

# 2008

## Annual Report



BY

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## INTRODUCTION

In the six years of its existence, 2008 has been a critical year for Ehsaas. Critical in two ways: one, in the successful fructification of our efforts until now and two, in helping us to evolve a future course of action for the organization.

Since its inception, Ehsaas has done pioneering work with street and working children. Despite the many challenges, the journey has been rewarding. To know that you have made a difference to even one life is extremely gratifying but to realize that these children have made an incredible difference to the lives of all those associated with this organization is even more heartwarming.

When we look back at the year that was 2008, it is impossible to not recall how Rinku – a multi-challenged child - has gone from strength to strength since the day he was found by the Ehsaas team working on an outreach program at the railway platform. It is impossible to not think of Diaji who was poisoned by unknown people without thinking of what may have become of him had he not been found by another team member. It is also impossible to forget Suraj's determination and perseverance during his stay at *Gharonda* making him a first among equals in his academic pursuits. And how can we forget the emotional growth that Deepak has charted with us since he joined *Gharonda*, finally making his one of our prized success stories.

The stories that stay with us are only the tip of the iceberg. While some cases were simply those of survival, others were of making that survival meaningful. In all of them, Ehsaas has played an instrumental role in varying capacities: from that of a counselor and emotional guide to roping in media advocacy and partnerships with relevant agencies to champion the cause of these marginalized children. In our endeavours, we have been part of state-level policy-making decisions and have asserted the significance of children in the political processes through the Children's Parliament that was attended by 70 children from 32 districts of the state.

We have worked to fulfill our aims at various levels: child-level interventions, interventions through families, society-level interventions, policy decisions and partnerships. We share with you the highlights of the year that was 2008.

## CHILD LEVEL INTERVENTIONS

One of the primary objectives of Ehsaas is to make Lucknow a child friendly city and we have been working with special focus on the Charbagh railway station, Hazratganj and Indiranagar to address and eradicate the problems of street and working children.

**Outreach Programme at the Railway Platform:** Towards this end, we established outreach centres emphasizing children's participation for need-based intervention at various locations. Such interventions included assistance to the children in the field of education, health, vocational training, counseling, shelter, restoration.



**INTERVENTION JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2008 IN NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES**

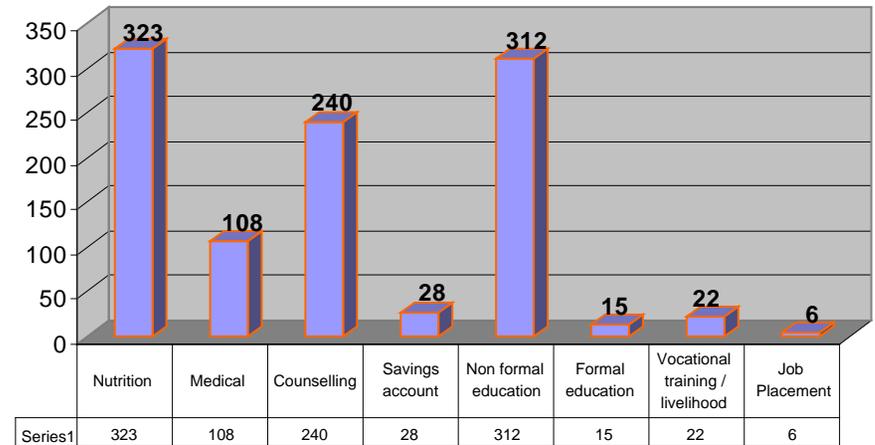
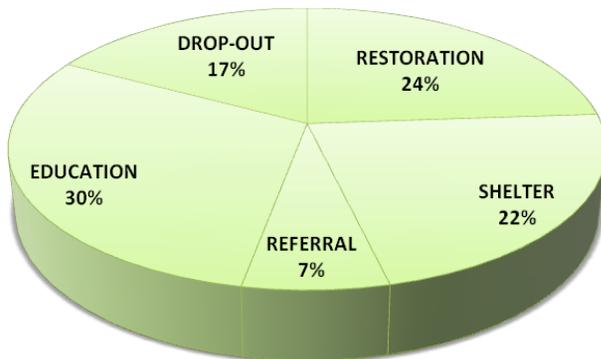
Training programmes were conducted for adolescent healthcare, HIV AIDS awareness, child rights at these outreach programmes.

**Home Placement Camps in Government Homes:** The child-level interventions were conducted by Ehsaas keeping in mind the provisions of the Juvenile Justice Act 2000 wherein children in difficult circumstances are categorized into a). children in conflict with law and b). children in need of care and protection. Our work with children in institutional care is thus extremely significant. For the first time in the country, home placement camps were organized within government homes housing children that fit in either one or both of the above categories. The success of these camps has given the impetus to ensure that more and more children are sent home.

**Gharonda:** Through its innovative methods of including children in the social mainstream, *Gharonda* has been a home to 25 children. These children were brought home by the Ehsaas team and belong to the age group 6 to 18 years. They are now attending school and are being provided health care, recreation and vocational facilities.

18-year-old Rahul who is pursuing his graduation in Arts from Lucknow University was enrolled for a computer course at UPDESCO. He later volunteered to work as a computer operator in the Ehsaas office and earn a stipend for himself. Rahul is also preparing for the Civil Services exam! Each child has made a niche for

themselves and is special to Ehsaas.



(Photos)

*Gharonda's* activities go on along with the temporary shelter service provided to street children. In the course of time, we hope to improve quality service to children.



A PLACE TO FULFIL THEIR DREAMS: Children at Gharonda

## FAMILY LEVEL INTERVENTIONS

At Ehsaas we believe that the best place for street and working children is home. Often, a return to home for these children is achieved only after counseling the parents as well as the children. Imparting parenting skills is the key to the retention of children in their homes.

In the coming year, a more concrete plan of action will be developed for family level interventions to raise the standard of living of families so that children



Lucky Sonkar (8 years old boy) is the resident of Himmatganj, Allahabad, who was reallocated to Ehsaas centre from Charbagh railway Station on 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2008. On counselling, it realised that he was misled by an unknown person from his school, Agrasen Inter College, and was brought to Allahabad railway station. The moment he got the chance to run from there, he boarded a moving train and reached Lucknow station. The address narrated by the child was searched with the help of police but all in vain. Afterwards his school was contacted for the same which was near his house. He was safely handed over to his father Ghulab Chandra ji on 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2008.

## COMMUNITY SENSITISATION & MOBILISATION

In order to successfully redress the problem of street and working children, it is imperative to sensitise and involve different sections of the society to their cause.

**Friends of Street Children:** These friends of street children contribute to the effort of Ehsaas in whatever capacity they can: volunteering to teach children, sponsoring the education of children and assisting



*PEOPLE PARTICIPATION IN A SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN  
ORGANISED BY EHSAAAS*

in fund-raising efforts of the organisation. Their biggest contribution though is to provide us the encouragement to carry on with our work.

With the assistance of these friends of children, we yet again successfully organized the annual Diwali *mela*. The highlight of this *mela* since it was first organized in 2003 has been the sale of candles made by the children at *Gharonda*.

**Mitr:** Ehsaas also launched a youth-oriented programme to train the city youth on child rights awareness. Our effort is to prepare the generation that will be in charge of the country's future to be sensitive to the cause of children in difficult circumstances.

**Teach India Campaign:** Ehsaas was part of with The Times of India's Teach India campaign and received an overwhelming response from the well wishers of society. It gave the organization and the volunteers a platform to be mutually helpful.

**Training & Capacity Building Programmes:** While on the one hand, children were trained on child rights, various programmes were undertaken to also train people who they are directly or indirectly in contact with.



Police personnel (GRP – 100 and RPF - 200) were trained on child rights and Juvenile Justice Act. A similar training programme was conducted for railway officials.

TRAINING FOR POLICE PERSONNEL BEING CONDUCTED BY EHSAAAS

The staff in institutional homes was trained on imparting psycho-social help to children. The skill set of the Ehsaas team was also worked on by training them in special handling skills for abused children among other things.

## POLICY INITIATIVES

**Resource Centre:** The major achievement in this direction is that the State has taken the ownership of the State Resource Center. The Resource center which was basically set up with the objective of strengthening the Juvenile Justice System through data collection, capacity building of stake-holders and

monitoring has taken up on-going action research.

**Integrated Child Tracking System:** The vision statement of the integrated Child Tracking System is to ensure the right to protection of children in difficult circumstances through tracking their activities, policy advocacy and capacity building of Stake holders. This can be done by keeping a track record of children between age 0 to 18 years. It is a web-based system operating through the convergence of various related government departments to facilitate the rights of survival, protection, human capital development and social participation to all children.

The system identifies vulnerable children and helps to create protective mechanisms to prevent children from falling out of the safety net. Since the exact number of beneficiaries can be identified, it assists in policy and program planning and will ultimately ensure the creation of a child friendly state.

**Universal Child Rights Day:** UP's First Children's Parliament was held at the UP Legislative Assembly. The Uttar Pradesh Vidhan Sabha created history on the Universal Child Rights Day by inviting 70 children from different parts of the state to hold a Children's Parliament.

The idea of the Parliament was conceived at Children First and NGO consortium on Child Protection under the aegis of Ehsaas. A series of consultations made our belief stronger that these closed door meetings and scattered NGO efforts will not change the situation of children in Uttar Pradesh. Our voices need to reach those who determine the future, the policy makers and our leaders. And these voices should be of the children themselves. Thus the concept of a UP Children Parliament was born.

The Parliament's proceedings were recorded by the Assembly Secretariat so that children's issue could be taken up later by the authorities' concerned. Present as special invitees to this special session were Speaker Sukhdev Rajbhar, Parliamentary Affairs minister Lalji Verma, BJP leaders Lalji Tandon and Om Prakash Singh.



*PROCEEDINGS OF THE U.P. CHILDREN'S PARLIAMENT*



SURAJ FROM GHARONDA SPEAKING AT THE U.P. CHILDREN'S PARLIAMENT  
2008

Interestingly, the proceedings of the Children's Parliament were conducted by two speakers, both children - Narendra, a resident of Rae Bareilly representing the boys and Reena from Varanasi, representing the girls. The children presented their problems before the house and the issues ranged from poor health facilities, education and civic amenities in rural areas to issues of child prostitution, child sex abuse, gender and caste discrimination and police high-handedness. The children were unanimous in their demand for a state children's commission to deal with child rights and protection issues.

Over 200 children participated in the concluding session of the Children's parliament organised at City Montessori School, Gomti Nagar.

The Uttar Pradesh Children's Parliament will be an annual feature from now on to be organized on the Universal Child Rights Day the 20<sup>th</sup> of November.

#### PARTNERSHIPS:

In the year 2008, Ehsaas partnered with the following organizations:

**UNICEF**

**Railway Children, UK**

**UNODC**

**Action Aid**

**Other NGOs:** An NGO Consortium on child protection named 'Children First' was organized in 2007 and continued in 2008 with 40 state NGOs. Meetings were conducted in the month of August with nodal agencies of NGO consortium to materialize the strategy and action plan for the state to protect the children.

State level meeting was organised by Ehsaas with support from. All the NGOs were asked to introduce themselves in a unique manner; they had to address the issues taking into consideration that they were in 2018 and not in 2008. This helped them in realising their future strategies more clearly. It was decided that State-wide campaign will be launched on 20<sup>th</sup> of November for ensuring the child rights to children especially those in difficult circumstances. Mass Awareness Campaign will be launched to sensitize the government, media and society towards the plight of children at the same time ensures a commitment from the government to take proactive steps to ensure the various rights of children.

#### PROSPECTIVE STRATEGY:

The year 2008 has been an year of learnings. A very memorable year that defines our future course of actions. Several initiatives taken will be strengthened during the following year such as the **Railway Children Surveillance and Protection Mechanism. Uttar Pradesh** fares poorly on all child development indicators. The need of the hour is State level interventions to bring policy changes. Thus the organization shall focus on bringing about policy changes for the improvement of status of children in the State. The consortium of NGOs will be strengthened for a collective effort.

The future will be about system strengthening , quality services to children, creating bench marks in child protection , policy formulation and active child participation in all of the above. Along this journey of ensuring rights to children every year we grow professionally and personally. We are enriched with each passing year with greater experience and insights from the time shared with the children. This has been and shall be in the future too our guiding light.



*MEMBERS OF THE NGO CONSORTIUM PARTICIPATING  
IN A CANDLE LIGHT VIGIL FOR CHILD RIGHTS*

# UP's Children Manifesto

- The constitution of India has made several promises for children but those promises still remain unfulfilled.
- India is a signatory to the Convention on Child Rights for the past 20 yrs yet the commitment to ensure the right to life, development , protection and participation have not been fulfilled .
- Even today only 50% children get registered in the State of UP and only half are immunized . The infant mortality rate is still as high as 72.7 and under five mortality rate is 96.4.which is much higher than the country rate which 57 and 74.4 respectively.
- Uttar Pradesh is second in maximum number of malnourished children: Every second child in Uttar Pradesh is malnourished and every sixth malnourished child in the country is from Uttar Pradesh. Every second adolescent girl is anemic in UP.
- The total budget for children is only 14%out of which only 0.17%is spent on protection of children 8%on development and only 4% on health
- Every child should get quality education and good school.
- Those children who are in difficult circumstances especially orphans they should be given sponsorship for education, health and all round development.
- There should be skill development programs for young persons and every young person should have access to them.
- The government had promised a Commission on Child Rights but the State Commission on Child Rights has not been formed even till now. It should be formed urgently.
- All political parties should include child rights in their manifesto.
- 20% of MP and MLA fund should be used for child development and protection.
- 20% of all child labourers in the country are in UP and even today children have to work to support their family, this should be stopped immediately.
- Children participation should be ensured while making programs for children

By: UP Children  
Supported by Ehsaas, Lucknow.