



Asha for Education™

Asha Florida, 300-9 J W Reitz Union P.O Box 118505, Gainesville, FL 32601

www.ashanet.org/uforida

EDUCATION PROJECT PROPOSAL 2022 – 23

of PAYIR TRUST submitted to Asha for Education U Florida Chapter

Organizational Details

Name of the Submitting Organization	: Payir Trust
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Introduction

Payir was founded in 2004 January by Senthilkumar Gopalan, an engineer who had worked in India and US in various industries ranging from Thermal Power Plants to Information Technology.

Vision: Payir envisages the transformation of Indian villages into a socially stimulating, self reliant, growth oriented community rooted in the principles of Truth - a society where people practice and interact with the highest moral values

Payir believes that the eventual ownership and implementation of ideas of holistic community development should come from and be owned by the community having its own set of leaders/experts. The existing learning environment does not provide scope for the development of such leaders/experts-leaders in local village governance; in areas of rural arts, crafts and culture; in local ecology; in traditional practices of farming, health and engineering; in local water bodies management and such areas of expertise which focuses on holistic rural empowerment and development. A customized learning center is an effort in line to nurture such leaders by working with a small set of children from their formative years.

The intervention program in existing government schools aims to introduce a number of systemic changes needed to increase the percentage of attendance at school around Thenur.

- By making school more engaging and activity oriented for students
- Creating the right environment in terms of infrastructure, social education to parents and community at large on shift on attitude towards inclusive and holistic education.



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Updates and Proposal for 2022-23

The initiatives have not changed significantly since 2021-22. With the pandemic *mostly* behind, regular work has commenced on learning initiatives, healthcare work, career guidance and watershed work.

Neighborhood Learning Center

- During covid, arrangements were made for students to engage for a few hours a day and in batches of 15 each. Now, the school intervention has resumed, with alternative teaching methods and supporting students who might be lagging behind. Payir teachers and other volunteers were trained to work with them, covering material from school books, providing worksheets, puzzles and engaging in craft work.
- The learning centers initially started at 3 villages, and have now expanded to 12 villages, engaging 320 students per day. The learning centers will continue into next year as well.
- Other than that, Evidyaloka classes also occur in the evenings. These classes teach Mathematics and Science subjects and in addition, during the holiday period, various classes on English, crafts, Science conducted over Skype for kids coming to the campus.
- After a long time, this January, across board, all salaries have been increased, now to a decently satisfying level. The starting pay now is INR 6,000 and the highest is INR 13,500 per month.

Supplementary Nutrition Program

Payir has been providing nutrition based ladoos to the 320 children at the neighborhood learning centers. This will continue into 2022-23 as well. Payir has focused on nutrition programs for over a decade and has collaborated with public authorities on this. Along with the efforts of many others, such programs are now being implemented on a larger scale as well by the government (see [related news snippet](#)).

Residential Children at Payir

Most of the children at the residential school went back to their homes when the lockdowns started in 2021, despite troubled backgrounds at home. But by January 2021, all 40 were back in the residential center. Payir has been taking care of them with food and studies and will continue this going forward. However, due to the stress of supporting all of them, older children who are nearing college years have been enrolled in hostels and Payir is also supporting them with fees. By this summer, 30-35 students up to 8th grade are expected to be in the residential school.

Career Guidance Program

With schools being closed and the college admissions being hazy, Payir has been offering career guidance and support to around 100 students seeking to go to college, and supporting over half of them with college fees as well.

- Payir started working for the 10th grade in 2010 coaching for 12th as well. When a few students still couldn't get into good colleges, there was a question if they needed to work in higher education. Over time, this yielded results. For example, one student from 2015, Kannan, who got good marks, is now a research assistant at IITM and MTech at IITM.



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- Govt schools in Thenur started 11th, 12th grade 5 years ago. Senthil was concerned in diving into career guidance because he didn't want to give false hopes. But many volunteers chipped in, they found out what students are good at, and found appropriate colleges. The effort is also costly -- one student can cost up to 50k per year. Each student coming through this program is supported fully.
- The main goal was to allow children to dream from 7th-8th grades towards college and higher education. In 2017, a friend called Arvind, who hails from a nearby village/college and Pacchaimuthu sir's classmate, offered to help out students. He works in Coimbatore, works at Oracle.
- For 12th std kids, they have 3-4 sessions a year. They are invited to Payir -- from all villages where Payir is active and from government schools. They obtain subjective info from the kids, and conduct an aptitude test objectively. Subsequently, they have 1:1 meetings with parents to inquire what is their affordability, where they are willing to send their child etc. Payir does not select students -- they are mostly marginalized. There is no merit based interview. The initial tests are conducted only to understand them better. They have mentors for each of the students -- 40+ working professionals in Trichy.
- Girls make up 60% of the students. Initially, parents were hesitant, but now the career guidance program has been renown so parents are comfortable.
- The degrees students usually pursue are social work, engineering, paramedical, pure sciences, arts. 1st year was skewed towards engineering, now split equally into arts and engineering, and some in nursing. Over the last 4-5 years, Payir has been speaking to colleges to allocate seats for its students. Examples are engineering seats in RFM Nagercoil, Trichy Bishop, St Josephs, Holy Cross, St Xaviers Paliangottai, affiliates of Loyola college, Madras School of Social. Colleges are happy to reserve seats. All students who have gone there, barring a few exceptions, have always performed well.

Watershed work

Thenur and surrounding villages have long suffered from droughts and efforts have been made for water conservation and management. Payir has continued to build a Yeri watershed (earthen bund). Bountiful rains last year and continuing into 2022, and with nearly 10000 trees planted and the restoration work of Yeri Watersheds that was done for the past couple of years has resulted in the groundwater being recharged very well. Most wells are brimming with water, even during summer. Agriculture is in full swing. In 2022-23, the focus is on maintenance and engaging in other activities such as a Kitchen Drive.

A [CSR Proposal](#) has also been developed through which Payir aims to communicate their vision and achievements.



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Budget Time period: April '22 - Mar '23

Description	# children supported	Total Budget (INR)	Supported by Asha-UF (INR)
Working with residential child (Food and Nutrition has been included in this)	35	16,80,000	2,00,000
Neighborhood learning center	350	11,52,000	5,00,000
Watershed work		10,00,000	2,00,000
Career guidance program (predominant expenditure is college fees)	100	15,00,000	5,00,000
Total (INR)		53,32,000	14,00,000
Total (USD approx)		68,400	18,000

Details

Working with residential children

Particulars	Cost / Child / month	Total Cost for 35 children / month	Yearly Cost for 35 children
Teaching & Caretaker - 2 full time, 2 part time, resource people, 1 caretaker, 1 watchman	1,500	52,500	6,30,000
Learning Materials - Books, Notebooks, Teaching Aids, Play Materials	250	8,750	1,05,000
Health Care and Hygiene - Medical expenses, Toiletries, Personal consumable	250	8,750	1,05,000
Food and Nutrition: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Fruits and Snacks twice a day	2,000	70,000	8,40,000
Total	4,000	1,40,000	16,80,000



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Neighborhood learning center

Particulars	Unit Cost	Yearly Cost for 12 centers
Salary for teachers @ Rs. 8000 (average) x 12 centers	8,000	11,52,000
Total		11,52,000

Watershed work

Particulars	Yearly Cost
Desilting of Tank & Water-ways (Thenur and Adaikkampatti village)	5,00,000
Raising Nursery & Tree planting (Thenur, Nathakadu, T.Kalathur, Nakkasalem, Adaikkampatti, Siruvayalur, Mavilangai)	5,00,000
Total	10,00,000