

GADENS B  RN



ANNUAL REPORT 2016
GADENS BØRN

VISION AND MISSION

VISION

Gadens Børn works for a world where all children have equal opportunities to experience a healthy and safe childhood. We will try to give the children faith in life and hope for a better future, by giving them access to education, healthcare, safety and care.

MISSION

Gadens Børn works to:

- Give non-registered children in deprived areas in Kolkata the possibility to break the social inheritance.
- Offer children access to education from where they can explore their skills, interests and abilities.

- Offer the children a permanent home where they will be cared for, get daily meals and healthcare, as an alternative to life on the streets.
- Offer the children a possibility to restore the emotional relations, so they can feel safe and secure.

Gadens Børn is an independent organization and not related to any political or religious beliefs or interests.

[HELP US HELP OTHERS](#)



A YEAR OF CHANGE



The year of 2016 started with a big dream coming true. Our long-awaited Children's House was finished and it opened in May. It was an incredible experience to see the finished house. Our work in India is mainly on "street level", and to build a house with 3 floors and 1000 square meters is not the easiest job we have had, but after a year and to months, and a lot of hard work, we finally succeeded.

The first thing we opened in the house was a school for 150 children. At the school we offer education, nutritious lunch, school bags, healthcare, computer lessons, sewing lessons and a school trip every month, where the children visit cultural attractions in Kolkata. The students at the school are all from a poor area called Santhospur, where the Children's House is also placed.

We have also found place to give children that live at Sealdah Station in Kolkata a possibility to go to school in the Children's House.

The year of 2016 was also the year we opened Shanti Daycenter. The Center is for children who are dealing with drugs, alcohol and glue sniffing. A large part of the children live at Sealdah station without their parents. They are left to manage on their own. At the Daycenter we offer food every day, education, healthcare, a bath, clean clothes, love, care and a lot of fun activities. There are approx. 20 children and youngsters using the Daycenter, which is open Monday-Friday from 11.00-17.30 and Saturday from 12.00-16.00.

Throughout the last four years, our effort and outreach work at Sealdah Station has made it possible for us to help more ill children to get the help they need, before it is too late. The work at the station also enables us to get in contact with smaller children to whom we offer free education through our school at Santhospur. The bigger children and youngsters at the station, who are struggling with drugs, are offered care, activities, healthcheck and meals at our Daycenter.

Our School in Kidderpore has undergone an amazing development, and the students are making great progress. The educational level at this school is several levels above the average level at governmental schools. In 2016 it was possible for us to offer computer lessons, because we where donated 15 computers. The students have great fun learning computer skills. The children finish school with good credentials and a feeling of self-worth and confidence.

AF YEAR OF CHANGE

In the beginning of 2016 we sent a group of volunteers to Kolkata for three and six months and later that year a new group of volunteers was there for six months. We also had two young assistants of only 19, that some of the older volunteers trained and worked closely with. Our volunteers have become Project Managers on some of our various projects. We had really great results with that and was an asset for our projects as we were able to work even more efficient on our projects. This enabled us to achieve a lot in 2016, amongst other things we were able to open our second school, open our Daycenter and begin daily visits to the Sealdah Station.

Our volunteers pay for their own plane tickets, food and expenses during their stay. The only thing that we can offer is that they can stay for free in the apartment where all the volunteers stay together.

We have achieved as follows in 2016:

- Passed out more than 74.000 meals
- Helped 120 children get into treatments at the hospital
- Helped 14 pregnant young women to health checks and birth
- Helped small babies survive in the harsh environment at Sealdah Station
- Offered 230 children free education every day
- Offered more than 20 children and youngsters help and care at our Daycenter Monday through Saturday
- Ensured that all children in our schools have gone through health checks
- Raised almost DKK 1,4 Millions

The very important donations come from charity dinners, foundations, company donations, private donations and memberships.

As founder of Gadens Børn it has been amazing to create and develop Gadens Børn together with all the volunteers, to what it has become today.

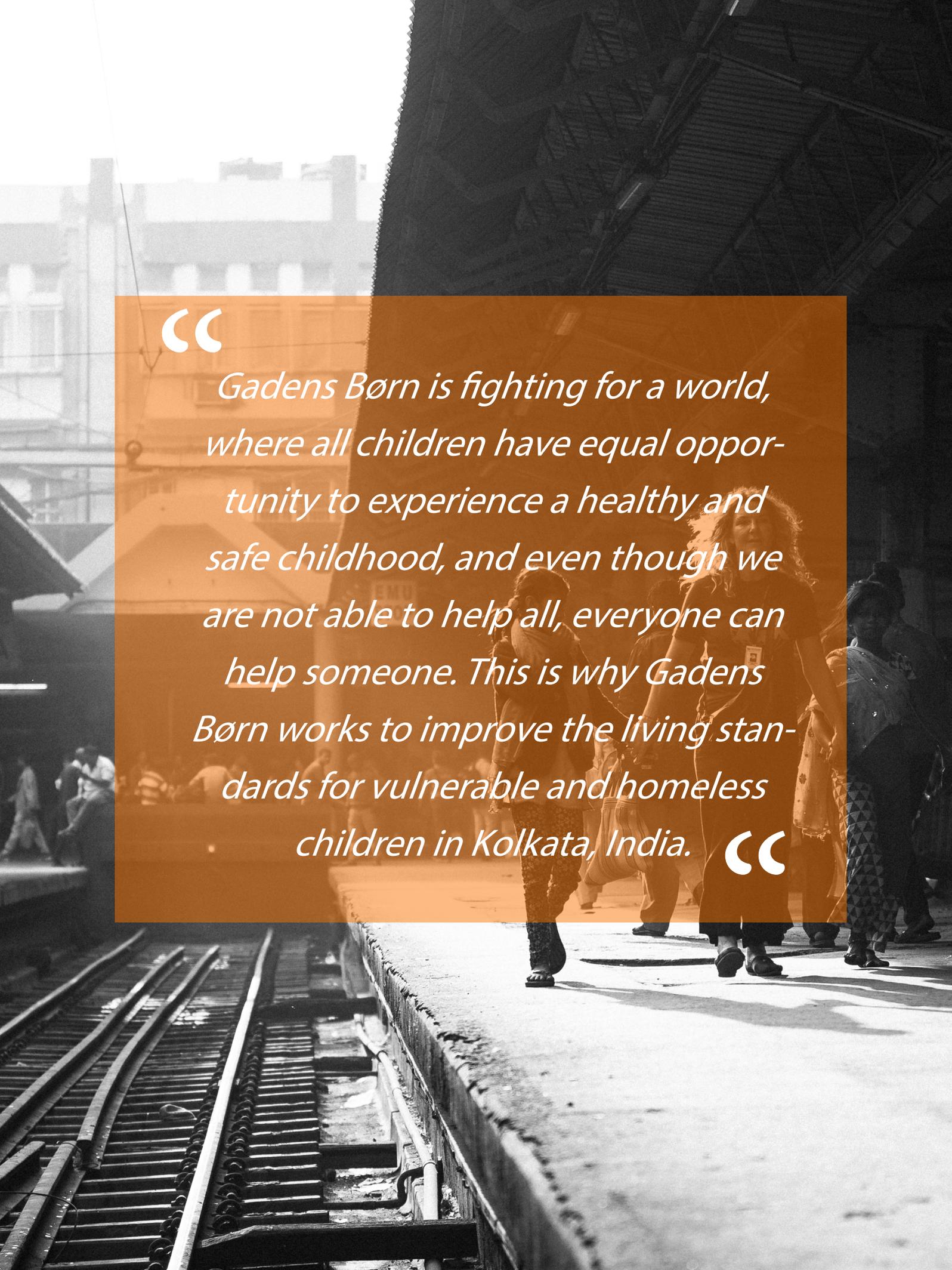
My goal for 2017 is that we can offer the best schools, the best children's home and be a strong safety net for all children and youngsters at Sealdah Station.

The volunteer work with Gadens Børn is the best thing I have accomplished in my life. The happiness and enormous joy that fills my heart, can only be described as pure love.

My vision is that Gadens Børn is able to offer a minimum of 1.000 street children and children of very poor families, an education of the same quality and level as the expensive Indian Private Schools which is only possible for the very rich families.



Pia Lindell Qvist
Founder Gadens Boern



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Gadens Børn is fighting for a world, where all children have equal opportunity to experience a healthy and safe childhood, and even though we are not able to help all, everyone can help someone. This is why Gadens Børn works to improve the living standards for vulnerable and homeless children in Kolkata, India.

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From playing on the train tracks to math, language and boogie woogie in the Children's House



Aasha School Santhospur opened on the 9th of May 2016, which was a great joy for us, the children in local area of Santhospur and for the children at Sealdah Station

In India there are a number of restrictions and bureaucratic rules and we are still fighting to get the right permissions to open our children's house where the children from Sealdah Station also can live. Until it happens, we are making sure that the children that lives at Sealdah Station still have the opportunity to attend school. We make sure that the children are accompanied on their way to school and back again every day.

The school is placed on the first floor in the Children's House which is located just outside of the City Centre, so the children have to take a small trip by train every morning to attend school.

Two of the girls who takes this trip every morning are Rinky 10 years old and Juma 12 years old. Rinky lives on one of the station platforms together with her mother and two younger brothers.

Juma lives and sleeps where ever she can find a spot. Juma's mother often leaves her alone at the Station for longer periods of time, so she must take care of herself.

Before the girls started school, Rinky and Juma spend their night and day at the stations chaotic crowds of people.

Their days where spend playing in the trains, on the tracks or at the parking lot. Sometimes they begged by the ticket offices or helped peel and cut vegetables for the food stands to earn some money. Especially 10-year-old Rinky often looked after her two younger brothers of 3,5 and 1 year old, while her mother slept or went out drinking.

Now things are different for them, they get picked up every morning at 7.30 by one of our caretakers, who makes sure that they get on the train to the Children's House and back again in the afternoon. On the 45 min. train ride to the school the children get breakfast and some even get a nap before they reach the school.

From playing on the train tracks to math, language and boogie woogie in the Children's House

Before the bell rings, the children have time for a bath and if they are lucky, they even have time to watch cartoons on the computer.

In school the girls and the other students learn to speak and write in Hindi, Benghali and English. They are also taught mathematics. The lessons are far from boring and both Rinky and Juma have already learned rhymes and songs in English, and now they are able with few words and gesturing to communicate with the volunteers from Gaden's Børn.

One of the girls most favourite activities in school is the boogie woogie – then they can shake the whole body, dance and sing with their whole body and heart.

Only a few years ago, the girls didn't want to go to school, but after only a few days at Aasha School Kidderpore, they felt very differently. Sometimes they even sing or dance the boogie woogie at the station.



THE DREAM BUS AND LEGO

When Pia Lindell Qvist, founder of Gadens Børn, travelled to Kolkata for the first time, she spend a lot of time in the slum areas in Kolkata to find out what life is like in these areas and what kind of problems the people living there was dealing with.

The purpose with this investigative work was to find out where and how Gadens Børn could be most efficient and help the most.

One of the slum areas where she decided to help, is an area under a highway bridge where a group of people have come together and build their own houses out of plastic, garbage and metal scraps. Around 50-60 children live in this small society. Pia calls them "a small forgotten group" and none of them went to school or even had the possibility to go to school.

This is why we founded our first Gadens Børn school in that neighborhood under the bridge, to help the forgotten group's children with school and education.

The school was a great success and we learned really fast that we had to move to better and bigger premises, which unfortunately had the consequence that several of the children from under the bridge thought it was too far away and dropped out.

For a long time, we were really sad about this development and have been looking for a solution to this problem.

Luckily, we have now found this solution! The first step was to expand Aasha School Kidderpore so we could make room for more students. This was made possible with help from Lego Medarbejdernes Jubilæumslegat.

The next step was to find a solution to the long walk from under the bridge to the school. The solution was a really nice bus which will transport the children to and from school every day and was donated by Restaurant Sokkelund. We expanded the school in December and the bus is purchased and almost ready to transport the children from under the bridge. We just can't wait; it is really a dream coming true.





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*WE BELIEVE THAT
EDUCATION
CREATES
POSSIBILITIES*

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STABILITY IN THE UNCERTAIN



Only six months ago 19-year-old Aisha was to be found at Sealdah Station, where she would have a blank stare and a smell of glue around her. Her face was hard and without expression because she spend her days sniffing glue fumes from a cheap bag of glue. In the evenings she dressed up to go to the Red-Light District and try to earn a living so she could eat and survive.

Now, six months later, her life is very different. Today Aisha is an employee at the Daycenter, where she cooks lunch for the children and makes sure that the Daycenter is clean and neat. Ever since she started working at the Daycenter, she has stopped sniffing glue and she no longer goes to the Red-Light District. There is a small light in her eyes now, that keeps getting stronger and stronger. As in the process of finding herself, she started talking more and more about her story and background, and when you hear that, you understand why she led her life the way she did before.

Aisha's life took an unexpected turn when she was about 10-years-old. She was offered education at an NGO, where she could go to school for free and learn to read and write. Aisha was so happy and couldn't wait to start, but only after a couple of days at the school her mother and step-father took her out of the school because they wanted her to help at home. Aisha was unhappy and begged her parents to let her go back to school, but unfortunately they wouldn't allow it.

She decided to run away from home, but quickly after her parents found her again, and to stop her from running away again they chained her in the kitchen. After several weeks where she was chained and given daily beatings, she one day poured oil all over herself and lit it on fire. Luckily her step-father found her just in time to put out the flames and take her to the hospital. Aisha was admitted for several months and was in severe pain. After she was discharged, she chose to run away from home again and was determined to live on the streets.

Ever since then Aisha has not wanted to go to school and study. Therefore she is not able to read or write. Then a couple of weeks ago she started showing interest in the lessons at the Daycenter and now she has started to understand simple calculations and trying to get a few words out in English.

Aisha's life hasn't been easy and the life on the streets are tough, but her life is improving a little and with the salary from the Daycenter she started to save so she one day can rent a small house for her and her husband. She has even started to dream of another future, which we hope that we can be a part of.



AMBASSADORS, SPONSORS AND VOLUNTEERS



The family of Gadens Børn is growing bigger and bigger, and this year we have had even more volunteer and ambassadors who support and help us. With their help and hard work, we were able to organize the following events:

EVENTS IN 2016

Charity dinner at Det Gamle Røgeri

We hosted a charity dinner at Det Gamle Røgeri for the fifth year in a row. With help from sponsors, donations and Gustav from Paradise Hotel we raised DKK 170.000 for all our great projects in Kolkata.

Aftenshowet

With help from our wonderful network we were invited to Aftenshowet on television on the 5th of April, where our founder Pia Lindell Qvist talked about all the work and projects.

It was a huge possibility for us, and we were overwhelmed by the love and support we received through Facebook, text and e-mail.

At the Annual Conference with PFA (Folkemøde)

For the second time Gadens Børn was invited to speak in PFA's "Brug Livet" tent at the Annual Conference on Bornholm. This time we participated in a panel consisting of Gadens Børn, Happy Dogs and Søskendekram. We talked about how to start working with a charity.

Charity dinner at Bistro Boheme

Gadens Børn and our amazing ambassador Per Thøstesen was for the fourth year running hosting one of the best charity dinner in Gadens Børn's history. With help from a lot of amazing people, sponsors and volunteers we raised more than DKK 500.000 on this night.

AMBASSADORS, SPONSORS AND VOLUNTEERS

Last charity dinner of the year at Kong Hans

The last charity dinner of the year was held at Kong Hans with help from their Head Chef and our ambassador Mark Lundgaard. This exclusive evening was absolutely amazing, and we raised DKK 255.000. What a way to end the year.

Birthday of Gadens Børn

On the 28th of November Gadens Børn celebrated its 4-year birthday. It has been four years with hard work, laughs, blood, sweat and tears and joy. We are looking forward too many years to come.



NEW AMBASSADORS OF GADENS BØRN



“It has been an honour to be an ambassador for Gadens Børn, who helps vulnerable and homeless children get a safe childhood in Kolkata. Pia and the volunteers are doing an amazing job.” – **Mark Lundgaard**



“I support Gadens Børn because I think that this project is so amazing and I’m so impressed by the fact that they travel to India to be there for the children and personally knows what is going on in their lives. It’s a great honour to be able to support this charity” – **Ida Corr**



“It’s with great pleasure I’m an ambassador for this initiative which makes so much sense” – **Lars Bom**



“After an event with Gadens Børn this year, I was so inspired by the amazing work they do in Gadens Børn, so when I was asked to become an ambassador for Gadens Børn, there was no doubt in my mind that it was a yes” – **Per Hallunbæk**

A TAIL FROM A VOLUNTEER



VOLUNTEER IN KOLKATA

by Jakob Lorenzen

Four months ago I was in a yellow Hindustan Ambassador for the first time, on my way to my new home in Kolkata. I mostly remember the trip by the driver, who was overtaking the other cars in the opposite lane through heavy traffic with his horn on. From the taxi window I got a taste of the poverty and the enormous crowds of people, which was going to be my daily life.

There was ongoing replacements of the volunteers and we all stayed together 3-5 people at the time in the apartment on the 5th floor in the Beliaghata area. From the rooftop of the building you could just get a glimpse of Sealdah Station, one of India's largest and most chaotic train stations. Even though we were divided on different projects, the station is the center for most of the work that we all do. Most of the children that we help with clothes, food and medicine lives here. Also, most of the young addicts who visits our Daycenter and the younger students that takes the train every day to the school in Santoshpur lives at the station.

The first couple of days at the station I remember as overwhelming and mainly with negative impressions. A very dirty baby was left on its own while the mother was drunk, and children not even in their teens yet, was high on glue. In the beginning it was impossible not to get affected by this, and it was hard to clear the head from all the misery when home at night.

Though in time, because of the daily visits to the station, you learn how much- or how little - you allow to affect you.

Over time I have gathered so many more positive experiences at Sealdah Station than negative, and each morning I'm looking forward getting to the station and seeing the children. What I didn't notice in the beginning was the straightforward joy the children could show. It was incredible to see that they could have a spark in their eyes and a contagious appetite for life, even though they were dirty and living underneath a bench. It's so amazing arriving at the station and seeing children that just reach out with open arms for you. They count on and trust you unconditionally.

I have come here to leave a mark, but it's the children that also leaves a mark on me. It's also me learning a lot and bringing so much home. First and foremost, gratitude, for all that you have and all that you get. And slowly the day is getting closer where I once again am in a yellow Hindustan Ambassador, this time on my way to the airport going home to Denmark. A little poorer, but so much richer.





REPORT

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2016 has been an amazing year both financially and for the projects. We had a financial target and a goal for the work in Kolkata and we are proud to announce that we achieved all our goals and the result of the year is more than we had ever dreamed it could be.

FINANCES

In the beginning of the year we had a target of DKK 1 million in donations for all the projects in India, and we are so happy and proud to announce that we have achieved the goal, and more. We succeeded because the donations at the charity dinners exceeded our expectations because of more attendees than expected, and because we held three dinners instead of the planned two.

The target was to raise DKK 700.000 on the charity dinners, but we managed to exceed this goal. With the extra charity dinner at Kong Hans, the first dinner at Det Gamle Røgeri and the yearly Bistro Boheme dinner, we managed to raise 95% of the total financial goal, which came to a total of DKK 925.000. It was almost unbelievable to understand that we on these three unique and special evenings managed to almost match our main goal. We wouldn't have been able to achieve this without all of you!

Another goal we gave ourselves in the beginning of the year was to raise DKK 100.000 through private and company donations, and this was also a success. With donations from members, private donations, Restaurant Sokkelund, Rotary, PFA, Per Thøstesen through "Til Middag Hos", 60dage, NTG, First Hotels, Kommunikator and anonymous donations we reached our goal.

Furthermore, we have been able to raise money through various foundations like; Erik Birger Christensen Foundation, Lego Medarbejder Jubilæumslegat and Asta & Jul P. Justesens Foundation who helped us with fundings for the schools.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

There has been wishes and dreams for the planned projects in 2016, but India is a country where conditions change on a daily basis, so it has not been easy to achieve our goals.

This year we opened the Daycenter for young homeless people.

It has been a dream for a long time to open this Daycenter for young homeless addicts. The young people we see especially at Sealdah Station, have often been kicked out of school, lost their job because they were too late or had sniffed glue. Because of this adversity they lose faith in themselves, in the system and their lives. The goal of the Daycenter is to recreate these young people's future which doesn't contain drugs, violence and misery.

This year we opened the school in the children's house in Santhospur.

While we are waiting for the approval for our new children's house in Santhospur we opened the school on the first floor. The school is a great joy for the children in the local area and for the children at Sealdah Station. The children from Sealdah Station is accompanied to and from the school every day. We have registered 150 students at the school who are getting lessons every day.

REPORT

Our goal is to educate the children to the world they live in, and that they get at least one nourishing and filling meal a day.

New School

With help from an anonymous donation we have now started working on a new school very close to Sealdah Station. The school is meant for the children that lives at the station. The school will be able to teach 55 students and will include Kindergarten classes for younger children. We are looking for the right space and expect the school to open in 2017.

School with help from lego

For a long time, we have had long waiting lists for our school in Kidderpore, but we have not had the possibility to expand. In 2016 Lego Medarbejdernes Jubilæumslegat chose to help us with the expansion of the school and in December we were able to proudly welcome the extended team of amazing teachers and new students to the school.



A young child with a prosthetic arm is shown in profile, looking towards the right. The child is wearing a blue and red tank top. The background is a blurred building with a blue vertical stripe. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange rectangle containing white text.

WITHOUT YOUR SUPPORT
NONE OF THE PROJECTS
WOULD HAVE BEEN
POSSIBLE!
FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY
HEART,
THANK YOU