

*"A man never stands as tall as when he kneels to help a child"*



## **ACF's Monitoring Visit to the Projects in Sri Lanka and South India**

As part of the committee's longstanding commitment to its sponsors, whenever possible, members volunteer to visit as many of the projects as they can during a short break that they arrange themselves.

Since the ending of the main Covid pandemic, this is the first visit that has been undertaken after 2020.

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### **Hill Country Visit - Hatton Area**

Mr Varathan and Mr Thiruchelvan commenced their monitoring with a trip, in early February, to one of ACF's new projects ... Hatton in the hill country region. Mr Varathan and Mr Thiruchelvan were very encouraged by the enthusiasm shown by students and their parents towards education despite their personal struggles primarily financial ones and living conditions.

Mr Varathan and Mr Thiruchelvan interviewed several potentially deserving children / their parents / guardians, with a view to selecting students for university assistance. The background to all the families is their persistent struggles with extreme poverty and the additional problems that are associated with it. More often than not, deserving children, living in the hill countries, have rejected university studies because their families simply cannot afford to pay towards it.

Of the 11 students who were interviewed, 8 have been selected to benefit from ACF's assistance, as they have fulfilled ACF's, strict but fair, criteria for being offered this support.



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### **South India Visit – Madurai**

A week later, accompanied by Fr Jeya, who works in partnership with SPACE, Mr Varathan took a trip to visit some beneficiaries of Pasumalai foster care Muniyandipuram foster care, and Anaiyur refugee camp (for Sri Lankans).



Earlier this month a group of children from Anaiyur Camp were treated to a day trip to Eco Park, in Madurai.



During the evenings, the children at Anaiyur camp make use of the ACF supported Study Centre for school home-work purposes and tutorial support. They are also provided with a snack and a cup of milk as part of our daily assistance.



## Vanni Visits

Towards the end of February, their next visits took Mr Varathan and Mr Thiruchelvan along with an ACF supporter and a friend Vallipuram Sathyendra to the Vanni area. During these visits Mr Sathyendra passed his observations / advice which were valuable to the team.

## Annai Illam - DWF – Mannar

Their next project visit took them to the western coastal town of Mannar. They had the opportunity to chat with the children and see them at play with some of the sports equipment that ACF provided.



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## Nanaattan Foster Care

Popping in for a brief visit with ACF's new foster care partner, Mr Vinothan, who is ACF's first ever university student to qualify as a lawyer, our ACF members enjoyed a mutually productive meeting.



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## Good Shepherd Convent - Mankulam

Within the same day they were also able to fit in the visit to the children and staff at the project in Mankulam. The newish computer room is well equipped with updated PCs, a printer and a copier machine.



## Iniya Vaalvu Illam – Vallipunam, Mullaitivu

Further in the day, a drive to Mullaitivu brought them to Iniya Vaalvu Illam and the youngsters who had been trained in producing leather products, machine sewing, embroidery and silk flower arranging.



## ASSETS – Kilinochchi

The team's visit to ASSETS proved very enlightening. ASSETS ethos is to empowering their mentally challenged and special needs children through a wide range of training programmes.



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## Arobanam Boys Home – Kilinochchi

On their visit to Arobanam Boys Home, they were able to meet and chat with the children and Rev.Fr. Sas



## Department for Social services

The Jaffna visit began with a meeting with the Director of Social services for the Northern province. Both Mr Varathan and Mr Thiruchelvan felt that the meeting enhanced their understanding about the processes and needs from both sides.

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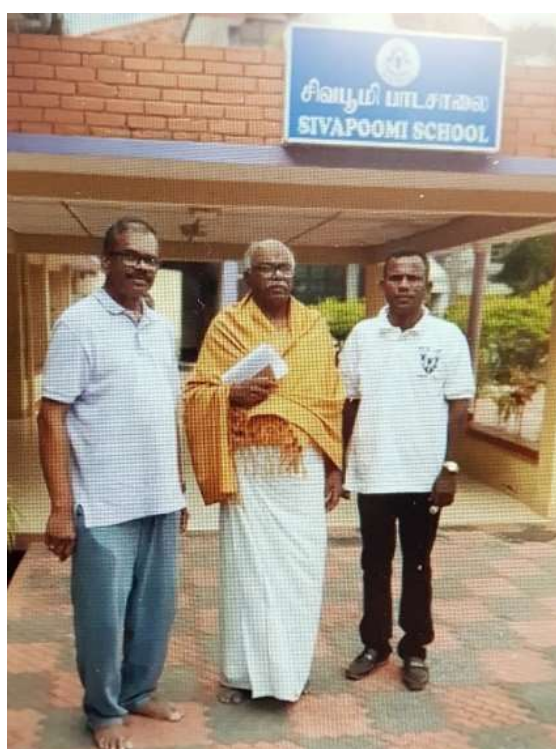
## Wecome Home - Anaikoddai

Mr Varathan and Mr Thiruchelvan were welcomed by Sr Rajesh at her project's place of residence where she currently manages the welfare of 10 persons who are either single mothers or been subjected to some form of abuse.



## Sivapoomi School, Special Educational School - Kondavil - Jaffna

Visiting Mr Thirumurugan was a well-awaited meeting for our chairman and our operations manager, as it proved very useful in gaining two-way updates on the special needs schools in Kondavil and Kilinochchi, elders homes in Keerimalai and Chulipuram, progress on the ACF assisted university students and the current foster care family in Jaffna.



## Iniya Vaalvu Illam Exhibition and Sales – 28 April 2023



The staff and special needs students of Iniya Vaalvu Illam organised and held their first vocational and work experience public exhibition on 28th April 2023. This is the culmination of 6-7 months of hard work and training in vocational studies and work experience in producing leather goods, embroidery, sewn garments, cosmetics application, hairstyling techniques and fabric flower arrangements.

This project has provided the students with the incentive, encouragement and confidence to look forward to integrating with society in a productive way through earning an income, as they are given the opportunity to learn skills that could provide the possibility of finding paid work after their studies.

This event was attended by many of the public, who were interested in looking at and purchasing the various items on display. Many of the products were sold on the day and event proved to be a success and was appreciated by all who attended.

Arobanam Children Fund is looking into the possibility of turning this pilot project into an ongoing scheme with Iniya Vaalvu Illam and other potential partners.

Special Attendees:

Director - Mr J Reginald – Committee Chairman (Iniya Vaalvu Illam, Puthukudiyirippu)

Chief Guest - Mr K Vimalanathan – District Government Officer (Mullaitivu)

Special Guest - Mr C Jeyakanth – District Officer (Puthukudiyirippu)

Special Guest - Mr S Dinesh – Manager of Operations - Arobanam Children Fund (London)

Honoured Guest Mr N Thasaratharasakumaran – District Social Services Officer (Mullaitivu)

**ACF are always in need of more sponsors to assist more children in need  
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