

Acknowledgement

The current study is first of its kind in Rajasthan. The study has given an opportunity to understand and highlight the problems faced by the children staying on railway platform and such other open spaces. The study has also helped to realize the need to look beyond the risks and vulnerabilities faced by the children staying on railway platforms. The children staying on railway platform is just one section of the large number of children who are living a life under difficult circumstances and situations. There is a need to look at the broader issue of protection of all such children.

I was fortunate to get an opportunity to carry out this study. I myself have learnt so many things due to this study. I am thankful to Khiltee Kaliyaan Network, Action Aid Jaipur and Railway Children, U.K. I am thankful to the Khiltee Kaliyaan team who collected data, undertook discussions with the children and railway officials.

I would also like to thank Mr. Rampal Chowdhary, Rahul and all other team members of Alarippu. My heartfelt gratitude and thankfulness to Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Joshi, Regional Manager, Action Aid Jaipur, Mr. Prem Ranjan, Program Manager, Action Aid Jaipur and Mr. Shiv Singh Nayal (our beloved Shivji) of Alarippu.

I salute the fighting spirit of the children staying on platforms who are trying day and night to live a life of their own and I dedicate this report to the spirit of this human survival.

Swarup Ratan Pal

Executive Summary

India has the largest population of street children in the world. Street children are a global urban phenomenon and their number is increasing. Among them, the children who have runaway from their homes and are struggling for survival on their own, and those who have no families are the most vulnerable. There have been some studies done outside Rajasthan on the condition of the children staying on and around railway platforms. However, in case of Rajasthan, there exists few studies.

In the current study, out of the total children surveyed, sixty percent belongs to the age group of 10-14 years and another thirty seven percent beyond the age group of fourteen years. Sixty four percent of the children were illiterate and another twenty percent knew barely how to read and write. The children's mothers are primarily involved in domestic work and don't go for any paid outside work. Their fathers are primarily involved in daily labor or small business or remained unemployed. Fifty seven percent children are staying outside home for more than a year. Multiple factors are responsible for forcing children to leave homes. Forty seven percent children told poverty (lack of regular income) as one of the reasons for their leaving home while thirty seven percent children pointed abuse and domestic problems as another primary reason for them to leave home. Most of the children (87%) stay at footpath and railway platform. Seventy percent children told that begging is one way of their arranging for food while forty three percent told collection from railway coach is another way. Fifty three percent children purchase food also. Thirty seven percent children admitted that children have sexual relationship among themselves. Only thirty percent children told that they are aware about HIV-AIDS. About eighty percent children have multiple addictions. The most prominent of them are tobacco/gutkha and white solution. Twenty three percent children complained of skin diseases while different ailments like head & body ache, cough-cold, physical injury were present among ten to twenty percent children. Most of the children told that they usually go or would like to go to either medical shop (80%) or govt. hospital (67%) for seeking treatment. Most of the children are involved in multiple works like begging, collecting plastic bottles & rag-picking, and cleaning of railway coach etc. The children consider maltreatment of police as the main problem in their work. Those who save money keep their money with stall owners of the station. The main avenues of expenditure of children are food, clothing, movie, gambling and addiction. However, 50% of their expenditure is made on gambling and addiction.

The study brings out the need of a safe and secure place for children where they can spend their time during day and night as and when they feel necessary. There is a clear need of starting drop in shelters near the station. There is a need to bring the children together and provide them a safe custody.

The JJ Act and Integrated Child Protection Scheme have provided ample scope for institutional intervention and civil society participation. The members of CWC, Special Juvenile Police Unit need a lot of guidance and training to function effectively on child rights issues. Continuous dialogue and advocacy are necessary with these bodies. The standard and quality of services at govt. homes, leaves much to be desired. Greater civil society participation is needed to change the mindset of the people towards the children staying on railway platforms. Collective and institutional initiative is needed for bringing broader change like change in policy, awareness, sensitivity, campaign etc. There is a need to develop and expand the safety network for different socially invisible children living under similar vulnerable situation. Volunteerism, sponsorship, foster care, adoption are some ways to promote individual participation

The study points out towards a need to look at the issue of child protection beyond the children staying on railway platforms. Child Protection should be the overarching goal of Khiltee Kaliyaan initiative which should work with the children in different situations like children in govt. institutional care, working children, street children or abused children etc.

Introduction

Literature Review

India has the largest population of street children in the world. At least eighteen million children live or work on the streets of urban India, laboring as porters at bus or railway terminals; as mechanics in informal auto-repair shops; as vendors of food, tea, or handmade articles; as street tailors; or as ragpickers, picking through garbage and selling usable materials to local buyers (Human Rights Watch/Asia, 1996). Considering that this estimate is as old as thirteen years, the current population would much higher.

Street Children is a global urban phenomenon and their number is increasing. Among them, the children who have runaway from their homes and are struggling for survival on their own, and those who have no families are the most vulnerable (Children without childhood- Ahmedabad, 2006). A large number of platform, street and working children use railway platforms for their survival (Prayas Sathi Joint Report 2007).

A review of the previous studies can provide a fair idea about the situation of the children staying on railway platforms and the vulnerabilities they face. A study (Association for Development, Delhi, 2002) in 2002 found that most of the children staying on railway platforms were in the age group of 8-16 years. 76% of the children attended school while they were at home. Most of these children were from lower income group, and 33% participants were from families of self-employed persons like vendors, etc. Nearly 47% children mentioned abuse by parents as the main cause for having left their homes. Nearly 57% children were living at the railway stations for the last 1-5 years and 64% children did not have any contact with their families and 52% did not want to go back to their families. It was found that 64% wanted to remain on the streets, because of freedom and employment opportunities. 60% children were involved in rag picking. About 74% children travelled to other places like Bombay during winters to escape the cold. Nearly 78% participants mentioned harassment by police as major problems faced by them regularly. 56% children stated that the police demanded or snatched money from them. It was revealed that 67% children smoked cigarettes, 78% respondents used drugs regularly, and of them 48% consumed it daily. Nearly, 53% respondents took drugs for fun and relaxation and 11% said that their friends urged them to use drugs.

Two similar studies (Prayas Sathi Joint Report, New Delhi 2007 and Children without childhood- Ahmedabad, 2006) conducted in Delhi and Ahmedabad respectively had similar findings. Besides the above mentioned issues, the study at

Delhi pointed out the pattern of working hours of the children. The usual working hours of these children were between 5-12 hours a day. 26.67% children worked between 5-7 hours; 61.38% children worked between 7-10 hours; and 11.95% children worked 10-12 hours a day. 11.95% spent most of their money on cigarettes or alcohol, 47.79% gambled, and 16.35% children spent their money on movies, travelling, etc. 23.90% children spent their income on their home.

The study in Ahmedabad found out that as nearly 66% of the street children had some schooling. However, children's lack of will, attractiveness of street life and sense of independence, fear of formal schools and punishment meted to children by teachers, language barriers, paper work, delays/ hurdles, absence of good bridge courses, and most importantly, the main stream school system's insensitivity to the special needs of such children were hurdles for entry into the school system and resumption of their education. When SC fell sick they generally went to a medical store for self medication (27.5%), Government hospital (23.5%), private clinic (13.7%), NGO centre at station (13.7%), and 33 (21.6%) children had never fallen sick after leaving home. The most essential services required by street children were night shelter (61.8%), clothes (38.2%), medical treatment (26.5%), toilet and bathroom (23.5%), education (20.6%), food (11.8%) regular employment (5.9%), financial assistance (2.9%) and other services (20.6%).

The study by Roschanski (2007) tries to document the efforts and experience of self organization of working children into unions and collectives in Delhi and Bangalore. It captures the efforts and experience of Bal Mazdoor Union promoted by Butterflies, a NGO based in Delhi and of Hasiru Sangha promoted by The Association for the Promotion of Social Action (APSA), a child-centred community development organisation located in Bangalore.

A study by Human Rights Watch/Asia (1996) documents police abuse of Indian street children and deaths of children in police custody. Human Rights Watch spoke to more than one hundred street children, as well as representatives of nongovernmental organizations, social workers, human rights activists, human rights lawyers, and other individuals who work with street children in Bangalore, Bombay, Delhi, and Madras. Of the one hundred children interviewed, sixty complained of police abuse in the form of detentions, beatings, extortion, or verbal abuse. All the children interviewed reported a fear of the police. Several factors contribute to this phenomenon: police perceptions of street children, widespread corruption and a culture of police violence, the inadequacy and non-implementation of legal safeguards, and the level of impunity that law enforcement officials enjoy.

A study conducted in Udaipur city of Rajasthan (2008) to understand the demographic profile and future prospects of street children of Udaipur finds out that majority of street children to be males and few parents of them had education.

Majority of the parents and the children are addicted to gutkha, tobacco and smoking. Only 21% of the children had ever gone to school. Poverty, Poor educational status of the parents and excess work load on the mothers are the contributing factors for this. The children have reported that the domestic abuse and maltreatment is so aggressive that at times children run away from homes. Most (55%) of these children had to work 12- 14 hrs. daily, while (32%) were working 8-12 hrs. daily and only 13% were working less than 8 hrs. a day. Most of the children entertained themselves by seeing television (52%). Others entertained by listening to radio (38%), playing games (13%) and other modes (7%). Anemia, malnutrition, Vitamin A deficiency and dental caries were commonly observed in the children. 26% of these children had fungal infection of skin and nails while 14% had injuries in hand and feet as occupational hazards. These morbidities are as a result of poor diet, poor hygienic condition and ignorance of these children regarding nutritive food.

The Study on Child Abuse: India 2007 by Ministry of Women and Child Development of Govt. of India is a first ever attempt by the govt. at a large scale to understand the extent of child abuse in India. The report indicates that 51% children in Rajasthan have reported physical abuse in one or more situations. The gender disaggregated data of the same shows that physical abuse is almost equal for both boys and girls. If we look for the data for physical abuse for children in govt. institutions () and street children , 22% children reported institution based abuse while 89% boys and 73% girls staying on streets reported physical abuse. However, alarming situation is that the girls are the more victims of institution based abuse. In the case of sexual abuse, 52.5 % boys and 47.5% girls reported incidents of sexual abuse meted to them in Rajasthan. The neglect of girl child is very high with 87% girl children reporting of one or more forms of neglect.

Children in Need of Care and Protection

According to The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2000 a “Child in Need of Care and Protection” means a child

- (i) who is found without any home or settled place or abode and without any ostensible means of subsistence
- (ia) who is found begging or who is either a street child or a working child
- (ii) who resides with a person (whether a guardian of the child or not) and such person
 - a. has threatened to kill or injure the child and there is a reasonable likelihood of the threat being carried out or
 - b. has killed, abused or neglected some other child or children and there is a reasonable likelihood of the child in question being killed, abused or neglected by that person
- (iii) who is mentally or physically challenged or ill children or children suffering from terminal diseases or incurable diseases having no one to support or look after
- (iv) who has a parent or guardian and such parent or guardian is unfit or incapacitated to exercise control over the child
- (v) who does not have parent and no one is willing to take care of or whose parents have abandoned (or surrendered) him or who is missing and run away child and whose parents cannot be found after reasonable enquiry
- (vi) who is being or is likely to be grossly abused, tortured or exploited for the purpose of sexual abuse or illegal acts
- (vii) who is found vulnerable and is likely to be inducted into drug abuse or trafficking
- (viii) who is being or is likely to be abused for un conscionable gains
- (ix) who is victim of any armed conflict, civil commotion or natural calamity

As the definition describes and as per the findings from earlier studies conducted, the children staying on and around railway platforms forms a category of children in need of care and protection. It is important to understand that these children crosscut many of the vulnerabilities as mentioned in the Act.

Purpose of the Present Study

There have been some studies done outside Rajasthan on children staying on and around railway platforms. However, in case of Rajasthan, it is only few. In particular the current study is conducted

1. To understand the **life pattern** of children working in railway platforms in Rajasthan

2. To study the **risks associated** with life of children on railway platforms in Rajasthan
3. To study the **policy environment** in Rajasthan regarding the Children in Need of Care and Protection
4. To help Khiltee Kaliyan design its **strategy and interventions** with children staying on and around railway platforms

Methodology

The study has used individual questionnaire, group discussion and interaction with different stakeholders as methods of collecting primary data. The questionnaire is prepared by Railway Children, a funding agency working with the children staying on railway platforms. The questionnaires were prepared for four segments- children, TTE, GRP-RPF, Vendors & Coolie and Station Managers. However, questionnaire for Station Manager was not executed in the field.

The questionnaire for the children as prepared by Railway Children was first modified to suit to the local requirements and avoid repetitions of questions. No modification was done for the questionnaire of TTE, GRP-RPF, Vendors & Coolie and Station Managers. All the questionnaires were translated into Hindi.

The field investigators were given a training of two days on the purpose of study, the questionnaires and the group discussion. The children's questionnaire and group discussion were tested in three locations (where final data was collected later i.e. Kota, Ajmer and Jodhpur). Two children from each location totaling six children were interviewed during the testing. One group discussion from each location totaling three discussions was tested. Necessary changes were made in the children's questionnaire after the testing and final format was developed.

Sample Size

In the final stage ten children from each location totaling thirty children, two TTE from each location totaling five TTE, two coolie/vendors from each location totaling six coolie/vendors and two GRP-RPF from each location totaling seven GRP-RPF were interviewed. The final data collection was done in three locations viz. Kota, Ajmer and Jodhpur.

Besides the formal questionnaire based data collection method, verbal interaction was made with a few stakeholders like Chief Judicial Magistrate, District Child Officer, Superintendent of Govt. Home, inmates of Observation Home, Women's

Home (*Naarishala*), RPF-GRP to understand the situation related to children in special circumstances.

Results of the Survey

General Profile of the Children

Distribution of Caste

The sample comprised of a hundred percent boys. In the sample, thirty three percent children each belongs to the scheduled caste and the general category respectively totaling sixty six percent of the sample. Another twenty three percent belongs to scheduled tribe category.

Table 1 Distribution of Caste in the Sample

Caste	% of Children
OBC	3.3%
SC	33.3%
ST	23.3%
General	33.3%
Don't Know	6.7%

Table 2 Distribution of Religion in the Sample

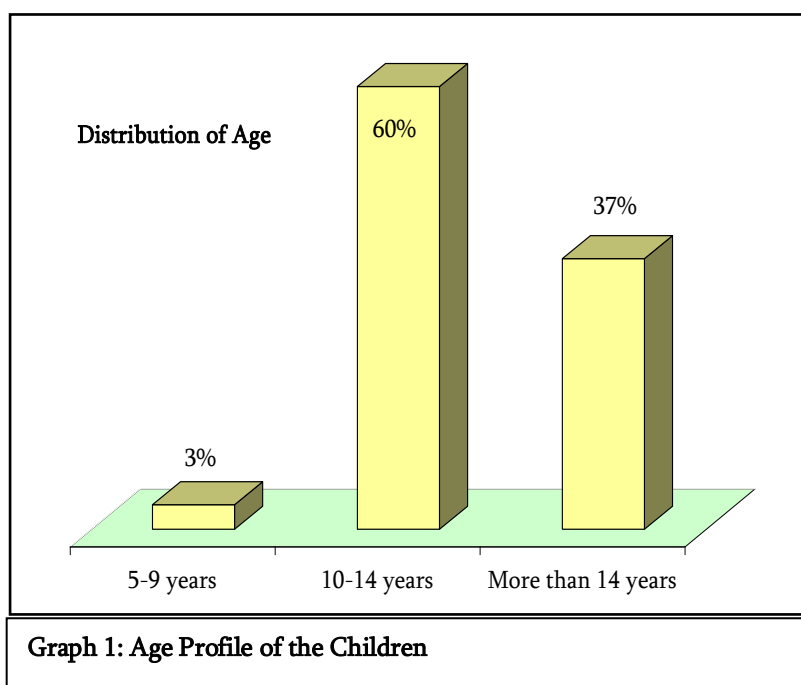
Religion	% of Children
Hinduism	63%
Muslim	37%

Age Profile of the Children

Out of the total children, sixty percent belongs to the age group of 10-14 years and another thirty seven percent in the age group of beyond fourteen years. This trend is in alignment with the age profile of the children as found in earlier studies.

Level of Education (Table 3)

In the sample, sixty four percent of the children were illiterate and another twenty percent knew barely how to read and write. As a result of this, almost no one was attending school currently. This situation acquires importance in the perspective of



various risks faced by the children. The level of education influences to quite an extent the knowledge and awareness about health and personal hygiene.

Domicile States of the Children

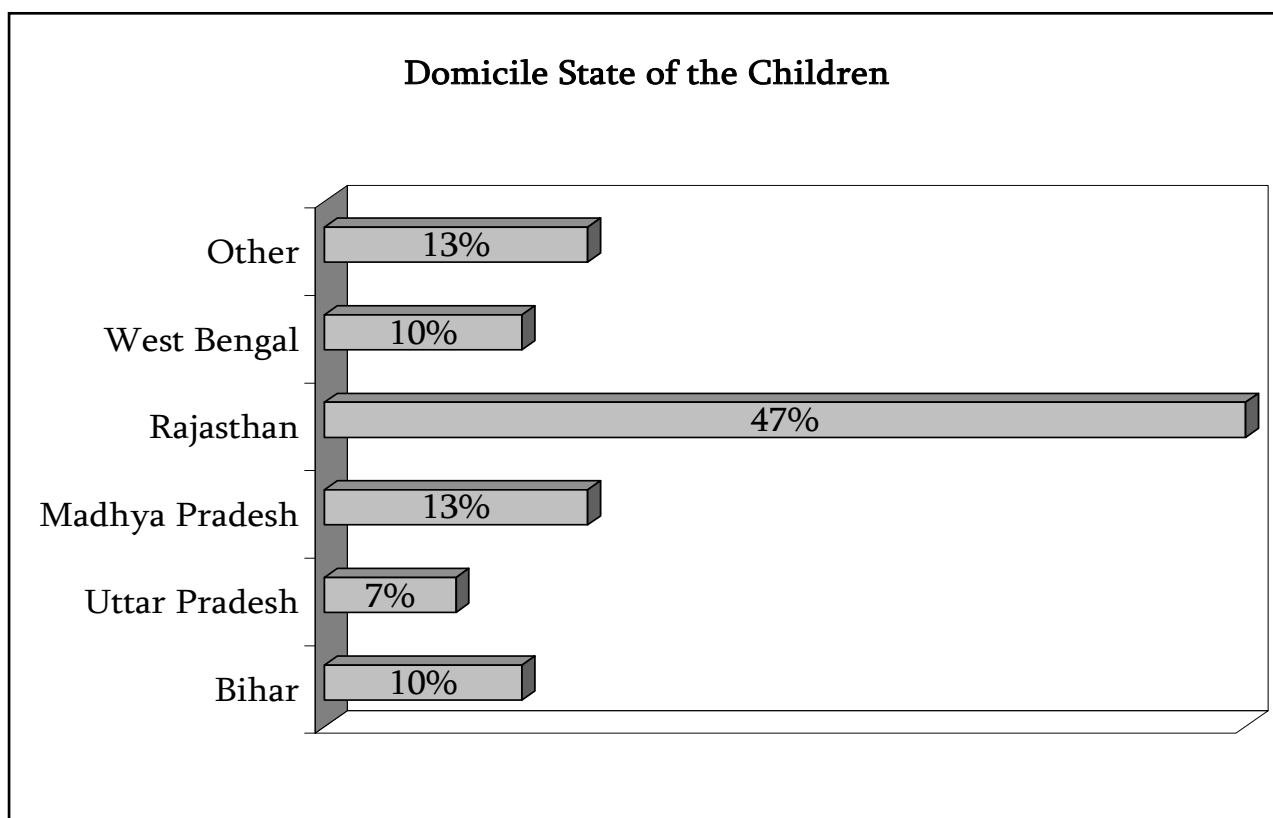
Most of the children staying at the railway platforms belong from Rajasthan itself. (47%) [Graph 2]. A few belong from states like Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal also.

Most of the children arrived at the station alone. Twenty seven percent children were accompanied by someone else. When they are accompanied, the children often come along with their parents at a new place.

Table 3 : Educational Status of the Children

Level	% of Children
Illiterate	64%
Knows how to read & write	20%
Between I-V th class	13%
Between VI-VIII th class	3%
10 TH Class	0%
More than 10 th class	0%

Graph 2: Domicile States of the Children



Family Context

Parents' Occupation

If we look at the occupational profile of the parents of the children we find that the children's mothers were primarily involved in domestic work and didn't go for any outside work. While their fathers were primarily involved in daily labor or small business, almost a quarter of children's fathers were unemployed also. Sixty seven percent children told that they are in touch with their families with varying intervals of contact while the rest do not have any contact with their families. Interestingly, sixty three percent children have both their parents alive, seventeen percent children have single parent alive and for another seventeen percent, the children have lost both the parents. Most of the children have a family size of between 5-9 members.[Table 5]

Table :4 Parents' Occupation

	Father	Mother
Farming	5%	0%
Service	9%	0%
Daily Labor	36%	9%
Petty Business	23%	5%
Unemployed	23%	23%
Domestic Work	0%	59%
Other	5%	9%

Table 5 : Average Number of Family Members

No.of Members	% of Children
0-4	37%
5-9	60%
More Than 10	3%

Mobility Pattern

Duration of Stay Outside Home

Fifty seven percent children are staying outside home and at the current place for more than a year. Thirteen percent is outside home for one to six months and another thirteen percent is staying outside home for six to twelve months

Table 7: Duration of Stay Outside Home

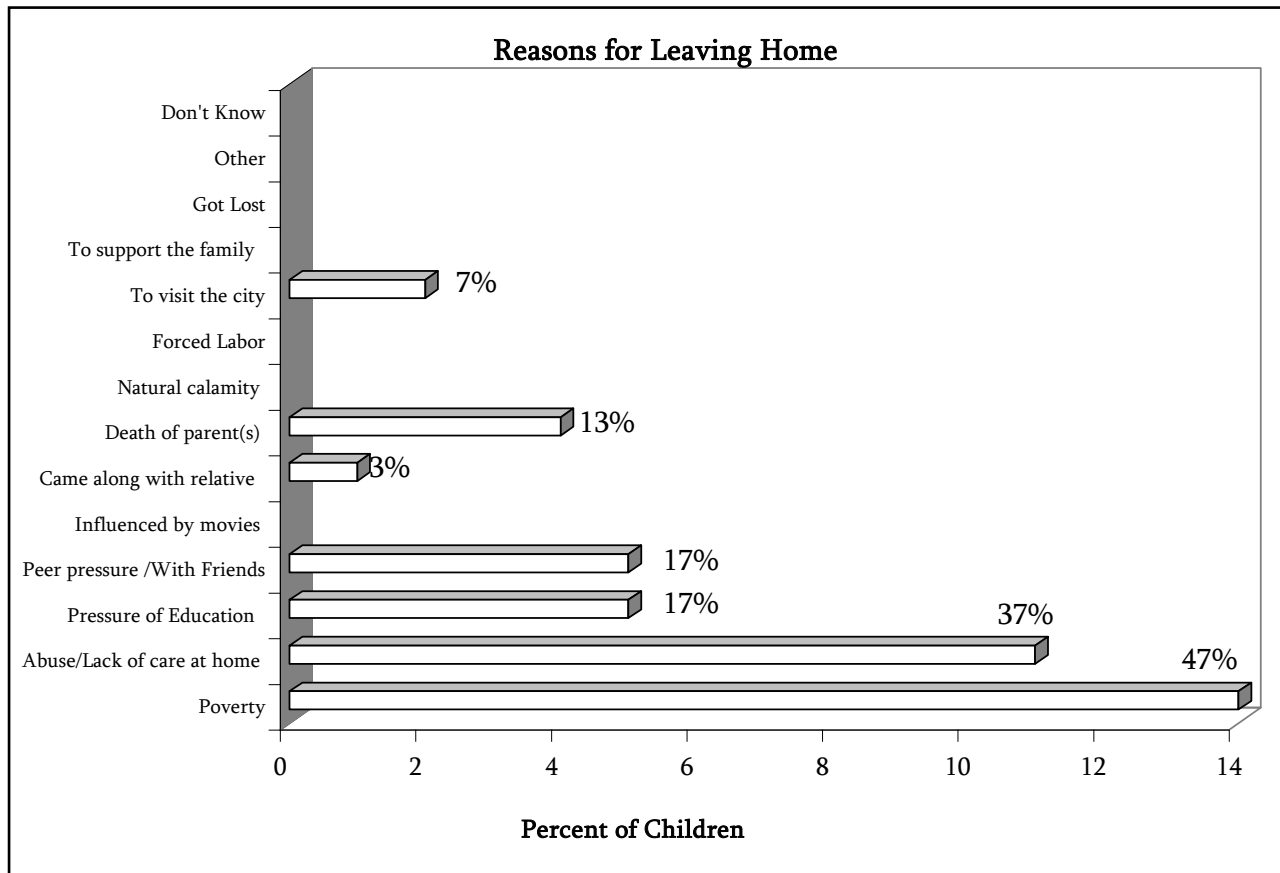
Duration	% of Children
1-3 days	7%
4 days -1 week	7%
2-3 weeks	0%
1-6 months	13%
6 months - 1 year	13%
Above 1 year	57%
Don't Know	0%
Up -Down with Home	3%

Causes of Leaving Home

There is no single reason for children to leave their homes. Usually it is due to multiple reasons. In our sample, forty seven

percent children told poverty as one of the reasons for their leaving home. Thirty seven children told abuse and domestic problems is another primary reason for their leaving home. Besides these two leading reasons, pressure and fear of education, death of parents and influence of friends& peers are the other three main reasons for leaving home by the children.(Graph : 3). Most of the children (67%) have left their homes multiple times.

Graph : 3 Reasons for Leaving Home by the Children



Duration of stay at One Place

There is no clear pattern of duration of stay at one place by the children. While thirty percent children said that they do not change their places, seventeen percent said they stay at one place for 1-3 months and another seventeen percent said that stay at for more than a year in one place. The children have revealed that they do not move particularly during the winter. But during summer there is no fixed duration at one place. Even if they go out of the city, they usually come back by day or two.

Current Place of Stay and Sleep

Currently, most of the children (87%) stay at footpath and railway platform. Almost equal number of them (73%) sleeps there as well. Around ten percent children do not have any fixed place of sleep. However thirteen percent children sleep at home.

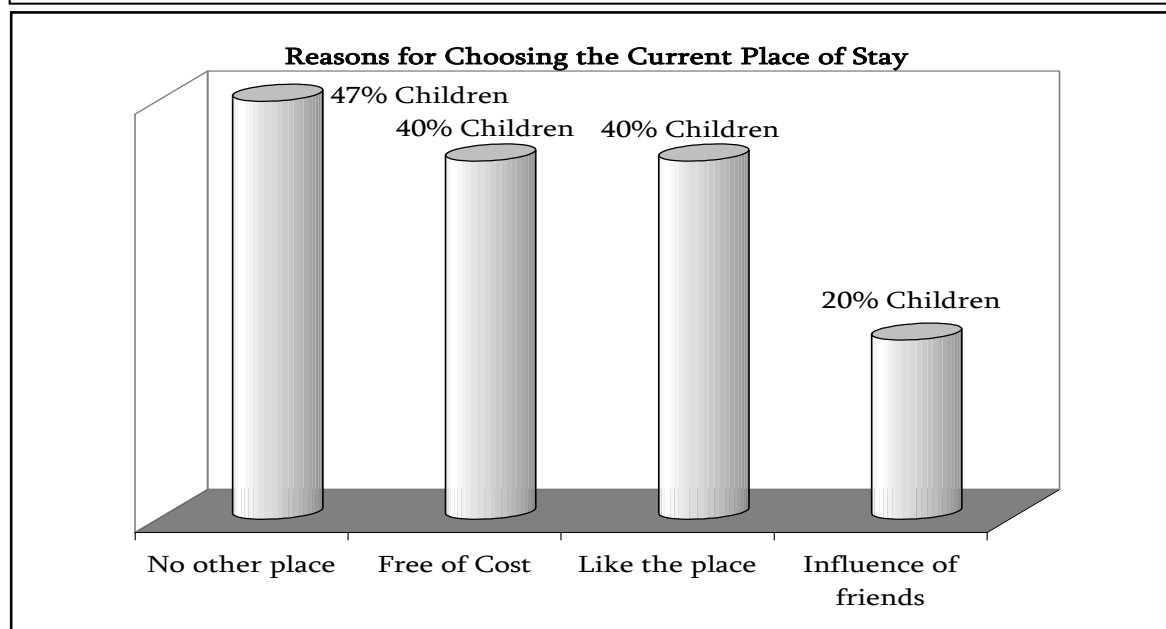
Reasons for Staying at the Current Place

There are multiple reasons for choosing the current place of stay by the children. The main reasons cited by them are that they do not have any other place to go (47%), free availability of the place (40%) and they like the liberty of the place (40%). Twenty percent children cited influence of friends as one reason of staying at the current place. (Graph : 4)

Table 8: Place of Stay of Children

Current Place of Stay	% of Children
Footpath-Railway Platform	87%
With friends	3%
Rented Room	7%
In Home	3%
Current Place of Sleep	
Footpath-Railway Platform	73%
No fixed place	10%
Home	13%
Pvt individual's place	3%

Graph 4 : Reasons for Choosing the Current Place of Stay



Living Condition and Security

Place of Toilet

Children use multiple places as per their convenience for toilet. Most of the children either go to open places or to stationery trains at platforms. A few children go to paid toilet also.

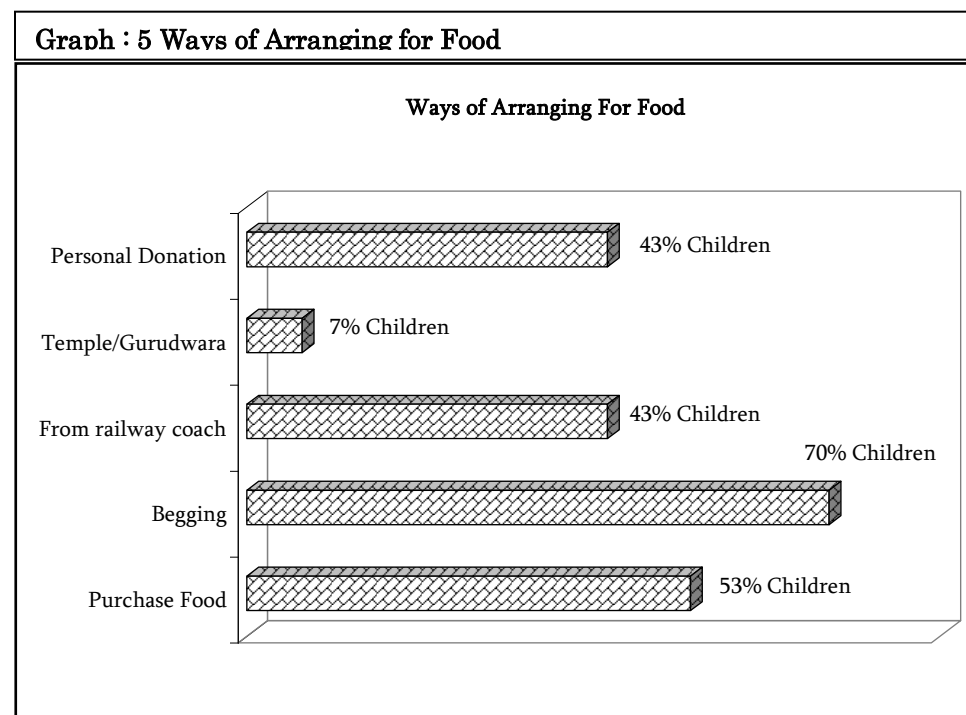
Table: 9 Place of Toilet of the Children

Facilities	% of Children
Paid Toilet	10%
In the Open	80%
Toilets on Platforms	7%
In the stationery trains	67%
Own Home	10%
Shelters run by NGO/Govt.	0%

Place for Keeping Belongings

Sixty percent children keep their belongings in a hidden place that no one else knows while twenty three percent of them carry the belongings with them always. They do not keep their items with a person.

Ways of Arranging for Food



There is no one fixed place of food for the children staying on platform. The children use different ways to arrange for food. It depends on the situation and availability. Seventy percent children told that begging is one way of their arranging for food while forty three percent told collection

from railway coach is another way. Personal donation/charity is also an important source of food for children specially in religious places. It is important to note that fifty three percent children have purchasing of food as one option for arranging for food for them. However, the disturbing reality is that forty percent of the children

never have a full diet in a day and another thirty three percent have it only once a day.(Table 10)

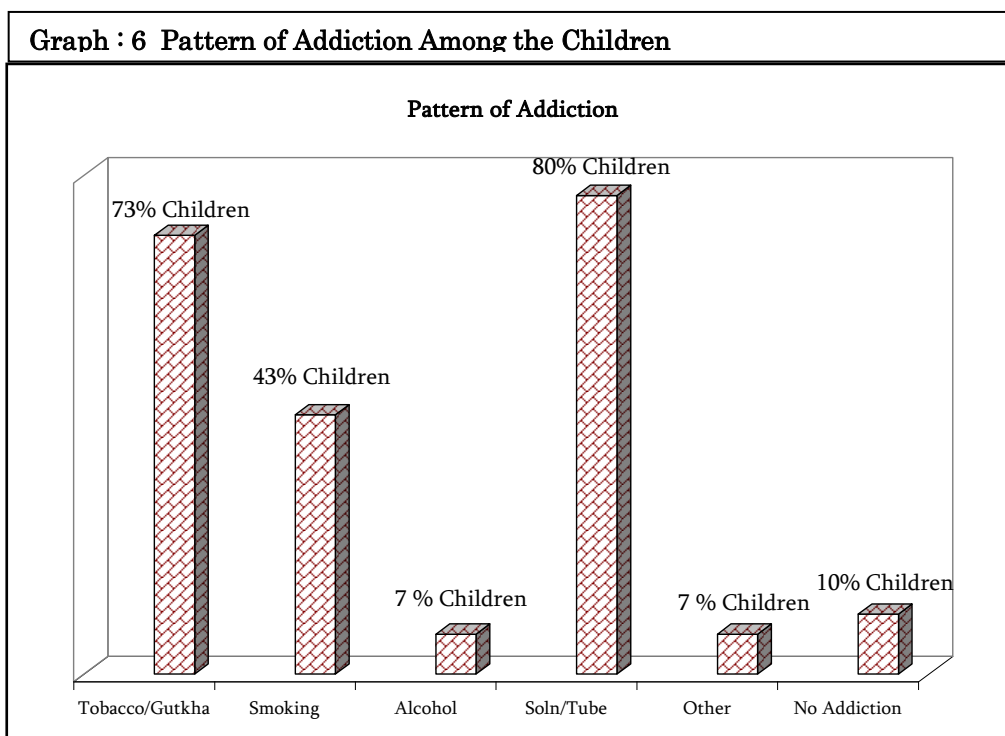
Frequency	% of Children
Never	40%
Once	33%
Twice	20%
Thrice	7%

Sexual Relationship Among the Children

Thirty seven percent children admitted that children have sexual relationship among themselves while the rest told that the children do not have sexual relationship. While the children admitted about sexual relationship, they were not aware about the extent or spread of the same among the children i.e. how many children are actually involved in it. A few children (13%) admitted forced sexual relationship made by the older children with the younger children

Pattern of Addiction Among the Children

About eighty percent children have multiple addictions. The most prominent of them are tobacco/gutkha and white solution. About forty three percent children admitted smoking also as one of their addictions.



Health Status

Prevalence of Disease or Ailments

The children complained of multiple diseases or ailments at a given point of time. Twenty three percent children complained of skin diseases while different ailments like head & body ache, cough-cold, physical injury were present among ten to twenty percent children. Thirteen percent children told that they didn't have any problem. (Table: 11). Most of the children told that they usually go or would like to go to either medical shop (80%) or govt. hospital (67%) for seeking treatment.

Table : 11 Prevalence of Disease Among Children

Types of Diseases/Ailments	% of Children Complained
Skin Disease	23%
High Fever	10%
Headache-Body ache	20%
Infection	3%
Cough-Cold	17%
Physical injury	17%
Don't Know	13%
No disease currently	13%

Awareness About HIV-AIDS

Table : 12 Awareness About HIV-AIDS

Awareness	% of Children
Yes	30%
No	63%
No Response	7%

Only thirty percent children told that they are aware about HIV-AIDS. Those who were aware about it, knew only one reason of spreading of HIV (89%). The children, who are aware about AIDS, have got the information from different mediums. The most common is television (100%), wall poster (33%) and from NGO (22%).

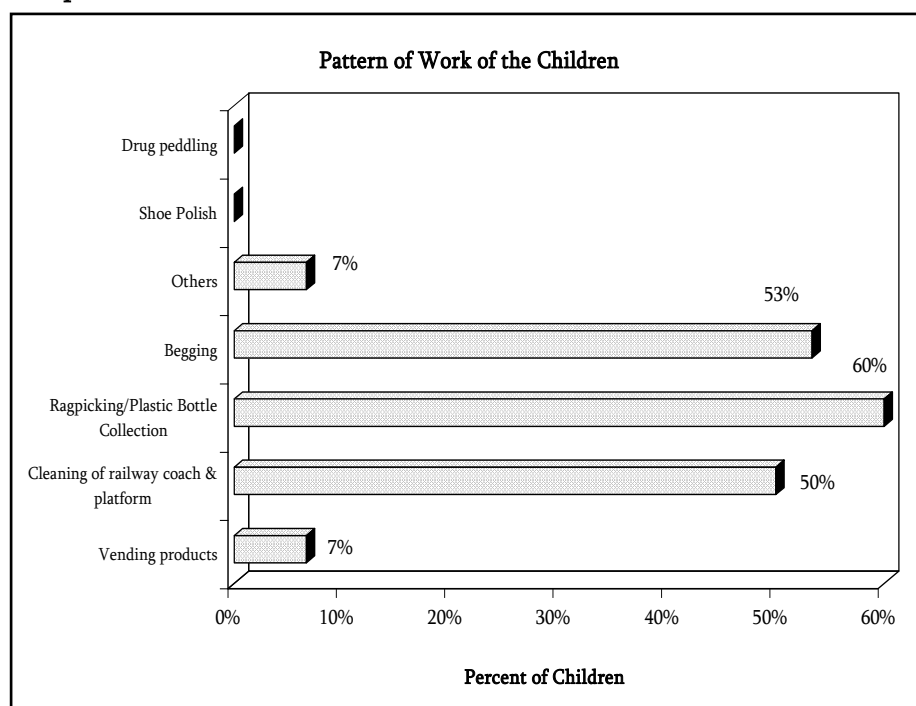
Work and Income Pattern

Almost all the children work. The main motivation behind the work is to meet the food, clothing and addiction expense. Most of the children are involved in multiple works like begging, collecting plastic bottles & rag-picking, and cleaning of railway coach etc. There is no fixed hour of work of the children. They work whenever they feel like working. However, most of the children work for seven to nine hours a day. Usually they operate in group whenever they work.(53%) The children consider maltreatment of police as the main problem in their work. Many of them save money and many of them don't. Those who save money keep their money with stall owners of the station.

Pattern of Work

Most of the children are involved in their current work for more than a year (67%). The children are involved in multiple works. Sixty percent children told plastic bottle collection & rag-picking as one way of their earning money. For fifty percent children cleaning of railway coach and fifty three percent children begging is one of the modes of work.

Graph 7: Pattern of Work of the Children



Reasons for Doing Current Work

Table : 13 Reasons for Doing Current Work

Reasons	% of Children
Only this Work is Available	10%
Started Doing With Others	30%
Got the Work Easily	27%
For Money	60%
For Food	63%
Instant Availability of Cash	27%
Have To Work Under Force	0%
Family/Caste Occupation	0%

As the data in the Table 13 shows, around sixty percent children cited earning money and food are the main purpose for their work. Some children started doing their current work as it was available easily (27%) or their friends were already doing that work (30%).

Risks Involved in Work

The children feel there are different risks or problems involved in their work. Fifty percent children consider maltreatment by police as the main risk in their work. Maltreatment by coolie or TT(27%), by passenger (20%) by older boys (23%) and injury (27%) are the other risks opined by the children. Interestingly, twenty three percent children said that they do not know the risks faced by them.

Table : 14 Different Risks Felt by Children

Risks	% of Children
Loss of Health	7%
Injury	27%
Long Hours of Work	3%
Hard Labor	10%
Maltreatment of Police	50%
Maltreatment of Older Boys	23%
Maltreatment of Coolie/TT	27%
Maltreatment of Passengers	20%
Do not Know	23%

Range of Earning from Different Works

Table 15 : Earning Pattern from Different Works

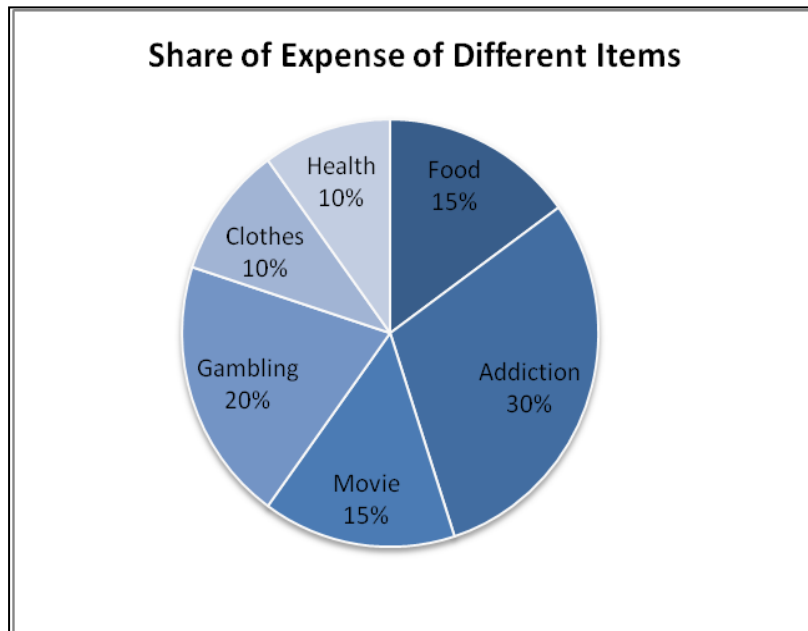
Type of Work	Earning
Cleaning the coaches of the train	Rs 40-80 per day
Collecting & Selling Old Water Bottle	Rs 50-150 per day
Rag picking	Rs 50-150 per day
Begging	Rs 30-150 per day
Carrying Gaslight in ceremonies	Rs 80-100 per day
Petty Work	Rs 100-150 per day
Gambling	Rs 50-500 per day
Selling minor items	Rs 50-70 per day

The table 15 is summary of earning in three locations where survey was done. The level and avenues of earning is more in Ajmer while it is average in Jodhpur. Besides these works, some children do boot polishing work who are separate from this group of children. Share of involvement of children in different works is different in three locations.

Share of Expense of Different Items

The notable point is children spend about fifty percent of their income in addiction and gambling. The issue of gambling didn't come in individual interview but during group discussion. There is 10-15 percent spending in clothes, food and movie. (Graph : 8). There is some spending on health also. (10%).

Graph: 8 Share of Expense of Different Items

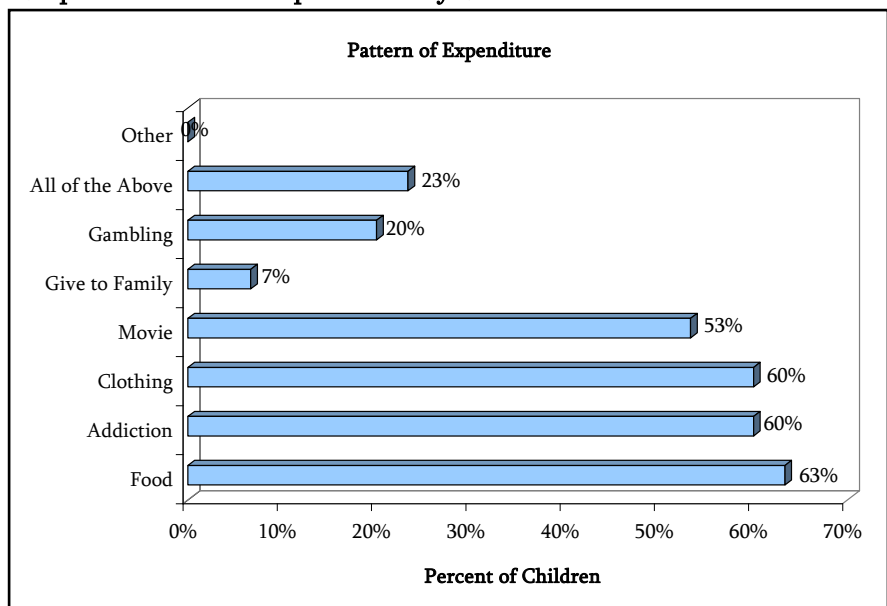


The low expense in food is perhaps due to the reason that children often have food by begging or get it from charity. No separate data was collected on spending on each item. The share of expense is as told by the children themselves. However, it varied in three locations. The current figure is an average of the three places. However, the avenues of expense are same in all the three locations.

Pattern of Spending

The main avenues of expenditure of children are food, clothing movie and addiction. About sixty percent children told that they spend their earnings on these four items. One fifth of the children admitted spending money in gambling also.(Graph:8) Many of them save money (43%) and many of them don't (53%). Those who save money keep their money with primarily with the stall owners of the station (30%) Fifty seven percent children didn't reveal where they keep their savings..

Graph: 9 Pattern of Expenditure by Children



Interview with TTE, Porter/Vendor and GRP-RPF

Traveling Ticket Examiner

According to TTEs, they usually do not come across new children. Informal discussion with them has revealed that the children staying on platform are not allowed to stay on platform legally. The railway officials have the direction of not to allow anyone to stay on railway platform. So officially no TTE is allowed to give an estimate of number of new children coming to platform or staying there.

All TTE consider that the children create problem for the railway authority and no children should be allowed to stay on the platform.

However, according to them also, the main reasons for children leaving home are poverty and domestic problem in the families. It is due to multiple reasons. This is in consonant with our finding with the children. The TTE could make out a new child usually by looking at his/her behavior and out of TTE's own experience. The children usually come from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and different parts of Rajasthan. All of them consider that these children create problem for the railway authority. The main problem the children create is to bother passengers. No TTE thinks that the children should be allowed to stay on the platform. If they come across any runaway child during train journey or find any new child on platform, they handover the child to RPF-GRP.

Porter-Vendor

According to porters and vendors, they seldom pay attention if any new child has arrived at the station. However, all of them admitted that around twenty to twenty five children stay on the platform. According to them, the main reasons for children leaving home are domestic problem in the families and to seek work. They could make out a new child usually by looking at his/her behavior. The children usually hail from Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and a few from Southern India. Almost all of them have helped such a child who has arrived fresh at platform. They have either handed over the child to GRP or NGO or arranged for food and stay. Some of them pay for tea of the children sometimes. A few of them know about NGO (KKEI) who works with the children. But they have not remained involved with the NGO so much. One third of the porter-vendor opined that the children do not create any problem for them while the rest has said that the children create problem. The children usually bother the passengers, fight

The main reasons for children leaving home are domestic problem in the families and to seek work

among themselves and commit theft. They usually scold the trouble making children and drive them away or hand over to GRP.

GRP-RPF

Out of the seven GRP-RPF interacted, only one was female. Four of them were of constable rank, one each Assistant Sub-Inspector, Sub-Inspector and Station Head Officer. According to GRP-RPF, few new children arrive at railway station. Usually the children who land up with them are those who are in conflict with law and sometimes lost children. According to them, around twenty children stay on railway platform. The main reasons for children leaving home are domestic problem in their families, to beg or they have become orphan. One or two RPF-GRP thinks that the children also get lost sometimes or seek work and so they leave the home. They come to know about these by talking to the child. All the GRP-RPF think that the children create problem for them. They opined that the children bother the passengers, pickpocket and fight among themselves. They usually send such children to NGO or govt. Home or send them outside the station .According to the female ASI at Jodhpur, no girl or woman is allowed to stay on platform alone. If any girl or woman arrives at the station, she is sent to govt .Home. Out of the seven RPF-GRP interviewed, five of them knew about both JJ Board and Child Welfare Committee. The rest two knew about either JJ Board or CWC. This is due to the intervention of KKEI.

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Consultation with Different Stakeholders

During the study, different stakeholders like Chief Judicial Magistrate, Superintendent of Homes, and District Child Officer were consulted. Observation Home cum Children's Home and *Naarishala* (Women's Home) were visited and interaction was made with the inmates. Proper prior permission was taken from the official for the visit. A very positive response and assurance of full co-operation & collaboration were received from all the stakeholders.

The main points that emerged during the discussions are as follows:-

There is a lack of Children's Home and Shelter Homes for children in need of care and protection. According to JJ Act 2000.children in need of care and protection are not allowed to stay alongwith the children in conflict with the law. However, due to lack of resources and/or for department's convenience, both categories of children

stay together. The children in need of care and protection are not allowed to stay with the children in conflict with the law at Ajmer. However, in the absence of alternative arrangement, it is creating some problem currently.

Although JJ Act stipulates separate stay and facility arrangement for different categories of children and for boys and girls, officials are of the opinion is it will be uneconomical for the govt. to provide so many infrastructure and resources compared to the number of cases that come to the department. At the most, such separate arrangement can be made taking 3-4 adjoining districts together.

In a recent directive, the state govt. has announced that all the Observation Homes except Ajmer & Kota, can keep Children in Need of Care & Protection which is totally against the spirit of JJ Act.

The govt. Homes seek support and collaboration from NGO in holding sensitization workshops for the deptt. employees, citizens, vocational training, counseling, education, extracurricular activities for children.

There is substantial possibility and need to develop and expand the safety network for socially invisible children e.g. domestic help, children living under abusive & exploitative condition with parents/guardian/persons, children involved in labor forcibly and/or secretly. The officials are in the opinion services like Childline (1098) can be effective in this regard

Jodhpur Observation Home keeps children from very poor families or whose parents are not in a position to look after their children. This is an area where a lot of work can be done.

Condition of Children at Observation Home in Jodhpur was satisfactory. However, condition of Naarishala at Kota is appalling. There are twenty four inmates between the age of 5 to 35 years currently. They complained vociferously about the unhygienic living condition, poor & inadequate food and abusive & ill treatment of caretaker and the Jailor. There is no electric supply in Naarishala for a long time. Due to shortage of water, the inmates bathe only once a week. The whole place was so full of foul smell that it was difficult for the surveyors to sit and continue their interaction with the inmates.

There is no electric supply at Naarishala in Kota for a long time. Due to shortage of water, the inmates bathe only once a week. The inmates complained vociferously about the unhygienic living condition, poor & inadequate food and abusive & ill treatment.

Group Discussion with Children

Group discussions were held with the children to understand them better and check the consistency of response they had given during individual interview. Efforts have been made to have the discussion with the children who have not been interviewed. So that the data checking remains valid.

The children were told to describe their mobility pattern around the platform. In all the three locations, the children travel during the day in a fixed train and come back to their place by another train within the same day. The children have their own arrangement of who would travel in which train. Within the city, they travel at the most 10-12 kms but then come back to the station where they stay. They do not travel during winter as there is lack of warm clothes with the children.

The children expressed the following problems of them.

- Lack of safe & secured place of stay
- Lack of warm clothes during winter
- Lack of adequate food
- Maltreatment by police
- Passengers consider them as thieves
- Older children exploit the younger children

The children also told what kinds of effect different stakeholders with whom they interact daily have on their lives

Stakeholder	Effect	Reason
Porter	Neutral	Low interaction
Shopkeeper	Positive	Provide food, Keep money
Local goons	Negative	Beat the children
Police	Negative	Beat. Misbehave with the children
GRP/RPF	Positive & Negative	Started treating well
Passenger	Positive & Negative	Give food. Treat as thieves
TTE	Negative	Misbehave with the children
Older children	Positive & Negative	Cooperate but beat the younger children

Location Specific Features of the Children

Kota

There are five platforms in Kota Junction railway station. The station comes under **West Central** Railway Division of the Indian Railway. In total, 115 pairs of trains pass through Kota during a week. The frequency of trains is high on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. The maximum trains pass during morning. The inflow and outflow of passengers increase during festivals like Deepavali, Raksha-Bandhan and Holi and on public service recruitment examination dates. The shops near the railway stations cater to the needs of the travelers and local people. The shops include primarily of tea stalls, tobacco and cigarette vendors, hotels and restaurants, sweets and snacks shops. There is a market near the railway station that have established shops of clothes, utensils, garments and other various domestic needs. The station has an enquiry window and police station of RPF and GRP. There is no report of trafficking in and around the station till now.

The children staying on railway platforms are mainly involved in begging and occasional engagement like collection of empty mineral water bottles and selling them after refilling, collection of food from the standing train, shoe polishing, cleaning of railway coaches etc. The children earn through these works and spend them mainly for entertainment and addiction purpose. Most of the children spend their time on platform as they can collect food easily in platform. Unlike Ajmer, Kota doesn't have charitable source of food for the children. The children who stays mainly on platform get engaged in work in tea stalls near the stations in the morning. They serve the tea and clean the glasses etc to get a couple of glasses of tea in return.

Ajmer

Ajmer Junction is located on Delhi-Mumbai via Ahmedabad route in North Western Division on Indian Railway. It has five platforms and 70 pairs of trains pass through the station. It occupies a very important position from tourism and religious point of view due to the location of Dargah and Puskar. A huge number of people visit the Dargah round the year and Puskar during winter. The Urs Fair of Ajmer is very famous in the country and a large number of people visit Ajmer during the Fair. Besides these occasions, the station remains busy during public service recruitment examination dates.

Most of the trains pass in Ajmer during 12 noon to 2:30 pm. The shops around the station are mainly of tea stalls, food stalls and *Dhabas*, clothes, wholesale market of vegetables, stationery, shoes and toys etc. Most of the children who stay at station go to **Dargah** for food. The Dargah area is a very crowded place and full of shops

selling items related to worshipping in Dargah. One of the distinctive features of Dargah area is the distribution of food coupons by the shopkeepers to the children. Many worshippers sponsor food for the beggars or homeless people staying in Dargah area. The shops in Dargah area distribute food coupons out of this sponsorship money to the beggars, children and homeless people. The children staying in Dargah area collect multiple food coupons from the shopkeepers. However, they do not utilize all the coupons within the day. They sell back these coupons to the shopkeepers at low rate of Rs 5 – Rs 8. In this way, it becomes a source of income for the children. So, maximum children throng around Dargah specially during lunch and dinner time for food and income. The whole affair of food sponsorship has become a racket to exploit the children by the shopkeepers. The other places like Bajranggarh and Daulatbagh have temples where children throng on Tuesdays, Saturdays and during Navratri for begging.

The station has GRP and RPF police stations, enquiry window assistance booth and public announcement system. According to the security personnel, the station is safe for the children as any missing child found at the station is taken care of by the police. If need arises, the girls are referred to govt. *Naarishala* or to Khiltee Kaliyan, a NGO working with the children staying on platforms. The railway police tries to take care of missing children by providing food and effort for home placement. There is no report of trafficking in and around the station till now.

One of the distinctive feature of Ajmer is the presence of *Aari-Taari work* (Zari based handicraft) in and around it. The places like Dourai, Madar, Somalpur, Logiya Mohalla and a few places within Ajmer city employ a large number of young boys between 13 to 18 years of age from West Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

Jodhpur

Jodhpur is part of North Western Division of Indian Railway and one of the important cities of Rajasthan. However, being at the one corner of Rajasthan, numbers of people frequented by trains are lesser than that of Ajmer and Jaipur. There are five platforms in the station and 34 pairs of trains pass through it. The main time of arrival and departure of trains are morning and night respectively. Besides the tourist inflow during the winter, Ramdeora Fair at Ramdeora, Urs Fair attract a huge number of people and devotees in and around Jodhpur. The seasonal Nepalese market, Sahakar Bhawan restaurant, dhaba and hotels, different types of shops are situated near the stations.

The station has RPF and GRP police stations, passenger assistance booths and public announcement system. According to GRP and RPF, the station is not safe for the children. **The children are found in large numbers in handicraft, wood product units in and around Jodhpur.** They also work in stone quarrying sites around the city. Due to their employment in the stone quarrying sites, people and children suffer from T.B. and silicosis.

National Policy and Legislations for Protection of Child Rights

National Policies

The major policies and legislations formulated in the country to ensure child rights and improvement in their status include:

- National Policy for Children, 1974
- National Policy on Education, 1986
- National Policy on Child Labor, 1987
- National Nutrition Policy, 1993
- Report of the Committee on Prostitution, Child Prostitutes and Children of Prostitutes and Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Women and Children, 1998
- National Health Policy, 2002
- National Charter for Children, 2004
- National Plan of Action for Children, 2005

Legislations

National legislations for protection of child rights in the country are:

- Guardian and Wards Act, 1890
- Factories Act, 1947
- Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956
- Probation of Offenders Act, 1958
- Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959
- Orphanages and Other Charitable Homes (Supervision and Control) Act, 1960
- Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976
- Immoral Traffic Prevention Act, 1986
- Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986
- Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1987
- Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994
- Persons with Disabilities (Equal Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 2000
- Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000
- Commission for Protection of the Rights of the Child Act, 2005
- Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2000

The Govt. of Rajasthan ratified the JJ Act 2000 in 2002 and prepared The Rajasthan Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Rules 2002. The Rules are divided into sixty three sections over five chapters dealing with the Juvenile in Conflict with Law and Child in Need of Care and Protection. The Rule also outlines the process of Rehabilitation and Social Reintegration of child. The current study tries to look at the **salient provisions for the Child in Need of Care and Protection**. There are a few areas which are worth looking to strengthen a community based intervention with the children in need of care and protection and for advocacy.

A. Structure of Child Welfare Committee

Section 24 sub section (1), of the Rule stipulates CWC to consist of five members including one Chairperson. Out of the five, at least one members has to be a woman and another, an expert on matters concerning children.

B. Procedure etc. in relation to Committee

- Section 25 sub section (1), stipulates the Committee shall hold its sitting in the premises of a children's home and shall meet at least three days a week.
- Sub section (2) stipulates the quorum for the meeting shall be three members attending, which may include the Chairperson.
- Sub section (5) stipulates the Committee shall take into consideration the age, physical and mental health background, opinion of the child and the recommendation of the caseworker, prior to disposal of such cases.

C. Production of a Child before the Committee

- Section 26 sub section (1), stipulates any child in need of care and protection shall be produced before the Committee, besides the other persons, any police officer or special juvenile police unit or a designated police officer
- Section 26 sub section (3) stipulates a child above two years of age shall be produced before the Committee within forty eight hours of admission excluding the journey time.
- Section 26 sub section (4) stipulates in case the Committee is not sitting, the child shall be kept in a place of safety and provided with all basic facilities and adequate protection.
- Sub section (7) stipulates the Committee shall make arrangements to send the child to the designated place of safety, with age and sex appropriate facilities, pending the inquiry.

D. Procedure for Inquiry

- Section 27 sub section (4) stipulates the inquiry of a child must be completed within four months unless special circumstances do not permit to do so in the interest of the child.
- Sub section (5) stipulates if the child has to continue in the children's home after inquiry, the Committee shall carry out an annual review of the progress of the child in the home.

E. Children's Home

- Section 28 sub section (1) stipulates the State Government itself or in association with voluntary organizations, shall set up separate homes for children in need of care and protection, in the manner specified below
 - (a) While children of both sexes below ten years, may be kept in the same home but separate facilities shall be maintained for boys and girls in the age group 5-10 years.
 - (b) Separate children's homes shall be set up for boys and girls in the age group 10-18 years.
- Section 28 sub section (2) stipulates each children's home shall be a comprehensive child care centre with the primary objective to promote an integrated approach to child care by involving the community and local NGO. Sub section (3) outlines the activities of such centre shall focus on
 - (a) family based services, such as, foster family care, adoption and sponsorship
 - (c) Provision of Childline and emergency outreach service through 1098
 - (d) Linking up with ICDS to cater to the needs of children below six years
 - (e) To establish linkages with organizations and individuals who can provide support services to children
 - (f) to encourage volunteers to provide for various services for children and families to become guardian
- Section 28 sub section (4) outlines the facilities of every children's home
 - (a) Physical Infrastructure (Standard of Accommodation Section 9)
 - (b) Clothing and Bedding (Standard of Clothing Section 7)
 - (c) Nutrition (Standard of Accommodation Section 6)
 - (d) Medical
 - (e) Education
 - (f) Vocational Training
 - (g) Counseling

-
- (h) Recreation Facilities
 - (i) Care Plan

(F) Social Audit of Children's Home

Section 30 stipulates the Central Govt. or the State Govt. the provision for Social Audit of Children's Home annually with the help of bodies like NIPCCD, ICCW, ICSW, ISI, Childline Foundation, NISD, Social Welfare Boards and School of Social Work.

(G) Shelter Homes

- Section 31 subsection (1) stipulates for the children in urgent need of care and protection, such as destitutes, street children and run away children, the State Government shall support creation of the requisite number of shelter homes or drop-in-centres through the voluntary organizations.
- Subsection (2) stipulates the shelter homes or DICs shall have the minimum facilities of boarding and lodgings, besides the fulfillment of basic needs in terms of clothing, food, health care and nutrition.
- Subsection (5) stipulates the requirements of investigation and disposal shall not apply in cases of children residing in the shelter home, except giving information to the Committee and the police about the missing or homeless children, besides initiating legal action in the interest of the child in terms of the Act or other child related laws.

(H) Miscellaneous

- Section 42 stipulates while dealing with a juvenile or a child under the provisions of the Act and the rules made here under, except at the time of arrest, the police officer shall wear plain clothes and not the police uniform.
- Section 43 stipulates no juvenile or the child dealt with under the provisions of the Act and the rules made here under shall be handcuffed or fettered.

Child Policy, Government of Rajasthan 2008

Vision: The Child Policy of Government of Rajasthan envisions a Rajasthan where every child gets an equal opportunity to develop his or her full potential.

Mission: The State shall provide to all its children an enabling environment for quality services of education, health, nutrition, clean water and sanitation so as to ensure their well being.

The Child Policy of GoR 2008, mentions about all the important national and international documents, policies, conventions, plans, commissions to define its context. The current policy has been formulated in a concerted effort to address the key issues of child health, childcare and nutrition, education, child protection, girl child and special focus group children. The current study looks closely at the strategies and implementation provisions of child protection in the context of children in need of care and protection as formulated in the Policy document although it is difficult to isolate the same from other child protection measures.

CHILD PROTECTION

Objectives

- Ensuring that children are protected from all forms of exploitation, discrimination, neglect, inhuman or degrading treatment and violence and get special protection under all circumstances
- Providing protection to children from all forms of sexual exploitation including pedophilia, trafficking and abduction and to prevent cross border and inter country trafficking of children.
- Preventing use of narcotic drugs, alcohol and other forms of substance used by children and provide appropriate treatment and rehabilitation to such children
- Protecting children in need of special protection including orphans, abandoned children, migrant children, sex workers, street children and children from any other socially excluded group

Strategy

- Priority to be given for providing adequate funds for institutional care, support services and child friendly facilities for both girls and boys
- Effective monitoring of children's homes, orphanages, charitable homes as well as observation homes
- Sensitization of lawmakers, administrative authorities and law officers dealing with juvenile cases
- Training of Police and Vigilance personnel for improved implementation of the provisions of the Immoral Trafficking (Prevention) Act 1956
- Provision of greater access to education, health and social services to children living in disadvantages social situations including orphans, abandoned children,

migrant children, children of sex workers, children working or living on the streets

Implementation

- Establishment of high level State Coordination Committee for Protection of Child Rights
- Developing strong mechanism to prevent child begging or exploitation of children for begging by strictly enforcing provision of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Act 2006
- Development of a Manual on Juvenile Justice, for different personnel involved in the administration of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Act 2006
- Establishment of a monitoring cell for the improved coordination, monitoring and implementation of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Act 2006

Budget Analysis-GoR¹

Government of Rajasthan is apparently committed to inclusive growth, which means higher welfare and better quality of life. According to Census 2001, Rajasthan has 2.73 crore children below 18 years of age (48% of the population) and 1.1 crore children in the age group of 0-6 years (19% of the population).

The future and strength of a State lies in a healthy, protected, educated and well-developed child population that will grow up to be productive citizens. Therefore it is state's responsibility to look into welfare of these children. Child specific sectors (Education, Health, Development & Protection) received an average of 17.8% of the State Budget from 2002-03 to 2009-10(BE).

Share of Children in Rajasthan State Budget

(Rs. In Crore)

	2002- 03 AE	2003- 04 AE	2004-05 AE	2005-06 AE	2006-07 AE	2007-08 AE	2008-09 RE	2009-10 BE
Education	3009.04	3293.19	3622.43	4282.91	4579.92	5204.71	7227.66	8586.97
Child Health	29.03	31.25	33.43	36.40	39.32	43.19	58.50	70.78
Child Development	223.08	294.60	251.62	268.77	312.60	370.85	493.82	660.23
Child	5.47	6.11	6.22	7.86	7.40	10.26	13.72	17.51

¹ This section is adapted from a study made by Resource Institute for Human Rights, a NGO working in Jaipur

Protection								
Total Child Budget	3266.62	3625.16	3913.69	4595.94	4939.24	5629.01	7793.70	9335.49
Total State Budget	19043.32	22029.27	23394.47	25793.70	29762.80	35683.20	40651.83	45233.63
% of child budget in State Budget	17.2%	16.5%	16.7%	17.8%	16.6%	15.8%	19.2%	20.6%

Source- State government Budget Books 2003 to 2009

AE- Actual Expenditure, RE- Revised Estimate, BE- Budget Estimate

Within the budget for the child, the share of education and child development has indeed increased when compared to child health and child protection. Out of Rs. 9335.49 crore promised to the children of the state, the allocation for education is 91.98 percent, 7.07 percent on development, 0.76 percent on health, 0.19 percent on protection. As is evident, that education alone is receiving maximum attention; the Government fails to focus on the child welfare holistically.

Poor investment on child protection is in itself a reflection of the low priority that the sector has received in government's planning and implementation. The neglect of vulnerable children like street children, orphans, migrant children, trafficked and sexually abused children in policy and financial statements is apparent when budgetary allocations over the years is reviewed.

Commissions

- Establishment of the **National Commission for Protection of Child Right** in 2007
- A **Working group on 'Protection of Child Rights of Children at Railway Platforms'** has been constituted by National Commission for Protection of Child Rights on 12th March 2009

THE INTEGRATED CHILD PROTECTION SCHEME (ICPS)- A Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Government - Civil Society Partnership

BACKGROUND

In the light of its expanded mandate, the Ministry of Women and Child Development views 'Child Protection' as an essential component of the country's strategy to place 'Development of the child at the centre of the Eleventh Plan', as envisaged in the Approach Paper to the Eleventh Plan.

The Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) is, therefore, proposed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development as a centrally sponsored scheme to address the issue of child protection and build a protective environment for children through Government-Civil Society Partnership.

Why ICPS?

- Child protection is integrally linked to every other right of the child. Failure to ensure children's right to protection adversely affects all other rights of the child.
- Child protection is also closely linked to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and policy makers have failed to see this connection or chosen to overlook it.
- Most existing mechanisms on child protection cater to post-harm situations. Preventive measures to reduce vulnerability of children and their families and to prevent children from falling out of the protective net are completely lacking in both the approach to child protection as well as programmatic intervention.
- There are multiple vertical schemes for child protection scattered under different Ministries/Departments- for example, the Labour Ministry is responsible for child labour elimination programmes, Ministry of Women and Child Development takes care of juvenile justice, child trafficking and adoption related matters, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare looks into the implementation of PC&PNDT Act to check female foeticide.
- There are glaring gaps in the infrastructure, set up and outreach services for children, as they exist now. These include:
 - (i) **Poor planning and coordination** - prevention has never been part of planning for child protection. Lack of lateral linkages with other sectors for ensuring prevention of violence, abuse or any other harm to children and protection of those outside the safety net has failed to ensure social justice.
 - (ii) **Low coverage** - numbers of children outside the safety net with no support and services is ever increasing and lack of systematic and comprehensive mapping of children in need of care and protection or of the services available for them at the district/city/state level results in low and poor coverage.
 - (iii) **Poor Infrastructure** - the minimal government structure that exists is rigid and a lot of time and energy goes in maintaining the structure itself rather than concentrating on programme outcomes. Moreover even the infrastructure prescribed by law is not in place, for example, JJBs and CWCs under the Juvenile Justice Act are lacking, shelter and institutional care facilities are also highly inadequate.
- Inadequate Resources - child protection constitutes only 0.034 percent of the total Union Budget. Not only is allocation of resources poor in terms of geographical spread, even the utilization of resources is uneven.
- Serious Service Gaps - there is a lack of services to deal with all categories of children in need of care and protection and supervision, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and services are weak. Child protection is not a priority in the States either.
- Poor understanding of child rights and lack of child friendly approach affect both planning and service delivery

OBJECTIVES

The ICPS brings together multiple vertical schemes under one comprehensive child protection scheme, combining existing child protection schemes of the Ministry and integrating interventions for protecting children and preventing harm. The ICPS therefore broadly aims at:

- (i) Institutionalizing essential services and strengthening structures.
- (ii) Enhancing capacities at all levels.
- (iii) Creating database and knowledge base for child protection services.
- (iv) Strengthening child protection at family and community level.
- (v) Ensuring appropriate inter-sectoral response at all levels.

The scheme proposes to achieve the above-mentioned objectives through effective implementation of child protection services at district, state and regional levels:

PROGRAMME COMPONENTS

- **Emergency Outreach Service through Childline**
- **Drop-in Shelters for Marginalized Children**
- **Non Institution Based Family Care**
 - (i) Adoption
 - (ii) Foster Care
 - (iii) Sponsorship
 - (iv) After-Care
 - (v) Cradle Baby Reception Centre
- **Institutional Services**
 - (i) Shelter Homes
 - (ii) Children's Homes
 - (iii) Observation Homes
 - (iv) Special Homes
 - (v) Specialized services for Children with special needs
- **General Grant-in-Aid for Need Based/Innovative Interventions**
- **Statutory Support Services:**
 - (i) Juvenile Justice Boards
 - (ii) Child Welfare Committees
 - (iii) Special Juvenile Police Units
- **Training and Capacity Building**
- **Strengthening the Knowledge-base**
- **Advocacy and Communication**
- **Monitoring and Evaluation**

SERVICE DELIVERY STRUCTURE

- (i) State Child Protection Unit (SCPU)
- (ii) State Adoption Resource Agency (SARA)
- (iii) District Child Protection Unit (DCPU)

Conclusion

The study points out towards a need to look at the issue of child protection beyond the children staying on railway platforms. While the necessity of the children staying on railway platforms cannot be denied, there are children who are equally vulnerable but socially invisible. Child Protection should be the overarching goal of Khiltee Kaliyan initiative which should work with the children in different situations like children in govt. institutional care, working children, street children etc. Special focus has to be paid on girl child. The study by WCD has pointed out high incidence of sexual abuse and neglect of girl children in Rajasthan.

Risks and Vulnerabilities Faced by the Children Staying on Railway Platform

The profile that emerges of a child staying on railway platform is a profile of deprivation, exploitation and neglect. The environment the children live in is highly abusive, uncertain, unsafe and risky. The stigma that is attached to them is of a VAGABOND for whom no attention is needed to be paid. They live at the edge of the society without any legal identity (they have a social identity of being Vagabond!) and continue to remain there. The traditional worldview of becoming 'eligible' for being counted as a 'citizen' fails completely in case of them. And yet! They enjoy the freedom and independence of their lives.

Most of the children who have run away from home and are staying at the platform are illiterate, in the age group between 10-14 years and victim of addiction and drug abuse. Many of them left home due to poverty and an abusive and troubled family. They suffer from malnourishment as there is no certainty of getting food. However, they work and earn to live for each day. Most of them also suffer from various internal and external diseases and ailments. The children do not have a roof over their heads and no permanent place of dwelling. The minimum daily lifestyle is full of unsafe practices. Many of them are victim of sexual exploitation and vulnerable to sexually transmitted diseases like HIV-AIDS. Unfortunately, they do not have access to information to protect themselves from such life threatening diseases. Being in an uncertain and exploitative environment, they are often prone to commit crime for their basic survival. As a result, they are often abused, troubled and exploited by the law keepers and passengers.

Where and What These Children Should Have Been?

The question that arises is - are we ready to accept the different worldview of these children and accommodate them in the mainstream of the society? What is our moral stand despite numerous Acts, Conventions and Commissions? As we know that children have little power and influence over the socio-economic processes that govern their lives. It is the responsibility and perhaps duty of 'Others' to confer and

ensure a few basic minimum conditions and standard of life to these children to enable them to live a humane life. It is important to ask why these children do not have roof over their heads? If there is an act called JJ Act is in existence and there is a definition of a category of 'children in need of care and protection', then what stops the govt. and the civil society to put these children under a safe custody? What are those barriers that prohibit us from being able to think that these children have also a right to survival, protection, participation and development? This soul searching is necessary for all of us because the struggle for winning human rights is based on this moral conviction.

Interventions with the Children

It is comprehensible that working with these children needs different strategy, thought process and imagination. A close observation and understanding of the lifestyle and thought process of the children can give a clue in developing the strategy and planning for intervention. However, there is **a clear need of drop in shelters**. It would at least give the children an opportunity to sit and stay under a roof, stay clean and hygiene. It would also give them an opportunity to sit and may be discuss together. What kinds of development activities can be planned is difficult to be laid down now. However, regular interaction and rapport building as a group can help them understand children's strengths, drawbacks, interest & preference. It needs to be built from there on. It is important to bring them together.

Collaborate With Government to Facilitate Improvement

There are ample opportunities to collaborate with the government in different matters. It is important to utilize the space the government is ready to provide to demonstrate replicable process and good quality work. If we want improvement in a system, we need to be into that system but not become a part of it and facilitate the change. The JJ Act has provided ample scope for civil society intervention some of which are highlighted in the current report also. A special role and contribution is indeed expected from the civil society to build a positive atmosphere within the govt. children homes in terms of proper medical service, providing life skill education, vocational training, counseling, recreation facilities and developing care plan for child.

Be a Monitor of the Government to Ensure Rights of the Children

In tandem with the strategy of collaboration with the government, it is necessary to monitor the government's commitment to fulfill its promises and duties to the children of the state. The JJ Act calls for such a dialogue and advocacy with the government to ensure the rights of the children. Implementation of JJ Act, in its true spirit needs a lot of hard work with the government. It is important to engage with the govt. at different levels with different objective and strategy. The working

of CWC, provision for drop in Shelter home, Children's Home, stipulation of various standards of facilities for the Homes, duties of the staffs, procedures to be followed in different actions etc. provide areas of monitoring..

Engage and Network with Greater Civil Society to Change the World View

To bring about a change it is necessary to change our paradigm of how we look at a thing. To recognize that a cube has six sides even if we can see only one side at a time is the beginning of change. To change the situation of the children in need of care and protection, it is necessary to develop the recognition these children are just a victim of circumstances for which they were not responsible. The circumstances had led them to the current situation and lifestyle they lead. It is possible to give the children a dignity and honor in the society. However, this change requires strength and force. A strength and force that needs to be generated from within the society. So it is necessary to make greater civil society aware, appeal to them to be a part of this change process and agent of change. It can happen collectively and individually as the situation demands. Promoting volunteerism among the youths for the children can be an important strategy. Individual sponsorship, foster care is also a very good option for promoting civil society participation. Endorsing social message by prominent citizens is another option. Mobilizing community support in cash or kind is a sustainable strategy to run the drop in shelters or children's homes. Collective and institutional initiative is needed for bringing broader change like change in policy, awareness, sensitivity, campaign etc. Different strategies need to be yielded according to the situation.

There Are Other Children/Demographic Segment Facing Similar Vulnerabilities

As the song goes in the film *'Tare Zameen Par'*- *'.....there are many more like me'*. There are many socially invisible children and others who are leading their lives under similar vulnerable condition. It is very difficult to trace them. There is a need to develop and expand the safety network for socially invisible children like domestic help, children living under abusive & exploitative condition with parents/guardian/persons, children involved in labor forcibly and/or secretly. Helpline like Childline (1098) is only one option for that. Campaign in media, activities in schools and colleges, mass communication are other options. What can be the other mechanisms?

Recommendations

1. **Proper Implementation of Juvenile Justice Act in the State with Strengthening of CWC and Formation of Special Juvenile Police Unit in each Districts**

Currently, JJ Act is seldom used in dealing the cases of children in need of care and protection. Because, there is little knowledge and understanding about the JJ Act among the police, RPF/GRP, CWC and JJB. There is a need of sensitization and orientation of the CWC, JJB, RPF/GRP and the Police on JJ Act by the government. RCPCR should direct the state government to present a report on the status of JJ Act implementation in the state .

2. **Coordination between JJB, CWC, SJPU and NGO**

The JJB, CWC and SJPU are the three pillars of institutional arrangement under JJ Act. However, there is no forum of interaction and discussion among these bodies currently in the districts. The coordination among these three bodies is needed to increase the social safety net for the children.

3. **Formation of a District Level Forum to Promote Coordination among Labor Department, Social Justice and Empowerment Department, CWC, JJB, SJPU and District Administration**

While the JJ Act comes under the purview of the Social Justice and Empowerment Department, the issue of child rights specially like child labor, child trafficking, drug peddling, children's enrollment in school, malnutrition among children involve different departments like Labor, Education, Women & Child Development.. So, a forum needs to be formed at the district level which will review quarterly (similar to DLCC or District Health Society) the status and progress of child protection in the district.

4. **Proper Implementation of Integrated Child Protection Scheme in the State**

The ICPS brings several existing child protection programs like Juvenile Justice, Program for Street Children, Schemes for Assistance to Homes to promote in country adoption, under one umbrella to contribute to the improvement in the well being of the children in difficult circumstances. The Scheme is ambitious in its objective as it proposes to set up State Adoption Resource Agency and State Project Support Unit at the state level, Child Protection Societies at the state and district levels and plans to strengthen CWC, JJB and SJPU at the district level.

5. **Separation of Children's Home and Observation Homes**

The children in conflict with law and the children in need of care and protection are kept together in observation homes. There is an immediate need of separating these two categories of children.

6. Increase the number and Improvement of Children's Home and Girls' Home

The more urbanized locations like Ajmer, Jaipur, Kota, Udaipur, Jodhpur indeed require multiple homes for boys and girls. Often the children have to be sent to State capital where the officials have refused to keep the children.

7. Simplify the procedure school admission of such children who do not have any legal identity

The children in need of care and protection often find themselves in such a situation where they do not have any legal document to prove them to be a citizen of India. The current procedure of school admission seeks age certificate, address proof etc. which the children or their guardian are often unable to produce.

8. Chalk out a sustainable strategy and program of rehabilitation of children

Till now there is no clear strategy and road map for such children who are in need of care and protection besides some vocational trainings and education. There are govt. schemes for running homes for the children but there is no scheme or rehabilitation strategy for the children once he/she becomes adult and has to leave the Home.

9. Formation of Separate Cell on Runaway Children in RCPCR

With the increasing urbanization in the state, there is a visible trend of increase in the number of runaway children. So there is a need to address the issue of runaway children separately within the Rajasthan Commission for Protection of Child Rights.

10. Rajasthan Child Policy Needs to Include a Separate Section on Runaway Children

The State Child Policy of Rajasthan doesn't mention about the issue of runaway children separately, although it mentions about Child Protection. There is a need to develop a separate policy and strategy for the runaway children in the state.

11. Establishment of Child Assistance Help Desk at every big junction railway station

The Ministry of Railway needs to set up Child Help Desk at every big junction station to help common people to report about missing children, to spot and help the missing child.

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