



# India 2009/10: programme evaluation



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*and so he was on [stage with] the rolla-bolla and he had a diabolo, but the thing dropped and it was sitting in front of him. But he didn't want to get off the rolla-bolla and pick it up; he wanted to show that he could still get it when on there. And he tried once and he didn't get it. And he tried again and didn't get it. And then one of the team members, I don't remember who it was, went to go and pick it up for him. And he was like "No, no wait, I'm going to do it, I'm going to do it". You know and he did it! It took a few times but he wasn't embarrassed about it; he was kind of funny in the way he did it. It was so beautiful to see that the kids that do try and try, and they get it! The huge smile... you just don't get that many moments in your life; I mean working hard and there it was in front of everyone "I did it!". That feeling is just huge.*

Connie Rao, Principle. Asha Deep Vidayashram

*this is as much 'learning' as learning in class room is. If not more because you're setting yourself targets, you're working on coordination, you're touching parts of the brain and brain work that doesn't happen in different parts of education. You're working as a team, you are performing; which is very important social skill to have. You know: projection, bringing people on board, making the audience work for you, touching an audience, letting them touch you. These are really important things.*

Paul Carling, Principle. Future Hope School

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## INTRODUCTION

*Why are we doing this? If its to help them develop performance skills, let's give them a platform to do it. If its to provide fun and entertainment, then let's make it really inclusive and inspiring. If its to encourage them to practice in their own time then we also need to provide momentum and support.*

In November 2010 PWB started it's second full programme of projects in India. A team of 8 volunteers were involved in a 5 month visit that included 3 full one month projects with Karm Marg, Asha Deep Vidayashram and Future Hope School. They also worked on shorter projects, between 1 and 3 days, with a further 9 organisations in Varanasi, Kolkata, Siliguri and Darjeeling.

As part of the programme design a project evaluation was timetabled for shortly after completion. The objectives of the evaluation were four fold:

- To ascertain ways to improve future PWB projects.
- To provide information about PWB's work to partners and funders.
- To demonstrate impact of PWB projects to potential funders.
- To develop an impact assessment methodology which can measure the benefits generated from PWB projects.

## Field Research

During late March and early April 2010 Matt Morris, the PWB chair, visited the 3 partner organisations that participated in full projects during the 2009/10 programme. He also met with a number of other organisations which PWB have worked with on short projects, either during the 2007/8 project or in the recent 2009/10 project, to scope out the opportunities of working with them in a full project in the future.

A number of interviews were conducted with representatives and children of the partner organisations. 'Play' sessions were also conducted with the children of each partner organisation to allow some visual assessment notes to be made.



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## OUTLINE NARRATIVE OF THE PROGRAMME

In December 2008 PWB issued a call for applicants for the forthcoming 2009/10 project programme. Anticipating a large number of applicants PWB set up a volunteer selection panel comprising of Emily Ball, Jonny Forbes and Matt Morris. In February 2009 the panel met to reduce the number of applicants from 60 to 16, who were invited to attend a audition in London. From this audition 8 were asked to join the project.

Unfortunately not all those asked accepted and a number of those who had initially committed had to withdraw, meaning that only 4 of those selected at the audition actually partook in the programme. One withdrawal was close to the departure date leading to the situation where, for the first project in Karm Marg, the team comprised of only 7.

During the Spring and Summer of 2009 the team met often in Bristol to create a show and work on the syllabus and teaching skills that they would be using on the programme.



In late September the team previewed their show at Winchester House School. The show was part of a circus skills day for 120 middle school children which culminated in the children demonstrating some of the skills that they had learnt that day. This was a great opportunity for the team to work together, not only on the show but also on managing a large number of children.

In October 2009 the team stayed on the Karm Marg campus; where 60 children live but don't study. Living in close proximity with the children of Karm Marg gave the

team an intimate view of the differences between their own childhoods and those of the vulnerable children of India. The team also had considerable teaching time, thus allowing them to explore which techniques work best in which context.

November 2009 the team were in Varanasi. The principle partner organisation is Asha Deep Vidayashram which is a primary and middle school for vulnerable children in the Nagwa neighbourhood. Most of the children of Asha Deep still live with their families but spend most of their free time on the streets; the children are therefore very different from the self contained Karm Marg campus. The team also performed with Guria who work with trafficked children.

In December 2009 the team took a 3 week break.



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January 2010 the team were based in Kolkata. The main partner is Future Hope School, however the team also worked with Don Bosco School, Missionaries of Charity and CINI Asha.

The team were scheduled to spend February 2010 in Vijayawada with SKCV however due to unforeseen circumstances this project had to be cancelled. Jonny Forbes, the PWB overseas coordinator, was able to arrange at short notice some short projects with CINI Asha in Siliguri, West Bengal. Due to the small size of each of CINI's locations the team split and worked with three separate groups simultaneously. These short projects lasted 2 weeks and culminated in the children making a demonstration to their peers. The team also got the opportunity to travel to Darjeeling where they spent the day performing and playing with the children of Edith Wilkins Street Children Foundation.

In March and April 2010 Matt Morris conducted the project assessment research.

In May 2010 Andy Parry returned to Winchester House School to present the work of the programme during an assembly.

July 2010 this document is published.

## **Standard project syllabus**

**Week 1: Tricks.** Introduction to everything for everyone and a chance to play, plus the PWB show.

**Week 2: Sequences.** Teaching only through routine building to give children building blocks of a sequence plus ideas for transitions, including staging mini shows in groups.

**Week 3: Themes.** Each day gets a theme (ie: clowning/mime, acrobalance, group-work, pair-work, musicality, storytelling, costume/make-up,) and children get to choose a prop and we use the sequences they already know to teach these performance skills. Started each theme day with a big group exercise to set the scene and finished with open box session to let them cool off.

**Week 4: Show.** Show conception, building, rehearsing and preparation. Designated roles for each team member.

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## PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

Those organisations that have participated in one, or more, full PWB projects (quotes taken from respective websites):

### Karm Marg

“We are a New Delhi based children’s home, but not just that! For over a decade now, Karm Marg has meant a loving, caring and nourishing environment for a variety of children and young adults from disadvantaged backgrounds. The idea from the very beginning has been to serve as a strong support system that enables these children to grow into confident, skilled and self-reliant young individuals.

Karm Marg as an organization is a home that provides shelter, care, medical support and education. In addition we run a vocational training program for young adults living at the home and outside. An income generation program that creates revenues by making eco-friendly products helps us run the organization, in turn also supporting economically weak rural women and alumni of the home.”

<http://www.karmmarg.org/>

### Asha Deep Vidayashram

“Asha Deep Vidayashra, a school running under the auspices of the NGO Hope and Joy Society for the Underprivileged, was started in February 2004 with the purpose of providing education to underprivileged children in the city of Varanasi, India. The name of our school translates loosely as Lamp of Hope School.

Our aim is to give children a chance to break free from the cycle of poverty by providing a quality education in a loving environment, enabling them to live with dignity and respect.

At present we have about 200 children ranging from 5-15 years old and nine teachers who, apart from teaching regular academics, look after the mental, physical, and social development of the children in classes from kindergarten through 6th grade. We plan to add a class every year until we have classes all the way through 12th grade.”

<http://asha-deep.com/>

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## Future Hope School

“Future Hope was set up in 1988 to provide a home, education, medical aid and opportunity to some of the children of Kolkata who found themselves living on the streets of the city. These children suffer extreme poverty and have little or no ability to change their lives. More than anything they need the love and security of a home. Future Hope now runs six homes where more than 200 former street children live and enjoy life.

The work of Future Hope extends beyond our homes and we also run a school with over 150 pupils studying from Kindergarten to Class 10. Our school takes in not only the children of Future Hope but also those from the surrounding slum communities.

We have also built a small community development on the outskirts of Kolkata. This allows those who have found jobs to take on a small home and develop independent life skills in a safe environment close to their friends.”

<http://www.futurehope.net/>

## SKCV

“SKCV Children's Trust helps street children in South India who have no other form of support. Through SKCV Street Child Rescue Projects, multitudes of deprived youngsters are gaining a new self-confidence and self-esteem, which is enabling their inborn talents and capabilities to unfold naturally.

### SKCV Mission

To create an environment for comprehensive development of young homeless and orphan street children, making them aware of themselves with relation to the world and their own problems, thus mobilising their independent potential to work collectively towards a better future for themselves, and a cleaner, healthier and more peaceful planet through child participation.”

<http://www.skcv.com/>



## KID'S STORIES

The children that PWB's partner organisations work with have a variety of different backgrounds however they generally can be classified into two types outlined below.

### Children without guardians

These children have found themselves alone for many different reasons. Some are orphans, many have been forced out of the family home due to very difficult economic conditions. Sometimes these children have been sold into labour or the sex trade. Other children have found themselves living in unsuitable conditions, for example where a parent has a history of violence.

Children without guardians are given safe and loving homes, and they may be given formal education by the partner organisation. Where a child still has living relatives our partner organisations work to reintegrate the child back into the family.



### Children living below the poverty line and susceptible to child labour

Many children living for very poor families drop out of the state education system to either work to supplement the family income or to look after their siblings. Those that do stay in the very poor quality state education system struggle badly and don't have the resources for additional tutoring required to make the grades. The parents of these children are generally illiterate and can't help their children in their studies. Without the help of PWB's partner organisations these children are destined to follow their parents into the same low skilled, low paid jobs - for example, rickshaw drivers, vegetable sellers.

Children living below the poverty line are given a range of services, including: specially formulated formal education, extra-curricular activities, extra tutoring and regular meals.



## PARTNER INTERVIEWS

Interviews were conducted with members of staff that were either involved in the decision making process in working with PWB and/or PWB activities.

### Interview questions

#### Project data

- Number of children taught
- Age range
- Gender split
- Number of children who performed

#### Staff background

- What is your role with in the organisation?
- Did you have a role during the PWB contact time? If so what was your role?

#### General opinion of PWB

- When did you first hear about PWB?
- Why did you decide to work with PWB?
- What has been your overall opinion of PWB?

#### Project specifics

- How do you feel the project went?
- What do you think went very well?
- What do you think can be improved?
- Was it better than last time?

#### Impact of the team

- How do the children react to having a team of performers stay with them?
- Do you notice a change in behaviour in the children when PWB is staying?
- Is there a difference between children in this regard? Are some more affected than others? Why do you think this is?

#### Learning performance skills

- What affect do you think learning the performance skills has on the children?
- What benefits to do you think are from learning performance skills?
- Do you think these skills can be translated into different contexts?

#### Making a performance

- What affect does having to put on a performance have on the children?
- Is there a difference between children in this regard? Are some more affected than others? Why do you think this is?
- What benefits do you think there are of putting on a performance?

#### Change and value

- Do you notice a difference in the children after the PWB has gone? How long does this last?
- What do you think are the long term benefits, if any, of PWB projects?



- Do you feel there is much value in running future PWB projects with your organisation?

## Summing up

- How do you think we could make our projects better?
- Do you have anything else to add?

## Project Quantitative data

As part of the partner interviews I collected the following data:

|                                  | Karm Marg               | Asha Deep<br>Vidayashram | Future Hope<br>School   |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Number of children participating | 40                      | 50                       | 50                      |
| Age range                        | 4-17 years              | 5-15 years               | 5-16 years              |
| Gender split                     | 60% boys /<br>40% girls | 70% boys /<br>30% girls  | 80% boys /<br>20% girls |
| Number of children who performed | 30                      | 40                       | 45                      |

## KARM MARG

### Veena Lal, President (Primary interview)

#### Salient points

- Very happy with PWB's work.
- The children love making friends with the volunteers.
- There is a definite improvement in the children's skill levels.
- Appreciate that the skills PWB teach can be combined with other performance arts.
- PWB projects facilitate cultural exchange.
- The project improves the children's skills in communications (English), art and crafts, and IT.
- Having a big PWB team on the project is good as more there is more chance for one-on-one contact time.
- Having the PWB team living with the children means they become more confident, focussed, caring and improves their understanding of different cultures.

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- Karm Marg would like to be involved in future PWB projects.
- They would like to involve the children from the local village to benefit the children and help Karm Marg - community relations.
- They would like the children to perform to the village people and in Delhi to the supporters of Karm Marg. This increased profile for the show will help make the children take it more seriously.

## ASHA DEEP VIDAYASHRAM

### Connie Rao, Principle

#### Salient points

- First project was so successful, so very happy that there was a second project. Would be very interested in annual projects with PWB.
- There is more to the project than just learning physical skills. The benefits include: learning about your own body and kinetics, team working and cooperation.
- Putting on a performance is a big, big deal for children that have never been on stage before.
- The children's performance is not only good publicity for the school but builds the sense of community.
- The team were well prepared, had good strategies for teaching (especially using only a little language), managed the children well and discipline wasn't a problem.
- There was a better feeling from the first project but it's difficult to put a finger on why.
- There was some loss of enthusiasm half way through the project. It might be that those that participated in both projects got a bit frustrated that things weren't moving fast enough. It could also be that the children were of an older age on average. It might be that you need members of the team to focus on the older children.
- Doing more with the staff was really good as it has some tradition in Varanasi. Teen boys particularly like the staff as it has aspects of martial arts.
- Need to think how to better publicise future performances by the children.
- The PWB project helps to integrate new children into the school.

*I remember one kid in particular: I hadn't really paid much attention to him until he was involved with PWB. Because it's a way for the new kids to like, well their personality comes out to; especially kids that have this kind of aptitude that doesn't show in class. And maybe they might not be so show off in class or nobody notices them, but suddenly you know they are juggling. So for those*

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*kids that are physical, its important for them to get a place in the school and get some respect and pride in themselves.*

- The children have very little toys and nowhere safe to play. So having such equipment and a safe place to use it is a big deal.
- Staying for a month with the children helps them with their English skills, but also helps them understand about foreigners and develop a world view.

*They love performing, they just love performing. Its just such a big deal for them to be on stage. Kids in more middle class areas; they kind of expect a chance, but a lot of these kids before they came to school would never have dreamt of being able to. So its great to get a kid out and let them shine.*

- Asha Deep use the skills taught by PWB in their other programmes. For example in the annual school performance the children did a hula hoop act.
- When there is no skilled supervision Asha Deep have struggled to keep the skills going.

## FUTURE HOPE SCHOOL

**Paul Carling, Principle**

### Salient points

- Having not personally worked with PWB before I looked it up on the web and it looked good.
- The Future Hope School has a very heavy schedule which includes sport, dance, music and tutorials. A concern was how would the PWB project fit into this schedule? A future question will be does the project happen during term time or during a holiday.

*I think it was great, it really was good. Particularly impressed with the team... You know: real interest, not patronising the children. That's really good, because a lot of people patronise the children; that means they don't push them. But your team didn't do that; they'd take them as they are and push them a little bit further*

- The team was well organised, there was plenty of equipment, the project was well structured and there was lots of different things to learn.
- The starters and finishers were good - warming up and warming down, and giving focus.
- Management of the age range was terrific.



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*for me hand-eye coordination is really important part of education. And so juggling is juggling and it is very entertaining, but at another level its working on different parts of the brain, apart from this really stolid porridgy Indian education. Which works on rote learning and doesn't touch parts of the brain that Heineken does. So I'm deeply in favour of juggling*

- Future Hope School wants future PWB projects to work with different children each time.
- Once the project has finished the practice does dwindle away. This is the fault of Future Hope School.
- Having a big team is good.
- Would prefer to run projects biannually

*I did see more kids come on and get more confidence, definitely and thats good. And particularly those who are maybe struggling [in the] academia sphere; you know fast track kids, non schooled children; it gives them the chance to be with their peers who might be in higher classes - so this is an equaliser in many ways and I like that.*

## **Basudev Namata, House parent (Secondary interview)**

Basudev's role is a live in supervision for 28 boys in one of the Future Hope homes and has been with Future Hope for 10 years. Many of the Basudev's boys were involved in both PWB projects at Future Hope School.

### **Salient points**

#### Performing

- The children have shown their circus skills to the village children near the Future Hope property outside Kolkata and the Hong Kong International School.
- Future Hope is keen to make shows to other organisations.

#### Inspiration

- Straight after the PWB team show many of the children were asking to get the props out and practice.

#### Practice

- When some of the boys are upset or angry then playing with circus props cools them down and burns off excess energy.

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- The practice allows them to focus and not think about their troubles.
- Some of the boys have created their own tricks.

## Cycle polo

- A few of the boys are very good on the unicycle. Their skills are transferrable to cycle polo and Future Hope have a team that are going to an all India tournament.

## Balls

- He keeps some juggling balls in the home for easy access. They are often used as a “safety program” when nothing else is happening.

## Teaching

- Some of the boys who took part in the first project have been teaching skills to newer boys.

## Suggestions

- Try splitting the children into groups and get them to work together for the whole project.
- Teach how to make and repair props.



## TEAM EVALUATIONS

Each of the team member volunteers on the project were asked to complete a post project evaluation. The evaluation was broken into the following sections:

- PWB, project and personal objectives.
- Selection and pre-departure.
- Project implementation.
- Team management.
- Working with the children.
- Working with partner organisations.

Overall there was a very positive review of the projects with all volunteers feeling they made a positive affect to the children they worked with. There was also a appreciation that the volunteer benefited from participating in the projects by gaining new skills and experiences.

Areas which where highlighted as requiring further work:

- Clearer stating of PWB and project objectives.
- Need to create a framework to show that objectives have been met.
- Improved team selection processes.
- Reduced time commitment for volunteers.
- Better timing of projects for volunteers who make income through performing.
- Adapt the syllabus to engage better with the older children who have previously participated in PWB projects.
- Do more 'out reach' work with organisations that aren't taking part in full PWB projects.

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## POST PROJECT OBSERVATIONS

On visiting each of the partner organisation a short 'play' session was conducted along with informal interviews with children who had participated in PWB projects. These are the impressions that were formed from :



- Most of the children that PWB have worked with have enjoyed learning circus activities and are obviously interested in continuing to learn more.
- Many of the children interviewed consider circus or juggling to be their main hobbies.
- There are signs that some of the children are continuing to learn new skills/tricks since the completion of the PWB project.
- There are instances where the children are using the props in new and novel ways (not taught by PWB). This is generally either: involving the props

in games they already know, using more than one prop at the same time, or making new games with the props.

- There is a definite drop off in the interest of the children to practice if there is no regular skilled supervision.
- Children less than 11 need continual stimulus if they are going to practice.
- Children over 15 become distracted by competing demands for their attention and struggle to keep practicing without ongoing input.
- Children 11 to 15 are those most likely to be still participating in open play sessions.

## PROJECT IMPROVEMENTS

### Syllabus

To continually improve its projects PWB needs to adapt the syllabus. With the potential of new projects and the continuation of projects in current partners this adaptation has two facets:

- learning what was and wasn't effective so changes to the syllabus to new projects can be made; and
- anticipating the skill development and developing interest of the children.

Potential developments in the syllabus:

- Pick a 'focus' group of children who do more advanced classes, and are trained to become tutors for new children.
- Themed projects, such as including dancers, clowns or whatever and developing a specific type of performance with the props.
- Working with a wider range of performing arts, including more dance, theatre and music.
- Include children in other areas of creating a performance; such as stage management, costume and prop making, and filming, photography and editing.
- Staff. As Connie pointed out staff has a cultural history in India. It is easy to make the prop. Fire with the staff is relatively easy.
- Fire. Would have to be supplemented with fire safety lessons. Very exciting so going to get the older children interested. Very good for performing. Would have to be done in small groups. What age should the cut off be? Would need to be able to make own equipment.
- Prop making. Opportunity for the children be creative in different ways. Help PWB to be more sustainable by reducing costs. Especially useful for fire props.
- Aerial. Would be very exciting for the children. Adds a new dimension to the projects. Opportunities for greater publicity. A free standing aerial rig retails at approx. £2,500, weighs 100kg and breaks down to components 2m long. Plus, crash mat, trapezes, safety equipment... The main issues are: importing the equipment into India, transporting it around around India, and where is the rig kept when not on project? Would need to have especially skilled team.







## Practicalities

### Timing in India

When arranging a project with a partner organisation we must always take into consideration both the partner and school's calendar. For example, our partners prefer not to undertake a project leading up to exam periods.

Weather is also a major consideration; summer in India (April - September) is very hot and humid in the south and the plains of the north. In the hills the fair weather can last till the monsoon which generally starts in May. As PWB provides physical activities for the children projects are best held when and where the weather is cooler.

### Timing in the UK

As drawn out of the team evaluation feedback it was thought that:

- the considerable time requirements required during the summer leading up to the project discouraged those who had other commitments (such as performing at festivals) from applying; and
- being out of the UK during December, which is usually the most financial rewarding period for performers, is equally discouraging.

Therefore a reduced time commitment in the UK and a departure date in January would be a more 'performer friendly' schedule and will maximise the quality and quantity of applicants.



## DEVELOPING A IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

### Evaluation evolution

Measuring the impact of a project is a vital step in ensuring that PWB is doing what it set out to do and can learn better ways of working. However the degree to which an impact assessment can meet prove its success depends on the quality and reliability of the impact assessment methodology. It is therefore important that PWB continually improves its evaluation methodology through an evolutionary process.

### Time table

There are a number of stages in the process of integrating learning into the evaluation process:

1. Outline the objectives and measurables of a PWB project
2. Develop the impact assessment methodology
3. Conduct a pilot
4. Adapt methodology from learning
5. Implement with future projects
6. Review success of methodology and adapt

### Objectives and measurables

PWB's vision from the website:

PWB works towards giving disadvantaged children the opportunity to explore their potential. We understand that, through teaching performance skills an individual's learning, creativity and team working skills are developed. Further, it helps to build confidence, develop empowerment and overcome social barriers. PWB's methodology of following the tradition of travelling show, and the principle of fostering long-term relationships, is ideal in not only engaging children, but also ensuring community trust in the project.

From this vision it is possible to: put these stated objectives in to context, detail the method which PWB uses to meet this objective and outline some of the ways to measure success:

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| Stated objective                   | Defined in context   | Methodology  | Measures   |
|------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Explore potential                  | Opportunity to try new things                                    | Introduce new games and ways to express themselves   | Using equipment in novel ways<br>Playing taught games differently                      |
| Creativity                         | Alternative to learning by rote                                  | Opportunity to create something new  | Combining skills<br>Integrating stories and communication skills to their performances |
| Learning skills                    | Developing new ways of learning                                  | Demonstrate many ways to learn skills and allow the child to try which is the best for different circumstances | Other physical skills improved   |
| Team working skills                | Cooperation and trust with peers                                 | Learning multi-person skills and performing multi-person acts  | Can build human pyramids<br>Play with props together<br>Teaching peers skills          |
| Build confidence                   | Self esteem - belief in being able to do what they set out to do | Performing in front of their peers and/or community  | Performs outside of projects<br>Teaching others skills                                 |
| Develop empowerment                | Foster power to decide direction of own life                     | Highlight the many possibilities in life and demonstrate alternative life choices                              | Has a more rounded conception of their future  |
| Long term engagement with children | Enthusiasm and engagement with PWB projects over many years      | Conduct projects with partner organisations multiple times   | Drop out rate during a project<br>Participate in more than one PWB show                |
| Community trust                    | The local community understand what PWB are trying to do         | Engage and involve the local community in PWB projects   | More people from the local community attend the children's show                        |

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## Collection methods and timings

Data for the impact assessment will be collected using the methods of observation, (recorded using video when possible) and interviews with project participants and partner employees and volunteers (recorded using audio when possible).

Impact assessment results will be collected before the project to generate baseline data to allow before and after comparisons. Other data will be collected during the project to capture a sense of the excitement and enthusiasm of the project. Finally, data will be collected after the project to assess the short and long term impact.

More work is needed to finalise and flesh out the objectives, measurables and data collection processes. However, a guiding principle in the collection of data will be the ability to compare over time and with projects in other locations.

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## CONCLUSION

This evaluation has found that:

- PWB partners see great value for their children and their organisation in participating in projects.
- To varying degrees the children that participated in a PWB project have gained new life skills.
- PWB partners have found children that have not excelled or participated in other school activities have found circus an activity to which they enjoy being involved in.
- PWB partners are positive about participating in future projects.
- There is room for improvement in the design and implementation of PWB projects, and that this evaluation is a positive step in learning how to improve them.



It is therefore clear that there would be great value in running another PWB programme in India. Further, by assessing the impact of projects PWB will gain a better understanding of the benefits.