

**STRENGTHENING EDUCATION IN RURAL SCHOOLS OF  
KANCHEEPURAM DISTRICT  
PROJECT REPORT (JUNE 2014 TO MAY 2015)**



*Supported by*

*Asha for education, Stanford Chapter*



**Kalanjiyam Trust**

Chennai – 600 041

## Background

The Asha Stanford supported rural school strengthening project has continued its implementation in June 2014; in all the five project schools: - Panchayat Union / Government schools in Kancheepuram district. The project is implemented in 2 primary schools, in Ariyanur (26) and Chinna Venmani (29) villages, one middle school, Periya Venmani (94), one high school which is Zameen Endathur High School (194) and in a Higher Secondary School, Thiruvadhoor higher secondary school (1600). Total number of students benefiting from the programs in these schools include: 149 students in the two primary schools and one middle school; 191 students in the high school and 1215 students in the higher secondary school.

## Learning Outcomes and academic achievements in 2014-15

**Zameen Endathur High School:** For second continuous year, the 10<sup>th</sup> standard students in Zameen Endathur School have all passed the 10<sup>th</sup> board exam. This achievement has been realized only since the support by Asha Standard Project started since last school year (2013-14), with two teachers to support the school. The strength of students in 10<sup>th</sup> standard is 42, and all of them have passed. Four students scored more than 80%,

<b>1st rank</b>	<b>M Barath</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>86%</b>
<b>2nd rank</b>	S Akash	424	85%
<b>3rd rank</b>	V Bargavi	420	84%
<b>4th rank</b>	L Magadevi	420	84%

## Subject wise results:

<b>Zameen Endathur High School – 10<sup>th</sup> standard Scores</b>				
	<b>1st Mid-term</b>	<b>2nd Mid-term</b>	<b>Half Yearly</b>	<b>Final Result</b>
<b>Tamil</b>	78.6	78.6	85.7	66
<b>English</b>	76.2	83.3	73.8	62
<b>Math</b>	38.1	45.2	42.9	53
<b>Science</b>	85.7	100.0	90.5	78
<b>Social science</b>	50.0	47.6	78.6	78
<b>Total pass percent</b>	35.0	32.0	38.0	100%

## Helping students to pass 10<sup>th</sup> in Zameen Endathur

Vinitha completed 10<sup>th</sup> in Zameen Endathur High School this year. She has been living in this village since birth and went to the primary school in the village. She lives with her father, mother and elder brother. Her parents earn their living through wage labor. Vinitha said 'I was not very good in studies and did not have much interest. I never liked Math and English



and could not do well in these subjects, these were very difficult for me. In class I could never understand what Sir was teaching us. I would ask my doubts but still did not get any clear answers that helped me. My English was very bad, I could lead letters and with lot of difficult words; however our teachers now helped me, they wrote the Tamil words and then the matching English letters and this helped me to pick up little by little. This year in 10<sup>th</sup> I had to work very hard so that I could get marks to pass the board exams. The teachers placed by Kalanjiyam worked closely with me and really helped me a great deal. They gave me practice questions and then helped me to understand how to answer them, by giving small clues. These they did regularly and each time I got different types of questions and I had to learn how to answer each. Once I learned and started getting better, I started to like English and wanted to learn more and more.'

'I also had the same situation in Math, when sir was teaching us equations, he would not take us step by step. This was difficult for me to follow and figure out on my own. So I used to get extra help from Subashini teacher from Kalanjiyam; like me there were students as well, so we all learned from Subashini teacher who patiently taught us step by step and relentlessly made us take practice tests. Before the exams I was very worried and nervous, but during the exams I was able to attend the exam with confidence; I have done my exam well and I am sure that I have passed. Thanks to Subashini teacher!'

**There are many students like Vinitha who have benefited due to the project, which has helped all students to pass the 10<sup>th</sup> board exam in this school. The teachers placed by**

the project are critical to the achievement of 100% pass and we hope to continue this effort and in the next year, focus on increasing scores in each subject.

### Thiruvadhoor Higher Secondary School

The project placed teachers have worked hard to improve the scores among the 10<sup>th</sup> class students. Totally 228 students took board exam and 191 passed (84%). Last year overall pass percentage was 77% and this year it has increased to 84%. **The top three scores were 468 (94%), 452 (90%) and 442 (88%)** Scores in each of the subjects have also substantially improved this year and the project's support has paid off well and added considerable value:

Thiruvadhoor higher secondary school – 10 <sup>th</sup> Marks		
	Half yearly	Final Exam
<b>Tamil</b>	65.0%	83%
<b>English</b>	46.7%	86%
<b>Math</b>	71.7%	93%
<b>Science</b>	91.6%	100%
<b>Social science</b>	67.4%	98%
<b>Total pass percent</b>	40.3%	84%

**12th Standard Results:** Totally 285 students took the 12<sup>th</sup> standard board exams this year in Thiruvadhoor School, and out of them 64% passed. This is lower than last year's result. However this year the project supported teachers spent less time with the 12<sup>th</sup> standard and only provided some minimal support for science and English. Among those passed the scores by subject are:

Subject	Score
<b>Tamil</b>	88%
<b>English</b>	88%
<b>Math</b>	82%
<b>Science</b>	90%
<b>Biology</b>	92%
<b>Physics</b>	90%
<b>Botany</b>	84%
<b>Computer science</b>	90%

## Sustained effort of students helps them to complete schooling:



This case study is about a young boy named Selvam from Kalpat village going to Thiruvadhoor Higher Secondary School. Selvam's mother Manammal expired when he was a small kid. His father Dhanasekar is a differently abled person. His elder sister Nandhini discontinued her studies when she finished 10<sup>th</sup> and got married and has three

children now. His younger sister Selvi is a differently abled child grown with learning disability. She discontinued her studies when she was in her 9<sup>th</sup> class. The family's financial background is very poor. The family runs only with the help of the pension money presently. IF Selvan does well and goes to college he will be able to make a difference for his family.

Selvam is an easy going person and likes playing indoor games; more than studies he was more interested in drawing. Selvam has speech related issues and has less clarity when he speaks; however this has not affected him till now but it needs to be intervened.

Selvam was only an average student through high school and scored 274 out of 500 in 10<sup>th</sup> class. In 11<sup>th</sup> he took Accounting with computer science as his major subject. Selvam says, 'I struggled through 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> and had to work hard to prepare for his board exams since the beginning of the academic year'. The Kalanjyam placed teachers in school supported me tremendously. They helped me to prepare and I worked extra hard in the last three months before the 12<sup>th</sup> board exams started. He scored 720 out of 1200 in his board exams. Selvam shared, proudly said that he has secured the first mark in Accounts in his class. Selvam's ambition is to become a chartered accountant and also to build a house for his family to live. Now he wants to pursue B.Com and is waiting for his admission process in some decent college.

When asked to share a few words Selvam says" I am happy that I have cleared by board exams. Kalanjyam and this project has been a great support to me from childhood. I regularly attend the adolescent meeting and other workshops conducted at Kalanjyam. Looking at all our troubles, Kalanjyam had helped me and other students to come to school in a cycle. I am so happy that I have come up to this level and I wanted to achieve more heights".

Many students in Thiruvadhoor Higher Secondary School are average students like Selvam and require a lot of support to help them to complete their education. The class sizes in these are schools are very large so teachers are not able to effectively ensure all students are learning. The project placed teachers and trying their best to help as many students as they can, by providing individual attention, to help them through their learning challenges and to pass the board exams.

### Results in Primary / Middle Schools:

Overall the marks stored by students in each class are presented below. In the smaller grades students are doing relatively well, consistent with our independent assessments. Class five students in all schools are well prepared to move into 6<sup>th</sup> standard. In the higher classes they need further improvement.

	Ariyanur			Chinna Venmani			Periya Venmani		
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>
Tamil	91	85	91	91	95	88	88	98	92
English	89	83	96	92	95	75	75	90	90
Math	92	75	92	93	96	84	95	100	100
Science	90	82	91	93	92	87	98	98	95
Social Science	90	83	92	91	97	87	90	95	95

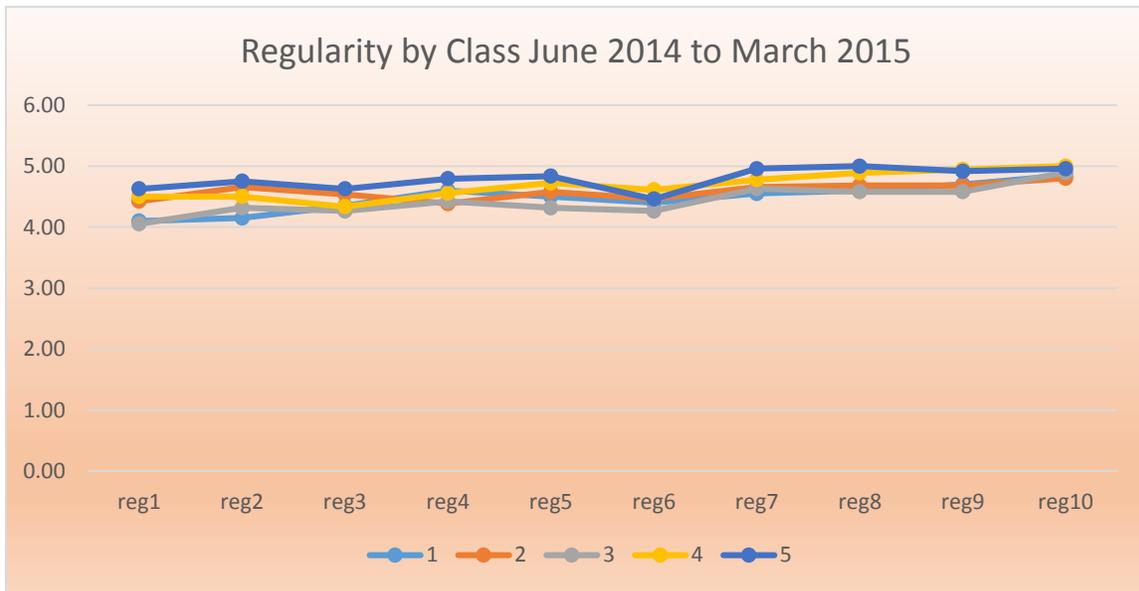
	Periya Venmani		
	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>
Tamil	73	83	83
English	66	68	76
Math	55	68	68
Science	66	74	85
Social Science	68	66	76

	Zameen Endathur High School			
	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>
Tamil	60	45	70	67
English	52	56	50	68
Math	65	71	59	62
Science	56	63	53	74
Social Science	73	59	82	72

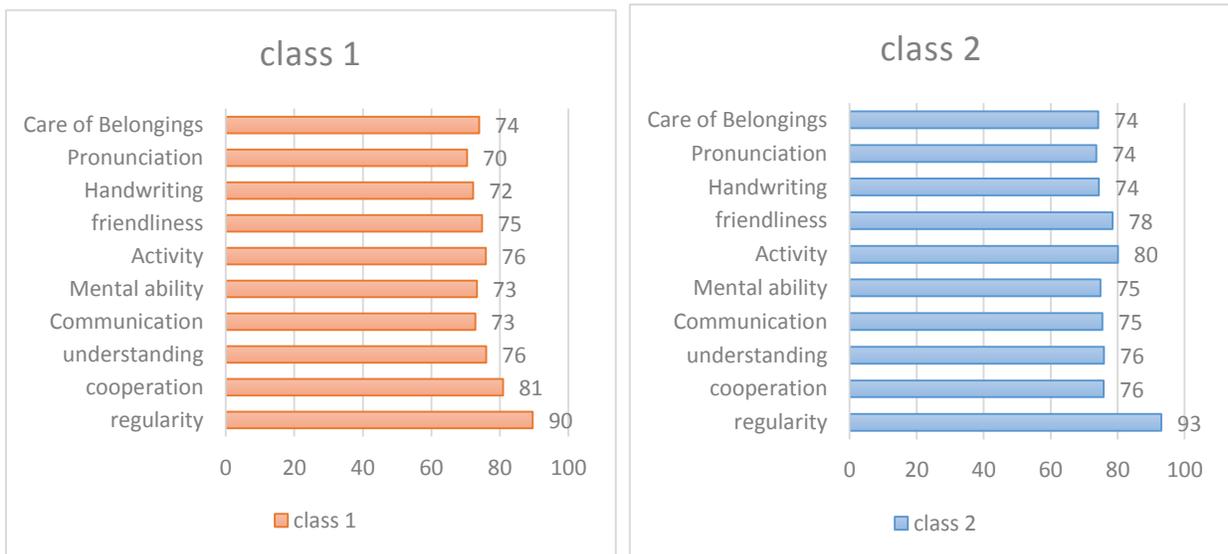
## Findings from Child Monitoring Data

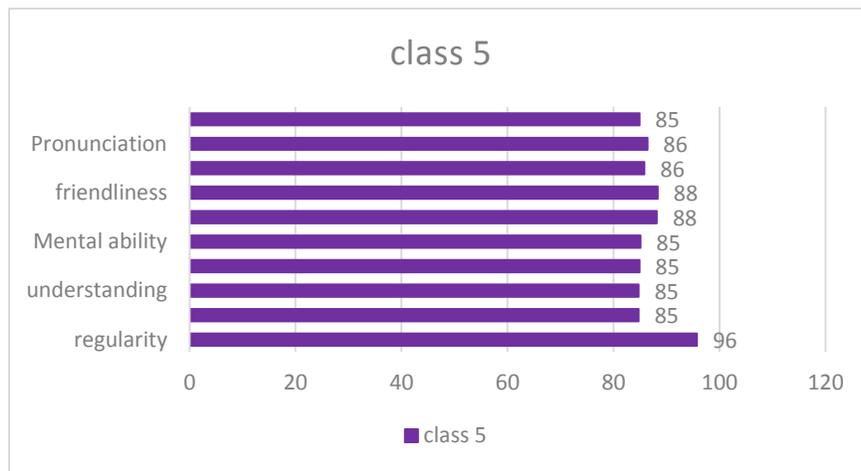
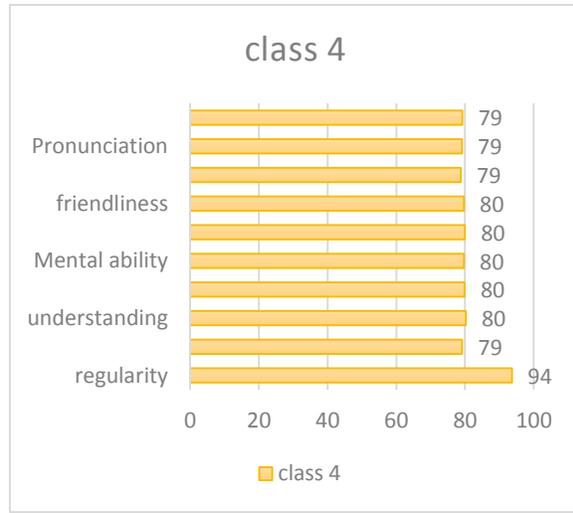
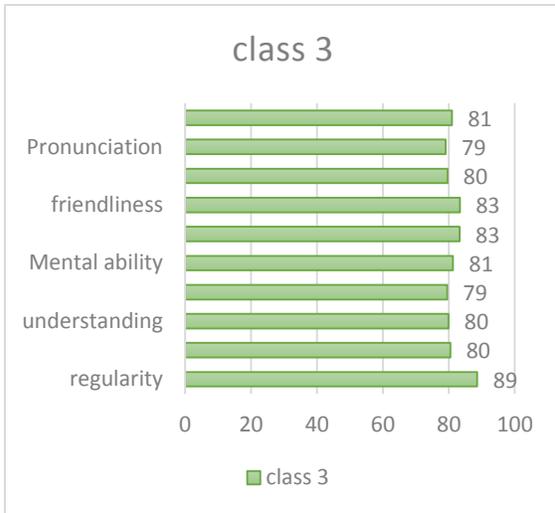
Para teachers track progress of students using a child monitoring card; this is done monthly, towards the end of the month. Data from all months was aggregated to generate an average score for each class, by each of the 10 indicators. The details of the 10 indicators are in Annexure 1.

Firstly regularity of students continues to be high, from beginign of the year and peaks in the second half of school year.

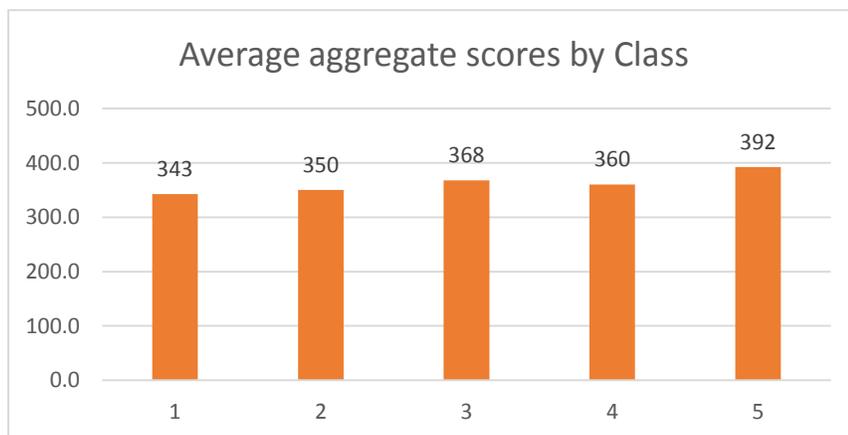


Scores on other idncators and good and suggest that children are doing well above average and by 5<sup>th</sup> standard, are well prepared.





**Average Aggregate Scores by Class out of total of 500:** On an average students are scoring between 68% and 78% and there is steady improvements with increasing grade/ class



## Digital Literacy:

Computer classes were conducted twice a week in the two primary schools and middle school. The focus continues to be strengthening children's skills on using computers. The computer curriculum includes: learning the basics of computers, how to work on MS WORD, EXCEL, and PowerPoint etc. The majority of the children are able to use and operate the computers; every year the as the 2<sup>nd</sup> standard kids move to 3<sup>rd</sup>, we initiate them into the computer class; fourth and fifth class students are helped to get advanced skill level. A computer exam was conducted at the end of the year to test the children's understanding, theory and practical exam was conducted. Similar to previous years the results are positive.

	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Practical (hand on exercise)</b>	<b>Digital (test using software)</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	90%	85%	80%
<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>	100%	82%	80%
<b>5<sup>th</sup></b>	100%	85%	90%
<b>7<sup>th</sup></b>	100%	92%	90%
<b>8<sup>th</sup></b>	100%	90%	90%



## ACER Assessments:

Scholastic assessment was conducted three times in the year, in June 2014, November 2014 and in March 2015. The objective of this assessment was to understand the learning levels achieved among a sample of the children in the schools, specifically on reading in medium of instruction (Tamil) and doing basic arithmetic. The assessments are adapted from those conducted by Pratham (ACER assessments) for children in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> classes. All children in these classes were assessed for reading Tamil and English, to be able to read at the level of 3<sup>rd</sup> standard. For Math, children in classes 3<sup>rd</sup> were assessed on counting numbers, addition and subtraction; whereas 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> standard were additionally assessed on multiplication and division.

The results presented in below table below indicate that there are significant improvements among the children since the beginning of the school year and since the previous year.



		Baseline				MIDLINE				ENDLINE			
<b>Tamil</b>	<b>Baseline - June 2014</b>	<b>Class 3 %</b>	<b>Class 4 %</b>	<b>Class 5 %</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Class 3 %</b>	<b>Class 4 %</b>	<b>Class 5 %</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Class 3 %</b>	<b>Class 4 %</b>	<b>Class 5 %</b>	<b>Total</b>
	Cannot read or write	0	5	0	1.50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	can read only letters	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Can read only letters and words	45	15.	8.	21.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Can read only letters, words and paragraph	15	35	8 %	18.5	20	22.2	9.1	16.7	0	0	0	0
	Can read all up to stories	40	45	84	58.5	80	77.8	90.9	83.3	100	100	100	100
	Total number of students	20	20	25	65	20	18	22	60	20	20	25	65
<b>English</b>	<b>Baseline - June 2014</b>	<b>Class 3</b>	<b>Class 4</b>	<b>Class 5</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Class 3</b>	<b>Class 4</b>	<b>Class 5</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Class 3</b>	<b>Class 4</b>	<b>Class 5</b>	<b>Total</b>
	Cannot read or write	0	5	0	1.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	can read letters	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Can read letters and words	50	30	16	30.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	can read letters, words and paragraph	35	35	32%	33.8	30%	22.2	13.6	21.7	0	0	0	0
	can read all up to stories	15	30	52%	33.8	70%	77.8	86.4	78.3	95	95	100	97
	Total number of students	20	20	25	65	20	18	22	60	20	20	25	65
<b>Math</b>	<b>Baseline - June 2014</b>	<b>Class 3</b>	<b>Class 4</b>	<b>Class 5</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Class 3</b>	<b>Class 4</b>	<b>Class 5</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Class 3</b>	<b>Class 4</b>	<b>Class 5</b>	<b>Total</b>
	None	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Can count numbers 1 to 10 ONLY	6	0	0	1	6	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	Can count numbers 99 to 100 ONLY	25	5	4	10.8	10	0	0	3.3	0	0	0	0
	Can count numbers and add ONLY	10	10	4	7.7	10	0	0	3.3	0	0	0	0
	Can count, add and subtract ONLY	65	10	4	24.6	80	16.7	9.1	35.	100	0	0	30.8
	Can count, add, subtract and multiply ONLY	0	15	20%	12.3	0	16.7	9.1	8.3	0	5	0.	1.5
	can do all OF ABOVE AND including division	0	60	68	44.6	0	66.7	81.8	50	0	95	100	67.7
	20	20	25	65	20	18	22	60	20	20	25	65	

## Activities conducted by the project:

### Primary Activities:



- Para teachers were placed in the primary and middle school and in Higher secondary school - Ariyanur, Chinna Venmani, Periya Venmani, and Thiruvadhoor schools; and one computer teacher was appointed and taught the children use / operations on computer, during a computer class, the primary and middle schools

- Four subject special school teachers were appointed for Thiruvadhoor higher secondary school; and two subject special school teachers were appointed for Zameen Endathur High School.

- As part of extra-curricular program, a drawing master was appointed to teach drawing for the children, at least two times in a week

- **After school tuitions:** Daily after school tuitions were conducted in Ariyanur, Chinna Venmani and Periya Venmani. The focus of the after school tuition was to help the children to catch up on their school lessons and to do homework. Here they also practiced their reading and writing, and multiplication tables. In addition special home work was given to each child, based on what the child needs to



learn. General knowledge was also provided through reading from different books/ sources.

- **Provided educational aids:** Students in all the schools were provided drawing note books, color pencils in the primary, middle and higher secondary schools; Tamil English Tamil Dictionaries were provided to all children from 5<sup>th</sup> class onwards; and school atlas has been provided to children from 6<sup>th</sup> class onwards in all schools.

- **Worked with slow learners** A Special Educator on board, (as part of our other Asha CNJ project) at Kalanjiyam was leveraged in the school where we felt the most need, at Periya Venmani school – to spend one day identifying children with special needs. The process of assessment includes the following parameters: Cognition, name recall, comprehension, Gross skills – balance, coordination, fine motor, academic parameters, reading, writing and social skills and play skills. Totally 8 children were identified to have learning challenges/ or as special needs children.

The para teachers in the project schools then shadowed the Special educator when he was working with children in other schools (Asha CNJ schools) so that they can try to implement some of the simple ‘interventions’. While we able to some of the children, others required more efforts from the special educator. So we hope to bring this component into the program next year.

#### Other Activities conducted January and May 2015

- **Drawing competition:** Drawing classes were conducted in all project working schools. In order to test the children’s skills, a drawing competition was planned on this day. 2 students were selected from each of the schools. These students were from classes 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. Totally 24 students participated in the drawing competition. The students



participated with great enthusiasm and wanted to exhibit their drawing skills. First and second prizes and certificates and consolation prizes were given to students.

- **Motivational Classes for 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Students:** in order to help the student prepare for their board exams and instill confidence, motivations sessions were conducted in both Zameen Endathur and Thiruvadhoor Higher Secondary School. Two external resource persons were invited and they interacted with the students during specially scheduled sessions during school hours. The sessions focused on tips for studying for exam, handling fear of math, how to study lessons with understanding, general self-confidence, and breathing techniques for relaxation and motivation for each student.



- **Exam preparation:** Revisions of portions were conducted by para teachers for students in all the schools. The evening tuitions were also used for this and included various activities in order to improve the children's concentration and attention.

- **Life skills Workshop:** On May 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, a workshop was conducted for students who completed 12<sup>th</sup> standard from the project villages, largely (over 80%) going to Thiruvadhoor Higher Secondary School. 33 students participated in the workshop. The workshop covered various aspects of life-skills including, self-awareness,



leadership, communication, gender values, and thinking about one's assets, goal setting, career options and included sessions for each student to develop their resume. This workshop was very helpful to the students on planning for their next steps and choosing a satiation course of study in college.

- **Special Camp for Primary School Children**  
– Drawing, Arts and Crafts

In the month of May a one day summer camp activity was held at Kalanjiyam, and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> class students from Ariyanur, Chinna Venmani and Periya Venmani Schools participated in the camp.

- **Crushed Paper Art:** Crushed paper art involves crushing kite paper into small balls and pasting it onto a design sheet provided.
- **Blow Painting:** Children drop blobs of paint onto the paper and blow it out using a straw into innovative shapes and create their own pieces of art.
- **Thumb Printing:** Children created innovative pictures using thumb printing technique.
- **Magic Painting:** A technique to make white and other light colors visible on a white sheet, the children drew things of their choice and painted the sheet with black/dark blue to see the magic happen.
- **Spray Painting:** Children tried their hand at using this technique to make a scenery on their pages.
- **Folder Making:** In order to keep all their art work, the children were taught to make folders using thick chart papers (Paper Boards).

The children thoroughly enjoyed the camp and learned a great deal. IN the coming year, some of these activities will be incorporated into the drawing class and after school tuition activity.



- **Kitchen gardens in Periya Venmani and Chinna Venmani schools:** the kitchen garden in both schools continue to flourish with the active involvement/ engagement of students and school officials. IN both schools, vegetables are cultivated regularly and this is added to the noon meal.
- **Hygiene and Sanitation:** all three schools are supported with one sanitation worker each who cleans and maintains the sanitation facilities in the school. Clean drinking water provision has been given through Reverse Osmosis filtration systems; and water from these is collected in drums provided by Kalanjyam and stored in each class. The sanitation workers also maintain the school premises. This year, a special focus on hand washing behavior was taken up. Hand washing soap was provided to each school and the para teachers facilitated hand washing with soap before lunch and after toileting. Children's awareness on this issue was also focused upon whenever possible to bring positive changes in personal hygiene behaviors.
- **Other activities conducted through-out the year** (reported earlier):
  - **Breaking up students into groups:** To make it interesting for the children, this year we divided students in all the classes in primary schools into four groups, each represented by a color. To facilitate healthy competitive spirit, we have announced that the group with the best scored (based on regularity, academic performance and other) will be provided prize for all students in the group, at the end of the school year.
  - **Newspaper reading** habit is being encouraged. Each day Para teachers present recent / important news stories. Other general knowledge is also being imparted on a regular basis.
- **Engaging with girl students:** One of the needs identified by the para teachers is to begin addressing information needs/ vulnerabilities of girl students. So this year we have started to take efforts to gather girls (in 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>) at the community level to engage with them and start talking to them on their health, importance of education and any problems they are facing in school or at home. We are also conducting awareness programs regularly at Kalanjyam training center, on reproductive health,

## Project Expenditure

<b>ASHA-Stanford Rural School Strengthening Project Expenditure June 2014- May 2015</b>	
Drawing Master	55,000.00
Para teachers and computer teacher salary and welfare (4 para teachers and one computer teacher)	270,000.00
After school Tuition program	30,000.00
School Teachers for Thiruvadhoor School (3) continued from last year <sup>1</sup>	200,000.00
School teachers from Zameen Endathur High School (2) <sup>2</sup>	110,000.00
Notebooks for primary / middle school and study guides	34,830.00
Dictionaries for students from new incoming 6th students (300)	18,750.00
Summer camp for Students in May (cost of materials purchased for the camp) <sup>^</sup>	5,000.00
Life skills training for 12th Standard for Thiruvadhoor school students <sup>^</sup>	5,000.00
<b>Total expenditures</b>	<b>728,580.00</b>

<b>Total fund received for year 2014-15</b>	765,000.00
Balance carried over from 2013-14	<b>53,169.00</b>
<b>Total funds available for 2014-1</b>	818,169.00
Total Expenditure in 2014-15	728,580.00
<b>Balance in hand</b>	89,589.00

<sup>^</sup>The two shaded items were not planned, budgeted ahead of time; we considered these important activities to implement to add value and with the cost savings we were able to support part cost of these activities from the project funding.

<sup>1</sup> While we had budgeted for three teachers and we provided the cost for these, but the school has added more teacher and the additional amount was supported from School PTA funds.

<sup>2</sup> The two teachers in Zameen Endathur were identified from the local area and so they did not require the transportation allowance, so this amount was saved.

## Annexure:

The details of the 10 indicators are included in the table below.

Indicator	Description
<b>Regularity</b>	Number of times missed school in last month
<b>Cooperation</b>	Cooperates with teachers, students and parents and maintains cleanliness and does homework
<b>Understanding</b>	Able to understand instructions from teachers and follow them correctly
<b>Communication</b>	Responds to teachers and other students and able to express oneself in class
<b>Mental ability</b>	Able to read, write (Tamil and English alphabets), numbers and does basic math - appropriate for each class
<b>Activity</b>	Active participation and involvement in classroom
<b>Friendliness</b>	Interactions with other students and teachers in school; helpfulness and sharing behaviors
<b>Handwriting</b>	Able to write letters, words sentences, (age appropriate) with legibility, spacing, neatness, speed etc.
<b>Pronunciation</b>	Reading and speaking clearly, letters, words and sentences, fluency in reading
<b>Care of Belongings</b>	Takes care of personal belongings, without losing, responsibility and does not take other's belongings

Each of the above are scored on a scale of 1 to 5 according to the following criteria:

1 = Needs to improve; Absent at least once a week or never fulfills minimum criteria

2 = Average; Absent 3 times a month or occasionally fulfills minimum requirement

3 = Good; Absent 2 times a month or fulfills minimum requirements

4 = Very Good; Absent 1 time in a month or fulfills more than minimum requirements

5 = Excellent; Never absent in the month and always fulfills beyond minimum requirements

## Teachers at Thiruvadhoor Higher Secondary and Zameen Endathur High School



## Motivation session at Zameen Endathur High School



## Students at Zameen Endathur High School with Cycle after school



## Drawing master in Class



## Life Skills Workshop for 12<sup>th</sup> Students





**Summer camp for children in May**

