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Taking healthcare to the rural areas

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Residents of Ashok Nagar, New Delhi

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Smile on Wheels - Mobile Charitable Hospital for Poor and Underprivileged communities

Healthcare

"He who has health has hope; and he who has hope has everything" – Arabic proverb

India has made rapid strides in the health sector since independence. However, various eye opening data from NFHS clearly indicate that access to **healthcare** still remains a challenge.

While the health statistics of rural India continue to be poor, the health status and access to health for the poor in urban slum dwellers has surfaced to be equally deplorable and have less than 4% of government primary **healthcare** facilities.

Urban slum dwellers suffer from adverse health conditions owing to mainly two reasons –first the lack of education and thus lack of awareness; and second the unwillingness to lose a day's wage in order to reach the nearest medical facility. **Healthcare for underprivileged**, which is a desperate need, thus remains unaddressed.

The need of the hour is thus a two pronged approach – first to bring quality **healthcare** services to doorsteps of the needy and second to promote **healthcare** awareness and contemporary **healthcare** seeking behavior among the underprivileged.

In such a scenario a mobile **healthcare** services delivery system is the most practical mechanism. And in subscription to this view, Smile Foundation has initiated the Smile on Wheels programme. This is a unique mobile hospital programme that seeks to address problems of mobility, accessibility and availability of primary **healthcare** with a special focus on children and women, in urban slums and remote rural areas.

The [Smile Foundation](#) on Wheels programme has so far provided **free healthcare** services to more than 15,41,000 children and families.

What We Did Last Year

541,835 people received healthcare services through **34 operational projects** in **478** remote villages and slums

Over 70% of the total beneficiaries covered in the reporting period were **women and children**

More than **10,000** school going children benefitted from **School Health Programme**

142 multi-speciality camps were conducted in underserved slums and remote rural areas, meeting the immediate healthcare needs of **37373 people**



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Inspiring Stories From Ground

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Gaurav Haryana

"When I took him to the doctor his scalp looked scary, now he has recovered and is so happy."

When Rita and Sandeep had Gaurav six months back the condition of their family was bad. Gaurav's elder sister was down with a bout of viral fever. Being daily wage earners it became very difficult for them to bear so much expenses. Even though Gaurav was born in a government hospital, his parents took him back home against the advice of the doctors because his sister also had to be looked after.

Soon after the baby's scalp started to turn red and flakes began to appear on his scalp. Initially the mother did not notice but when the flakes turned heavy she began to go to a local doctor to cure her baby but he could do not much. After hearing about the Smile on Wheels, Rita took her baby to the clinic where he was prescribed an ointment. Gaurav began to recover in no time and his parents are overjoyed that he is growing up healthy and happy.



Hajrath Barar Madhya Pradesh

"I am recovering slowly, thanks to the doctor who cured me."

When asthma and skin problem worsened, 65 year old Hajrath Barar had to discontinue his work in the nearby farms as a daily wager. Hajrath was bound to stay at home, causing his wife to work in the fields to fulfill the basic household needs.

Due to lack of access to medical facilities in the village, the residents had to travel around 12 km to reach the nearest Community Health Centre (CHC) in Chanderi when they suffered health problems. People like Hajrath avoided this, because they could not afford to lose a day's wage.

Hajrath's problems were identified by Dr. R K Sharma, who heads the project team of Smile on Wheels clinic in Ashok Nagar. Under his prescription, effective tablets and ointments were provided to him, and after 15 days Hajrath's health started improving.

Hajrath Barar has now recommenced his work in the farms. He continues to take his medicines for asthma and also takes part in mobilising other villagers in seeking healthcare from the Smile on Wheels.



Mahesh
Telengana

"Our children always complained that we did not do enough for them and then they left us in our old age."

Mahesh and his wife have five daughters. They raised them with equal love and never did they regret not having a son. His children grew up, got married and moved to different places. They began blaming their parents for not providing enough for them and slowly over time stopped coming to see them altogether. Both Mahesh and his wife began to suffer from old age related problems and even when their mother was on her death bed none of the children came.

Mahesh's health too started to suffer after the demise of his wife and with no one to care for him he became weaker. It was during one of the community counseling sessions that Mahesh came to know about Smile on Wheels clinic and began to attend it regularly. His health has improved and he also talks to the volunteers and jokes around with them. He tries to keep happy and healthy like the doctor asked him to.



Savitha
Chennai

"We are old and poor. Our health is failing. We only find relief in each other."

82 year old Savitha lives with her husband in a tin shanty in the middle of a congested and unhygienic Chennai slum. When their children refused to take care of them they had no option but to suffer silently. There was no one who could provide them warmth. Her husband is slowly losing his eye sight and both husband and wife are suffering from many other health problems due to their age. The families in slums like these do not have time to care for diseases or even if they do they do not have a choice because they have to earn their daily bread and look after their families. Most people in these slums suffer in silence, often losing their lives to curable diseases.

The Smile on Wheels mobile hospital which regularly visits the community has managed to keep the people healthy of late through regular visits and proper care and distribution of free medicines. Savitha and her husband receive timely check-ups and are healthier.



Tribal Community Kalahandi, Odisha

When a lot of children and adults began to fall sick at regular intervals the tribal community at Kalahandi, Odisha the people did not know who to turn to. Their regular visits to the local quacks increased but they could hardly provide any relief to the people. The residents of the area work as daily wage laborers and either cannot afford to go to a doctor or do not want to go to the doctor and lose a day's wage. These kinds of health problems have been a common problem in the area because of unhygienic lifestyles and continuous neglect of minor health problems.

When the Smile on Wheels services started in the area it bought relief to 42 of the remotest of villages in Kalahandi. Launched in June 2015, the project has already benefitted a population of over 20,000 people. Various sensitization programs to spread awareness about health related issues are conducted regularly. Volunteers and ground staff pay door to door visits to create awareness about the benefits of availing a qualified doctor's advice in case of an ailment.

PROJECTS



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HAPPENINGS



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SUPPORTER SPEAK



"We understand our social responsibility as an organization and always look for correct partners to work towards this. Smile Foundation has been doing great work for national development"

Rajeev Sharma,
Chairman & MD Rural Electrification Corporation (RECL)

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PHOTO ESSAY

[Hope and Well-being: Taking healthcare to the remotest and underserved](#)



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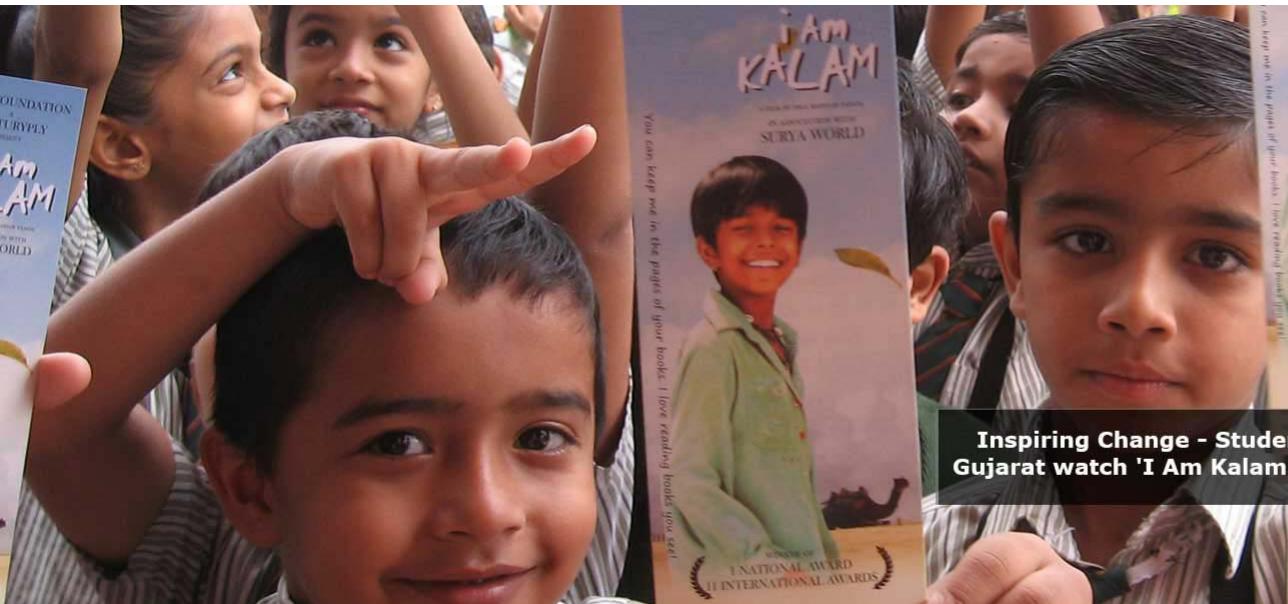
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Students of Smt. KC Gand



CHILD FOR CHILD

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About Child For Child

Children are the future of a nation. They are the best change agents, be it in the family or the community in which they live. It is therefore crucial to help the children, catch them young and inculcate in them feelings of empathy and conscience so that they grow up as responsible individuals. Sensing this need, Smile Foundation came up with Child For Child (CFC) programme in 2006. Sensitization of privileged children and their parents, towards the existing inequalities around them, is an important objective of CFC.

Privileged children are sensitized about the deprivation and pain endured by the underprivileged kids. CFC seeks to inculcate a conscience and value system in the children so that they grow up to become responsible citizens and change makers. Before their minds are set with age, the CFC programme tries to make them count their own blessings and understand the plight of less privileged ones. Once they start realizing the worth of the privileges they are born with, they automatically turn their thoughts towards positivity and develop the right outlook. This eventually helps them develop into not only successful but responsible individuals in life. They grow up to become significant change makers, who contribute positively to the society.

Under Child For Child programme, Smile Foundation visits various schools and conducts engaging sessions for the young minds. It sensitizes children towards various causes and let them realize their privileged status.

CFC currently reaches out to nearly one million privileged children in 900 schools spread across 417 districts of India, every year. In addition, their parents and teachers are also involved in the process. The programme has today reached out to each part of India with the exception of Lakshadweep.

What We Did Last Year



17,00,000 CHILDREN SENSITIZED ALONG WITH THEIR TEACHER AND FAMILIES



4400 SCHOOLS COVERED IN 417 DISTRICTS OF INDIA



MORE THAN 27000 EVENTS & ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED IN SCHOOLS

Happenings

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Neetu Choudhary

Principal, SKSK Educational Institute, Ludhiana



Principal

Gem International School, Alipur



Savita Arora

Principal, Bharti Public School, Delhi



Ananya Roy Choudhary

Principal DAV School,
Kolkata



Navneet

Principal, Guru Amar Das Public School,
Jalandhar

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Children bridge the gap; adults follow steps!



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