

YUVA

Annual Report —

2024-25



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Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA) is a non-profit development organisation committed to enabling vulnerable groups to access their rights. YUVA supports the formation of people's collectives that engage in the discourse on development, thereby ensuring self-determined and sustained collective action in communities. This work is complemented with advocacy and policy recommendations on issues. Founded in Mumbai in 1984, currently YUVA operates in the states of Maharashtra, Assam and Jharkhand.

Suggested Citation:

Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA). (2025).
Situational Analysis of Domestic Workers in 15 Districts of Maharashtra. Mumbai: India.

Published by:

Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA)
YUVA Centre, Plot 23, Sector 7, Kharghar,
Navi Mumbai – 410210 (India)
2025

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Reflecting on forty years of people-centred change



President's Address

As YUVA marks four decades of people-centred change, I feel honoured to step into the role of President in this milestone year. Our journey is not just the story of one organisation, but of innumerable people's movements and collective struggles that have shaped, and in turn been shaped by, YUVA's path. It is a legacy of solidarity, resilience, and hope.

What has consistently defined YUVA is the understanding that no struggle stands alone. Questions of habitat rights link to livelihoods, governance, rights of children and young people, and all are deeply bound with climate justice concerns too. Our strength has been the ability to hold these interconnections together, to innovate while being rooted in people's realities, and to co-create responses alongside communities.

In the past year, our teams worked to expand access to legal entitlements and social protection, strengthen workers' rights, support communities resisting eviction, and facilitate essential services. We also nurtured youth leadership and deepened climate justice efforts, while continuing to build and sustain alliances with people's collectives across the country.

As we look ahead, the task before us is to build on four decades of learning with renewed vision and energy. We must strengthen alliances, refine strategies, and continue to place people's voices and leadership at the heart of transformation. YUVA has always been a space where new ideas take root and grow stronger as more people join us in carrying them forward. This spirit of openness and collective ownership is one of our deepest values, and we remain committed to recognising and nurturing it in the years to come. I draw inspiration from the resilience of the communities we walk alongside and am confident that together we will chart bold pathways towards justice and equity.

It gives me great joy to share YUVA's Annual Report for 2024-25. My deepest gratitude to all our friends, partners, and well-wishers who have walked this journey with us. May we continue to dream, act, and co-create a just and humane world.

In solidarity
Archana Srivastava
President, YUVA

Forty years of changemaking, ten years of leadership



Message from the Executive Director

As YUVA marks four decades of its journey, my heart is full. Over the past year, we have reflected on and celebrated this milestone with community leaders, civil society members and government stakeholders. Together, we asked each other: how can we continue to lead change stronger, together? These conversations reminded me of the courage and resilience that have shaped our work from the beginning, and the collective hope that keeps us moving forward.

This year has also brought recognition and renewed energy to our efforts. Our nature-based placemaking initiative in Mankhurd's resettlement colony was honoured with an award, spotlighting how community-led greening can convert neglected spaces into safe, thriving commons. These greened areas are more than cooling interventions; they embody people's ownership and stewardship, showing what is possible when communities design their futures. With the continued support of Chalo, Basti Badlein, we are inspired to deepen these efforts.

Across our work, whether with domestic workers' organisations in Maharashtra, collectives of children and youth, or people resisting forced evictions, we have stayed focused on strengthening leadership and enabling access to rights and entitlements. These struggles are not easy, especially as questions of climate change, inequality, and migration intensify. Yet, they affirm our belief that lasting change comes from people's action, and that our role is to facilitate and walk alongside them.

On a personal note, this year also marks a decade of my leadership at YUVA. I feel honoured to have walked this path with colleagues, community leaders, and partners who hold up the values of honesty, justice, and dignity every day. As I look back, I am filled with gratitude for all that we have achieved together, and as I look ahead, I hold on to the same purpose, passion, patience, and perseverance that have guided me so far.

Thank you for your continued trust and solidarity. I hope the stories of transformation in this report will inspire you, as much as they inspire us. And let us continue to not only believe in the possibility of just and inclusive futures, but actively collaborate to make this vision come true!

In solidarity
Roshni Nuggehalli
 Executive Director, YUVA

1. About Us

YUVA

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

To secure people's identity in the city and encourage their participation in decision making, we run Habitat Facilitation Centres, Labour Facilitation Centres, a Migration Resource Centre and Child Resource Centres in communities. Currently, our work is spread across locations in the states of Maharashtra, Assam and Jharkhand.



Poverty

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



Environment Sustainability

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



Urban Governance and Planning

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



Mission

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

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

Vision

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

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

Core Values

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

Social Justice

Gender Justice

Environmental Sustainability

Honesty & Integrity

Secularism & Democracy

Core Purpose

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

Our Approach

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

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

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



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

As questions of housing, livelihoods, basic services and rights of every individual are deeply interrelated in the lives of marginalised persons who often face challenges from all quarters and at the same time, our work spans across all these thematics. We also intervene for climate justice, and to centre people's participation in climate action planning.

Our work is rooted in seeking approaches to overcome systemic barriers and injustice, so that we can co-create a more inclusive and equitable future with people's support.

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

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

2. Our Work

Poverty

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

We empower the urban poor, so that they can participate in decision-making and realise their 'Right to the City'. As quality of life is determined by the kind of habitat and work available, YUVA works in an integrated manner on both the thematic, so that people's right to habitat and work can be upheld. Given the multifaceted vulnerabilities at play, YUVA also implements programmes to uphold child rights and youth rights to strengthen these populations.

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



Secure Habitats for All

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

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

In Numbers

8
habitat facilitation centres

14
eviction cases addressed

1,218
community leaders engaged in local governance

23
settlements accessed improved basic services

11,306
legal entitlements and social protection schemes facilitated

Major Interventions

Facilitating access to legal entitlements and social protection

Across our habitat facilitation centres, we bridged the gap between community needs and government schemes by facilitating access to legal entitlements and social protection. In 2024-25, a total of 11,306 legal entitlements and social protection schemes were facilitated, including access to food security, education, identity documentation, and social security.

Building community-based organisations

We continued to support and strengthen people's collectives across cities. In Mumbai, Mohalla Samitis ensured habitat improvements in settlements. In Navi Mumbai, the Ghar Hakk Sangharsh Samiti (GHSS) mobilised residents to seek housing rights and basic services. In Vasai-Virar, community-based organisations deepened their engagement with the municipality on issues of services. In Guwahati, the All Guwahati Slum Coordination Committee (AGSCC) expanded its reach to new settlements.

Resisting forced evictions and supporting affected families

We intervened in 14 eviction-related cases across Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Guwahati, and Ranchi. In each case, the role of people's collectives was central, ensuring community mobilisation. Efforts prioritised securing housing alternatives through the state to prevent families from being rendered homeless. For example, in Kandivali, Mumbai, strong local mobilisation led to renewed rehabilitation efforts, while in Navi Mumbai, campaigns prevented the displacement of more than 350 families in Tata Nagar and minimised harm in other areas.

Enabling secure tenure and recognition of informal settlements

In Nagpur, our engagement led to the official notification of Parvati Nagar under the Maharashtra Slum Act, paving the way for tenure security for 129 families. In Akola, the Akola Vikas Sangharsh Manch worked on land titles (malki pattas) for 80 slums. This effort gained visibility and was reflected in public commitments and local development priorities during the election period.

Strengthening settlement infrastructure and access to basic services

Through sustained engagement with municipal bodies and people's collectives, we enabled improvements in settlement infrastructure and services across multiple settlements. In Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, and Vasai-Virar, residents secured new pipelines, borewells, water tanks and flood mitigation works. Communities also negotiated for better waste management through the provision of garbage vans, as well as improved water supply, sanitation facilities, and street-level services. These outcomes were achieved through consistent mobilisation and follow-up by local collectives, demonstrating the power of organised community action in securing dignified living conditions.

Promoting inclusive planning and evidence-based engagement

The draft Panvel Development Plan (DP) for 2024-2044 was released in August 2024. It opened

avenues for geo-tagging informal settlements and identifying tribal hamlets, street vending markets, construction workers and nakas. Importantly, it gave us scope to engage with communities and municipal officials towards advocating for an inclusive vision for the city by influencing inclusive urban planning. A campaign was launched, and numerous suggestions and objections were submitted by our constituencies to the Municipal Corporation based on which hearings were also conducted. Our teams and communities were formally heard by the hearing committee that is further revising the Development Plan.

Legal scrutiny of the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme: The Supreme Court in 2024 called on the Mumbai High Court to audit the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme under which Resettlement and Rehabilitation (R&R) buildings are built. With a habitat facilitation centre located in an R&R colony, we supported the residents federation to provide considerable inputs into the audit process with suggestions to develop a comprehensive R&R policy with extensive input of their habitat needs post relocation. While this process is still ongoing, inputs have been crucial for improving habitat conditions in R&R colonies across Mumbai.

Evidence-based documentation

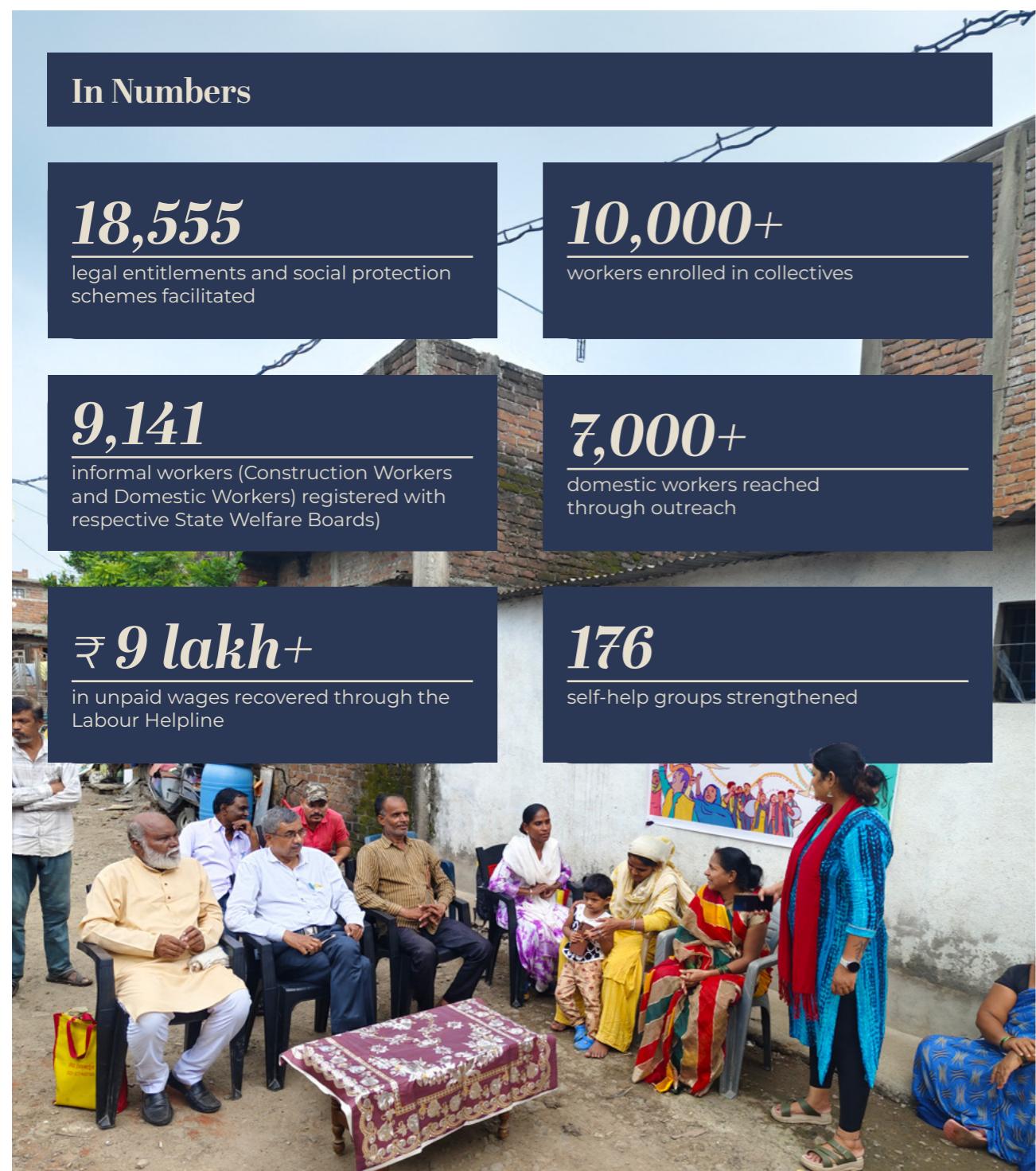
In Navi Mumbai, the journey of the Ghar Hakk Sangharsh Samiti was captured in a documentary (Wo Subah Kabhi Toh Aayegi: Safarnama) tracing their efforts to secure housing rights and basic services. A series of films on Vasai also documented its challenges of rapid urbanisation and environmental stress, spotlighting the role of community groups to uphold their rights.

YUVA's work was also featured across regional and national platforms, bringing visibility to housing struggles, settlement infrastructure gaps, and inclusive planning processes. These documentation efforts continue to be valuable tools for awareness, dialogue, and mobilisation, ensuring that people's voices are heard in wider policy and public conversations.

Dignified Work for Everyone

We partner with a range of informal workers (daily-wage workers, construction workers, street vendors and domestic workers) to enable their access to Right to Work, Fair Wages and Welfare. We facilitate entitlements and registrations for access to welfare, engage in documentation and networking, participate in and lead campaigns and

networks to take forward the effort for dignified and adequate conditions of work for informal workers and the realisation of their rights through their empowerment. The work is spread across 9 cities—Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Panvel, Vasai-Virar, Akola, Nagpur, Guwahati, Jorhat, and Ranchi.



Facilitating access to legal entitlements and social protection for workers

We enabled workers to secure pensions, insurance, education support, and other benefits through 18,555 legal entitlement and social protection applications and registrations. In Maharashtra, construction and domestic workers were supported to register with the Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Board and other State Welfare Boards, contributing to 9,141 worker registrations during the year. In Ranchi, women street vendors accessed PM SVANidhi loans.

Strengthening workers' collectives and leadership

Over 9,000 workers are now part of collectives such as the Kamgar Ekta Workers Collective. In Maharashtra, more than 35,000 domestic workers were mobilised through outreach and awareness initiatives of the Maharashtra Rajya Gharelu Kamgar Samanvay Samiti (MRGKSS). Through these processes, workers built legal awareness, strengthened leadership capacities, and expanded membership in collectives. We also engaged with the Maharashtra Domestic Workers' Welfare Board for wider welfare schemes, reduced registration fees, and standardised processes across districts.

Supporting access to wages, welfare, and just working conditions

The Labour Helpline remained a crucial support mechanism for workers, operating in the cities of Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Panvel, Vasai-Virar, Akola, Nagpur, and Guwahati. It helped recover over ₹9.15 lakh in unpaid wages this year, and also served as a space for workers to raise concerns, seek guidance, and resolve disputes related to their livelihoods.

Networking with worker collectives and networks

We worked with a range of networks at the city, state, and national levels, including the Working People's Coalition, Maharashtra Rajya Gharelu Kamgar Samanvay Samiti (MRGKSS), Kamgar Ekta Workers' Collective, and in Assam with the Grihakarmi Adhikar Suraksha Samiti (GASS).

Evidence-based documentation and surveys

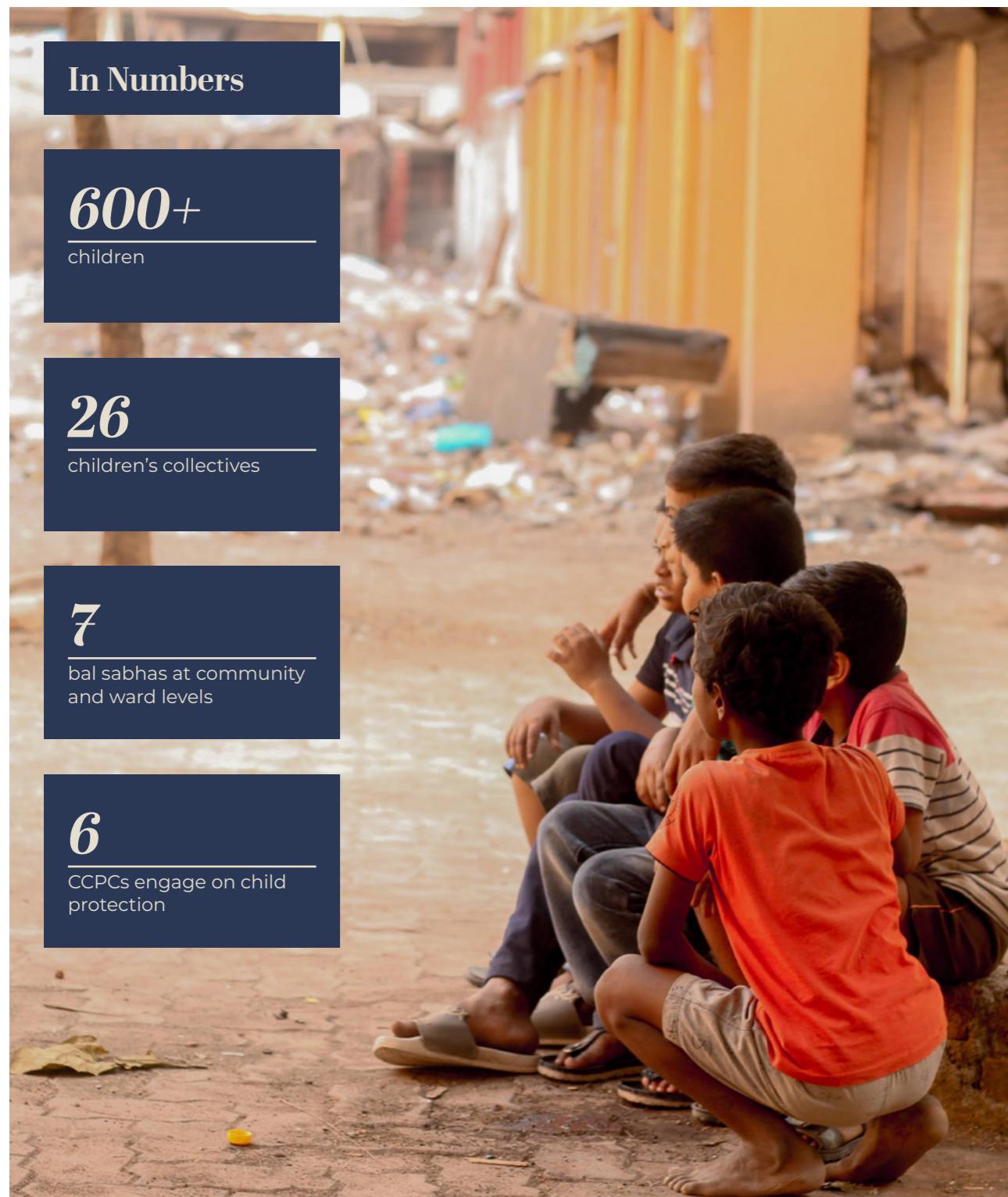
A state-wide survey of more than 5,000 domestic workers across 15 districts was published as the Situational Analysis of Domestic Workers in 15 Districts of Maharashtra. A Policy Brief was also released, recommending improvements in registration, expansion of welfare schemes, and stronger protections for domestic workers. The study received coverage in nearly 20 media reports in various languages. The Times of India, highlighted that many women remain in domestic work into old age, with limited options and poor social security.



Child Rights Friendly Communities and Cities

We facilitate child-friendly communities and cities, with the participation of children as equal stakeholders. We enable platforms for children to express their opinions, organise themselves into collectives, and engage for their rights. With

children in marginalised communities experiencing multiple vulnerabilities, our interventions aim to facilitate their holistic development. Our work in partnership with children's collectives has spanned across 8 areas in Mumbai.



Strengthening children's collectives and peer learning

Children's groups remained central to our work in fostering awareness, peer support, and leadership. Through Bal Adhikar Sangharsh Sangathans (BASS) across 8 settlements in Mumbai, children participated in sessions on themes such as menstrual health and hygiene, environmental protection, cyber safety, the Constitution. The leadership structure was strengthened by inducting new children and building second-line leaders. Creative engagement was encouraged through sessions supported by Toy Bank, which reached over 300 children.

Deepening child protection networks at the local level

In the absence of active city-level mechanisms, efforts were made to activate and strengthen local child protection systems. In Mumbai, Child Safety Forums were initiated in Malvani and Bandra, and revived in Mankhurd. These forums facilitated discussions on ward-level issues and child safeguarding. Fourteen awareness sessions were conducted with parents who are part of Community Child Protection Committees (CCPCs), and local school staff were trained on POCSO provisions and safety practices. Police officials also engaged in dialogue with children on issues of protection.

Enabling children's civic engagement and public participation

Children actively engaged in public campaigns to voice their concerns with decision-makers. During the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, children presented letters to candidates across party lines in North East Mumbai. As part of Child Rights Week, street plays, film screenings, games, and Bal Sabhas were organised to highlight safety, education, and rights. Campaigns reached hundreds of community members and duty bearers with strong child-led messaging.

Fostering environmental awareness through experiential learning

A summer camp on the theme 'Environment and Us' was organised for over 400 children, combining learning with creative expression through film screenings, puppet shows, art, and outdoor visits. In Lallubhai Compound (Mumbai) and Navade (Panvel), children and women participated in green drives and biodiversity awareness sessions, building ownership of their local environments.



Evidence-based documentation

YUVA's work with children's collectives was featured in a blog by the Queen Mary University of London: "Migrant Children and Substantive Citizenship: How a Children's Collective in Mumbai, India is Working to Bridge the Gap." The publication highlighted how children in migrant communities are organising, building awareness of rights, and negotiating with duty bearers to claim substantive citizenship in the city.

Youth Empowerment for Active Citizenship

We encourage young people's self determination and empower them to claim their rights. We curate platforms for youth to express their opinions, organise themselves into collectives for their empowerment and access to rights. Our youth

work focuses on facilitating collective agency and supporting their participation in governance as active citizens. This work has taken place in Mumbai and various districts of Maharashtra.



Major Interventions

Enabling holistic youth development

Safe spaces in bastis and colleges offered opportunities for youth to strengthen life skills, leadership, and emotional well-being. These hubs encouraged peer learning, civic awareness, and confidence-building, while also fostering collective growth. Urban greening activities provided hands-on experience in ecological sustainability, deepening young people's connection to the environment.



Sustaining youth networks and collective action

Youth collectives across rural and urban contexts continued to mobilise around issues of education, livelihoods, mental health, climate, and social justice. Creative learning and engagement forums, such as an annual youth convention, the City Caravan programme, and cultural events provided spaces for youth exchange and visibility, while alumni re-engagement processes ensured continuity and solidarity across generations of youth leaders.

Building civic awareness and governance participation

Under the Anubhav Shiksha Kendra youth experiential learning programme, youth in 21 districts of Maharashtra were encouraged to participate in governance processes, from village assemblies to city forums. They articulated visions for development, and held dialogues with local bodies.

Promoting women's leadership

Young women took significant steps into leadership roles this year. Dedicated spaces for women's participation supported them to speak up, engage in decisions, and hold responsibilities within collectives and committees. These processes affirmed the importance of gender-equitable youth leadership for long-term social change.

Strengthening pathways to livelihoods and entrepreneurship

Youth were supported to enhance job readiness through training and exposure visits and connected with meaningful livelihood opportunities. 250+ youth participated in 2 job fairs, and 109 youth were placed in jobs. Additionally, 5 youth-led community enterprises were established with financial and mentoring support, helping young people build sustainable income opportunities while gaining confidence to expand further



Evidence-based documentation

YUVA shared insights from working with young people at 'Up the Ante' conversation series organised by Vidhi. YUVA's approach to mental health and marginalised youth was featured in India Development Review article "Mental health and marginalised youth: What's missing?". The piece highlighted gaps in existing systems and the importance of community-based, youth-led spaces that enable emotional well-being and collective resilience.

Environment

We are committed to climate-just habitats, livelihoods and regions, and on how the development praxis can be aligned within social and ecological justice frameworks. Our work enables participatory climate action from the



grassroots, ensuring that the needs of marginalised communities are reflected in local adaptation, coping strategies, city level disaster mitigation, and inclusive policy. Our work is spread across 4 cities—Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Vasai-Virar and Guwahati.

Major Interventions

Strengthening Community Climate Action Plans (CCAPs)

Over the past year, the CCAP was piloted and deepened in Ambojwadi, where sustained follow-up led to drainage and sanitation works benefitting nearly 2,000 households. Through nature-based solutions (NbS) and placemaking, a flood- and heat-prone open space was reclaimed for community use. These learnings were extended to three other cities, where local youth—trained as Climate Educators—led community-driven climate action. Across all four cities, CCAP follows a four-pronged approach: city-level hazard mapping, rapid assessments, community-led vulnerability assessments, and the formulation of Community Climate Action Plans. The vulnerability assessments

are actively shaped by youth volunteers. Importantly, the work on micro adaptation is tied to interventions at the city level, linking community priorities with disaster mitigation and spatial planning. To strengthen impact, city-level collectives have been formed, including, Aapli Vasai Aapla Vikas, and the Concerned Citizens Group in Guwahati.

Advancing nature-based solutions and placemaking

The Chalo, Basti Badlein campaign enabled crowdfunding for local climate action, focusing on adaptation and coping in vulnerable neighbourhoods of Mumbai and Navi Mumbai. Over two years, these efforts raised modest sums but reclaimed three new community spaces, one

in Lallubhai Compound, Mankhurd, one in Panvel, and one in a Navi Mumbai school. In recognition of these efforts, YUVA was awarded at the India Forum for Nature-based Solutions Annual Summit 2024, selected from 55 submissions across India as the only project highlighting nature-based solutions in an urban poor community.

Building networks and coalitions

YUVA deepened its role in climate justice coalitions at city, state, and national levels, bringing the perspectives of urban poor communities into broader climate discourses. By participating in networks and policy forums, YUVA contributed to more equitable climate action frameworks.

South Asia Network on Dams, Rivers and People (SANDRP).

SANDRP continued documenting developments on monsoons, rivers, and wetlands across South Asia. Its documentation in 2024-25 on sites such as the Bhoj Wetlands, the Tawi Barrage, and projects

in the Western Ghats contributed to discussions and decisions in different forums, while its work on monsoon monitoring gained recognition.

Global to local engagement

Through deliberate efforts, YUVA has pushed for the inclusion of urban and urban poor perspectives in global climate spaces, specifically at the annual Conference of Parties. Collaborating with networks like the Urban Transformations Consortium and CAN-International, we contributed to the Mitigation Work Programme submission. By hosting an official UNFCCC side-event on multilevel urban governance with ICLEI and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, and engaging in youth dialogues with global leaders such as Germany's Vice Chancellor, YUVA helped ensure that the perspectives of India's urban poor, cities and youth were represented in international climate dialogues. These efforts reflect our growing role in bridging local experiences with global spaces and strengthening the collective voice of civil society in shaping just and inclusive climate action.



Evidence-based documentation

We continued to foreground community knowledge through participatory mapping and documentation frameworks, including our article in *Question of Cities* that examined how residents experience and respond to urban climate challenges. These approaches showed how communities can assert their voices in spatial decision-making, countering the dominance of technocratic processes that often marginalise grassroots perspectives. Through the paper titled

Hands Together in The Journal of Public Space by UN-Habitat, we documented nature-based placemaking in an urban poor resettlement colony. Similarly, our article with CEEW in *Shelter Journal* (HUDCO) showcased youth-driven resilience and disaster preparedness, while reflections in *Question of Cities* after COP29 underscored the need to centre urban poor and climate justice in global spaces. Reports, consultations, and public forums further amplified these realities, ensuring they inform climate planning and policy.



Governance

State Assembly Engagement

We continued to engage with legislative processes. In the Maharashtra State Assembly, questions were raised on the functioning of the Domestic Workers Welfare Board, informed by ongoing issues and cases faced by workers.

Strengthening of Mohalla Samitis

YUVA facilitated the functioning and consolidation of Mohalla Samitis in Mumbai, anchoring participatory governance processes under the 74th Constitutional Amendment. These Samitis worked on pressing local issues, including water, sanitation, housing, and municipal service delivery, while also building leadership at the community level to engage with ward officials and municipal structures.

3. YUVA@40: Celebrating Four Decades of YUVA

On 30 August 2024, YUVA marked 40 years of working with marginalised communities towards justice and equality. The occasion was both a celebration and a moment of reflection, gratitude, and renewed commitment.

Turning 40 offered a chance to revisit YUVA's journey, its struggles, learnings, and achievements, which have been shaped over the years by the voices and actions of communities, grassroots leaders, partners, donors, staff, and supporters. Staying true to the spirit of "We Lead Change", the focus of the celebrations was on leadership that emerges from the margins, the people who continue to challenge inequities and create pathways for change.

A series of creative exhibitions and events brought this energy alive, captured vividly in a short film of the celebrations. The film showcases how people from across bastis (informal settlements) participated with enthusiasm and pride, reflecting their lived experiences, leadership, and aspirations. These stories highlighted how YUVA's work is about enabling voices and strengthening collective action.

As part of the celebrations, we also launched a digital interactive timeline of our journey over the past 40 years (journey.yuvaindia.org), offering an engaging way to revisit key milestones and memories.



The anniversary also created space for community members and staff to reflect on what YUVA has meant in their own journeys, helping them speak up, reclaim leadership, and build resilience. These personal accounts added depth to the celebrations, reminding everyone that YUVA's work is rooted in people and their everyday realities.

In essence, YUVA's 40th anniversary was more than a milestone. It was a celebration of shared histories and collective strength and a recommitment to continue working towards justice, dignity, and equality for all.

4. Stories of Transformation



Parvati Nagar, a 20-year-old informal settlement (basti) in North Nagpur, is home to 130 households who lived for decades without legal recognition or basic services. Excluded from city plans and dependent on irregular water tankers, families also lived under the constant fear of eviction.

1. Securing Legal Recognition and Water Access in Parvati Nagar, Nagpur

In 2024, YUVA began supporting residents to change this reality. Two urgent priorities emerged: securing slum notification (legal recognition) and water access. To take this forward, residents formed the Parvati Nagar (Vanjara) Vikas Samiti. Its first action was a signature campaign seeking recognition and services.

The notification process required extensive documentation, including

land records and proof of residence. With many residents lacking valid IDs, Aadhaar update camps were organised, and key land documents were gathered with YUVA's support. This evidence became the foundation of the settlement's case with the Nagpur Municipal Corporation (NMC).



At the same time, the community pursued water connections under the Har Ghar Jal scheme. Initially, each household was asked to pay ₹7,000 for a tap connection. After sustained negotiation, the fee was waived, and by December 2024 all 130 households had functional taps, bringing immediate relief and dignity.

Meanwhile, the Vikas Samiti strengthened its push for legal recognition. A memorandum was submitted to NMC, followed by a Plane Table Survey and socio-economic survey, in which all 130 households participated. When a public notice of the proposed

notification was issued, residents ensured awareness across the community, and with no objections received, the process advanced.

In October 2025, Parvati Nagar was officially declared a notified slum under the Maharashtra Slum Act. This landmark achievement not only protects residents from eviction but also makes them eligible for housing and infrastructure schemes, securing their place in the city's plans. For women especially, legal status and water access have transformed daily life, reducing hardship, improving health, and building confidence in collective action.

The Parvati Nagar journey shows how community-led organising, supported by YUVA, can secure systemic change. What began with an effort for water became the pathway to long-term recognition and inclusion. Today, the Vikas Samiti continues to push for better roads, drainage, and housing, ensuring this milestone is only the beginning of their journey.

In 2023-2024, YUVA launched a ground-up initiative to strengthen Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) in five informal settlements (bastis) in Navi Mumbai: Panchshil Nagar, Tata Nagar, Anand Nagar, Ramji Nagar, and Gandhi Nagar. Most residents of these bastis migrated from various regions, seeking livelihood, but struggled with unsafe housing, lack of sanitation, insufficient basic services, and repeated threats of eviction. Many had low awareness of their rights as well as how to resolve their pressing community problems.

Responding to these challenges, YUVA introduced a series of interactive, participatory capacity building sessions for each CBO. The approach centred on engaging community members directly, building their leadership skills, and helping them recognise their collective power. Through mapping exercises, group discussions, games, and real-life examples, participants identified key issues, such as unsafe roads, poor toilets, irregular garbage collection, and weak drainage, and developed local solutions.

As the training progressed, tangible changes began to emerge. In Ramji Nagar, permanent toilets with water tanks were installed, and regular garbage collection was initiated in all five communities. Speed breakers were built in Anand Nagar and Panchshil Nagar to protect children from fast traffic. CBO members led efforts, submitting letters, meeting ward officers, and following up, demonstrating new confidence and ownership in shaping their future.

Today, these communities stand stronger and more united. Residents now take the initiative for local problem-solving, youth have started joining committees, and collective action has become a norm. This journey reflects how capacity building, when rooted in community realities, transforms not just settlements, but people's sense of dignity and possibility.



2.

Transformation in Navi Mumbai Slums

The Nav Yuva Mahila Shehriya Sangh is an active city-level federation in Navi Mumbai that brings together around 150 women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs) from across seven areas - Belapur, Sanpada, Nerul, Vashi, Ghansoli, Koparkhairane, and Digha. Supported and facilitated by YUVA and registered under the Societies Act in October 2024, this federation has become a strong collective platform for local women to join hands, share experiences, and enhance their lives through mutual aid and financial empowerment.

3.

Strengthening Women's Collectives in Navi Mumbai

The journey of the federation began much before its official registration, as women from different communities first formed individual SHGs. Each group brought together 10-15 women, creating a space for mutual support and collective growth. Over time, these groups realised that their strength would multiply if they organised further:

first at the ward level, then at the area level, and finally as a united city federation. Today, all these different SHGs are woven together as one powerful entity.

The main objectives of the federation reflect the values of solidarity, inclusion, and development stated in their constitution and training materials. The federation supports its members by promoting financial inclusion and literacy, facilitating access to small loans, organising capacity-building workshops, and encouraging women to take up new livelihoods, such as the recent auto-driving training for 25 interested women. Regular meetings, transparent record-keeping, and an environment of democratic decision-making ensure every woman's voice is heard and counted. The federation also prepares registers to help women keep proper records of their savings and activities, enabling smoother teamwork and accountability.

Many women say the most important change is how the federation has helped them recognise their self-worth and possibilities. One woman recently shared that, after becoming part of her SHG and then the larger federation, she gained the confidence to step out of her home, open a bank account, and

talk with government officials for the first time. The federation provided movable capital loans (₹10,000 per SHG) to support women's self-help groups, and these funds are designed to circulate within the group, one woman uses the capital, returns it, and it passes on to another.



The Nav Yuva Mahila Shehriya Sangh is more than just a collection of SHGs, it represents a collective effort for economic justice, social support, and problem-solving in the city's most underserved neighbourhoods. Guided by their own constitution, training, and shared vision, and strengthened by the leadership and aspirations of ordinary women, the federation is

creating dignity and opportunity for many who might otherwise have remained isolated or unheard. The federation now aims to expand its reach to more women across Navi Mumbai and strengthen members' access to livelihoods and government schemes in the coming year.

YUVA and the Maharashtra Rajya Gharelu Kamgar Samanvay Samiti (MRGKSS) organised a large state-level Domestic Workers Parishad in Mumbai. The event brought together more than 2,000 domestic workers, leaders and allies from across Maharashtra.

At the Parishad, YUVA launched A Situational Analysis of Domestic Workers in 15 Districts of Maharashtra and a Policy Brief, drawing from a survey of 5,000+ workers. These publications presented hard evidence on the conditions of domestic work and put forward clear recommendations—such as recognising domestic work under labour laws, establishing welfare boards, and ensuring access to social security.

For many domestic workers, it was the first time their struggles were recognised in such a public forum. Workers spoke of endless working hours, lack of written contracts, denial of leave, and exclusion from most labour laws. Women shared how they are often treated as 'maids/servants' rather than as workers, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation, abuse and sudden job loss. The gathering underlined the urgent need for rights such as minimum wages, paid leave, health insurance, pension, and protection against harassment.

The Parishad became more than just an event—it strengthened the collective voice of workers, and marked an important step in pushing for state-level policies that uphold dignity, justice, and recognition of domestic work as real work.

4.

Strengthening domestic workers' voices for justice

5. Fueling Youth Aspirations through Community Enterprises

In February 2025, YUVA organised a Youth Pitch Fest for Community Enterprises in Mumbai, offering young people from marginalised communities a platform to showcase their ideas and ambitions. Thirteen youth came forward with ventures ranging from tuition classes and home-based food services to event management, tailoring, and mobile repair shops. They were selected from the initial round of 60+ applications from youth entrepreneurs.

Most of these community enterprises had started informally, run from small rooms or makeshift spaces. Limited capital, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of professional guidance held them back. The Pitch Fest created a supportive space where youth could present their ideas before a panel of experts, receive feedback, and refine their business plans.

Eventually, five community enterprises were selected for intensive support. Each received financial support, mentoring, and guidance tailored to their needs. With this backing, tuition classes improved learning spaces and increased enrolment, food ventures invested in better equipment, and service-oriented businesses such as event management and repair shops strengthened their operations.

For the young participants, the Fest was about more than resources, it was about recognition. The process validated their struggles, highlighted their creativity, and showed that their ideas had value. Several enterprises have since expanded their services within neighbourhoods, generating income and resilience for their families and communities.

The Youth Pitch Fest demonstrates how investing in community enterprises can unlock youth potential and strengthen local economies. By enabling young people to grow their ideas into sustainable businesses, it is helping build pathways of dignity, self-reliance, and long-term transformation.



Anantwadi, a small village in Latur district, was facing a challenge. Many young people spend most of their time on mobile phones and social media. They were not active in studies or community life, and rarely attended Gram Sabhas. Parents and teachers worried about their future and about the role they would play in society.

To change this, YUVA's Anubhav Shiksha Kendra started the Ekajoot Anubhav Katta in the village. The idea was simple - bring youth together, build leadership, and encourage them to take part in village development. With the support of the local youth leader, the first meetings began. Slowly, young people started showing interest.

The Katta used games like cricket, kabaddi and team activities to bring youth closer. After the games, discussions were held on the Gram Panchayat, Gram Sabhas, and government schemes. A study visit to Raigad Fort inspired the youth, helping them understand that true leadership requires discipline, responsibility and unity. From this experience, the group named itself 'Ekajoot' (unity).

Within a few months, the youth began taking the lead in village life. They organised a cleanliness drive, raised questions on water shortage in the Gram Sabha, learned about the Right to Information Act, and staged plays with social messages during festivals. For the first time, the villagers saw their children stepping forward to take responsibility for the community.

6. Building Youth Leadership through Ekajoot Anubhav Katta



7. Creating Safe Schools: The Sakhi Savitri Samiti Story

When schools reopened after COVID-19, children from low-income families faced serious challenges. Many girls had dropped out and were at risk of early marriage, while child labour increased. To respond, the Government of Maharashtra issued a resolution in March 2022 to form Sakhi Savitri Samitis (SSS) in every school, aimed at creating safe and child-friendly environments. However, in most schools, these committees only existed on paper.

After this official notification, YUVA worked to activate one such committee at Shubham School, Mankhurd. The team engaged the school principal, teachers, parents, local representatives, police, doctors, anganwadi workers, and children. Members first met to understand roles and why the committee mattered. YUVA supported training

on child rights, coordination with government bodies, ensuring participation, and creating visibility by installing a name-board in the school.

The committee began meeting monthly, focusing on re-enrolling dropouts, building stress-free learning spaces, spreading awareness on gender equity and child rights, and responding to safety concerns. A Bal Sabha held in November 2024, gave children a platform to share views on equal opportunities and protection. One student said, "Before, we didn't know we could speak up about problems. Now we know someone will listen."

Though challenges remain, like irregular attendance and limited funds, the committee has already improved awareness and accountability. Building on YUVA's earlier work on child rights in communities, the Sakhi Savitri Samiti strengthens protection inside schools, with plans to expand to other municipal schools and link more closely with state mechanisms.

Ambojwadi, a dense settlement in Malad, Mumbai, has long struggled with flooding, poor sanitation, heat stress, and a lack of basic services. During the monsoons, overflowing toilets often led to sewage entering homes, exposing residents—especially women, children, elders, and persons with disabilities—to severe health risks.

Rather than imposing top-down fixes, YUVA mobilised youth from different pattas to lead a community-based vulnerability assessment (VA). As trusted members of the settlement, they co-designed surveys, conducted interviews and focus group discussions, and mapped infrastructure and essential services. Their local knowledge shaped the process—surfacing coping strategies like raising platforms inside homes or shifting temporarily during floods, and revealing vulnerabilities such as waterlogging, broken drains, and the lack of green cover.

With the findings of the VA, YUVA initiated a Community Climate Action Plan (CCAP) to shift from survival to resilience. It proposed short, medium, and long-term micro adaptation measures that integrated both development and climate priorities. Mapping and evidence gave residents the tools to collectively engage with the governing civic body, Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai. Youth groups and community-based organisations met officials, presented maps, and sought action. Their persistence led to municipal funds being allocated for drainage and sewage upgrades in several flood-prone pattas. Change soon followed: in Sant Nirankari Bhavan, sewage stopped spilling into homes; in Bismillah Chawl, drainage was improved; and in Panchsheel Buddha Vihar, nature based Solutions and place-making turned a previously flooded ground into a green community space.

For Ambojwadi's youth, this journey was transformative. Youth and local collectives realised their power to generate and analyse data, define priorities, and lead collective action.

8. Localising Climate Action Planning in Ambojwadi



5. YUVA Centre

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

In 2024–25, the centre's training and residential facilities were used by 57 non-profits and other organisations and individuals. 125+ training sessions took place at the Centre.



6. Shaping Narratives ComplexCity: Urban Festival



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



The festival's seventh edition was organised in 2025. With learnings from prior re-visioning and festival management, ComplexCity 7.0 was designed more intentionally, with a process-led approach guiding its planning and implementation.

This allowed for richer experiences for diverse city audiences and meaningful interactions between community members and middle- and upper-middle-class residents, helping shift biases about the urban poor and further inclusivity in cities.



YUVA's Making Mumbai Youth Convention 2025, held in March at Maharashtra Nature Park, Dharavi, focused on Youth Resilience and Well-Being. Attended by 300 youth from marginalised communities, the convention provided a nurturing space for discussions on challenges faced by young people, including insecure housing, informal livelihoods, limited access to education and employability, and the pressures of discriminatory norms. Sessions explored community-centred care, peer support networks, and ways to destigmatise mental health and well-being challenges, with panelists from Mariwala Health Initiative (MHI), RATI Foundation for Social Change, and the Centre for Mental Health Law and Policy (CMHLP).



YUVA's curated urban walks continued to draw varied audiences, provoking questions on housing and urban identities. Street play competitions presented creative expressions of the city by diverse youth groups, bringing together perspectives from across Mumbai's communities.

The Shramik Sahitya Sammelan celebrated the cultural expressions of informal workers. Domestic workers, construction workers, and street vendors from Navi Mumbai and Panvel came together to share their stories, poems, and lived experiences reclaiming their narratives and highlighting their role in shaping inclusive cities.

All festival initiatives are documented here:
<https://complexcity.in/>

7. Urban Resource Centre

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

In the past year, work continued to revitalise the physical library space, and to strengthen the online repository of resources. We also started libraries within 05 communities across the Mumbai Metropolitan Region.

The Centre's archival content is constantly updated with narratives generated from our current work, particularly on migrant workers and broader themes of inequality and injustice. The URC now houses 13,238 books, with 26 new books added between 2024 and 2025. Additionally, the collection includes 675 MP4 videos covering children, women, and youth programmes; topics such as habitat, informal workers, and climate-related issues; and YUVA's research and documentation over the years. Images from youth programmes spanning 1984 to 2024, as well as digitised annual reports (1997-2019) and research reports, further enrich the Centre's offerings.

The URC has become a key learning space for YUVA teams and provides valuable resources for external members as well.



8. Strategic Communications and Resource Mobilisation



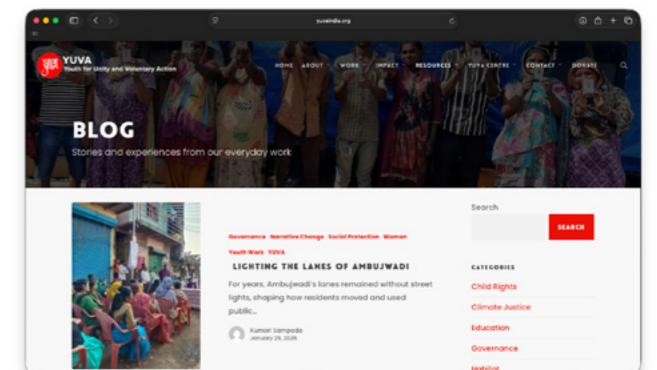
Our communications efforts focus not just on sharing programmatic interventions, but on building public support to act for human rights.

While our multi-lingual blog (<https://yuvaindia.org/blog/>) was a powerful medium to take ahead people's narratives in their own voices, we also used our social media channels (Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter/X, YouTube, and our website) extensively to engage with diverse audiences through regular updates, informative series posts, topical campaigns, reels, and community testimonials.

Reels on domestic workers, highlighting their struggles, crossed 1 million+ views on Instagram, and this viral traction played a key role in driving overall growth. From April 2024 to March 2025, YUVA's social media reach expanded from about 5,000 to nearly 1.9 million, marking a sharp increase on Instagram and Facebook. LinkedIn and Twitter/X



also showed steady growth, strengthening visibility among professionals, donors, and partners. The Chalo, Basti Badlein 2.0 fundraising campaign was run entirely on social media, further boosting engagement and visibility.



On YouTube, views grew significantly from 5,800 in 2024 to over 24,500 in 2025. Watch time increased more than sevenfold (from 121 hours to 884 hours), and subscribers more than tripled (from 52 to 188).

YUVA's first philanthropy research, "Big Bets and Bugbears for Social Justice: Enablers and Demotivators for Indian Philanthropy Today," was published this year. The study was completed under an ISDM – Centre for Philanthropy for Inclusive Development fellowship. The research examines sector-wide patterns in philanthropic giving and highlights what enables or hinders support for work rooted in social justice.

YUVA continues to share a quarterly emailer as a regular engagement medium.

YUVA participated in the Resource Alliance Leadership Academy 2024, sharing its work on climate justice with a global community of fundraisers. Building on its work throughout the year, YUVA participated at the International Fundraising Congress 2024 in Amsterdam, co-facilitating an open discussion on climate justice.

9. Working at YUVA

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



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

Given the challenging environments we work in, we remain mindful of the need to constantly

support people's access to well-being, and offer avenues to replenish and re-energise. With the introduction of a customised Human Resource Management System (HRMS), employees can now log attendance and apply for leave online from any location, including the field. The system also streamlines salary processing and reporting, freeing up nearly half of the HR team's time to focus on other organisational development priorities.

In the past year, our study circles incorporated well-being oriented sessions, and we offered free individual counselling support for those

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

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

10. Organisational Governance

Our Governing Board

President	There is separation of YUVA's Management and Governance. The Executive Director attends Board Meetings in an ex-officio capacity. The current Board Members will serve for the 2024-26 term.
Archana Shrivastava	
Treasurer	No remuneration was paid to any Board Member during 2024-25. No Board Member has any blood relation with another Board Member or with any of the staff members.
Secretary	
Mani Mistry Elavia	
Members	
Kavitha Krishnamoorthy, Rajendra Joshi, Dilip Bhadarge, Shikha Shukla	

11. Safeguarding the Workplace

Internal Committee

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

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

Presenting the IC 2024-25 report:

0 complaints of sexual harassment received over the year
0 complaints disposed off during the year
0 cases pending for more than 90 days
1 workshop/awareness programme conducted for employees

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

Child Protection Committee

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

Annual report of the Child Protection Committee:

0 complaints of sexual harassment received over the year
0 complaints disposed off during the year
0 cases pending for more than 90 days
1 workshop/awareness programme conducted for employees

Status of the Organisation

Registered under the **Societies Registration Act, 1860** (836 GBBSD 1984/26 December 1984)

Registered under the **Bombay Public Trust Act, 1950** (F10304/20 April 1985)

Registered under **section 12A of the Income Tax Act** (INS/24339/7 May 1985)

Registered under the **Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act** (FCRA No. 83850025)

Recognised under **section 80G of the Income Tax Act**

Registered on **NGO DARPAR (Niti Aayog)**.
Unique ID: MH/2017/0117127

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

Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA)

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

2024

