

Project Arogyam - Nutrition Support for Children
Proposal for 23-24
Mar 3rd 2023

Background:

Schools/Villages covered

Asha prefers to work with schools and villages on a long term basis. All the villages identified here are places that we have a long history with. We have typically need working with the schools in the village and also run mini-schools in the area. This gives us the ability to identify the children who really need this support and also for the relations with the vendors and the village leaders to execute such a project.

Here is some background on these villages.

Thozhudhavakkam, Thiruvallur Dist (from 2004) – 40 students

This is a hamlet in the Kaivandhur Panchayat. This hamlet is located in the water catchment area of the Poondi reservoir and is frequently flooded. The people who live here are mostly Irulars (most common tribal group in North Tamilnadu). The children from this hamlet go to the government school in Kuppammal Chathiram a school we have been supporting from 2004. Our Project Sangamam office is also in the neighbouring Ambedkar Nagar hamlet of the same Panchayat. We have been providing nutrition to the children from Feb 2021.

Our teacher at Kuppammal Chathiram, Deivanayagi, lives in Ambedkar Nagar and has been coming every evening at about 5:00 pm to Thozhudhavakkam. She brings nutrition from her home and distributes it to the children and also teaches them for an hour. Her husband, Srinivasan, who is also coordinator of our project Sangamam, also assists her in doing this.

Old Thirupatchur, Thiruvallur Dist (from 2015) – 60 students

We have been supporting the school with a computer teacher since 2015. We started providing a regular teacher for the school in 2018-19. A group of adi-dravidars come from a hamlet about 1.5 Kms to the school. There is also a brick kiln next to this place. Most of the people in this hamlet work in the brick kiln and there are also some migrant labourers (and their children) who are living inside the brick kiln itself. Together these children account for some 60% of the children at this school. We were running a mini-school there. Nutrition support was provided at this mini-school. We decided to continue the nutrition support at the school itself for all the children. Our teacher at this school, Tamilselvi, brings the cooked items from home and gives it to the children at around 11:00 am. On days when the school is closed she even travels to the village / brick kilns and distributes the food there!

Annanagar – Thiruvallur Dist (from 2017) – 80+ students

Even among the poor villages that we work with, this is probably the poorest. A couple of 100 families of Irulars live here in the banks of Kosasthalayar. It is part of the Thirukandalam Panchayat but it some 1.5 Kms from Thirukandalam with just a mud road leading to their hamlet. Asha has constructed a library in the school premises which we have access to operate. We were running a mini-school here. There is huge absenteeism among children even before Corona and this is where we first started noticing how the children start getting very restless around lunch time as they have mostly not had lunch. Through our appeal to Hyundai Glovis, they engaged Sevalaya to do some improvements to the village and also run a program to provide breakfast to the children. During the pandemic all this stopped. We started providing nutrition to the primary school age children through our mini-school. We are now

continuing the same in the school. Our teacher at the school, Geetha, brings the cooked food to the school and distributes it to the children at around 11:00.

Vazhavandhan Kottai – Thiuvalur Dist (from 2014) – 40 students

This is a hamlet of Katchur panchayat. Even calling it a hamlet is too charitable. This is a place where some Irular families have been resettled by the government and given “group houses”. There are some 100 families living here in abysmal conditions. We have done flood relief here and also ran a mini-school here. One of our teachers who now lives in Seethanjeri, Vanitha, is willing to run a mini-school here as well as run the Arogyam project. The nutrition assistance will be provided in the evening for about 40 children.

Ariyapakkam – Thiuvalur Dist (from 2014) – 60 students

This is good school that we have been supporting for a while. The village itself is quite prosperous. But majority of the children here come from SC/ST hamlets in Ariyapakkam as well as Periyapalayam. We used to run the nutrition program at the mini-school in this village. Our teacher Thenmozhi is willing and interested in running the Arogyam program here.

Vembedu – Thiuvalur Dist (from 2022) – 50 students

Like Annanagar this is a remote completely tribal hamlet. Almost all the students in this remote school are Irulars. Our computer teacher at this school Narmadha Devi is interested in doing her bit to help this school. She is willing to come to this school every day to deliver the nutrition before heading to her school! We may find alternate arrangements as we progress with the implementation here.

Pudhur – Thiuvalur Dist (from 2014) – 20 students

We have worked off and on with this village for more than 10 years. We are also supporting 2 other schools in this same panchayat at Gandhigramam and Yelappanaidu Pettai. Our teacher from this village Nandhini is keen to run this program here. These children at the school are also mostly very poor and from SC/ST communities.

Gandhigramam – Thiuvalur Dist (from 2014) – 40 students

We have been working with this school for a number of years. We have done flood relief work here, built a toilet, Glovis built a garden for the children etc. This is also an entirely Irular remote hamlet. We will have to work with the school Ayaah and the HM to implement the program here.

Nedumbaram – Thiuvalur Dist (from 2022) – 40 students

This is a big village where many of our teachers (as many as 6) come from. However the school serves a poor hamlet and children often come to school without breakfast. One of our teachers Gomathi has expressed interest in implementing the nutrition program here. She is a computer teacher and goes to many schools. But she can provide the nutrition items to the school before going to her other schools.

Athikinaru – Thoothukudi Dist (from 2019) – 45 students

There is a middle school in this village. Asha has been supporting them with a computer teacher, renovation to their toilet etc. since 2019. The school HM worked with the villagers to allow us the use of a community wedding hall for our mini-school. The children coming to the mini-school were mostly from the marginalised Narikoravar community. We started providing them nutrition support. As they account for more than 50% of the school strength, we have been continuing this at the school. The head-mistress had taken ownership of this and is serving these children in the school during the break at 11:00. Note that the nutrition support at the school is just provided in a targeted manner to these Narikorava children.

Nagalapuram – Thoothukudi Dist (from 2011) – 30 students

This village has the school that has been supported for the longest time as part of Project Pearl. Our coordinator hails from this village and we also run a library from a building that belongs to the local temple. We were running a mini-

school in our own library. While there are also some well-off people in the village, most of the village is poor. While the dominant caste in this village are Devars, the people who benefit from our nutrition program are mostly people belonging to the Scheduled Caste Sakkiliyar community. We have continued this after the schools have reopened as well. The children were being served nutrition in the morning at our library before they go to school. About 30 children from the Sakkiliyar community who are very poor and orphans have been selected and provided this nutrition support.

Koovachipatti – Thirunelveli Dist (from 2019) – 50+ students

We have been supporting the primary school in this village from 2019-20. We were supporting the Kindergarten with 2 teachers from the village. Then as the pandemic closed the school, the two teachers started mini-schools at their own homes. As the pandemic receded, the school started functioning in a small way. Our teachers also started running the Kindergarten classes. Given the very young age of the children and also given the general state of poverty in the area, we have run Arugyam for the Kindergarten children. The 40 students coming to the Kindergarten have benefit from our nutrition program.

Panikkarkulam – Thoothukudi Dist (from 2014) – 45 students

This is a middle school with a strength of 90 where we have been working for a long time. We are also supporting the Balwadi in the village. About half the children from the school are very poor and can benefit from this program. Our teacher at the Balwadi here, Vaitheeswari, is interested in running the nutrition program here.

Govindhanpatti – Thoothukudi Dist (from 2014) – 40 students

This is one of best performing schools and our regular teacher Saraswathi Devi is going to this school. The school has a strength of 55 of which about 40 of them require this nutritional assistance. Our teacher Saraswathi Devi is keen to run the program here. She was running this program at the minischool in this same village.

Kumaragiri – Thoothukudi Dist (from 2014) – 40 students

This is a middle school with a strength of 70 that we have been supporting since 2019. The HM at this school, Mr. Thirupathy, was the HM at Nagalapuram which we had been supporting since before 2010! We have long history with the HM. Many of the children coming to the school are from very poor background and can benefit from our nutrition support. We are planning to use the help of the Ayah at the school to provide nutrition for about 40 of the 70 students.

Budget

The nutrition program aims to provide an additional nutritious snack or addition to their food and is not intended to provide them a whole meal. Towards this end we allotted only Rs 10 per child per day towards this and we were doing this for about 20 days a month on an average.

The Rs 10 also includes the cost of transportation of the material as well as the salary for a cook. We are providing cooked food at all the locations.

Here are the number of children and the cost of food for the full year.

SNo	Village	Number of children	Approx. Cost (no of children * 10 * 20 * 12)
Thiruvallur			
1	Old Thriupachur	60	1,44,000
2	Thozhudhuvakkam	40	96,000
3	Annanagar	80	1,92,000
4	Vazhavandhan Kottai (Katchur)	40	96,000
5	Ariyapakkam	60	1,44,000
6	Vembedu	50	1,20,000
7	Pudhur	20	48,000
8	Gandhigramam	40	96,000
9	Nedumbaram	40	96,000
Thoothukudi / Thirunelveli			
10	Athikinaru	45	1,08,000
11	Nagalapuram	30	72,000
12	Koovachipatti	55	1,32,000
13	Panikkarkulam	45	1,08,000
14	Govindanpatti	40	96,000

15	Kumaragiri	40	96,000
Other Costs			10,000
TOTAL			Rs 16,54,000 /-

Total Funds required for a year of nutrition supplements at these 15 villages: Rs 16.54 Lakhs.