



ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

# ASHA CHENNAI

ASHA SOUTH INDIA TRUST

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## About



Asha was founded in the summer of 1991 at the University of California, Berkeley by a group of Indian students interested in helping their country. Asha Chennai took root in 2002 as a separate chapter and has grown since then to include more than 15 highly committed volunteers. We are actively executing about 10 projects which together support more than 180 schools, run 10 libraries, 12 RTCs and provide scholarships for over 100 students. Asha Chennai is registered as a separate charitable trust, Asha South India Trust to ease operations.

In this Annual report for 2024-25 we have attempted to capture the exhaustive nature of Asha Chennai's work across all our programs. Our programs have not only continued to run successfully, they have also expanded in scale and scope in various directions. We have provided details of activities of all [our major programs](#) like – SPRINT, Explore, ACE (Asha Computer Education), and RTC (Rural Technology Centres).

Our Karadipath program expanded to 56 schools this year. Our ACE program has reached 105 schools and expanded to 3 other geographies. We conducted our first ever ACE Impressions event which was hosted at Amazon's Chennai office. Our RTCs expanded from seven to twelve! Amazon's donation of 1200 laptops has given our computer infrastructure a huge boost! Our software initiatives for this year have been elaborated under the article [Asha Kanini and Software Initiatives](#). Under our article [Community Connections](#), we have provided details of our partner collaborations. These collaborations have significantly added to Asha's experience and goodwill.

At Asha innovation is something that affects every aspect of what we do. It has been the collaborative efforts of volunteers, software development team and teachers. You may read all about this in the section on [Innovation@Asha by Mr. Rajaraman](#), Volunteer and Coordinator at Asha Chennai.

Student assessments have been used by Asha for gathering important information about how well lessons are being absorbed by students. We gather ideas of if and how we need to course correct to ensure students benefit from what is being taught. We have been conducting oral, written, and computer science assessments for children in a rigorous manner for over 15000 children over the years. To better understand the impact of our work, we have also been collecting sociological data related to the children. The findings of this has been discussed in detail in Mr. Rajaraman's blog post [Factors That Affect Education](#).

Factors Edu

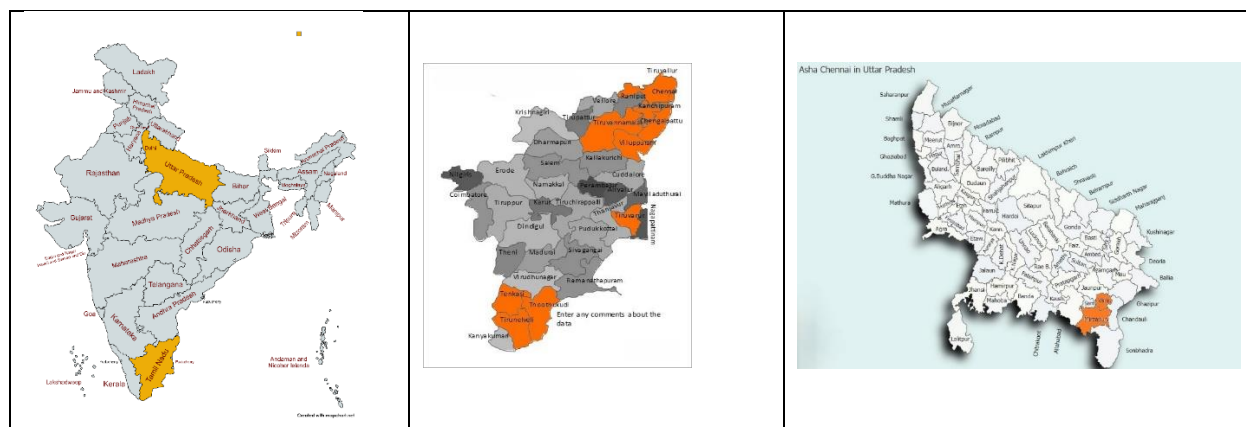


## Asha Chennai in Numbers

SPRINT (Supporting Primary and Middle Schools in Nurturing Talent)	Basic Exposure to Computer Science	ACE	Rural Technology Centre	Libraries
Supporting 170 schools in TN and 15 in UP	300 schools	Supporting 105 schools in Thiruvallur	12 centres supporting 12 schools in TN	10 in TN
More than 160 teachers and staff	18 trainers	105 govt teachers trained	20 teachers	10 Librarians
Reaching 12000 students in TN and 3000 in UP	30000 students benefitted	3,000 students benefitted	1000 students studying at the centers	Reaching 300 students

## Our Coverage

Asha Chennai has its operations in Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.





In TN, we have projects in Thiruvallur, Thiruvanamalai, Villupuram, Thiruvallur, Thoothukudi, Kanchipuram, Chengalpattu, Chennai, Thirunelveli and Thenkasi . In Uttar Pradesh, we operate in Mirzapur and Rajatalab (Varanasi).

## Overview of Activities in 2024-25

The year 2024-25 has been a very successful year for Asha Chennai. Here are some major achievements for us.

- Asha Chennai was sponsored by [Code.org](https://code.org) to attend the **Asia Pacific Computer Education Conference (APCEC) in Japan in Nov 2024**. Our coordinator, Mr. Rajaraman, represented Asha Chennai at the conference.
- We completed a tremendously successful first year of ACE. All the 52 schools that started in Oct 2023 as well as the new set of 53 schools that started the program in Aug 2024 completed the project work and assessments required for the program.
- Asha Chennai was selected to receive the **Amazon Innovation Grant of US \$100K** in December 2024. This was a tremendous honour for us and recognition for our work.
- [Code.org](https://code.org) selected **Asha Chennai as one of the two regional partners in India** to partner with in its efforts to bring in their excellent CS curriculum to India.
- Namma School Namma Ooru Palli, the Tamilnadu Education Department's organisation that bridges the government schools and external organizations (both corporates and NGOs), featured the work being done by Asha Chennai in their report and also extended the permissions to Asha to continue all our work with ease into 2025-26.
- **AuxoHub conducted an independent, third-party impact assessment** of our [ACE](#) and [RTC](#) programs and captured the different facets of our impact on the students as well as the community at large.



Auxohub RTC



Auxohub ACE

With the first batch of 52 schools implementing the ACE program well in Thiruvallur, we felt confident enough to expand this to a 2-year program and also add 53 more schools in 4 Districts in a second batch starting in August 2024. We conducted assessments for all the students in both these batches. All the students in all these 105 schools participated in the project work. Amazon Chennai office graciously hosted the ACE Impressions events for both these batches and Amazon engineers who judged the competition were thoroughly impressed by the quality of the presentation projects and programming modules the students had produced.

Our RTC program continued to expand with two RTCs being started at Kilpennathur in Thiruvannamalai District and Nallatinputhur in Thoothukudi District in July 2024. Three more RTCs were started at Thirupatchur, Uthukottai and Thirutani in Thiruvallur District in Feb 2025. With these we have a total of 12 RTCs. We expanded the course offerings at the RTCs as well. A Web development 2.0 course that teaches the students full-stack development was launched in Feb 2025 and we have been creating a course on Robotics to be launched in Aug 2025.

Infrastructure at all our programs and projects have been significantly augmented over the year. We have received 1,200 laptops from Amazon. These are very good quality 4 to 6-year-old HP

Elitebook laptops. These are functioning very well at the schools that have received them. All our programs are now having adequate laptops. We received 200 laptops in March/April timeframe which we were also able to distribute to projects run by other chapters of Asha where we hope to spread our methods and curriculum. This includes Asha Kaithi, Asha Kanpur and Asha Assam. We are also working on implementing our curriculum as Asha Mumbai and Gandhiji school Pondicherry run by Asha.

In all our projects, we have rolled out our own output trackers. Teachers in our ACE, Explore and Sprint-CS programs report their work every day using a simple reporting app developed by Asha software developers for Android phones. A dashboard for each of these programs allow us to clearly see the overall progress of the curriculum implementation. These are being created for our RTC and KaradiPath (also part of Sprint) programs as well.

Computer Science assessments were initially being conducted rigorously only in our RTCs. They have been brought into our Sprint programs as well. It is conducted in Digital Literacy for Class 5 and in Scratch programming for Class 8. Going forward we will continue to assess Digital Literacy in Class 5, Scratch in Class 7 and Physical Programming Concepts in Class 8. These assessments have been successfully completed in our ACE program as well.

In early 2025 we engaged AuxoHub to conduct an independent third-party impact assessment survey of our RTC and ACE programs. They conducted interviews of students, government teachers, Asha teachers and trainers, even students' parents etc. to arrive at a comprehensive picture of the impact from these programs. Since then they have given us the reports. Here are the Impact Assessment reports for [ACE](#) and [RTC](#) programs.

Despite the good progress in funding as well as implementation of our programs in 2024-25, there are significant head-winds that we confront in the coming year. Amazon which accounted for more than 30% of our funding in 2024-25, is changing its focus from CS education to other areas like career development and AI. It is not clear to what extent we will be able to continue getting funds from them. Tamilnadu Education Department is launching their own CS and AI curriculum for classes 6 to 9, called Spark. This will disrupt a lot of the work we are doing in our ACE, and Explore programs. It will also affect our RTC and Sprint programs a little. These impacts are discussed in our sections on [Financials](#) and [Plan for the coming year](#).

## Community Connections: Asha with Partners

This year, Asha volunteers, teachers and students were invited to various events by our partners. This has been an opportunity for Asha to expand our horizons. Here are the major activities we undertook in partnership with other organisations.

### Asia Pacific Computer Education Conference 2024 Code.org Tokyo

Mr. Rajaram, coordinator of Asha Chennai, was sponsored by [Code.org](https://code.org) to attend the Asia Pacific Computer Education Conference 2024 which was organized by [Code.org](https://code.org) and their Japanese partner Minna no Code. The conference included one day devoted to discussion of issues related to India in Tokyo, two days of school visits in Tokyo and Sendai to see how the Japanese schools were approaching teaching Computer Science and finally the main conference organized in Sendai. Participants from many Asia-Pacific countries including Japan, India, Thailand, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Hongkong, Malaysia, South Korea, Cambodia etc.

The school visits showed schools with very good infrastructure compared to India for sure. It also showed innovative teaching methodologies and also demonstrated how Japan is integrating teaching of Informatics with all the other subjects. The conference brought up common challenges across countries like how to deal with AI, teaching Computers vs teaching using computers, teacher training, infrastructure etc. You may read the detailed report here- [Japan APCEC Report](#).



### Asha Chennai chosen as the Regional Director for Code.org in India

We have been chosen as the Regional Director for Code.org in India!! This prestigious, invitation-only program for 2025 includes only four countries—India, Mexico, Spain, and Chile—and Asha Chennai is honored to represent India as one of the key partners. As Regional Director, Asha will continue to bring [Code.org](https://code.org)'s world-class computer science curriculum to our supported schools.



This partnership gives us access to exclusive resources: curriculum tailored to Indian languages, priority teacher and facilitator training, and close collaboration with [Code.org](https://code.org)'s global team. This also helps to further Asha's goal to integrate of computer science into mainstream education, ensuring students from all backgrounds have the skills they need for a digital future. Being part of this global network allows us to learn from and contribute to best practices worldwide.



### Ms. Kim Doyeon's visit to RTC and Chennai

Ms. Kim Doyeon, the Global Business Development Head at [Code.org](https://code.org) visited Chennai this year. During the RTC Impressions event, Ms. Kim Doyeon spent an entire day interacting with government school students from all our RTCs. The students proudly showed off their projects, asked tons of questions and snapped loads of selfies! She also visited our Chennai office, an ACE school GHS Sothuperumbedu, a primary school at Arkampattu, a middle school at Soolaimeni, an RTC school GHS Periyapalayam, and our RTCs at Kannigaiper and Periyapalayam—getting a firsthand look at the impact of Asha's work.



### USD 100,000 Innovation Grant from Amazon

This year, Asha Chennai has been selected as a recipient of a USD 100,000 grant from Amazon, recognizing our efforts as a key partner in driving community impact. This grant reflects our shared goal of bringing quality education to underprivileged children. The grant recognizes how we have used innovation and technology to enhance access to education and improve learning outcomes. Since this was an unrestricted grant, it offered us the flexibility to address critical needs, scale our programs, and explore innovative approaches to achieving our mission.

### The Amazon Careers of the Future Summit, Delhi

Amazon invited Asha Chennai to The Amazon Careers of the Future Summit, held in Delhi in January 2025. We participated as one of their Project Partners. Leaders from industry and public policy were brought together to discuss critical role of computer science education in preparing students for future careers.



For Asha, this was an opportunity to showcase our Robotic Wheelchair project. This project was created by our students from Public Union Middle School, Anantheri (Thiruvallur, Tamil Nadu). The project sparked curiosity and excitement among the attendees. Our students had the privilege of interacting with distinguished guests, including Dr. Kamakoti Veezhinathan, Director of IIT Madras, Mr. Palanidaran Chidambaram, Director of Appstore and XScreen Tech at Amazon, and Mr. Akshay Kashyap, India Lead for Amazon Future Engineer. Travelling to Delhi and meeting with dignitaries was a special experience for our students and teachers.



## Computer Science Education Summit, Pune

We were also invited to be a part of the **Computer Science Education Summit 2024-25**. The event was organized by Amazon and LFE (Leadership for Equity) in partnership with [Code.org](https://code.org). in Pune. Mr. Venkat, Asha volunteer and Asha teachers participated in the event. You may read the detailed report on the event here- [Computer Science Education Summit 2024-25](#)



The event was a deep dive into the future of AI in education, covering essential topics like Generative AI, Training Data, AI Literacy (Big 5 Ideas), and Bias in AI. A standout session on "Approach Localization" explored how AI principles can be adapted to different educational contexts.

Beyond the summit, our team also took a cultural detour, visiting Aga Khan Palace, Chatrapati Shivaji Road, Ganesha Temple, and Lal Mahal, immersing themselves in Pune's rich heritage.



## Auxohub's Independent Assessment of ACE and RTCs

[Auxohub](#) works with corporate clients, funding organisations and NGOs, providing advisory services, research support, content creation as well as assessments and evaluations. Auxohub conducted an independent impact assessment of Asha's two programs—ACE and RTCs.

Their assessment highlighted the transformative outcomes of the RTCs:

- ✓ Pass rates consistently above 90% across all courses
- ✓ Learning gains of 26%–46% in digital literacy skills
- ✓ Marked improvements in mathematics and English, reflecting cross-disciplinary benefits
- ✓ Stronger problem-solving and critical thinking abilities among students

You may read the complete report here- [RTC Impact Assessment Report](#)



In the ACE assessment, Auxohub found that teachers who once felt nervous even switching on a laptop now guide their students with confidence—77% reporting higher self-belief and 84% using digital tools in other subjects. For students, ACE has become the most exciting part of their week, helping them learn typing, presentations, and manipulating audio, video and photos while building teamwork and problem-solving skills.

You may read the complete report here- [ACE Impact Assessment Report](#)



## Innovation @ Asha Chennai - 2025

Asha Chennai has always focused on research and innovation in terms of understanding the problems that confront education for the underprivileged and experimenting to find the right solution for the problem whether it be in identifying the right processes, developing the right curriculum or even finding the right way to monitor and evaluate our solution. This aspect of Asha Chennai received a big boost in Dec 2024 as we were recognized by Amazon for the innovative work that we were doing and we award the **Amazon Innovation Grant of \$100K**. This helped us take these kinds of innovations we do even further during the year. Here are some of the innovations we have brought in during the last year.

SNo	Innovation	Description	Programs Impacted
<b>1. Asha Kanini Software and Contents</b>			
1a	New Method for mapping contents	Asha Kanini v4 separates contents and mapping into different DB tables. Further we have provided the ability to search using the old textbook and assign the contents to new textbook lesson which speeds up the process for new textbook migration.	Sprint
1b	MESL Activities	One hour discrete activities for teaching important concepts in each subject (8 per year) which incorporates classroom activities, computer based activities and reinforces the concepts with pen and paper.	Sprint
<b>2. Computer Science Curriculum</b>			
2a	Course Designing and Development	Our software development team has been working with teams of teachers to develop new courses. This has been working successfully.	All Programs
2b	ACE Year 2 Curriculum	We have started with the Basic programming RTC course and enhanced it to create a Scratch based programming curriculum for ACE year 2. As we are piloting this we are also piloting a set of schools teaching programming with Code.org's CSF Express. It provides us the opportunity to compare the two.	ACE
2c	AI Activities for Explore	Like discrete DL activities, we have created discrete AI activities. These are largely based on the activities already there in the Govt's Spark program. We expect to pick activities from Code.org's Hour of AI as well.	Explore

2d	AI extensions to Sprint	We are bringing the Code.org's physical computing course into the 8 <sup>th</sup> standard in our 8-year curriculum. We are also starting the process of incorporating AI into our 1 to 8 CS curriculum.	Sprint
2e	AI Course	A full course which will teach the use of AI, how AI works and finally how to use it in a solution of their own. This has just started.	RTC
2f	Web Development 2.0	This is a full-stack web development course. As the students have already learnt HTML and CSS in Web Development 1.0, we focus on the server side technologies and DB here.	RTC
2g	Robotics Courses	We have introduced a Robotics 1.0 course which will move them beyond the physical computing course to handle different kinds of motors, relay circuits and other actuators in addition to attaching and using various third party sensors with our Circuit Playground Express board.	RTC

### 3. Input, Output and Outcome Tracking

3a	Asset Tracker	We have developed a sophisticated QR code based asset tracking for all our 2000+ computers under our management. We have also developed a pinger app to monitor if the computer is being regularly used.	All programs
3b	Output Tracker	Forms for teachers to report their work and an approval process around the same has been implemented for Explore, ACE, RTC, Sprint-CS and Sprint-KaradiPath teachers. Informative tracker dashboards have been provided for each of these programs as well.	All Programs
3c	3 <sup>rd</sup> Term Endline	We were doing baseline and endline assessments with Northstar's toolkit. We are doing that now for those who have completed their 3 <sup>rd</sup> term as well which validates for the stickiness of their Digital Literacy learning.	RTC
3d	Assessment Analytics	As we did a thorough analysis of our Maths, English, Tamil and CS assessment data in primary and middle schools, we have extended our analysis capability by building several more analysis capabilities into our server.	Sprint



#### 4. Processes at our Programs

4a	Infrastructure at our RTCs	We have been ramping up the infrastructure at our RTCs with 3D printers, Drones and big screen TVs.	RTC
4b	Amazon TIS MakerSpace visits	We have been taking our RTC students to the Amazon-TIS Makerspace in Bengaluru to get exposure to Robotics, Drones, 3D printing etc.	RTC
4c	Teacher Training model	We follow the “Teacher as a Lead Learner” model for our ACE teacher training. We combine this with bringing immediacy to the training (i.e. lessons to be taught within one month of the training) and support at the point of delivery (trainers to visit the school, and infrastructure problems also addressed at the school). We use variants of this model in our other programs as well.	All Programs
4d	Teachers as Software Developers	We have been giving opportunities for teachers with good computer science skills to try their hands at development. This serves to enhance their skills and also contribute to our software development. Further for teachers who are considering a career switch, this also provides that opportunity in-house.	All Programs
4e	Certificate Distribution Function	These functions extend the opportunity to present their work from stage to a larger number of students and also take our work to the community.	RTC
4f	Third Party Impact Assessment	We engaged AuxoHub to do an independent Impact Assessment of our RTC and ACE programs. This will help us in donor communication as well as provide a valuable external perspective on our programs.	ACE and RTC

These will be discussed in detail in this report on our website.

### Asha Kanini and Software initiatives

The Asha Kanini project began in 2014-15 with the dual goal of enabling structured computer science education and leveraging technology to enhance learning across all subjects. As we complete a decade of this journey, the initiative continues to grow in scale, sophistication, and impact. Over the years, we have established:

A strong Computer Science curriculum for Classes 1 to 8, successfully implemented in more than 180 schools across Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. Adapted variants are also used by government teachers to deliver digital literacy and introductory programming through a condensed 2-year programme.

Asha Kanini, a simple, unified platform that enables teachers to access curated, high-quality lesson content aligned to the TN and UP state board syllabi.

In addition, the Asha Kanini team supports Asha Chennai through a wide range of operational and analytical systems including assessment management, data reporting and monitoring across programmes, and asset-tracking solutions.

### Highlights of the Year (2024-2025)

**Asha Kanini V4:** A major upgrade with improved usability and powerful mapping tools to align content with updated textbooks.

**Data reporting systems expanded:** Enhanced reporting and monitoring for Sprint, Explore, ACE and RTC programmes.

**Assessment analytics strengthened:** Advanced dashboards now provide deeper insights into assessment data. As we have maintained several years of data with the same and new students, our analytics have become more meaningful.

**Content development:** Robotics and Web Development modules were developed in partnership with lead teachers, strengthening technology skills within the teaching community.

**Teacher upskilling:** Several teachers have begun training to become software developers and are actively contributing to software development work.

**Improved asset management:** Laptop tracking using Pinger and automation of several asset-monitoring processes including CCM.

### Looking Ahead (2025-2026)

In the coming year, our focus will be on further strengthening Asha Kanini both as a learning platform and as an operational system. We plan to introduce an LMS-enabled version of Asha Kanini, enhance our data analytics capabilities, implement streamlined error reporting and improved server monitoring tools, and launch an advanced dashboard to support a unified view of various programmes. On the academic front, we plan to partner with the teachers on various initiatives including expanding our curriculum to include AI and integrate AI-driven features across programmes. We will also work towards rolling out an improved Android version to increase accessibility and reach across our schools.



## Factors that Affect Education

This is a shorter version of the blog I had written on the same topic. As an Asha volunteer and Coordinator of the Asha Chennai chapter over the past 20+ years, I have been visiting government schools in Tamilnadu and other states and also implemented several projects to improve education at the schools.



Here are four broad categories of factors that I have found affect the learning and educational outcomes of students that we serve within our Asha projects, and which may be extrapolated to individuals more broadly in society as well.

### 1. Natural Ability

An individual's natural ability clearly plays a part in their performance in education as much as it would in various sports or art. However, what we regard as intelligence is highly polygenic. Different aspects of what we perceive as intelligence are caused by several genes. Therefore, this characteristic of intelligence doesn't mutate easily to form genetic pools of more intelligent or less intelligent people. Races and castes and people belonging to certain nations are not predisposed to being intelligent or not intelligent by birth.

Countries that have taken a policy route to educate all its children equally have done well for that. It has created opportunity for all its citizens. Note that this is not to deny that children as individuals are unique in their interests and capabilities. However, an education that is equally accessible to all provides opportunities for developing these capabilities to all the children.

### 2. Sociological Factors

Several factors related to the student's family, upbringing, and the community in which the student grew up affect their education.

- **Nutrition:** Several studies have found that children who have low BMI and stunted in their development perform poorly in education. Government's midday meal and breakfast schemes help mitigate this to some extent.
- **Parental Education:** Children of educated parents do significantly better in education. Educated parents are able to continue the education at home as well. This also bears on greater value being placed on education.
- **Financial Well-being:** Families that are better off are able to provide an environment where learning can take place at home. Financial well-being also impacts the kind of preschool education a kid gets, extra-curricular activities the children engage in etc.
- **Value for Education:** This probably is the most important sociological factor. Children who grow up in families and communities that places high value for education learn much better than those who do not. This has a huge bearing on why one school or

one village or one community does well in education while another does not. But it should be noted that this is not set in stone and communities have shown dramatic capability for change.

### 3. Schools and Teachers

People consider schools with good infrastructure and adequate number of teachers who are well trained to be the most important factor for education. However, our own studies have found almost no correlation between the infrastructure at a school and the educational performance of the students and only a weak correlation between the teacher-student-ratio and the educational performance. While it is still important to have schools with good infrastructure and adequate number of teachers, other factors have much greater impact on education.



### 4. Education System

Curriculum (or what is to be taught), Pedagogy (how is it to be taught), Assessment (how is this assessed) and the monitoring/feedback mechanisms together make the education system. More than any other factor, this is what explains why some nations are doing educationally better than others. If Tamilnadu and India need to catch up with the rest of the world, this is the area that is going to require most focus.

#### In Summary

For judging the educational performance of one student and for improving it, natural ability and the quality of the schools and teachers, are indeed the most important or actionable parameters. However, people extrapolate the same factors when reasoning about the educational performance of the whole society or smaller communities within it. That is not just flawed but is also dangerous as it leads to several wrong policies which are often flavours of gifted child programs (like IITs, IIMs and Navodaya schools in India) or focus on infrastructure or number of teachers at the schools.




Little attention is paid to sociological processes and educational processes which have a much bigger impact on education. These are much more important in explaining the state of education as well as trying to do something about it. Without providing access to good education to all its people paying particular attention to the sociological factors holding people back, India will not be able to improve its education. Substantial improvements are required in aligning the assessments to test the actual learning of the children instead of testing their ability to memorise textbooks. Data collection at the level of the schools and teachers needs to be improved significantly as well. I hope to see these transformations guiding Tamilnadu and India to a better educated society.








## Asha Projects



At Asha, we see ourselves as catalysts for social change, working toward the goal of equitable education in rural India. Our programs are designed to ensure that quality education reaches all, regardless of caste, economic background, or other barriers. This vision has gained the support of citizens, school staff, and government officials alike. Our efforts focus on improving the quality of education in government schools, primarily across rural Tamil Nadu and now in Uttar Pradesh. While our programs are consistent across regions, we have structured our teams by geographic location for efficient operations. These projects are described below.





Project Name	Project Details
<a href="#"><u>Project Sangamam-Thiruvallur</u></a> 	<p>We launched this project in 2004-05 in the Thiruvallur district and have since expanded to support around 90 primary and middle schools across the Poondi, Ellapuram, Kadambathur, and Thiruvalangadu blocks of Thiruvallur, as well as the Sriperumbudur block of Kanchipuram district. Dedicated computer teachers are currently working in all these schools, and we have also placed regular teachers in approximately 15 schools and implement the KaradiPath program in 30+ schools. We also run eight Rural Technology Centres (RTC) in Thiruvallur in Thirutani (Thirutani Block), Kanakamma Chathiram (Thiruvalangadu Block), Seethanjeri, Thirupatchur and Thomur (Poondi Block), Uthukottai, Kannigaiper, and Periyapalayam (Ellapuram Block). Explore and ACE programs were also launched here and 75 of the ACE schools are in this district.</p>
<a href="#"><u>Project Sangamam Rajatalab &amp; Mirzapur</u></a> 	<p>Asha has a long presence in the areas near Varanasi in UP. The Asha team in Rajatalab near Varanasi reached out to Asha Chennai to also replicate our government school support work in the schools there. We are currently supporting 12 schools there and are also beginning to work with 4 schools in the Mirzapur area.</p>
<a href="#"><u>Project Pearl</u></a> 	<p>Project Pearl supports about 25 primary and middle schools, two balwadi(s) (pre-primary educational centers) and four community libraries in the remote villages of Thoothukudi, Thirunelveli and Thenkasi districts. Three RTCs are running in Nalattinputhu, Kalugumalai and Kayathar in Thoothukudi district. Explore and ACE programs have also started here with 2 trainers. KaradiPath program is being implemented in 5 schools.</p>
<a href="#"><u>Project Thulasi</u></a>	<p>Project Thulasi started with a Tuition centre at Seeyapoondi a remote village in Villupuram district. It then started supporting government schools in Villupuram and Thiruvannamalai districts. It is currently supporting about 25 primary and middle schools. Four libraries are also</p>

<p>Project Thulasi</p> 	<p>being run as part of the project. Explore and ACE programs have also started here with 3 trainers. Spoken English through KaradiPath curriculum is being taught in 6 schools.</p>
<p><a href="#">Project Cauvery</a></p> <p>Project Cauvery</p> 	<p>Project Cauvery was started to replicate our computer science education and technology aided education in the schools around Mannargudi in Thiruvarur district. We are currently supporting about 12 schools with 4 teachers.</p>
<p><a href="#">Poorna Vidhya</a></p> <p>Project PV</p> 	<p>Through this project we work with four Chennai city Corporation schools and six schools in the Gooduvancheri area of Chengalpet Dist. While computer teachers go to all these schools, we have also appointed regular teachers at four of these schools.</p>

Besides these government school projects that deal with specific Geographies, we also have the following projects that handle a specific program across Geographies.

### Projects that aid the School Improvement

<p><a href="#">Project RightStart</a></p> <p>Project RightStart</p> 	<p>It is economical and effective when training is given to all the teachers from our different projects together at one place, and hence started this annual exercise of teacher training. It is held at IITM campus in May every year. It has grown in strength and participation over the years. These training sessions are provided by recognized experts in the different fields of education. We also have training in the project locations itself in just Maths and Science during the Sept/Oct holidays. We have a RightStart-CS in December for all our CS related training. Further each project has monthly teacher meetings where some training also happens in their local areas.</p>
<p><a href="#">Project Asha Kanini</a></p> <p>Asha Kanini</p> 	<p>Technology and Education Initiative efforts to improve the processes happening in the classrooms at the government schools. As a part of this initiative we are developing and packaging contents to be used in classrooms, developing software to make the input (assets) and output (teacher work) tracking processes easier, conduct assessments at schools, analyze the assessments to identify areas for improvements, developing a curriculum for teaching computer science for primary and middle schools, online English training for teachers etc.</p>
<p><a href="#">Project Sugadharam</a></p>	<p>Many of the schools that Asha Chennai supports do not have adequate toilet facilities. If toilets are not there, children are sent home to nearby</p>

<p>Sugadharam</p> 	<p>fields when they need to use toilet. This becomes an even bigger problem for middle schools. Problems and lack of facilities in the toilets also make it unhygienic for the children. Asha has worked with donors to repair/renovate toilets where we can or build a new one where that option does not exist.</p>
<p><b><u>Rural Technology Centres</u></b></p> <p>RTC</p> 	<p>Rural Technology centers are a joint initiative of IIT Madras and Asha to take good quality technology education to high and higher secondary school in remote rural areas. The RTC teachers provide basic education in the associated high or higher secondary school and more advanced courses are offered for free to interested students at our centers.</p>
<p>Other projects</p>	
<p><b><u>Asha Scholarship</u></b></p> <p>Scholarships</p> 	<p>Asha Chennai identifies children from under-privileged backgrounds going to different schools and colleges, and matches them with donors to give scholarships that cover their tuition fees, books, uniforms, etc. About 80% of the students are from in and around Chennai, while the rest are from other parts of TamilNadu.</p>
<p><b><u>Project Manigal</u></b></p> <p>Manigal</p> 	<p>Project Manigal aims to promote education as a tool to change the marginal status of the gypsies. We work with Narikoravas settled in two colonies in Chennai at Indiranagar and Kottur.</p>



## Asha Programs

### 1. SPRINT (Supporting Primary and Middle Schools in Nurturing Talent)

SPRINT is Asha's longest-running initiative, launched in 2004. Today, we operate in over 170 schools across Tamil Nadu and 15+ schools in Uttar Pradesh.

SPRINT was originally conceived in 2003-04 to address teacher shortages in government schools. The program began by placing regular teachers in under-resourced schools. In 2014, this expanded to include computer teachers, who not only teach computer science but also use carefully curated open source digital content and Asha developed content to enhance learning in other subjects. Amazon has been supporting the computer teacher program in 100 SPRINT schools for the last 2 years.

Through SPRINT, Asha works closely with schools to help them improve the overall quality of education. Over the course of a year, we provide support in the following ways:

- Teach computer science at all the 180+ schools. We have developed an 8-year CS curriculum to teach at these primary and middle schools which is taught by Asha teachers.
- Appoint additional teachers to work alongside the government teachers in schools where there is a low teacher-student ratio.
- Running the Karadipath program in collaboration with Karadi Tales to improve English language, currently active in 56 schools.
- Distribution of stationery materials
- Distribution of uniforms to students
- Support the school in celebrating annual days by providing snacks and prizes.
- Take students on an excursion.
- Hosting events like Asha Impressions to broaden student exposure
- Conduct assessments in Math, English, Tamil/ Hindi, and Computer Science to track progress and impact.

#### Computer Education

Since 2014-15, Asha Chennai has been teaching computer science to primary and middle school students in Tamil Nadu. Recognizing the need for a more engaging approach to teacher computer science, we developed our own curriculum. Our curriculum covers both **digital literacy** (how to use a computer) and **computational thinking** (programming and problem-solving with computers). It is also designed for schools with minimal infrastructure or unreliable internet access. In fact, many of the schools we support rely on the laptop that our teacher brings to class.

Asha Chennai has developed **Asha Kanini**, a platform that enables teachers to easily access curated digital content aligned with their lesson plans. We also create our own resources, such as digital lesson plans, to fill gaps where existing content is insufficient. Both Asha Kanini and our computer science curriculum have been developed with scalability in mind, allowing them to be expanded to schools across the state with government support.

Our curriculum emphasizes **Learn-by-Doing**. Every lesson is designed as an activity that the children will complete on the computer and in the process learn the concepts involved in the activity.

### Project Work

A key aspect of our pedagogy is the practical application of what is taught. Each year, students are required to use their knowledge to create and submit projects. Children from 4th and 5th standards prepare presentations using OpenOffice, while those in 7th and 8th standards develop programs in Scratch. These projects are team-based, with Asha teachers mentoring and guiding the students throughout the process. Selected projects are showcased at **Asha Impressions**, a platform for students to present their work.

The primary goal of project work is not assessment; it is a powerful teaching tool. Projects complement instruction-driven learning by fostering goal-oriented education. Students build the confidence to navigate and learn new tools on their own.

### Asha Impressions at IIT, Madras

Two Asha Impressions events are held every year. During the Asha Impressions held this year in April, we received **over 800 project submissions** from 120 schools across Thiruvallur, Thiruvaurur, Thiruvanamalai, and Chennai. From these, 31 outstanding projects were selected to participate in the Asha Impressions, held in Chennai. Finalists had the unique opportunity to present their work at the **Central Lecture Theatre, IIT Madras, on April 28, 2025**.

Students brought their ideas to life through poems, songs, dance, experiments, storytelling, handmade models, and even acting! The judges were thoroughly impressed, making it incredibly difficult to choose the winners. In fact, for two of the competitions, two teams were jointly awarded third place - a testament to the exceptional quality of the entries.

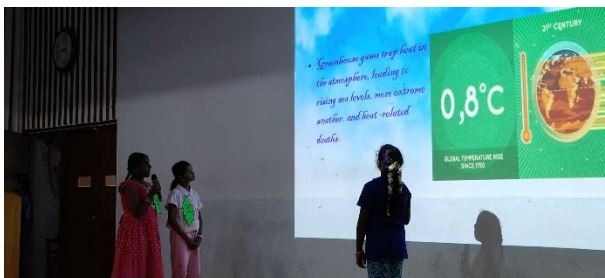
You may view the video here – [Asha Impressions at IITM](#)

You may read the detailed report here- [Asha Impressions April 2025](#)

Asha Imp Video



Asha Impressions



The second event was held at Thoothukudi in June 2025. Here, **300 projects were submitted** by students out of which 17 projects were selected under Digital Literacy, and 10 projects were chosen for Scratch Programming. The students' projects ranged from practical tech solutions to imaginative digital storytelling built with curiosity, creativity, and confidence. You may watch the video here – [Asha Impressions at Thoothukudi](#)



## Karadipath Program

Asha Chennai has partnered with KaradiPath to launch the Magic English SLL program. This innovative initiative aims to teach children English using a natural, immersive approach that mirrors the way they learn their first language. The Magic English SLL program believes that the best way to learn a language is naturally. Just like how children learn their first language, this program helps them learn English by first listening, understanding, and speaking. Reading and writing come later. This makes learning feel easy and fun.

We launched the Karadi Path training program in 10 selected schools on mid Oct 2022 with a goal to enhance language learning and comprehension skills among students. Later on, we expanded this program to 56 schools we support in the years 2023-24, 2024-25.

### Details of the Methodology

When a new school is taken up, the teaching always begins with Level 1. Class 1 is generally not included because the students are too young to follow the program along with the rest of the class. Instead, the program starts from Class 2, where Karadipath Level 1 is taught, followed by Level 2 in Class 3, and Level 3 in Classes 4 and 5.





Each level consists of 72 sessions, with each session lasting about 40 minutes. The program was launched at the beginning of the academic year and has already shown remarkable success at the beginner level, equipping many students with essential skills and confidence.



Building on this success, the intermediate level was introduced in October 2024 at two Government High Schools: **GHS Thomur** and **GHS New Thirupachur**.

In these schools, Level 1 is being taught this year to Classes 6, 7, and 8. Over the next couple of years, Levels 2 and 3 will be added gradually, allowing the program to reach a steady state.

Each session can accommodate up to 40 children, but in most schools the students are divided into groups of 20 to 30 children each. This ensures that every child receives adequate attention and can participate actively. Teachers conduct two sessions per week for each group, with each session lasting about 40 minutes. This structured approach allows the program to be delivered effectively across different grades and schools, while maintaining consistency and quality in teaching.





### Training on KaradiPath:

Trainers from KaradiPath, Mr. Arockia and Ms. Ashwini, conducted a full-day training for our teachers at the Sangamam office in Thiruvallur on 15 June 2024. Asha's KaradiPath teachers attended the session and also demonstrated all parts of the programme. The trainers and teachers walked through each component of a session- Focus, Action Path, Music Path, and Story Path- giving clear demonstrations and answering all questions. For the Intermediate-level training, Ms. Ashwini later gave a live demo at GHS Thomur on 9 September 2024.



### Key Features of the Program

The program creates an immersive environment where children are surrounded by English, encouraging them to pick up the language through natural exposure. Engaging activities such as storytelling, songs, and games are used to reinforce language skills in a fun and interactive manner and allowing children to develop a solid foundation in pronunciation.

We conducted a thorough assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of KaradiPath program. In selected schools like PUPS Thiruvallangadu, PUPS Sadurangapet, PUPS Ariyapakkam, we conducted assessments at the beginning of the academic as well as at the end.



## Regular Teacher Program

Government guidelines recommend one teacher for every 30 students, but even this standard is often unmet in government schools. Additionally, headmasters and headmistresses are burdened with administrative duties, limiting their ability to teach. This 30:1 ratio is also inadequate for multi-age classrooms, which are common in small rural schools. The activity-based teaching methods employed in government schools further increase the demands on teachers. One of the most pressing needs in these schools is the provision of a sufficient number of teachers. Appointing teachers not only supports the schools directly but also allows us to monitor classroom activities and ensure that the educational materials we provide are being effectively utilized.

Under the regular teacher program, Asha currently has 30 regular teachers. These teachers visit schools assigned to them and teach subjects like English, Math and Science in accordance with the government's curriculum. They work at par with the government teachers and are not provided as substitutes. Each teacher is assigned a school and they go to the respective school every day.



## Stationery Material Distribution

Stationery distribution drive kicking off in July at our UP Project and then in August at Pearl Project in Thoothukudi across all Asha-supported schools. This year, we provided students with



essential supplies, including two-line and four-line notebooks, pens, pencils, chalk, chart paper, exam pads, geometry boxes, exam pads, scales, color pencils, sketch pens, and crayons.

While the government provides some stationery materials for students, both their quality and quantity are often insufficient. Asha steps in to bridge this gap by supplying quality stationery. Additionally, Asha also provides schools common supplies like chart paper, A4 sheets, and picture charts. Every year, Asha ensures these essential materials are topped up for the schools. These supplies not only help students stay organized and focused on their studies but also foster creativity and self-expression.

Following the completion of distribution in Thoothukudi, the effort expanded to Thiruvallur, Thiruvallur, Thiruvallur, Thiruvallur, and Chennai. Asha Chennai distributed stationery materials in **185 schools benefitting over 13,900 students** this year. You may read the detailed report [here](#).

Stationery Dist



## Laptop Distribution

We have for long struggled with insufficient infrastructure when it comes to laptops. Serving over 180 schools under SPRINT, 300 schools in Explore, 150 schools under ACE and 12 RTCs, laptops have always been a pressing need. This year, **Amazon provided us with 1,200 laptops** provided in batches of 500, 500 and 200.

Sama Digital Foundation handed over the laptops, donated by Amazon, to Asha Chennai. After thorough checks by Sama, the laptops were dispatched to Asha and received at our Thiruvallur project office.

After the required software were installed by Asha's team, the laptops were distributed by our project coordinators and Asha teachers, who personally delivered them to Headmasters and government teachers at our project schools. We distributed laptops schools in Thiruvallur, Thoothukudi, Thiruvallur, Thiruvallur and Chennai. Additionally, spare laptops were utilized for assessments in ACE schools and were distributed once the assessments were completed.

These laptops have served our various projects like SPRINT (primary and middle school), Explore (high school), and ACE (government teacher program) supported by Amazon.

You may read the detailed report here- [Amazon Laptop Distribution](#) and view the video [here](#).

Laptop Dist



Laptop Video



Asha Chennai also received a **donation of 12 desktops from Bentley Systems** in November 2024. These desktops were allocated to four schools: two in the Guduvanchery area under our Poorna Vidhya project and two in the Thiruvavur district under our Cauvery project.



## Oral Assessments

Every year we carry out oral assessments and written assessments at all Asha supported schools. To lay the ground rules and requisites of the assessments, the teachers are provided training every year. Oral assessments are carried out for students from grade 1 to 5.

This year, we conducted oral assessments at 190 schools covering 15,573 students across all our geographies.



Along with assessments, we also collect sociological data such as height, weight, parent education etc. This helps give us a broader picture of the background and environment of the children. The findings are then collected and updated into our database.



## Written Assessments

We conducted written assessments for students in Grades 1-5 across all our projects between February and March. Teachers were provided training to reiterate the guidelines needed to conduct the exams fairly.





**185 schools in Thiruvallur, Thoothukudi, Thiruvallur, Chennai, Thiruvannamalai, Rajatalab, and Mirzapur participated in the written assessments this year.** Our project coordinators and teachers oversaw the process at each location.

The question papers were prepared by our teachers, printed, and distributed by project coordinators at each site. These assessments are not meant to evaluate individual students but to gain an overall understanding of their comprehension and learning progress. The insights help us tailor our lesson plans for the next academic year, focusing on areas that need improvement.

To ensure fairness, the answer sheets are collected and sent to other project locations for evaluation. You may watch the video [here](#).

Written Assmt Video



## Annual Day Celebrations

This year, Asha Chennai supported 150 schools across our projects in Tamil Nadu as they celebrated their Annual Day with full enthusiasm! Several schools also proudly marked a century of existence, which was a truly historic milestone!

The Tamilnadu education department had asked all schools to celebrate annual days. The funds provided to the schools were insufficient. Asha Chennai pitched in by sponsoring prizes and snacks to keep spirits high and tummies happy. The school teachers and the public managed the rest. You may watch the video here – [Annual Day Celebrations 2025](#)

Annual Day Video







## Student Excursion

From temples and palaces to beaches and planetariums, March was a month of exploration, learning, and joy across Asha projects. True learning happens when children experience joy, wonder, and discovery. This March was filled with enriching excursions across our projects, giving students unforgettable memories and meaningful lessons.

Nearly 900 students from 50 schools (4th and 5th standards) in **Thiruvallur** enjoyed weekly excursions to Vandalur Zoo and Mahabalipuram. The children marveled at wild animals, explored ancient temples, and delighted in beach visits—their favorite part of the trip. Asha staff, government teachers, and volunteers, including Chennai coordinator Mr. Rajaraman, accompanied the groups. You may watch the video here-

[Sangamam Annual Excursion](#)

Sang Excursion







Between January to March, 452 government school children from our **Project Pearl in Thoothukudi** traveled to Kanyakumari. With the support of 38 teachers and Asha staff, the children explored Vivekananda Rock, Thiruvalluvar Silai, and Kannadipalayam Beach, enjoyed a thrilling boat ride, and crossed the Glass Bridge. Meals and snacks kept spirits high, making this the first big trip for many students. You may watch the video here- [Pearl student excursion](#)

Pearl Excursion



In March students from government schools under our **Thulasi Project in Thiruvannamalai** went on an educational day trip to Thanjavur and Thiruchikallanai, accompanied by government teachers and Asha staff. Asha arranged transport and all meals, ensuring a smooth, enjoyable experience. They visited the Brihadeeswarar Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Thanjavur Palace, enjoyed a 3D show and visited Thiruchikallanai.





Two batches of 200 students and 20 staff from our **Project Cauvery in Thiruvavur** went on excursions on March 8 and 29, 2025. The first group visited Trichy Mukkombu Dam, the Planetarium, Kallanai Dam, and Thanjavur's Periya Kovil, accompanied by Asha volunteer Ms. Komalavalli. The second group explored Chidambaram Nataraja Temple, Pichavaram, and Poompuhar Beach. Students were served a hearty meal, with idlis and Pongal for breakfast and curd rice, lemon rice, and tamarind rice for lunch.



In March, students from **Chennai schools** went on an excursion filled with learning and fun. Asha volunteer Mr. Sriram joined them in the morning and spoke with the government teachers. The trip began at the Birla Planetarium in Kotturpuram, where students explored the exhibits and enjoyed a Sky Theatre show. After a short park break with science-themed play equipment, they continued to Guindy Park. A lunch of variety rice and ice cream was served. The students then visited the Thiruvananthapuram Beach where they had a fun playing in the sand and waves. You may watch the video here- [Annual excursion Chennai](#)

Chennai Excursion







## Teachers excursion

Teachers play a pivotal role in shaping young minds. However, their experience of the world is severely restricted by their financial and family circumstances. To broaden their horizons, honor their hard work and provide them with a well-deserved break, Asha Chennai organized a teachers' excursion to Hyderabad. Over 60 teachers (many with their children) from Project Sangamam and Poornavidhya, Asha staff and volunteers took a 3-day trip to Hyderabad. They visited Golconda Fort, Birla Mandir, Salar Jung museum, Charminar and Hussian Sagar Lake.



Teachers from our Thriuvanamalai project visited Cochin in October 2024. They visited Fort Kochi, Jew Town, Athirapilly falls, Snow Park, Boating at Marine Drive etc. Our teachers from Thiruvapur also visited various tourists' locations in Cochin, while Project Pearl visited Pondicherry and Vellankani.



These events are a refreshing getaway, designed to foster camaraderie, relaxation, and rejuvenation. Beyond the enjoyment, the trip also strengthens the sense of community among the teachers. It served as a reminder that their collective efforts are appreciated, and that taking time to recharge is essential to maintaining their passion and effectiveness in the classroom.



## 2.Explore



The Explore program is Asha's effort to connect with more schools and extend our reach. While we cannot provide the full support offered under our Primary and Middle School programs to all schools, we engage these schools by giving them access to Asha's scalable initiatives and guide them in using them effectively. This includes the Asha Kanini software, which supports teaching across all subjects, and access to our computer science curriculum.

Currently, the Explore program runs in over 300 schools across four districts in Tamil Nadu. Students take part in five separate one-hour activities that introduce them to different areas of computer science. The original Amazon Explore program focused mainly on programming, but Asha has expanded it to include digital literacy as well. The activities are carefully chosen to teach key computer science concepts in ways that are engaging and enjoyable for students. These activities are listed [here](#).

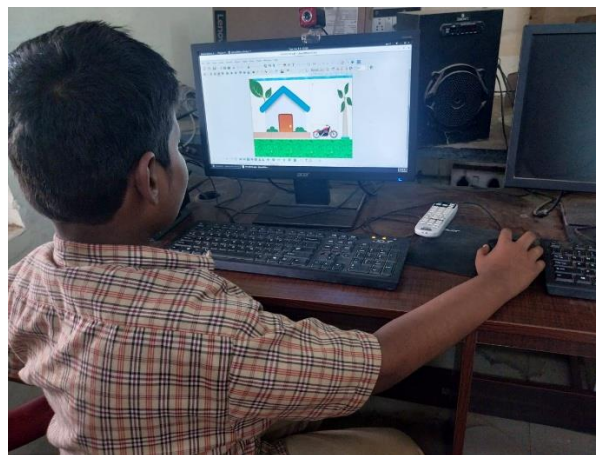


Each Computer Science (CS) Trainer is allocated between 10 and 30 schools with a total strength of about 2,500 students in classes 6-9. The teacher visits each school in rotation and does the activities for students in these classes. The teachers are able to do 4-5 sessions per class in the school over the year.

The children have been engaging well with the activities, and the program has been well received by both students and school staff, including teachers and the Headmasters. Visiting a new school each day, building relationships with teachers, and starting work immediately is a big challenge. Long travel across unfamiliar areas, sometimes covering hundreds of kilometers, adds to the difficulty. Despite these challenges, the computer science trainers have been doing an excellent job.



### 3. Asha Computer Education (ACE)



In 2023, Asha signed an MoU with the Government of Tamilnadu to train government school teachers to deliver computer science education to students from classes 6-9 at 50 to 60 schools as per mutually agreed programme design and schedule. Our team came up with the name ஆஷா வழி கணினி கல்வி-Asha Computer Education – ACE, since it perfectly captures the essence of this project. This program is entirely funded by Amazon under their Amazon Future Engineer program.

ACE program was inaugurated on 19th Oct 2023 in Thiruvallur and started in 52 schools. About 1800 students spread across these 52 schools were taught the one-year curriculum. Government teachers were actively assisted by Asha trainers. A textbook for the curriculum was released and the teachers have been using the same. You may read details about the program [here](#).



#### ACE V2 Inauguration

Our pilot in Thiruvallur turned out to be very successful prompting us to expand the program to other geographies. This year, we took the ACE program to more schools in Thiruvallur, Thoothukudi, Villupuram and Thiruvanamalai.

#### Thiruvallur

ACE V2 was inaugurated on Friday, 9 August 2024, at GHS Thirupatchur, Thiruvallur. The event was honored by the presence of key figures such as Mrs. Johnsirani, Headmistress of PUPS Thirupachur, Mrs. Mythili, Headmistress of GHS Thirupachur, Mr. Rajaraman Krishnan, Asha Coordinator, Mr. Venkat Ramaswamy, Asha Volunteer, Mr. Srinivasan, Sangamam Coordinator, along with Asha staff, computer teachers, and government teachers.

During the inauguration, computers were distributed to all ACE teachers, followed by the first training session. The enthusiasm and active participation of the 24 government teachers set a positive tone for the future of ACE V2.



### Kilpennathur, Thiruvanamalai

Following the inauguration of ACE V2 in Thiruvallur, we inaugurated ACE V2 at Kilpennathur, Thiruvanamalai, on August 13, 2024. The event was presided over by Block Educational Officers Mr. Sriramulu and Mr. Ramamoorthy, with Asha Project Coordinator Mr. Rajaram and Block Resource Office Supervisor Mr. Selvam and Thulasi Project Coordinator Dhinakaran.

Other guests included teachers and instructors from Kilpennathur Government Boys Higher Secondary School, and Primary School, Salakuppam. During the event, laptops were distributed to all participating government teachers, reinforcing Asha's commitment to equipping educators with the tools they need to succeed.

After the inauguration, a training session was conducted for the government teachers. Asha's computer trainers elaborated on the goals and objectives of the program, sharing their vision for empowering students through digital education.



### Thoothukudi

The ACE V2 program was officially launched at the Thoothukudi, Pearl Project, on August 2024, marking its expansion to a third location in Tamil Nadu. The inauguration was led by Mrs. L. Regini, CEO of Thoothukudi, who lit the kuthuvilakku, accompanied by Mr. Venkat, steward of Asha Chennai, and Mrs. Padmavathi, BEEO of Kovilpatti.

Mr. Venkat distributed laptops to 13 government school teachers; in addition, three laptops each were presented to MMC School, VOC Government Higher Secondary School, PUMS Ilambuvanam, and PUMS Thittangulam. The CEO's office also received one laptop, further cementing the commitment to supporting education in the region.





## Villupuram

The inauguration ceremony for ACE in Villupuram took place on 14th August 2024 at the Block Resource Office in Melmalayanur. The event was inaugurated by Mr. Suresh, District Coordinator of Namma School Namma Ooru Palli, and Mr. Prakash, Block Education Officer. Asha's Project Coordinator, Mr. Rajaraman, Block Resource Office Supervisor, Mrs. Jamuna and Mr. Dhinakaran, Coordinator of Asha's Thulasi Project. The training session was conducted by Mr. Rajaraman, who elaborated on Asha's vision and core values.



## ACE Teacher Training

Under Asha's "Teacher as Lead Learner" model, training sessions are conducted in small batches to prepare teachers for the next 4–6 lessons they will deliver in their schools. We continued to offer training sessions to both the new and older ACE teachers in line with the curriculum being taught. Asha Trainers conducted monthly training sessions at different locations- Thirupatchur in Thiruvallur, Kovilpatti in Thoothukudi, GHSS Vannikonandhal in Melmayannur, Kilpennatur in Thiruvanamalai for both the batches of the ACE program.



## ACE Impressions

Following the pattern of our SPRINT and RTC program, the children worked on a detailed project for 8 to 10 weeks at the end of the year. The best projects were selected and featured in the ACE Impressions event.

### ACE Impressions Batch 1

Asha's first ACE Impressions was scheduled for March 2025. The response from students and teachers was overwhelming. **Over 373 projects were submitted from 52 schools!!** After a rigorous selection process 17 outstanding projects were selected to be presented to external judges.

On March 19, 2025, these 17 teams, accompanied by their government teachers, Asha teachers, project coordinators, and staff, traveled to Chennai for the first-ever ACE IMPRESSIONS event hosted by the **Amazon Chennai office at their World Trade Centre**, Perungudi office. The event saw participation from dignitaries, including the V Balamurugan (APO) Assistant Educational Officer, Thiruvallur district, officials from Namma School Namma Ooru Palli, and representatives from Amazon Future Engineer. A team of Amazon volunteers engaged the students throughout the day, making the experience both enjoyable and enriching.





Since this was the first time, both the government teachers and students were a little nervous. However, the students' presentations left a lasting impression on the judges and attendees. Their confidence, creativity, and grasp of technology were evident in the quality of their work. Government teachers expressed their gratitude for being part of both the ACE program and this event, recognizing the transformative impact it has had on their students.

Out of 17 participating teams, three emerged victorious, claiming a combined prize money of ₹4,20,000!

- ✓ 1st place – GHS Murukkampattu, winning prize money of INR 1,80,000
- ✓ 2nd place – PUMS Nallatur, winning prize money of INR 1,40,000
- ✓ 3rd place – GHS Athimancheripet, winning prize money of INR 1,00,000

The winning teams were awarded prize money, which will be used to set up computer labs or support other needs in their schools, ensuring that the impact of ACE extends beyond this event. You may watch the video [here](#) and read about the ACE Impressions [here](#).

ACE V1 Video



ACE Imp V1



The funds were allocated to schools with the intent of setting up computer labs or addressing other urgent infrastructural needs.

- At GHS Murukampattu, although we initially proposed establishing a computer lab, the school requested that the funds be directed toward renovating their toilets. We honored their request and undertook the toilet renovation project.
- PUMS Nallatur highlighted their need for tablets for students, along with tables and chairs. Accordingly, we provided the required devices and furniture.
- GHS Athimancheripet, which already houses a hi-tech lab, sought support for its renovation. At their request, the prize money was channeled into upgrading the facility.

## ACE Impressions Batch 2

Though the second batch of ACE began only in August 2024, government teachers went above and beyond to complete the first year of our program on schedule. They continued working on their projects through the summer holidays and submitted them by May 10th.



Over 470 projects were submitted by students of ACE Batch 2! The second ACE Impressions event was also hosted by Amazon at the World Trade Centre, Perungudi, Chennai. The event took place on 21 June, 2025. You

ACE Imp V2



ACE Imp RV2



may watch the video [here](#) and read the detailed report here [ACE Impressions Batch 2](#).

Out of the 17 teams, four teams took away the prizes-

- ✓ **1st place -GHSS Melsevalampadi (Villupuram)** -“Assam Forest” project, took home smartwatches, medals, certificates, and ₹1.6L for their school!
- ✓ **2nd place- PUMS Singarajapuram (Thiruvallur)** won the second place with Project “Payanam,” winning ₹1.3L!
- ✓ **3rd place - PUMS Ganalapadi (Thiruvannamalai)** earned third for “CIRCUITS” and bagged ₹1L, plus trophies, medals & certificates!
- ✓ **Judges’ Favorite- GGHSS Ettaiyapuram (Thoothukudi)** took back INR 40,000 for their school.

The prize money was utilized by the schools for their pressing needs-

- GHSS Melsevalampadi (Villupuram) – Constructed an elevated stage to conduct its events and functions
- PUMS Singarajapuram (Thiruvallur) –Upgraded their computer lab with civil and electrical repairs.
- PUMS Ganalapadi (Thiruvannamalai) - Purchased tables and benches for students
- GGHSS Ettaiyapuram (Thoothukudi) –Purchahsed a screen and projector

ACE Winners



You may read the detailed report here- [ACE Winners Turn Prizes into Progress](#)



## ACE Assessment

At the end of the 2024-25 academic year, Asha conducted assessments to check if the students had learnt the contents of the ACE first year curriculum. This was held in Feb-Mar 2025 for the 52 ACE V1 schools and in Mar-Apr 2025 for the 53 ACE V2 schools. This was rigorously conducted. At each school the trainer for that school was paired with another trainer to conduct the assessment with no participation by the teacher at that school. The assessment is conducted individually for each student on a computer as well as pen and paper. Students who successfully completed the course curriculum, project work and assessments were awarded completion certificated. You may read more about the findings of the assessment here - [ACE Status Report – October 2025](#)

ACE Status







## 4. Rural Technology Centers (RTCs)



The goal of RTCs is to provide essential computer science education to all students at the associated government high and higher secondary schools and provide the students opportunity to learn more at our centers which will work in the evenings and Saturdays.

At our RTCs, we teach 6 month courses to 6th to 12th std students in digital literacy, programming and more advanced topics. We have also developed a good assessment mechanism to test the learning of the students and broadly the outcome of our efforts. Students are assessed through their Project work, NorthStar Assessments and teacher inputs.

Our RTC teachers visit the 12 associated high and higher secondary schools and teach all children in classes 6 to 9 the basics of digital literacy and programming. Then interested children (including children from other schools) are given the option to take one of several advanced courses at the center for free. These centers function between 4:30 to 7:30 pm on school days and all day on holidays.

### RTC Courses

Here are the set of courses being offered at our RTCs. Note that the courses offered by each RTC will change from term to term to give the opportunity for all students to take these advanced courses.

1. Basic Digital Literacy
2. Basic Programming
3. Web Development
4. Javascript Animations
5. Physical Programming
6. Media Editing

We are planning to introduce more courses over the next few months. These include-

- ✓ Web Development
- ✓ Intro to Robotics
- ✓ Artificial Intelligence

## New RTC inauguration

Asha Chennai inaugurated five new RTCs this year- 3 in Thiruvallur, 1 in Thoothukudi and 1 in Thiruvanamalai.

### Nalatinputur, Thoothukudi

Asha's 8th RTC Centre and the third in Thoothukudi District, Tamil Nadu was inaugurated on 14 June, 2024, Friday at Nalattinpuður near Kovilpatti. Asha teacher at this RTC visits the associated higher secondary school, GHSS Nalattinpuður. The inauguration function was attended by Asha Volunteers, Mr. Rajaraman and Mr. Bhaskar. They visited GHS Nalattinpuður school along with Asha Coordinator, Mr. Murugan and Asha teachers to talk about Asha's work and RTC courses on offer. You may watch the video [here](#).

RTC Nalattinpuður

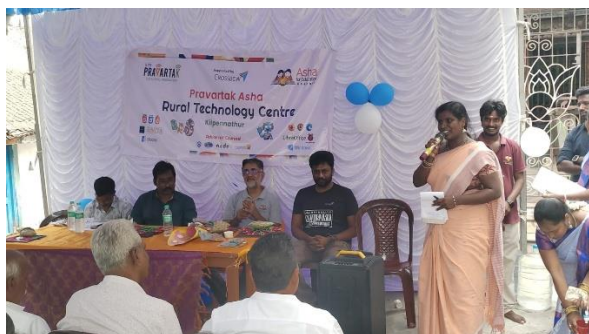


### Kilpennathur, Thiruvanamalai

We opened our ninth Rural Technology Centre (RTC) in Kilpennathur, Thiruvannamalai.

The Kilpennathur RTC was inaugurated on July 6, 2024, by Crossbow founder Mr. Deepak, his team, Mr. Sriramalu, the Block Education Officer of Kilpennathur, and Asha coordinator, Mr. Rajaraman. The event was graced by the presence of the school headmaster, computer and regular teachers from Asha, members of the Consumer Protection Federation, police officials, and other guests. Crossbow donated nine computers to the RTC, including five laptops and four desktops. RTC Kilpennathur is paired with Girls Government Higher Secondary School, Kilpennathur. You may watch the video [here](#).

RTC Kilpennathur



### Thirupatchur, Thiruvallur

We inaugurated our 10th Rural Technology Center (RTC) in Tamil Nadu—our 6th RTC in Thiruvallur district at Thirupatchur. This RTC is led by our teacher Mr. Rajkumar who teaches at GHS Thirupatchur. Currently, the RTC is offering Digital Literacy and Scratch Programming



courses, with 80 students enrolled in the first batch. We look forward to seeing them showcase their projects at RTC Impressions very soon!



### Tiruttani, Thiruvallur

We inaugurated our 11th Rural Technology Centre in Thiruttani on 17 February, 2024. The Thiruttani RTC is being led by our teacher, Ms. Sasikala.



### Uttukotai, Thiruvallur

RTC Uttukotai was inaugurated by Asha Volunteer, Mr. Venkat Ramaswamy on 14 March, 2025. The RTC is being led by our teacher Ms. Radha who was earlier a part of Asha's RTC Seethanjeri. The RTC is associated with the Govt Girls High School Uthukottai and is offering Digital Literacy and Scratch Programming courses to start with.





## RTC Impressions in July

RTC Impressions, a competition among Asha's RTCs, was held on 31 July 2024 at the **IITM Research Park in Chennai**. From a large pool of submissions, 43 projects from the seven continuing RTCs in Thiruvallur and Thoothukudi districts were selected for the event. Students, RTC teachers, and Asha coordinators travelled to Chennai, showing strong commitment and excitement. The showcased projects were of excellent quality, reflecting the students' hard work, creativity, and learning. Judges were impressed by the innovation and skills displayed. Students presented confidently and handled the Q&A sessions with clarity. The event's success was also due to the guidance of the RTC teachers, who played a key role in helping students develop and refine their projects. You may watch the video [here](#) and read the detailed report [here](#).

RTC Imp Video

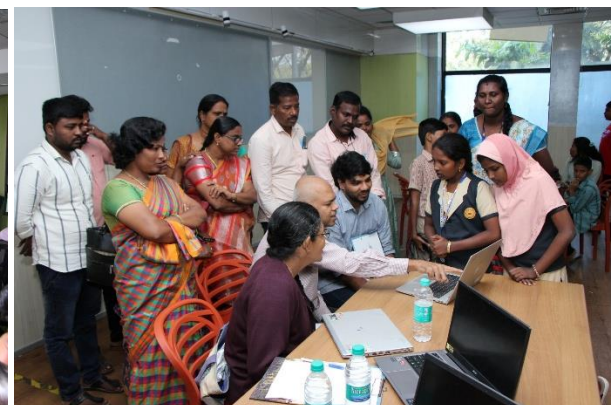


RTC Imp July24



## RTC Impressions in February

The second RTC Impressions of the year was held at **IITM Research Park on February 13, 2025**. A total of 51 teams from 9 Rural Technology Centers (RTCs) across Thiruvallur, Thoothukudi, and Thiruvananthapuram traveled to Chennai to compete in six categories—Digital Literacy, Scratch Programming, Physical Computing, Web Development, Media Editing, and Animation. The student projects showcased a remarkable range of ideas, complexity, and innovation, impressing the audience with their ability to apply learned concepts and adapt their projects in real-time when challenged by the judges.



The event was graced by **Mr. Kamakoti, Director of IITM**, and **Ms. Doyeon Kim, Head of Global Partnerships at Code.org**, as chief guests. You may watch the video [here](#) and read the detailed report [here](#).

RI Feb Video



RTC Imp Feb25





The event also received good press coverage. Media outlets like Times Now, Business Minute, DT Next, Dinamalar etc covered the event. You may read the articles [here](#).

RTC Imp Articles



### Career guidance at Thiruvallur

On November 10, 2024, Asha conducted a Career Guidance session for students at Thiruvallur. Approximately 50 students from our RTCs in Thiruvallur participated in the session, led by Dheya. Known for providing precise, personalized career guidance, Dheya aligns its recommendations with each individual's strengths, interests, and values. Based on results from a psychometric assessment, they offered tailored insights into each student's strengths and weaknesses, highlighting potential career paths suited to them. Students had an interactive session with Dheya's team and shared their feedback on the analysis.

Asha volunteer Mr. Rajaraman spoke to the students about societal views of success, exploring the achievements of renowned figures and the deeper meaning of success beyond public recognition.



### RTC Excursion

At Asha, we have always organized fun and educational excursions for the schools we support. However, this year, for the first time, we extended that experience to our RTC students!

Over 200 students from our 7 RTCs in Thiruvallur and Thoothukudi were taken on exciting field trips. Students from Seethanjeri, Kanakammachatiram, Kannigaipair, Periyapalayam, and Thomur in Thiruvallur district explored the scenic hill station of Yelagiri, visiting the Nature Park and the Fundera Park, where learning met fun amidst flora, fauna, and playful experiences.



Meanwhile, students from Nalatinpudhur and Kilpennathur in Thoothukudi headed south to Kanyakumari. They took in the sights of Maatur Thottipalam, the majestic Padmanabhapuram Palace, and the serene Kanyakumari Beach, where the land meets the sea. For the RTC students, it was a truly unforgettable experience that combined learning, exploration, and joy! You may watch the video here –

RTC Excursion



[RTC Student Excursion](#)





## 5.Sugadharam

Under Project Sugadharam, Asha undertakes the construction and repair of toilets in schools that we work closely with through our other programs – esp. the primary and middle school support. This initiative is critical in improving health and hygiene among school children and within the broader community.

In many of the schools we support, existing toilet facilities are inadequate, forcing children to resort to open defecation during breaks. The situation is exacerbated by increasing urbanization, which has diminished the availability of open fields near schools. The absence of proper sanitation facilities is particularly detrimental to girls in middle and high schools, often leading to higher dropout rates when they reach puberty. The lack of toilets also poses significant challenges for teachers, making their working conditions difficult and uncomfortable.

### PUPS Palavakkam

Asha has been associated with **PUPS Palavakkam** since 2014. Since the toilets at the school were not in usable condition, we recently took up the construction of the girls' toilet and the renovation work for the boys' toilet. A toilet block with two toilets, a urinal area was built. New plumbing was laid, water connection was provided with a new motor and tank, new tiles and painting work was undertaken. Plumbing related repair and some flooring work were carried out as repairs in the boys' toilets. The toilets were inaugurated on 20 September, 2024 by Asha's Volunteer Mr. Rajaraman and the HM of PUPS Palavakkam, Mrs.Chinthamani. Teachers Federation Secretary, Mr.Selvam, Sangamam Co-ordinator -Mr.Srinivasan , Asst. Co-ordinator- Sathish Kumar B and other Asha staff were also present at the inauguration. The toilets have been in use by the students since. You may watch the construction video [here](#).

PUPS Palavakkam



### PUPS Kannigaiper

We undertook the construction of new toilets at **PUPS Kannigaiper**. The school has been associated with Asha for 11 years. The school lacked a boys' toilet, and the girls' toilet was in a state of disrepair. We constructed a new boys' toilet with two rooms and an open urinal, while the girls' toilet was fully renovated. Both facilities were upgraded with water supply, lighting, plumbing, plastering, and painting. Construction began in June and was completed by September. The toilets were inaugurated on September 20, 2024, by Asha volunteer Mr. Rajaraman and the school's Headmaster, Mr. Udhaya Kumar. Sangamam Coordinator Mr. Srinivasan, Assistant Coordinator Mr. Sathish Kumar B, and other Asha

PUPS Kannigaiper Sugadharam Report



staff were present at the event. You may watch the video [here](#). The detailed report of both the toilet constructions are linked here- [Toilet Construction at Palavakkam and Kannigaiper](#)



### GHS Thirupatchur

Asha Chennai has been supporting the Panchayat Union Primary School and the Government High School (both within the same campus), at Thirupatchur for several years. These are located in the Poondi block of Thiruvallur district.

At the primary school we have a regular teacher and we also implement our computer science program and the KaradiPath program there. The high school is implementing our ACE program and we are also teaching spoken English through KaradiPath Intermediate SLL program there. Further we recently started our RTC at Thirupatchur which is paired with this school. Both these schools have been very receptive and supportive of our programs. All our monthly meetings and even ACE training sessions are held at these schools.

This year, we took up the renovation of both the boys' and girls' toilets at GHS Thirupatchur, which has over 150 students. Given the poor condition of the existing facilities, we carried out comprehensive work: laying new flooring outside the toilets, constructing a new septic tank, installing new toilet units, carrying out essential plumbing, adding a plastic water tank for the boys' toilet, and completing thorough cleaning and painting. The newly renovated toilets are now fully functional and ready for use, providing students with a cleaner and more dignified sanitation facility. You may watch the construction video [here](#).

GHS Thirupatchur



As a part of this same effort we also undertook the repair work of the roof of one classroom at the primary school. It was leaking badly. We re-laid the weathering course of the roof and now the room is in a good condition.





## 6.Manigal

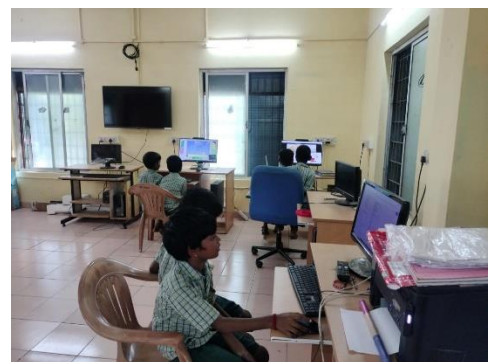
The gypsy community is one of the most marginalized communities economically socially and educationally. Their children were often staying away from the mainstream school system. Due to low levels of learning and their nomadic style, their children drop out early from the school system.

Project Manigal has been giving special attention to the education of the gypsy children for the past several years in two Government schools located at Indira Nagar and Kottur in Chennai. The goal of Manigal project is to promote education as a tool to change the marginal status of the gypsies. To use schooling as a tool to keep children in a safe environment and away from work. To break the barriers that prevent them from accessing the educational institutions.

In Kottur Chennai High School we have deputed a teacher to coach gypsy students and slow learners. Around 15 students are studying from 6th to 10th. Ramya passed 10th std last year with the dedicated effort of our High school teacher Ms. Geetha.

At Indra Nagar school too, students from classes 1 and 2 were integrated with regular classes. 5th students attend their regular classes for half a day and spend half a day with Asha teachers. The four desktops donated by Asha are used by the project teachers for teaching school children the activities and videos given in the Kanini App, in batches. Craft classes were held for the gypsy and other school children.

The efforts of Project Manigal for the past several years is bearing fruit and more and more children are getting enrolled in school. Most of them are completing the primary school and some are completing high school. Parents are coming forward to enroll the children on their own and schools have reported improvement in the learning levels of children.



## 7.Asha Scholarships for underprivileged students

While many of Asha-Chennai's projects focus on supporting schools that serve underprivileged children, we recognize the importance of also assisting those attending other schools and colleges across the city and in rural Tamil Nadu. Beyond financial support, Asha volunteers play a crucial role in mentoring these students, offering guidance and encouragement.

The Asha Scholarships project is designed to cover school or college fees, as well as the cost of uniforms and books for children from 1st standard to college, with exceptions made for LKG and UKG students in special cases. The primary criterion is that the children come from underprivileged backgrounds.

This year, Asha Chennai awarded scholarships to 114 students, helping to alleviate part of their educational expenses. The selection process targets students from Class 10 to 12, as well as college students, who are rigorously screened to ensure they meet the criteria. Scholarships are disbursed in three installments, with Asha closely monitoring the progress of each beneficiary to ensure their continued success.



Asha Chennai launched Support-A-Child program to support Asha Scholarships students. Under this project, one can sponsor any number of children supported by Asha-Scholarships project. The contribution would cover the education expenses for the number of children chosen (including school fees, books and uniforms). The intention of Asha Scholarships project is to empower the children to complete their basic education and become fully functional adults.

## 8.Asha Libraries

### Sangamam Project

Asha had been running two libraries in Thiruvallur at Seethanjeri and Anna Nagar. The Seethanjeri library was run by Ms. Kanaga until December 2024. She has discontinued and the library has not been functional since.

The Anna Nagar library is run by Ms. Nivetha and continued to operate through the year. The library is open from 5.00-6.30 PM from Monday to Saturday. The children spend time doing their homework, reading or doing some activities during their time there. Sundal or peanuts are distributed to the kids.



### Pearl Project

We had been running four libraries under the Pearl project until last year.

1. Lakshmi library at Koovachipatti run by Ms. V.Valarmathi
2. Siluvaikani library at Kayathar run by Ms. Anitha
3. Vishwanathan library at Nagalapuram run by Ms. Mariammal S
4. Vishwanathan library at Suriyaminikkan run by Ms. Muthuduraichi

Children come to the library every day and spend their time doing homework for the first 30 mins. After that the teacher may engage them in some simple experiments, card reading practice, reading and telling Tamil songs or stories, English book reading, learning on Asha Kanini or watching short educational videos on the laptop.

### Achanakulam Library Inauguration

This year, we set up a new library for the benefit of school students in Achankulam near Pasuvantanai, Thoothukudi District. The library was officially launched by Mr. Murugan, the Pearl Project Coordinator of Asha, who cut the ribbon and inaugurated the facility.

The library was the dream of Mr. C. John Paul, the Headmaster of Achankulam RC Primary School. John Paul used to be a teacher and part-time coordinator at Asha. He wanted a Asha library to be available for the children in his school. The ceremony was presided over by Achankulam Panchayat Council President Mrs. Thanalakshmi Pichaikani and Achankulam Village Administrative Officer Mr. S. Gopinath Manokaran.





For the last 16 years, Asha has been providing computer teachers in 28 government schools across Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli, and Tenkasi districts.

## Thulasi project

The Thulasi Library Project was conceptualized and designed by Mr. Gershon Gurin Podlish from Boston, USA. With his guidance and the funding support of Asha for Education's Chennai chapter, the project began in 2017 in a single village in Seeyapoondi. Over time, the library initiative expanded to other localities, becoming an integral part of Asha's Thulasi project. Since 2022, Asha Boston has been providing support for this initiative.

**At the libraries,** we have implemented the following core activities across all four libraries:

- Reading sessions
- Weekly crafts
- Educational games
- Weekly science experiments

We plan to emphasize oral Tamil skills and help in improving the reading proficiency in Tamil.

### Seeyapoondi

Ms. Pushpa is a new librarian for Seeyapoondi from this year. She has made built good connections with PUPS Seeyapoondi and reads books for children in the morning and goes to the library in the evening to help the kids to read.

### Kilpennathur

The Kilpennathur library was originally managed by the Consumer Rights Protection Group. After they approached Asha for support, Asha took over its management. The school next to the library has been actively involved, with the headmaster encouraging students to utilize the library's resources. Currently, Ms. Deepa serves as the librarian here.

### Su. Pola Kunam

In October 2023, we established a library in the picturesque village of Su. Pola Kunam, nestled near a hillock. This library, located within a primary school, serves the students of the primary, middle, and high schools. Ms. Narmada is the librarian who is currently managing this facility.

### Kaniyampoondi

Kaniyampoondi is a small village in Thiruvannamalai district. The highly motivated headmistress of PUPS Kaniyampoondi played a key role in convincing the local community to establish a library here. Ms. Dhanalakshmi now manages this library.

## 9. Teaching to Empower, Learning to Transform

One of the core principles of Asha's educational approach is "Teacher as a Lead Learner" which emphasizes that the teacher need not know all the information required for a subject/course ahead of time but learns even as he/she is teaching the course. This underpins our approach to teacher training. Recognizing that teachers may not always have specialized knowledge in subjects like Computers, Math, English, or Science, Asha is committed to providing continuous professional development opportunities. We also ensure that our educators are not only equipped with the necessary skills but are also trained in pedagogical methods that make learning engaging and practical for students.

To bridge any gaps in subject matter expertise and to cultivate innovative teaching strategies, Asha conducts comprehensive training programs throughout the year. One of the cornerstone initiatives is the "**Rightstart**" program, a five-day intensive workshop held annually before the start of the academic year. During Rightstart, experienced trainers deliver in-depth sessions on a range of subjects, ensuring that our teachers are well-prepared for the upcoming school year.

In addition to Rightstart, Asha organizes "RightStart - CS", a training in computer science during December. These sessions are designed to keep teachers up-to-date with the latest developments in technology and pedagogy, enabling them to deliver contemporary and relevant lessons.

Moreover, our commitment to continuous improvement is reflected in the ongoing content development and training activities that our teachers engage in at Asha's offices throughout the year. These initiatives not only enhance subject knowledge but also foster a culture of lifelong learning, empowering teachers to inspire and educate with confidence and creativity.

### RightStart 2025

Rightstart was held from May 22 to 26 at the Vanavani Auditorium, IIT. 170 Asha teachers from our projects in Thiruvallur, Thoothukudi, Thiruvanamalai, Thiruvarur, Chennai and other districts attended this training. The participants included Computer Science teachers, Karadipath teachers, Regular and RTC teachers, and trainers. Teachers from the Gandhiji school run by Asha Pondicherry also participated.

Over five days, the teachers underwent training in Maths, Science, Scratch programming, Stress Management, and Karadipath methodology. The first two days focused on Math training by Mrs. Meena Suresh, followed by 1.5 days of Science sessions led by Ms. Poorva Bhattar. The Science training this year also included showcasing something related to the Science concepts learnt through Scratch programming. We also organized a session on stress management by Ms. Manimegalai. On the final day, Ms. Preetika Venkatakrishnan, COO and Head of Innovation at Karadi Path Education Company, conducted the Karadipath session. Mr. Anuj, a noted story-teller also engaged our teachers in the session.



The event concluded with a vibrant closing ceremony where teachers showcased their talents through music and dance. We took the opportunity to recognize and honor staff and teachers who completed 5, 10, 15, and 20 years of service. Volunteers and coordinators took turns to talk about the invaluable contribution these staff have provided to Asha and the children we serve. You may read the detailed report [here](#).

RighStart 2025



## Computer Science Training in December

In December, teachers from UP, Thoothukudi, Thiruvananthapuram, Thiruvallur, Chennai and Thiruvallur converged at Kanakamachaitram, Thiruvallur for 3-day training session. The training was an internal event led by our Lead Teachers, Volunteers, Software Engineers, and RTC Teachers, who conducted sessions on various computer-related topics.

This year, we also incorporated two sessions facilitated by external trainers. Mr. Bharath a content developer from Education Initiatives, and Ms. Ramapriya, a teacher from Singapore and Australia who teaches Visual Arts through technology enriched the training this year with their work experience and perspectives. Aram News and News 81 reported the event. You may read the detailed report [here](#).

CS Training 24





## Math and Science Training in October

We also conducted the Math and Science training during October. Our trainers Ms. Meena Suresh and Ms. Purva Bhattar conducted the sessions at all our geographical locations. They taught the teachers new methodologies to teach their subjects and also introduced interesting experiments to make learning fun. Our teachers have always enjoyed these sessions and look forward to learning more every session.



## Other Highlights of the Year 2024-25

### Asha India Conference, Tamulpur, Assam

The Asha conference was held from February 7 to 9, 2025. This annual gathering brought together representatives from all Asha chapters in India, including Assam, Mumbai, Rajatalab, Kaithi, Manipur, Kanpur, Ballia, Lucknow, Gandhiji School Pondicherry, and Chennai. Asha Chennai was represented well with 3 volunteers and 3 staff attending the conference. Each chapter then shared updates on their work over the past year. On the second day, participants visited Satyanarayanpur Upper Primary School to observe local education initiatives. Discussions also covered key accounting and technical matters related to Asha Trust. Asha Chennai also presented its findings related to the factors that affect education. On the third day Asha Assam celebrated its 25th anniversary and took out a march through Tamulpur to bring awareness to the evils of child marriage.



Beyond the formal sessions, attendees from Chennai explored Assam's cultural landmarks and even took a trip to Bhutan, making the conference both productive and memorable.

### IIT Alumini Meet- Sangam 2024

Asha's co-ordinator, Mr. Rajaraman Krishnan, an alumni of IITM, was invited as a panelist in insightful panel discussion on the topic 'Societal Impact or How to make an Impact?'. Balaji Sampath the founder of AID India, A. Ravishankar the founder of Chudar and Ravi Gundlapalli the founder of Mentor Cloud were the other panelists in this session that was moderated by Malati Raghunath, a guest faculty at IITM. The panel talked about how IITM alumni may do more to impact the society and help make Viksit Bharat.



This was the fifth edition of the annual flagship event of the Indian Institute of Technology Madras Alumni Association (IITMAA). The event took place on September 14, 2024 at The Westin Hyderabad Mindspace. The theme for this year's event was "Sankalp for Viksit Bharat". Several panel discussions were organised on topics ranging from startups and technology to sustainable development and student wellbeing.

### Medical Camp for Asha Teachers

On 14 Dec, 2024, Dr. Deepa, a longtime friend of Mr. Rajaram, along with three young doctors and an attendant, conducted detailed health checkups for 80 teachers and Sangamam team members. Teachers had their medical reports reviewed, and health histories were discussed. The doctors addressed concerns like thyroid, BP, menstrual health, post-maternity care, and healthy eating habits. A special private session for women teachers focused on breast cancer self-examination, creating awareness and empowering them to take charge of their health.

Dr. Deepa provided a summary with practical medical advice, making the camp an eye-opener for all participants. She took efforts to make sure the concerns of each teacher was answered during the consultation. As a gesture of gratitude, the doctors were honored with handcrafted gifts made by our teachers.





## Plan for the Coming Year

The year 2024-25 has been an excellent year for Asha Chennai both in terms of fund raising and in terms of the execution of our programs. But there are challenges ahead in both these respects. The challenges and how we plan to respond to them are detailed in the first section below. Rather than explain the plan for our various programs, we have laid out broader approaches which will span multiple programs.

### Challenges

Amazon has been our primary supporter since 2022-23. They have been sponsoring Computer Education (and more) at 100 of the 190 schools under Sprint. They have been sponsoring our scale initiatives of Explore and ACE in their entirety. Recent support in the form of the Amazon Innovation Grant of \$100K has also helped fund out software development team under our Asha Kanini project. Some of the expenses for the RTCs have also been borne from Amazon's funding. In total Amazon's donations were about 35% of Asha Chennai's total funding in 2024-25. Therefore, the announcement from Amazon in May 2025 that it was considering moving away from CS education and into other fields which they are still evaluating including career guidance and Artificial Intelligence, was a big shock for Asha Chennai.

Amazon's funding had brought a certain complacency in our fund raising efforts. We have not been actively seeking CSR funding from other corporates over the last couple of years. Amazon has assured us that the funding for 2025-26 will not be disrupted in any way. This gives us a year or more to ramp up our fund raising. Amazon has also assured us of all the support required. With the increasing prominence of our initiatives, we should be able to raise funds.

Quite probably the much bigger challenge confronting us TN education department's launch of the Spark program for classes 6 to 9. The Spark curriculum teaches CS and AI to students in classes 6 to 9. It also plans to use government teachers much like our own ACE program. We were hoping that Asha Chennai, through the demonstrated success of the ACE program, will have an opportunity to put such a curriculum in place. As ACE is still a running pilot, we did not get that opportunity.

### The Spark programs places a question mark over several things Asha is doing.

ACE program cannot be run in schools in which Spark is rolled out. Though this is a small percentage of the schools in 2025-26, this will eventually displace ACE. But we may be able to contribute to the Spark program using the expertise we have gained from implementing the ACE programs.

Explore initiatives which provide a introduction to CS for students will not be required if a full curriculum is being taught to the same set of students.

Our RTC teachers school program also teaches CS to class 6 to 9 students. This will also not be required.

Finally, even our Sprint program will be affected. Our middle schools will also eventually have the Spark program and therefore will not require our Computer teachers. What we do in the primary will also need to be restructured if the same curriculum is going to be covered by Spark in classes 6 to 9.

But Spark is also clearly an opportunity. Asha is among the few organizations that have successfully implemented programs to teach CS to students in all classes of the school, ranging from 1st std to 12th. We have further demonstrated this using our teachers as well as by training government teachers to execute our curriculum. Through our RTCs, we have extended well beyond basic digital literacy and programming in terms of capabilities. We can give the government a curriculum that spans as aspects of CS including AI, Robotics, Web development, Media editing etc. Our unique approaches including “Teacher as a Lead Learner” model of teacher training, “Goal Driven learning” and “Intensive Learning” through project work, etc. have been proven to be very effective. We have to find a way to involve ourselves in the Spark initiative and guide that to success. Our partnerships with organisations like IITM, Amazon and Code.org adds to our credibility.

### **Artificial Intelligence**

AI is something that has started pervading all the things we do. Existential questions aside, it will certainly affect how we learn all subjects. We have to prepare for a radical overhaul of Asha Kanini. It also impacts what we need to learn in order for our skills to remain relevant in the age of AI.

AI is coming into all our CS related curriculum. SPRINT CS curriculum is being refined to include AI activities in all classes. The set of Explore activities to expose children to Digital Literacy is being expanded with a curated set of AI activities to complement our DL activities. We are creating a course of AI for our RTCs. We are working on understanding and refining the AI part of the Spark curriculum. But bringing AI into what we teach is easier. Making AI part of how we teach will be more challenging and we are also beginning to work on that.

### **Input, Output and Outcome Tracking**

One of the areas where we have innovated a lot over the last year is in the area of tracking what we do. We have been tracking out assets with QR codes and online verification. We will be integrating that with a trouble reporting system as well to track the progress of problems with the assets. The asset register which is still being maintained separately will also be merged with the asset verification system.

In terms of output tracking we are already tracking the work being done by Explore trainers, ACE govt teachers and trainers, and the Sprint CS teachers. This is continuing to be improved. Further we are also in the process of developing trackers for RTC (both teachers and students) and KaradiPath teachers who are part of the Sprint program.

In terms of outcome tracking see our reports on [RTCs](#) and [ACE](#) to see how we have improved our outcome tracking through projects and assessments. There are long pending enhancements to our assessment analytics to do more with the data that we have been gathering. We hope to do this in the coming few months.

### **CS Curriculum**

We are continuing to evolve our CS curriculum being offered in our various programs. At ACE we are finalizing our 2nd year curriculum which teaches Scratch based programming. Through our partnership with Code.org we are also experimenting with piloting programming through Code.org’s CSF Express for the ACE 2nd year curriculum. This will help us compare the two and improve both in the process.

At the RTC we rolled out Web Development 2.0 to teach full-stack web application development and in February. This needs further refinement which is happening. We will be rolling out a new course on Robotics by August. We will continue to enhance the courses we offer through our RTCs.

We are in the process of bringing Code.org's Physical Computing course to our 8th std students. Scratch based programming is being completed in class 7 which some of the coding lessons are being pushed down to earlier classes.

Explore activities are also being enhanced. We are considering bringing some AI activities to Explore and also look at aligning it to the lessons and tool in Spark.

### **Asha Kanini, Content work and Other Software initiatives**

Asha Kanini and its contents will continue to be enhanced in 2025-26. Asha Kanini v4 has been rolled out and various kinks especially in the mapping process are being ironed. We will be taking up a full review of the contents including the newly added lesson plans and MESL activities. We will look at bringing additional packages in as well. We need to continue enhancing the Asha Kanini UP version. We are also working on an LMS like extension to our Asha Kanini to enable students to work on worksheets from within Asha Kanini.

### **Administration of the Organisation**

Asha South India trust 12A has been renewed recently. It was granted till 2029-30. We also need to renew our 80G. We further hope to apply for FCRA which will help us move all our operations to within a single organisation - Asha South India Trust. Note currently the FCRA operations are being managed through Asha Trust. Once the entire operations are moved to Asha South India Trust, we intend to register for ESIC and PF for all our staff. This will formalize their employment and bring more security to their lives.



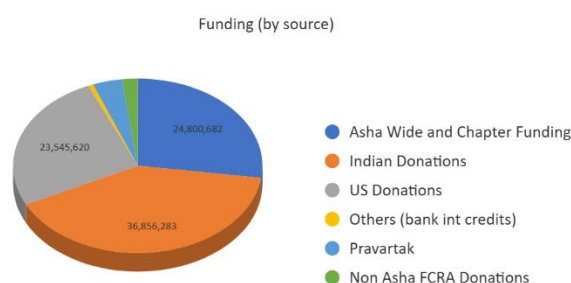
## Asha Chennai Financials

Asha Chennai is poised at an interesting juncture at the end of 2024-25. While the fund raising performance has been good, we face challenges ahead. Our biggest donor Amazon has decided to move away from funding CS education programs. While our funding for 2025-26 is also assured, we are not yet clear whether we will continue to receive support from them beyond 2025-26. We raised a total of Rs 9.11 Cr and spent about Rs 6 Cr to leave us with a balance of Rs 8.9 Crores.

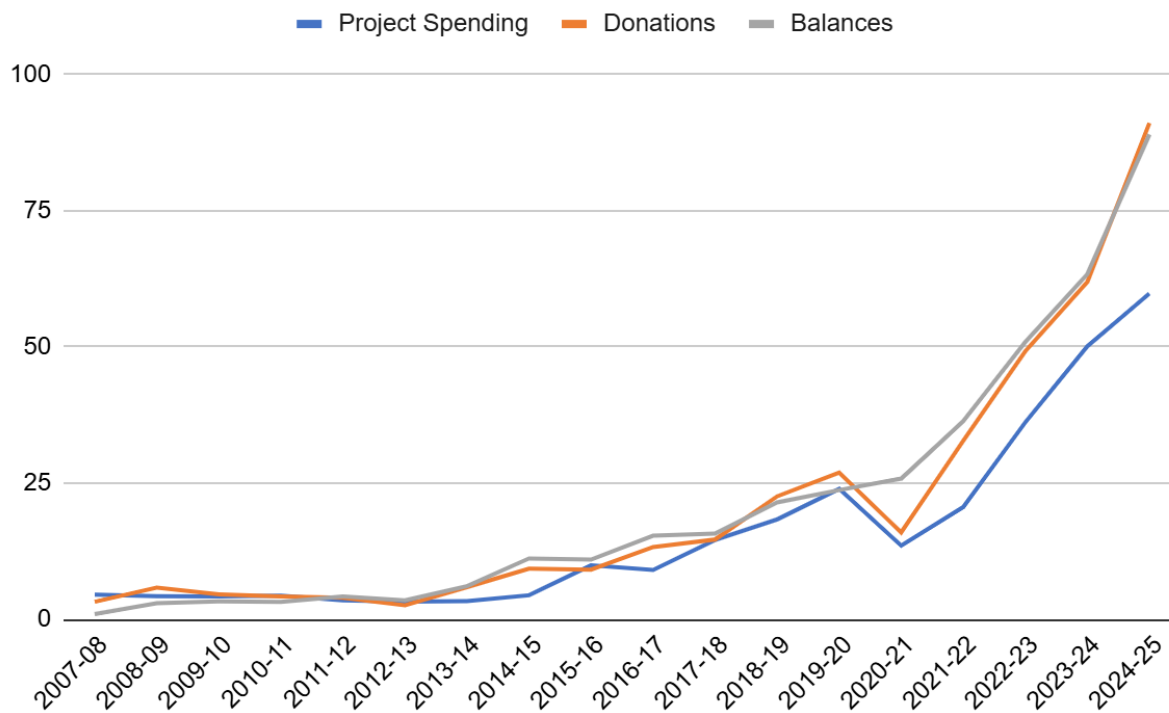
Here is a breakup of the funding by source. Indian donations (from CSR funds and individual donations) accounted for Rs 3.69 Crores and US donations (mostly individual donations) accounted for about Rs 2.35 Crores. Out of the Indian donations Rs 2.52 Crores was Amazon Future Engineer funding for our CS programs and Rs 84.5 Lakhs was the Amazon Innovation grant.

We got a significant allocation from Asha central funds this year and a couple of our projects were funded by Asha Austin and Asha Boston chapters. These together accounted for about Rs 2.48 Crores. Through IITM Pravartak, we received about Rs 35 Lakhs from various corporate donors. Other foreign donations that came directly to Asha India through Benevity and Give amounted to about Rs 18.5 Lakhs and we received interest income of a little less than Rs 6 Lakhs.

Funding (By Source)	INR
Asha Wide and Chapter Funding	24,800,682
Indian Donations	36,856,283
US Donations	23,545,620
Others (bank int credits)	573,940
Pravartak	3,500,000
Non Asha FCRA Donations	1,845,722
<b>Total</b>	<b>91,122,247</b>



Here is a historical view of our donations, our expenses and the balance. Both of these have grown significantly over the years. The Y-axis represents these in Millions of Rupees.



While our balances and the fund raising in 2024-25 look good, there are challenges ahead. We count on the continued support of our donors to help us continue our good work.

## Empower Change: Join Hands with Asha-Chennai

The heart of Asha-Chennai is its vibrant community of volunteers and donors. Each of these individuals plays a crucial role in driving our mission forward, whether through monetary donations, volunteering their time, or both. Their unwavering support is the foundation of our success, and we hope you, too, will be inspired to join us in making a lasting impact.

At Asha-Chennai, we offer multiple avenues for you to contribute, each one ensuring that your involvement makes a tangible difference in the lives of the children we support.

- **Donations**

Your financial contribution can transform lives. [Visit our Donate page](#) to explore the various methods of donating and become a vital part of our mission.

Donate



- **Support-A-Child**

Through our Asha Scholarships Project, you can sponsor a child's education, covering expenses like school fees, books, and uniforms. You'll receive regular updates on the child's progress and opportunities to connect directly with the student, witnessing firsthand the difference you're making.

- **Volunteering**

Not all contributions are financial. Many choose to give the gift of time, engaging in activities that align with their interests and skills. At Asha-Chennai, there are no rigid hierarchies—just a friendly, passionate group working together for a common cause. Join us, and contribute in ways that suit your schedule and passion.

- **Moral Support**

Sometimes, a simple word of encouragement can work wonders. If you believe in our cause and the work we're doing, let us know. Your support and kind words fuel our drive to continue making a difference.

*By contributing in any way that resonates with you, you become a crucial part of a movement dedicated to uplifting the lives of children through education. Your support truly matters.*



## Asha Event Calendar - 2025-26

At Asha-Chennai, every event we organize is a step towards empowering the underprivileged and creating a brighter future through education. Our event calendar is a reflection of our commitment to making a meaningful impact across various domains. Throughout the year, we host a range of activities designed to uplift both educators and students. This calendar is more than just dates and events—it's a journey of growth, learning, and making a difference. You may view the detailed event calendar [here](#).

Event Calendar



## Testimonials

**Ms. Doyeon Kim, Head of Global Partnerships at Code.org, about the RTC Impressions –**

“I was truly inspired by the creativity, problem-solving, and presentation skills of all students. Their diverse projects, covering topics from Indian culture to community applications, highlighted them as creators of technology, not just consumers. The quality and innovation in their work were remarkable.”

**Prof. V. Kamakoti, Director of IIT Madras, about the RTC Impressions-**

“Our expectation from the RTCs was to provide a platform for students to have opportunity for innovation and out of box thinking. There are many social problems, requirements in agriculture, which can be overcome by trying out new ideas and we wanted to facilitate this for rural children through the RTCs.”

**Mr. Raja Chidambaran, Sr. Technical Architect at CISCO, Adjunct faculty at BITS Pilani for last 10 years and Judge at RTC Impressions –**

“I have been a judge at RTC Impressions by IITM Pravartak for the last 5 or 6 times. I also visit other colleges, private institutions for their PhD programs, symposiums and their final project presentations. Where I see RTCs stand out is, where RTCs give students a 360-degree experience. The students are able to deliver their technical knowledge in the form of the story or a game or programming which integrates all their knowledge and creativity. This is a completely different approach. The students are encouraged to come up with their own ideas rather than to copy from elsewhere. The concepts they come up with are their own, which is a huge plus which will

benefit them in the future. This is a seed that will give us entrepreneurs and startups in the future. With respect to the implementation projects, I see that the RTC focuses on the primary skills which is understanding, implementing and delivering, which is unlike any commercial course available outside. The projects and apps which the students create are with focused on benefitting the society, which is not the direction which private institutes focus on. RTC has a great future and is much needed for all rural kids.”

**Ms. Ibin Fathima (Student at Kayathar RTC) –**

“Earlier, I only knew how to play games in the laptop, but once I have come to the RTC, I have learnt how to use a program and create projects. This has happened in a span of just 6 months and I find it amazing. Coming to IIT and presenting in front of so many students and judges has helped build my confidence and removed stage fear. Our teachers have brought us here safely and have been taking such good care of us and everyone has worked together to highlight the talent of kids from the villages. I am very happy to be here today!”

**Mr. Vijayaraman, Government and ACE Teacher at GHS Komakkambedu**

“I have also been working as an ACE teacher at this school for the past year. ASHA has been giving us excellent training every month, and all our doubts were clearly explained during the sessions. As part of the program, we were required to submit projects by students. For this, Amazon generously provided us with three laptops. During the same time, our school’s high-tech lab had stopped working, so these laptops were a great help. We needed more laptops for the 15 student groups. When we informed ASHA, and they quickly arranged five more laptops through Amazon. In total, we received eight laptops. Using laptops was a new and exciting experience for our students. They were thrilled to use them, and it made a big difference. The students became very involved in the projects and worked with great interest and speed. They even said they enjoyed this laptop-based work more than regular subjects. We are truly grateful to Amazon; without the laptops being provided at the right time, we wouldn’t have been able to complete so many projects or make it to the final round. We sincerely thank both Amazon and ASHA for giving our students this valuable opportunity.”

**Head Mistress of Government High School, Thiruttani Union, Murukkampattu**

We have been part of Asha’s computer training program (ACE) for the past one and a half years. The laptops given by Amazon helped us provide good computer training to our students. Even though our students come from a rural area, we took part in the competition organized by Asha. Out of 52 schools, our students’ projects were selected for the (ACE Impressions) event. We are very proud that our school won both first and fourth place in the competition held at the Amazon office. Because of this, our school received support worth ₹1.8 lakhs. We are very thankful to Amazon for gifting smartwatches to the first prize winners, which made our students very happy. We also sincerely thank Asha for giving such valuable opportunities to students from poor, rural backgrounds.

**Mrs. Joan Mary, Judge at ACE Impressions**

“It was my privilege to be a panel member for the presentations delivered by students from various schools. I was impressed with the confidence and energy each team brought with them. Most of the teams were able to answer the technical, content related questions which shows their enthusiasm, efforts and time spent to learn and create the presentations in a creative way. I thoroughly enjoyed the whole event by learning through the innovative thinking of these young minds. Kudos to ASHA team for creating such a positive impact in future generation!”

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