



**WE BELIEVE IN A WORLD  
WHERE NO CHILD EVER HAS  
TO LIVE ON THE STREETS**

**Our Mission Story  
2022-2027**

**NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND, IN TANZANIA**

**children** RAILWAY  
No child lost to the streets

# THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE ON THE STREETS OF TANZANIA EVERY DAY

Street connected children are amongst the most marginalized in our country. Many of us have become accustomed and desensitised to seeing them, yet many of these children will suffer physical and sexual violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation while on the streets.

National efforts to end this travesty were articulated in a 2017-2022 National Plan which included a commitment to reduce the number of street connected children across the country. During this period, Railway Children Africa were able to protect more than 2,348 children, supporting them to leave the streets and be reintegrated safely into a supportive family setting.

Despite these efforts, our 2021 headcount showed that in six major cities, at least 4800 children remain on the streets and our project work tells us that new children head for the streets every day. We are determined to meet this challenge head on and make a deep and lasting impact on the lives of vulnerable children, both now and for generations to come.

We believe in a world where no child in Tanzania ever has to live on the streets - a huge challenge that requires our most ambitious strategy ever. Alongside the development of outstanding practice and services to keep street connected children safe, we will help to create a movement of people from civil society, government, the transport sector and the wider public, united in their commitment to protect the most vulnerable children in our country.

# WHY WE CONCENTRATE ON TRANSPORT HUBS

Many children pass through bus terminals as they flee abuse, conflict and poverty. In their eyes, public transport represents possibility, escape and the chance of a new start – but the dangers children end up facing on the street can be far worse than the problems they left behind.

As they make that initial journey, their time on public transport offers a vital window of opportunity to reach them, build a relationship and keep them safe before they come to serious harm. For the very same reasons, bus terminals (and as Tanzania develops also railway stations) can also make the ideal hunting ground for predators, gangs and criminals seeking to exploit, traffic and abuse vulnerable children.

**OUR TRANSPORT INDUSTRY HAS A  
CRITICAL ROLE TO PLAY IN PROTECTING  
CHILDREN AND WE INTEND TO SUPPORT  
THEM TO DO SO AS WE DELIVER OUR  
AMBITIOUS PLAN TO 2027.**

# WHO WE ARE



## OUR VISION

We believe in a world where no child ever has to live on the streets.



## OUR MISSION

Create and enable sustainable change for children living alone and at risk on the street.



## OUR AIM FOR 2027

We will evidence and demonstrate, effective and sustainable safeguarding solutions for street connected children.

# WHAT WE STAND FOR

## We stand for children

- The children who don't have a voice.
- The invisible children.
- The children struggling to survive on the streets around the world every day.
- The generations of children suffering repeated cycles of abuse.

**WE STAND FOR CHILDREN, THEIR CHILDHOODS AND THEIR FUTURES! WILL YOU?**



## THESE FIVE VALUES GUIDE OUR WORK



### NEVER GIVE UP

Face challenges head on.



### HAVE COURAGE

Push boundaries. Think Big.



### EARN TRUST

Be Honest. Always act with Integrity.



### SHOW COMPASSION

Be kind and show respect to all.



### NURTURE TALENT

Encourage growth. Enable others.






# OUR CHARTER FOR CHILDREN

All children have the same rights and are entitled to the same protection. Wherever they are and whatever their story, children are children. No child should ever have to live on the streets. It is unacceptable for any child to be abused, exploited and left alone to survive and we must build a movement of like-minded people who are inspired to stand with us.





We believe that if we want the world to join together and help us to create systemic change, we must give children and young people a voice. If we want to create a movement of people, committed to our mission, we must amplify these voices and we can't do that alone. We are developing our Charter for Children with children so that they can influence how we work, who we collaborate with and how we unite the public to help us ensure no child is left behind.



## We will build consensus around the conviction that:

-  We all have a part to play in protecting our most vulnerable children.
-  No child found at risk should ever be ignored or passed by.
-  Abuse is simply unacceptable in the family and in communities.
-  All children have the right to a safe and nurturing family environment where they are loved.
-  All children have the right to an education to help them reach their potential and thrive.

## We will build a movement of people who stand up for vulnerable children by:

-  Not ignoring a child alone on the streets or on transport.
-  Reporting any incidence of abuse and exploitation.
-  Respecting children's views and listening to them.
-  Challenging harmful cultural perceptions and practices.

As we develop our charter for children further, we will ensure that children remain actively involved in harnessing support from all our key stakeholders. Our charter will help us to build activities with children at the centre and enable us to strengthen conversations and activity with key influencers and partners.

**AS WE CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN GOVERNMENT SYSTEMS, INFLUENCE THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND ENSURE NO CHILD IS LEFT BEHIND, THIS CHARTER AND THE VOICES OF CHILDREN WILL BE AT THE HEART OF OUR VALUES AND ACTIONS.**

# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Since we were established in 2010, we've achieved landmark milestones to protect children surviving on the streets:



We have established Railway Children Africa as a strong independent legal entity, led, governed and managed by Tanzanians.



We have become the leading organisation in the country on matters relating to street connected children, regularly consulted by government and other NGOs on the issue.



We developed National Guidelines on Child Reintegration jointly with the government and with UNICEF to ensure the safety of children is at the heart of all efforts across Tanzania to reunify children with their families.



Our rate of children remaining at home after family reintegration has risen from 50% when we started in 2010 to 84% in 2022.



We have secured justice for children, succeeding in challenging the impunity with which children on the streets were abused, helping to secure convictions.



We have influenced the allocation of resources for children living and working on the streets, by working in partnership with two district councils.



We couldn't have achieved any of this alone. We work hand-in-hand with key partners - bringing together the police, social welfare officers, community leaders, other government stakeholders and children themselves to build the most effective solutions.

Over the past five years we have:



Reached and protected 12,000 children and youth.



Reintegrated 2,348 children into families with 84% remaining at home.



Provided school support to 4,542 children to continue with education.



Supported 1405 youth to establish sustainable livelihoods.



Created a national coalition of organisations championing alternative family-based care.

Over the next five years, it is more critical than ever that we come together from across a range of sectors in the country; government, civil society, development partners and the business world, to consolidate our expertise and empower other key players to create maximum, sustainable change for generations to come.

We must build on our success and knowledge to create and evidence solutions that can be scaled across the country.

**OUR AIM AS WE SET OFF FOR 2027 IS TO LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND.**

# OUR NEW STRATEGY MODEL FOCUSES ON FOUR KEY ACTION AREAS FOR CHANGE

During the last ten years, our strategy has concentrated on creating change at three levels: on the street; in communities and with governments. We have made significant progress during that time and delivered compelling results to inform our future work.

During the final year of our previous strategy, we reviewed our work using a theory of change model. This deep analysis of our programmes, the contexts in which we operate and the experiences of street connected children has informed and underpinned the development of our new Tanzanian strategy. It has enabled us to set goals and design interventions that will lead us to achieve our aim of leaving no child behind.

Our 'three step change agenda' as it was previously known, has evolved, adding new learning and practice which ties all our actions together and weaves core new elements throughout our work. In addition to hands on work with children, families and communities and our collaborations with the transport industry and child protection agencies, we are focusing on the development of data, research and evidence.

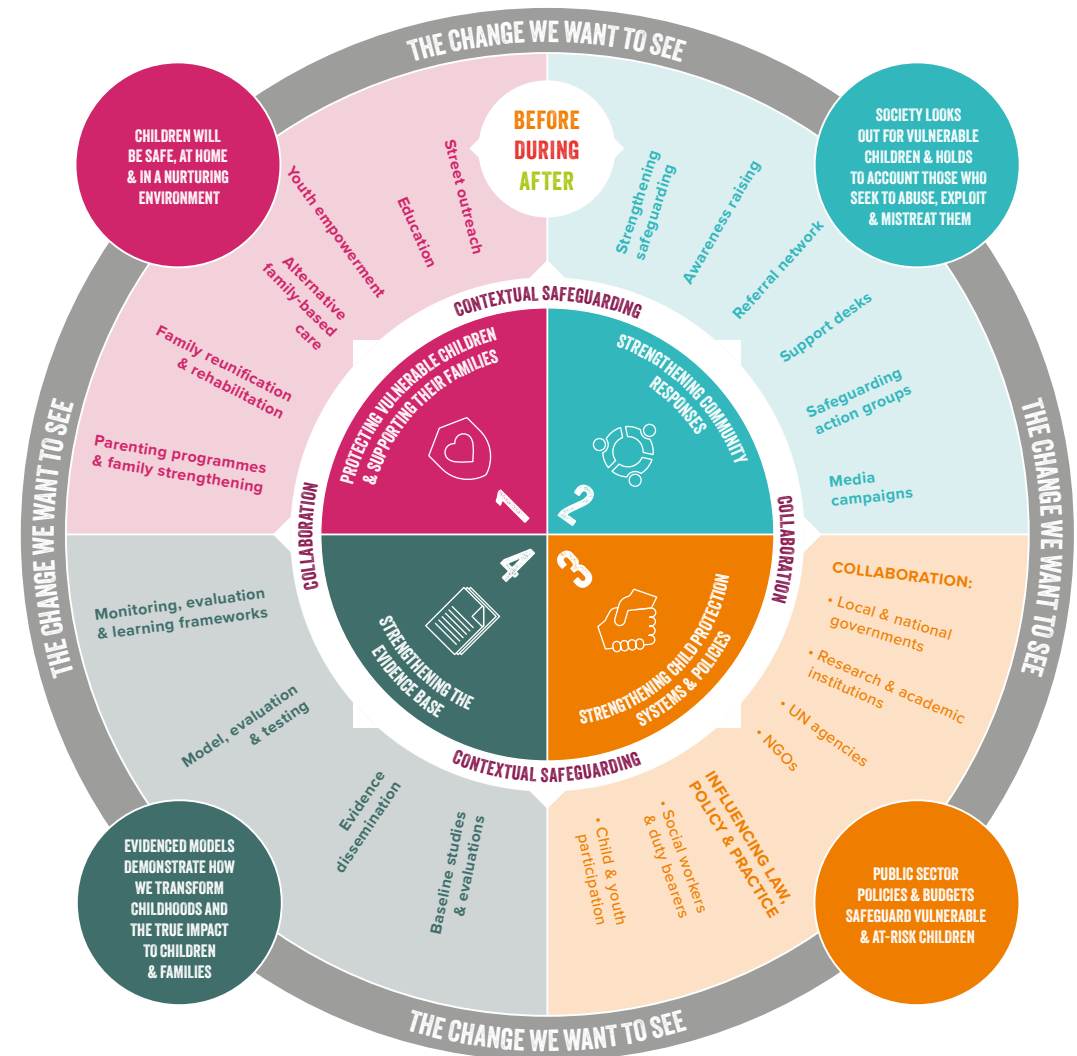
Our aim is to create and evidence high impact ways of working that can be adapted, replicated and scaled by other organisations.

A strong evidence base will enable us to demonstrate to policy makers, influencers and budget holders the value, impact and need for coordinated, systemic efforts to protect the most vulnerable children in society.

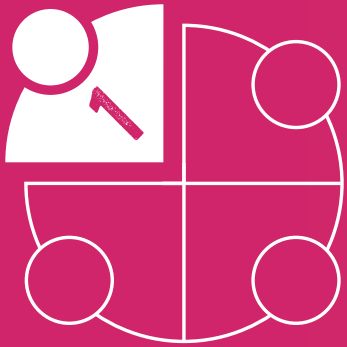
Our new strategy model focuses on four key action areas for change in order to protect the most vulnerable children, **before, during and after** they are alone and at risk on the streets:

1. **Protecting vulnerable children & supporting their families**
2. **Strengthening community responses**
3. **Strengthening child protection systems and policies**
4. **Strengthening the evidence base**

At the heart of this is a focus and dedication to collaborating with others and the development of contextual safeguarding solutions, to protect all young people from harm and abuse. This involves addressing the underlying causes, as well as the effects and is therefore prominent in all four of our action areas for change.



The following pages explain in more detail how each element of the model will combine to achieve our goal for 2027, LEAVING NO CHILD BEHIND.



## CHANGE AREA 1: PROTECTING VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND SUPPORTING THEIR FAMILIES

We will keep children safe and enable them to stay in a nurturing family environment where they can attend school and thrive. We will build safety nets and develop programmes and services of the highest standards to protect vulnerable children who are at risk of running away or becoming lost to the streets.



### ? What is alternative family based care?

Alternative family-based care is a system of care where children who can't be looked after by anyone in their own families, are looked after by a family who have been selected, qualified, and approved by local authorities – either temporarily in the case of fit-persons and foster care, or forever in the case of adoption. This is more conducive to healthy child development than any form of institution. In our work, we will always seek to reintegrate children back with their families or extended families, but when children need somewhere safe to stay, we will endeavour to ensure that these alternatives are family based.

Our work with street-connected children across Tanzania has highlighted inadequate parental care as a common theme in many of their stories. Among the 11,000 children we supported between 2017 and 2022, 58% of them told us that neglect drove them to seek an escape on the street and 9% suffered violence and abuse at home. We will complement our outstanding work with children on the street and with the families they have been restored to with efforts to strengthen families and equip parents with the skills and understanding to care for their children effectively before families separate.

**Working with children and their families before, during and after they are on the streets is complex but by collaborating and empowering others, we can create life changing outcomes.**

### By 2027 we will:

- Reduce the number of children coming to the streets by strengthening the capacity and resilience of families at high risk of separation.
  - 11,200 at risk families will be strengthened through a parenting programme.
  - 2,200 vulnerable children will be at reduced risk of ending up on the streets.
- Reduce the number of children at risk of significant harm through street outreach and early interventions centred around bus terminals to identify, engage and protect them.
  - 10,400 children and youth living or arriving alone and at risk on the streets in at least 3 cities will be protected and transition to a safe setting.
- Transform the life chances of children, including siblings, within reunified families.
  - 7,800 children will enjoy improved physical and emotional well-being and be supported to attend school.
- Reduce the number of youth living long-term on the streets.
  - 3000 youth living on the streets are empowered to create sustainable livelihoods through workplace training schemes and support to start small businesses.
- Increase the availability of family-based temporary care to provide a safe space for children prior to their reunification with family.
  - 250 individuals vetted and trained to offer family-based alternative care.

**OUR APPROACH FINDS THE VERY BEST SOLUTIONS AND PRACTICES TO BREAK THE CYCLES OF ABUSE, NEGLECT AND FAMILY BREAKDOWN AND KEEP CHILDREN SAFE. FOR GOOD.**



## CHANGE AREA 2: STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY RESPONSES

We will work in partnership with communities and the transport industry, helping them to create environments that are hostile to abuse and where people are equipped to play their part in protecting all vulnerable children.

We will build a public movement where it is unacceptable for any child to be abused, exploited and left alone to survive and where people feel compelled and equipped to challenge this where they see it.



### ? What is contextual safeguarding?

Contextual safeguarding focuses upon protecting all young people from harm and abuse within the environments outside of the family home, such as on public transport, in retail settings or on the streets. It relies on partnerships between public sector services, civil society and local communities including retailers, transport providers, and individuals, so that everyone is aware of possible warning signs and how to report or respond to them. Those with influence over the physical environment are able to make improvements, including changes to how and when spaces are used, so that those settings become safer and young people are better protected.

Over the past five years our work in communities has progressed and evolved significantly. Initially there was a need to change public perceptions of street connected children, who were seen as a nuisance, and in many cases treated inhumanely by the authorities that should protect them.

**As a measure of our success in this space and the appetite and commitment we have seen from our community partners, we are now working with many groups to strengthen skills, increase awareness, build safer environments and create a movement of people united in their commitment to play a part in keeping children safe from harm. We call this 'contextual safeguarding'.**

### By 2027 we will:

- Increase the capacity of communities to protect their children by training transport staff, police and others who work in and around bus terminals.
  - Three pilot projects in Mwanza, run jointly with the Department of Social Welfare, will trial the creation of child helpdesks within large bus terminals, training community champions, social welfare officers and others to actively protect children.
- Make physical transport spaces safer for vulnerable children by bringing together key stakeholders to collaborate on safeguarding.
  - Safeguarding action groups in three large bus terminals will coordinate efforts to protect children and make the physical spaces safer.
- Raise awareness of the experiences of vulnerable and street-connected children, the harm of violence against children and the ways in which communities and members of the public can respond appropriately.
  - Public will be reached with key messages through media campaigns and community dialogues.

**TRANSPORT SETTINGS  
BECOME A SAFE ENVIRONMENT  
WHERE SOCIETY LOOKS OUT  
FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN,  
PROTECTS THEM FROM ABUSE  
AND EXPLOITATION AND ENSURE  
THAT NO CHILD IS LEFT BEHIND.**





### CHANGE AREA 3:

## STRENGTHENING CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEMS

**We will work closely with policy makers, public servants and civil society to find and implement ways to strengthen and better resource child protection systems so that no child is left behind.**

Whilst social and government structures to protect the most vulnerable are in place in Tanzania along with strong examples of public policy, we know that – despite the best intentions – many gaps remain in the system that allow children at risk to repeatedly slip through the cracks and into serious danger.



Limited capacity, overstretched resources and organisations working in isolation from each other are all factors that make it difficult for Tanzania's child protection systems to function as well as they should.

We will coordinate and co-deliver services with local government agencies to strengthen their skills and capacity to provide effective child protection.

**We cannot create the change we are determined to achieve, at the scale it is needed, alone, so we will collaborate with key partners to galvanise national action and lead the case for change.**

### By 2027 we will:

- Strengthen the capacity of the social work force to better meet the needs of children living and working on the streets.
  - Collaboration with government partners will enable and demonstrate an effective child protection system in 3 districts.
  - 220 Government social welfare officers will have been trained in safe and effective practice in family reintegration, safeguarding, foster care and child protection.
  - 250 individuals vetted and trained to offer family-based alternative care.
- Influence the resourcing of services to protect children and young people.
  - Decision makers within both local government and at a national level will have a clear understanding of the detailed budget allocations required.
- Make the case for investing in increased alternative family-based care provision.
  - The RCA-initiated national childcare reform coalition will have demonstrated the value, benefits and safety of family-based care with national and regional policy debates.

**WE CAN'T CHANGE THE WORLD BY OURSELVES BUT BY UNITING OTHERS TO WORK MORE EFFECTIVELY, IN COLLABORATION, WE CAN STRENGTHEN THE SYSTEM AND OUR CASE FOR SUPPORT. TOGETHER WE WILL BE STRONGER AND WE WILL LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND, WHEREVER WE WORK.**



## CHANGE AREA 4: INVEST IN EVIDENCE BUILDING

We will evidence effective and sustainable safeguarding solutions for street connected children, demonstrating how we transform childhoods and the true impact of these interventions on their lives and their families. Building outstanding evidenced services will enable us to establish programme models and practice that can be replicated.

The data available about children in street situations is extremely limited. National data collection systems are not designed to capture these children as they do not live in households. Consequently, they are too easily overlooked by policy makers as they allocate public funding and develop programmes.



Whilst data collection tools for counting children on the streets are helpful in amplifying conversations at government level, it is vital that we understand the issues that drove them there and their experiences whilst on the street.

**For us to influence change at a national level and to achieve real impact at scale, it is also critical that we can evidence the impact of our services on the well-being of children and their families.**

### By 2027 we will:

- Collaborate with other organisations working with street connected children to share, align and combine our respective data about street connected children and their experiences.
- Collaborate with academic researchers to help grow understanding of what works.
- Ensure children's views and voices sit at the heart of our research and evaluation in a way that they feel protected and empowered.
- Identify and measure gaps and opportunities in child protection systems.
- Evidence effective safeguarding solutions, demonstrating their impact and how they can be replicated or adapted.
- Ensure that a robust evaluation framework covers every element of our programmes.

**BUILDING A STRONG  
EVIDENCE BASE WILL  
PROVIDE A PLATFORM  
FOR US TO INFLUENCE  
AND ENSURE THAT GLOBAL  
AND LOCAL ACTION LEAVES  
NO CHILD BEHIND.**

# GOVERNANCE

Over the next five years we will focus on ensuring there is collective responsibility and representation in all decision-making forums and structures.

Performance indicators for the new strategy period will be monitored and governed through:



An annual evaluation of our governance effectiveness.



The consistent implementation of core organisation policies.



Executive Director and Senior Managers participate in Railway Children Africa governance committees.



A strong independent Railway Children Africa board.



A hybrid model of in-person and online meetings between the board and senior leadership team to encourage regular and consistent attendance and participation.



# SUSTAINABILITY

We will build sustainability in the following distinct ways.



We will proactively engage local government actors and child safeguarding partners to co-deliver services in order to demonstrate a sustainable and replicable approach to building effective child protection systems.



Drawing on the success of our family strengthening work in support of reintegrated children, we will offer parenting courses, including training in alternative discipline, and awareness programmes within communities from which the highest number of children arrive on the streets. This will help to prevent the breakdown of families at most risk of separation.



This strategy seeks to grow income from within Railway Children Africa to build flexibility and sustainability in programme as well as positioning the charity to fundraise within and outside of Tanzania.



Strengthening existing child protection structures within communities, to ensure children and families get the support they need within their localities.



# APPENDIX 2: STRATEGIC PLAN BUDGET

Item	Programme Cost in GBP					
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Street outreach & family reunification	411,182	640,617	600,373	516,439	497,315	2,665,926
Youth livelihoods	219,740	493,914	515,805	470,632	289,595	1,989,686
Parenting support	104,104	518,300	438,166	391,710	354,388	1,806,668
Community outreach	18,781	91,221	89,822	73,167	64,404	337,395
Childcare reform	21,333	55,375	50,765	38,878	32,985	199,336
Train social workforce	13,463	44,814	60,117	39,463	31,152	189,009
Policy engagement	12,720	28,380	28,004	22,635	18,112	109,851
Staff – Support	191,457	263,409	263,409	263,409	263,409	1,245,093
Admin	97,017	111,915	111,915	111,915	111,915	544,677
Evaluation & learning	39,750	48,258	58,079	41,710	79,432	267,229
Capital	10,442	45,304	39,718	6,984	-	102,448
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,139,989</b>	<b>2,341,507</b>	<b>2,256,173</b>	<b>1,976,942</b>	<b>1,742,707</b>	<b>9,457,318</b>

# OUR PEOPLE PROMISE

All that we can achieve as an organisation is only possible because we have dedicated, skilled and courageous people. Their tenacity, passion and compassion create a culture that enables us to deliver incremental values beyond the resources we could ever have available to us. We know this, we witness it every day and therefore we strive to create an organisation that values them and their contribution.

As we set out to achieve life saving change for vulnerable children, we make our people a promise:



We will ensure diversity and inclusion, following transparent, fair and rigorous recruitment processes that attract and encourage applications from a diverse range of candidates.



We will support new people to fully settle into their new role and our organisation by providing a structured induction and integration programme.



We will develop with our people to identify their career goals and facilitate opportunities for their growth.



We will develop and implement a wide range of initiatives that ensure our people are well managed and feel valued, listened to and included.



When people leave, we will listen and learn and seek leavers as ambassadors for Railway Children Africa



# TOGETHER TO LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND

No matter where they come from all children are entitled to the same protection and have the same rights - the right to a nurturing family environment, an education and the chance to fulfil their potential.

No child should face, danger, abuse, exploitation or violence. Children are children and no child should ever have to live on the street.

We are totally committed to our mission, and we will push the boundaries to overcome the challenges that will face us along the way.

Our collaborations and efforts with other passionate people and agencies are strengthening all the time and together we will ensure no child is left behind.

**IF YOU BELIEVE NO CHILD  
SHOULD EVER HAVE TO  
LIVE ON THE STREETS AND  
ABUSE IS UNACCEPTABLE,  
PLEASE JOIN US.**



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NGO Compliance No. 1566

**children** RAILWAY  
No child lost to the streets