

# YOUTH FOR SEVA

ACTIVITY REPORT 2011-12





**VOLUNTEER**  
to connect the dots



# Activity Report 2011-2012

## Youth for Seva - Bangalore Chapter

(A Project of Hindu Seva Pratishthana)

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## Note from the Coordinator

Dear Friends,

Over a century ago, Swami Vivekananda said - *"My hope of the future lies in the youths of India, youths of character and intelligence, renouncing everything for the service of others."* As we prepare to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda in 2013, the experiences of last five years at YFS only reinforces the faith and conviction Swami Vivekananda had in youth.

### Connecting the DOTS

The year 2011-12 witnessed YFS volunteers collaborating and creating a network of all stakeholders to effectively address the gaps in the society. They have partnered with over 100 government schools, 32 hospitals, 30 NGOs, 50 corporates and many academic institutions to empower the individuals and enable the organizations to bring about change in the community. We were also exploring how an attitude of *Seva* can fill the gap that seems hard to be met by monetary incentives. *Doctors for Seva* team has started sending specialist doctors on rotation to

Afzalpur Taluk health centre in Gulbarga district where no specialist doctors were willing to accept postings. Green Commandos played a significant role in Solid Waste Management Round Table (SWMRT) which has been very effective in influencing the policies and implementing waste management across Bangalore. SWMRT also won the *Namma Bengaluru's* best community based organization award for 2011.

### Corporate partnership beyond grants

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) partnership in YFS does not merely include taking grants, running programs and sending reports. Every effort was intended to actively engage the employees of the companies in volunteering by conducting orientation and training programs for employees in various companies. The Child Health Development program (CHDP) executed by YFS in collaboration with Bosch was one among 8 projects in Bosch worldwide which won the Bosch Business Excellence Award in 2011. To introduce MBA students into the development sector, Alliance University chose YFS to run a formal course for the students which was very well appreciated by the students. In the coming year, YFS is determined to focus more on increasing employee participation in volunteering.

### Micro-volunteering made meaningful

Often, groups of employees want to volunteer one full day as a team activity. YFS was able to engage such groups in one time volunteering activities in meaningful ways. Eye pre-screening of over 11,000 children was primarily done by such one-time volunteers. 'Chiguru', a daylong cultural event to help children

discover their talents, also attracted 180 volunteers. Creating audio-books for visually challenged was another initiative over 100 volunteers. With many companies introducing day-of-service where employees can take a day off on a working day to volunteer, YFS plans to have more of such meaningful micro-volunteering opportunities.

### **Beyond short term activism**

Developments in the last one year at the national level highlighted encouraging signs about youth today having the sensitivity and wanting to be positive change agents in the society. Sri Anna Hazare led movement against corruption has demonstrated the urge among the youth to see clean governance. This is just an example of that deeper desire amongst the youth to participate in the developmental work of the nation that goes way beyond event triggered short term activism.

### **Consistency and Continuity**

By definition, volunteers do not have carrots or sticks to ensure their continued involvement. It's the joy of serving and a sense of social responsibility that keeps volunteers going. Wherever volunteers have been consistently working for over a year, results have been astounding. In many schools where volunteers went consistently throughout the year, significant impact on the academic performance was observed alongside higher aspirations of children. Consistency and continuity are two key mantras required for volunteers to be effective. We must recollect Swami Vivekananda's words here – *“Purity, patience, and perseverance are the three essentials to success and, above all, love.”*

### **Planning for enrichment of volunteers**

In the coming year, greater emphasis will be on the enrichment and growth of volunteers. Monthly meetings of volunteers in various regions of Bangalore are being planned. Apart from the seminars and dialogues with accomplished individuals in social service, interactions will be arranged to enhance the understanding and keep up the motivation. Volunteers will be trained in the art and science of NGO management so that they can be valuable additions to the partner NGOs. Residential camps for volunteers and educational outings to rural areas will be arranged.

### **To conclude**

The phenomenal growth of YFS is entirely due to the commitment and dedication of the volunteers. We are delighted that another 10 young professionals have quit their lucrative jobs and started volunteering full time with YFS since March 2012. Equally motivating is the fact that thousands of students, professionals and housewives are able to manage their time to volunteer with us in spite of their demanding commitments.

YFS is largely supported by the generous contribution from individual donors, who believe in the power of youth. This has given us the confidence to think big and act better. We sincerely appreciate contributions from every one of them and look forward for their continued support.

With such dedicated volunteers and support from all well-wishers, YFS will be able to channel the aspirations of a large number of people who seek to make a significant difference in the community.

**Venkatesh Murthy**  
Coordinator, Youth for Seva

## About us

Youth for Seva (YFS) started in April 2007 as a platform to provide opportunities for youth who wanted to take active part in community development despite time constraints. Through this platform, YFS aims to empower youth to become positive change makers who will enable organizations and institutions to work without a vested interest. The goal of YFS is to support schools, NGOs, government hospitals and other organizations in the social sector through volunteers who can help them mitigate some of their shortcomings and challenges. Volunteering is made easy and customized to the individual's interests and time constraints. Youth for Seva (YFS) is a project under Hindu Seva Pratishtana.

For more information, visit [www.youthforseva.org](http://www.youthforseva.org)

### **Vision**

To empower youth to make a difference.

### **Mission**

YFS aims to inspire youth to volunteer; connect them to grassroots projects and provide ongoing support and training to both volunteers and NGOs.

## Advisory Board

### **Dr. Doraiswamy**

Chairman, PES group of colleges

### **Sri Srikantan Moorthy**

VP and Head – Education and Research, Infosys

### **Prof. Vaidyanathan**

HOD, Finance Control Dept., IIM, Bangalore

### **Dr. M. K. Shridhar**

Secretary, Knowledge Commission, Govt of Karnataka

### **Smt. Nagamani and Sri Jagannatha Reddy**

Secretary, CMR Institutions

### **Sri D.M. Kiran**

President & CEO, iSol Talent Consulting

### **Dr. R. Balasubramaniam**

Founder, Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement

### **Dr. Vijayalakshmi Deshmane**

HOD, Surgery Department, Kidwai Cancer Institute

### **Sri M.P. Kumar**

CEO, GlobalEdge Software

### **Sri R. Natarajan**

COO and CFO, Helion Advisors Pvt. Ltd.

### **Sri N.V. Raghuram**

International Coordinator,  
Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana

## **National Coordinators**

Sri Venkatesh Murthy

Sri Shobhit Mathur

## **Bangalore – Steering Committee**

Sri Rajanna

Smt. Soumya Dey

Sri Vinodh Bharadwaj

Dr. Dayaprasad Kulkarni

Smt. Sinu Mundkur

Sri Aravinda Rajagopal

Sri Udaya Bhaskar

## Volunteering Models

Youth for Seva has designed several volunteering models to enable individuals get involved in the community despite their time constraints. Volunteering is made easy as it caters to the individual's interests and convenience w.r.t. time availability and location. Currently, the following models are in place:

- **Weekend volunteering:** Working professionals and college students find it most convenient to volunteer during the weekends. It is convenient for professionals and college students who can spare a few hours consistently on Saturdays and Sundays.
- **Weekday volunteering:** Housewives and retirees prefer to volunteer on weekdays. Many of them are interested in teaching in a government school for a few days a week.
- **Seva Vacation:** College students who can volunteer full time for a few weeks during vacation or just before getting a job have ample opportunity to engage in the community in an area of their choice. YFS reimburses all reasonable expenses incurred by volunteers during the Seva Vacations.
- **Seva Fellowship:** Many graduating students and professionals get a few months free during their job transitions. Through Seva Fellowship, they can volunteer full time for three months or more. Several college students also gain knowledge through field experience. YFS reimburses all reasonable expenses incurred during this period.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

—Margaret Mead

- **Volunteering for one-time events:** There are many events such as medical camps, environmental awareness programs, special day celebrations and other events that do not require time commitments on a regular basis. Volunteers can contribute to these events with some very basic orientation or training.
- **Virtual volunteering:** People with special skills like creative writing, movie making, website creation, graphics design, etc, can help YFS and other NGOs with backend tasks such as creating websites, newsletters, grant proposals and project reports.
- **Volunteering Professional Services:** One can offer professional skills to serve community's needs. 'Doctors for Seva' is one such initiative of YFS. Similarly auditors, lawyers, writers or any other professionals can offer their professional services.

*The Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project conducted a survey in 36 countries to understand how many people volunteer and do so in what type of activities. They have estimated that between 1995 and 2000, the number of volunteers who have contributed through voluntary organizations in 36 countries put together would form the 9th largest country with a population of 140 million people. The economic contribution has been calculated to be 400 billion US dollars per year*

*(p. 20, "State of the World's Volunteerism Report, 2011, www.unv.org)*

## Why Volunteering

### Importance of Community Engagement:

While the government, NGOs and corporates are trying various ways to help the economically needy sections through schemes and sponsorships, the one concept which often gets undervalued is that of volunteering. There is a risk of one or more of the stakeholders developing vested interest in the development project if there is not community ownership. What makes volunteering so crucial is that it gives the power of implementation to ordinary citizens who are otherwise left out of the larger plans of the government and other entities.

Volunteering helps individuals take an active role in development by taking part in activities that promote a cause they believe in. The experience helps individuals gain a deeper understanding of their fellow citizens' needs and challenges. The personal connection gives way to a symbiotic relationship.

The government can empower the community and catalyze development by providing a platform that makes it easy for individuals to get involved in the community despite their time constraints. A citizen's role shouldn't begin and end on the day of the elections. The citizen must be empowered to engage in the development process. When individuals get an opportunity to engage in development, they understand the ground level issues and barriers to development. This experience increases their awareness and sensitivity about social issues. Development is complex and is impossible without team work.

## YFS and Volunteerism

On a large scale, people should be living a life with integrity and values, but need not be activists. But a critical mass of enlightened citizens is required who will actively participate in all walks of social life and work towards enabling the systems like administration and other institutions to work without vested interest and empower people to become capable of managing their own development. A healthy society should not require NGOs or any such external agents. The community itself should be able to organize and take care of its needs.

The primary goal of YFS is to develop a platform that helps individuals take active role in development and in the

process join hands with NGOs and the community on an ongoing basis to support and enable them to take responsibility for their own progress. YFS aims to do this with continued collaboration with other like minded organizations.

Volunteering is the first step in expanding one's identity beyond one's immediate family. It's a great way to sensitize people to society's needs. YFS should enable such individuals to become competent to provide leadership in the community to create self organizing society.

Y F S

*provides me the opportunity to reach out and form a meaningful bond with my larger family to which I belong. YFS and supporters are enabling our own dear children whose potential will further build the prosperity and glory of our very own nation, our home for future children. With utmost humility and a yet-to-fulfill sense of personal duty, I quote Nelson Mandela that truly "there can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children".*

**– Tarun Sareen, Senior Director-Technology, EMC India CoE**



## ***I want to become an engineer!***

*“I want to become an engineer, so I really need to learn to speak English” said the 10 year old girl in broken words at her first English Speaking Class. Constant reminders of her plans provide enough motivation to her to learn the daunting Grammar Rules and Spellings. And sometimes, it's the appreciation and encouragement from me, her “English Teacher”, which does the task. Their determination is contagious.*

*I have been teaching these children, primarily girls aged 10-15 years, at Anatha Shishu Nivas since 3 months. Conducting the English Speaking classes in Bangalore has been one of my most overwhelming experiences as a volunteer with Youth for Seva.*

*When I had begun, there was this obvious and naive “feel good about myself” factor. But it didn't take time to realize the much greater depth of fulfillment such interactions leave you with. The connection in those classrooms with all the students has been enriching not only in terms of doing good for others but also on spiritual and emotional levels. And that's what makes me go back every time and give it my all.*

*Today, while working for a leading Software Consulting Firm, I spend two weekends a month and other times when I am free to support a cause I strongly believe in: Education for Children. I believe that all of us can contribute something, no matter how big or small. I know for myself that as long as there is a need, I will continue to volunteer.*

**– Pallavi S,**

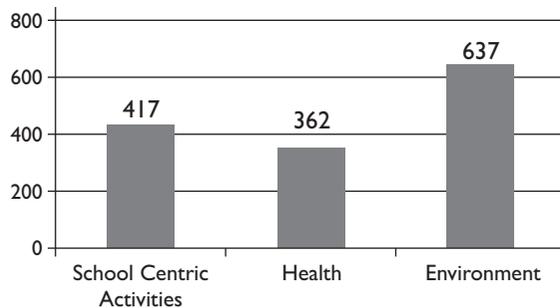
*YFS volunteer since 2008 and Accenture employee (teaches Spoken English at Anatha Shishu Nivas)*

## **Changing Lives Through Volunteer Engagement**

### **Weekday/Weekend Volunteers**

Individuals from all walk of life volunteer on an ongoing basis for YFS – be it college students, high school students, housewives and those who are working full time. There is so much dedication volunteers bring to the work that numbers don't do them any justice.

### **Number of Weekday / Weekend Volunteers**



*Volunteering with Youth for Seva has been a life-defining experience for me. I can safely say that all the activities I have done so far this year, teaching, awareness talks, various things for the health team, all have made a deep impression on me. The team at YFS has similarly given me a new perspective on what work means, and what true seva is. I have come to realise, more than anything else, that there are countless things that I need to learn, and that seva is my chosen path to learn them. My path may take me away from YFS, but it will never take me away from learning or humility, and for this I thank you all.*

**–Sanjana Shelar**, Seva Fellowship Volunteer  
after completing her BA in Hispanic  
Studies from Oberlin College, U.S.A.

## Seva Fellowship

There were 14 volunteers who contributed in the areas of documentation, events like Seva Mela, summer camps, computer education and other activities for a few months.

## Foreign Interns

There were 8 interns from the U.S. who contributed in several activities including vision prescreening, volunteering in hospitals, awareness talks and documentation.



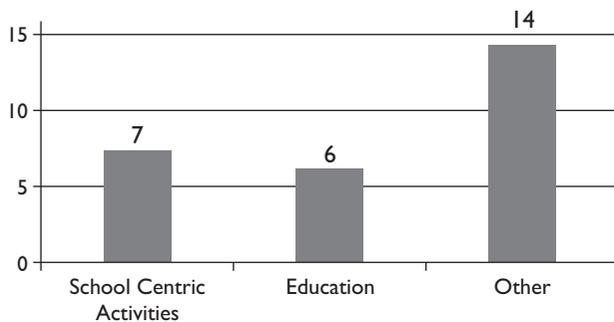
**Volunteer**  
ing in Bangalore with  
Youth for Seva was a life altering  
experience. I hope to come work here  
few months out of each year once I've  
established myself as a doctor. There is just a  
world of possibilities that I'm so eager to  
approach because of the fantastic experience I  
had from June to August in Bangalore.

**– Elizabeth Lawler**  
She was pursuing a degree in Chemistry from  
Wellesley College, U.S.A.

## Seva Vacation

College students interested in volunteering opt for this model where they volunteer for 2-3 weeks during their semester breaks. During the winter break, 27 volunteers were connected to several activities in health, education and event organization. Volunteers were engaged in audio recording of books to help the visually challenged, celebrating Vivekananda Jayanthi in schools, networking with other NGOs to raise awareness about engaging volunteers in the community, helping with accounting and teaching computers for children.

Number of Seva Vacation Volunteers



*“In my sixth semester I saw a banner of YFS inviting volunteers. At the same time, I saw around me a society that was in need. I felt dutiful to approach the NGO and become a volunteer. That is how my acquaintance with YFS started,” says Niveditha.*

*Starting with small-time community-based activities to more responsible ones, Niveditha believes that she has come a long way, in that she has become a better person. “I have observed that my confidence has improved, and my communication skills have become better. As for now, I teach computers at local government schools,” she says.*

*According to her, the best part about her relationship with YFS is that it never compromises with her engineering studies. “It has never come in the way of my studies. The best part is that I can choose programmes that are near my house, so it is never a problem. Besides, I believe that if you want to do something, you will make time for it,” believes Niveditha.*

*Apart from teaching computers to school kids, Niveditha is also doing a stint with Saksham, an NGO that facilitates audio recording for the visually-impaired. “I help blind students record themselves, and also process the recorded material,” she says. While social service is not a potential career option for her, she is firm that volunteering for various causes would continue. “Even after I start a professional career, I want to take time off to volunteer. I am confident of that,” says Niveditha.*

Source: Excerpt from the article at [ExpressBuzz.com](http://expressbuzz.com)

(full article at <http://expressbuzz.com/education/seva-for-a-better-society/364784.html>)

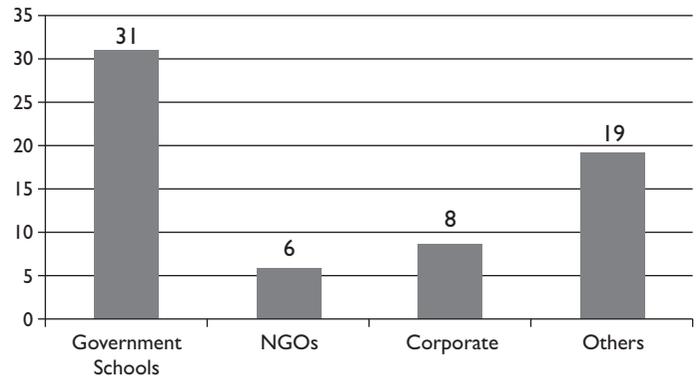
## Partnerships

YFS believes in collaboration as community development is a complex process which requires partnerships to serve as much and reach as many as possible. YFS has several partnerships: other NGOs, Government Organizations, Colleges, Corporate, Hospitals, etc.

One of the more prominent collaboration was with Pollution Control Board that kicked off with the Ganapati festival. Green Commandos set in motion their hallmark annual initiative – Parisara Ganapati and collaboration in one thing led to another. This relation extended to Bengaluru Recycling Habba, 2011 for which Green Commandos partnered with KSPCB through Solid Waste Management Round Table and managed all the volunteers for the event.

Through the multiple experiences, KSPCB recognized the potential of the volunteers of Green Commandos and issued a letter recognizing their efforts and authorizing volunteers to undertake awareness drives.

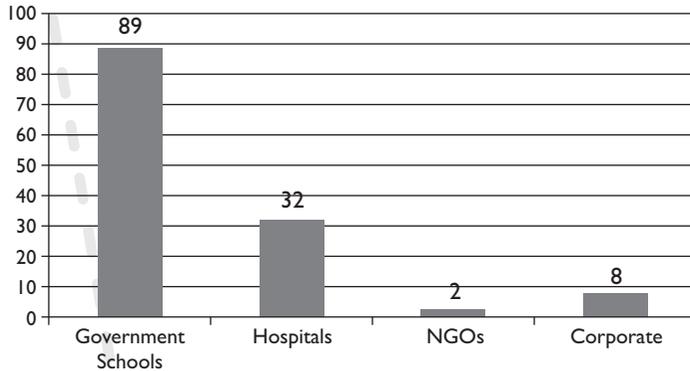
YFS Partners in Environment



When we came across Youth for Seva, and Akshay told us that they could help us with passionate youngsters and volunteers, it made a whole lot of difference to our program. Today we are confident that we have the foundation to build on and prepare the next generation for the challenges coming their way, because of the continued support from Youth for Seva.

– **Lalitha Mohan,**  
Founder of Jwalamukhi Trust

### YFS Partners in Health



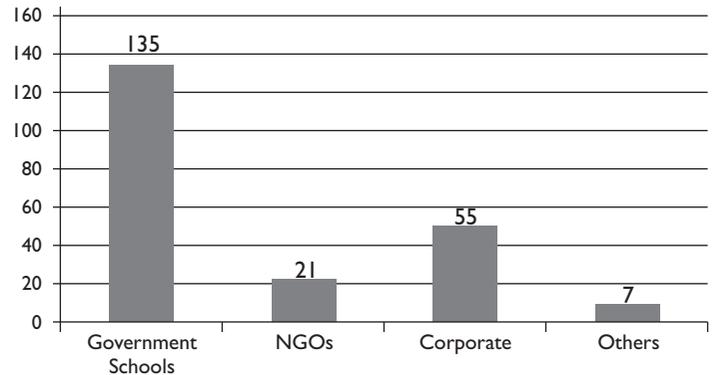
We, in Bosch are really thrilled by the work carried out by YFS. The type of commitment and the continuous support rendered to Bosch identified Government schools is simply great. Especially, the health awareness talks and the counselling sessions by the YFS volunteers has inspired many teachers, parents and the children who are really benefitted, YFS has been successfully carrying out the Child Health Development Project of Bosch by reaching out to 1200 children in 2011 and the healthy children ratio has increased dramatically. We intend to take 10 more schools in the year 2012 and we are sure that YFS will be a great support to execute this project.

—Ms. Usha S  
Manager at BOSCH

We sincerely acknowledge the contribution of YFS volunteers to our school. Apart from providing material aid, volunteers actively contributed to the enrichment of learning experience of the students. Professional approach and the concern they have for our children are truly commendable. Like our regular teachers they took up any responsibility given to them. We thank YFS for sending such dedicated volunteers to our school.

— Mr. Nagaraj, Principal  
Government Higher Primary School, Kathriguppe

### YFS Partners School Centric Activities



## Other Collaborations:

### Alliance University

The Alliance School of Business partnered with YFS to provide an introduction and orientation to the development sector for its management students.

The orientation program included a session that provided an overview of the development sector conducted by the staff at YFS. The students were also taken on field visits to:

- Nele ([www.nelehsp.org](http://www.nelehsp.org))
- S-VYASA ([www.svyasa.org](http://www.svyasa.org))
- Ramana Maharshi Academy for Blind ([www.srmab.org](http://www.srmab.org))
- Shivanahalli Ramakrishna Mission ([www.rkmission-shivanahalli.org](http://www.rkmission-shivanahalli.org)) and
- Little Sisters of the Poor (<http://lspbangalore.com/>)

Students interacted with the staff and inmates of these NGOs; studied the existing setup and suggested how management professionals could assist and make a difference in the growth and development of NGOs.

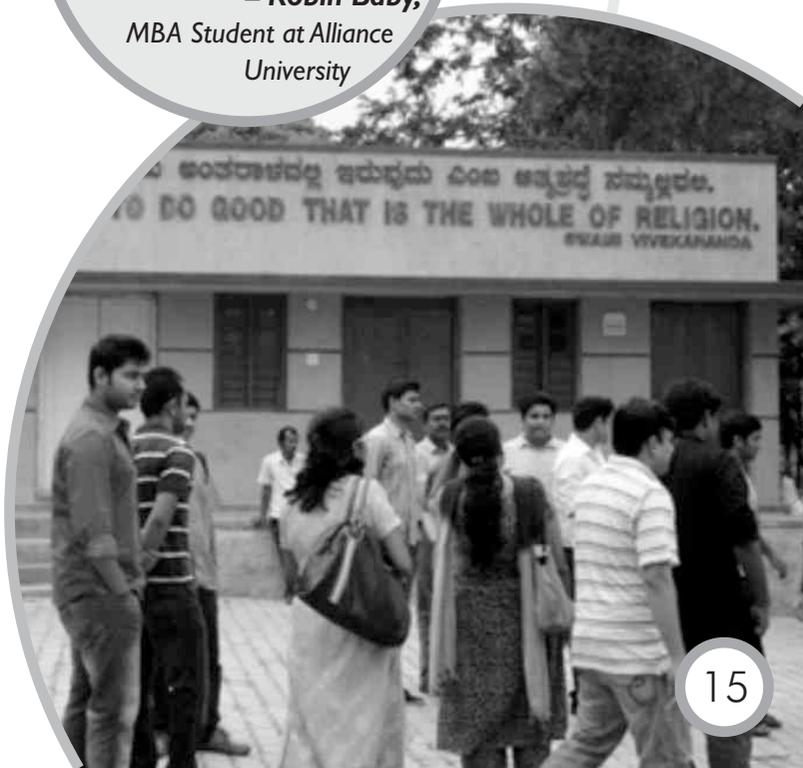
After the field visits, the following experts from different sectors of the NGO sector conducted a workshop for the students:

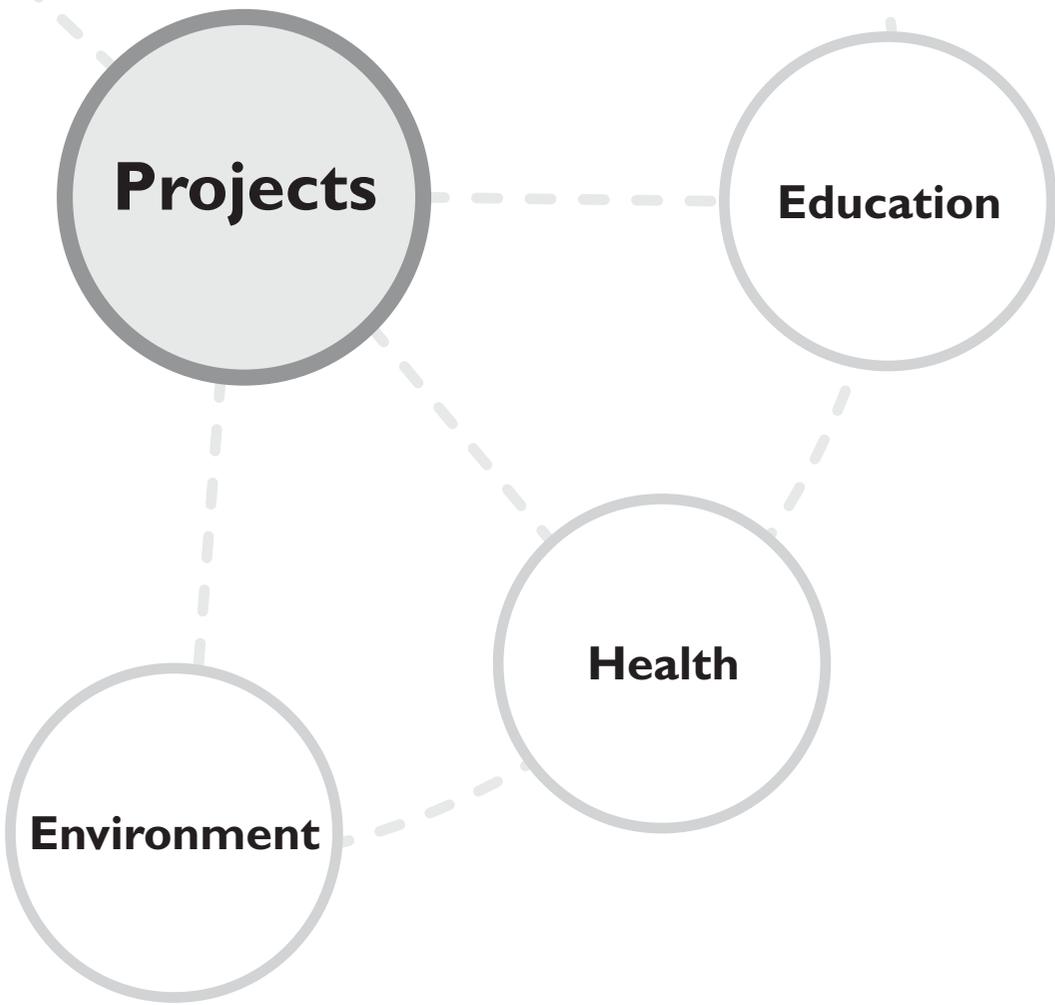
- Livelihood/Rural Marketing - Speaker from Masmara (Ms. Veena Hegde)
- Waste Management - Speaker from Saahas (Ms. Minti Jain)
- Health/Rural Development - Speaker from Karuna (Dr. Sudarshan)

The students really enjoyed the orientation and promised to volunteer at these NGOs.

*The volunteers of Youth for Seva revitalized me. The dedication of these volunteers inspires me to be a part of serving society in ways that are possible.*

**– Robin Baby,**  
MBA Student at Alliance  
University





## Education

- **Teaching**
- **School Adoption Programme**
- **Sponsor A Child**
- **School Kit Drive**
- **Other Activities**

A significant number of our volunteers are engaged in school centric activities – be it in teaching, conducting events, health screening, awareness about environment etc.

Government schools are often times understaffed and the teachers there are overworked leaving little time to cater to the needs of the children. Most children attending government schools are first generation learners and lack any kind of support and encouragement from their parents. YFS aims to fill certain gaps through volunteers to ensure that the students don't miss out on important things like learning spoken English, basic computers and participating in cultural and enriching activities that helps them discover their interests and talents. In addition, volunteers also help children review some basic academic concepts in schools, slums and orphanages. An overview of the activities is given below:

<b>School Centric Activities</b>				
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Reach</b>	<b>Number of volunteers</b>	<b>Total volunteer hours</b>	<b>Number of Students Benefited</b>
Teaching	55 schools	160	6435	1850
School Adoption	4 schools	8	648	607
Sponsor A Child	103 schools	100	600	836
School Kit Drive	58 schools in Bangalore and 22 schools outside Bangalore.	149	1744	8600
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>417</b>	<b>9427</b>	<b>11893</b>

## Teaching

YFS volunteers have been teaching Spoken English, computers and reviewing basics in 55 schools spread across 18 locations in Bangalore. There are both weekday and weekend volunteers involved in the school. In addition to teaching, some of them get involved in the celebrations

at the school and also visit homes of students with low attendance or a dropout to get them back into the school.

### Contagious Enthusiasm

*I joined Youth for Seva in 2010 because I always felt the urge to give back something for the society. The structure of YFS, the volunteers and the enthusiasm of youngsters is what attracted me towards social work. Due to lack of motivation I didn't take part in YFS activities for almost a year, but after seeing many youngsters working towards a common cause of improving the life of the under privileged, I felt I should also pitch in and do my bit. The other volunteers of YFS motivated me to volunteer as well.*

*I started teaching spoken English to the children in Kumaraswamy Govt. Primary School. Then shifted to teaching Computers, something which comes naturally for a techie like me. I was so happy to see the urge and enthusiasm the kid shown to learn. Volunteering has been a satisfying experience for me and Youth for Seva has provided me and other volunteers with the right platform to do social work.*

**– Raghunath B.S.,**

*YFS volunteer and Mathworks Inc employee*

## School Adoption Programme

As part of the CSR initiative, three corporate companies adopted government schools to fill certain gaps after evaluating the needs of the school.

### KPIT Cummins have adopted two schools

KPIT sponsored two teachers in the two schools. A survey was conducted in the schools in the beginning of the academic year to assess the level of Kannada and Mathematics. It was found that children had difficulty with both Kannada and Mathematics.

### ***Hosakarehalli Govt. School***

- A total of 150 children are being covered for Mathematics, Kannada, English and Computers
- Medical screening program was conducted in September, and treatments are in progress. Dr. Dhanya, a dentist has been connected to this school to provide dental treatments on an ongoing basis
- Health awareness talks have been initiated in November
- Talk by Lt. Sandeep from the Indian Army on 4-Sep-2011
- A Magic Show was organized for the children on 19-Nov-2011

### ***Sunkenahalli Govt. School***

- A total of 105 children are being covered for Mathematics, Kannada, English and Computers.
- Talk by Lt. Sandeep from Indian Army on 4-Nov-2011

### **Phillips Electronics India Ltd. has adopted one school**

#### ***Kalkere Govt. School***

Phillips has sponsored an English teacher for classes 8 and 9 as there was no English teacher in Kalkere school. Four engineers from Philips have taken up the initiative and the company has sponsored the English teacher's salary.

### **EMC<sup>2</sup> has adopted one school**

#### ***Garudachar Palya Govt. School***

The primary objective was to set up a computer lab and fund a computer teacher. A total of 457 students from Std 8, 9 and 10 are being covered under this program. In addition, other activities were conducted:

- Menstrual Hygiene awareness talks and distribution of Sanitary Napkins for 117 students of Std 9 and 10 were conducted on 13-Sep-2011
- Spoken English classes for 340 students (std 8 & 9) have been started and 4 volunteers from EMC have been trained for the same
- Three day personality development program conducted for 9th standard students.
- Vivekananda Jayanti celebration program conducted in school which involved skits and quiz being conducted by EMC volunteers for 8th and 9th standard students.
- Health screenings of all high school students completed and follow up treatments completed for some students.
- 100 students were taken for a movie "Tintin" sponsored by RED FM

**Gift a school kit  
for Rs. 250/-**

School Kit:

One School Bag

Ten Note Books,

One Pen, One Pencil &

One Eraser, One

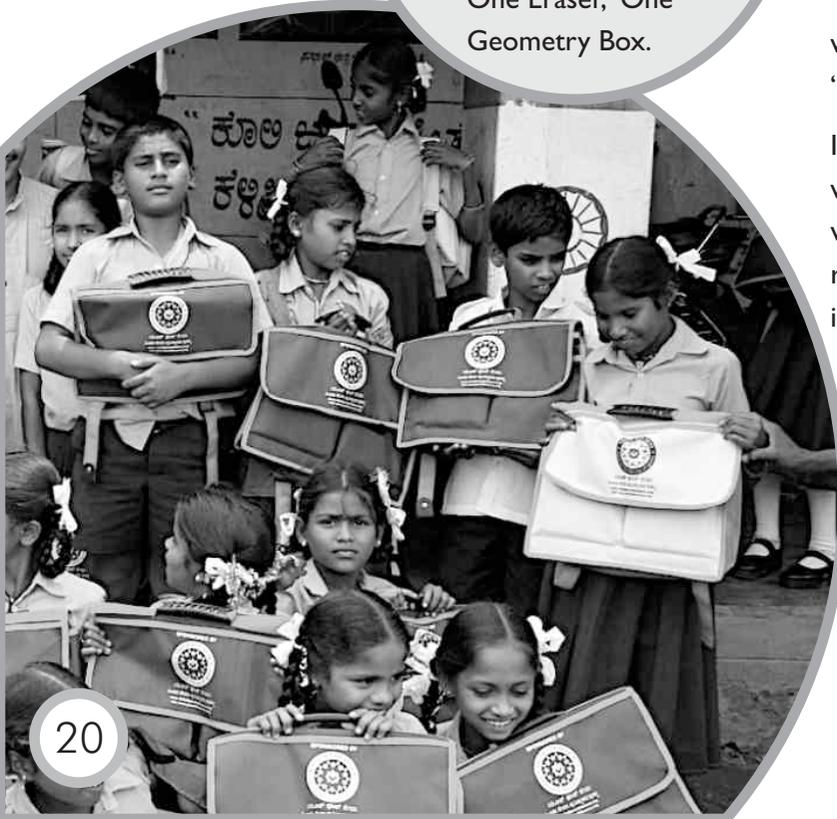
Geometry Box.

## School Kit Drive

As per the survey conducted by YFS volunteers, most of the students can't afford the basic things needed for their education. The reasons were many; parents being away from the children, absence of caretakers for the children, single parents with a financial crisis, children without parents, family below poverty line etc.

YFS volunteers have discussed with the teachers about what would help these children and the basics are put in a "School Kit."

In 2011, 8600 children benefitted from the school kits. They were made possible by partners comprising of 60 volunteer coordinators, employees in 47 corporates, residents in 3 apartment complexes and students and staff in 3 educational institutions. The volunteer coordinators spent time to spread the information about the school kits and assisted in marketing and distributing in 58 schools in Bangalore and 22 schools outside Bangalore.



## Sponsor A Child

YFS volunteers who have been volunteering in different schools came across many bright children in slums and government schools who were finding it difficult to afford to stay in the school. In order to support these children, "Sponsor A Child" was started in June 2009 as a platform to connect children from economically deprived backgrounds to people who want to give back to the society and could sponsor a child's education or mentor a child by organizing various activities for Milana, the donor child annual meeting of Sponsor a child program took place on Dec 11, 2011. 50 donors and 347 children participated in the program.



Volunteers have taken an active part in making this program successful. They are involved in finding donors, training government school teachers and writing reports to be sent to the donors which are key to keeping the administration cost to 10%. Going forward, we hope to reach out to children from 2500 families, develop a comprehensive Mentorship Training Program and conduct career counseling for students who have passed out of class 10.

*It is utter painful to see kids working for their livelihood, when they deserve the equal right for education like any other child. This is where Youth for Seva, Sponsor A Child program is playing a vital role.*

*The experience worth mentioning here is, which I won't be able to express in right words, when I received a call one day. Initially, I took time to realize who the caller was and what she was trying to convey. The moment I realized, that the call was from my sponsored child and she wanted to let me that her annual exams were over and she performed very well, I was THRILLED!*

**– Geetashri Goswami,**  
Senior Member of Technical Staff, VMware (Donor)

## Other Activities

### Women's Leadership Forum:

- As part of the Women Leadership Forum in association with EMC2, Youth for Seva along with Rashtrothana Parishath selected college-going girls from lower economic background to be trained in leadership skills. As part of this initiative, library projects were started by the girls in K.P.Agrahara on Magadi road & Byappanahalli near K.R.Puram.
- The girls under this program also organized a Gynecology camp for 123 women from the slums in Byapanahalli on Sep 25.
- A leadership development program for the girls was conducted in September.

*The crash course organized by YFS was very good. Nobody gathers so many children in one place and brings in so many experts to help the students. The objective was to help students focus on the key points that help them do well in the exams. I was very happy to be part of it.*

**– Mr. Ravindra Reddy**  
(conducted a grammar session for the students)

- A leadership development program for the girls was conducted in September.

### Crash course for 10th standard students:

YFS organized a crash course in partnership with Rashtrottahana Parishat for 10th standard students in the last week of December for 165 children from 8 schools. The academic focus was on four subjects – Maths, Science, Social Science and English taught by 15 teachers from all over Karnataka. Motivational sessions to raise their aspirations were also conducted.

### 2011 Summer Camp:

Summer Camps were conducted in more than 30 locations (government schools, slums and orphanages) for students in 5th – 8th standard. The goal was to engage children in various activities that will enhance creativity, facilitate children to discover and express their talents, provide an atmosphere where values can be imbibed, present role models and encourage children to dream. 60 volunteers engaged more than 600 children.

### Library initiative in partnership with READ India:

In December, over 123 books to the Kannada School and 70 books & 4 charts to the Urdu School plus 2 globes for both the schools were delivered. The school authorities and all the kids were very excited on seeing the books. The schools have agreed to have a 1 hour class called

“Library Period” every week so that the kids get ample time to spend with the books. Our volunteers who visit the school regularly will ensure that the kids are making good use of the new resources they now have.

### **Audio recording:**

In a bid to address the acute shortage of academic audio books for the visually impaired, Saksham, an NGO working with the differently-abled, in association with Youth for Seva organized a unique workshop on audio book creation. 40 volunteers are very active in the audio recording.

### **YFS sponsored school at Chikli, Aurad Taluk, Bidar:**

Approximately 75km from Bidar is a place called Aurad. Here, there are small communities of Lambanis called THANDA. There are around 7 such Thandas, and in each of these communities there are around 150 people. The main occupation of people here is agriculture. Most women go out to work for road construction. In every house on an average there are 4 children. In every Thanda there are 50-60 children of the age group 4-12 years.

These kids normally accompany their parents to fields, because there is no such thing as a school in all these communities. Though there is a govt school in one of these communities it has been defunct for years now!! There is an Anganwadi place which is never opened!!!

Since the children have to travel 6km to attend school, the parents don't send them to school.

Since 2009, YFS has been funding a one teacher school for 50 children at Chikli.

*I want to thank you in every way  
for being a wonderful scribe for our  
daughter Nivedita.*

*You have eased our enormous pressure, strain  
and tension by being not only helpful in writing  
her exam patiently..you have been very supportive  
to us too.we are motivated by your sportive gesture.  
Our best wishes to you in all you do.*

**–Mrs. Padmini Vasant**

*(acknowledgement to Mrs. Paranjyothi  
for scribing 6 exams for her daughter,  
Niveditha who is studying BCA)*

### **Informal school at Poorna Prajnya Layout:**

Bangalore's booming construction industry brings in large number of construction workers. Latha Rao, a volunteer of YFS saw a group of such children whose parents are migrant construction workers in a park near her house. This prompted her to start an informal school for children of construction labourers. Started in January 2009, Poorna Prajnya informal school engaged children on a daily basis and provides them basic education. Sharanappa, won the first prize in a Drawing Competition held during the Chiguru event. 9 students out of the 35 have enrolled a government school nearby. The children were taken to Planetarium, Cubbon Park and Bannerghatta National Park.



### **Power of One**

*It was 3 years ago, when I had just resigned from my career as a Software Engineer and was settling in as a full time house maker, that my stint with YFS to teach street children began. We were constructing our house at Poorna Prajnya Layout, a daily sight then was a group of children of the construction workers playing around and whiling away all their time. The workers had primarily migrated from villages in North Karnataka and their duration in the city was as long as the work demanded. Also these daily wage earners found education of their children an unnecessary luxury.*

*I was free then with some time at hand and decided to start a Non Formal School for these children. A place where I could teach these children the basics to read and write and the parents wouldn't mind as we were charging no fee.*

*Our school now runs from 10:00 AM – 1:30 PM everyday at the shed behind a local temple in the locality. I am accompanied by another volunteer, Roopa Srinivas. She has been sincerely working along with me for over a year now. Only after she joined, were we able to segregate the children into three groups depending upon the child's ability to learn and age. I am thankful to her for her time and dedication and wish to see a lot more of us join this cause.*

*We teach the children basics of English, Kannada and Maths. Activities such as music, songs, dance and dramatics are included to make the environment enjoyable.*

*It is most joyous to see these children make efforts to come neat and clean, attend the classes regularly and later be accepted by regular Schools. Some of them do leave us mid-way if their parents are relocating or if there isn't enough motivation from their home. At times we do go to the houses of such children and bring them back but sometimes we can't. That's when it is the most discouraging. Apart from school activities, we also attend to their health care.*

*I would like to tell everyone that even if it is an hour a month that you decide to take out from your schedule, it is enough for the people who need this kind of support from us. I assure that everyone, including working professionals and housewives, can contribute in many overwhelming and rewarding ways.*

*– Latha Rao, YFS volunteer since 2009, previously worked as a software engineer*



## Health

- **School Centered Initiatives**
  - Doctor-at-School
  - Vision Pre-screening
  - Awareness About Menstrual Hygiene
- **BOSCH - CSR**
  - Child Health Development Project
- **Adult Health Program**
  - Sanjeevini Free Clinic
  - Medical Camps for Adults
- **DFS in Gulbarga**

While working on field in government schools and slums, YFS volunteers came across many children and adults who required medical attention, but didn't know where and whom to reach out to, given their poor economic background. Situations like these prompted YFS to explore the possibility of engaging medical professionals in voluntary work through the concept of Doctors for Seva. The objective of YFS is to fill this gap in partnership with volunteers (both with and without medical background), doctors and hospitals. Often times, the children are diagnosed with a problem but there is no follow up to ensure that they are provided the necessary medicines or referred to the appropriate specialist. Health volunteers play a very key role in closing the loop.

For more information, please visit  
[www.doctorsforseva.org](http://www.doctorsforseva.org)

## Summary of Activities

Health						
Activity	Number of locations covered	Number benefited	Number of volunteers	Total volunteer hours	Number of medical staff	Number of hospitals
School Health Program	12 schools	2415 children screened, 208 referrals completed out of 413 requiring referral	46	703	15 doctors	11 hospitals
Vision Pre-screening	53 schools	11700 children screened, 97 children given glasses, 165 children referred to Sankara Eye Hospital for further evaluation	129	1350	-	1 hospital
Menstrual Hygiene Project	6 rural and 10 urban schools.	2275 girls given awareness, sanitary napkins distributed to 1147 girls	8	92	-	-
Bosch CSR - School Adoption	8 schools	1131 children (1058 treatments completed out of 1248 requiring treatment)	33	772	10 doctors	10 hospitals
Sanjeevini Free Clinic	clinic caters to people from 5 surrounding slums	2250 consultations, 387 families reached out to, 18 surgeries done	9	145	10 doctors	7 hospitals
Medical camps for adults	8 locations	2448 people screened	73	595	3 doctors	12 hospitals
DFS in Gulbarga	2 taluks (Afzalpur, Aland) surveyed + Gulbarga town	will begin in April 2012	4	N/A	8 individual doctors ready to start volunteering	2 hospitals offered voluntary services
Other one-time Activities	Participation in pulse polio drive, rural medical camp, and vaccination for school children	N/A	27	263	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>22,219 people reached out to</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>3920</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>31</b>

## Doctors for Seva

When Doctors for Seva (DFS) first started in June 2010, many were skeptical about such a project taking off saying that doctors & hospitals in this day and age have become very commercial. However, while interacting with doctors and hospitals, we realized that many of them were extremely compassionate, motivated and dedicated to serving the needy. What was thus far lacking was a platform to enable them to volunteer - Doctors for Seva has since provided that platform. Today, the DFS network has grown to include 67 medical professionals, 31 hospitals and over 50 non-medical volunteers in Bangalore alone.

### DFS Projects:

DFS projects aim to create working, sustainable models which common man can replicate with minimal external sources of funding. Therefore, the chief focus of the projects has been to engage and involve volunteers (medical & non-medical) in the vicinity of a school or a slum to take complete ownership of the project, be it monetary or otherwise. While majority of our projects run without any external source of funding, we do engage corporates when we receive requests to sponsor programs. Even while engaging corporates, our aim remains to involve them as part of the community, and not restrict it to only sponsorship. Therefore, employee engagement in corporate sponsored projects remains an important aspect of such initiatives.

## School Centered Initiatives

### SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAM:

The objective was to address the health issues of children from Government schools. In the year 2010-11, we conducted 23 school-based medical “camps”, screened 4,917 children, and provided free treatment to 1,565 children who required it. Through our experience and a thorough analysis of the data collected we have concluded that these medical camps are sufficient as a short-term solution but in order to promote long-term wellness, we believe that a more consistent approach is necessary and that is how the Doctor-at-School program evolved.



## Doctor-at-School

This program is aimed at connecting at least one doctor (General Physician or Paediatrician) to one government school located in an area of their preference. Along with a doctor, a team of 3-4 volunteers and a hospital/clinic for specialist attention are also connected to the school. Volunteers assist the doctor in organizing the screening follow up treatments and to deliver awareness sessions. While the doctor does the initial screening and the volunteers do the follow-up with medicines and treatments, the program doesn't end here. In the Doctor at School model, the doctor continues to visit the school at least twice a month throughout the academic year, so that children have continuous access to a doctor.

## Vision Pre-screening

Around 15% of children have ophthalmic problems in a typical government school. However, to identify these 15% children, technicians and ophthalmologists have to spend 4 to 6 hours screening all students in a school having strength of around 250.

To tackle this issue, Sankara Eye Hospital, Bangalore, in association with Sri Ramana Trust trained DFS volunteers (non-medical) to undertake eye pre-screening programs in government and corporation schools in South Bangalore.

While Sankara Eye hospital partnered with 41 NGOs across Bangalore in this program, ours was the only program which ran without any external source of funding or monetary incentives for volunteers. In a span of 3 months from June to August, 350 volunteers screened 11,700 children across 53 schools in Bangalore. We also ensured that children requiring spectacles received the same through sponsorship from Philips.

Employees from Brocade, National Instruments, Philips and Wells Fargo also volunteered during the health pre-screening.



## No Eye Contact

*I have been doing Menstrual Hygiene Talk since last two years along with other volunteers.*

*In the Month of Jan 2012, the Menstrual Hygiene Talk in Al Ameen Kambhal Posh Primary & High School was a new experience to me.*

*Generally to make the school girls comfortable and open up, we begin the talk with our first experience on attaining puberty. But I just could not start that way... I could see all the girls with their head bent down on bench. They refused to even look at the chart spread over on the board. Oh! I thought "how will I be able to involve them in the talk?"*

*With one or two lighter notes, I began interactions on their understanding about Menstrual Hygiene and slowly realized all of them started looking at me and started responding. Then I decided, let me now make them open up with first their time experience. To my great surprise, I could see many hands go up and EIGHT girls shared their first time experience. The whole session was very lively and interesting.*

*This school had more of male teachers. Not a single girl in this school knew how to calculate their monthly cycle and used to feel embarrassed for taking permission whenever they used to get their periods in the school.*

*I was very happy that through my talk, I was able to make them speak and could make them feel positive about Menstrual Hygiene as the girls in this school were totally ignorant about it.*

**–Vyjayanthi, YFS volunteer**



## Awareness about Menstrual Hygiene

The Menstrual Hygiene awareness program was initiated in June 2010 with the primary intention of reducing school absenteeism among adolescent girls, due to menstruation.

While volunteering in government schools, Youth for Seva volunteers noticed that it was not uncommon for high school girls to take a long leave of absence or entirely drop out of school once they attained puberty. We also noticed that neither parents nor teachers were comfortable imparting awareness on this issue. As a result, dropping out of school seemed quite normal, and in some rural schools, we even came across teachers who encouraged girls to remain absent during menses.

The awareness program is combined with distribution of Sanitary Napkins whenever we find donors for the same.

From June 2011 - Feb 2012, we have reached out to 12 urban locations, 6 rural locations, covering a total of 1,895 girls for awareness talks and distributing 1,426 packets of Sanitary Napkins. The Menstrual Hygiene awareness program was initiated in June 2010 with the primary intention of reducing school absenteeism among adolescent girls, due to menstruation.

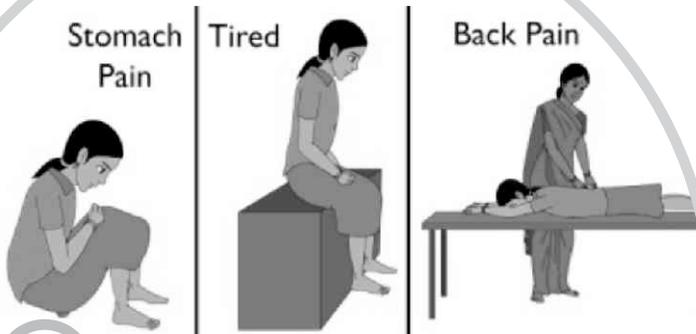
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### Way Forward – Animation Video

In order to reach out to a larger set of adolescent girls while maintaining quality in imparting awareness, we came up with the idea of making an animated video on menstrual hygiene. The script is ready, and the voiceover (in Kannada) has been recorded with the help of our volunteers. The video is likely to be completed. Once ready, we hope to distribute copies of the animated video to other NGOs, schools, self help groups and anyone who might benefit from such a resource. We hope that this will reduce the awkwardness faced by women who impart awareness talks on this issue, despite being trained. If successful, we can translate it into other languages to reach out to more number of girls.



## BOSCH - CSR - Child Health Development Project

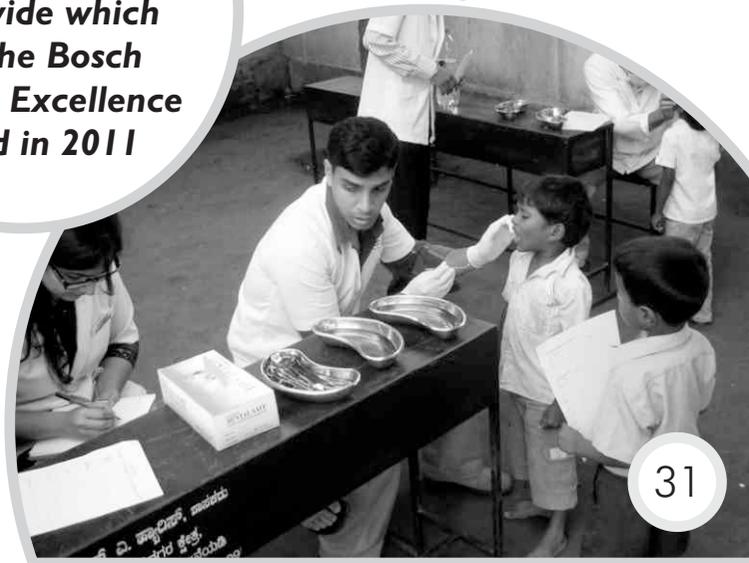
Bosch India Ltd.'s CSR initiative, driven through Youth for Seva aims to adopt 27 schools under Child Health Development Project (CHDP) to monitor and provide healthcare access for 3 years in Govt. Primary (classes I to VII) schools in the vicinity of Bosch at Adugoddi, Bangalore.

In 2010-11, 3 schools were adopted for their health needs and the services of one set of doctors/hospitals were utilized to complete screening and referrals at these schools. Scaling things up in 2011-12, 6 new schools have been adopted and to execute the project simultaneously at these 6 schools, we have connected multiple doctors/hospitals to each school, and spread the screening over multiple days, wherever necessary. The involvement of multiple general/specialty and dental hospitals made it possible to simultaneously handle the 8 schools. The reach of the program is captured below:

Total no. of volunteers involved	110
Total no. of children screened	1131
Total no. of cases closed	1058
Total no. of pending cases	131

Bosch sponsored medicines, four lady care-takers and logistical arrangements while Doctors for Seva network undertook the project execution by engaging voluntary doctors and other lay volunteers.

***The CHDP was one among eight projects in Bosch worldwide which won the Bosch Business Excellence Award in 2011***



## Adult Health Program

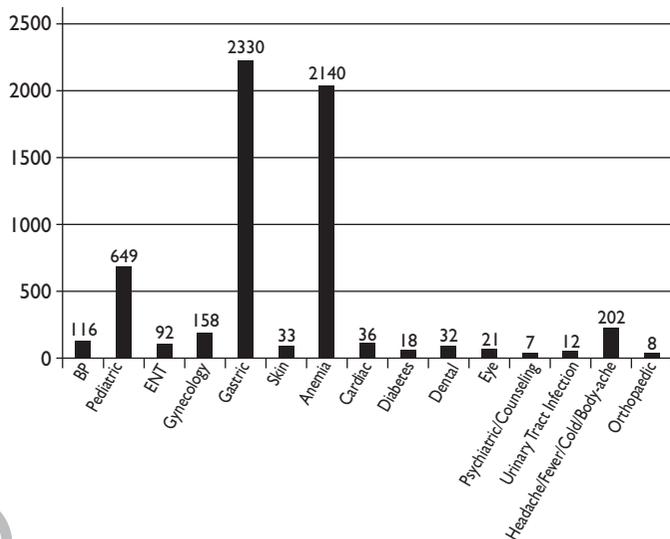
### Sanjeevani Free Clinic

Doctors part of the DFS network consult for free at the clinic set up by Anatha Shishu Nivasa, Basavanagudi. Consultation and medicines (where possible) are for free, and further referral treatments are handled by the Doctors for Seva network.

6 doctors consult at the clinic and 12 hospitals and doctors handle referral cases. 9 volunteers have put in 145 volunteer hours to enable the 2300 free consultations.

At Sanjeevani free clinic, we have reached out to a total of 2458 patients last year; the break up is shown below:

Type of cases at Sanjeevani Clinic



### “Are they out of their mind?”

Gangadhar, a 23 year old lad from Mandya had to discontinue his PU to take care of the family after his father's death. He worked as a garment worker along with his mother. His heart pains started from past one year. He was diagnosed with septal defect in his heart (hole in heart) and was referred to Jayadeva Hospital where the treatment costs were approximated to Rs. 1,07,000. He wasn't enrolled under Yashaswini program of Government and this worsened his situation.

He had taken a loan for his sister's marriage and had sidelined his treatment. He placed the responsibility of being a good brother above his health. But being a good brother didn't lessen the pain of his heart. He came to know about the assistance provided by Sanjeevani (Doctors for Seva) clinic for the needy through a chain of contacts which he doesn't remember clearly.

Bhavani from the clinic guided him throughout the process after reviewing his economic condition. Taking his weak economic condition into consideration, Jayadeva Hospital reduced the treatment cost to Rs 25000/- , Youth for Seva's Sponsor a Patient program arranged Rs 20000/- and he paid the rest. He recalls that he was very brave throughout the process and had a successful surgery on 17th May 2011. He considers this as his rebirth and feels indebted to Youth for Seva and also he remembers Bhavani as being more than a family for him during his treatment. When he had first heard that someone will pay his medical bills, his first thought was, “are they out of their mind?!”

He's transforming his gratitude into action by accompanying the patients from Sanjeevani to their concerned hospitals and guides them through the process.

## Medical Camps for Adults

Medical Camps for adults are aimed at people who require, but cannot afford, treatment owing to their financial background. These medical camps are conducted wherein Hospitals and doctors part of the DFS network screen and offer free/subsidized treatments for these people.

12 Hospitals, 3 individual doctors and 75 volunteers have helped conduct these camps, reaching out to about 2500 people across 8 locations.

## DFS in Gulbarga

An opportunity to take DFS to the rural area came up following a meeting with the Health Secretariat, Dr. E.V.Ramana Reddy, in September 2011. Based on the data given by the government, we decided to initiate a pilot project in Aland and Afzalpur Taluks in Gulbarga district. We found that though Aland had just one or two specialists, it was Afzalpur which was facing a severe problem since there were absolutely no specialists willing to visit this place. As a result, people from Afzalpur had to travel 60 kms to Gulbarga to avail emergency health facilities. This was a major problem especially in cases of pregnant women requiring caesareans.

Barriers of language and culture in addition to bad roads and sudden change of lifestyle in rural areas were some of

the reasons which contributed to the non-availability of specialists at Afzalpur. Given these challenges, the concept of a Specialist from Gulbarga city volunteering their time on at least one day a month seemed like a reasonable first step to get them to visit Afzalpur. Just as we hoped, 6 specialists (3 Paediatricians & 3 Gynaecologists) agreed to visit Afzalpur once a month, on a Sunday of their choice.

While interacting with doctors in Gulbarga, several of them expressed an interest to initiate volunteering activities in the slums of Gulbarga district. Therefore, we decided to start Doctors for Seva free clinic catering to people from slums. This clinic will be run in association with Seva Bharathi, a local NGO, and will begin by providing free consultation and medicines every Saturday. This project is scheduled to start from April 7, 2012.



## Other Activities

- **Software to capture information about the health activities:** Capturing information regarding the health of a few thousand children from multiple schools, and continuously updating this information following each referral means a lot of data! We've maintained all this data as soft copies (using one excel sheet for each school), but this is only going to be efficient and maintainable in the long run if a software is in place to keep all the data in one place, while at the same time making it available to those that require it. A volunteer has built software that we are currently testing.
- **Teen Day:** On the occasion of Teen Day 2011, YFS volunteers helped Indian Academy of Pediatrics (Bangalore)'s Adolescent chapter organize intra-school competitions on the theme of "Prevention of Teen Alcohol Use (Booze or alcohol abuse - either lose them or lose yourselves)" in 2 schools, which saw participation of a total of 69 high school students in writing, poster making, drawing and debate competitions.
- **Medical camp in Sugganahalli village, Magadi taluk:** 12 YFS volunteers participated in a medical camp conducted for people in Sugganahalli village, in February 2012. Conducted by an independent team of doctors from Bangalore, the camp reached out to about 350 locals.
- **Blood Donors on call:** YFS volunteers willing to donate blood in case of emergency are encouraged to let us know their blood groups, and this helps us maintain a

blood donors' registry that has proved very helpful. Every now and then, we have come to know about emergency requirements for blood, and volunteers have stepped in to donate and address this requirement.

- **Pulse Polio:** During the pulse polio drive on February 19, 2012, DFS volunteers were requested to assist in polio booths. A total of 23 volunteers responded to the call, of which 14 were trained and posted at different booths. In addition, Sanjeevini Medical Checkup centre was also a part of the program and administered polio drops to 48 children. DFS members, Dr. Girija who volunteers at Sanjeevini clinic and Dr. Vimochana were responsible for driving this initiative.
- **Sponsor-a-Patient:** When there are patients with dire need of medical treatment but cannot afford it due to their low income background, YFS volunteers donate/raise money to sponsor the treatment. In the coming year, patients will be sponsored in partnership with Right to Live program by Kote Foundation.

DFS will be looking at streamlining all its existing projects. This will include review of structure and function of these projects keeping in mind the best practices. Necessary adjustments will be incorporated and standard operating procedures will be laid out in order to make these models replicable, scalable, sustainable and measurable.

DFS will decide to concentrate on the most intense and problematic areas and focus on finding simplistic, sustainable and holistic solutions keeping volunteerism as our primary guiding force.



## Environment

- **Waste Segregation**
- **Campaign addressing one-time usage of plastics**
- **Sapling Plantation**
- **Green Clubs (in schools)**
- **Bilekahalli - STIR (Sustainable Transformation Initiative by Residents)**
- **Jwalamukhi: Leadership Programme for Children**

Environment is an abstract social issue to delve into, partly because of the magnitude of the problems that surround us and the general lack of immediate results. Thus, it's easy to get intimidated by melting icebergs in Antarctica or Global warming!

Green Commandos is at the forefront of breaking this perception of helplessness and impressing upon people that most problems stem in unsustainable practices in our own backyards. Empowering individuals to make change for themselves is the call of the hour not only for protecting Earth, but also for the survival of humans themselves. Green Commandos strives to make this change through a three pronged approach: (i) Making people aware of various Environmental issues in regard to their relevance, criticality and hypothetical solutions, (ii) Initiating activities that bring the awareness to action and (iii) Sustaining the action to create change in the lives of people.

Volunteers call this methodology as “bottom to top change”, and vouch for its effectiveness. 2011 has been a year of experimenting, consolidating and gaining expertise in different activities and new collaborations across various organizations. For more information, visit <http://www.greencommandos.com>

## An Overview of the Activities

<b>Green Commandos</b>			
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Reach</b>	<b>Number of volunteers</b>	<b>Total volunteer hours</b>
Sensitizing people about one time usage of plastics	34 events	93	381
Waste Segregation	19 locations	216	1489
Sapling Plantation	1018 saplings	132	423
Green Clubs (in schools)	31 schools	23	484
Black spot Elimination	3 locations	40	160
Cleanup drives	3 locations	15	45
Bengaluru Recycling Habba, 2011	-	16	648
Bilekahalli STIR (Sustainable Transformation Initiative by Residents)	-	47	1440
Waste management at tourist spots	2 locations	21	142
Other		34	796
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>637</b>	<b>6008</b>

## Waste Segregation

The past year has been an important one for Green Commandos in terms of understanding waste segregation in various contexts across the city. The sheer number of issues that garbage is associated with – social and economic status of rag-pickers, health hazards from unattended garbage, ground-water contamination at landfills, air pollution owing to incineration, economic implications through import of garbage from developed countries etc – make it an essential agenda of Green Commandos. It is with this spirit that Green Commandos has strengthened its ties with Solid Waste Management Round Table, BBMP and PCB. Last year saw the proposal for setting up Dry Waste Collection Centers (Kartavya stores) presented to the BBMP by SWMRT. SWMRT's efforts led to it bagging the Namma Bengaluru Award for the best community based organization in the city. 93 Kartavya stores will come in various locations across Bangalore in the coming year and Green Commandos is helping organizations running the DWCCs to reach out to people and optimize their operations thereby reaching to new communities and independent layouts, where the practice is unheard of.

Green Commandos volunteers were also pivotal in starting waste segregation in around 4000 homes in the past year. 216 volunteers have put in about 1500 volunteer hours spread across 19 locations in raising awareness about waste segregation. This included various locations in Bangalore and some rural areas outside Bangalore too, such as Mittur.



*In waste segregation, awareness in people is important. Unless people are completely involved in judiciously using plastics and taking steps to minimize and segregate waste, it will be difficult for us to achieve our goal of a clean and green future. I have been constantly motivated being a part of Green Commandos to consistently do my job to create such awareness among the public. This will take time as the process is slow but change is inevitable!*

*My involvement in such initiatives taught me how to talk effectively, to spread ideas and to justify my passion. I thank all the helpful and committed members of YFS for this!*

**– Vishal Kumar Sinha, Volunteer**

## Campaign addressing one-time usage of plastics

To address the garbage problem in the city, we at Green Commandos have realized the big role that one-time usage of plastics plays. Discarding plastics after using only once can cause severe hazards such as choking stray animals feeding on garbage, causing unnecessary and avoidable garbage etc. It is in this regard that we bring in the concept of the 4 R's – Refuse, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.



## Campaign Fun

*The cloth bag campaign at HM Tambourine was a first time experience for me and my friends and I am really happy that the whole campaign was completed very smoothly. It gives me lot of satisfaction to know that I can help save the planet atleast to some extent while improving the livelihood of some. I have learnt and often been told that we should use cloth bags instead of plastic ones. Though at school we have also been told that we should spread awareness about the harms of plastic bags, I had never got an opportunity to do it. With the Green Commandos of Youth for Seva helping me and my classmates, I have urged some my other friends also to participate.*

*The campaign at HM Tambourine was conducted with fifteen of my friends. We divided ourselves into groups and each group went to one block. At almost all houses, we got positive responses and many compliments. We found that most of the residents also wanted to help ban plastic bags but were unable to do it as there was no organization to help them. Most of the residents took atleast one bag and some also bought bags in large numbers. While doing the campaign, we also found some time to enjoy ourselves with our friends. We assessed each other on how much we could convince the residents and bring awareness by getting their interest.*

*Though Youth for Seva was introduced to us by our school and has permitted us to do many such activities, some of my friends and I have decided to continue and participate whenever possible. The campaigns give us a thrill as well as satisfaction of helping others.*

**– Anshuman,**

*9th standard student, Kumarans School*

Any campaign pertaining to the issue encompasses two steps:

1. Sensitizing people about the hazards of not having a Refuse,Reduce,Reuse and Recycle mindset.
2. Providing alternatives for plastic bags to prompt the concept of 'reusing'.This concept encourages people to go back to the age-old practice of carrying 'jholas' or cloth bags.Green Commandos uses the help of partner organizations to make cloth bags carrying a strong message to encourage people to carry bags for shopping.

Youth for Seva collaborated with Sri Kumaran's School to engage class 9 standard students in social service for 6 months. Their main project was sensitizing different communities about the one time usage of plastics itself, along with cloth bag promotional drives and pledge signing. Many children had positive experiences and wrote to us about them.

## Sapling Plantations

Trees are one of the few reasons that humans can survive on this planet. Last year, there was an increase in the number of trees planted as well as in the network of partner organizations. We experimented with different methodologies in various locations for planting trees and there were many lessons learned.

132 volunteers planted 1018 saplings in the rainy season last year in 6 different events. We also collaborated with the Forest Department at Gunjurpalya (off Marathahalli) in an attempt to make Bangalore's first urban forest cum park. Green Commandos collaborated with Say Trees to plant around 500 saplings in the area, which were complemented by 500 saplings from the forest department.

Green Commandos also collaborated with Cisco, HSBC, GMR and Subex for planting saplings in various locations in the rainy season. Moreover, many similar minded organizations and NGOs have come up and started working together in this regard. A round table is being planned for all the organizations so that collaboration with the government increases and new organizations get an equal chance as well.



## Green Clubs (in schools)

2011 was also the year where we experimented with setting up Green Clubs in various schools around Bangalore. Children need to be empowered to deal with different Environmental issues around themselves, and these issues differ with the backgrounds of the children.

We realized the challenge and adopted 8 schools in Adugoddi with Bosch and 3 private schools. Both cater to different student backgrounds, so we made different modules for the students and presented them in schools. The targeted audiences were children in high school, and they turned out to be an energetic and enthusiastic bunch!

Four different topics were covered in depth in these schools through group discussions in classes and various engaging hands-on activities. The topics covered were Water, Air, Noise and Waste. Two additional modules will be taken up next year – Nature and plants, and animals. Elaborate activities are also planned in the coming year, such as setting up waste segregation in the campuses where it doesn't exist already.



*I was associated with the government schools in Adugoddi for two months. My experience was good and time just passed by without any hassles.*

*Children out there were really good in learning things, their interest is superb! Teachers also really helped us in making the interactions with children fruitful.*

*We are looking to implement waste management and other practical things in schools in the coming academic year. Learning by doing will really have a great impact on the children. Looking forward for more the coming academic year!*

**– Shree Kavya, Green Club Volunteer**

## Black Spot Elimination

Almost all of us are a witness to a scene like this close to our homes or offices:

When a part of the road, empty plot or sidewalk loses its original purpose to give way to a garbage heap, it is called a black spot. Black spots are a menace for more than one reason. Besides being an eyesore, stray animals often start eating the garbage, and sometimes get choked on the plastic. Around 300 cows die every year in Bangalore because of plastic consumption. Moreover, such garbage heaps can harbor dangerous disease carrying bacteria and fungus that are propagated by mosquitoes and flies.

## Spotless!

Every kind of work is dignified in its own way. Indeed. My first time volunteering with Green Commandos was for the Black Spot Elimination Drive at J.B. Nagar. The black spot was a complete nightmare. Plastic bags, empty tins, broken glass, unpaired footwear, tattered clothes, rusting wires, battery cells, rotting food...it was a seemingly impossible stretch with mounds and mounds of filth, an eyesore to any passerby. But we continued our work and prompted the citizens to join us as well.

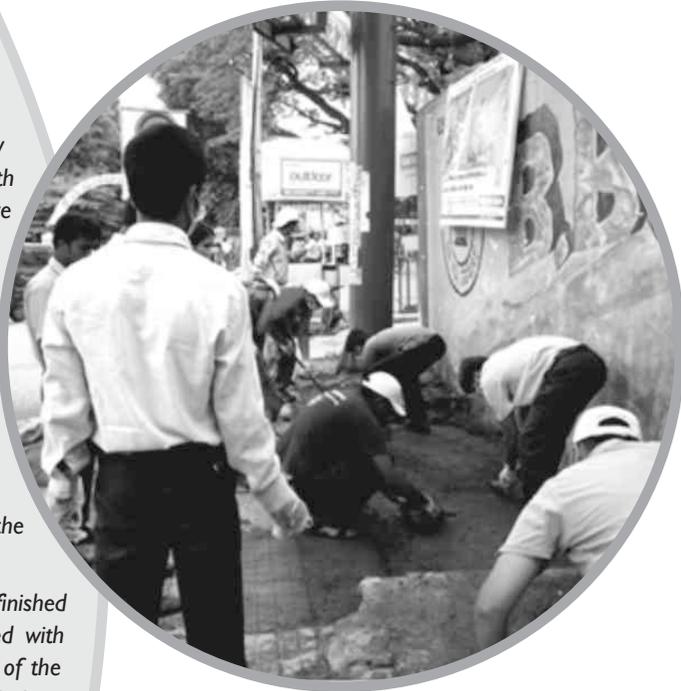
Just as the florist on the opposite side of the lane sold his invitingly cheerful flowers, fresh as the morning air; just as the supermarket beside it opened for the day, with its neatly arranged grocery waiting to be bought; just as the vehicles continued to zoom up and down the road, wading their way carefully through the overflowing traffic; the volunteers continued with their task of cleaning up the black spot.

And the involvement was complete; the dedication, inspiring; the teamwork, beautiful.

In a span of just under 3 hours, the volunteers had successfully finished their task on hand, and lined up large plastic bags stuffed with segregated garbage that was picked up by a BBMP vehicle of the locality as scheduled. An interaction with the residents and shop owners in the locality followed, regarding waste segregation at source and the role of poura-karmikas. Their grievances and prompt feedback gave us more to ponder, in our post clean-up discussion. It was noon by then and we all took leave, each with a satisfied smile, a heave of contentment and a streak of enthusiasm to follow up this activity in the community.

Starting off with this team has been a wonderful learning experience for me. Hoping for a more challenging and eventful year ahead!"

—Vidya from Chitrakala Parishad challenged a black spot in Indiranagar



2011 was a year where we experimented with cleaning black spots as well. Though we have officially discontinued the practice as a stand-alone activity, we did learn that black spots are closely linked with waste segregation and are but an effect of people not segregating waste. If people can compost their kitchen waste and recycle the dry waste, there is hardly anything left to throw on the roads!

We conducted 3 black spot cleaning drives in 2011 in Malleswaram, Jeevan Bheema Nagar and Yesvantpur.

Besides Bangalore, Green Commandos was also operational in rural areas around Bangalore. A clean up drive was planned and executed in the village of Mittur, Kolar. The students of the local government school were more than keen to join the volunteers and help get their village back to its pristine state.

Waste segregation was started in the village, but could not be sustained owing to low quality plastics forming the bulk of the waste, which doesn't have much economic value. A spike in usage of plastics in rural India is one of the most tragic developments of the last decade. It is often mixed with compost, and one can see some plastics in the fields as well. This slowly releases carcinogens into the soil and affects the water quality and the crop yield of the farmers as well.

All in all, 40 volunteers put in 160 volunteer hours for various activities under Black-spot elimination and different cleanup drives.

### **Bilekahalli – STIR** (Sustainable Transformation Initiative by Residents)

Moving forward in the long run, we realized that we had gotten to the stage to address holistic community development as well. We had gained expertise across various environmental issues over the years and felt that it was time we experimented with a sustainable model of an ideal locality that could be replicated across different localities. These assorted thoughts gave birth to our first community centric project.

We chose Bilekahalli (Bannerghatta Road) as it was one of the areas in Bangalore that comprised of people across all

### **A brief snapshot of Bilekahalli**

<b>Entity</b>	<b>Number (Approx.)</b>
Independent homes (LIG)	175
Independent homes (MIG - HIG)	300
Apartment complexes(total units)	10 (1000)
Small shops	200
Corporate offices	10
Large retail establishments	4
Scrap dealers	10
Vegetable markets	1

different social and economic spectrums. Besides, Bilekahalli also had a huge potential for change - both in terms of environmental sustainability as well as involvement of residents in driving social change.

The project is divided into various phases and issues. The first phase, survey was completed in November and waste segregation was decided to be an ideal issue to target first. As a result, we started waste segregation on 9th main with the help of two Narsee Monjee interns. Residents were used to propagate the message, and a presentation was set up. Around 40 residents turned up for the presentation, and promptly started waste segregation. Local scrap dealers were targeted to pick up the waste to symbiotically benefit both communities. Talks are on to set up a Dry Waste Collection Center in Bilekahalli to address garbage problems.

## Other Activities:

### Forest waste management and crowd control:

Towards the end of 2011, some volunteers showed enthusiasm to be involved in forest conservation activities as well. Forests are the lynchpins of human survival and are often at the receiving end of many activities. Thus, ensuring that there is minimum ecological impact in the forests, especially when there are large scale events hosted there is of prime concern.

Green Commandos, in association with other partner organizations, took up the job of managing the waste and crowd in three important Jathas, two of them in Bandipur National Park and one in Dabguli Forest Reserve, Tamil Nadu so as to not affect the local fauna.

All 3 events were organized by part-time volunteers only. This is a step towards making Green Commandos decentralized in terms of activity planning and execution to empower the youth.

### Bengaluru Recycling Habba, 2011:

Green Commandos is a member of Solid Waste Management Round Table (SWMRT), Bangalore and has played its part in reaching out to the masses to make them aware of the concept of waste segregation and recycling.

In 2011, SWMRT took a big leap and hosted the first national campaign for celebrating recycling across the city and making it a cool thing to do. The Habba was structured as a 14 day action packed extravaganza with events such as exhibition of recycled products, trash trail and bags workshop, mela in the mall and the Grand Recyclathon awards. Green Commandos took charge of volunteers for the event and volunteers clocked over 600 hours for its success.



There was something for everyone – workshops, outdoor activities and games for children, intense discussions on the economics of garbage for young professionals, artistic exhibitions for people with a creative bend of mind and awards to recognize diligent waste-pickers.

SWMRT collaborated with BBMP and Karnataka State Pollution Control Board to make the Habba a grand success. The entire event was covered exhaustively by several leading dailies such as DNA, Times of India, Deccan Herald and The Hindu and various news channels as well. With the first step taken, SWMRT members have pledged to bring recycling to the common consciousness through this annual event.



### **Parisara Ganapati Campaign**

Parisara Ganapati Campaign was taken up in partnership with the Pollution Control Board (PCB). The Ganapati festival is held across India with much fanfare every year. However, religion's message of harmony with the planet as well is often ignored. What results is nothing short of catastrophic damage of one of nature's and Bangalore's most prized resource – Lakes. Around 3-4 lakh idols were submerged in 2011 by the 85 lakh population of Bangalore in 12 lakes.

### **Kalawar Technologies – Rural Initiatives:**

Last year also marked as a year of substantial increase of rural initiatives taken by YFS. Most of YFS' rural environmental initiatives are in collaboration with Kalawar Technologies, the organization founded by Mr. Radhakrishna Kalawar.

In the past year, YFS and Kalawar Technologies diversified in the different products offered to rural areas to improve livelihoods, providing innovative renewable energy and water solutions. The village Mittur has been the hub for experimenting with most of the innovative solutions, and projects such as providing LED Lamps to the school to give students have been remarkably successful. Suvarna News has documented and aired the various initiatives in the village as well.

### Jwalamukhi - Leadership Programme for Children:

Jwalamukhi is a trust that was formed in 2010 with the vision of shaping the future leaders of the country. It offers a uniquely woven programme to high school students of various schools –government, aided and private all alike. Essential skills such as public speaking, civic and environmental awareness are imparted to children to groom them to be social change-makers. Students are taken through a 6 month crash course filled with fun activities such as role plays and group discussions that leave strong messages. Students are then expected to conduct follow-up activities at community level – both in their own schools and residential areas.

Last year, YFS collaborated with Jwalamukhi for the duration of the entire programme and provided 16 volunteers as mentors and instructors. We also helped Jwalamukhi with various environmental campaigns in the year.



*I and my friends wanted to change many things in our city - cutting of trees, burning of leaves - we wanted to stop it. We were seeing all this happen all around us and wanted to do something for social change. So when we got to know about the Jwalamukhi program for social change we immediately decided to be a part of it.*

*I have been very influenced by the program. Nowadays I can't stand quiet when something is getting wasted or anything is happening to the environment. I feel that I have to do something to stop it.*

**– Gayatri**, Cluny Convent student, who finished the Jwalamukhi Impact Programme in 2011

### Animal Welfare Program at YFS:

YFS plans to form a network of organizations and veterinarians who can collaborate and hold various activities, assist the government and finally, improve government policies. Two activities have already taken place, an anti-Rabies vaccination camp at Ambedkar Nagar and an awareness talk at Malleswaram Govt School, and this is just the beginning!

*A huge forest is being consumed by a fire. All the larger forest animals come out, and are transfixed, immobilized, as they watch the forest burning. They feel overwhelmed and powerless, all except for a little hummingbird that flies to the nearest stream, takes water into its beak and flies back and drops the water on the fire, then back to the stream. Back and forth the tiny bird goes. The other animals stand watching and say to the hummingbird, "What do you think you can do? You're too little, this fire is too big. You can only bring a small drop of water at a time." Undeterred, the hummingbird replies, "I am doing the best I can. That's all anyone can do." That, to me, is what all of us should do. I may feel insignificant, but I certainly don't want to be like the animals watching as the planet goes down the drain. I will be a hummingbird. I will do the best I can*

**– Wangari Maathai**, Kenyan Environmental Activist and winner of

### Way Forward for Green Commandos

Even though we started in 2009, we are still in the learning phase of environmental issues. 2011 has been the year of many experiments, consolidation and diversification of activities, failed attempts, roaring successes and many great stories!

Moving forward, Green Commandos will continue to be the platform for volunteers to experiment with their ideas for tackling environmental issues. However, what we will look to improve is our volunteer reach and increase our network of partner organizations.

With the first steps taken, we are now poised to plunge into the roots of all issues and make environmental awareness and sensitivity the new paradigm of the modern day society.

All of us have to be hummingbirds. There is no other way.



## Events

- **Deepavali Seva Mela**
- **Annual Volunteers Day**
- **Milana: Bringing Children and Donors Together**
- **Chiguru: Highlighting Hidden Talents**
- **Vivekananda Jayanthi Celebration with Volunteers**

## Deepavali Seva Mela

Seva Mela is an initiative of YFS to showcase and promote the products made by our partner NGOs supporting Self Help Groups; intellectually disabled and differently-abled children. This year was a grand success. A total of 16 NGOs, 26 companies and 1 college participated in the mela. YFS acted as a facilitator between the company coordinators and NGOs in seeking the requisite permission to hold the Seva Mela in their premises. The NGOs were very pleased with the sales and the support provided by the spirited YFS volunteers and company coordinators. NGOs like Art of Living, Sajjan Rao Vidya Samsthe and Seva in Action felt bolstered with the active involvement of the YFS volunteers and company coordinators in garnering the crowds to their stalls and thereby enhancing the gross sales.

## Annual Volunteers Day

Over 400 enthusiastic youth participated in “Annual Volunteers Day” organized by YFS at PESIT College, Banashankari 3rd stage on Oct 15, 2011. It was an occasion to celebrate the accomplishments of YFS volunteers in the year gone by and to share the plans for the coming year. The chief guest of the evening was Sri Saravanan, Sr. Vice President and Managing Director of EMC Data Storage Systems India and the keynote

speaker was Dr. M.K.Sridhar, Secretary, Knowledge Commission, Govt of Karnataka.

The event began with a beautiful rendering of “Vande Mataram” sung by YFS volunteers. Then, a video that highlighted the impact the volunteers have made in different government schools and other NGOs was shown. In his address, Sri Saravanan said volunteers are not paid not because they are priced less, but they are priceless. Volunteers entertained the audience with two skits which has socially relevant messages.



## Milana: Bringing Children and Donors Together

Milana, an annual program from Sponsor a Child project of Youth for Seva was held at Mangala Mantapa at NMKRV College in Jayanagar on December 11, 2011. Every year, all the donors are invited to meet their sponsored child/ children. The main purpose of this program is to encourage donors to participate in ensuring the all-around development and wellbeing of the child and the children to receive encouragement love and support from the donors. The parents of the child accompany the child to the meet and get an idea of how seriously their child's education is being taken not just by Sponsor a Child, but also by the individual donor. This year 341 children benefiting from Sponsor a Child program, gathered in full spirit and enthusiasm to meet their donors.. A cultural show was put together by the children. Songs, dances and a yoga display were among the main performances. All the children had brought paintings and handicrafts for display and to give to the donors as a token of love and respect. About 42 donors were able to make it to this program. The program was put together by the active participation of about 25 volunteers.



## Chiguru: Highlighting Hidden Talents

Sunday, December 4, was just not any other day for the 1000 plus government and non-formal school children in Bengaluru. It was a day of joy, enthusiasm and triumph for these 1000 children from 32 schools who participated in 12 different events. The event was sponsored by Cambridge Silicon Radio (CSR) and driven by school coordinators who are volunteers at YFS.

The day began with children displaying their skills in the form of attractive rangolis and drawings of nature, idols of God and Goddesses etc. As the venue was a college, most of class rooms were used for various competitions. Later in the afternoon, many stage programmes were performed by children as part of the competition. The stage program consisted of plays and small acts, dances and songs performed.

*This is the first time I am seeing such huge number of children participating in an event like this. I am thrilled to be part of Chiguru. This event not only provides a platform for children to show their extracurricular activity, it also boosts their confidence level*

– **Shruthi**, School Coordinator at Banashankari Govt. School



More than 20 schools participated in small act which included themes like mythology, patriotism and few plays showcased some social messages as well. Kamala Nehru School children, who played Kittur Rani Chennamma play, bagged first prize in the drama category. A 12-year old boy who came beating drums during the play captured maximum claps and appreciation.

The other events like creative writing, quiz competition, storytelling, and pick and speak also saw participation in huge numbers. Some spellbound moves by young yoga gurus left the participants and the audience mesmerized.

Chiguru-2011 not only provided a platform to nourish the hidden talent in children, it also showed how volunteers can efficiently organize an event without many hiccups. Chiguru ended with a promise to come back with more vibrant color and energy next year.

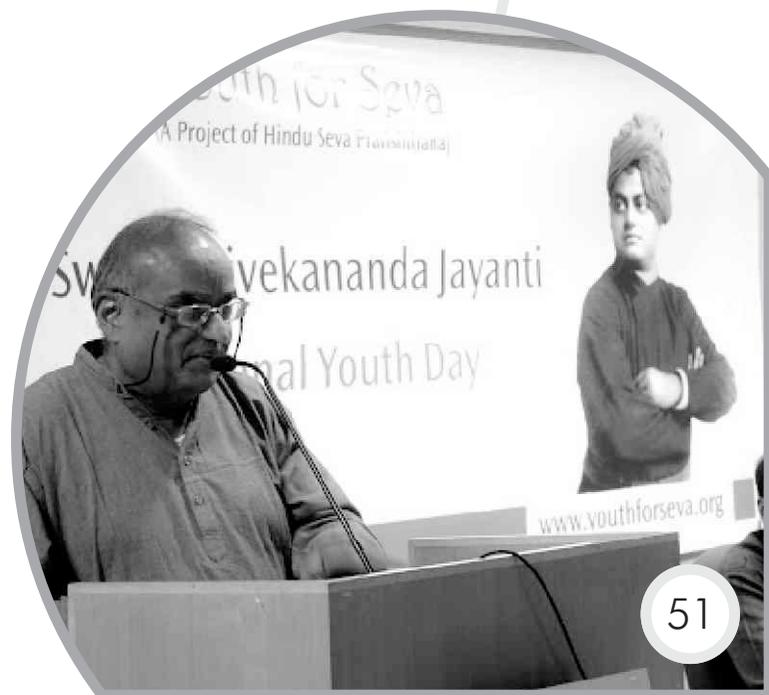
## Vivekananda Jayanthi Celebration with Volunteers

*“We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded, and by which one can stand on one's own feet”* said Swami Vivekananda. Youth for Seva celebrated Vivekananda Jayanthi with volunteers on Sunday, February 19, 2012 to revisit teachings of the inspirational leader. Over 150 volunteers attended the celebration. Prof. Vaidyanathan from IIM Bangalore, Mr. Srikantan Moorthy, VP from Infosys and Mr. D. M. Kiran, CEO of iSOL graced the occasion.

The celebration started with volunteers singing Vande Mataram. Prof. Vaidyanathan was the keynote speaker and said that Swami Vivekananda's life was his message; a leader who left behind such phenomenal impact within a lifespan of just 39 years. Then, Mr. Srikantan Moorthy concisely pointed out that every human being has the right to dream big but should ensure that the pursuit of action is with compassion and thought.

The Sunday celebration was a culmination of the Vivekananda Jayanthi celebrations in more than 67 schools. Each school was provided with eight scripts that students could use to enact a small skit that highlighted Vivekananda's teachings including attaining happiness through hard work and service.

Instead of having the volunteers give a talk about Swami Vivekananda, the volunteers engaged the children in performing skits so that they have fun and retain the essence of his teaching. Children enacted 3 to 5 of the skits on that day and sang songs as well. Drawing competition was also conducted in the schools where the children were encouraged to draw pictures depicting Vivekananda's life. Volunteers organized the celebration event in the schools from preparing the students to perform the skits to distributing prizes for the drawing competition.



# YFS in Media





Sinu Joseph was just another conscientious engineer who wanted to do her bit for the community and so volunteered as a language teacher at rural and government schools through Youth for Seva that runs projects in education, health and environment in several cities. But the 29-year-old discovered a full-time calling in social work when she stumbled upon the reason for many adolescent girls dropping out of school. "Once the girls start menstruating, attitudes to education change," she says. "It's not a problem without a solution. Dispelling the myths and misconceptions about periods, making available sanitary napkins and providing toilets was the key." Sinu has been doing all this through her programme Menstrual Hygiene Awareness that's reached out to 1,000 and more girl students so far.

What inspired this programme?

I was a part-time volunteer and used to teach spoken English at the government high school in Malleshwaram. There were 25 children out of which only three were girls. Suddenly, one of the girls was absent from school for a long time. Later, I learnt the reason for her absence was that she had attained puberty. I was also told by the teachers that it was common for girls who reach puberty to remain absent from school during menstruation and sometimes even drop out of school entirely. During my visits to the rural schools, I discovered that absenteeism during menstruation was even

encouraged by teachers. There was of myths surrounding this no biological process and the n common one was that it was an imp process and the menstruating pers too becomes impure. The thoug process was bizarre and it compelled n to create an awareness module, whic focussed not only in creating awarenes among these girls on the biological aspects of menstruation, but also helpe the young girls overcome the inhibition: and wrong beliefs associated with it.

What is the connection between menstruation and girls dropping out of schools?

You cannot expect girls to attend school when there are no toilets or usable toilets for them. Being reserved about women's personal hygiene and health is a cultural thing and so with nobody really talking about it, there are limited ways for the girls to help, educate or demand better facilities for themselves. I conducted a survey in Mittur village, Kolar, to map habits and concepts of womenfolk regarding menstruation. Girls and women were isolated from menstruation as they were considered impure. In Chamrajnagar, some

parents are so petrified of the possibility of their daughter becoming pregnant that they marry them at or 13. They consider the sea enough to even discuss menstruation. To think sanitary napkins, or the sea or buried dead would bring a curse



ಇದು 'ಪವರ್' ಸ್ಮೂಲ್ ಕಥೆ



ಕೋದಂಡರಾಮಸ್ವಾಮಿ ಪ್ರೌಢಶಾಲೆ



# THE HINDU

TODAY'S PAPER » NATIONAL » KARNATAKA

GULBARGA, February 21, 2012

## 'Doctors for Seva' aims to take healthcare to rural areas

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

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'Doctors for Seva', a project that provides health services to deprived sections of society in and around Bangalore, has decided to extend operations to Gulbarga district.

Sinu Joseph, who is involved in the project, which is run by the Youth for Seva Trust, told *The Hindu* here on Monday that the trust had decided to first concentrate on Afzalpur taluk where health parameters were low

In Bangalore, the trust, with the help of a network of doctors and hospitals, provides voluntary services to economically backward sections of society.

At present, there are 53 doctors and 27 hospitals who provide health services in Bangalore schools and slums.

Ms. Joseph said practical difficulties, living conditions in villages, and language and cultural barriers made it difficult for taluk hospitals and primary health centres to retain doctors.

Keeping this in mind, Youth for Seva had decided to enlist local doctors on a volunteer basis to work at the taluk hospitals and primary health centres, thus bringing healthcare to the doorsteps of people in rural areas.

We have now taken up the task of motivating doctors to volunteer their services on rotation," she said.

As per government records, Aland and Afzalpur taluks had no specialists in government hospitals.

"We want to persuade specialists to spare their services at least on rotation so that the people there have access to specialised treatment."

Doctors could decide how often they wanted to volunteer their services, she added.

Interested doctors can contact Ms. Joseph on 9342578862.

Youth can bring a change

YUVA

# Counselling is her mission

Balancing her professional and family life along with her social work, Vyjayanthi stands as a perfect example of the current generation of women.

CHITRA PILLAI

I have seen many who have excelled in one or the other field but rare are those who are able to balance many and emerge as a winner. Vyjayanthi is one such person who has equally managed her life and work to convert her dreams into reality. Having worked in bank for 25 years, the entry into social work for her was out of mere interest in serving and helping others.

Conducting free counselling camps and awareness camps at schools and colleges, she has now become one of the most prominent and active personalities in the field. Managing both her profession as a coordinator on professional consultancy and social work, she has rightly put forward the motto, "Nothing is impossible with sheer determination." Her pure devotion is seen in her taking two days off from work to serve others.

I always wanted to serve and help people, especially women and senior citizens. To see a smile on their faces means a lot and happily I am blessed to have got such an opportunity to help them," said Vyjayanthi, who started her first steps in the field in 1999 by actively participating in the camps and initiatives organised by an NGO, Youth Seva in Bangalore.

Learning Kannada on her own to have free interaction with the people, she tries to devote maximum to the needy. Arranging for awareness talks on nutrition and menstrual hygiene, empowering the children and women become one of her major initiatives. After conducting special classes in counselling, she recently offers her service free of cost at government schools in the city. Nagarvanahalli Government School, located at Basaveshwarnagar, is one such school where she is successfully running this

## Her service her prayer

Having lost her parents at a young age of 11, she herself realises the difficulties faced by a lone girl at different stages in a life. For her, service is like a prayer to God. Giving equal time to her supportive family, which includes husband and son, she believes that everyone should come forward to help others.

initiative once a week for high school children.

"Most of the young girls from rural and poor families face lot of mental trauma due to various problems like physical abuse, family problems, etc. Counselling helps them in realising that there is someone, who is there to hear our problems and thereby reduce their burden. Even in case of menstrual hygiene, girls rarely even speak about it. Through talks, I try to reach out to them by going down to their level so that they become comfortable in speaking up their emotion in front of us," she added.

Having lost her parents at a young age of 11, she herself realises the difficulties faced by a lone girl at different stages in a life. For her service is like a prayer to God. Giving equal time to her supportive family, which includes husband and son, she believes that everyone should come forward to help others. "Taking one day or minimum two hours from your busy schedule to serve others is actually nothing. If you can bring a smile to at least one person, that itself means a lot. Such smiles and nods are always the memorable moments of my life," said Vyjayanthi, who also has sheer interest in music and has even trained a group of visually impaired girls for free in singing Sanskrit shlokas.

the maximum  
on their face



BILEKAHALLI TO BE THE MODEL AREA

Green commandos steer Bilekahalli towards waste management

Volunteers of Youth for Seva are helping residents of Bilekahalli understand waste management and implement it.

By Deepthi M S

23 Jan 2012, Citizen Matters

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"Have you ever tracked down and located your garbage?" questioned Akshay Yadav, coordinator, Green Commandos of Youth For Seva Organisation (YFS) to a group of residents. The question left the residents wondering.

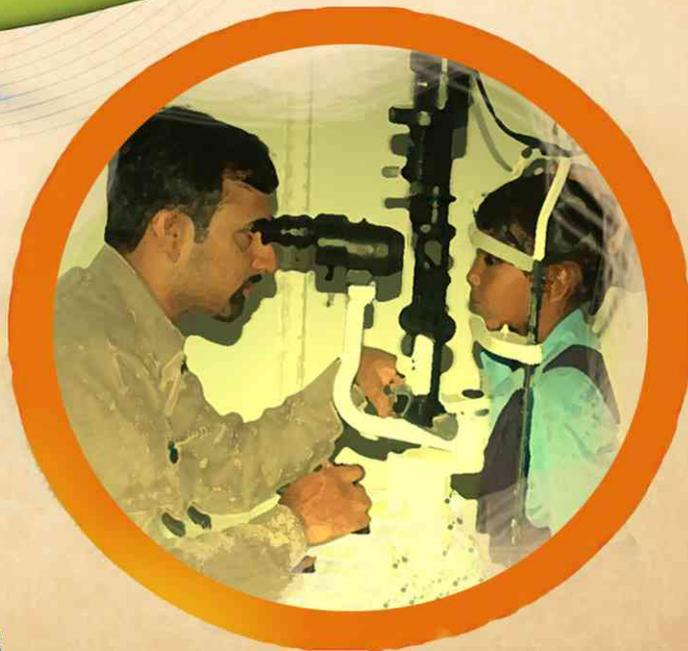
An Awareness presentation for Waste Management was held by YFS, at Raja Helix Apartments, Bilekahalli on Saturday, 14 January.



The poster outside the apartment. Pic: Deepthi M S

The presentation was on the importance of segregation of waste at source. Yadav explained that more than half





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