

Annual Report

December 2003 to March 2004

1. About Identity Foundation

Identity Foundation (E-3981-Pune) is a charitable trust registered with the office of the Charity Commissioner of Pune. Identity Foundation has been working with underprivileged children since September 2003. It is a not for profit organisation without any political and religious affiliations.

1.1. Vision Statement

We, the members of Identity Foundation, our friends, supporters and partners envision a society that respects human rights, especially the rights of children. We envision a society that ensures a safe, secure, stable and healthy childhood with an opportunity for education and development for every child.

1.2. Objectives

- To work towards creating access to formal education systems for underprivileged children and provide opportunities for alternative education.
- To partner with the formal education system to provide access to quality education to children.
- To make available medical aid to children and provide linkages and establish networks for referral services to ensure that the health needs of children are met.
- To provide opportunities for vocational training and life skills education for children and youth.
- To protect children from various forms of abuse.

1.3. Trustees

1. **Namrata Kavde-Datye** (Trustee + Programme Manager): Working with the children and managing the programmes. eMail: Namrata@identityfoundation.org
2. **Sudeshna Parmar** (Trustee): Has an experience of about 10 years of working with underprivileged children. Trustee of the non-governmental organisation Sparrows. eMail: Sudeshna@identityfoundation.org
3. **Sameer Datye (Trustee)**: Heads the User Experience Team in TietoEnator India. Helps in fund raising and communication and reporting needs of the Trust. eMail: Sameer@identityfoundation.org

2. An overview of the activities undertaken during this brief period.

Identity Foundation started its operations in September 2003. The legal entity came into being only in February 2004 after the registration with the Charity Commissioner's office, Pune.

During this period members of Identity Foundation invested their time in outlining the activities of the Trust and in identifying the population of underprivileged children that it aimed to work with. Identity Foundation started its work with children living on the Pune railway station commonly

referred to as street children¹. A considerable period was spent in establishing a rapport with these children. Networking and learning activity was carried out with the railway authorities, the railway police, local businesses and other organisations who were working on the same issue.

2.1. Situation of children on the railway station

The Pune railway station is home to a large number of children. The actual number of children on the railway station is difficult to pin down because of the floating nature of these children. There are some children who have made the railway station their permanent habitat. There are others who visit the station temporarily and stay there for a day or a few weeks and then move on. The reasons for which the children land on the railway station are varied. Some of them have left their homes for reasons such as poverty, alcoholism, violence and abuse, etc. whereas some are lost or abandoned. Some children have absolutely no contact with their parents or their relatives whereas some of them occasionally visit their homes.

The railway station is a hub of activity. It provides these children with some source of income either through begging, selling various small items, shoe polishing, sweeping the trains, etc. They find family in the company of other children and have a very strong emotional bond among themselves. This is also the place where they are subject to various forms of abuse. One also finds substance abuse being largely prevalent among these children. The children are addicted to cigarettes, tobacco, alcohol, drugs, whitener, etc. The children are also engaged in gambling and petty crimes.

2.2. Programme: NFE (Non Formal Education) & LSE (Life Skills Education)

It is obvious that these children lack access to basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter and love. The rapport building period with these children consisted of building a level of trust and confidence among these children. The children have lost their childhood in the process of fending for the above needs.

With a strong belief that education has the power to transform lives Identity Foundation began its non-formal education (NFE) and life skills education (LSE) programme with the children on the railway platform. The programme aimed at mapping the needs of the children and the existing knowledge of the children to understand what level of input the children would require. Identity Foundation began with a basic literacy programme along with providing personal health and hygiene related inputs. The programme also aimed at providing emotional support to the children and a link back into the society.

Also...

- Identity Foundation partnered with SATHI, an organisation whose main focus is on trying to reintegrate runaway and lost children with their families and society.

¹ **The United Nations definition of a street child is:**

"Any girl or boy ...for whom the street (in the widest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwelling and wastelands etc.) has become his or her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood; and who is inadequately protected, supervised, or directed by responsible adult."

Note: Street children may or may not have a family to go back to i.e. they may orphaned, abandoned or destitute and be completely on their own or they may have some contact with their families or they may be staying with their families.

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- A tie-up with Sadhu Waswani Hospital and the Sasson Hospital was also sought to provide basic medical aid to the children

3. Achievements...

- The members and volunteers have established a basic rapport with the children. This is the most important step because the children tend to look at people trying to get friendly with them with suspicion!
- In this year our NFE and LSE programme has been able to reach out to about 50 children.
- The first centre on Pune Railway station is run with cooperation from the Railway Police
- Identity Foundation members and volunteers have been sensitised about the gravity of the problems the children face.

4. Funding & Resources

- Identity Foundation has managed its activities so far without organisational funding. As of today, the funds come from friends, family and associates and associates of people associated with us.
- Our biggest supporters are concerned members of the society who see our work and help us in their own little ways.