



Progress Report

Name of the Project: Prevent school drop out of children in and discharged from Children's and Observation homes

Project Period: Ongoing

Reporting Period: 1st October to 31st December 2016

Project Goal: Project Objectives:

- Information gathering
- Remedial Education
- Home Visits
- Relationship Building
- Counseling
- Mainstreaming with/without financial assistance
- Follow up to ensure children continue in school

Activities & Achievements: Children in observation homes are one of the most marginalized populations in Mumbai.

The children who live in these Homes come from different states of India and are educated in a Marathi medium school run by the Home. The language difference makes it difficult for them to learn. Remedial education helps in coaching the children in the Marathi language as well as their school subjects thereby helping them understand what they are learning and maintaining their interest to continue education once discharged from the Home.

Sahaara staff procures addresses of discharged children from the home authorities. The social workers then traverse through labyrinthine gullies of Mumbai slums searching for the children's residences. Through such home visits, networking with local schools, facilitating assistance in books and materials, the child is facilitated entry into formal education paving the way to a bright future.

During the period October to December 2016, 163 children were provided with coaching, stationery and experiential learning in Chembur Children's Home, Bal Kalyan Nagari and David Sassoon Industrial School.

Information regarding 17 discharged children was gathered from the Home authorities. These children have been visited through personal home visits. Through family and individual counseling, these children have been provided with the opportunity of continuing education.

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Coaching Story:

FINDING HOPE AND SECURITY

Beginning the day, not knowing whether you will have a place to call home at the end, is one of the worst feelings in the world. Unfortunately, for many children across the city of Mumbai, this situation is one they face quite frequently.

Sharad* was only around 12 years old when his mother passed away due to the elephantiasis disease. His father then shifted to Dubai for work, leaving Sharad in the care of one of the neighbours who lived in an apartment in Grant Road. Before long, this neighbour realised that he couldn't meet the needs of this young boy and he was subsequently admitted to Umerkhadi Observation Home (UOH) in November 2014.

After four months there, he was shifted to a private home for another four months before he was shifted again to Chembur Children's Home (CCH), where we met him in July 2015. Sahaara conducts supplementary education classes in CCH for the children who live there.

Sharad began to attend our classes there. When we first knew him, he was an emotionally insecure boy, troubled and disturbed by the things that happened in his past. He had a tendency to burst into tears regularly, as younger children do. Despite this, he was talkative during classes and liked to tease the other children. Sometimes his behaviour was unusually excessive, as he distracted the other children from their studies by making faces and laughing for no specific reason.

Sahaara staff noticed this behaviour and slowly, we began to counsel him. When he was upset, we were there for him, comforting and helping him understand what was happening. We were also able to encourage him to participate in sports, and in the educational activities we conduct during classes.

As we kept counselling and supporting Sharad, we saw a change in the way he began to behave. Today, he enjoys playing cricket regularly with the other children and recently, he confidently presented a speech on national leaders during class. He is class monitor and encourages the other students to behave well, while he has also become well-disciplined as a result of the responsibility handed to him. His favourite subjects now are Maths and English. Sharad has also begun to share with us whenever he encounters any personal issues, and this helps us to encourage and counsel him in a way that builds his value system.

We are so glad to see how Sharad has grown from the first month we met him. We hope to help many other young boys like Sharad find hope and security to look towards a brighter future!

*Names changed to protect identity



Tracking Story

TAKING MANALI* HOME

Within the vast city of Mumbai, there are children that often run away to escape the confines of their situations.

Here is the story of one such girl.

Manali* is a thirteen-year-old living with her family in the slums of Colaba, Mumbai. Her mother works as a bus attendant for a local school and her father works as a peon with a very low income.

On 1st October 2016, after returning home from school, Manali's mother asked her to get a few household chores done. Much like any other teenager, she refused. Not appreciating her dis-obedience, her mother hit her. Feeling insulted by this, Manali left home while her mother was out. Later in the day, her parents realized she was missing and went to the local police station to lodge a missing persons' complaint.

As soon as she left home, Manali went to stay with a boy from her locality. While she was there, another boy entered the house and tried to abuse her sexually. In the morning, Manali escaped and leaving her friend's home, she took a bus and went to her school. There, a local street vendor recognized her, and having heard that she was missing, he then informed her parents about her whereabouts.

Manali's mother was angry with her and didn't want to take her back home. So she told the local police to admit her to Umerkhadi Observation Home (UOH). A couple of days later, on 5th October, the probation officer of UOH contacted Sahaara and asked us to help out with her case.

We tracked down Manali's parents in order to understand her situation. Her mother was not open to taking her back but through counselling, we were able to establish a relationship between Manali and her parents. We also counselled Manali about the importance of continuing with her education once she was back home.

We were able to help her parents with all the necessary documents in order to release Manali from UOH so she could go back home.

Finally, on 31st October 2016, Manali went back with her family to their home. Sahaara continued to make regular follow up visits to her home to check on the progress of the family and encourage them to keep Manali in school.

Manali is currently doing well and regularly attends school, looking forward to a bright future ahead of her. She hopes to become a police officer someday!

*Names changed to protect identity