

# ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS 2015/16





# CONTENTS

<b>1. Foreword</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. About Railway Children India</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Our Values</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4. Our Approach</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5. Our Vision</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>6. Railway Children's Intervention in India</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7. RCI's Station work</b>	<b>8</b>
• Round-the-clock outreach at railway stations	
• Child Help Desks at railway stations	
• Drop-in Centres	
• Reunification with Families	
• Long-term Care Placements	
• Vocational Training	
• Non-Formal Education	
• Medical Services	
• De-addiction Support	
• Nutrition Services	
• Follow-up and Reintegration	
• Intervention with the railway stakeholders	
• Awareness campaigns and sensitisation	
• Intervention at the Government Home, Chennai	
<b>8. RCI's Source Area work</b>	<b>13</b>
• Strengthening Child Protection Committees (PLCPC)	
• Action against child labour, child marriage and migration	
• Developing Child Protection	
• Linking Vulnerable Families with social protection schemes	
• Enabling Access to Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)	
• Enabling Access to education	
• Developing Employability Skills	
• Employment/business and job creation	
<b>9. Capacity Building of Partners and RC Outreach Workers</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>10. Advocacy Initiatives at State and National Level</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>11. Capacity Building within Indian Railways</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>12. Partnership with Northern Railway Zone</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>13. Partnerships of Railway Children</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>14. Case Studies</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>15. Accounts and finance</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>16. Our Team</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>17. Our Offices</b>	<b>24</b>

## COUNTRY DIRECTOR'S FOREWORD

I am delighted to present our annual report for 2015/16 which includes detail of our successes, challenges and stories of hope. We have collaborated with 16 voluntary organisations across eight states (Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh) implementing programmes at 50 locations over this time period. This has included working at 16 major railway stations, 10 government homes and 24 high-risk areas, both rural and urban, where children and families face multiple socio-economic vulnerabilities and are at risk of unsafe migration.

India is committed to protecting the rights of children as enshrined in its constitution and there are specific laws for children. Paradoxically, government spending on child protection issues still remains abysmally low, undermining the implementation of existing schemes and discouraging the establishment of new initiatives. The country's total budget per child as a percentage of India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has gradually declined since 2011/12 and in the 2015/16 budget, it stands at only 0.41 per cent. Put in simpler terms, only 0.41 per cent of GDP has been earmarked for children, even though they make up more than 40 per cent of the population of India.

In this context, we have worked with the Indian Railways and government departments to adopt a child-friendly approach in their policies and programmes. 1,499 personnel (including the Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Government Railway Police (GRP)) were given training on how to protect children in and around the railways. In government children's homes we have worked to ensure minimum standards of care are established and monitored throughout.

Looking to the future, we are also formulating our long term vision and strategic plan for India. This aims to protect 120,000 children and restore 96,000 of them sustainably, working at 25 railway stations, five source areas and 26 government children's homes. We plan to partner with corporates, individuals and institutional donors to help us achieve this and ensure that no child is left behind.

We would like to thank all of the donors, supporters, well-wishers and mentors who have supported us in our journey towards achieving our vision –

**'a world where no child ever has to live on the streets'.**



**Navin Sellaraju Sukumar**  
Country Director, India

## ABOUT RAILWAY CHILDREN INDIA

Railway Children (RC) is an international children's charity, established in 1995 in the United Kingdom that believes in **'a world where no child ever has to live on the streets'**.

Railway Children's ([www.railwaychildren.org.uk](http://www.railwaychildren.org.uk)) work strives for sustainable changes in the lives of children alone and at risk on the streets. Children living on the streets have run away or are forced to leave home due to abuse, violence, neglect and poverty. Often what they face on the streets is even worse, with many not surviving to adulthood.

Railway Children in India works as a liaison office (UNI-MULO05000515) of the UK charity (reg. charity number 1058991). **Railway Children India (RCI)** was established and **registered as non-profit under Section 25 Company (U85100DL2013NPL260371)** in 2013 to scale up and sustain the impact of its work.

## OUR PRINCIPLES

1. We respect the dignity of every child
2. We always put the best interests of the child first
3. We build on the abilities of each child while being aware of his/ her limitations
4. We create an environment that encourages and values the voices and decisions of children
5. We know that children have evolving and resilient capacities
6. We have a zero tolerance approach to neglect, abuse, and maltreatment of children in care and protection processes
7. We ensure that we do not re-traumatize a child
8. We have a zero tolerance to exploitation
9. We nurture the individuality of children by investing in diverse resources and opportunities
10. We form authentic and empathetic relationships with every child
11. We do not judge children
12. We believe that all children should experience permanence in shelter, health, education, achievement and relationships (as opposed to uncertainty and multiple transitions)
13. We use innovative processes, which are quality assured, to reach out to children.

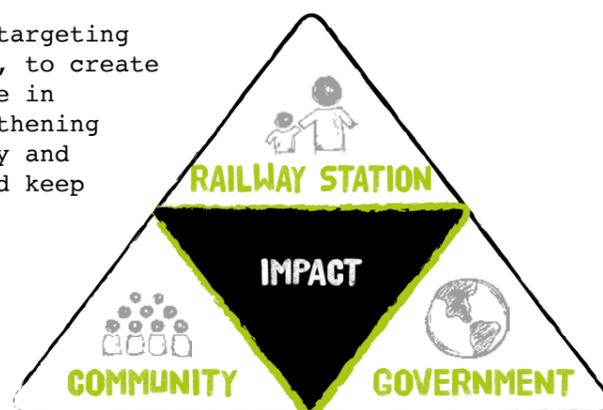
## OUR APPROACH

### WE WORK AT THREE LEVELS FOR LONG TERM CHANGE...

**At railway stations:** We aim to transform stations into 'Child Friendly Spaces'. This would involve a team of outreach workers (ORW) being based at the station 24/7, looking out for children as soon as they arrive alone. They then make sure the child is safe, fed, clothed, has water, medical help and whatever counselling support is needed. Each location operates a Child Help Desk, where the outreach workers are based, and can cater for every child's needs, referring them to shelter accommodation or care institutions where appropriate, and beginning the process of family restoration whenever possible.

**In communities:** We work in local communities, targeting the locations that most children run away from, to create a safety net to stop this happening. We believe in empowering communities and families and strengthening their resources so they have the responsibility and ability to properly care for their children and keep them safe.

**With governments:** Strengthening the existing government system and structures is key to ensuring long-term, sustainable change which is what we always aim for, and what allows us to have the greatest impact, where it is needed most.



## OUR VISION

Looking ahead, RCI has plans to transform 25 railway stations into Child Friendly Spaces, to improve child care and protection in 26 child care institutions and strengthen the child protection mechanism within five 'source area' communities. This will enable us to protect 120,000 children and restore 96,000 of them to their families or to safe, long term homes.

## RAILWAY CHILDREN'S WORK IN INDIA

During the period of this report, we have worked with eight Government-run children homes and two Observation Homes (homes that offer temporary accommodation to children in conflict with the law) to ensure minimum standards of childcare were maintained. We collaborated with 16 voluntary organisations in eight States (Bihar, UP, MP, Delhi, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh) implementing programmes across 50 locations including at 16 major railway stations and 24 rural and urban high-risk areas where children and families face multiple socio-economic vulnerabilities and are at risk of unsafe migration.

Railway Children knows that children leave their families due to reasons such as abuse, parental neglect and a lack of educational opportunities. For this reason we work through source level interventions, to change the perceptions of local communities towards the protection of vulnerable children. We make children on the streets visible to their communities and increase understanding of how they came to be there.

## RAILWAY CHILDREN AND OUR WORK WITH PARTNERS IN INDIA

STATE	ACHIEVEMENTS
Uttar Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launched rehabilitation support mechanisms in six high risk districts to stop the trend of children leaving home.</li> <li>Trained members of Village Level Child Protection Committees (VLCPC) on child rights and protection in Chandauli.</li> <li>Facilitated a Railway Protection Force led multi-stakeholder network of child protection at Lucknow Railway Station.</li> </ul>
Bihar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established outreach and Drop-in Centre facilities for children at risk around Darbhanga railway station</li> <li>Reunified children who had left home through Child Protection Committees wherever possible.</li> <li>Improved the function of Integrated Child Protection Schemes (ICPS)</li> </ul>
Delhi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reunified children staying at Government Homes with their families wherever possible.</li> <li>Piloted a project to strengthen Special Juvenile Police Units (SJPU) in Delhi</li> <li>Supported the Child Protection Group, an outreach worker support group, at New Delhi Railway station to establish collaborative child protection interventions</li> </ul>
West Bengal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launched multi-stakeholder child protection networks at Malda, Asansol, Sealdah, Howrah and New Jalpaiguri stations</li> <li>Implemented preventative actions through Child Protection Committees in the districts of Asansol and Malda</li> <li>Reunified children staying at four Government Homes with their families wherever possible.</li> </ul>
Madhya Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formed and strengthened a multi-stakeholder advocacy group acting as a watchdog against child rights violations</li> <li>Improved the function of Integrated Child Protection Schemes</li> </ul>
Maharashtra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensured outreach systems are in place at Chatrapati Shivaji Terminus Railway station reunified families with children at Government Homes wherever possible</li> <li>Offered legal aid, assistance and awareness programmes at two Government Homes for children in conflict with the law at Bhiwandi and Yavatmal</li> </ul>
Andhra Pradesh:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensured outreach is in place at Tirupati and Renigunta stations to protect children and provide care and support</li> <li>Facilitated community-driven advocacy and shelter services through empowering communities and enabling stakeholder participation and consultation.</li> </ul>
Tamil Nadu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthened services at a Government Home in Chennai ensuring minimum standards of care for children and faster family reunification where possible</li> <li>Improved the implementation of Integrated Child Protection Schemes (ICPS) in the source areas where most children are coming from</li> </ul>

# RAILWAY CHILDREN'S STATION INTERVENTION IN INDIA

Children running away from abuse, violence and poverty use India's extensive railway network to get to the cities, where they hope to find a better life. Thousands of children arrive at India's vast, chaotic railway stations and find themselves lost, alone and scared, with no idea where to go or what to do. Their dreams are brutally shattered, they end up living on the platforms facing abuse, violence, exploitation and even death.



## 24/7 OUTREACH AT RAILWAY STATIONS

Reaching these children as soon as they arrive at the station is crucial. Therefore, Railway Children India, along with its local partners, has established strong outreach teams that operate 24/7 at stations to provide care and protection to these children.

RCI protected 8,646 children in eight states through its station level intervention. Out of the total number, 1,308 were girls. These children had either left home voluntarily, were forced to leave due to neglect or abuse, or had been victims of kidnapping or human trafficking. It also included children who had gone missing while travelling with their parents or family.

## CHILD HELP DESKS AT RAILWAY STATIONS

Railway Children has set up Child Help Desks at major stations and railway terminals to help children who are lost, abandoned or need support. The spaces have been provided by the railway authorities and the desks are run in partnership with local voluntary organisations. Our **Child Help Desks** provide safe spaces that children can access and be referred to by station staff.

We have trained 'peer workers' to help us to reach children who were difficult to engage with because they were wary of adults and responded better to other young people. From Child Help Desks, children in need of further help are referred to our 'Drop-in Centres' where they can receive food, clothing and medical assistance. From here we work with each child to try and determine the best long-term solution for their individual circumstances. Wherever possible and appropriate, we reunite children with their families.

## DROP-IN CENTRES (DIC)

In the year 2015/16 6,104 children accessed the services of Drop-in Centres.

Drop-in Centres are located near to the railway stations and as well as addressing the immediate needs of each child referred to them, they also offer **vocational training** to children and young people in order to help them secure jobs and move on to a better life. **Counselling** sessions give children the opportunity to explore their potential through music, dance and art. This helps them deal with their emotions and prepare for a return to family life.

Some children stay at the Drop-in Centres for a very short time while we work with them to decide the best course of action. Wherever possible and appropriate, we work to reunite children with their families. However, when this is not possible we make sure to secure safe and appropriate alternative long-term care.

## REUNIFICATION WITH FAMILIES

A total of 3,805 children were reunited with their families.

While restoring children to their families, Railway Children always prioritises the best interests of the child. From the first point of contact, through our outreach teams, the child's story is verified and investigated at every level with assistance from social workers and counsellors. Then a detailed assessment of each family situation is done and the information shared between children, parents, families, communities and, if appropriate, the Gram Panchayat and school teachers.

## LONG-TERM CARE PLACEMENTS

In the year 2015/2016, a total of 647 children were provided with alternative care support through securing long-term care home placements.

In this period, many children were identified as having insufficient parental or family care available, or living in difficult circumstances that made reuniting them with family impossible.

RCI has worked with these children to arrange alternative long-term care in government homes.

## VOCATIONAL TRAINING

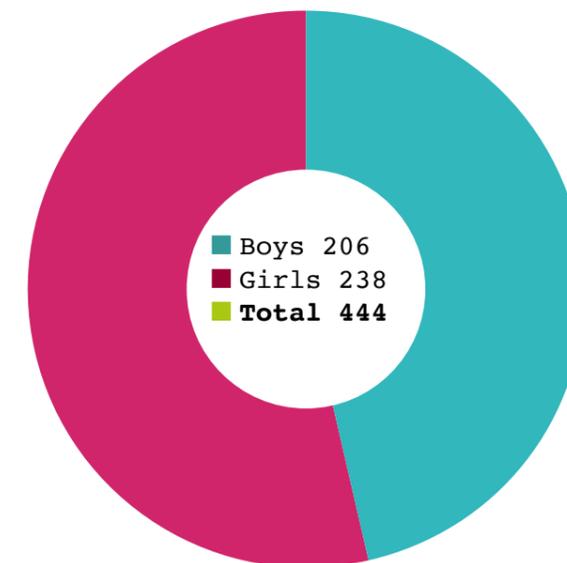
A total of 444 children were helped to access vocational training in the year 2015/2016

Through local partner organisations and in conjunction with Child Welfare Committees, RCI has identified the youth in long-term care homes who were not in education and enabled them to access vocational training offered by the government, vocational training institutes and other NGOs. The objective was to make them more employable with increased skills, more access to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.

Having identified the reasons children had left home, those who had done so due to job-related issues were offered training and helped to secure employment so they could leave street life behind.

RCI offers counselling to the young people and then uses its strong industry links to find them suitable hands-on training in areas such as:

- construction, (including electrical, plumbing, masonry and welding skills)
- hospitality (housekeeping, food and beverage service and food production)
- mechanics
- nursing
- beauty services



Children linked to vocational training

## NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

4,242 children (3,370 boys and 872 girls) accessed non-formal education through our Drop-in Centres

Non-formal education of children has been shown to have a significant impact on children for whom mainstream education is not an option. It can help them to develop their own world view, and become a conscious, civic-minded and creative individual who is able to successfully integrate into society, improving overall education performance and making it easier for children to enter or re-enter mainstream schooling.

Each child is offered the opportunity to learn basic literacy, English, maths and computer skills as well as helped to develop analytical thinking and taught basic life skills and knowledge of personal hygiene and understanding of preventable diseases. This equips them the basic language and living skills that will help them secure gainful employment.

## MEDICAL SERVICES

In the year 2015/16, 2,696 children (2,169 boys and 527 girls) accessed our medical services

RCI is committed to keeping children safe and healthy through regular health check-ups and screening tests. This helps with the early detection of deficiencies and general health problems so regular examinations are carried out to assess:

- General physical condition
- BMI
- Dental health
- Eyesight
- Blood sugar levels
- Haemoglobin levels

Any children found to be in need of support were given the appropriate medical advice and precautionary measures at the Drop-in Centres.

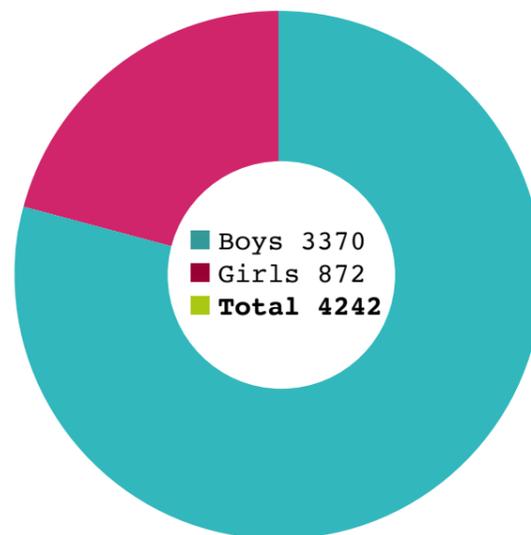
## DE-ADDICTION SUPPORT

Support with de-addiction and detox was given to 112 children in the year 2015/16

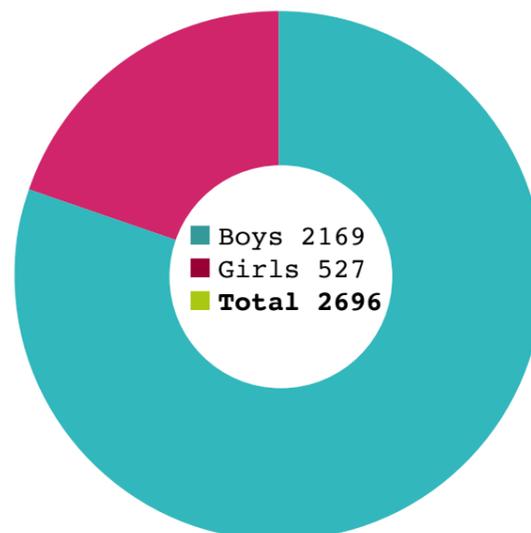
We believe that addiction affects every aspect of the afflicted child's life, both physically and mentally. The problem is often recurring and only a total change in attitude can bring any meaningful recovery.

We engaged and motivated those suffering with substance abuse and supported them through de-addiction.

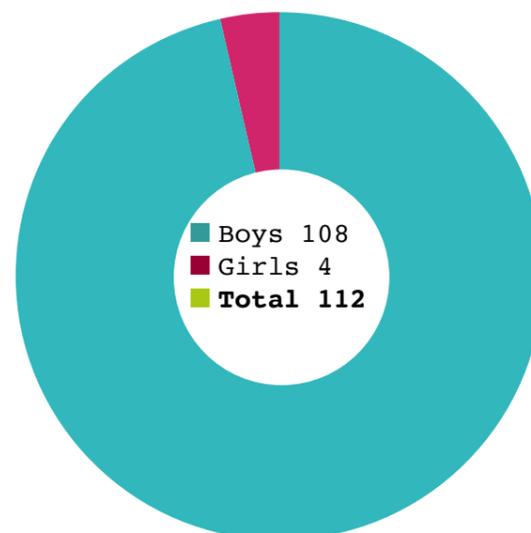
During the treatment we arranged group sessions to educate and motivate family members so they can accept and support the child. We also extend exhaustive counselling sessions and group therapy to co-dependants of those affected by addiction and link these youths to education and vocational training opportunities.



Number of children provided with non-formal education



Number of children availed medical services

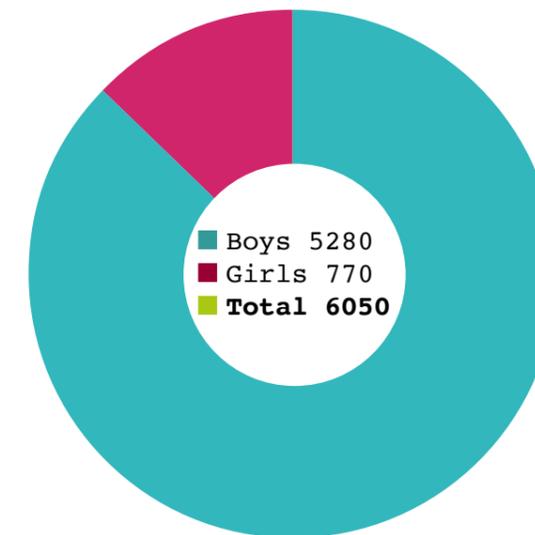


Number of children given de-addiction support

## NUTRITION SERVICES

6,050 children (5,280 boys and 770 girls) received nutrition services in India through our program

Malnutrition is one of the most common causes of death among children under five years of age in India as it weakens the immune system, making illness worse. The main underlying causes of malnutrition include inadequate access to food and nutrients, inadequate care of children, inadequate health services, and an unhealthy environment. Therefore, RCI ensures children receive nutritious meals, drinking water and have access to toilets while they are in our Drop-in Centres.



Number of children given nutritional support

## FOLLOW UP AND REINTEGRATION

RCI is committed to carrying out quarterly follow-up work with all children reunited with their families. As a result, we have been able to report back on the progress of 2,303 children throughout 2015/16. Out of these children, 1,959 are still with their families and 1,150 of them are continuing with their formal education.

As a part of the restoration process family level intervention is planned, as working with the child alone is not enough. Family plays a key role in the wellbeing and development of each child by ensuring that they feel comfortable and safe at home. It is important to address any issues persisting within families that may compel these children to leave home. In the process of restoration, we carry out parental counseling and vulnerability assessments.<sup>1</sup> At the time of reuniting these children, 929 families were identified as vulnerable, meaning the children had a higher risk of leaving home again. These families were then offered additional counselling support both before, during and following on from the child's reintegration.



Reunification of a child with family by team through CWC

## INTERVENTION WITH THE RAILWAY STAKEHOLDERS:

### Capacity building and training:

At three major junctions (Katpadi, Jolarpet and Villupuram), 824 RPF and GRP officers were provided training on Child Rights, the Juvenile Justice Act 2015, the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) issued by Railways, and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act 2012 by RCI. As a result Jolarpet junction has begun to hold Child Help Group meetings and a Child Help Group has been formed in Villupuram junction. This was recognised by GRP headquarters on Twitter, and re-tweeted by Hon. Mr. Suresh Prabhu, the Government of India's Minister for Railways.



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

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS AND SENSITISATION:

In collaboration with our partners Scope India, Railway Children carried out an intensive 15-day campaign to generate awareness among the passengers and general public, at Villupuram Junction Railway Station, about the issues facing children living alone and at risk on the streets and their responsibility to protect them. The campaign used a series of **street plays** within the railway station premises, bus stations and in the slums near the stations.



This campaign reached 7,500 members of the general public, 75 vendors, 30 coolies and 160 drivers. As a result of this:

- 1) 18 children were rescued by vendors and coolies
- 2) 15 children were rescued from the bus station and market area during the campaign
- 3) The campaign was witnessed by the **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 a Child Help Desk (CHD) at Villupuram station and provided temporary space in front of the GRP office
- 4) The local media has intensively covered the campaign and supported the initiative in state level Tamil newspapers - Dhintanthi, Dhinamalar and Dhinasaithi. This campaign has also helped in building strong relationship with the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU). Since this campaign, the DCPU has invited Scope to work with them in government homes.

## INTERVENTION AT THE GOVERNMENT HOME, CHENNAI:

In the first six months of the time period, a manual on 'Minimum Standards of Care (MSoC)' was formulated as per the Juvenile Justice Act 2015. This was used to provide training to staff at the home. During the following six months, the intervention focused on implementation of those standards of care. So far, the following three of the eight standards have been reached and are being practiced:

- 1) A Child Protection Policy (CPP) has been developed in the local language, and all staff members have been trained on its content and implementation.
- 2) Life skills education has been integrated into the activity schedule of the children and is carried out by trained staff.
- 3) CHES has ensured that all staff members caring for children are fully trained on the Juvenile Justice Act 2015 and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012.



As a result of this, changes in the care environment have already been seen. For example, children have reported positive change in the behavior of home staff during the 'Bal Sabha' children's committee meetings and 150 children have been identified as still being vulnerable after being reunited with their families and given intensive follow up support.

At present, all 150 of those children are staying at home, 96 are continuing education, and the families of 25 children were supported to apply for sponsorship schemes.

## RCI'S SOURCE AREA WORK

Working with 16 local NGOs across eight states (Bihar, UP, MP, Delhi, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh) RCI has established Integrated Child Protection Schemes (ICPS) to strengthen community-based child protection mechanisms at Panchayat and village level and further protect children from exploitation and abuse.

## STRENGTHENING CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEES (PLCPC & VLCPC)

Child Protection Committees (CPCs) have been formed at Panchayat and village level, with guidance from the head of the Gram Panchayat. They then recommend and monitor the implementation of child protection services and each committee includes two child representatives, a member of the DCPU, Anganwadi workers, school teachers and auxiliary nurse midwives, as well as respected village members and civil society representatives.

The CPCs have been entrusted with dealing with child-related issues in the respective Panchayats, curbing crimes against children (including abuse and sexual assault), and taking issues to the appropriate authorities for action. The members of the Village and Panchayat Level Child Protection Committees (VLCPC) were educated on, and sensitised to, child rights and child protection. Since these orientation programs, VLCPCs have started playing a significant role in ensuring care and protection of children.

## ACTION AGAINST CHILD LABOUR, CHILD MARRIAGE AND MIGRATION

RCI has worked to change the mindsets and attitudes of communities towards child labour and child marriage. Key members of society, including children, parents, and communities, were made aware of the dangers surrounding child labour, child marriage and migration.

As a result, families and communities have taken collective action to promote the protection and development of children. Adolescents (especially girls and women) worked together to monitor and tackle child rights violations and protect children's rights, especially the right to education.

Community Based Organisations (CBOs), including adolescent groups and Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs), have supported community awareness-raising work including sharing information on the harmful effects of child labour and child marriage, the importance of education and the social protection schemes available.

## DEVELOPING CHILD PROTECTION

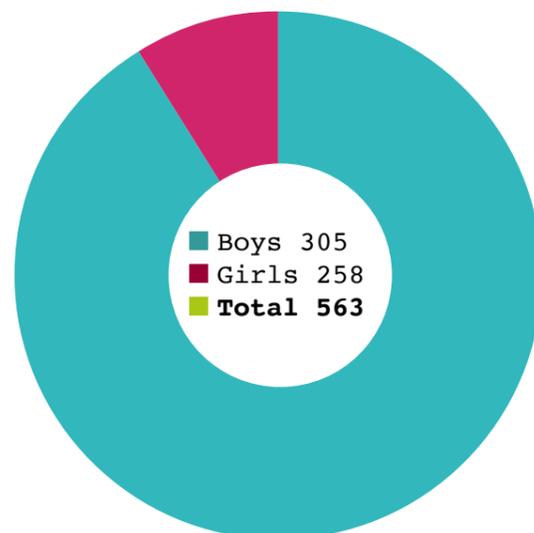
Railway Children has been nominated by the Department of Social Defence (DSD) to train Group 1 officers (including Block Development Officers (BDOs) and Tahsildars) from three districts (Chennai, Thiruvallur and Vellore) on Child Rights, Child Protection, Railway SOP and POCSO Act. These officers are responsible for initiating child protection mechanisms at both block and district levels.



At the first session in April 2016, 67 officers attended for the training. Railway Children has also been invited to train 27 newly-recruited District Child Protection Officers, which will directly enable them to implement the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) at district level.

## LINKING VULNERABLE FAMILIES WITH SOCIAL PROTECTION SCHEMES

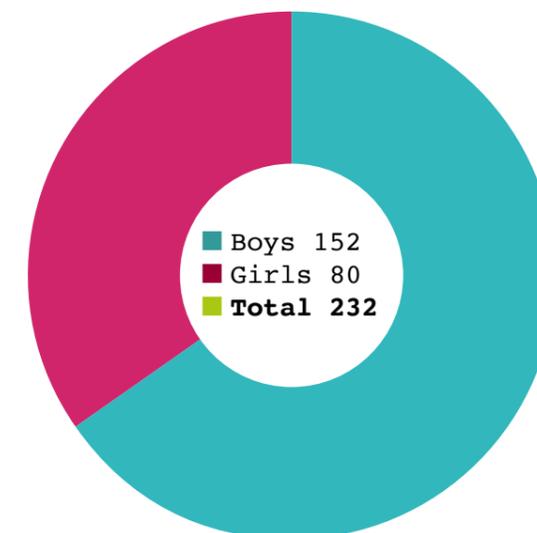
RCI has identified vulnerable children and families that are entitled to help through social protection schemes and ensured they have access to them in order to minimize the risk them leaving home. A total of 308 families were linked with social protection schemes. For example, 79 girls were supported by Chief Minister Kanya Suraksha Yojana's Girl Child Protection Scheme in Bihar.



Number of families benefitted

## DEVELOPING EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

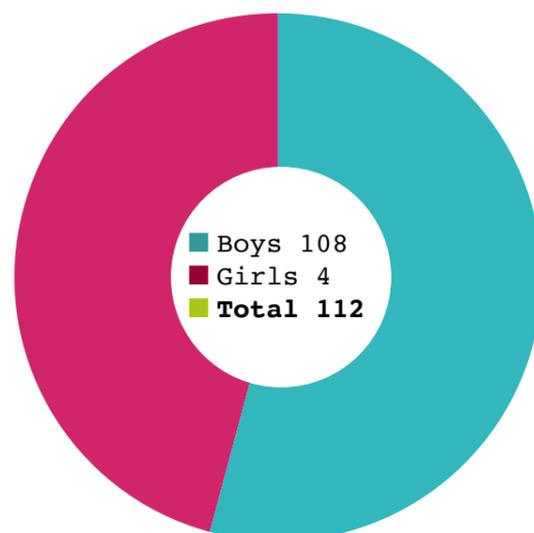
In order to improve the employability of young people, RCI has supported them to access vocational training which in turn has equipped them to better engage in economic activities and access the job market. In the year 2015/16, a total of 231 youths were linked with vocational training which included skills training, increased knowledge, career counselling, English language education and support so that they could apply to private companies for jobs as well as explore their own entrepreneurial opportunities.



Number of youths engaged in training

## ENABLING ACCESS TO INTEGRATED CHILD DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (ICDS)

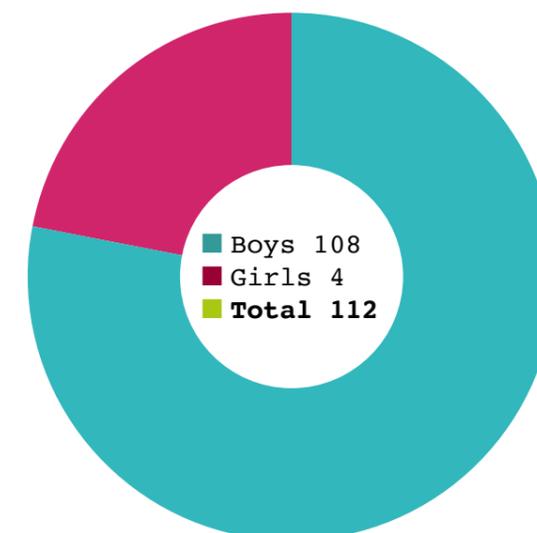
Childhood malnutrition is a common underlying cause of death among children under the age of five years, and negatively affects a child's growth and overall development. Therefore, nutrition in children is increasingly being recognized as an important indicator of development. Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) in India is the world's largest integrated early childhood programme aimed at improving the health, nutrition and development of children aged three to six years and links them to primary health care services such as immunization and Vitamin A supplements. RCI, through local NGOs, has worked towards spreading awareness on ICDS and its benefits. Though our awareness programmes, we tried to motivate families to link their children with the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS). As a result, we were able to link 563 children with this scheme. ICDS programme has had a positive impact on the survival, growth, and development of children.



Access to Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)

## EMPLOYMENT/ BUSINESS AND JOB CREATION

RCI has assisted young people in finding suitable job opportunities in the private sector and supported them with skills such as interview preparation. We have endeavored to increase and/or reinforce the skill sets of the young people and carefully match their capabilities to industry expectations. These efforts helped facilitate smooth placement of the young people into employment and as a result 64 young people have secured jobs.

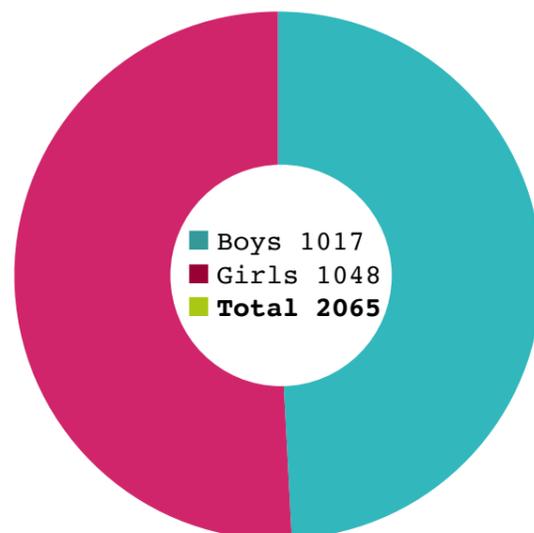


Employed/job created (youth)

## ENABLING ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Education is vital for every child. At RCI we build on the abilities of each child while being aware of their limitations. We help children to access school and support them to stay there. We engage with teachers, parents and communities to create an environment that enables, encourages and values the voices and decisions of children.

Emphasis was also given to the improvement of school infrastructures where needed. Building work necessary was carried out, such as to boundary walls, toilet facilities and playground areas, and the availability of text books and resources was improved. In addition to this, extra-curricular activities were introduced to bridge the gaps between the school, local children and education stakeholders. Regular meetings between school administration and local education officials have helped build child friendly environments in schools. In the period 2015/16, a total of 2,065 children were helped to access education through this initiative.



Number of children aged 6-14 years enabled to access Education

<sup>2</sup> IMPROVING CHILD NUTRITION; The achievable imperative for global progress, UNICEF & WHO, April 2013.

<sup>3</sup> ibid

## CAPACITY BUILDING OF PARTNERS AND RC OUTREACH WORKERS

- For new partners, in West Bengal, the Haripur Amra Sabai Unnayan Samiti (HASUS) and Bagmari Mother and Child Development Mission (BMCDM), a two-day workshop on basic child rights was held in August 2015. This training helped partner organisations to understand what is meant by advocacy and understand each step of the advocacy cycle.
- RCI took the initiative and started to document good practices of working with children at risk. Workshops and meetings with partners were then held to help them identify and implement these practices.
- SAMYAK, a four-day workshop on psycho-social support was held in May 2016 for 48 participants from 10 NGOs (not funded by RCI) and the District Child Protection Unit of Chandauli district, in Uttar Pradesh. The objective was to help them identify their own inner strengths and confidence so they can reach out to children and connect with them in an effective way.
- The RCI team took a lead role in facilitating a training session on child protection at Chandauli, for 60 participants from five 'block level' Child Protection Committees (CPC), which included 10 children who were CPC members. The training also helped build the capacity of the child members to improve their function at 'village level' CPC.
- RCI conducted seven capacity building and/or sensitization workshops, including the SAMYAK workshop, for a total of 150 participating outreach workers, on various issues such as:
  - Railway's SOP
  - Legal Instruments to Protect Child Rights.
  - The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000
- RCI organised a Knowledge Sharing Workshop with partners on 'Quality of Care and Protection of Children' in May 2016 in New Delhi. It was attended by 20 participants from eight partners working in five states of India. The purpose of this workshop was to introduce a value framework for developing quality interventions for children.

## ADVOCACY INITIATIVES AT STATE AND NATIONAL LEVEL

- **Advocacy initiative with the Assam State Commission for Protection of Child Rights:** The Honourable Governor of Assam State, Mr Padmanabha Balakrishna Acharya, released a baseline study report entitled "*Status of Children in Railway Premises*" on May 9th, 2016 at 'Raj Bhavan' (Governor House) in Guwahati. This was widely covered by State media. This baseline study was conducted at Guwahati Railway Station, jointly by Railway Children and the Assam State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (ASCPCR), Government of Assam in November, 2015 in order to transform the station into a 'child friendly space'.
- **Advocacy Initiative in Madhya Pradesh on Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS):** The Principal Secretary of the DWCD, (Govt. of Madhya Pradesh) has permitted Railway Children to work in collaboration with DCPU, Hoshnagabad for the implementation of the ICPS in the district of Hoshangabad.
- **Advocacy Initiative in Bihar on Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS):** Railway Children has initiated the rolling out of the Integrated Child Protection Scheme in collaboration with DCPU in Darbhanga across the District. This has so far benefitted more than 500 children under the Parvarish Scheme which gives Rs.900 for children up to the age of six and Rs.1000 for 7 to 18-year-olds.
- **Child protection awareness campaign:** An awareness campaign on child protection has been conducted by Railway Children in collaboration with the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) in Chandauli (Uttar Pradesh) which reached 1,506 people. It was part of a campaign on the widow's pension scheme, organized by the District Administration between April and May 2016 in eight blocks of Chandauli district.

- **State Level Consultation on Railway Connected Children, West Bengal:** This state level consultation was held in Kolkata, West Bengal, at Hotel Stadel, Salt Lake and was organized by the Children in Need Institute (CINI) Child Protection Resource Centre, supported by RCI on 20th May, 2016. The objective of the workshop was to come up with recommendations for the children in contact with the railways for submission to the State Government and WBSCPCR.
- **Consultation on Reunification:** On 2nd May 2016, RCI organized a consultation in Chennai on the reunification of children in 2016. The consultation was attended by representatives from five states, including NGOs working on child rights issues and government and non-government stakeholders.
- **Regional Consultation on the Family Reunification study in Southern Region:** This consultation was held in the Southern Region on 2nd May 2015 and many of the stakeholders actively participated and provided inputs to the study findings. The issue of street and railway connected children was highlighted at state level through this consultation. This was positively received by civil society organisations and widely covered by the media.
- **Mapping Exercise of Child Protection Mechanisms at 28 Railway stations:** RCI has decided to conduct an annual mapping exercise on child protection mechanisms in the context of implementing the 'Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) for Railways to ensure Care and Protection of Children in Contact with Railways' at 28 major railway stations including Ajmer, Bangalore City, Bhubaneswar, Chennai Central, Chennai Egmore, Delhi Anand Vihar, Delhi Hazrat Nizamuddin, Delhi Junction, Gorakhpur, Guwahati, Howrah, Katihar, Lucknow NER, Lucknow NR, Mumbai Central, Mumbai CST, Nagpur, New Delhi, New Jalpaiguri, Patna Junction, Ranchi Junction, Sealdah, Secunderabad, Tripartly and Varanasi. The assessment will make recommendations for the strengthening of the child protection mechanisms as well as the SOP and its future implementation.
- **National Workshop on Strengthening Reunification of Children with their Families:** The National Consultation on strengthening Reunification of Children to their Families was conducted by RCI at the Hotel Royal Plaza, on 27th and 28th November, 2015. The focus of the workshop was to gather inputs from different stakeholders before finalizing the recommendations for the research entitled "Child Reunification Processes in India".

**Key findings** of this research were:

- (a) 50% of the children had left home more than once (after restoration);
- (b) Reasons for leaving home were: seeking work, leisure and recreation, corporal punishment in the family and school, neglect;
- (c) The main reasons for the child remaining with the family after restoration were: awareness of parents, negative experiences on the street, a sense of responsibility towards family, the presence of an attachment figure, contentment with present options in life and increased parental understanding of the child's need.

Around 60 participants from different Government and non-government organizations across the country attended. The Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) also attended the concluding session of the consultation and recommendations were made to MWCD regarding supporting the reunification process.

## CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME WITH INDIAN RAILWAYS

- RCI as a conducts capacity building programmes at the RPF Academy Lucknow and RPF Training Centres across India on a regular basis. A total of **318** RPF personnel (including newly-appointed ASCs, in-service officials, constables etc) were trained/ orientated in seven workshops including a Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop, conducted at the RPF Academy Lucknow and five RPF Zonal Training Centres respectively i.e. Bandikui (NWR), Rajasthan, Nasik (CR), Maharashtra, Damohani-Jalpaiguri (NFR), West Bengal, Kanchrapara (ER), West Bengal and Kimber Garden- Tiruchchirappalli (SR), Tamil Nadu.
- Railway Children conducted **21** capacity building workshops/sessions for RPF/GRP/ Commercial railway staff at 17 Railway Stations of 10 divisions in four different Railway Zones i.e. Northern Railway (New Delhi, Old Delhi, Hazarat Nizamuddin, Anand Vihar, Delhi Cantt. Jammu Tawi, Ambala, Chandigarh, Ludhiana, Moradabad and Lucknow), Eastern Railway (Sealdah and Howrah), Southern Railway (Chennai Central & Jolarpet), South Central Railway (Tirupathy) and Chennai GRP division and Delhi Metro. Over **1,200** railway personnel were trained in this period.
- A two-day training programme (zonal level) on the protection of child rights in the context of Railway's SOP for RPF personnel of Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) was conducted in collaboration with the Assam State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (ASCPCR) at Guwahati, Assam on 26th and 27th September 2015. A total of **140 participants** from the Railway Protection Force (RPF) of four Railway divisions of Northeast Frontier Railways and NGOs attended this training.
- RCI conducted training for RPF personnel on child protection issues as per the Railway's SoP at Kanchrapara, Howrah, Sealdah and Jalpaiguri.



## PARTNERSHIP WITH NORTHERN RAILWAY ZONE:

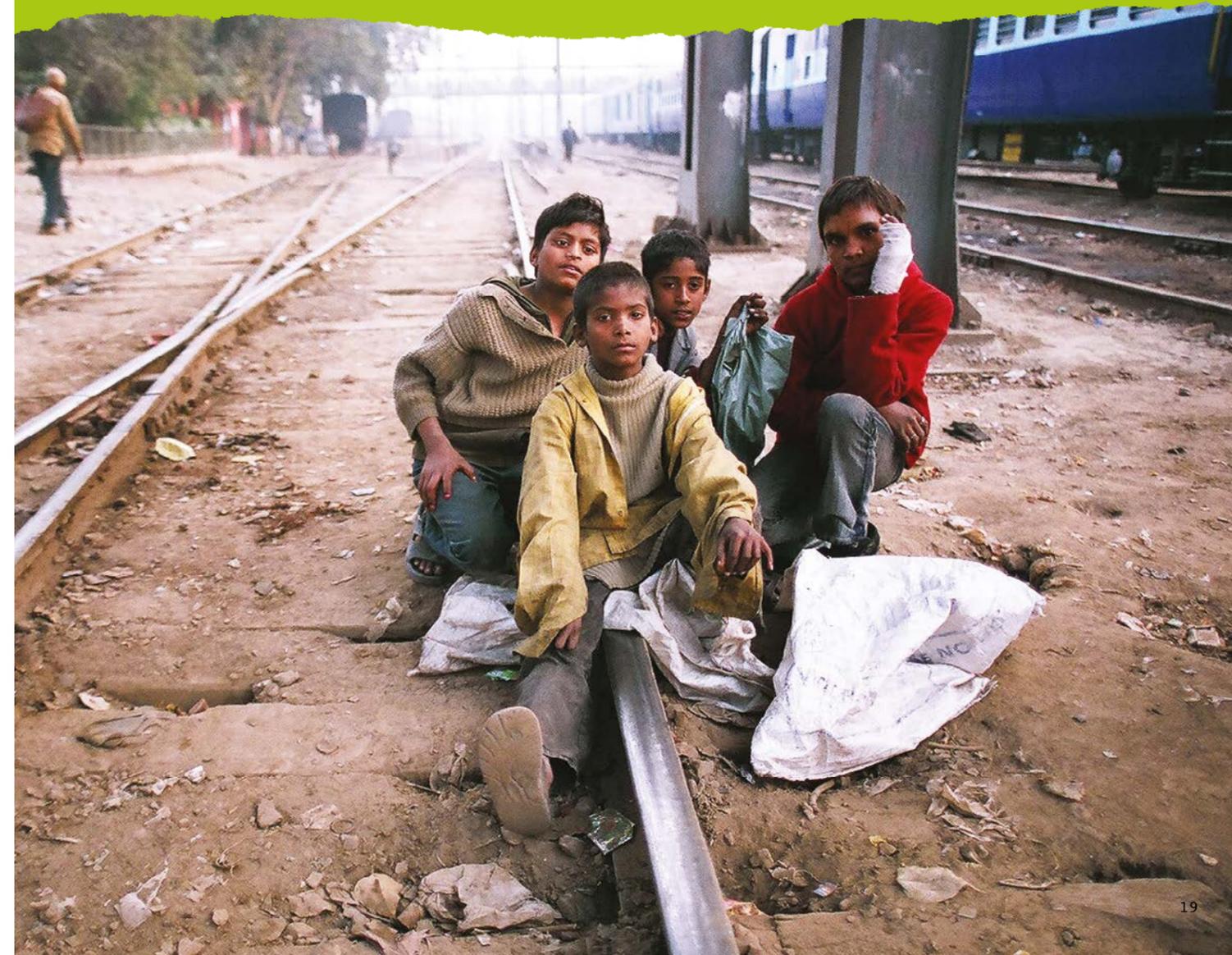
- The RPF of the Northern Railway Zone celebrated its 59th Raising Day (29th August) ceremony by organizing a week of activities on different issues and concerns including child protection issues at the stations. In this context, RCI had conducted awareness sessions on child protection in the context of the Railways' SOP for RPF personnel at four major railway stations of the Delhi area i.e. New Delhi Railway Station, Delhi Railway Station, Nizamuddin Railway Station and Delhi Anand Vihar between 1st and 4th September, 2015.
- To create awareness on child protection issues, RCI had designed, printed and provided 10 banners on child protection issues to RPF Northern Railway for displaying on the raising day.
- To generate awareness on child protection issues among different stakeholders such as passengers, vendors etc. RCI has provided **5,000** handouts on child protection issues to RPF Northern Railway for distribution.
- As well as the above, Railway Children India itself has conducted awareness campaigns on child protection issues between 1st and 4th September, 2015 in Delhi, Nizamuddin and Anand Vihar Railway Stations. A team of volunteers were involved for 3-4 hours every day and interacted with more than **1,500** people including passengers, vendors, railway staff etc.

## PARTNERSHIPS OF RAILWAY CHILDREN

RCI has been partnering with CONCR'N, CINI, Praajak, Don Bosco – Howrah, HASUS, BMCDM in West Bengal, Jeevodaya in Itarsi, MP, Bal-Prafulta – CST Intervention, Mumbai, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) Field Action Program, Gramodhaya Samithi (GRASM) in Andhra Pradesh, CHES, Scope India and the Rural Self-employment and Educational Development Society (RSEEDS) in Tamil Nadu, Ehsaas – Uttar Pradesh, Sathi – Delhi, Sarvo Prayas Sansthan and Narayani Seva Sansthan in Bihar. Partnerships with Sathi – Delhi & Sarvo Prayas Sansthan ended in May 2016.

### ACHIEVEMENTS OF PARTNER ORGANISATIONS:

- Don Bosco Ashalayam and CINI have been selected to operate Railway ChildLine service (by the Ministry of Women & Child Development) at Howrah and Sealdah railway stations, respectively.
- RSEEDS has facilitated the formation of a Child Protection Group at Jolarpet (Tamil Nadu) which was acknowledged by the Railway Minister (via Twitter).
- Scope India, in collaboration with the GRP and RPF, rescued 443 children in this period.
- Sathi's continued counselling with children and capacity building of staff at the government home for girls (Nirmal Chaya) resulted in better engagement of children, family tracing and speedier reunification of children to their families.
- Sathi received the 'National Award for Child Welfare 2014' for their outstanding performance in the field of child protection and development on 14th November, 2015.



# CASE STUDIES

## AN INSPIRING STORY OF CHANGE

Reeta (name changed to maintain confidentiality as per RC Child Protection Policy), is a 17-year-old girl studying in the 9th standard who has been living in Nirmal Chaya Government Home for girls for the last seven years. Her parents died (her father due to alcohol consumption, her mother from tuberculosis) when she was eight years old. Her elder brothers refused to take any responsibility for Reeta and admitted her to a Government Home in June 2009.

The home was a completely new environment for Reeta who lacked any parental love and sense of belonging. All this made Reeta feel lonely, desolate and angry at the world around her and she soon developed an aggressive personality. She did not respond well to counselling or talk much to the welfare officers, sharing little information about herself. She used to argue over petty issues with the other girls in GCH and even used to hurt them when they did not respond to her.

SATHI's Counsellor, Ms Manisha contacted Reeta on April 3rd, 2015 and after having a counselling session Manisha decided to enrol Reeta in a 'Home Orientation' camp at GCH organized by SATHI. Reeta came to the camp but only to demotivate other children. It was difficult to make Reeta concentrate on any one particular thing. One day, Manisha organized a dance activity and called Reeta to express herself. To everyone's surprise, Reeta told the rest of the girls to follow her dance steps. Manisha realized that Reeta was a good dancer and choreographer as she was dancing beautifully, making others dance and ensuring none of the girls should make a wrong move. Manisha and the other girls praised Reeta for her dance skills and encouraged her to continue practicing.

After the completion of the camp, it was observed that Reeta began to take part in yoga classes organized by GCH. She did meditation, involved herself in games and activities and staff soon saw an improved performance in her studies. Manisha kept in regular contact with Reeta and motivated her to keep developing her dancing skills.

Manisha contacted Reeta again on January 25th, 2016. She asked her about her interest in vocational training and having had some success academically by then, Reeta decided to start computer classes which she attended regularly. She was completely transformed. A girl with a short-temper had now become a girl who laughed to control her anger. She had become so creative that she could now work on PowerPoint and use different animation options. The happiness could be seen on her face when she created something on the computers and the other girls were no longer afraid of her. Reeta now has a lot of friends and has a big smile whenever she talks to anyone. The superintendent of the home has praised her for showing tremendous change in her behavior and Reeta has also motivated other girls to seek vocational training.

Reeta now shares her story with the staff, saying how for so many years she felt like she was living in a jail behind the bars in the GCH. She missed her mother and wanted to be at home but was disheartened when her brothers had admitted her to the home. She felt angry when she saw other children being reunited with their families. In this case we could see that recognizing Reeta's dancing skills and giving her motivation from the counsellor finally instilled some self-confidence within Reeta. She now has many friends who love her for who she is. Reeta says, "Main bade hokar apna Dance school Kholungi aur best choreographer banungi "(When I grown-up I will open my own dance school and will become the best choreographer)".

## A DREAM COMES TRUE

Ramesh, (name changed) a 16-year-old boy from a suburb of Chennai, used to spend most of his time wandering the streets with friends and was addicted to substance abuse. Sometimes he disappeared for several days at a time.

In June 2015, Ramesh was found at a bus station, heavily under the influence of drugs and living on streets. He was presented before a Child Welfare Committee, which referred him to CHES (RCI's partner in South India) for further intervention.

CHES engaged with Ramesh and learnt that he had previously been living with his parents and elder brother. His father was addicted to alcohol and failed to take care of the family. His mother was working as a domestic helper and his elder brother worked as a daily wage labourer. Ramesh left school after he failed the 8th grade and he lost interest in education. He started spending his days with friends in the neighbourhood and gradually got addicted to drugs.

Ramesh was referred to a psychiatrist for de-addiction. After the treatment he was reunited with his family and his parents were counselled to support Ramesh in his de-addiction. Despite then being completely clean of his former substance addiction, Ramesh was then idle – not willing to go back to school – but expressed an interest in motorbike mechanics. The minimum criteria to be eligible for that course was an 8th grade pass but CHES managed to convince the Don Bosco Institute to accept Ramesh on to a special mechanic course running in collaboration with Yamaha.

Ramesh said: "I feel that I am on the right track. I always dreamt of becoming a mechanic. Now my dream is coming true".

## INTO A BRIGHT FUTURE

Md. Idris (name changed), the youngest son (12 years old) of his family from Massa in Bihar was contacted at Darbhanga Railway Station on 10th February 2016, by one of RCI's outreach workers.

He was on his way to work in a yarn factory in Rajkot (Gujarat) accompanied by a friend but looked scared and traumatized. The staff enquired about him being alone and once they had built his trust he told them how he had lost interest in school and been lured to travel to Rajkot to earn decent wages without telling his parents.

Idris was produced before the CWC and was referred to a Government Children's Home while RCI made contact with, and assessed, his family. It was ascertained that due to the poor economic condition and lack of conducive environment in the family Idris had lost interest in studies but the team was able to help his parents support him in going back into education. They were given access to Home Placement Support (which covers the tuition fees of taking private tuition from the teacher of his choice). Now Idris is enrolled in Class 4 in a Government primary school where he is continuing his studies.

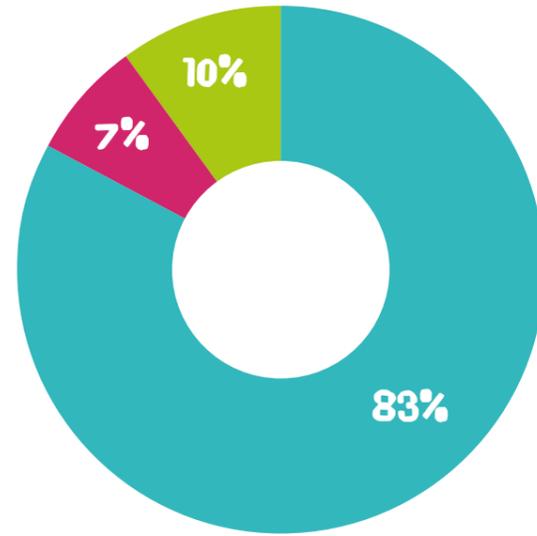
Regretting his mistakes Idris said: "***Dusre ke kahne par hi main ghar se pehli baar bahar gaya tha, par ab nahi jaunga***" (I left home for the first time under the influence of others but I will never

## ACCOUNTS AND FINANCE

Railway Children raises funds in the United Kingdom through events, trusts and institutional grants and individual donations. We express sincere gratitude to all our donors for showing faith in our interventions and backing us as we fight for street children and their rights. We also thank every individual donor for their acts of kindness that keeps our work going.

In 2015/2016, Railway Children India spent INR 81,412,407 as shown:

- **Direct Programmes:** INR 67,320,283
- **Training:** INR 6,003,985
- **Support and Admin:** INR 8,088,139



Accounting for finance for 2015-16

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