

# MADURAI SEED



*Annual Report*

2015-2016





Pandi Meena in a crafts session during Vasantham Summer Camp





# MADURAI SEED

**Annual Report 2015-16**

**MADURAI SEED is a non-profit organization to support and to empower the underprivileged children and young people, registered under Indian Trust Act.**

---



**Report by:** A.S. Karthikbharathi, M. Mansurali, V. Mariammal, V. Elavarasi, C. Arunkumar, K.MuthuPandi

---

Reg. off: Arjun Shanmuga Illam, 439/1, East Street, Karumbalai, Madurai – 625020,  
0452-2537670; 9442537670; maduraiseed1999@gmail.com, www.madurai-seed.org



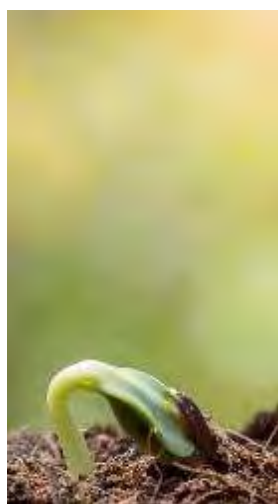
***We are grateful to you ... Thank you...***

- Dr. Melli Annamalai
- Dr. E. Annamalai
- Dr. Eveline Masilamani
- Dr. Laura Villiger
- Prof. John Potts
- Paola Pappone
- Mr. Martin
- Patricia Jegher
- Martina Frei
- Dr. Ursula Villiger
- Dr. Peter Fuchs
- Mrs. Eliane Suess
- Dr. Niklaus Schatzmann
- Sylvia Fust
- Clive Oxen Den
- Susanne Grossman
- Christina Latham
- Er.V.P. Parri Ganesan
- Mr.Karthik Natarajan
- Er. Vinoth
- Mr. Biju
- Mr. Muruges & Viji
- Asha- Boston, USA
- Asha Trust, India
- Friends of MADURAI SEED, Zurich
- Kantonsschule Freudenberg School Students & Staff
- Dalyan Foundation
- CESCO
- Vizhuthugal
- Friends of MADURAI SEED, India





**From a small seed  
a mighty trunk may grow**





## **Contents**

**Founder's talk**

**Beneficiaries list 2015-2016**

**Holistic Education Centers 01**

**Scholarship Program 10**

**Endowment Prizes 12**

**Library 19**

**Journals 21**

**Saving Schemes 22**

**Skills and Personality Development Programs 23**

**Club Activities 47**

**Volunteering & Internships 61**

**Site Visits 62**

**Participations 63**

**Vizhuthugal 64**

**Friends of Madurai Seed, India 65**

**In Medias 66**

**Finance Report 67**

**Conclusion 68**

**Added Readings 69**



## **Education**

**It gives inspiration, It gives opportunity,  
It gives hope, It makes change**





# From the Managing Trustee

## Dear Friends and Supporters

Vanakkam. Madurai Seed is rendering its services for the disadvantaged children and young people of Madurai for the past 17 years. This 17 years of journey was possible just because of you. We proudly present you our 9<sup>th</sup> annual report after the registration.

We strongly believe with education we can eradicate poverty. In 2015-16 Madurai Seed touched over 1000 children's lives with our direct and indirect initiatives.

In 2015-16, in our education centers 34 finished 10<sup>th</sup> std, 30 finished 12<sup>th</sup> std, 4 young people got placements in the final semester, 3 are going to pursue post-graduation. 90% of these students are the first members in their families to study higher secondary and college education.

Madurai Seed's role in educational and vocational guidance has a strong need in an area like Karumbalai for the higher education and college going aspirants.

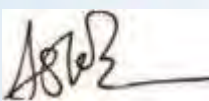
The skills and personality development activities prepare them to encounter the larger society with much confidence. Lack of exposures, and resources shouldn't be a problem for children and young people from a low income area for their development. They should also get equal opportunities. Yes, we are achieving that gradually. The growing number of higher education aspirants and their job profiles are the proofs.

Our unique functional style is "Children turning into Volunteers". The children who grew up in Madurai Seed come forward to do any kind of work to support the organization as volunteers during their college life. They also form an alumni association as an extension when they go for jobs. We are proud, some of the alumni have turned as donors and do other resource works to support the organization. This culture will cherish further.

I thank Asha-Boston chapter, Friends of Madurai Seed, KFR School, donors, advisors, friends, fellow trustees, staff and volunteers for their great support in bringing up the children and the young people to live up to their dreams.

Thanks for your continuous support and kind.

With love



**Karthik Bharathi A.S.**

15.04.2016

## OUR MISSION

To provide a supporting and a nurturing environment for socially, economically disadvantaged children and young people to discover and develop their mental abilities, to enrich their sense of self-esteem, to empower them with emotional stability, and to promote personal and social responsibilities.



MADURAI SEED is a grass-root level nonprofit organization founded in 1999, aims to promote underprivileged children and young people through education.

"Seed" refers to our belief that every child has great potential, when disadvantaged children and young people are supported with adequate resources and opportunities, just as a plant they grow and achieve great heights.

Madurai Seed is registered under Indian Trust's act in 2007.



## Program Overview



### Formal Education

Regular assistance for school subjects

Various Clubs for students

Support slow learners

English classes

Education and career guidance

### Skills & Personality Development

Seminars, Workshops, Trainings, Camps & Theatre

Financial literacy through Children Savings Bank

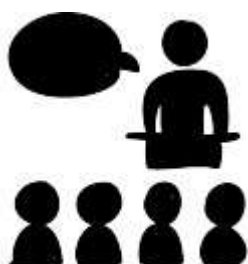
Exposure visits

Library & Journals

### Scholarship

Children from single parent family

Endowment Prizes for meritorious students



**Each one is different**

**Each one is special**



**Each one is beautiful**





## Direct Beneficiaries through Madurai Seed 2015-16

Beneficiaries	Activities	Male	Female	Total
<b>Children</b>	Holistic Education Centers, Sevalayam Hostel Program, Library, Club Activities, Skills and Personality Development Programs	301	107	<b>408</b>
<b>Young People</b>	Education Center, Library, Skills and Personality Development Programs, Club Activities	25	05	<b>30</b>
<b>Benefited Families</b>				<b>340</b>
<b>Children</b>	Scholarships, Endowment prizes, Study materials, stationaries	72	57	<b>129</b>
<b>Young People</b>	Scholarships	18	05	<b>23</b>
<b>Children</b>	Provided with interest money for saving			<b>135</b>
<b>Young People</b>	Rotational Fund			<b>30</b>
<b>Children</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> std admission	10	07	<b>17</b>
<b>Young People</b>	College Admission	17	03	<b>20</b>
<b>Benefited Areas</b>				<b>10</b>
<b>Benefited Schools</b>				<b>28</b>
<b>Community</b>	Providing children journals, providing young people journals, awareness programs, medical camp, cultural events, and public meetings.			





**“When ONE teaches, TWO learn”**





## MADURAI SEED Holistic Education Centers

**Background of the area:** The children are from underprivileged areas in Madurai like Karumbalai, SM Nagar, PT Colony, Indira Nagar, Kamala Nagar, Tallakulam, Managiri, and Mathichiyam. Parents of these children are daily wage earners like construction labors, painters, tricycle pullers, auto-drivers, scavengers, small vendors, women are also going to work, and they are mostly maid servants. Most of the men are addicted to alcohol. The parents haven't been to school. Children lack their parent's motivation in education.

**Background of the Children:** Children from the underprivileged areas are studying in government schools, and government aided schools. 2% of them are studying in private schools. Parents couldn't guide them in studies. The area is very populous. The houses are very small. They couldn't pay for private tuitions. The working parents don't have time to spend with their children. They aren't getting necessary caring from their parents. They also lack positive role models in their locale.

**What we do:** We provide them spaces for studying according to the age levels and opportunities which normally they couldn't get from their families and schools. Volunteers assist them with school works. The Special activities like library, saving bank, exposure visits, scholarships, endowment prizes, skills and personality development programs, and other co-curricular activities are there to enrich their leadership skills, creativity, aspiration, and communication, and to help molding their whole personality. Each center has been provided with necessary lights, fans, black boards, and audio/visual facility. The children look the center as a home away from home. The teaching volunteers are called as brothers and sisters. They sit with them and work more closely with each child and give necessary support.

### *List of benefited children through Education Centers*

Benefited Children	Age	Boys	Girls	Total
Vandugal Arangam	5 to 9	60	44	104
Vergal Arangam	10 to 13	62	42	104
Kanavugal Arangam	14 to 17	54	22	76
<b>Total</b>		<b>176</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>284</b>

## Vandugal Arangam 5 to 9 years old children

### Benefited children

Standard	Boys	Girls	Total
I	13	11	24
II	15	07	22
III	17	10	27
IV	15	16	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>104</b>

No. of teaching volunteers : 04

No. of activity volunteers : 02

Vandugal Arangam creates a joyful learning environment for the young children from 1st standard to 4th standard (between the ages 6 – 9 years). "Vandugal" in Tamil means "Children with joy and boundless freedom". Volunteers use various teaching aids, visuals, rhymes, and games to engage the children. Languages (Tamil, English) are given high importance in this center.



Std: I



Std: II



Std: III



Std: IV



## Vergal Arangam

10 to 13 years old children

### Benefited children

Standard	Boys	Girls	Total
V	18	09	27
VI	10	10	20
VII	21	10	31
VIII	13	13	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>104</b>

Number of teaching volunteers : 04

Number of activity volunteers : 02

This center is specifically meant for the children from 5th to 8th standards (10 years to 13 years). This center is named as Vergal (roots) to establish the significance of staying strong in the path of education. This is the period when a child develops low confidence about their learning skills. This center gives importance to Tamil, English and Maths. Slow learners are being supported by the volunteers individually.



Std: V



Std: VI



Std: VII



Std: VIII

## Kanavugal Arangam 14 to 17 years old children

Number of teaching volunteers : 06

Number of activity volunteers : 02

### Benefited children

Standard	Boys	Girls	Total
<b>IX</b>	20	04	24
<b>X</b>	06	06	12
<b>XI</b>	10	07	17
<b>XII</b>	18	05	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>76</b>

"Kanavugal" means dreams. This age group (14 years to 17 years) of children reach the the adolescent stage, who need proper guidance and counseling for their better future. They are studying from 9th std to 12th std. These are the classes where children often drop out. So, Kanavugal Arangam gives the students solid support to discover their dreams and reach higher education.



Std: IX



Std: X



Std: XI

### Details of First Generation Hr.Sec. Students

Std	Male	Female	Total
<b>XI</b>	04	04	<b>08</b>
<b>XII</b>	11	03	<b>14</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>22</b>



Std: XII

### Higher Secondary Students

Std	Bio Maths		Maths-Computer		Science		Commerce-Accountancy		Engineering		Total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
<b>XI</b>	02	02	00	01	01	02	05	02	02	00	<b>10</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>XII</b>	05	02	02	00	01	03	07	00	03	00	<b>18</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>04</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>01</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>00</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>40</b>



## 12<sup>th</sup> std Results 2015

- In March 2015 13 Boys + 2 Girls = 15 students wrote the 12th Std Exams.
- On 07.05.2015, the results were announced. All the 14 students have passed the exams. Among 11 are the first in their families finished 12th Std Level. 2 are from single parent family. B. Girija is the topper from Karumbalai center with 1010 marks out of 1200.
- The students have joined for Tamil, English, science, commerce and tourism courses in various colleges. 5 people have joined as volunteer in Madurai seed.
- 1 student who failed in the exam was given special coaching for supplementary exams.

No	Name	Marks scored	Percentage
1	B. Girija	1010	84.16%
2	A. Ramesh	951	79.25%
3	K. Anand	826	68.83%
4	M. Anand	766	63.83%
5	C. Chellammal	753	62.75%
6	D. Vigneshwaran	694	57.83%
7	A. James	655	54.58%
8	G. Selvakumar	643	53.58%
9	M. Ameer	616	51.3%
10	S. Vadivel	606	50.5%
11	G. Dinesh	606	50.5%
12	S. Vijayakumar	589	49.08%
13	I. Naveenkumar	557	46.41%
14	P. Rabinkumar	515	42.91%



**“See your goal, Understand the obstacles,**

**Create a plan, Clear your mind, Embrace the challenge,**

**Stay on task, Show the world you can do it.**

## 10<sup>th</sup> std Results 2015

- In March 2015, 26 students (19 Boys + 07 Girls) wrote the 10th Std Exams.
- On 21.05.2015 the results were announced. 23 children have passed the exam. Among them, 13 students are the first persons from their families finished high school Level. 2 students are from single parent family. 1 child is physical challenged.
- Those 3 students who failed wrote the supplementary exams.
- Everybody have joined for 11th Std, ITI, Polytechnic.
- Kowsalya has Scored Centum in Science and 99 marks in Math. Vijayalakshmi has scored 99 in Science and 99 in Social Science.
- All the students are pursuing 11th Std. They have joined in Bio-math, Pure Science and Commerce groups. Guidance was provided in selecting groups, and school admissions for them.

No	Name	Marks	Percentage
1	B. Kowsalya	478	95.6
2	A. Vijayalakshmi	441	88.2
3	M. Jiniya	414	82.8
4	M. Ramya	413	82.6
5	S. Meenakshi	383	76.6
6	G. Divya	379	75.8
7	D. Vindhya	376	75.2
8	M. Manikandan	365	73
9	G. Suresh	353	70.6
10	C. Karuppaiah	345	69
11	M. Selvaraj	335	67
12	A. Joyal	329	65.8
13	M. Arun	305	61
14	S. Kannan	296	59.2
15	A. Salman Khan	293	58.6
16	C. Kaleeswaran	274	54.8
17	S. Sivaraman	271	54.2
18	R. Subramani	271	54.2
19	M. Kartheepan	261	52.2
20	C. Namachivayam	253	50.6
21	M. Vasantha Kumar	238	47.6
22	R. Kalvirajan	222	44.4
23	C. Gurumoorthy	209	41.8



**Dreams**  
+  
**Work**  
=  
**Success**





## Sevalayam Hostel Program

Benefited age group : **10 to 17 years old**

Working hours : 7.00 to 8.30 PM weekdays

Number of teaching volunteers: 7

Standard	Boys
<b>VI</b>	40
<b>VII</b>	32
<b>VIII</b>	21
<b>IX</b>	23
<b>X</b>	32
<b>XI</b>	09
<b>XII</b>	08
<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>

Sevalayam is a free hostel for village children (boys) from poor economic and social background. The children are from 64 villages in 8 districts of TamilNadu. All the students are studying in a nearby corporation school. Many of them are single-parent children. Many of them are having problems in basic reading, writing abilities in both Tamil and English, and basic arithmetic skills. Volunteers are helping to improve their basic skills. 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> standard students are provided help in Math and English subjects.

### Sevalayam 12<sup>th</sup> results:



09 students wrote 12<sup>th</sup> examination. English and Math were concentrated more, as they find these subjects difficult to pass. Special classes, and revision exams were conducted regularly for the students. They were provided with exam tips and stationaries before the exam. 100% result. All students have passed the exam. 3 people scored above 70%. 2 people scored above 60% and 4 people scored above 50%.

### Sevalayam 10<sup>th</sup> results:



17 people wrote the 10<sup>th</sup> exam. Special classes were conducted for English and Math subjects. Many model exams were conducted. They were provided question banks, and stationaries for exam. Guidance about streams in 11<sup>th</sup> std was also given for them. 100 % result. All have passed their exam. 3 people scored above 80%. 8 scored above 70%. 6 scored above 55%.

## The dalgal Arangam



This team consists of college-going young people. Most of them were the erstwhile Madurai Seed children. They come to give back to the succeeding children the same "Madurai Seed Experience". They teach children at the education centers, and organize extra-curricular activities for them. They are also equipped with necessary educational, vocational guidance and personality development programs.

### Year-wise details

S.No	Year	Male	Female	Total
1	First Year	7	2	09
2	Second Year	8	2	10
3	Third Year	3	0	03
4	Fourth Year	3	1	04
5	Completed College	3	1	04
<b>Total</b>		<b>24</b>	<b>06</b>	<b>30</b>

### Specialization wise details

Degree	Specialization	Male	Female	Total
B.A	Tamil, English, Economics	6	2	8
B.Sc	Mathematics, Nursing, Tourism	3	1	4
B.Com	Commerce	5	2	7
BBA	Business Administration	1	0	1
B.E	Civil, ECE, Computer	4	1	5
B.Ed	Teacher Education	1	0	1
B.L	Law	1	0	1
Diploma	ECE, Mechanical	3	0	3
Total		24	06	30



### Some Highlights:

- Among the 30 young people, 21 are the first generation graduates; 4 are from single parent family.
- 26 young people are teaching children in the evenings.
- Most of them grew up in Madurai Seed from their childhood
- 7 young people are completing their graduation this year; among 6 are the first generation graduates.
- 2 people are going to do post-graduation

### Stories of Hope:

**Thilagavathi** joined in MADURAI SEED when she was 12 years old. Her father is an electrician. She had studied in a small government aided school. She had scored above 85% in 10th and 12<sup>th</sup> board exams. She was the first girl in Karumbalai to get a merit seat in Thiyagarajar Engineering College at Madurai. She studied electronics and communication. She is a first graduate. It is an important achievement and a success story to inspire women's education in an area like Karumbalai. She is now preparing for government exams.

**Manickaraj:** He also had scored above 90% in 10th and 12thstd. He studied computer engineering. He is a first graduate. He also got campus placement. He gratefully remembers the guidance given by MADURAI SEED during his higher secondary period.

**Ramki:** He had scored 85% in 12thstd. He got a merit seat and studied Civil Engineering. He is working as an admin in WellCare and preparing for government exams.

**Nagoor Raja:** He is a graduate in Tamil literature. He is helping his family with a good earning from abroad.

**Mathan:** He is a graduate in Tamil Literature. He has joined in Madurai Seed in his middle school. Now, he has completed three years of volunteering to Madurai Seed children. He has joined Masters in Folk Arts at Madurai Kamarai University.

**Muthaiya:** He is a graduate in Tamil Literature. He is working at Madurai Seed and has a plan for higher studies. He is a first graduate in his family.

**Suresh Kannan:** He scored 81% in 12thstd. He studied Diploma in Mechanical Engineering. He has got placement in a reputed company.

**All the above people are first graduates in their family.**

**They've rendered maximum 3 years to 2 years of volunteering at Madurai Seed**

**We are very happy they are moving on in life.**

## Scholarships



Even for the government and corporation school students, the start of educational year comes with more needs. The expenses raise when it comes for higher secondary and college education. The lack of economic support steals the fruitful experience of school and college life. Our scholarship scheme provides immense support for their dreams.

**KFR- Children Fund:** KFR, a school in Zurich, and MADURAI SEED have setup a scholarship program for orphan/semi orphan and for the most disadvantaged children and young people. Our Children are from various schools, and their fee structure differs. So, we fixed some amount for each class. We pay their fee partly. Further, we encourage their parents to take the responsibility and we promote children to save in our bank as much as possible.

**Endowment Prizes:** It aims to honor the high mark scorers of 10<sup>th</sup>std and 12<sup>th</sup> std. It is a small monetary award to appreciate their hard work in securing top marks and to support their further study. Another reason is the upcoming students are motivated to score high marks and taste fruits of success.

### Beneficiary Details

Arangam	Classes	Male	Female	Total
Vandugal Arangam	1 to 4	15	16	31
Vergal Arangam	5 to 8	17	19	36
Kanavugal Arangam	9 to 12	25	12	37
Endowment Prizes	Top Marks in 10 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup>	01	10	11
<b>Total Children</b>		<b>58</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>115</b>
Thedalgai Arangam	College Young People	18	03	21
Thedalgai Arangam	Coaching Classes	01	01	02
<b>Total Young People</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>04</b>	<b>23</b>



## Admissions:

- **11<sup>th</sup> std admission:** 23 children after the 10<sup>th</sup> std exam results, were provided support for applications, admission works, and study materials.
- **College admission:** 14 children after the 12<sup>th</sup> std exam results, were provided support for applications and admission process.
- **Coaching Class:** MuthuPandi and KarpagaSelvi were provided support for joining in bank exam coaching class.
- **Materials:** 30 students of 12<sup>th</sup> std were given exam materials on 04.03.2016.
- **Materials:** 34 students of 10<sup>th</sup> std were provided with exam materials on 15.03.2016.

## KFR Scholarship Distribution Program:

On 06.07.2015, Scholarship Distribution Program was held at Gandhi Museum. Children with their parents participated in the program. Trustees Karthik Bharathi, Mansurali, and Mariammal facilitated the program, and talked about the role of this scholarship, responsibilities of parents in their ward's education, importance of girl's education, etc. Director Elavarasi and Children Federation Leaders distributed the scholarships. Totally **125 children** and their parents took part in the program.



**Parents And Children At Scholarship Distribution Program**

## Endowment Prizes:

On 05.07.2015, Endowment prizes were given for the top scorers (2014-2015) of 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> std in three categories, based on Madurai Corporation level, Karumbalai level and for the achievers in Madurai Seed. Totally **11 children** were awarded with certificates and monetary prizes. The awardees and their parents were honored. Our trustees KarthikBharathi, Mansurali, and Mariammal, Advisors Muruges and Viji took part in the program and distributed the prizes. The toppers shared their feeling, their study habits for today's students.



### Details of Endowment Prize Awardees

<b>KFR Endowment Prize for toppers from Madurai Seed Corporation Schools</b>  Rathna 12 <sup>th</sup> std, 1143/1200  Visithra, 12 <sup>th</sup> std, 496/500	<b>Teacher Mariammal Endowment Prize for toppers from Karumbalai</b>  Pavithra, 12 <sup>th</sup> std, 1076/1200  Kowsalya, 10 <sup>th</sup> std, 478/500
<b>Mr.Krishnasamy Endowment Prize for toppers from Madurai Seed Centers</b>  Girija, 12 <sup>th</sup> std, 1010/1200  Kowsalya, 10 <sup>th</sup> std, 478/500	<b>KFR Endowment Prize for topper from Sevalayam Hostel Center</b>  Subramani, 10 <sup>th</sup> std, 447/500
<b>Madurai Seed Prizes for the achievement of 10<sup>th</sup> std students</b>  Vijaya Lakshmi ; 441/500; Social Science 99; Science 99  Kowsalya; 478/500; Science 100; Maths 99  Jiniya 414/500; Ramya 413/500	



## Education/ Career Guidance/ Counseling



Parents aren't aware to give proper guidance to their children. Schools stress on passing the grade and marks, but not what to do after that. It is where our works are very crucial to give them guidance on higher education streams, subjects, colleges, career options, entrance exam, application processes, etc. We talk to the children as well as parents.

**Educational New Year:** Schools were reopened on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June. Our young people provided sweets to the school going children at the six entrances of Karumbalai to encourage the parents and children.

**11<sup>th</sup> std Admission Guidance:** After the 10<sup>th</sup> std exam results, on 22.05.2015 a guidance meeting was conducted, essential support was given about various streams and subjects in 11<sup>th</sup> std, selection of schools, application process, etc.

**College Admission Guidance:** After the 12<sup>th</sup> std exam results, on 08.05.2015, students were guided through various undergraduate programs, colleges, application, professional course counseling procedures, employment choices for various subjects, etc.

**Exam tips:** 2015-16 batch tenth and twelfth standard students received tips regarding exams, paper presentation, dos and don'ts before exams, how to plan and utilize the study holidays, group study tips, revision tips, etc in the following dates 29.02.2016 and 12.03.2016.

**Parents meeting:** On 01.03.2016, a career guidance meeting was conducted for the students and parents of 12<sup>th</sup> std. Particularly parents of girl students were informed about job opportunities, and various government schemes for graduate girls.

**Guidance Meetings:** Students took part in the educational and career guidance program conducted by Dinakaran and The Hindu newspapers, listened to educators, and visited the stalls.



## English Classes:

English in schools is taught as another subject like Maths and Science, and not as a language. Children and young people find it difficult to communicate in English. They find it even more difficult when it comes to higher education and employment. English is even one of the reasons for children dropping out from the school. In Madurai Seed, we try to teach the language as a means of communication and emphasis on LSRW skills using various teaching aids, methods, classroom engagement, story books, AV materials, etc



**Elavarasi Karthik:** Her class aims to improve children and young people's communication and overall personality. She prepares them to express themselves whenever they get opportunities. She uses functional ways to develop their English language skills. Teaching and learning happens through activities. The classes incorporate worksheets, audio-video clips, stories, short films, group discussions, and games to enhance their communication skills, creativity, and values. Totally, 60 hours of classes were conducted.

**Mirjam Baechli,** internship student gave English classes for children and young people from July to August 2015. She taught them English grammar, vocabulary building through activities. Totally 19 hours of classes were conducted for children, 12 hours of classes were conducted for young people.

**Pascal Sporken** a teacher of English from Belgium volunteered children and young people. He imparted communication English through activities, worksheets and pictures. He portrayed the story "The peter and the Wolf" with music and beautiful narration. He taught the children grammar with OUP books. He taught music using Keyboard for the young people. He gave classes for 15 hours from 18.02.2016 to 06.03.2016.

**Keith Rossborough,** an ELT professional from Zurich gave a workshop on Teaching Strategies to our young people. Resources like AV aids and Cuisenaire rods were used. He introduced different ways to promote book reading habits among the children. The techniques and strategies he taught will guide our young people to get deeper subject knowledge and long-term learning too. He gave 10 hours of classes from 15.02.2016 to 28.02.2016.



## Teacher Training



These classes were conducted to equip our teaching volunteers to manage their classrooms effectively. We also shouldn't duplicate their school classrooms. We provide tools for volunteers to act creatively, to maintain emotional balance, to use multimedia and books.

**29.05.2015: Chart Preparation:** Director Elavarasi gave training on this topic. She illustrated some chart ideas for science and English lessons. Then the volunteers involved in preparing some materials.

**13.06.2015:** A meeting for the young people was organized to discuss curriculum plans for the children who lack basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills.

**04.07.2015:** A training on power point presentation was given by volunteer Prabhu.

**05.09.2015: Strategic Planning Workshop** was organized under the leadership of Director Elavarasi for MADURAI SEED volunteers at Aakash Hotel. They have discussed about the future activities and how to execute them this year. They designed a framework carrying various activities for children. As there were many young new teaching volunteers have joined this year, this served as an orientation to them. Everyone was assigned with specific roles and responsibilities. They also discussed about the needs of volunteers and development activities for them too.



**12.09.2015: Teaching Aids** training was given to the volunteers. Using the “Arvind Gupta-Toys from Trash” videos, volunteers made some teaching aids for their respective subjects.

**29.09.2015: Using Ipad:** There are thousands of learning and productivity apps available today in the smartphones. With the help of Ipad Director Elavarasi showed the volunteers how to make use of them.

**30, 31.01.2016: Learning Difficulties** workshop was facilitated by Mr. Andreas Gross from Switzerland. He emphasized supplementary education and teaching volunteer’s role in helping kids with learning difficulties. Many child-centric approaches were discussed. Role plays were enacted to understand the teaching and learning process. He also taught about organic farming and kitchen gardening methods.

**18, 19.02.2016: Teaching English:** Mr. Keith Rossborough from Switzerland, facilitated the workshop for the young people. He explored interactive teaching techniques. The workshop accentuated the kinesthetic learning using cuisenaire rods and ELT story books.



**Learning to teach.... Teaching to learn....**





## Survey on Basic Reading and Arithmetic:

A survey has been conducted for two weeks in the area of Karumbalai and surrounding Indira Nagar, S.M.Nagar and Sevalayam Hostel students to find the basic reading and arithmetic skills among children from 3<sup>rd</sup> std to 8<sup>th</sup> std. Total number of children covered in the survey is 309 including children who are coming to seed and other children in these areas. The results are shocking.



### At Karumbalai, S.M.Nagar, and Indira Nagar

Classes	Total Number of Children Given the test	Difficulty Reading a Paragraph From 2 <sup>nd</sup> std Tamil book
3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> std	111	55
6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> std	102	33
School Dropout	6	6

Classes	Total Number of Children Given the test	Difficulty doing basic arithmetic From 2 <sup>nd</sup> std book
3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> std	111	57
6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> std	102	40
School Dropout	6	6

### At Sevalayam Hostel

Total Children	Classes	From 2 <sup>nd</sup> std book
90	6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup>	14 couldn't read Tamil
		29 couldn't do arithmetic

This survey was conducted as a part of Lakhon Mein Ek campaign by Pratham and ASER. This shows a need of severe interventions in helping children at the same time taking preventive measures. A volunteer's meet was conducted to address the issue at our education centers. The children who lack basic reading and arithmetic skills were given special teaching by volunteers using flash cards, story cards, newspapers, worksheets, and teaching aids.



**We provide a fruitful, fun-filled, resourceful environment for children and young people to learn, to express, to work together, to share ideas, and to get hands on experience. These activities enrich them with knowledge and life skills across various subjects. They don't get such exposures in schools and families where our intervention finds a strong purpose and delivers favorable impact.**



## Reading

### Senthamizh Library



Books open the doors of creativity and imagination. We encourage children to become lovers of books. They don't have access to the world of books in their schools, apart from text books. Madurai Seed's library provides the opportunity to read extra on various titles, contributes to positive use of leisure time, and joyful learning.

**Number of books** : Above 4000

**Magazines Subscribed** : 13

**New Books Arrived** : Sakithya Academy won Tamil novels, Tamil modern short story books, Tamil language teaching audio visual materials and books for young children. Abroad volunteer Keith has sponsored English stories and grammar books.

**Library Functioning Time** : Weekends 10 AM to 12.00 PM, Weekdays 6.00PM to 9.00PM

**Librarian** : Volunteer Karthik is acting as a librarian. He is further assisted by children representatives Kowsalya 11<sup>th</sup>, Santhosh Kumar 8<sup>th</sup>, Suchithra 4<sup>th</sup> and volunteer James.



**Reading Gives You Wings**



### High Light Events:

**On 19.07.2015**, Students Girija, Vasanth, Vindhiya, and Vasim Khan introduced the books they've read to others. Melli Annamalai from Asha Boston was also presented during that occasion.

**On 08.08.2015**, Newspaper reading session was conducted. A whole month newspapers was brought, important articles were shorted by topics like education, environment, science, etc.

**On 01.09.2015**, Students from Vandugal and Vergal Arangam went to the Madurai Book Festival. Students visited almost all the stalls and some of them bought books.

**On 03.09.2015**, Students from Kanavugal Arangam and Young People visited the Madurai Book Festival and bought books.

**On 24.09.2015**: Tulika children's story books were read in groups. Volunteers read the books to children. Then everyone shared what they've read.



**Love Books, Love Life**

**Books make us better**



## Writing

### Journals



Children react upon something that they feel important and interesting through writing. They see, speak, and read many things; this activity helps them to experiment with writing. They see their creation on hand in the paper; they read again and again and rejoice.

**24.06.2015: 25<sup>th</sup> issues release** Puduyugam Children magazine's 25<sup>th</sup> issue was released by the Social Worker Ariara Velan, Rajesh and Meenakshi from Muthan Printers. The 25<sup>th</sup> issue comprised of children's stories, experiences, and excerpts from Madurai Seed's annual report. The 25 issues of Puduyugam magazines, and handwritten magazines, drawings were showcased as an expo.

**Creative Writing Sessions:** For Puduyugam Children Magazine and Pudiya Velichangal Youth Pamphlet, creative writing sessions were conducted by Elavarasi. Totally 10 hours of session were conducted on various weekends. Content for the journals were discussed. Children were stirred up to write their own experiences into stories. Writing prompts to kindle their imagination were given.

**About Puduyugam 26<sup>th</sup> issue:** This year's issue specialized on only girl children's writings. They have written about their ambitions, daily life, likes and dislikes, education for women, gender equality, women achievers, etc. We believe this special issue will bring much awareness to the girls, boys, and parents about the rights and responsibilities.

**About Pudiya Velichangal issue:** This year's Pudiya Velichangal issue emphasized on best movies released in the year. Cinema is playing a major part in the lives of every youth of Tamil Nadu direct or indirect. To create awareness about film appreciation and to take good values out of films, movie reviews written by our young people were published.



## Savings

**Thenkoodu Children Bank** promotes the saving habit in children from young age to take self-responsibility in educational expenses, and to help their parents. Children save their pocket money in the bank for one year. Registers, and bank pass books are managed by volunteers. When the new educational year starts, the savings of children are provided to children to manage their school expenses. We provide **20% interest** for their saving. It is an innovative initiative, getting a great response among children and parents year by year.

### Activities:

- On 02.06.2015, Accountant MuthuPandi gave training to the volunteers on how to maintain Thenkoodu bank registers, and pass books.
- On 10.06.2015, the savings of the previous year **2014-15**, were provided to children. Children saved Rs. 56,103 in the year. Special prizes were given to the maximum amount savers.

## Savings of 2015-16

### Arangam Wise Savings

Arangam	Classes	Amount
Vandugal Arangam	Classes 1 to 4	Rs. 25,252
Vergal Arangam	Classes 5 to 8	Rs. 20409
Kanavugal Arangam	Classes 9 to 12	Rs. 11673
<b>Total</b>		<b>Rs. 57340</b>
<b>Interest Amount Given</b>		<b>Rs. 8123</b>

### Children with Highest Savings

Name	Class	Amount
M.Ramya	XI	3300
M.Ranjani	VIII	2312
S.Sathish Kumar	IV	1360



### Classes with Highest Savings

Class	Amount
XI	Rs. 9548
VIII	Rs. 8641
IV	Rs. 5844

- The savings in 2015-16, will be distributed to children in the month of June 2016.

## Young People Saving Scheme

There are 30 members (25 male & 5 female). They are taking a small amount from their monthly stipend and put into the rotational fund of **Rs.3000**. Every month three people will be given each Rs.1000 from the collected amount. Thus all the 30 members will get Rs. 1000 in 10 months. No doubt that the amount is being very helpful to the young people for their educational expenses and pressing needs.



## Personality Development



The personality development programs raise the children and young people as confident, responsible, independent individuals. They learn important life skills that shapes their relationship with the society. They are able to think of their dreams for their future and learning necessary skills and values at present to achieve the dream.

25.07.2015: A.S. Karthikbharathi taught a life skills lesson from Aparajitha Thalir Thiran Thittam. Pesi Palagu – **Learn to Speak**, which helps to break stage fear, speaking etiquette, and body language. He demonstrated a model speech. Children were encouraged to come forward to speak,

23.08.2015: Elavarasi taught a life lesson from Aparajitha Thalir Thiran Thittam. **“Respect the relationships”** – how to maintain good relationship with friends, assertiveness, appreciating others, etc.

01.01.2016: **Prof. Prabhakar** gave the new year’s message. He talked on the importance of education, developing interest in different professions, turning the passion into life, life-long learning. He took stories of his students who came from humble backgrounds and now achieved great positions. Everyone was inspired by his speech.

02.01.2016: **Prof. Evanjeline Manoharan** talked on “Values”. He described how good values can take one to the great heights. Good values bring good thoughts, good actions, and good life. He emphasized on the important attributes that can give oneself satisfaction and the purpose of life.



Getting Inspiration from Prof. Prabhakar & Prof. Evanjeline

**Pecha Kucha 20×20:** On 04.01.2016, 20 PPT presentations were given by 20 people including



young people and children on various topics like Architectures of Madurai, Vaigai River, Famous places in Madurai, 20 popular people from Madurai, My childhood, My Karumbalai, My School, My College, My role model and also global issues like water management, superstitions and so on. Some of them shot their own pictures for presentation. They've

also explained about their presentation at the end, what inspired them, what are some problems they encountered, and how they solved them. They integrated their creativity and computer skills and gave engaging presentations.

**Creative Self-Expression Workshop:** This two days' workshop (25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> January 2016) at CESCI



stimulated the thoughts about mass-media, stereotypes, hobbies, taste for literature, appreciation of music, and the importance of expressing opinions and emotions. The camp utilized various means like mask making, icebreaking games, theatre activities, seminar, discussion, and reading session which made it very live. Prof. Prabhakar Vedamanickam and Kaleidoscope center team facilitated the workshop.



**You Are Your Personality**



## Leadership: Federations

The leaders and the representatives of federation and clubs are selected by election. Here children and young people as teams work together in planning and executing the activities. They divide roles and responsibilities among them. They ideate new initiatives, plan, and conduct various programs. They practice democracy and leadership in these groups.

<b>MADURAI SEED Children Federation (MSCF)</b>	Vasim Khan, Vindiya, Aadhavan	Presidents
	Vasanth, Jiniya	Kanavugal Arangam
	Jeeva Ganesh, Maha Lakshmi	Vergal Arangam
	Kaviyarasu, Keerthana	Vandugal Arangam
<b>MADURAI SEED Young People Federation (MSYF)</b>	Karpaga Selvi, Arun Kumar	Presidents
	Jensi Rani, Ananth	Representatives
<b>Senthamizh Library</b>	James	Thedalgai Arangam
	Kowsalya	Kanavugal Arangam
	Santhosh Kumar	Vergal Arangam
	Suchithra	Vandugal Arangam
<b>Puduyugam Children Journal</b>	Sharmila	Thedalgai Arangam
	Ramar	Kanavugal Arangam
	Deepak	Vergal Arangam
	Yoga Priya	Vandugal Arangam
<b>Thenkoodu Children Bank</b>	Karpaga Selvi	Thedalgai Arangam
	Srinath	Kanavugal Arangam
	Mahalakshmi	Vergal Arangam
	Karunakaran	Vandugal Arangam
<b>Vanmugil Cultural Club</b>	Madhan, Manipandi	Thedalgai Arangam
	Sathish Babu	Kanavugal Arangam
	Pakiyalakshmi	Vergal Arangam
	Priya	Vandugal Arangam
<b>Mutram Literature Club</b>	Muthaiya	Thedalgai Arangam
	Sakthivel	Kanavugal Arangam
	Hemalatha	Vergal Arangam
	Prasanna	Vandugal Arangam
<b>Galileo Science Club</b>	Muthu Ganesh	Thedalgai Arangam
	Muthu Lakhmi	Kanavugal Arangam
	Tamilselvan	Vergal Arangam
	Kaleeswari	Vandugal Arangam
<b>Aagaya Gangai Social Science Club</b>	Surya	Thedalgai Arangam
	Tamilselvi	Kanavugal Arangam
	Selvakamalesh	Vergal Arangam
	Manoranjani	Vandugal Arangam
<b>Suvadugal Sports Club</b>	Suresh Kannan, Manikandan	Thedalgai Arangam
	Premkumar	Kanavugal Arangam
	Priyadharshini	Vergal Arangam
	Karunya Didi	Vandugal Arangam
<b>Annai Medical Club</b>	Jensi Rani	Thedalgai Arangam
	Lakshmi	Kanavugal Arangam
	Swetha	Vergal Arangam
	Chithirai Selvam	Vandugal Arangam
<b>Young People Saving Scheme</b>	Vigneshwaran	Representative
<b>Young People Journal</b>	Karthik	Representative

## Vasantham Summer Camp



Vasantham Camp is the one big event, and most expecting event between children and young people of Madurai Seed. The Ninth Annual Summer Camp conducted in between 14<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015. It was such an excellent package of learning and fun together. The one-week camp combines life skills, arts, aesthetics, and nature. The first three days were conducted at Madurai Seed Vandugal Arangam. Another four days were spent in Kadamankulam village in Sirumalai.

### Objectives of the camp:

- To provide multi-faceted exposures to children and young people since they couldn't get opportunities in their schools and families.
- There are many "Summer Camp Packages" outside, but they are expensive.
- They've just finished a whole-year of school chores, they need a break.
- Learning is not only in books. Experiences, experiences, and experiences is the core concept.
- To instill the sense of appreciation towards arts and nature.
- To give them chance to work in teams without age or gender barriers.
- To make them responsible, and value bound fellows through direct and indirect camp programs.
- To find the skill, personality, interests of the children apart from the academics.



**Camp: Amalgamation of indoor and outdoor experiences**



### **Important features of the camp:**

- The participants aren't only performing the role of receiver. At times they are the organizers, there are the performers, and they are the speakers.
- There is a much freedom to express, to be happy, to have fun. We stress the freedom with responsibility. Everyone has their roles and responsibilities.
- Teamwork, care for each other, friendship and participation are much appreciated.
- Service in the form of any physical work, event management, care for children, knowledge support is encouraged in a great level among volunteers.
- The camp mood is preserved fresh until the last day. The tradition for years.
- The camp provides much memories, energy and rejuvenation towards the whole next year.
- Everyone is a star in the camp. Therefore, we observe no one is left behind. All are encouraged to participate.
- The participants are provided nutritious food, munches, and refreshment drinks.
- The knowledge part, skill part, character building part gets equal importance.



**Vasantham means Spring. Spring is joy. Spring is new energy. Spring is colorful. Spring is cultivation.**

**Vasantham Camp means the same.**

## Major Activities of Vasantham Summer Camp 2015

### Input Sessions

Self-Analysis  
Basic Etiquettes  
Self-Love  
Creative Thinking  
Self-Worth  
Problem Solving  
Goal Setting

### Art Sessions

Paper Quilling  
Cob House Construction  
Stone Painting  
Coconut Shell Painting  
Turban Styles  
Flower Crown Making  
Leaf Crown Making

### Nature

Talk with Village People  
Nature Walk  
Know the Plant  
Eat Healthy

### A Typical Day in Vasantham Camp

Exercises	physical work	today's plan
Prayer	Songs	input session
Games	Art session	games
Cultural night	feedback	next day's plan



Art is as natural as sunshine and as vital as nourishment



## First Day, 14.05.2015:



The first day there were about 80 children and 10 young people gathered in the Vandugal Arangam no need to tell about how much enthusiasm and eagerness floated in that place. Children were allotted into five teams. This year the inauguration marked significance by turning the participants as guests. Children who have attended maximum number of Vasantham Camp lighted the lamp

followed by a prayer song. The input session started at 10.30. Sam Devanand our special volunteer started with the life skill of the day "Self Analysis". He briefed about SWOT analysis. He encouraged everyone in penning their SWOT table.

Again, the input session started after the tea break. This time, Ms. Yoga Lakshmi an intern from the local college took up a session on "**basic etiquette**". She emphasized the importance of body language, dress code, cell phone etiquettes, and code of conduct in public places. She derived many examples from the day to day life of children, family and school context.



Game Session was conducted by Elavarasi. She conducted two new games. The games were played in the street both boys and girls. In an area such as Karumbalai girls aren't allowed to play in street and we broke the stigma. Before the arrival of children after lunch, back end works are done for the next session "Crafts". Today's craft activity was "paper quilling". The session was conducted by volunteer Prabhu. All teams were provided with necessary things and stationary. Prabhu has demonstrated some methods. He also showed some pictures for inspiration. Children started to explore their creativity and imagination in papers. They have created ornaments such as earrings, pendants, bracelets, greeting cards, paper flowers, etc. All the products were stunning. Another blind-fold game was conducted by Elavarasi.



The evening was started with a refreshing tea and snack. Then again two input sessions were conducted by Sam Devanand and Yoga Lakshmi on topics such as Self-Love and Problem Solving. Though it seems too much for one day, the participants didn't get tired. Another game was conducted by volunteer Ramki. Then the rest of the games, and activities were reserved for the upcoming days.

**15.05.2015, Second Day:** The second day falls around 9.30 am. Even before the children gathered early and collected their friends and team members in the street. One team read aloud the yesterday's report. Today children were provided with "green color caps painted with two eyes popping out looks perfectly like a frog. Our senior volunteers painted the caps yesterday.



Sam Anand today, took the topic "Self-Love". He engaged all the participants by interacting and prompting questions to them. He stressed the point self-love is different from selfishness. Then Mrs. Elavarasi conducted a blind folded game using balloons. After the tea, Ms. Yogalakshmi conducted the creativity session. She briefed about divergent thinking. Then she assigned each team to come up

with a two minute skit. No topics were provided to them. They were free to think and execute whatever they want. The teams enacted their skits some are comical and some has the social message. Karthikbharathi gave his insights to the skits both in the criteria of thinking process, concept and theatre skills. The session pitched importance of thinking out of the box, and confidence in expression.

There was a different kind of craft session waited for them after the lunch. No one really experienced in building a miniature house with clay. Each team was given a load of enough clay to build a house. Cob House is a trend in sustainable living. Years before our ancestors used to live in those types of houses. They are harmless to nature and less energy consuming. The concept of green campuses is widely spoken today.



Each team was assigned to build a miniature model house. The only rule was to use clay and natural things. As soon as they are provided clay and accommodated place in the street, they've started working immediately. Everyone was busy. They are not worried a little about their hands and cloths are getting muddy. Everyone was working towards the same goal "perfection". Every team did a wonderful job. Every house is different, none resembles a same type. Even one team built a double story home. All team decorated the walls with drawings, and stones. For roofing they used sticks and Palmyra leaves. The concept of cob house is perfectly consumed by them.





In the evening, Sam Devanand talked about "Self Worth". Yogalakshmi talked about conflict management. Both the input sessions used interactive activities and some games. Karthik anna provided the information regarding the Sirumalai trip. Everyone was happy and rushed home to pack.

**16.05.2015, Third Day:** The third day started with distributing colorful caps, hat, clown hat, cowboy hat, or scarfs to wear. They looked very colorful. Karthik anna



took the session on goal setting. He did that by explaining the SMART way of setting goals, and the differences between objectives, aim, goal. Finally everyone shared about their SMART ways of acheiveing their goals. After the session, Karthik anna make sure that everyone is ready for the trip.

Around 1.00PM everyone was ready for the travel. First a van departed from Karumbalai having all the bags of children, camp things, vessels and groceries like a mini kitchen on the van. With no bags and things to hold, very freely, holding each other hands everyone started to walk towards the bus stand. By taking 3 various buses, everyone safely reached the cottage at Sirumalai. The place was 1600 feet above from sea level. There were about 18 hair pin bends like a roller coaster ride, beautiful view points, everyone liked the bus ride. Everyone helped to accommodate the luggage and kitchen items. Furniture in the rooms was arranged in order to sleep. Then Karthik anna told about the rules and regulations to follow in the place. He advised volunteers to take care of every need of children. Children didn't get the chance to explore the place, since it became dark. So what, the next day when they wake up they would find the place like a heaven on earth.



**17.05.2015, Fourth Day:** The day started much early with chirps of birds, mist, and the ginger tea prepared by Velmani Akka, a perfect way to welcome the morning. It is time for physical work, Karthik anna explained about the plans for the day. Children were busy cleaning up the places, fetching water, arranging necessary things for today; some helped the arrangement of breakfast.



Then the exploration started. Everyone went inside the village; it is a small, humble village consisting barely 50 houses. Our children went to the village people and asked to send their children to the camp. Apart they had a nice conversation with the people about their family, occupation, life style, details about the village, etc. The village people gave nice hospitality to the children. Then the children started

to collect stones for the "stone painting session". Thus they explored the village inside out. It was so much fun collecting stones like treasure, yes the nature's treasure.



Today, children and young people made "leaf crown" and wore them. Every crown was unique, and an added value to their smiling faces. Today's input session is "Know the Mountain". Volunteer Arun explained about Sirumalai. It has a rich biodiversity. He also introduced the mythological background, important fauna and flora of the place. It is always important to know about

the place and its importance to our living. Thus he concluded the session with "respect and live along with nature". Karthik anna added his input to the session about indigenous people and politics of invasion in the name of money, industry, and tourism which presses the natives to the margin in the context of Sirumalai.

After the lunch, the game events continued. Then everyone went for a little Nature Walk. For many of the children and even young people it was their first time seeing coffee and pepper plant, jack fruit tree, and some of the vegetables in their actual plant and variety of flowers. The cultural night started inside the house, since there was raining outside. What else to



say fun, fun, and fun. It is so much happy to see some faces who are in fact "allergic to dance" came voluntarily to dance. After the dinner, everyone readied their bed. Is it important to say they all started sleeping?



**18.05.2015, Fifth Day:** The day started with the surprises for today. There were many plans discussed



in the backyard among Karthik anna and volunteers about today's activities and preparations. One of them is taking the children for bathing to the nearby farm. After the refreshing tea, the exercise session started. All of them did "Surya Namaskar". Volunteer Karpaga Selvi taught the warm-up exercises. Then the children went for mini-jogging led by volunteer Parvathi. Today's special is scarf styles. Everyone wore

their bath towels like scarf around neck, or head. Beautiful styles. Then everyone went for a small nature walk. Suddenly the place was covered by mist and slowly passed. It was an everlasting memory. We found a pond; we spotted a hummingbird and a kingfisher around the pond. The teams were assigned an activity to enact natural scenery. They have to give poses. The concepts they took were amazing like the rising sun, farming, genesis of a plant, human evolution, village festival. Then we've found a cement lane where farmers dry their crops. We sat around Karthik anna, he started a casual talk about the place, his conversations with local people, and he also asked how the children like this place. No need to say everyone shouted the same answer "love this". In the noon, everyone started the journey towards the farm where the arrangements for bathing was made. Not literally bathing, it was so much fun. The motor splashes water over them. Nobody wants to get out from the water. It was a truly different experience.



After the lunch, in groups everyone gather for the art session. Each group was provided with paints. Today is "Stone Painting Day". The stones they gathered on the other day in fact turned valuable artifacts. Every person came with at least one painted stone. The outcomes were breath taking. From birds, cars, human faces to abstract paints, the creativity of the children developed to a different

level. Everyone displayed their product in group. Then all of them were carefully packed for the post-camp expo. Velmani Akka prepared a delicious snack using the unripen jack fruit. It was a different dish nobody ever tasted before.

In today's cultural program, some of the young people from Sirumalai village joined. They acted as judges for children's dance program. Finally, they also gave a dance program. The day ended after so much of fun.

**19.05.2015, Sixth Day:** It is the day before the final day at Sirumalai. So, everyone wanted to make the



day unforgettable. The day started very early. Karthik anna added fun to the warm-up session. Everyone has the experience of dancing to songs, but exercises? This was the twist the leader should do exercises to the tunes of a melody song. The others should follow that. Along with warm-up exercises, the laughter therapy added today. It was fun to the sky. Today is turban style day. Turbans

were made by bed sheets. Then they went for walk around the village made photographs in front of the simple houses of people made primarily by wood and cob.

The art session started in the morning. Today's special is coconut shell painting. All were provided with the necessary things. Likewise the stone paintings, the coconut shells turned precious like ear rings, bangles, pen stand, a cat, abstract designs, faces, even angry birds to say some for example. What we understood is everyone has some level of creativity and a skill without any teaching, what we need to do is giving them the chances to express them.



Then everyone went to search of water spot for today's bath. We finally found one. People told not to step into the water since it was deep. Some volunteers helped to fetch the water in the pot. From the pot it was poured over the children from height like a water fall. Only the volunteers got into the pond and enjoyed.

The afternoon went musical. The basic of unit of music is sound. Every team was assigned to particular things like plate, hands, sticks, and even silver glasses as instruments to produce music. The coordination and rhythm of the music was expected, our children won't fail to provide the rustic instrumental music.





The preparations started early for the cultural night. Since it was the last cultural night it was planned as public show in front of the village leader's house where every villagers can come and enjoy. The lights and audio were set. The villagers assembled there one by one. There was 8 dances presented to the public included one by the village children and another by

village young people. The village people are overwhelmed by the cultural given by children. After the cultural the village young people took us to the beautiful spot. With torch lights, holding the shoulders and hand everyone assembled in that place. It is a viewpoint where we saw the entire city. The campfire was burned there. Everyone surrounded that and sang beautiful songs. It was such as memorable night, the coolest breeze, warmth of the camp fire. Everyone began to miss the camp. A stereotype yet the true feeling of the camp fire.



**20.05.2015, the final day:** It is the final day of the camp. The day started with the exercise session. The exercises were added with hand claps. Since we are departing around 12'noon, everyone is advised to pack their things. Today's special is flower crown making. Everyone plucked the local flowers and made beautiful crowns. Some wore the single flowers. Since, we are departing; the cottage owner Arasu

and care taker Moorthy were honored and thanked. Karthik anna told the story of how he found the place and how the camp went for him. Some children also



shared their feedback. Sirumalai part and art sessions were the highlights. Karthik anna told that we are going to be in touch with the place soon through a botanical visit. Everyone welcomed the idea. Then the children went into the village to say bye to the people. Then we had the breakfast and Sirumalai special jack fruit and banana. The van left the place carrying all the luggage and kitchen things. Ultimately,

everyone thanked the place, the Mother Nature for taking good care of them in these four days. The Camp will last forever in their minds as green as the Sirumalai forest.

## **CESCI Rural Camp:**

It was a three days' summer camp from 22.05.2015 to 25.05.2015 which aimed at teaching many new things to the students, learning several new ideas and ways of looking at things from them, giving encouragement and space for them to showcase their wonderful talents and use their creativity and finally enjoy at the summer camp before their schools reopen for the new session. The camp which spread across three days had well planned activities for the children on all the days. This year the camp was facilitated by Mr. Karthik Bharathi and Mrs. Elavarasi from MADURAI SEED organization, Madurai in collaboration with Ms. Chellathal, the village program coordinator from CESCI. The participants comprised of a few guest children from urban economically poor slums in Madurai where SEED organization works and children from villages around CESCI who are part of the village program. This created a holistic environment where children from the cities and the villages could interact and learn together. There were around 60 students who participated in this summer camp.





## Women Empowerment



There are gender biases rooted deeply in their families and society. Girls are denied lots of opportunities than the boys. Most of the girls often say "We'd like to play and visit more places". MADURAI SEED ensures they are getting all the chances like the boys to play, speak, learn and advocates the importance of their education with their parents.

**04.06.2015: Medical Camp:** Doctors met our adolescent girl children and checked their height, weight, asked about specific problems. They were given health advice and nutrition supplements.

**23.08.2015: Health & Hygiene:** Caretakers from Dhan Foundation spoke about puberty, diet, hygiene practices for adult girls. They explained about particular health problems and prevention tips. Iron supplements were provided to all.

**11.10.2015: Skype Interaction:** Dr. Melliya Annamalai and our girl children spoke over Skype. They interacted about eve-teasing, freedom, dreams, family, and education in Tamil Nadu.

**12.10.2015: International Girl Child's Day** was celebrated with Dhan Foundation members at Vandugal Arangam. Dance, speech, quotes of women leaders' highlighted the event.

**13.10.2015 to 22.10.2015: Women Empowerment Week** was celebrated during the Golu-Navratri days. Girls talked about various women leaders and their achievements, education, decision-making, self-reliance, etc.

**08.03.2016: International Women's Day:** A.S.KarthikBharathi talked about "Feminism", he quoted examples from our day to day life where women are denied rights and respect. He advised the boys to practice gender equality in their families.



## Hand Crafts Making



A wide range of learning happens when the little hands involve in creating crafty things. They get immense confidence when they are creating something. It is also fun, and a kind of vocational training. We make the platform for them to participate, create, and learn.

**05.08.2015: Wire Crafts:** Our students and volunteers made some wire bicycles and wire cars by exploring the book "Jojo's Wire Car" presented by Eveline Amma and Nola.

**08.08.2015: Wire Baskets:** Basket knitting class was given by volunteer Jensi Rani. Children made hand baskets using plastic wires.

**28.09.2015: Tower Building using Straws:** Students were set into five groups with a challenge to build Eiffel Tower using straws. This activity illustrates problem solving, planning, teamwork and co-operation.

**15.11.2015: Toy Workshop:** Madurai Seed students participated in the toy making workshop organized by Yellow Bag at Gandhi Museum and they made toys using waste materials. .

**26.12.2015: Origami:** They made 14 different models like crane, horse, dog, crown, cup, frog, twirling bird, and peacock by paper folding techniques. They were given Origami paper and instruction sheets.

**21.02.2016: Loom bands:** The activity was conducted by abroad volunteers Keith and Pascal, children learnt to make colorful loom bands. They've presented the bands to friends and family.





## Drawing



The presence of arts in a child's life has immense benefits. That's why we encourage them to unleash their creative potential through drawings.

**27.05.2015: Drawing Class** was conducted by Volunteer Vikki. Children were encouraged to imitate the day to day real objects in papers.

**27.08.2015: Amazing Nature:** Children participated in the interschool program - "Amazing Nature" at Lady Doak College. They showed their potential on doing Art from waste, Rangoli, Pencil sketch.

**01.10.2015: Pencil Drawing:** We experimented the portrait drawings. Some children and volunteers came forward as models and the others were tried to trace them on paper.

**27.11.2015: Art Expo** of Perumal Da, a renowned Madurai artist was conducted by Aravind Eye Hospital. Our children and young people visited the expo.

**20.12.2015: Art Training:** Children learnt and practiced the fundamentals in ART through Canvas-Art class conducted by Raine Foundation. They understood the different patterns of drawing and coloring.



## Cooking



Cooking is a life skill, and it is fun for the children. They divide tasks among them and work as a team for the best output. They also learn healthy eating habits. Most importantly, they learn cooking isn't a "girl thing".

**13.09.2015: Cooking Class** was conducted by Mrs. Velmani for children and young people. She prepared delicious rice items. Groceries were divided between groups. She gave instructions and supervised each group. Finally everyone had a healthy delicious plate.

**26.09.2015: Food Festival** This year food festival turned healthy too by selling traditional foods. 15 various dishes using millets, grains, pulses, and vegetables were prepared by children and sold in the street. The public were very much inspired by the idea of bringing back traditional foods. They gave their support by buying the foods. The profit gained from the food festival was spent in a local hostel where elementary school children from various underprivileged backgrounds are staying and studying.

**11.03.2016:** Madurai Nanbargal group conducted **Urupasi: Millet Food Festival**. Children took part in the program and listened to the seminars of various green warriors on the importance of traditional crops, organic farming, health benefits of millets, etc.





## Theatre



Theatre is a powerful educational tool. When they perform they get immense self-esteem, they feel a great sense of achievement. Every child has a job to do there, everyone's skill is utilized. Everyone works in their full form to achieve a similar goal. It transforms the whole personality. Children create their own world and communicate their ideas.

**20.08.2015:** Children witness the **puppet show** program conducted at Karumathur College.

**23.08.2015:** Children witnessed the historic play about "**Raja Raja Chola**". They have enjoyed the historic set, makeup, and properties. Later they conversed with the actors.

**23.09.2015:** Children and young people witnessed the post-modern Tamil play "**Manal Magudi**" at Karumathur College. They also listened to the play-writ MurugaBoobathy.

**01.11.2015:** Elavarasi conducted a **drama session**. Children were divided into groups, they've selected some short stories of famous writers and enacted.





**27.03.2016: World Theatre Day** was celebrated at Madurai Seed. Professor. Elango from the Department of English, The American College took part as the chief guest. The children acted 6 different types of plays. He encouraged the children and appreciated the positive aspects of each play.

**30<sup>th</sup>, 31.03.16: Performance at American College:** Children performed a lively play along with English department theatre event. The play was about women's rights, and voice against gender discrimination which was directed by Elavarasi. Their performance grabbed the attention of everyone and received the big rounds of applause.

**Theatre Classes:** Kaleidoscope Center for Arts and Culture facilitated 10 hours of theatre classes to the children between the months of **December to February**. Mr. Anand, Post Graduate in Tamil and a student of National School of Drama, Bangalore taught these classes. Theatre games, story-telling, role play activities were conducted. They've selected some stories and transferred into a play. They also added songs, music to them. One of such drama was staged during our Margazhi Utsav program.





## Story Telling



They feel a great sense of achievement when they tell stories and the stories are heard with great response. They may tell their own stories, or other stories with their own words. It improves their language skills, and imaginative thinking. Most important of all, storytelling is fun.

**29.04.2015: Story telling class** was conducted by the young people for students. Children were divided into groups. Each volunteer in the group told them the stories.

**24.12.2015: Stories with Music:** Stories were told accompanied by background music. The experience of storytelling and listening was elevated to a great experience along with music.

**20.03.2016: World Story Telling Day** was celebrated. Children and young people came up with stories. Some of them used background music; some of them enacted a role play. Some of them engaged the listeners in their stories; it gave a lot of confidence to the kids to stand before mike and showcasing their talent. Totally 12 stories were told. Finally the students who told stories in a moving and engaging way were given prizes.

**21.03.2016:** Children took part in the event conducted by "**Kalagala Vaguparai**"- teacher's group at Nandhanar Hostel as a part of world story telling day. The story tellers in the clown makeup told stories, conducted games. The stories were humorous as well as conveyed morals and values to the children.



## Field Trips



The children and young people can't get a chance to explore the places around. Madurai Seed thereby provides them chances to see various places and activities happening around them. The trips act as an extension of their classroom learning. We give priorities to the historical, cultural, and ecological important places and events.

26.06.2015	<b>Eco-Park Fun Evening:</b> Went to eco-park, played group games.
28.06.2015	<b>Kadavur Trekking:</b> walked through the Kadavur hills
11.07.2015	<b>Kadavur Cycling:</b> cycled from Karumbalai to Kadavur hills, cooked meals
28.07.2015	<b>Chatrapatti:</b> Children and young people had a fun day at the water way, played games. Children visited the agriculture lands, crops, farms and met farmers in the village Chatrapatti.
11.12.2015	
25.12.2015	
02.08.2015	<b>Seeing History:</b> Visited Meenakshi temple, and Thirumalai Nayak Palace
16.08.2015	<b>Keela Kuyil Kudi Jain Cave:</b> Visited stone carvings, scriptures and learnt the history of Jainism in Madurai.
30.08.2015	<b>Keeladi Archeological Excavation:</b> First set of children and young people visited the excavation site, and archeological treasures of the Pandya kingdom
06.09.2015	<b>Keeladi Archeological Excavation:</b> Second set of students visited the excavation site and saw the century old items.





27.09.2015	<b>Rameshwaram Education Trip:</b> Visited Central Fisheries Research Institute, played in shore, for many children it was their first train journey.
18.10.2015	<b>Muthupatti Jain Cave:</b> Visited jain sculptures, paintings, and old scriptures.
24.10.2015	Young people trekked the Palani Murugan hill. They went to the temple and learned about the myths and history.
24.10.2015	<b>Thanjavur Education Trip:</b> Visited the old temples, palace, and museum.
29.11.2015	<b>Varichiyur Jain Cave:</b> Visited old sculptures, paintings, and scriptures, knew about how Jainism hailed in Madurai in the old times.
24.12.2015	Visited the <b>exhibition</b> for children at Tamukkam grounds.
10.01.2016	<b>Madakulam Jain Cave:</b> A historic and ecological important place, with Jain monument and migrated birds.
15.01.2016	<b>Megamalai:</b> A refreshment trip to volunteers and staff.
14.02.2016	<b>Vikramangalam:</b> Children visited the Jain monument and learned about the history.
14.02.2016	<b>Kumbakarai:</b> Young people trekked over the hill and enjoyed the waterfall.
23.03.2016	<b>Alagarkoil Eco Visit:</b> Young people trekked the hill, watched birds and butterflies.
24.03.2016	<b>Puducherry:</b> Young people visited the Catamaran: Eco Center and their Green School Project.



### “Field Trips

**They open the senses as well as the soul”**

## Computer Training:



Volunteer Prabhu has conducted basic operations and MS Office classes for 2 hours in a weekend, and totally 46 hours of classes were conducted for young people and higher secondary students. Tamil Nadu government is giving laptops for college going students. So, it will be useful for them to learn how to make use of it effectively. The learning from the classes can be seen in other events like Pechakucha and Science Club activity.

## Film Screening



Film appreciation is a necessary of time. Instead of avoiding films, we should develop awareness, encourage critical view, and integrate that to learning. This activity helps them to identify good films, to develop aesthetic sense, to avoid hero worships and consumerism, and to develop taste for film making.

We screen important movies that are appropriate to children and young people. We take them to film festivals. We prefer children movies, animations, documentaries, movies on socio political issues, comedy, biopics, and short films. A small discussion will follow after every film.

### Highlight Events:

09.06.2015	Children and Parents watched the national award won, children film <b>"Kaaka Muttai"</b> , which discusses globalization, social stigma towards slum people, political play, etc.
24.09.2015	Young people saw the national award won movie <b>"Kutram Kadithal"</b> , which discusses the maladies of education system, sex education, punishment, emotional balance, etc.
14.11.2015	Kanavugal Arangam children watched films at <b>World Cinema Festival</b> organized by Yadhartha organization.
15.11.2015	<b>Charlie Chaplin Film Festival</b> organized at Madurai Kamaraj University
30.12.2015	Children and young people went to theatre and enjoyed <b>"Pasanga-2"</b> movie.



## Literature Club



Literature gives experience and pleasure. They visualize, recreate, and respond creatively. They begin to empathize with people, to appreciate diversity, they will spend quality time. Literature club introduces the taste of reading and listening to literatures, and takes them to literary meetings conducted in the city.

**14.04.2015:** Tamil **Debate program** was conducted at the East Street. The topic was Whether children have to respect children or the parents have to respect children. People enjoyed the speeches of children.

**13.08.2015:** **Poetry Reading** session was conducted. Volunteers came with the poems published in recent magazines that are suitable for children. After every poetry they've discussed the language and imageries.

**14.08.2015:** **Nonfiction**, the term and types were introduced to the children. They've also read some cultural, political, and travel related essays from newspapers and magazines.

**23.08.2015:** **Short stories** of Imayam, an acclaimed writer in Tamil were read from his book Manbaram. The stories related to farmers and agriculture were very useful to understand their life and culture.

**29.08.2015:** Karthikbharathi introduced poems of **Bharathi**, that are not so popular among the masses. These new poems were practiced as songs.

**28.11.2015:** A seminar on **Progressive Literature** was given by Karthikbharathi. He explained about Marxist, feminist writings. He also gave examples from some books, poems, and authors.

**29.11.2015:** Children and young people took part in the **"Art and Literature Night"** conducted by TamilNadu Progressive Literature Movement. Children and young people had a chance to see, and listen to the famous writers, actors, and social activists.



## Science Club



The science club kindles the sense of wonder. We are keen that the children shouldn't just memorize science for exams; rather understanding and application of the concepts are encouraged. It stimulates activity based learning.

**Skype Science Classes:** 10 hours of skype classes on Sundays between the months July to September were conducted. Hariharan Mani an engineer from USA conducted science classes through skype. He took concepts of electricity and nuclear physics and elaborated them with adequate examples, pragmatic aspect of the concept, and cleared the children's doubts.



**23.08.2015: Experimental Science Activities** were conducted under the guidance of Elavarasi. Some activities given in the science text books of children were exercised. In schools they just pass the activity pages, so we tried them at the education centers.



### **03.10. 2015: Basic Science Experiments:**

Students demonstrated various basic principles of Archimedes, Newton, Pascal. They also illustrated Lissajous figure and phenomena related to light. One of the teams showed some slides of human organ and the blood cell under the microscope.



**21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2015: Science of Sounds:** Students in 25 teams had done a great job in experimenting various sounds in front of our office, Vandugal and Vergal arangam. They created sounds of different animals, birds, musical instruments using papers, cups, stones, water, thread, balloon and day today objects. Students learnt the phenomena of sound, vibration, frequency, pitch, etc. They enjoyed a lot by asking questions and engaging themselves with their teammates!



**17.02.2016:** 54 children and volunteers got to observe the magnificence of moon and stars through telescope at The American College.

**28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> February 2016: National science day** "It is better to do than to hear a thousand times". To spark an interest in science and to inculcate scientific temper among children, we organized Science Carnival on 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> of Feb. IX & XI std young people presented science skits, seminars, working models of solar city, solar cooker, hydro-electricity, wind energy. Climate change and global warming were illustrated. Our young people prepared a video on "Polluted Vaigai River". Water pollution, and water crisis issues were discussed. Parents also visited the project models and appreciated.



**Science is the way of thinking: Imagine ...Invent...Inspire**

## Social Science Club



Social science club imparts the knowledge and awareness about history, civic rights and responsibilities, politics, social menaces, culture and heritage. It aims to raise children and young people with political and social awareness.

### Seminars

26.07.2015	<b>What is Economics?:</b> A Seminar conducted by volunteer MuthuPandi. He elaborated on reserve bank, GDP, and share market.
02.08.2015	<b>Freedom fighters of Tamil Nadu:</b> A presentation given by Karthikbharathi
06.09.2015	<b>Castes and Reservation:</b> A seminar given by Karthikbharathi
02.10.2015	<b>"Gandhi Today":</b> A seminar given by Karthikbharathi
23.01.2016	<b>"Map of India":</b> Learning to locate States, popular cities, rivers, and mountains
24.02.2016	<b>"Politics of Tamil Nadu":</b> A seminar given by Karthikbharathi
23.03.2016	Screening and Discussion on the documentary <b>"The invisible other"</b> caste in Tamil Cinema

### Visits:

<b>27.04.2015</b>	Witnessing culture specific Meenakshi temple festival
<b>20.05.2015</b>	Witnessing culture specific Chithirai Festival
<b>26.09.2015</b>	Witnessing Tallakulam Perumal temple float festival
<b>02.10.2015</b>	Visited Gandhi Museum on Gandhi's birth anniversary
<b>17.10.2015</b>	Witnessing Navarathri Kolu festival in Meenakshi temple
<b>13.12.2015</b>	Visited Tamil Nadu Tourism Exhibition at Sangam Hotel
<b>17.01.2016</b>	Visited Numismatic exhibition at Gandhi Museum
<b>24.01.2016</b>	Witnessing culture specific "Theppa Thiruvizha"
<b>01.02.2016</b>	Visited Government Chithrai Exhibition, various stalls of ministries





### Meetings:

16.08.2015	Young people took part in the meeting conducted by Evidence organization on <b>Human Rights</b> Violation on Dalit Women at Hotel Senthur.
29.08.2015	Took part in the <b>Protect Vaigai River</b> Campaign conducted by Dhan Foundation at the banks of Vaigai river.
12.09.2015	Children took part in the <b>"Madurai Sangamam"</b> fest and visited various stalls on Tamil culture, folk arts, crafts and enjoyed cultural performances and speech on Tamil heritage at Hotel Pillar.
13.09.2015	Girl children and volunteers participated in the Mukoodal <b>Women's conference</b> conducted by Dhan foundation, visited various stalls on women health, education, entrepreneurship, women's rights, etc at Tamukkam ground.
12.12.2015	Young people took part in the <b>conference against caste</b> discrimination and violence organized by Evidence at Gandhi Museum.
03.02.2016	Young people took part in the meeting conducted by Evidence organization on <b>"Caste in Higher Education Premises"</b> at Tamilnadu Theological Seminary.
04.02.2016	Young people took part in the felicitation program given to Human Rights Activist <b>Henry Tiben</b> for the Amnesty International Award at Tamilnadu Theological Seminary.



## Vanmugil Cultural Club

**Singing Classes** for the children has been conducted during the weekends. They are learning songs by themselves by sharpening listening and memory skills. Listening to songs and singing provide a great relief to their inner self. 15 songs sessions were conducted for 30 hours in the year 2015-16. They have learned Bharathiyar songs, environment awareness songs, folk songs, and other melodies. They are all provided a chance to sing, this gives great confidence to them about their voice. Elavarasi, and volunteer Karpagaselvi coordinated these singing classes.

**On 04.10.2015**, 30 children took part in the audio release program of Enga Madurai- a musical journey into the culture of Madurai. They listened to various songs about Madurai.

**On 24.01.2016**, Prof.Prabhakar, a multi-faceted personality visited Madurai Seed. He conversed with children, talked to them about their interests. He has identified the skill sets like singing, dancing, and theatre among children.

**Dance Classes** has been conducted during the afternoon of weekends. In 2015-16, 20 sessions were conducted for 40 hours. Children who've selected dance as their interest took part in these classes. 30 children were given dance practice for folk songs, patriotic songs, instrumental, and celebration specific songs. They've also learnt culture specific folk dance like oyillattam, thevatattam, silamba kolattam. Volunteers Surya, Madhan, and Anand coordinated these classes.

**Photography classes:** Madurai Seed has three cameras and a handy cam, using these resource young people were given photography classes. 25 volunteers were given training in rotation. They are also collating the photos into videos. Particularly Volunteers Muthuganesh, Vignesh, and Anand are taking good photographs.

- Volunteer Ramki and Elavarasi took part in the film making workshop conducted at CESCO.
- Some volunteers took their own pictures for PechaKucha presentation.
- "Vaigai Now" a video showcasing the pollution of vaigai river shot by volunteers. Other slideshows and photos are being uploaded in Facebook and YouTube.





## Medical Club



The medical club organizes various events like medical camps, seminars of doctors, awareness meetings in partner with various health care agencies.

**31.08.2015: Medical camp** for children was organized. Doctors from Madurai Ladies Circle examined the children. They checked the height, weight, and general growth. There was also a dentist presented examined the oral health of children. Parents also came and asked about their child's health. Doctors advised the parents on clean and hygiene practices, and healthy diet. They gave away vitamin supplements, and general OTC.

**03.10.2015: Anti Liquor** Awareness program was organized by Lion's club at Gandhi Museum. Our children and young people took part in the meeting and gained knowledge about physical and mental health issues related to alcohol addiction. They have heard the stories of recovered people, how they and their families suffered because of addiction. Finally they took the teetotaler vow.

**12.02.2016: Dengue Awareness** presentation was given by the students from Health Awareness Center of Madurai Institute of Social Sciences. They talked about mosquito breeding places and control measures, clean and hygiene practices, dengue transmission cycle, signs and symptoms, treatment, etc. They gave dengue awareness pamphlets to the children which were distributed in the community.



**Oral Health Check Up**



**Mosquito Control Seminar**

## Sports Club



Sports are an integral part of a child's development. In Karumbalai children don't have space to play, plus there are gender biases that restrict girls to play in streets. Sports club organizes indoor and outdoor sports events in the nearby parks and grounds during weekends and other holidays.

**Yearly Sports Meet** was conducted during the quart yearly holidays in the months of September and October 2015. There were totally 04 teams. Indoor, outdoor, and traditional game events were conducted. Each volunteer took in charge of particular events. Events were conducted at junior, senior, and super senior levels, girls were encouraged to play. Thus, we made sure every child gets opportunity to play. The team Rocky Riders bagged the rolling trophy.

**Swimming Class:** During quart yearly holidays 12 hours of **swimming** session to volunteers and higher secondary students.

**12.07.2015:** Elavarasi conducted **fun indoor games**, which improves attention, memory, and language.

**29.09. 2015: Memory games** were conducted using Android apps. The game was projected in the screen. The touch screen game gave a novel experience to the kids.

**30.09.2015: Harry potter game** was played.

**27.02.2016:** Swiss volunteer Keith conducted game session using **Cuisenaire rods**.





## Special Days



Various National important days are observed to bring awareness, knowledge and values behind the day. The special days are utilized to bring the joy, creativity, learning together. Special guests are invited on these days to motivate the children and young people.

**15.08.2015: Independence Day** was celebrated for the whole day. Our children federation leader Wasim Khan hoisted the flag at the program office. Sweets were distributed to the public. Then, children and young people went to enjoy the parade and cultural events at district level Independence Day event. In the evening, children presented dance, songs, and drama in praise of independence. A quiz competition was also conducted.



**05.10.2015: On Teachers Day**, children gave hand-made greeting cards to the teaching volunteers. They spoke about their favorite teaching volunteer. The activity reveals about how our volunteers are inspiring and caring the children apart from teaching.

**14.11.2015: On Children's Day**, young kids were interviewed by volunteers about their favorites and wishes. Volunteers also joined in the dance events given by children. Karthik Bharathi spoke about how importance it is the children being happy and healthy for nation building. Also our children from Vanmugil Cultural Club gave performances at **Nandanar Hostel**.





**12.01.2016:** On **Young people Day**, A.MuthuKrishnan, a prominent social activist and writer visited Madurai Seed and had conversation with children and young people. It was a thought provoking seminar combined with various aspects of social activism from education, women's rights, freedom of speech, equality, and traditional knowledge and

environment protection. He eagerly encountered the questions from children and young people. All have understood the importance of living with political awareness and social responsibility.

**26.01.2016:** On **Republic Day**, Children Federation leader Maha Lakshmi (VIII) hoisted the national flag, before she was invited by student representatives and came as a rally. It is Madurai Seed's tradition to give prestigious chance to the children to hoist the national flag. She gave the Republic Day address. Important newspaper articles about that day were read aloud. Sweets were distributed to the students and public.



**01.02.2016: Institution Day** was celebrated by remembering the history of Madurai Seed, how the organization evolved during by year by year. Our important supporters and friends were remembered. Today's children and young people were inspired by the success stories from Madurai Seed. The Managing Trustee and the Director advised the students

to use the resources like books, activities, people for their learning, guidance, and to achieve their dreams. Sweets were distributed to celebrate the institution day.



## Celebrations



We think it is important to introduce the children to multi-cultural, multi-religious activities in order to raise them as open, tolerant, free thinking global citizens. We don't force any ideals upon them. In Madurai Seed religious events become learning. We intensify on cultural aspects rather than rituals.

**14.04.2015: Tamil New Year** was celebrated as a tribute to the Tamil language. We organized a debate in the street. Children tried to speak pure Tamil without colloquialism and English mix. Many parents and public viewed the debate.



**18.07.2015: Ramjan** was celebrated by sharing wishes and gifts to friends. Muslim students brought sweets for others. The meaning of Ramzan fasting was shared by the students. Finally, the signature dish Biryani was cooked and shared to all. Some of the meal packs were provided to the homeless destitute.

**08.11.2015: Diwali** was celebrated as celebration of togetherness with former students and volunteers at Gandhi Museum. Some of the alumni members shared their experiences at Madurai Seed. Children showcased plenty of talents through singing, dancing, miming, poetry reading, and speech.



**23.12.2015: Christmas**, the whole celebration was about the Origin of Christmas, Santa, Christmas tree and the Birth of Jesus which had a fusion of over five songs, dances, speeches and a skit. All the kids enjoyed the beats of Jingle Bells song. At the end, volunteer Prabu dressed as Santa danced and gave chocolates and cakes to the kids.



**31.12.2015: New Year's Eve** was celebrated at the terrace of Kaleidoscope center, as a family every one joined and had a good time. Fun games were conducted for each class and volunteers. Without agitation of winning and losing, the eve of the New Year was spent with joy and laughter.



**15.01.2016: Pongal**, the harvest and thanks giving festival was celebrated in a colorful manner. Everyone came in traditional attires. Plants, and organic jiggery as prizes were distributed to the Rangoli competition winners. We cooked Pongal before the program office, and shared with people.





## Programs for Public:

These public programs form a bridge between our organization and the community where we work. Though we work extensively for the benefits of children and young people, the public programs also join the parents of our direct beneficiaries. Children and young people also take pride of doing something for the benefit of society. They become empathetic and responsible.

**Chithirai Festival:** This is a grand festival in Madurai celebrated during summer. Millions of people gather in a place. Providing drinking water to the people is considered as a great service in these days. On **13.05.14**, In Tallakulam area, we have provided water and buttermilk to people. On **14.05.14**, In Annanagar, Water, and butter-milk were provided to the people. In these two events, nearly 3000 people benefited from our service.



### Madurai Seed in flood relief activities:

The Chennai and Cuddalore district was affected by the enormous rain and flood. We've involved children and young people in the relief work. Some children, young people, alumni, and parents provided funds to buy relief materials.

- On **05.12.2015**, as a first phase contributions from our young people, children, and parents water bottles, biscuits, and good quality used cloths were sent to Chennai.
- On **07.12.2015**, as a second Phase, with the donation from our Alumnus Manikandan and his friend Vinoth, Sanitary napkins, candles, and biscuits were sent to Cuddalore.
- On **13.12.2015**, as a third phase, our children and young people made thousands of mosquito egg and larvae killers. They are a small ball of tree dust and oil covered with cloths. When it is thrown in stagnant water, the oil in the ball gets released and kills the mosquito.



### Rangoli Contest 28.12.2015 :



Rangoli Contest is being conducted every year, to maintain a strong relationship with parents, and public. It is also a kind of cultural activity that demands creativity, and aesthetic-sense. This year approximately 100 people participated in the competition. A panel of men from young people's team judged the Kolams based on colors, size, and creativity. The prizes for Rangoli competition

were distributed on Pongal day. Young people and children joined in the rally accompanied by traditional Thavil, and Nagaswaram. The public were very happy about the prizes of a rose plant, and organic jaggery.

### Magazhi Utsav 29.12.2015



This public event on It is a tribute to performing arts. The theme of this year was **arts for education and social change**. Today people's entertainment is limited to only television. Performing arts and folk arts gets little significance in the lives of people in low income areas. Although "appreciation of arts and aesthetics isn't only reserved for the sophisticated people". These cultural activities provided so much value for the community.

The people appreciated the children and young people very much. **Vanmugil Cultural Club** presented their "No Bribe" and "Science or Destruction" mimes, and traditional and folk dances. It was followed by "Thangameengal" a short play by our kids directed by Kaleidoscope Center. CESC organization's students enacted an "Anti-Liquor" drama. It became a heart touching awareness event. "Oyil Attam" by professional artists were really a visual treat for the spectators. The activity was welcomed by the public in a great manner.



## Volunteering & Internships:

**Yogalakshmi**, a social work student from the nearby Lady Doak College worked as an intern during the summer camp. She conducted life skills sessions in the camp.

**Mirijam** from Switzerland engaged in the activities for Madurai Seed kids and volunteers from 10th of July to 6th of September. She involved in teaching English for volunteers and students of classes 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> std. She exchanged various views about India and her country, interacted through short films, movies, visited historical places with the volunteers. She assisted Administrative works and learnt more about Madurai Seed. She analyzed students from VIII and IX std with activities, stories, newspaper cuttings, tests. Her internship helped her to learn about NGO administration and also our young people to learn English.

**Pascal Sporkan** is a teacher of English from Belgium, volunteered to Madurai Seed children and young people. He imparted communication English by means of activities, pictures and worksheets. Children felt an interactive and enriching experience in his classes. He conducted a story telling session "The Peter and the Wolf" with music and beautiful narration. He also taught fun games.

**Keith Rossborough** from Zurich gave a highly active and participatory workshop to our young people. Resources like Cuisenaire Rods for doing active and collaborative learning strategies were explored. He also handled some classes for the children too. Keith and Pascal conducted games session, and loom bands making session for children.

**Andreas Gross** from Switzerland conducted a teacher training workshop for the volunteers. He emphasized the role of a teacher volunteer in handling kids with learning difficulties. Many child-centric approaches were discussed and accepted. The enriching session included discussions & short plays. Also organic farming and kitchen gardening practices and ideas were discussed.

**Hariharan Mani**, a software professional in USA handled science classes through Skype. He emphasized on science concepts and their applications in various inventions, and daily life. He also visited Madurai Seed once, and met the children and volunteers. He gave an uplifting speech, told about his education, profession, and various branches of engineering studies.



## Site Visits



July 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015: **Dr.Melliya Annamalai** is the project steward of Madurai Seed in Asha for Education, Boston Chapter. This year Melli Akka's visit gave us a great encouragement. She took part in the library club event. Students Vasim Khan and Kowsalya shared about their favorite books to other children. She discussed about various challenges in getting higher education, education loan processes,

right to education act, reservation system, vocational education, etc. Later, she spent the day with the volunteers discussing about activities in Madurai Seed, roles and responsibilities of volunteers, various teaching methods used in classes, etc.

05.08.2015: **Eveline & Nola:** Eveline is an important member in the Swiss Friends of Madurai Seed support group. She is a great admirer of our activities. Their visit was an informative one for our kids. They shared their thoughts on "Learning by Doing" by presenting us a book called "Jojo's Wire Car". Motivated by the book, our kid Santhosh from VI std and Volunteer Nagarjun made a wire car and wire bicycle. They met the teaching volunteers, visited the library, and education centers, and interacted with the children.



28.08.2015: **Ms. Nakamura Mari:** She is a Japanese researcher interacted with our MS team. She visited the centers and asked various questions about the socio economic background of the children, and how Madurai Seed helps them. They exchanged their views on the Social Development and Poverty alleviation in India and Japan. Also, this brief meet gave our volunteers a wide knowledge about the active spirit of Japanese people which is behind Japan's tremendous growth.



## Trustees and Staff Participation

### Managing Trustee A.S.Karthikbharathi

**22, 23, 24.05.2015:** Facilitator of the Dreams Summer Camp for the rural children at CESC, Madurai. He outlined the overall camp schedule and conducted life skill oriented sessions.

**25.07.2015:** Participated in the fund raising strategies meeting for NGOs at Tiruvannamalai.

**09.10.2015:** Delivered a speech to children in the Velammal Matriculation School's prayer meeting at Madurai.

**21.10.2015:** A partaker in the ASER education status survey training conducted by Pratham organization at Trichy. Later Madurai Seed conducted the survey in Karumbalai and nearby slums

**09.10.2015:** Participated in the "Online presence and fundraising capacity workshop" for NGOs conducted by Guide Star at Chennai.

- The various participation of the Managing Trustee gave insights on how to maintain the organization's values and identity in online platforms.
- The participations brought along friends and strengthened our networks with other organizations.
- ASER survey helped us to identify children who lack reading and arithmetic skills in the area we work.

### Director Elavarasi

**23.10.2015:** Director Elavarasi took part in the "**Teacher's Workshop**" organized by "Kalagala Vaguparai" for teachers. Kalagala Vaguparai is a team of ideal teachers who wish to transform traditional classrooms into more fun filled, child centric classes. Professors, and resource persons, educationists visited the workshop and gave sessions on the importance of theatre, story-telling, books, films, and games in classrooms. The problems of today's children and education system were discussed. Our Director told it was a good experience to interact with the teachers from around the state, get to know problems of the children, and challenges in teaching in a broad perspective, the values she learned from the workshop will be translated at Madurai Seed also.

17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> February 2016: Director Elavarasi took part in the **Film Making Workshop** "Take One Action" conducted by Ekta Parshad and CESC. The camp stressed the role of documentary and film making techniques in community development causes.

## Vizhuthugal Alumni Association:



**Vizhutugal (Aerial Roots)** is the alumni association for former students, and volunteers of Madurai Seed. The alumni can render monetary support, knowledge support, or moral support. There are high possibilities that children and the young people of today getting inspired by their success stories

### Some News from Alumni:

- Sadam Hussain has joined in M.Phil (Commerce).
- Karpaga Selvi and MuthuPandi have studied a course for the bank exams, and accounts maintenance related training.
- The Diwali celebration was organized completely by the donations of former beneficiaries in Gandhi Museum.
- Rs.15, 000 was donated by alumni and their friends for the flood relief activities. Napkins, biscuits, candles, were sent to Cuddalore district.
- O.Manikandan donates Rs.1000 every month.
- Likewise, Sulthan Alautheen and Pethu Raja have donated on special occasions.
- Ganesh Kumar who has finished MA, MPhil, and B.Ed in Math, has joined in Gandigram Rural University as a junior research fellow. He is a first graduate.
- ArunKumar who has finished BA and B.Ed in English is working as a Web Content Writer in Parent Circle, a publishing enterprise in Chennai. He is a first graduate.
- MuthuPandi who has finished M.Com and B.Ed in Commerce has joined as a senior accountant in a hospital. He is a first graduate.
- Priya who has finished B.A and B.Ed is teaching in a private school. She is a first graduate.
- Maheswari who finished engineering (ECE) is working now. She is a first graduate.
- BalaMurugan and NagoorRaja who finished their under graduation are also working in private sectors.



## Friends of Madurai Seed, India



This group envisions an effective community through like-minded people as resource persons, advisors, moral supporters, and donors from India. They will know Madurai Seed inside out. They can join with Madurai Seed in every possible way. Their resource will be channelized to the needs of children and young people. They form an important extension of Madurai Seed family and be an inspiration.

### Some Updates:

- These friends and supporters boost up our children and young people by participating in the events, giving lectures or trainings, and also by being role models.
- A Facebook group was started in the name of Friends of Madurai Seed, India. The group is continuously updated with pictures and updates of Madurai Seed's activities. There are now XXX numbers of members in that group.
- People are from various arenas of the society like teachers, professors, social activists, NGO leaders, lawyers, government officers, and entrepreneurs. They constantly appreciate our activities.
- Vinoth Kumar, an IT professional was introduced by our alumni O.Mani. He is donating Rs.1000 per month. He also extended his support for flood relief activities.
- Murugesan and Viji couple is visiting Madurai Seed on special occasions and encouraging children. They gift Krishnaswamy Endowment Prize to the top scorers in 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> std.
- Prof.Prabhakar visited and spoke to the children and young people on New Year's Day. His Kaleidoscope center of arts and culture will work hand in hand with Madurai Seed.
- Prof. Evanjeline gave a guest lecture to the children and young people on social values.
- Social welfare officer Karunakaran visited Madurai Seed and gave a lecture to the children.
- Social activist Muthu Krishnan delivered a lecture on National Youth Day.
- Social workers Mr.Biju and Mr.Dhanraj share their views on our programs besides giving guidance whenever needed.

# A different interpretation

2.4.16.

THE HINDU

Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* staged by the Fourth Wall Production of The American College is a bold attempt to contemporize the gender war

T. SARAVANAN

**A** voice over introduces the play as a magical and from there starts the clever interpretation of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* by the Fourth Wall Production of The American College highlighting how women constantly struggle to prove their profile in the male-chauvinistic society.

The 90-minute play opens with a street vendor singing in melancholy and looking for the dawn of a new day followed by a dance sequence. Finally a butcher makes an entry and forcefully suggests her products introducing Padma, a capitalist male chauvinist son, where men think they can do anything with money.

The next scene shifts to a group of Nigridians again singing about sufferings of women and pray for their deliverance. After the musical introduction, the actual Shakespearean play starts expressing Katherine, "the shrew", and daughter of Baptista, a rich man. She is, presumably, detested in this world for her outskokness. Her sister Bianca knows how to win the world with feminine follies. Bianca is wooed by many suitors but Baptista declares that he will not give away Bianca in marriage to any one until Katherine gets married. Petruchio, a rich young man with a devil-may-care attitude takes up the



**SOCIAL COMMENT** Scenes from William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* staged by the Fourth Wall Production. PHOTOS: R. ASHOK

We read the entire script and whenever a discussion comes we have taken another form of performing arts

”

challenge and "tames" the shrew.

The performance ends with a Tamil street play highlighting how gender equality plagues the society. "It is a deliberate start-up of Shakespeare's act in order to contemporize a similar issue. The Fourth Wall theatre chose the oldest theory of drama; the acting and Dance Theory to

start with. After engaging the audience, we moved towards judicial theory and finally made use of the street play by the members of Madurai Seed's NGO as a denouement," says N. Elanga, director of the play.

The idea to stage this play struck Elanga when he was teaching poet Subramania Bharathi's Pandita Saratham to a group of

students. Bharathi uses an expression 'Petta pulamalai' to describe how Pandavan about male speculations during their misfortune when Draupadi was stripped by her adversaries. "Immediately, my student questioned how Bharathi, known as one who fought for the cause of women, can categorise women as weaker sex. Bharathi too lived in a male

chauvinistic society much like Shakespeare. The Elizabethan had found an interesting theme of how a girl of free will is tamed by a man, thus catering to a popular appetite. We just took that line and read the whole play. What we have tried here is a revisionist and approach to Shakespeare. We read the entire script and whenever a discussion comes

we have taken up other forms of performing arts," he says.

The audience of the open air theatre helped in the performance. The lightings by Kiruba Johnson and C.P. Rajiv deserve appreciation. Josiah Manasse's music captivated the audience. "The unconventional approach in the universal issues of love, marriage and gender inequality was well received.

A paragraph was published about Madurai Seed's drama on gender inequality along with another play. 4<sup>th</sup>

picture depicts Madurai Seed children's acting. To read the full article in the following link.

<http://www.thehindu.com/features/metroplus/society/a-different-interpretation/article8422848.ece>



# Audited Finance Statement 2015-2016

**MADURAI SEED, KARUMPALAI, MADURAI**  
**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31.03.2016**

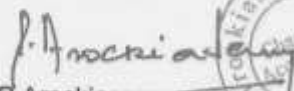
	Schedule	Year ended March 31, 2016 Rs.
<b>Income</b>		
Foreign Contribution Received		1,668,874
Donation Received		50,286
<b>Interest Income</b>	7	
S B Interest		24,666
FD Interest		7,773
		<u>32,439</u>
		<u><u>1,751,599</u></u>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Programme Cost		
Children Education Centre	8	532,700
Children's and Young People Skill & Personality Development Programme	9	653,051
Library for children & Young People	10	93,677
Sponsorship	11	347,030
Young People Education Centre	12	51,818
Community Development	13	25,585
Administration Expenses	14	525,026
Depreciation	2	24,750
		<u>2,253,637</u>
<b>Excess of Expenditure Over Income</b>		<b>(502,038)</b>

This is the Income and Expenditure Account referred to in our report of even date.

**For Arockiasamy & Raj**

Firm Registration Number : 006850S

Chartered Accountants

  
P. Arockiasamy  
Partner

Membership No.018348

Place : Madurai

Date : 01.07.2016

  
Managing Trustee



## Conclusion

The year 2015-16 was the year of activities given much importance to team work and self-expression. In today's social economic situation, children and young people from low income areas encounter lots of challenges in their day to day life, when the challenges don't encourage them thrive further, when the challenges don't offer them opportunities, when the challenges become a disadvantage, that is when Madurai Seed finds its importance. We provide them the educational and emotional needs to mend the challenges into prolific achievements.

We will continue to endow disadvantaged children and young people an environment where they can grow into big trees with their branches touching all corners of the society. We are proud in bringing up successful people with social responsibilities. We will continue to do so.

We look forward to the coming year to be filled with new strategies and innovation in our programs that will create greater impact among the children and the young people. Thanks for all the help rendered by you over the years towards the cause of the underprivileged.

**Thanks for your continuous love and support.**





## Added Readings

### CESCI Summer Camp for Children

22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> May 2015/ By: Saumil Sharma

#### Acknowledgement

I owe a thank you to Ekta Parishad and to CESCO Madurai to accept me as an intern and give me an opportunity to work with people and gain my energies to learn so much from all the children. Also, I would thank Elavarasi ma'am, Arunji, Prema madam, Thanaraj sir, Darshana, Thirumalai and Chellathal madam who translated the proceedings of the camp from Tamil to English for me to understand. Also, Bijuji for his constant encouragement to take part in the activities.

#### Preface

During my field internship programme, I was an observer and at times a participant in the CESCO Students Summer Camp held at CESCO campus in Madurai, Tamil Nadu. It was a three day summer camp which aimed at teaching many new things to the students, learning several new ideas and ways of looking at things from them, giving encouragement and space for them to showcase their wonderful talents and use their creativity and finally enjoy at the summer camp before their schools reopen for the new session.

The camp which spread across three days had well planned activities for the children on all the days. This year the camp was facilitated by two dedicated and simple people – Mr. Karthik Bharathi and Ms. Elavarasi Bharathi from SEED organization, Madurai in collaboration with Ms. Chellathal, the village program coordinator from CESCO.

It was great to witness the amount of talent the children had and potential to make great theatre, props, films, songs etc. in a short span of time given to them using almost nothing, for example, children were to dress up like monster so one of the child stuck several tips of the lady fingers on his face to make it look 'dirty and dangerous' and another child in the cooking session wanted to look like a chef so rolled up a white piece of paper on spot and pinned it from behind using a twig, that is how creative the children were.

Also, at times they did laugh at jokes, film clips, theatre dialogues etc. which even we often laugh at but some of them may be sexist or racist or simply discriminatory, but at those points I separately pointed out to Elavarasi ma'am that we must later tell them as they are growing and need to make them aware of how a particular instance is wrong or discriminatory, we need to explain and condemn it. It is important to understand the issue seriously and never make it a practice in the long journey of life.



The children are the future of the world and if we put in our energies into them and explain the wrong practices today then we can expect a generation which is more sensitive towards issues related to gender, caste, class and other socio-cultural practices. They can think and make the decisions using their knowledge, in this sense, the summer camp extended to broader realms of life of a child, from issues concerning the home like anti-alcohol, how and what

to cook when there is no fire etc. to the larger issues about the nation like equality, agrarian crisis. CESC's Village Program Students Summer Camp 2015 was a successful event and gave an opportunity to the children to explore their own talents, share and learn a lot more with each-other.

**Introduction** This report is a detailed account of the CESC Students Summer Camp held for three days between 22nd of March, 2015 to 24th of March, 2015 at the CESC campus in Madurai.

It is part of the Village Program run throughout the year at CESC which aims to empower, increase interaction and build relationship with people from about 8-9 villages around the centre. CESC has been activity involved in working in these villages with programs focusing on needs of Women and Children, the summer camp is a part of the larger program related to children and it is held once in every year.

This year the camp was facilitated by two dedicated and simple people – Mr. Karthik Bharathi and Ms. Elavarasi Bharathi from SEED organization, Madurai in collaboration with Ms. Chellathal, the village program coordinator from CESC. Also, the participants comprised of a few guest children from urban economically poor slums in Madurai where SEED organization works and children from villages around CESC who are part of the village program. This created a holistic environment where children from the cities and the villages could interact and learn together. There were around 60 students who participated in this summer camp.

In this report, the first part elaborates upon the day to day activities and programmes of the summer camp, it also comprises of the details of each activity and the potential importance it plays to improve the learning of the children and several specific examples from the activities are stated wherever possible. The second part has a detailed time-table stating the activities planned in which the students engaged and interacted with each-other. The conclusion highlights some of the experience shared by children at the end of the programme and comments on the overall CESC summer camp 2015. It is followed by several photographs with captions from the event. This report can be translated into Tamil so that it can reach more number of people.



## **Day 1: March 22nd, 2015, Friday**

The children from SEED, Madurai and the children with student Volunteers from other villages around CESC arrive at the centre at around 11 A.M. and were served tea and biscuits. After the children had settled down and occupied their rooms, the programme for the day started.

They all gathered at the CESC Meeting Hall 1. All the children sang a prayer song before starting the three day long summer camp. This was followed by mixing the children from SEED and CESC and then dividing them into groups, these groups were made for functional purposes and carrying on the group activities every day. Each group had a group name, they were derived from the various national symbols like national bird- peacock, national fruit- mango, and national animal- tiger and so on.

### **First activity: Goal-setting**

This activity focused on how one can and one should set goals in order to work hard to achieve them. Ms. Yogalakshmi from SEED delivered a lecture on one can decide a goal and follow it. At the end of the lecture, each group had to make a short skit on the theme 'how to reach your goal?' and all the students participated in the skit and this was the first display of their potential talent at the camp.

### **Second activity: Paper Quilling**

Quilling is an art form that involves the use of strips of paper that are rolled, shaped, and glued together to create decorative designs. It requires a lot of creativity and that is what students expressed through their individual work. Mr. Prabhu from SEED taught the children the art of quilling and they created their favourite designs like making a Lord Ganesha, flowers, necklaces, phones and many more designs. The work was put on display and was appreciated by Bijuji.

### **Third activity: Cultural programme**

This was the last activity for the day where children were assigned five different traditional dance forms from Tamil Nadu and five different traditional songs, they were given time to prepare both of them. Later in the evening, they performed these in front of all the people at the CESC Amphitheatre and received huge round of applause and appreciation for their acts. The five different distinct dance forms were "Kollatham" which is performed using sticks, "Gummi" involves using hands to make clapping sounds and perform the dance, "Olliaattam" is performed using handkerchiefs, "Garragathham" uses a traditional earthen pot which has a green parrot sitting over it, the dancers place it over head and perform and finally 'Parai' in which a traditional musical instrument is played by the hands while dancing. The day ended with a sumptuous meal served by the kitchen team to all the children, volunteers and the guests.

## **Day 2: March 23rd, 2015, Saturday**

The children got up in the morning and performed yoga and meditation to keep themselves healthy. After which based on the Gandhian principle of 'shramdana' which literally means 'donation of manual labour', children cleaned some areas at the campus and their rooms. After having the breakfast and getting ready, the activities for the day began.

### **First activity: Divergent thinking and Creativity- Complete the pattern**

This was the activity for the morning session and included several activities and games to enhance different ways to look at one thing, therefore making your thinking more 'diverse' and 'creative'. Ms. Elavarasi facilitated this session.

In the first half of the session, everyone was given a half and undone pattern in their new notebooks and children had to complete the pattern to make any figure or image continuing from that pattern. For example some children were given a pattern of a semi-circle line drawn on a blank paper but both of them used it differently, one of them converted it into an image of a girl and the other person converted it into the image of a flower. Elavarasi later explained to the children how depending upon their perception, interpretation and creativity the final image created differs from each another.

### **Second activity: Divergent thinking and Creativity- Torrance test**

In this activity, each group was given two questions or situations printed on a piece of paper and they were allotted some time to discuss the questions in the group. After that they were suggested to share the answers with the audience in any creative way like using a short skit, dance, speech etc. The main aim of this activity was to understand how words and questions can be interpreted by thinking in a 'divergent' manner in various different ways by each individual actor. Their unique way of thinking added meanings to the words apart from the original literal meaning.





To elaborate the point about divergent thinking the questions from each group are written below and as answers are supplemented as examples. They help us peek into the children's world and how they think about these questions.

Group 1: Methods used to convey the answers was a skit and a speech.

Question 1- If you have to make a rule which everyone should follow what would that be?

Question 2- If you can make one thing free for everyone what would that be?

There should be a rule for total prohibition and ban on alcohol selling and consumption.

Drinking water should be free for everyone.

Group 2: Methods used to convey the answers were 2 short skit and a speech.

Question 1- Given a choice, what would you be like to be from the following four options and why- ocean, sea, waterfall or lake?

Question 2- What 3 wishes would you like to have from God?

They gave reasons for each of the four options, choice of being an ocean as it depicts depth knowledge, choice of being a lake as it is very deep, choice of being a river as it flows clearly without any breakage and sea as it very wide and a huge water body.

One of wishes were to build a palace on ocean and they didn't have time to discuss the others.

Group 3: Method used to convey the answers was skit.

Question 1- If there is no electricity what will be the source of energy?

Question 2- Narrate a story of a zoo without using the name of any animal.

Sun, wind and air can be used as source of energy if electricity is not available.

They make a short skit about a zoo, and made animals giving shapes to their hands and using other children. So they didn't use the name of the animals but performed the play on animals. The group was suggested to incorporate sounds / phonetics of the animals to be more creative next time.

Group 4: Methods used to convey the answers were 2 short skit and a speech.

Question 1- What would the world be like if there was no sleeping time and what would you do with the extra time?

Question 2- What is more important out of the two- motorized vehicles or computer?

The first half of the question 1 wasn't answered, in the second part there were three broad responses. Some of them wanted to use the extra time for 'positive thinking', others wanted to 'think about the next day' and what will they do and many of the students wanted to use electronics like television, computer and video games.

The second question was not addressed.

Group 5: Methods used to convey the answers was a speech.

Question 1- Share any 3 advantages and disadvantages of living in a tree house.

Question 2- Which new subject would you like to introduce that will be helpful for the students? Why do you choose it?

Living in a tree house may be unsafe as animals can attack us and other answer was about environment preservation and how trees have to be cut or disturbed in order to stay in a tree house.

Out of a wide range of subjects, the four subjects on which the students emphasized were- "political science" to understand the politics around us, "weekly travel" to explore the practical world around, "songs and dance" to keep students active and energetic and "story-telling" where students tell stories and listen to stories on important issues.

### **Third activity: Documentary and Short film-making**

Sam Devanand from Madurai facilitated this workshop and building on the knowledge of theatre asked students to take efforts, use imagination and make short-films, each group were given a camera and few hours to decide a script, write dialogues, make scenes, choose a location and shoot a film. It was later edited and screened for the audience. Mr. Thanaraj from Ekta Parishad Tamil Nadu, Daniel and Barbara, guests from Switzerland and myself were present to appreciate the extraordinary potential in each film which can be used to create awareness on social issues. We all suggested if students can use potential techniques of making a film which were taught by Sam Devanand. The basic techniques taught by him are listed below:

1. Decide a short topic and a specific theme for the story/ documentary.
2. Decide the total time of the story/ documentary in minutes/ hours.
3. Discuss the theme/ story in the group.
4. Write down the dialogues.
5. Decide the actors for different roles.
6. Do a Rehearsal of acting and dialogue delivery.
7. Decide the background music, sound.
8. Decide the shooting spots.
9. Camera rehearsal.
10. Shoot the film.
11. Edit and present the film/ documentary.



### **"The last night" - Cultural program**

Another cultural program was organized at the Amphitheatre in the night. Each group performed a short skit based on social issues like girl child rights, child rights, women issues, land problems, education etc. these topics were given to them in the afternoon at the end of the activity and they had to prepare and perform in the evening.

Children from SEED lead many dances on famous Tamil film songs. The young students from CESCO also joined them to shake a leg on the beats. Some children even sang songs. A girls group danced on famous songs of A.R. Rahman.

The event came to an end by a theatre play on 'agrarian crisis and migration' in which Thirumalia and other children from CESCO and performed. The issue was sensitive and the performances touched the heart of the audience and made us to rethink about the situation of farmers in Indian villages.

### **Day 3: March 24th, 2015, Sunday**

The children got up in the morning and performed yoga and meditation to keep themselves healthy. After which based on the Gandhian principle of 'shramdana' which literally means 'donation of manual labour', children cleaned some areas at the campus and their rooms. After having the breakfast and getting ready, the activities for the day began.

#### **First activity: Leadership skills**

Arun Prasad from SEED, Madurai facilitated the session on 'Leadership Skills' in hope to inculcate the spirit and importance of leadership in the future generations and enable them to be good leaders. He used several activities through which various characteristics of leaders were explained.

a) Brainstorming on the idea of 'qualities of a leader' b) Relate the infrastructure of CESCO with various skills required for leadership, for example, high roof reflects high aims/ goals, the strong walls reflect the strong and bold decision making qualities etc. c) Prepare an image portraying the importance of "group/ team work" by creating a huge image of a 'monster'. All members of the group must participate in the group. In order to create a huge dummy of a monster using children, i.e. some members held the others from bottom, other made them sit on a shoulder, some gave the voices, some added multiple hands to the dummy and hence, the activity reinforced and taught the idea of working in groups and cooperating with each other, doing hard-work, sharing and coordinating the activities. d) Short film/ clips screening and discussion: "Roadside Ambanis"- Kamal Sethi, "Lead India" video and another short clipping on the idea of "helping".

## **Second activity: Cooking without the use of fire: Sharing and making 8 recipes**

A large number of parents of these children are 'coolie' workers which means daily wage labourers, mostly waged for lifting heavy loads over their head, shoulders or on a makeshift trolley. Some other parents go to the field to work during the day. Sometimes, when the small children come back to home from the school then parents aren't there or the mother is ill or there is no source of fuel to cook the food, in these three instances, they may be left hungry and cannot have food. Keeping these extremities in mind, they were given recipes which didn't require any fuel or lighting the fire to prepare a small meal. The children were then divided into groups and asked to prepare the dishes. The program was facilitated by Ms. Chellathal, the village program coordinator, CESC and supported by SEED facilitators- Ms. Ilavarasi, Mr. Karthick and Mr. Arun.

The presentation of the dishes was great with decorations and topping with coriander, grated carrots etc. It tasted delicious and some of them were mouth-watering. One of the groups also had a young boy who prepared a makeshift chef hat using a newspaper and a twig, as already mentioned in the introduction. Another group presented the food on banana leaf and one of them wrote a beautiful looking "Welcome" on the ground using small leaves and red colour flowers. The dishes were tasted and appreciated by special guests from outside- Daniel and Barbara from Switzerland working with Ekta Parishad, Bhopal, Sandeep from Rajasthan and myself. Mr. Biju, Director of CESC and Mr. Thanaraj, State Coordinator Ekta Parishad Tamil Nadu encouraged the efforts taken by the children.

For the benefit of those who will like to try and prepare the dishes, the 8 recipes are listed here:

1. Jaggery Aval (Jaggery sweet balls): To prepare this you need flattened rice, jaggery powder, grated coconut and honey. Soak the flattened rice in water till it becomes little soft and add all the other ingredients, mix it and make small size round balls and serve it. Jaggery helps in binding of flattened rice and other ingredients together. It will taste like a freshly prepared 'laddu'.
2. Guava Spicy Juice: To prepare this juice, you need to take out guava juice first. To this juice, add mint leaves, green chilli paste, few drops of lemon juice and coriander topping. Use cool water for better soothing food experience.
3. Curd Raita: To prepare this you need curd, cucumber, carrot, pumpkin, butter and salt. Grate all the vegetables and add to the curd, mix 1 table spoon of butter and salt to taste. The dish is ready to be served. It can be accompanied with other rice dishes.
4. Tomato Sweet Salad: To prepare this nutritious salad, you need tomato, honey, lemon, ginger and coriander. Cut tomato into small 1 inch cubes and finely chop the ginger, add honey and lemon, mix coriander leaves and add few flakes of them for topping.

5. Cucumber-Beetroot Salad: You need to take out juice from cucumber and beetroot. After that add sugar and few drops of lemon and serve it chilled with ice. This simple juice recipe is very refreshing.
6. Sunday Salad: To prepare this salad, you will need mango, papaya, grapes, pineapple, apple, pomegranate, lemon and honey. Cut all the fruits into small 1 inch cubes and mix honey and a few drops of lemon, ensure that all ingredients are mixed well together and enjoy the Indian 'fruit bowl chaat' or fruit bowl salad.
7. Mixed Salad: To prepare this you will need beetroot, cucumber, capsicum, carrot, raw mango, ginger, lemon, salt and pepper. Cut all the fruits and vegetables into 1 inch cubes, add a few drops of lemon to it, grated ginger and salt and pepper to taste. Mix the ingredients well and the healthy salad is ready to be served.
8. Curd Poka Aval (Flattened rice curd balls): To prepare this you need flattened rice, curd, mango, carrot, green chillies and salt. Soak the flattened rice in water till it becomes little soft and add all the other ingredients, mix it and make small size round balls and serve it. Curd helps in binding of flattened rice and other ingredients together.

### **The closing ceremony**

After having a sumptuous lunch, the children gathered at the Mail Hall 1 for the closing ceremony. All the children who wanted to share their experiences, learnings or even thank spoke their hearts out to the audience. Each of them received a small useful gift from a lucky draw. All children had something different to say, these are few examples of what the children expressed. Ajitha linked the activity on leadership with the leaders at home like fathers, this was an insightful way of looking at patriarchy. Kaushalaya found the goal-setting exercise very helpful for practical application. Soundaryapandian enjoyed the craft session. Muktya liked the Gandhian idea of 'shramdana' and manual labour, for the first time he said that he started cleaning and developed a different thinking perspective. Jeck was delighted and proud to make a film and see himself acting in it. Abi appreciated the drama on agrarian crisis and migration during the cultural program in the night. He also thanked SEED, Madurai to come for the summer camp with CESC Volunteers and students. Ajit said that he couldn't imagine preparing dishes without fire and had his first cooking experience without fuel. Thirumalai expressed that he can never forget the lessons he has learnt at the summer camp. Even facilitators and other participants appreciated the children, their affection, their creativity and talents. We all suggested them to continue with their journey in spite of any barriers or boundaries as they can always seek support and guidance from SEED, Madurai and CESC. They must continue their journey against all the odds to blossom into a beautiful flower and grow into a tall tree! All the children departed with smiles on their face.



## Site Visit Report

**July 21, 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015: By Melli Annamalai**

Karthi and 2 others came to receive me as I arrived by the overnight bus from Mysore. I went to my place of stay, and after refreshing myself was picked up again by the team and taken to Karumbalai. I spent more time than usual on this visit, and it gave me the opportunity to observe more activities/classes.

The first event on the agenda was the library session. Students read a book from the library and present to the others. They had picked topics on the environment, scientists. They mostly listened to the speaker silently. (They were vocal in other sessions, so they are not always passive listeners.) I asked a few questions to bring an element of analysis to the discussion.

Later that day I had a full session with the volunteers (college students who work with the center). Over the years they have developed a program where each volunteer is laser-focused on a group of students. They each spoke to me about what they are studying and what class they handle at the center. Some of them commute long distances to their colleges, but still find time to volunteer at the center. I was struck by how intense the desire to go to college was, and how families sacrifice everything for their children to do so. This is quite different from a rural area. In this urban area, if the student passes class X and XII and gets decent marks the families go all out to send them to college, including taking large loans to send them to private institutions. Private institutions have proliferated in Tamil Nadu, often of questionable quality, but charging high fees. Loans are easier to get (there are government schemes to support higher education), so families take the loans and send their children to any college they can get admission to.

College admission to good colleges is extremely stiff. Many government run colleges are considered good, as are the older aided colleges. Students who don't get admitted to these colleges only have the option of private ("self-financing") colleges of varying quality. On the positive side, these colleges do give them the degrees that are necessary for any job. For example, the government is hiring a lot of government school teachers, and this process appears to be corruption-free.

Teachers are selected through tests, but require a B.Ed to qualify to take those tests. So the B.Ed degree is essential. Till the capacity increases in the good government colleges, there might not be any option but to go through these private colleges.

In summary, there is a palpable support for education in the community. Students and parents are looking for opportunities to help them learn better. Karthi considers this an achievement of the Seed centers. Other social factors have contributed also, but the Seed centers are critical for providing the guidance and support needed to enable the aspirations to become reality.

Coming back to the Seed Narpanigal centers. The team has developed material that helps them with the so-called "slow learners" (students who have fallen behind grade level). For example, they have ways to teach the alphabet to children in elementary school. It is unfortunate that the government school system is so poor in quality that even the alphabet has to be taught by non-governmental organizations. The team was doing a good job in the class I visited.

Space continues to be a problem, with rising rents. I urged them to consider buying a place. With careful money management they have been able to save most of the donations they receive locally. Perhaps this could be used towards buying a place. This should be explored further. However any space within Karumbalai is likely to be small, so the situation of multiple classes sharing a room will continue. A volunteer from Switzerland was staying with them and working with them for 2 months. I was quite impressed that she stayed right in Karumbalai. She was teaching English. She felt that the students know more English than might appear to an observer, one of the problems is they are shy to speak. Karthi and team dropped me back at the bus station and I took the overnight bus back to Mysore.



## Conversation with Seed Narpanigal on the International Day of the Girl Child

October 11, 2015: By Melli Annamalai

Today is **International Day of the Girl Child**. On this occasion I spoke to girl students from class VI to college at the Seed Narpanigal project in Madurai. The conversation was over Skype.

The girls were eager and very engaged in the conversation. We discussed the changes in the last 20 years – there are many more women in the workforce now. They all intend to continue their education for many years and listed Ph.D., doctor, and police as some of their goals.

One of the things they really like about the center is that they play all types of sports – they have girl Kabbadi teams, girl cricket teams. This is empowering. Everyone is encouraged to learn everything.

The big challenge they discussed was eve-teasing. On the way to school or college men ogle and men tease, even men who could be their grandfather as a girl said. If they discuss with their parents they sometimes get worried and get them married. So sometimes they hesitate to discuss this with their parents. The parents want to take care of the marriage responsibility before any untoward incident. The boys at the center do not engage in eve-teasing, they are taught from the beginning to treat all women like they treat their own sisters. So International Day of the Girl Child should also focus on changing behavior of boys.

The other theme that emerged was freedom. Freedom to travel, and do the things they want to do. Parents naturally fear for their safety, and it is not always possible to convince them. Again, to make the world a safer place for women, men have a big role.

The girls would like their opinions to be listened to more at home. For example there is immense pressure to get daughters married, so often that overrides all other wishes of the girl. A girl's opinion has to be given all the consideration it is due.

It was a great way to mark the International Day of the Girl Child – listen to the challenges and dreams of the girls at Seed Narpanigal. We will continue to work together to bring the fundamental change of a safer society where girls' opinions are heard.



# Internship at MADURAI SEED

July 10th to September 6th, 2015: Report by Mirjam Bächli

## Introduction



I am a master student of economics at University of St. Gallen in Switzerland. I decided to engage myself in social work for the length of my last semester break. Through the project Gateway to India from University of St. Gallen and the Swiss Dallyan Foundation I got to know the non-profit-organization MADURAI SEED. My internship took place between July 10th and September 6th, 2015. In the following I describe the current formation of the NGO. Then you can read about my point of view of and ideas for the NGO. Before I end the report with a short conclusion, my various activities at MADURAI SEED are stated.

## Location

Madurai Seed (MS) is a non-profit-organization. It was founded by Karthik Bharathi in 1999 and registered as a trust in 2007. The NGO is located in Karumbalai, an underprivileged area in northern Madurai. Karumbalai is densely populated and was called slum just 10 to 15 years ago. In the recent years, however, it developed and by now all houses should have basic facilities like a toilet. Still, most families share one room to live and don't have tap water or home appliances like a fridge. The families living in this area have an income significantly below average. This is often due to a lack of higher education. Many of them cannot provide educational and financial support to their children going to school or college. In addition, as the living space at home is typically small, there is often no quiet place available to do homework or to read books.

## Team

Karthik (M.A. and M.Phil. in Tamil Literature, B.Ed.), Mansur (M.A. in Sociology) and Mariammal (M.A. in History, M.Ed.) are the three members of the board of trustees. Karthik, the managing trustee and a fellow of Asha for education in Boston, USA, is responsible for the daily business. In addition, he develops the syllabus, organizes the annual camp and special events. Karthik himself lives with his family in Karumbalai and knows the area by heart. Mansur is the financial trustee. He is a former teaching volunteer as well as director at Seed. Mansur visits Seed several times a week after his work at the government and knows the students and volunteers. Well. Mariammal, the third trustee, is a retired teacher and stays more in the background. The board meets on a monthly basis to discuss and decide about guiding concepts.

Elavarasi (M.Sc. in Physics, B.Ed.) is the director of the NGO. Together with the teaching volunteers she executes the decisions of the trustees and brings in her own ideas too. She does the office work like mailing and is responsible for the social-media presentation of MS. In addition she teaches English and Physics in the evening.

The teaching volunteers play a key role in the functioning of the NGO. They are former students at Seed who finished 12th standard and now give evening classes as well as organize other activities for the MS-students. Moreover, some of the volunteers support Karthik and Elavarasi in their daily work, especially when it comes to computer tasks. 22 of the total 26 volunteers attend college. 4 already finished their college and are either searching for a job or enrolled in a course. The volunteers receive a salary, dependent on working hours, attendance, sincerity and quality of further tasks. At the moment, there are no other teachers engaged on a paid or unpaid basis. The volunteers, the director and the board of trustees discuss and coordinate the various activities mainly at the monthly (or more often if needed) meetings.

### **Target Group**

All children who are enrolled in 1st to 12 st standard from Karumbalai and the Sevalayam hostel can participate in the NGO-program. The students from the Sevalayam hostel are from outside Madurai like villages or neighbor districts but go to school in Madurai. These children are taught at the hostel whereas the children from Karumbalai have classes in one of the MS-centers. There are no requirements regarding religion, grades at school or caste for participating in the activities. There is the one condition, however, that the participating children should attend all classes. The consequence of not going to classes regularly is that these students might not be invited to the weekend programs or special events. At the moment xx children (xx boys and xx girls) are registered at Madurai Seed.

### **Infrastructure**

Madurai Seed has one small office with two working places. One of the two computers has internet connection. There is also a laptop which can be connected to the WIFI in the office. WIFI is protected by a regularly changing password so that the volunteers cannot log in with their own electronic devices. In the same building as the office, on the first floor, there is a center with the library as well as one class room. In the building next to the office there is another center with two rooms. All these rooms are rented. Two further centers being a property of the NGO are located further down the street. The total six rooms are equipped with a blackboard. In the library there is in addition a TV with DVD player. Furthermore, in one of the centers are a whiteboard and a beamer with screen.

### **Activities**

MS follows a holistic approach. Primary, the organization wants to make the students pass the school exams and provides therefore additional classes in the evening where the classic school subjects are taught. Subsidiary, MS aims to develop and strengthen the personalities of the students. This is mainly done through special activities such as workshops, celebrations of important cultural events or the yearly camp during school break. The many special events that took place and in which I participated during my internship can be seen in chapter 4. From Monday to Saturday the additional classes are held in one of the four education centers and the Sevalayam hostel. Classes are held between 18:00 and 20:00 for the children from 1st to 4th standard and between 18:00 and 21:15 (one break of 15 minutes at 20:00) for the higher classes. Madurai Seed doesn't provide time to do homework. Two to three volunteers are responsible for each class. They can follow a syllabus and use the books from the government schools.

On Sundays there are no classes because it is a holiday. If there is no special event going on, the usual Sunday-program is the following: At 10:00 the library opens and sometimes reading sessions take place. Otherwise, the children can read books, newspaper and magazines by themselves. Borrowing the material is however not allowed. In the afternoon there is a dancing class led by some volunteers and later in the evening MS organizes game sessions or shows a movie. The savings bank is another part of the holistic approach of Madurai Seed. Each student has an account at the NGO. He/She can bring the amount to be saved to class and the teaching volunteer makes then an entry into the savings book. The interest rate p.a. is fixed at 20 %.

### **My point of view**

Madurai Seed is an NGO with a program to support and empower underprivileged children and young people. The main function is to provide additional classes where the school subjects are deepened. The weekdays are rather intense for the pupils. After returning home from school in the afternoon, they have a short break and then participate in the MS-program until evening. It is thus not surprising that the students sometimes seem tired during the evening classes. Nevertheless, my impression is that the way these classes are conducted helps the students improving their school achievement. The students are eager to learn and have ambitious role models. Therefore I would say that they know the importance of education for a decent life. This awareness is an important step in empowering the children.

### **Activities**

The program that MS offers is diverse. There are some events that are planned by the board of trustees but most of them are the result of spontaneous suggestions by Karthik or Elavarasi. This spontaneity asks for flexibility of the volunteers and the students. During my internship I got the opportunity to participate in many events and I realized that the children are excited to see or hear something new in a different environment. These activities are to my opinion an important part of the MS program as the children's parents don't have the money, time or the idea itself to take them out for presentations or exhibitions. In terms of the choice of events I had sometimes the impression that it was rather arbitrary. Once, for example, we went to the Tamukkam exposition for home appliance. I felt that the children were not interested at all in the washing machines or mixers that could be seen but that they just walked through and waited in the fun park in the end. This event might be better replaced by going to a (fun) park from the beginning. Another point relates to the communication. To improve the effect of these events I recommend informing the children in more detail about the content of the event coming-up so that they know what to expect. As well, it might be a good thing to inquire better the key parameters of events so that it can for example be prevented to wait two hours for the beginning of a drama.

**Recreation :** The running of the NGO heavily depends on the married couple Karthik and Elavarasi, who are seven days a week available for Madurai Seed. Work- and private life of the two can hardly be separated. The hours at the office are consequently often adjusted to the family needs. However, I don't see this as a disturbance as Karthik can be contacted by phone any time. Yet, I felt some fatigue of Karthik and Elavarasi which I trace back to the intense presence of the two over the past years. In combination with the family duties and the two sons who ask for parental attention, their overall workload increases even more. From my point of view it might be reconsidered to close MS one day a week or every second week (for example on Monday) to relax and have some quality time only for the family. This might be beneficial for the volunteers too, who are busy with college and activities at Madurai Seed and could need one day off.



**English Language:** The importance of the English language for Madurai Seed is undisputed, especially because of the international money donors and volunteers. Elavarasi can express herself very well in English. She is the one who does the English communication for the NGO. Karthik has some basic knowledge but when it comes to discussions or thorough explanations he struggles. When Karthik and Elavarasi are together, she translates for him, so happened e.g. during the interview with the Japanese researcher who visited the NGO once or with myself. This lack of English skills limits Karthik's scope of work for MS and, not to forget, can lead easily to misunderstandings. I think it is important for the NGO that Karthik deepens his English knowledge further. That way he would be a role model in learning English for the volunteers at the same time. Further, I recommend continuing the English classes for the volunteers as the two months I taught were not enough for a sustainable progress. The English classes would not only be beneficial for the volunteers but for the whole NGO. The teaching volunteers can share their knowledge in the evening classes and ensure a certain quality of the lectures.

**Office Work:** With Arun's (former coordinator at Seed) move away from Madurai Seed, Elavarasi undertook his tasks. Along with this change some of the knowledge got lost and during the office work I was confronted with procedures like e.g. uploading documents on the webpage where no one of the current staff knew how to do it. To prevent this in the future, a simple solution is to write down the important processes. Also, it would be good to have someone who has profound knowledge in IT and most important in the MS Office programs. A computer course might be a sufficient step to make Elavarasi or one of the volunteers more confident in computer tasks.

**Classes:** During my lectures for the 8th and 9th standard students in the library I often noticed that this class room is badly affected by the noise of the other class rooms around. If one class is loud or watches a movie it affects quickly the quality of the class in the library. It not only makes the students noisy and distracts them but also the communication between teacher and students is disturbed and worsens the quality of the lecture. The rent for the center with the library in it is a high monthly expenditure. As Karthik and Elavarasi already considered buying another building in place of the rented center I support this idea not only out of a financial perspective but also to build the rooms according to the students' needs. Another point that came to my mind is the violence going on. The students not only tease each other in a playful way but hit powerfully. I can't help feeling that it is for many students a natural way of solving conflicts instead of starting a discussion. I recommend an awareness workshop where students learn about violence and its consequences. Especially the volunteers should then go as an example.

**Financial Situation:** Madurai Seed financially depends on Asha for education in Boston and on the association Friends of Madurai Seed in Zurich. In addition MS receives occasionally one-time donations. The financial situation of MS is at the moment favorable. Still, if one of the named associations stops its payments, MS would be in trouble. Karthik, aware of this situation, is thinking about a third sponsor through the alumni. All the teaching volunteers who complete their college education are automatically part of the alumni association. The Alumni network involves around 50 members whereof only 10 are said to be active with regular contacts. There is no membership fee but Madurai Seed aims at receiving donations as a "repayment" of the investment in terms of effort and money Madurai Seed made. The alumni are invited to

some of the Seed-celebrations like Diwali or New Year's Eve. To make the Alumni to a third source of earnings I would say that the Alumni association should be shaped more beneficially so that the members are tied stronger to the NGO and are more willing to donate. MS could for example organize some exclusive Alumni-events.

## **Activity Report**

### **Office Work**

From Monday to Saturday between 10.30 and 12.30 I supported Karthik und Elavarasi in the office. As the business year and the related extensive tasks were just completed in early summer, there were mainly everyday activities to work on such as preparing documents and writing minor texts in English. In addition, I outlined a new and short brochure, started to update the webpage and provided technical support regarding Microsoft Office programs.

### **English Classes for the Volunteers**



From Monday to Friday, between 14:30 and 16:00 I taught around ten volunteers in English. The volunteers wished to focus on their speaking skills. There was no syllabus available. The program of the first half an hour was up to the volunteers. They had opportunity to ask questions, show me their writing for corrections or have casual discussions. For the lecture from 15:00 – 16:00 I usually prepared a short grammar part, introduced new vocabulary or draw the volunteers' attention to common mistakes I could recognize during the classes. This section

was then followed by speaking tasks in small teams or in class. Current topics from newspaper articles, culture differences or the life of the volunteers were the basis for the various speaking exercises. Also, we were watching the movie Slumdog Millionaire with discussions before and after.

### **English Classes for the Students (8th and 9th standard)**



From Monday to Saturday, between 19:00 and 20:00 I taught around fifteen 8th and 9th standard students in English. My task was to motivate them in learning English and to teach basic skills. There was no syllabus available. The class was usually started with some simple warm-up questions and ended with short sequences of games like Pictionary (draw a word on the blackboard) or 'Changing the letter' (find out the correct word). These games helped to memorize the newly learnt vocabulary. In the main part of the class I focused on speaking and listening. For instance, we read

English and bilingual books together. To understand the content the students prepared then role plays or made drawings. Moreover, I taught some general grammar topics like sentence structure, tenses or adjectives vs. adverbs.

## Special Events

Besides my general tasks described above I participated in several special events together with the students and volunteers. I felt that especially the children were eager to talk in such a casual environment and that they took up English faster than in the class room.

*Celebration of the End of Ramadan:* The volunteers and students prepared the different ingredients for the traditional Muslim dish Briyani. Until lunch - cooked by Karthik and some of the volunteers – was ready, we played games with the students.

*Melli's Visit:* Madurai Seed welcomed Melli. Then, the students prepared short book presentations for her. In the evening, Melli met the volunteers to learn about their ways of teaching. During lunch with Melli, Karthik and Elavarasi we talked about social commitment. Later that day, Melli visited the different centers to get a glance of how the evening classes are hold.

*Visit of Viji at her home:* Viji taught English at Seed for more than one year. She shared her experiences with me and advised me in giving my own lectures.

*NGO-Meeting in Tiruvannamalai:* Karthik attended the "Step"-project meeting in Tiruvannamalai. I accompanied him on that journey. During the meeting I spent my time with two former Seed-volunteers. From our talks I could learn about their personal development from a Seed- student to an employee of an ITcompany and a magazine, respectively, in Chennai.

*Book Presentation in Chennai:* Karthik, two former Seed-students and I participated in the presentation of Mrs. Nageshwari Annamalai's new book about the conflict between Israel and Palestine.

*Excursion to Chattirapatti:* Some of the volunteers had a school leave on that day. Altogether, we drove to Chattirapatti to take a bath in the channel there and play water-volleyball.

*Funeral of A.P.J. Abdul Kalam:* MS organized a funeral ceremony in front of the office. Students and volunteers sung songs and prayed. Afterwards, everyone gathered in the library to watch the funeral on TV.

*Tamukkam Exposition:* Students and volunteers walked to the Tamukkam Exposition fare ground. After seeing the different products presented in the halls, the students could either ride a camel, go for a train or boat ride. On the way home we enjoyed a snack.

*Visit of Meenakshi Amman Temple:* I joined a few volunteers and one of my students to the city center. We went to the Meenakshi Amman Temple. The volunteers showed me around and told several interesting stories about Hinduism and the different gods. Afterwards we visited the 1'000 pillar museum in the temple.

*Evelyn's and Nola's Visit :* Madurai Seed welcomed Evelyn and Nola. Nola presented the English book "Jojo's Wire Car" to the students which she uses herself in teaching English in a township in South Africa. Some of the students showed their self-made wire-cars and wire-bicycles. Also, I got the opportunity to talk to Evelyn about Madurai Seed and to exchange teaching experiences with Nola.

*Excursion to CESCO* (Center for Experiencing Socio-Cultural Interaction): With Karthik and Elavarasi I spent some hours at CESCO. Biju, the director of CESCO, explained me the development and concept of the center.



Interview with Mari Nakamura, Research Fellow: Mari is a research fellow of the Institute of Developing Economies IDE at a Japanese university. She is in the early stage of her research project about the education of children from poor Indian families. The research phase and the writing process will take about two years in total. She interviewed Karthik and Elavarasi about the functions of Madurai Seed, the students and their families as well as the role of the volunteers. She was also raising questions concerning the Indian school system and the Indian job market in general. In the evening, Mari came again to the center. First, she interviewed some of the volunteers about their education, aims and parent's education. Then, she visited the different education centers to get an impression of how the NGO is run.

Independence Day: At 7:00 students and volunteers hoisted the Indian flag in front of the office. Afterwards, a few volunteers and I went by bicycle to the Race Course Ground to see a parade and enjoy the several dancing shows by students from schools around. In the evening, the Seed students presented their drawings, poems and dancing shows for which they prepared the week before.

NGO-Event at Samanar Malai: At the foot of Samanar Hills the NGO Green Walk organized a one day event to make people aware of environment and current issues. After our arrival we first walked up Samanar Malai to see the sunrise and the old inscriptions. Then different talks about environment took place. In the mean time the children participated in the Five Elements Children's Camp, guided by volunteers. The camp tackled various aspects of environment in a playful way. Finally, the children received a certificate.

Drama "Rajendra Cholzant" at Laxmi Sundram Hall: In the late afternoon a few volunteers and students went to the public auditorium to watch the play Rajendra Cholyhant. The story is about the famous Tamil king with the nickname Kadaram Kondan, who was involved in a war for Kadaram – a former name for Malaysia – in the 19th century.

NGO-Event "River Walk": At Vaigai North Bank DHAN Foundation organized an event named River Walk. Some students and volunteers walked from Seed down to the river and gathered in front of a temple with the other participants. This celebration of the full moon was part of the Vaigai restoration project.

## **Conclusion**

The commitment of Madurai Seed to empower and support underprivileged children is visible and sensible. The whole stuff provides big effort to run the NGO. Nevertheless, Madurai Seed shouldn't stop working on its own and improve its program. Especially the future should be kept in view as there might be basic change if Elavarasi finds a government job. It was a great and intense experience to be part of MS. The students who came to my class and the MS-staff taught me a lot about Indian culture and life. I thank everyone who made my stay the way it was!

## Workshop on Creative Self Expression

25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> January 2016, By: Arun

### Introduction

A workshop on creative self-expression was organized for Madurai Seed young people on 25<sup>th</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup> of January 2016. We strongly realized the need for this kind of workshop. While Madurai Seed's most of the activities are based on creativity and self-expression, conducting a workshop on self-expression itself has a chance of maximum impact. The workshop helped them on how to and where to access inspiration to become creative and self-expressive. The workshop was conducted at CESC campus, the tranquility and greenery of the place elevated the mood of the event.

### Why:

- To remove their inhibition to communicate
- To boost their energy level
- To encourage originality, honesty, and reality in speaking
- To encourage positive hobbies
- To give awareness about mass media
- To introduce positive means for entertainment
- To introduce the taste of reading literature
- To build self confidence
- To prevent them from being just spectators and consumers
- To support them to react and create
- To help them feel unique and great

### Facilitator's profile:

**Mr. Prabahar:** Professor of Tamil at The American College, Madurai and one of the pioneers in establishing the Visual Communications department in the college. He is a multifaceted personality a music director, an author, an artist, a singer, a movie critic. He has just instituted "Kaleidoscope Center for Arts and Culture" at Madurai. He was further accompanied by three of his former students.

Mr. Thirunavukarasu: Master's graduate in Tamil, studied at National School of Drama, New Delhi and now actively functioning in Theatre projects nationwide.

Mr. Vadivel: A research scholar doing his research in Trends in Tamil Modern Theatre, Graduate of Tamil, and performing arts

Mr. Anand: Master's graduate in Tamil and studied Theatre at National School of Drama's branch at Bangalore.

## **MASK MAKING: COLORING & SPEAKING**

### **Are we true to ourselves?**

It was the very first session. The participants were asked to cut the mask and color them. The only rule was they've to separate the mask into three parts according to their age level like 1 to 7 years old, 8 to 14 years, and 15 to 21 years old. They can use as much as colors in the mask. Later they've to relate the colors with their emotions, and unforgettable moments in the past.

### **Observations & Learning:**

- Family plays an important role in shaping our character and the way we express things. As many of them have shared their love for mother, traumatic family events, and economic suffering.
- Expressing an emotion can be tough, but expressing it freely and truly was advised.
- Speak your truth in the moment



## **ART OF LISTENING: MUSIC**

### **Are we open to listening?**



Prof.Prabhakar has played some portions from "Laya Project". The participants listened to the local's songs and music from coastal areas affected by Tsunami. He emphasized on how Tamil's perspective of music was limited to only songs from cinema. We always want to see music than listening to music. Lyrical music is largely preferred over instrumental music. Then some instrumental

music was played, participants listened first with eyes open and then eyes closed. Then they spoke about how they felt when listening to music.



### **Key observations & Learning:**

- Most of them have the habit of listening to songs in mobile or TV. Everyone accepts that music is doing something to their mind.
- Music has no language. Music from any land has something to speak with us even we don't understand the meaning.
- Gather new experiences

Watched some of 'Celine Dion's performances later.

### **SEEING AND UNDERSTANDING: IMAGES**

#### **Are we really seeing?**



Visuals are the powerful medium of communication whether it is a painting, photography, or video even body language. Every image in the world is created by someone for someone. Prof. Prabahar presented a PPT on "seeing, viewing, and understanding". We see lots of images every day. Images are communicating with us directly and indirectly. He spoke about how our thinking, culture, and everyday activities are decided by these images. He particularly spoke about gender and other stereotypes in advertisements.

### **Observations & Learning:**

- Any idea that is constantly promoted by the images becomes our fashion.
- A fixation deprives our creative expression.
- We should equip ourselves to understand the stereotype, politics and direct and indirect motives behind an image.
- Never let the stereotypes filter your self-expression

### **PLEASURE OF READING: LITERATURE**

#### **What reading can do to you?**

Prof. Prabahar read two Tamil short stories. The plots of the both stories are simple, and rely on day today things. Literature isn't something that detached from us. We all may encounter such events in our life, what you see and how you perceive matters. When reading as a story the events and emotions are even more powerful. He also read some Tamil free verses and haiku. The young people are introduced to the taste of reading short stories and poems.

### Observations & Learning:

- Everyone likes listening to stories rather than reading and telling stories.
- We don't fake our emotions while reading. A good literature elevates and refines us.
- Read, read and read



### ACT CREATIVELY: THEATRE

Three groups were divided like a family, friends circle, and a business. They were asked to make a small skit. The concept was if you got Rs.10, 000 how would you spend. No other ideas were given. They were free to act like whatever they want. Then each team performed their skits. Professor Prabakar, Karthik Anna and other facilitators gave their feedbacks.

### Observations & Learning:

- Media and cinema affects our way of thinking. It limits our creativity not to see beyond.
- We identify intelligence with complexity, and mediocrity with simplicity. But, it should not be like that.
- We hesitate to speak our lives realistically. We tend to romanticize them.
- Engage in creative activities



## OPEN UP: GAMES

### **We always like to return to our childhood, then why don't we play?**

Mr.Anand, Mr.Thirunavukarasu and Mr.Vadivel conducted many games. The games are planned with the notion of "Learnjoyment". The games required quick action, reaction, body movements, sounds, keen listening, eagerness and above all openness.

### **Learnings:**

The games concentrated on voice and body flexibility. Flexible body can improve a flexible mind vice versa. The games sharpen our senses. Playing shifts you from both physical and mental idleness and fills you with energy.



### **Conclusion:**

The participants were encouraged to speak a lot, to open their emotions, to ask questions. No opinion was discouraged. No verdicts were pushed upon them. As it was the first workshop of this kind many inputs and questions were put before open ended for self-evaluation. At the feedback session, Karthik Anna explained the importance of being self-expressive and how they can improve that with all the resources at Madurai Seed. Director Elavarasi told that we, at Madurai Seed center are planning to continue the creative self-expression sessions and going to extend the same to children also. That will make them more expressive, live, innovative, true, kind and skillful. From the participant's feedback, many of them are interested to read books and listen to music. Their understanding of cinema and media has changed from average. They've decided to take every chance to express them and search for creative activities that is close to their self. We don't say the objectives of the workshop are 100% achieved. But, it is an important step forward, an eye-opener towards vast opportunities and experiences. Last but not least, **Thanks to the Kaleidoscope team and Prof.Prabahar sir.** Thank you.





*THANK YOU*







Haribalan in a crafts session during Vasantham Summer Camp





**MADURAI SEED**  
**To Support and Empower the Underprivileged**  
**Arjun Shanmuga Illam, 439/1, East Street,**  
**Karumbalai, Madurai – 625020,**  
**9442537670, 0452-2537670**  
**maduraiseed1999@gmail.com, www.madurai-seed.org**

