

A VIRTUAL SITE VISIT REPORT

People First Educational Charitable Trust – Gaya and Koderma Rescue Junction

ON

OCTOBER 11, 2023

ATTENDEES

Asha Silicon Valley Volunteers:

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ASHA FOR EDUCATION

SILICON VALLEY CHAPTER

RESCUE JUNCTION – KODERMA SITE VISIT NOTES

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Virtual site visit was performed by the Silicon Valley ASHA Chapter on October 11th, 2023. This is the summary of the virtual site visit. We spoke to several kids (Suraj, Saurabh, Chotti, Golu and Wasim), staff (Rakesh, Amit, Abhishek) and the project coordinator Deepak Kumar.

Koderma is a major station (railway junction) about 50km to the east of Gaya. It a major station on the main Delhi to Calcutta Railway line and is situated in the middle of an extremely poor, mostly tribal area.

Rescue Junction of Koderma district in Jharkhand stands as a beacon of hope and compassion in the fight against the deeply concerning issues of child trafficking, child abuse, child labour, child marriage, and child disappearances. Operating under the esteemed umbrella of the People First Educational Charitable Trust, this sanctuary encompasses three rented rooms that serve as a lifeline for vulnerable children in the region. In both purpose and approach, Rescue Junction mirrors its counterpart in Gaya, showcasing a remarkable commitment to fostering a better future for the innocent souls it embraces.

The first impression upon encountering Rescue Junction is one of purposeful determination. The modest yet welcoming environment created within the three rented rooms symbolizes a safe space where children find respite from the shadows of their harrowing pasts. The team's dedication to mirroring the working style of the Gaya centre underscores their allegiance to the mission of restoring dignity and nurturing potential. It is a testament to the unwavering dedication of the People First Educational Charitable Trust that this branch operates with the same ethos as its predecessor, illuminating the organization's united commitment to safeguarding the rights and well-being of the most vulnerable members of society.

The proposal was for establishing a small outreach center with drop-in care center offering education, support and the ability to intercept trafficked children working closely with the police and local authorities much on the successful Rescue Junction model. This early intervention approach has proved to be the key to prevent children “disappearing” in to child labor or prostitution. Rescue Junction has a remarkable record of rehabilitation of these children and reintroducing them to the education system.

Rescue Junction is playing a vital role for stopping the child trafficking especially from nearby slum areas where kids from mica mining industry live. The parents/relatives of kids mine mica, and many a times the kids make a petty living selling bits of mica. Some of the healthier kids are thrown into the mica mining, stripping them of their childhood and education, thus impacting their formative years. Koderma drop-in center plays a vital role to stop the children who were going to work under different circumstances and have motivated the families in slums in Koderma. They have saved the children from risks, especially trafficking.



Rescue Junction approaches kids whose lives are really in danger position. Team is working with close co-operation with district administration and Child Welfare Committee. They have restored many children with their families. They work very closely with the RPF, CRPF and other local agencies.

The centre provides 24/7 support and assistance to children facing abuse, neglect, exploitation, and homelessness. Trained professionals and volunteers offer counselling, intervention, and rehabilitation services to ensure the safety and well-being of the children.

The center has capacity of ~50 kids. Currently there were 25-30 kids spanning the age of 5 to 13 years. On an average some kids stay at the center from 4-6 months. We also visited the Koderma platform 6. Two kids were found collecting plastic bottles. These kids would sell the bottle to make a living. The two kids, Golu and Wasim, were approached with care and later brought to the center by the Rescue Junction staff. The kids were cleaned, provided with fresh clothes, food and shelter.

Their team is always visiting local Slum in Koderma and have approached the families to motivate them to not send the kids to work. They encouraged the parents and kids to go to their center where they provide counselling, basic education and link them to government scheme. During the site-visit, we were shown the nearby slum area.

In line with its holistic approach, Rescue Junction in Koderma extends far beyond the provision of shelter. The 24/7 availability of shelter, coupled with first aid medical facilities

and counselling services, showcases a comprehensive commitment to addressing both the immediate and long-term needs of the rescued children. The impact of these services is palpable, offering not only physical care but also a supportive environment for emotional healing and growth. The children are not just recipients of aid; they are embraced as individuals deserving of love, care, and a chance at a brighter future.



Team of Rescue Junction at Koderma engaged in outreach/awareness at nearby slums



Children from Slum and Railway Platform at Koderma with team members of Rescue Junction



Rescue Junction team approaching a new kid at the platform and telling them about the center



Children learning at the Koderma Rescue Junction



Children engaged in a fun activity at the Koderma Rescue Junction



Women members of Rescue Junction engaged during outreach and counselling of children at Slum