

**DON BOSCO CHILD LABOURERS AND SCHOOL DROPOUTS PROJECT**  
**MYSORE SUPPORTED BY YOJANA**  
**Yearly Report -2010**

**Introduction**

The year 2010 marked significant expansion and growth of the Mysore community based project for child labourers and school dropouts. Being a community based project, we have had moments of doubts and difficulties, but as a whole we are better educated, empowered and experienced to carry forward a project which is community based, keeping the marginalized children the centre of all concerns and activities. The highlights of the activities implemented and its impacts can be summarized under the following headings.

**1. Foundation Schools in 16 slums**

Out of 65 slums in Mysore, we had zeroed into 16, where there is high prevalence of child labourers and school dropouts. During the past months, we were consolidating and strengthening the **Foundation Schools** in these centers by preparing an academic syllabus, training teachers, daily monitoring and supervision of classes, conducting monthly parents meetings and monthly tests for children to see their progress. Presently 400 children are attending this program daily.

**2. Bridge School**

We launched the Bridge school for those who completed the Foundation school. The Bridge school is a one year program for dropouts who are already 12 years. In March 2011, they can write the 7<sup>th</sup> standard examination and join 8<sup>th</sup> standard regular school. Presently 45 children are attending this program. For those who are coming from far, bus passes are provided.

**3. Open School**

Our intervention for the child labourers and dropouts received a big boost when the Karnataka State Open School and the National Open School New Delhi gave us accreditation to start Open Schooling for school dropouts. Now our center is eligible to present students who have completed 15 years, to the 10<sup>th</sup> standard examination. They should have a passed or failed certificate of 7<sup>th</sup> standard to join this program. Some of those who complete our Bridge school will enter the open school 10<sup>th</sup> standard program next year.

**4. Vocational Training Program**

In the month of July we launched the vocational training program in 3 skills - chalk making, liquid soap making and candle making for the children and the parents of the children. The program is running successfully.

**5. Children's Bank**

Three years ago Don Bosco Mysore started banking for children in collaboration with the South Indian Bank Mysore. But during this year, we started our own bank independently, called the **Don Bosco Children's Bank**. It is running very successfully with 400 account holders (children).

## **6. Children's Parents Bank**

Gaining inspiration and experience from the Children's Bank, we launched banking for the parents of our children under the title, **Don Bosco children's parents Bank**. It is a daily bank and the response from the parents is very good. There are already 300 independent account holders.

## **7. Children's Community Bank**

When we launched banking for the parents, others from the community started asking for inclusion. So we started a separate bank for them under the title, **Don Bosco children's Community Bank**. Anyone from the 16 communities, where we are working can be part of this banking. We are getting good response for this banking too.

## **8. Gathering of the parents of child labourers and dropouts**

Every month we have a gathering of the parents of our children in 16 communities. We are getting good response and attendance for these meetings.

## **9. Training and commissioning of Community Barefoot Counselors/ Mediators**

We have commissioned 16 Community Barefoot Counselors, one in each community. They are elected people from the community with leadership qualities and interest for the wellbeing of children. They are given basics in counseling, human rights and child rights, etc. Gradually we hope to build up a strong social action network through these leaders.

## **10. Gathering of Stakeholders and Social Auditing Assembly**

A gathering of stakeholders was organized with the assistance of experts to engage in discussion on children's issues, problems and possibilities. 45 Persons attended this one day program.

## **11. Yuvaspandana -2010**

This was a one day program organized for the leaders among the children. Besides skill games, singing, entertainment etc., they had classes on the Life and educational system of Don Bosco, child rights, leadership etc.

## **12. Republic Day Celebration and Gathering of Children**

January 26<sup>th</sup>, the republic day of India marked a great event for the children of the project. The whole day was filled with games, cultural programmes, prizes, food, fund, etc. nearly 400 children attended the programme which was held at the good shepherd school grounds at Mysore.

## **13. Cultural Exchange Programme**

ICDE India is a coordinating agency working for youth exchange programme between India and Sweden. As part of a cultural exchange programme 20 youth were involved in our project. They organized several programmes to bring together Indian and Swedish cultures involving our children.

## **14. Training Programme for Staff and Teachers**

A full day workshop was organized for the staff and teachers on the Right to Education (RTE) act, where we discussed in details how to carry forward the spirit of the law in the communities where we are presently involved.

## **12. Child Rights Clubs**

We have launched 18 child rights clubs, to promote the rights of children by children. Some of the duties of the club members are – bringing other school dropouts who are not presently in any program to attend our classes, monitoring absentees, intervening or bringing to the attention of responsible persons the violations of child rights, abuse of children etc.

### **Impacts:**

- About 445 children were mainstreamed either in formal schools or in non formal technical centres.
- 16 slums were gradually transformed into take up the ownership of the project
- 16 teachers were selected from the community and trained and equipped to handle any child related or social related problems
- The project is in the process of forming caring community Counsels which will play important role to keep the programmes community based, participatory and sustainable
- The banking activities helped to nurture the savings and thrift habit among the poor children, parents and community which also ensured the financial education to these groups.
- The rights of the children such as right to education and right to child hood has been restored through the project.
- Children's leadership qualities have been enhanced. This is one of the key components of the UN Child Rights such as to ensure the participation of children in all matters pertaining to their lives.

### **Conclusion**

In spite of the numerous challenges are problems faced, all those engaged in this program feel that this is a worthwhile project. We are still operating from a rented house with limited space. The Director of the project is staying in Sreerampura, 15 kms away from the office. He has no transportation facilities to come to the office or to move around.

The future of our interventions on behalf of the marginalized should be community based and it should be empowering and challenging for all those involved. This calls for continuous commitment from the part of the Agency especially to plan, monitor, communicate and coordinate the programs. We thank sincerely Breads and Yojana for their interest and generous support.

## **CRISP Report of Mysore Project**

<b>Programmes</b>	<b>Achievements</b>
No of slums covered under the project	16
No of child labours reached out	445
Foundation schools	In 16 slums and 400 children are being attending in this education programme
Bridge School	45 child labours are studying in bridge school
Open school	Accreditation got from government for the project. Next year we hope to admit the senior children from the bridge school children in open school
Vocational training	3 skills ( soap, candle and chalk making. 40 children and 30 women were trained
Don Bosco Children's Bank	400 children started savings and other banking activities
Don Bosco Children's Parents bank	300 parents opened accounts in this bank and started thrift and savings activities
Don Bosco Children's community Banking	16 community banks started in 16 slums and 240 women started their savings activities
Parents meeting	11 meetings conducted till date
Get together, camps, Meetings ,etc	4 programmes conducted
Trainings to staff	One programme
Child Right Clubs	18 CRCs started in the project area and 198 children took membership in these clubs.