



#weinspirehumanity

"The strongest hearts make time for helping others in their low times, even when they themselves are fighting hard in their challenging times" - Mandeep Kaur Sidhu

Smiles.Care is an NGO, having its roots laid out in a small village Tangra (Punjab, India). The dream is to touch as many lives as possible. The essence of being in rural areas and to do something different has always fascinated the founder Mandeep Kaur Sidhu. Did you ever think, on this beautiful earth, there are hundreds and thousands of villages and towns, where we can never imagine how helplessly people are living? The world is moving faster and the fastest, leaving behind fellow beings. Mandeep Kaur Sidhu is born to a family who runs a small flour mill in village Tangra. She holds a firm belief that despite hardships, education has played a transforming role in her life. She has been successful as an entrepreneur, winning "Upcoming Startup of the Year 2016" award by ASSOCHAM India in August 2016 for her venture Simbacart. Initially Mandeep was doing shoe donations along with the business she started in 2014 and her social campaigns were famous under the titles "More Smiles Each Day" & "Footprints of Kindness" Campaigns. Being in a village, Mandeep felt that if she can do so well despite extreme financial constraints, many other kids in her village can definitely excel much like her. She registered her NGO Smiles.Care in the Year 2016, and started executing all social cause activities under the NGO umbrella in a much-organized way as earlier she was



only doing the activities as part of CSR of her business or as an individual raising brand awareness and giving back to the community. The message Smiles.Care gives to the society is "We Inspire Humanity". The word 'Donation' means generosity in giving something to the needy people out of our kindness towards them. Smiles.Care believes, the new generation

can replace it with "Sharing". There is a proverb that "Charity Begins At Home" which means

a person's first responsibility is for the needs of their own family. People are often reluctant or hesitant to help others. There are others who share a huge amount of money in the name of charity but pay no attention to the poor and needy ones in actual. The concept of hidden donations must be eliminated as soon as possible to move money from one person to the actual needy. Smiles.Care wants people to come forward and join the movement, saying no to hidden donations. Hence, Smiles.Care always prefers to click pictures and videos of every campaign it does and post it on social channels. The objective behind is to trigger more souls to be closer to humanity and think how smaller acts too can change lives.

Rather than a focused approach Smiles.Care welcomes a broader range of issues people face in the rural. The reason is, it is difficult to say NO to the innocent people around, who needs help. However, the top addressed causes are Education and Health.



Education is the power that can shape and transform the lives of mankind. It empowers with the ability to think, to make decisions and to become self-reliant. Education is one way through which girls and boys can establish their identity.

However, since ancient times in India, girls were deprived of this precious wealth of education. Literacy of girls was looked upon as a disgrace. *Life of majority girls was confined to domestic work. It took an era, for many countries, including India to understand 'The power of educating girl'*. Today the girls are competing with men in all spheres of life. On the contrary, there are people who still have the opinion that ideal place for a girl in the society is the home only, not only in rural but urban too. They also believe that money spent on their education is a mere wastage.

Smiles.Care also runs a formal evening school. Smiles.Care provides free education and facilities to 125+ children as on November 11th, 2016 where nearly 60% kids are girls. It provides free

English and computer classes in evening school. It is a challenge for the NGO to welcome children of all age groups, and teaching students in separate groups as per their classes with the low staff of just two. The two includes Mandeep herself and a new hire Gurjit Singh for Smiles.Care. Smiles.Care manages to teach kids with the help of volunteers.

Smiles.Care is currently running on a rented playground. Where it manages to display study boards with the help of trees and students sits on the ground. Recently with the help of monetary donation, NGO managed to have 50 chairs. There is the requirement of sitting arrangement for all. Smiles.Care keeps on getting donations with the help of posts on social media. With the donations, the first objective is to complete chairs, bags, notebooks and other stationary for all kids coming to evening school. Every Sunday, NGO gets laptops from Simbacart as it's a holiday in the company and kids learn computers every Sunday. Smiles.Care aims to have its own campus very soon along with teaching free to 500 kids in next two years.



Here is what the founder says “The **stories are painful** when I see kids coming from village 4-5kms from our NGO, by foot. Love, Politeness, and Care attract them. Before you do anything, *India needs Love, Politeness, Ethics, Values and Care*. With love, you can win over many things. *When there were initial days of our NGO, A group of boys in a team won a sports*

activity. I asked them to do something for others and entertain as you are the winner. They said, "Should they do sit-ups?" It was a sad incident. Schools treat such a way that punishment has become a pleasure for kids. Rather than singing a song or dance they prefer sit ups by holding ears. **I was moved** by that incident and fell in more love with my kids. They handshake and hug each day when they meet me. I wonder more than this what love could be. I believe it's the height of compassion. One should be thankful if one gets the chance to serve the humanity at any point of time in life.”

Two little girls met Mandeep in the washroom at NGO Smiles.Care, and were all filled with foam of the soap on her hands, feet, arms, face, and neck. She asked them "Hey, what are you doing and not attending class, don't you have soap at your home? One of them innocently replied, "NO madam, we don't have soap at home". Her heart was repenting, why even she asked them? Sitting in our chair, we do not realize that people do not have even soap, at their home and it is a luxury for them which is a fast moving consumer good for the whole world.

Poverty is just like a disease to which hygiene is associated. Health is equally prior cause to be addressed along with education. There are number of people who live below poverty line and



therefore they are forced to live on the streets, footpaths and slum areas. These people live in such areas where the living conditions are unfavorable but they are helpless to help themselves. A pair of shoe is a necessity for every individual but for the poorer, earning a pair of shoe is least priority task

due to which they suffer from many health issues. According to the medical opinion, shoes prevent severe parasites transmitted through soil, along with the diseases like Schistosomiasis and Hookworm. Approximately, two million people worldwide are infected with soil-transmitted diseases. These diseases are caused by different species of roundworms. It is infected by those worms which are transmitted through contaminated soil. So we can very well imagine that how

the poor people try to earn their livelihood by putting their life into so much of risk. **According to WHO**, its global goal is to eliminate these diseases by focusing on providing proper pair of shoe to deprived ones. As we commonly observe that poor people including their children walk around barefoot. Walking through garbage, parasitic water and mud can have extreme long-term



health effects. On other hand if we analysis other side of coin , many of us confine our old pair of shoes to some corner in our house which gathers dust with the passage of time. We never even recall even once while wearing shoe to our office that an underprivileged little kid is going to school without a shoe today. Smiles.Care is all focused on health related campaigns, especially shoe donation drives which are a costly

necessity. Smiles.Care donates shoes to the kids in elementary schools and people who live in slum areas in rural and bring smiles on their face. Many people all around the world walk barefoot not by their choice but, due to lack of resources they cannot buy shoes for their feet.



Smiles.Care always participates with its volunteers in health check-up campaigns to be conducted by any other organization. Recently Smiles.Care extended help in conducting Cancer Checkup Campaign and Eye Check Up campaign in two of the villages in Punjab.

The country and educated men and women entrepreneurs should stand as a whole to support and initiate educational initiatives especially in rural to bring the change. We need to invest our time and put our best efforts to nurture NGOs such as Smiles.Care. The questions are open. Can we stop hidden donations and start with publishing and inspiring more people? Can we set education and health as the priority causes to be addressed in our country? How many people living in urban will believe and support an NGO operating from a small village in Punjab? How many educated people will be ready to help and serve, leaving urban life and working for the rural? How to associate with real donors for Smiles.Care, as NGOs in the country has already lost the trust of donors around?

Case Study, from the house of Smiles.Care.