

The Vilvam Foundation™

HALF YEARLY REPORT 2023



AT VILVAM

The last day of the month of Karthigai and the weather has changed with the thick morning fog just in time to bring in Margazhi, our coldest month. As we all sit together to write this update for you, we realize that a mere report is not sufficient to capture the transformations, learnings, joy and impact on the field. It is merely a teaser.

These last 6 months we have seen our work on the field especially in the areas of Education and Culture (**ĀGAMĀ**) take firm root. It gives us so much pleasure to share this report with you as the transformation in children, families and communities is truly re-affirming. We are on the right track and we hope to absolutely grow these programs in a significant way to allow all children the opportunity to do better at school, imbibe life skills/vocational skills to get employed and live as individuals in vibrant communities living values learned and shared through our value education program.

Growth and scale would require a space to house our many activities around education, learning and vocational training. We have been focused on building a beautiful Learning Centre. Work has started in this regard.

With **KRIYĀ**, which is our program focused on livelihood creation, the changing nature of the market has pushed us to think out of the box. Post Covid our rural enterprises had to innovate, become more efficient and reach audiences and customers in newfound ways. The Vilvam team worked closely with these enterprises to create effective partner ecosystems to help grow and address new markets. In addition people in the district needed new skills to help them find jobs. They did that very successfully through our rural skill building programs.

MANDALĀ, which focuses on Health and Wellbeing continues to maintain our herbal garden and research while we build out our Wellness Space and raise funds for our nursery. These two critical aspects have to be completed to move forward.

We have had a hectic but fulfilling 6 months and the next 6 months look promising and exciting as many more villages want our programs in their communities which is a good sign.

We hope to expand our education programs to the next 5 to 10 villages, kickstart the wellness and community health landscape program in all villages where we have a presence and finally focus on entrepreneurship and vocational training for young adults in this district while simultaneously continuing our regular work. So much to do and with friends like all of you supporting us every step of the way, its truly a fulfilling and exciting journey.

See you in 6 months !

Hope you enjoy our update!

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VILVAM - Our Work

Quick Recap

A seed was planted in 2011 when our work in the villages around Tiruvannamalai brought us face to face with the depth and breadth of issues that people needed help with.

The problems that rural folk face are varied in nature, but they almost all stem from rapid change and the resultant stress in learning to cope with those changes.

In this disorganized transition to an unfamiliar world, many fail to make it and are trapped in vicious cycles of debt and alcoholism. Livelihoods, children's education and health suffer greatly.

The Vilvam Foundation was established as an empathetic doorway to help people make this transition.



IMPACT SNAPSHOT

25

VILLAGES WHERE WE WORK

2

SELF-SUSTAINING RURAL ENTERPRISES

250+

DIRECT IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

500+

INDIRECT IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

300+

FIRST GENERATION LEARNERS

1000+

HOUSEHOLDS INDIRECTLY IMPACTED

ĀGAMĀ



ĀGAMĀ

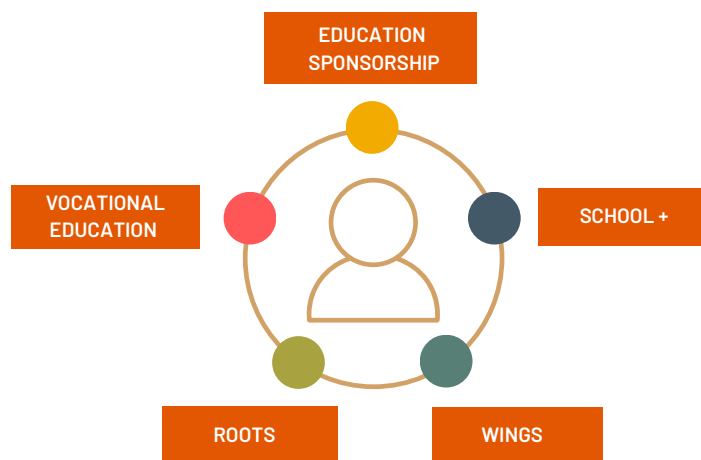
KNOWLEDGE AS TRANSFORMATION

ĀGAMĀ aims to transform rural children into responsible, self-aware adults who participate in the economic and cultural life of their communities.

The focus is on **Knowledge, Education, Culture and Vocation.**

This is done through 5 programs:

- **Education Sponsorship**
- **School +**
- **Wings**
- **Roots**
- **Vocational Education**



The Vilvam Foundation™

SCHOOL+

- Strengthening Foundational Skills in Tamil, English & Math
- Computer/ Digital Literacy

WINGS

- Essential life skill classes
- Project & activity based learning
- Subject matter experts

ROOTS

- Knowledge about local history, country & people
- Individual & community responsibility
- Value Based Education on individual, family & community matters
- Culture & Heritage appreciation
- Celebration of festivals & community events

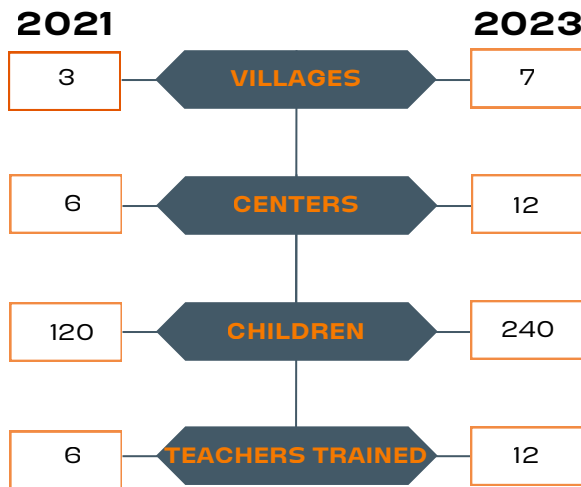
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

- Career counseling & guidance
- Conduct psychometric assessments
- Conduct one on one counselling
- Triangulate aptitude, ambition & constraints to develop career path.

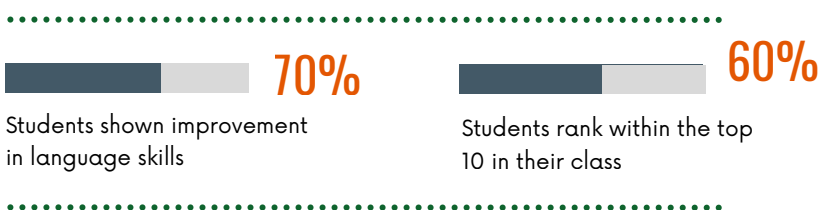
ĀGAMĀ: SCHOOL+

STRENGTHENING FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS IN MATH AND LANGUAGE

Programs we initiated 1.5 years ago for the students finally **taking root** particularly in the last 6 months. The impact of these initiatives extends beyond mere numbers and it is tangible and meaningful.



- Our children eagerly participate in after school intervention, conducted 4 days a week for 1.5 hours, and the positive outcomes are reflected in their report cards.
- The teachers serve as the driving force for these centers, having developed a special connection with every student. They make each session interactive and enjoyable, and our children eagerly anticipate the stories shared by their teachers. **A special mention goes to Kathalaya for training our teachers in storytelling.**
- The teachers develop the study plan based on the child's evaluation and regularly conduct parent-teacher meetings. This approach pulls parents to participate in their children's education, a practice that typically does not happen in rural areas.



Learning concepts by doing



Children absorbed in reading



Mixed age classroom



Teachers discussing about study plan

ĀGAMĀ: SCHOOL+

Digital Literacy program

- Launched on the 2nd December, 2022.
- A Comprehensive curriculum has been designed for all age groups and learning levels.
- Students receive regular simple projects to foster creativity and evaluate their application of learned concepts.
- For many children, this is their first opportunity at using a computer.

40

Students on weekends attend classes in 4 batches.

10

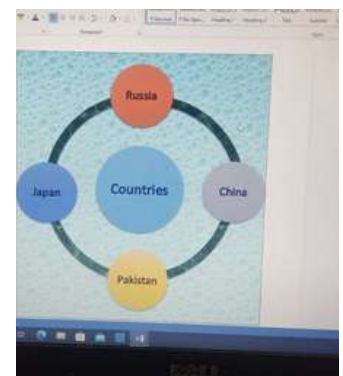
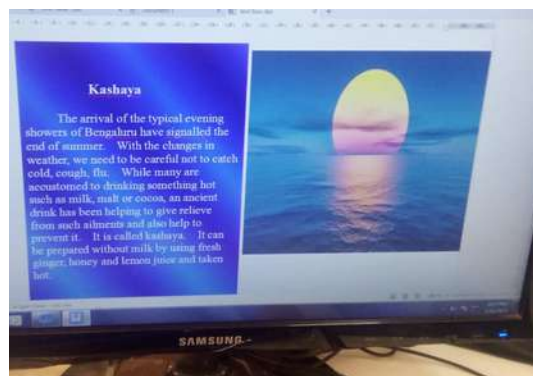
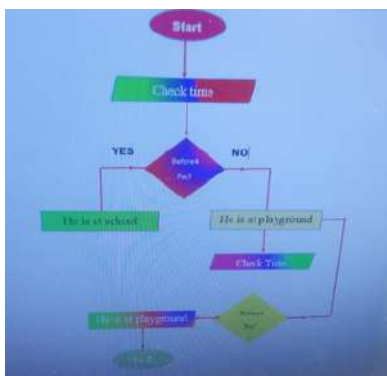
Students in weekday classes

2

Dedicated local teachers



Computer center at The Vilvam Foundation



Projects done by children

ĀGAMĀ: ROOTS

VALUE BASED EDUCATION

- We launched weekly sessions on value-based education at our centers, integrating lessons from our Puranas, Indian history and Indian mythology and the response has been fantastic.
- Students from primary school to college participate in these sessions.
- Every class comprises of the following components:

- **Chanting and Shloka recitation**
- **Activity/games to re-enforce learnings**
- **Stories from our Puranas and History**
- **Awareness building and exposure to Indian history and heritage with a special focus on local history**
- **Discussion and debates on lessons learned from these stories and texts**
- **Relevance and practical application of lessons learned in daily life**

-
- Our children take the lessons learned and share them with their families. They never fail to seize opportunities in schools to display this knowledge.
 - A 1st-grade student impressed her school during a picture exhibition by narrating stories, drawing attention to our VBE sessions. The school now seeks a dialogue for implementing similar classes !!!
-



Children, filled with excitement, adorned their best attire, decorated the center on the day of the Sita Rama wedding narration. After class, they shared sweets and fruits, making it a memorable day for everyone in the class.



Qualities students wished to present to Rama during the wedding.



Ayodhya - A dream city as envisioned by the students.



Understanding Dashavatar

Highlights



From idolizing movie heroes, children now enthusiastically talk about Rama and Lakshmana and brave warriors from our glorious past thanks to our teachers elevating the storytelling experience. This marks a significant shift in mindset and hero worship.



Two 8th-grade students from our center performed the Ramayana in the TN folk art style 'Villu Paatu.' They composed the dialogue/song, set the tune, and went up to district level in Kalai Tiruvizha function.



Students taken on heritage and historical trips | (above) Adi Thiruvarangam Temple visit built by the Cholas and the Vijayanagar Empire

ĀGAMĀ:WINGS

LIFE SKILL EDUCATION

- Lifeskills bridge the gap between academics and holistic personal development, shaping students into better individuals.
- We adopt a structured approach with one lifeskills topic introduced monthly, and children are taught through activity and interactive sessions.
- Some of the topics covered these last few months include effective conversation, how to focus, the importance of teachers, goal setting and public space cleanliness.

Beneficiaries:

- Children
- Family
- Community

Positive Transformation:

- Students now show significant changes in behavior: increased respect for parents and elders at home, along with reduced screen time.
- These young agents of change have made a significant impact in their villages, proving that children can contribute to a promising future for their community. All it takes is determination and a will to make a difference.
- **We're receiving requests to open similar centers in many other neighboring villages.**



Older children participating in a goal-setting session.



Kids during one of the sessions.

TRANSFORMATION IN ACTION - project based learning



As part of goal-setting and staying focused topic, children undertook projects such as establishing a village garden, saving for Pongal clothes, and memorizing Tamil Nadu districts. They gained the skill of transforming generic goals into SMART ones, resulting in a sense of accomplishment and pride upon achieving them.

TRANSFORMATION IN ACTION - Project based learning

Kananthampoondi



Agaram



Kaveriyampoondi



Pandithapattu

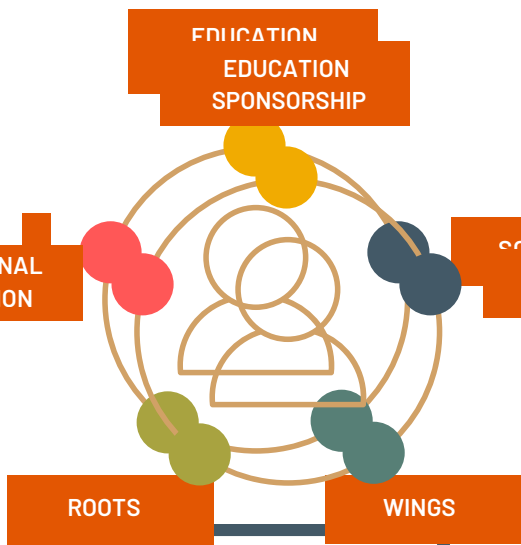


SCHOOL+ centers, acting as change-makers, spearheaded a cleanup initiative, targeting a street, temple, public library, and Panchayat office. Students, guided by teachers, collaboratively set goals, planned, & executed the activity with enthusiasm. Parents & villagers joined in, witnessing the little ones in action, creating a proud moment post-cleanup. This not only enhanced understanding of "Public spaces" but also instilled pride in students for contributing positively to their village.

ĀGAMĀ: WHAT'S NEXT?

- Kickstart a foundational course on entrepreneurship.
- Start vocational courses and basic business courses for young adults.

- Expand to 5-10 more villages.
- Start between 10 and 20 new centers.
- Commence training on communication and conversational skills.





- Take existing programs to Govt. schools and private schools
- Expand to another 10 villages
- Focus on community projects and community discussions.
- VBE based on epics

HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE?

ACTIVITY DETAILS	AMOUNT in ₹
ADOPT A VILLAGE (2 Centers - Impact 40+ children lives)	2,50,000
ADOPT A VILLAGE CENTER (Impact 20+ children lives)	1,25,000
SPONSOR A TEACHER	48,000
VOCATION IMMERSION PROGRAM (Twice a year)	2,50,000
DONATE TOWARDS THE KNOWLEDGE CENTRE BUILDING	30,00,000
DONATE SNACKS FOR THE CHILDREN(Per year)	75,000
SPONSOR TABLETS FOR A CENTER (2 Tablets)	24,000

Kindly contact us at

 +91 94498 25502

 tvfconnect8@gmail.com

PROGRAM CENTERS

THIS YEAR

7 | **12** | **240**
VILLAGES | CENTERS | CHILDREN

IN 5 YEARS

25 | **50** | **1000+**
VILLAGES | CENTERS | CHILDREN

MANDALĀ



MANDALĀ

MAKING HEALTHCARE & WELLBEING ACCESSIBLE, AFFORDABLE, AND LOCAL

MANDALĀ | CONTEXT

Rural Indians spend a lot on medical care for common ailments, and lack access to good healthcare, leading to growing debt. While we are happy to conduct periodic medical camps we realize that we are not addressing the real issue of better lifestyle, better nutrition and preventive care.

We have discovered the valuable use of medicinal herbs, but their knowledge is diminishing. Backyard medicinal plants were once used in every home for health and wellness, but intergenerational knowledge transmission has broken down and commercial medicine efforts have caused their decline.

People now have begun to visit hospitals for minor ailments that could be treated at home with food or herbs. This is a financial burden and consumes time due to distance and transportation.

OBJECTIVE

MANDALĀ aims to go many steps further to look at prevention as an all important element of health and wellbeing.

MANDALĀ hopes to build awareness of the use of medicinal plants. We plan to distribute herbs and plants that can be a first line of defense to boost immunity and heal oneself at home through food and herbs before going to the hospitals.

COMPONENTS

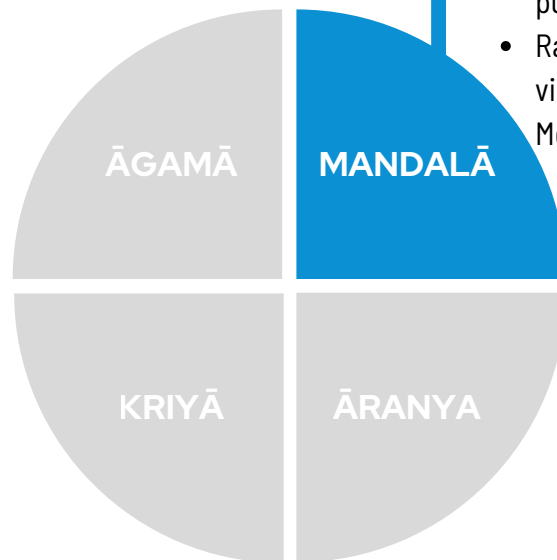
In the last 6 months we have done the following:

- Created and continue to maintain a herbal garden with 95 critical herbs needed in this area and 34 varieties of greens.
- Created and continue to maintain a Knowledge repository
- Started the construction of a Wellness space for workshops, training and immersions

Things we need to do once we avail of funds:

- Set up a world-class nursery
- Create Wellness kits/community
- Establish Wellness gardens
- Train women to take these kits to market and establish a sustainable livelihood program

MANDALĀ: WHAT'S NEXT?



- Complete construction of the Wellness Center
- Set up the nursery
- Create community herbal gardens in all villages where we work.
- Get the community to fully take ownership of these public spaces.
- Raise awareness in these villages on how Food is Medicine

HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE?



The Vilvam Foundation™

ACTIVITY DETAILS	AMOUNT in ₹
DONATE TOWARDS BUILDING THE WELLNESS CENTRE	10,00,000
DONATE TOWARDS CREATING THE NURSERY	2,50,000
SPONSOR THE LIVELIHOOD OF THE HERBS AND NURSERY CARE TAKERS	96,000
SPONSOR THE LIVELIHOOD OF THE HERBS AND NURSERY CARE TAKER(4 Persons)	3,84,000



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KRIYĀ



KRIYĀ

CREATING LIVELIHOODS & SKILLED INDIVIDUALS

The two rural enterprises Wild Ideas and Work.Flow. continue to provide livelihoods for hundreds of people while being self-sustaining and profitable.

But the need for livelihoods is great in our district.

The Vilvam Foundation trains people across different vocations so that they can become employable in a multitude of sectors. Over the years, these training programs has led to substantial growth and creation of livelihoods.

Skill Building ➔ **Business Opportunities**

Last year, the Vilvam Foundation organized an end to end candle-making workshop for women, and this Diwali marked a magnificent celebration for all the women who took part in this training and took their wares to market.

Over four months of the festive season, they dedicated their efforts in mass production of exquisite terracotta candle diyas, ensuring timely completion and delivery. The women, from ordering raw materials to establishing the production line, completing quality checks, and packing, handled it all like true professionals. Now, they're all set to tackle any order size, making customers happy with their newfound skills.

Diwali was a true celebration as many of our awesome donors who participated in our **Urban (Consumer) Rural (Manufacturer) Connect program** chose to contribute organic food essentials made by their rural manufacturing partners to deserving orphanages. To learn more about this program to connect with us.



Women Weaving Light and Fragrance



Children @ Sri Sathya Sai Premaarpatham Foundation relishing WILD IDEAS vadams

KRIYĀ

CREATING LIVELIHOODS & SKILLED INDIVIDUALS

As many of you know Work.Flow. was launched as a high impact rural enterprise with 2 specific goals.

- Give people work in rural India and stem urban migration.
- Create a platform for anyone involved in the construction industry – builders, artisans, craftsmen – to plug in, earn their livelihoods and teach their skill to those who want to learn. This could be masonry, carpentry, electrical, plumbing, stonework, welding etc.

Over the past few months, the highly skilled team has now commenced the construction of The Vilvam Learning center and the Wellness Centre.



Top: Wellness Centre | Below: Vilvam Learning Center construction work in progress

KRIYĀ: WHAT'S NEXT?



The Vilvam Foundation™

Over the past 6 months, the herbal garden which is part of Mandala has been established and is thriving as planned.

Some of the goals in setting this up was:

- To create awareness around herbal medicine and spread awareness on using food as medicine
- To supply free medicinal saplings to villagers
- To train people on usage in and around Tiruvannamalai
- To sell kits to urban audiences to create a sustainable rural livelihood program for women in this area.

We hope to raise funds to kickstart the required skill building that aims to empower women in rural areas through comprehensive training modules including:

- Seed Collection,
- Sapling Preparation,
- Soil Preparation,
- Nursery Setup,
- Packaging Techniques,
- Community Distribution,
- Recipe Collection, and
- Documentation

EXPECTED OUTCOME

- Create Livelihoods
- Improve Health
- Reduce Healthcare Burden
- Preserve Traditional Knowledge
- Reduce Environmental Impact





The Vilvam Foundation™

THANK YOU