

Knowledge Centre

With the aim of increasing access to secondary and higher education for rural girls and focusing on reducing gender and social disparity a Knowledge Centre was set up in 2014 in collaboration with Primavera trust at Kishanpura village in Jaipur district. The center was helping the girls to gain wider knowledge and skills to face challenges and feel motivated to continue in schools, build confidence and self-esteem to raise voices to resist pressures against marriage at an early age. This opportunity was provided to the government school's girl students who otherwise do not get enough chances and qualitative resources to study. Considering the low literacy level of parents who struggle for daily bread and butter and hence do not have enough time, these girls lack the scholarly exposure. Thus, Knowledge Centre was started to provide high quality education to rural students of grade 8 to 12. Moreover, nutritional supplements were provided every day keeping in mind their health standards.

The subjects taught were Science, Maths, Physics, Chemistry, English, Political Science, History, Hindi and Computers for students studying in classes 8 to 12. It seemed necessary to make them familiarized with technology to cope up with fast paced society and therefore there was a provision of a computer lab. On the weekends and holidays, life-skill education was being imparted to instigate scientific thought in them including logical and reasoning skills, train them with self-defense mechanism and improve their access to services. Through participatory method of teaching, various activities and games, a lot of significant and predominant issues got covered connecting them better with the outside world.

Learning Center

With the success of Knowledge Centre we have started Learning Center in Shyopur area of Sanganer in 2019. In this area most of the population is of daily wage workers, drivers, plumbers and some women are working in the houses of others. 50 students are regularly getting quality education after their school hours. In this center SMILE is teaching to the students subjects like Science, Math, English, Computer, Social studies and Sanskrit.

Along with subject teachings SMILE is providing daily nutritional supplements to ensure good health of the students. The center also provides life-skill lessons to the girls to understand themselves in a better way and to broaden their thought process. Systematically we follow the module of life skills prepared by us and we also add content according to the needs of

the students. We teach them various skills which are important in their lives such as managing emotions, confidence building, creative thinking, leadership, team building, peer pressure etc.

As a result:

- girls have become more confident and their self-esteem has improved
- the academic performance of the students has improved significantly
- supplementary nutrition has increased their health and energy levels
- life skill education has improved girls critical thinking and creative skills, helped them in expressing their opinions and to work with their emotions
- because of their improved level of education and life skills the students are motivated and their aspiration has become high

During the COVID-19 pandemic SMILE has continued to work with students to improve their level of education, health and nutrition and confidence. During the pandemic the students were familiarized with new learning techniques, such as Zoom and Google meetings. Besides education, entertaining activities took place as well. Life skills education helped them to overcome negative feelings related to COVID. Celebrating different festivals has taken place online. The students implemented a survey in their community to increase awareness of the COVID-19 and on how to take precautions against it.

Pariniti

In association with Ekakanya, "Parinati" project was created in July 2016, with the vision of giving girls the opportunity to achieve their fullest potential and participate as a change leader, to create positive change in their own lives and in communities. Villages in Bassi Block of Rajasthan are deeply entrenched with gendered social norms and social evils. Hence to instill transformation and work upon such issues, the project trained a group of 30 girls who have evolved as change leaders. Few of the objectives include the provision of scholarships for further education, engagement of women and girls to work productively and efficiently, teaching the art of negotiation for brighter future and building their critical, creative thinking skills. After three years a lot of development is seen in the mind-sets and thought processes of these girls. Not only they have surpassed the shackles of society but also sowed a thought on challenges of human race amongst their folks to further ripen the action. Being a part of Parinati at a younger age helped them to shape their ideologies and opinions in a more constructive and sensible

way. The confidence was gradually built up in them through various opportunities for their overall growth.

Primary education in government schools

SMILE has continuously worked with students of primary education in government schools and trained the teachers to understand and communicate better with the students. SMILE has developed techniques for both teachers and students. We believe teaching through activities, such as songs, games, drawing etc. During the COVID-19 pandemic SMILE's greatest achievements for primary education include creating a YouTube channel and developing more than 500 videos for primary education students to learn Hindi, English and Math, along with work sheets. SMILE has adapted 5 government schools, educating 30 students per school, emphasis on those students who haven't kept up with the rest of the students.

Adult Literacy Program

Literacy is one of the essential elements of life. In the interiors of Rajasthan, the literacy level is a major concern especially amongst the women. Therefore, SMILE in collaboration with Bosch Foundation took an initiative for teaching them from scratch. The Adult Literacy Program of the 7 villages of Bassi and Panwalia has been a remarkable journey for all the women till date, empowering them and giving a sense of confidence and pride. The main agenda of the program was to make them independent and self-reliant so that they can smoothly read newspapers and necessary documents and handle basic monetary transactions of day to day life. Through education we wanted to instigate in them a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment. This initiative was taken to empower and boost their self-esteem. By using unconventional methods of teaching, women were taught how to read and write basics of Hindi, the national language and basic calculations. Capacity Building workshops were held timely for the trainers so that they could themselves understand the concepts well and learn the process of teaching to deliver the best results. We used the primers made by experts and professionals of adult literacy. The art of communicating to middle-aged women through songs, class-room activities, games and other participatory methods were also taught in ToT. Provision of literacy related books to further develop reading and learning habits, was done by SMILE. After completing the training most of them were able to read and write. They found the remarkable change in their own lives. Now they are more confident and more aware and can face the challenges of lives

Cutting and Tailoring course in the villages

After the success of vocational training centers in Jaipur we started 'Integrated Cutting and Tailoring' course in 8 nearby villages of Jaipur. This course programmed for 6 months was carefully and meticulously planned month-wise. The women did not have any know-how on stitching. Hence, initially the importance of the course and the skills were discussed and later a detailed syllabus with all the processes and methods was designed which covered various forms of clothing styles of Indian (their local traditional dress) as well as Western wear. A big achievement was when around 7 girls designed their school uniform including skirt and shirt, and salwar kameez. The joy of stitching their own clothes and wearing them knew no boundaries. They felt a sense of satisfaction and confidence while learning and sewing. It made them feel that they are now skilled and won't be dependent on the market provisions all the time. Along with the course, workshop on legal laws for women was also organised to make them aware about the rights against the crimes and violence they face in their everyday lives. The women were overwhelmed by being a part of such enlightening workshop and realizing their identity and importance.

Overtime SMILE has developed a strong team of almost 30 staff members who can work with children and women from disadvantaged and difficult background, help them understand from their perspective and consul them to build their self-confidence and engage with families and communities in more meaningful way. The team works under the guidance of an executive committee, comprising of 8 honorary members with diverse background and strong professional and social experience.

The CEO of SMILE Mrs. Kamini Shukla has been honored with titles like:

- **"Jaipur Shree"** by Sanskar Club, Jaipur
- **"Red Rickshaw Campaign"** with Vodafone Foundation, Jaipur
- **"The Heart of Gold" in (Social field)** by FM TADKA, Jaipur
- **"Rotary Club Jaipur Bapunagar"** for Helping under Privileged Children & Women.
- **"Ambedkar Mahila Kalyan Puruskar"** was given by the state government **"Social Justice and Empowerment Dept."** for upliftment of underprivileged women.
- **"Mahila Shakti Puruskar"** was given by the state government **"Women Empowerment Dept."** for her continues contribution in the field of women empowerment for last 35 years.
- **"Baal Meitri award"** by Child Welfare Committee of Rajasthan government

SMILE NGO has received

- **An appreciation letter** from **Primavera India Trust** in 2017
- **An appreciation letter** from **Pingalwara Charitable Trust** in 2018
- **An appreciation letter** from the government for helping in the marriages of the inmates of Mahila Sadan

The detailed information of SMILE can be found at its website at www.smilefamily.org

SMILE has developed strategic association with other NGOs operating in Jaipur city e.g. Vishakha, Bodh Shiksha Smiti, ActionAid, Primavera Trust, Bosch India Foundation, Ekaknya, Sandhan, Vividha local banks (Canara Bank, SBI), as well as with universities and government departments.












