

## Project Pearl - Proposal for academic year 2015-16

### Background

Thoothukudi district is in the south of TamilNadu and is one of the backward districts in terms of economic indicators, social progress and industrialization. It is also a notoriously dry district and agriculture is completely dependent on the monsoons. Some of the blocks in this district are rain-shadow regions and receive no more than 10-15 days of rains in a year. Livelihood options for the people here are quite limited and migration to urban areas in search of jobs is quite common. With respect to education, access to schools for the underprivileged children is not an issue, especially at the primary school level (classes 1-5) but the quality of education is quite suspect.

Asha Chennai started a project in three blocks of Thoothukudi district namely Ottapidaram, Vilathikulam and Kayathar during the 2008-09 academic year with the primary focus being improvement in quality of education. We identified government schools where the pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) was more than the government-mandated ratio of 40:1, visited them and interacted with the school teachers to understand the issues they were facing. It was fairly obvious that a lot of these schools needed additional teachers to help out with the teaching, to provide normal education to the students and for the smooth functioning of the schools. The following table gives a timeline of the various major events in the project over the last six years.

2009-10	The project was started with support for the schools at Melamanthai, Panikkar Kulam, Anandan Madan Patcheri and Nagalapuram. In August of 2009 we added support for Vilvamarathupatti. We also started two libraries at Nagalapuram and E. Velayudhapuram.
2010-11	We had discontinued support to two of these schools (Melamanthai PUPS and PanickarKulam PUPS) by the beginning of the academic year due to appointment of additional government teachers in them. We pulled out of Vilvamarathupatti during the academic year following an additional government teacher coming in and Asha Chennai teacher quitting simultaneously. We were unable to add more schools as the new DEEO did not grant us permission to.
2011-12	We discontinued support to the middle school at Anandan Madan Patcheri as Asha teacher Gopinath quit and we couldn't find a replacement due to lack of access and proper public transport to the village/school. Also, we decided to work in schools a bit closer together and decided to focus on Kayathar and neighbouring blocks only. After site visits and due diligence early in the school year, we added a teacher to and started supporting middle school at Vadakku Ilandha Kulam. This school was upgraded to a high school and hence was split into two schools - a primary with classes I-V and high school with classes VI-IX. We also opened a library in a smaller village called

	Suriyaminikkan, close to Vadakku Ilandha Kulam.
2012-13	The teacher we had appointed at Vadakku Ilandha Kulam got appointed as a government teacher and Vadakku Ilandha Kulam school got an additional government teacher posted there as well. We therefore discontinued our support for this school.
2013-14	In addition to the school and library at Nagalapuram we also decided to support the Balwadi there as it did not have any teachers. We also added support for the middle school at Vaagaithaavur.
2015-16	We started supporting the primary section of the school at Ayyanar Ootru by adding a teacher. Due to an increased teacher-student ratio at Vaagaithaavur PUPS, we dropped our support for that school and took up support for the feeder balwadi in that village.

We are currently supporting the schools at Nagalapuram and Ayyanar Ootru. We are running three community libraries at Nagalapuram, Suriyaminikkan and E. Velayudhapuram. We are also supporting balwadis at Nagalapuram at Vaagaithaavur.

During our last site visit, we visited an Adi Dravida Welfare (ADW) school campus at Thirumangalapurichi as the assistant HM there had been requesting Asha's support. Based on our assessment, we feel the school would be worth supporting. It also happens that the village president has been requesting us to open a community library similar to Nagalapuram. There are about 300 families in the village and it could be quite useful.

Due to political reasons at Panikkar Kulam, we were not able to appoint a teacher as proposed last year. The deadlock seems to continue and so we are removing the proposed support for the school this year.

Here are the details for the schools, balwadis and community libraries we propose to support this academic year.

### **Nagalapuram**

We have been supporting the school here since the beginning of the project. The school strength when as of June 2015 is about 125. There are three teachers for the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> standards and three teachers for classes 1 to 5. They also have English medium option available for classes 1 and 2. The school is doing well and we found the headmaster to be very motivated. The children from the school have been doing well at Chess competitions with training by our Asha teacher John Baul.

The Balwadi has 25 children and there are no government teachers since the teacher was shared between this Balwadi and that in a neighbouring village. Our teacher Pechiammal has been working at this Balwadi.

### **Vaagaitthaavur**

The balwadi at this village serves as the feeder Balwadi for the school. This Balwadi had not been functioning earlier and so we started supporting it last year. Because of this, parents have started sending their children to this Balwadi instead of the one in a neighbouring village. This also has led to an increase in enrollment in the school thereby strengthening it. The Balwadi has about 25 children being supported by our Asha teacher.

### **Ayyanar Ootru**

There is a high school and a primary school in the same campus. This makes for a good academic setting for the primary school which has 230 children and 7 government teachers. Class 4 also has English medium, and hence all classes from 1 to 4 have both English and Tamil mediums which makes it very challenging to manage with the existing teachers. We had appointed one teacher there but with a total of 9 classrooms and existing teachers, there is a shortage. Appointing a second Asha teacher would help our efforts. The Headmistress and other teachers at the school seemed motivated and also welcomed Asha's help.

### **Thirumangalakurichi**

This is an ADW school campus with both primary and high schools. The primary school had about 60 children and three teachers but the high school (classes VI-X) had 90 children and just three teachers including the HM. At the time of our visit, the school did not have any teacher for Maths and English, and the HM was desperate because the board exams for class X were coming up. The school would certainly benefit from Asha's involvement. Starting a community library in this village could also be beneficial.

# **Project Expense Report for the previous year 2014-15**

**{ To be added }**

## Project Proposal for the current year 2015-16

#	Work Description	Cost Details	Total Cost
<b>Ashs teachers' honorariums</b>			
1	Teachers at schools Ayyanar Ootru - 2 Thirumangalakurichi - 1	Average salary of Rs.5300 per teacher and festival bonus of Rs.3000  $3*5300*12 + 3*3000$	1,99,800
2	Honorarium for John Baul as teacher at Nagalapuram and coordinator for Project Pearl	Costs would include conveyance and mobile expenses. Once a week he will need to visit the other schools, Balwadis and libraries (except the one in E.Velayuthapuram)  $8000*12 + 3000$	99,000
3	Balwadi teachers Nagalapuram - 1 Vaagaithaavur - 1	Average salary of Rs.3100 per month and festival bonus of Rs.3000  $2*3100*12 + 2*3000$	80,400
<b>Sub Total</b>			<b>3,79,200</b>
<b>Educational and other requirements for schools</b>			
4	<b>Stationery items</b> - ABL Drawing bundles - Pens & Pencils - Dictionaries - World, India, Tamil Nadu and Thoothukudi maps	Average of Rs.100 per child for 500 students in three schools Nagalapuram - 125 students Ayyanar Ottru - 230 students Thirumangalakurichi - 150 students	50,000
5	Sports/games materials such as skipping ropes, chess boards, balls, etc	Rs.5000 per school for three schools	15,000
6	Trays to hold ABL materials	50 trays per school at Rs.60 for three schools	9,000
7	Mike-speakers set for Nagalapuram	Rs.15000 for the set; additional cost to be borne by the school	15,000
8	New/replacement mats for students to sit	25 mats per school at Rs.150 per mat for three schools	11,250
9	Annual day expenses	Rs.10000 per school for three schools	30,000
10	Water drums and fans	7 drums for Ayyanar Ootru, 3 drums at Nagalapuram at Rs.1800 per drum 2 fans at Rs.1500 per fan	21,000

		including labour 10*1800 + 2*1500	
11	Internet Connection at Nagalapuram School	Rs 400 per month	4,800
<b>Sub Total</b>			<b>1,56,050</b>
<b>Educational &amp; Other requirements (for Nagalapuram and Vaagai Thaavur Balwadis)</b>			
12	<b>Stationery items</b> Slate for children + slate writing sticks	Rs.50 per child for 50 children in two balwadis Nagalapuram - 25 children Vaagai Thavur - 25 children  50*50	2,500
13	Toys, mats, books for teachers	Rs.3000 per balwadi for 2 balwadis	6,000
14	Color dress for balwadi children	Rs.250 per child for two balwadis  250*50	12,500
<b>Sub Total</b>			<b>21,000</b>
<b>Community Libraries (at Nagalapuram, Suriyaminikkan, E.Velayudhapuram &amp; Thirumangalakurichi)</b>			
15	House rent for the four libraries	Rs.500 on average per month for four libraries  4*500*12	24,000
16	Honorarium for four librarians (educated, preferably from the same village)	Rs.900 per librarian + Rs 900 as festival bonus  4*900*12 + 4*900	46,800
17	Books, magazines and newspapers for four libraries	Rs.10000 per library	40,000
18	Book shelves, floor mats, chairs, lights, locks, brooms, charts, plant saplings, buckets/pots, drinking water table, Register/Catalogue books, Fire extinguisher buckets	Rs.2500 per library	10,000
<b>Sub Total</b>			<b>1,20,800</b>
<b>Miscellaneous expenses</b>			
19	Volunteer/Interns - site visit, field trips	Four trips a year	8,000
20	Admin expenses		10,000
21	Contingency		20,000
22	Materials for teaching English, Maths and Science	Includes materials from Ramanujan Centre	15,000
23	Teacher training expenses	Food during teacher meeting in Kayathar. Travel to Chennai and	15,000

	food during the travel.	
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>68,000</b>

**Grand Total - Rs. 7,45,050/- (Seven Lakhs Forty-five Thousand and Fifty)**