



Centurion
UNIVERSITY

*Shaping Lives...
Empowering Communities...*

ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES: CENTURION UNIVERSITY'S ENDEAVOURS



1.4.3 (Evidence No.3)

Initiatives and programmes undertaken by the university to improve access to basic services for all are as below

Crèche

UMBC has set up a Day Care / Crèche facility for children of working parents from the neighbouring slum. The very thought of setting a Crèche revolves around the notion that in earlier years of a child's life it's crucial that each child gets care and attention it needs. For children to receive the best care and attention it's best they stay at home with their parents because it's more influential on their development. However, in today's scenario parents opt to re-enter the work force and then left to think about their child's care and attention.



These parents in cities opt for some good child day care. A good Day Care / Crèche or a Play School in the city is certainly expensive for the parents from slums.



To address such needs and to fulfil dreams of parents from the slum – UMBC has set up Day Care cum Play School for their children. Parents who are professionally engaged with any firm, organisation or profession can drop their children at UMBC in the safe hands of trained Governess and Care Takers of the Crèche and go to their work with least worries.

Children start their day in the morning with a round of prayers and exercise with their trained Governess and Care takers. They enjoy their day with fun, games, food, rest and some learning too. Parents pick their children as they return from their work. UMBC manages the expenses of this Crèche from resources generated from sales of products, donation from staff members and patrons.

The children are also indulged in activities like dancing, painting, and singing. They are provided with toys and playing equipment to play and enjoy with their friends. There is uniform for all the kids like any school to avoid any discrimination. Each child is provided with nutritious food for lunch and mattress to take rest during the day. UMBC houses 20-30 children from the slum with 2 Governess for them.

Digital Learning Programme

The Digital Centre is a holistic approach to better educational and employment outcomes. Communities lacking resources may have limited computer experience and access. The UMBC facilities provide a chance to overcome these limitations, develop computer skills and gain confidence. UMBC facilitates a four-month training program in learning modules, the Internet, and software applications.

UMBC has set up a Digital Learning Lab for School and College going students from the neighbouring Slum **Kargil Nagar**. The programme was designed in response to multiple discussions with children and their parents and understanding the limitation of facilities in the schools they were enrolled.



This Digital Learning Programme opened scope and interest among children, youth and women towards computer education and e-learning.



The curriculum content includes: MS Words, MS Excel, Social Media, Internet Use and e-Commerce. Between 2014-19 the lab has enrolled **687** members in different programmes which includes 338 school students, 178 youths and 171 community members (male and female) helping them to navigate livelihood , employment , training, financial and educational opportunities.

These learning has helped them fetch a better job with opportunity for Data Entry, Stock Management, Inventory Management, Sales and Reporting, Invoicing, Accounts Management.

It's worth noting that few students had used a computer before, many had only used it for some games and most of them had not seen even a computer. Our programme has taken them from zero level of digital exposure to decent competency.

Besides that – it has given equal opportunities for UMBC staff members who never had any exposure to computers. Staff members with computer knowledge provided training to their colleagues off the office hours.



House hold Toilets Construction

Few well-marked challenges in Urban slums are, increasing migrants population leading to overcrowded / cramped living conditions, poor quality of life, unhygienic surrounding, improper sanitation and hygiene practices leading to increasing morbidity and health expenses.

During 2014-15 most of the slum dwellers either did not have any access to a toilet or with a dismal use of existing structure nearby. UMBC organised multiple community level meetings and awareness camps to motivate and mobilise community youth and women to construct their own toilets. Subsequently worked with Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation and mobilised Govt. funds for 1265 household toilets for urban poor. Out of which 600 + toilets have been completed and are in use in Kargil nagar.

Besides that UMBC has organised 26 camps , competitions and workshops for youth and children on behavioural change - safe sanitation and hygiene practices.

Accessory Support Services for the Urban Poor - Banking Inclusion

UMBC in partnership with few banks like Allahabad Bank and IDBI carried out a banking inclusion drive for the primary target groups of the project in phases covering 5-6 neighbouring slum communities. Urban poor surprisingly comprise a highly unbanked demographic, particularly in a smaller city like Bhubaneswar.

For many slums in the periphery of the city, formal banking penetration are still found to be as low as that of a village. During 2014-15 UMBC conducted a study on Urban Poor covering different Socio- Economic parameters. One of the points of discussion was banking inclusions of individuals and households. Few very interesting points was observed:

- Many individuals both men and women were uninformed about how banks work, about the different kinds of banking products, terms and conditions of different kinds of loans (including those for their own business), and differences between concepts such as insurance and loans.
- Women typically manage household finance and expenses. Significant number of women lose their earnings to the male members of the family who spend it on alcohol, gambling or other non-household expenses. Banking could be safer and better option for managing the cash in hand.
- Individuals or entrepreneurs from the slum community could not demonstrate their credit-worthiness to banks and further could not show a history of regular bank transactions to avail the banking services and facilities.
- Individuals and households do not have proper document in support of their dwelling and other credentials to avail banking facilities.
- Pensions and other government are linked to Bank Accounts for easy and hassle free transaction and access to Govt support and schemes.
- Most of the individuals from the slum – run petty business during the day – making them difficult to visit banks during the working hours to deposit or any other transactions
- Women are relatively more unbanked than men – as they are find less time and opportunities to move out of their houses.
- Male members are primary breadwinners –hence they create account in their name.

