

Background

Tribal Child Early Health & Education, Pune, India



Since 2007, BODHI has worked with local partner the JEEVAK Trust to provide about thirty-five 0-5-year-old children of the Gosawi nomadic tribe in the Pune slums (population: 5000) with nutritious food and medical care, created awareness about health and hygiene issues amongst the parents and provided basic schooling. The project is locally run and monitored.

Children receive food, medicine and education at the one-room centre they attend Monday-Saturday at 10am. They are fed both breakfast and lunch before leaving around 1.30pm. The food includes whole grains, vegetables, milk, eggs and fruit. Any food and tonic left over at the end of any session is given to the handful of older children who come as carers for a younger brother or sister. The milk and eggs given to the children are not part of any food provided by the parents, as they are relatively expensive and there is little knowledge about the nutritional value of different foods.

Benevolent Organisation for Development, Health & Insight (BODHI)

Children are given tonics and deworming medication. They receive pre-primary education through such activities as nursery rhymes, poems, drawing and stories. The centre is cleaned daily.

Although the project has given supplementary feeding to the tribal children, the parents are unable to continue giving the same inputs to the children in their homes as they are very poor. The parents mainly depend on daily wages. These families migrated from Eastern Maharashtra and work as construction workers, beggars, vegetable vendors, rag-pickers etc. They live in very small tin shed houses, whose surroundings are unhygienic, which aggravates sanitation problems and facilitates occurrences of infectious diseases.