



Kalanjiyam



# பதிவுகள்-4



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## Kalanjiyam Milestones in 2010

In the year 2010, Kalanjiyam implemented many programs and forged new partnerships. We have been able to bring about changes with the involvement of local communities and are gratified to see the results. In this volume of Pathivugal we present the major highlights and success stories.

### Free Van Service to Zameen Endathur High School

Kalanjiyam has been working with six Panchayat union primary schools in Kanchipuram district as part of a project supported by Tamil Nadu Foundation (TNF). In 2009 when the TNF project was started, we identified one of the factors that caused the children to drop out without completing secondary school education was the considerable distance to school. Zameen Endathur High School was where the majority of children from the TNF project schools were enrolling. Kalanjiyam therefore decided to start a free van service to arrange transport for the students from their villages to the Zameen Endathur high school daily. Cognizant Foundation donated a new Mahindra



Maxi Cab Tourister to Kalanjiyam for the purpose. The free van service supported by TNF was inaugurated on July 6th 2010 by the Chief Education Officer of Kanchipuram and Mr. Madhavan Sadagopan, CEO of Cognizant Foundation and other community leaders. The service now serves over 80 students from nearby villages and is the second free school van service that is being operated by Kalanjiyam.

### Expanding Kalanjiyam activities to Virudunagar district



Kalanjiyam adopted three Panchayat Union schools in the villages of Virudhunagar district to replicate the Kalanjiyam model of strengthening rural schools. Though located in a district that has been getting the top rank in both 10th and 12th standard over the last 20 years, these villages and schools are also among the more underprivileged, with no other NGO presence. A three member village committee conducted an assessment to identify the needs of the schools. As per our model, Kalanjiyam worked to mobilize the local community and improved the school infrastructure. Kalanjiyam provided text books to all the children in the three schools and introduced computer education. Maithri Educational and Charitable Trust supported Kalanjiyam in this initiative. The successful replication in these villages with the active involvement from the community has boosted our confidence to the take these initiatives to other parts of TamilNadu.

### Computer Lab in Periya Vellikkadu Middle School



Kalanjiyam has been working in Periya Vellikkadu Middle School to develop it as a model school in the area.

In 2010 we set out with a goal to establish a computer lab in this Panchayat Union Middle School. This was a community driven initiative with support from community leaders, PTA and the school officials. The goal was achieved and we now have a fully functioning lab equipped with 10 computers provided by Citibank through the Rotary Club of Madras North West chapter. This is the first computer lab to be established in Lattur block and will serve as a model for all the surrounding schools. The computers have been setup with basic applications and Digital Literacy software to help children accelerate the acquiring of computer skills on par with those of their urban counterparts.



# Information Education and Communication (IEC)

Prevention and health promotion are important focus areas in Kalanjiyam's work with rural communities. It was recognized early on that there was a dearth of culturally sensitive communication materials in Tamil that provide accurate and timely information on good health practices to prevent disease and promote wellness. This provided an impetus for producing audio, visual and print communication materials in Tamil and disseminating these to all remote corners of the state, to reach individuals, families, institutions and other NGOs. These materials were pre-tested within the Kalanjiyam framework and developed to address the cultural sensitivity of rural areas. Kalanjiyam now regularly receives requests for these health education materials through emails, phone calls, post card and letters. We courier the materials free of cost. A number of those who receive these materials have offered to make a donation which has helped to offset mailing costs.

In 2010-11 Kalanjiyam produced and released the following health education materials



## Vindai The Miracle Brain

Maithri Educational and Charitable Trust partnered with us on the production of "Vindhai" – The Miracle Brain, a one of a kind DVD that helps educate all parents on the functions of the human brain and the factors that influence children's mental and cognitive development. In Vindhai, Dr. Prithika Chary, the first lady neurophysician and neurosurgeon of India has extolled the basic aspects of brain functioning in a simple and easy manner. She talks about the stages of brain development from conception to adolescence and the factors that can positively or negatively impact proper functioning. Vindhai covers topics such as low IQ, mental retardation, epilepsy and includes tips that can help with management of the problems associated with functioning of the brain. Vindhai was released on January 27th 2011 by Cine Actor Prithiveeraj.

Kalanjiyam shepherded the creation of the Tamil version of 'Consumer Guide to Child Health' a book by a US based Pediatrician Dr. Balasubramaniam. The book titled 'Anbulla Ammavukku' or 'For Dearest Mother' has been translated by Journalist cum writer Mr. Supra-Balan. Anbulla Ammavukku offers the experience and wisdom that comes with years of experience in working with children and families. It presents childhood illnesses that are common as well as rare and explains the causes, symptoms and actions to be taken at home for managing these and recommends when to seek medical

help. This book is dedicated as thanks to every mother who stands as the epitome of love and care. Anbulla Ammavukku, released on February 25th 2011 by Nalli Kuppusamy Chettiar and received by fitness expert Mrs. Vijaya Chamundeshwari, is being distributed free of cost to all.

## Anbulla Ammavukku A Guide to Child Helath



## Penmai - To Be a Woman

'Penmai is a DVD production on women's reproductive health. In Penmai Dr. Gita Arjun, Director of E.V. Kalyani Medical Center in Chennai, in great detail clearly presents the most important reproductive health issues that women face as they go through different phases from adolescence through menopause. The material attempts to clear many prevailing misconceptions for women and their families and presents on do's and don'ts and how to care for themselves during these phases. Penmai was released on 20th October 2010 at Bala Mandir's German Hall by the Secretary, Ms. Maya Gaitonde and Cine Actress Revathy. More than 1000 copies of Penmai have been distributed free of cost to individuals, NGOs and other institutions across Tamil Nadu. Penmai was a joint production of Kalanjiyam and The Aseema Trust.



# Reproductive health Charts

As part of a reproductive health project for adolescent girls, Kalanjiyam developed a set of four charts in partnership with The Aseema Trust. The charts present the changes a young woman goes through before and during puberty. They are to be used as a tool to discuss with girls and young women the functions of female reproduction system in the context of menstruation and conception. The charts were developed based on input from a peer group of adolescent girls and have proved very effective to have discussions on reproductive health with this age group. Kalanjiyam is building a database of 100 grass root NGOs working actively to increase awareness of women's reproductive health and have initiated the effort to disseminate this material among them.

## IEC Materials in Tamil available

**Papparamittai volume 1 & 2** – Audio CD of 10 stories set to music, narrated and sung by children to instill creativity in children

**Thaimei volume 1 – VCD** on pre-natal and ante-natal maternal health care presented by **Dr. Kamala Selvaraj**

**Thaimei volume 2 – VCD** on early childhood development for children up to 5 years focusing on social and psychological aspects of a child's development presented by Psychologist **Latha Mangeshwari**

**Vindhai – DVD** on the development and functioning of the brain presented by **Dr. Prithika Chary**

**Penmai – DVD** on reproductive health from puberty to menopause presented by **Dr. Gita Arjun**

**Reproductive Health Charts** – Set of 4 charts on puberty, menstruation and conception in Tamil

**Anbulla Ammavukku** A book on early childhood health, with information on illnesses, their cause and symptoms as well as when to seek medical help

**Ellorukkum Solvom** Short video clips to raise awareness about the stigma and discrimination associated with HIV/ AIDS

### On Thaimai

“Thanks for sending the Thaimai video two parts. It is very informative and useful for the awareness programs. Definitely we will show this in our adolescent girls and pregnant and lactating mothers programs.”

**-K. Shanmugavelayutham.**  
TN-FORCES, Chennai

“I had a look on the content and it is very informative and useful for parents. The way the messages are conveyed is very impressive. I have experience in working in CEE in Karaikal for Tsunami Rehabilitation project. I would suggest that you can distribute this CD's material to libraries in rural areas where more education is required”

**-V. Manikantan,** Chennai

“My heartiest congratulations to you for producing an excellent pair of CDs- Thaimai 1 and 2! We all enjoyed watching the same. They are very interesting, informative and instructive. Dr. Kamala Selvaraj has put in a lot of efforts to convert the highly technical terms in simple Tamil. In CD 2 the psychological aspects of the child development during the 1-5 years is very enjoyable and is full of examples from day to day life. The recording, the photography and the editing of the twin CDs are very good.”

**-Dr. S.S. Iyer,** Delhi

## Testimonials

“Thanks to Kalanjiyam for making people aware of the health issues regarding women's reproductive life. It is easy to understand and provides answers to many of the doubts that many women have in themselves. We saw the DVD and we felt that we should take these information to our Women Self help group members to our level possible”.

**-Hari Priya,** Chennai

“Kudos on bringing out "Penmai", and in the process filling a big need and a current void in the area of women's health!”

**-Anand, T.** Thiruvanimiyur

“I received the DVD Penmai. It is fascinating and gives all facts which an adolescent girl needs to know. Even well educated women are not aware of many of the issues dealt in the DVD. Thanks for initiating such a wonderful project.”

**-Mr. Jaganmohan,** Chennai

## Highlight from our Surveys

We routinely conduct surveys / needs assessments as part of our programs. A special highlight is the result from an assessment in 2010 among children going to Panchayat Schools and private English medium schools. The children going to Panchayat schools scored higher on reading skills compared to children going to English medium schools in our villages.

## Thanks to the Press

Kalanjiyam thanks all the press and media for helping us bring visibility and awareness on the various published materials to the Tamil speaking communities in Tamil Nadu, across India and around the world. It is their coverage that has helped us get the materials to those in need.





## Digital Literacy programs

Rotary International (RI) District 3230 initiated a partnership with Kalanjiyam and provided the Digital Literacy software to our adopted schools. This software enables students to learn the basics of computer applications systematically in Tamil language through a self-paced program. On MAY 29th, Rtn. K.B.Sridhar, the District Chairman of Digital Literacy Project of RIDist.3230 inaugurated the program in Periya Vellikadu Middle School in the presence of the community leaders, teachers and interacted with the children in the school. The Digital Literacy software has been implemented in 12 Kalanjiyam's adopted and TNF project schools, at Kalanjiyam Training Center and in our three adopted schools in Virudhunagar district. Using this software the 4th through 8th standard students in our schools have developed basic skills in MS WORD, MS Power Point and how to use email on internet.

## Zameen Endathur High School programs

The Zameen Endathur High School established over 50 years ago has classes between 6th to 10th standard. Previously the pass percentage for the 10th standard class was about 50 percent. In 2009 Kalanjiyam took the challenge to raise this to 100 percent and implemented several initiatives. In consultation and cooperation of the school teachers, special classes were conducted for the students for 80 days before board exams. Kalanjiyam supported the initiative and provided students with supplemental nutritious snacks in the evenings and safe transportation to teachers to go back home after late evening classes. The effort proved to be very successful, and resulted in 85 percent of the students passing the 10th standard for the first time in the history of the school.

The school did not have proper hygiene facilities and Kalanjiyam renovated the existing non-functional toilet structure to make a usable toilet for the girls in the school. This was done with support of LMS-Emmeskay Solutions Pvt. Ltd. and Dr. Balasubramaniam. Since the adoption of this school, the community leaders and local community are also participating in improving this school. The reputation of the school in the local area is much improved and enrollment in this school is increasing.



## Ongoing program for Strengthening rural education in Panchayat Union Schools

Kalanjiyam continues to implement the strengthening programs with the cooperation of school Headmaster, teachers and involvement of community leaders. Six of the 13 Panchayat Union schools that Kalanjiyam adopted are supported through a pilot project of Tamil Nadu Foundation (TNF). One of the primary schools and TNF Project School at Athivakkam village became middle schools last year. We continue to provide a well-rounded education program including music, drawing, yoga and the computer education in each adopted school.

Children are regularly provided with nutrition supplement 'sathu mavu' in our adopted schools. Kalanjiyam staffs provide daily support in each of these schools. Every child's daily attendance and progress is tracked through a child monitoring card. A total of nearly 800 students are benefiting from these programs.

We have identified the key factors associated with school drop outs in our villages and are addressing them through various initiatives. We are beginning to see some changes; the percent of 10th standard students passing has increased from 57% in 2009 to 69% in 2010 and the majority are continuing their studies. In the year 2011 we plan to bring clean water and hygiene facilities to all our adopted schools.



## Resources for teacher and parents

Visit Teacher Plus magazine [www.teacherplus.org](http://www.teacherplus.org) for information on issues concerning children's education that would be useful for teachers, parents and children and read some of the articles by Kalanjiyam.



# Happenings 2010 – 2011 - Highlights



## Student Scholarships

In the 2009-10 school year, 48 students from 20 local villages scored over 80 percent marks in the 10th standard board exam which is a great achievement for rural students who face challenging circumstances. We started providing annual scholarships in 2008 to encourage the students to continue their education to 11th standard and beyond.

We are happy to report that since initiating this program, we have had an increasing number of students scoring over this percentage. Anbu Friends, a group of Alumni from Madras Institute of Technology supported us in this effort in 2010.

## Community health programs



On August 7th 2010 a session on breastfeeding and infant feeding practices was conducted at the Kalanjiyam Training Center. Women of all age groups from the adopted villages participated in this program. Ms. Nirmala Selvam an expert and member of the Breast feeding Promotion Network of India conducted the session. The program was a big success in providing and reinforcing knowledge on breastfeeding practices and also helped address specific problems many women were facing.

On January 22nd 2011 a program was conducted on children's health and wellness by Dr. Balasubramaniam, a US based Pediatrician, at Kalanjiyam Training Center. This program was helpful to new mothers to clear the common myths and misconceptions on children's health concerns between 0 to five years and learn the importance of hygiene and sanitation.

As a next step to our IEC material on communicable diseases, Think Today, Not Tomorrow, we brought the issue of dealing with Tuberculosis (TB) to our village communities. In partnership with REACH, programs were conducted in Melakaandai and Athivakkam villages among women from self help groups to inform them about prevention, diagnosis and treatment of TB. In the coming year this program will be expanded to reach more rural communities.

There has been a tremendous demand for health information from our villages since we started the Bioscope programs in 2009. In 2010 the Bioscope programs took the new materials that we have developed, such as Penmai, to reach many young girls, women, and their gatekeepers in our villages. We also took this program to the local schools in our villages in 2010.

## Education AID



Kalanjiyam annually provides educational aid to deserving students from economically poor families in partnership with Maithri Educational and Charitable Trust. In 2010 education aid was provided to 23 students, thirteen of whom were in upper primary or higher secondary school while the rest were in college. This annual program is encouraging more students in our villages to pursue higher education and continue on to college after 12th standard.



# Adolescent REPRODUCTIVE Health program



## Heritage Club Program

Towards the end of last school year, Sankara Vidyashramam School in Thiruvanniyur contacted Kalanjiyam to initiate Heritage Clubs in the rural schools as a way to promote cultural heritage and to provide opportunity to our rural students for social interactions and exchanges with students in urban areas

Two Heritage Clubs, the first of their kind in rural areas were formed as part of this effort. The Sangamam Heritage Club was formed in Zameen Endathur High School and the Gramiya Heritage Club was formed in Periya Vellikadu Middle school. These were inaugurated by Dr. Suresh of Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), a national NGO, which establishes Heritage Clubs in schools.

Students from both schools became members of the heritage clubs and participated in various programs such as essay writing and shared the local folklore and traditions, promoting local arts and crafts and participated in inter-school competitions with other children from Chennai Schools.

Kalanjiyam arranged for a local folk artist Master Manikandan to come to the school and teach the students traditional folk dances such as Tappattam, Kollattam and Oyilattam. In November 2010 we coordinated an effort with the two clubs to stage a first performance in their schools in front of local community members. The children also had the unique opportunity, to perform the folk dances at Alliance Francaise in Chennai on 27th November 2010. The event provided the students a rare opportunity to show-case their talents that was appreciated by all. The event was covered by the media and the program was telecast on Raj Music Channel. Mrs. Nimmi Chellappa, an INTACH Coordinator, made special efforts to encourage all the students who participated by presenting them with certificates.



Educating adolescent girls by providing knowledge, self awareness and life-skills is an important focus for Kalanjiyam in reducing their vulnerabilities. To that end, Kalanjiyam has been implementing the Vanavil project over the last three years. This year, the project focused on the issues related to reproductive health and HIV/ AIDS. In 2010 we surveyed adolescent girls in and out of school from our villages to understand the gaps in knowledge and addressed these through regular programs.

Over the last nine months monthly meetings have been conducted at Kalanjiyam Training Center and in our local village schools to sensitize the girls on gender roles, bodily awareness, puberty and menstruation, reproduction and sexually transmitted diseases. These programs reached over 200 adolescent girls from local villages and more than 800 adolescent girls in middle to higher secondary school (7th to 12th standard) in our village schools.

In addition we also conducted programs for their gatekeepers, that is mothers, grandmothers and aunts, to better inform them about the reproductive health issues and sensitize them on the needs of adolescent girls and how they can ensure the long term well being of their daughters. Nearly 120 women from local villages participated in the program.

Special refresher training was conducted at Kalanjiyam Training Center for the grass root level health care providers, the Village Health Nurses (VHNs). These VHNs were sensitized on reproductive health and the needs of adolescent girls and were provided with health education resources.





## Kalpat Village Panchayat Union Primary School

The first rural school adopted by Kalanjyam was the Kalpat primary school. On August 15th 2006 we began supporting this school in a small way by providing school bags and note books to the 17 students enrolled in the school to encourage them.

Starting then, each of Kalanjyam model educational programs was implemented in this school first. The programs were aimed at improving the environment, providing extracurricular classes and weekly nutritional supplements as well as improving personal hygiene and sanitation conditions at school alongside supporting the teachers in implementing the regular school curriculum.

Today Kalpat primary school has 50 children enrolled and is attracting parents who send their children to private schools to enroll back in this government school. We are seeing many positive changes among the children in this school. The percent of students who miss school has declined from about 25% per month in 2008-09 to less than 5% per month in 2010-11. Our child monitoring data shows that nearly all children who have been with us for two or more years are able to achieve all the class appropriate milestones. In addition, they dress neatly, are healthier, and eager to learn every day.

These changes were brought through Kalanjyam programs, our dedicated staff who take utmost interest in addressing the needs of each child in the school, the active cooperation of the school teachers and the involvement of the parents and local community in the school. We are confident that each child in the school will move on and complete 12th standard and become successful active participants committed to the development of their community.

## Supporting Young people through livelihood Skills

Each year we provide support to deserving youth from our villages to gain skills for making them employable. We identified that there is a great demand for licensed drivers. Annually we select young people from families who are in need to better their livelihood options and put them through a professional training course in driving and help them secure four-wheeler licenses. In 2010, 15 young men and women selected by our team, went through the training and got their driver license. This has helped them to secure suitable employment and support their families.

# My view of Kalanjyam

- Malliga, Field Staff at Kalanjyam



“Kalanjyam means a collection. True to its name, Kalanjyam has been a light giving source, mobilizing our villages, bringing together the community members to improve standard of education.”

“In 2006 August Kalanjyam came to our village. Before this no one knew where my village was. I don't know if my village community had any inkling of community service prior to this. But after Kalanjyam came, our whole village is keen to do community work and serve their community. Working with children, especially focusing on health and education, makes us all very happy. My happiness is that I am able to participate and provide input to the children in our villages and am able take part in their development. I am proud of this. Not only Kalpat village, but in the surrounding villages, many children are getting support of Kalanjyam, to fulfill all the basic needs for our children's education.”

“In the year 2006, in Kalpat village primary school the enrollment was 17 children. Kalanjyam started initiatives to strengthen the school and arranged everything from electrification of the school premises to fixing the windows in the school. Because of these changes the children's interest to come to school, without being absent increased. In this day and age with increasing technological advances, my village children are also learning computers and this is most satisfying for us. I am 35 years old and never seen a computer before, but now I am also learning computer along with my children. What more can I ask for? If my children learn and develop that is enough. My village will develop and be ready to part an advanced Indian village in the 21st century. Kalanjyam's effort reaches the most needy in our villages, the differently abled, adolescent girls, youth and mothers and families and this makes us very happy.”

“I am very happy to be part of an effort such as Kalanjyam, which like the dream of H.P.J. Abdul Kalam, aims to achieve to ensure basic education and health for all in our rural areas.”



N. Ramakrishnan, USA

I have known Kalanjiyam from its infancy in 2006. In the past 5 years Kalanjiyam's growth has been phenomenal. I have observed their office bearers to be deeply committed, very passionate and sincere with their service through Kalanjiyam. Kalanjiyam is doing a great service to rural communities in particular, as follows:

- ✳ Improving schools, strengthening educational standards, providing computer, giving out scholarships, providing transportation etc.
- ✳ Improving hygiene and sanitation conditions in schools
- ✳ Implementing educational programs through materials about child development, women's health, HIV/ AIDS awareness etc.

I have also observed that Kalanjiyam has partnered with other likeminded NGOs such as TNF, Maithri Educational and Charitable Trust etc to be more resourceful and reach a larger section of community. Kalanjiyam seems to have touched the hearts of many in the rural community with their services. I wish Kalanjiyam all the best and continue with their noble service.

Kalanjiyam **Thanks**  
all the partners for their  
**continued support**

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## Munusamy **Raviraaj**

Founder and Director of Kalanjiyam

Kalanjiyam was formed with a dream to transform rural communities, to develop an 'energized and empowered community that can take part in its own development'. Kalanjiyam is in its fifth year and we are beginning to see remarkable changes at various levels in our villages. We would like to share some examples of the shades of community participation.

Our staff members, who are from local villages, go beyond the call of duty and serve their villages actively, through tuition classes and providing health education in their free time. They are beginning to lead their communities through example.

Cadres of future community leaders are developing. Our village committee has become empowered to form a community based organization and lead local development efforts.

Men, women and children in our villages volunteer their time to take part in various Kalanjiyam activities, be it cleaning up the schools, helping in the construction of a school toilet, fixing pot-holes on the roads or helping out with the mobile lending library.

We would like to thank the local and district officials, school teachers, community leaders and all other community members who have trusted us, extended their cooperation and actively participated in the efforts to bring about change.

*"Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek."*

- Barack Obama



# Kalanjiyam

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