

Progress Report of CMT's Interventions in Education

April 2019- March 2020

Background information

The *Inception Strategy and Ways of Work for the Chelvanayakam Memorial Trust*, recognises the critical role of education in enhancing children's life chances, as well as the wide-ranging support necessary to rehabilitate the neglect and destruction of infrastructure and human capacities in northern Sri Lanka during the war years. Drawing upon the contextual analysis and suggested interventions outlined in the *Strategy* document, since 2013 the Chelvanayakam Memorial Trust (CMT) has expanded its intervention starting out of its pilot initiatives at Thanthai Chelva Primary School, Thellippalai to cover 9 schools in the Valikamam Educational zone.

Rationale for the selection of the Schools:

The CMT's pilot at Thanthai Chelva Primary goes beyond its commemoration of S. J. V. Chelvanayakam's legacy. Primary education doesn't just ensure a strong foundation of the basic literacy skills required for later academic success. A systematic, thoughtful education during these critical years will help a child realize her/his full potential eventually and grow into a socially conscious individual. Therefore, CMT's contributions to the nine schools including Thanthai Selva Primary now are an investment towards a more just and peaceful society later. Furthermore, the nine schools selected deserve support, especially, in catering to the children of a highly marginalized community in terms of displacement, class and caste. Multiple displacements during the war also challenge these families' struggle to educate their children as a potential escape from their current poverty. All but one of the schools Mylitti Kalaimakal Vidhyalayam are primary schools.

1. Thanthai Selva Thodaka Nilai Palli
2. Kollankaladdy Saiva Tamil Vidyalayam
3. Mavaddapuram South American Mission Tamil Mixed School
4. Varuthalaivilan American Mission Tamil Mixed School
5. Myliddy North Kalamahal Vidyalayam
6. Thaiyiddy Ganesha Vidyalayam
7. Thaiyiddy Sivakurunathar Vidhyalayam
8. Ottahapulam Roman Catholic Tamil Vidyalayam
9. Urani Kanishta Vidyalayam

The CMT's Education interventions are aimed at impacting educational outcomes in the following ways.

- a) Helping interested teachers improve the quality of their teaching,
- b) Enhancing teacher- pupil relationships,
- c) Developing teachers' and students' capacity for self- learning,
- d) Maximising the use of learning resources in schools,

Over the past year, CMT has made progress on work in the following areas, which are detailed in this report

1. Smart Classroom Development
2. English E Lessons
3. Financial Support for capacity building (students, teachers and schools)

1. Smart classroom development

Technology is at the heart of development and advancement and CMT aims to facilitate access to technology to students in difficult areas from vulnerable backgrounds who do not have this facility. As part of this CMT is undertaking a pilot initiative to provide smart classroom facilities in school we support. The aim of this pilot project is to find out if smart classrooms create an enabling environment for improving the educational outcomes at the Thanthai Chelva Thodakka Nilaip Palli (Primary School). The reasons for selecting this school are 1) Its location at a convenient accessible spot for all, 2) Its history of service as the primary section of the 200 year old Union College, 3) Needs both in terms of limited educational learning infrastructure, and the large number of children from vulnerable families who attend this school, and 4) the dedication and support of the principal and teachers of the school.

Objectives, Process and Outcomes

- Teachers are able to increase the variety of teaching methods they use in their classrooms.
- Teachers are better able to identify and support the students' different learning styles visual, oral, kinesthetic etc.
- Students and teachers have a greater number of interactive communications (instead of the commonly used one directional communication style).
- Teachers are able to quickly access and show students relevant information online.
- Students are able to search the internet for relevant information during class.

CMT has completed the following activities to develop school/teacher capacity in relation to Smart Classroom development

- I. **Provided a smart board and multimedia projector** to Thanthai Chelva Primary to enable learning and encourage different type of teaching and learning methods and train the teachers to use the board.
- II. **Conducted an introduction training** for teachers from Thanthai Chelva Primary and Varuthalaivilan American Mission Tamil mixed school.
- III. **Organized an exposure visit** to Puthukudiyiruppu, Sri Subramaniya Vidyalayam a school where several class rooms have been installed with and are using smart boards for more than 2 years.



IV. Providing a conducive environment for the Smart classrooms

CMT provided assistance to improve the physical space and ambiance of the classroom by providing a ceiling and partition so as to ensure for its effective usage of a smart board and equipment provided by the Government provided to Kollankaladdy Saiva Tamil Vidyalayam. The board has been set up in a common area so that students of all grades can now use it effectively.

Images of classrooms with Smart board being used



Smart class room Proposal

CMT has developed a proposal to raise funding for the pilot initiative to provide all class rooms with smart boards at the Thanthai Chelva Primary school. This proposal has been shared with well wishers and known networks. The proposal is easily adaptable and can be used by other schools who may also be seeking to get assistance or donations for smart boards.

2. English E lesson

I. Teachers training

Due to the shortage of English teachers in Northern Province, the ministry of Education of the Northern province has developed and distributed an E (electronic) lesson program for primary school children. (This was done by digitizing the national school text books for learning English - voice recordings have been made for each lesson and these are provided on CDs to teachers. Supplementary documents are also provided to teachers). Although the education ministry distributed this E program to schools, there was neither introductory training nor support given to teachers to use these tools effectively. To fill this gap, CMT organized training to learn how to use the E program with the support of the Northern province English assistant director and the Valikamam zonal primary school assistant director of education for Valikamam zonal schools. 50 teachers participated in the training from 12 schools. The CMT program lead makes continuous visits to our target schools in order to support teachers with the E program.



II. Provision of Laptops

Some of the school CMT has been working with needed another type of support. They didn't have the facilities to implement E lessons as in a computer. Here CMT provided Laptops to these schools (all in the Valikamam Education zone).

- Myliddy North Kalaimahal Maha Vidyalayam
- Urani Kanista Vidyalayam
- Kollankaladdy Saiva Tamil Vidyalayam
- Mavidapuram American Mission Tamil Mixed School



3. Financial Support for capacity building (students, teachers and schools)

CMT provided financial support to individual students and schools in order to enhance their capacity to engage in quality learning and teaching.

3.1 Monthly financial support for 25 vulnerable students

20 students were identified from Thanthai Chelva Thodakka Nilai Palli and 5 students from Kollankaladdy Saiva Tamil Vidyalayam to receive a monthly bursary of Rs.500/-. Students can use this amount to purchase stationary, pay tuition fees or help with their transport costs. The money is transferred to the school account and the school transfers it to the students bank accounts.

Students were identified by the class teachers based on the following criteria:

- low income families
- students lost their parents
- single parent households

3.2 Financial support for Volunteer English teachers and a preschool teacher allowance

For a long time period Thanthai Chelva Thodakka Nilai Palli didn't have an **English teacher** so students in that school were at a disadvantage. The school found a volunteer teacher in the area and requested CMT to pay the volunteer teacher allowance. CMT has been paying monthly Rs.10,000/- to the teacher. Thanthai Chelva Thodakka Nilai Palli is running a **preschool** with 4 teachers and CMT partly contributes toward one of the teacher's salary. CMT also provides financial support for the **volunteer English teacher** in J/Thaiyiddy Ganesha Vidyasalai to implement E lesson for Gr 1- 5 students.

3.3 Model paper support

Financial support to distribute the model paper in Thanthai Chelva Thodaka Nilaip Palli for Grade 5 students who sat for the scholarship exam.

3.4 Support for the study tour

CMT provided part support to the Thanthai Chelva Thodakka Nillap Palli study tour to visit Trincomalee, Polonnaruwa, Sigiriya and Anuradhapura which are places related to their studies. 60 students (Grade 3 - 5) and their parents and teachers participated in the 2 day tour.

The education tour gives students the opportunity to visualise what they learn at school as well as to expose them to new ideas and experiences. Something that children from these schools. The following benefits are identified for students,

- The opportunity for experiential learning as a contrast to classroom learning.
- The opportunity to broaden the social experience of the students.
- The opportunity to link the experience with the curriculum so that learning becomes holistic.
- This also provides the child the opportunity to experience the art, craft and culture of the places they visit.



3.5 Study material distribution

Urani Kanista Maha Vidyalayam is school that has been restarted after resettlement recently and has just 12 students. The government constructed a new permanent building for the school. CMT provided the educational materials for improving the students learning.

3.6 Additional Classes for GCE O/L students

Myliddy North Kalaimahal school originally the American Mission School with a school with a 200 year history and displaced for 30 years and functioning close to a camp for IDP's (internally Displaced Persons) in Chunnakam was newly returned to its original location in September 2019. However many of the students of this school who are from families that remain in displacement have to travel daily from their homes in the IDP camp to Myliddy almost 20 Kms away. CMT supported the teachers initiative to conduct additional exam paper classes to improve their understanding in and increase the student pass rate of GCE O/L Ordinary Level in Maths, Science, Tamil and English.

