



Pudiyador Times

Issue 30
April 2017

We're back!

Dear friends,

It feels great to say that we are back to publishing our newsletters again!

Welcome back: to you and to us. We present to you the 30th issue of Pudiyaador Times.

With major changes happening to our team and our programming in the last couple of years, and with the associated capacity cuts, we've had to make some hard choices. Sadly, our outreach efforts, particularly newsletter publications, took the brunt. However, we are happy to announce that we have a brand new newsletter team that will publish issues regularly and has also been tasked with creating the back issues to fill you all in.

We have now published 5 of the older issues and are working very hard to clear the rest of the backlog. Thank you for your patience and understanding and unending support.

- The Pudiyaador team

Say hello to Natasha Ravinand, the newest addition to the newsletter team and our creative guru! Natasha is in 10th grade and has been the driving force behind our latest efforts to publish the back issues of Pudiyaador Times.

She will continue to work with us to publish our newsletters henceforth. This project has been no mean feat and we are thrilled to have Natasha on our team!



Director of Awesomeness

Running a non-profit organization is tough. It only gets more challenging when you involve young children and their communities, not to mention their schools, local governing bodies, city police, politicians, and other interesting characters that can be found in a beautiful, old, and complex city like Chennai. This is what Ashwinii Chidambaram set out to do in the summer of 2016.



Ashwinii didn't walk into Pudiyador without knowing what she was getting into! She had volunteered in early 2013 when Pudiyador had just expanded to our two newest centers (Saligramam and Urur Kuppam). As one of our best and brightest volunteers, Ashwinii practically ran the Urur Kuppam center and got to know the children and the community and about all the challenges of running a non-profit intimately. Almost two years into her volunteering, she had to leave to do what young women are expected to do: earn a living in industry.

For the following year or so, Ashwinii worked on technology projects involving digital signature applications and widgets. While she enjoyed her work, she felt that something was missing. It wasn't quite what made her feel happy. She had been bitten by the non-profit bug and it seems there was no looking back.

So Ashwinii turned her attention to Pudiyador one more time. This time around, Pudiyador was in need of some major changes and we welcomed her back with open arms - and a new position! She was our dream candidate: experienced, hard working, truly committed (or should we say enmeshed), excited, full of ideas, and with a work ethic that is hard to find.

We are pleased to present Ashwinii Chidambaram, Director, Pudiyador. In less than a year, Ashwinii has made some remarkable changes to our organization. She took a couple of months to assess the ongoing operations and understand the functioning. While the team was already working hard at trying to accomplish a host of goals, the organization needed new blood and a fresh perspective. Ashwinii started cutting out the fat and streamlining operations to increase the impact of existing tasks. She proved to be an inspiration to the ground team as well as the management team and pushed everyone gently but firmly to go farther, do more.

She works closely with the community and constantly tries to incorporate their expectations into our programming. And she gives the team plenty of latitude to create and execute programming that they believe would benefit our children and community the most.

In our next issue, we will tell you about ongoing efforts of our team and all the cool things they are doing. Stay tuned!



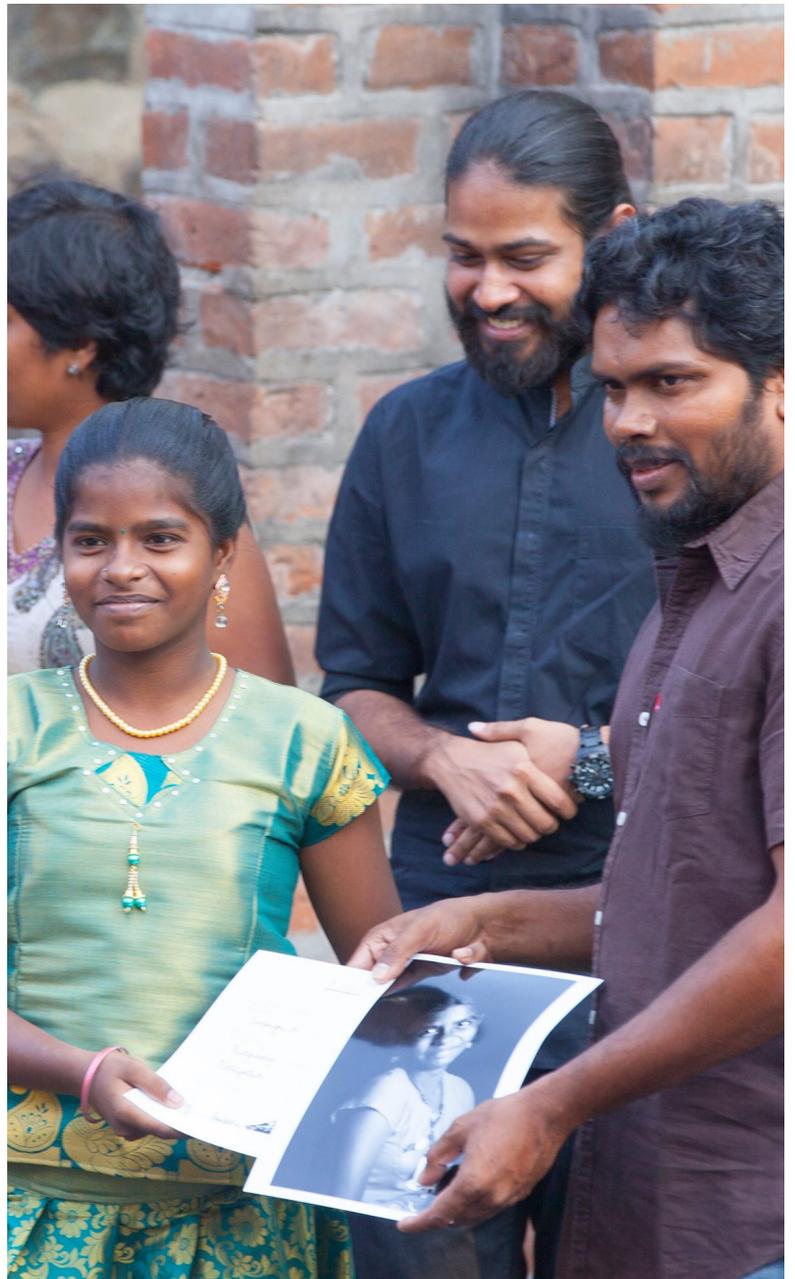
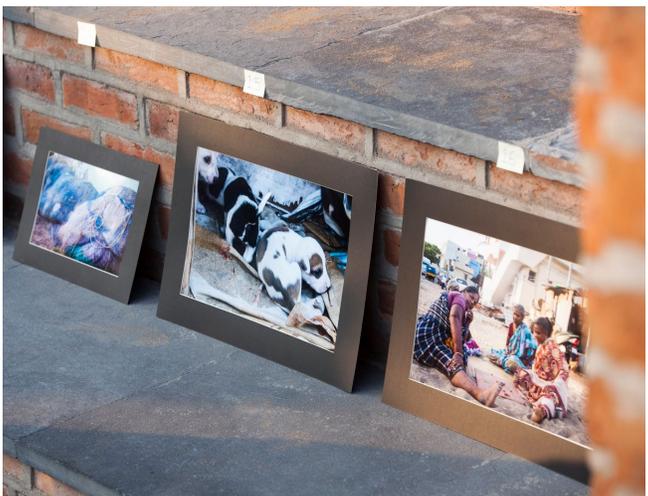
YAP Photography Project



The Urur Olcott Kuppam Vizha is an annual festival conducted in the Urur Olcott Kuppam community. The organizers approached Pudiyador to conduct a photography workshop for our children as part of the festival. But wouldn't it be even better if we can go beyond the festival and give our children more intensive professional training?



Fifteen children from our young adult program underwent an intensive 4-month training program. This group met every weekend (early mornings on Sat and Sun) and on some weekdays (when the moonlight was not to be missed) to learn the joys and techniques of photography. There were initial theory lessons on how to handle the camera, light and shadow, lenses and apertures, and then the rest was all field lessons. lenses and other equipment which was a delight for our budding photographers.

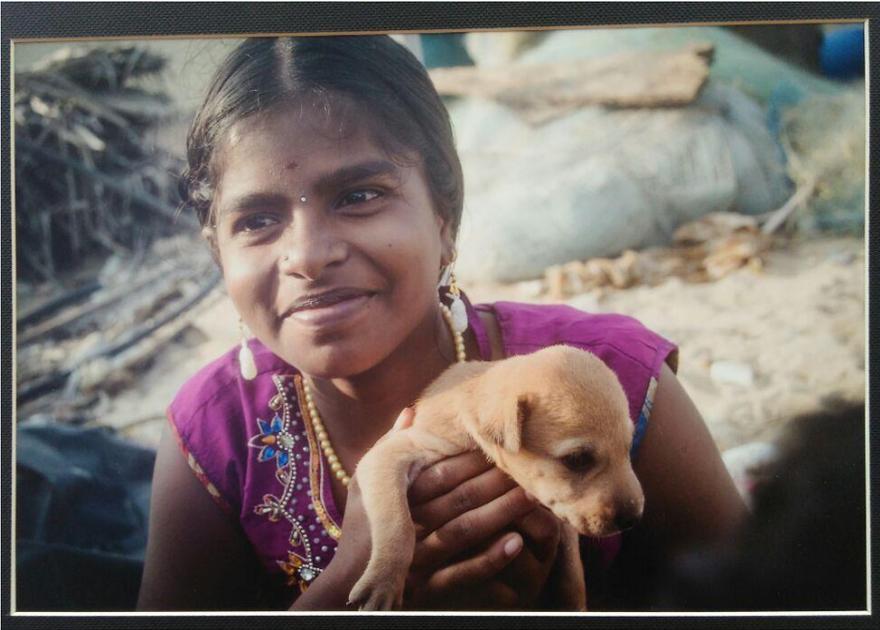




The children started off with 2 sessions using regular point-shoot digital cameras and then advanced to using DSLR cameras (they had 5 cameras among them). Photographer Ram Keshav conducted the last 3 classes with his professional sets of lenses and other equipment which was a delight for our budding photographers. Having shot hundreds of beautiful pictures of a variety of themes, the children concluded their training by taking portrait photographs of themselves.

Keshav's workshop was spread among 6 half-day classes in 3 months. Along with actual, hands-on work with the camera, Keshav focused on street photography. The children were given instruction on the process of storytelling within the land of Urur Olcott Kuppam. The works of the children were put on display at Spaces and were awarded certificates of proficiency. These certificates not only make the children proud of their accomplishments but also enable them to earn well-paying jobs at photography studios.





All works were framed and presented as a showcase. The curated works represent the hard work put in by the children and the amazing results.

What are the plans for the future, you ask?



The children who are interested in following this as a career path will now undergo a second level of training that will take them to new heights.

Who knows, one of them might be the official photographer for our very own Pudiyador Times!





"Life at Urur-Olcott Kuppam"

A Photo Story from the perspective of children from the Kuppam

To many, Urur Olcott Kuppam may remain unknown until it is referred to as that place behind Thalapakatti or the fishing village in Besant Nagar. Wronged by history, and at the edge of geography, few people know about this village or the life of its residents. In the atomised ambience of the urban, fishing villages like Urur Olcott Kuppam are islands of community life, where social responsibility and communal obligations still hold some sway over individual choice. The devil, as they say, is in the detail, and the children's photography project aims to bring out just that.

For long seen in a negative light, as a slum devoid of character or legitimacy, Urur Olcott Kuppam is striving to reclaim its legitimate place in the history of the city. Through this project, Urur Olcott Kuppam's children show you vignettes of life in their favourite part of Chennai.

This has been accomplished by introducing the art form of photography to a group of kids from UOK and guiding them to learn the art and as well create art with UOK, its identity and heritage as the central theme.

Professional photographer Ram Keshav has led the photography workshop for the kids through a structured series of six half-day sessions spanning over 3 months. Ram Keshav, assisted by volunteer Maheshwaran Sridharan, led the kids through the creative process, step-by-step, comprehensively covering the concepts and fundamentals of light and photography, and hands-on work with the camera, guiding them on street photography and process of storytelling.

The pictures curated today are a tribute to Urur Olcott Kuppam and its identity. Equally, it is a celebration of art created through a public platform by the children of the Kuppam.

An Initiative of the Urur-Olcott Kuppam Vizha – Celebrating Oneness



Quarter Highlights



- Sangeetha, a professional on gender sessions, gave a session at YAP about gender issues. On February 4th we conducted an exhibition of photography, displaying some photos our kids took. The YAP kids performed " Villu Pattu " in Ururkuppam..

We started a new program "Biriyani for Moms" to give the mothers a break and do something nice for them for a change. The mothers played games, spent time together, and ate biriyani for dinner!



Around 120 children (from both ASP & YAP) participated in our annual sports meet.. They were split into 4 "houses" of 30 children and two staff members. We held 40 different events to include a variety of interests and abilities. It was a huge hit!



We re-started a savings scheme to help the children understand money and learn to manage basic expenses.

We started the "Tea-Kadai Teens" program. These teenagers now wake up early in the morning to meet at their local tea shop and read the newspaper together. They then share what they learned with other children..



You can join our efforts

Teach online!



Connect with our children during weekday /evenings and weekends (IST).

Choose from helping with academics to reading stories to demonstrating science experiments. Sky's the limit!

Donations welcome!



PayPal, direct deposit, or in kind
All donations are tax-exempt
501(c)(3) in the US
80-G and FCRA in India

Spread the word!



Partner us with other NGOs
Ask your employer about CSR
And about matching donations!

Our specific needs for the next quarter

1. Doctors

- Need doctors to volunteer once a month for health check-ups in our communities. Any kind doctors you know of who would be willing to help?
- Need a child psychologist who speaks Tamil. Know any?

2. Projectors

- Skype classes are clearer on the big screen
- We also screen educational/fun movies

3. Educational material

- Books in English for ages 3-10
- Illustrated books for non-readers
- Picture cards for innovative storytelling
- Dictionaries (English and/or Tamil)
- Puzzles/activity books, board games
- Art Material: Color pencils, crayons, water-colors, paint-brushes
- Science experiment kits

4. Music and sports equipment

- Musical instruments
- Bats/balls/frisbee for group sports
- Carrom boards / Chess boards

5. Cameras and Camcorders

- Digital cameras to record activities and share between centers

6. Others

- Computer tables, plastic chairs, storage cupboards/bureaus

Contact our team

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