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

Project Period: Ongoing

Reporting Period: 01st January 2016 to 31st March 2016

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: 29 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 29 (19 in DSIS and 10 in CCH).

Sahaara believes that every person has a dream, and our work centers around ensuring that marginalized persons are able to 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.

Coaching Kushal* to Confidence

One of the greatest gifts we can have is that of confidence. When we have confidence in our abilities, we can explore and learn many new things. But there are many children who are deprived of the environment under which they can grow in confidence or the essential skills needed to tackle life.

We began to spend time with Kushal* in 2015. He lives in David Sassoon Industrial School (DSIS), a government home for children until they reach the age of 18. Kushal has been shuttling between homes since his mother passed away in 2011.

He used to stay in a crowded urban slum known as Priyadarshani, in the middle of Mumbai. However in 2008, when he was 7 years old, his father passed away. Post the death of his father, his mother married again. But after she passed away too, Kushal's new step-father did not want anything to do with the children. Kushal's sister took them all to visit their mother's friend who then admitted them to government homes. Kushal and his

brother were admitted to New Observation Home (NOH) and his sister to Additional Observation Home (AOH). He lived here for two years until he was shifted to another home for two years, finally coming to DSIS in 2015.

Sahaara has been conducting computer classes in DSIS since 2005. Kushal was enrolled in these classes by the authorities of the Home.

When he first began to come to classes, Kushal didn't know anything about computers. He found it very difficult to understand the applications and told us he didn't want to learn. As we encouraged him to keep trying, we discovered that the reason he was hesitant about computers was because his knowledge of the English language was weak and therefore he was intimidated by computers and the programs we were trying to teach him.

When we, at Sahaara, realised this problem, we began to give him special attention. We started to teach him English first and then slowly, about how to use the computer. As he grew in both skills, Kushal became much happier. He was interested in the lessons, learning as much as he could about the computer and what he could do with it.

Through these coaching classes, his determination and self-assurance levels have grown and recently, he told us that he finds it easy to use the computer. He comes regularly to our coaching classes and enjoys exploring all the new applications and programs he can find. Kushal has also been inspired to learn English daily.

We are so glad we could walk beside and coach Kushal, both in understanding a computer and reading English, but more in the art of being confident that any task can be achieved with just a little help!

*Name changed to protect identity