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

Project Period: Ongoing

Reporting Period: 01st April to 30th June 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: 16 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 16 (8 in DSIS and 8 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.

Learning to Hope

Orphaned, homeless and alone, he ran away from what was his home, hoping to maybe find a better life in the big city of Mumbai.

This is the story of a fourteen-year-old Jaswinder*.

Jaswinder lived and worked at a local dhaba in Delhi, the capital city of India. He lost his parents when he was just a young boy. While working at the dhaba, he faced physical abuse at the hands of the owner.

At the same time, he befriended a few local truck drivers, hoping constantly that he would get the chance to run away from the abuse he faced on a daily basis.

Finally gathering courage in 2013 at the age of 10, he ran away with a truck driver and reached the state of Punjab. With just two hundred rupees in his pocket, he got on to a train headed to

Mumbai hoping to find a better life. On reaching Mumbai, he wandered around the city, sleeping on the streets.

A few months in, a police woman found him sleeping on the streets of Nariman Point, one of the southern areas in Mumbai. She took him into custody and he was admitted into Additional Observation Home (AOH), a home for children who have been found wandering around the streets of the city. In 2016, he was moved to David Sassoon Industrial School (DSIS) in Matunga, Mumbai.

Sahaara conducts coaching and computer classes in DSIS. We met Jaswinder in July 2016 after he enrolled in our computer classes for the year.

At first, we saw that he wasn't interested in studying and had absolutely no hope for the future. He couldn't understand Microsoft Office; his typing speed was slow and gradually he became disinterested and discouraged, saying that he wasn't interested in continuing the computer class with us.

However, over time, we were able to form a relationship with him. This helped us understand him and his needs better, especially once he told us his story and shared his past with us.

He now spends half an hour every day practicing Microsoft Word with our assistance and fifteen minutes a day on increasing his typing speed. He is also learning various English words to help with his studies and interacting well with both teachers and children during classes.

Jaswinder can see his own progress and is very surprised by it! He never thought he'd learn something like Microsoft Office. He is grateful for all that he has learnt and thankful for the opportunity, saying that he would also like to study further and perhaps even become a successful cricketer someday!

Sahaara aims to instil hope for a better future in the lives of these children who have no families, so that they are encouraged and they know that somebody cares for them. We hope to see each of these children grow up to become individuals with great dreams!

*Names changed to protect identity

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