

FOR EQUALITY



GENERAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF KERALA



Thiruvananthapuram
Date: 17/07/2025

V. Sivankutty
Minister for General Education
and Labour
Government of Kerala

Kerala has always been a role model among all states in the field of education. Performance excellence and quality are the hallmarks of General education in Kerala. The Kerala society's emphasis on education has contributed greatly to this achievement. The General Education Department and Samagra Shiksha Kerala, hand in hand, are implementing numerous quality interventions, paving the way for the empowerment of public education and thereby creating a new Kerala.

Kerala is among the states that have shown the best performance in the National Quality Index. This achievement has earned Kerala a place in the 'STARS' project. The goal of the 'STARS' project is to implement necessary reforms to enhance the quality and credibility of public education, design and implement innovative and flexible activities to improve educational quality, and ensure better outcomes.

This is a brief document about the major activities implemented by Samagra Shiksha Kerala under the STARS project in Kerala. I extend all my best wishes for the continuation and quality implementation of excellent activities.

With affection,



- V. Sivankutty

Dr. K. VASUKI IAS
SECRETARY



General Education Department
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Date



Message from Secretary, General Education

Samagra Shiksha represents an integrated and inclusive approach to school education, and this document reflects the innovative practices, collaborative initiatives, and community engagement that have enriched our educational landscape. I am delighted to note the commendable effort taken to present a document showcasing the academic activities carried out under Samagra Shiksha in Kerala under the STARS Project. This initiative is a significant step forward. Creating a comprehensive record of our academic endeavours is crucial for several reasons: it allows us to effectively showcase the depth and breadth of the programme, serves as an invaluable resource for future planning and implementation, and enables us to identify best practices and areas for further improvement. This document not only reflects the dedication and hard work of our educators, administrators, and stakeholders but also serves as a valuable record of the innovative and inclusive practices being implemented across the state.

The holistic development of learners is always the focus of the Samagra Shiksha, Kerala. This documentation highlights our collective strides towards that goal. From strengthening foundational learning to fostering equity and excellence in education, the initiatives captured in this document reflect the spirit of collaboration and commitment that defines Kerala's education system.

The hard work demonstrated in creating this document is truly appreciated. Such thorough documentation will undoubtedly contribute to the continued success and evolution of educational initiatives across the State, ultimately benefiting our students and the entire academic community.

I congratulate the entire team behind this initiative for their dedication and vision. May this report serve not only as a record of achievements but also as a source of inspiration for future educational endeavours.

Dr. K Vasuki IAS
Secretary
Department of General Education
Government of Kerala



Introduction

STARS (Strengthening Teaching-learning and Results for States) is a sponsored project of the Central government implemented in Kerala through Samagra Shiksha since 2020. Numerous commendable activities have been implemented through the STARS project to improve the educational quality of Kerala. Early childhood education, foundational literacy, evaluation, improving classroom learning, streamlining educational service activities, interventions in vocational education, and physical infrastructure development are among the various programs implemented as part of the project. This booklet introduces some of the most commendable programs among them. We hope that the information in this book will be beneficial for future educational planning and implementation.

Dr. Supriya A.R.
State Project Director
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STARS Project Document 2025
FOR EQUALITY

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Published By	SamagraShiksha Kerala SSA Bhavan, Nandavanam Thiruvananthapuram www.ssakerala.in

VISION OF THE STATE



Kerala envisions an education system that is deeply inclusive, context-sensitive, and responsive to the unique cultural and geographical realities of its people. The State firmly upholds the principle that equitable quality education must reach every child, including those in the most remote and marginalised communities, ensuring that no learner is excluded from the mainstream of development.

In this spirit, the special education programme implemented in Idamalakkudi-Kerala's only tribal gram panchayat - reflects a nuanced and humane approach to educational inclusion. Recognising the distinct linguistic and cultural identity of the Muthuvan community, the 'Padipurassi' initiative adopts a mother tongue-based pedagogical approach, beginning instruction in the Muthuvan language and gradually transitioning to Malayalam. This ensures that children are able to learn in a familiar and supportive linguistic environment, thereby enhancing comprehension and retention.

The programme also demonstrates the State's commitment to overcoming structural and geographical challenges. Through the efforts of Samagra Shiksha Kerala, specially trained educational volunteers have been deployed to address teacher shortages, ensuring continuity and quality of instruction. Infrastructure and learning conditions have been strengthened through the establishment of classrooms and libraries, provision of play equipment, and installation of solar panels to address power constraints in this remote region.

Further, acknowledging the physical barriers to school access, dedicated escort support has been arranged to safely accompany children through forest terrain, thereby preventing dropouts and ensuring regular attendance.

Through such targeted and compassionate interventions, Kerala reaffirms its vision of an education system that respects diversity, removes barriers, and empowers every child—irrespective of location or background—to learn, grow, and participate meaningfully in society.

OBJECTIVE

The programme aims to bridge learning gaps and reduce dropout rates among children of the Muthuvan tribal community by adopting a culturally responsive and context-specific approach to education. Recognising that language and accessibility are critical barriers to effective learning, the initiative prioritises mother tongue-based instruction through the Padipurassi model, enabling children to begin their education in the Muthuvan language and gradually transition to Malayalam. This approach enhances comprehension, builds confidence, and facilitates smoother academic progression.

To ensure continuity and quality of learning, the programme addresses teacher shortages by deploying specially trained educational volunteers who are equipped to engage with the unique socio-cultural context of the community. In addition, focused efforts are made to strengthen the learning environment through the provision of essential infrastructure, including classrooms, libraries, learning materials, and play equipment.

The programme also acknowledges and mitigates geographical challenges by ensuring access to schooling through dedicated support mechanisms, thereby promoting regular attendance and retention. By combining linguistic inclusion, academic support, and infrastructural development, the initiative seeks to create a supportive and enabling educational ecosystem.

Through these comprehensive interventions, the programme strives to ensure that children from the Muthuvan community are not only retained in the education system but are also empowered to overcome learning barriers, achieve improved outcomes, and actively participate in the broader social and educational landscape.



implemented in coastal areas.

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INTERVENTION AT IDAMALAKKUDY

The tribal school in Idamalakudy exemplifies the crucial importance of decentralisation and regional flexibility in educational planning. This understanding led to the adoption of a special education project approach for schools operating under unique circumstances. As part of the STARS project, decentralised educational activities have been implemented, including the special education programme for Idamalakudy and targeted interventions addressing learning challenges faced by learners in coastal areas.





The uniqueness of Idamalakkudy

Idamalakkudy, the sole tribal panchayat in Kerala, is situated in a dense forest area of approximately 116 square kilometers and is surrounded by the Sahya Parvata hills. It is the only village panchayat inhabited exclusively by the Muthuvan tribe. Currently, more than seven hundred Muthuvan families reside in 26 hamlets within the 26,000-acre Anamudi Reserve Forest. The hamlets are connected only by forest paths. The first settlement, Idalippara, is located 36 kilometers from Munnar town via Rajamala Pettimudi. Traveling four kilometers further leads to Societykudi, the headquarters of Idamalakkudi, where the panchayat's only school is situated.

EDAMALAKUDY

Area: 106 sq k

Population: 2236 (2001 census)

Men: 1196

Women: 1040



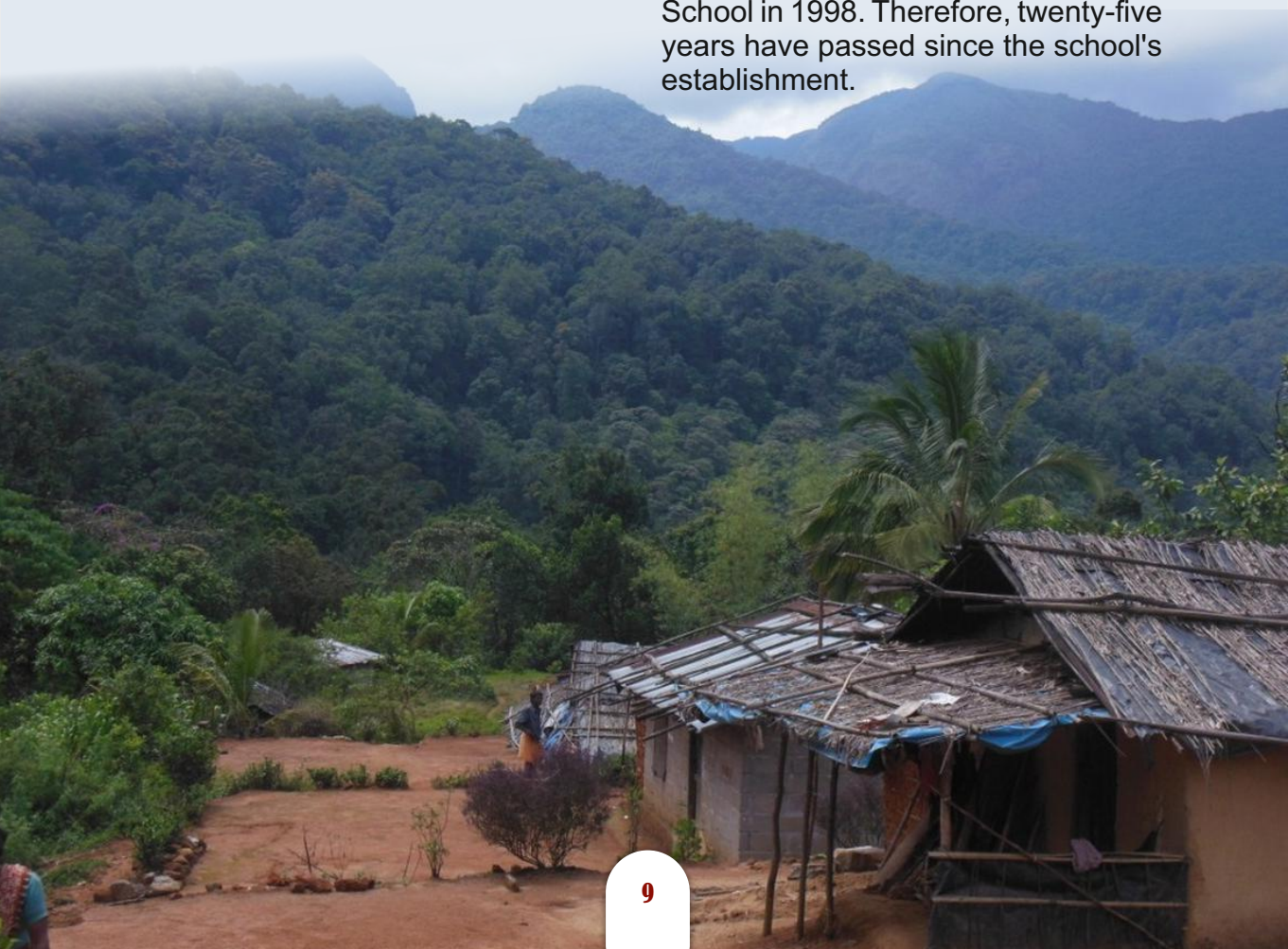


Idamalakkudi is a panchayat that lacks a public transport system, forcing locals to travel mainly on foot. Residents must rely on private convergence to reach Munnar (outside the panchayat) or Devikulam (where the panchayat office is located). The cost of a jeep ride exceeds four to five thousand rupees. The journey is difficult due to wild animals, dense forests, and challenging roads. Both footpaths and jeep routes are crossed by streams, which experience flash floods during the rainy season. Consequently, travel to and from Idamalakkudi is impossible during the monsoon. Isolation occurs because the road is blocked by large boulders caused by landslides, and even hired jeeps cease operating. During this time, travellers from Munnar can only reach as far as Pettimudi; the remaining distance must be covered on foot. Furthermore, although jeep tracks connect the Idamalakkudi Tribal LP School to other villages, they are not suitable for transporting children daily for educational purposes.



The children from the 26 surrounding villages rely on the Tribal Government LP School for their education, as it is the only school in the panchayat. Although the school was upgraded as a UP School in 2023, permanent teachers have not been appointed for the upper primary section. Consequently, the UP section currently operates using temporary teachers assigned through Samagra Shiksha Keralam.

Separate hostels for boys and girls, managed by the Tribal Department, are located near the school. However, the building used as the boys' hostel was originally constructed for the Panchayat library, and the girls' hostel is housed in a small building. This institution, which started functioning as a Kudipallikkudam started by the Harijan Society in 1997, was converted into a Lower Primary School in 1998. Therefore, twenty-five years have passed since the school's establishment.



Language crisis

Children in Idamalakkudi have minimal contact with the general public. Their mother tongue is the unwritten Muthuva language, creating a major learning crisis as the language for daily parlance significantly differs from the language of their textbooks. While Samagra Shiksha Kerala previously prepared study materials in Muthuva, the recent revision of textbooks necessitates the preparation of new textbooks translated into the children's local language. Furthermore, the life, culture, and language of Idamalakkudi must be carefully considered while developing the curriculum and educational materials. To effectively overcome this language barrier, the service of mentor teachers proficient in the Muthuva language is essential for every class.



Travel Facility



It is impractical to search for absentees due to the difficult terrain and the lack of cellular range needed to contact parents. Furthermore, the children cannot be sent to school for fear of while life attack. To address this, an education volunteer should be appointed in each village. These volunteers would be responsible for communicating with parents on behalf of the school and for escorting children to school daily. Such volunteers have already been appointed for these escorting duties as part of the STARS project.

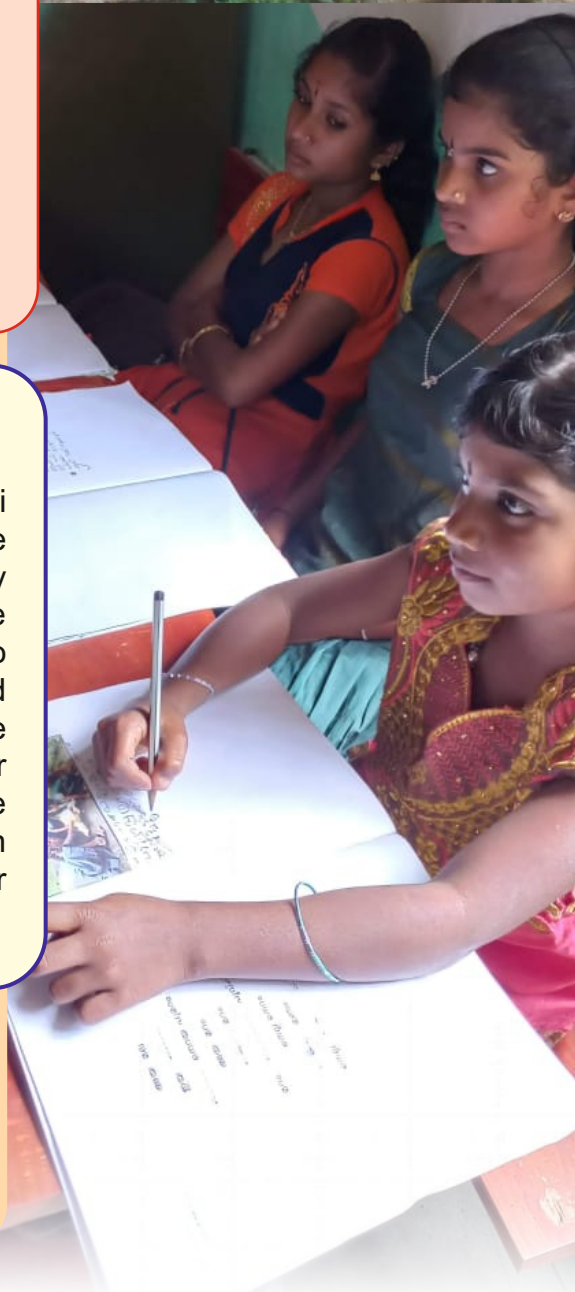
Cultural crisis

Ideological and religious crises also persist in Idamalakkudi. The Muthuvan community's main festival, Pongal, lasts for ten days. Traditionally, community members visit relatives for feasts during this period, resulting in children's absence from school for nearly a month. This crisis could be alleviated by rescheduling the schools' Onam and Pongal holidays to align with the community's cultural calendar.



Climate and learning

The appropriate study period for Idamalakkudi should be decided considering its unique climate. During the rainy season, many villages become isolated from the outside world, making it impossible for children to attend school. Given that both children and teachers are unable to reach school during the monsoon, the general practice of a summer vacation should be re-evaluated. The possibility of implementing a rainy season vacation instead should be explored for Idamalakkudi.



STARS PROJECT INTERVENTIONS

“Padippurassi”

Children in Idamalakkudi effectively use two languages: language for daily parlance and the textbook language. To address the resulting language crisis, the 'Pathipurassi Language Development Project' was implemented. The main objective of this project is to ensure that children's learning experiences originate from their local, familiar world. Lessons that incorporated their jewelery, forests, and flowers, connecting the curriculum to the children's language, culture, and living environment were developed. The teaching methodology was enhanced through the use of attractive illustrated notebooks and joint diaries. This adaptive learning method enabled the children in a smooth transition to Malayalam without losing touch with their mother tongue. In this way, the project transformed language learning into a more engaging experience for the child, significantly improving the effectiveness of primary education.





To meet the Chief Minister

To announce the success of the 'Pathipurassi Project, children, parents, and teachers from Idamalakkudi met with the Honourable Chief Minister, Shri Pinarayi Vijayan. The children presented their learning experiences, and in the subsequent ceremony, the Chief Minister officially declared the project successful. Following this announcement, the government took steps to upgrade the Idamalakkudi LP School to a UP School.

As part of their visit to meet the Chief Minister regarding the project's success, the children—many of whom had never left Idamalakkudi—travelled to Thiruvananthapuram, where they could see the sea and the airport. They also experienced a ride on the Kochi Metro. These novel experiences led to visible social changes in the children.





Although internet facilities are available at Idamalakkudi school, the lack of regular supply of electricity common in the forest area-necessitated an intervention. To solve this, Samagra Shiksha Keralam (SSK) installed solar panels with the help of ANERT.

To encourage reading, reading cards were prepared. However, to prevent them from getting wet and damaged during the rainy season, SSK provided the school with a lamination machine to preserve the cards.

Addressing the major issue of absentees, getting children to school on time posed a significant challenge. To overcome this, six escorting staff were deployed as part of the STARS project, assigning three staff members to each of the two adjacent schools. Their primary duty was to bring the children to school in the morning and safely take them home afterward.



To address the shortage of trained teachers, Samagra Shiksha trainers are serving in the interim residence. Additionally, four qualified educational volunteers have been appointed to the residence as part of Samagra Shiksha.

The children of Idamalakkudi have not left their homes to participate in art and cultural competitions so far. However, during the 2023-'24 academic year, students represented Idamalakkudi school for the first time in the sub-district Sports Festival.



Upon finding that the necessary equipment for children's play and learning was unavailable, a large number of play materials were donated. This equipment helped the children grasp concepts, making learning activities more attractive, increasing participation. Furthermore, the Idamalakkudi GUPS established both a classroom library and a school library, with the assistance of Bookmark, by providing necessary books and storage shelves.



Idamalakkudi's living conditions and ways of life are distinctly different from mainstream life in Kerala. By providing special consideration to the field of education and making time-bound interventions, the community can effectively be brought into the mainstream of society.





BEACH TO BENCH

Coastal Children's Education Programme

Children in the coastal region of Kerala do not perform well in their studies due to a number of factors. To address this, Beach to Bench a unique project launched by Samagra Shiksha Kerala aimed at the educational development of coastal students was introduced. The objective of the project is to create opportunities for these children to excel in academic activities with

Specifically, this initiative aims to address the various challenges faced by children from coastal areas, increase their interest in learning, improve the quality of learning, and nurture their diverse talents.





Approach

Samagra Shiksha Keralam adopted a highly flexible and localised approach to implementing the “Beach to Bench” program. Given the cultural adiversity and variety of ritual and practices along Kerala's coastline the stretchers for 590 km the policy was to devise and implement unique operational programmes tailored to each residential area.

In its first year, the project initially focused on the coastal blocks of Thiruvananthapuram and Malappuram districts. For the 2024-‘25 academic year, Beach to Bench was expanded within these two districts, and operations were newly started in Kasaragod district.



Mode of execution

1. District Level Consultation Meeting

A planning meeting was held in each district to discuss the project's objectives, the specific challenges faced by coastal students, and potential solutions. This consultation was attended by people's representatives from the coastal region, socio-political and educational leaders, and head teachers.

To formulate project proposals, a diverse group-including public representatives, key figures in the socio-political and education sectors, Fisheries Department officials, PTA Presidents, primary teachers, and Samagra Shiksha Kerala activists-collaborated. They focused on aligning with the proposals with the project objectives, the needs of the target group and the problems prevalent in the coastal region, and suggested solutions.



2. Social Profiling

The next step involved studying the characteristics of each coastal village. By conducting community profiling and analysing factors like lifestyle and child attendance, action plans were formulated. These plans were designed to identify the specific activities required to overcome students' learning difficulties.

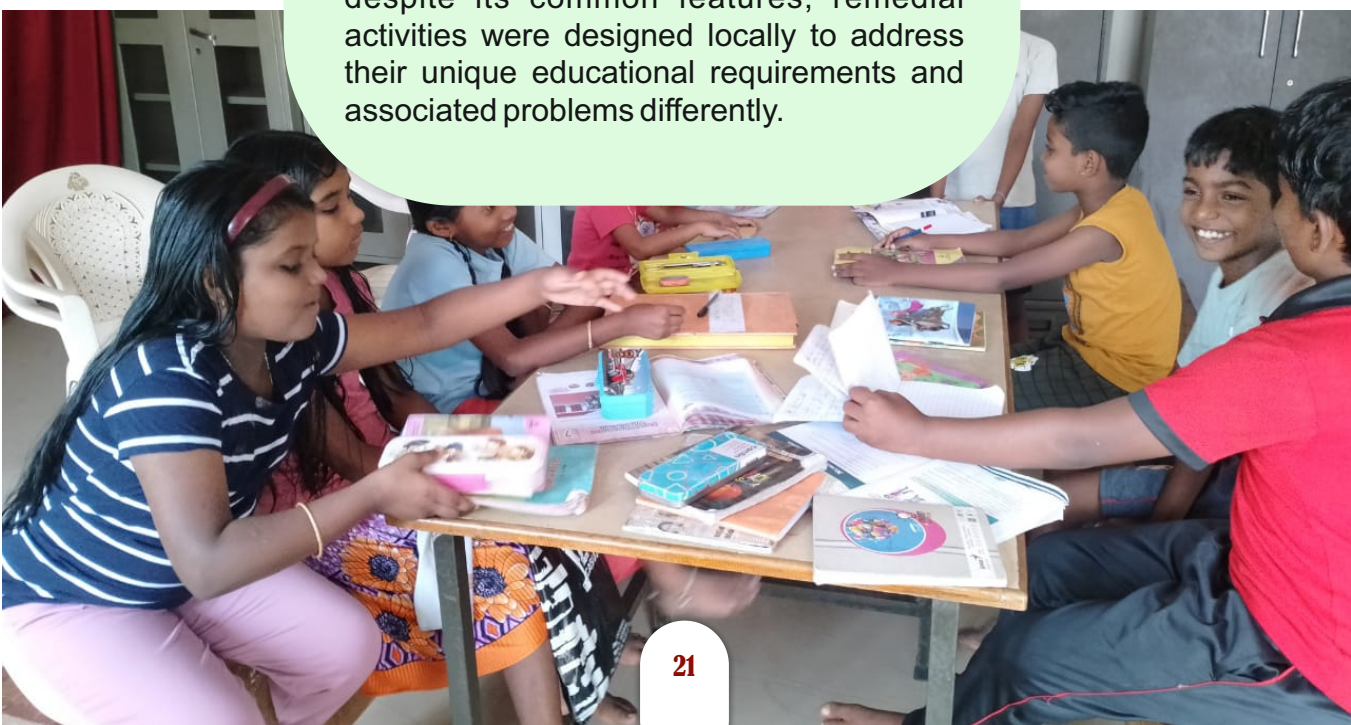
Initially, the project included 540 children from the following BRCs: Balaramapuram, Neyyattinkara, and Thiruvananthapuram South URC in Thiruvananthapuram district, and Tanur in Malappuram district.





selection of children

The BRCs utilised a tool to identify children from classes 3 to 9 who were struggling with language and mathematics. In each selected BRC, a meeting was subsequently held with officials from various departments related to children's education, and BRC-level action plans were formulated based on the suggestions received. Acknowledging that the needs and challenges of children vary significantly across the coastal region, despite its common features, remedial activities were designed locally to address their unique educational requirements and associated problems differently.



Training for student volunteers

Practical training was organised to support children facing learning difficulties. The training focused on learning strategies, activities, language approaches, and mathematics approaches, as well as the causes and solutions of these difficulties.

Parental Education

The goal was to empower the parent community to actively contribute to their children's educational progress. The training was structured as a participatory programme where parents could identify general education goals, understand modern learning approaches, and master learning support methods on their own.





KALIKKALAM

Extracurricular activities such as physical training also aim to attract children to additional learning centers. Although children from coastal schools have a special interest in sports, most schools do not conduct related activities due to limited space, lack of coaches, inadequate equipment, and insufficient time. The 'Kalikkalam' programme was designed to address this gap. It has become an activity that not only enhances the physical fitness of children but also showcases their talent in sports, thereby boosting their self-confidence.





PROJECT BENEFITS

Increased Learning Interest: There has been a significant increase in children's interest in learning.

Enhanced Confidence: Learners demonstrated improved self-confidence.

Progress in Foundational Skills: Students achieved significant progress in basic language skills.

Active Participation: Children are now actively involved in the classroom learning process.

Higher Attendance: The attendance level of the students has increased.

Greater Parental Engagement: Parental involvement in class PTAs and school activities has risen.

Volunteer Development: The project successfully developed a group of capable and willing educational volunteers ready to engage in educational activities across the coastal region.

Comments:



Hadi Mashoof- 5B

GMUPS TANUR TOWN

Issues Observed

Literacy Gaps: The child had difficulty recognising letters, symbols, and combinations of letters prior to the commencement of the remedial class.

Reading Aversion: There was a lack of interest and fluency in reading.

Low Engagement/Motivation: The child initially showed limited motivation to attend class.

Visible Changes in the child

Improved Literacy: The child now successfully recognises letters, symbols, and letter combinations.

Active Participation: The child participated in all activities through group work and demonstrated increased interest in the reading process.

Boosted Self-Confidence: Children gained the belief that they could read and write without fear.

Holistic Development: The child was able to voluntarily participate in other artistic activities.

Communication Skills: The child was able to present personal experiences to others.

Social Behaviour: The child demonstrated improved social behavior and interaction with peers in the class.

CHANGES OBSERVED BEFORE AND AFTER INTERVENTION

Before Intervention (Problems)

Literacy Deficits: The learners could not recognise letters, symbols, and basic punctuation.

Behavioural Issues: The learner exhibited behavioural disorder, characterised by rough conduct toward teachers.

Classroom Conduct: The learner consistently failed to maintain class decorum.

Reading Aversion: The learner openly expressed dislike for reading, stating it was difficult and resulted in headache.

After Intervention (Changes Observed)

Academic & Cognitive Changes

Impact of Activities: Learning activities, particularly those using the idea-sharing method, had a positive impact.

Literacy Progress: Although not yet fully proficient, the student made significant progress in recognising and reading letters.

Increased Engagement: The student demonstrated increased interest in classroom activities and showed a competitive spirit in participation.

Reading Habits: The learner began to attempt reading, including reading newspaper headlines.

Activity Preference: The learner maintained a greater interest in extracurricular activities than in core classroom work.

Behavioral & Social Changes

Patience: The learner developed patience through participation in group activities.

Communication: The learner became more polite in speech.

Improved Conduct: The learner made efforts to behave well with teachers and avoid unnecessary conflicts with peers.



AM LPS

The implementation of 'Beach to Bench' special learning enrichment programme has brought about noticeable changes in children, the most important of which is their ability to engage in learning activities happily. Our school children—Umair, Yasin Nafsatul Misria, and Mubashira—have experienced a significant positive change. These children show greater interest in learning, participating in group activities, and playing games both individually and in groups. Furthermore, they are able to express their opinions openly, and can freely ask questions to their classmates and teachers.

The most significant benefit we observed from the Beach to Bench project was the children's increased interest in engaging in learning activities.





About STARS

STARS (Strengthening Teaching-learning and Results for States) is an education project designed and implemented by the Central Government with World Bank assistance to improve education standards. Among the states of Himachal Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Kerala implementing this project, Kerala was included considering its excellent education quality index. Kerala has been receiving the benefits of the STARS project since 2021. Numerous suitable and commendable education programmes for Kerala have been implemented as part of the STARS project.

This booklet presents one of the most important activities among them.

