

## Door Step School

*A country's development can be measured by its literacy rate and the importance it places on education. In India, there are quite a few initiatives run by the government that work towards boosting the education system and Shirley Murphy reports on an initiative that provides tuition to disadvantaged children*

Government initiatives apart, a few organisations and individuals have taken it upon themselves to work for the cause of education, especially for the underprivileged. Among these is Bina Seth Lashkari, Founder of Door Step School, Mumbai. For almost three decades, her non-governmental organisation (NGO) has been providing quality education to the children of slum dwellers, pavement dwellers, construction site dwellers, and other underprivileged kids in Mumbai and Pune.



They found children in railway stations, near the Gateway of India, and other open areas and they started to teach them *in situ*. However, this was not a good option as they found it hard to concentrate and there were too many distractions. Then Bina thought of getting a vehicle, equipped with the basic items that a classroom ought to have, which could go around the city teaching these children for poor backgrounds. That was when they introduced the mobile school concept. The classes, in English, Mathematics and General Science, last for at least two to three hours inside the buses.

With seven buses as part of its fleet, the Door Step School initiative in Mumbai alone has had an impact on the lives of over 50,000 children. The NGO conducts classes at four locations simultaneously with more than 100 students being taught inside a single bus.