

FOLLOW-UP STUDY REPORT ON CASES WORKED ON BY KOSHISH
CHEMBUR BEGGARS' HOME, MUMBAI (MALE AND FEMALE SECTIONS)

JANUARY – DECEMBER 2012

Background:

To build on its engagement with socially excluded populations, the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai started a Field Action Project named Koshish in 2006 where it committed itself for the protection of the rights of the one of the most vulnerable populations, i.e. destitute and shelter-less people criminalized under Beggary Prevention Legislations. Koshish aims at addressing the interrelated issues of beggary, destitution and homelessness through a combination of measures, pitched at varying levels of providing support for basic and immediate needs, facilitating linkages to gainful and secure employment and advocacy for integration into the larger society. It also aims for the development of meaningful policy for securing rightful entitlements.

There have been very serious linkages between destitution and beggary; both with helpless people getting into beggary as well as state punishing working poor on charges of beggary under legislations like the Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959. It is a common belief that those who are into begging make a lot of money, they do it as choice and therefore, they deserve to be punished. However, this is based more on the popular notions in society but in reality, these notions have very little relevance.

The Bombay Prevention of Begging Act was brought in place to check the issue of beggary. It aimed at prevention of beggary through training and rehabilitation of those involved in begging. However, the way beggary and beggar is defined in the act changes the whole document into very vulnerable and anti-poor law. Over the years, it has been largely arrest and punishment that got implemented, while the training and rehabilitation programs have become either irrelevant or totally absent.

Since August 2006, Koshish had been working in Mumbai and had gained a sufficient amount of experience and understanding that could be used constructively to engage with broader advocacy and model-building work. With this aim, we extended our work to Delhi in 2009 and Patna in 2012 and have been engaging successfully with the respective state governments.

Context:

Koshish has been working very closely with the government machinery, thus, attempting to influence change from within and making the government accountable towards its people. Efforts

have been put to make the government take up the responsibility and get into collaboration in the entire process.

With our experiences in Mumbai and Delhi, we have realized that improved structures and arrangements for the betterment of people could be soundly ensured with active government participation. More direct programs were focused towards ensuring “Protection of Legal rights of Persons under BPBA, 1959” and Rehabilitation and Re-integration of individuals in the societal structure through various processes of capacity building.

Presently, we are working in two beggars’ homes in Mumbai. We are successfully engaged with different processes owned by the government while working inside the institutions catering to the rehabilitation needs of persons in custody. The honorable court has been very supportive and working hand-in-hand with Koshish towards the accomplishment of our vision, bestowing immense trust on us and understanding the need for social intervention.

We have been preparing Social Investigation Reports (SIRs) for the court in order to facilitate the release of cases during their remand period. For the preparation of SIR’s we follow a comprehensive process involving interactions with clients, visiting their homes, meeting their families, relatives, friends, etc., detailed interactions with their employers and telephonic conversations as required. However, we felt it would be an interesting exercise to know the present status of the cases, for whom SIRs were submitted in the year 2012. Therefore, we began re-visiting each one of them.

The purpose of this exercise is to know about the present status of cases who were arrested and released on the basis of SIR’s submitted by Koshish, what are they doing and how they are surviving. It was heartening to know that the efforts that the Court, together with Koshish, took to ensure justice for the clients paid off as most of the clients are now earning their livelihood through hard work.

We did a follow-up of the cases released on the basis of SIRs prepared by Koshish from January – December 2012. For those living in Mumbai we conducted home-visits, while those who resided out of Mumbai, we made phone calls to check up on them.

In 2012, we prepared 953 SIRs for the release of cases in remand, in both male and female sections at the Chembur Beggars’ Home, Mumbai. For the purpose of this study, we built a sample by taking 20 per cent of the total cases for follow-up. The cases were chosen by stratifying them through the region they came from and the time period that they were arrested between January to December. We therefore, effectively have 190 cases out of 953 as our sample for the current study.

Out of the 190 cases, 60 cases were living with their families and 55 were engaged in gainful employment. 74 cases were unreachable, due to change of address, cases relocating to different areas, phones not reachable or being switched off. Only two of the total cases followed up were engaged in begging. They are back into begging due to frequent arrests under the Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959 leading to loss of jobs and trust. With limited skills and options available at their disposal, they resort to begging for a living.

We came across many clients who were still looking for jobs. There were some under treatment for problems related to their mental health. But majority of the cases were either employed or living with their families. We still have a healthy 60% success rate of clients released through remand.

A summary of the cases (male and female) that we followed up:

Present Status	Male	Female	Total
At home with family	25	35	60
Gainful Employment	45	10	55
Unreachable	52	22	74
Begging	1	1	2
Total	123	68	190

Below is the follow up list reflecting the date of arrest, date of release and their present occupation. The follow up reports were prepared through meeting up clients, home visits, employer visits and telephonic conversations.

Detailed Status Report – Male

Sr. No.	Name (age)	Date of follow-up	Present Status
1	K. Patel (20)	11/03/13	K's father says he has gone back to Mumbai and is working. The family does not have his phone number. He calls them from a PCO.
2	R. Chauhan (52)	11/03/13	R is currently working at a shop in Hussainganj, Lucknow and lives with his family.
3	A. R. Joshi (40)	11/03/13	A is currently working at a hotel in Mumbai. But the family does not know his address. He calls home sometimes from PCOs.
4	R. Ali (21)	11/03/13	R is in Jharkhand with his grandfather preparing for his 10th exam.
5	J. Jadhav (30)	10/03/13	J is preparing for state service exams. He is on

			medication since he falls sick often.
6	D. Dubey (26)	10/03/13	D is working in Mumbai for the past 5 months. He calls home sometimes from the PCO, he does not have a phone.
7	V. Bihari (30)	10/03/13	V has been married now and runs a small tea shop in his village.
8	S Khan (30)	10/03/13	S is at home but his mental health has become very bad. His brother is planning to take him to Lucknow for treatment.
9	K Alam (40)	10/03/13	K is at home with his family but his mental health is bad and is unable to get treatment since the family is poor.
10	D. D. Biswas (50)	10/03/13	D stays at home with his family since release.
11	S Gopalaswamy (44)	11/03/13	S is currently working in a temple as an assistant to the priest. He is also under treatment for his mental health.
12	G. Singh (25)	10/03/13	G is working in his village under the MGNREGA. He is in good health and lives with his family.
13	A. Singh (30)	10/03/13	A lives with his brother in Khairabad and works in the field. He is doing fine.
14	M. R. Vishwakarma (33)	12/03/13	M lives with his family and works at a garage with his brothers.
15	J. Rai (45)	11/03/13	J used to work in his village but left for Mumbai last week to find better work. He calls home from the PCO sometimes. The family does not have his number.
16	W. Gurango (26)	10/03/13	W lives with his family in West Bengal and is fine. He used to work but now stays at home.
17	Mohammad I (25)	10/03/13	I is at home with his family. He works at a brick kiln in the nearby village.
18	A. M. Patil (60)	11/03/13	A lives in his village with his younger son who takes care of him. He is doing fine now.
19	S. D. Bansode (40)	11/03/13	S lives with his family in Andur and has a footwear shop in the market. He is doing well for himself and the family.
20	L. S. Surshekhar (24)	11/03/13	L. was under medical treatment but is now living in Mumbai, Santacruz working at a local restaurant. He calls his family from the PCO sometimes. He does not

			have a phone.
21	V. V. Dhanwalkar (36)	11/03/13	V lives with his family and is currently in search for a job. V's father asked assistance from Koshish for finding him a job.
22	A. Nagare (56)	10/03/13	A lives with his family in the village and works on the farm. He is doing well.
23	M. K. Saha (34)	11/03/13	M is living with his parents in Patna, Bihar and looking after them
24	H. Mulchand (60)	11/03/13	H lives with his family in the village and works on the farm.
25	A. A. Sheikh (48)	11/03/13	A lives in his village and does odd jobs in the field with his family.
26	B. K. Das (32)	11/03/13	B was under treatment for his mental health but is better now and lives with his family in Odisha.
27	H. S. Shirale (65)	11/03/13	H lives in his village with the family and works on the farm.
28	S. R. Alam (22)	11/03/13	S is living with his family in Bihar. But he needs medical treatment and his family has asked for support.
29	K. Ramudu (18)	13/03/13	K has opened a small shop near his house and is living with his family.
30	M. J. Singh (34)	12/03/13	M is living with his family and runs a small shop from his home.
31	B. A. Balu (25)	11/03/13	B is at home with family and works on the field and takes care of animals.
32	T. G. Sheikh (35)	12/03/13	T lives with his family and works on the farm.
33	S. Mande (28)	11/03/13	S lives with his family in the village and works at the local barber shop.
34	U. Sugagan (30)	11/03/13	U was at home post release but has come to Mumbai for work. The family does not have his contact number.
35	D. P. Guru (24)	15/03/13	D is under treatment at Sultanpur Mental Hospital. He is much better than how he was when released from Beggars' Home according to his father.
36	R. D. Gadale (51)	15/03/13	R is at home with his family. He is unable to work due

			to old age and stays at home.
37	Mohammad S. (25)	15/03/13	S is at home at works on the farm. He is living with his family.
38	S. B. Patil (28)	15/3/13	S lives in his village with his brother. His villagers think of him as a god-man and keep visiting him, get food for him. He does not work
39	B. N. Gawand (62)	15/3/13	B lives with his family and does fishing for a living with his son and grandson in Uran.
40	R. H. Karegaar (35)	15/3/13	R's friend was spoken to. He says R begs for a living and has no job. We could not speak to R since he does not have a fixed location.
41	K. R. Kudia (28)	18/02/13	K is now living in Gujrat with wife and two children. He works as a loader.
42	S. K. Sawad (62)	19/02/13	S is working currently and lives with his sister and her family.
43	R. Koli (31)	18/02/13	R is currently staying with his family in Solapur. He has become an alcoholic and does not work anymore.
44	V. S. Patke (35)	20/02/13	V's aunty Rashmi told that he is not staying in Mumbai. He works in informal sector and comes to meet her once in four months. He keeps travelling as and where work takes him.
45	S.N. Kote (52)	19/02/13	S is working as a security guard. He is staying with his wife and kids.
46	S Kailash (40)	19/02/13	S works in the informal sector and stays under flyover with family.
47	R. M. Dalvi (32)	20/02/13	R's home was found but neighbours said he has gone to his native and should be back in a week. They say he is working, but not aware of what job he does.
48	T. S. Walund (65)	19/02/13	T is in his village and under medical treatment for his health problems.
49	S. Q. Khan (17)	08/03/13	S works as a rag-picker with a scrap dealer in Bandra (W). He has been living alone.
50	A.A. Savle (50)	08/03/13	A lives with his son and works as a rag-picker.
51	M. U. Yadav	08/03/13	M. works as a labourer with a local contractor.
52	R.R. Gaikwad (45)	09/03/13	R is jobless and not interested to work. His wife has filed for a divorce and the case is on. He says he likes

			his life this way.
53	M.R. Lad (36)	09/03/13	M lives outside the house since his mother does not take him inside. He does not work and keeps asking her and her daughters for money.
54	P. T. Mazi (46)	19/02/13	P earns about Rs. 7000 a month, spends on basic necessities and alcohol and sends home money.
55	H. D. Jadhav (24)	19/02/13	H lives with his family but has severe mental disturbances. Hitesh, although dependent on family, does not beg and the family is confident about this.
56	R. L. Derber (32)	19/02/13	R is working but currently home since 15 days since his urge for excessive sleep is an obstacle for his work as sweeper which requires him to be present early morning.
57	G. Nair (36)	09/03/13	G lives in Pune and is completing his plumbing contract. He gets Rs. 150 a day.
58	R. C. Mhatre (24)	08/03/12	R. does not work and is mentally ill. His mother works. They have tried for his treatment but not much difference could be identified.
59	A Sheikh (60)	08/03/13	A is a rag picker but alcoholic and stays away from home occasionally. His son is planning for helping him with de-addiction.
60	S. Kharinar (43)	09/03/13	S. stays away from home usually and when at home, he is abusive and violent. He hardly works and when he does, he spends his money in alcohol. His wife works as helper in Balwadi and the entire family stays at his wife's sister's home.
61	M. Shah (65)	19/02/13	M worked at the given contact post-release but left the job without informing. The employer will get back to us if he gets any details about him.
62	A. Solanke (55)	09/03/13	A is working with a caterer in Gujarat.
63	C.Mohite (60)	20/03/13	C does odd jobs with the municipality and lives on his own. He does not live with his family, since he is an alcoholic and the family does not approve of his drinking.

64	R. B. Kharaj (44)	09/03/13	R works in a cloth shop but is also an alcoholic. His family takes care of his needs.
65	K. P. Rathod (55)	18/03/13	K is working in Mumbai and lives in the accommodation provided by the employer. The family does not know his address.
66	B. Sharma (20)	18/03/13	B lives with his family in his village and works in the village at a shop.
67	J. Purangranit (50)	18/03/13	J lives with his family in Punjab and is working on the field there.
68	K. Munshilal (25)	18/03/13	K lives with his family in and is working on the field there.
69	O. B. Meena (32)	18/03/13	O lives with his family in and is working at a local sweet shop.
70	R. Santu (30)	18/03/13	R lives with his family in his village. He does not work though.

Detailed Status Report - Female

Sr. No.	Name (age)	Follow-up Date	Present Status
1	M. Mahadik (42)	04/03/13	M has been living with her family since release. She is in need of treatment for her mental health.
2	S. Qureshi (35)	08/03/13	S is also known as Noor Bano. The client's uncle and aunt live at the given address. They said that S was being treated in her native place in U.P.
3	J. Sakat (52)	08/03/13	J lives with two daughters and is dependent on her daughter's income.
4	K. Trimakal (56)	09/03/13	K lives with her son at the given address.
5	A. Kale (30)	08/03/13	A stays under the Andheri flyover, with family and sells garlands.
6	D. D. Salunke (35)	09/03/13	D is staying at home with family.
7	A. Sheikh (21)	09/03/13	A lives with her father and brother in Kurla.
8	A. Sheikh (55)	08/03/13	Met A at her home, she does odd jobs for a living, also works as a domestic help. Abida's elder daughter Reshma, who lives in Vasai and visits her every fortnight, gives her money for her expenses.
9	S. Sheikh (25)	08/03/13	S is at home due to her mental condition. She is totally dependent on her mother Abida.

10	R. Sheikh (22)	08/03/13	R does odd jobs for a living, and is survived by her mother and sister.
11	F. Fernandes (60)	08/03/13	F lives with her daughter Filomina at Vikhroli and is not working due to her old age.
12	S. V. Kale (56)	09/03/13	Met S, her daughter and her husband. They live outside Charni Road station on the footpath. S sells flowers for a living.
13	S. B. Kanoje (45)	09/03/13	S is homeless. She seeks alms from public for her basic food and amenities. Previously she worked as a domestic help in Maker Tower, but has been jobless since she has been arrested by the police multiple times under BPBA.
14	V. Subramaniam (50)	08/03/13	V lives at the given address and her daughters live nearby who take care of her.
15	C. G. Lode (50)	08/03/13	C lives with her daughter and her son at the given address.
16	H. Kamble (60)	08/03/13	H lives with her son and wife. But has become extremely weak with age.
17	R. N. Sawant (65)	20/02/13	R lives with her daughter in her village.
18	S. Lalji (55)	22/02/13	S is staying with the family at the given address. She works with the family, they make and sell papad and she is doing it well.
19	A. R. Reddy (20)	19/02/13	A is working as a domestic worker in that area.
20	V. R. Reddy (44)	19/02/13	V is not working at presently. V lives with her daughter with no other support system.
21	S. Pinto (72)	08/03/13	S lives with her family and is at home.
22	K. R. Aware (26)	22/02/13	K is staying with her family on the given address.
23	S. Bano (65)	19/02/13	S is living with her son Yaseen. However, due to old age, her health is not very good.
24	L. N. Deshmukh (65)	19/02/13	L lives with her daughter Shaila who is a domestic worker. She is happy with her.
25	S. Mandal (23)	19/02/13	S is under treatment at the Regional Mental hospital, Thane. Her sister takes care of her needs.
26	S. Kale (50)	19/02/13	S works as domestic help and this she has been doing for several years.
27	I. Pawar (60)	19/02/13	I lives with her family with grand children. She is not

			able to work due to old age.
28	N. (60)	19/02/13	N lives in her village and is fine. At the given address, we met her daughter Lakshmi who said that Narsaffa left for her village immediately after release from Beggars' Home.
29	T. Khanam (19)	10/3/13	T lives with her family and is doing well.
30	S.Jamnik (55)	10/3/13	S lives with her son in the village. She stays at home and does not work due to old age.
31	J. Meher (50)	10/3/13	J lives with her son and family in Odisha. She is doing well.
32	S. N. Kothari (23)	10/3/13	Spoke to S's family. She has become highly disturbed and roams around in the village shouting and fighting. Her father took her to the Regional Mental Hospital at Nanded but they did not admit her. Her father asked Koshish for help.
33	P. Gargate (50)	4/3/13	P is currently under treatment for her mental health. She is with her family.
34	J. M. Vyavhare (45)	8/3/13	J lives with her family and does all her household chores like she used to before arrest.
35	V. Roshan (50)	8/3/13	V lives with her husband and they together do odd jobs for a living.
36	N. R. Kawte (38)	8/3/13	N lives with her family. She works on the farm.
37	V. P. Bhusare (25)	4/3/13	V is living with her family and is doing well.
38	D. O. Vyas (30)	8/3/13	D is with her family now and stays at home.
39	A. A. Warthe (30)	4/3/13	A lives with her husband and child in Nagpur. She does not work.
40	V. M. Patil (65)	4/3/13	Her daughter says, V lives in Mumbai and sells small astrological products for a living. She is homeless and wanders from one place to another. V visits home sometimes but does not live at one place constantly.
41	J. B. Nareshchandra (40)	4/3/13	J lives with her family in West Bengal and is doing well.
42	R. Borkar (27)	4/3/13	R is under treatment from Nagpur Mental Hospital. Her family is taking care of her needs.
43	S. R. Kaul (30)	4/3/13	S is living with her family at home. Her health is fine but she has started smoking. Family was worried about this.

Reflections:

This exercise, though small, has been extremely significant in representing this small population and creating a voice for them. There are huge numbers of arrests made under the Beggary Prevention Legislations where the persons arrested are not into begging, but poor homeless individuals working through the day and living by the roads after work. There are thousands of people who are criminalized for their inability to comprehend their own situations due to severe complications in their mental health. There are many who resort to begging as the only means of survival available at their disposal, out of the need to continue existing and not as a choice. It is crucial that such persons be acquitted by the honorable court and be reinstated into the social system by providing social security measures for betterment of their health, shelter, sanitation, food, clothing and other basic necessities.

It has been observed that, the arrest of individuals affects the entire family unit and leads to loss of livelihood for an entire family, inevitably pulling them into begging. This is of grave threat to many families who work and live on the streets, as they are most vulnerable to arrests. One man getting arrested can turn life upside down for the wife who might be subject to working in extremely harsh exploitative conditions, children dropping out of school and engaging in child labor, old parents left to die with no medical aid and care. It gives rise to a whole new cycle of criminalization of various groups in different forms.

Another critical challenge that faces us is the release and treatment of people with mental illness. We came across many people who are undergoing treatment for their mental health in regional mental hospitals post release. Arresting such harmless persons, who themselves are in need for security makes it all the more challenging for their rehabilitation. They need timely treatment and referrals to the mental hospitals and not arrests.

We are grateful to the honorable court for accepting our SIRs and facilitating the release of clients on the basis of our reports. This initiative has been of great support for Koshish in working towards our vision to protect and safeguard the rights of our people.