



**Annual Report of Vidya Vanam an
Educational Initiative of Bhuvana
Foundation
2012 –2013**



**Vidya Vanam Thuvaipatti Road, Anaikatti, Combatore Dist , TN 641108
(www.vidyavanam.org)**

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Report from S. Sriram, President - Bhuvana Foundation:

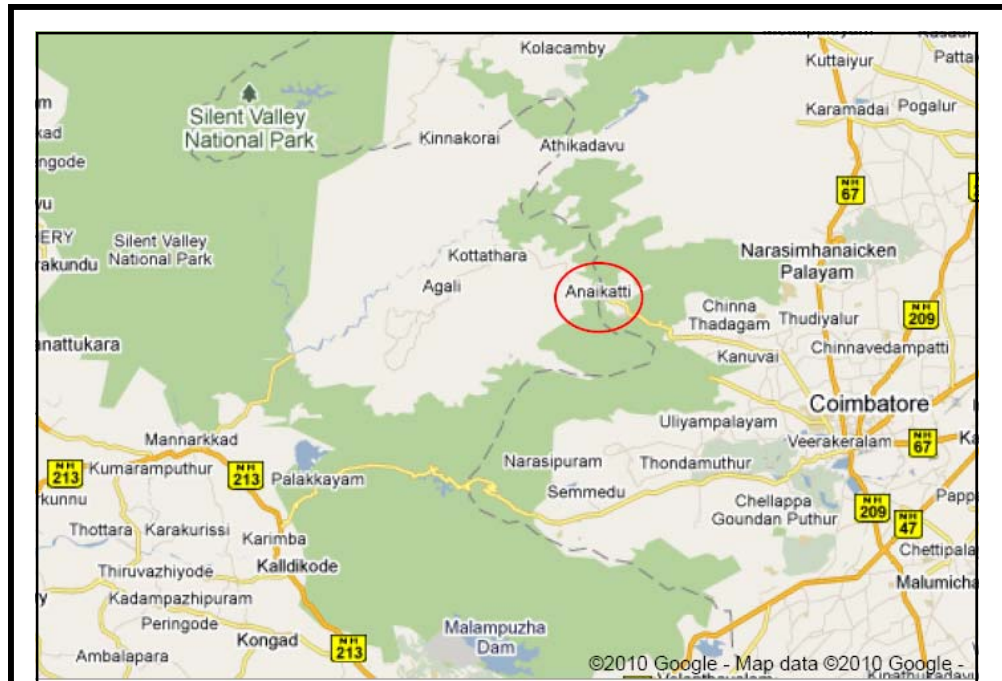
We can look back at 2012-2013 and feel satisfied on meeting the goals charted out by the board in 2011 and 2012. To meet the accreditation needs for higher secondary school certification we needed more class rooms and hence a new building. With generous support from members of the board and patrons, we completed a 10 room classroom block on time and on budget. The class rooms became operational at the beginning of the first term of 2012 and was formally opened by Mr. Balaguruswamy on August 15th 2012.

Our school strength increased from 223 To 249 and the number of teachers increased from 17 to 19 giving an overall teacher student ratio of 1:13. Thanks to the many donors we are able to meet the revenue expenses of the school.

Currently we are accredited by the National Institute of open schools (NIOS) valid till 2015. We recognize that due to changes in the accreditation requirement planned by the Department of Education, NIOS may be disbanded and merged with other educational boards. We are working towards getting a formal accreditation from the Educational board from the center or the state.

The highlights of the year, were features of our educational program which are unique. Thus, the second term is designated the project term and the entire school works on a particular theme. This year the theme was rivers and Dr. Gopal Gandhi inaugurated the project day on December 6th. This was followed by the annual day in February of 2013.

Our vision of education is to foster a “fear free” environment where failure is accepted as first steps to success. We face challenges, but these are “good challenges: and thanks to the board we are able to meet and take our mission to the next level.



Vidya Vanam is located in the Village of Anaikatti, about 40km from Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.



Google map of site of Vidya Vanam (red circle) with the town of Anaikatti to the rear of the school.

Bhuvana Foundation

The Bhuvana Foundation was formed in January of 2007 to fund the Vidya Vanam School. Village leaders had expressed a need for a private English education alternative to local government schools after many village children could not pass state exams and even those who completed failed to their job search due to problems in communication with English . With aid from local NGO, the site and location was established in March 2007 and Vidya Vanam officially opened in Anaikatti in October 07.

Vision of Vidya Vanam

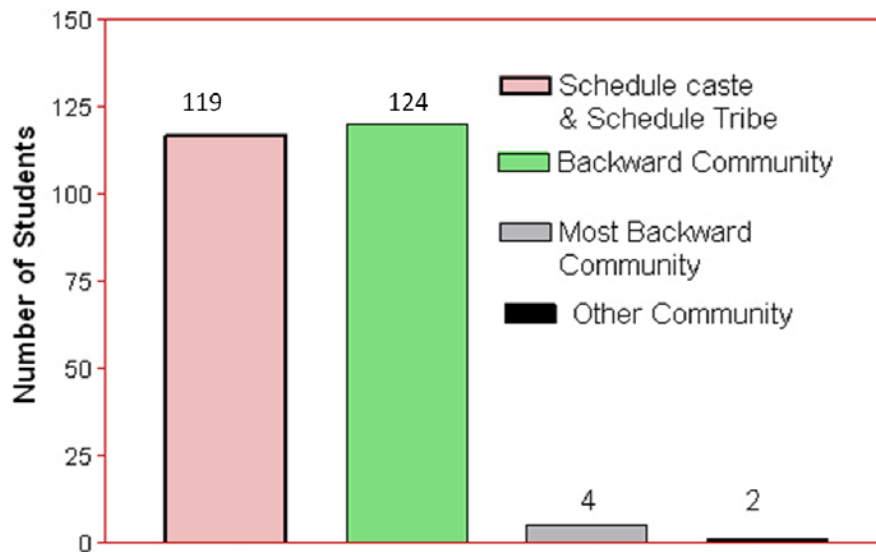
Vidya Vanam is an elementary school for children from tribal and underprivileged families living in rural India. The school is located about 45km north east of Coimbatore, in the Nilgiri Hills. The parents of these children are either illiterate or have had no formal education, and hence the sons and daughters represent first-time learners. It is our endeavor to help these children grow into literate, self-confident, motivated and emotionally stable human beings. Vidya Vanam provides children with the tools for self learning while simultaneously recognizing the rich cultural traditions of the villages. They are encouraged to imagine a world outside of classroom walls and rural villages. It strives to impart the elements of education that respect and nurture this cultural identity and instill in the children pride and respect for their roots, environment and culture.

Student Body

The current student body strength is 249. The community break down is as follows:

Backward community	124
Tribal	119
Most backward	4
Other	2

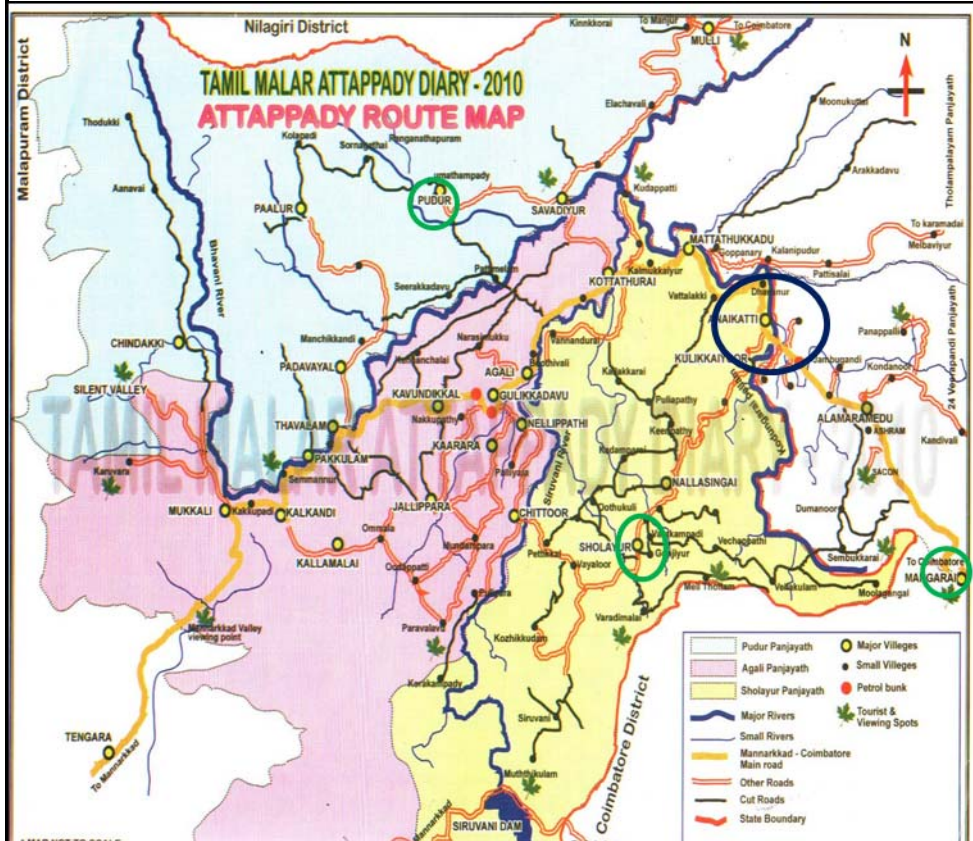
The boys to girl ratio is 1.1:0.9



Where do our students come from?

Our students come from 30 villages of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The furthest village is approximately 15Km from the campus. Students come to school by Vidya Vanam Bus, autorickshaw, bicycle, or walking. Some of the older children have learnt to bicycle and have use it as a means of transportation

The villages which send children to Vidya Vanam are: 1) Anaikatti – Tamil Nadu and Anaikatti Kerala, 2) Thuvaipathy, 3) Kalkadu, 4) Kullikur, 5) Vadakkalur, 6) Thekkalur, 7) Jumbugundi, 8) Alamamedu, 9) Kondanur, 10) Pudur, 11) Mangarai, 12) Vatlaki, 14) Veerampandi, 15) Moongil Pallam, 16) Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, 17) Mandyaman Koil, 18) Dasanoor, 19) Laksham Veedu, 20) Mattathukadu, 21) Kottathurai, 22) Vannanthurai, 23) Naickerpadi, 24) Agali, 25) Goolikadavu, 26) Paala maram, 27) Kalandi Pudur, 28) Alangadi Pudur, 29) Gopaneri, 30) Seenguzhi.



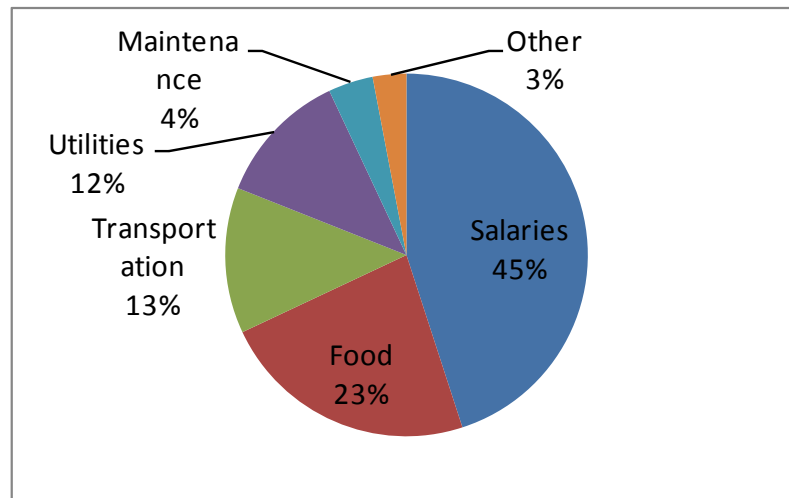
Map of Anaikatti and surrounding villages. This region includes villages in the state of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Vidya Vanam is located in Anaikatti (circled in purple) The villages in Tamil Nadu is shown in white and those in Kerala are shown in pink and yellow. The green circles are the farthest villages in Kerala and Tamil Nadu who are students of the school.

Highlights of Academic Year 2012 –2013.

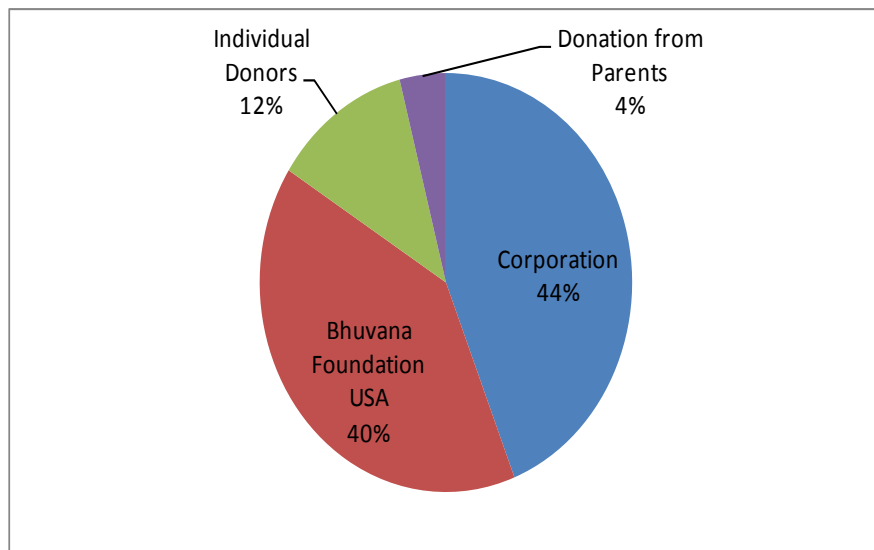
- **In the summer of 2012, Vidya Vanam was host to a Dance summer camp which was hosted by Ms. Karuna and brought children from different schools in Coimbatore for one week of intense dance training.**
- **Vidya Vanam hosted one week of education work shop in which teachers from other parts of Tamil Nadu participated. The work shop focused on how to improve the teaching methods, empower children to learn and to change the class room paradigm from “teacher centric” to student centric”**
- **Opening of the new school block which will serve as the academic classes for all children. The block was build from contributions made by members of the board and the community and was opened by Dr. Balagurswamy on August 15th 2011.**
- **Project Day was celebrate on December 2nd 2012. This year, Project Day was combined into a single event for both the junior and senior schools. The thematic presentation for project day as “rivers of the World”. The Chief Guest for Project Day was Mr. Gopal Gandhi, Gandhiji’s grandson and former governor of West Bengal. During the opening programs, he interacted with the Vidya Vanam students, engaging them in dialogue about what they wanted to be when they grew up.**
- **On 8 December 2012, Vidya Vanam hosted a TEDx event, a conference that engages in dialogue about the power of ideas in promoting global change. Visitors from around India flooded the Vidya Vanam campus to discuss ideas for change, ranging from topics on health and fitness, to education, to the possession of superpowers! Each speaker brought unique ideas to the table. Each challenged the youth of India—as well as the youth of the globe—to inspire change. The speakers were passionate, spreading their inspirations and experiences throughout the minds of those in the audience.**
- **On Republic day Children of Vidya Vanam with children from the Government school presented Sholai Kuilgal a choir concert at Coimbatore.**

Financials:

Expenses: Direct education costs is approximately R. 18,500/ year/child. (this includes providing lunch and morning and evening snacks, transportation all expenses for books, and extracurricular activities).



Revenues: The funds for the school come from the following sources: Corporation and trusts: 44%; Bhuvana Foundation USA :40%, Individual Donors: 12%; Parent donation as fees 4%.



Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)

Vidyavanam in its endeavor to empower and provide opportunities in teaching, to the youth of Anaikatty, has started a course on "Early Childhood Education and Development". This course is certified by (IGNOU). Eighteen women from surrounding villages are being trained to provide support and ensure the social development of children of ages between 2 and 6.

Women learn elements of pertaining to early childhood growth and development. They also set the children to seamlessly enter kindergarten and class I. Under a Nationally developed curriculum the teachers learn: 1) Early childhood stages - growth and development 2) pre-school, reading, and math, 3) Recognize and become familiar with child development services provided by the government, 4) child health 5) basics of child psychology 6) establishing and running child services in remote villages 8) providing resources to mothers to help understand the needs of the children.

Future Plans and Directions:

The Board of Bhuvana Foundation had planned for Vidya Vanam to educate children to tenth grade. We anticipate that the first graduating class will be in 2016-2017. Depending on how the accreditation papers move through the system we are likely to be eligible for the Central Board Secondary Education or the State Matriculation board. We will know the outcome within the next academic year.

At the last board meeting we began the plans to develop a vocational center for the students who finish 10th and are not inclined to go further. Also, the vocational center will provide avenue to help other teenagers who drop out of school and are eager to seek a vocational skill. A tentative site for the vocational school has been chosen and we are looking for corporate sponsorship for the program.

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of Bhuvana Foundation India
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* Bhuvana Foundation USA is a non-profit sister organization in USA . The individual contributors of Bhuvana Foundation will be acknowledged separately.