

YUVA Annual Report 2023–24



Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA) is a non-profit development organisation committed to enabling vulnerable groups to access their rights and address human rights violations. YUVA supports the formation of people’s collectives that engage in the discourse on development, thereby ensuring self-determined and sustained collective action in communities. This work is complemented with advocacy and policy recommendations on issues.

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Table of Contents

President’s Address	02
Message from the Executive Director	04
1. About Us	06
YUVA	06
Mission, Vision, Core Values and Core Purpose	07
Our Approach	08
2. Our Work	10
Poverty	10
Secure Habitats for All	11
Dignified Work for Everyone	14
Child Rights Friendly Communities and Cities	18
Youth Empowerment for Active Citizenship	22
Environment	26
Governance	30
Parliamentary and State Assembly Advocacy	31
Governance Accountability Initiatives	31
Formation and Strengthening of Mohalla Sabhas and Samitis	31
3. Stories of Transformation	32
4. YUVA Centre	42
5. Shaping Narratives	44
ComplexCity: Urban Festival	44
Urban Resource Centre	46
Strategic Communications	47
6. Working at YUVA	48
7. Organisational Governance	50
Our Governing Board	50
8. Safeguarding the Workplace	51
Internal Committee	51
Child Protection Committee	51
9. Financial Information	52
Status of the Organisation	Back Cover



President's Address

*Holistic efforts
for social
transformation*

As YUVA nears its 40-year milestone, I reflect on my early associations with this organisation. As a youth, I was a part of the SMILE programme, which offered me many foundational learnings on leadership and development. Even now, via the Anubhav Shiksha Kendra youth experiential learning programme, YUVA continues to take ahead the commitment to young people's growth and leadership. It is this tireless commitment to people's empowerment, justice and rights, coupled with the organisation's youthful spirit and energy, which helps it work with passion and purpose everyday.

In the past year, YUVA continued its long-term commitment towards people's access to dignity, justice and rights. Teams worked on-ground to facilitate access to legal entitlements and social protection, and uphold workers' rights. People's collectives strengthened their efforts to resist forced evictions and access basic services. We built knowledge and capacities on local governance, to increase people's participation in decision making. From strengthening community groups and collectives to larger city level networks, we worked across levels with cross-cutting approaches on issues of housing, labour rights, youth and children's rights, and environmental justice issues.

Now, more than ever, organisations striving for change in a rapidly changing India, need to sharpen strategies for better impact. It is critical to build collective power, and solidarity for people's struggles. As questions of climate change intersect deeper with social challenges, it is important to adopt holistic strategies. It is imperative to work with agility and to keep adapting one's approaches, so that marginalised people remain at the centre of all efforts. I am heartened that YUVA has shown all these qualities in its work, and continues to work with focus towards social transformation.

Nearly 35 years ago I founded Saath Charitable Trust with a similar focus on urban issues, and over the years the work of both these organisations has filled me with pride and resolve. As we forge ahead, I am hopeful that we will be able to chart brave paths, with the wisdom of our experience, to co-create the just and inclusive futures we seek!

As I present to you our Annual Report for 2022–23, I thank you for your unstinting support. Hope you enjoy reading the highlights of the past year, and I look forward to remaining in touch.

In solidarity
Rajendra Joshi
President, YUVA



Message from the Executive Director

*Strengthening
our commitment
to people*

Looking back on yet another busy year just gone by, so many highlights come to mind.

Over the past few months, our team worked to support the growth of domestic workers' organisations in Maharashtra. This much neglected area of organisational building support has already shown meaningful results. Grassroots organisations are better capacitated to respond to the needs of domestic workers today. Moreover, by supporting a state-wide network of domestic workers' organisations, we are taking these efforts further for progressive policy change.

We also continued to strengthen the call for child protection, despite the systemic gaps—mandated Child Protection Committees were inactive, given the delay in conducting municipal elections in Maharashtra. We engaged with Community Child Protection Committees (CCPCs) in our areas of work, spread access about Childline's new number and network, and our Bal Sabhas engaged police and *anganwadi* workers in conversation.

Our work on climate justice proceeded with strength, from the local to global levels. At COP28, I shared why climate action needs to be participatory and should consider questions of housing and labour, rights of children and young people. In urban poor communities where we work, we focused on adaptation and took ahead the work on nature-based greening and placemaking. By converting abandoned community spaces into sites for greening and micro cooling, we ensured safe spaces for vibrant community cohesion. This work would not be possible without the partnership with community leaders, local government bodies and ecology experts. It is also being taken ahead with strong community stewardship. We ran a successful fundraiser, *Chalo Basti Badlein*, and garnered public support to take this work ahead too. I am hopeful about what more we can do in the coming months.

This year, different facets of our work were also widely published. From a case study on our journey over the decades by ISDM, to our work on right to housing in the Oxford Journal of Human Rights, to presentations at the IV ISA Forum of Sociology 2023, and numerous national conferences, alongside important films on the work of children and youth collectives we have facilitated.

While these are just a few examples of the range and depth of our work in 2023-24, this report spotlights many more. I hope you will feel inspired by the transformation stories shared, and the process of changemaking we've outlined will inspire you in your journey too.

I also want to acknowledge the tireless efforts of our team, and all our collective efforts everyday to build a supportive and inclusive culture, guided by feminist leadership principles. Our systems and processes build trust and inspire intentional, impactful work. Through well-being initiatives, reflective practices, and opportunities for learning, we empower our people to thrive personally and professionally.

I look forward to your support and partnership, as we enter the fortieth year of our enduring commitment to social transformation.

In solidarity
Roshni Nuggehalli
Executive Director, YUVA

1. *About Us*

YUVA

Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA) is a non-profit development organisation committed to facilitating access to rights for vulnerable groups. Since our founding in 1984, we have focused on empowering the most marginalised people, working on human rights issues related to urbanisation, migration and natural resource management.

Broadly, our work focuses on three different areas:



Poverty

We aim to address multi-dimensional aspects of poverty in a holistic and integrated manner.



Environment Sustainability

Our work encompasses both the natural and human/social environment. We look at issues of quality, equity and sustainability in the development and management of natural resources and in the quality of human life.



Urban Governance and Planning

Our work on governance centres around facilitation of the democratisation of power and decentralised access to and management of public resources.

Mission

We will empower the oppressed and the marginalised, to help them access their human right to live in security, dignity and peace.

We will facilitate people's organisations and institutions towards equitable participation in the development process. We will engage in constructive dialogue and critical partnerships with the government alongside civil society, including movements, trade unions, women's groups, academic institutions and the private sector, to enable and strengthen people's empowerment processes.

Vision

We believe that development is a continuous struggle to create a humane society, which sustains all human beings, as well as nature, where all people enjoy universal human rights.

A humane society based on the values of equality, distributive justice and secularism is liberated from oppression on the basis of caste, class, creed, race, gender, age, ethnicity, language; is free from all forms of exploitation and violence; and demonstrates integrity and respect for democratic polity and processes.

Core Values

Our non-negotiable core values which commit us to the fundamental principles of development are:

Social Justice

Gender Justice

Environmental Sustainability

Honesty and Integrity

Secularism and Democracy

Core Purpose

We aim to democratise society, polity and economy for all.

Our Approach

India's marginalised populations experience multiple intersecting deprivations. Migratory patterns bringing people to urban centres of India, often to escape injustice, oppression and livelihood-related constraints at home, are reinforced in new ways in city homes.

Informal employment at lower wage rates forces marginalised people to inhabit informal settlements, some of which are not even recognised by the government and subjected to threats of forced eviction. With frequent loss of homes and livelihoods, the urban poor are never secure. In addition, with growing climate threats in marginalised habitats (including increased flooding and landslides), risk to life and livelihoods has increased.

The cycle of informal labour and housing and the lack of access to basic services forces people to live in abject conditions, deprived of their basic human rights.

Our work has always focused on how we can facilitate human rights for disadvantaged individuals and groups. In urban areas, we are guided by the Right to the City framework, which aims to involve every individual in the decision making and development of cities. We strengthen the identity building and citizenship of the urban poor, so they can stake a claim over the city as rightful citizens.

As questions of housing, livelihoods, basic services and rights of every individual are deeply interrelated in the lives of marginalised persons who often face challenges from all quarters and at the same time, our work spans across all these thematics. We also intervene for climate justice, and to centre people's participation in climate action planning. Our work is rooted in seeking approaches to overcome systemic barriers and injustice, so that we can co-create a more inclusive and equitable future with people's support.

We apply a holistic 360-degree approach to address issues of poverty, environmental sustainability, participatory urban governance and planning, keeping rural-urban linkages in view to help set up just and inclusive spaces. We support natural resource management and the growth of new livelihoods, focusing on people's training, to help them upskill and demand adequate conditions of work and pay and claim their rights. Intervention strategies in rural and urban areas focus on developing community-based people's organisations, building and strengthening people's leadership and developing their voices for integrated community development.

In the following sections, we share our work over the past year, and how we have facilitated access to rights for marginalised individuals and groups.

*Reinforcing Rights,
Resisting Injustice*

2. Our Work

i. Poverty

Poverty is multi-dimensional and impacts every aspect of life. The urban poor struggle to access housing, work and basic services (such as water, electricity), often more than their rural counterparts. They may end up paying much more to access services due to corruption and their lack of identity documents in the city.

We engage with the urban poor to support their access to rights, so that they can participate in decision-making and realise their 'Right to the City'. As quality of life is determined by the kind of habitat and work available, YUVA works in an

integrated manner on both thematics, so that people's right to habitat and work can be upheld. Given the multifaceted vulnerabilities at play, YUVA also implements programmes to uphold child rights and youth rights to strengthen these populations.

We have always worked to make visible the invisible needs and demands of marginalised populations of the city. In the past year too, we continued to build people's leadership and facilitate their access to rights.

Secure Habitats for All

Our work on **Right to Habitat** focuses on how we can support the development of sustainable habitats, with access to land and housing as a right. We work with people living in insecure housing conditions, facilitating their access to basic services and building community resilience to handle forced

evictions. Interventions focus on capacity building, research and advocacy, and participation in campaigns and networks. Our work is spread across seven cities—Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Panvel, Vasai-Virar, Akola, Nagpur, and Guwahati.

In Numbers

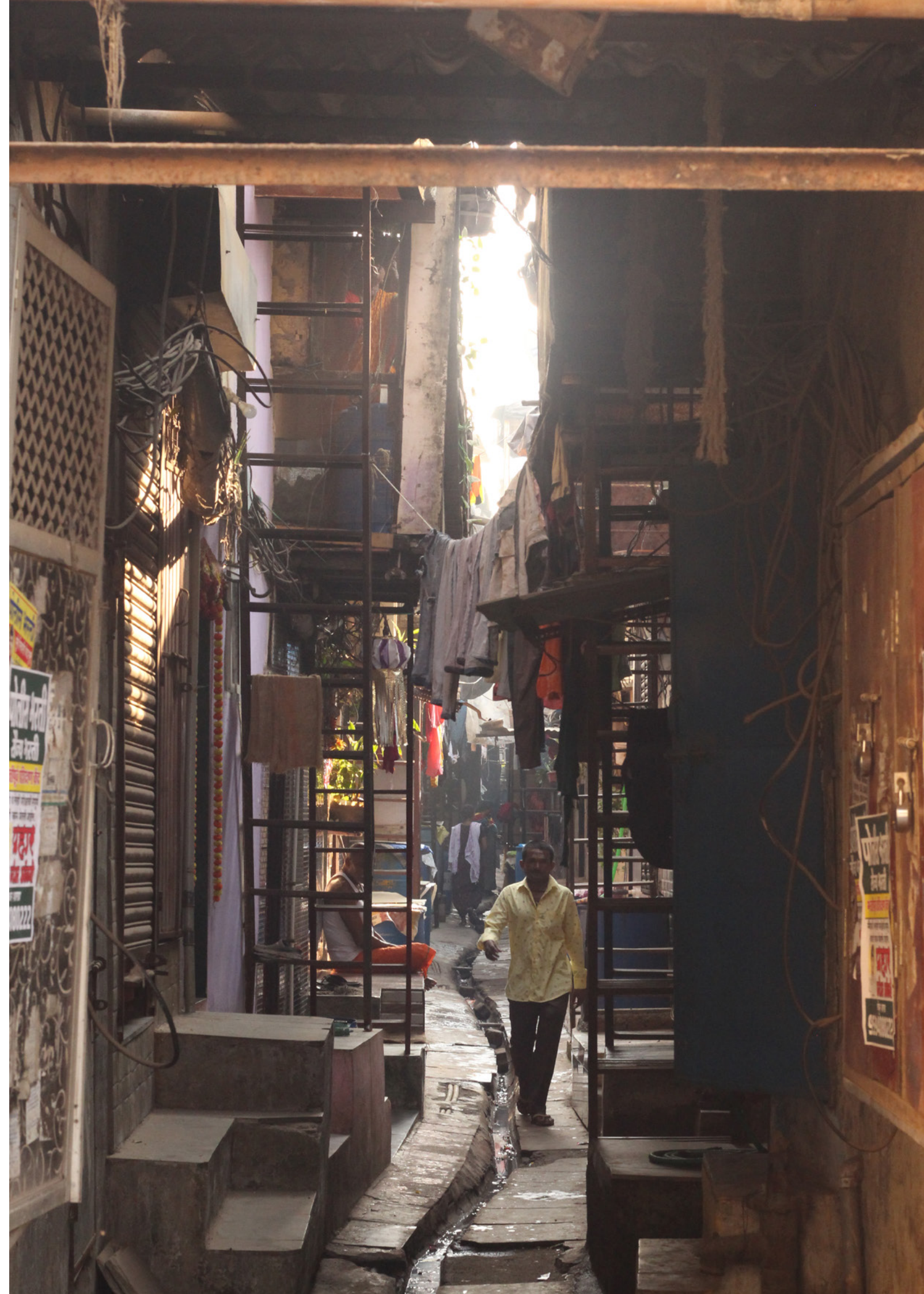


Major Interventions

- **Driving recognition of marginalised populations in cities by facilitating access to identity documents, access to entitlements and basic services** through Habitat Facilitation Centres. For example, in Panvel our sustained advocacy with the municipal corporation along with the local community based organisations resulted in four settlements being able to access portable toilets
- **Facilitating last mile delivery of social protection schemes via model social protection facilitation centres** in three diverse contexts (urban, rural and tribal districts) in Maharashtra, reaching 247 villages, 151 gram panchayats and 1 urban local body. In Kagal (Amravati district) this work is in partnership with Dr. Ambedkar Sheti Vikas Va Sanshodhan Sanstha. With our efforts, 4,997 applications were sanctioned and cash entitlements amounting to over INR 1.4 crore were received by people in dire need of support. Largely, the schemes enabled social protection for women, children and other vulnerable groups; right to food; social security for informal workers. We facilitated eligibility determination, assistance in obtaining supporting documentation, stacking of schemes based on eligibility, filing of applications and sanctioning assistance through regular engagement with block, tehsil and district level officials.
- **Strengthening people's collective leadership and advocacy efforts** by supporting the development of community-based organisations (CBOs) and people's organisations. We also focused on their regular capacity building. The Char Hakk Sangharsh Samiti in Navi Mumbai and the All India Slum Coordination Committee in Guwahati strengthened their city-wide impact for people's right to housing. In Nagpur and Akola, the Shehar Vikas Manch and the Akola Vikas Sangharsh Manch continued advocacy for access to land titles (*malki pattas*).
- **Resisting forced evictions** before, during and after they occur with people's training, network

building and preventive strategies driven by the Anti-Eviction Support Cell. YUVA intervened in several cases of forced evictions in Mumbai, Navi Mumbai and Vasai-Virar and in select districts of Assam, offering advocacy and support to the communities through different collectives and networks. While evictions have increased, sustained work in this area has strengthened people's solidarity and their organising to resist evictions; in some cases, legal actions have provided temporary relief from evictions.

- **Intervening for inclusive urban planning in Navi Mumbai and Vasai-Virar.** We engaged with the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation during the hearings of the Revised Draft Navi Mumbai Development Plan. In Vasai Virar, we comprehensively geo-tagged *bastis* within city limits, and conducted a secondary research on planning in the city to inform the upcoming Development Plan revision.
- **Supporting community health needs.** As requested by P-North Ward Assistant Municipal Commissioner we conducted a comprehensive ground-level survey in Malvani, Mumbai to identify the healthcare needs of the community. The final report, presenting perspectives from both community and healthcare professionals, guided the decisioning for two new hospitals and a submission has also been made for a clinic in Ambujwadi.
- **Evidence-based documentation and research** driven by insights from on-ground realities, presenting people's needs and demands in their own voices. YUVA's article, 'Making Right to Housing Work: Learnings from YUVA's Approach of Enabling the Right to Adequate Housing' was published in the Oxford Journal of Human Rights Practice. YUVA's July 2023 article in Citizen Matters, 'City fails to provide homes for those displaced by infrastructure projects' highlighted the status of vacant housing for Project Affected Persons (PAPs).





Dignified Work for Everyone

We partner with a range of informal workers (daily-wage workers, construction workers, street vendors, domestic workers) to enable their access to **Right to Work, Fair Wages and Welfare**. We facilitate entitlements and registrations for access to welfare, conduct research and advocacy, participate in and lead campaigns and networks to take forward the struggle for dignified and adequate conditions of work for informal workers and the realisation of their rights through their empowerment. The work is spread across 9 cities — Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Panvel, Vasai-Virar, Akola, Nagpur, Guwahati, Jorhat, and Ranchi.

In Numbers

₹27.3L

construction worker wages recovered

14,974

Legal entitlements, worker registrations and worker social protection schemes facilitated

4,271

members enrolled in workers' collectives

100+

self-help groups strengthened

Major Interventions

- **Facilitating access to legal entitlements and social protection** for construction workers, street vendors and domestic workers, and furthering advocacy to demand this, where challenges and bottlenecks arise. In Panvel, for instance, the rapport building with the Labour Commissioner's Office over years has facilitated successful registrations of *naka* workers in the Maharashtra Building and Other Construction Worker's Welfare Board, which was impossible in earlier years due to multiplicity of employers for the *naka* workers.
- **Supporting access to wages, welfare and just working conditions** for construction and *naka* workers via a range of initiatives and outreach programmes. The Labour Helpline, operating across 6 cities, helped recover over INR 27.3 lakh worth unpaid wages via cases registered through it in 2023–24.
- **Encouraging informal workers to form collectives** to better negotiate for their rights at the local, state and national level. Our efforts focused on organising people at identified *nakas*, markets and communities, building their rights awareness and connecting them with larger worker networks for change. We also worked to enable their access to needed skill and capacity building sessions to further collective bargaining and rights-based demands in collectives.
- **Anchoring the strengthening of domestic workers' organisations.** We supported the growth of domestic workers' organisations in Maharashtra, offering key organisational building support. Our efforts also extended to supporting a state-wide network of domestic workers' organisations.
- **Supporting street vendors to better handle forced evictions.** Post pandemic, the number of street vendors has risen in cities. Threats of eviction have also grown and there is often lack of enforcement of the Street Vendors' Act, 2014. Across our cities of work, street vendors collectivised stronger to advocate for their rights and demand state-level implementation of the Act. They articulated their demands against forced evictions and raids, and their need for social security. Town Vending Committees were formed in Nagpur and Akola, offering an opportunity to engage better on street vendors' rights.
- **Encouraging the formation and strengthening of self-help groups (SHGs)** and connecting them with government schemes for financial support. We also facilitated access to training, to help self-help groups strengthen their income-generating opportunities and develop their independent identities, and connected them to market opportunities.
- **Networking and advocacy** in partnership with civil society organisations and networks at the city, state and national level on issues related to informal workers, such as with Working People's Coalition, the Maharashtra Rajya Gharelu Kamgar Samanvay Samiti (MRGKSS) and Kamgaar Ekta workers' collective, and in Assam the domestic workers' collective Grihokarmi Adhikar Suraksha Samiti. In Assam, YUVA was part of the Draft Preparation Committee of State Legislation for Domestic Workers. The draft Bill prepared by the Committee was presented in the state legislative assembly and withdrawn on assurance that a state legislation will be ratified soon.
- **Evidence-based documentation and research** strengthened by first-hand knowledge of on-ground realities, presenting people's needs and demands in their own voices. We conducted a survey of 5,000 domestic workers across 16 districts in Maharashtra, to understand the current status of domestic workers in the state.





Child Rights Friendly Communities and Cities

We facilitate child-friendly communities and cities, with the participation of children as equal stakeholders. We enable platforms for children to express their opinions, organise themselves into collectives, and advocate for their rights. With children in marginalised communities experiencing multiple vulnerabilities, our interventions aim to facilitate their holistic development. Our work in partnership with children's collectives has spanned across 11 areas in Mumbai.

In Numbers

600+

children

26

children's collectives

6

community focused bal sabhas + 1 ward level
bal sabha (co-organised)

6

CCPCs engage on child protection

Major Interventions

- **Creating a safe space for learning and interaction** by enabling mobile Child Resource Centres (CRCs) in communities. These spaces are severely lacking in marginalised communities, and conceiving them as mobile spaces ensures that they can be set up dynamically to respond to children's needs. The CRCs enable non-formal education, life skills training and creative learning opportunities.
- **Promoting safe communities.** With the delay in municipal elections, the city's mandated Child Protection Committees are inactive. However, YUVA continued to engage with 6 Community Child Protection Committees (CCPCs) on issues of child protection. With the Childline network taken over by the district child protection units, and the earlier helpline number 1098 being replaced by 112, we spread awareness about these

systemic changes and how children in distress can still seek protection. Bal Sabhas also focused on issues of child protection, existing systems and responsibilities, and engaged police and *anganwadi* workers in conversation.

- **Encouraging children's collective building** so that they can take forward their demands and present it to relevant authorities and demand action. 26 children's groups were facilitated and connected to the larger children's collective Bal Adhikar Sangharsh Sangathan (BASS) in 11 areas of the city. BASS also focused on second line leadership, to build its sustainability and leadership structure, and raised local funds and resource contributions through their initiatives, such as street plays and curated walks. The journey of BASS was published as a short video on our YouTube channel.

- **Child-led campaigns and advocacy initiatives** towards children's demand for adequate urban childhoods. Children participated in the campaign *Bacchon Ki Suno, Phir Ummedwar Chuno* and prepared a demand letter for incumbent leaders before the assembly elections. They also sent 400 postcards to the Minister of Women and Child Development, Maharashtra, highlighting the plight of child protection, as part of the *Chalo Basti Badlein* campaign during Child Rights Week. Under the 'Ghar Ghar Hariyali' campaign co-organised with the BASS children's collective, 300 children participated and planted 250 saplings.

- **Building children's understanding and action for climate justice.** Through a summer camp focused on Environment and Us, and other year-round initiatives, children were facilitated on better understanding the climate crisis, and localised individual and collective efforts towards change. Our efforts also extended to nature based placemaking in urban poor areas, at the individual and institutional level. We created 3 nature-based spaces in municipal schools in Mumbai (attended by ~5,000 students), to support their physical and emotional development. These spaces were created with people's co-design and ownership on maintenance.





Youth Empowerment for Active Citizenship

We encourage young people's self determination and empower them to claim their social, economic, political and cultural rights. We curate platforms for youth to express their opinions, organise themselves into collectives and advocate for their rights. Our youth work focuses on facilitating collective agency and supporting their participation in governance as active citizens. This work has taken place in Mumbai and various districts of Maharashtra.

In Numbers

8700+

direct youth outreach

200+

youth trained via leadership and governance programmes

120+

youth collectives

Major Interventions

- Empowering youth with rights awareness, Constitutional values, life skills** through a range of creative formats to support their holistic development. For instance, the Constitution Mahotsav held across 21 districts of Maharashtra built energy and interaction among 200+ youth to deepen their understanding of Constitutional principles and values.
- Encouraging the formation and strengthening of youth collectives** to help young people jointly claim and defend rights, and take forward demands and present them to relevant authorities for action. Our Anubhav Shiksha Kendra youth experiential learning programme emerged as a truly youth-led movement, strengthening its organisational structure, and democratically electing a State Committee to further strategise and plan interventions ahead. The journey of this youth movement was also published as a short film on our YouTube channel.



- Building youth leadership, especially of women leaders.** Across the year, the focus on building leadership among women leaders continued. A state-wide convention by Anubhav Shiksha Kendra for 75 young women foregrounded and highlighted the importance of female participation in leadership roles. Youth from 190 villages and 102 colleges participated in this initiative.

- Youth-led networking and advocacy initiatives.** Ahead of the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, youth conducted voter registration and education programmes across districts of Maharashtra, in partnership with the Election Commission. They also developed a manifesto, highlighting their needs, and submitted it to local and district officials for action. Youth also pushed for increasing youth participation in the Maharashtra Social Forum, and a charter of their needs was further sent to the World Social Forum. Anubhav Shiksha Kendra initiated networking forums on youth and climate oriented issues at different district levels, such as in Konkan, Kolhapur and Akola.



ii. Environment —

We are committed to climate-just habitats and cities, and on how the development praxis can be aligned within social and ecological justice frameworks. We focus on how the requirements of most vulnerable regions and marginalised citizens can be represented in climate planning and decision-making processes. Our work is spread across 4 cities—Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Vasai-Virar and Guwahati.

Major Interventions



■ **Integrating climate justice focus in marginalised urban settlements.** In Ambujwadi, Mumbai, we presented the 'People's Climate Action Plan' report to the Assistant Municipal Commissioner P-North ward, and relevant officers from various departments, sharing insights on climate justice, and gaps in the Mumbai Climate Action Plan. We also identified a priority sub-area (Moiniya Masjid) for adaptation. Due to sustained followup a new overflow line was laid there, providing relief to over 200 families suffering from septic tank overflow and curbing the spread of associated diseases. In Navi Mumbai and Guwahati, we conducted rapid assessments in identified hotspots to map social and climate vulnerabilities.

■ **Initiating nature-based placemaking for select vulnerable communities in Mumbai** to facilitate community design through placemaking and greening of an open space. We identified and initiated community driven urban greening in urban poor areas that are highly vulnerable to heat stress in Mumbai. The nature-based placemaking interventions went beyond increasing green cover; it foregrounded community participation and ownership to design accessible open spaces through scientific greening methods.

■ **Collaborating towards a climate justice coalition at the MMR level.** We are working to build deeper networks with social and climate justice movements, and to integrate climate justice into educational programs and workshops, to bring together diverse stakeholders, for more holistic and focused action-oriented response to climate change. We aim to mainstream a justice lens to both social and climate movements existing in the city.

■ **Contributing to the changing climate narrative in the city,** with analytical documentation and presentations on different platforms about nature-based placemaking by the urban poor, on coping and resilience of urban poor communities, and on the critical need for a climate lens in development plans. This knowledge building and dissemination is shaping the discourse on the urban poor, through a climate justice perspective. YUVA's work on Climate Justice was presented at COP28 in Dubai in December 2023, at the 5th Capacity Building Hub, organised by UNU-EHS & ICLEI. The intent of the conversation was 'Empowering transformative urban action towards an expanded climate and innovation agenda.'

■ **Assessing impact of river rejuvenation project on urban settlements.** With the Municipal Corporation of Mumbai proposing a Poisar River Rejuvenation Project (PRRP), YUVA studied the status of urban poor communities along its banks, and shared short-term recommendations for the Municipal Corporation, including on rehabilitation, solid waste management, stormwater drainage improvements, and widening initiatives. We also advocated for coordinated city planning and a cross departmental approach to the PRRP, to facilitate project implementation and consider needs of the most impacted urban poor groups.

■ **Engaging in the water sector** by supporting the efforts of the South Asia Network on Dams, Rivers and People (SANDRP). In 2023–24, the network continued the work of monitoring, researching, analysing, disseminating and networking on these issues. In addition the network continued to speak about river and floodplains restoration, analysed flooding, and monitored dam induced and dams related disasters. The network's evidence-based documentation continued and it strengthened collaborations with civil society groups.



iii. Governance

State Assembly Advocacy

We continued advocacy efforts on issues of evictions, the survey of informal settlements, the rights of marginalised groups, informal workers, youth and children. In the Maharashtra and Assam State Assembly questions on labour rights, worker benefits and the welfare board were raised by House Members.

Governance Accountability Initiatives

We are a part of the Wada Na Todo Abhiyan (WNTA), a national platform of civil society organisations focusing on governance accountability to eliminate poverty, discrimination, and social exclusion. YUVA is the Co-convenor of the National Steering Committee.

Strengthening of Mohalla Samitis

We have been facilitating the strengthening of *Mohalla Samitis* across cities, promoting this under the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act process of decentralisation and decision-making at the *basti*-level, mandated under the Area Sabhas. *Mohalla Samitis* help further capacity building in the community and engage with people on issues concerning them.

3.

Stories of Transformation

1.

Nurturing people's organisations for city-level change

YUVA's focus on facilitating holistic people-driven change in cities is an intentional strategy to ensure sustainability of designed processes and interventions. For instance, in the past year, two

people's organisations facilitated by us—the All Guwahati Slum Coordination Committee (AGSCC) and the Navi Mumbai based Ghar Hakk Sangharsh Samiti—continued to lead advocacy for people's housing security, against forced evictions, and to front people's demands and rights in urban spaces. In Vasai-Virar, the recently formed city-level federation, Nagarik Adhikar Samiti (Citizen Rights

Committee) took ahead people's demands on housing and basic services. At the same time, workers' collectives and networks in these cities—the domestic workers' Grihokarmi Adhikar Suraksha Samiti (GASS) in Guwahati and Jorhat, the Maharashtra Rajya Gharelu Kamgar Samanvay Samiti (MRGKSS), the Kamgaar Ekta workers' collective and the The All India Women Hawker Federation (AIWHF) at Ranchi continued to spread awareness on workers' rights, advocated for effective state-legislation and

functioning of welfare boards, and enrolled workers in membership based collectives, to ensure that they could self-determine and lead their own changemaking.

The efforts by YUVA to setup and strengthen people's organisations, while occupying a facilitatory role and shifting power to the people, is a long-term commitment to sustainable change. It highlights the importance of building people's agency and capacity, so that they can demand governance accountability, while working in participatory ways.



Through the Anti-Eviction Support Cell, YUVA intervened in different instances of forced evictions occurring across cities, to offer support to the people.

In Navi Mumbai, YUVA supported a joint appeal for a survey of *bastis* and moratorium on evictions until this survey is completed. The Ghar Hakk Sangharsh Samiti people's organisation, initiated continuous negotiations with CIDCO. They also petitioned the police not to support evictions until new regulations were implemented. With the continuous followup and advocacy, evictions in some settlements were temporarily halted. An achievement was the MIDC declaring in August 2023 that it will conduct biometric surveys in informal settlements, following GHSS's appeal. The team is now demanding similar surveys from the CM for CIDCO and NMMC lands, continuing their efforts.

In Guwahati, the team reached out to nearly 500 families across two established settlements, facing the threat of forced evictions, offering them paralegal assistance, which eventually led to a favourable court-ordered stay. The team also intervened in the case of an extensive eviction on a wetland in Guwahati, where approximately 350 households were demolished to facilitate a water reservation project by the Guwahati Metropolitan Development Authority, aimed at mitigating floods. We engaged with affected residents both before and after the evictions to assess the impacts and strategise approaches to justice.

2. Building people's capacities to resist forced evictions

Bhimvadi, a non-notified informal settlement (*basti*) in the Peeli Nadi area of North Nagpur, is home to 300–350 households, primarily of daily-wage workers employed in nearby industrial areas. This settlement, partially located on railway land, faced a severe lack of basic services like water, electricity, roads, and garbage collection. The residents struggled with neglect and exclusion from municipal planning authorities, without legal recognition.

3. Transforming Bhimvadi through people-led efforts

Recognising these challenges, YUVA initiated an intervention in Bhimvadi to address the systemic issues and improve the living conditions of its residents. In collaboration with the local community-based organisation (CBO), Bhimvadi Vikas Samiti, YUVA facilitated dialogues with the residents to identify their most pressing needs. Together, they adopted a people-led approach to systematically

tackle the settlement's issues.

A key breakthrough happened when YUVA and the Samiti pushed for a Plane Table Survey (PTS), which plays an important role in getting *bastis* officially recognised. YUVA stepped in with its knowledge of urban governance and policy advocacy, collaborating with the Nagpur Municipal Corporation (NMC) and the Malki Patta Bhade Patta Watap cell to make sure an agency was appointed to carry out the PTS.

The PTS was a transformative milestone. It mapped the settlement, assigned specific numbers to each house, and established official records for the *basti*. This gave the residents a legal identity, enabling them to be recognised as legitimate occupants of the land. As a result, properties previously untaxed were brought under the tax net, marking a critical step towards regularisation. This process also laid the groundwork for future *basti* notification, land tenure rights, and access to housing schemes.

These efforts also led to the construction of proper roads in parts of the settlement, the provision of electricity, and access to tap water connections for all households.

While challenges remain, such as incomplete road connectivity in some areas, the combined efforts of YUVA and the Bhimvadi Vikas Samiti have brought significant improvements to the settlement. The PTS, in particular, has not only provided long-term security for the residents but also strengthened their voice in demanding rights and resources from the government.

This intervention exemplifies how partnerships between communities and organizations like YUVA can drive sustainable change. By empowering the residents of Bhimvadi and advocating for their inclusion in the city's governance framework, YUVA has helped pave the way for a more equitable and inclusive urban future.

Within the Vashi Naka rehabilitation and resettlement (R&R) colony, the New RNA Colony houses residents of footpaths near the Wadala depot who were shifted here in 2020 under the Mahatma Gandhi Path Kranti Yojana.

There are 47 buildings here of five to seven floors each. When people moved into these buildings, they found them to be in a dilapidated condition, as they had not been maintained since being constructed ten years ago.

Residents accepted rehabilitation, forming housing societies and initiating necessary repairs and beautification of their homes. Some families spent over ₹50,000 on repairs and maintenance.

In 2022, concerns about the structural integrity of Building 25 and 26 prompted residents to conduct a structural audit. To their dismay, the audit revealed that the building was not safe for habitation, falling under Category C1 (which indicates that the building is to be evacuated and requires immediate demolition). Shortly after, the entire building was covered with a mesh, and residents were asked to submit a letter affirming their responsibility for residing in the building. Authorities were focussed on evacuating the building immediately.

During this process, residents raised specific demands related to rehabilitation, such as that all residents will collectively accept rehabilitation in the same building. They also stated that the rehabilitated building should be in Category A or constructed within the last two years, and there should be no outstanding electricity or water bills for the rehabilitated building, among other demands.

Owing to focussed advocacy with officials, residents were shifted to another nearby building. YUVA has continued to work with the community to help them strengthen their advocacy. The larger question remains on the maintenance and safety of such R&R buildings, how relocation continues to take place into such housing and the danger they pose to others who live in close proximity to such buildings.

4.

Residents at risk: Advocacy around unsafe rehabilitation housing in Vashi Naka

5.

Expanding work with domestic workers in Maharashtra: YUVA as a nodal organisation

As a mature entity in the civil society space, YUVA has been working as a nodal organisation to support the growth of a domestic workers' network. In 2019, 32 different organisations,

unions and collectives came together as a network called the Maharashtra Rajya Gharelu Kamgar Samanvay Samiti (MRGKSS), formed to protect the rights of domestic workers in Maharashtra. YUVA has played a key role since the formation of MRGKSS, with an organisational strengthening and support process for member organisations. Specifically, 8 organisations doing important work with domestic workers but either lacking

financial support and organisational capacities are supported on their financial strengthening and organisational capacity building. YUVA supports leadership development and knowledge building on domestic worker laws. Further, through an extensive selection process, 10 individuals were selected to develop their leadership, strengthen their understanding of domestic worker laws and schemes, to help them work more effectively for workers' rights.

The capacity building programme translates YUVA's experience into practical tools. Moreover, the regular handholding on key programme and finance capacities is the support many organisations need to strengthen their work and impact. Through this process, MRGKSS has expanded to 5 new districts—Dhule, Sangli, Nashik, Ahmednagar and Jalna—with a current presence in 16 districts of Maharashtra.

YUVA has been organising Bal Sabhas for nearly a decade now, as an effective way for child leaders to directly engage with governance systems and dialogue to access their rights. The role of Bal Sabhas became more critical in the past year, given that child protection systems were under more pressure for the following reasons. First, despite a 2014 Maharashtra Government Resolution mandating active Child Protection Committees in every ward of the city, these Committees were not functional, given the delays in conducting the municipal elections.

Additionally, with the Childline network transferred to district child protection units, and the national helpline 1098 being replaced by 112, there were some struggles in adapting to the newer systems. With some *anganwadis* also not being accessible to children in different areas, they did not have that support mechanism either.

In this context, the Bal Sabha YUVA co-organised as a part of M-East Child Safety Forum was an important platform for children associated with different organisations and collectives to present their experiences. Child leaders shared about the current situation on diverse issues in their *basti*, such as unsafe environments, drug addiction, child labour, the non-functioning of Child Protection Committees, and presented perspectives on how to work on these issues.

While representatives of government agencies, such as child welfare officers, *anganwadi* workers, police, and others were invited and shared that they would come, they did not participate. Despite this setback, the child leaders shared their insights at the ward level and are taking forward these issues with relevant government departments.

Over 350 children participated in the ward level Bal Sabha and some of the participating organisations included Pratham, Janjagruti Vidyarthi Sangh, Jeevandhara, Karunya Trust, among others.

6.

Highlighting children's needs through a ward-level Bal Sabha

YUVA's youth work focuses on empowerment and leadership building for self-determined action and systemic change. YUVA's facilitatory role enables access to networks, builds capacity and strategic focus.

Since the early 1990s, YUVA has been implementing the Anubhav Shiksha Kendra (ASK) programme, a voluntary youth movement, sustained by young people themselves. Spanning 21 districts of Maharashtra at present, ASK represents the value of investing in youth leadership for change. It demonstrates how a structured yet flexible programme, with room for young people to co-design outcomes, can offer transformative and sustainable outcomes. ASK builds youth ownership, while expanding their knowledge, skills and perspectives.

ASK's outreach among most marginalised youth, and creative interventions also make this programme unique. Be it discussion forums, treks, youth exposure visits, youth participation is sought in diverse ways. Often youth share how the diversity in engagement builds curiosity and engagement, offers them valuable exposure, and builds their confidence and leadership skills.

In the past year, ASK democratically elected its State Committee, following due process. This marked a significant milestone in the organisation building of this youth movement, and will support its independent functioning going ahead. The State Committee strategised and planned for the upcoming year (with a focus on focus on issues of gender, climate and Constitutional rights) to further develop youth leadership for change.

7.

Strengthening youth leadership and citizenship to lead changemaking

In Mumbai, YUVA has been engaging in nature-based greening and placemaking for select vulnerable communities, converting disused community spaces into sites for greening, micro cooling and as safe spaces for vibrant community cohesion.

These interventions have unfolded with the support of the community, local government and ecology experts. Further, by ensuring people's participation at every step, the spaces have been taken ahead with strong community stewardship.

In the past year, we organised a campaign, *Chalo Basti Badlein*, which spotlighted the work in this direction, and sought public support to strengthen it further. The fundraising campaign helping YUVA invest in newer sites with this intervention.

YUVA also expanded this model to the institutional, community and individual level. The initiative's most prominent social benefits are increased accessibility of green cover and a safe space for interaction, especially for women and children who are the primary users of these spaces. From being spaces that community members avoided due to their disuse, or the violence or substance abuse associated with it, they have transformed into thriving play and recreation spaces which the people actively own themselves. With the children and youth deeply invested in the planning and care of the tree plantation, wall painting and use of the space, they are at the core of this nature based solution. Women and other community leaders have also lent their support to the greening initiatives, and the upkeep of the plantations.

Community design of this space has also helped people overcome the disconnection they felt from these surroundings due to their resettlement here, and given them a space to interact and develop new community ties and social cohesion. It has brought people back to open spaces, much needed in densely populated settlements, and helped make the space speak to their needs.

8.

Strengthening nature-based placemaking with people's support and community stewardship



4.

YUVA Centre

YUVA Centre offers an open, reflective space that is ideal for meetings, workshops, conferences and other learning and training initiatives. The Centre contains residential facilities too. It aims to provide the best environment for training, and enhance its self-sustainability.

In 2023-24, the centre's training and residential facilities were used by 240 non-profits and other organisations and individuals. 150+ training sessions took place at the Centre.



5.

Shaping Narratives

ComplexCity: Urban Festival

YUVA's annual urban festival, ComplexCity, has been our effort to seed narrative shifts towards equitable and just cities, in response to growing polarisation and divide.

The festival's sixth edition was organised in 2024.

With the learnings from the prior re-visioning, and on festival management, the festival was designed more intentionally and a process-led approach was used to guide its planning and implementation.

We succeeded better in designing experiences for diverse city audiences, bridging meaningful interactions between community members, the middle and upper middle class residents, to shift biases about the urban poor and further inclusivity in cities.

YUVA's curated walks continued to draw a varied audience, and provoked interesting questions on housing and identities in cities. The *Making Mumbai* youth convention, organised around the themes of identity, governance and climate justice provided a rich opportunity for young people to delve deep into these themes, share and sharpen their perspectives. Street play competitions brought creative presentations on the city by diverse young groups.

The festival website, <https://complexcity.in/> houses all the different initiatives organised.



Strategic Communications and Resource Mobilisation

Our communications efforts focus on not just sharing programmatic interventions, but building public support to act for human rights. While our multi-lingual blog <https://yuvaindia.org/blog/> was a powerful medium to take ahead people's narratives in their own voices, we also used our social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Youtube) extensively to engage with diverse audiences, sharing updates and insights from the work in progress.

A detailed case study on YUVA's journey was published by Indian School of Development Management (ISDM), and we also translated it to Hindi for further access.

YUVA participated in danamojo's danaVrddhi programme, offering the organisation much needed knowledge of retail fundraising and how to develop a strong donor engagement programme. YUVA launched a monthly emailer and has continued to use this as one of the engagement mediums.



Urban Resource Centre

YUVA's Urban Resource Centre is a dynamic space (both online and offline) to generate and share knowledge, drawing from YUVA's rich engagement with urban areas. The Centre covers a wide range of themes, from housing to migration, informal livelihoods, urban childhoods, etc.

In the past year, work continued to revitalise the physical library space, and to strengthen the online repository of resources. We also started libraries within a few communities across the Mumbai Metropolitan Region.

The Centre's archival content continued to be constantly updated by narratives generated from our present work, especially the narratives of migrant workers and on larger inequality and injustice thematics. At present, the Centre houses 12,000+ learning resources, including reference books and journals, in English, Hindi and Marathi. This Centre has emerged as a learning space among our teams, and provides valuable resources for external members as well.

6.

Working at YUVA



Our strength lies in diversity. We prioritise maintaining an accepting and inclusive working environment to help develop people's capacities as they work. Transparent reporting and accounting systems build trust in the process and helped employees contribute better. Everyone is a leader here, charting their concrete path of growth with the support of their team members and others.

With feminist leadership development guiding sessions, teams focused on cultivating

compassionate communications, respecting diversity, claiming their power as leaders in personal and professional spaces, with mindfulness, knowing that self work is often most important. The deep investments in organisational development processes made us reflective, playful and deliberate. We also participated in an annual review process, sharing programmatic updates and gaining inspiration from each other's change efforts.

Given the challenging environments we work in, we remain mindful of the need to constantly support people's access to well-being, and offer them avenues to replenish and re-energise themselves. In the past year, our study circles made way for well-being oriented sessions, and we offered individual counselling support for those who wanted to opt for it, following all necessary confidentiality protocols.

We also support people's learning as they work, with scholarships and leave for professional education as needed. The richness of people's lived experiences is complemented by their access to formal education, and together it helps the staff work intentionally, and with the support of needed knowledge and expertise, for impact.

YUVA's work is guided by both full-time staff and consultants. Across the year, volunteers and fieldwork students also supported our work.

7. Organisational Governance

Our Governing Board _____

President

Rajendra Joshi

Treasurer

Archana Shrivastava

Secretary

Mani Mistry Elavia

Members

Kavitha Krishnamoorthy

Nisreen Ebrahim

Mohan Surve

Nalini Shekar

There is separation of YUVA's Management and Governance. The Executive Director attends Board Meetings in an ex-officio capacity. The current Board Members will serve for the 2022–24 term.

No remuneration was paid to any Board Member during 2023–24. No Board Member has any blood relation with another Board Member or with any of the staff members.

8. Safeguarding the Workplace

Internal Committee _____

YUVA's Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Committee, while drawing from The Sexual Harassment of Women in the Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013, applies this policy to women, other genders and men who are employees, volunteers, interns, and consultants of the organisation.

The Internal Committee (IC) is constituted as per policy norms with an external member who is a lawyer. Over the year, training sessions are held to ensure the setup of an enabling environment, and prevent instances of sexual harassment.

Presenting the IC 2023–24 report:

0 complaints of sexual harassment received over the year

0 complaints disposed off during the year

0 cases pending for more than 90 days

1 workshop/awareness programme conducted for IC members and employees each

No action needed to be taken by the IC and the management

Child Protection Committee _____

YUVA is committed to the safety and development of children, and all employees, volunteers, interns, and consultants of the organisation are bound to comply with the organisation's Child Protection Policy. The Child Protection Committee aims to ensure regular training of the staff, to ensure safe and enabling spaces for children, and to see that this policy is upheld.

Annual report of the Child Protection Committee:

0 complaints of sexual harassment received over the year

0 complaints disposed off during the year

0 cases pending for more than 90 days

1 workshop/awareness programme conducted for employees

No action needed to be taken by the ICC and the management

9.

Financial Information

The Maharashtra Public Trusts Act, 1950

Registration No. : F-10304 (Bom)

Youth For Unity And Voluntary Action (YUVA) Balance Sheet as on : 31st March 2024							
2022-2023	Funds & Liabilities	2023-2024	2023-2024	2022-2023	Property and Assets	2023-2024	2023-2024
3,39,18,136	Trust Funds or Corpus :- Balance as per last Balance Sheet	3,39,38,152		69,18,578	Immovable Properties :- (At WDV) (As per Annexure "B")		66,47,763
20,000	Corpus Fund	-		9,54,067	Movable Properties :- (At WDV) (As per Annexure "C")		8,28,499
-	Add: Received for corpus fund	-			Other Earmarked Funds :- (As per Annexure "A")		16,88,714
16	Fixed Assets Corpus	17	3,39,38,169	1,18,51,669	Investment		6,80,13,479
	Add : Fixed Assets from Earmarked Grant			3,47,10,042	Fixed Deposit with Banks (As per Annexure "E")		
					Advance :- (As per Annexure "D")		
	Other Earmarked Funds :- (Created under the provisions of the trust deed or scheme or out of the Income) (As per Annexure "A")		2,88,66,102	6,56,920	Deposits	7,29,590	
95,48,525				1,86,169	Advance against salary	3,65,496	
	Liabilities :- (As per Annexure "F")	16,37,013		3,43,285	Other Advances	13,43,337	
26,38,482	For Expenses	-		10,40,408	TDS	4,55,714	
1,400	For Amount received in Advance	1,000		2,63,447	Receivables		
	For Deposits	-	16,38,013	14,494	Membership Fee Receivable		
26,39,882				25,04,623	Prepaid Expenses		28,94,137
	Income and Expenditure Account :-				Cash and Bank Balances :- (As per Annexure "E")		
1,06,24,620	Balance as per last Balance Sheet	1,56,94,738		55,745	Cash in hand	31,809	
50,70,118	Add: Surplus carried over from Income & Expenditure Account	25,31,982		48,26,582	Balance with bank	25,64,606	
							25,96,415
1,56,94,738			1,82,26,720	48,82,327			
6,18,21,305	Total Rs.		8,26,69,006	6,18,21,305	Total Rs.		8,26,69,006

Significant Accounting Policies as per Schedule A

The above Balance Sheet to the best of our belief as per our Audit Report contains a true account of the Funds and Liabilities and of the Property and Assets of the Trust

As per our report of even date
For C N K & ASSOCIATES LLP
Chartered Accountants
ICAI Firm Regn No. 101961 W/W-100036

Suresh Agaskar
Partner
Reg. No. 110321
Place : Mumbai

Date :

28 SEP 2024

C N K & ASSOCIATES LLP
MUMBAI

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

For Youth For Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA)

Rajendra Joshi
President

Mani Mistry Elavia
Secretary

Archana Shrivastava
Treasurer

YUVA
MUMBAI

Youth For Unity And Voluntary Action (YUVA)
Income & Expenditure Account for the Year Ending 31st March 2024

Registration No. : F-10304(Bom)

2022-2023	EXPENDITURE	2023-2024	2023-2024	2022-2023	INCOME	2023-2024	2023-2024
53,15,309	To Expenses For Training Centre (As per Annexure "G")	58,32,556			By Interest		
1,42,067	To Administrative Cost	6,07,836	64,40,392	4,87,776	On Saving Bank Accounts	5,79,274	
	To Donation Reversal		2,67,318	16,74,022	On Fixed Deposits	21,50,153	
4,46,367	To Depreciation		3,96,400	11,795	On MSEB Security Deposit	16,358	
				21,73,593	Less :- Interest Credited to Projects	27,45,785	20,34,768
				2,86,046		7,11,017	
				18,87,547			
	To Expenditure on Objects of the Trust			42,38,574	By General Donation		17,72,899
	(a) Religious				By Donations Towards Earmarked Activities	10,80,83,629	
4,80,586	(b) Educational	38,100		5,84,05,255	Less :- Transfer to Earmarked fund	10,80,83,629	
	(c) Medical Relief	-		5,84,05,255			
	(d) Relief of Poverty	4,89,60,992			By Income from other sources		
20,03,900	(e) Other Charitable Object				a) Community Contribution		
	Children Health Education and Welfare	16,10,482		25,780	b) Membership Fees	3,800	
	Community Building and Welfare and upliftment	2,53,00,164		3,800	c) Income From Training Centre	82,55,609	
	Research and Study	52,57,683		75,32,368	d) Misc. Income	1,33,341	
	(f) Relief Expenses-Post Covid-19			40,628	e) By other Income		
				59,850			
3,30,200				76,62,426			83,92,750
28,14,686							
7,31,91,632		8,11,67,421					
7,31,91,632	Less :- Transfer to Earmarked fund	7,86,03,096	25,64,325				
50,70,118	To Surplus carried over to Balance sheet		25,31,982				
1,37,88,547	Total Rs.	1,22,00,417	1,37,88,547		Total Rs.	-	1,22,00,417

Significant Accounting Policies as per Schedule A

As per our report of even date
For C N K & ASSOCIATES LLP
Chartered Accountants
ICAI Firm Regn No. 101961 W/W-100036

Suresh Agaskar
Partner
Reg. No. 110321
Place : Mumbai

Date :

28 SEP 2024

C N K & ASSOCIATES LLP
MUMBAI

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

For Youth For Unity & Voluntary Action (YUVA)

Rajendra Joshi
President

Mani Mistry Elavia
Secretary

Archana Shrivastava
Treasurer

YUVA
MUMBAI

Status of the Organisation

- Registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 (836 GBBSD 1984/26 December 1984)
- Registered under the Bombay Public Trust Act, 1950 (F10304/20 April 1985)
- Registered under section 12A of the Income Tax Act (INS/24339/7 May 1985)
- Registered under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA No. 83850025)
- Recognised under section 80G of the Income Tax Act
- Registered on NGO DARPAN (Niti Aayog). Unique ID: MH/2017/0117127

Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA) is a non-profit development organisation committed to enabling vulnerable groups to access their rights and address human rights violations. YUVA supports the formation of people's collectives that engage in the discourse on development, thereby ensuring self-determined and sustained collective action in communities. This work is complemented with advocacy and policy recommendations on issues.

Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA)

YUVA Centre, Plot 23, Sector 7, Kharghar,
Navi Mumbai – 410210 (India)

2024

