

ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS 2015/16



RAILWAY
children
Fighting for street children



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ABOUT RAILWAY CHILDREN INDIA

Children India (RCI) was established in 2013 to work with children who are in need of care and support in India. It is registered under Indian Companies Act, 2013 of Section 25 (now section 8). Railway Children India is governed by a Board of four Directors that meets every quarter to discuss strategy and programmes and advise the Country Director. These directors are experienced individuals from diverse fields such as international development and corporate social responsibility.

Railway Children India's vision is **a world where no child ever has to live on the streets**. Our objective is the relief of children and young persons under 25 years of age who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress, anywhere in the world and in particular those who are living on the streets.

INTERVENTION MODEL

Railway Children India's mission is guided by three important elements as highlighted in the below figure:

- 1. Immediate Need for Care and Protection:** RCI works at railway stations with high levels of need to directly support and rehabilitate children through local NGOs. It enables children alone and at risk at railway stations to access immediate need for care and protection.
- 2. Working with Government:** Railway Children India works in collaboration Ministry of Railway, Railway Board, MWCD and various state governments for strengthening child protection mechanism in India particularly at railway stations. It conducts capacity building trainings for Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Government Railway Police (GRP) in child protection issues and related laws.
- 3. Making community responsive to the issue:** RCI works to create mass awareness on children rights the process of displaying posters, distribution of hand outs and display of banners communicating child protection information for passengers at railway stations.



VISION 2022

Over the next five years, RCI has planned to transform 25 railway stations to child friendly spaces, improve child care & protection work in 26 Child Care Institutions and strengthen child protection mechanism at 5 source areas by 2022. We will protect 120,000 children and restore 96,000 children sustainably around 25 railway stations, 5 source areas and 26 government children home. It means lives of 96000 children would be transformed from living alone and at risk to a life with dignity, control, purpose and togetherness and continue to live at a safe space (either family or long term care).

INTERVENTION AT THE STATION LEVEL

Intervention with children:

Step I: Outreach/Identification

During this year programme reached out 1290 children from 3 railway stations of Tamil Nadu (Villupuram, Katpadi and Jolarpet) and one Government Children Home, Chennai through the local partners The Hope House, CHES, Scope India and RSEEDS. Out of 1290 children, 1118 were enabled to access Drop-in- Centre (DIC) services at railway stations and children at Chennai Government Home were supported through counselling and other psychosocial support methods.

Step II: Forming relationship with the child and ensuring the basic needs of the child is met

As a result of immediate care and protection services, the programme reunified 938 children with their respective families and 75 children were referred to long care homes. Out of all children referred to long care homes, 18 were linked to vocational training. In addition, 285 children were transferred to other district and state Child Welfare Committees (CWC) for further intervention and support.

Step III: Restoration and follow up

The programme has initiated quarterly follow up of reunified children. As a result, information of 585 children are being captured. During the follow up process 541 children were found to be staying back with families. Among them, 364 children were continuing education through formal schools. 22 children were engaged in vocational trainings and 47 were engaged in some sort of work with in the villages. 108 children were idle at home and the remaining 44 children have left home again due to the unstable socio-economic conditions of the family and the ignorant parents.



Reunification of a child with family by team through CWC

Intervention at the family level:

As a part of the restoration process family level intervention was planned, as solely working with the children cannot address this issue. Family plays a key role in the wellbeing and development of the child and ensure that s/he feels comfortable and safe at home. It is important to address the issues persisting within the families that compelled these children to leave their home behind. In the process of restoration parental counseling and vulnerability assessment¹ is one of the key component of the programme design. Vulnerability Assessment has been done at the time of reunification, 166 families were identified as vulnerable, where the chances of children leaving home again was higher. During the post reunification; intervention with these families 27 children were referred to experts for intensive mental health support, 68 parents were convinced to withdraw their children from working and continue with formal education and 39 children were referred to vocational training. Additionally, for 32 vulnerable families, the programme has articulated a support plan, which is being implemented.

¹ Vulnerability Assessment tool (VAT) has been developed by RC- development and Support function for identification of the vulnerable families and planning appropriate intervention for each of the child according to the assessment report.

Intervention with the Railway Stakeholders:

Capacity building and training:

At 3 major junctions (Katpadi, Jolarpet and Villupuram), 824 RPF and GRP officers were provided training on Child Rights, Juvenile Justice act 2015, Standard Operating procedure (SOP) issued by Railways, and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act 20 12 by Railway Children India. As a result; a) Jolarpet junction has begun to convene Child Help Group (CHG) meetings and 'Child Help Group' has been formed in Villupuram junction. This was recognized by GRP headquarters through Twitter, which was re -tweeted by Hon. Mr. Suresh Prabhu, Minister for Railways, Govt. of India.

Awareness campaigns and sensitisation:

Railway Children in collaboration with Scope India has implemented a 15 days intensive campaign to generate awareness among the passengers and the general public, at Villupuram Junction Railway Station, about the issues of "children living alone and at risk on the streets" and their responsibility to protect children. Campaign was implemented through a series of **street plays** within Railway station premises, bus stations and in the slums nearby the Railway Stations.

This campaign reached out to 7500 general public, 75 vendors, 30 coolies and 160 auto and taxi drivers, as a result of this 1) 18 children were rescued by vendors and coolies. In addition, 15 children were rescued from bus station and market area during the campaign. 2) This campaign was witnessed by **Additional Divisional Railway Manager (ADRM)** during his review visit to the railway station. He appreciated the initiative and has agreed to provide space for setting up 'Child Help Desk'(CHD) in Villupuram station; temporarily provided space in front of GRP office, close to the entrance of the Railway Station 3) Media has intensively covered the campaign; it has appreciated the initiative and widely covered the news in state level Tamil newspapers - Dhintanthi, Dhinamalar and Dhinasaidhi. This campaign has also helped in building strong relationship with District Child protection Unit (DCPU). After this campaign, DCPU has invited Scope to work in government home.

Intervention at the Government Home, Chennai:

In the first six months' time a manual on "Minimum Standards of Care (MSoC)" as per Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 was formulated and provided training to the staffs of the shelter home. `During the next six months of the year intervention focused on implementation of the standards of care. At present, out of 8 standards 03 following standards have been achieved and are in practice. 1) Child protection Policy (CPP) is developed and translated in local language, all the staff members are trained in CPP on implementing the same. 2) Life skills education is integrated in the activity schedule of the children and implemented regularly by trained staff.

3) Capacity building of all the staff members including the newly appointed staff on Juvenile Justice Act 2015 and Protection of children from sexual offences Act 2012 is conducted by CHES to ensure trained staffs are attending to the children.



Tweet by Hon. Mr Suresh Prabhu, Minister for Railways, Govt. of India



As a result of the intervention changes in the care and protection environment have begun to manifest. For example, A) children have reported positive change in the behavior of home staff during the 'Bal Sabha' meetings. B) 150 children were identified as vulnerable post restoration and were followed up intensively.

At present, all 150 children are staying back at home after reunification. Further, 96 are continuing education, 40 idle at home. C) Families of 25 children were supported to apply for sponsorship scheme.

Preventive approach: Intervention at the Source

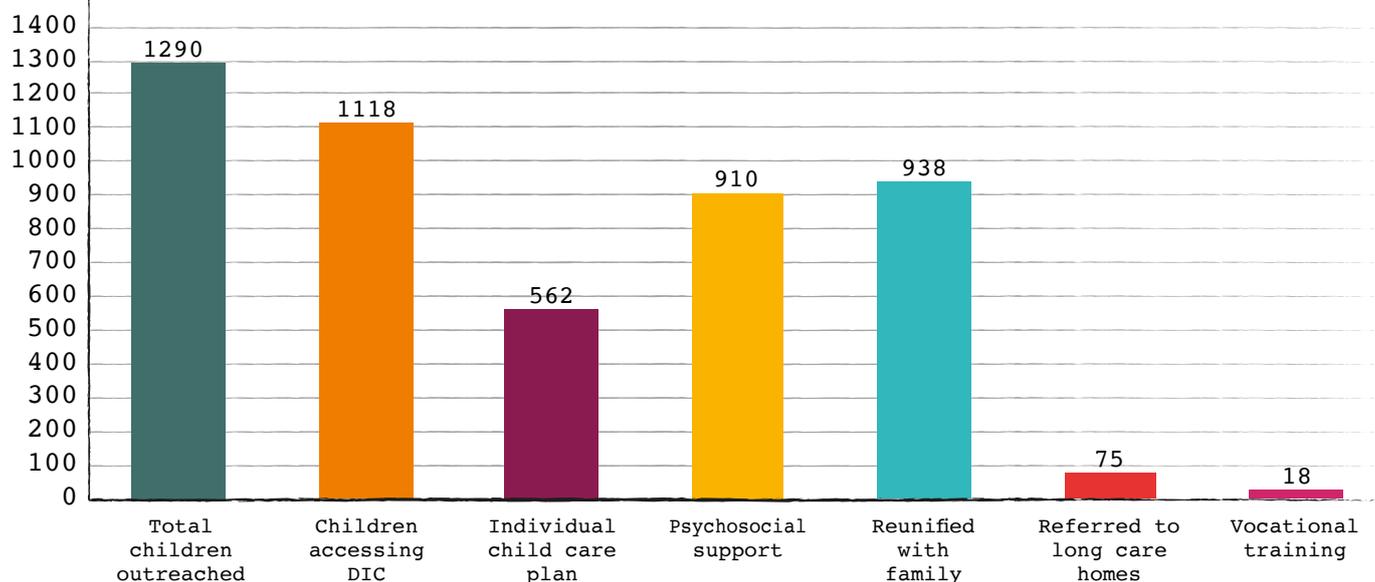
3 source areas have been identified from where most of the children were usually found within the stations. Upon the analysis of the baseline study conducted in June 2016 it was observed that a) every day 2 to 3 new children arrive in the two railway stations- Villupuram and Katpadi, b) 65 children access these two stations for work and live with their respective families nearby the station and c) K V Kuppam, block in Vellore district, Thennamadevi block in Villupuram district and Ezhil Nagar (ward) in North Chennai were identified as the most vulnerable blocks and



wards, a large number of children are out-migrating unsafely from all of these areas. Preventive work has been initiated in these source areas from September 2016.

Railway Children (RC) has been nominated, by the Department of Social Defence (DSD), as a resource agency to train Group 1 officers including Block Development Officers (BDOs) and Tahsildars from 3 districts (Chennai, Thiruvallur and Vellore) on child Rights, Child Protection, Railway SoP and POCSO Act. These officers are responsible to initiate child protection mechanism at the block and district level. First training was organised in April 2016, 67 officers attended the training. Railway Children has also been invited to train 27 newly recruited and dedicated District child protection officers, this will directly enable the implementation of Integrated child protection scheme (ICPS) at the district level.

Key highlights of the intervention



Regional Consultation:

Railway children organized a south-regional consultation to discuss the findings of the research titled 'Child reunification processes in India' on 2nd May 2016 in Chennai. This consultation was attended by representatives from 5 states comprises of NGOs working on child rights issues, individual child rights experts, UNICEF, Department of Social Defense, Women and Child Development, AP and Telangana and Child Welfare Committees. Hon'ble Justice G.M Akbar Ali (Retired judge and Member JJ Committee, High Court of Madras), was a special invitee and chaired the consultation. The key findings of the report shared is as follows



1. Knowledge of child protection mechanisms was negligible in most of the communities. Other vulnerabilities and risks in these communities were: migration, indebtedness, addiction, child labour, child marriage, and human trafficking.
2. Education of children remains an important area of work, as poverty is not the only reason that contributes to children dropping out of school. Access to education, in several communities, had barriers such as distance from institution, lack of transportation facilities and corporal punishment in schools.
3. Reasons reported for leaving home by almost half of the children were associated with family and/or home environment, such as- corporal punishment at home, fear of being punished, perceiving home environment to be uninteresting or difficult, feeling neglected and/or lonely at home, and leaving home in search of the parent.
4. Contextual vulnerabilities impact life of children before they leave home as well as after their reunification with families.
5. Reasons reported for children staying back with families are a) continuation of life or daily activities without significant disruption, for many children daily life activities continued as before and without the need for adjustment with significant changes. b) However, for some children, this continuation of life was with higher alertness from parent(s). c) Negative impact and perception of life on streets, d) a strong sense of responsibility towards family. e) Presence of attachment/ support figures in family/community. f) Contentment with present options in life and Parental understanding of needs of their children (and hence agreeing with their choices).



At the end of the consultation the panel felt, that there is a need to lobby with the state and the relevant departments to address the contextual vulnerabilities of the children otherwise rehabilitation is going to be increasingly difficult. The consultation proved to be a great platform for Railway children to develop a stronger network to advocate on this issue at the state level. As a follow up action, a core committee was formed to strengthen the recommendations of the study and share it with relevant stakeholders across the state. This workshop has been widely covered by both print² and visual media.



Media coverage of the Regional Consultation on Family Reunification Study

Review Workshop on quality standards of work:

Railway Children and all its partners got together to review their current quality of work with children and clearly defining 'quality of work with children'. This reflection took place during Knowledge Sharing workshop organized by Railway Children on 26th and 27th of May at Delhi. The workshop was facilitated by Dr. Achal Bhagat, MBBS MD (Psychiatry) MRCPsych, is a Senior Consultant Psychiatrist. As an output of the workshop, Railway Children and its partners have decided to develop a 'quality framework' to guide high and consistent quality of work with children connected with railways)

Staff capacity building:

As a result of the training need analysis (TNA) process facilitated by Railway children for CHES and Scope, following capacity building needs emerged; a) how to access Integrated Child Protection Scheme b) to understand Juvenile Justice Act 2015 c) POCSO Act 2015 with TN state guidelines d) how to respond to the psycho social care needs of the vulnerable child and families. All the four training needs were addressed through systematic training programmes (on 23rd December 2015, 01st April 2016, 11th to 14th May 2016 and 23rd June 2016), facilitated by the Development Support unit of Railway Children. Detailed reports of these trainings are available. Individual capacity building need for all Railway Children team members were assessed and addressed. In addition, common capacity building need for Railway Children team was addressed through a workshop on the Juvenile Justice Act 2015 and Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) in Delhi.

Refresher training on administering '**Vulnerability Assessment Tool (VAT)**' was organized by Railway children in the month of January 2016. This helped partners to develop a clear understanding of the vulnerabilities of the children and family, which contributed in developing an effective individual care plan.

Finance workshop

Date: 28th and 29th November 2015

Workshop was organized by Railway Children India. Mr. Navin Sellaraju, Country director Railway Children India, facilitated the workshop as he introduced the 'purpose of the workshop' and the participants Country Director briefly referred to the findings of the external audit conducted by NN Das & co which was scheduled during the beginning of the year in 2015. He highlighted that there was certain concerns in the finance management systems being followed by partners, the same was observed by the external audit team. Hence this workshop is scheduled to build the capacities of the partners on 'Accounting Practices and Principles', additionally to update the latest information on fulfilling statutory compliances.

Objective of the workshop

- To understand the mandatory/ non-negotiable practices in managing finances of non-profit sector registered under societies, trust and section 25 companies. With Specific reference to a) Internal controls b) Accounting systems c) Finance management d) Governance/ statutory compliances.
- To learn the consequences to for the organisations, in case of not adhering the statutory compliances?
- To provide technical feedback and Suggestion for improvement for partners based on the observations & findings highlighted from the recent Audit of 17 partners
- To update renewal procedure of FCRA based on Renewal of FCRA act 2011.



PARTNERSHIPS

Railway children India (RCI) has been working in the Railway stations through the local partners. In Villupuram the local partner is Scope India. IN Katpadi Rseeds was chosen as the local partner, but due to non-performance RCI opted to initiate exit process with Rseeds. A new partner has been identified to replace the existing partnership with Rseeds. The Hope House (THH) has been selected to work at Katpadi station, Vellore district. A rigorous and systematic (Due Diligence) partner selection process was followed to arrive at this partnership decision. The work with The Hope House will be starting from July 2016. CHES is the local partner working in the Government Shelter home, Chennai.



VOICES OF CHILDREN

A DREAM COMES TRUE! I WILL BECOME AN EXPERT MECHANIC!!!

Ramesh (Name Changed) a 16-year-old boy hails from a suburb of Chennai. He used to spend most of the time on the streets wandering with friends and was addicted to substance abuse. Sometimes he disappeared for 2 to 3 days and came back home whenever he felt like.

In June 2015, ChildLine rescued Ramesh from the bus station, while he was under influence of drugs and living on street. He was presented before a Child Welfare Committee, which referred him to CHES (RCI partner) for further intervention.

Intervention: CHES engaged with Ramesh and learnt that he was living with parents and elder brother. His father was addicted to alcoholic and failed to feed the family. His mother was working as domestic help and elder brother worked as a daily wages labour. Ramesh discontinued his education after he failed in the 8th grade and he was no longer interested in education. He started spending his whole day with peers and other friends in the neighbourhood and gradually got addicted to drugs.

Ramesh was referred to a psychiatrist for de-addiction. After the treatment, he was restored back to his family. His parents were counselled to support Ramesh in the process of de-addiction. During follow-up meetings, Ramesh was found to be completely de addicted from substance abuse. However, he was sitting idle at home, not willing to take-up studies and expressed his desire to learn scooter mechanic's work.

However, the minimum eligibility to join this course was 8th grade pass. With much effort CHES was successful in convincing Don Bosco Institute to avail a seat for Ramesh in a two-wheeler mechanic course running in collaboration with Yamaha.

Ramesh In his words: - I feel that I am on the right track. I was always dreaming of becoming a mechanic. Now my dream is coming true.

"I'VE FOUND MY HOME, A HOME AWAY FROM HOME - I DO NOT LIKE TO BE ON THE STREETS EVER AGAIN!"

Rahul (Name Changed) a 7 year old boy hails from Tindivanam, a town in Villupuram district in Tamil Nadu. He belongs to a nomadic community. For generations the family has been moving from place to place, camping on the way, make ornaments of beads and selling them as they move.

Rahul used to stay with his grandmother. He was not interested in school and because of neglect by his parents he decided to leave home and landed in Villupuram railway junction.

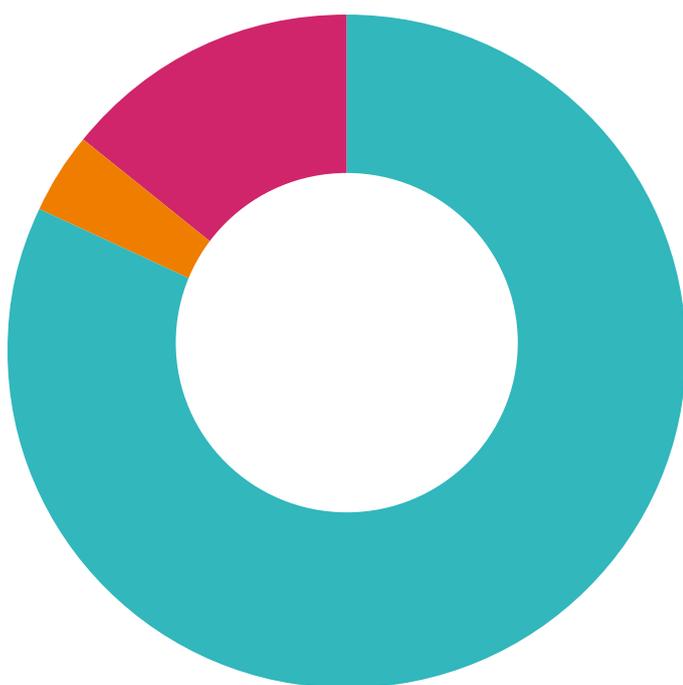
One of the vendors (Child Protection Group member) who was selling coffee in the railway junction found Rahul sitting alone and called scope India team to intervene. Rahul was convinced to visit the drop-in- shelter. During the interactions Rahul revealed why

he had decided to leave home in search of work. Later he was produced before a child welfare committee (CWC) for further intervention. After inquiry the CWC requested Scope to reunify the child back with the family and Rahul was re- admitted to school. He was being followed up every 2 months. He was found to be at home.

Intervention: On 24th February 2106, the team again found Rahul at Villipuram railway junction. This time he refused to go back to family. He informed that most of the time he was alone at home and his parents are not bothered about him. While talking to Rahul's parents, Scope India members felt that they are not very concerned about the child. They also said that they need to be keep traveling for their livelihood. The grandmother shared about her inability to take care of the child. The situation was discussed with Child Welfare Committee. Keeping the best interest of the child, Rahul was referred to a government home for boys. He was re-admitted to formal school. Now Rahul is in the 4th grade. His parents visit him once in a month and Rahul visits his family during vacation time.

Rahul in his words: *I feel good to play with friends. I want to become a policeman and I want to have my own house and settle down. I don't want to move around places like my parents.*

FINANCE



Finances for FY 16-17

Direct Program	82%
Training	4%
Support and Admin	14%

OUR TEAM

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