project address the identified needs and objectives?
 1. Highly effective
 2. Effectively
 3. Not effectively
 4. Not at all effectively

Section 2: Reach and Impact

4. How many individuals were reached by the YAR project from this centre in the last 10 years?
 1. Fewer than 100
 2. 100 – 500
 3. 500 – 1000
 4. More than 1000
5. How would you rate the vocational training impact on the target group?
 1. High impact
 2. Impactful

3. Not impactful
4. Not at all impactful
6. To what extent did the project contribute to the self-development of the youth?
 1. High significant contribution
 2. Good contribution
 3. No contribution
 4. Very poor contribution
7. What impact did the project have on the personality development of the youth?
 1. Highly impactful
 2. Impactful
 3. Not very impactful
 4. Not at all impactful

Section 3: Economic and Social Impact

8. Did the YAR project contribute to the economic well-being of the youth through employment opportunities? (improved their financial situation)
 1. High significant contribution
 2. Good contribution
 3. No contribution
 4. Very poor contribution
9. How would you rate the social development impact of the YAR project on the youth? (improved their social status, like no more street child, they have an identity, respect etc)
 1. Highly impactful
 2. Impactful
 3. Not very impactful
 4. Not at all impactful

Section 4: Broader Impacts

10. To what extent did the project impact society as a whole? (no vandalism, youth crimes etc)
 1. Highly impactful
 2. Impactful
 3. Not very impactful
 4. Not at all impactful
11. Did the YAR project contribute to the cultural development of the youth? (brought out their talents, helped them to become singers, actors dancers etc)
 1. High significant contribution
 2. Good contribution
 3. No contribution
 4. Very poor contribution
12. Was there any noticeable political impact resulting from the YAR project? (participation in healthy politics, not being used and exploited by political parties)

1. High significant contribution
2. Good contribution
3. No contribution
4. Very poor contribution

Section 5: Reporting and Benefits

13. How satisfied are you with the reporting and documentation of the Yar Project activities ?
 1. Highly satisfied
 2. Satisfied
 3. Dissatisfied
 4. Highly dissatisfied
14. What benefits did the YAR project bring to the implementing YaR Centre?
 1. Enhanced reputation
 2. Increased capacity
 3. Improved partnerships
 4. Other (please specify)
15. In your opinion, what benefits did the project provide to the donor?
 1. Demonstrated impact
 2. Enhanced visibility
 3. Positive publicity
 4. Other (please specify)

Section 6: Alignment with SDGs

6.1. To what extent did the YaR project align with the following Sustainable Development Goals?

16. No Poverty: 1. Very Strong alignment; 2. Strong alignment; 3. Weak alignment; 4. Very weak alignment
17. Zero Hunger: 1. Very Strong alignment; 2. Strong alignment; 3. Weak alignment; 4. Very weak alignment
18. Good Health and Well-Being: 1. Very Strong alignment; 2. Strong alignment; 3. Weak alignment; 4. Very weak alignment
19. Quality Education: 1. Very Strong alignment; 2. Strong alignment; 3. Weak alignment; 4. Very weak alignment
20. Gender Equality: 1. Very Strong alignment; 2. Strong alignment; 3. Weak alignment; 4. Very weak alignment
21. Clean Water and Sanitation: 1. Very Strong alignment; 2. Strong alignment; 3. Weak alignment; 4. Very weak alignment

Section 7: Impact at Different Levels

22. To what extent did the YAR project have a local impact? (Improved behaviour, school attendance, and the reduced child labour etc...)

1. Very strong impact
 2. Strong impact
 3. No much impact
 4. Not at all impactful
23. To what extent did the project contribute to state-level impact? (Reduction in crime, improvement in training and education and employment creation)
1. Highly significant contribution
 2. Good contribution
 3. No contribution
 4. Very poor contribution
24. To what extent did the project contribute to national-level impact? (Policy level influence like youth policy, education policy, child protection/safety policy)
1. Highly significant contribution
 2. Good contribution
 3. No contribution
 4. Very poor contribution

Measurable Quantitative Impacts

7.1. Youth Impact:

25. Number of youth beneficiaries enrolled: _____
26. Percentage of Beneficiaries dropped out : _____
27. Percentage increase in educational attainment: _____
28. Increase in employment rate among youth participants: _____
29. Percentage improvement in income levels: _____
30. Reduction in youth crime rates: _____

7.2. Family Impact:

31. Percentage increase in family income: _____
32. Improved access to healthcare for families: _____
33. Number of families reporting improved quality of life: _____
34. Percentage decrease in family-related stress: _____
35. Enhanced family cohesion (unity): _____

7.3. Local level Impact:

36. Reduction in local unemployment rates: _____
37. Number of community engagement initiatives implemented: _____
38. Increase in local businesses or entrepreneurship: _____
39. Improvement in local infrastructure: _____
40. Change in crime rates within the locality: _____

7.4. State level Impact:

41. Percentage of increase in state-level employment rates: _____

42. Educational improvement across the state: _____
43. State-level economic enhancement: _____
44. Impact on state-level healthcare: _____
45. State-level crime rate changes: _____

7.5. National Impact:

46. National employment rate changes: _____
47. National educational improvement: _____
48. Contribution to national GDP: _____
49. National healthcare impact: _____
50. Recognition or awards at the national level: _____

Measurable Qualitative Impact:

Please provide narratives or descriptive information. (give possible evidences)

7.6. Youth Impact:

51. Success stories of individual young beneficiaries
52. Changes observed in attitudes and behaviours

7.7. Family Impact:

53. Testimonials from families about the project's influence
54. Qualitative improvements in family relationships – case stories

7.8. Locality Impact:

55. Community feedback on changes noticed
56. Local leaders' opinions on the project's contribution

7.9. State Impact:

57. Perspectives from state-level authorities (District collector, Police commissioner/any recognition)
58. Stories illustrating project influence on a broader scale (Recognition of SDBs in the state level)

7.10. National Impact:

59. Media coverage and national recognition for YaR INK
60. Testimonials from national-level stakeholders based on YaR INK
61. Contribution to the National YaR forum by YaR INK

7.11. Impact on Youth Empowerment: Training, Employment & Income

62. List the specific vocational training programs provided by this centre (Enlist)
 1. Hotel management
 2. Automobile technical
 3. Mechanical lathe work
 4. Masonry
 5. Carpentry

6. Computer training
7. Any other: mention

63. How relevant were these training programs to the needs of the youth of this place ?

Mark on a scale of 10 being highest and 1 lowest

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Hotel management | 1_2_3_4_5_6_7_8_9_10 |
| 2. Automobile technical | 1_2_3_4_5_6_7_8_9_10 |
| 3. Mechanical lathe work | 1_2_3_4_5_6_7_8_9_10 |
| 4. Masonry | 1_2_3_4_5_6_7_8_9_10 |
| 5. Carpentry | 1_2_3_4_5_6_7_8_9_10 |
| 6. Computer training | 1_2_3_4_5_6_7_8_9_10 |
| 7. Any other: Mention | 1_2_3_4_5_6_7_8_9_10 |

64. Number of youth employed after completing vocational training in the last 10 Years:

1. 1 – 50
2. 51 – 100
3. 101 – 150
4. 151 - 200
5. Above 200 (if data available mention actual (how many))

65. Types of industries or sectors where employment opportunities created (Name)

1. Hospitality
2. Automobile
3. Mechanical
4. Production
5. Carpentry
6. IT Industry
7. Any other (specify)

66. Average income of employed youth per month

1. 1000 - 2500
2. 2501- 5000
3. 5001 -7500
4. 7501 - 10000
5. Above 10000

67. How does this income compare to the region's average income?

1. Much higher
2. Higher
3. Lesser
4. Very much lesser

68. There were observed changes in societal attitudes towards youth empowerment?

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree

3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree

Section 8: Overall Project Management:

8.1. Consequential Societal Impact:

69. The YaR project has influenced the overall social fabric of the community?
1. Strongly agree
 2. Agree
 3. Disagree
 4. Strongly Disagree
70. There was observed changes in societal attitudes towards youth empowerment?
1. Strongly agree
 2. Agree
 3. Disagree
 4. Strongly Disagree

8.2. Management Effectiveness:

71. Did the management of the project enhance over the past 10 years?
1. Strongly agree
 2. Agree
 3. Disagree
 4. Strongly disagree
72. Key strategies were implemented for efficient project management
1. Strongly agree
 2. Agree
 3. Disagree
 4. Strongly disagree

8.3. Monitoring and Evaluation:

73. There were efficient the monitoring mechanisms in place
1. Strongly agree
 2. Agree
 3. Disagree
 4. Strongly disagree

8.4. Reporting Practices:

74. There was periodic reporting of projects in specific formats
1. Strongly agree
 2. Agree
 3. Disagree
 4. Strongly disagree

75. All the key stakeholders were involved in the reporting process
 1. Strongly agree
 2. Agree
 3. Disagree
 4. Strongly disagree
76. There was an excellent review and feedback system in place for the YaR project
 1. Strongly agree
 2. Agree
 3. Disagree
 4. Strongly disagree

8.5. Adaptability and Learning:

77. The project underwent adaptations based on lessons learned
 1. Strongly agree
 2. Agree
 3. Disagree
 4. Strongly disagree
78. Feedback from stakeholders was incorporated for continuous improvement?
 1. Strongly agree
 2. Agree
 3. Disagree
 4. Strongly disagree

8.6. Project Success Metrics:

79. Overall project satisfaction rating (1-10):
80. Identification of key success factors:
 1. Great visionaries among SDBs
 2. Passion for youth work
 3. Dedicated staff
 4. Cooperation of the youth and community
 5. Support of PRI
 6. Any other (what do you think were the key success factors)

Section 9. Lessons Learned & Recommendations for Future:

81. Insights gained from the project
82. Recommendations for improvement
83. Need areas that YaR INK has not reached out

Section 10 Challenges Faced:

84. Key obstacles encountered during project implementation (Enlist)
85. Strategies employed to overcome challenges (Enlist)

Tool for Key Informant Interview (KII)

(Qualitative Assessment)

1. How long have you been actively engaged with the YaR Ministry?
2. Have you ever held a position as a YaR Ministry Director, and if so, for what duration?
3. Is the YaR Ministry in SDB INK progressing in the right direction?
4. What are your observations or concerns about the current YaR Operations?
5. Are the current activities within the YaR Ministry addressing the contemporary needs of youth effectively? Please share your observations.
6. Have YaR activities and programs influenced provincial policies toward YaR work? Could you provide examples to illustrate this?
7. What were some of the key milestones in the YaR programme during your term of office in the YaR project as a director/admin/staff?
8. Should the YaR ministry of the INK province undergo a transformation or paradigm shift? If so, do you have any suggestions? Which areas should these transformations be?
9. Is the YaR mission of INK adequately visible within the province, Salesian India, and the SDB Congregation?
10. Does the province possess sufficient resources to sustain the YaR mission as it has in previous years, particularly regarding: a. Availability of passionate Salesians, especially the new generation? b. Financial support and funding? c. Policies and allocations (e.g., 10% of Urban English Medium school income for YaR)?
11. Do we have good documentation in all our centres that showcase the impact of all we have done?
12. How is the current documentation system of the YaR ministry in SDB INK? Is there consistency in our documentation and reporting practices?
13. What are some weaknesses in our documentation and records management within the YaR ministry? What is the reason for this weakness, if there was any?
14. How is modern electronic media put to use in the documentation process within the YaR ministry, making it more professional and accessible? Do you have any suggestions for improvement?
15. Has the YaR ministry reached a level of maturity where it can operate independently, with support from or alignment with government interventions alone?

16. Have YaR interventions by SDB INK been influential in shaping government policies on behalf of children and youth, especially for education and welfare/well-being? Can you name a few such policies and how SDB YaR Project has contributed?
17. Are YaR interventions effectively aligned with changes in government policies and operational styles?
18. What opportunities do you see for influencing the government to adopt some of our YaR mission strategies?
19. What were some of the expected impacts of our YaR Ministry during the last 10 Years?
20. Were the expected outcomes of the YaR Ministry over the past decade as expected?
21. Is there a decline in the impact of our YaR ministry over the years?
22. In which way has the YaR ministry contributed to the families of the children and youth?
23. What were some of the major contributions of the YaR ministry in the promotion of the education of children and youth?
24. What is the contribution of the YaR intervention in the vocational training and skilled jobs of the YaR beneficiaries?
25. What is the volume of employment creation that gave economic stability to the youth and their families?
26. How has the YaR ministry contributed to the improved health of the children in difficult situations?
27. How have you supported children and youth as they move out of our direct intervention? Name some of these major support areas?
28. What interventions has the YaR Ministry taken up to fight for the rights of children and youth? Enumerate, if possible, with some case stories?
29. What level of self-sufficiency have you created for the youth through the YaR interventions?
30. Can you cite some examples of YaR participants taking up social causes?
31. Can you identify any YaR interventions that did not yield sufficient returns on investment? If so, could you provide examples?
32. Should the INK province redefine the vision, mission, and objectives of the YaR Ministry to make it more relevant to current and future youth development? What would be your personal vision in this regard?
33. Is there a shortage of personnel in the YaR Ministry, both among Salesians and laity? If so, what factors do you think contribute to this? How can it be resolved?

34. What is the impact of YaR ministry on the formation of the young Salesians?
35. What impact have you created through the YaR ministry in the respective dioceses?
36. Do you have among your collaborators, staff or volunteers, people who were once a YaR beneficiary? Can you name a few of them?
37. What were some of the failures in our YaR interventions that we should learn from and avoid in the future?
38. What are the primary challenges faced by the YaR Ministry at both civil society and province levels? Could you name some of them?
39. Has the YaR mission effectively engaged stakeholders, including staff, children, Salesians, PRI and community members, and donors?
40. Have these stakeholders remained as external agents or as part of the intervention? Can you give examples of such engagements?
41. How do you respond to the assertion that the severity of youth-related issues has significantly diminished compared to a decade ago?
42. Please cite some of the youth problems that have diminished over the years, mostly attributed to YaR interventions (e.g., Bonded Labor/school dropout).
43. How have you responded to the needs of the Young at Risk in the rural communities?
44. What type of networking and community organization have you put in place as a byproduct of the YaR intervention?
45. Can you highlight any significant milestones achieved by the YaR ministry in the last decade, such as marriages of YaR beneficiaries facilitated by you, housing/residence provided to families, family reunion, business enterprises by youth as a result of YaR ministry, political career for any YaR participants, specific major interventions in collaboration with Government?
46. Has there been any Salesian/religious/priestly vocation arising from the YaR intervention participants in the last decades?

PROFILE OF THE PRINCIPAL ASSESSOR

Dr. Tom Jose, MSW, Ph.D



Dr. Tom Jose is a distinguished Professional Social Worker with a Master's degree in Social Work (MSW) from Madras University and a Doctorate in Social Work from Thiruvalluvar University. With over 30 years of extensive expertise in development initiatives, he has made transformative contributions to the sector. Dr. Jose has collaborated with numerous NGOs, coordinating projects with donor organizations and supporting project management. His work includes designing and implementing innovative intervention plans to drive sustainable development.

For nearly two decades, Dr. Jose has been associated with the Karl Kübel Foundation, an international organization, where he has worked closely with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) across the globe. He has facilitated over 150 training workshops on Project Cycle Management (PCM), Logical Framework Approach (LFA), Theory of Change (ToC), Outcome and Impact Orientation (OIO), and Proposal Writing. Additionally, he has conducted more than 60 independent workshops on project planning, Results-Based Management (RBM), monitoring and evaluation, documentation, and reporting. Dr. Jose's dedication extends to over 100 programs focusing on fundraising and resource mobilization, empowering organizations to enhance their capacity and sustainability.

His career is a testament to his staunch commitment to social transformation, touching countless lives through his expertise, compassion, and visionary leadership.

Dr. Tom Jose shares a long and enriching association with the Salesians of Don Bosco, particularly within the Bangalore Province. He was the founding coordinator of BREADS Bangalore, the Development Office of the SDB INK and has worked with SDB INK for nearly a decade. Dr. Tom's contributions extend beyond project management to significant research endeavors. Notably, he authored two impactful studies:

1. Study of Street and slum children of Trivandrum City, published by UNICEF
2. Study on quality of Lay Collaboration (Salesian Cooperators) in Bangalore Province.

Dr. Tom Jose has made significant contributions to the field of organizational development and capacity building, particularly within the NGO sector. He has researched and designed specialized modules on NGO Management, Human Resource Management, and Visibility and Branding for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). His expertise extends to facilitating numerous Train-the-Trainers (ToT) programs, as well as Leadership and Team Building initiatives utilizing the Outbound Training (OBT) approach, tailored for both corporate entities and educational institutions.

Renowned for his Organizational Development (OD) interventions, Dr. Tom has successfully implemented programs for NGOs, focusing on critical areas such as Project Team Designing, Fund Management, Organizational Audits, Impression Management, and Development Training. With over a dozen impactful interventions to his credit in South East Asia, Dr. Tom's work reflects his dedication to fostering robust, sustainable, and strategically aligned organizations.

Dr. Tom Jose has conducted over a dozen End-of-Project (EOP) evaluations for prestigious organizations such as BMZ, MISEREOR, and the European Union (EU). Additionally, he has been an integral team member in numerous feasibility studies across Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and the North Eastern states, bringing his expertise to projects aimed at fostering sustainable development and impactful interventions.

Coimbatore
15 October 2024

Navigating the Future is an impact study carried out under the supervision of Don Bosco BREADS, (Bangalore Rural Educational and Development Society), the development wing of the Salesian Province of Bangalore (INK), India. It is a glimpse into the continuum of services that Don Bosco settings provide to the children rescued from the street and vulnerable youth, in the states of Karnataka and Kerala.

This book highlights the outreach, and the top priority assigned to the Young at Risk (YaR) mission by the Salesians of Bangalore, with 31 institutions and children's homes, caring for 36.54% of the 15,172 children in the care of Don Bosco YaR Network forum across India. The INK Province also promotes 1,543 community-based initiatives that reach out to 53,045 children.

This impact study is testament to the Don Bosco, Bangalore Province's commitment to the young at risk. Responses from 345 children, from among past and present beneficiaries of 12 YaR centres in the province, reveal the deep and lasting impacts of the collective dedication that helped children faced with adversity, transition into empowered individuals leading productive and fulfilling lives. Their stories bring out the unique Don Bosco approach of accompaniment of the child or youth that characterizes the YaR work in the Bangalore province. The study recommends the strengthening of YaR services according to the suggestions and feedback offered by the beneficiaries.

In line with the province mission, BREADS incorporates the YaR objectives into most of its programming, irrespective of whether the project is about education, skilling, community and women empowerment, or climate action. As an adaption to the times and need, BREADS extended the YaR mission to a significant new population of 60,970 migrant youth through 12 of the 36 Don Bosco Migrant Desks in India.

Other notable contributions have been to the advocacy for child rights in the states of Karnataka and Kerala, and the development of models and best practices that were shared with other practitioners. The Salesian YaR sector has also been instrumental in the training and formation of skilled and dedicated personnel in the field of child safeguarding, which is a huge contribution to society.

The study reflects the Salesians' unwavering dedication to the holistic development and empowerment of marginalized youth through the Don Bosco Young at Risk (YaR) mission in Karnataka and Kerala.



BREADS
Bangalore Rural Educational
and Development Society

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