



VANAVIL

14th - ANNUAL
REPORT
2018 - 19



Creative Education

Safe Childhood

Healthy Children

Vanavil Trust, Keezhakarayiruppu Village, Sikkal Post, Nagapattinam, Tamil Nadu, India 611108.

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We were born out of the destructive Asian Tsunami. We survived an almost similar destructive cyclone Gaja last year. We have built resilience to a very marginalised community and with this new cyclone are trying to work in other vulnerable pockets. We hope that with all your continued support we will be able to reach out the goodness and progress to the Gaja affected Talaignayiru people also. It was also the year of great transformations we made in the way we impart education at the Vanavil School. We brought in Montessori method and have signed up for a new english acquisition program from Karadipath.

Vanavil Stands For

Child protection | Ending malnutrition | Holistic Education

Started as an anti-begging child care institution, Vanavil has in the fourteen years of its existence grown into

- a) children's home,
- b) an alternative primary school
- c) afterschool centres in villages where the nomadic tribes live and
- d) a training centre which prepares young people to jobs and higher education.

Child Protection: We work with a community that contributes the bulk of child and women beggars in Nagapattinam. We started working post tsunami with this community with an explicit goal to wean the children out of begging and giving them nutritive support and holistic education. In fourteen years, we have taken more than 250 children out of begging. We are working with another 250 children



in villages far away from Vanavil school through afterschool centres. We run a children's home to provide a safe space for these children many of whose parents are still engaged in begging and nomadic occupations. We convince the children to give up begging and we also go in search of those who relapse into begging due to family financial crises and/or disinterest in education and bring them back to the fold of education.

Ending Malnutrition: Vanavil was given life by a young infant Lakshmi whose life was snuffed out of her much too soon due to lack of nutrition. The nomadic communities due to their cultural habits of early marriage and dislike towards contraception and due to their nomadic food habits show signs of severe malnutrition. At Vanavil Home and School we make sure we provide three healthy nutritive and tasty meals a day and also provide milk, egg and nutritive snacks to the children.

Holistic Education: A proper space for childhood, a good educational model that nurtures the child's interest and curiosity and pedagogy that takes into account all the multiple intelligences that different children possess is crucial for the child protection project. We have created a positive haven where children can learn freely. We run an alternative learning environment with Montessori equipment, a student theatre group, extensive art projects, Music and dancing sessions and Sports.



Vanavil Children's Home

Vanavil runs a Children's home for children rehabilitated from child begging and a few children brought in by social welfare and Police departments. The home has 22 boys and 42 girls. We have two separate hostels for the boys and girls. Our home serves a crucial purpose of providing safe space for children who are in difficult situations. Listen to the stories of some of our children:



Nadeeswari's story

Nadeeswari was born in Velankanni shrine area and her mother does odd jobs and begs at the shrine. Her father left them even as Nadeeswari was a young child. The mother remarried and then Nadeeswari's problems took a turn for the worse. Nadeeswari was supposed to sell Jesus stickers – a new method of begging where the children plead pilgrims to buy these stickers for ten rupees and more. With the alcoholic step father taking charge of her, Nadeeswari was beaten and made to beg for long hours and all the money she gathered was taken by the step father for his alcoholism. Unable to bear extreme violence and not getting any support from her mother Nadeeswari approached a local well-wisher and ultimately the Velankanni Police Station. We were called by the Police station and she was sent to Vanavil Home. Nadeeswari has recovered from much of the trauma she faced with counselling and activities at Vanavil. She is studying in 6th standard now and dreams of becoming a Police Woman when she grows up.



Jesudasan the Playwright

Jesudasan's father is also an alcoholic. Jesudasan's family was surviving on his mother's and grandmother's labour. His mother heard about Vanavil through some people she met, and she brought him to Vanavil. Jesudasan is very bright and he is the play wright and theatre director of Vanavil. In the floods last year their house also collapsed and now the family is living outside the Zion's church



in Nagapattinam. The father also disappeared only to be found in Kerala in some crisis making the family travel to Kerala to rescue him adding to their already immense financial crisis. Jesudasan however is a very bright child and hopes to become a doctor when he grows up.

Programs 2018-19



Awareness on Child rights and Child Sexual abuse: We conducted awareness about good touch and bad touch and inappropriate behavior to children and staff. We demonstrate to children about whom to approach if they are facing awkward or abusive situations. We observed the anti-child labour day to explain the hazards of child labour to the kids.



Sports Day: We use sports in an effective way to engage the students and also to bring down the aggression in some students. Every day evening we have a sports hour when the younger children play with ring ball, frisbee, skipping rope and throw ball. Elder kids play badminton, kabaddi and football. In the summer, we had our elder student P. Sami from the CSI Corley school in Chennai coaching the younger ones in Vanavil Home in kabaddi rules. The week long Summer Kabaddi camp was run by Sami and other elder students for the younger ones and we had a tournament and gave prizes to the winning team.



Women's day: We held speech and poetry competition to mark the Women's day and also to discuss about teasing, bullying and other issues girl children face. Boys and girls took part in the competitions and penned some interesting pieces.

Medical checkups and camp: Regular medical checkups are done for the children at the Vadugacherry PHC. For smaller ailments like fever, cold etc., we also go to a private clinic in Sikkal in the evenings. For bigger problems like dental issues, infections, skin problems we go to the GH in Nagapattinam. Periodic medical camps are held at the school through the PHC.



Vanavil Nursery And Primary School

Vanavil at present covers from KG to college for 170 children from the most marginalized children from



- Boom Boom Maatukarar Aadiyan and Narikuravar, nomadic tribes
- Children in conflict with law and/or in forced labour.



From the first day Vanavil has been an alternative school with a home. The School is an important part of this program of rehabilitating child beggars and runaway/abandoned children as we believe that a proper child friendly environment with caring adults is a positive way to appeal to the child to give up hazardous begging.

Vanavil School has been a child centered school with proper trained and empathetic teachers who understand the rights of the child.

Vanavil has progressed in leaps and bounds in academics this year. We have implemented the Montessori method and have created a Montessori environment in Vanavil thanks to the Ramcharan Trust and Usha Subramanian.

We have a new English acquisition program from Karadipath to teach our children English through listening stories, songs and learning through Kinesthetics.

From 2nd to 5th we implemented thematic learning where each term the children take a theme and explore it in many ways – painting, model making, exposure visits, performances etc. For the first term the Sea was our theme and the second term was taken over by the Cyclone Gaja. For the third term we had a wonderful Project day on April 3rd with our primary school children. The theme this term was living things and they had models of animals, and a forest, had make colourful birds through Origami, amazing drawings of trees, leaves, birds and insects, sang songs about trees and theatre performances.



Our Success Stories...

Guru Balan and Arthi came first and second in their schools and made it to newspapers! Six of our children who took their Grade 10 public exam this year have all passed. V.Gurubalan has scored 364/500 and Arthi has scored 350/500. Both Arthi and Guru Balan have come school first and second at the Puducherry Government High School near Sikkal. Guru Balan has gone to Chennai to study at the CSI Corley's Hr. Sec School and Arthi to Tarangambadi to St. Theresa's to complete their higher secondary education.



Vanavil and have both passed. They are appearing in entrance exams for the Government Fine Arts Colleges in Tamilnadu.

7 of our children have finished 11th grade and are moving into grade twelve this year. Together for all the 10th, 11th and 12th kids we are running spoken English classes at Vanavil this summer.

P. Sudha finished her B.E degree in Electronics and Communication Engineering and has joined for an internship at NP Compete, an IT company in Chennai.

All the four children who appeared in 12th grade exams from Vanavil have passed their exams. Bhuvaneswari and Devi who attended the St. Theresa's higher secondary school have cleared their 12th exams with 60 percent marks. Devi has joined Diploma in Nursing and Bhuvaneswari is admitted into B.Sc. Mathematics.

Lakshmanan and Siva would be the first boys from the Sellur Village to be going to College this year. Lakshmanan and Siva were sent to the CSI Corley's higher Secondary School in Chennai by



Vanavil Outreach Centers

Vanavil Outreach Centers function in five hamlets where the Aadiyans and Narikuravars live. We reach out to 221 children from these five villages through our outreach.



The Nomadic communities tend to have the habit of travelling to village festivals and other towns where the children either beg or sell wares. They are generally malnourished due to their cultural and food practices and the social conditions they live in.

The main purpose behind these afterschool centers is to keep the children in School, pitch in to their nutritive intake and make them partners in child protection by making them aware about the hazards of begging and selling wares which are their customary practice.



Our Goal is to

- To give the kids a well-equipped support environment to motivate and sustain the school going habit in them.
- To equip them with Math and Language skills to fill the gaps.
- To expose them to reading, art, performances and sports to inculcate a holistic learning experience and build their personality as positive motivated hard-working young people.
- To form child protection committees in these villages to build organic awareness on the rights of the child and mechanisms prevailing to protect the child.

Events and Programs

Summer camps for Art and craft: We conducted arts and craft Summer camps for the outreach students to foster their skills in extracurricular activities and also to strengthen their interest in school education and build their self-esteem and confidence. The Summer camps attract even the kids who dropout or irregular to school and we counsel them indirectly about the fun things they can do at School and in the Vanavil outreach centers.



Festivals & Events – New Year, Pongal and Independence Day: Every year we celebrate festivals and important days at the centers and children perform dance, drama, songs and competitions in essay, oration, poetry and art competitions. The events are an opportunity to bring the community into the children's center.



Child protection and Community Meetings: We hold periodical meetings with the community and Parents to discuss local issues the children face in education and other situations. We also display the artwork and academic work done by the children in these events so that parents can see the achievements of the children. We give awareness about child rights and the evils of begging and other child labour practices.

Vaasal



**MAKING
YOUNGSTERS
LIFE READY**

Vaasal - Making youngsters Life ready

Vaasal center opened by winning a grant from the Battle of Buffet BOB pitch fest in 2017 has become an active training center catering to a lot of young people in the Nagapattinam town. United Way Chennai and Battle of Buffet are our donors for 2018-19.



Vaasal was started with the goal to guide and train

- College graduates who are ready to join the workforce and need assistance with finding employment opportunities and preparing for competitive exams
- 12th standard graduates who are looking for guidance on the path forward and assistance with preparing for Higher education entrance exams and filling out college applications
- Youngsters who have finished school/dropped out of school and need skill training leading them to employability.



Our Program

Job Competitive exam stream



We run a TNPSC/TET/Group 4/ RRB free coaching Classes at the Vaasal Training Centre every day evening 5.30-7.30. The course is six month long and sometimes custom made shorter courses towards a specific exam is also run. We have a small library and the alumnus of our previous groups use the space and library during the day.

Our achievements

- **Aravinthan.P**, who was taking classes from Vaasal has succeeded in his service commission exams and has gained employment as Agricultural Officer in Nagapattinam Collectorate.
- **Sulochana.S** and **Sabarinathan** have both cleared their Group 4 exams and have been appointed as Junior assistant in the Rural Development Department and Village Administrative officer, Kurichi, Nagapattinam, respectively. Sulochana is also preparing for her group II final exams having cleared the preliminaries.
- **Iyyappan.N** has gained employment as a junior assistant in the Employment Department.
- **Thangamani. S** has cleared the forest service's exam and has gained employment as a Forest Guard in the Theni Division.
- **Aravinth. T** has cleared the Railway Recruitment Board exams and is posted as an Assistant Loco Pilot in Southern Railways.
- **Mukilan. M, Ajith Kumar. R, Vasanthan. M, Mathivanan. V and Rajalakshmi. P** have cleared the first level preliminary exam for Group II government services and are preparing for their Final written exams to be held soon.

Higher Education Stream

We had an unexpectedly huge response to our CUCET (Common Entrance Test for Central Universities) Coaching program. We had more than 360 enquiries and we had to restrict the intake to 120 for space constraints and to enable efficient teaching. We moved to a bigger premises to accommodate our CUCET aspirants and the two month long program was intense and classes were from 10 to 2 every day and we had many full day sessions with experts coming from the Central university and elsewhere. The results are out but the Rank List is not out yet. In CUCET 2018 when we had just started Vaasal we had 5 students who gained admission and this year we hope to send more students in.

Vocational Training Stream

We had reached awareness to more than 250 village students through our village level outreach vocational career guidance meet ups. We sponsored seven students in dire financial condition to various vocational and skill enhancement courses and all of them completed their courses successfully.

Through Vaasal we've created some achievers and in turn they support other students by holding classes at Vaasal. We're creating a volunteering model where our beneficiaries would help new aspirants. We held a small felicitation program to congratulate our achievers in TNPSC stream. We also held a valedictory seminar to our CUCET guidance program by inviting eminent academics.





Disaster Response with a focus on Children

The Gaja Floods in November ravaged our district very badly. Vanavil also bore the brunt of the floods and we had our electricity lines completely ruined and some minor breakages to the dining hall. But the huge loss was of our dear trees, we lost more than 100 trees – some planted and grown by us and some really old trees that existed even before Vanavil moved to that land. We had a power blackout for more than 45 days. We were moved by the concern and support of our supporters and friends and thanks to them we could get the school building back to normalcy within a short span of time.

We still have to do some repairs to the dining hall and get a new CCTV camera system that was damaged in the Gaja Floods.

The Gaja floods that affected us thus wreaked more havoc on the coastal Vedaranyam block where the cyclone Gaja took its landfall. Vanavil was born out of a disaster relief volunteering and we wanted to use our experience and local understanding to the benefit of the cyclone affected masses. We organized a relief coordination center at





Nagapattinam where people could send the materials and money they were collecting in various cities and groups. We also raised some money and we reached a relief kit with groceries, clothes and children's food items for more than 5500 families. More importantly we reached more than 3500 Tarpaulin sheets to the people suffering in rains after their houses were completely destroyed and gutted. Thanks to each and every one of you who donated money, materials and labour to make this possible! It just reinforced our own resolve to work in impossible conditions.

Thanks to the timely support of United Way Mumbai, United Way Chennai and their partners Black & Veatch and Eaton companies we reached household utensils and stoves to 1040 families in Talainayiru, Nagapattinam, Kilvelur and Vedaranyam Blocks in Nagapattinam district.

We gave school kits with school bags, note books, pens, pencils to 2000 children in the Talainayiru Area. We also rebuilt the roof of a government aided primary school in Talainayiru which was completely destroyed in the cyclone.

The relief work meant that we were in close contact with the affected communities in these two blocks and the constant geographical vulnerability of this area means disturbed schooling for children and poor resources for the women. We intend to work with primary and middle school level students in the area to build basic math and language skills. The project will be started with ten afterschool centers which will have a small library and also teach children from 1 to 8 grade students in Math and Language skills.



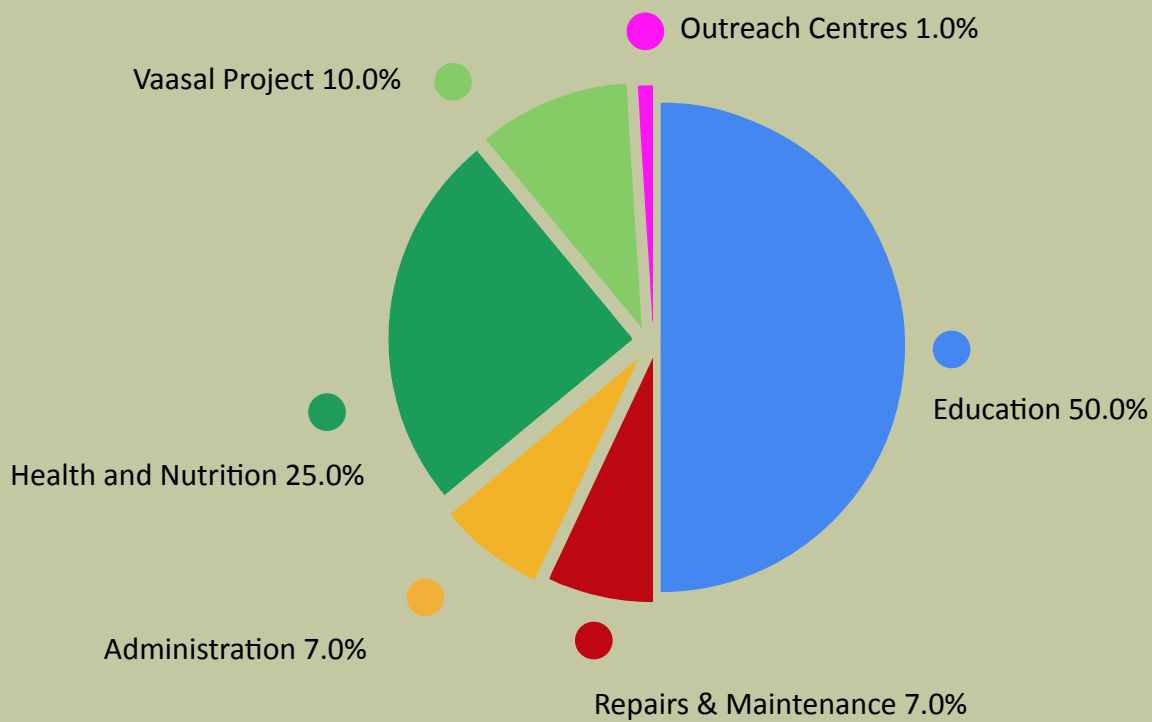
Financials

Vanavil Actual Financials FY18-19 1-Apr-2018 to 31-Mar-2019	Vanavil Budget Projection FY19-20 1-Apr-2019 to 31-Mar-2020
Fund Raising	Fund Raising
Funds for Programme ₹61,69,234	Funds for Programme ₹76,00,000
Funds for Cyclone Relief ₹25,43,900	Farm ₹4,00,000
Total Inflow ₹87,13,134	Total Inflow ₹80,00,000
Endowment ₹2,00,000	
Expenses	Expenses
Education ₹34,30,856	Education ₹35,00,000
Health and Nutrition ₹17,16,594	Health and Nutrition ₹19,00,000
Vaasal ₹6,71,328	Vaasal ₹7,00,000
Outreach Centres ₹1,00,843	Outreach Centres ₹6,00,000
Administration ₹4,60,675	Administration ₹5,00,000
Repairs and Maintenance ₹4,91,988	Repairs and Maintenance ₹4,00,000
Cyclone Relief* ₹23,83,491	Farm ₹4,00,000
Total Outflow ₹92,55,775	Total Outflow ₹80,00,000
*Non-recurring expenses	

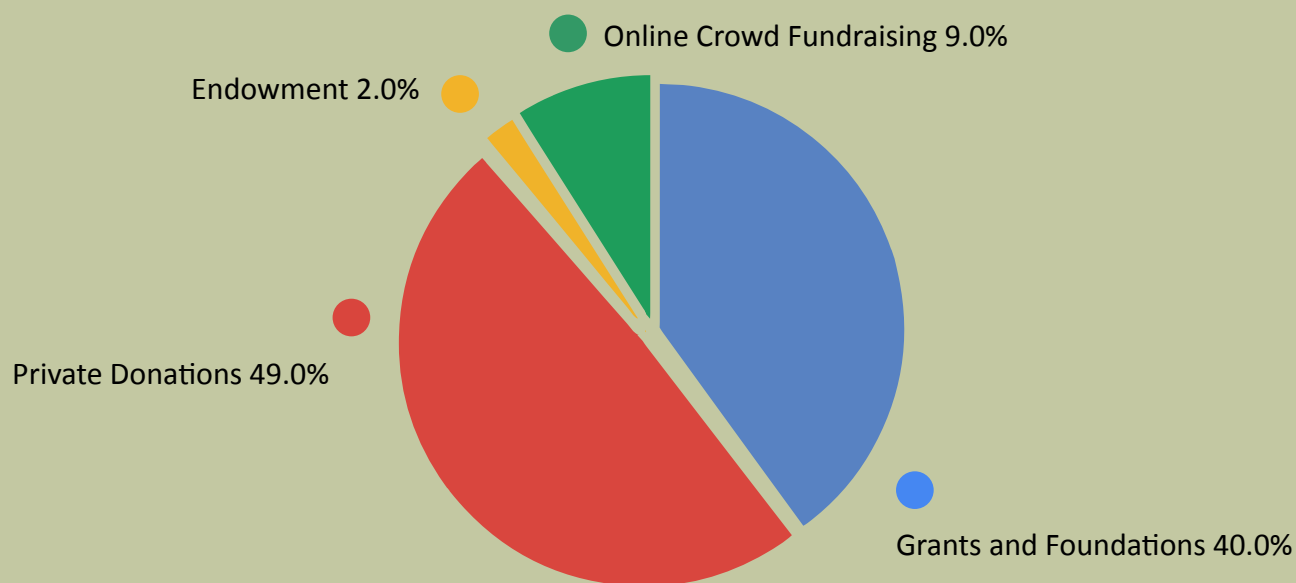
BENEFICIARIES COUNT

Vanavil	76
Home & Hostel	102
After school	250
Vaasal	551
Housing	10
Relief work	6500

Where the money goes?



Who funds us?



What they say

V Vasanthi Devi,
Educationist, Former Vice Chancellor,
Manonmaniam Sundaranar University

It's a great human effort to be reaching education to the most marginalised sections of the society. Working with the Boom Boom Maatukarars who're steeped in age old customs and social invisibility is an enormously dedicated effort that will bear an imprint on the social scenario and in the larger goals of reaching equal quality of education to all the marginalised children equally. Revathi's total identification with these forgotten children for 14 years has made Vanavil a landmark in true education.



Balaji Sampath,
Founder and Secretary, Aid India

Revathi's work at Vanavil school has completely transformed the lives of children from the most marginalized and poorest communities. This huge impact was possible only because of the amazing dedication and persistence by Revathi and her team. I saw how they struggled in the initial years to get the school up and running. Most others would have given up. She kept at it and over the years has shown what is possible when someone is so committed to the mission.



Srinath Baba,
Mathematician, Montreal, Canada

I have visited Vanavil several times in the past 7 years, and I look forward to it eagerly every year. The clarity of the mandate, the commitment of the team and the overall transparency of the institution won me over on my first visit and drove away any scepticism that I may have arrived with.

Vanavil achieves a lot with what they have. The atmosphere is joyful, there is a lot of affection and care. Revathi and her team really do know every detail about every child, a stupendous task when there are more than 150 children. In a little over a decade they have brought so many children up from infancy with consistent education while maintaining a responsible and respectful connection to their community and family. I am delighted and impressed every year when I hear of the increasingly consistent successes of the children at the board exams and of their ambition, interest and desire to enter college.



I remain in awe of what Revathi, Nataraj and the entire team are doing at Vanavil and in the newer after school centers in the surrounding villages. I have no doubt at all that this exceptional institution will continue for decades to enable these nomadic children to have opportunities and lives that they would be otherwise denied.

Media Coverage – Awards and Mentions



Scoonews The national level Magazine on Schools and education sector has awarded Revathi a teacher warrior award and has also published a story in their magazine about Vanavil on pg. 36 in <https://www.scoonews.com/magazines>

News minute online news portal honoured Revathi and Vanavil on teachers day by running a special story and a video <https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/tn-woman-started-school-changing-lives-kids-nomadic-tribes-87828>

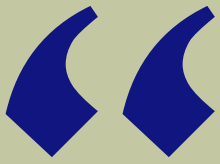


Mega TV honoured Revathi for her work with Vanavil with a Women achiever award for Women's day

Aid India conferred an award for service excellence to Revathi for her untiring work with marginalised children in the field of Education.



Eenadu Telugu Newspaper ran a story on Revathi in their Women's supplement Vasundhara.



A big Shout Out to **United Way Chennai** and **United Way Mumbai** for supporting our Gaja Cyclone Relief efforts and enabling us to support the most affected villages with high quality household material!

A very big Thank You to **Wipro Cares** for making the Vanavil project stable through their support of providing us our beautiful green campus and **The Marc Sauquet Foundation** for being on our side steadfastly through the years!

Our Supporters

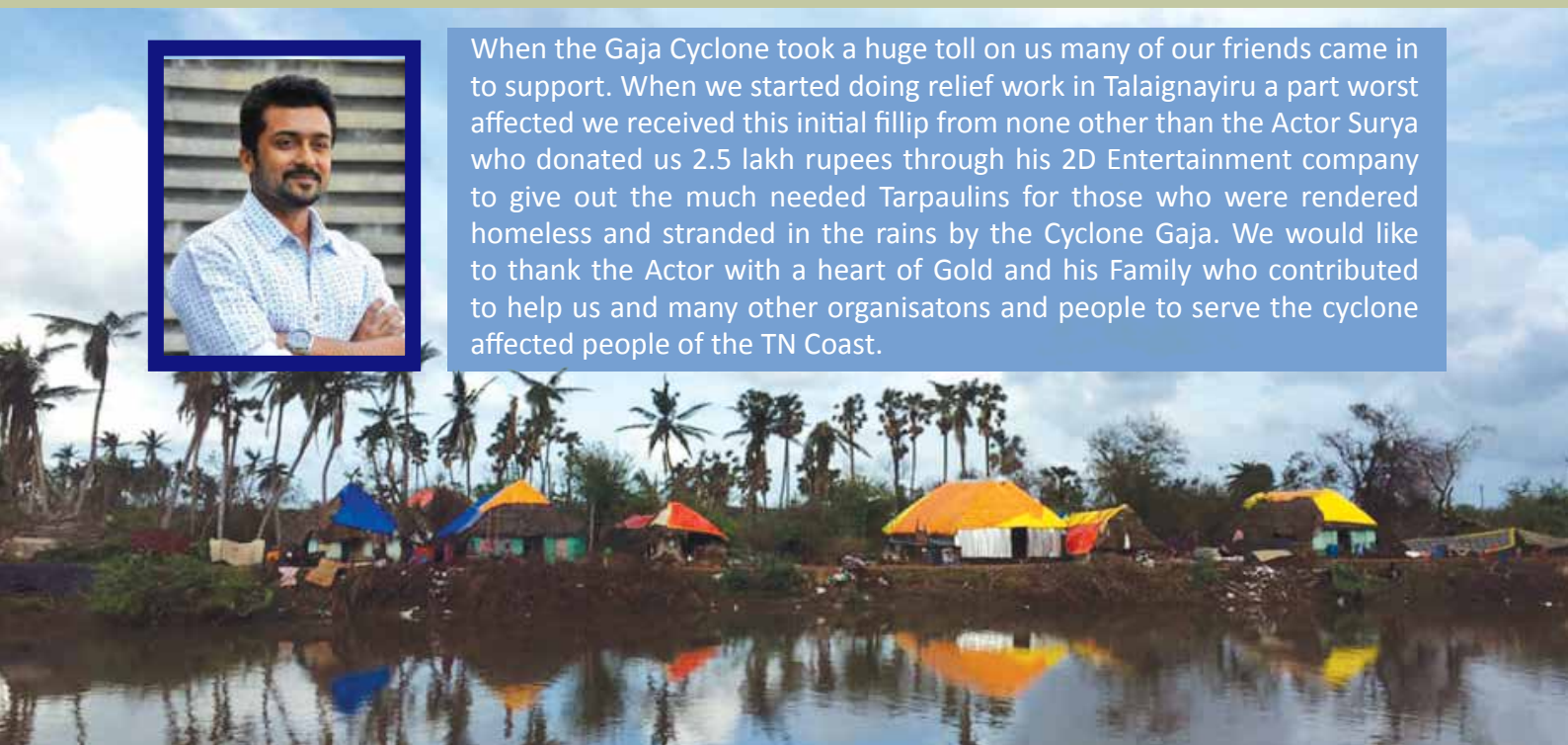
Prabha Bala and Bala Swaminathan Foundation which works towards Tamil language education and the welfare of tamil speaking people donated all our children with a new dress to celebrate the Tamizhar Thirunaal Pongal.



Long time friend and supporter of Vanavil Srividya, a courageous rural reporter for The Hindu Newspaper married Rajshekar, journalist with The Scroll in an elegant ceremony and they shared their happiness and bond with the children at Vanavil. Vidya and Shekar asked any of their guests wanting to give them a gift to donate to Vanavil instead. The donations were towards repairing the damages caused by the Cyclone Gaja and they also gave us a tree sapling at the wedding to start our process to grow trees to make up for the many many trees we lost in the Cyclone. That beautiful gesture of love shed so much light on us in the gloomy post cyclone days and we wish the couple all the happiness in this world!



When the Gaja Cyclone took a huge toll on us many of our friends came in to support. When we started doing relief work in Talaigayiru a part worst affected we received this initial fillip from none other than the Actor Surya who donated us 2.5 lakh rupees through his 2D Entertainment company to give out the much needed Tarpaulins for those who were rendered homeless and stranded in the rains by the Cyclone Gaja. We would like to thank the Actor with a heart of Gold and his Family who contributed to help us and many other organisations and people to serve the cyclone affected people of the TN Coast.



The People

Board



Revathi R,
Managing Trustee
Educationist, Writer



Dinesh Sundaramurthy,
Principal Architect,
Cognizant Technology Solutions



S.R. Solai Raj
Art Educator

Advisory Council



HK.Abhishek,
Principal Architect, Siemens.
Matthew Wennersten,
Software Consultant.
Devishree Radhakrishnan,
Software Consultant.
K Natarajan,
Artist.



Krishnaveni,
Activist.
Senthil Babu,
Historian IFB.
Vardini Sukumar,
Educator.



The Team



Teachers: Praveena; Sridevi ; Ragapriya ; Revathi; Mahalakshmi; Shalini ; Gayathri; Jennifer; Natarajan; Gunaseelan; Dinesh

Fundraising

Vanavil is growing in terms of its impact and reach with projects like Vaasal and outreach centers. As we grow, so does our financial needs. Thanks in large part to our ardent supporters who donate year after year, we are able to do more. For the past couple of years, we have embraced the growing crowd fundraising platforms in India and making a good use of it.

Thanks to DONATEkart and the amazing people who donated through the platform, we ran a successful campaign to get school supplies in May 2018. 73 donors got us 4959 products like notebooks, pencils, pens, charts, glues, bags, etc. and helped us get close to 200 children school ready!

Deepavali is the most special event for our kids as they get their only set of new clothes for the year. Our Deepavali campaign on Milaap had 87 supporters donating us Rs.2,11,219 which helped to get our children new clothes, some crackers, a happy feast for the special occasion.

LetzChange a not for profit online fundraising platform has been the backbone to our online fundraising campaigns. We have some ongoing fundraising campaigns on LetzChange. In the last financial year our food support fundraiser got us Rs.1,86,917 and more importantly it got us two Food Endowments. Ms.Sarmishta Ramesh and Ms.Devishree created these endowments to give food to the Vanavil kids on a specified date every year!

To transfer funds from banks in India, use the following details:

Account Name: Vanavil Trust
Account Number: 954121293
Bank Name: Indian Bank
Branch: Nagapattinam
IFSC: IDIB000N004

From foreign countries (FCRA):

Account Name: Vanavil Trust
Account Number: 510101006399272
Bank Name: Corporation Bank
Branch: Nagapattinam
Bank Address: 73, Neela South St, Nagapattinam, India – 611001
SWIFT CODE: CORPINBB716

To make tax deductible donations from US, please mail a check to the address below, payable to AASAI and write "Vanavil" on the memo line.
American Association for Social Advancement of India
11136 Lake Breeze Drive, North Potomac, MD 20878, USA

You can also raise funds for us by running campaigns on **Milaap**, **LetzChange** and **DONATEkart**.

Vanavil is a registered Public Charitable Trust (No: 81 / 2005). Vanavil's tax exempt 80(G) registration No: 7162E (103) / 07-08. Your donations are tax deductible in India.



DONATE