

**REHABILITATION MEASURES FOR STREET CHILDREN  
BY THE NGOs IN TAMILNADU.**

**BY**

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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE AVINASHILINGAM INSTITUTE FOR HOME SCIENCE  
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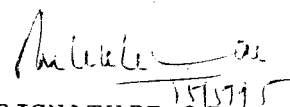
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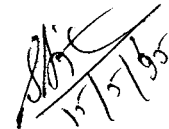
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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## INTRODUCTION

## SONG ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

"Here I am, One small voice  
Here I am, One young soul  
Let me join your world, enjoy your world and  
Take it as my own,  
I need your love.  
Here we are, take a look at us  
Here we are, can you see us at all?  
All alone and unsure, Can you feel our fears?  
Let us share them all with you.

### REFRAIN:

Don't take away my time to be a child  
Let me breathe the air with you.  
Give me room to be and space to see  
Lend me a name, a voice to sing my dreams  
Tell me, can I share your world?  
Share the world with me  
I am one young dream  
I need your love".

REFERENCE: First Regional Conference on  
Street Children in Asia, Manila, 1989.

## INTRODUCTION

Despite the adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child by the United Nations as early as in 1959, and the subsequent child welfare measures put forth specially by the developing countries, children face a multitude of hardships in their development and growth - Ministry of Social Welfare (1988) and Indian Council for Child Welfare - ICCW, (1992).

The phenomenon of Street Children has emerged as one of the serious and pressing problems of the Indian cities today. The causes for this disturbing development lie deep-rooted in our nation's economic inconsistencies and trends towards urbanisation (Panicker, 1988 and Parmar and Solanki, 1993).

The children on the streets are there not as a choice, but due to adult irresponsibility. When children are abused, maltreated, neglected and abandoned in many different ways, they venture onto the streets. The plight of street and working children in short, reflects the societal ills, in particular, poverty, family break-up, social conflicts and exploitation. They struggle for survival with a hope to become respectable citizens of the country. Street children thus represent one of the most exploited and rapidly growing minorities and one of our most poignant social challenges (Tacon, 1989).

Children left uncared for on the streets at the age of ten, if still are there at eighteen, become street youth, representing an embittered generation. To tackle this growing menace, co-ordinated efforts are very much required on the part of the Government, voluntary organisations and the community-Arimpoor (1992) and National Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development (NIPCCD, 1992). While the general public tends to view street children with disregard, fear and rejection, those who work directly with these youngsters see them as admirable survivors, potential entrepreneurs and decent citizens,

Any programme aiming at concrete amelioration will have to take stock of the reality that street children have a strong sense of independence. The facts are clearly in favour of community-based programmes to deal with the growing problems of street and working children (UNICEF, 1988 and Rane and Shroff, 1994).

The Government of Tamil Nadu thought it fit to address the problem of street children in the year 1989 itself. The first step was to provide them with shelters for sleep and safety. The idea behind this was to reduce the abuse and exploitation of street children by anti-social elements. The task of organising these groups of street children was found to be achievable only with the involvement of the Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

The Government of Tamil Nadu had earmarked Rs.2 lakhs for the starting of five night shelters in the City of Madras and recognized five NGOs to maintain the shelters and also provide useful skill training to the children reporting to them. The number of beneficiaries was fixed to be 50 per NGO.

The Government has also recommended the requests of the NGOs to the Municipal authorities for making available to them the unused noon meal centres for housing the night shelters. The State Government routes the programme for the development of street children through the Directorate of Social Defence.

It is a happy augury that the NGOs have positively responded to the Government initiative to play a vital role in mitigating the problems of street children. The NGOs have evolved new methodologies of intervention for street children, based on concrete experience over the last several years, keeping in mind the life style, psychological orientation and readiness of street children to work out solutions to their problems (ICCW, 1992).

While there is an increasing realisation of the need to rehabilitate street children, it is imperative to examine as to how far have the institutional efforts borne fruits. With this broad objective in view, this study has been undertaken.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Understand the organisational set-up and functioning of the NGOs working with street children;
2. Examine the rehabilitation measures extended for street children by the NGOs and
3. Study the impact of the rehabilitation measures on the street children.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

## II REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature pertaining to this study have been reviewed under the following headings:

- A. Policies and Programmes for Child Welfare in India
- B. The Profile of Street Children
- C. Problems of Street Children and
- D. Rehabilitation of Street Children.

### A. POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES FOR CHILD WELFARE IN INDIA:

The Declaration of the Rights of the Child was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1959. The excerpts from the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child are summed up thus:

ARTICLE 6: 1. State parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life and shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.

ARTICLE 13: The child shall have the right to freedom of expression.

ARTICLE 20: 1. A child who is temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own interest cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the state.

2. State parties shall in accordance with their national laws ensure alternative care for such a child.

ARTICLE 27: State parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development,

ARTICLE 31: State parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, play and recreation,

ARTICLE 32: State parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse, torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts (UNICEF, 1990),

The Convention on the Rights of the Child entered into force as an international law in 1990, and expresses the following:

Survival Rights: which include the rights to adequate living standards, and access to health services;

Development Rights: which include education, access to information, play and leisure, cultural activities, and the rights to freedom of thought, conscience and religion;

Protection Rights: which embrace all the above, and also cover all forms of exploitation and cruelty, arbitrary separation from family and abuses in the criminal justice system and

Participation Rights: which recognize children's right to express their opinion and have a say in matters affecting their own lives (Pinto, 1992).

India is one of the few countries in the world having a clear cut policy for the welfare of children, The preamble

of the National Policy for Children, 1974 describes children as a "supremely important asset". It enjoins on the state the policy to provide adequate services to children, both before and after birth and throughout their period of growth, to ensure their full physical, mental and social development (Sachdeva, 1993 and Rane and Shroff, 1994).

The various provisions in the National Policy on Children refer to the health and nutrition of children and mothers, nutrition education of mothers, free and compulsory education of children upto the age of 14 years and recreation, cultural and scientific activities, It also refers to treatment, education and rehabilitation of physically handicapped, emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded children and special assistance to children belonging to weaker sections in the urban and rural areas and provision of facilities to the delinquent, neglected and exploited children to enable them become useful citizens,

The National Policy on Education (1986) also stresses a holistic approach to early childhood care and education, The nation's new 20-point programme embodies the concern for the child in its several action programmes oriented to benefit disadvantaged children (Rajendran, 1988 and Sachdeva, 1993).

The Government has been implementing general programmes for the development of children as well as providing special grants-in-aid for children in especially difficult circumstances,

The general programmes are Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), Special Nutrition Programme (SNP), Universal Immunisation Programmes (UIP), Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE), Operation Black Board (OBB), Non-Formal Education Programme (NFE) and other allied programmes. Special grants-in-aids for institutional and non-institutional services with matching support from state governments are provided by the Ministry of Social Welfare Government of India. The programme on Urban Basic Services for the poor (UBSP) launched in 1990 suggested convergence of social services by including assistance to mentally retarded and handicapped children, rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents, special programmes for street children, and rehabilitation of other disadvantaged sections of the society (Anand, 1993).

The government of Tamil Nadu has recently launched a 15-point programme for child welfare with emphasis on various welfare and developmental activities (Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of Tamil Nadu, 1994).

#### B. PROFILE OF STREET CHILDREN:

Street Children are recognized by different terminologies in different countries. They are "homeless" or 'runaways' in the U.S.A.; 'Parkingos' in Kenya; 'Pogey-boys' in Phillipines; 'pivets' in Brazil; 'gamines' in Bogota; 'young rascals' or 'pre-rescals' in Papua New Guinea; and 'street children' in India. 'Vagrant', 'delinquent', 'hooligan' are more unkind words to describe him or her, while the more humane call them 'destitute', 'abandoned' or a 'child worker' (Rane, 1990).

The term 'street children' is applied to those children who are engaged in multifarious activities on the streets of big towns and cities in almost all the third world countries. These are children of impoverished families who are eking out an existence on the bare threshold of subsistence (Chaudhry, 1994 and Pallana and Simab, 1994).

As Pinto (1993) describes, street children are those for whom the streets, more than their family has become their real home, a situation in which there is no protection, supervision or direction from responsible adults,

UNICEF (1988) defines 'street children' as those who live or work on streets of urban areas without reference to the time they spend there or to the reasons for being there. There are three categories of street children based on their relation with their families:

(i) children with occasional family contact, i.e., working children who spend all their days and some of their nights on the streets or in public places;

(ii) children with continuous family contact, i.e., children living with their parents on public pavements in urban areas, and

(iii) children without family contact, i.e., abandoned and neglected children including, orphans, runaways, refugees, displaced persons or those lost in the transit while travelling with their parents,

Pushed by rural poverty, concomitant with population increase and landlessness, the families and their children migrate to cities and find their way into squatter settlements, Children who run away from their home are also classified thus:

- i) Children who run away from unpleasant or traumatic home environment and
- ii) Children who run away to taste the exciting experiences of the glamourised city life (Nabh, 1993, Iyer, 1994 and Rane and Shroff, 1994),

The breakdown of the family due to death or divorce or desertion is the major cause for children to be on the streets, Exclusion from school, extreme poverty, inadequate housing, socially disadvantaged families, alcoholic and violent parents and political violence are other direct or indirect causes for children to seek refuge on the streets (International Child Health, 1994),

The factors that have led to this phenomenon in three major cities of India, as identified through a study conducted by the Institute of Psychological and Educational Research (IPER, 1991) are as follows;

- Delhi : Poverty (46%)
- Other reasons including death of parents  
(18%)
- Dysfunction or abuse (18.5%)
- Natural calamities (5%)

Bombay : Lack of employment (32.5%)

Family dysfunction (24.2%)

Death in the family (17.3%)

Madras : Poverty (83.9%)

Employment opportunities in the city (9%)

Family disruption due to death of parents  
(3.8%)

Whatever may be the category, or the cause of the phenomenon, the common characteristics of street children as Rahman (1994) points out are as follows:

- a) they come from extremely poor families;
- b) they are with or without one or both the parents  
and
- c) they have to work for their own survival and / or  
to support their families in their struggle for  
subsistence.

Norton as quoted by Iyer (1994) outlines the features of the street child thus:

A male street child -

- a) belongs to the 11-15 age group
- b) is marginally employed in a shop or hotel
- c) is underpaid and overworked
- d) gets only one hour of rest for fourteen hours of work
- e) suffers from inferiority complex
- f) is constantly exposed to dirt and smoke
- g) lacks toilet and bathing facilities
- h) is harassed by police and municipal workers
- i) has a loving relationship with siblings and
- j) occasionally fights with other street children,

A girl street child -

- a) has attained puberty but has no privacy
- b) has no toilet facilities
- c) uses public taps or bathes in rivers
- d) works for 4-9 hours a day
- e) earns about Rs,100/- per month but cannot save it
- f) is undernourished
- g) does not have adequate clothing
- h) sleeps huddled with the opposite sex
- i) is easily led into prostitution and,
- j) has no security,

The profile of the street children is detailed hereunder:

**Sex:-** The number of boys is almost twice that of girls. It is generally observed that there are fewer girls than boys since girls are generally more protected by their families and girls usually work as domestic helpers within private households. Further, girls who are lured or trafficked into prostitution are usually housed in brothels (Childhope, 1990). However, significantly, sex distribution is almost even in the city of Calcutta, where boys are only 6% higher than girls (IPER, 1991).

**Age:-** Street children are usually in the formative years of life, in the age group of 11-15 years, followed by the age group of 6-10 years. In Calcutta and Hyderabad, there are more children in the age group of 6-10 years, while in Bombay and Bangalore the 11-15 age group figures high (40% and 80% respectively) (Panicker, 1992).

**Religion:-** Out of every ten street children, eight are found to be Hindus. Only the cities of Madras and Bangalore have street children from Christian communities, while children belonging to Muslim community are in substantial numbers

in Bombay, Calcutta and Kanpur. Among Hindus, almost half belong to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes (IPER, 1991).

**Family Background:-** Studies in Delhi, Bombay and Kanpur reported that over three-fourths of them stay with their families. In Madras, more than 90% of them are living with their parents, who are perhaps pavement dwellers. A small percentage of street children (always boys) lived alone. Children without their families often got attached to an adult or a peer's family.

The family size of the majority of street children is very large. The socio-economic condition of these families is very poor. The earnings of the children greatly supplement their family income besides their own survival (IPER, 1991).

**Employment Status:-** With the barest rudiments of education, these children have to work at the humblest level. They can be found working in the informal sectors without much training or capital investment - as coolies, hotel workers, cycle rickshaw pullers, rag pickers, automobile cleaners, helpers in small industries, vendors such as flower sellers, construction workers etc. (IPER, 1991, Arimpoor, 1992 and Bose, 1992). The world's oldest profession, prostitution also claims 0.3 per cent of these unfortunate children. Most of the street children work for a long period of time, 10 to 13 hours a day. A few are occasionally engaged in begging.

## C. PROBLEMS OF STREET CHILDREN:

### **Deprivation of their rights;**

The right of education, recreation and leisure, the right to a healthy life, the right to a standard of living adequate to ensure proper development and growth and the right to protection from exploitation and sexual abuse are rights which the street children have never heard. They are caught up in two vicious cycles: poverty and deprivation.

Poverty denies them the opportunity of acquiring education. The lack of adequate education drastically limits their earning power and access to basic needs such as housing and medical care (Arimpoor, 1992).

The IPER study (1991) reveals that 39.3 per cent of working street children are paid inadequately and more than one-third complained of over work. Some also reported of physical abuse by their employers.

Abandoned by their families, some 100 million children subsist only by back breaking work or turn to petty crime, prostitution or begging (UNICEF World Report on Children, 1990). Over 50 million children live under unsafe and unhealthy conditions and are deprived of schooling; some 3.5 million children die every year, of disability. Some 155 million children under 5 in the developing countries live in absolute poverty. Millions including many in the richer societies are maltreated or neglected or sexually exploited or become victims of drug abuse (Jesu, 1988).

The street obliterates childhood. They are caught up in the trauma of adult life prematurely. Their unkempt appearance deprives them of social acceptance and lowers their self-esteem. They are humiliated and rejected and some of them react by delinquency. Sooner or later this leads them to a remand home where they are deprived of their liberty (Arimpoor, 1992).

#### **Living Conditions:**

More than half of the street children live under the open sky and the rest spend most part of the day on the street, but sleep under some kind of covered shelter at night (D' Lima and Gosalia, 1992).

#### **Health Problems:**

Street children are generally malnourished and anaemic, many of them are physically stunted. An IPER study on street and working children shows that 92-93 percent of them suffer from both protein and vitamin deficiency. The age-height ratio is unsatisfactory in 72 per cent of these children (Mitra, 1993).

Street scavengers are prone to skin diseases and cuts; baggage boys to chest pain, muscular and skeletal pain. Street vendors and hawkers run a constant risk of exposure to trauma from vehicular accidents (Filguerias, 1992)

Most of the street children are exposed to dirt, smoke and other environmental hazards. The unhealthy and

insanitary conditions of their general environment are certainly not conducive to healthy living, with pitifully inadequate night shelter and improper bath or toilet facilities (Arimpoor, 1992 and Rastogi, 1993).

It is a matter of concern that many of them suffer from sexually transmitted diseases, and AIDS because of their recruitment into the sex trade. Examination on 1000 children rescued by an NGO from 50 brothels in one Asian city showed that 20 percent were HIV positive and 82 percent were carrying STD . They are also exposed to substance abuse, which results in physical and mental deterioration (Childhope, 1990).

#### **Psychological Problems:**

Lack of parental affection may lead to serious emotional conflicts in these children. They develop a deep sense of insecurity, which often results in uncontrolled aggressiveness and overt rebellion directed against the social systems (International Child Health, 1994).

All street children are prone to street fights, and bullying from bigger youth, harassment from extortionists and policemen, suspicion and arrest for petty crimes and abuse and torture from misguided authorities. Street children are subject to adult exploitation, including by their parents who force them to work (Rane, 1990).

#### D. REHABILITATION OF STREET CHILDREN :

With the problem of street children reaching menacing proportions, rehabilitation of these children has become the onerous duty of the State and its agencies. It is of utmost importance that these children be made to internalise the need for leading an organised life (Shweb, 1993 and Sharma, 1994).

With thousands of children taking to the streets, solutions can never be those of an earlier era when custodial care and formal education were the sole remedies. The need to respect their inner strengths, abilities, self-image as self-dependent young persons, their initiative, their group as a basis for social support and nurture, are to be taken into account as starting points for rehabilitation measures. The programmes have to be based on the needs of these children, rather than on a pre-conceived and stereo-typed notion of the care of children. To evolve an appropriate policy framework for the protection, care and development of neglected children it is vital to identify their need for nutrition, supplementation, emotional security, skill training and employment opportunities (Mishra, 1989, Anand, 1993, NIPCCD, 1993 and Desai, 1994).

The Central and State Governments, the municipal corporations and NGOs have a very specific role to play and to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life

of these children, The Government does not directly execute all welfare schemes, programmes and projects, It relies substantially on the support of voluntary organisations which translate the welfare schemes into action with the help of their own resource net work (Panicker, 1992 and Parmar and Solanki, 1993) .

Social work intervention for street children has to be planned at two levels.

. Children already living on the streets have to be helped so that they have adequate access to the basic services considered necessary for their healthy growth and development.

. The aspect of prevention has to be emphasised. Families which are economically and socially vulnerable tend to aggravate the problem. Assistance must be provided to "at risk" families which are likely to fall apart, consequently leading to destitution among children ( Rane and Shroff, 1994) ,

Current efforts in helping street children fall under three broad types of programmes or services, which were evolved in response to an analysis of the three major categories of street children and their specific needs and circumstances,

**Community - based programmes:** This supports children who maintain regular contacts with their families, and are preventive in approach. By providing opportunities and skill for self-employment or adequate employment to the

heads of the family and ensuring the delivery of basic services such as health, education and shelter, the structure of a normal life is preserved, Community - based programmes may be a partnership or joint effort of local communities, NGOs and city Governments,

**Centre - based programmes:** These provide care for totally abandoned or orphaned children, temporary shelter and other supportive and rehabilitative services, designed primarily for children with severed family ties, The centre's social worker assists the children to either re-establish contact with their families or arrange foster families,

**Street - based programmes:** These reach out to children right on the streets where they live and work, particularly children who have irregular contacts with their families, Through these programmes, the negative impact of street life are softened, through activities that allow the children's talents and interests to come to the fore,

These various programme categories include support of street children and their families through non-formal and formal education, organisations of parents and children, health services, counselling, vocational and other skill training, value clarification, para-legal training, credit/loan assistance to parents and foster home care (Childhope, 1989). As Panicker and Nangia (1992) point out, the most effective and relevant way the city administration could intervene, is by identifying existing NGOs. Three innovative models emerged out of the strategies evolved

by NGOs working for street children in major cities:

1. Community - based contact programmes
2. Night shelter / day and night shelter and
3. Group home

**Community - based programme:** This provides professional social work intervention, creates an awareness among them about their life and work situation and stimulates in them motivation to help themselves and enables them have an access to various basic services like education, health care, vocational training, employment, recreation and counselling for their growth and development and thereby improve their self-image and self-esteem.

**Night shelter/ Day and night shelter:** Studies on street children in major cities of India, indicated that children themselves have prioritised their prime need as night shelter and food. The night shelter becomes an extension programme of the contact centre run by the NGOs. Children are gradually introduced to structured and disciplined life through constructive group living experiences,

**Group Home:** Residential care is particularly useful in the case of very young street children without family support. A residential facility with the provision of after care services is essential for their rehabilitation and integration into society,

However, voluntary organisations working with street children all over the country face several difficulties. The major problems include lack of adequate funds, non-availability of suitable accommodation and lack of committed personnel. Further lack of understanding and negative attitude to the problems of street children, on the part of all those who influence their life, i.e. the police, judiciary, government officials and the public at large, hampers the work of the agencies to a great extent, (Rane and Shroff, 1994).

## METHODOLOGY

### III METHODOLOGY

The Methodology adopted for the study on "Rehabilitation Measures for street children by the NGOs in Tamil Nadu" is discussed under the following headings.

- A. Selection of the Locale for the Study;
- B. Selection of the Sample;
- C. Selection of the Methods and Tools;
- D. Collection and processing of the Data.

#### A. SELECTION OF THE LOCALE FOR THE STUDY:

Information obtained through media and informal interaction with one or two known organisations revealed that rehabilitation measures are provided for street children by the NGOs in five major cities of Tamil Nadu, namely, Madras, Madurai, Coimbatore, Trichy and Salem, where this phenomenon is widespread. While Madras city has six NGOs, the other cities have only one organisation each, run mainly as branches of the main organisation at Madras city, namely, Don Bosco Anbu Illam.

The Madras city had a consortium of organisations namely, the Madras NGO Forum for Street and Working Children, started in 1990, by the National NGO Forum for Street and Working Children and Tamil Nadu State Social Welfare Board. The following organisations are the affiliated members to this consortium.

- (i) Don Bosco Anbu Illam : Centre for Street Children
- (ii) Asian Youth Centre : Youth animator organisation
- (iii) Indian Council for Child Welfare : Child Development Agency
- (iv) Nesakkaram : Centre for street children.

- (v) Asha Nivas : Development agency
- (vi) Mariyalaya : Centre for street girls. (Mariyalaya is a NGO functioning in coordination with the other organisations. It is not affiliated to the consortium).

Out of the above six organisations, only five, excluding " Asha Nivas ", were selected for the study as the latter did not give permission for research.

Three of the five organisations under study namely Asian Youth Centre, Nesakkaram and Don Bosco Anbu Illam work exclusively with street boys, while Indian Council for Child Welfare (ICCW) works with both street boys and girls. On the otherhand, Mariyalaya's efforts are directed towards street girls alone.

#### B. SELECTION OF THE SAMPLE:

A sample is a portion selected from the population or universe (Wilkinson and Bhandarkar, 1986).

For a detailed study on the organisations, the heads of the five organisation were contacted.

To assess the impact of the rehabilitation measures undertaken, twenty beneficiaries in the age group of 11-17 years were randomly selected from each of the five organisations. The total sample thus comprised hundred children (75 boys and 25 girls) benefitting from the rehabilitation measures offered by the different NGOs under study.

### C. SELECTION OF THE METHOD AND TOOLS:

Since the study aimed at an indepth analysis of the rehabilitation measures for street children, Case Study method was adopted for data collection from the heads of the NGOs,

According to Kothari (1995), Case Study is a popular form of qualitative analysis involving a careful and complete observation of a social unit,

A detailed schedule was prepared for gathering information from the heads of the organisations, The schedule called for general information about the organisation, its profile, staff particulars, programmes and rehabilitation measures undertaken, problems faced by the NGOs and their future perspectives,

An interview schedule was prepared for data collection from the beneficiaries, According to Gupta (1993), an interview schedule refers to a set of statements or questions to be answered by the respondents in a face to face situation and filled in by the interviewer himself,

The interview schedule developed for the beneficiaries called for information on the background of the beneficiaries and the specific rehabilitation measures provided in terms of shelter, food, clothing, education and vocational training and the benefits accruing,

### D. COLLECTION AND PROCESSING OF THE DATA:

The heads of organisations were approached with an introduction letter from the University where the researcher

pursued her Master's Degree Course, explaining the purpose of the research.

The data from the beneficiaries was collected after creating a good rapport with them,

The data thus collected was analysed, processed and the results were tabulated, Chapter IV presents the results of the study,

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### IV RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Rehabilitation Measures for Street Children in Madras undertaken by the five organisations under study are presented and discussed as follows:

- A. General Details about the Organisations
- B. Management Information
- C. Rehabilitation Measures undertaken by the NGOs
- D. Problems faced by the NGOs
- E. Future Plans and
- F. Impact of the Rehabilitation Measures on the Beneficiaries,

##### A GENERAL DETAILS ABOUT THE ORGANISATIONS:

###### 1. Year of initiation:

Table I shows the year of initiation of the organisations and the year of starting the programmes specifically for street children.

TABLE I  
YEAR OF INITIATION

S.No.	Organisations	Year of Initiation	Year of Initiating programmes for street children
1.	Indian Council for Child Welfare (ICCW), T.N,	1953	1990
2.	Asian Youth Centre (AYC)	1984	1986
3.	Don Bosco Anbu Illam	1985	1985
4.	Nesakkaram	1988	1988
5.	Mariyalaya	1990	1990

Although the Indian Council for Child Welfare has been in existence from 1953, the programmes for street children were started only in 1990. All the organisations under study have been working with street children from mid-1980's.

Don Bosco Anbu Illam was the first organisation in Madras City to work with street and working children, providing them shelter home. Mariyalaya is the first organisation in Madras working exclusively with street girls.

## 2. Objectives:

Table II gives the objectives of the selected organisations, as given by the interviewees.

TABLE II  
OBJECTIVES OF THE ORGANISATIONS

ICCW	Asian Youth Centre	Dan Bosco Anbu Illam	Nesakkarani	Mariyalaya
To ensure for children their basic human rights to survival, physical and social development and opportunities to grow to their full potential.	To work towards the creation of a new society based on equality, freedom and justice.	To make the street children feel wanted and loved; prevent them from being exploited.	To realise social transformation and promote people's participation,	To help the street girls to grow into respectable and responsible women.
To work for the protection of children against neglect, abuse and exploitation.	To help the street child/youth become self-reliant, respectable and resourceful,	To provide shelter for the children under especially difficult circumstances,	To bring to public awareness of the problems of street children.	
To undertake activities for the betterment of families and communities which will ultimately enhance the quality of life for children.	To offer openings for formal and non-formal education. To reunite them with their family; help them start their own homes,	To find alternative work opportunities. To rehabilitate children who need special care and guidance for a longer period.		

All the organisations are working towards the creation of a better society by providing infrastructural services, education and welfare activities that ensure the protection of the rights of the child. Training in vocational skills was also found to be a major goal of the organisations under study. Thus the objectives have both short term and long term goals.

### 3. Programmes undertaken by the organisations:

Table III gives the programmes undertaken by the organisations under study.

TABLE III  
PROGRAMMES UNDERTAKEN BY THE ORGANISATIONS

Organisations	General Programmes	Programmes for street children
Indian Council for Child Welfare (ICCW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Creche for children of working women</li> <li>b) Guidance and counselling service for handicapped children</li> <li>c) Usilampatti project for women and children</li> <li>d) Child Labour Relief Programme,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Night shelter</li> <li>b) Non formal education and vocational training.</li> </ul>
Asian Youth Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Young hotel workers project</li> <li>b) Girl children in slums</li> <li>c) Child-labour welfare schemes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Shelter home for street and working children</li> <li>b) Non-Formal education</li> <li>c) Vocational guidance</li> <li>d) Skill development</li> <li>e) Rag pickers' development schemes</li> </ul>
Don Bosco Anbu Illam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Elimination of child labour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Shelter homes</li> <li>b) Evening schools, non formal education</li> <li>c) Rag pickers' rehabilitation</li> <li>d) Clean and Green Madras city project</li> <li>e) Marriage of rehabilitated youth</li> </ul>
Nesakkarama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Programme for working children</li> <li>b) Literary mission</li> <li>c) Office for run away children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Shelter home</li> <li>b) Formal education</li> <li>c) Vocational training and job opportunities</li> <li>d) Guidance and Counselling</li> <li>e) Family re-union</li> </ul>
Mariyaya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Referral services for deserted and destitute women after counselling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Shelter home</li> <li>b) Education-formal and non formal education</li> <li>c) Medical care</li> <li>d) Awareness creation</li> <li>e) Sports and games</li> <li>f) Enhancement of cultural talents</li> </ul>

Ensuring safety through providing night shelter, non-formal education, and vocational skill training were the activities found in common. Assistance in settling down to normal family life specially through counselling and guidance was the special activity reported by Don Bosco Anbu Illam and Nesakkaram,

#### B, MANAGEMENT INFORMATION :

##### 1, Administrative set-up of the organisations:

The Administrative set-up of all the organisations is more or less uniform with a Director or Co-ordinator, Project Officers to take care of the various programmes and secretarial staff. All the organisations have street educators working at the grass-root level with the street children,

The number of staff varies from 22 to 51. In Mariyalaya, Don Bosco Anbu Illam and Nesakkaram the entire staff work for the welfare of street children. Indian Council for Child Welfare (ICCW) which is a national level organisation, has 65 staff in Madras City, out of which 10 personnel work in the project for street and working children. In Asian Youth Centre, nine out of the 22 staff work with street children,

##### 2, Financial details:

All the organisations raise their own funds from local sources. In addition, except Mariyalaya, all the other organisations are sponsored by either the central or state government or both. Asian Youth Centre and ICCW are being helped by International Organisations,

Table IV gives the details of linkages of the organisations, with national / international bodies, state / central government and other agencies for fiscal help and expertise,

TABLE IV

DETAILS OF LINKAGES

S.No	Organisations under study	International organisations	State/Central Government	Other Organisations
1	Indian Council for Child Welfare T.N	UNICEF	State Social Welfare Board, State Directorate of Social Defence	Madras NGO Forum for street and Working Children
2	Asian Youth Centre	UNICEF Child Relief and You (CRY)	Central and State Govt, Campaign for Fight against Child Labour (CFL)	Madras NGO Forum for street Working Children
3	Don Bosco Anbu Illam	UNICEF International Labour Organisation (ILO)	Ministry of Welfare, State Directorate of Social Defence	Madras NGO Forum for Street and Working Children
4	Nesakkaram	-	Central and State Govt. State Resource Centre (SRC) AIDs Department	Madras NGO Forum for Street and Working Children
5	Mariyalaya	-	-	Madras NGO Forum for Street and Working Children

There appears to be a sound linkage between the NGOs working for street children, Central and State Governments have been extending financial help and three out of the five organisations receive help from renowned international bodies such as United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Child Relief and You (CRY) and International Labour Organisation (ILO),

#### C, REHABILITATION MEASURES UNDERTAKEN BY THE NGOs

##### 1, Identification of the street children:

Children who are found to live or spend most of their time on the streets are collected by the personnel of the various organisations and brought to the centres, These children may or may not have family ties, Some of them come in contact with the organisations through their own family members, relatives or friends,

All the organisations have community education centres where non-formal education is imparted to Children under Especially Difficult Circumstances (CEDs), Once the contact is established, shelter is provided to children with no or weak family ties, and also to children whose parents have permitted them to stay at the centre,

##### 2, Coverage of street children:

Table V gives the details of children catered to by the NGOs in the shelter homes and contact centres and their distribution according to age and sex,

TABLE V

## DETAILS OF STREET CHILDREN IN THE SHELTER HOME AND CONTACT CENTRES

S.No.	Organisations	Number of children	Number of children age specific											
			Shelter home						Contact centres					
			6-10		11-15		16 & above		6-10		11-15		16 & above	
B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G			
		Boys	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	
		Girls											Total	
1.	Indian Council for Child Welfare	226	124	350	60	40	127	84	39	-	-	-	-	-
2.	Asian Youth Centre	475	-	475	20	-	30	-	25	-	140	-	160	-
3.	Don Bosco Anbu Illam	1000	-	1000	200	-	325	-	75	-	-	-	175	-
4.	Nesakkaram	500	-	500	110	-	160	-	30	-	40	-	90	-
5.	Mariyalaya	-	800	800	-	18	-	45	-	12	-	382	-	255
														88

The number of children benefitting from the rehabilitation measures from the NGOs varied from 350 to 1000, (75 to 600 in the shelter homes and 200 to 725 in the contact centres),

ICCW has 350 children in the shelter home but does not have any contact centres. It has issued identity cards to eighty of its permanent inmates,

Asian Youth Centre has 75 children in the shelter home and have contacts with 400 children. They do not provide identity cards,

Don Bosco Anbu Illam has 1000 children with provision for residential care for 600. They have cells set up in the Railway Stations and the city bus stand from where the children are collected. They do not provide identity cards,

Nesakkaram provides shelter home for runaways and orphans who have been living on the streets. The contact centre catersto 200 children.

Mariyalaya provides shelter home for 75 and has contacts with 725 street girls. Mariyalaya does not provide identity cards to these girls,

### 3. Specific rehabilitation measures:

The specific rehabilitation measures provided by the organisations are discussed hereunder:

#### a. Provision of shelter home:

The organisations provide for permanent shelter and/or night shelter and contact centres. Children staying in the shelter homes are provided with mattresses for sleep.

While Mariyalaya, Don Bosco Anbu Illam and ICCW provide permanent shelter, AYC provides only night shelter and Nesakkaram runs a contact centre for street and working children, ICCW runs five shelter homes - four for boys and one exclusively for girls,

Asian Youth Centre runs one night shelter home but covers street children at 6 contact points in South Madras, Don Bosco Anbu Illam runs three permanent homes and one model training rehabilitation centre, Nesakkaram acts as a contact centre for street children to receive rehabilitation measures,

Mariyalaya which is exclusively for street girls, runs only one shelter home, but has two contact centres in North Madras,

b, Provision of basic amenities:

The basic amenities provided by the organisations are given in Table VI,

TABLE VI  
BASIC AMENITIES PROVIDED FOR STREET CHILDREN

S, No.	Organisation	Food	Clothing
1,	Indian Council for Child Welfare, TN,	Free Meals are provided once a day,	Clothes are provided on an yearly basis,
2,	Asian Youth Centre	Snacks are given once a day,	Clothes are given only for special occasions like Human Rights Day
3,	Don Bosco Anbu Illam	As the children live there throughout the day, three meals a day are provided,	Clothes are provided regularly and for special occasions,
4,	Nesakkaram	Meals are provided only for children at the shelter home,	Clothes are given to contact centre street children on an yearly basis and also for special occasions, festivals, etc,
5,	Mariyalaya	Food is provided only to run away children and orphans,	Clothes are provided to all the inmates on an yearly basis and also for festivals,

For children residing at Mariyalaya food has to be provided either by parents / guardians. In the case of orphans and run aways, the organisation provides them three meals a day. On special occasions, all the inmates are provided with one meal sponsored by an outsider.

Don Bosco Anbu Illam also provides three meals a day to all its inmates. Asian Youth centre and ICCW provide snacks and one meal a day, respectively, while Nesakkaram provides only snacks on special occasions.

All the five organisations provide clothes on an yearly basis or as per requirements and also for special occasions.

All the five organisations have adequate bath and toilet facilities. Clean drinking water is also provided. Provision of proper ventilation and lighting was also noted.

c. Education:

The major objective of all the organisations has been stated to be education. Table VII shows the type of education provided.

TABLE VII  
PROVISION OF EDUCATION

S.No.	Organisations	Types of Education
1,	Indian Council for Child Welfare, TN,	a) Non Formal Education
2,	Asian Youth Centre	a) Free Schooling b) Non Formal Education
3,	Don Bosco Anbu Illam	a) Free Schooling b) Non Formal Education
4,	Nesakkaram	a) Non Formal Education
5,	Mariyalaya	a) Free schooling (Formal education) b) Non Formal Education c) Night schools

The education provided was mainly of non-formal type, in the community-education centres. Three NGOs facilitate formal education also. The Madras NGO Forum for Street and Working Children has published a set of reading materials based on a syllabus framed with the help of a group of educationists, artists and writers under the guidance of the State Resource Centre for Non-Formal Education. Primers such as "Arivu Thulir" "Arivu Malar" and "Arivu Kani" published by UNICEF and the Madras NGO Forum are used (Figure 1.1).

d. Vocational training and job opportunities:

All the five organisations provide vocational guidance and training to the street children in tailoring, two wheeler mechanism, auto driving, carpentry, screen printing, plumbing, horticulture, welding, soap making and embroidery.

# அறிவுத்துளிர்



சென்னை சாலையேர சிறார்களுக்கான  
தன்னார்வ நிறுவனங்களின் கூட்டமைப்பு  
சென்னை - 600 001.

மாநில பள்ளிசாராக் கல்விக் கருவூலம்  
(தமிழ்நாடு தொடர்கல்வி வாரியம்)  
அடையார், சென்னை - 600 020.

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# அறிவு மலர்

38(b)



சென்னை சாலைப்பேர சிறார்களுக்கான  
தன்னார்வ நிறுவனங்களின் கூட்டமைப்பு  
சென்னை - 600 001.

மாநில பள்ளிசாராக் கல்விக்கருவலம்  
(தமிழ்நாடு தொடக்கல்வி வாரியம்)  
அடையாடி, சென்னை - 600 020.

Sponsored by UNICEF

# அறிவுக் கவர்



சென்னை சாலையோர சிவசுந்தரன்  
தன்னாரின் நிறுவனங்களில் கிடைப்பது  
சென்னை - 600 020

மாநில பள்ளிசாலைத் தலைவர் கருவலம்  
(குமிழ்நாடு தொடர்புகளை கவனியுங்கள்)  
சென்னை - 600 020

Sponsored by UNICEF

பாடம் - 25

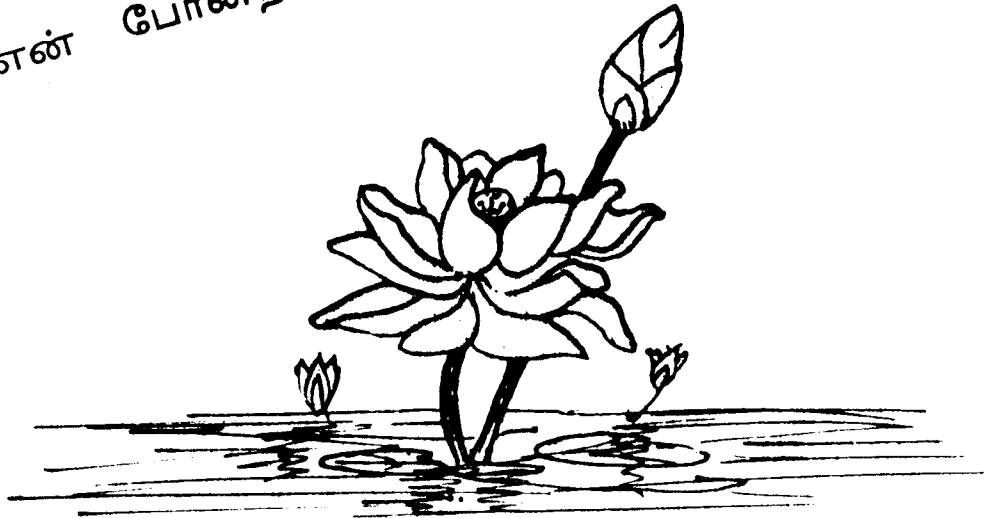
கல்வி



கல்வி மனிதனுக்கு அவசியம்  
 கல்விக்கு ஈடு எதுவும் இல்லை  
 கல்வி உங்களுக்கு நல்வழி காட்டும்  
 கல்வி உங்களுக்கு மதிப்பைத் தரும்  
 கல்விகற்றால் நீங்கள் உயரலாம்.



- என் பெயர் பாலாஜி.
- நான் சாலையோர சிறுவனாக இருந்தேன்.
- இன்று சென்னையில் உள்ள சமூக சேவை நிறுவனம் ஒன்றின் உதவியால் ஆட்டோ டிரைவராக உள்ளேன்.
- வாழ்க்கையில் முன்னேற கல்வி அவசியம்.
- என் போன்ற சிறுவர்களுக்கு இந்நூல் பயனுடையது



Depending on the field of training, the training period extends from one week to one year. Mariyalaya, Asian Youth Centre and Nesakkaram provide the trainees with stipend either from their own resources or through local sponsors. The NGOs also network and employ the rehabilitated children in their own organisations as helpers in the hostel, office boys, watchman, cook, electrician, street educators, contact persons etc.

Children from Don Bosco Anbu Illam are actively involved in the Clean and Green Madras city project in collaboration with the Corporation of Madras. Twenty boys from the same institution have been selected by the government to receive training under the Jawahar Rozghar Yojna (JRY).

Mariyalaya, ICCW and Nesakkaram encourage these children to save money. Normally the money is deposited with the coordinator. Savings is done through hundis and bank accounts.

e. Health and welfare activities:

All the organisations provide regular health check-ups, referral services, awareness camps, treatment of skin diseases, provision of medicines and financial aid for surgeries.

Don Bosco Anbu Illam with the assistance of T,T,K Foundation, Madras provides de-toxification of drug addict children and provides individual counselling and group therapy to the recovered drug addicts.

Recreation is the main activity through which these children are able to channelise their physical and mental energy. All the NGOs provide ample sources of recreation through movies, outings, dramatisation by the children etc. These children are also actively involved in the celebration of National days such as Independence day, Human Rights Day etc. The Madras NGO Forum for Street and Working children also conducts annual sports meet for these children.

f, Socio-psychological rehabilitation:

Interviewees from all the five NGOs stated that steps were taken to re-establish the children's contact with their families. In Asian Youth Centre, prior to providing institutional care, a social worker visits the family members to explore the possibility for the child to return home. Guidance and counselling are given to problematic children to help them overcome their traumatic experiences on the streets.

It was reported that rehabilitated children by and large do not leave the organisation before the age of eighteen, whereby they are both physically, mentally and emotionally stronger. However, except Mariyalaya, all the other organisations reported of some instances where children run away from the centre, but return to any of the six organisations, if not to the same. The reasons for these incidents were attributed to the maladjustment of the children to the rules and regulations.

g, Legal protection:

Except Asian Youth centre, all the other organisations stated that a few of their children had previous police records, In case of police detention, the concerned NGOs represent these children in the juvenile courts,

Since most of the street boys lived in or near the railway station, the most common offences were illegal cup collection and working as unauthorised porters, The other offences were petty thefts, gambling and street brawls,

The street girls have been caught for street fights, thefts, non payment of debts and prostitution, However, even after rehabilitation, a few of these children were reported to have continued to commit offences and got arrested under suspicion,

#### D, PROBLEMS FACED BY THE ORGANISATIONS:

The problems faced by the NGOs are presented in Table VIII,

TABLE VIII  
PROBLEMS FACED BY THE ORGANISATIONS

S.No,	Organisations	Problems faced
1,	Indian Council for Child Welfare, T.N,	a) Antagonism by the residents of the locality, b) Political disturbances, c) Harassment by the Police,
2,	Asian Youth Centre	a) Irregularity of children in attending training courses or non formal classes b) Paucity of funds,
3,	Don Bosco Anbu Illam	a) Difficulty in getting across the mental barriers of the children
4,	Nesakkaram	a) Children being disorganised and some psychologically battered, b) Antogonism by the residents of the area
5,	Mariyalaya	a) Non co-operation and inconsistency of girls and their parents b) Inadequacy of space to conduct programmes c) Paucity of funds,

The main hinderance faced by all the NGOs was found to be the non conformity of the children to the rules and regulations of the institutions,

Lack of monetary and infrastructural facilities was also reported by AYC and Mariyalaya, while ICCW and Nesakkaram reported of antagonism by the public (since the centres are located in residential areas) and harassment by the police,

#### E. FUTURE PLANS OF THE ORGANISATION:

The future plans of the Organisations are as given in Table IX,

TABLE IX  
FUTURE PLANS OF THE ORGANISATIONS

S.No,	Organisations	Future Projects / Plans
1,	Indian Council for Child Welfare	a) Horticulture projects-for the age group of 16 years and above, b) Income generating programmes for the parents of street children, c) Tailoring unit for street children,
2,	Asian Youth Centre	a) Create more awareness through campaigns b) Concentrating on alternative programmes,
3,	Don Bosco Anbu Illam	a) Boys Town- A home away from home for run aways, b) Self employment schemes c) Documentation and training centre, d) Housing scheme for married youth
4,	Nesakkaram	a) Promote people's participation b) Create a youth village c) Bring about social transformation d) Opening more centres for street and working children,
5.	Mariyalaya	a) Family income generating schemes b) Vocational training in book binding and catering,

The main goal of all the NGOs is to bring about social transformation and change in the attitude of the society towards the street and working children. Provision of more shelters and offering vocational training for the children are also the major future thrust areas,

Both Mariyalaya and ICCW have plans for providing income generating activities for the parents of the street and working children,

The future plans thus stated have long term perspectives and are directed towards minimising the problems of street children,

F, IMPACT OF THE REHABILITATION MEASURES ON THE BENEFICIARIES:

The 100 beneficiaries contacted i.e. the children rehabilitated, representing the five NGOs, threw light on the impact of the rehabilitation measures on the target group,

1, Profile of the beneficiaries:

a, Age and sex:

Table X gives the distribution of the sample according to their age and sex.

TABLE X  
AGE AND SEX WISE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE

S. No.	Age group (in years)	Percentage of children	
		Boys (n:75)	Girls (n:25)
1,	11 - 12	45.3	52
2,	13 - 14	24.0	28
3,	15 - 16	13.3	16
4,	17 - 18	17.3	4

A large majority of the children were found to be under 14 years in the case of both boys and girls.

b. Nativity:

Fifty-seven per cent boys and 88 per cent girls belonged to Madras city or its suburban areas; 39 per cent and 12 per cent boys and girls respectively, had migrated from other parts of Tamil Nadu. Four per cent boys were from other states too.

c. Whereabouts of the respondents before rehabilitation:

On enquiring, it was found that there was a considerable lapse of time between the period the children left their homes and their entry into the NGOs concerned. The lapse of time ranged from three months to more than four years,

Table XI gives the places of their stay prior to joining the centres,

TABLE X I  
PLACE OF STAY BEFORE REHABILITATION

S.No.	Place of stay	Percentage of children	
		Boys (n:75)	Girls (n:25)
1.	Railway station	32	-
2.	Place of work	15	8
3.	Pavements/ other public places	35	68
4.	Others	18	24

A large number of girls (64 per cent) had been living on the streets for four or more years. They were found to live on the pavements with their parents or family members,

Nineteen per cent of the boys and 24 per cent girls had lived with friends, neighbours or relatives, but spent most of their time on the streets,

Thirty-two per cent boys were found to have lived on the railway stations, while 15 per cent boys and 8 per cent girls had lived in their places of work,

Among the boys, 27 per cent had travelled to other cities or areas of Tamil Nadu and nine per cent to other states (mainly the cities or suburban areas of Bangalore, Hyderabad and Bombay).

d. Reasons for living on the streets:

The reasons stated by the respondents for living on the streets are as given in Table XII, and Fig. 1



TABLE XII  
REASONS FOR LIVING ON THE STREETS

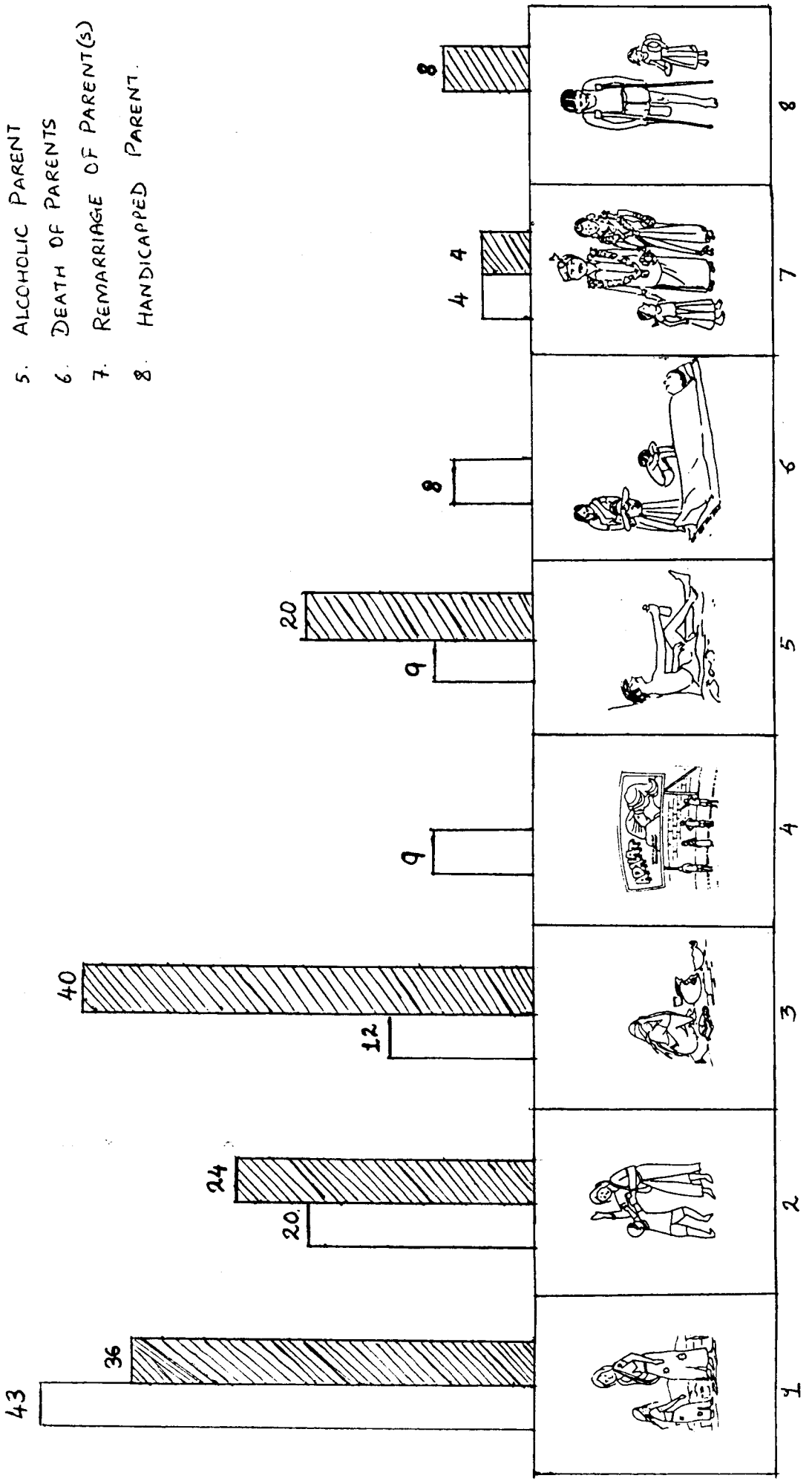
S. No.	Reasons	Percentage of children *	
		Boys (n:75)	Girls (n:25)
1.	Poverty	43	36
2.	Family problems	20	24
3.	Abandoned by the family	12	40
4.	Run-Away	9	-
5.	Alcoholic parent	9	20
6.	Death of parents	8	-
7.	Remarriage of parent(s)	4	4
8.	Handicapped parent	-	8

\* Multiple Response.

Forty-three per cent boys and 36 per cent girls stated poverty as the main reason followed by family problems for their apathy. Income wise, all the respondents belonged to economically weaker sections of the society, i.e., living below the poverty line.

- 1. POVERTY
- 2. FAMILY PROBLEMS
- 3. ABANDONED BY THE FAMILY
- 4. RUNAWAY
- 5. ALCOHOLIC PARENT
- 6. DEATH OF PARENTS
- 7. REMARRIAGE OF PARENT(S)
- 8. HANDICAPPED PARENT.

 BOYS  
 GIRLS



REASONS FOR LIVING ON THE STREETS

Fig. 1

Forty per cent girls and 12 per cent boys stated abandonment by their family as reasons. Thirty per cent of the children belonged to single parent families,

In the case of nine per cent boys, the factors that led them to run away from home and subsequently living on the streets were lack of interest in studies, adventurous spirit and lure of the city life,

Eight per cent of the boys lived on the streets due to death of both parents. Alcoholic father, family problems, remarriage of one or both parents were the other reasons stated,

e. Identification and entry into the Rehabilitation Centre:

While 53 per cent children had been identified and brought to the organisations by the staff of the NGOs concerned, 10 per cent had been left in the centre either by their family members or by relatives; 29 per cent had come to the rehabilitation centres with the help of their friends or neighbours and eight per cent had come on their own.

All the girls stated that they had joined the organisations of their own volition when approached by the staff of the NGOs concerned. The boys on the otherhand who were used to the free wheeling street life had to be persuaded by the street educators and 32 per cent boys had joined the centres after days' or months' of initial contacts with the personnel of the NGOs concerned.

With regard to the factors that had motivated them to join the centre, provision of food, clothing and shelter were the main reasons stated by 51 per cent of the respondents;

20 per cent had joined the centre for sheer survival. Desire for education and the urge to lead a decent life had inspired 42 per cent to join the centres, which stand testimony to the earnest efforts put forth by the NGOs,

f. Years of stay at the centre:

The number of years of stay or contact with the centres is presented in Table XIII.

TABLE XIII  
ASSOCIATION WITH THE NGOs AT THE CENTRE

S. No.	Number of years	Percentage of children	
		Boys (n:75)	Girls (n:25)
1.	Below 1	29	20
2.	1 - 2	23	28
3.	2 - 4	39	36
4.	4 and above	9	16

Twenty nine per cent boys and 20 per cent girls had been in the rehabilitation centre for nearly a year; 39 per cent boys and 36 per cent girls have been with the organisations for 2-4 years. The percentage of girls staying for four or more years was found to be higher (16 per cent) than that of boys.

g. Association with their families:

Table XIV shows the categories of children benefitting from the rehabilitation measures, classified in accordance with their family ties.

TABLE XIV  
CATEGORIES OF CHILDREN REHABILITATED

S.No.	Categories	Percentage of children	
		Boys (n:75)	Girls (n:25)
1.	Living with family (attends the centre)	52	88
2.	Living in the centre and has family contacts	17	-
3.	Living in the centre with no family contacts	31	12

The children fell under three broad categories based on their family contacts : children attending the day centre or staying in the night shelter, while continuing to live with their families (52 per cent boys and 88 per cent girls); Seventeen per cent of the boys lived in the centre but had contact with their family and the remaining children were living in the centre with no family ties at all (31 per cent boys and 12 per cent girls),

Only 74 children (52 boys and 22 girls) had contacts with their families. Table XV gives the details on family size with number of siblings.

The reasons given by the respondents for dropping out of school are presented in Table XVI.

TABLE XVI  
REASONS FOR DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL

S. No.	Reasons	Percentage of children	
		Boys (n:67)	Girls (n:14)
1.	Lack of interest in studies	28	21
2.	Family problems	21	36
3.	Poverty	18	29
4.	Run-aways	18	-
5.	Others	13	14
6.	Not stated	1	-

The major reasons for dropping out of school as stated by the boys were lack of interest in studies (28 per cent) and family problems (21 per cent). On the other hand, girls attributed their dropping out to family problems (36 per cent) and poverty (29 per cent),

i, History of violation of law:

A considerable proportion of the respondents, when on the streets faced harassment by the authorities of law (43 per cent boys and 20 per cent girls),

The reasons for police detention are given in Table XVII.

TABLE XVII  
REASONS FOR HARASSMENT

S.No.	Reasons	Percentage of children	
		Boys (n:32)	Girls (n:5)
1.	Under suspicion	44	20
2.	Cup-collection	19	-
3.	Street fights	13	80
4.	Gambling	9	-
5.	Stealing	6	-
6.	Others	9	-

The major reasons for harassment of boys was found to be suspicion (44 per cent) as against 20 per cent among girls. Eighty per cent of the girls admitted that street fights were the reasons for such instances.

Among boys, 19 per cent had history of detention by the railway police for illegal cup collection, working as unlicensed porters, drug peddling or begging, Gambling and petty fights were reported by 16 per cent boys.

Twenty per cent of the boys had been taken to juvenile courts and eight per cent had been institutionalised before rehabilitation.

## j. Employment pattern:

Table XVIII gives the categories of employment of the 56 boys and 10 girls who had been employed prior to rehabilitation.

TABLE XVIII  
EMPLOYMENT STATUS

S.No.	Occupation	Percentage of children	
		Boys (n:56)	Girls (n:10)
1.	Coolie	33	-
2.	Cup-collection	22	-
3.	Unskilled labour	18	42
4.	Mechanic	13	-
5.	Tea/Hotel boys	5	-
6.	Domestic help	2	48
7.	Rag-pickers	5	-
8.	Others	2	10

A large percentage of the boys (33 per cent) were employed as coolies, porters in railway stations, etc; while 48 per cent girls were employed as domestic helps.

Twenty-two per cent of boys were employed as cup collectors in the stations and 2 per cent employed as vendors. Forty-two per cent of the girls were employed in small industries and petty shops and 10 per cent as hawkers and flower sellers.

## 2. REHABILITATION MEASURES RECEIVED :

The details about the various rehabilitation measures received are given in Table XIX. and Plate I. (a-f)

TABLE XIX  
REHABILITATION MEASURES A VAILED

S. No.	Aspects	Specific help	Percentage of children*	
			Boys (n:75)	Girls (n:25)
1.	Shelter			
a)	Type of Shelter	Permanent	45.3	88
		Night shelter	27.0	12
		Contact centre	28	-
b)	Provision of accessories	Mats/Blankets	72.0	100
c)	Infrastructural facilities	Toilet and bath facilities	100	100
2.	Food	Once a day	73.3	20
		Thrice a day	27	16
		Only on special occasions	80	16
3.	Clothing	Regularly	23	52
		Yearly	29.3	-
		Special occasions	100	100
4.	Vocational Training	With stipend	20	8
		Without stipend	12	28
5.	Health services	Regular check-up	100	100
		Provision of medicines and financial aid for surgery	80	72
		Attending health camps	35	56
		Guidance and counselling	15	8
		Treatment of skin diseases	19	32
		Detoxification	11	-
6.	Recreation	Games and sports meet	100	84
		Movies	93.3	96
		Outtings	84	56
		Creative activity and cultural meet	36	92

\* Multiple responses

**AN EFFORT TO RETRIEVE THEIR LOST CHILDHOOD**

**PLATE I(a)**



**TO STRIVE, TO SEEK, YET NOT TO YIELD**

**PLATE I(b)**



**NON FORMAL CLASS IN PROGRESS**

PLATE I(c)



FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

PLATE I(d)



ALL WORK AND NO PLAY, MAKES JACK A DULL BOY

PLATE I(e)



FRESH AIR TO BREATHE NEW LIFE INTO ME

PLATE I(f)



A NEW LIFE BET

The rehabilitation of the children includes both welfare and developmental activities. The three necessities of life - food, clothing and shelter are provided to the children to ensure safe and healthy living.

Health and recreational services for proper physical and psychological channelization were also provided for their holistic development. Skill development and rudimentary education are provided to help them combat the ills of street life.

In specific terms, as a result of joining the centres, 87 per cent boys and 56 per cent girls have started receiving non-formal education as part of their rehabilitation measures by the NGOs. Eleven per cent boys and 44 per cent of the girls started attending formal schools with the financial help of the NGOs concerned. Two boys from Don Bosco Anbu Illam are also assisted to continue formal education in boarding schools.

However, three per cent boys were found to remain illiterate even after rehabilitation.

a. Employment after rehabilitation:

After rehabilitation programmes, 57 per cent boys and 44 per cent girls were employed. Eighteen per cent of the boys took to non-formal education. Thirteen per cent boys and 11 per cent girls have shifted from their previous jobs to better vocations after they received training in the particular field. While all the 11 per cent girls took up tailoring, five per cent boys shifted to working as horticulturists, three per cent to mechanics and two per cent to carpentry.

b. Use of leisure time by the children:

The leisure hours available to the respondents varied from thirty minutes to two hours or more every day. Table XX shows the leisure time activities of the children.

TABLE XX  
LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES OF THE CHILDREN

S. No.	Activities	Percentage of children* (n: 100)
1.	Play	37
2.	Study	22
3.	Reading (Non-Formal classes)	17
4.	Watching movies	15
5.	Helping the street educator	12

\* Multiple Response.

Thirty-seven per cent of the respondents stated that they spent their leisure hour playing with peers; 22 per cent were studying and 17 per cent attended non-formal classes. Watching movies and helping the street educator were stated by 15 per cent and 12 per cent of the respondents respectively.

All the leisure time activities pointed out the positive trend set by the NGOs to channelise the abundant energies of these budding youth on constructive lines.

### 3. Human Relationship:

Eighty-three per cent respondents reported to have close friends, with 54 per cent having friends in the same age group and the rest being friendly with older children too, Ten per cent were found to have friends of both the categories.

However, conflicts among peers was not uncommon. Only 24 per cent boys and 40 per cent girls stated that they never enter into fights. Sixty-three per cent boys and 48 per cent girls stated that they fought occasionally while 13 per cent boys and 12 per cent girls admitted that they always fought with their peers.

The reasons for conflicts are as given in Table XXI.

TABLE XXI  
REASONS FOR CONFLICTS

S. No.	Reasons	Percentage of children	
		Boys (n:57)	Girls (n:15)
1.	Provocation or Teasing	30	47
2.	Desire to win while playing	42	20
3.	Self-defence	12	13
4.	Others	16	20

The main reason for fighting among boys appeared to be provocation or teasing (42 per cent), while desire to win in play was the prime reason as stated by the girls. Dislike towards a particular child, boredom, fun, etc were also the reasons for confrontation.

While 74 per cent of the respondents considered that the society was sympathetic towards them, 26 per cent felt that the society had either been indifferent or hostile towards them.

However, the psychologically battered children are given guidance and coounselling at the centre, It was shocking to note that many of these children are also addicted to drugs, (Sixty per cent of the respondents of Don Bosco Anbu Illam, between the ages of 13-16 years have undergone detoxification at the T.T.K. Foundation Centre, Madras.)

Forty-four per cent respondents reported of harassment in the rehabilitation centre - 27 per cent by peers and the rest by older children and staff of the centres,

## 4. Future plans and ambitions of the beneficiaries:

Table XXII presents the future plans of the street children under study.

TABLE XXII  
FUTURE PLANS

S.No,	Future plans	Percentage of children	
		Boys (n:75)	Girls (n:25)
1,	Decent jobs	57	44
2,	Settle with family	1	18
3.	Undecided	42	38

Fifty-seven per cent boys and 44 per cent girls wanted to be employed in decent jobs, vocations such as tailoring, carpentry, plumbing, auto driving were their choice fields. The girls mainly wanted to settle and start their own family.

That a considerable proportion of the beneficiaries (42 per cent boys and 38 per cent girls) were unsure about their future plans points out the pessimistic attitude of the street children. It may take a longer period for them to come out of the shackles of their vagrant life.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

## V SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study examines the rehabilitation measures for street children undertaken by the NGOs in Tamil Nadu. The data were collected both from the NGOs and the target groups.

The heads of five NGOs located in Madras city namely, Indian Council for Child Welfare (ICCW), Asian Youth Centre (AYC), Don Bosco Anbu Illam, Nesakkaram and Mariyalaya were approached with an interview schedule to collect necessary details,

Twenty beneficiaries in the 11-18 age group were randomly selected from each NGO (comprising a total of 100 beneficiaries - 75 boys and 25 girls) for studying the impact of the programmes on the clientele through an interview schedule.

The findings of the study are summarised hereunder:

### NGOs' Perspective:

\* All the organisations under study have been working with street children from mid-1980's. While ICCW works for both street boys and girls, Mariyalaya is exclusively for street girls and the other three NGOs cater to boys only. The NGOs network with Madras NGO Forum for Street and Working Children and share the common goal of creating a better life for their beneficiaries.

\* The number of staff working for street children in the five NGOs varied from 22 to 51. The administrative set-up is almost similar in all the NGOs, the street educator playing a key role at the field level. While the organisations raise their own funds, they are being assisted by central and state governments and international bodies such as UNICEF, ILO and CRY.

\* By and large, the NGOs come in contact with the children directly on the streets; Don Bosco Illam and Nesakkaram have set up child monitoring booths in the railway stations.

- \* Except Nesakkaram, the other NGOs provide shelter home facilities. Nesakkaram acts as a mobilizing centre. The coverage of children varied from 350 to 1000-75 to 600 in the shelter homes and 200 to 725 in the contact centres.
- \* Don Bosco Anbu Illam provides full residential care, while ICCW, AYC and Mariyalaya provide night shelters. The shelter homes provide accommodation with proper ventilation and lighting, adequate toilet and bath facilities, clean drinking water and mattresses for sleeping.
- \* Only Don Bosco Anbu Illam provides three meals a day; in Mariyalaya, food is provided only to runaways and orphans. The other NGOs provide only snacks. On special occasions all the NGOs provide free meals. All the NGOs provide clothes as per requirements and for special occasions.
- \* For Non-Formal Education, the Madras NGO Forum for Street and Working Children had published a set of reading materials under the guidance of the State Resource Centre for Non-Formal Education.  
Don Bosco Anbu Illam, AYC and Mariyalaya also assist their beneficiaries to get formal education if desired.
- \* All the NGOs provide vocational training courses. Don Bosco Anbu Illam runs a 'model training centre'. Assistance from other NGOs and national programmes such as Jawahar Rozghar Yojna (JRY) was reported to be sought.
- \* The NGOs provide regular health check-ups, AIDS and STD awareness camps, referral services, treatment of skin diseases and guidance and counselling for drug addict children.
- \* Celebration of National days such as Independence Day, Human Rights Day, etc and organisation of sports and cultural meets were also reported, to bring out the talents of the children.
- \* All the NGOs reported of representing their beneficiaries in juvenile courts when kept in custody under suspicion.
- \* Non-confirmity of the children to the rules and regulations of the organisation, inadequacy of funds, and infrastructural facilities, public antagonism and police harassment were the major hinderances faced by the NGOs.
- \* Despite the hurdles faced, the future plans of all the NGOs are laudable, i.e., to bring about social transformation and attitudinal change towards street children. Both Mariyalaya and ICCW have plans to initiate income generating activities for the parents of the street children also.

### Impact of Rehabilitation on the clientele:

- \* A majority of the children under study hailed from Madras City or suburbs.
- \* Fifty-three per cent of the beneficiaries were identified and brought to the centres by the staff of the NGOs while others had come either on their own accord or with the help of their family members or neighbours.
- \* The period of association with the NGOs for a large majority of the respondents ranged from two to four or more years. That forty-two per cent respondents had contacts with the NGOs concerned not only for sheer survival but also for a decent life through education, stands testimony to the efforts of the organisations to rehabilitate street children.
- \* While 52 per cent boys and 88 per cent girls lived with their families and participated in the programmes in the contact centres, 17 per cent boys lived in the shelter homes but had family contacts. The remaining boys and girls had no family ties at all.
- \* Large family size (5-11 members), poverty and broken homes had been the reasons attributed by the children to be on the streets. The places of stay prior to rehabilitation were mainly pavements or other public places (35 per cent boys and 68 per cent girls), while 32 per cent had lived in the railway stations.
- \* Seventy-two per cent of the respondents were school drop outs and 9 per cent illiterates. The main reason for dropping out of school was attributed to lack of interest in studies.
- \* Seventy five per cent boys and 40 per cent girls had been in employment, the nature of jobs being portering, vending, cup-collection, rag picking etc for boys, and girls worked as domestic helps, rag pickers or workers in petty shops.
- \* There were instances of police harassment (37 per cent), mainly under suspicion and for street fights. Twenty per cent of the boys had been to juvenile courts and eight per cent were institutionalised prior to rehabilitation.
- \* As part of their rehabilitation, the children received both welfare and developmental inputs from the NGOs such as food, clothing, shelter, health services, education, vocational training, and recreational facilities to ensure their physical, mental and emotional development and to bring about changes in their living conditions.  
As a result of their association with the NGOs, 87 per cent beneficiaries have taken to non-formal education, while 19 per cent are continuing their formal education.

After receiving vocational training 16 per cent children have been employed in newer fields such as tailoring, carpentry, welding, two-wheeler mechanism and auto driving,

\* While 74 per cent had developed faith in fraternity and reported of society's sympathy towards them, 26 per cent still felt that the society had either an indifferent or hostile attitude towards them, There were instances of 16 per cent boys running away from the rehabilitation centre, but returning after a few days or weeks,

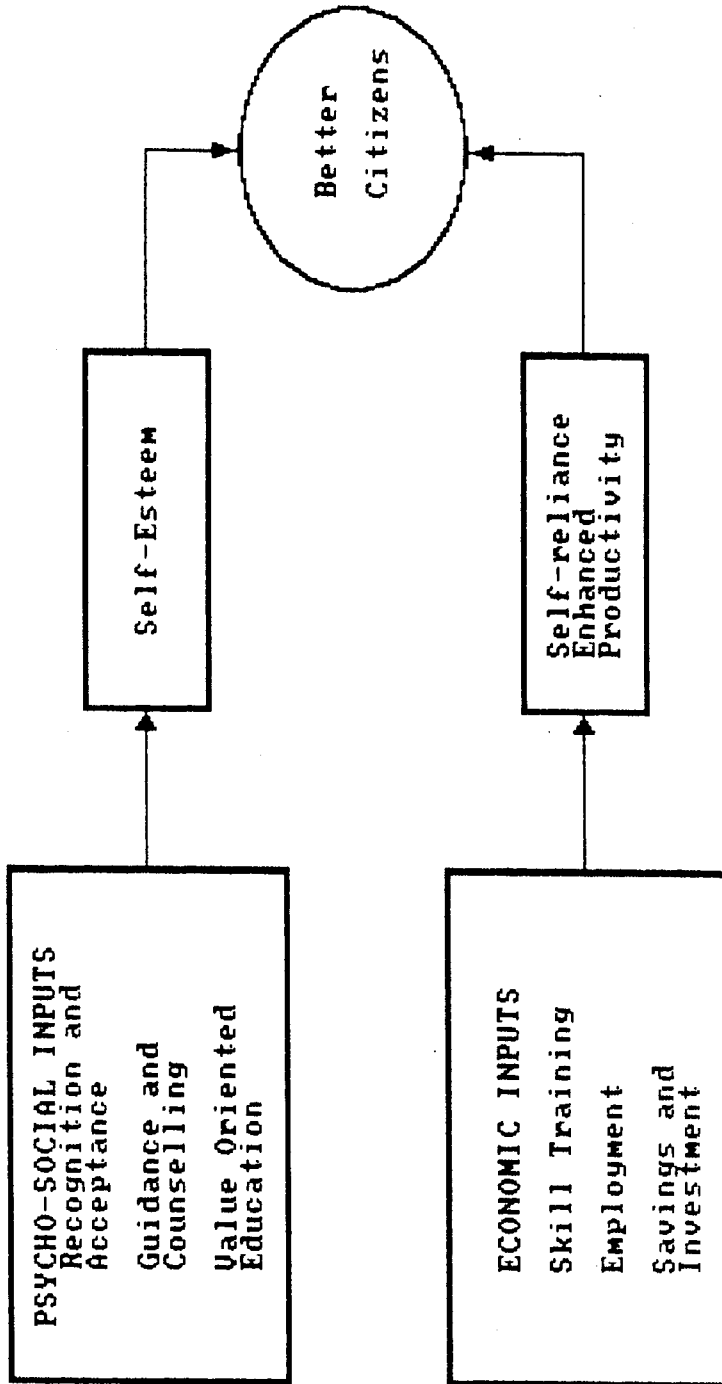
\* That 58 per cent boys and 62 per cent girls had a positive and futuristic attitude towards their own lives proves the impact of the rehabilitation measures by the NGOs. While a majority of boys as well as girls desired for decent jobs, 18 per cent girls expressed their wish to settle down in family life. However, the future appears to be bleak for 42 per cent boys and 38 per cent girls who may take some more time to recoup from the shackles of their street life.

#### Conclusion:

As shown in the empirical model (Fig.2), the street children who are shunned by the society and outcasted can become worthy and productive citizens with self/esteem and respect, when the NGOs provide them with a combination of psycho-social and economic inputs for rehabilitation.

These neglected and ostracised children who are likely to turn delinquent, deviant and/or rebellious, need to be accepted by the society and their potential recognized. This can be achieved by the NGOs through guidance and counselling and value oriented education, which will enable them overcome their antagonism towards society and also buildup their self/esteem.

These spirited children at the threshold of their vibrant youth, need to be trained in skills and guided for suitable avocations which would raise their economic status and well being. The NGOs concerned can mould the street children to become prosperous small entrepreneurs.



INTERVENTION MODEL FOR REHABILITATION  
OF STREET CHILDREN

Fig - 2

The World Summit for children convened by the United Nations in September 1990, had made an urgent universal appeal to the member nations to make a solemn commitment to give high priority to the Rights of Children, to their survival, protection and development. No doubt, the millions of children in India, who live under especially difficult circumstances including the street children, deserve their rightful share in the global efforts to implement the Plan of Action by the United Nations. There can be no task nobler than giving every child a better future.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX I  
A VINASHILINGAM INSTITUTE FOR HOME SCIENCE AND HIGHER  
EDUCATION FOR WOMEN  
(Deemed University)

REHABILITATION MEASURES FOR STREET CHILDREN  
BY THE NGOs IN TAMIL NADU

1. Name of the Organisation :

2. Name of the respondent :

3. Designation :

I BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE ORGANISATION

1. When was the organisation started?

2. Nature of the organisation :

a. Government sponsored : Central / State

b. Voluntary organisation

c. Project of any international organisation

3. If voluntary organisation, specify the source of resources.

4. What are the objectives for starting the organisation?

5. What are the programmes undertaken by your organisation?

II ACTIVITIES OF THE ORGANISATION

6. Was your organisation started specifically for street children?

7. If not, when was the project for street children started?

8. Does your organisation undertake Rehabilitation measures for street children or does it act as a centre for mobilizing these children?

9. i Are there other child welfare programmes undertaken by your organisation?

ii If yes, specify.

III ADMINISTRATIVE SETUP OF THE ORGANISATION

10. How many staff are employed in your organisation?

11. Do you have separate heads for all the programmes or only for specific programmes?

12. How many staff are employed for the street children welfare activities?
13. Does your organisation work with Governmental or NGOs for the welfare of street children?
14. If yes, specify the agencies,

#### IV INFORMATION ON THE STREET CHILDREN

15. How do you identify and classify street children?
16. How many children are there in your organisation?
17. Please specify age-wise, the number of boys and girls in your organisation.

6-10 Yrs	11-15 Yrs	16 Yrs & above	Total
-------------	--------------	-------------------	-------

Male

Female

18. Do you give them identity cards?
19. How do you collect background information about these children?
20. Do these children have contact with their families?
21. Do you take steps to re-establish contact with their families?
22. Do you organise counselling for the family members?

#### V TYPES OF REHABILITATION MEASURES

23. Do you provide shelter for these children?
24. If yes, (a) Full time shelter  
(b) Night shelter
25. Do you provide them free meals?
26. If yes, how many times a day do you provide food?
27. What are the facilities you have for providing education?
  - (a) Free schooling
  - (b) Non-formal education
  - (c) Night schools
  - (d) Community education centre
  - (e) Others

28. Do you provide them:

S. No.	Welfare Activity	Specific help / Details
1.	Immunization	
2.	Medical check-up	
3.	Guidance & Counselling	
4.	Recreation	
5.	Savings	

29. Provision of basic amenities :

(a) Do you provide them bath and toilet facilities?

(b) Do you provide them clothes?

(c) If yes, do you provide them clothes :

(a) Regularly

(b) Yearly

(c) Special Occasions

30. Do the rehabilitated children work?

31. i Do you give them vocational training?

ii If yes, in what fields are they trained?

32. Do you have any :

i Special vocational training centre for street children?

ii How long is the training?

iii Do they receive any stipend?

iv Who pays the stipend?

33. Do you collaborate with other agencies, factories, hotels etc., to rehabilitate these children?

34. What are the job potentials for the rehabilitated children?

35. Do you employ the rehabilitated children in your organisation?  
If yes, specify.

36. Do you have any income generating programmes for the family members?

#### VI PROBLEMS FACED BY THE ORGANISATION

37. What are the problems you have faced or facing in the execution of the rehabilitation programmes?

38. Do they run off from the rehabilitation centres frequently?

39. Do these children have previous police record?

40. What are the type of offences committed by them?

41. Do they continue to commit petty thefts even after joining the organisation?

42. Are they harassed by police, municipality or other authorities of law and order?

43. Do you represent the children belonging to your organisation in case of any problem with the authorities of law?

#### VII FUTURE PERSPECTIVE

44. What are the projects or future plans your organisation has devised for the welfare of street children?

APPENDIX II  
AVINASHILINGAM INSTITUTE FOR HOME SCIENCE AND HIGHER  
EDUCATION FOR WOMEN  
(Deemed University)

REHABILITATION MEASURES FOR STREET CHILDREN  
BY THE NGOs IN TAMIL NADU

1. Name of the respondent :
2. Age :
3. Sex :
4. Native Place :
5. i Educational qualification before rehabilitation : (a) Literate  
(b) Illiterate
- ii What is the reason for dropping out of school?
- iii Present educational status : (a) Formal school  
(b) Non-Formal  
(c) Illiterate

I FAMILY BACKGROUND

1. Do you live with your : (a) Parents  
(b) Father  
(c) Mother  
(d) Siblings  
(e) Peers  
(f) Alone
2. Where do you live ?
3. If with family, details :

Name	Relation to respondent	Sex	Age	Educa- tion	occupa- tion	Income (P,M.)
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4. If alone, how long have you been living on the streets?
5. Why have you taken to living on the streets?
6. Do you have contact with your family?
7. Have you been to other cities/towns on your own?
8. If yes, name the places,

II EMPLOYMENT DETAILS OF THE STREET CHILDREN BEFORE & AFTER REHABILITATION

9. i) Are you employed at present?  
ii) Where were you employed before rehabilitation?
10. Are you employed part-time or full-time?
11. How many hours a day do you work?
12. a) How much wage do you receive per day?  
b) Do you save your earnings?  
c) If yes, mode of saving?
13. How many hours of rest do you get in a day?
14. What do you do in your leisure hours?
15. Do you work at nights?
16. Do you get extra wages for working nights?

III DETAILS ON STREET LIFE

17. How does the society react towards you?
  - (a) Sympathetic
  - (b) Hostile
  - (c) Indifferent
18. Do you play with others?
19. Do you fight with other street children?
  - (a) Always
  - (b) Occasionally
  - (c) Never
20. What are the reasons for fighting?
21. Have you been harassed by the authorities of law?
22. If yes, give reasons
23. Have you been remanded or taken to juvenile courts?
24. How many times have you been remanded?
25. Have you been institutionalised before?

26, Do you face problems of harassment from peers and others on street?

#### IV ADMISSION TO THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION

27, How did you come to know about this organisation?

28, When did you come in contact with the NGO personnel?

29, Did you have contact sessions prior to joining the organisation?

30, What motivated you to join this organisation?

31, How many years have you been with this particular organisation?

32, Have you been with other agency / organisation before this?

33, Have you ever run away from any organisation?

34, If yes, give reasons,

#### V FACILITIES PROVIDED BY THE NGO

S.No.	Facilities Provided	Details	Opinion
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35.	Shelter		
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i	Permanent Shelter		
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ii	Night Shelter		
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36,	Basic Amenities		
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i	Food		
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ii	Clothing		
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iii	Toilet & Bath		
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37,	Education		
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i	Formal		
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ii	Non-Formal		
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38,	Vocational Training		
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39,	Health Services		
-----	-----------------	--	--

40.	Recreation		
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VI SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

41. Do you have close friends?

42. What do they do?

43. What is your future plan or ambition?