



RTU REACHING
THE
UNREACHED

2021-22
ANNUAL REVIEW



Our vision

A world free from poverty, inequality and suffering, where every child is safe, well cared for, educated and happy.

Our mission

To support the most vulnerable people in rural South India, especially women and children, according to their felt basic needs and priorities, and empower them towards their overall development and self-reliance.

Our values

RTU's work is still informed by the fundamental principles set down by our founder, Brother James Kimpton, who spent 45 years in our area supporting those living in the most desperate poverty.

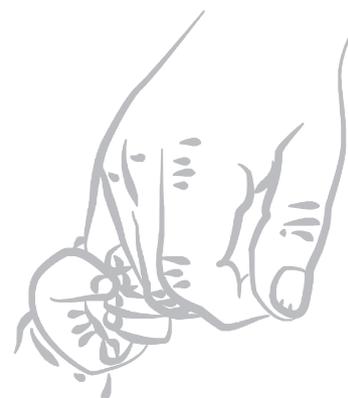
He believed the most vulnerable people we support every day, should always live with dignity and security. While he knew the importance of alleviating their immediate suffering by ensuring enough food to eat, basic healthcare, access to clean water and a safe place to live, he also profoundly understood the complex long-term challenges faced by those living in poverty.

RTU's continuing emphasis on education, female empowerment and rural development, and the importance of building resilience are rooted in his knowledge of the communities he served and his wisdom in understanding and responding to their needs and priorities.

The spirit of James Kimpton lives on in every aspect of the work we do with the most disadvantaged people, especially children, to whom he dedicated his life. We remain committed to the vulnerable people we serve, aspiring to his humility, selflessness and grace in everything we do.

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FLIGHTSTUDIO

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Welcome From the Director's desk



Dear Well-wishers,

Welcome to our Annual Review for 2021-22. We have had yet another successful but challenging year.

From the start of COVID-19 in March 2020 and the lockdown in Tamil Nadu, our staff immediately took action to reach out to those most in need. School teachers, childcare staff and all the other departmental staff have been actively involved in purchasing and distributing emergency dry-ration packs, learning kits, online learning materials, food packets, medicines, transporting patients and other relief works throughout the pandemic. Even though some of the staff were affected by COVID themselves, they did a marvellous job, and I would like to take this opportunity of thanking them for their hard work and dedication.

The current financial year started with the threat of COVID still hanging over our heads but at long last, the schools are now back up and running again and children have returned to our Children's Villages and schools. The teachers have worked very hard to bring our students back up to speed to make up for all the schooling they have missed.

We are very grateful to all our donors for their generous gestures and sacrifices to support our programmes especially for the donations sent to help with the emergency relief. Even though they themselves were suffering in the pandemic, they were able to reach out to enable us to help those most in need. Reading this report will certainly give you a picture of what we did last year and I hope show you how your generous support brought significant changes in the lives of the children and other vulnerable people in rural villages. We wish you a pleasant reading.

Our heartfelt thanks to you all.

May God bless you all!

Fr. J. Antony Paulsamy, OFM. Cap.,
Director.



What we do - Changing lives for good

RTU was founded by Brother James Kimpton in 1974, when he opened the Pushpurani Clinic. The clinic provided urgent, basic medical care for local people from scheduled and tribal castes in and around the small village of G.Kallupatti in the Theni District of Tamil Nadu, South India, where we are still based.

In 1978, with our community health and housing programmes beginning to expand, we were registered as a formal Society and the first of our 'foster families' was established to care for a family of local children who had been orphaned and, with no-one to care for them, brought to us for shelter. We now have four Children's Villages, still based on the foster family principle, providing safe, loving homes to vulnerable children.

While the majority of our budget is dedicated to our childcare, education and health programmes, we recognise that providing a safety net to meet the basic needs and priorities of the poorest people is only one aspect of tackling long-term poverty.

Our work reaches out to the most disadvantaged rural villages in our area of Tamil Nadu, providing practical support whenever and wherever it is needed most. Our wide-ranging, programme-based approach builds confidence and resilience, helps families and communities overcome poverty and dependence, and builds an independent future for all.

Childcare

- RTU's Children's Villages provide a loving home for 300 orphaned or lone children at any one time, cared for by foster mothers.
- Our ten hostels house about 400 teenagers, who have moved on from their foster families to live more independently.

Education for all school age children and help to attend college

- 1,300 children attend RTU's schools every year
- RTU works with 7,500 children across 100 villages, supporting Government primary, middle and secondary schools to increase the educational attainment of the most disadvantaged children
- We run evening study centres for children in rural villages
- We provide financial support enabling many students to continue in further education and gain a professional qualification



Health care and disease prevention

- Every year around 35,000 people are treated and supported by our Pushparani medical and physiotherapy clinics, including more than 100 children who are HIV+ or from families affected by HIV/AIDS
- We run health camps in partnership with other organisations to raise awareness, provide regular health checks, inoculations and treatment

Female empowerment in the community

- RTU has helped over 2,600 women to access training that leads to secure employment
- The microfinance schemes run by our women's Self-Help Groups have helped over 800 women to start their own businesses, improving families' resilience and reducing rural migration
- Each year, the Self-Help Group members save over 2 crore rupees between them and receive income totaling around 4.25 crore rupees from interest, loan repayments and grants from RTU
- Our network of over 108 women's Self-Help Groups is growing in 29 villages is growing with 500 more women expected to benefit in the next three years alone

Rural housing

- RTU builds houses for the most disadvantaged families who cannot access Government schemes
- To date 9,000 families in 60 villages have been provided with new, safe and sturdy village houses

Water

- RTU has drilled 2,489 new wells, providing remote villages and schools with access to safe and reliable water supplies



Our strategic approach to change

Many of RTU's beneficiaries struggle with a complex combination of factors around poverty and inequality, including:

- Gender and caste discrimination
- Low income and reliance on irregular daily wage work
- The absence or sudden death of a primary family breadwinner
- The inability to work or provide care because of ill health or injury
- Debt, often caused by borrowing from moneylenders at high rates of interest
- Poor quality housing, education and healthcare
- Lack of access to some basic human rights, such as clean water, coupled with long periods of drought

We bring about social transformation in rural communities through activities that help to strengthen individual and community resilience.

Education

- Access to the education provided in our schools and our educational outreach programmes helps children develop the skills and knowledge they need to fulfil their potential and lift themselves out of poverty
- Our women's training programmes help promote economic self-reliance and build resilience



Rural development

Initiatives such as our housing, water and women's Self-Help empowerment programmes strengthen and support rural communities, helping them break free from long-established cycles of poverty.

We do not work in isolation. By engaging with like-minded organisations and individuals, we are able to create the right conditions for social change. Our partners include, among others, Government agencies, other NGOs, corporates, philanthropists and academic institutions.

Our highly valued staff are the key to our ability to bring about real change. We believe in equipping them to meet the challenges of our work by providing comprehensive and continuing training and career development.

Our response to Coronavirus

In India, as around the world, the coronavirus pandemic struck with brutal speed. Fortunately, at RTU we were well prepared to respond quickly and effectively to the crisis.

We continued to respond with compassion and pragmatism to the needs of our communities as we moved forward in this unprecedented situation. We planned for the changes that we needed to make to our programmes and were mindful of the need to address mental health issues and provide support to children and families so they could eat and the children were motivated to learn and stay in school.



We organised many initiatives at the request of Government officials including G. Kallupatti Village Panchayat (Local Body), Primary Health Centre at Devathanapatti, Revenue Inspector at Devathanapatti, Tahsildar of Periyakulam Taluk, Theni Dt, Tamil Nadu and our Own Initiative.

Place/area of Action/response

G. Kallupatti Village Panchayat, Genguvarpatti, Silvarpatti, Devadanapatti, Jeyamangalam, Melmangalam, JK Nagar, Kakkanni Nagar, Endapuli village Panchayat in Periyakulam Taluk, Theni District, Tamil Nadu, South India and Pudhupatti Village in Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu.

Health and hygiene measures

As soon as COVID infections became apparent in Tamil Nadu, we printed and distributed 5000 leaflets to local people, school children and our staff members to raise awareness about COVID-19. 1150 washable masks were distributed to local people, our staff and children.

Morning and afternoon meals were served to 22 village cleaning workers, sweepers and other support staff who travelled some distance to work in our local village.

We purchased a sanitation machine and cleaning products for our local village Panchayat to disinfect the village and cleansing products for Nallakaruppanpatti Village Panchayat. We also bought a disinfectant spraying machine for our own campus.

We donated a COVID testing booth to the Primary Health Centre in Devadanapatti.

We provided a fogging machine to Erumalainayakkanpatti village to try and control the spread of dengue fever and other mosquito-borne diseases. It has a powerful jet that can penetrate through micro holes.

One of our target villages, Alagarnayakkanpatti, was severely affected by COVID-19. To reduce the infections, we donated 500 kg of bleaching powder and 50 litres of Lysol to use in disinfecting the village.

Food rations to those most in need

We distributed basic food items to more than 6,364 families who were unable to work during the lockdown including dhobies (washer men), nomads, barbers, pot-makers, building workers, and other disadvantaged people including transgender people, people with physical and mental disabilities, those who were sick, Sri Lankan refugees, members of our women's Self-Help groups, the parents of our school children and those living below the poverty line. Identified by our staff members and local Panchiat authority leaders, we reached families in 37 villages in Theni and Dindigul Districts.



Each emergency food ration kit contained dill, pepper, mustard seeds, split urad dal, cumin seeds, turmeric powder, roasted peanuts, chickpeas, legumes, cowpeas, red chili powder, sambar powder, tamarind, moong dhal, yellow split pea, semolina and rice; enough to feed a family for a month. The food rations helped the most vulnerable children to have nutritious meals every day and we distributed them every month during the lockdown.

We provided financial assistance of Rs.2000 to 167 of the most vulnerable of our Children's Village children's families through their bank accounts every month. Later this support was increased to 252 families. For those without bank accounts, we distributed dry ration packs to 174 Children's Village children's families with Rs.1000 in Theni and Dindigul Districts.

Hot meals and soup distribution

In the second wave of COVID in 2021, we continued the emergency food supplies and also provided hot meals to the most vulnerable people living in our local villages. 360 people received hot meals every day from our central kitchen. We prepared a variety of rice with lentils, vegetables, and an egg to stop people from going hungry. We also distributed herbal soup to boost the immune system when they came to receive the hot meals and also to other people who were passing by.

We have provided a lifeline to large numbers of people during the lockdowns, serving meals to key workers, migrant workers travelling through our area trying to reach their homes, and many others in urgent need of food.



Kanishka is 9 years old from our local village and lives with her grandmother. Her mother died when she was young, and her father remarried and settled far away. Now she has only her grandmother to take care of her and meet all her needs. They live in a house built by RTU and her grandmother works in a weaving centre. She never feels lonely as she loves her grandmother who is always with her and her friends too. Her RTU teacher visited her at home for home schooling and she was also able to watch the Tamil Nadu Government educational channel. During the COVID-19 second wave, we provided her and her grandmother with food rations so they could have good, nutritious food every day.

Looking ahead, the pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns and school closures have had a devastating effect on many families and particularly the education of the children. In the sections below, we describe in more detail the measures we have taken and continue to take to rebuild lives and give the children the quality education they deserve.



1

Children's Villages and hostels

RTU's four Children's Villages and ten hostels for teenagers provide a safe and secure family, home and community for 850 of the most vulnerable children in our area of South India, helping them grow and thrive as they prepare for an independent life, free from poverty.

Children have been at the heart of our work from our earliest days.

All of them have suffered great hardship from birth, having lost one or both parents due to illness, accident, suicide or desertion. Their relatives are unable to care for them due to poverty or ill-health. One in eight are either HIV+ or have family members affected by HIV/AIDS.



The younger children are cared for by dedicated and highly trained foster mothers and live together in family units in small houses in our Children's Villages. Four female and male live-in counsellors at RTU provide additional emotional support to help them deal with trauma and loss.

At around the age of 13, the children move into one of our single gender hostels with a warden to give them greater independence. Once they finish their education at our RTU schools, we support them as they study at college to gain a professional qualification or learn a trade, returning during the holidays.

Since the first purpose-built Children's Village opened in 1984 with 24 children, we have given secure, caring homes to as many as 1,029 children a year in 2007, with the number settling at a steady 850 - 1000 in subsequent years.

For each child, RTU is a refuge, a place of sanctuary, a place of love and care, and a place to rise from humble beginnings to achieve a meaningful, financially independent role in Indian society.



238 Children are growing up in 4 Children's Village

377 Children are growing up in our 10 Hostels

45 Foster mothers, **10** Wardens, **4** Counsellors and **4** Managers are taking care of the children.

Children's Statistics for 2021 – 22

	HIV Infected			HIV Affected			Others			Total			%
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	
Orphan	10	10	20	11	18	29	61	61	122	82	89	171	20%
Semi -Orphan	7	8	15	12	18	30	189	226	415	208	252	460	54%
Poor	0	0	0	1	7	8	80	131	211	81	138	219	26%
Total	17	18	35	24	43	67	330	418	748	371	479	850	
%			4%			8%			88%	44%	56%		

During the Pandemic

As per Government regulations, in March 2020 we had to send most of the children in our care back to stay with their relatives in their native villages. Only those who were orphaned and had no contact with any of their family members were allowed to stay with us. The schools closed in Tamil Nadu at the same time and so the lockdown came to be known as the COVID holiday. We immediately took steps to ensure that the children who were HIV+ received their ART and other vital medication.

To help the relatives, many of whom were elderly grandparents without the means to support the children, we provided COVID relief support. 252 families received monthly payments of Rs.2000 and we distributed emergency dry ration packs to 174 families with Rs.1000 in Theni and Dindigul Districts. The relatives were relieved to receive our support to manage this crisis to care their children.

Our childcare staff telephoned the relatives and the older children every few days, and made regular visits to the families to check on their health and wellbeing.

Many of our professional students away at college returned to live with us during the lockdown while their colleges were closed. Even though it was their COVID holidays, they helped the younger children who were allowed to stay in our care here in RTU with activities and learning. When the colleges opened to online learning, the students were able to study here at RTU using our online and IT facilities.

Unfortunately, we were very sad to lose four of our older students who died during the pandemic due to drowning, an accident in the workplace and kidney disease. This caused great sadness to all of us who had raised them since they were small children.

- One of our children, Veeralakshmi, who had to return to her home during the lockdown, met with an unimaginable tragedy in her life. Her mother due to mental stress pushed Veeralakshmi onto an open fire which resulted in 70% burns. She was in the Government hospital in Theni but immediately we admitted her to a specialty burns hospital in Madurai where she underwent life-saving treatment and skin grafts. On leaving hospital, she received special care and physiotherapy on her damaged hand. She is still undergoing physiotherapy but has much improved. It is so sad to see the scars she has been left with.
- Rajashri went home to her father during the lockdown and suffered severe pain and swelling in her abdomen. Her father took her to the local hospital and was advised that her kidney had to be removed. As he could not afford the medical expenses, he contacted us. We admitted her to a specialist kidney care hospital in Madurai and her kidney was able to be saved. After the surgery she recovered very quickly and came began to live life normally in a few weeks, thanks to the love and care of our staff.

During the lockdown, a few of the children's families exploited this opportunity and arranged early child marriages, most of which we were able to stop in time. We were so concerned about the children that we made phone calls and visits so we could be updated about their activities on a regular basis.

Poorani

Poorani (name changed) returned to live with her aunt during the lockdown as per the Government regulations. She had finished her schooling and wanted to do a three-year nursing course, which we were arranging. However, her relatives arranged a marriage for her without her consent and it was only on her wedding day that she found out. After the marriage, she immediately telephoned the 1098 Childline number who rescued her and referred her to Dindigul Child Welfare Committee. When speaking to the staff, she told them that she belonged to RTU and wanted to return to us. Immediately we brought her back to RTU where she was supported by our counsellors. After a few months we visited her relatives to try and get her original id card and community certificate. They refused and insisted we send her back to them so that they could settle her with the groom. Instead, we applied for copies of her paperwork and were able to use them so she could use them to get into nursing course. Before she started her course, the groom's family came to ask her to sign an agreement to break their relationship. She is so relieved that this unhappy episode in her life has now ended, and she can enjoy her nursing studies.

Important occasions to celebrate

Our children were allowed to return to our Children's Villages and hostels in November 2021 and the schools re-opened for good in July 2022. It was heart-warming to be able to celebrate the various religious and public festivals at RTU once more.

- **Pongal Celebrations** – The historic Tamil Harvest Festival of Pongal was celebrated on 15th January with great joy and happiness.
- **International Women's Day** – All our female staff were invited and honoured by both girl and boy students as part of International Women's Day celebrations on 8th March.
- **Founders Day** – RTU Founder Brother James Kimpton's 4th Memorial Day, and 47th Annual RTU Day was celebrated on 5th October. A special talk about Brother James's life and dedication was delivered and inspired many to follow his example and support RTU.



- **Diwali Festival** – On 4th November all the children were blessed with new dresses, sweets, firecrackers, and special food to make the Diwali festival even more colourful and memorable for the children.
- **Children Camp & Parents meeting** – All the children from our four Children's Villages, ten hostels and our professional students away at college took part in the Children's Camp from 24th to 28th December with various fun activities and motivation sessions. 460 parents attended the parents meeting and we were very proud to see all the parents showing their love for the children. The parents expressed their gratitude to RTU for the loving care and education their children are receiving until they are able to gain fulfilling jobs.
- **Christmas Day** – With a prayer, Christmas celebrations started on 25th December. It was celebrated with a lot of zeal and enthusiasm by everyone. All the children performed beautiful dances, speeches, and dramas.
- **Presenting gold rings** – Three of our foster mothers– Mrs Malarkodi, Mrs Vijayalakshmi, from Anbu Illam and Mrs Kaveri from Nirmala Children's Village - were honoured with 4g of gold rings with the RTU emblem for their 10 years of service to the children.

Counselling for students



Our four counsellors provide an important service to help the wellbeing of the children in our care.

- They conduct counselling programmes for children, helping them build resilience.
- They provide emotional healing, and psychosocial support in a child-friendly environment for children suffering trauma and loss.
- They provide special care and protection to children who have been separated from their families, and now live with our trained foster mothers.
- They support Government initiatives to ensure the care, protection and rehabilitation of children in our care.

Awareness to adolescent students

As well as our normal curriculum, we organise many special meetings to help the wellbeing of our children. A special meeting was held for our adolescent boys and girls on child protection by the relevant Government officials who explained how to protect themselves from abuse and how to use the Childline helpline number in an emergency.

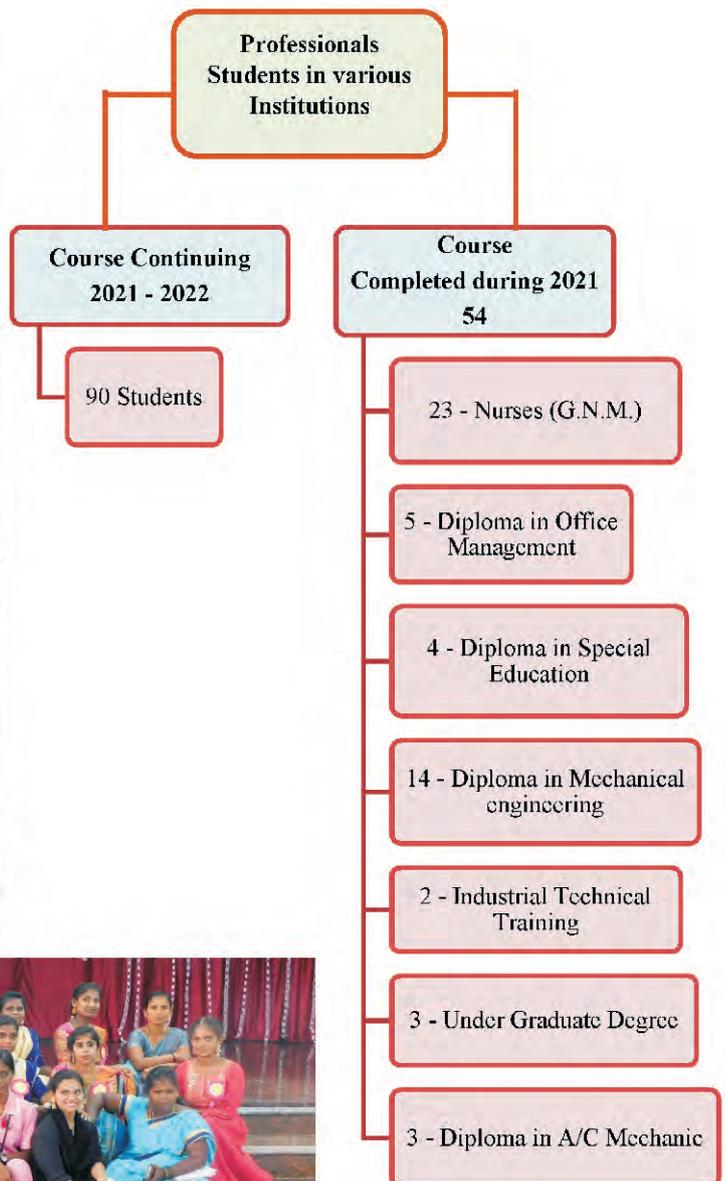
Awareness was given to adolescent boys and girls about counselling, motivation and mental health issues by Father Arockiaraj and two other trainers.



Project impact

- Children in our care are given a loving, caring childhood with many opportunities to make friends, learn, play and take part in a wide variety of sports, music, dance and celebratory events.
- Children's health and wellbeing are greatly improved as they are given emotional support to help them come to terms with the tragedy and suffering experienced in their early lives.
- Fewer children are at risk due to poverty and their family circumstances.

After completing their schooling at RTU schools, most of the children in our care move onto higher education and professional courses, according to the marks they achieve and their aspirations. Those who do well in their State Board exams can gain access to Government-run colleges where tuitions fees are low. However, other colleges can sometimes charge high fees which are met by us, along with the students' mess fees and personal expenses.



- RTU feels very proud of our alumni nurses who worked hard caring for patients during the COVID pandemic in various hospitals and we salute their noble service during the pandemic.
- Nandhini, a special-needs teacher working in a special school at Nagapattinam, was honoured by the District Collector for her best performance.
- Fifteen of our alumni nurses successfully passed the Medical Recruitment Board Exams and are currently working in prestigious State Government hospitals.
- Four of our alumni nurses are working abroad - Ms.Pushparani @ Selvi and Muthumari in Saudi Arabia, Hasina begam in Qatar, Sakila Banu in Singapore.
- Three of our alumni nurses are studying part-time whilst working to gain their BSc Nursing qualifications to further their career.
- We are very grateful to all our alumni who generously contribute towards RTU's services.



Meena's story

In 2005 Meena came to our Sirumalar Children's Village at the age of nine with her older brother. After completing her schooling in our schools, we supported her to do a BSc degree in Zoology and a bachelor's degree in education. She worked as an English teacher in our schools and, following a Diploma in Counselling, she was promoted as a student counsellor. During the lockdown when the schools were closed, she made great use of her time to make videos on YouTube in the Yuvan channel. With the help of Brother Arockiadoss, Meena compiled all the content into a book named Aakkum Alumaigal which was launched in the presence of all the staff and children at RTU. In September, she married Siva, another of our alumni and soon after the marriage she was promoted to Childcare Manager in Nirmala Children's Village. Meena was HIV+ when she came to us and, even with all the stigma and health issues, she has achieved a good career. We consider her as a role model for all the younger children currently in our care.

Wedding Bells in RTU!

We always feel very proud when the children in our care become happily settled in life. We sometimes host the weddings of children who have lived with us, acting in loco parentis for those who have no relatives and proving money needed to help set up home.

Sr. No	Name of the couples	Year Joined in RTU	Studies undergone in RTU	Completion Year	Present Occupation	Marriage held on
1	Mr. Vignesh & Mrs. Yogapriya	1997	B.E., Chemical Engg.	2013	Own Business in Batlagundu	17.05.2021
2	Mrs. Amuthamani & Mr. Jawahar	2004	GNM	2018	Medical Coding	24.05.2021
3	Mrs. Saranya & Mr. Sundar Raj	2005	B.A., History	2021	House Wife	04.06.2021
4	Mrs. Varshini & Mr. Vasudevan	1994	GNM	2014	Vadamalayan MultiSpecialty Hospital	27.08.2021
5	Mrs. Selvi & Mr. Krishnamoorthy	2006	GNM	2017	Working in Coimbatore	08.09.2021
6	Mrs. Meena & Mr. Siva	2005	B.Sc., B.Ed., DCPT	2019	NCV Manager in RTU	10.09.2021
7	Mrs. Sornalakshmi & Mr. Tamilselvan	2009	Computer Application	2020	HouseWife	24.10.2021
8	Mrs. & Jeyasri & Mr. Muthuraja	2005	DECE & B.E.	2016	House Wife	27.10.2021
9	Mrs. T. Chitra & Mr. Rajesh	2001	GNM	2017	Working in Coimbatore	10.11.2021
10	Mr. Gnanasekaran & Mrs. Ramya	2002	DME	2011	Working in a Private Company	10.11.2021
11	Mr. Dileepan & Mrs. Pavithra	2001	DME	2014	Working in a Private Company	10.11.2021
12	Mr. Pandi & Mrs. Banupriya	2001	DME	2016	Working in a Private Company	11.11.2021
13	Mrs. Karthigaipriya & Mr. Thavamani	2005	Dip. in Office Management	2015	House Wife	14.11.2021
14	Mr. Jaiganesh & Mrs. Bhargavi	1998	ITI	2006	Working in a Private Company	15.11.2021
15	Mrs. Akila & Mr. Balamurugan	2007	Dip. in Special Education	2021	Working in a Special School	06.02.2022

Project impact

- Children leave our care having had a college education and the support to become independent young adults.



Empowering children with quality education

We know that education is one of main ways to break the cycle of poverty, but for many disadvantaged children in the rural villages where we are based, regular school attendance to develop the skills and knowledge they need to pass the public exams and to fulfil their potential is impossible.



Despite the state Government's initiatives to ensure that all children receive a good education, some children are at risk of dropping out and of child marriage. Education for girls is often given less importance, especially when they are needed at home to care for younger siblings or to enhance the family income.

Our schools and educational outreach programmes help many of the most vulnerable children gain the qualifications, skills and confidence they need to become independent, self-reliant adults.

Our first school opened in 1985 and we now have six balwadies (pre-schools), two primary schools, a middle school and a higher secondary school, all serving the children who live at RTU and others from the most disadvantaged local families. All children receive regular health checks and uniforms, books, and learning materials are given freely, as well as nutritious lunchtime meals.

Around 1,300 children attend our schools at any one time, taught and supported by 75 teachers and 25 support staff who receive regularly training and adopt innovative experiential approaches to learning. Our higher school students consistently achieve 100% pass rates in the 10th, 11th and 12th standard public exams. Children who require extra support due to having missed large amounts of schooling in the past are given additional learning and help in small groups so they can catch up with their peers.



Daycare for the very young

RTU runs two daycare centres, looking after pre-school children from the most deprived local families whose mothers go out to work. The centres welcomed 52 children in 2021-22. All the children who attend are given fortified porridge twice a day and a nutritious lunchtime meal and are looked after well by our staff.



Pre-Schools

Our six pre-school balwadies for four- and five-year-olds provide full-time nursery education for around 200 children who are taught and cared for by trained RTU staff. Teachers engage the children with songs, stories, dances and play, and teach English and Tamil alphabets and numbers. The children come from RTU's Children's Villages and from disadvantaged families nearby. We prioritise rural children who are sick and malnourished, and those whose mothers work each day.

This year our teachers prepared a "Balwadi Syllabus Handbook" and published it on 5th October. The teachers also made engaging puppets and use these as teaching aids with the children.

In 2021-22

- **52** very young children from poor local families were looked after at our day care centres
- **160** children in 6 balwadies (pre-schools)
- **1,268** children over five years old attended our schools
- **12%** of 10th standard students scored over 80% in their public exams and 100% passed
- **20%** of 12th standard students scored over 400/600 and 2 scored over 80%, 100% passed
- **87** older students left school to start college courses
- **54** college students graduated from college.



Our students study a broad curriculum and benefit from state-of-the-art facilities such as science labs, computer labs, a library, and language clubs to instill a love of prose and poetry. There is a broad range of extra-curricular activities including participation in local sporting and dance events and competitions at district and state level, national and religious festival celebrations, and regular school trips out. Emotional support is provided by our counsellors and training sessions are run to improve self-esteem and motivation.

School activities during the pandemic

The schools closed in March 2020 and, in Tamil, Nadu, only re-opened finally for all the students in July 2020. So that the children had access to teaching during the pandemic, teachers went through a steep learning curve to prepare online lessons and videos for the children and adapted to teaching on Whatsapp.

- Lessons and videos were sent and taught to the 6th to 12th standard students in our Higher Secondary School through Whatsapp. Students regularly received study materials and presentation slides daily from the respective teachers and studied well with their guidance. For those with no online or mobile phone access, paper-based learning materials were prepared.
- In June 2021, all the teachers and head teachers visited students' homes to stress to the parents the importance of education, and to check the on the students' physical and mental health. Our teachers and school counsellors focused on their psychological and emotional wellbeing.
- **School at home programme.** From July 2021 onwards, our teachers from our four schools visited the students in their homes and interacted with the parents as well as the students. It helped them to understand the current educational status of each student as they prepared for them to return to our schools. They also started a new study programme called 'School at Home'. Our teachers gathered children in their own villages and gave them lessons outdoors. This programme was very successful. We provided learning kits to all the days scholars and helped them to do their homework. We were able to do this when they visited for their emergency food supplies that we provided.
- **Health care initiatives.** We purchased masks and sanitisers for the students. The schools were sanitised and appropriate standards for cleanliness maintained. Regular health checks were conducted when children visited school during lockdown for the collection of emergency provisions and learning kits. During this time, the height and weight of each child was measured.



Lekha Sri



Lekha Sri is 14 years old from G. Kallupatti village in Theni District. She has been studying in our schools since 1st standard and is now studying 9th standard in our St Peter's Higher Secondary School. Her father is paralysed in both legs and is unable to walk. Her mother and older sister are both working in agricultural labouring work. Their income is insufficient to support their big family as there are also two younger sisters and a younger brother. They live in a house built by RTU. During the pandemic, we provided emergency food rations. Lekha Sri received free notebooks, writing materials and also received a new uniform now that the schools have re-opened. She is studying well and actively participates in many cultural and literacy activities. She would like to become a science teacher. Lakha and her family expressed their sincere thanks to RTU and our sponsors, SBI Life Insurance, for providing food during the lockdown.

School activities after school reopening

- **Health care initiatives.** As per the Government rules, we organised hand-cleansing stations and temperature checks for each student when they entered our school campus every day. With the help of Genguvarpatti Primary Health Centre, de-worming medicines were distributed to students.
- **Reduced curriculum and book-based teaching.** As per the Tamilnadu Education Department order, school re-opened for the highest four year groups from 9th to 12th standard students from 1st September 2021. For the first two weeks, our teachers taught bridge courses to help children acclimatise with refresher lessons and covered basic knowledge. Because of the pandemic, the State Government reduced the syllabus to 40% and issued new guidelines to the teachers. Our teachers taught using books, and video lessons prepared by them and the Diksha portal.
- The **National Achievement Survey** of the Central Government was held. The exam was attended by 60 students from 8th to 10th standard. 13 students in 11th standard also applied online for the National Rural Trust Examination and 25 of our 10th standard students wrote the National Talent Search Examination.

12th rank holder

Nagasathya



On 19th July 2021, the Tamil Nadu Education Department finally announced the marks for the 12th standard students as they were unable to take their exams. They based the marks on their results in the 10th and 11th standard exams, and also the practical exams that they were able to sit in January. All the students in our school passed. **Nagasathya** secured the first rank with 92.7%, Muthupandi second rank with 92% and Srimathi scored 88.8%. 24 students secured above 500/600 marks and 34 students 450/600 marks. Nagasathya also secured 95 marks in Tamil and holds the first mark. She had also been the 1st rank holder in her 10th standard exams.



Fr. Arockiaraj organized a counselling programme to our primary school teachers on "How to face challenges joyfully"

- Child-centred approach and child rights training was organised for teachers over two days by Shyam Sundar, from the Solar Trust in Chennai. The training covered how to be a Friend, Philosopher and Guide to the child in the community and also how to create and strengthen a safe environment around children. They focused on developing comprehensive life skills in children so that they are empowered and are responsible citizens of society. They also covered the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012.
- We conducted abacus training and exams for 28 maths teachers as well as a one-day training programme on how to teach science concepts in a simple way by Mr Sathiya Manikkam, from Galileo Science Center, Madurai.
- Father Arockiaraj organised a counselling programme for our primary school teachers on "How to face challenges joyfully".
- **Various teacher training courses were held via Zoom during the pandemic.** These included "Classroom is a SACRED place" organised by Brother Pravin FSC from Sri Lanka, "The bookless classroom" and "Let us go to school again" about the importance of preparing students to attend school again and the challenges teachers may have to face. Another zoom session was held on "KalaKala (happy) classroom" by Mr Siva from Madurai.
- **Training on the impact of social media.** This two-day training was held for all teachers on the pros and cons of social media and the responsibility of the teachers to keep children safe. He stressed the importance of social media education and media clubs in all the schools.
- **Participating in Lasallian Indian Women Symposium.** The Lasallian Indian Women's Symposium was held for two days at Boys' Town in Madurai. 25 women teachers and staff from RTU took part. Special guests talked about the importance of women's mental health and keeping updated with knowledge to deal with the modern world, safety and security of women in the workplace, how to deal with the daily problems that women face and legislation to protect women.



Extracurricular activities:

- **The National Green Cadres programme** was launched at our St. Peter's Higher Secondary School. One of our teachers explained the effects of the Parthenium plant to our 9th standard students and also explained how to make vermicompost.
- **Self-confidence training workshop for our students** was conducted for 9th to 12th standard students and teachers by Madurai Nikhil Foundation. Students were trained in self-analysis, goal setting, memory and communication.
- 40 students participated in a postcard writing competition titled “ **India in my view - 2047**” organized by the Indian Postal Service.
- **Participating in District level competitions:** The District level Kala Utsav competitions were held in Theni. Eight students from our St Peter's Higher Secondary School actively participated in Bharatanatyam, Karagam, drawing and toy-making competitions.
- **Media clubs in our schools:** Media clubs were inaugurated in all our four schools to develop an understanding of the effects of social media on themselves as individuals and upon society. It will be helpful for our students to develop skills to encourage the production of creative media and to be critical of social media posts. On the same day, our St Peter's Higher Secondary School students' compositions were published in a monthly magazine named "**Chitrodai**".
- **Participating in an online magic show organized by SBI Life Insurance:** Mr Tusher Raj Kumar, an illusionist performed different magic items and amazed all the students.
- **Abacus training** was conducted twice a week and **cursive writings for 4th to 8th** standard students conducted daily.
- **National Social Scheme camp** by Tamil Nadu Horticulture University students organized a one-day camp on the National Social Scheme in our St Peter's Higher Secondary School. The professor gave career guidance to our 12th standard students. The visiting University students planted fruits trees such as muskmelon, mango and gooseberry in our school's garden and playground.



Emotional well-being and health care initiatives

- Our counsellors gave individual and group counselling to students and also accessed short films for them. This included grief counselling, anxiety, behavioural modification techniques, problem-solving, self-awareness, education and exam stress, home sickness, relationships, substance abuse, self-harm, gaming addiction, and motivational issues.
- Officials of Theni District Child Welfare Committee gave counselling to our adolescent boys and girls on "Child Protection".
- **Health care:** 348 students from 9th to 12th standard attended the **vaccination camp** and have taken their two doses of Covaxin vaccine with the proper health checks by the Government medical doctor. Our 7th to 9th standard students taken the Corbevax vaccine. 1st to 5th standard students had the usual inoculation boosters. Our medical team arranged this camp with the help of Genguvarpatti primary health centre. Deworming tablets were given to SPHSS students by Genguvarpatti PHC.



Special events and occasions

- **Pongal Celebration:** On 13th January, all the teachers from our four schools joined together and celebrated Pongal in our St. Peter's Primary School and distributed sweet Pongal and sugarcanes to our students from 10th to 12th standard students. These were the only students allowed in school at that time.
- **National Girl Child Day** was observed on 24th January with the help of the "All the Children" NGO. The Government officials gave a talk about the inequalities faced by girls, and the importance of promoting education, health, and nutrition for girls.
- **Republic Day celebration:** The 73rd Republic Day was celebrated on 26th January following the COVID-19 safety rules.
- **World Cancer Day:** On 4th February 2022, World Cancer Day was observed with the theme "Close the Care Gap."
- **National Science Day:** On 28th February 2022, we organised "National Science Day" to mark the discovery of the Raman effect by Indian Physicist Sir C V Raman born on February 1928. Our teachers exhibited all the science-related apparatus and explained the concept of each item to our 6th to 9th standard students.
- **International Women's Day celebration:** On 8th March 2022, all our teachers were honoured by our students in their respective schools and they presented a souvenir to each teacher.

It is often difficult for children in poor Government schools to achieve their potential.

Some are unable to attend school regularly due to family poverty, or perhaps they are first-generation learners and their parents are not able to provide the right support and encouragement. RTU's education outreach programmes are targeted at increasing the educational attainment of the most disadvantaged school children from the lowest castes.

Mobile school science laboratories



Our three mobile science laboratories are fully equipped to enable our six highly qualified science teachers to bring quality science lessons to Government schools in rural villages and provide students with hands-on experience of laboratory experiments. This RTU project, with its aim to inspire and improve the educational attainment of children in poor rural schools, started in 2004. In 2021-22 we visited 101 Government schools in the Dindigul and Theni districts - 70 primary, 19 middle and 12 secondary schools. 7,415 (3865 boys and 3550 girls) disadvantaged children benefitted from the programme.

Due to the school closures, our teachers could not reach more children in the year. However, during the lockdown, our teachers sent science lessons through Whatsapp to the Government school children who had access to android mobile phones. The teachers prepared 125 videos themselves which they sent to the children and also general videos about science subjects for 6th to 12th standard children. Since November 2021, our teachers have been able to regularly visit Government schools again with the permission of State school authorities.

The Government school headteachers and teachers were very proud of the increasing high score of marks in science subjects by the students.

Evening study centres

We run a number of after-school study centres six days a week in rural villages, giving children from homes where it is difficult to study a place to do their homework. The children who use the centres also benefit from extra tuition, provided by our teachers and receive free books, educational materials and evening snacks. In 2021-22, 255 children benefitted from our eight study centres.

During the year we were able to refurbish three of the evening study centres in Bomminayakkanpatti, Kottaipatti and Genguvarpatti villages to make them bright and welcoming learning environments with new roof tiles, floor tiles, ceiling fans and fresh paint, as well as colourful murals.



Anandkumar

“My name is **Anandkumar** and I am 13 years old. I am from Bomminayakkanpatti village and I study in the village high school. My father died when I was 7 years old. As my mother never went to school, she couldn't help me with my studies. I joined RTU's evening study centre where the teachers helped me to read and write and improve my maths. We also get snacks every day.

Due to the COVID lockdowns, our school was closed for two years. When I went back to school, I had forgotten everything, but the study centre teachers helped me to read and write again and I practiced with other children. Our teachers led indoor games to help us learn and remember the things we studied.

All the repair works at our study centre have been done. The roof was repaired, and new fans and lights were installed. The walls were also decorated with drawings which are about the subjects we study. It is a very nice place to learn for children like me. I am very thankful to RTU to provide such a good place to study.”

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Thank you for making our impact possible.

Helping vulnerable families to become self-reliant and afford care and education for their children



Our Home Support Programme provides small payments to around 81 of the most disadvantaged families in 51 villages in our area, so that they can afford to send their children to school regularly. This help currently benefits over 100 children, including around 33 who are affected by HIV/AIDS.

Our programme staff visit every family before they join the programme. We provide sufficient funds to purchase school uniforms, pens and notebooks, and our staff regularly meet the families and schools to discuss the children's progress.

Our JK Scholarship Fund provides financial support to those children who, if they pass their final public exams with the right grades, can apply for college or professional courses so that they can continue their studies. This year three girls joined professional courses in General Nursing and Midwifery, Auxiliary Nursing and Midwifery, and Office Management.

In 2021-22

- 255 children from the most disadvantaged families received extra learning and support at our evening study centres
- 116 children received financial help so that their families could afford to send them to school
- 7415 children in Government schools were given greater opportunities to study science at a higher level in the Science group in the Tamil curriculum.

Hunger is part of everyday life for many families living in poverty

RTU provides nutritious food for all the children in our Children's Villages, hostels, schools and balwadies (pre-schools) as well as to vulnerable sick and elderly people living locally.

This daily meal is sometimes the only proper meal the children from local families at our schools will eat each day – and is often of great relief to parents who struggle to earn enough to provide for their families.

Our foster mothers prepare fresh meals for the children in their care in the Children's Villages and, for the children at our hostels, schools and balwadies, each meal is prepared in our central kitchen.



In 2021-22

- Around 2,000 people every day received a meal from RTU's central kitchen
- 380 teenagers living in our hostels received morning and evening meal each day
- Thousands of food packs were distributed from our central kitchen to the most vulnerable people living in local villages during the pandemic
- Around 100 elderly or infirm people are given nutritious food and financial support

We mainly buy the fresh vegetables for our kitchen direct from wholesalers and farmers, helping to support local businesses.

Farm

Our own coconut plantation provides about 30,000 coconuts every year and we also grow bananas, papayas and mangos alongside the coconuts, yielding around 1,000 pieces of fruit each year. We use all the produce for our central kitchen and for the meals our foster mothers prepare for the children in the Children's Villages.

The waste products from our coconut growing activities provide fuel for the large steam cookers in our kitchen, helping us to run our kitchen as cost-effectively as possible.



Weekly assistance for the elderly

- Our self-sufficient approach helps us to feed everyone who needs our daily meals, including a small number of elderly and infirm people in nearby villages, some of whom we also support with small financial pensions.
- Particularly frail and vulnerable, they would otherwise struggle to afford fresh food or prepare it themselves.



Karuppayee and Mookan's story



Karuppayee aged 70 and her husband, **Mookan**, aged 75 years are both frail and unable to work. Their daughters have married and settled with their in-law's families in different villages some way away.

After their daughters' marriages, they used to go for labouring work to earn a living, but Mookan's eyesight deteriorated, and Karuppayee is a tuberculosis patient. They relied on neighbours for their food and other needs, but it was hard for people to support them regularly, so they went many days without food.

Finally, we came to know about them and have been giving them old age assistance of Rs. 150 per week which they use to procure basic things. "We feel loved and without this, it is impossible for me and my husband to survive now. We are very thankful to RTU for being with us and other people like us."



Ill health and serious injury can tip families that are already struggling into even deeper poverty and destitution, particularly if a key member's ability to work and earn money is affected. Families will often borrow money from moneylenders to pay for treatment and medicine, putting them into debt.

Poverty in itself is a catalyst for the spread of disease and is likely to increase exposure and susceptibility to some illnesses.

Without our support, many families and vulnerable individuals, especially children, those who are affected by HIV/AIDS, those with a disability, and many with common but often devastating diseases would have no access to the treatment and care they need.

We see awareness, prevention and primary healthcare as vital to ensuring adequate medical support in rural villages.

Our **Pushparani Medical Centre, Mobile Clinic and Physiotherapy Unit** provide access to medical treatment and ongoing care for those in RTU's care and for many of the most vulnerable local people in our area and nearby villages who cannot afford healthcare. Our aim is to ensure that everyone can access affordable healthcare even in the remotest rural villages.



We carry out regular medical and dental checks, including eye tests, and run 'health camps' in our Children's Villages, hostels and our schools in partnership with hospital doctors and the local Primary Healthcare Centre, checking for common diseases and conditions and making referrals for further investigation or treatment as required. Many of the conditions we test for, such as anemia and other blood disorders, occur frequently in children who live in poor conditions and may lack proper nutrition, but are inexpensive and straightforward to treat.

Occasionally, we encounter serious, life-threatening illnesses in our routine checks.

Ongoing immunisation programmes and other activities help to protect communities against outbreaks of serious and contagious diseases. We inoculated a number of older school children against diseases, a virulent and potentially fatal infection that affects the nose and throat, and sometimes the skin, and is easily spread by close contact. We also gave the usual inoculations to our 1st to 5th standard students.

During the pandemic, we took many initiatives to protect people from catching COVID. We printed handouts to raise awareness about the spread of COVID, gave washable masks to village people, staff and children, and distributed cleaning and sanitation products for disinfection and medicines to nearby villagers through the local authority village Panchayats. More details of this are in our earlier section on "Our response to Coronavirus".

- We treated 19,952 patients.
- 4189 patients received physiotherapy treatment.
- Three days a week our medical team took our mobile health clinic to nearby villages – 1773 patients in 3 villages benefitted through these clinics.

Project impact

- The most vulnerable people in our target area have access to affordable, local healthcare and support.
- There is a reduction in serious illness due to regular health checks, blood tests, screening, immunisation and awareness raising.
- People are able to return to work and protect their family income due to regular and ongoing rehabilitation. Hospital costs are covered so reducing the need to borrow from moneylenders to pay for medical costs.



A diagnosis of HIV/AIDS often carries a heavy stigma in rural communities in South India, leading to social isolation and even destitution for families whose breadwinners are already struggling to work because of their illness.



The HIV+ children living in our Children's Villages and hostels often come from such families and have seen both parents become ill and die from AIDS. They benefit from a programme of regular testing, treatment and additional nutritional support to help them have the best possible chance of living a long and fulfilling life.

Their physical development and well-being are closely monitored. Each child has a twice yearly CD4 cell-count blood test and their hemoglobin is measured bi-monthly.

Our specially trained nurses are available around the clock and we provide counselling and HIV health awareness for our older young people.

Our work is complemented by doctors from the government ART Centre in Kanavilakku, who have regular consultations with all the HIV+ children.

In 2021-22

- 102 children from HIV/AIDS affected families were cared for in our Children's Villages and hostels, 35 of the children were themselves HIV+
- 12 HIV+ children took part in the online Camp Rainbow Programme organised by YRG Care Chennai
- 33 HIV+ children are supported in our Home Support Programme to attend school.

Hospice care

When the infected children become unwell, we refer some of them to Jeevan Jyothi Hospice.

This hospice provides inpatient treatment and palliative care, as well as an outreach programme for people with HIV/AIDS.

It is a place of care, compassion and tranquility, in keeping with our values and beliefs.

Project impact

- Children who are HIV+ are less likely to develop AIDS and other serious conditions due to regular monitoring and additional nutrition support.
- Young people at RTU and those living locally know how to look after themselves and maintain good health.
- Young people who are HIV+ in our area are given the life skills and confidence to lead normal lives without stigma.
- Young people, normally not allowed to live in college accommodation due to the stigma of HIV, are given the opportunity of attending college and gaining graduate and post-graduate qualifications.

As well as bearing the main burden of responsibility for caring for their families and running their households, women in poor rural villages usually go for daily wage labouring work to support themselves and their dependents. Many women we support are lone parents who have lost their husbands to illness or injury, while others are the main breadwinners for their families while their husbands are absent, often working elsewhere or cannot work due to ill health.

Our initiatives focus on inclusiveness, gender equality and confidence-building to train and empower these women to be influential members of their communities beyond their immediate domestic environments. RTU also works to promote equal access and value to education for girls and raises awareness about issues such as child marriage.



In 2021-22

- 1,605 women belonged to 108 RTU Self-Help Groups in 29 villages
- The Self-Help Group members saved Rs.51,30,000 in this financial year and earned the income of Rs.57,16,042 as interest from the Loan amount Rs.4,46,79,516 revolved.
- 77 women gained qualifications from our three mobile tailoring units, helping them to find employment and become financially self-reliant

Self-Help Groups

Each of the women's Self-Help Groups we support brings together 10 to 20 women from the same village to provide a support network for themselves, their families and their communities.

Community leadership

Many Self-Help Group members, their confidence boosted by the new skills they have learned, take on decisive leadership roles. Supported by training and mentoring, with RTU's encouragement they become involved in making key decisions on important local matters such as water and sanitation, some going on to stand successfully for election to the local Panchayat or other official positions. Many of the groups engage in positive activism to confront and tackle serious social issues, for example, domestic violence, child labour and illegal alcohol sales, helping to make their communities safer places to live.

Micro-finance

Members of the Self-help Groups contribute small amounts of money to a common fund, which is then available to borrow from to spend in emergencies or to fund rural enterprises by members.

Loans are made available at very low interest rates, giving women a chance to start building a new future and protecting them from the high interest rates levied by moneylenders.

Manjula's story

Manjula, 55 years old and lives in Viralipatti village with her husband and two children in Nilakottai Taluk in Dindigul District.

"We were going for coolie work but as this was insufficient to meet our daily expenses, we were forced to borrow money from moneylenders at high interest. We struggled to repay the loans.

RTU staff visited our village and explained about the savings and the various benefits of forming a Self-Help Group. So, me and some nearby friends formed a group called Kalaimagal Women's Self-Help Group. We attended various

awareness training courses including some on income generation initiatives which helped me to understand what I needed to do and what not to do in business and life.

Initially we started saving Rs.100 per month in our communal fund. I took Rs. 5000 to start a business renting out cooking vessels for functions and expanded this to renting chairs and tables. Six months ago, I took out a loan amount of Rs. 1,00,000 from our group and opened an electrical shop. Today I am earning Rs.500 to Rs.1000 per day. Now I have repaid all my old debts and have paid for my children's marriages. RTU is the one and only reason for all that I have achieved. I was supported by my Self-Help Group, and I am now standing on my own two feet. I will be very thankful to RTU for the whole of my life."



Learning new skills

Where work is available locally, it is often irregular and poorly paid. RTU's mobile tailoring training gives women from impoverished backgrounds the chance to learn a trade, gain an accredited qualification and earn an independent living to secure a future for their families. Our teachers take the mobile tailoring course to different villages every six months.

Their new skills enable them to set up businesses in their own area, keeping them close to their families, establishing stability for their children and fostering economic self-reliance.

Due to the pandemic, we were only able to run the training for six months. So, only 88 women took part and benefitted from this training. However, our teachers were able to train our professional students who were living with us during the lockdown, when their colleges were closed.



Gayathri's story



“My name is Gayathri and I live in Melmangalam village in Theni district. I am 27 years old. My husband is a daily labourer working in construction and his income is irregular. Sometimes he had to go to different cities to get work. We have two sons, and both attend the balwadi in our village. We live in a colony house built by the Government. As my husband's earnings are not sufficient to support our family, I thought of going with my husband to do construction labouring work. However, I heard that RTU was running a tailoring centre in our village, so I joined in September 2021. During the six-month course, our tailoring instructor taught us how to sew handkerchiefs, blouses and shirts, sudhidhars as well as many handicrafts. In January 2022, I bought a sewing machine repayable over 10 monthly instalments. After completing

this tailoring course, I started stitching many blouses and sudhidhars for our neighbours. From the earnings, I have been repaying Rs.800 per month for the sewing machine. I am very happy that RTU has helped me to get this tailoring training and become a successful entrepreneur. I am so grateful to RTU for giving me such generous help.”

Project impact

- Women in our target rural villages have access to affordable loans to start their own social enterprises, businesses or pay for family emergencies.
- Women have increased status, equality and confidence to make a difference to their communities and take on leadership roles.
- More rural women in our target villages earn their own money enabling them to take charge of their family's finances and improve their economic well-being.
- Women in our target villages have increased awareness about Government assistance they can access, health and disease prevention, commerce, gender equality and how they can collectively make a difference.
- Girls in our target villages are more likely to stay in education and not be married at an early age.

In rural communities in South India, many poor families live in sub-standard housing, often makeshift huts that are at risk of fire, prone to vermin and easily damaged by monsoon rains. These crude homes put the lives, health and well-being of children and adults at risk. When they need repairing or replacing, many families are forced to borrow money, creating debts that are sometimes so difficult to settle they pass down to future generations, perpetuating a relentless cycle of poverty.



RTU's house-building scheme provides families living in low quality accommodation, or who have lost their homes altogether, with safe, secure housing.

The new houses are durable and weather-proof, with a shady veranda, a living room and cooking area, and a toilet/washing area. All the doors, door frames, windows roofs are built of concrete and are made at our block construction plant. Where possible, the houses also have an electricity supply.

Since our rural house-building programme started in 1976, we have built nearly 9,000 village homes, including several complete villages.

In 2021-22

- 47 families in 14 villages moved into one of our new homes
- 172 people benefitted including 28 children, 26 widowed people, 8 blind people, 2 who are HIV+, 9 people with a disability, 34 elderly people, 7 people with a mental illness and 58 healthy people.

Petchiyammal's story



Petchiyammal is a widow living in Keelavadakarai village in Periyakulam Theni District 21km from RTU. She is 50 years old and works as a daily labourer. Her husband deserted the family in 2006 and they still don't know his whereabouts. She had a son who sadly died of jaundice in 2014 and she now lives with her daughter-in-law, Pandeewari, and her two grandsons aged 13 and 11. Both are studying in the local Government Higher Secondary School. They lived in a tin-sheeted house which was damaged and leaked during the monsoon season.

Petchiyammal came to know about RTU and asked us for help to build a house for them because of their terrible living conditions. She had been on the waiting list for some time but at last we were able to assess their living conditions and build a safe house for them. The house consists of a main room, kitchen, veranda, toilet, and electricity. Petchiyammal considers this a great gift to her family and is relieved that the family have a secure safe home in which to raise her grandsons.

Project impact

- The most disadvantaged families in our target rural villages have safe and secure homes to live in and raise their families.
- The health and wellbeing of people is improved.
- People are less likely to be affected by monsoon rains or fire accidents.

South India is heavily dependent on two monsoon rains every year in order to maintain a regular water supply for domestic and agricultural use - but when the monsoons fail, drought conditions can quickly take hold, with devastating consequences. Climate change is making the situation ever more precarious in remote areas.



Clean water is vital to protect health and limit water borne diseases that can lead to illness and death. Around 140,000 children under the age of five die every year in India due to illnesses that are entirely preventable, caused by contaminated water.

The long-term lack of water can also have wider social implications. Where there is no reliable water source, the task of collecting water from a local pond or tank, often having to carry it several kilometres, usually falls to women and children. This curtails women's availability for work, while the resulting disruption to children's school attendance has long-term consequences for their educational attainment and subsequent life chances.

Since our water and well-drilling programme started in 1980, we have created almost 2,500 bore wells in remote communities, equipped with submersible electric pumps and water tanks.

We were able to drill three wells this year – one in Nirmala Children's Village, Bodi, one in Velayuthapuram village, in Theni District and one in Muthalagupatti, Dindigul District.

In 2021-22

- We drilled three new bore wells in village communities.
- 62 children in NCV Bodi benefitted with clean water and toilet facilities.
- 40 families in Velayuthapuram village and 110 families in Muthalagupatti village benefitted.

Project impact

- People in poorest villages have access to clean, safe water reducing the risk of disease and malnourishment particularly among children.
- Families have access to water to grow crops and keep livestock to protect their livelihoods and prevent rural migration.



KEEP YOUR
TWIN
HAPPINESS

Velayuthapuram village's story



Velayuthapuram is a remote village in A. Vadipatti Panchayat in Theni District, 20km away from RTU's main campus. 40 families live in this village with a population of 200. Their main occupation is agriculture-based and construction labouring, and as mill workers. This village is dependent on monsoon rain from June to September and there is a long drought for the remainder of the year. They had two borewells, but these had long since dried up due to the lack of rain. The situation became worse when a private solar power company bought up much of the farmland and drilled borewells for their own use, without allowing the villagers to use them. So, the village people had to walk a considerable distance to fetch water from a farm or bought potable water from the water seller for Rs.800 for 6000 litres. We have two Self-help Groups in this village and so the women asked us for help. Having divined the site with the help of Mr Amaladoss, we organised drilling rigs down to 746 feet. We fixed PVC pipeline and a submersible electric pump linked to a water storage main tank from which seven pipes run to different taps throughout the villages. In total, 14 workers were involved in setting up these water facilities for this village. The borewell gave a very good water supply. The people and especially the children were overwhelmed to see water gushing out. Now, around 200 people have access to clean, safe water for drinking and cooking.





RTU has 246 staff, many of whom have dedicated their working lives to RTU. Nearly 1 in 5 are former beneficiaries of RTU, while others come from the rural communities in our area. Our long-standing presence has helped us establish strong connections and working relationships with the villages in our programme area, underpinned by our close understanding of local values, cultures and practices.

We recognise the contributions made by all our staff and believe in investing in them not only for their own development – many of our dedicated and experienced team are highly qualified in their specialist fields - but also to ensure our programmes are well-run according to current best practice. We provide training on key issues such as gender, child rights, child protection, safeguarding and gender sensitization (to achieve the equal treatment of boys and girls).

We also ensure through staff training that everyone who works at RTU fully understands our vision, mission and core values and is clear about how these inform our work.

We believe in encouraging a joined-up and collaborative approach to RTU's strategic development and have established an annual 360-degree peer review process for every department. Plans are formally reviewed appraised by colleagues from other departments and contributions from beneficiaries are an essential part of the process.

A focus on teamwork, inclusivity and respect is encouraged, fostering a positive working environment. As many of our programmes are focused on the empowerment of women and girls, we consider it to be important to employ a high proportion of women in our staff team, especially at senior levels. Of a total of 256 staff employed at RTU as on March 2022, nearly 4 out of 5 are women.

Staff Details

Staff in RTU	Male	Female	Total
Support Staff	16	18	34
Programme Staff	33	155	188
Senior leadership/ department heads	11	13	24
Total	60	186	246

Purchasing committee – 4 (male)

Senior Leadership Team – 5 (3 male and 2 female)

Child and women protection committee – 6 (3 male and 3 female)

Key activities undertaken during the year

During the pandemic, staff members were encouraged to share their ideas to support our Children's Village children's families, local school children and vulnerable people locally. Even in the face of three successive lockdowns and all the uncertainty, our staff team ensured that everyone remained connected and motivated. As a team they went to the villages and distributed emergency dry rations and food to vulnerable families. A number of initiatives were undertaken to ensure employees health, safety and wellbeing, although sadly we lost one member of staff due to COVID and staff members suffered the deaths of family members. We organised capacity building for teachers and students, and conducted a variety of virtual training sessions, some of which is reported under our Education section above. The Employees' State Insurance Scheme for all members of staff was implemented.



Purchase of equipment and new buildings



13 Financial Review

RTU has strict budgetary, accounting and control policies and procedures, and we are proud of our accountability and transparency. In 2021-22, RTU spent 8.04 crore transforming the lives of an estimated 90,000 people directly and indirectly in the poorest communities in three Districts of Tamil Nadu. Our full financial statements can be downloaded from our website.

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2022

Source of funds	As at 31 st March 2022	As at 31 st March 2021
Corpus Fund	5,47,88,222.85	5,46,88,222.85
General Fund	3,71,69,103.19	3,84,27,208.18
Project Fund	14,30,57,449.33	13,60,13,884.34
Total	23,50,14,775.37	22,91,29,315.37

Application of funds	As at 31 st March 2022	As at 31 st March 2021
Fixed Assets	5,90,08,008.93	6,04,90,921.65
Investments	16,27,41,559.72	15,47,00,205.22
Current Assets, Loan & Advances	1,32,65,206.72	1,39,38,188.50
Total	23,50,14,775.37	22,91,29,315.37

Signed	Secretary/Treasurer Reaching the Unreached G.Kallupatti, Periyakulam Taluk, Theni District, Tamil Nadu 625 203, South India	Mr K Shivakumar Chartered Accountant, Mem No 009305, Gandhigram, Dindigul, Tamil Nadu 624 302, South India
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Receipt and Payment Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2022

Particulars		
Opening balance	16,86,38,905.72	15,55,23,329.63
RECEIPTS		
Relief of poverty	3,19,42,505.29	3,11,94,214.47
Education	5,25,44,148.53	4,80,40,468/99
Medical relief	31,90,164.47	30,47,102.33
Corpus for project	1,00,000.00	
Other receipts		2,500
Total Income	8,77,77,818.29	8,22,84,285.79
Total	25,64,16,724.01	23,78,07,615.42
PAYMENTS		
Relief of poverty	3,06,77,970.57	2,51,03,984.80
Education	4,71,89,410.77	4,23,78,929.20
Medical relief	25,42,064.23	16,85,795.70
Total Payments	8,04,09,445.57	6,91,68,709.70
Net (Payments)/Receipts	73,68,372.72	1,31,15,576.09
Closing Balance	17,60,07,278.44	16,86,38,905.72
Total	25,64,16,724.01	23,78,07,615.42

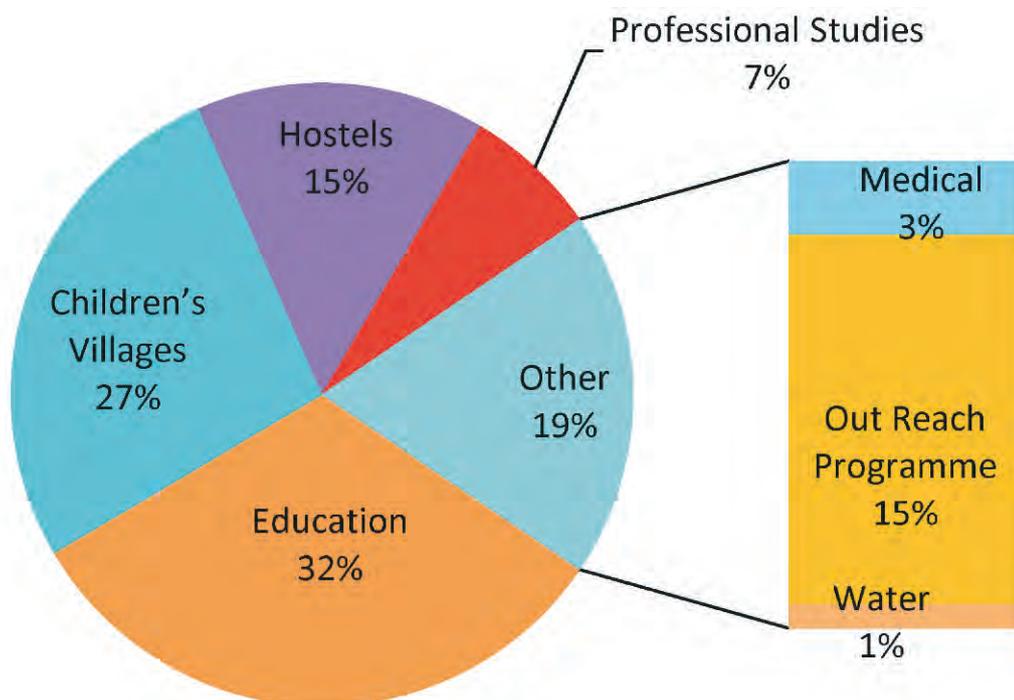
Income summary

We are pleased that our total income from grants and donations increased by 6.49% during the year thanks to the support and generosity of many individual and institutional donors. Foreign contributions represented almost 60% of our income, investment interest was 13% and local contributions represented 28% thanks in particular to the generous support of SBI Life Insurance for our education programme. Foreign contributions are accounted for on the basis of the credit advice received from the bank, are accounted for separately and the rules governing these are complied with. Restricted project grants are recognised as income in the year and are dispersed to specific projects. Our grants and donations are accounted for in the year of receipt or on receipt of the sanction. Corpus and capital funds received from donors are separately accounted for, and gifts in kind are valued and accounted for. Interest is utilised for the purpose for which it is received.

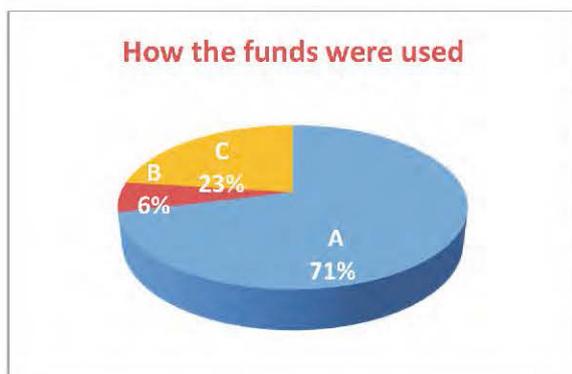
Expenditure summary

All expenditure including support costs is accounted for on a cash basis. Expenditure increased by 13.45% on the previous year but only 3.71% since 2019-20, mainly because of the suspension of some of the programmes due to the lockdown. Every quarter we hold a budget control meeting to compare actual expenditure and income to budget, and budgets are reviewed monthly in our committee meetings. We managed to keep our per capital expenditure within the original budget and so, with a strict control of expenditure and a reduction in expenditure in some of our programmes due to the lockdown, we ended the year with a small profit of 73 lakhs. During the year, our purchase committee consolidated the list of items to be purchased and liaised directly with wholesalers to negotiate a fair price.

Programme Expenditure Breakdown



Programme budget vs Utilization



Particulars	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
A - Programme	67.02%	69.55%	70.72%
C - Capital	12.10%	5.81%	6.39%
B – Administration	20.88%	24.64%	22.89%
Total	100%	100%	100%

For more details on the financial information shown here, please visit

www.rtuindia.org

A note of thanks to all our staff and supporters

Reporting on another successful year for RTU, we would first like to convey our heartfelt appreciation and thanks to all our staff, Board and General Body members and all our supporters both in India and throughout the world. Their commitment and dedication truly transforms lives.



The achievements highlighted in this report have been made possible through various collaborations with Government, NGOs and corporate partners in India, as well as organisations and individuals across the world.

We are, as always, especially grateful to all those individuals, families and community groups who donate to the RTU charity in the UK, and in US and other countries. We particularly appreciate the compassion and support you have given our children during what has often been a difficult year. Without you, much of our work simply could not be carried out.

There has been a welcome increase in the level of support from donors in India, especially the former children of RTU, our RTU alumni. Along with our staff and local people, they raised significant funds for our programmes last year, while local businesses and groups in our area provided funds and prizes, and helped out at events.

The support we receive from various charitable trusts and larger companies is significant. During 2021-22, **SBI LIFE** extended its financial support to fund the operational expenses of educating the most deprived and vulnerable children in our schools. We thank them for their ongoing commitment to our work during 2021-22.

Other organisations from whom we received support in 2021-22:

- Nature Organics Pvt Ltd (Australia)
- Aall Foundation (Caymen Islands)
- De La Salle Solidarieta (Italy)
- Enfants Du Monde (France)
- Weyer Trust (Germany)
- Yoga Vereinigung Rajagopalan (Germany)
- Association Les Enfants De L'Univers (France)
- Enfants Du Monde ASBL (Belgium)
- So-Hum Foundation (USA)
- American Service to India (USA)
- David Young's Charity (UK)
- GC Gibson Trust (UK)
- SMB Charitable Trust (UK)
- Bryan Guinness Charitable Trust (UK)
- Souter Charitable Trust (UK)
- The Mercury Pheonix Foundation (UK)
- Stiftung Lichtblicke in der Welt (Germany)
- Nandri-Help for South India (Switzerland)
- UK Online Giving Foundation (UK)
- Mission In Der Einen Welt e.V. (Germany)
- Kindermissionswerk (Germany)
- Association Solidarite ASIE (France)
- Signum Fidei (Malaysia)
- Avnedefonden (Denmark)
- And so many individuals like you from Overseas and India.

We remain committed to the service of the most vulnerable children, families and communities. On behalf of all our beneficiaries, thank you for helping bring practical help and solace to everyone who needs us.



RTU is registered as a Society No. 42 dated 18th September 1978 under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act 27 of 1975. There are 22 Society members of which 9 make up our Board of Governors.

Board of Governors

Dr D K Oza, IAS (Retd.) President and Chairperson
Sr Anastasia, PBVM, Secretary & Treasurer
Mr Murugan
Mr Mohammad Sheik Ibrahim
Fr Arumainathan
Mr Deenadayalan
Dr Mary Ramasamy
The Capuchin Provincialate (Institutional member)
President of the Indian DLS Brothers
(Institutional member)

Other General Body Members

DHAN Foundation (Institutional member)
Boys' Village Director (Institutional member)
Mr V Purushothaman
Dr R Kousalya Devi
Mr Henri Tiphagne
Mrs Cynthia Tiphagne
Rev Sr Lucian, SCC
Mr K Kunasekaran
Mr B Ilango
Mrs Caroline Edmunds
Mr. Gandhi
Fr J Antony Paulsamy, OFM Cap
Mrs G Shanmuga Latha

Founder and Patron

Brother James Kimpton, Founder of RTU in 1974 and *Thatha* to the thousands of children who have grown up in our care. Died here on 5th October 2017, at the age of 92. He dedicated his life to serving the rural poor of South India.

Legal Obligations

Foreign Contribution Registration No. 075940008 of 7th January 1985
For 12A (a) Registration No. C.N.1612/31/79/TN. V of 12th October 1979
New renewal registration No.(12A(a)) AAATR2237GE20214 – approved on 28 May 2021
PAN of the organisation is AAATR2237G
Tan of the organisation is MRIR00733F
Section 80G (5)(vi) of the Income Tax Act, 1961 Order No. C.No.464/63/89-90/CIT-I of 2nd Feb 2010
New renewal registration No.(80G) AAATR2237GF20214 – approved on 28 May 2021
Employees Provident Fund No. TN/MDU/24673 – No. CI/TN/ENF/MDU 92
Employees Group – Gratuity Registration No. Master Policy No.606000617
Food Safety and Standards Authority of India Licence No. 12417022000074
ISO 9001:2015 Certificate No. 739601
NGO DARPAN Unique ID: TN/2017/0167996
Auditor
Mr K Shivakumar, BSc, FCA, FICWA, DMA (ICA)
Chartered Accountant, Gandhigram, Tamil Nadu – 624 302, South India







RTU is registered under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act, 1975 and 12A of the Income Tax Act. Donations to Reaching the Unreached are exempt under section 80G of the Income Tax Act. Reaching the Unreached is registered under FCRA.

Reaching the Unreached (RTU)

G.Kallupatti
Periyakulam Taluk
Theni District
Tamil Nadu 625 203
South India

For more information:

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 RTU-India
 @rtuindia