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

Project Period: Ongoing

Reporting Period: 01st April 2016 to 30th June 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).

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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.

On The Way To Achieving Dreams

What do you do when you find yourself alone? That's the overwhelming question Sufiyan* had to answer when he was just 7 years old. His mother and father had just passed away; Sufiyan was too young to know what happened to them both. All he knew was that in the days immediately after, his aunt came to his house and took his two brothers back to her house in Gujarat, leaving Sufiyan to himself in the suburbs of Mumbai.

A lady who lived close by took care of him for a few days but Sufiyan ran away from her house and joined a few friends he had made in that area. For approximately the next 8 years, Sufiyan picked rags off the road, make t-shirts and sell them to people. He lived life on his meagre income from this trade.

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In September 2015, when he was around 15 years old, Sufiyan and his friends together decided to rent a house in Mumbra, one of the suburbs of Mumbai. They were all in a disruptive mood and after drinking some alcohol, they tried to steal a mobile phone from an individual at the train station.

The police caught them and as Sufiyan was underage, he was sent to Umerkhadi Observation Home (UOH) and consequently moved to David Sassoon Industrial School (DSIS) four months later.

Sahaara has been holding computer classes in DSIS since 2005, helping the children who live in this home learn new skills that will help them when they leave.

We met Sufiyan in January 2016. When he first began to come to our classes, we saw that he liked to be alone and used to get angry sometimes. He also used to stammer occasionally when he spoke to us. He had difficulty in class as his English language skills were low and he had never operated a computer before.

After we noted these problems, we began to focus our attention on teaching Sufiyan English so that he could understand the computer more. Simultaneously, we also counselled him, pointing out the importance of getting education and studying so that he could have a better chance in the future. Gradually, Sufiyan's confidence in dealing with programs on the computer grew. He also began to recognise that studying was a way to grow and he has now started to spend some time learning.

We hope to watch Sufiyan fulfil his dream and start his own business selling t-shirts in the future! Sahaara hopes to help many boys like Sufiyan achieve their dreams.

*Name changed to protect identity