



Proposal to
Asha for Education (Cornell)
to support Mumbai Mobile Creches

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Proposal Objective

This proposal seeks funding from Asha for Education(Cornell) for **\$5000** to support the education and nutrition programmes of Mumbai Mobile Creches reaching over 4,500 children living on construction sites.

Brief overview of Mumbai Mobile Creches

Mumbai Mobile Creches (MMC) was founded in 1972 in Mumbai with the belief that every child has the fundamental right to security, education, health care and protection. Running day care centres on construction sites for the past 42 years, MMC at present runs 28 centres in Mumbai, Navi Mumbai and Thane and has reached over 1,00,000 children. Our focus is on holistic development of children of birth to 14 years of age running a comprehensive day care centre catering to the health, nutritional and educational needs. We run a crèche for children under three (our youngest child here was fifteen days old!), a preschool and an after school support for the older children. Our centres are open from Monday to Saturday 08:45 am to 04:30 pm. Our model of comprehensive child care and work is in close partnership with parents, the construction industry, labour communities, government agencies and concerned NGOs to promote child rights. Over the last forty two years, we have developed and pioneered a model that supports the development of the very young child, frees young children from the burden of child care and supports children to get into and stay in school.

Institutional Background



The construction industry is the largest employer of migrant labourers in urban India. These labourers are usually the poorest of the poor. Millions of migrants are employed on construction sites in India. They are largely unorganized and move wherever they can to earn an income. Most migrant labourers are illiterate and speak only their native language. Their lives are characterized by insecurity of wages, dangerous working conditions, and lack of access to any kind of welfare.

This migrant population usually does not get registered on any municipal rolls, is not considered a political vote bank and consequently falls through the cracks.

The children of these workers – estimated to be over 3 million – are even more vulnerable. Because of the extreme poverty of their families and since their parents are constantly working these children are left to fend for themselves. They suffer from malnutrition, undernourishment, accidents, and innumerable health problems and are marginalized from formal schooling, day-care centres or any sort of support system. The dangerous construction site is their only playground.

However this need not be the case. **Mumbai Mobile Creches runs comprehensive day care centre for children from birth to 14 years of age for children on construction sites.**

Our **vision** is for all children to have a nurturing and happy childhood and our **mission** is to promote ‘child-friendly sites’; where every child living on a construction site is safe, healthy and educated, and able to enjoy their childhood.

1. Mumbai Mobile Creches Education Programme



Background

MMC has developed a unique educational curriculum to meet the needs of migrant children on construction sites. The purpose of the education programme is to encourage healthy social, cognitive, and emotional development in children ages 0-14 years, providing them with the educational and language foundation necessary to integrate into municipal schools and succeed in their future pursuits. The education programme also frees older children from the burden of caring for their younger siblings, and provides support to the working parents with the reassurance that their children are well cared for during the work day. Lastly, our programmes help children develop the character, curiosity, and love of learning that will serve them throughout their lives.

Goals

The goals of the education programme vary based on the age of the children, but they all share the core aim of providing children with the tools to become effective citizens. For the crèche babies, aged 0-3 years, the primary goal is to create a stimulating environment that nurtures motor, cognitive, social, emotional and physical growth. Children aged 3-5 years are part of the pre-primary (balwadi) programme, which focuses on school preparedness and skill development. In the primary classroom, for children aged 6-14, teachers focus on enrolling children to municipal schools and ensuring they stay in school. MMC helps the children by providing them after school support or before school support depending on the school timings.

Educational Methods and Materials

Teachers at MMC centres employ a variety of teaching tools in the different classrooms to achieve their educational objectives, constantly appraising and re-evaluating the effectiveness of these methods. A brief explanation of the teaching methods for each age group is as follows:

Crèche: The toys in the crèche facilitate active engagement through independent and guided play. These learning aids include balls, rattles, building materials, crayons, books, and much more.

Balwadi: Balwadi learning aids encourage imaginative thinking and problem solving, as well as strengthen the students' pre-reading, pre-writing, and pre-mathematics skills.

Primary: The learning aids in the primary programme provide the children with a education in reading, writing, and mathematics. The aids work in conjunction with a variety of other programmatic aspects, including field trips, English language preparation, arts and crafts, computer learning and more. The basic aim is to help children enter and stay in school. In all of these classrooms, teachers engage the children with questions, discussions, and positive feedback.

Our education programme is an important tool in breaking the cycle of urban poverty; by providing children with a stimulating education, MMC aims to provide children with the necessary tools to pursue success in their subsequent studies or in their eventual vocations. By funding our education programme, you will not only help secure the inalienable right to education for vulnerable children across Mumbai, but you will also help provide them with the tools to facilitate their own success. Investing in children's education is truly an investment in this city and this nation's future.

We seek a support of Rs **\$500** towards purchasing education materials for our centres .

Our Teachers: The torchbearers of MMC's Programmes



The teachers at the MMC centres are unquestionably our most valuable asset on construction sites. Our teachers teach the children, cook their meals, feed the children, clean the centres, interact with parents and community members, and take on any other necessary tasks as they arise.

Their incredible multi-tasking is what keeps the centres running smoothly, just as their dedication and enthusiasm are what allow our children to learn and engage with our programme.

Each day they work as both care-givers and educational professionals, helping to ensure that the children can benefit from a quality education in a healthy and nurturing environment. All of our teachers are trained to work as teachers either through MMC's comprehensive teacher training programme (Bal Palika) or through other reputable training programmes. Teachers work to implement every aspect of our programme; without them, our programme would cease to exist.

At present 40% of our teachers come from construction sites. By supporting the salaries of our teachers, you are investing in the foundation of the MMC programme .We seek a support \$ **3000** towards salaries of teachers.

2. Nutrition Programme:



MMC's nutrition programme aims to provide children living on construction sites with proper food and nutrition to foster healthy physical and cognitive development. We work to improve the children's nutritional health with a carefully designed daily diet. We provide breakfast, mid-morning snacks, lunch and an evening snack to all of our students. Each child also takes multivitamin and calcium supplements, as they are often deficient in these essential nutrients. And for those children who are malnourished we provide other recommended foods that are high in calories and protein. We aim to cover the major food groups and add variety to the daily diet through our nutrition programme.

Providing our students with a hearty diet allows them to fully engage and participate in their classroom activities and helps to ensure that they grow to be healthy and strong.

By supporting our nutrition programme, you will be helping to provide nutritional support to children across our centres at critical periods in their physical and cognitive development. We seek a support of **\$1,500** towards part supporting meals given to children during the day.

MMC's alumni: Impact of MMC's programme

Ramchandra Vithal Rao, hails from Andhra Pradesh and has been working as a teacher with MMC for the last 25 years. In fact, his parents were labourers on one such construction site and he was six years old when he first entered a Mobile Creche centre. Supported by MMC, he studied till the 12th standard, and was inspired to become a



teacher. Ramchandra loves working with children on construction sites because he knows what it is like to be one of them. “I want to show them that if they work hard , they can become a teacher, a doctor, a police officer.... anything. They should not be forced to remain where they are because they have no choice,” he says firmly.

Ramchandra wants to inspire children to move and look beyond the site and take charge of their lives, the way he did being inspired by MMC teachers.

Watch Ramchandra narrate his story at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eGpLXokuu24>

Budget & Support for the period of April 2014 to March 2015

Budget head	Description	Total Amount (\$)
1. Education Programme		
<i>a. Education Materials</i>	Educational material provided to the children which includes educational and teaching aids, paper, writing and art material for crèche, pre-primary and primary programme	500
<i>b. Teachers' Salaries</i>	Towards salaries of teachers	3000
2. Nutrition Programme	Part supporting meals given to children during the day.	1500
Total Budget		5000

Note: Since supplies to our centres under the education, nutrition, and health and hygiene is done on a quarterly basis, the expenditure under the said heads will not be equitably distributed every month.

Conclusion

We seek your support towards the most crucial areas of our work, and it will ensure that we are able to provide the best possible services to children living on construction sites of the city. By supporting Mumbai Mobile Creches you will ensure that children living in the most marginalized and invisible sections of Mumbai enjoy a safe, healthy and educated childhood.