

BALA LAKSHYA JYOTHI

(Lighting up Children's future)

Issue: Two

Quarterly Newsletter from RELIEF FOUNDATION

April, 2015

CONTENTS

Message from Chairperson	1	How can you support us	6
RF News	2	Contact us	6

A Message From The Chairperson

Dear champion friends of Relief Foundation,

As we usher in the new financial year, we see newer associations and goodwill building refreshing our hopes on support for our projects. We have had the opportunity to serve our trusted donors providing details of our work in the last financial year.

This quarter you will read some heartening development information about our Foundation. Please take it up to spread the word about the work, since we are heavily relying on you as ambassadors of our mission to garner goodwill, wishes and support line up.

A few donors have approached us with an interest to start education based rural resource centres in villages of their ancestral origin. This is indeed a very healthy approach to philanthropy, since it would mean changing the lives of children for the better, and thereby nurturing the community towards responsible living.

I take this opportunity to thank each and everyone who have bestowed their trust on us and have remained with us all these years. We sincerely look forward to receive your feedback on this Newsletter and also our work. We also need your continued support to make a difference in the lives of children.

Best wishes for the NEW YEAR!

Vidya Shankar,
Chairperson

Cascade Montessori Rural Resource Centre

Jamnamarathur Centre

In our last newsletter we updated you about the recruitment of two tribal youths for our centre in Jamnamarathur. It gives us immense pleasure to share that they have successfully completed the training programme on Montessori Assistant. It started from February and went up to April end.



It was such a revelation for us also to witness the transformation that happened in them during the course of the training. Today, these two youths are confident of running the centre themselves until the main adult completes the International Diploma in Montessori Education for children between 6 and 12 years old. We are also happy to share that we have recruited the main adult for this centre who will undergo the International Diploma training starting from August 2015. We have also bought the material required to set up this centre. While the construction in our place in Jamnamarathur is happening in full swing, we have taken a place temporarily on rent to start with, which will house the

resource centre until the construction gets complete. A meeting has been planned for potential parents in the month of May.

Elavur Centre

Apart from our centre in Jamnamarathur, we have started another centre in a place called Elavur in Thiruvallur District of Tamilnadu. It is a small village near Gummidipoondi, an industrial town. A trained and experienced Montessori Director, who has been working with Relief Foundation for the past 7 years, is going to run the centre. A place has been taken on rent, while in parallel we are looking for land either on lease or to purchase to build our own centre. The rented place will be renovated, as required, before we start the centre. We have also placed the order for Montessori material. An assistant has been recruited who also completed the training programme along with Jamnamarathur youth.



We are excited that our pursuit to spread quality education in rural areas is picking up and people are ready to lend their support trusting Relief Foundation's abilities to run such projects.

Scope for new centres.

One of our Core Committee members Ms.Champakalatha wants us to start a centre in Melmangalam village near Periyakulam, Theni district in Tamilnadu. A place to run the centre is already available. We are looking for the right candidate for both assistant and the main adult to start this centre. At present, we are in the process of interviewing candidates. We are confident of starting the centre by October 2015.

Few other youth interested in starting centres in villages in Bhavani, Tirunelveli, and Kundrathur have approached us with requests. We are examining the viability as well as human resource potential besides the requirements for donor support.

People who are interested to support or to know more about these projects, please write to us @ relieffoundationindia@gmail.com

Happy School Programme

A school has to be a **Happy Place** for children to feel secure and respected. Research shows that when children are happy, their learning improves. Relief Foundation has created a matrix called Child Rights Compliance Index based on the fundamentals rights of Children as outlined by UNCRC to aid schools to become much sought after by children. The CRCI is a tool that aims at pinpointing in a precise manner a school's performances in specific areas. From the results, if the management deems it relevant, a school reforming plan can be drawn out, which is where the Happy School Programme takes its

place. The Happy School Programme consists of a continuous engagement between the school and Relief Foundation.

We are happy to say that we successfully audited one school in Chennai covering all the parameters and submitted a detailed report to the management of the school. We are very thankful to the management and the staff members of the school who were very cooperative throughout the audit. We have also proposed to the management of how RF can start its association with the school slowly. Such an initiative taken by every school assuring the best for their students will go a long way in making meaningful impact in the lives of many children.

CASCADE-Family learning Cooperative^(SM)

CASCADE Family Learning Cooperative a Montessori Resource Centre that functions in Thiruvannamiyur under the aegis of Relief Foundation, applied for service mark for the services provided to children and their families. We are happy to say that after accepting our application we have been given approval for service marking CASCADE model. This is a major step forward for this initiative as it not only protects the model, but also will help RF to provide its services to children and other interested partners in a structured manner.

For the first time in the history of CASCADE, ever since its inception, we have started conducting reading seminars in Tamil apart from the regular English ones for parents. This is a major step forward as language is never going to be a barrier for parents to learn the wonderful art of



Relief Foundation

parenting in the words of Dr. Maria Montessori. Parents are extremely excited to be part of these sessions, which are regularly conducted every Saturday.

Please visit our Facebook page and website for updates about this initiative.

www.cascadeflc.org

<https://www.facebook.com/CASCADE.Chennai>



Donor Update

Relief Foundation is very thankful to all its old and new donors for the trust shown and the support extended to all its projects. We are delighted to say that after we re-launched our newsletter and sent the copies to our long time well wishers, encouraging words and financial support came from many quarters. Whether the contribution made is small or big, Relief Foundation does not differentiate between them, as any support extended is timely and is always

received with thanks. We are extremely thankful to a well wisher veteran donor who gave One Lakh rupees immediately after he received the newsletter. Similarly, we also received from Anandashram Trust. Both the contributions are going towards supporting rural education. Such unstinted support gives us the strength to pursue our goals.

Similarly, companies are showing interests in our projects too to support them as part of their CSR activities with one big IT Solutions provider already supporting one of our rural centres on a long-term basis. Potential donors from companies made visits to our Thiruvannamiyur Centre to understand the connection of a resource centre in rural areas. Investing in rural education is the need of the hour and we are sure that companies will support RF initiatives in the days to come.

New individual donors have joined hands with RF starting April 2015 contributing on a monthly basis. Every such contribution made makes a meaningful difference in our work. We extend a warm welcome to all our new donors to join hands with RF in our endeavour to provide quality education to children.

New RF Members

We are delighted to welcome new members becoming a part of RF's team.

Mr. Venkatakrishnan. R. RVK Associates, Chennai joined as a Trustee and Treasurer

Following persons joined as Committee members:

Ms. Dipa Dixit, Advocate, New Delhi, former member of National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), Government of India and Trustee of J N Dixit Foundation.

Ms. Juliette Viard-Gaudin, Student of International Development, from France, who started as a volunteer with RF became a part of the Committee. She will spread the word on support required to take this work forward, to her circles in her country and also her Alma mater- University of Bath in UK.

Ms. Champakalatha - Vice President in Shriram Group and heads the Gold loan division of the company for Maharashtra and Karnataka.

FCRA

Relief Foundation has reapplied for FCRA in the month of February 2015 after we had closed it 3 years ago. Many of our foreign donors who supported all our school building related and training activities in the past have welcomed this step and have assured their support to RF. We are extremely thankful for their trust on our work.

Other important updates

- Ms. Vidya Shankar, Chairperson of RF, has been nominated as a member of State Commission for Protection of Children's Rights (SCPCR) as a **Montessori expert**. This is a major step taken forward by the Tamilnadu Government to recognize Montessori education as a means to protect the rights of children.
- RF is now on Facebook. Please visit <https://www.facebook.com/relieffoundation02032015> to know latest updates about the work we do.

How you can support us?

- ❖ Sponsor a child - towards cost of educating and supporting the family of children in our centres in rural areas - Rs 15000/- per year
- ❖ Sponsor education - towards cost of supporting a child's education till the age of economic independence identified by Relief Foundation, after a due diligence screening process. Rs 6000/- per year per child including educational resources, home library, home visits and counseling sessions for families for responsible living and linking them to various Govt schemes where applicable.

Note: All donations made to Relief Foundation are exempted under Sec. 80G of the Income Tax Act of India

Contact us

Relief Foundation,

No. 7/9, Sriram Nagar Main Road,

Thiruvanmiyur,

Chennai - 600041

Phone: 044-4527644 Email: reliefoundationindia@gmail.com

Website: www.reliefoundation.in