

NEWSLETTER



Sri Aurobindo Society

ACPN

AURO CENTRE FOR PUBLIC NUTRITION
PUBLIC HEALTH & PUBLIC POLICY

KNOWLEDGE | ACTION | PUBLIC GOOD

Newsletter 05

January - June 2025

Auro Centre for Public Nutrition, Public Health and Public Policy (ACPN)

A vertical of Sri Aurobindo Society (SAS) Pondicherry. ACPN was established in November 2021.

Sri Aurobindo Society was started by the Mother on 19th September 1960 and is one of the most renowned charities in India and internationally.



***We believe in working among the most deprived sections of society
and the most backward areas of the country***

We welcome Dr K S Nagesh, MDS as Advisor, ACPN

An eminent public health expert and former Director, Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Public Health and Center for Disease Control, RGUHS, Karnataka

Creating Impact - Vita Poshan

From the Shopfloor.....



.....to the Shops



However, there is still the hardest nut yet to crack....

Around 5% of the community point blank refused to have anything to do with introducing a new food in their diet. They had a complete mental block, and were not willing to listen about the benefits of the new foods, and said they were afraid of side effects. **This group happened to be the most vulnerable – the poorest labourers, completely illiterate and with no awareness of basic**

We have to work on this

Feed back from the Field

Sample distribution of VitaPoshan was completed in April 2025 with very encouraging feedback from the field

- Around 80% of the community were in complete acceptance of the products and liked the taste, the feel and the flavours.
- 15% of the community are indifferent to VitaPoshan Baalya citing reasons of lack of time, but mostly unwillingness to purchase extra milk, which they say is outside their budget and they don't like it with water
- The biggest hit was VitaPoshan Kutumbha because it could be eaten with routine food. It enriched the taste and flavour and made everyone feel good and energetic

Happiest feedback from the community....

- There is improvement in health and energy levels of children, adolescents and adults.
- The products have good taste and are easily digestible
- There is a higher sense of well being and better health across all age groups after consuming VitaPoshan



VitaPoshan enters the Yadgir Market!!

The beginning of several new and successful initiatives in Yadgir District

VitaPoshan entered the Yadgir market in May 2025 – through wholesalers, retailers, SHGS.

Promotional activities are going full swing in Yadgir Taluk. Events are being organized at Village and Town Santhes (weekly markets)



Auto backs were distributed to about 50 auto rickshaws



Free samples for tasting VitaPoshan was given to the community.



Kiosks have been distributed to 5 Women Self Help Group members for marketing VitaPoshan



Reports from market indicate that VitaPoshan is selling well, there have been repeat orders and people are liking it

We are grateful to KKRTC and Vritti Media for screening our promotional film at the Yadgir, Shahpur and Surpur Bus Stops/ <https://publicnutrition.aurosociety.org/gallery/>

Research Publications

A paper documenting the Yadgir Project has been published on-line by Springer Nature Journal of Indian Institute of Science.

"Introducing Sustainable Technology and Industry in Aspirational District, Yadgir to Provide Livelihoods and Strengthen Human Capital" by Veena S. Rao , H. I. Somashekar, Gopikrishna Konga and Harshita M. Chinnaswamy

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s41745-025-00470-y>

This paper explains a unique, multi-sectoral convergence and development project for women self help groups covering sustainable technology, women's economic empowerment and livelihoods, horticulture, health and nutrition, and education in Yadgir Aspirational District. Yadgir is the most backward district of Karnataka with extremely poor human development indicators, low per-capita income and minimal industrialization. Sustainable technology has been introduced in this district for the first time for setting up a small scale nutritious food production unit run by self help group women, for producing VitaPoshan, a fortified, nutritious multi-grain food, for children, adolescents, adults and family, made from locally available agri-horticulture produce. An accompanying strong multi-layered communication strategy has resulted in progressive behavior change regarding health, nutrition, sanitation practices, already visible in families. This initiative is expected to accelerate improvement of the health/nutritional status of the family/community; economic empowerment of women; higher learning capacity of children; upward social mobility and higher income within families—in short, strengthen Yadgir's human capital

"Predicting Transitions in Stunting, Wasting and Underweight Among Children in Aspirational Districts of India" by Veena S. Rao, Shalini Rajneesh, Hanimi Reddy, Anil Chandran and Harshita M. Chinnaswamy, Indian Journal of Human Development, Sage.

<https://lnkd.in/gUVdSUUq>.

This paper analysed the trends in reduction of stunting, underweight and wasting among children 6–35 months, as evidenced in the real-time data of the Karnataka Multi-sectoral Nutritional Pilot Project (KMNPP) (2015–2018), implemented in Chincholi Block, Gulbarga District and Devadurga Block, Raichur District, published in The Indian Journal Human Development on 19 May 2022*. It attempts to apply the real-time proof of concept re trends and transitions on the baseline data of stunting, wasting and underweight of children 6–35 months extracted from NFHS-5 data of the two lowest quintile households of all the 112 aspirational districts (ADs) using linear, exponential and logarithmic regression, and predicts the improvement of these three measures, after implementation of the KMNPP interventions for a period of five years. The article also projects how this improvement impacts the average aspirational district data regarding these three measures, and the national average taken from NFHS-5. In five years, as per the linear regression trend, stunting decreased from 46.3% to 30.4%, wasting from 24.6% to 9.0% and underweight from 43.0% to 1.2% in the two lowest quintile households of 112 ADs. Due to these changes in two lowest quintile households of aspirational districts, stunting percentage will reduce from 41.7% to 33.6%, wasting from 22.8% to 15.5% and underweight from 38.0% to 20.7% in all the 112 ADs; and nationally, stunting will reduce from 36.2% to 31.4%, wasting from 19.9% to 16.1%, underweight from 31.2% to 23.5%.

Hence, for India to show faster progress in reduction of stunting, wasting and underweight, there is strong justification for replication of the KMNPP interventions in the poorest quintile households of all 112 Aspirational Districts.

****Multisectoral Nutrition Interventions and Their Impact on the Nutritional Status of Children:***

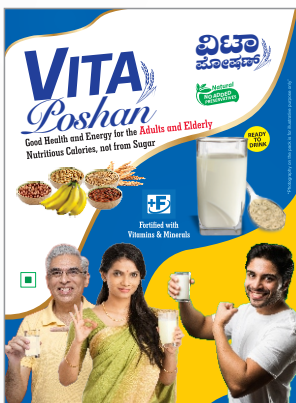
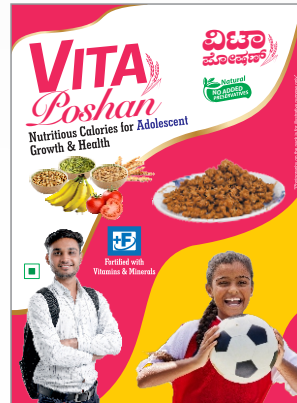
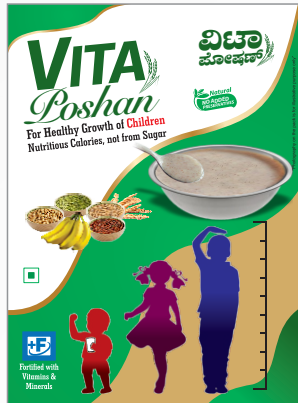
An Open Experiment in Two Remote Blocks of Karnataka, India by Veena S. Rao, Shalini Rajneesh, Chaya Degaonkar, Hanimi Reddy, and S. Bharadwaj <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/09737030221098979?journalCode=jhda>

Our grateful thanks to

Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited, Mangaluru (MRPL) Karnataka
State Beverages Corporation Limited, Bengaluru (KSBCL)

for their support

For providing affordable, healthy, nutritious food to the most deprived communities of Karnataka



Leadership

Shri Vijay Poddar, Chairman
Dr R Sankar, Advisor Eminent Public Health/Nutrition Expert
Dr Kush Verma, IAS (Retd.) Advisor Public Policy
Ms Rina Ray, IAS (Retd.) Advisor Education
Dr Nagesh K S, Advisor
Dr Ajit Sabnis, Director, SAS,
Shri Kaushal Sharma, CFO, SAS

Team

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CONNECT WITH US

We believe that partnerships can create sustainable impact for India's most backward communities.
To know more about our projects or to partner with us,

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<https://www.linkedin.com/company/auro-centre-for-public-nutrition-public-health-and-public-policy/>

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