



DON BOSCO MIGRANT SERVICES

Empowering Migrant Lives. Creating New Futures.

Annual Report 2020 - 21





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OUR IMPACT AT A GLANCE

6,618

Total People
Reached

2,650

Families
impacted

915

Children
impacted

3,050

Laborers
Supported

2

Rescue



DAILY WAGERS SUPPORT



- Bangalore City, Thrumbar SC Dhobies at Gingee - **20 Families**
- Gypsies Mambakkam Village (Solid Waste Management Cleaners) - **10 Families**
- Triplicane, Chennai (Physically Challenged & Roadside Beggars) - **50 Families**
- Madhavaram, Muslim Nagar, Tiruvallur District (Beedi Workers) - **150 Families**
- Amaramedu, Madharpakkam, Tiruvallur District (Shoe Company Workers) - **50 Families**
- Medavakkam (Sri Lankan Tamil Families) - **100 Families**
- Avadi (Daily Wages Families) - **25 Families**
- Maranodai, Villupuram (Dalit Families) - **300 Families**

BEAUTY PARLOUR, SALON & RESTAURANT WORKERS

- Anna Nagar, Choolaimedu (Manipuri Families) - **150 Families**
- Adambakkam (Manipuri Families) - **150 Families**

DRIVERS

Manjampakkam, Chennai (Interstate & Intrastate Lorry Drivers) - **100 Individuals**

BRICK CHAMBERS (MIGRANT WORKERS)

- Kavarapettai, Tiruvallur District (10 Odiya Brick Chamber Labour Families) - **930 Families**
- Gnayiru, Manali, Chennai (3 Chambers Tamil Labour Families) - **300 Families**
- Metupalayam, Tiruvallur District (SC Tamil Brick Chamber Families) - **120 Families**
- Pananthoppu, Tiruvallur District (SC Tamil Brick Chamber Families) - **80 Families**
- Arithurai, Keezhmudalambedu, Tiruvallur District (SKB Tamil Brick Chamber Families) - **80 Families**



CASUAL LABOURERS IN FACTORIES



- **100** Odry Labourers (SIPCOT, Guindy)
- **200** Sundaram Clayton Workers (SIPCOT)
- **150** General Motors (SIPCOT, Maraimalai Nagar)
- **250** Sundaram Fasteners (SIPCOT)
- **100** SIDCO Labourers (Thirumudivakkam, Pallavaram)
- **150** Cosmetic Labourers (SIPCOT, Guindy)
- **150** Casual Labourers (Koyembedu Market)
- **150** Loading and Unloading Labourers (Koyembedu, Chennai)

EVICTED SLUMS

- Kudapakkam, Tiruvallur District - **100 Children**
- Perumbakkam, Chengelpet District - **200 Children**
- Kanagi Nagar, Chengelpet District - **75 Children**
- Navalur, Kancheepuram District - **50 Children**
- Kanagi Nagar, Chennai - **150 Families**
- Perumbakkam (OMR) - **150 Families**
- Navalur, Padapai, Kancheepuram District - **68 Families**
- Vyasarpadi Slum, Chennai (Daily Wages & Coolies) - **138 Families**
- Perumbakkam (OMR) (Evicted Slum) - **200 Families**
- Moorthy Nagar (Slum Evicted) - **100 Families**

CONSTRUCTION LABOURERS

- Tiruvottiyur, Chennai (Construction Migrants) - 300 Labourers
- Vyasarpadi, Chennai (Construction Labourers) - 250 Labourers
- TNHB, Perambur (Construction Labourers) - 250 Labourers
- Madhavaram, Chennai (Construction Labourers and Families) - 250 Labourers
- Manali, Chennai (Migrant Construction Labourers) - 75 Families
- Avadi Police Quarters (Construction Labourers) - 300 Families
- Tamil SC wages working in SIPCOT, Pudupettai Gummidipoondi - 150 Families
- Migrants Casual labours in SIPCOT, Pudupettai Gummidipoondi - 150 Families
- Migrants, Araneri, Kancheepuram Dt - 50 Children
- SIDCO, ISM Labourers, Thirumudivakkam, Pallavaram - 300 Labourers
- ISM Labourers, Gummidipoondi - 100 Families



RELEASED BONDED IRULAS

- Pudupettai, Gummidipoondi, Tiruvallur District (Telugu Irulas) - **50 Families**
- Vatalanmeladu, Gummidipoondi, Tiruvallur District (Irular Families) - **50 Families**
- Pudupettai, Gummidipoondi, Tiruvallur District (Irular Families) - **50 Families**
- Thathayan Kandigai, Uthukottai TK, Tiruvallur District (Irulars) - **50 Families**
- Villar Colony, Tiruvallur District (Irular & Specially Abled) - **20 Families**
- Arithurai, Kavarapettai, Tiruvallur District (Irulars) - **50 Families**
- Ponniyamedu, Tiruvallur District (Irulars) - **75 Families**
- Rice Mills, Anna Nagar, Tiruvallur District (Released Bonded Irulars) - **150 Families**
- 6th Mile, Tiruvallur District (Gypsy Families) - **50 Families**
- Thiruninravur, Kakalur (Transgenders) - **50 Families**
- Aminjikarai (Transgenders) - **40 Families**
- Ernavoor (Transgenders) - **50 Families**



SOURCE MIGRANTS

- Kasbatoli, Bihar (Coolies) - **220 Families**
- Solid Waste Management Labours, Koyembedu - **40 Families**
- Tri-Cycle Loaded and unloaders, Koyembedu Market - **25 Families**
- Payment Dwellers & Coolies, Pookadai (Old), Near High court - **150 Families**



5,726

Total Families Supported

6,150

Total Individuals Benefited

3,599

Total Children Benefited



Training and Empowerment



Training & Empowerment

Neo Leadership Capability Model Training



Held on November 21, this training empowered 80 children from seven evening tuition centers, including Gudapakkam, Ponniampedu, and Pananthoppu. Led by Fr. John Wilson, the program focused on self-awareness, team building, and value-based leadership. Children were taught to set goals, face social realities, and find innovative ways to inspire others. This dynamic training was designed to nurture tomorrow's leaders who can stand for justice, equity, and social change, even in the most marginalised communities.

Legal Literacy Training – Mambakkam

On November 29, Bosco Migrant Services conducted a Legal Awareness Training in Mambakkam, Kancheepuram District, for 51 migrant workers from Assam, Jharkhand, Orissa, and UP. They were educated on Inter-State Migrant Act, Social Security Act, and BOCW Act. Workers voiced concerns about discrimination, ration overpricing, and lack of sanitation facilities. Fr. Bosco encouraged the formation of a migrant workers' association and proposed campaigns like Clean & Green Mambakkam.



Protests, Training & Empowerment

Postcard Campaign to the PM



On Nov 11, Bosco Migrant Services and the Unorganised Workers Federation launched a Labour Revolution Day at St. Mary's Hall, Chennai. The team spread awareness about new Labour Codes and initiated a Postcard Campaign, where 500+ migrant workers sent appeals to the Prime Minister and Chief Minister demanding Corona relief and labour rights.

Police Boys Club Launch – Gudapakkam

On Nov 19, Bosco Migrant Services and Vellavedu Police Station launched a Police Boys Club workshop in Gudapakkam. Police officials and Fr. Bosco encouraged youth through success stories and activities, promoting games and studies as tools for empowerment. The club aims to provide positive engagement for slum youth.



Handbook on Migrant Rights

Empowering Change Through Knowledge

This handbook culminates a shared vision to compile essential concepts and legal frameworks for migrant workers. Bosco Net was instrumental in bringing this resource to life.

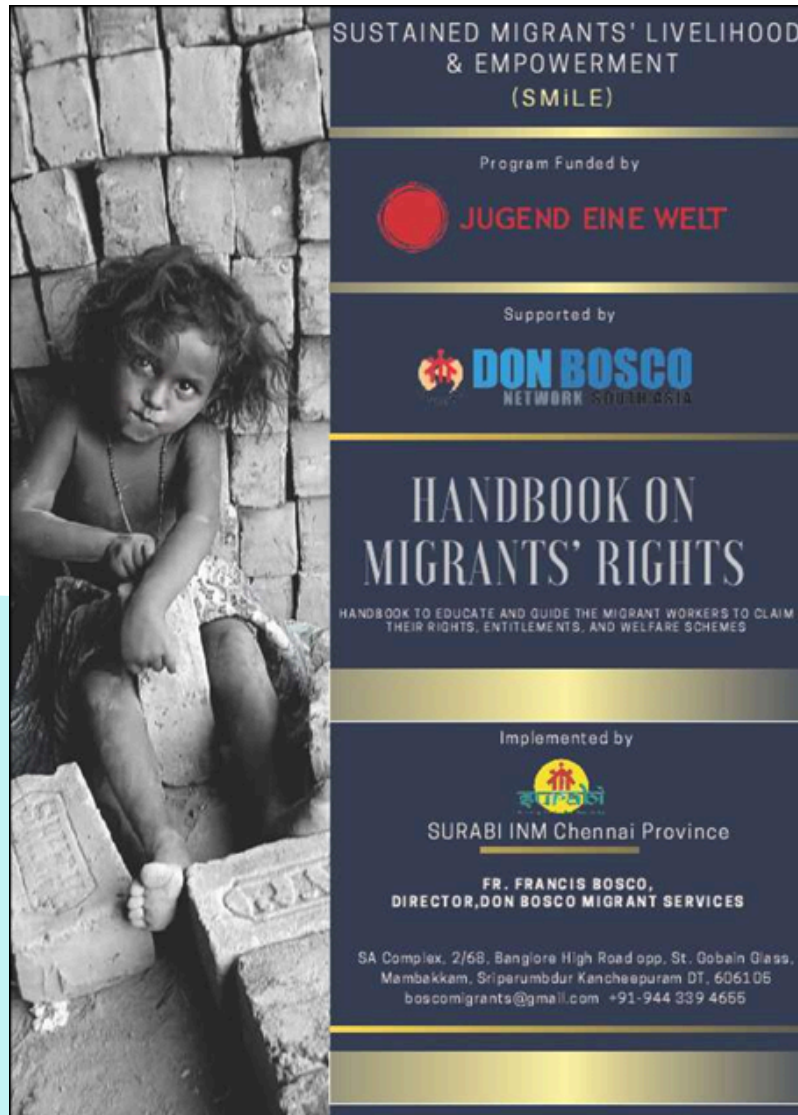


This guide is designed to serve as a practical training tool for:

- Staff members working with migrant communities
- Migrant leaders and advocates
- Government officials in labour and related departments

While this handbook is not exhaustive, it marks the beginning of an ongoing effort to address migrant rights within the evolving legal landscape. Our organization will continue to expand and refine this resource as it engages more deeply with migrant issues and legal frameworks.

This handbook serves as a practical guide for unorganized workers in Tamil Nadu, equipping them with knowledge on legal rights, welfare schemes, and advocacy strategies.



Released in January

“ **A Training Toolkit for Legal Redressal and Intervention Programs** ”

Inspiration instills Hope

February

Fr. Amit Mondal, II year MSW of Sacred Heart College (Autonomous), Tirupattur, Tamil Nadu, sharing his experiences with the migrants.

Away from their home lands in Bihar, Jharkand and Oddissa, hundreds of migrants, most with their children, work and live off their pre-borrowed wages, residing in slums, tin sheet houses around Chennai. Despite pain in their hearts and anger in their eyes, the migrants of India, the creators of India's smart cities walk tall with grit and dignity, making a responsible livelihood and remitting hard-earned money to help their ageing parents in their home states.

I am indeed glad to share my experience of living with the migrant labourers in Chennai for 25 days. I am grateful to the Don Bosco Migrants Service Society, Madhavaram, for giving me this opportunity to be a part of this prestigious organization. I was extremely enthusiastic to meet the migrant labourers who have migrated from different states of India -Assam, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Bengal, Jharkhand for their livelihood. I was able to visit quite a few sites where the migrant labourers are residing with minimum facilities provided by the manufacturing companies in Sriperumbudur, Ambathur, Mamvakkam industrial areas. At the time of my visit I interacted with them, conducted surveys and had taken up few case works through which I have learned about them better and came to know the issues involved at work place and their residence sites and was able to help and guide them. I was fortunate to visit the bricks chambers at Ponneri for the first time in my life. I visited the owners of the bricks chambers and interacted with migrant labourers and their children. Mostly the children are not taken care. The children are left free whole day doing nothing. They look shabby, no proper cloths and looks like they are completely neglected but the Don Bosco Migrant Service Society have taken extra initiatives to get into this difficult field and after their intervention they have managed to provide proper education to the children by enrolling their names in the nearby government schools and giving them free tuition. Today hundreds of children are beneficiaries of Don Bosco's services.

I also had opportunity to visit the slums at Navalur in Sriperumbudur, and Kannigi Nagar at Old Mahabalipuram. The dehumanised life style of the slum people is heart-wrenching. Though the government has constructed some apartments and resettled the slum people in these apartments – they lack basic facilities and it looks like that they are dumped out or treated as social rejects and stench and filth of society. There are no proper transportation, no job opportunities, no good schools, no medicals or hospitals no water. Youths are addicted to drugs and alcohol and children are sexually abused. The Don Bosco Migrants Service Society has brought some transformation after several visits to these slums. I have realized their struggles, pains, suffering and problems that they go through. I can say that I have equipped myself to be a professional social worker by being in the practical field by observing and being with them.



When asked 'what makes you feel confident and what makes you challenged as a migrant', their uniform answer is:

'I have an abled body and a brave heart to inspire confidence within; the sparkle of trust of my tiny children placed in me enlivens my tired spirits; though conditions look unfriendly and the future uncertain, we go on and we never give up, we never give up because we live in the present, we live the moment and we shall soon overcome; from the ashes of our fathers and the blood of our children, a new generation rises, it is rising to reclaim the lives lost and wealth denied. Till then we do not rest, we shall not perish.'

MEETINGS

SWAMI AGNIVEHJI AND TUJAC MEETING

TUJAC met at Egmore to press demands on worker registration, ESI, and labour code withdrawal. A memorial was held for Swami Agniveshji, a lifelong fighter for justice and the poor.

NAPM SOUTHERN ZONE MEETING

NAPM Southern Zone met online on September 17 to address pandemic challenges. Members urged cash aid, increased MNREGA days, and resistance to exploitative legal amendments.

REVERSE MIGRATION – ORISSA STUDY

A Google Meet analyzed reverse migration trends in Odisha. Over 8 lakh workers returned, most unskilled, with 40% employed in brick kilns and facing major challenges in food, work, and welfare.

INM YAR COMMISSION MEETING

The INM YaR Commission met on September 14 at Don Bosco Anbu Illam. Members shared COVID-19 updates, national campaigns, and plans for strengthening YaR ministry work across centres.

LEGAL LITERACY MEETING – MANALI

On September 20, a legal awareness meet was held at Manali for 300+ migrants. Fr. Francis Bosco spoke on rights, PF, and housing issues; labourers supported forming a Sangam for collective strength.

SALESIAN SOCIAL FORUM MEETING

 3rd to 5th February

 PARA - Ravulapalem

The Salesian Social Forum (SSF) is a dynamic collective of volunteers, lay persons, and members of the Salesian family.

Held over three days in Pararavulapalem, the forum served as a platform for shared learning and strategic dialogue.

Participants reaffirmed their commitment to promoting secular values, social justice, and human rights, especially for marginalised youth and women.



Meeting Agenda

- Rediscovering core identity
- Responding to the national political crisis
- Addressing sexual abuse, power, and patriarchy
- Shifting paradigms – Living the Gospel in the New Normal



Education

Collaborating with Academicians to Identify Issues and Advocate for Change

National Webinar on Scope and Challenges of Women Migrant Workers Post-Covid-19

January: In Collaboration with The P&G Research Department of Social Work at Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur District, Don Bosco Migrant Services organized a two-day National Webinar titled "Scope and Challenges of Women Migrant Workers Post-Covid-19 Pandemic." The event brought together distinguished academics, practitioners, and field experts to discuss the severe impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on women migrant workers in India. As its primary objective, the webinar aimed to explore the challenges faced by women migrant workers in the post-Covid-19 period and to identify strategies to support their reintegration into the workforce.

Key Highlights

- Growth in Female Migration (2001-2011): More than doubled, from 4.1 million to 8.5 million.
- Labour Force Decline (November 2020):
- Total Reduction: 13.5 million (6.8 million men and 6.7 million women).
- Women Displaced: 6.7 million (2.3 million rural and 4.4 million urban women).
- Percentage Drop: 13% of women exited the workforce.

Core Issues Discussed

- Economic Shock and Job Losses: Women in the informal sector—home-based workers, domestic workers, construction laborers, textile and garment factory workers, and beauty service providers—were most affected.
- Trauma and Distrust: Many women migrants experienced extreme trauma, including abandonment, insecurity, and lack of institutional support during the lockdown.
- Barriers to Re-Employment:
 - Inadequate mobility and safety.
 - Lack of childcare options.
 - Wage disparity and discrimination.
 - Limited opportunities for skill enhancement.

Real-Life Incidents

- Tragic Death in Muzaffarpur: A viral video showed a child trying to wake his dead mother at a railway station in Bihar—an image that became a symbol of the suffering of women migrants.
- Sexual Harassment: In Shiva Plastic Factory, Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu, a migrant couple (Iswar Prasad and Bombi Dhurwai) were detained, abused, and falsely accused of theft for demanding their wages.
- Bonded Labour and Violence: At GDM Brick Chamber, Tiruvallur District, 350 migrant laborer families from Odisha were prevented from returning home and were assaulted by 50 thugs.
- Unsafe Working Conditions: In KRNBR Brick Chamber, Tiruvallur District, two girls from Odisha (Manjari and Kalahandi) were killed when a wall collapsed during work.

Recommendations from the Webinar

- Strengthen Data Management: Maintain transparent, gender-disaggregated data on migrant workers to ensure targeted support.
- Legal Protections: Amend labour laws to recognize and protect domestic and informal sector workers.
- Safe Re-Employment Initiatives: Ensure secure working conditions, equal wages, and accessible childcare facilities.
- Psychosocial Support: Provide counseling and trauma support for women affected by the lockdown.
- Inclusive Labour Codes: Review and amend the new labour codes to specifically address the needs of women migrants.

Youth at Risk: National Youth Commission Meet

Empowering Youth Ministers to Support Migrant Youth

The National Youth CCBI Commission organized an online Youth Ministry Course titled "Youth at Risk" on January 25, 2021. The event aimed at equipping priests, religious leaders, and youth animators across India with the skills and knowledge to effectively work with migrant youth facing social, cultural, and spiritual challenges. The session was led by Fr. Francis Bosco, Director of Bosco Migrant Services, Chennai, who served as the resource person. The program was attended by nearly 40 youth ministers and was conducted from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm.

Understanding the Challenges

Youth migration leads to the loss of cultural identity, faith practices, and lifestyle changes. Due to seasonal migration patterns, youth often migrate after celebrating local festivals in their home states, such as Bihu in Assam and Durga Puja in West Bengal.

Integrating Migrant Youth: Core Strategies

- Identification and Mapping: Locate migrant youth in the area and understand their needs.
- Basic Needs Support: Ensure access to shelter, food, healthcare, sanitation, and education.
- Migrant Help Desks: Establish support centers in parishes for guidance and documentation.
- Community Involvement: Mobilize local communities to create a welcoming environment.

Tools for Migrant Youth Ministry

Inspired by the teachings of Pope Francis:

- Welcoming migrants and creating a safe and inclusive space.
- Protecting migrants, safeguarding their rights and dignity.
- Nurturing Migrants: Offering spiritual and emotional support.
- Integrating Migrants: Connecting them with local communities.

Practical strategies included:

- Mobilizing parish communities and youth groups for support.
- Connecting young migrants with local parish priests and catechists.
- Establishing forums for migrant support within parishes.

Key Insights and Statistics

- Loss of Cultural Identity: Young migrants lose touch with their traditions and faith practices.
- High-Risk Environments: Migrants often work in dangerous jobs (construction, brick kilns, factories).
- Isolation and Vulnerability: Young single migrants face social exclusion and exploitation.

Recommendations for Sustainable Impact

1. Set Up Migrant Help Desks: Provide essential guidance and support.
2. Cultural Preservation: Organize cultural events to maintain migrant traditions.
3. Continuous Training: Regularly train youth ministers to support migrant youth.
4. Community Mobilization: Involve parishes, schools, and local youth groups.
5. Spiritual and Emotional Care: Offer counseling and faith-based support.



National Youth Commission
Conference of Catholic Bishops of India (CCBI)

Youth Minister's Animation Programme
An Online Course on Youth Ministry



Prof. Jade Carvalho
Asst. Professor
(Psychology)



Fr. Thomas Aquinas SDB
National Coordinator
National YAR Network



Fr. Chetan Machado
Exec. Secretary
CCBI Youth Commission



Fr. Bosco Francis SDB
Director
Don Bosco Migrant Services



Fr. Joel D'Conha
Former National Director
ICYM



Dr. Steve Rocha
Child Rights Activist

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Working with YOUTH AT RISK
22-26 January 2021

- ❖ Who are the "Youth at Risk (YAR)"?
- ❖ Common problems of YAR.
- ❖ How to rescue youth with deviant behavior?
- ❖ Human Rights & Youth.
- ❖ Factors influencing behavioral problems
- ❖ Migrant youth

"Welcome, protect, nurture, and integrate migrants."
— Pope Francis

ANIMATION PROGRAMS

MIGRATION ANIMATION PROGRAMME

Don Bosco Migrant Services conducted a Migration Animation Programme for Redemptorist brothers in Trichy to deepen their understanding of migration issues.

The day began with a Eucharistic celebration presided over by Fr. Francis Bosco, followed by sessions that explored the types, causes, and consequences of migration.

Bro. Nirmal Tirkey shared insights from his work with young migrants in the manufacturing sector, highlighting issues of exploitation, poor living conditions, and wage delays.

An exposure visit to a construction site allowed participants to interact directly with migrant labourers, followed by a planning session that laid out future outreach activities.

9th February
Trichy



MIGRATION BEST PRACTICES

18th February
Hyderabad Province

A day-long session on Migration Best Practices was held for Salesian priests, staff, MSWs, and volunteers of the Hyderabad Province.

Fr. Francis Bosco and other speakers explained key migration concepts and shared success stories from the INM province, work with brick chamber labourers and slum-evicted communities.

Presenters from Sriperumbudur, Gummidipoondi, and Vijayawada highlighted effective models of migrant outreach, such as alternate schooling for labourers' children and support desks for quarry and construction workers.

Staff from Warangal and Hyderabad shared interventions in over 185 slums, while representatives from PARA and Nava Jeevan rounded out the session with collaborative strategies. The event concluded with a renewed call for inter-provincial collaboration to improve conditions at both source and destination points.

TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY STUDY

This month, Don Bosco Transgender Centre collaborated with Snehidhi (an organization working in North Chennai) and Br. Unit 2 to conduct a comprehensive study on the transgender community. Documentation and reports for the year 2018–2019 were prepared for submission to the TANSAC (Tamil Nadu State AIDS Control Society) project. Data on consultation meetings, awareness events, and outreach programs were compiled.

Additionally, Mrs. Rupakala, President of the North Chennai Transgender Federation, was interviewed to understand the lives and challenges of transgender persons at individual, family, and community levels. Information was collected about transgender people living in Chindadripet, Vannarapettai, and Perambur areas.



Unorganised Women's Meeting – Perumbakkam

 **22 February 2020** |  **Block 18, Perumbakkam**



An evening meeting for unorganised sector women was held under the leadership of Br. Raja, with around 30 women participating. The discussion focused on key issues such as children's education, self-employment opportunities, welfare board registration, and childcare. Plans for a new evening tuition center were also discussed.

The group agreed to hold regular monthly meetings, and talked about member registrations and class visits. Suggestions were made for improving children's development. Evening class teachers Ramya and Bharathi also attended the session.

Shaping the young towards a better future

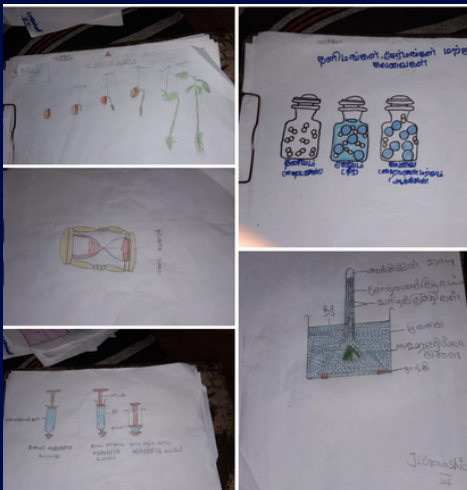


Engaging Children



"Migrants Tell Their Story of Hope" – Online Mime Show

Bosco Migrant Services organized an online mime competition in December for children from study centres across Kannagi Nagar, Perumbakkam, Mettupalayam, Sixth Mile, and Ponniyammanmedu. Children performed expressive mimes on migrant struggles, environmental issues, mobile addiction, traffic rules, and more.



"Creating Young Scientists" – Science Drawing Contest

On 12th December 2020, a science-themed drawing competition with 16 participants, the contest sparked curiosity and gave students a hands-on way to connect with science. It was conducted for Grade 5 & 6 students at the Kannagi Nagar Evening Tuition Centre. The goal was to foster interest in science and math early on, combating the dropout trend in higher education among underprivileged children.

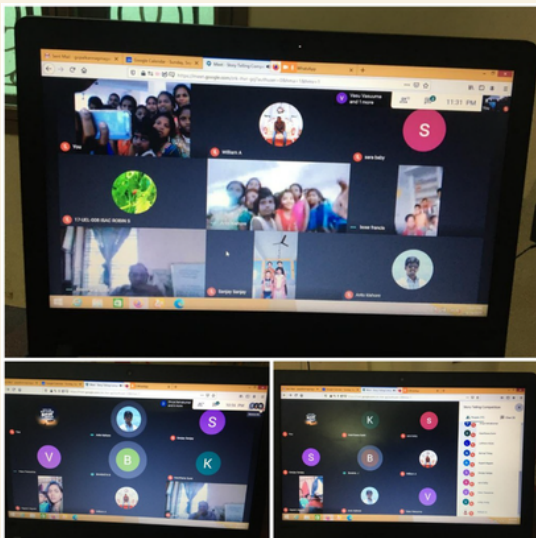


"Birthday Joy for All" – December Celebrations

Because every child deserves to feel special, joint birthday celebrations were held in Kannagi Nagar and Perumbakkam for all children born in December. On 10th, 14th, and 20th December, cakes were cut, songs were sung, and sweets were shared among smiling faces. Children like Arunkumar (13) and Rahul (13) were thrilled to be celebrated with their peers in a spirit of inclusion and happiness.

Learning at Home During the Pandemic

As schools and online learning remained inaccessible to children in government schools, Don Bosco teachers used WhatsApp groups to continue education through creative assignments and activities. Children actively participated and shared their work from home. Prizes were given to encourage learning. The initiative helped children feel included and supported, even without formal classes.



Educational Support for Gummidipoondi Children

In Pudhupettai village, 350 Tamil and 200 migrant families live in industrial surroundings. Many children were unsupervised due to both parents working.

Don Bosco started a bilingual education support programme with Hindi-speaking teachers for migrant children. Activities included foundational learning and play. Brother Infant and staff member Deepak were key to this effort.



Teachers' Day Celebration

In honour of Teachers' Day, educational kits were distributed to children in rural learning centres at Koodapakkam, Burmanagar, Sadayankuppam, Pananthopu, Ponniyampedu, Mettupalayam, and Thathayankandigai. This celebration also paid tribute to great social reformers and educators like Ambedkar, Periyar, Buddha, Marx, Savitribai Phule, and Che Guevara, whose ideals continue to inspire Don Bosco's educational mission rooted in liberation and dignity.



Lighting the Way for Kiln Workers' Children



Community Mapping

In February, initial outreach began in Pudupakkam and Pudukuppam villages, covering MRN, SGI, and SJI brick kilns. Workers from Tamil Nadu and Odisha were identified, along with 100 families and 65 children.



Evening Classes

Special evening coaching sessions and games were launched for children of kiln workers. These sessions aimed to provide educational support and create a safe, engaging space after work hours.



School Enrollments

With the support of Don Bosco Migrant Services, 65 children were enrolled in Pudupakkam and Pudukuppam Government Primary Schools, and their school attendance is being monitored.



Parental Engagement

Meetings with parents emphasized the importance of regular schooling. Positive responses were received, and many agreed to support their children's continued education.



Brick Kiln Owner Collaboration

Consultations were held with brick kiln owners, advocating for support in facilitating children's education. Awareness was raised about the benefits of employer involvement in child welfare.



Expansion to Vichur Region

The team extended outreach to Aarumandai, Thirunilai, and Vellivayal villages in Vichur, covering kilns like AJSV, JAYA, SAKTI, SJP, TCM, and MRB. Awareness and counseling were provided.



Education Beyond Classrooms: Children's Learning and Joy During the Pandemic

Study Centres for Manali Children (10th September 2020)

Two study centres were launched in Burmanagar and Sadayankuppam, Manali, for over 100 migrant children who had no access to learning for six months due to COVID-19.

Activities included games, dance, singing, reading, and writing, conducted by trained animators. The Village Administrative Officer offered the public hall for the sessions. Parents and community leaders appreciated the initiative led by Don Bosco Migrant Services.



Online Storytelling Competition – “Becoming Directors” (20th September 2020)

An inter-centre online storytelling competition was organized after children were grouped by class level and finalists were selected from each tuition centre. The grand finale had over 50 enthusiastic participants. Children presented inspiring and creative stories, impressing both judges and organisers. The event celebrated talent, teamwork, and storytelling as a form of empowerment.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



9-02-2020 PONGAL - HAND BALL GAME

A handball tournament was held for youth from six villages. The event drew strong community support and concluded with prize distribution to the winning Mettupalayam team.

UTHUKOTTAI

16-02-2020 YOUNG LABOURERS - MERRY-GO-ROUND GAMES

Over 50 young labourers participated in team games organized by MSW trainees. The event promoted teamwork, relaxation, and financial awareness through fun activities.

MAMBAKKAM



26-02-2020 EVENING CLASSES AT FREE CENTERS

New evening classes were launched with 30+ children attending. Free notebooks and study materials were provided, deepening trust among parents and community members.

PERUMBAKKAM

24-02-2024 NEW EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

A new evening class was started for 25 students from local government and private schools. Subjects like math, science, and English were offered to academically lagging children.

GUMMIDIPOONDI



Shaping Young Minds



Children's Group Parade Inauguration — Oct 17, Perumbakkam

Around 150 children from the Perumbakkam resettlement area gathered in colourful team formations (Red, Green, Yellow, Blue) and marched in unity. The event emphasized team spirit, discipline, and leadership, ending with group games and sweets.



Indian Students Day & Tribute to Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam — Oct 15, Pananthoppu

To mark Dr. Kalam's birthday, students participated in speech, poetry, drawing, singing, and music chair competitions. Ward member Mr. M.K. Anandhan presided as guest. The celebration reminded students of their power to shape India's future.



“Design Your Dream” Fancy Dress Competition — Oct 24 (Online)

Children dressed as teachers, doctors, environmental activists, and social leaders, promoting themes like clean cities and corruption-free society. Over 50 finalists participated online, showcasing creativity, social awareness, and confidence.



Leadership Training Program — Oct 26, Kannagi Nagar & Navalur

Led by Fr. John Wilson, this training helped young leaders develop skills in team building, innovation, and responsibility. Fr. Francis Bosco urged participants to become authentic, people-first leaders who uplift their communities.

TOWARDS A JUST SOCIETY

22-02-2020

PRESS MEET ON LABOUR CODE

NAPM and unorganised workers' unions held a press meet protesting the controversial Labour Codes, highlighting threats to welfare boards and workers' rights. About 50 NGO representatives participated to demand policy withdrawal and legal protection for informal workers.

23-02-2020

YOUTH COORDINATION MEETING

Over 20 youth attended a local meeting in Perumbakkam to voice their needs, including sports infrastructure and regular engagement. Monthly youth meetings with constructive activities were proposed for sustained involvement.

NAVALUR – EVENING CLASSES

A new evening class was launched for 30 students, led by teacher Aishwarya, adding to the existing two centers. Brothers Immanuel and Kiran conducted Sunday football training and special sessions.

29-02-2020

PUBLIC INQUIRY ON ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

A public inquiry on addiction saw participation from 30 NGOs and public figures like Krishnammal Jagannathan and Dr. Poornachandrika. Testimonies revealed alarming trends of substance abuse near schools, calling for urgent policy action and community awareness.

Into the Lives of Brick Chambers

Scope of Our Work in Tiruvallur

- 26 brick chambers identified in Gummidipoondi Taluk
- 11 chambers actively served by Bosco Migrant Services
- 2000 labourers, including 300 children
- Migrants from Tamil Nadu (Tindivanam, Villupuram, Tirukovilur) & Odisha (Balangir, Nuapoda, Baleshwar, Bhadrak)

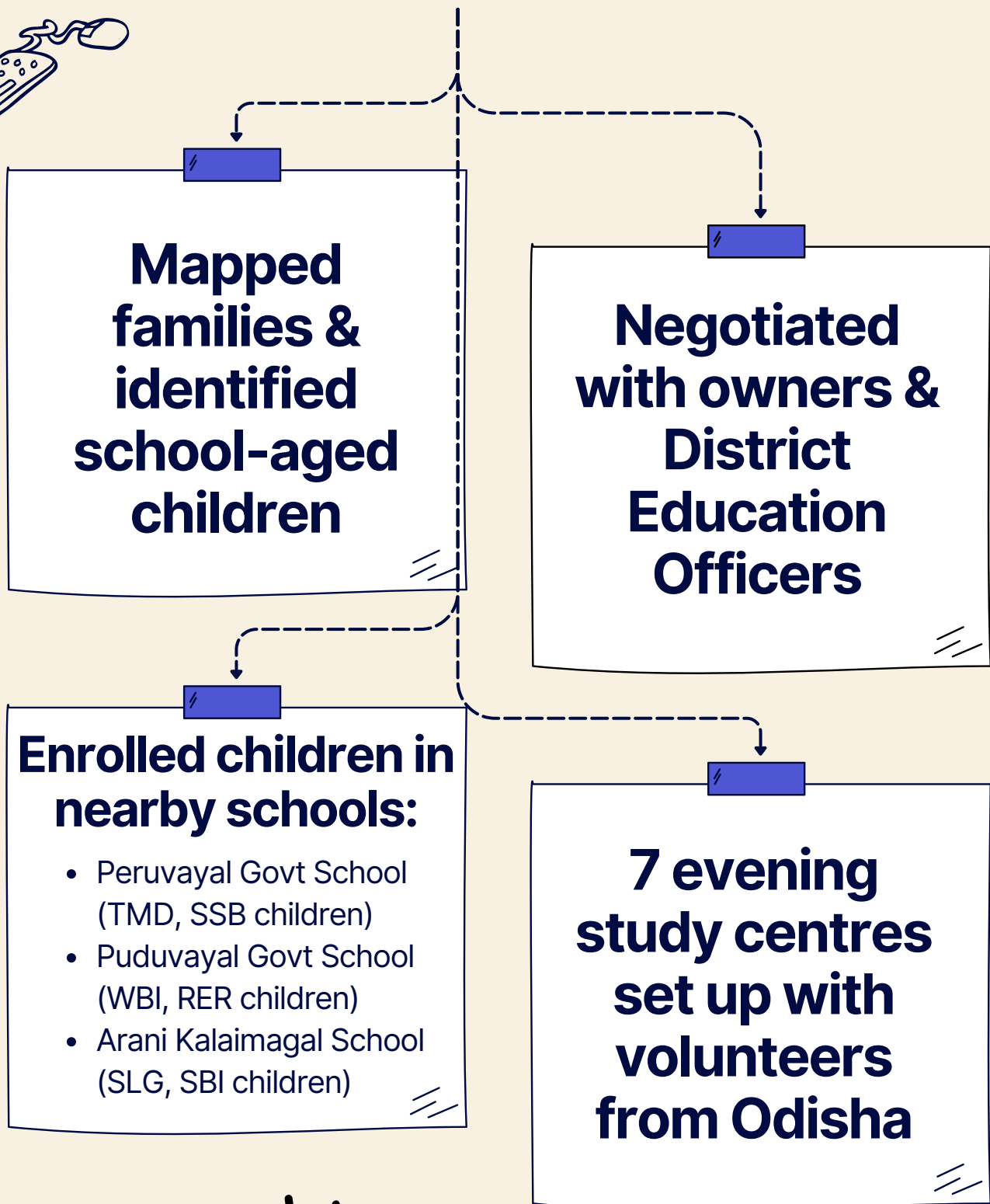
IMPACT SO FAR

Metric	Number
Labourers Reached	2000
Children Supported	300
Study Centres Run	7
Schools Linked for Enrolment	3
Odiya Volunteers Trained	10

Education and Empowerment in Brick Chambers



Education Access Initiatives in Brick Chambers



CELEBRATING CREATIVITY, CULTURE & CAPACITY

Manali Dance Competition

On November 10, over 70 children participated in a vibrant Dance Competition organized at Burmanagar, where most parents are daily-wage migrant workers. With new clothes and radiant smiles, the children showcased their talent with pride. Parents and guests, including Mr. Siva and Mr. Augustin, witnessed the extraordinary energy and grace of children who otherwise battle poverty and exclusion.



Memory Contest – Thirukkural & Athichoodi

To sharpen cognitive skills and instill Tamil linguistic pride, a Memory Competition was held across all evening tuition centres in November. Children from 1st to 3rd grade recited Athichoodi, while those from 4th to 12th memorized Thirukkural verses. The competition witnessed 40+ finalists on November 28 during the online grand finale. For children with limited access to online education, this event raised confidence, eliminated stage fear, and reconnected them with heritage texts.

Painting the Walls with Pride – Perumbakkam

On November 11, children from F Block decorated their tuition room walls with inspiring murals. They depicted Thiruvalluvar, the "See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil" monkeys, and other creative expressions. These paintings reflected their imagination and moral values. The initiative not only brightened the space but empowered children to take ownership of their learning environment.



Welfare Activities



Kannagi Nagar – Series of Welfare Activities (April to August)

Kannagi Nagar and nearby Ezhil Nagar were among the worst-hit urban settlements during the lockdown. Home to thousands of daily-wage earners, domestic workers, widows, and persons with disabilities, the area saw widespread hunger and unemployment.

Between April and August 2020, Don Bosco Migrant Services, in collaboration with SURABI, Real NGO, Habitat, Wipro, and local women's groups, conducted multiple rounds of targeted relief efforts, including:

Activities we carried out

- Daily cooked food for 600 individuals (widows, elderly, abandoned women, differently-abled) from 05.04.2020 to late April.
- Grocery kits worth ₹2,500 each to 500 families on 19.04.2020.
- Groceries and rice worth ₹3,000 to 100 vulnerable families (widows and disabled) on 04.05.2020.
- 5 kg rice for 200 families on 23.05.2020.
- Wheat flour and cooking oil to families of headload workers in Pudupet on 25.07.2020.
- Masks for 1,500 women on 15.06.2020, coordinated by Ms. Geetha of the Unorganised Workers' Federation.
- Masks and sanitizers for 400 children on 08.06.2020.
- Biscuits and chocolates for 200 children on 09.04.2020, supported by Pushkar Friends.
- Kinder Joy chocolates for 100 children on 21.08.2020.
- Cake and snacks distributed to 100 evening class children on 16.06.2020.



WELFARE ACTIVITIES AND RELIEF DISTRIBUTION

IRULAR COMMUNITY SUPPORT – AARIKAMPATTU VILLAGE (19.08.2020)

In Aarikampattu village, Tiruvallur district, 36 Irular families rely on basket weaving for a livelihood. Their children began attending Don Bosco evening classes.

On 19th August 2020, sweets were distributed to the children. Parents expressed happiness and gratitude. Fr. Bosco, Fr. Kishore, Br. Nirmal, and team personally delivered the items.

BRICK KILN WORKERS' SUPPORT – PANATHOPPU (19.08.2020)

In Panathoppu, part of the Ellapuram Union in Tiruvallur District, Don Bosco Migrant Services and SURABI distributed sweets to 26 children from 54 families, many of whom are daily-wage and brick kiln workers. The children, who attend government schools and Don Bosco evening classes, received the gifts with joy.

METTUPALAYAM SUPPORT – THIRUKANDALAM VILLAGE

In Mettupalayam, a village in Thirukandalam, around 40 families work in vegetable farms and brick kilns. These low-income families were heavily affected by COVID-19.

On 19.08.2020, sweets were distributed to 31 children from these families. Fr. Bosco, Fr. Kishore, and Br. Nirmal coordinated the distribution. Parents expressed heartfelt thanks.

NAVALUR RELOCATION SITE – WELFARE SUPPORT (21.08.2020)

In Navalur, Kanchipuram District, 33 resettled families from 1500 evicted households live in relocation blocks. Since schools were closed, online evening classes were arranged.

On 21st August 2020, sweets were distributed to 25 children, following safety and social distancing protocols.

KOODAPAKKAM RELOCATION SITE – WELFARE SUPPORT (22.08.2020)

In Koodapakkam, Tiruvallur District, 32 blocks housing 1,024 families were visited. These families were evicted from places like Om Sakthi Nagar and Maduravoyal.

On 22nd August 2020, sweets were distributed to 35 children attending Don Bosco evening classes. Parents actively cooperated with the team.

Reaching the Unseen: SEZ Workers, Welfare, and Relief

A closer look at Bosco Migrant Services' efforts in Special Economic Zones—documenting the lives of returnee migrants, raising awareness on welfare board registration, and providing essential relief to families living on the industrial margins during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Data Collection at New SEZs

Bosco Migrant Services expanded data collection efforts among returnee migrant workers in SEZs like Ambattur, Manali, Irungattukottai, Singadivakkam, and Chennai Chatiram. Surveys covered casual labourers in manufacturing and loading sectors, many from states like Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, and Odisha. While most migrants were cooperative, some expressed distrust.

Online Meet on Tamil Nadu Welfare Board Registration

On July 19, 2020, an online meeting was held to raise awareness about unorganised workers' registration under various Tamil Nadu welfare boards. Speaker Mrs. Geetha explained required documents, ongoing challenges like VAO verification, and the importance of renewing registrations to access benefits. Participants were urged to spread awareness and support workers in the registration process.

Relief at Manali SEZ – 25 August 2020

Manali is home to many industries and a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) where numerous migrant workers from Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar, and Odisha are employed. On 25th August 2020, 10 kg of rice and groceries were distributed to 35 families in Burmanagar and 15 families in Sadayankuppam. Future support includes continuous assistance and establishing tuition classes.

Perumbakkam Relocation Settlement – Relief Distribution (02.05.2020)



The Perumbakkam Relocation Settlement, particularly Blocks 18 and 19, is home to hundreds of families displaced from slum communities across Chennai. These residents, already marginalized, were hit hard by the COVID-19 lockdown, losing daily wages and access to basic resources.



On 2nd May 2020, under the leadership of Fr. Francis Bosco, and in collaboration with Royal Enfield and the evening class teachers of Don Bosco Migrant Services, a large-scale relief distribution was organized. Approximately 200 families received 10 kg of rice and full grocery kits, delivered directly to their homes.



On 6th August 2020, further support was extended in the form of mask and sanitizer kits, distributed to all children enrolled in Don Bosco evening classes in these blocks. Spearheaded by Mrs. Nishat and supported by local youth, the initiative promoted safety and hygiene practices among children and their families.



Additionally, to uplift the spirits of the children, Kinder Joy chocolates were distributed to all students in the evening classes. The joyful response encouraged more children in the neighbourhood to enrol, and parents expressed their appreciation for the continuous support offered by Don Bosco Migrant Services.

Kavarapettai Relief – 4 September 2020

Relief kits were distributed to 200 migrant workers from Bihar and Odisha working in companies like Aachi Masala and SS Engineering. Despite employer promises, poor hygiene conditions led workers to rent cramped rooms, prompting Bosco Migrant Services to intervene.



Katravakkam Relief - 6 September 2020

Bosco Migrant Services provided dry ration kits to migrant labourers from Assam and other states working in Irungattukottai SIPCOT industries. Many had remained behind during the lockdown due to poverty and job insecurity.



Ambattur Relief – September 2020

A survey and relief distribution were carried out for migrant workers from UP, Bihar, Odisha, and Northeast states in the Ambattur Industrial Estate. Workers were located across multiple colonies and slums, with many living in harsh bachelor accommodations.



FOOD SECURITY FOR MIGRANTS DURING LOCKDOWN



During the nationwide lockdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, thousands of migrant families faced extreme hardship due to job losses and the suspension of public transport.

In response, Bosco Migrant Services, with support from SURABI, distributed dry rations to over 500 families across vulnerable communities including migrants, Irulars, Kuravars, and slum dwellers in areas such as Mambakkam, Oragadam, Gummidipoondi, Thathayankandigai, and Kannagi Nagar.

The aid provided not only met urgent nutritional needs but also brought visible relief and gratitude to the beneficiaries, offering a lifeline during an otherwise unforgiving time.

SUPPORT FOR NORTH EAST MIGRANTS IN CHENNAI

The pandemic lockdown was especially harsh for North East migrants living in Chennai, many of whom experienced racial profiling, income loss, and eviction threats. Thanks to coordinated efforts by the State Government, Chennai Corporation, and NGO networks, urgent needs were met with shelter, food, and safe return via Shramik trains.

A heartfelt note of gratitude was extended to Fr. Francis Bosco and Israel Jebasingh (Rtd. IAS) for ensuring continuous ration supply. While around 100 individuals in Adambakkam chose to stay back due to health, economic, and family constraints, ongoing support has given them hope amidst anxieties about rent, education, and discrimination.





Commitment To Justice, Rights and Inclusivity

PROTESTS

PROTEST FOR ONLINE REGISTRATION

6 AUGUST 2020 | DMS LABOUR COMMISSIONERATE

Objective

To demand better relief, food security, and access to welfare board registration for unorganised and migrant workers during the lockdown.

Actions Taken

Led by the Unorganised Workers Federation, with key activists including Fr. Francis Bosco and Mrs. Geetha, a protest was held before the Labour Commissionerate.

Key Demands

Submitted a memorandum seeking simplified online registration, cash aid, and welfare board benefits.



PROTEST AT SHASTRI BHAVAN

22 JULY 2020 | SHASTRI BHAVAN, CHENNAI

Objective

To highlight the survival crisis faced by unorganised construction and migrant workers during the extended COVID-19 lockdown and to demand governmental intervention.



Actions Taken

A protest was staged outside Shastri Bhavan, where activists gathered to represent the economic and humanitarian crisis faced by displaced workers.

Key Demands

A 10-point memorandum was submitted to the Chief Labour Commissioner calling for food, work, housing, and transport aid.

PROTEST FOR THE PROTECTION OF WELFARE BOARDS

A protest was held on 23rd September 2020 (Wednesday) by the Joint Action Committee of Unorganised Workers to demand the withdrawal of the central labour codes, which threaten to dissolve existing welfare boards.

OBJECTIVES

- Fair COVID-19 relief
- Renewal and registration of workers through trade unions
- Simplified online systems
- Mandatory registration of migrant workers under ESI
- Halting privatisation of sectors like railways, electricity, and transport
- 3% allocation in the national budget for unorganised workers
- Implementation of one percent levy for welfare boards

CRITIQUE OF THE CENTRAL LABOUR CODES

The protesters strongly criticised the Central Labour Codes introduced in Parliament, noting that:

- They were passed without proper consultation with trade unions, violating ILO Convention 144
- Key protections for construction workers were removed
- The codes ignore the realities of informal labour, especially women, domestic, and agricultural workers
- The existing welfare boards, which serve as a safety net for lakhs of workers, are now at risk of being dismantled
- Provisions concerning occupational health and safety are vague or absent



PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP

A broad coalition of trade unions and civil society organisations took part in the protest, including:

- Tamil Nadu Construction Workers Panchayat Union
- Tamil Nadu Manual Labourers' Union
- Tamil Nadu Regional Labour Federation
- Tamil Nadu Domestic Workers Union
- Tamil Nadu Laundry Workers Union
- Tamil Nadu Beauticians and Barbers Welfare Association
- Tamil Nadu Electrical Appliance Repair Workers Union
- SARPAM Irular Workers Union
- Arunodhaya Domestic Workers Union
- Coastal People's Protection Movement

The protest was led by:

- National Secretary Amma Geetha
- State President Ram Narayanan (Mud Workers Union)
- Fr. Francis Bosco (Don Bosco Migrant Services) State Secretary Leelavathi
- Mr. Jeyakumar (Coastal People's Protection Movement)

Smile Project: Legal Literacy Campaign in Mamvakham

On 25th October 2020, Bosco Migrant Services launched the Smile Project in Mamvakham, a legal literacy campaign designed to awaken awareness among migrant workers engaged in construction and manufacturing. With nearly 60 participants from states like Bihar, Jharkhand, Manipur, Odisha, and Nagaland, the training helped migrant labourers understand their rights, access free legal aid, and gain confidence to speak up against exploitation.

This session was not just about the law—it was a call for inner transformation. Through peer-led initiatives, Bosco empowered workers to see themselves not as victims but as leaders, capable of demanding fair wages, humane working conditions, and legal protection. The Smile Project continues across Tamil Nadu, reaching those most excluded from justice.



Trade Union Seminar: Reform or Reversal?

On 8th October 2020, a crucial seminar on the new Central Labour Codes was organized by the Unorganised Trade Union Joint Action Committee at HMS Hall, Egmore. With participation from 17 unions, the discussion centered on the weakening of worker protections under the new laws, demands for domestic worker legislation, online welfare board registration, and increased ESI benefits.

Following the seminar, a series of collective actions were agreed upon: a mass protest on 21st October, a hunger strike beginning 22nd October, and a statewide workers' protest on 28th October. These events aimed to amplify unorganised workers' voices and press the government for fair, inclusive labour policies.



Justice for the Forgotten: Legal Action on Injuries, PF & Wages

Behind the numbers are human stories of injustice and survival. Don Bosco Migrant Services continues to intervene in cases of worker injury, wage theft, PF fraud, and exploitative conditions.



KIFARUL'S LAST SHIFT (Case Study 1)

- Age: 18 | From: Assam | Company: Casagrande, Oragadam
- Kifarul Islam worked as a security guard. He fell ill at work, was admitted to Sriperumbudur GH, and later died. His employer never informed the family. No compensation was paid. His body was buried in Tamil Nadu, far from the home he dreamed of returning to.

GIDEON'S CHOICE (Case Study 2)

- Age: 22 | From: Nagaland | Company: Rubber Factory, Tamil Nadu
- Gideon lost both a hand and a leg in a machinery accident. The factory tried to silence him with a meagre offer—enough only for a train ticket home. Bosco intervened to file for proper compensation and legal support.

RAHUL'S WAGE THEFT (Case Study 3)

- Location: Ambattur Industrial Estate
- Rahul suffered a hand injury during overtime work. The company told him not to return and denied his wages during recovery. No leave, no pay, no accountability.

THE SYSTEMIC BREAKDOWN

- PF deductions are made without receipts. Many never see that money again.
- Overwork (13–14 hrs/day) is normalized. Overtime is unpaid.
- Workers are unaware of entitlements or are misled by middlemen.
- Children aged 0–13, accompanying parents, lack access to school, nutrition, or play.
- Families buy ration rice at ₹10/kg, while locals get it for ₹1/kg through PDS.

Bosco Migrant Services is actively:

- Filing legal cases on PF recovery, wage dues, and workplace injuries
- Organizing legal literacy camps across Tamil Nadu
- Setting up education centres for migrant children in multilingual formats
- Coordinating with government officials to track compensation delays
- Launching helplines and site visits to record complaints and support families

JUSTICE FOR MANISHA

A PROTEST AGAINST THE
SYSTEMIC VIOLENCE
FACED BY DALIT WOMEN
IN INDIA

On a crowded afternoon at Valluvar Kottam, Chennai, members of Don Bosco Migrant Services joined hands with activists, students, and allies in an outdoor protest for justice. They raised their voices against the brutal rape and murder of Manisha, a Dalit girl from Hathras, Uttar Pradesh.

This was not an isolated crime. It was a reflection of a larger, brutal pattern—one where caste and gender intersect violently, particularly in states where saffron ideologies dominate. According to the National Crime Records Bureau, 88 women are raped every day in India, and among the worst states are Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra—regions where caste atrocities and misogyny are emboldened by silence.

In UP alone, over 526 Dalit women have been raped—yet the machinery of justice remains disturbingly inactive. In Manisha's case, the police, instead of investigating, allegedly burned her body without consent, stripping her family of dignity, grief, and truth. This was not just a rape—this was a state-enabled cover-up.



THE PROTEST'S PURPOSE

This protest was not just for Manisha's rape, but for the unbroken pattern of violence that targets Dalit communities again and again. The activists declared:

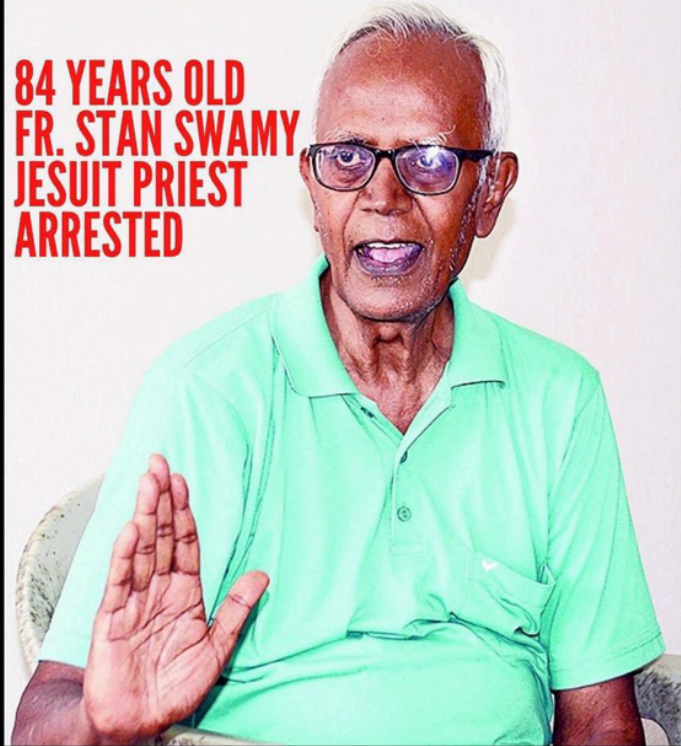
- Rape is not only physical abuse—injustice itself is a form of rape.
- Lynching, silence, and systemic neglect are repeated violations of Dalit humanity.
- The caste system, when protected by politics and policy, becomes a weapon of impunity.

This is a call to all—to see, to speak, to resist. We cannot let this cycle continue.

“Today it's Manisha in UP. Tomorrow, it could be your sister. Arise, awaken, and protect.”

In Solidarity with Fr. Stan Swamy

**84 YEARS OLD
FR. STAN SWAMY
JESUIT PRIEST
ARRESTED**



SUFFERING FROM PARKINSON'S DISEASE - HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER - WORKING FOR OVER FIVE DECADES IN JHARKHAND FOR ADIVASI RIGHTS - ARRESTED BY THE NATIONAL INVESTIGATION AGENCY IN RANCHI ON OCTOBER 8, 2020. IN THE BHIMA KOREGAON CASE

On a charged afternoon at St. Dominic Savio School, Mylapore, Don Bosco Migrant Services, along with civil society groups, religious leaders, political representatives, and concerned citizens, stood in protest. Their demand: Release Fr. Stan Swamy, an 83-year-old Jesuit priest and tribal rights activist, unjustly jailed under the UAPA.

Fr. Stan dedicated over three decades to defending Adivasi rights in Jharkhand, questioning land acquisition, filing PILs for undertrial tribal prisoners, and urging implementation of constitutional protections like the Fifth Schedule. His arrest in connection with the Bhīma Koregaon violence, a charge many call fabricated, is seen as part of a larger campaign to silence dissent.

Bhima Koregaon Case

The case links 17 intellectuals to alleged Maoist plots following violence at a Dalit celebration in 2018—used to arrest activists and stifle dissent.

The bigger picture

His arrest reflects a pattern—marginalizing Dalits, tribals, Muslims, and activists who challenge unjust laws and policies.

Who joined the protest

MP Kanimozhi, Peter Alphonse, Muslim and Christian leaders, Jesuits, Salesians, and PUCL stood in solidarity with Fr. Stan and Adivasi communities.

Legacy and hope

Though imprisoned, Fr. Stan's life remains a beacon of resistance. His work inspires us to awaken, reflect, and act for justice.

Caste Certificates for Irular Families – Aarikampattu Village

In Aarikampattu village, part of Guruvaayal Panchayat in Tiruvallur District, around 30 Irular families reside. These families were once bonded labourers in rice mills and have been living in this village for over 10 years.

They do not own land or homes. Instead, they live in temporary huts on poramboke land (unassigned government land) and work in jasmine flower farms owned by dominant caste landlords. Residents are not allowed to work elsewhere; if they try, their right to stay in the settlement is revoked.

Children from these families are not allowed to attend school or think independently. Many have dropped out due to the denial of caste certificates and resulting ineligibility for education scholarships.

To address this, Don Bosco Migrant Services brought the families together, formed a union, and advocated for their rights. With their support, 42 children from these families have now received caste certificates issued by the Tahsildar and revenue officials, enabling them to continue their education.



Are They 'Dark' or 'Irular'? – The Marginalisation of Irular Families in Thathankandigai

In Thathankandigai, 35 Irular families live deep inside forested areas in huts without proper facilities. These families have migrated from different regions and live without land rights or livelihood opportunities. Subject to the discretion of the Forest Department, they are occasionally employed at very low wages.

They lack basic documentation like caste certificates, ration cards, or Aadhaar cards – raising the uncomfortable question: Are they even recognised as Indian citizens?

Their children grow up without access to education, play, or basic amenities. Through Don Bosco Migrant Services, community mobilization and union formation have slowly started to take root in the area.

Since these families lack government-recognised housing (patta) and live without electricity, drinking water, jobs, or schools, they have been systematically excluded from development schemes.



Lives Lost, Justice Denied

Neglect and Unsafe Conditions Claim Migrant Lives

*Sajjad, Age 22 – Crushed by
Construction Negligence*



On February 15th, Sajjad, a 22-year-old migrant from Bihar, fell to his death from the seventh floor of a government housing construction site in Avadi. He had no safety belt. There were no safety nets. There was no enforcement of basic worker protection.

The FIR clearly stated that the lack of safety mechanisms was the direct cause of death. But to this day, not a single contractor or engineer has been arrested. Only after his death were safety belts hurriedly distributed to workers—a tragic and hollow gesture.

Sajjad's death leaves behind not just an empty place on the construction site, but an enduring grief for his family, and a silence that continues in the halls of justice.

Mirdas, Age 9 – A Life Lost to Neglect

On January 19th, Mirdas, a 9-year-old boy living in a brick kiln labour camp in Tiruvallur, passed away due to untreated viral fever. His parents, migrant workers from Odisha, were unable to care for him amid their long and exhausting workdays.

Like many others, they began work at 8:30 AM and returned only by 6 PM, with no room for breaks or family care. By the time they realised the illness was serious, government hospitals refused treatment, citing his migrant status.

Forced to seek help from a private hospital, the cost of admission and treatment was far beyond what they could afford. Without continued care, Mirdas died. His death is not an isolated tragedy, but a reflection of a system that denies the poor even the most basic right: healthcare.



Rescued and Returned: Sanjay's Journey Home

A 12-Year-Old Migrant Boy Finds Safety and Support After Months of Domestic Bondage in Lockdown Chennai

On the 8th of August, Don Bosco Migrant Services received an urgent call from the Redhills Police Inspector. A young boy named Sanjay Thakur, just 12 years old, had been found wandering the streets, lost and frightened. He was originally from Bihar and had come to Chennai the previous year with his older brother, Lalu, to work at a construction site.

Before the pandemic lockdown, Lalu left Sanjay in the care of a TAMILIAN family, intending it to be a temporary arrangement. However, when the lockdown struck, Sanjay was trapped in that house for over three months, forced into domestic labour. He had no way to contact his family, no one to advocate for him, and no way out—until he managed to escape.

Sanjay wandered the city, desperate to find help and return home. Near Redhills, a kind stranger noticed him and brought him to the local police. That moment changed the course of his life.

With the help of Bosco Migrant Services, Sanjay was given shelter, care, and dignity. The team immediately contacted his brother and coordinated his return. With the support of railway authorities, Sanjay boarded a Shramik train from Chennai Central on August 11th. Days later, he was safely received by his brother at Patna Railway Station.

This story is a reminder that while migrant children often go unnoticed in cities, their lives matter. A simple act of rescue, followed by coordinated care and compassion, brought Sanjay back to safety—and to hope.



Sudha's Homecoming After 9 Years

Sudha was just seven years old when she was rescued by Childline at Villupuram railway station. Without any traceable information about her family, the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) of Villupuram placed her at Don Bosco Boys and Girls Home in Gedilam Maranodai, Villupuram District. As she grew older, Sudha continued her studies, eventually completing her 8th grade and preparing to enter 9th grade. Yet, amid her progress, the question of her family lingered in the minds of those who cared for her.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought unprecedented challenges. With hostels shutting down, finding a safe shelter for Sudha became a struggle. Friends and well-wishers stepped forward, offering temporary refuge, but her situation remained uncertain. Determined to resolve Sudha's predicament, Fr. Francis Bosco, Director of Bosco Migrant Services, launched an intensive search mission. He focused on the railway lines leading to neighbouring states, hoping for a clue that could lead to her family.

After months of searching, the mission succeeded. Sudha's village was located in the hills near Kuppam. Accompanied by Fr. Bosco, Sudha embarked on the journey by jeep, and as they reached Kuppam, she recognized Gudupalli railway station—a place she remembered from childhood journeys. Filled with hope, they continued up the hills, navigating several villages. Suddenly, Sudha spotted a familiar group of houses. As she approached, the villagers recognized her immediately, calling out her name—"Sudha!"

It was a moment of overwhelming joy for Sudha, her parents, and the entire community. Fr. Bosco watched as Sudha reunited with her family, who belonged to the Irular community. Remarkably, Sudha was the only literate member among them—no one else in her family had ever attended school.

While her parents were overjoyed, they were also concerned about her education. With only Telugu and Kannada medium schools available in the village, continuing her education became a challenge. Fr. Bosco assured them that



arrangements could be made for Sudha to continue her studies in Chennai or Villupuram, even while staying connected to her family.

This heartfelt reunion was the result of unwavering determination, compassion, and the collective efforts of the search team, who navigated treacherous valleys and hills to bring Sudha home. A child lost for over nine years was finally back in the embrace of her parents—thanks to Bosco Migrant Services.

Why the Poor Migrants Suffered Most During Lockdown

The Life of Kifarul Islam, Lost and Forgotten

In April 2020, Kifarul Islam, a 20-year-old migrant worker from Assam, died quietly in a government hospital in Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu. Employed as a security guard for Casagrande (via VIPRAAS company), he fell ill with severe diarrhoea during the early days of the Covid-19 lockdown. Alone in his room in Oragadam, no one came to check on him — he was invisible, like so many others.



Death Without Dignity: A System That Fails the Vulnerable

When Kifarul passed away on April 19, 2020, no post-mortem was done — a standard medical protocol — because of fear and confusion during the pandemic. His body was buried locally in Sriperumbudur, without returning it to Assam, despite promises by the company.





Worse, the death certificate spelled his name wrong: “Kiparul” instead of “Kifarul Islam.” This minor clerical error became a major legal obstacle, delaying his family’s ability to claim compensation.

LIC Claim: A Battle for What Was Rightfully Theirs

Kifarul was the sole breadwinner of his family. His grieving mother’s only hope was a small LIC policy payout — but it was denied because of the name discrepancy. It took two months of petitions to the RDO, Health Department, and Medical Officer to issue a corrected certificate. Only then was the LIC claim finally processed.

This tragic story underlines a massive, often unseen truth:

Migrant workers remain undocumented, unheard, and uncared for.

-  Incorrect names,
-  No post-mortems,
-  No legal records,
-  No access to compensation

Without data, their deaths are not counted. Without support, their families are left in limbo.

Thanks to Those Who Stepped In

The eventual correction happened thanks to the persistence of Bosco Migrant Services, Mr. Anand, Mr. Augustine, and supportive government officials like the RDO (Kanchipuram) and Sriperumbudur Medical Officer.

Kifarul’s story must not repeat.

We demand:

- Immediate post-mortems for all labourer deaths
- Accurate documentation in native languages
- Automatic compensation channels for migrant deaths
- Employer accountability for all safety and legal processes

👊 JUSTICE AND RELIEF: TWO STORIES OF STRENGTH AND SUPPORT

Gideon's Fight for Justice: Rs. 4 Lakhs Compensation Secured

Gideon, a 28-year-old labourer from Nagaland, suffered a severe accident at KA Industries near Avadi, resulting in amputation of his right arm and injury to his foot.

Despite employer resistance and police delay, Bosco Migrant Services intervened—pressuring authorities to file an FIR and protect Gideon from coercion. After legal advocacy and negotiations, Gideon received ₹4,00,000 in compensation. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of advocates and community leaders who supported his fight.



Cyclone Relief for the Most Vulnerable

When cyclones Nivar and Burevi battered Tamil Nadu in November and December, thousands of poor slum dwellers and Irular tribal families faced devastating floods and displacement.

Don Bosco Migrant Services' emergency task force mobilized quickly, distributing nearly 1,000 food packets and essentials across Chennai's low-lying areas including Kannaginagar, Perumbakkam, and Gummidipoondi. Sponsored by generous donors and supported by courageous staff and volunteers, relief efforts brought hope amid the storm.



CHAMPIONING CHANGE

Support for Farmers' Protest

As freezing winds swept through Delhi's borders, over 1 lakh farmers from Haryana, Punjab, and beyond continued their historic protest demanding repeal of the three farm laws that threaten their livelihoods:



1. Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act 2020
2. Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act 2020
3. Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance Act 2020

On 8th December 2020, Tamil Nadu stood in solidarity. At Valluvar Kottam, Chennai, unorganised workers' federations, trade unions like CITU, AITUC, HMS, and political groups such as Naam Tamilar Katchi, AAP, Makkal Needhi Maiam, and VCK united in a condemnation rally. Fr. Bosco and Bosco Migrant Services joined hands with labour leaders to demand the repeal of the laws and justice for India's farming backbone.

Clean & Green Campaign – Sriperumbudur



Changing mindsets, clearing myths. In Mambakkam, Sriperumbudur, a unique initiative was launched by Bosco Migrant Services to promote hygiene and environmental responsibility among migrant communities.

Often stigmatized unfairly, Inter-State Migrant (ISM) workers are blamed for unclean surroundings. But this campaign flipped that narrative – ISM workers, led by Mr. Anand and Zakhir, took charge of their own spaces, cleaning residences, streets, and public areas.

Thanks to the support of the Block Development Officer, Panchayat Leader, and government officials, cleaning materials were provided. Together, they removed garbage, cleaned drains, and planted the seeds of civic pride.

The Clean & Green Campaign didn't just transform surroundings – it instilled a sense of dignity, unity, and ownership. It proved that with the right intent, every migrant is a guardian of the environment and a citizen of change.

MEMORIALS

5th Memorial of Ayya Sasi Perumal

On 31st July 2020, the 5th death anniversary of Gandhian and anti-liquor activist Ayya Sasi Perumal, who died during a prohibition protest, was observed at St. Anthony's Church Hall in Chennai. The event was organized by Mr. V. Sundar, a fellow prohibition activist and supporter of Sasi Perumal Ayya.

During the event, speakers strongly condemned the reopening of liquor shops at a time when people were severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, struggling for daily meals and living in fear of death. They demanded that the Tamil Nadu government immediately enforce complete prohibition and ensure justice for the death of Sasi Perumal.



Memorial Meeting of Com. Devadas

On 29th August 2020, a memorial meeting for Com. Devadas, President of the TN Narikuravar Welfare Association, was held at St. Mary's, Armenian Street.

Union leaders, family members, and community representatives including Mrs. Geetha, Mr. Jeyakumar, Mr. Arul, Advocate Ravi, Aam Aadmi Party members, and Irular and Narikuravar leaders such as Mr. Shankar and Fr. Bosco shared personal memories.

Speakers highlighted Com. Devadas's simplicity, commitment to the Narikuravar community, and active role in advocating for unorganised workers. His legacy was remembered as a guiding light for the community's ongoing struggle for dignity and rights.



CHANGES FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

New Horizons

In an inspiring step toward rural development, Fr. Britto, Br. Infant, and Mr. Siva of Don Bosco Migrant Services conducted field visits across villages in Thiruperumbudur and Kundrathur Unions.

They visited areas including Vallam, Mettu Palayam, Mathur, Kandigai, Oragadam, Ezhichur, Panaiyur, and Panapakkam, identifying communities such as Irulars, brick kiln workers, resettled slum dwellers, and other marginalized groups.

The goal was to design programs around:

- 🌱 Women's Self-Help Groups
- 📖 Children's Education initiatives
- 🛠️ Livelihood and Skill Training
- 🏠 Collective micro-enterprise projects

The initiative was part of groundwork for a Royal Enfield CSR project proposal, and aimed to foster sustainable, inclusive growth. Don Bosco teams continue working in solidarity with these communities to uplift their lives.



A Sriperumbudur Case of Migrant Returnees Seeking Livelihood



As pandemic fears eased, migrants from Bihar returned to Tamil Nadu, hiring buses at their own expense. Mr. Niraj, along with 30 workers from Siwan, spent ₹1.6 lakh to reach Sriperumbudur on promises of jobs at Hyundai. But no work awaited them.

Stranded for over a month, most left for other cities. Only 13 remained, struggling to pay ₹10,000 in rent and running out of money. On 12th October, they reached out to Bosco Migrant Services through a helpline.

The team visited the workers at Sri OM Nagar, arranged alternative jobs, helped with housing, and provided basic support.

Celebrations and Cultural Engagements



A Christmas Milestone for Rongmei Tribes in Chennai

On 25th December 2020, St. Mary's Co-Cathedral, Chennai, became more than a festive venue — it became a safe space of solidarity and support for over 100 young migrant workers from Assam, Manipur, and Nagaland. The Rongmei community, known for their warmth and resilience, gathered to celebrate Christmas and launch a new chapter of empowerment.

Why a Help Desk?

With many young women employed in Spas, Salons, and Malls, issues like long hours, wage delays, abuse, unsafe environments, and lack of legal protection surfaced during an open discussion.

Fr. Bosco addressed their concerns, formally launching a Migrant Help Desk dedicated to the needs of the North East Tribal youth, particularly the Rongmei. The Help Desk aims to:

- Offer grievance redressal
- Provide legal support and emergency response
- Educate workers about rights, PF, wage norms
- Enable collective action and self-advocacy



★ The Way Forward

🕒 Fr. Bosco encouraged forming a formal association of workers to demand dignity and rights.

🕒 The North East Help Line will offer round-the-clock guidance, legal contacts, and documentation support.

🕒 Shared Christmas lunch, carols, and cultural dances made it an event of joy, hope, and unity.

Closing Note

This Help Desk is not just a service — it's a commitment: to uplift the vulnerable, protect the voiceless, and build community across cultures. The first of its kind for Rongmei youth in Chennai, this initiative redefines care not as charity, but as shared humanity.

CELEBRATIONS: SPREADING JOY ACROSS DISTRICTS



DIWALI: A FESTIVAL THAT EQUALISES

From November 14–16, 2020, Diwali was celebrated across four districts by two teams led by Fr. Bosco and Fr. Kishore. Over 1,000 laddus were distributed to children and migrant families. More than giving sweets, the event reminded us that pure joy doesn't come from wealth, but from presence, unity, and love.



FOOD FIESTA – NOV 5, KANNAGI NAGAR

To foster cooking confidence and creativity, children prepared treats like gulab jamun, fried rice, egg paniyaram, and payasam. Their culinary spirit filled the evening tuition center with joy. Kudos to teacher Ms. Saratha for coordinating this wonderful celebration!

CHILDREN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS – NOV 14–17

Across Perumbakkam, Kannagi Nagar, and Navalur, students showcased their talents in dance, drama, speeches, and silambam.

- 🎤 Perumbakkam: Fr. Bosco shared about children's rights; kids received notebooks and pens.
- 🌸 Kannagi Nagar: Celebrated in two blocks with Father Kishore; sweets were distributed.
- 🎨 Navalur: Fr. Britto and Br. Infant witnessed poetry, dance, and joyful performances.



Ayudha Pooja Celebrations



📍 Mettupalayam | 26 October 2020



In the vibrant village of Mettupalayam, under the Tirukandalam Panchayat of Tiruvallur district, Ayudha Pooja was celebrated with devotion and joy. Organized by Don Bosco Migrant Services, the celebration brought together women's tailoring trainees, evening tuition students, and village residents to honour the tools of their daily lives—sewing machines, books, and craft materials—with gratitude.



📍 Ponniyambeedu | 27 October 2020

The following day, in Ponniyambeedu, another heartfelt Ayudha Pooja was held. Representatives from Don Bosco—including Br. Infant and Mr. Siva—were invited and warmly welcomed by the local community. Br. Infant led the prayer ritual, offering camphor aarathi over the tools and books that sustain these families' lives. The children performed folk dances and sang community songs, turning the celebration into a display of culture and talent.

SLUM-EVICTED CHILDREN CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH HOPE AND PURPOSE



Navalur was lit with warmth and joy on December 23rd as slum-evicted children from BMS night school celebrated the birth of Christ. The event wasn't just festive; it was formative. Children learned about Christ's role as a protector of the powerless and the significance of sharing and sacrifice. Rev. Fr. John Britto, OMI, and Sr. Vijaya Rani, DMI, uplifted the young minds with stories of compassion and courage.

The celebration came alive with energetic skits, dances, and poems performed by children. Dressed in bright colors and full of spirit, they transformed the hall into a theatre of joy and learning. Special emphasis was placed on social justice, helping the children recognize their roles as future advocates for change.

A SEASON OF SHARING – CHRISTMAS ACROSS COMMUNITIES

Perumbakkam & Kannagi Nagar:

On December 20th, over 200 children gathered in Perumbakkam Public Hall from five study centers. Prayer songs by 19th Block children opened the event. Group dances, Bible verses, and skits from each center brought unity and creative expression to the stage. Chief Guest Fr. Kishore praised the children for their vibrant participation. Sweet treats and warm meals wrapped the day in comfort and camaraderie.



Mettupalayam & Pananthoppu:

December 21st was a vibrant day for children at the Government Middle School, Thirukandam. Performances ranged from devotional solo songs to energetic kollattam and a play on the challenges faced by migrant communities. Fr. Kishore's message of hope inspired children to embody goodness and empathy.

Gudapakkam & Ponniamedu:

On December 22nd, the Irular children of Gudapakkam and Ponniamedu displayed their rich heritage with traditional dances and handmade Santa Claus sketches. The event was a blend of celebration and cultural pride. Guests were honored, and Christmas cake and snacks added to the festive mood.



GIFTS OF JOY AND JUSTICE

Gummidipoondi, 6th Mile & Thathayankandigai:

December 23rd marked a special celebration in these centers as children received brand-new dresses sponsored by Amazon and Fr. Joe Prabhu. For many, it was their first time dressing up for Christmas. Laughter echoed through the celebration spaces as children enjoyed performances, cake, and moments of community bonding.



A Celebration of Equality:

What united all the Christmas events was not the grandeur, but the spirit. From traditional dances to lessons in empathy, every moment became an act of resistance against poverty, exclusion, and inequality. The children learned that they, too, have a role in transforming society—through joy, education, and unity.

THANK YOU TO ALL TEACHERS, VOLUNTEERS, AND SPONSORS WHO MADE THIS CHRISTMAS NOT JUST MEMORABLE BUT MEANINGFUL.

