



Shanthimalai Trust & Shanthimalai Research and Development Trust

QUARTERLY REPORT

Oct - Dec 2024 (Q3)

Submitted by the Executive Committee, 10th February 2025

The report aims to give a brief but accurate overview of the developments and activities of each quarter of the Financial Year, for publication to interested readers of all kinds. For questions and suggestions please write to Mrs. Vijayalakshmi (vijayalakshmi@shanthimalai.in).

A. SHANTHIMALAI TRUST

Direct Help Programme

On December 1, 2024, Tiruvannamalai experienced the devastating impact of the Fengal Cyclone, bringing torrential rainfall and triggering a massive landslide on Arunachala Mountain. This tragic event claimed seven lives, including four children, and left many families in despair as their homes were destroyed or severely damaged. In response, Shanthimalai Trust stepped forward to provide critical support to 500 affected individuals. Hot meals were served for four days to those taking refuge in shelters, offering comfort and relief during their time of need. The total cost of this relief effort amounted to ₹1.7 lakhs, ensuring timely assistance to the community during this challenging period.



As part of our ongoing support for those impacted by the landslide, Shanthimalai Trust identified and assisted the 10 most severely affected families who lost their homes and belongings. To help them rebuild their daily lives, we provided essential cooking vessels valued at ₹1.5 lakhs, ensuring they had the necessary resources to prepare meals and restore a sense of normalcy amidst the chaos.

We provided essential support to the stone-maker community in Periyapaliyapattu village, where many families faced severe hardships. Groceries worth ₹50,000, including rice, dal, oil, and other necessities, were distributed to help them rebuild their lives during these challenging times.



SSA (Primary) School

On 3rd October 2024, an Open House meeting was held with parents to discuss the progress of their children in the First Term Test. The event saw 95% attendance, reflecting strong parental involvement in their children's education.

On 8th October, an awareness anime video about the POSCO Act was played during the Value Education class to educate students about child safety.

From 2nd to 12th October, Navaratri was celebrated with great enthusiasm. A beautifully decorated Golu, featuring various god idols, was arranged on the school campus, and pooja was performed daily during the celebration period. On 9th October, students visited Yogi Ram Surat Kumar Ashram as part of a Navaratri field trip to learn about the cultural and ethical values associated with the festival.

On 10th October, a workshop on career development and interpersonal skills was conducted for teachers at the SRM school campus. Vijayadasami, celebrated on 12th October, marked the admission of two new Junior KG students, making the occasion even more special.



Between 7th and 13th November, five students from Grade 5 actively participated in a handicraft workshop conducted at Marudham School, showcasing their creativity and artistic skills.



On 14th November, Children's Day was celebrated with various engaging activities, including a fancy dress competition, in honour of former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's birthday.



On 7th December, a Science Exhibition was organized to make scientific concepts more accessible and interactive for students. The exhibition saw active participation, with students enthusiastically presenting their projects.

During the Deepam Festival, three students from Grades 3 and 5 participated in a Bharatanatyam dance competition held at Arunachaleswar Temple and won prizes, bringing pride to the school.

On 24th December, Christmas was celebrated during the morning assembly with cultural activities that brought joy and festivity to the day.

Two workshops were held during this quarter to enhance skills among staff and students. The Maruthi Science and Math Lab team from Madurai conducted a session for Mathematics teachers, while Mrs. Eva from the School Development Team led a workshop to improve students' English reading and writing abilities.

This quarter was marked by activities that promoted academic excellence, cultural appreciation, and skill development among students and staff.

Yoga-Meditation Centre

This season has begun under the guidance of beloved Amma, and we have 85 friends participating in the meditation sessions. Friends in the community were pleased to see our efforts continue to benefit the needy.

During the quarter, heavy rains on December 2nd caused significant damage, including the collapse of two compound walls near the D-site and M-land areas close to Sivasakthi Guesthouse. Immediate repairs were undertaken to restore the walls and ensure safety. Additionally, several infrastructure upgrades were completed to improve living conditions. A new roof was constructed at the entrance of Sri Ram House, along with bedroom alterations and the addition of a new toilet.

Toilet modifications were also carried out at Sivasakthi Guesthouse to enhance functionality. In response to roof damage caused by the rain, damaged sheets were replaced at Upasana, Sadhana, Radha Krishna, and Arjuna Kitchen. Furthermore, weatherproof work was completed at Arunachala Unnamalai, Brindavan Sivasakthi Prasadam, and Milerappa House to protect these structures from future weather-related issues. These efforts demonstrate our ongoing commitment to maintaining and improving our facilities.

Skill Development (SSDP)

On October 6, 2024, at Sri Ramana Maharishi Matric Higher Secondary School, Kaveriyampoondi, Shanthimalai Skill Development Program held a sponsorship meeting for newly selected beneficiary students and their parents. Dr. Andreas and Dr. T. S. Sudha addressed the gathering, and agreements were signed by each parent. They emphasized the importance of students attending the Sunday Skill Development Program, which focuses on communication, computer skills, self-expression, and team building.

During the meeting, students and parents were briefed about post-school courses, potential colleges, career opportunities, and how the Shanthimalai Skill Development Program supports these endeavors.

The selection of beneficiaries was conducted in two phases. On October 12, 2024, shortlisted students attended personal interviews with their parents. Dr. Andreas, Dr. T. S. Sudha, and Mr. Ashok conducted the interviews, selecting 25 students in the first phase.



The second phase was held on October 17, 2024, at the SRDT Campus, Athiyandal. Dr. Andreas and Dr. T. S. Sudha conducted another round of interviews, selecting 29 out of 31 students.

A total of 54 students were selected, including 34 from Sri Ramana Maharishi Matric Higher Secondary School and 20 from other schools.

A computer skills assessment was conducted online on September 29, 2024, for SSDP students, followed by online feedback on the computer sessions.



Communication skills classes commenced on October 13, 2024, and continued every Sunday until the last week of January 2025.



Shanthimalai Environment Care (SEC)

Girivalam Seva (GVS): Over the last quarter, our Trust has continued its active involvement in the Girivalam Seva (GVS) initiative. In partnership with sanitary workers from the local village panchayats, our staff have been diligently maintaining cleanliness along the Girivalam Path. This ongoing effort plays a key role in ensuring the area remains pristine for both pilgrims and the surrounding community.

Environmental Training Program: A district-level workshop on the impact of solid waste management on climate change was held in Virudhunagar on 02-12-2024. Dr. M.P. Rajasekar, one of our trustees and Environmental Expert, served as the resource person for the event. He delivered an insightful lecture on the detrimental effects of indiscriminate disposal of solid waste and also emphasized the importance of proper segregation, collection, and processing of solid waste generated by urban local bodies, highlighting how these practices are crucial in mitigating the environmental impact and addressing climate change.



Integrated Farming System: Chrysanthemum flowers have been successfully planted on 0.40 acres of land, showcasing a vibrant mix of yellow, white, and violet colors. Since flower picking began in December 2024 and harvesting an average of 7 kg of flowers daily. The flowering season will continue until the end of February 2025, contributing to both the local environment and our ongoing agricultural efforts towards sustainability.



Green Earth Mission: A mini forestry has been established, featuring trees that represent each of the Zodiac signs and stars. In total, 108 native trees have been planted, creating a unique and symbolic collection. This initiative has been named "Indhu SraVan Woods," in honor of the sponsor of the tree plantation.



Eco-Friendly Natural Model House: The construction of the Sivakami House is approaching completion, featuring an innovative double-layered roofing system that effectively regulates indoor temperature. This design minimizes the need for air conditioning by optimizing natural air circulation, promoting energy efficiency. We expect to complete the final stages of the project by the end of February 2025, bringing us closer to delivering a real-world example of sustainable living. This project aligns with our ongoing commitment to environmental responsibility and enhancing community well-being.



B. SHANTHIMALAI RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT TRUST

SRM School

As part of extended learning, primary students visited the Golu display at Sri Ram Surat Kumar Ashram in Tiruvannamalai. During the trip, they sang slogans and listened to stories about the Navaratri festival. The children were excited and happy to share their experiences.

Vijayadasami Pooja was performed on 10th October 2024 to mark the conclusion of Navaratri. Students recited slokas during the pooja, and prasadam was distributed to all.



On 25th October 2024, KG students celebrated Blue Day. Both teachers and students dressed in blue, and classrooms were decorated with blue-themed objects. Activities were organized to highlight the importance of the color.



Thirteen students from Classes VI to VIII participated in a week-long handicrafts workshop held at Marudham Farm School from 7th to 14th November 2024. Accompanied by Mr. Manikandan, the students learned various crafts, including bead jewelry, paper basket making, palm leaf products, and basket weaving.



Children's Day was celebrated on 14th November 2024 with a variety of programs presented by teachers, including speeches, poetry recitations, dance, and songs. Students were delighted to see their teachers perform on stage.

On 22nd November 2024, a volunteer from Procter & Gamble conducted a Girls' Hygiene Awareness Program for 153 girls from Classes VI to XII. The session covered topics such as understanding the menstrual cycle, maintaining hygiene, and adopting a healthy diet.

A Science Model Presentation training session was held on 5th and 6th December 2024, where 32 students from Classes VI to XII were guided by educationists from the Agasthya Foundation, Bangalore. The training covered topics like the human body, light, air, and reflection through models and experiments. On 7th December, the trained students presented these models to their peers, staff, and parents. The activity boosted their confidence and learning.



Teacher training programs were conducted in December 2024. On 16th December, Mr. Armin, Ms. Eva, and Dr. Durai Ganesh facilitated a session for Shanthimalai teachers. Ms. Eva demonstrated a model Class IV English lesson and discussed key preparatory steps for effective teaching. Teachers identified their top challenges through a survey, which shaped the topics for future training. On 28th December, a session on motivating academically struggling students was held. Dr. Durai introduced intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, while Mr. Armin and Ms. Eva elaborated on key factors influencing motivation, including teacher behavior, content relevance, learning methods, and classroom environment. The afternoon session covered evaluation techniques based on Bloom's taxonomy, and subject groups developed blueprints and question papers for different grade levels.

On 24th December 2024, KG students celebrated Christmas. Students and teachers dressed in red and white and engaged in creative activities like fingerprinting and making Christmas trees using palm prints. The children enjoyed singing carols and rhymes.



A Term II Parent-Teacher Meeting was held on 31st December 2024, with 70% of parents attending. They met class teachers to discuss their children's progress and signed report cards. Principal Mrs. Rathna addressed the parents, highlighting initiatives like daily reading practice, handwriting improvement sessions, and a math diagnostic test to support students. She also shared the revision test schedule for Classes X, XI, and XII and announced that the annual sports meet would be held in the first week of January 2025. She mentioned plans for the 30th anniversary celebration of the school. Dr. Andreas delivered a speech on the importance of proper nutrition for children.

School Development Project

Joyful Learning

This quarter, the Joyful Learning Kindergarten project achieved significant milestones in enhancing the learning experience for children and empowering teachers, despite challenges such as teacher attrition and the need for curriculum standardization. Key accomplishments included curriculum development

initiatives, festive celebrations, creative learning activities, teacher training, and advancements in language teaching.



Joyful Learning continued to engage children effectively, demonstrating its positive impact on their learning and participation. Feedback from teachers during team meetings emphasized the importance of a standardized and structured curriculum with streamlined guiding tools. To address this, activity-based learning curriculums were explored. On 19th October 2024, a two-hour online demonstration of the DOT Learning Circles curriculum was conducted with the DOT development team at the Hybrid Office, SRDT. Attendees included all kindergarten teachers, Principal Mrs. Seethalakshmi, Academic Coordinator Mr. Balasubramaniyan of SSA School, and SRM KG teachers.



Teachers were also provided with a 15-day demo of the DOT application to evaluate its effectiveness. Feedback analysis is ongoing, and the management will decide whether to adopt DOT Learning Circles or explore alternative solutions. Efforts are underway to finalize a comprehensive curriculum framework through continuous brainstorming and testing.

Festivals and celebrations were integrated into learning activities, enriching children's cultural understanding and creative expression. Diwali was celebrated with art projects such as decorating diyas, group floral arrangements, and storytelling about Narakasura, fostering creativity and cultural knowledge. Christmas was marked with music, movement, and artistic activities like palm-print Christmas trees, collage work, and decorative painting, enhancing motor skills, focus, and creativity.



Teaching and learning support systems saw progress through guidance from Mrs. Kanimozhi, who emphasized activity-based learning principles referencing the IB Primary Years Program (PYP), anecdotal observation recording, and the use of library resources to deepen understanding of joyful learning. Balanced parent relationships were encouraged to support child development. Children showed strong engagement in English learning through songs, rhymes, and stories. A virtual induction session on Jolly Phonics was conducted by a certified trainer, and pre-primary teachers expressed interest in additional training to further develop their skills. Teachers also participated in a didactical demonstration training session, gaining hands-on experience with materials for

diverse learning needs. During the session, Mr. Armin suggested identifying further requirements during the Math materials demonstration.

Teacher attrition posed a significant challenge, with difficulties in recruiting skilled and committed candidates for activity-based teaching. To address this, potential candidates underwent classroom observation to evaluate their teaching aptitude and involvement before onboarding. Ongoing support and professional development opportunities were provided to retain and upskill current teachers.

Next steps include organizing a comprehensive training program on Phonics, enhancing recruitment strategies to attract talented educators, and strengthening teacher retention efforts to ensure continued progress in the Joyful Learning Kindergarten project.

3R/ABL Team

Learning and teaching were simplified for students struggling with reading and writing in both English and Tamil. Mathematics was taught using specially designed tools to develop the four basic mathematical skills. Self-learning, rapport-building among students, and peer group learning were prioritized and nurtured. For Activity-Based Learning (ABL), a specially designed assessment process was followed, combining oral and written tests.

Language and math skills were given priority in the ABL class, with the timetable implemented from October. Subjects like Science and Social Science continued to be taught in regular classes. By the end of December, the Activity-Based Teaching Committee (ABT) recommended that 9 out of 12 students transition back to their normal classes.

Plans are underway to explore integrating Activity-Based Learning into regular classes using the existing curriculum, enabling joyful learning students to continue ABL in Class 1 next year. From the upcoming academic year, Class 1 will transition to a purely activity-based learning model.



Sponsorship Programme

At the end of the 3rd quarter of 2024 the Sponsorship Program shows the following figures:

The final number of sponsor beneficiaries for the year 2024-25 is follows: from a total of 827 students (SSA, SRM and OUT) 394 (48%) receive educational support. (Full sponsorship: 223 and Aid to Education 171 students). Germany is supporting 153 students with full sponsorship and 48 students with Aid to Education.

On 1. September a meeting for all new Sponsor students and their parents was held to inform about the principles of our sponsorship program. On December 22nd the second parents meeting was conducted.



Student's food:

During this quarter altogether 15,327 students received lunch from our schools. From 142 children of our SSA school about 81% and from 617 children of our SRM school about 39% of children were eating our school food.

C. FINANCE REPORT Q3 (FY 24-25):

Income

A total income of 628 lakhs (406 L from foreign, 222 L local sources). Local income includes 131 lakhs of school fees which is only 45% of the expected income for this year. Schools are working with parents to improve their payment attitude (INR 1 lakh ~ 1,111 Euro).

Expenditure

With total expenses of 487 lakhs and a head count of 2086 beneficiaries, the current financial expense position is well within budget. There is a decline in the beneficiary numbers due to a drop in school strength and other programmes. This development is under scrutiny and shall be turned around as soon as possible.

Overview

	FY 21-22	FY 22-23	FY 23-24	FY 24-25 (Q1-Q3)
BENEFICIARIES	2453	2351	2207	2086
INCOME*	901	928	940	628
EXPENSES*	668	812	781	487
<i>*1 lakh INR ≈ 1,111€</i>				
