



Every Life is Worth Living with Dignity



PROGRAM REPORT

Preparation and Initial Implementation

AND THE JOURNEY CONTINUES...

As I write this note for the first report of The Koshish Trust, I feel overwhelmingly grateful and at peace in my heart. Moving out of an institution where this work started 18 years ago and attempting to set up an independent work wasn't going to be easy and everyone in the team was prepared for the challenges that would come our way.

While we make a new beginning in terms of organizational identity, our commitment to the work and field remains firm and we are confident of building a much stronger and inclusive organization.

I am thankful to everyone who has stood with us during this phase of trial for us as a team; I thank our mentors, friends of Koshish, our family members who kept their belief in us and gave us the much-needed confidence to take this step. I thank our Advisory Board for providing us critical inputs and direction to follow the right path.

I can't thank enough our friends at Azim Premji Foundation for trusting us and supporting us in a manner that is very rare, definitely not a practice for a funding organization. The way Foundation came forward and offered to support our efforts to set up this new initiative is very special and goes beyond the resources they provided.

The transition has been a huge learning and I am confident we will put this learning to good use to build this work. I won't say transition was smooth and it wasn't supposed to be, however, we found enough support in the form of our mentors, advisors, friends and family who made everything an experience in itself.

My team at TISS that decided to move out and co-create this new organization continues to be a source of my strength as well as inspiration. Such decisions aren't easy but they made it look so good and smooth.

We have just started and past 6 months have gone mostly into setting up the processes and structures. The beginning in the field has been very promising and we are now set to take a full flight.

Warm regards,

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(Mohd Tarique)
Managing Trustee

ESTABLISHMENT AND INITIAL SETUP

Following its registration in May 2024, The Koshish Trust began the essential work of building a foundation for its operations, a process which began in August. During the first two months, we worked with the minimal team with focus on establishing administrative and operational systems. With the program team scheduled to join in October, the initial team had its task set to complete the necessary processes and organize the space for the team to begin straightaway.

In October, more members joined the team. This month we focused on building a shared understanding of the vision and purpose of the organization. We engaged in team-building exercises and then hit the field. We explored various localities in Navi Mumbai to look for possibility of community-based intervention. After careful consideration, we decided to work with one community each in Mahape (Ghansoli) and Seawoods areas. Our engagement with these communities formally started in November 2024.

Financial & Administrative Systems: We set up a dedicated bank account with the State Bank of India. This account is serving as the financial core for managing programme funds, disbursing salaries, covering operational expenses, and receiving the grant. Apart from the bank account, we developed policies related to support for the team, leave/holidays, special provisions, Redressal Mechanism etc. Subsequently, the appointments for the team were processed.

Institutional Collaborations : We initiated dialogues with relevant government entities, including strategic meetings at the Mantralaya in Mumbai and the Commissionerate of the Department of Women and Child Development in Pune. Through these discussions, we identified areas of synergy, clarified mutual goals, and submitted a draft Memorandum of Understanding for formal collaboration. The MoU is currently under process. It is a significant step towards establishing a cooperative framework within which the Trust can operate alongside government institutions.

Two of our Trustees are serving members on the committee appointed by the Department of Women and Child Development, Government of Maharashtra, to prepare the draft for an alternative legislation on beggary. We played a key role in the preparation of this draft bill, contributing both conceptual and field-based inputs drawn from our long engagement with issues of homelessness and destitution. The draft aims to move away from punitive approaches to rehabilitative, and inclusive frameworks. The document is currently under review and consideration by the government for further processing as per the procedure for law amendment.

Additionally, we collaborated with institutions like Prem Daan (a residential rehabilitation facility for women in distress). This institution houses the women who are found and rescued in the state of destitution. The Koshish Trust has collaborated with them with specific goal of tracing the families of women and facilitating their reintegration into the families. Similarly, in Delhi we joined a network of voluntary organizations, Sehri Adhikar Manch (SAM) that works for the rights of the homeless citizens.

Strategic Planning: Concurrently, we developed an operational strategy, defining the scope and nature of The Koshish Trust's work. Key areas of focus were determined based on community needs, government policy, and potential impact we want to create. The aim of this planning phase was to ensure that our programmes would address critical gaps in support for the population we serve, with an emphasis on social justice, mental health, and decriminalization of poverty in India.

Formation of the Advisory Board

To guide our mission with expertise and integrity, we began building an Advisory Board composed of respected figures from the fields of public service, academia, mental health, journalism, and social activism. This involved extensive outreach and in-person meetings, where we presented the Trust's objectives and discussed potential advisory roles.

The following individuals, each with remarkable contributions to their fields, graciously agreed to lend their expertise as part of our Advisory Board:

1. **Shri Ahsan Abid Mohammad.** Shri Abid is a civil servant currently serving as the Special Secretary, Tourism, Art and Culture for the Government of Delhi.
2. **Judge Swati Chauhan.** Judge Chauhan is a former principal judge at the Family Court, Mumbai.
3. **Shri R Subrahmanyam (IAS retired).** Shri Subrahmanyam is a distinguished IAS officer (retired) with a career lasting 37 years. As a Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, he was a key force behind the SMILE Scheme, India's first non-punitive scheme for the destitute persons.
4. **Dr Usha Ramanathan.** Dr Ramanathan is a distinguished legal scholar renowned for her expertise in law and poverty.
5. **Dr. Soumitra Pathare.** Dr. Soumitra Pathare is a prominent psychiatrist and the Director of the Centre for Mental Health & Policy Research, Pune.
6. **Shri Kireet Khurana.** Shri Khurana is a versatile filmmaker, animator, and commercial director from India, known for his socially conscious work.
7. **Shri Zeeshan Shaikh.** Shri Shaikh is a prominent journalist and Associate Editor at The Indian Express.
8. **Shri Ujjwal Uke (IAS, retired).** Shri Uke is a seasoned bureaucrat with a distinguished career in the Indian Administrative Service. He held key positions in the Maharashtra government, including Principal Secretary of the Social Justice and Special Assistance Department.
9. **Justice (Rtd.) Pukhraj R. Bora.** Justice Bora Bora is a former judge of the Bombay High Court.
10. **Shri Lakshman Sethuraman.** Mr. Lakshman Sethuraman is a distinguished professional with a strong academic background, having graduated from IIT Madras and IIM Ahmedabad. With over 14 years of experience at the Tata Group, he has honed his skills in establishing and scaling up health systems. He has been a longtime volunteer for work with the homeless communities in India.
11. **Prof. Vijay Raghavan.** Prof. Raghavan teaches at the Centre for Criminology and Justice, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. He also leads Prayas, the Institute's field action project in prisons in Maharashtra and Gujarat.

PLANNING/PREPARATORY MEETINGS

1. Networking

Regional Mental Hospital, Thane: A meeting with the social service superintendent (medical social workers) at the Regional Mental Hospital in Thane was held to understand the problems the Hospital faces in the rehabilitation and reintegration of patients with their families and communities. The primary objective of this meeting was to gather in-depth information on the challenges faced by both the Hospital and its dedicated social work staff, particularly in bridging gaps between patient care and family reintegration. This understanding would help us determine if a collaborative approach could strengthen the hospital's services and create a better path for patient rehabilitation.

During the meeting, Mr. Nitin and Mr. Satish, both medical social workers at the Hospital, shared details of the obstacles they encounter daily. Furthermore, they emphasized the need for improved resources and staff capacity to facilitate effective outreach programmes that could help maintain family connections during the patient's treatment. They also expressed concerns about the lack of resources for follow-up support once patients are discharged, which frequently results in relapses or readmissions due to inadequate aftercare support.

These insights underscored the potential possibility of a partnership with The Koshish Trust, through which we could provide complementary support and resources, thereby addressing some of these challenges.

RSCD, Belapur: RSCD is dedicated to conducting extensive research, organizing training sessions to promote good governance, and engaging in policy advocacy to achieve inclusive development through the Savitri Academy. Their focus areas are A.R.T.—Advocacy, Research, and Training.

A meeting was held with Shri Bhim Raskar, director RSCD, to discuss possible future collaboration with The Koshish Trust and to review geographical information regarding the Navi Mumbai area. We also discussed the approach of the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation towards the homeless and destitute communities. This has developed into an important network support given their wide experience and presence in the geography that is relatively new to us. Their guidance and insights have been critical for us developing appropriate strategy for the field outreach.

NULM shelter visit at Ghansoli (Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation Community Development Department; under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Urban Livelihood Mission): A visit was done to the Urban Behram Astha Social Development Institute, located at Nivara Kendra, Ghansoli. During the visit, the manager, Shri Rahul Wade, provided an overview of the institute. The organisation is led by Shri Tarun Mishra, who mentioned that similar centers are located in Surat and Mumbai.

This centre provides accommodation for single women, men, and families. Meals are provided by the organisation, and various activities are conducted on-site. The centre also has dedicated staff for cooking and maintenance.

Admissions to the centre are handled by the police, community members, and the manager, who personally oversees the intake process. They assured us of their support to our clients requiring shelter. They also invited us to work with them and support with family tracing for the clients residing with them.

2. Community Visits for Mapping

Several visits were organized to the clusters with the concentration of homeless population. These visits were done to assess the necessity and feasibility of running community-based intervention in some of these sites. Some of the key communities that we visited and assessed as possible intervention sites are explained below:

Kopari Village: A group within the transgender community resides at the Chakka Temple, Kopari Village, Navi Mumbai where approximately 200 people live. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we provided significant assistance by distributing food and other essentials to them. In this new phase of our work when we were focusing on Navi Mumbai area, it was only natural for us to think of them and explore if we could support the community through structured intervention. To begin with, we visited them to understand their current needs, holding a small meeting with the members of the community. We also spoke with the local Anganwadi teacher to learn more about their situation.

It was noted that many transgender individuals in the community have already prepared or obtained the necessary documents. Recognizing this, we considered how we could help connect them with government schemes and services.

Through consistent engagement and planning, we hope to better understand their needs and assist them in their journey toward sustainable livelihoods.

Near Kerala Bhavan: On 21 October, 2024, we visited the homeless community residing near Kerala Bhavan in Navi Mumbai. These people from Solapur Barshi Maharashtra have been living in Mumbai for the past ten years in search of work and due to lack of resources in the village. We held discussions with their team leader Shri Somnath Pawar and eight other men and women from the community. Earlier in October, an action was taken by the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation to demolish the huts of 20 families in the area. According to Mr. Somnath, these families are now living along the roadside.

Many children in this community do not attend school, and a few were seen begging near Vashi Station. It was also noted that some youth from the community were selling gajra and toys at signals in Kharghar and Vashi. They expressed a need for work opportunities, as the demolition of their huts has brought increased challenges, including visits from both the police and municipal officials.

Currently, 26 families are living on the road, while another 15 families from the community reside near Kerala Bhavan. Additionally, around 27 families from Rajasthan are also living in the vicinity. Health support is urgently needed for this community.

Kharghar: A visit to a community living in Kharghar was made. The community has been living there for 7-8 years. We interacted with about 10-11 families. The male members are engaged in daily wage work, while the women do works like selling Gajra, toys, and garbage bags. Some women of the group are also into begging and take their infants along. Most of these families hail from Solapur.

Seawoods-Darave: In a visit to the Seawoods-Darave area, we found 20-25 families living under the bridge. Most of these people have migrated from Amravati, Maharashtra. The men are involved in daily wage works such as gutter cleaning and construction. Some women sell toys but most of the women are into begging.

Night Outs: To understand the presence of homeless groups in areas of Navi Mumbai such as Belapur, Nerul, Sanpada and Juinagar, we carried out several night outs and found out people sleeping rough in certain pockets of all of these areas. We were able to talk only to a few people as most of them had slept. But this gave us a preliminary idea of the areas vis-à-vis homeless population. We are carrying out further night outs and by the next quarter, we shall be able to make a fair image of these locations.

3. Team Building Process

Rationale:

As part of the team building process, a review and planning meeting was organized during October 5-6, 2024. It brought together team members from Mumbai and Delhi units, with a focus on enhancing organizational understanding and reinforcing team spirit. The purpose of this meet was to introspect the developments encountered while transitioning from TISS, discuss develop action plan for the organization, spend some time together in solidarity and get inputs on certain organizational and administrative systems with the experts coming in for these sessions.

The session of Day 1 was conducted by Mr. Santosh Thakare, an external expert who has been a volunteer and supporter of our work since long. He covered essential aspects of human resource management, including recruitment, leaves, as well as adherence to policy and discipline. The team was oriented on procedures from job post creation and advertisement and shortlisting, laying a foundation for transparent and consistent recruitment. Through this session, team members were encouraged to uphold office discipline and punctuality, recognizing how maintaining a solid administrative framework is essential to collective and individual productivity within The Koshish Trust. In addition to administrative processes, the retreat highlighted critical financial procedures, aiming to explain financial technicalities and responsibilities.

Trust Building exercises formed a crucial component of the retreat. On Day 2, in a reflective session led by Ms Sehrish Altaf, again an external resource who volunteers for us, team members explored their motivations to join the Koshish Trust and their expectations from the Trust. They discussed their experiences during the transitional period between resigning from Koshish FAP-TISS and joining The Koshish Trust, sharing feelings of uncertainty but also expressing confidence in the leadership and a deep commitment to the cause, especially as Koshish Trust remains one of the few organizations directly addressing the needs of individuals in destitution.

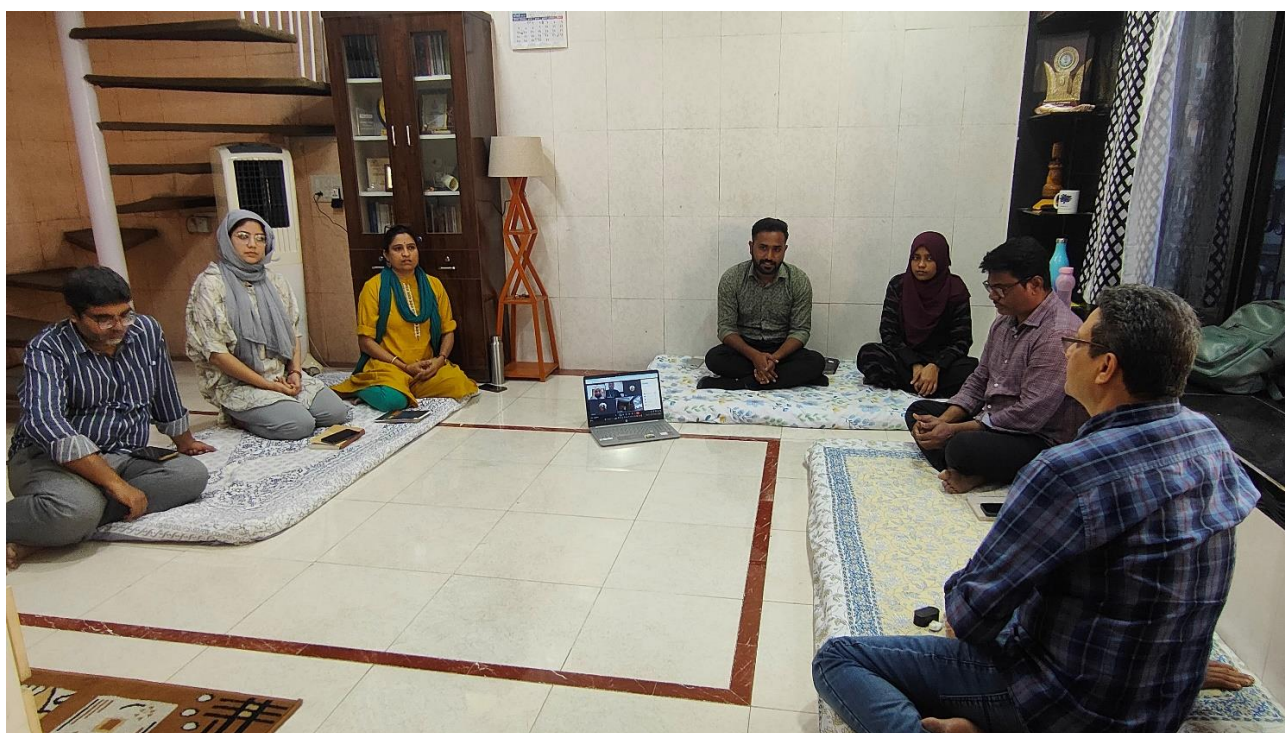
The team highlighted the supportive work culture, which provides both professional freedom and personal support during crises, as a key factor for their stay in the organisation. In discussing organizational priorities, members recognized the intersecting importance of individuals, the mission, and the organisation as a whole, emphasising that the people within The Koshish Trust define its purpose and impact.

4. One-Day Workshop on Team Building and Communication

On 16 October 2024, Shri Altaf Shaikh, Development Communication Expert, took a one-day workshop on team-building and communication for The Koshish Trust, designed to bring stronger

relationships, improve communication, and build a positive, supportive organizational culture. The workshop began with a round of introductions, after which Shri Shaikh asked each team member to reflect on and write down their expectations for the workshop and what they hoped to gain from it. He gathered these reflections, using them to align the workshop's agenda with the team's expectations. This exercise helped clarify objectives and offered an opportunity to see common themes, creating a shared sense of purpose.

A key component of the session involved going beyond professional work. Shri Shaikh encouraged everyone to share personal details that typically do not reflect on the CV. This sharing allowed team members to open up about deeply personal details of their lives, revealing dimensions of themselves that were previously unknown to others. Through this exercise, participants gained a richer, more nuanced understanding of each other's personalities, bringing better appreciation among colleagues. This encouraged team members to see each other as individuals with unique personal traits, rather than merely co-workers. Following this, Shri Shaikh led a brainstorming session addressing several points that had surfaced in the initial reflections. Topics included strengthening individual resilience, improving accountability, effectively managing timelines, and enhancing intra-team communication. Additional discussions explored ways to promote a supportive work environment, reduce workplace stress, and empower each individual to express their views confidently. This activity set a tone of openness and mutual respect, which are foundational for organisational growth.



The workshop also involved an in-depth exploration of personal accountability, self-improvement, and the impact of individual actions on the team. Shri Shaikh shared insights on conflict prevention and resolution, outlining strategies for maintaining harmony in a team where everyone's voice matters. He highlighted the importance of addressing conflicts with empathy, suggesting that problems should be approached from the organisation's perspective to achieve collective solutions. He encouraged each member to adopt a mindset that sees the organisation as a supportive whole,

advocating that a positive environment contributes as much to productivity as any policy or management structure. This led to a rich discussion on the need for a positive work atmosphere, where trust and open communication are prioritized, allowing each individual to contribute meaningfully. We also engaged in activities centered on self-awareness, stress management, and recognizing emotional state, equipping us with strategies to better handle personal stress and improve communication. As a final reflection, Shri Shaikh asked team members to think deeply about why they chose to work at The Koshish Trust, and on the issue of destitution. This exercise was an opportunity for everyone to reconnect with the mission, sharing their sense of purpose and reaffirming their dedication to the cause. Each team member reflected on their experiences and expressed their gratitude for the supportive work environment, which offers flexibility, understanding, and camaraderie.

This initial workshop was deemed crucial to engage and strengthen the bonds of the current team, ensuring they are equipped to support new recruits and create an environment of mutual growth. By the end of the day, team members left with renewed commitment and valuable tools for promoting collaboration, communicating effectively, and enhancing their personal and professional skills. The feedback that we got in this workshop has reinforced our approach towards creating a cohesive, mission-driven organisation, with the understanding that an empowered and connected team having a sense of ownership is essential to fulfilling the mission of the organisation. This workshop marks an important milestone in team-building, setting the foundation for further in-depth workshop that will continue to support our team in achieving its full potential.

KEY INTERVENTIONS

Once the team joined in October, we began with direct interventions in the communities and institutions that we were able to organize during the preparatory phase. Some of the key interventions are described below:

- a. **Institutional Intervention:** We have collaborated with Prem Daan, a residential institution for destitute women, and offer counselling services and facilitation of family restoration for the clients there. Similarly, we have collaborated with an Hausla Program in Shelter for homeless men in Delhi. Key services in both these institutions have been regular counselling sessions for the clients needing psycho-socio support and family tracing for the clients who are able to provide some sort of details/whereabouts for the family. While immediate attention to medical needs and care is available in these facilities, there is limited intervention when it comes to creating possibilities for restoration or reintegration of the clients with their families. Continuing from our earlier work in the field, we have an effective model of family tracing supported with the local organizations/ volunteers facilitating the repatriation. We have been working with the clients individually and our efforts have resulted in many of them getting back to their families. A regular follow up is maintained with such cases.



- b. **Community Based Intervention:** We have community level intervention at multiple sites. Interventions include range of services like case work, health referrals, dispute resolution, counselling, livelihood support, education program, emergency assistance, family tracing, referral services etc. These Communities have people mostly engaged in informal labor and casual work including beggary. Since the nature of work is ad-hoc and inconsistent, many of these persons are into occasional beggary as well. Through our interventions, we are attempting to provide immediate support for emergency situations like

health as well as long term change in the community's approach and situations that would facilitate their exit from beggary.

In Navi Mumbai, we are working with 2 communities: one in Mahape (Ghansoli) and the other is in Seawoods-Darave. In these communities we engage with individuals and families at multiple levels such as counselling, health and livelihood support for bringing individuals out of begging. We also engage with the children of the community to do art activities and elementary reading-writing skills.

In Mahape community near Ghansoli, we are running education program while also doing intervention on documentation of individuals such as Aadhaar card and birth certificates.

Education: Education is clearly our most ambitious intervention that we draw hope from. There are children who are either involved in beggary or at the risk of getting into it. Our education program checks this and ensures that children study and not work. We engage with parents and motivate them to educate their children. We also address the triggering factors resulting in children being pushed or compelled to beg. The Education program includes networking and collaborating with nearby schools and Anganwadi's and strengthen community's access to these facilities.

In the Mahape community, we take regular classes with children of various age groups. We teach children who are unable to attend school due to causes such as lack of documentation or parents' unwillingness to send them to school. In both these scenarios we are working towards enrolling these children in school as we are doing counselling sessions with parents as well as attempting to get relevant documents issued from government.

Apart from that, we provide support classes to school-going children with helping them understand concepts and complete their homework in a timely manner. In the absence of any family member who can supervise or help the children with their studies, coupled with the delayed start, it is often noticed that child is not able to cope up with the pace of the education at school and within a short period of a few months, child drops out. This happens with the highly motivated children as well. When they are not able to cope up with the teaching at school, they are either scolded and punished. Worst, their performance is attributed to their identity and this is where the disillusionment sets in with ultimate drop out from the school. Our support classes have addressed this issue very effectively.





- c. **Health & Mental Health:** We use network systems and agencies to facilitate clients access to healthcare. First attempt is to avail government facility, followed by charitable or private services if necessary. Though health is not the direct focus or the core intervention, community engagement makes it essential that every time there is a necessity of an urgent nature, we have to intervene. Similarly, with outreach also whenever there is a necessity, appropriate health support is extended.

We organized a health camp in the Mahape community in collaboration with D.Y. Patil Hospital in the month of April. The health camp was hugely successful with many people from the community benefitting in relation to different health issues they were faced with. However, a more important result of this health camp was the enhanced acceptance of the community for us as an organization. We clearly saw certain barriers breaking down. Within the community the group that had stayed away or reluctant to participate in our programs so far, availed the screening benefits at the health camp and that allowed us an opportunity to have deeper engagement with them. A follow up for the clients who needed any specific or serious intervention at the hospital is being maintained now.

- d. **Advocacy:** Advocacy remains one of the core objectives of our work. Practicing ‘Systems Approach’, we believe it is extremely important to engage and work with the government systems for any long-term reforms and change. As part of this, we engage with various agencies and institutions to raise the issues of our target population.

We have been consistently and actively engaged in advocacy for shelters for urban homeless citizens, recognizing adequate shelter as a fundamental right and a critical component of dignified living. Our Managing Trustee serves as a member of the Supreme Court-appointed Monitoring Committee on Shelters for the Urban Homeless. This committee holds its meetings regularly and different issues regarding shelters are being brought to it for redressal. Our continued and active participation has enabled us to make a significant contribution. As our support to the Amicus to the Supreme Court in the Shelter matter, we review and analyze the affidavits filed by the states. This in turn helps us understand the situation and status of the shelters through out the country.

As part of our Advocacy work, we collaborated with US Consulate Mumbai to screen the film ‘The Invisible Visible’, a film made by an independent filmmaker Kireet Khurana, highlighting the issues pertaining to homeless and destitute population through the life and work of Managing Trustee. The screening was followed by a panel discussion where issue of homelessness, possible solutions and challenges were discussed with the audience.



- e. **Action Research:** While people living in the state of destitution face continuous harassment, neglect and abuse, it is rarely that their experiences are documented in any form. While there are perceptions and opinions formed about them, there is hardly any attempt made to understand their side of the story. To address this, we initiated an action-oriented study where the objective was to listen to people's side and document the way they express their lives and situations they are faced with. Another objective was to identify clients who require long term support and plan intervention for them accordingly. In the process we had conversations with over 500 clients spread across Mumbai and neighboring cities like Kalyan, Thane, Vasai, Virar etc.

The report is an effort to bring forward the real-life experiences of people living in destitution, using their own voices. These are people who face poverty, hunger, illness, and rejection every day. The report tries to question the common stories that state, people and media often tell about them; stories that see them as criminals or as people who do not matter. It tries to break this image by sharing what these individuals themselves feel, think, and hope for. In this way, the report becomes both a record of lived reality and a form of resistance. It asks for a kinder, fairer, and more responsible way of seeing and treating people who are poor and left behind.

At the same time, the report also engages with the view that is often seen in the work of human rights organizations and NGOs. These groups usually speak about people in destitution as only victims of a failed system. While this view is helpful in showing the injustice they face, it often forgets to show the strength, resistance, perseverance and voice of these people. When we see them only as victims, we may stop seeing them as individuals who can speak, and who have agency, in a manner of speaking. This report tries to bring back that lost voice. It listens to how people talk about their own lives, and of how they are seen. And in doing so, it reminds us that they deserve to be heard.



- f. **Night Outs:** We conduct night out for rescue and emergency care for the homeless clients. Teams drive through the streets and offer immediate relief in terms of food, blankets, clothes etc. while working with the person to move him/her to nearby shelter facility. This intervention includes rescue for emergency situations, awareness generation by dissemination information about government facilities for shelter and relief available and networking with civil society organizations running the shelters and other services. The frequency of night outs (in Delhi) increases during the winters as the need for rescue goes up manifold. While in Mumbai it remains a regular program, in Delhi it is implemented as a Special Campaign given the extreme weather conditions and the resultant need for shelters. We did a total of 12 night outs and reached out to 198 individuals in Delhi in eight of the eleven districts of Delhi, namely, Central, North, West, South, South East, South West, East and North East Delhi.

In Mumbai, we could do relatively a smaller number of night outs because a significant portion of our time and efforts was invested in ongoing action research and documentation work related to the report. We did a total of 08 night outs in which we covered areas such as Kharghar, Belapur, Nerul, APMC Market Vashi in Navi Mumbai and Mahim in Mumbai.

These night outs serve multiple purposes. The primary reason of course is the rescue or emergency support to the needy persons on the street along with building connections on the streets. However, an important by-product of these efforts is the deeper realization of our privileges and blessings that each outing on the streets reminds us about. Engagement with people on the streets cleans and strengthens our understanding and perspective on homelessness and destitution.



- g. City Level Collaborative:** We have initiated a city level collaborative of organizations working on the issue of homelessness in Mumbai. At present 6 organizations have come together to form this collaborative. The purpose of this is to strengthen the rehabilitation services for the homeless and focus on greater impact with combined resources and energy. A working group comprising of one member from each organization has been constituted to develop the further processes for the formalization of the collaboration.



- h. Voting Rights Campaign:** We are part of civil society network called Sehri Adhikar Manch (SAM). As part of this collective, we mobilized homeless citizens for enrolling with electoral process. This campaign was run in collaboration with Election Commission authorities. The homeless people were registered and

provided with Voter ID cards. With the collective, we held meetings with three Assistant Electoral Registration Officers in the following Assembly Constituencies:

AC 40 Jam Nagar House: Covering Bangla Sahib, Kali Mandir, and Gol Market.

AC 41 Jal Vihar: Covering Kale Khan and Nizamuddin

AC 51 Kalkaji: Covering Nehru Place and Kalkaji Mandir shelters.



- i. **Youth Engagement:** We hosted students for their field placements and internships. Through this we are trying to build their perspective about the issue and also encourage them to see the relevance of values and empathy with the required openness.

We hosted Business Management students from Vijaybhoomi University, Karjat, Maharashtra as part of their Managerial Leadership Course. The group was oriented on the work of the organization apart from the broader orientation on the issue itself.

We also conducted awareness session for the students of law where our Founder Ms. Pallavi Thakare shared her journey with the students, highlighting the plight of the homeless and destitute and the role that youth can play in making people feel wanted and cared for. Another orientation session was conducted with the students of community mental program



- j. **National Alliance for Dignity and Inclusion (NADI):** We have initiated a national level alliance with like-minded organizations that believe in the persons right to live with dignity and were willing to be a part of the collective we initiated. So far, we have representation of organizations from 10 states as part of this Alliance. One of the key objectives of this alliance is the timely support for rehabilitation and reintegration of homeless clients, especially those with mental health issues. Organizations have also committed to build each other's capacities based on individual strengths of each member organization.
- k. **Community Mental Health program:** We have initiated a community level mental health intervention with the purpose of creating a cadre of community mental health workers that can protect and promote the rights of the persons with mental illness. The program is still at the initial stage and is being developed. The response from the community has been positive. However, given the regular and frequent police or municipal body action on the destitution persons on the streets acts as a demotivation and deterrent in them coming together. Still their participation and preparedness to support the vulnerable persons from their community, whether settled with the cluster or isolated in the streets, is remarkable. We are working towards identification, training and support for community-based volunteers who would support the community members facing mental health issues.
- l. **Training & Sensitization:** We organized training session for the social service superintendents of different government hospitals from across Maharashtra. Around 200 officers attended our orientation session on homelessness and the challenges that homeless citizens face when visiting the health facility. This orientation session we organized in collaboration with Maharashtra Social Service Superintendents Association. We plan to continue holding more such sessions and orientation etc. This association has proved very useful and effective in ensuring smoother and dignified access to health services for our client group.
- m. **Legislative Reform:** We are part of the Committee that government of Maharashtra had put together to prepare the draft for the alternative legislation that could replace the existing beggary prevention law. We submitted the draft to the government and the same is going to be tabled to the government for further processing. We aim to collaborate and work with concerned Ministries or state departments towards necessary reform in the existing beggary laws in the country. We have also participated in the review of the centrally operated scheme SMILE on invite of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India.

- n. Media Engagement:** It is known how crucial is the role that media plays in terms of creating sensitivity and understanding of any given subject and issue amongst the general society. We therefore engage closely with the media professionals so that they understand the issue in its right context and then writing about the same. We did several meetings with friends from media to plan and work with them. We did night rounds together, held meetings in the community and sought their support in taking our programs and issue to larger society. We were covered twice by a national newspaper with detailed pieces. In fact, they also carried an article written by the Managing Trustee of the organization. The friends from media are also helping with the dissemination of the action research we did to capture the lived experiences of people living in destitution.

Conclusion: This period has been foundational for The Koshish Trust, establishing essential organizational, financial, and collaborative structures that provide a strong base for our mission. Our community-focused efforts, including mapping exercises and networking with organizations have provided deeper insights into the challenges present before the destitute. These interactions have enabled us to identify specific areas for intervention and support, helping us plan for impactful programmes that address real community needs. These foundational steps will guide our approach as we work to create sustainable solutions towards rehabilitation of destitute populations. As we move forward, our focus will be on expanding the team, launching key programmes, and deepening our partnerships with various stakeholders, building on the groundwork laid in this initial phase.

This period has been nothing short of a roller-coaster for us. There have been both excitement and challenges. We started with enthusiasm and started building programs for our community-based interventions on one hand, and laying the groundwork for a new vertical of research on the other.

The community took us with warmth and engaged with us with openness, enabling us to build a good rapport in both these communities. Moreover, our collaborative work with institutions both in Delhi and Mumbai is taking a meaningful shape. We also carried out the necessary procedural processes to establish and stabilize the organization. As of now, our work in communities is well functioning and we are in the process of expanding our works in institutions.