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

Project Period: Ongoing

Reporting Period: 01st January to 31st March 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: 18 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).

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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.

From Alone to Capable

What do you do if you find yourself all alone in the world, with nobody to take care of you?

This was the question Hemant* had to face in 2013 at the age of thirteen. His father had passed away when he was just two years old and eleven years later, his mother contracted tuberculosis and passed away too.

As he was the only child in the family, there was nobody but his aunt to take care of him. Hemant was studying in the 8th standard in school, but he dropped out and got a job at a nearby general store with a monthly income of Rs. 6000, so that he could somehow make ends meet.

One day in 2014, his aunt decided to visit their native village. In order to survive, Hemant asked the neighbours to supply him with food and he paid them for it.

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However, a few days later as he was walking home, the police arrested him on the suspicion that he was stealing and he was taken to a home in Dongri and admitted there. One year later, in 2015, he was shifted to David Sassoon Industrial School (DSIS) in Matunga, Mumbai.

Sahaara has been working in DSIS, providing the children from 7th to 10th standards with computer coaching.

We met Hemant in 2016 when he joined our class. He was a cheerful and happy boy but very irregular to the classes. He would have difficulty typing and understanding Microsoft Excel.

Although previously, he was in the 8th standard, after joining DSIS, as he attended a Marathi medium school, he had dropped to the 4th standard. This made him unhappy.

When we noticed these things, we took the time to counsel Hemant about the importance of education and the benefits of pursuing it further. We gave him personal attention and taught him how to use Microsoft Excel as well as Paint and Word on the computer.

Slowly, we watched Hemant become motivated to enjoy studying. He practices for an hour regularly and now even guides and encourages the other children in class. He shared with us recently that he felt that he would never be able to learn computers but now that he has, he has a lot of hope for the future!

As Hemant will be released the following year, we hope that we can stand by and encourage him as he continues to see what a difference can be made by good education and the belief that you are capable of much more!

*Name changed to protect identity

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