

REWARD Trust

Irumbulichery, Tamil Nadu, India

A brief record of activities for the period April-2021 to March 2022

During the period April 2021 -March 2022, REWARD Trust activities included online teacher training activities during lock down and in person activities after the schools had reopened. The year was eventful with blows and breeze. The Trust lost its Founder President V. Sridhar. Following this to continue the activities seamlessly, the Managing committee was reorganised. Dr. Kalavathi was inducted as the New President. Two more members Mr. H. Rajeswaran, Senior Manager, INFOSYS and Ms. Megala RajanBabu, Biology Resource person were inducted as Trustees. REWARD Trust continues its journey with the vision of reaching the Rural, first generation, marginalised students in Govt. Schools.

Throughout the lock down period the teachers were given assignments and online classes so that they would be prepared to enable the children as and when the schools reopen. Teachers also worked on a Summer Project as usual. Once the schools reopened, a survey conducted by the Trust and the ground experience revealed the extent of learning gap imposed by the pandemic. The teachers had to quickly act along with the initiative from the state to address the learning gap.

Post pandemic also saw a big influx of students into Govt Schools. This has led to an acute demand for more teachers who had to be appointed quickly without losing the rigor of selection interviews. Amidst masks and sanitizers our primary teachers filled the class rooms with creative learning aids to bring back the attention of students. High and Higher secondary teachers indeed put in all their might in mitigating the gap and moving on to the prescribed syllabus. School visits by the trustees found the energy and enthusiasm of children to be back in school.

Interaction with experts always increases appreciation of areas beyond the chosen field of an individual. During this academic year too, as a usual practice a number of guest speakers, who are specialists in their fields, were invited to address the teachers both on line and in person as allowed by the circumstances.

Month wise presentation of activities:

April 2021: Teachers were given assignment in Physics under the topic Current Electricity. This was followed by a one-to-one telephonic viva-voce.

May 2021: A summer project work titled " COVID-19" was assigned to the teachers. Teachers divided in to 8 groups did their projects under various subtitles. Typical subtitles being: Protection from pandemic, effect of COVID on economy, effect of COVID on education, Vaccination and the kind of vaccines, approaching COVID through alternate medicines and so on. Teachers were instructed to carry on data collection with due care to safety and send a group wise write up.

June 2021: A zoom meeting with Dr. R. Sivaraman was organised. Dr. Sivaraman who has done extensive work on Music in ancient Tamil Nadu spoke about literature references to the tones and musical instruments that were in use then, quoting extensively from the Epic Silappathikaram. During this month an on-line interaction event between teachers and senior students doing

undergraduate and post graduate courses was organised so that teachers get an idea of what is currently covered in the courses. Students doing Cardio pulmonary perfusion technology, Naturopathy and Yoga, Speech and Language Pathology and Audiology and so on participated in the interaction sessions stretched out as a series.

July 2021: In addition to the interaction series that continued into this month, the teachers were engaged in activities to hone their skills further in English Language and also Mathematics by way of assignment activities and problem solving.

August 2021: A revision exercise where the teachers read all the material including prose, poetry and grammar in Tamil Language text for class VI was assigned and the teachers were examined to assess their proficiency. Teachers wrote an on line test. Problem solving exercises in thought provoking math problems were discussed. In addition teachers were suggested to read stories from Enid Blyton, Roald Dhal, Lewis Carroll and so on and present **a video recording of story- telling.** August also saw some teachers partially attending schools as lock down was relieved for a while. In some schools our teachers were asked to interact with students through Whatsapp.

September 2021: A revision of concepts in Mathematics covering number line, numbers rational , irrational and so on as per the syllabus in class VI, VII and VIII was taken up. During this month REWARD Trust engaged in a data collection activity to assess community response on COVID and its effect in the villages where REWARD Trust functions. A questionnaire was circulated to parents, teachers and students . Analysis of result clearly revealed that there was almost no education for rural children for the entire lock down period. TV transmission by the state was watched by some or a maximum of one hour per day. Many children got engaged in doing house hold chores. This survey **laid bare the real situation on ground and the enormity of efforts required to address which might** take even two to three years of intense work.

October 2021: Activities during this month started with a math test for the teachers. Since many teachers had started attending schools, a Google meet was organised where all the teachers shared their experiences in the class room regarding reading skill, arithmetic skills, the learning gap as seen in the class and the creative efforts planned by teachers to address these problems. In addition for self study , all the teachers up to high school level teaching, were asked to focus and prepare on Social science at class VIII level . The higher secondary teachers were indicated specific portions in their syllabus and were extensively tested for their teaching proficiencies and problem solving. A special zoom lecture in **Math Teaching at primary and secondary level was given by Dr. Jayasree Subramanian, SRM University, Amaravathi,** specialised in Math and Math Education.

November 2021: With requisitions for more teachers pouring in from schools, school visits and conducting of interviews were scheduled during this month. Periodic on line interaction with teachers were held at random to learn about their difficulties, explore possibilities of assistance and assess their efforts . Weekly interaction with physics and chemistry teachers at Higher secondary level were carried out.

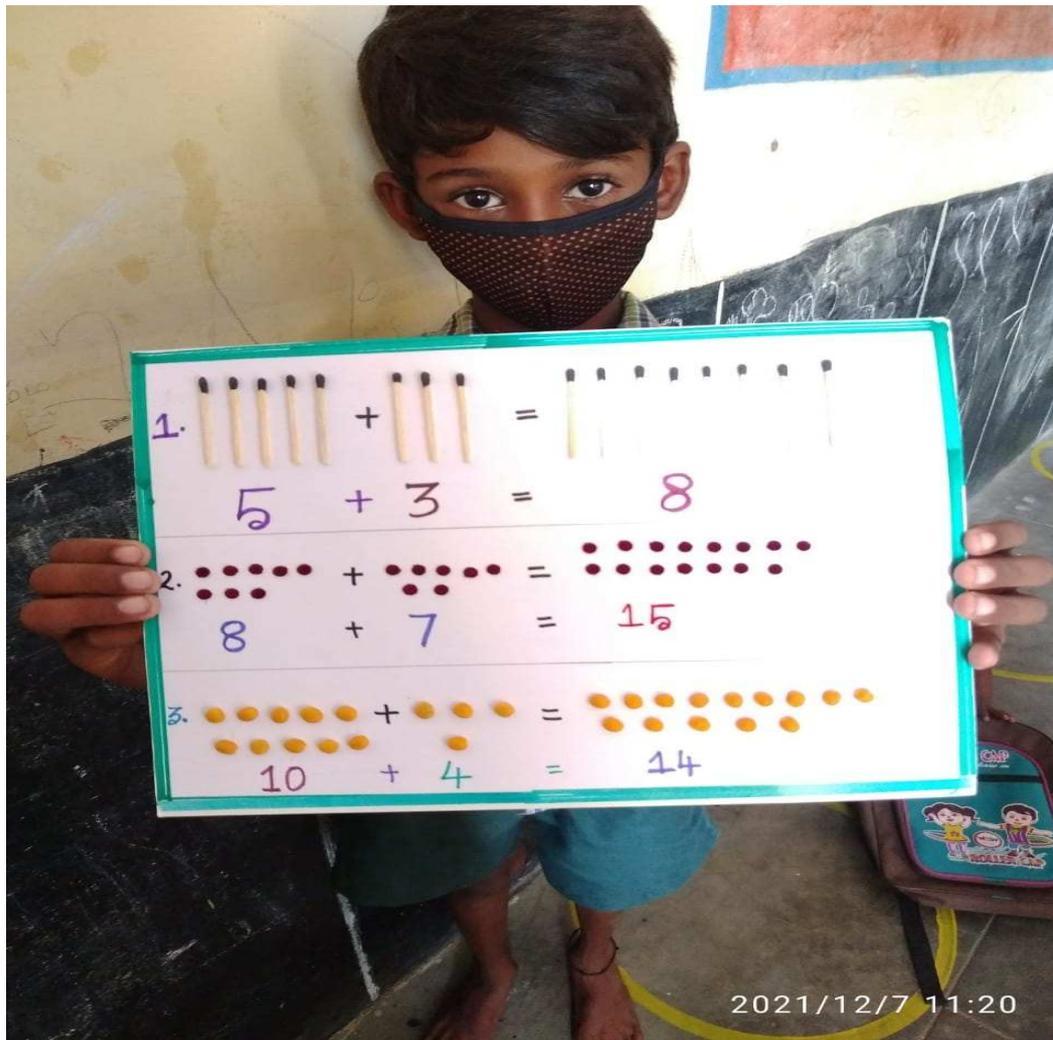
December 2021: In the absence of physical meeting on fourth Saturdays an online Google meet was scheduled and the primary teachers were asked to show the learning aids they had prepared and used in their class rooms. A few typical ones have been added at the end of the report.

January 2022: A revision self study activity in Biology syllabus for classes 5, 6, 7 and 8 was taken up. Teachers were given a test . A Google meet to discuss teaching methodologies at primary level for newly introduced English medium classes was held.

February 2022: This month saw our first in person teacher training session on fourth Saturday. Teachers presented their summer project work on COVID. Sri. Rajan Babu, Former Director (Technical) BHAVINI, Sri. R. Baskaran, Senior Scientist from IGCAR, Sri. Cheralathan Former Scientific Officer and a keen enthusiast of Homeopathic system, Prof. Satya Narayana, Central University Pondicherry were the judges who evaluated the presentations. Class Room observation of REWARD Trust Teachers at Nerumbur HSc School, Vittilapuram Middle School, Sooradimangalam Middle School was conducted. It was heartening to see the enthusiasm of the students in the class. All of them were happy to be back to school. Later, teaching methodologies adopted by these teachers were discussed at personal level.

March 2022: The teacher training program for this month had a notable guest. **Dr. Satya Kishnammal Jagannathan, Paediatrician** and daughter of freedom fighters Smt. Krishnammal Jagannanathan and Sri. Jagannathan shared her experiences and illustrated how some of the ordinary women in her life did extraordinary things. Later, the teachers were informed about the annual SMART test .

Revising addition for primary



Project Presentation on COVID



Title : What is COVID -spread, effect, history



Title : Vaccination, Plasma treatment, Effect of Age and Race factors