



## BOSCO REFUGEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



BOSCO Refugee Assistance Program aims to empower refugees to rebuild their lives by identifying their potential and building their capacity while in the host country. Every refugee hopes and dreams of a war free peaceful world. We admire their strength and courage as they face new challenges and start life afresh trying to heal from the pain and trauma of losing their most dear ones back home in conflict. The success of this 19-year old annually renewed project is a team of dedicated staff. Presently BOSCO has 67 Indian staffs and 53 refugees staff who find joy and pride in working for the cause of these most vulnerable people. The major activities of this project are as follows:

### **Education and Vocational Training:**

Education is one of the key areas of BOSCO's work with refugees focusing mainly on admission of children to government schools. Refugee children have access to government schools under right to education and BOSCO supports them by educating parents about the location of schools, procedure of admission and accompanying them for the same. As medium of instruction in most government schools is Hindi and parents are not literate in Hindi, BOSCO has 3 Centres where refugee children are provided tuition classes. Children are also prepared for admission through bridge classes. BOSCO also runs crèche's for children at its centre at Bhogal and Bodella. Children are provided uniforms and mid-day meals.

Students are also facilitated admission to National Open School to do their 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. As it is a distance learning program, tuitions are provided to refugee students. Language is a big barrier for most refugees as they do not speak Hindi and English which creates a lot of problems for them to interact with local Indians. BOSCO runs English and Hindi classes for refugees at 3 Training Centres. They are also trained in basic and advanced computer skills. All these courses are for a period of six months. Life skills trainings are conducted for all students attending language and computer classes to equip them with basic skills to cope with their life.



## **Psychosocial Support and Child Protection**

BOSCO provides psychosocial support to refugees as most of them have gone through a lot of trauma in the country of origin and have coping issues during their stay in New Delhi. BOSCO has technical tie up with VIMHANS (Vidyasagar Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Science) to build capacity of social workers and psychologists. Individual Counselling, Group Therapy and Home visits are made as part of follow up after the initial assessment. Mental Health clients are assessed by psychiatrist from VIMHANS. Single refugees without family support are institutionalised for their treatment. De-addiction is also facilitated for clients that abuse alcohol or drugs.

As part of the psychosocial support BOSCO has a special focus on unaccompanied minors who are here in New Delhi without any family support. They are followed up regularly and encouraged to take up studies / vocational trainings and are provided life skills training. Best Interest Assessment (BIA) and Best Interest Determination (BID) are carried out for children at risk including unaccompanied and separated children. Communities are sensitised on child marriage and child labour and such cases are followed up for appropriate interventions. BOSCO works in close collaboration with CWC and Child line for child protection.

## **Health Support:**

BOSCO supports refugees to have better access to government health facilities through Community Service providers (refugees able to speak in Hindi and English). Refugees are provided with generic medicines that are not available in the government pharmacy through four chemists that BOSCO has tie up with. Females in the reproductive age group (13 yrs. to 49 yrs.) are provided sanitary napkins. Health awareness sessions are conducted in the community on water/vector borne diseases, reproductive health, immunisation, HIV/AIDS etc. Free condoms and mosquito nets are also provided to refugees. Health Camps are also organised at various refugee populated areas.



### **Youth Clubs:**

BOSCO works closely with the refugee youth and have formed 12 youth clubs in the community. All clubs have 2 male and 2 female leaders who with their members conduct campaigns in community on Sexual and gender-based violence, Education, HIV/AIDS etc. through sessions, street plays, skit, songs etc. They also compete with each other in Sports and Cultural Programs during Sports and Youth Meet. 1000 refugee youth are associated with BOSCO Youth Clubs.

### **Community Mobilisation**

BOSCO works closely with diverse refugee communities. Major populations are Ethnic Afghans, Hindu Sikh Afghans, Somalis, Chins, Rohingyas, Congolese, Sudanese and few other nationals like Ethiopians, Eritreans, Iranians, Iraqis, Palestinians etc. BOSCO regularly engages with community representatives and conducts leadership trainings for them. Female leadership and 50% female participation in all BOSCO programs is encouraged. BOSCO engages with 10 children's groups, 10 women's groups, 4 elderly groups and 12 youth groups to understand their issues and take feedback.

Social Projects @ INR 30,000 are provided to communities to promote community based protection. Peaceful co-existence with locals is encouraged and rapport building with locals like RWA members, shopkeepers, landlords, government school principal and teacher, doctors and medical staffs of government hospitals is taken up regularly.

### **Prevention and Response to SGBV**

BOSCO conducts a lot of awareness activities on prevention of Sexual and Gender Based Violence throughout the year. 16 days of activism to end violence against women is conducted every year in November. Dialogues are held with men and boys to promote their role in ending violence against women and girls. The role of UNHCR and its partners is shared with refugees. BOSCO also provides medical and psychosocial support to survivors and links them with UNHCR's legal partner. Confidentiality is maintained and SGBV SOP is adhered to. Shelter support is explored for survivors.



### **Services to People with specific needs**

BOSCO works with people with specific needs like elderly, disabled, medically vulnerable, children at risk and women at risk. Vulnerability assessments are carried out for timely identification and appropriate linkages. BOSCO conducts assessments for subsistence allowance to refugees as per UNHCR's guidelines and sends recommendation to UNHCR. Based on UNHCR's approval, the same is entered in database and cheque requests send to Development and Justice Initiative (DAJI) with UNHCR's authorisation. Cheques received from DAJI are distributed to refugees and non-collections are returned to DAJI.

### **DAFI**

BOSCO also implements the German Embassy scholarship program for refugees to complete their higher education (graduation/technical trainings). Scholars are provided a monthly subsistence allowance, yearly book allowance, and registration and tuition fee. They are followed up every month for support to complete their studies and group interactive sessions are conducted.

