Name of Project: Impart computer literacy to poor children in India

Project Period: Ongoing

Reporting Period: 01st April to 30th June 2018

Specific Objectives of the Project:

To improve access to computers
To increase computer literacy of the children
To deliver quality computer education

Achievements of the Project:

Improvements in the grades of the children.
Innovative teaching methods employed
One to one individualized attention is given to the students

Number of beneficiaries: 10 beneficiaries

Key Activities:

The two computer centres currently ongoing are in the following homes:

Chembur Children's Home (CCH), Mankhurd
David Sassoon Industrial School (DSIS) Matunga

Each center is well equipped with 10 computers. Each batch consists of 8-10 students. The computer classes are being carried out with two batches each day at each centre (Monday to Friday). The total number of beneficiaries is 20 in DSIS.

Sahaara Charitable Society,
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Sahaara believes that every person has a dream, and our work centers around ensuring that marginalized persons can articulate and work towards achieving their dream. Children living in Mumbai juvenile homes are one of the most marginalized children in Mumbai. Institutionalized, these children are most often from highly poverty-stricken families.

As a part of the holistic intervention therein, Sahaara imparts computer education to the children between fourteen to eighteen years of age in the juvenile homes. Sahaara's in-house computer course delivers a fitting foundation to the children preparing their skills for the technology-driven world outside the homes. The children attending the computer training get a start which will help them break out of the poverty cycle and fulfill their dreams of a stable future.

Below is the story of a child who has benefited with the help of the computer training carried out by Sahaara personnel.

Shantanu* finds hope!

Long trips with family can be times of bonding, fun and adventure. There is lot of time spent together that strengthens family relations.

However, one such trip brought great despair for 7-year-old Shantanu, who was abandoned by his parents while they were travelling from Goa to Karnataka in India. At such a tender age, fear gripped the heart of Shantanu who had nothing but his family, and he suddenly found himself lonely and helpless on the street. He made many attempts to search for his family, but to no avail.

Life on the street is tough, especially for a young child. Various challenges stared Shantanu in the eye as he had to figure out how to fend for himself at an age when most children from normal families live carefree. He made new friends on the streets and soon began working as a rag picker, which he continued for the next 4 years.

In 2013, Shantanu came to Mumbai and was loitering around a railway station when some social workers on an NGO noticed him alone and identified his vulnerable condition. They acted promptly and brought him to a government children's home in Dongri, Mumbai so that he can receive the necessary educational and vocational support.

After about one year, he was transferred to David Sassoon Industrial School (DSIS) in Matunga. At this Government Home, he was able to complete his Grade 10 exams in the year 2017-18. After his exams, in May 2018, Shantanu enrolled for the Computer Course which Sahaara runs at DSIS among the older children with the goal of imparting Basic Computer Literacy to the children in the Home.

When Shantanu joined the course, initially he didn't like to get involved in any activity and kept to himself. But the Sahaara computer teacher encouraged and counselled him. Through personal attention and quality time spent with him, he gained interest in learning computer. He has been improving his typing skills and practises daily for about half an hour. He has been learning English words daily due to the computer course and he practices it regularly. He has learned MS-Excel and MS-Word.

He is grateful to Sahaara for teaching him computers and English in the process!

Presently Shantanu is 16-years-old, and we are happy with his progress. He wishes to be reunited with his family and we hope he is able to find his family someday.

* Name changed to protect identity.

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