



Thulir

A Center for Learning at Sittilingi Village

OVERVIEW
2022-23



BUDGET
2023-24



Prepared by Balaji in consultation with Project Partner

OVERVIEW- 2022-23



BACK TO SCHOOL

This was the first full year in the new campus of Thulir. It was also the first year since 2018-19, and there were gaps to be filled in. Missing two full years of schooling is quite significant for students in the age group of 3-10 years. During the year, **the teachers focused on students in the age group 8-10**, as they would be leaving soon to join other schools.



During the year, **56 full-time students and 2 special children** attended classes in the campus. The teachers **continued decentralised classes** in different villages. The attendance in these classes, held during evening and weekends, depend on various factors, reaching up to 30 students on some occasions. Tamil Nadu Government had introduced a similar program called *Illam Thedi Kalvi*. Thulir contributed to this program by providing inputs and training those volunteering for the program.

In addition, the festivals and other activities are open for students from all schools and also those who have passed out of the school. The sports meet is well participated.

ACTIVITIES DURING THE YEAR



Pictures from my site visit in January 2023

Being back on the campus is easily the best thing to happen during the year. Although the campus was inaugurated in January 2019, and classes began soon after that, students missed most of 2020-21 and 2021-22 due to the pandemic.

I visited Thulir between January 3-5, 2023, after almost 2 years. During the trip, I spent time attending the classes, watching rehearsals for their upcoming cultural program, meeting teachers, and having wide range of discussions with Anu. **My detailed report from the trip can be found [here](#).**

The regular updates from Thulir in form of newsletter/blog are usually rich in content and covers a wide range of activities - <http://www.thulir.org/wp/blog/>

RUN TO THULIR AND

The year saw some excitement around long distance running. Students and staff started participating in running events in Bangalore and other places with support from Bangalore-based Runners High.

In October 2022, Santhosh, Manikandan, and Kishen ran from Bangalore to Sittilingi over four days to raise funds for library building. Santhosh and Mani has raised funds for Thulir as a part of Team Asha in the past.

*Both Thulir and Runner's High had gone through immense challenges through COVID and the last few years had been difficult. At Runner's High getting the community back and reinstating the belief in what we do and who we are was of utmost need and at Thulir, helping the children come back to school for the joy of learning was the prime need of the hour. In both instances, the resilience of the community and the value system created as the foundation ensured we came out of the crisis **STRONGER TOGETHER!** For us at Runner's High, this run was truly a journey to the heart – showing who we are and what we are about!*

- Santhosh Padmanabhan



THE SITTLINGI RUN



The visit of Santhosh, Mani, and Kishen laid the foundations for the revival of Sittilingi Run. Although it was held before, it was suspended during the pandemic. After arriving at Sittilingi, the trio did another long run with some of the staff, students, and other members of the village.

The Sittilingi Run was a joint initiative between Thulir, Tribal Health Initiative, Sittilingi Organic Farmers Association, Porgai, and other members of the village Panchayat. The run happened on February 5, and I participated in the event.

The run was organised to bring the people from different villages together and promote awareness about keeping good health. All the teachers and students of Thulir were involved in the event, either as an organiser or volunteer, or participants.

You can read more about the run, and my own personal journey leading to the run here - <https://balaji.run/2023/03/31/the-sittilingi-run/>



CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

The Dining Hall, partly funded by Asha - Bangalore and Asha - Irvine chapters, was ready for the new academic year.

Thulir also **completed constructing staff quarters for one family within the campus.** The house was occupied by Kavya, who volunteers with Thulir, and Mallesh, who works with Porgai. Their son will be attending Thulir from next year.

The **foundation for the Library building** was laid during the year.



Foundation for Library

Thulir has obtained permission from Directorate of Town and Country Planning (DTCP) for building 8 class rooms. They are expected to be completed over the next 8 years. This was required for getting recognition. Funding for these projects were obtained separately.



New Dining Hall

UTILISATION OF BUDGET

| | Budget | Actuals | Explanation |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------------------------|
| Salaries | ₹ 13,64,400 | ₹ 13,64,400 | No change in staff during the year |
| Nutrition Expenses | ₹ 4,00,000 | ₹ 6,28,420 | See Note 1 |
| Resource Person Expenses | ₹ 60,000 | ₹ 45,570 | See Note 2 |
| Travel Expenses | ₹ 60,000 | ₹ 89,025 | See Note 3 |
| Telephone And Communication | ₹ 10,000 | ₹ 5,462 | |
| Vehicle Maintenance | ₹ 25,000 | ₹ 4,344 | See Note 3 |
| Teaching Materials | ₹ 45,000 | ₹ 38,194 | |
| | ₹ 19,64,400 | ₹ 21,75,415 | |

NOTES TO REALISATION OF BUDGET

1. Nutrition: Funding under this head is usually the 'balancing amount.' **Thulir follows a contributory kitchen model. Parents, teachers, and occasionally guests, can contribute whatever they can, either in cash or through their produce.** The inflation in food price this year has been significantly higher this year. Further, the rains have been unseasonal affecting the farming community in the village. Since expenditures are on the rise, an alternative way of funding is being considered.

2. Resource Persons' Expenses - The following people visited Thulir among many others:

- a. **Anil** and **Rekha** from Sahodaya School, Gaya, Bihar, came with 12 students for a week for interactions and sharing.
- b. **Vinod** from Marudam School came regularly to conduct nature walks, birdwatching walks and ecology classes.
- c. **Lakshmi**, a post graduate student in psychology, came twice to help Ambika work with children with development delays.
- d. **Dennis** from Delhi University taught western dances.
- e. **Dr. Christy** taught Bharathanatyam and Indian folk dances.
- f. **Manimaran** did a traditional Tamil folk dance and music workshop.
- g. **Mhaiiri Mcinnes**- taught Feldenkrais method of Awareness through Movement to children and teachers.
- h. **Abiksha** and **Shyam** from Gujarat taught many math and co-operation games.
- i. Five resource persons from the Barefoot Academy of Governance conducted two 3-day workshops for 30 participants from 4 alternative schools in Tamilnadu in November and February on the Constitution of India called 'Teachers for change' in Thulir. All our teachers participated in this.

NOTES TO REALISATION OF BUDGET

Further, they had over 30 guests for The Sittilingi Run. Thulir also organised the Tamil Nadu Alternative Network meeting which saw over 30 participants. **Anjana**, volunteer with Asha Bangalore visited Thulir with her family, and I visited twice during the year.

3. Travel Expenses and Vehicle maintenance

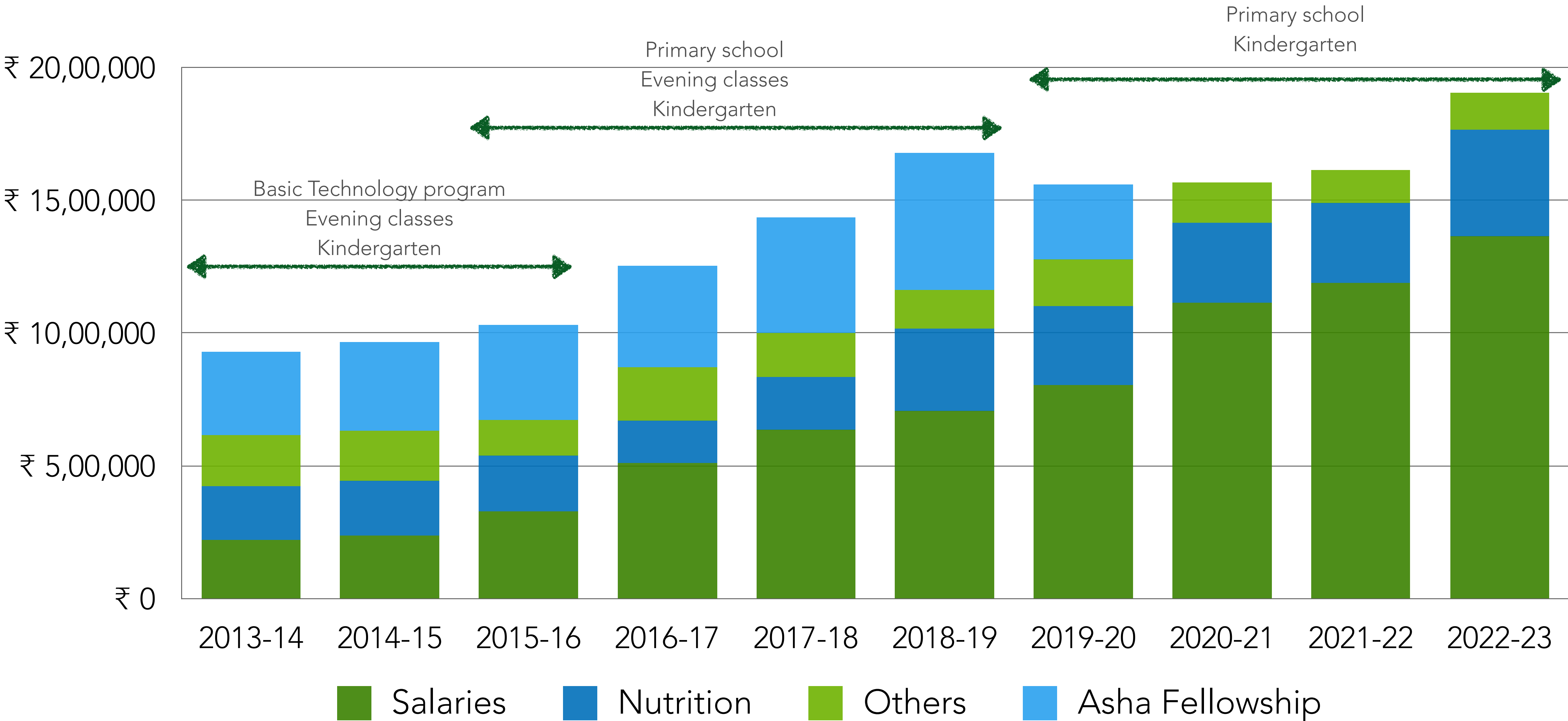
The budget earlier included expenses pertaining to a) Travel to village classes in Palakuttai b) Travel twice a week to take classes in government schools in Nammankadu and Palakuttai. c) Travel to Dharmapuri more than once or twice a week to government offices for obtaining approval from DTCP and education department. It was assumed that teachers would use Thulir's vehicle for travel. However, the teachers used their personal bikes for official work and claimed Rs.6 per km for official work and it proved to be mutually beneficial.

Other travel during the year includes children visiting Bangalore to participate in Anandayana and Bangalore Marathon. Teachers and children went to Marudam Farm School, Thiruvannamalai, for their craft week. Teachers went again to Marudam for teacher training. Teachers and students visited Senji Kottai (Gingee) and Sathanur for an exposure/ study trip.

2023-24

BUDGET

SUPPORT BY ASHA FOR EDUCATION



BUDGET 2023-24

| | 2023-24 | 2022-23 | Explanation |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|--|
| Salaries | ₹ 14,29,200 | ₹ 13,64,400 | See note 1 for break-up of salaries |
| Nutrition Expenses | ₹ 4,69,600 | ₹ 4,00,000 | See note 2 for details of expenses |
| Resource Person Expenses | ₹ 50,000 | ₹ 60,000 | |
| Travel Expenses | ₹ 70,000 | ₹ 60,000 | The budget is in anticipation of frequent visits to Chennai to meet officials for getting approval for the school. |
| Telephone And Communication | ₹ 6,000 | ₹ 10,000 | |
| Vehicle Maintenance | ₹ 10,000 | ₹ 25,000 | |
| Teaching Materials | ₹ 50,000 | ₹ 45,000 | |
| | ₹ 20,84,800 | ₹ 19,64,400 | ~6% Increase in the overall budget |

NOTE 1 - SALARIES OF TEACHERS

| | 2023-24 | 2022-23 | |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|--|
| Anuradha | ₹ 2,28,000 | ₹ 2,16,000 | <p>Thulir has decided to increase the salaries of all teachers equally by Rs. 1,300 per month. The salary of Ambika, who takes care of special children, is being paid by another donor who wish to engage in the project with Thulir for a considerable time.</p> <p>The philosophy or rationale behind the compensation and increments were provided by the Trustees in 2021 and can be found here.</p> <p>Short profiles of teachers can be found in the annexe to the report.</p> |
| Rajammal | ₹ 1,64,400 | ₹ 1,48,800 | |
| Archana | ₹ 1,44,000 | ₹ 1,26,000 | |
| Ravi | ₹ 1,54,800 | ₹ 1,39,200 | |
| Lakshmi | ₹ 1,29,600 | ₹ 1,14,000 | |
| Sasikala | ₹ 1,29,600 | ₹ 1,14,000 | |
| Ambika | | ₹ 90,000 | |
| Chitra | ₹ 1,29,600 | ₹ 1,14,000 | |
| Sindamani | ₹ 1,29,600 | ₹ 1,14,000 | |
| Jeevila | ₹ 1,11,600 | ₹ 96,000 | |
| Suresh | ₹ 1,08,000 | ₹ 92,400 | |
| | ₹ 14,29,200 | ₹ 13,64,400 | |

NOTES TO BUDGET

Note 2 - Nutrition Expenses

The Thulir kitchen is as old as Thulir and was an integral part of Thulir. The kitchen has evolved over the years - from catering to guests and preparing snacks for children to a full-fledged kitchen preparing lunches and snacks for children. The kitchen now employs two full time cooks. The funding from Asha Bangalore so-far was focused on sustaining it as an 'enterprise' to support the initiatives of Thulir. The kitchen was envisaged to be a self-supported kitchen with voluntary contributions - cash and kind - from children and parents. Given that many of the parents are small-time farmers, they are happy to contribute a small portion of produce for the kitchen. Few others contribute through fuel and their work. Starting this year, Asha Bangalore will support only specific expenditure heads. The break-up is as follows:

| | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| Salary of Cooks (two) | Rs. 26,300 per month | ₹ 3,15,600 |
| Teachers meals | Rs. 50 per day for 220 days | ₹ 1,10,000 |
| Teachers' snacks | Rs. 20 per day for 220 days | ₹ 44,000 |
| Total | | ₹ 4,69,600 |

NOTES TO BUDGET

Note 2 - Nutrition Expenses (cont.)

Currently, there are no indicators measured to see the efficacy of the nutrition program. The project partner have been advised to come up with indicators like BMI, other nourishment indicators, and health data regularly to monitor the program. In Sittilingi, the Tribal Health Initiative have been a running a health program for many covers which also covers most students. The program was briefly interrupted during COVID and in the process of getting resumed. Other health initiatives include:

1. **Preventive care** - A nurse from the hospital or occasionally a doctor comes once a month and talks to the children, shows flash cards or does some activity related to any topic in preventive health. Say, nutrition, dental hygiene, general hygiene, diarrhea etc.
2. **Height and weight** checked for children to be checked once a month. Every child has a notebook for this. The aim was to have one or two kids in each age group who are 'child doctors' who will monitor 1 and 2 in their class. The program will be reviewed during this year.
3. Every year, students undertake projects around 'food' as the theme.
4. The teachers of KG and class 1 check basic vision and hearing of each child too to pick up any developmental delays. When they have any doubts about any child they refer the child to the THI for detailed check ups.

Providing nutritional balanced meals and snacks provided in school aligns with the overall objectives of the Nutrition program.

ANNEX - PROFILES OF TEACHERS

ANURADHA



Anu 'chithi', as she is popularly called by the children, is the co-founder of Thulir. An architect by qualification, her interests in education supersede her interests in architecture and has been involved in teaching children for the past 25 years. She also practices architecture and was actively involved in designing the Thulir campus. She, along with her husband Krishna, were Asha Fellows for more than a decade and half, supported by Asha Princeton till 2020. They have been coming to Sittilingi from 1993, to design and help build the Tribal hospital here and shifted to Sittilingi in 2003 with their 2 sons.

RAJAMMAL



Rajammal hails from Moola Sittling. She has been with Thulir for over a decade now, first as a student in the evening program, then the Basic Technology program and now as a teacher. One of the first teachers for the school, she is now a graduate. Her son, Rishi, also studies in Thulir. She now has a baby daughter, Aradya who will soon join Thulir.

LAKSHMI



She was a student of Thulir in the evening classes. She has been trained in Thulir for the past 10 years. She has two children and both study in Thulir. She teaches the kindergarten children.

RAVI



Ravi joined Thulir in 2014 and has a B.Ed. Degree. His wife works as a nurse in the THI and they have two children - a son and daughter - and they study in Thulir. Ravi handles all matters relating to compliance with the government authorities.

ARCHANA



Archana, along with her husband Ram, moved to Sittilingi in late 2016. They have two daughters and both study in Thulir. She was earlier helping in the administration of the school on pro-bono basis. She now handles the accounts and administration, apart from teaching English.


ANNEX - PROFILES OF TEACHERS

SASIKALA

A portrait of a woman with dark hair, wearing a green and blue sari, looking directly at the camera.

She joined Thulir when her daughter joined the pre-school program. She teaches the kindergarten children. Her daughter finished 5 years in Thulir and has joined the local government school. Currently, her son is a student in Thulir.

SINDHAMANI

A portrait of a woman with dark hair, wearing a blue and white sari, looking directly at the camera.


Sindhamani - She is a graduate with B.Ed. qualifications. She joined in 2016. Her daughter studied for 5 years in Thulir and is now studying in Marudam Farm school, another alternative school in Thiruvannamalai. Her husband is part of the school construction team.

CHITRA

A portrait of a woman with dark hair, wearing a blue and pink sari, looking directly at the camera.

Chitra - She possesses a D.T.Ed. (Diploma in education). She was earlier working as a teacher in neighbouring village. Apart from teaching she manages the school kitchen. She has started learning to manage accounts and assisting the process.

SURESH

A portrait of a man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a blue polo shirt, smiling at the camera.

Suresh - Suresh hails from Palakkuttai village but has grown mostly outside, as his father worked with the Railways. He holds an M.A in English with a B.Ed degree. He helps in all the outreach programmes of Thulir.

JEEVILA

A portrait of a woman with dark hair, wearing a red and blue sari, looking directly at the camera.

Jeevila - Jeevila joined in 2019. She hails from S. Thathampatti, a dalit hamlet, about 15 Kms from the school. She is a graduate with B.Ed and worked at a private school in Kottapatti for sometime. Her two sons and one daughter study in Thulir.

Thank You



For more information, please visit

1. Project page in Asha for Education - <https://ashanet.org/project/?pid=967>
2. Thulir website - <http://www.thulir.org/>