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

Project Period: Ongoing

Reporting Period: 01st October to 31st December 2017

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: 11 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 11 (5 in DSIS and 6 in CCH).

Sahaara Charitable Society,
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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.

Discovering a New Road

Often, life is hard for children growing up in the muggy and overcrowded slums of the city. Plunged into poverty, various ways of earning money become tantalising. One such story is that of Sooraj*.

The Sooraj we now know is a responsible and enthusiastic eighteen-year- old, studying in Standard 9.

But a year ago, he was very different.

At school, the friends he made influenced him negatively. His attendance in school became inconsistent, and shortly he dropped out. This same infamous circle of friends, engaged in street fights and petty thefts on a regular basis. Unfortunately, it didn't just stop at that. In no time, Sooraj
found himself involved in a blackmailing case as he attempted to lay hands on easy money.

In the month of September 2016, Sooraj and his friends got arrested for this.

During the trial they were found guilty of two blackmailing attempts, and were sentenced to four months of imprisonment.

As he was underage during the period of the trial, he was shifted to David Sassoon Industrial School (DSIS) – a government correction home for minor offenders - in June 2017.

Sahaara holds computer classes for the children in DSIS, in order to help them gain an understanding of how to use a computer and its applications, and increase their chances of being employed when they leave the home.

In September 2017, our team met with a rebellious Sooraj when he joined Sahaara's computer classes. He had little knowledge of computers and not much practice with MS Office, as it wasn't a part of his curriculum in school.

In the course of his interaction with us at Sahaara, he was counselled and encouraged to continue with his studies. With the dedicated attention he received from our team, his interest began to grow.

Soon we saw a drastic change! Here was an intrigued Sooraj, willing to read 5 -10 pages and type them all out on to MS Word. His interaction with our teachers also underwent change – from being rebellious, he gradually became more obedient and this was reflected in his learning.

We were happy to see Sooraj grow with the extra care and support he received from our staff. We hope that he will be released soon from DSIS and get the chance to chase his dreams! We are glad to have been able to help Sooraj go down a different road from the one he was on!

*Name changed to protect identity

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