

# Vanavil Annual Report 2013-14

Completing nine years, Vanavil is supporting 135 kids. We have eight classes from kinder garden to 7<sup>th</sup> grade and a team of 10 Teachers and 6 nonteaching staffs. The overall academic performance has improved a lot since the kids now in middle school had entered formal schooling in kinder garden unlike the older kids who directly joined mainstream middle schools after few years with Vanavil. We have separate teachers for every subject. Average attendance is 68%, which is running far ahead of local government schools. Academic results are also expected to be good, with more students taking the 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> standard exams, building on our first “passes” over the last two years. Dropout rate has reduced and this year only two kids from 9<sup>th</sup> grade have dropped out due to family pressure and lack of interest.

The kids are healthy and their general immunity is good. The wardens take good care of their ailments. A 7<sup>th</sup> grade boy was diagnosed with congenital heart block, thanks to the doctors team of Meenakshi hospital, Thanjavur, and we are monitoring his condition carefully. One major issue this past year was kids getting sick from drinking bad water. Thankfully, Srinath Baba donated a water Purifier and we now have safe drinking water.

The most exciting development for students this year is that the kids have a vegetable farm in the backyard. They invest a lot of time and are so happy nursing the plants. It is already yielding radish, greens, tomato, and green chilli. It also becomes a reason for the kids to stay back in hostel even in weekends. The kids practiced a lot of dance and dramas and performed them on

Republic Day. The teachers made it a grand event and it was a great outcome team effort.  
Farm

Thanks to Srinath and Renaata Raabe for donated two milch cows, we now have two cows and three calves. Due to Komari disease outbreak all the cows were sick for months. They have recovered and are healthy now. The rice harvest was good this year. We need ‘goat proof’ metal fencing for the farm; Wipro Cares has generously asked us to submit a request for funding for the fence, which will hopefully come through soon.

## Summer camp & Extra-curricular Activities

	Boys	Girls	Total
Thulir-L.K.G	9	3	12
Thalir-U.K.G	8	4	12
I	7	8	15
II	8	10	18
III	7	4	11
IV	9	3	12
V	7	8	15
VI	5	7	12
VII	11	7	18
<b>Vanavil kids in Mainstream Schools</b>			
VIII	0	2	2
IX	1	3	4
X	0	1	1
XI	0	1	1
XII	0	1	1
B.A	0	1	1
Total	72	63	135

## Photography

Chithirai selvan, a professional cinematographer conducted photography workshop for a week. He explained the mechanism of DSLR camera and its functions. After shooting around the school campus the kids were taken to Vedharanyam salt pans for a day and returned with beautiful photographs.



Kid's Photography

## Performing arts



Janaki and Bosco taught various folk dances for different age groups. They taught parai, kurumbar attam, karagam, oyil aatam, kummi and trained the kids for choreographed performances. Revathi taught a play called “Kutti yaanaiku kombu mulaichadhu” to the kids.

## Visual arts:



JP and Panneer from Bangalore did an interesting craft workshop. With simple material like paper cup, disposable plate, straw, etc they made beautiful crafts.

Kalamkari painting on textiles was taught by Vaidhegi from Chennai. Natarajan, Solairaj, Guruz taught hand painting, clay modelling, mask making.

## Thilaga workshop

Thilaga is a professional Katta Koothu artist and tutor. She is conducting dance classes every three months for the kids. She teaches dance and fitness exercises.



### **Teacher's workshop**



Matthew and Deepa conducted a workshop on teaching strategies. They taught how to use open ended questions, down memory lane, pair and share strategies in a classroom. Lot of ideas to improve the teacher-student relationship and to make a punishment free classroom were discussed. Overall the workshop helped the teachers to create an interesting and engaging classroom.

### **Science workshop**

Mr.Sathya Manickam and Palpandi conducted a two day fun filled workshop for teachers on Science and Astronomy. He shared a lot of ideas to make a classroom interesting and hold kids attention. The workshop highlighted how all disciplines are interlinked and how to using low cost and no cost material for teaching. It widened our scientific knowledge and left us more curious on science behind everything around us. He also gave a demo to use the Telescope we bought from Galileo Science forum.



### **New Initiatives & Projects**

#### **Computer Lab**

Paul Prokop donated a laptop this year, which has maintained some computer facility for the kids because our one aging desktop has finally died. With drastic power cut it is becoming difficult for the kids to study in the evenings and conduct computer classes, however, thanks to John R. & Ruth E. Wennersten for donating an inverter, we are able to light up a portion of the evenings for study. For a proper computer lab we still need more computers and a power back up, and we are preparing a proposal for kitting out the library with proper systems and furniture and to copy a model academic program from Chennai to get great education returns on the computer lab investment.

#### **Academic Growth**

This year the targeted remediation program for older students has worked exceptionally well. We made a special effort to identify and work extra with students who were struggling (typically due to gaps in schooling), and scored some big successes, including helping some older students who were persistently illiterate to learn to read in Tamil. The targeted program will continue this coming year. Parents continue to buy in to education as a better alternative to early marriage and/or informal employment. Next year we plan for students from 6<sup>th</sup> standard onward to be placed in monitored enrolments at local government schools, further building on our goal of transitioning all children into formal education.

#### **Teacher Improvement**

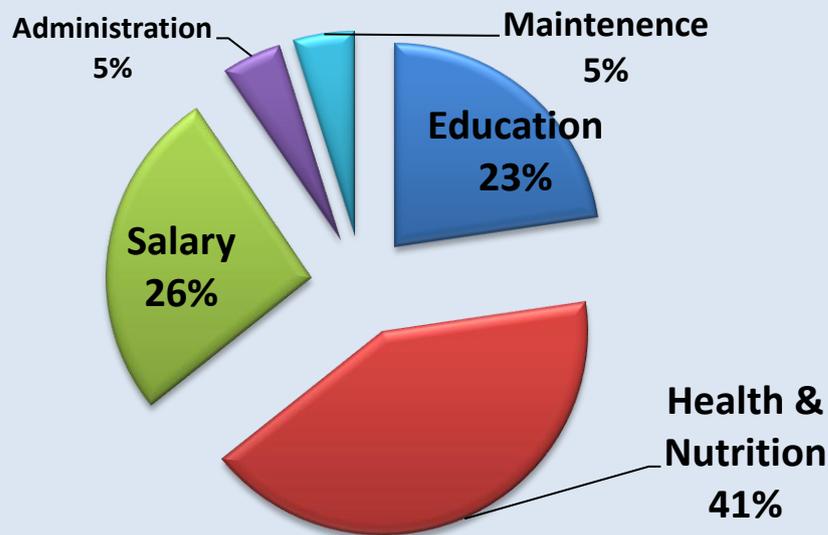
Past years have shown relatively high teacher turnover. We are hoping to raise more funds this year so we can increase teacher salaries, and we will also be conducting additional teacher training workshops to improve skills (and therefore make teaching easier for our staff!) The rapport between the current group of teachers and students has really improved, especially after the Republic Day celebration where the teachers had a good connect with the kids.

## Capital Campaign - Van

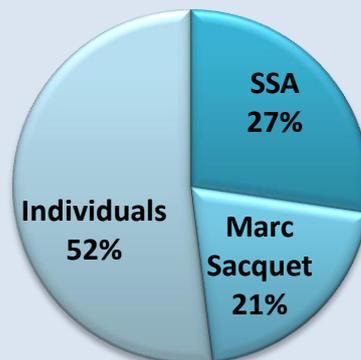
The other big push is to replace our aging school van. The van is a very important component for older students who need to be transported to local schools and for day scholars (especially younger students) who need help getting to school. Our van is long past its useful life but the declining SSA funding has meant we have had to postpone replacement. We are hopeful that after the elections we can approach local donors for assistance, and we are reaching out through all our networks for increased funding so we can take care of this and other long simmering priorities, such as the fence.

## Rejuvenated Relationship with Institutional Donors

We are making extra efforts this year to reach out to backers such as Wipro Cares and to improve communication overall. Wipro Cares has been exceptionally generous in the past and we are happy that they we have together re-engaged for the good of the kids. A big thank you to all of our contributors, both instutional and private, who helped us raise a record 20.4 lakhs in non-government funding this year. Expenses overview:



## Donations



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