

Railway Children

Additional Information for Global Giving for support for children living on the streets of Kitale, Kenya.

November 2015

In Kenya alone, more than 250,000 children live on the streets. These children are regarded by society as a nuisance that must be tolerated—a 'problem' rather than vulnerable children who desperately need help. 'Struggling to Survive' our recent research, found that children who live on the streets often experience extreme poverty and violence at the hands of parents and authority figures before and after leaving home. Rape and sexual violence are common experiences for many children and girls are particularly at risk. With their basic rights violated and no access to education, these children's futures are uncertain and in need of urgent intervention.



About Railway Children

Railway Children is an international children's charity working with disadvantaged children living alone and at risk on streets and railway platforms in the UK, India and East Africa. There are an estimated 100 million street children worldwide. Railway Children believes in a world where no child ever has to live on the streets and therefore works on three levels to ensure long-term sustainable change for these children:

At Street Lev-

We meet the immediate needs of children on the streets. Our outreach workers find vulnerable children before an abuser can. We provide food, shelter, safety and support while we try to reunite them with their families or find other long term solutions.

At Community

We change the perceptions of local communities. We make children on the streets visible to their communities and increase understanding of how they came to be there, to prevent them being ignored, condemned or passed by.

At Government

We use our research, expertise and strong relationships with key individuals and departments to influence policy makers and leverage government support for children living on the streets.

Railway Children's work in Kenya is focused around the town of Kitale because it is an area known for its large migration of street children. Some will have taken to the streets to escape severe violence and poverty in the home and others to find some form of work. Kitale is an area which relies heavily on agriculture and has been badly affected by agricultural disasters in recent years causing extreme and persistent poverty. The streets are hostile and dangerous places for young children with no services in place for them to get basic help or protection. Drugs, alcohol and glue sniffing is used extensively amongst street children as a way to escape the desperation of their situation. Through outreach work, rescue centres, family counselling, agricultural training and youth association models, Railway Children and Child Rescue Kenya are working hard to change the outcomes of many of these children.

The Birunda Rescue Centre is just one of the projects which makes up the larger Child Rescue Kenya (CRK) centre based in Kitale. Railway Children and Child Rescue Kenya have been working together for the past seven years and together we provide child rescue and support, family support, youth empowerment and community outreach work.

The Birunda Rescue Centre is a key component of the organisation and is a short stay and rescue shelter which provides safety and rehabilitation for children who have been rescued from the streets for up to six months. It has a maximum capacity of 80 children and has an open door policy to ensure that any child in need is able to access the services of the rescue centre when they need it. It provides a short-term safe place to stay as the social workers try to make contact with their families for reintegration. While at the centre, children will be provided for their basic needs (including food and medical care), counselling and informal education to ensure they are able to return to school after reintegration with their families. Group and individual counselling sessions will be participatory ensuring all ages and abilities are able to contribute. Children who require further care, however, or who are unable or unwilling to return home will be referred to the Liyavo care home run by Child Rescue Kenya, which is a long term and permanent shelter.

An important part of a child's successful rehabilitation back home is their ability to return to education. A trained teacher is employed at Birunda and is tasked with assessing the level of each child entering the programme and developing an education plan with them. The non-formal education at Birunda ensures that the children are able to keep up with their studies ensuring that reintegration to formal education is smooth and that children don't fall behind their peer group. The training at Birunda includes life skills, where the children are taught how to build self confidence, improve their behaviour and learn how to make healthy decisions about their lives.



In 2013, the Birunda Rescue Centre had 425 admissions. Of those children, 164 were reunited with their families, 20 children were referred to long term care and 180 dropped out. Many of the children who drop out, however, are found to return naturally when they feel ready, with many accessing help from the centre on numerous occasions.

Birunda Rescue Centre expected outcomes: Nov 2015 to Oct 2016

- 1) Birunda Rescue Centre will provide temporary accommodation for up to 352 children.
- 2) A total of 300 of these children will be new children accessing the shelter for the first time.
- 3) Of the 352 children, 180 of them are expected to be reunited with their families or referred to other long-term care.
- 4) Follow up visits will be carried out on every child either reunited with family or referred to care to ensure the success of their rehabilitation.

Establishing its short term rescue centre format in 2006, Birunda filled a vital gap in the services available to children in need. It offered quick and easy access to protection for newly arrived street children which meant no child had to remain on the streets for the simple reason that there was a lack of an alternative option.

The centre has also given the police and judiciary a welcome alternative to entering children into the often abusive juvenile justice system. The Centre is also used by the Children's Department as somewhere to temporarily house children while establishing and assessing the child's situation before deciding on the appropriate care.

Budget and monitoring and evaluation

Birunda Rescue Centre receives no government support and over the next 12 months requires funding to cover the costs of bedding, mosquito nets, food, clothes and toiletries and partial costs of its small medical centre required for health checks, vaccinations and providing basic first aid.

At the beginning of 2013, Railway Children successfully applied to the Big Lottery Fund for a grant to fund our work with Child Rescue Kenya over four years. This grant has transformed the scale of our work and enabled us to reach out to more children on Kitale's streets and their families. The Big Lottery Fund pays for Child Rescue Kenya's outreach work, the rehabilitation of the child, reunification and home placement work and follow up visits. The Fund does not pay for the Birunda centre which provides safety for the children immediately after being rescued from the streets as it prefers to pay for services linked to education or livelihoods rather than tangible on-going project costs; Birunda is therefore currently funded by Railway Children's UK fundraising.

The amount of funding we are looking to cover for the Birunda Centre over the next twelve month period is £23,493

Item	Amount
Utilities and bedding (caters for up to 80 children at any one time)	£826
Nutrition (caters for up to 80 children at any one time)	£13,629
Clothing (caters for up to 80 children at any one time and is based on an average of 100 children per year that will need new clothes)	£570
Toiletries (caters for up to 80 children at any one time)	£1,290
Health checks and medication (caters for up to 80 children at any time, plus medical support for youth at £1,848 p.a.)	£5,272
Family livelihood training and start up grants for 20 families	£1,906
TOTAL	£23,493

The Birunda Shelter project is an essential component of our work in East Africa and our campaign *If I grow up*. The UK government is matching every pound donated to Railway Children's *If I grow up* campaign before 22 January 2016. This is a special opportunity for the charity to help twice as many children in urgent need.



Donations will be doubled by the UK government until 22 January 2016

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