



Trailblazing Indian Librarians Transforming Communities

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Participating Librarians who have submitted the monthly library services data, during the programme implementation, on a consistent basis, has their profiles with complied data on the progress made through services, introduction to new thematic areas, inclusion of various target groups and potential services have been aligned to IFLA's UN-SDGs. That said, there are a few profiles who are featured based on anecdotal evidences, as data analysis was not possible due to inconsistent data.

This publication was prepared by the special library programme team led by Ms Rojarani D, Development Associate, Ms Siranjothi K, Development Associate, and Priyanka Mohan, Strategic Programme Lead. Ms Vidya Padmanabhan, Short-term Consultant developed the preliminary content of this publication. A very special thanks to Ms Kailin for her graphical recording of INELI programme.

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction	13
2. The Community Library Trailblazers	25
3. The Change-Makers	55
4. The Innovator	105
5. Impact Stories	129

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The publication was conceived and brought together by various actors who are driven to strengthen the role of librarians and redefine public libraries as knowledge hubs for its communities. I am sharing this space of gratitude to each director of public libraries from participating states of India, mentors, international librarians, knowledge partners, library innovators from the global and regional INELI network, IFLA President, and donors. I wish to express my deepest gratitude to all those who have extended their time, and have made valuable contributions to make this effort and journey a success.

My heartfelt gratitude to Professor M S Swaminathan, a visionary, remains an inspiration as his words of wisdom and knowledge has nurtured each one of us to work towards reaching the unreached.

I am grateful to former director of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Ms Nancy J Anabel for seeding the concept, integrating the hub and spokes model, connecting the dots and allowing us to envision the infinite possibilities of public libraries for empowering and building inclusive knowledge communities. I am grateful to Dr Basheerhamad Shadrach for showing the opportunity to empower the Indian Public Librarians through the INELI Programme.

I acknowledge my profound gratitude to the Directors of Public Libraries of the states, for their support in all aspects - nurturing the librarians' unseen potential and recalibrating the functioning of libraries for social development. I also acknowledge the local partners, organizations, and individuals instrumental in supporting the librarians to deliver services through their libraries. This has played a critical role in initiating possible self-sustaining and localised models for community development.

The profiles in this publication, the passionate and innovative librarians were guided for their transformational journey by the mentors (Late) Ms Sudha Mukherjee, Ms Neeti Saxena, Ms Amarjeet K Gill, Dr Geeta Malhotra, Dr Jagtar Singh, Dr K P Vijayakumar, Mr A P Sivakumar and Mr Karthikeyan Jayaraman. Each one have provided their time, shared their knowledge, experience and words of wisdom, inspiring each

of the participating librarians. On behalf of M S Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) team, our profound gratitude and share the success of this programme with all of you.

I am grateful and honour each and every public librarian who chose to step up and become game changers for our communities. Their deepest agility was the key factor in shedding those aspects which has helped them to relearn, unlearn and act towards making a difference for themselves and their libraries. Now as a community library leader, they can be instrumental in building stronger New Age Libraries for our nation.

I am grateful to the reviewers from the regional INELI's network Ms Allison Dobbie (INELI Oceania) and Dr Heba Mohamed Ismail (INELI MENA). Likewise, Ms Amarjeet Gill has provided constructive inputs, that allowed us to rework on the preliminary draft. I am in gratitude to Dr Malarvannan, Senior Scientist, MSSRF for identifying ways to synthesize the draft content. I express my gratefulness to Dr S Venkatraman, Independent Consultant to UNESCO and ADB for his critical review on strengthening the contents and overall presentation of data in the view of IFLA's UN-SDGs.

I am grateful and share the success of this programme with Ms Deborah Jacob, Ms Pilar Pacheco and Mr Darren Hoerner (former officers of the Global Libraries Initiative) whose vision has sparked and ignited the heart and minds of the Indian librarians.

I am grateful to the Foundation for their continuous support in making this Special Library Programme a success through the Jamsetji Tata National Virtual Academy. I appreciate and acknowledge the efforts, persistence and seamless contribution rendered by the MSSRF-INELI team Ms Rojarani D and Ms Siranjothi K involvement, dedication and sharing of their field experiences has allowed us to share with the readers the unique story of each librarians transformation as library trailblazers. Ms Rojarani D has been instrumental for data monitoring, review, collation, mapping with IFLA's UN-SDGs, integration of learning assignments, tasks, and activities in online and offline workshops/conferences and in capturing results of the programme. Ms Siranjothi K has coordinated key project deliverables since inception and has strengthened the online curriculum. I appreciate her patience and unparalleled support in finalizing the manuscript. The integration of innovative services and hub and spokes model through libraries was made possible due to the strategic design inputs from both Ms

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I am grateful for the unconditional support rendered by the Executive Director of MSSRF Dr Murali K S and Director of Ecotechnology Dr R Rengalakshmi.

In gratitude to grace and everyone who has made a difference to this programme....

Priyanka Mohan
Strategic Programme Lead
Special Library Programme
M S Swaminathan Research Foundation



Foreword

Science, technology and knowledge institutions are required for a community's intellectual and mental well-being. The M S Swaminathan Research Foundation has been at the forefront of bringing technological empowerment to rural communities and reaching the unreached through information and knowledge exchange.

I am happy that our experience of working to build the capacities of focal points in communities as knowledge workers, climate managers, hunger fighters and others is now being scaled through public libraries. Public Libraries are not only for the collection of books, but also a collection of ideas, exchange of information and tool for cooperation among institutions. The INELI network has already proved itself a successful and powerful instrument, having brought many changes to more than 50 libraries in India. I congratulate all the librarians, now recognized as community trailblazers, who have joined together to empower the community with much-needed knowledge exchange and sharing across different villages and regions.

I congratulate the entire team who have contributed to this publication and hope it inspires many more librarians who want to seed social and developmental transformation in the communities they serve.

Prof M S Swaminathan
Founder Chairman - M S Swaminathan Research Foundation,
Ex-Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha



Special Message

One of the most rewarding projects I have been involved in over my long career is the INELI program. Initiated and supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Global Libraries, I have seen first-hand how it has significantly impacted the development of innovation and leadership for hundreds of young librarians around the world.

The world needs librarians! Smart, strong, passionate librarians who advocate for a fairer more equal world; who support the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals; who recognize the importance of local actions to make a difference and to achieve the targets set out in the Agenda.

The professional development and opportunities provided by the INELI program show the power of improving the competencies and skills of librarians. Because when they are given these opportunities, librarians are empowered to make a real difference in their workplace and in their communities. I have been inspired to see the great initiatives of the INELI India alumni over the past few years, and this model has been proven to ignite creativity and confidence, demonstrated by the stories in this book.

There are three areas where libraries have the opportunity to change people's lives.

The first is supporting the United Nations 2030 Agenda. IFLA and libraries around the world are championing the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals; there is no development without access to information and there is no meaningful access to information without libraries.

The second is to bridge the digital divide. There are growing inequalities in the ability to access online information. While digital technologies offer vastly increased knowledge sharing, too many in the world do not have access to the internet and without universal access inequality will increase. Libraries can provide access and build the skills needed for people to have the information they need for better and more fulfilling lives.

The third is that no matter how big or small, rich or poor, libraries around the world are the hearts of their communities, and provide connection. Libraries are one of the few safe spaces where all are welcomed and where we share wonderful communal collections of resources. Libraries continue to evolve and engage people.

This publication, which demonstrates how Indian public librarians are transforming public libraries as lifelong learning centres, is an important and significant addition to the literature and a celebration of the achievements of these individuals.

We need to all work together to make libraries as good as they can be – congratulations to those who have produced this book. I am sure it will inspire and motivate you, the reader, to make a difference and to be a strong and committed advocate for the power of libraries.



Dr Christine Mackenzie
IFLA President, Netherlands

April 2021



Special Message

There is always a need of a light that can seed transformation in any work we are involved in.

*"Their joy is joy of all the world, they see; thus more
The learners learn to love their cherished lore."*

- Thirukkural Couplets: 399

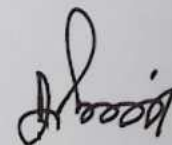
We are continuing to build a movement that we hope will surge a catalytic change. As I read the stories of transformation from this publication, I was struck by their passion, knowledge, facilitation skills, perseverance, agility and impact of their learning's through the capacity building provided by M S Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF). Each of the public librarians across States, including many in Tamil Nadu have pushed to participate and gain more exposure to strengthen their professional growth and to transform their libraries, which is the underpinning success to this publication.

I am very grateful to MSSRF and its team for strengthening the librarian's leadership skill through both online learning and offline workshops both Nationally and Internationally. They have largely benefitted from such an exposure which will give them pride to be community trailblazers for their libraries.

Despite various systemic challenges, each one the librarians in this publication are sharing an important take-away message that public libraries are knowledge institutions for everyone. Mapping of Sustainable Development Goals and building evidences for each of the goals and its relevance to public library is well captured here. Every reader which will be struck by the important role of librarian, as an inspiring face for building knowledgeable society is reiterated through each of these profiles. Beyond building community library leaders, each one has to step up, be agile, self-initiate, and look into various ways of making libraries more relevant for communities. I strongly urge librarians to learn from this publication and to do the

needful and address the needs of the community. This compilation will support in transforming other public libraries, globally.

I am extremely grateful to all those who have taken the courage to bring together this publication, which shall inspire many librarians to lead for change in their respective libraries. I also see this publication as an opportunity for the Department of Public Libraries across States to learn from the changing trends of public libraries. The Government of Tamil Nadu, Department of Public Libraries' mission is about creating lifelong learning centers for everyone. I look forward to this concept to be replicated across Tamil Nadu and in other States and internationally in South Asia.



Director
Directorate of Public Library
April 2021

Introduction



Free flow of relevant information and its access is a fundamental right for everyone. Eons before, for bridging the information and urban-rural digital divide, and the need for delivering need-based information among the rural communities was identified as a niche area. The information was delivered using technology and has been facilitated by social torch bearers, which time and again is seen as a proven model at the Foundation. The Jamsetji Tata Training School was launched at M S Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) in 2007, as part of the National Virtual Academy (NVA) was developed as a platform for building knowledge empowering social groups in social development. These torch bearers are popularly known as knowledge workers, change-makers, hunger fighters, climate managers, and so on, who are seen as one of the pillars for social transformation across India. Recognized as social enablers, they are transforming themselves and their communities through a gamut of interventions using Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and non-ICT and weave potential linkages with local institutions, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), government, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSRs), philanthropists and alike.



Over two decades of experience at the Foundation, a network of community change-makers have brought value addition to the lives and livelihoods of many rural women and men, including youth. Their engagement as social guides, even today, is seen as a critical pillar enabling information flow between individuals of common practice. This has opened a space for them in taking better informed decisions, tap into new knowledge, integrate current trends, use technology and change their mindset. In the meantime, in the recent past, there has been a push to build the human capacities where possible for building stronger communities. Likewise, the Agenda 2030 encourages public institutions such as public libraries, considered as third spaces to become more inclusive in their approach, and enhance access to information for building smart and resilient communities.

The relevance of public libraries for everyone remains unexplored in this part of our world. The potential of librarians as social innovators and enablers was an idea seeded and initiated the Global Library Initiative of the Gates Foundation, more than a two decades ago. Implemented in



more than 6 regions, the initiative of International Network of Emerging Library Innovators (INELI) has strengthened more than 5000 + public librarians' leadership skills for community development. The success of the international cohorts led to INELI being implemented in the regions of Oceania, Latin America, Africa, Middle East and North Africa, ASEAN, and India and South Asia. Each INELI has both formal and informal regional networks of innovative library leaders, empowering communities by reimagining public libraries as knowledge hubs, in their respective regions.

About the Special Library Programme

M S Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) was the recipient to the Gates Foundation and NASSCOM Foundation and has spearheaded the Special Library Programme, since 2015. The programme was evolved with a vision to drive a national mission for strengthening librarian's leadership capacities and self-initiate innovative interventions for repositioning public libraries as lifelong knowledge learning centres for one and all, initiated in 2015 and 2017, respectively. By design the initiatives together focused on

- *Building capacities and enhancing innovative leadership capabilities of emerging librarians,*
- *Building evidence of change through public libraries by delivering innovative community need-based services, among diverse target communities, and*
- *Forming and co-creating a vibrant network of community library leaders in this region to scale INELI India and South Asia and sustain connection across the globe.*

International Network of Emerging Library Innovators (INELI) India and South Asia: A comprehensive capacity building program of the Global Library Initiative, Gates Foundation was designed for fostering leadership and innovative thinking and competencies of the public librarians. MSSRF has spearheaded this initiative in India and South Asia since 2015 with 3 Cohorts, comprised of 60 public librarians from 6 South Asian countries namely Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. This model encompasses online and offline learnings and has equipped the participating librarians as community library leaders driving social change in their respective libraries.

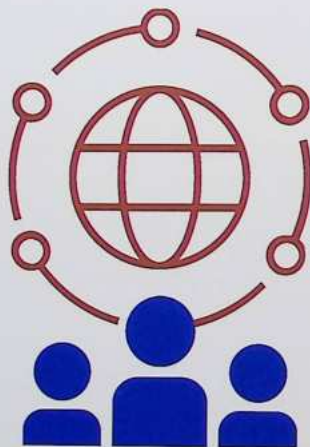
Cohort Formulation: MSSRF received nominations from the State and Country Directors of Public Libraries of India and South Asia. These nominations were screened by MSSRF implement team, interviewed by the INELI mentors and library professionals. The potential public librarians from each Indian State and 6 South Asian countries were selected during the year of 2015 for Cohort 1, 2016 for Cohort 2, and 2018 for Cohort 3. Cohort 1 and 2 were the national cohorts from 19 States in India,

and Cohort 3 from 6 South Asian countries. They were selected based on their interest, commitment and passion to drive social change and impact among local communities through public libraries and other project criterions.

The curriculum designed for this 21st leadership online course specifically focussed on Community Needs Assessment, Access to Information and Innovative Services, Building Evidence of Change through Library Data, Networking and Partnerships, Innovative and Change Management, Writing Proposal and topics related to leadership skills building. The developed curriculum, focused on nurturing 21st century librarians skills (Attitude, Skills and Knowledge (ASK)) was housed in Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) platform. The learning through assignments have allowed the participating librarians to take the necessary steps in introducing a bouquet of community oriented services in their libraries. Many have shared their learning with staff and since then they have been rebuilding the libraries for reaching the unreached using existing resources.

Reshaping Public Libraries as Next-Generation

Libraries: The national and international convenings were organised through this programme summarised the best practices on building green, SMART, inclusive and resilience oriented Next-Generation libraries. Besides learning on technical know-how, they were also exposed to the attributes of strengthening their librarian's leadership skills. Participating librarians had deep dived with international librarians to learn on reshaping library ecosystem. They have had interactions on converging information through services and technology, the importance of applying strategic and design thinking, partnership with local institutions, mapping of needs, power of volunteering, networking, users and non-user orientation, diversification of services across all types of target groups, inclusivity, space re-orientation, policy recommendations with council, power of negotiations, integration of UN-SDGs, use of technology, e-resources, public access, use of information, and much more.



Next-Generation Libraries are innovative, progressive, embrace change, inclusion of technology, localisation, co-creating localised network through partnerships, integration of hub and spokes model where possible, addressing local needs by providing information services, librarians as change agents, cultivating apt linkages for building resilience of communities, and becoming part of the global community practice.

The national cohorts (1 and 2) were involved in an other initiative on “**Repositioning and Strengthening Indian Public Libraries as Knowledge Learning Centres**” supported by NASSCOM Foundation and Indian Public Library Movement. More than 40 librarians had actively participated in face-to-face workshops and trainings, developed annual library plan, library event calendar and had identified specific goals they would like to work on based on the local needs.

At MSSRF, the implementing team has brought convergence and synergies to the concepts, approach, processes and leveraged learning opportunities for all selected librarians in both online and offline platforms. This has encouraged learning and knowledge exchanges between librarians of various regions and has paved never to be seen best practices across libraries. Face-to-face workshops and trainings became a discussion platform, allowing us to reshape the role of Public Library. The workshop allowed them to discovered the 1994 Public Library Manifesto of International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

(UNESCO). The role of International Federation of Library Association's (IFLA), UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN-SDGs) and India's National Priorities was highlighted. The multiple layer approach allowed librarians to rethink, redesign and redefine their libraries as inclusive spaces. Need-based innovative services were delivered in the form of events, activities, and services since 2017. This was one of the missing links in library science and management programme. A progressive and dynamic transformation was made in the past five years by the selected librarians of this programme. This publication is an attempts to share the tangible and anecdotal evidence of change.

Connect with Global Librarians' Network: The regional network of innovative library leaders was built through the transition committee and they have founded the Asia Network of Library Innovators' Foundation (ANLiF) in February 2020. The Foundation shall be a regional platform to empower librarians who shall act as social enablers for evolving Next-Generation Libraries. Further the INELI community of practice connect through the **INELI Regional Connect (IRC)**, a virtual platform



that aims to connect and sustain the INELI Network globally.

This publication specifically captures the transformational journey of participating librarians,

and their passion in co-creating Next-Generation Libraries in India.

Key Achievements and Learnings

More than 50 librarians have been able to transform the public libraries through localized partnerships and continue to provide need-based services to diverse target groups with integration of IFLA's UN-SDGs. The cycles of development and welfare outreach could be analysed where in online and face-to-face capacity building programs has allowed the selected librarians to experience; learn and feel empowered to innovate, ideate and integrate community services. In turn, they had reached out to the non-users, have network, built local partnerships and also promoted the global goals.

The INELI as a model has enhanced leadership capabilities and has improved soft and technical skills of participating librarians as innovative professionals. It is very evident that the learnings have been shared with associated library staff across 19 States in India. They have gained recognition, participated in state consultations, policy discussions, earned awards as best librarians change-makers and a few have received promotion post participation in INELI India and South Asia.

The Special Library Programme's thought leadership was applied given the scale of implementation, in several key areas

5Ps

Provided orientation in the **concept of Sustainable Development** and **5 Ps** (people, planet, partnership, peace and prosperity).



Introduced the **global vision** of Agenda 2030 - IFLA's UN-SDGs with delivery of need-based services through libraries.

Public Library Manifesto

Introduced the **public library manifesto** IFLA – UNESCO.



Introduced community need-based services and continued services for creating lasting impact of change in social development.



Evolved learning on 21st century librarians' leadership attitude, skills and knowledge (ASK).





Integrated self-sustaining model libraries through local partnerships.



Evolved India's First Library Development Plan for public libraries and annual event calendar for librarians.



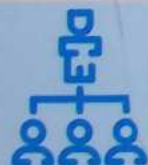
54 public librarians have participated in the National Reading Mission 2022.



Built a network of public librarians connecting diverse target community with need-based locale-specific services.



Librarians have participated in state specific dialogue and consultations.



Focused on options to work more effectively within local systems and strengthen governance capacity of local government and other partners to enhance sustainability.



Interestingly, these librarians have reinforced the need for third spaces for one and all. Given their passion for service have self-initiated community services. Consistently, across 37 libraries, librarians have organised outreach programmes to a wider group of citizens like, early literacy for toddlers, children, adults, senior citizens, marginalized, LGBTQ, and differently-abled. It is very much evident, despite concerns and challenges faced by librarians, the big picture of public libraries is that they are here to stay, be redefined, be absorbed as key players for disseminating information and knowledge among one and all. Also, there is ample evidences where in networking and partnerships can play a crucial role in empowering localization and in building resilient communities. A framework for community centered interactive public library would eventually fall into place.

Special Library Programme Achievements



37 Community Trailblazers have emerged from the initiatives.



37 Indian public libraries have delivered **1,236** programs from April 2017 to March 2019.



A total of **3,44,893** community members were reached out.



14 specific target groups reached - Farmers, Fishers, Irulas, Women Entrepreneurs, Ex-service army, Jail Inmates, Visually and physically challenged, Juveniles, LGBTQ, Research scholars, School children, Youth and Senior citizens through library services.



HEALTH



SKILL DEVELOPMENT



AGRICULTURE



CULTURE AND HERITAGE



EDUCATION



WOMEN EMPOWERMENT



PRO NATURE



DISASTER RELIEF



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

9 thematic areas covered through public libraries – Education, Skill Development, Health, Culture and Heritage, Women Empowerment, Agriculture, Pro Nature, Employment Opportunity, and Disaster relief.



14 Specific Target Groups delivered through public libraries.



Trailblazers continue to build inclusive, resilient communities through their respective libraries by providing access to relevant, localised information through partnerships at all levels.



Branch, Village and NGO libraries have outperformed State Central libraries.



The digital infrastructure of **50** libraries in **21** states including union territories enhanced and strengthened for public access to improve social and economic development.



4 public libraries have introduced ICT enable innovative services - Plant Clinic, Phone-in-a-Query, Tele-Health, Audio Advisories and programmes to improve digital literacy for supporting Nation's farming communities.



*37 libraries have showcased alignment with **13** UN-SDGs.*



2 libraries from the districts of Tamil Nadu (Villupuram and Pudukkottai) have been integrated hub and spoke model to disseminate the information.



*A single Panchayat Trailblazer had reached out to more than **3,696** individuals.*



Librarians were representing in legislative meeting and suggesting policy inclusion (Tamil Nadu).



South Asian Regional Network - formed as Asia Network of Library Innovators' Foundation (ANLiF) and are part of INELI Regional Connect - partaking in global virtual platform for sharing the best practices.



About the Publication

The idea of having a publication occurred after sharing the results of the Special Library Programme in the “Libraries for Everyone” conference, Turkey 2018. The feedback received was very encouraging for the team to share the evidences of change with wider audiences from the library field, including policy-makers in India.

This publication captures the beginning of a mission started by the selected librarians portraying unlimited possibilities of Indian public libraries serving the growing information and knowledge needs of diverse communities. **They are India's example of Next – Generation Libraries. Yes! first of its kind having trailblazing profiles of capacitated public librarians catalysing changes in their libraries. The profiles are unique as each one have chosen to implement their ideas and innovate based on local needs and opportunities.**

This ambitious programme has captured trends and results from more than 50+ librarians, over a period of one and half years through rigorous monitoring. Additionally, in 2019, the librarians have participated

in a survey that allowed us to capture the depth of change from each based on their learning from online and offline curriculum. The data analysis has led to the demarcation of three types of librarians profiles Community Trailblazers, Change-Makers, and Public Library Innovators, making each a unique read.

The librarians have expressed an increase in footfall and memberships, users and target groups and are moving beyond book services. Distinguishable change is realised by them to promote social equity across all, as mentioned in the achievements and learnings. Efforts were made to reach the unreached - the cradle to grave approach of libraries catering to all age groups have also been demonstrated. Each library have creatively in the best possible way have broken the myth that library are only for books. The data sepcifically shares the various services that can be provided geographically based on local needs. Further more, the data had showcased the potential scope of integrating most of the key services with National Priorities and IFLA's UN-SDGs barring a few profiles.

Each one of the libraries now act as a hub and can build well informed knowledge societies, across any country, by recognizing the ubiquitous nature of public libraries. In many villages, and districts, libraries are gaining popularity from the target groups, beyond educational needs. It's functioning is being nudged to contribute for social, economic and environmental sustainability, which is emphasised in the IFLA - UNESCO public library manifesto.

IFLA's reference to UN-SDGs in this publication and the indicators approved by UN for monitoring its SDGs: What IFLA refers to as UN-SDGs has been explained as “IFLA's consistent position is that **access to information is essential in achieving the SDGs**, and that libraries are not only key partners for governments but are already contributing to progress towards the achievement of the 17 Goals” (source: www.IFLA.org). While this is quite relevant to the activities undertaken under the outreach programmes of the instant project, **it is necessary to make a distinction between these indicators and the indicators developed by the UN for monitoring**

its SDGs. It may be of relevance to note here that the UN-SDG indicators do not contain any indicator to monitor the achievements made by libraries. There is a need to do so.

Data and the Sustainable Development Goals:

In an IFLA Briefing on the above topic, it is stated that “the indicators are explicitly designed to be used in following up and reviewing the SDGs... the choice of indicator risks neglecting the contribution that libraries make. If Member States only focus on the current indicators, they may not give libraries the support or recognition they deserve. It is therefore important to make the case for better indicators for libraries, first nationally and regionally, and in due course globally. IFLA therefore suggests making the case for the following indicators in national and regional SDG monitoring... SDG 9.c, 11.4 and 16.10...”

(see: https://www.ifla.org/files/assets/hq/topics/libraries-development/documents/sdg_data_brief.pdf)

The above box item confirms the statement made above that the current list of SDGs of 169 targets and 231 indicators do not contain any specific indicator to highlight the importance of public libraries or monitor the achievements, but that there is a need to work towards this.

It would be worthwhile to pursue this and initiate necessary steps to develop measurable indicators disaggregated at different library levels. This may trigger government action to monitor the progress of SDGs by developing relevant indicators dedicated to highlighting the role of public libraries.

The readers are encouraged to review the book keeping this background in mind. We request the readers to make a conscious effort in bringing public libraries as a nodal institution in their respective regions. Inter-linkages with stakeholders such as non-governmental organisations, corporate social responsibilities, angel investors, and government schemes can aid librarians in providing community services.



Lets meet Next-Generation Trailblazing Public Librarians of India...



The Community Library Trailblazers



The librarians profiled in this section have distinguished themselves as “**ground breaking trailblazers**” having pushed their capabilities, demonstrated transformative and collaborative leadership, strategically ideated, defied barriers, overcame challenges, built local networks to transforming libraries as **Next-Generation learning hubs**. They are catalysers, creating a revolutionary change in the field of library. They have pushed ahead of their times in this region, for themselves, for their libraries, for our nation as a whole. They are truly exceptional among their peers. Their profiles captures specific details of the shift in their libraries across diverse thematic areas, adopting cradle to grave concept for the services, integration of IFLA’s UN-SDGs for reaching the unreached.



“Supporting farmers - the backbone of the economy in times of distress through innovative need-based agrarian services.”

Branch Library - Thirukovilur Key Milestones

Outreach 1,760 M: 972 F: 788

- 2** Specific Target Groups benefitted - School Children & Adults including Farmers
- 6** Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)
- 4** Thematic areas expanded
- 3** Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs
- 1** Best Readers' Circle Award instituted by Tamil Nadu Government

1. Mr Anbazhakan M



25 Years of Experience



Branch Library, Thirukovilur, Tamil Nadu

Anbazhakan is the assistant librarian of Villupuram branch library, Tamil Nadu. He is known for his punctuality, hard work and self-confidence. Participating in the MSSRF's capacity building programme he chose to stay focussed on sharpening his professional skills associated with his social attitude, and understanding community needs and providing information services.

According to him, as a trailblazer public librarian, one has to be socially inclined, to serve the community. He has expressed that mis-information can disengage people from making apt decisions and he would like to change that. Anbazhakan states *"Librarians have to be responsible, adaptable, patient, a good listener and conveyer of ideas by conversing with the community"*. These aspects have allowed him to plan and implement major services and has

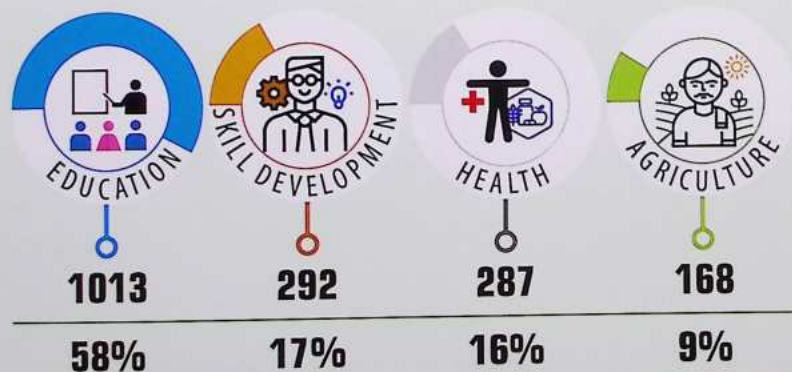
initiated diverse initiatives through the library. In recent times, they have received adequate community participation and has observed an increase in the number of users joining the Readers' Circle.

The key successes in this library have been the implementation of the Reading Mission and organizing e-Plant Clinics for farmers and their welfare. Initiated by Anbazhakan in collaboration with MSSRF, the library has farmer's forum to discuss issues related to yield and pest and disease management. His efforts have resulted in farmers gaining information, and have adequate insights on plant and soil health, schemes for farmers and other areas of agrarian assistance. On an average, 1,000 farmers have benefitted through the plant clinics organized by him. Anbazhakan's effort in reaching out to farmers through the library showcases the



Outreach 1,760 M: 972 F: 788

Thematic Areas of Services



- **Agriculture:** Plant clinics for farmers, soil health, audio advisories
- **Education:** Book fairs, computer classes and Reading Mission
- **Health:** Tele-health and awareness programs
- **Skill Development:** Chess coaching and karate classes for children

need for rural libraries to provide such assistance for the farming community across India. He urges “Libraries, wherever possible must support small farmers, allied livelihoods and the targets associated with Zero Hunger Goal of UN-SDGs. Libraries can become a neutral platform for initiating discussions on issues faced by farmers and interlinkages can be built for rebuilding lives and livelihoods”.

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Male Female



Anbazhakan on Supporting Farmers and their Communities

“I would continue to support sustainable agriculture and integrated pest management practices for the farmers”.

He is keen to expand the coverage of plant clinics across villages of Tamil Nadu and through forums keen to disseminate authentic information on government schemes and crop insurance policies to support farming communities.



2. Mr Asaithambi M



16 Years of Experience



District Central Library, Tiruvarur, Tamil Nadu

“A public library trailblazer aligned to the motto of service before self”

District Central Library - Tiruvarur

Key Milestones

Outreach **1,197** M: **600** F: **597**

3 Specific Target Groups benefitted - School Children, Adults including LGBTQ & Senior Citizens

4 Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

3 Thematic Areas Expanded

2 Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Best Librarian Award received from Tiruvarur-Tamil Literary Development Corporation (2018)

Asaithambi a librarian at the District Central Library, Tiruvarur district in Tamil Nadu, had participated in MSSRF's capacity building programme since 2017. He realised the work of the librarian is to be a social enabler, connect with community and fulfil their information and learning needs. He has been able to bring a positive shift in the working of the library by directing his efforts towards community development and social welfare. Recent initiatives have been associated to skill development for children and promotion of reading habits, conscious and mindful parenting and most importantly transforming his attitude and mindset towards expanding library space for LGBTQ as library members.

Asaithambi states *“This is just a beginning with no end”*. A new sense of direction has birthed in him. He feels very satisfied with the current work initiated

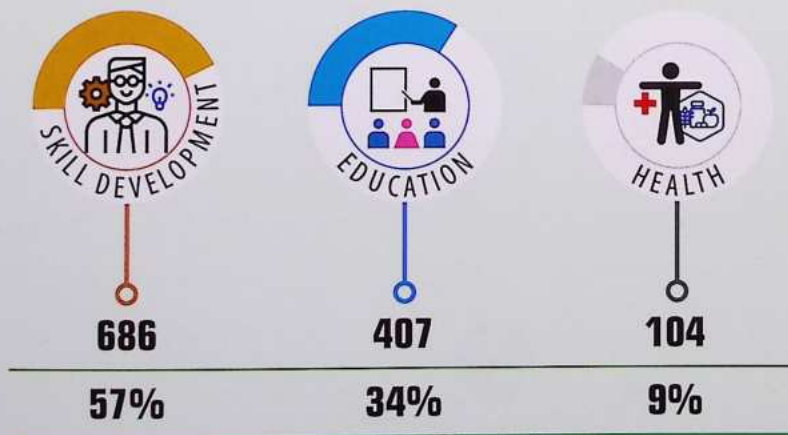
and he envisions this library to become progressive and admits the need for his active involvement, as a librarian. He credits every step taken for creating Next-Generation Libraries is due to the support received from MSSRF, the department of library and other officials in the process of making the library a lifelong knowledge learning centre. He also credits an increased confidence as a performing trailblazer.

Asai has ideated and expanded information services which is in alignment with UN-SDGs, especially Good Health and Well-Being. He has also fostered localised network and partnerships for the library which is well reciprocated by the community. He was instrumental in supporting the community with other volunteers during the Gaja Cyclone that hit Tamil Nadu in 2018. He has ensured the distribution of relief materials and other extensive support was



Outreach 1,197 M: 600 F: 597

Thematic Areas of Services



- **Education:** Reading Mission - promoting reading habits
- **Health:** Tele-health programs
- **Skill Development:** Summer camps, classes for children on drawing, origami art, etc.

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Male Female



Asaithambi on Building Knowledge Hubs through Local Partnership

"Self-sustainability of a public library is driven by the elements of volunteering partnerships and active involvement of progressive – thinking librarian".

rendered to 1,600 individuals in and around his district. He has stated: "I understand the power of reaching the unreached in times of distress and beyond. It makes librarians push boundaries and act as change agents at any given point of time".



3. Mr Banic Pandian B



27 Years of Experience



Branch Library, Thiruvottiyur, Tamil Nadu

“Living by the motto of ‘reaching the unreached’ through the learning by doing methodology”

Branch Library - Thiruvottiyur

Key Milestones

👤 Outreach **8,589** 🧑🏫 M: **4,307** 🧑🏫 F: **4,282**

4 Specific Target Groups benefitted - School students, Youth, Adults including persons with Special needs & LGBTQ

12 Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

4 Thematic areas expanded

5 Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

1 Maximum Membership Award (State Level), Best Readers' Circle Award from Government of Tamil Nadu

Banic Pandian believes strongly that to excel and meet the requirements of a trailblazer public librarian, one needs to tap the opportunities that come their way and hone one's skills and personality for the better. He said, *"I always look at challenges as my opportunity to perform better in life and that perfectly applies to my profession as well. Honing my personality better with the advanced technical knowledge with respect to library may help me to step ahead with the game".*

Banic has been taking active steps by setting key goals for community development. The library has been providing services such as communication skill development, entrepreneurial activities for women, special empowerment classes for children, motivational classes for visually impaired (more than 600 individuals), among others. He has founded

competitive examination training centre to benefit children and youth in this region and continues to provide these services on sustained basis.

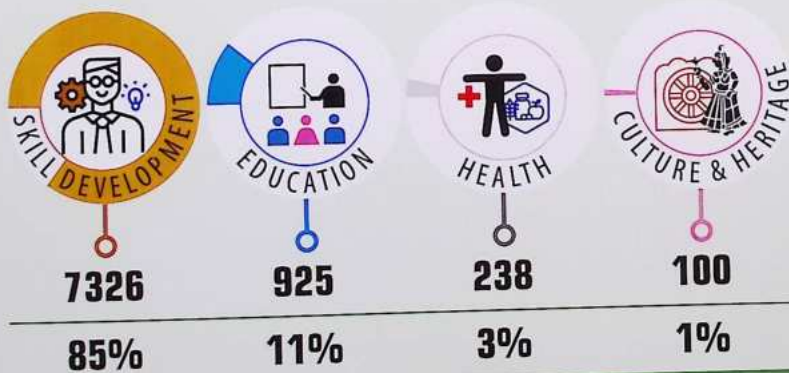
Children below the age of 6 and 7 belonging to Irulas community are considered and are mostly engaged in daily wage for supporting small-scale aqua industry. This means their education is totally compromised. In this context, Banic has initiated educational and learning opportunities for these children. He has also successfully organized several health camps and skill development initiatives for the community at large who otherwise are discriminated and apartheid by the society.

He has also created a specific space with equipment for the specially-abled to read their study material. In such a small, yet significant ways he has been a trailblazer public librarian fulfilling the adage of



Outreach 8,589 M: 4,307 F: 4,282

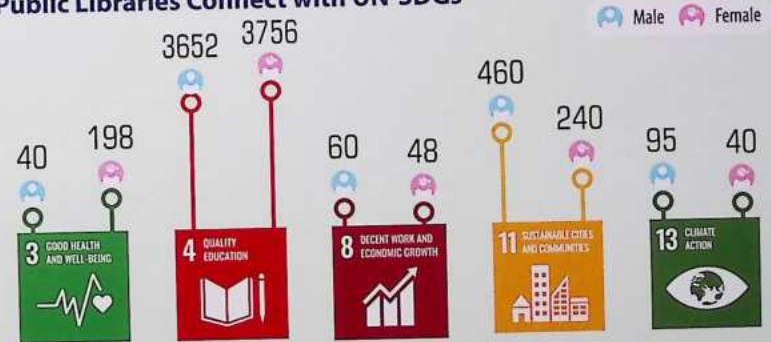
Thematic Areas of Services



- **Culture and Heritage:** Day celebrations and awareness on National Priorities
- **Education:** Discussion forums for students, reading, preparation for competitive exams, Pasumaipuratchi - save our trees, tuition on specific subjects for children
- **Good Health and Well-Being:** Tele-health awareness programs
- **Skill Development:** Crafting skills, tailoring workshops, soft skills and professional skills training, movie screening for specially challenged on selected

reaching the unreached. The library has innovative and information services in alignment with UN-SDGs, especially Decent Work and Economic Growth, Climate Action and Building Sustainable Cities and Communities. He continues to innovate and include more services through the library.

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



Banic on Localisation of Services through Knowledge Hubs

"Self-sustainability and localization of services for communities is a great thing to achieve. I personally consider that the staff in the library are best equipped with necessary talents to align with my (Librarian's) vision, perfectly to run the library. In faith with we seek public support and their participation in all our initiatives. This for life can contribute to a holistic self-sustainability of the library".

Banic aims to streamline the work of his library to "Bring forth all sects of people regardless of sex, age, race, disability, and religion. He aim to counsel people with their doubts of all kinds to support their living in every possible way. He believe this will provide them with improved access to information". He strongly believes that redirecting and recognizing the work done by public libraries in India for community welfare and its connection to UN-SDGs can help librarians make difference in every one's lives.



4. Mr Binoy Mathew



16 Years of Experience



Valapattanam Grama Panchayat Library, Kannur, Kerala

“A one - man army public librarian is striving for community development at the panchayat level”

Valapattanam Grama Panchayat Library - Kannur

Key Milestones

Outreach **3,696** M: **1,903** F: **1,793**

4 Specific Target Groups benefitted - School students, Youth, Adults and Senior Citizens

26 Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

7 Thematic areas expanded

8 Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Binoy is a single librarian, passionate and dedicated to serving communities through Valapattanam Grama Panchayat Library, operational since 1950. He says “a public library has to be an open and neutral space for everyone, serve its users in the best way possible and provide the needful information they seek”. Many outreach services have been delivered to different target groups. Basic facilities of electricity, reading room, internet and a space with sufficient lighting and ventilation have been provided. The library has sections for reference, and periodicals. It has targeted a diverse age group between children to senior citizens, including the unemployed. The library is also reputed to conduct and organize competitive coaching exam for students of which 92 individuals have been successfully employed with government jobs.

Binoy has undergone several professional training programs as a public librarian. In 2013 he participated in national level training for Direct Training Skill (DTS) at Thiruvananthapuram. He has expressed that he owes excellent capacitation and transformation as a trailblazer public librarian and dedication towards community development is after his participation in MSSRF's capacity building programme in 2017.

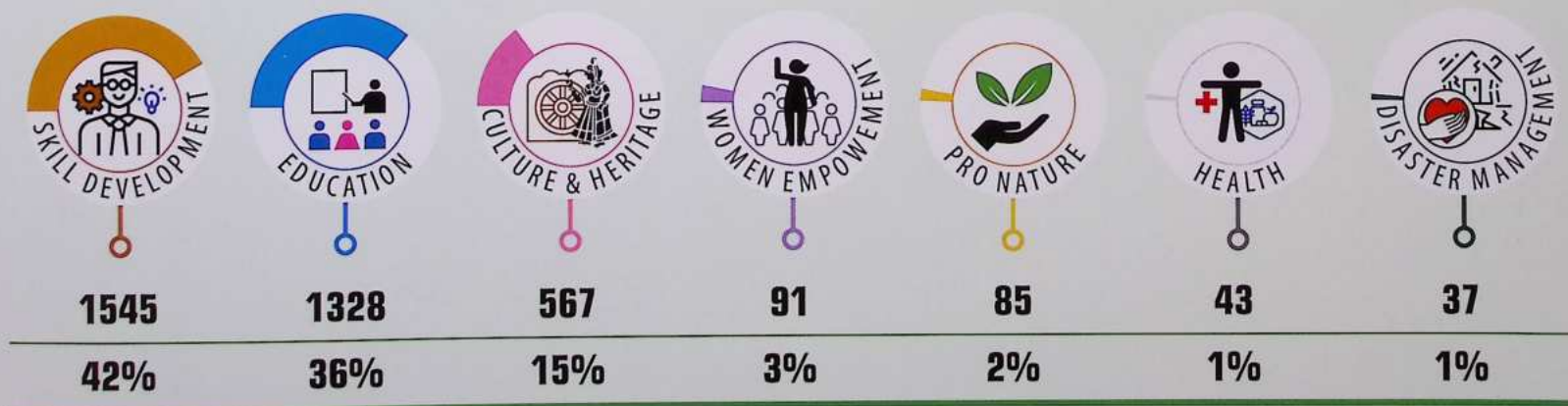
There have been gaps and difficulties in building the library with a purpose for his community. Now, he has essentially solved most of these gaps through volunteering and sponsorships. Forums were evolved and cultural programs for children were conducted on a regular basis. The library is now partially digitized and their interaction and membership of the community has also increased. New forums for youth, women and senior citizens was created.



Besides this, many unique services have been initiated and continuously delivered which are aligned with UN-SDGs such as Reduced Inequalities, Climate Action, Decent Work and Economic Growth, and Peace Justice and Strong institutions, besides others.

Binoy stated: "I have transformed mainly in 3 major areas – attitude, skills and knowledge. MSSRF's capacity building programme opened a new window for my profession. I got high profile mentors and a team of librarians as friends. The various trainings, I got in the platform has increased my confidence, idea, creativity and my perceptions about being a librarian. I researched well about why and how to address community needs for a smooth and fruitful functioning of my library. More than that, I see myself as a leader in this profession".

Thematic Areas of Services



Outreach 3,696 **M: 1,903** **F: 1,793**

- Culture and Heritage:** Celebration of festivals and awareness on days of national and international significance
- Disaster Management:** Collecting and distributing relief materials for Kerala Flood victims in 2018
- Education:** Competitive exams coaching, learning camps for children on science, English communication, etc., reading months and awareness programs
- Health:** Classes on food and nutrition, health check-ups for senior citizens
- Pro Nature:** Environment day programs and sessions
- Skill Development:** Foot ball World Cup screening and interaction forums on sports, competitions for children, craft workshops, sessions and lectures on topics such as parenting, etc.
- Women Empowerment:** Self-defence training and classes for women and girls, workshop on drafting project proposals for empowerment of women

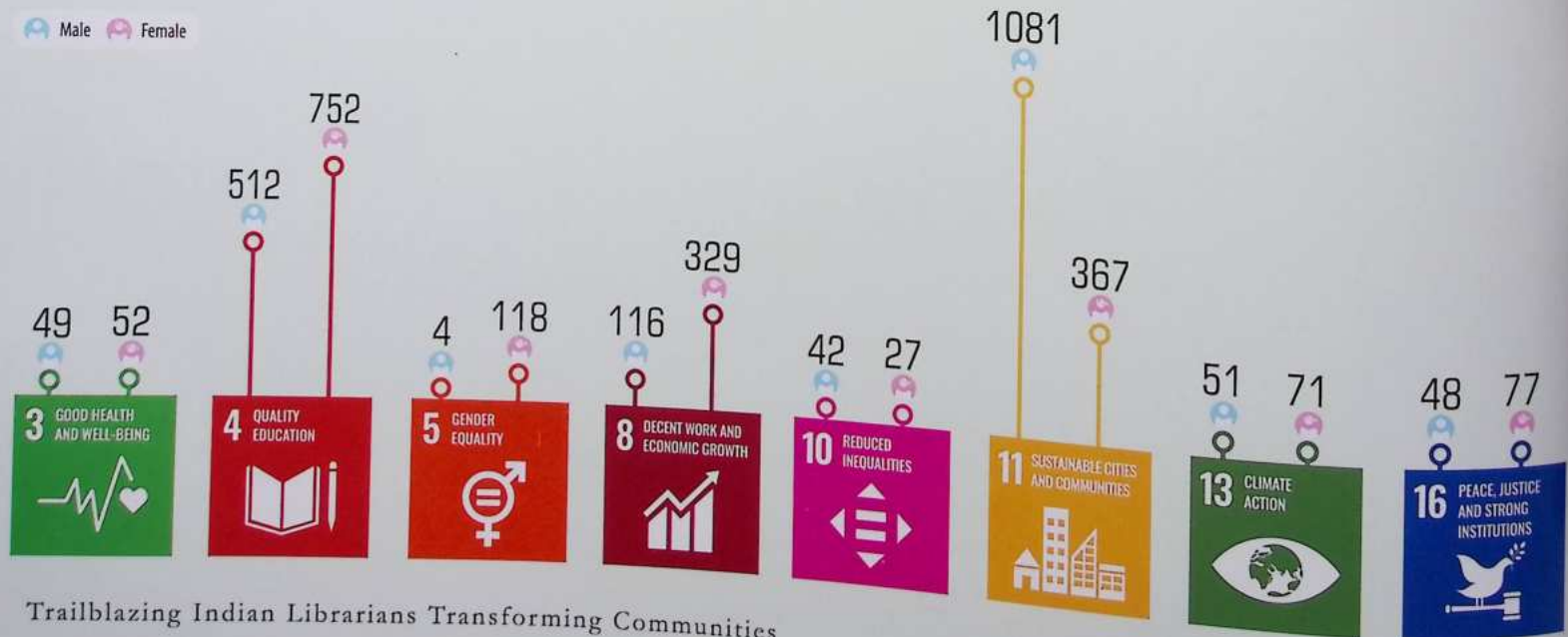
As of February 6, 2021, the Valapattanam Grama Panchayat Library has been renovated with an amount of 3.4 million Indian rupees from Asset Development Fund, Minister of Legislative Assembly, Kerala State. The library has Solar Power Plant which will generate the entire energy needs of the library, Digital Class Room and eco-friendly furnishings. In the pandemic period, library started a special online service for children titled 'Creative Homes-Defeat Covid-19', through social media tools and apps. This has allowed the participating children to remain active in their spaces, despite lock down challenges.

Binoy on Self-Sustaining of Libraries through Community Driven Network

"Several pillars exist for consistent and self-sustainable performance of a public library. Its localization alone serves the purpose for everyone in our community. In the case of this small panchayat library of Kerala, having a population of 7,955 with 1,210 houses, a volunteer base network has helped tide through changing circumstances. Government interventions and changing policies as per current trends at a macro level is the need of the hour for public libraries in India".

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Male Female







“ Adequate stakeholder support and guidance would help community trailblazer public librarians to materialize their dreams of reaching the unreached ”

PDDU Divisional Public Library - Kota

Key Milestones

Outreach 5,825 M: 4,234 F: 1,591

5 Specific Target Groups benefitted - School students, Youth, Senior Citizens & Adults including visually impaired, prison inmates & LGBTQ

17 Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

6 Thematic areas expanded

7 Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

5. Dr Deepak Kumar Shrivastava



21 Years of Experience



2017 - 2019 - Most Creative Thinker Award, Award of Excellence by JECRC University, Jaipur for great contribution to Public Libraries, District Administration Award, Outstanding Leadership Award, Master Moti Lal Sanghi Young Public Librarian Award & MRES Young Innovative Public Librarian



Government PDDU Divisional Public Library, Kota, Rajasthan

Deepak Kumar is a public librarian at the Government PDDU Divisional Public Library in Kota, Rajasthan. In the initial days of his career, Deepak recollects that he was unaware of the role of innovation, creativity, and technology in public libraries. He stated: “no one was there to help, recognize and guide public library professionals. A library is a space having issues, with lack of staff, budget, motivation, appreciation, and neglects community needs. Staff continue to deliver activities with no scope to think outside of box, and are always more concerned over loss of books, recovery of dues from remote areas, etc.”

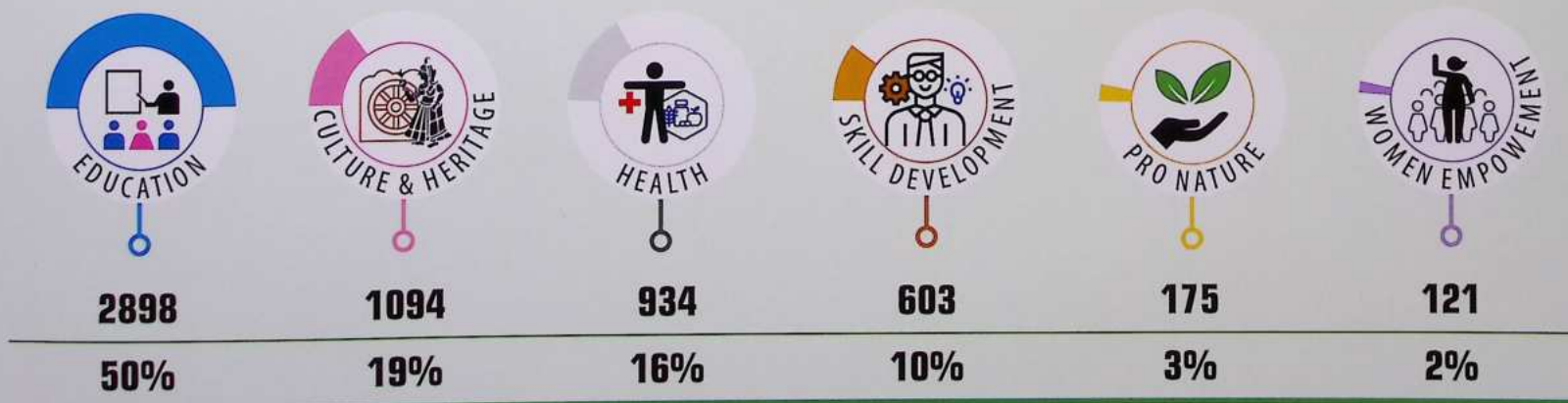
He took a leap of faith and joined MSSRF's capacity building programme for strengthening his leadership capabilities and understanding the role of sustainable development in libraries. Deepak mentions that the change in his confidence and the biggest opportunity to be a part of a network of public librarians; innovating, ideating and co-creating together towards welfare of community created a newer pathway.

The library has adopted cradle to grave approach and free access to internet have been made available to the public besides other basic facilities. Deepak states: “Library has major improvements and changes in the functioning and services for differently-abled, tele-health awareness, initiative for slum kids and LGBTQ, research citation for scholars and professors, kids email help line, read it and review it programme, school connect and voice donation programme, music library activity, audio book classroom, e-books and printed book supply services for IIT-JEE”.



It is the First library in the State of Rajasthan to have included services for transgender and sensitization programme on LGBTQ, thereby showcasing the role of library as inclusive spaces for all. Similar efforts were made to bring awareness on cleanliness, hygiene among women and girls both in libraries and across schools. Deepak has initiated partnerships with NGOs for delivery of library initiatives with relevance to the global goals of Good Health and Well-Being, Reduced Inequalities, Peace, Justice and Strong Institution, and Gender Equality, besides others.

Thematic Areas of Services



Outreach 5,825 **M: 4,234** **F: 1,591**

- **Culture and Heritage:** Day celebrations and awareness on events of national significance
- **Education:** Book launches, interaction with authors, video screenings and reading awareness for diverse groups
- **Health:** Tele-health programs and awareness on several diseases
- **Pro Nature:** World Environment day celebrations – tree plantations, awareness talks, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan awareness and rally
- **Skill Development:** Talk shows on human rights, harmony and peace, forums for senior citizens, etc.
- **Women Empowerment:** Motivational talk show for International Girl Child day

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



Deepak on Self-Sustaining Libraries

Deepak identifies the library to be in its growth stage and has stated:

“Self-motivation on the part of the librarian and the ability to connect with the community and stakeholders are essential pillars of self-sustainability. Sustainability means meeting current needs without compromising the opportunities of future generations. Self-sustaining model libraries are those which keep up the pace with the changing needs of society (changing of plans, functioning according to the present). Now we are collecting, arranging and circulating information according to community needs and engaging volunteers as per their own interest from the community. This approach is popularly called as “Pustak Mitra”. Now, I am able to facilitate and overcome problems which were faced earlier”.

Deepak as a trailblazing public librarian is keen to venture into newer and more essential areas of development through his sustained efforts and support from all. During Covid-19, he has sustained the library services by using social media app. He has realized the importance of delivering e-resources in local language, including English to the library users. He has shared *“I am able to connect with many users across the globe and able provide access to e-resources in my mother tongue. This service is popularly known as Knowledge @ your Door Step. MSSRF’s dedication and devotion towards building the capacity of public librarians is highly appreciable because they have shown a path for us to rebuild libraries for anyone. I am creative and innovative, having confidence to equip libraries to enhance information access for every one”.*





“Signifying the versatility of public libraries for an inclusive social transformation”

Allahabad Government Public Library - Prayagraj

Key Milestones

👥 Outreach **733** 📞 M: **525** 📞 F: **208**

- 4** Specific Target Groups benefitted - *School students, Youth, Adults & Senior Citizens*
- 7** Innovative Community Need-based Services (*locale-specific & demand driven*)
- 4** Thematic areas expanded
- 4** Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs
- 🏆** Ranked 8th All India in the 'List of Best Libraries' (India Today Ranking)

6. Dr Gopal Mohan Shukla



23 Years of Experience



Allahabad Government Public Library, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh

Gopal Mohan Shukla is from the Allahabad Government Public Library, Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh. He is a public library innovator, trailblazing activities for the communities. In the past, he was made to believe that a library is a space only for the readers, lending and a repository of books. The library has also faced issues in areas of finance, non-cooperation from fellow colleagues, inadequate IT infrastructure, attitudinal concerns, etc. After joining MSSRF's capacity building programme Gopal has taken steps to resolve these issue by overcoming the conservative library management mindsets.

The library currently provides facilities of clean water and sanitation, electricity, internet browsing access and reading room for the public. It has sections for children section, references, and periodicals. Gopal has improved his ability to interact with

community and has introduced various innovative services in this library. A few to name are competitive exam preparation consortiums for students, career guidance and counselling, discussions on sustainable development and environmental awareness, etc.

Library is seen to evolve as an inclusive space for all and the librarian has specifically initiated services in the lines of Decent Work and Economic Growth, Sustainable Cities and Communities, and Climate Action, besides sustaining focus on Quality Education. The most significant achievement was when the library was ranked 8th in the list of Best Public Libraries in India. Gopal believes that government participation and policy legislations can help transform the face of public libraries in India.



Outreach 733 M: 525 F: 208

Thematic Areas of Services



Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



- **Culture and Heritage:** Day celebrations such as Hindi Diwas, World Heritage day, etc.
- **Education:** Academic tours and reading awareness
- **Pro Nature:** Tree plantation initiatives, group discussions
- **Skill Development:** Professional training to college librarians

Gopal on Building Capacity of Public Librarians

Gopal has expressed: "There is no doubt that INELI has transformed my professional work culture significantly. This librarians' leadership and 21st century skill development program has been designed in a very scientific and pragmatic manner with national and international exposure. Learnings through this program have changed my mind set, attitude, management skills, work culture and way of thinking remarkably. The knowledge exchange program to Australian and Singaporean Public Libraries acquainted me with current international scenarios and services for communities through public libraries. I have applied my learning's in the library and have got enthusiastic results. Certainly this program is wonderful lifetime work experience for me".

Gopal has expressed: "There is a need for showcasing versatility of public libraries as knowledge centres for all. This would be an effective means for wide social transformation". To bring attention to the changing nature of work of public libraries and its importance for building knowledge societies, Gopal has written a paper on "International Network of Emerging Library Innovators: Global Movement of Public Libraries Transformation", which was published in University Grants Commission. The paper emphasises extensively in the skill development movement for public librarians in India and the world, thereby empowering public librarians to reach the unreached through innovative community services.



7. Ms Kalaiselvi M



10 Years of Experience



Branch Library, Kanjikovil, Erode, Tamil Nadu

“Believing in learning beyond books and encouraging the scientist within each child to innovate, ideate and co-create”

Branch Library - Kanjikovil

Key Milestones

Outreach **2,613** M: **1,398** F: **1,215**

3 Specific Target Groups benefitted - School students, Other mixed age groups & Farmers

13 Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

5 Thematic areas expanded

4 Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

2018 - Best Readers' Forum Award received from Tamil Nadu Government & Best Librarian Award from Nam Uratha Sinthanai

Kalaiselvi, like other librarians is a trailblazing librarian who has also believed that a library is a space for reading books. She credits the changing phases and accomplishments in this library, and her perception, attitude, and confidence to be a library innovative leader became pertinent after joining the MSSRF's capacity building programme.

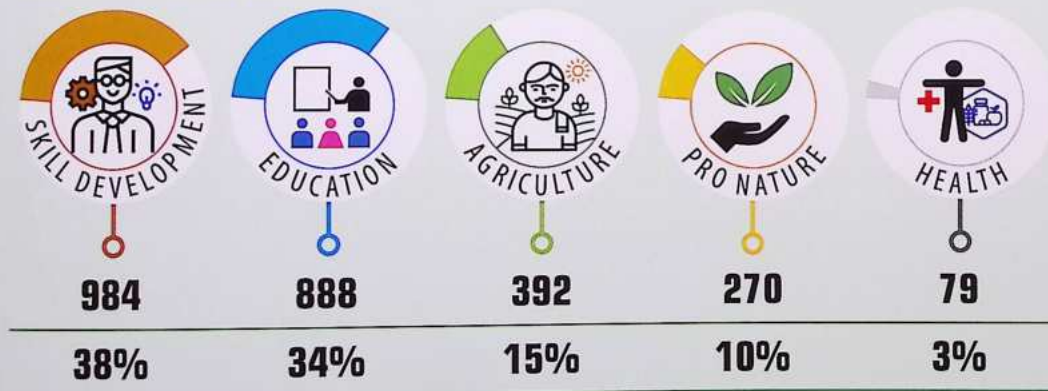
Kalaiselvi has been able to improve community participation through the library by providing community need-based services. A lot of the library's work also focuses on slum-dwellers children as well. Several innovative services have been introduced such as plant clinics for farmers, recycling activities, browsing facilities, reading, and other related activities /events.

Unique to this library, Kalaiselvi has introduced “Do it yourself STEAM and STEM program (science and innovation)” for children which involves using of waste materials. This has been a breakthrough effort recognised by local schools, colleges and government departments in Erode. This program has equipped several school children to learn beyond text books and understand science practically. Children ideate and brainstorm for creating equipment such as washing machines, mini-refrigerators, mixer grinders, grass-cutters, ATM machines, water dispensers and vending machine, vaccum cleaner, popcorn maker, water purifier, recycling plastic for laying tar roads and other such appliances. Several children from this group have been recognized and awarded at District, State and National levels.



Outreach 2,613 M: 1,398 F: 1,215

Thematic Areas of Services



- **Agriculture:** Plant clinics and farmers' forums, awareness on plantations among children
- **Education:** Computer-aided learning program, reading awareness, scientific learning and experiments for students for practical learning
- **Health:** Awareness on hygiene and importance of cleanliness on World Hand Wash day
- **Pro Nature:** Recycling activities and innovation through usage of waste materials for children
- **Skill Development:** Story-telling programs, multi-purpose camps and trainings, spoken English classes, etc.

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



As far as her professional transformation is concerned, Kalaiselvi believes that the program has helped nourish positive, creative and innovative thinking in her along with being able to strategize her ideas, eliminate the habit of procrastination, and make her decision-making process more fluid and transparent. The library is having variety of initiatives and she credits its success to the community for trusting and encouraging her to support children's learning needs.

Kalaiselvi highlights that both the children and the library have received awards and recognition for the innovative services, post participation in MSSRF's capacity building programme. "Students have participated in a pro-nature recycling initiative and have won awards as Junior Researchers at the District

Level. One of their works was also selected at the National Level". Kalaiselvi has been instrumental to expand the scope of library and its access to everyone in an equitable way. This library has been receiving continues support from its community, local stakeholders and Readers' Forum hence making this library more inclusive space.

However, she highlights that there are some concerns associated to the working of the library such as need for more space, library timings which are currently not full-time, shortage of funds, need for automating work in the library and digitization, etc. She has initiated steps to resolve these obstacles in due course of time reflecting her proactive and progressive mindset. During 2020 lockdown she has also authored a book titled "Ettaiyapurathar Pottriya Yedagam" which is about the history of Karungalpalayam Library.

Kalaiselvi on Building Inclusive Communities through Knowledge Services

Kalaiselvi remains inspired on the concept of reaching the unreached and continues to seek opportunities to build Next-Generation Library for its communities. She has expressed *"any librarian with potential to ideate, can invest their time, be creative, and have dialogues with diverse target groups. Despite challenges and societal barriers, Kalai has stated that "librarian must remain neutral and support everyone's learning needs. Public library needs to be the knowledge hub and be open to one and all. Moreover, government interventions and policy action can propel collective action for public libraries in India".*





நிகழ்வு / சம்பவம்

**காஞ்சிக்கோவிலில்
பயிர் மருத்துவ முகாம்**



பெருந்துறை, செப். 24-





“Integrating the element of climate literacy and awareness for sustainable development”

Branch Library - Andipalayam

Key Milestones

Outreach 6,985 M: 3,406 F: 3,579

3 Specific Target Groups benefitted - School students, Other mixed age groups & Senior Citizens

10 Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

4 Thematic areas expanded

3 Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

1 Best Public Library Award (2017-2018)

8. Mr Murugan A



22 Years of Experience

Murugan is a people's person and a well-known librarian working in the Branch Library, Tirupur district of Tamil Nadu. He has been an active participant of MSSRF's capacity building programme which has helped him to fine-tune library initiatives towards the United Nations Agenda 2030. He is a quick learner, inquisitive, critical thinker, service oriented, and excellent communicator.

Murugan has had major accomplishments as a public librarian in recent times. Reading for children and their education, tree planting initiatives focusing on environmental conservation, and yoga classes for women and children are few innovative services initiated by him. He has taken step towards building community development and addressing their needs through the library, despite persistent problems and challenges. He has collaborated with more than 13 schools for building awareness on library services and continues to improve library infrastructure through local partnerships. Since the execution of Reading Mission program, students have accessed the library and have been reading UN-SDG based thematic books categorised by Murugan. Several



Branch Library, Andipalayam, Tirupur, Tamil Nadu

healthcare initiatives have also been implemented for those requiring medical aid and awareness by the library.

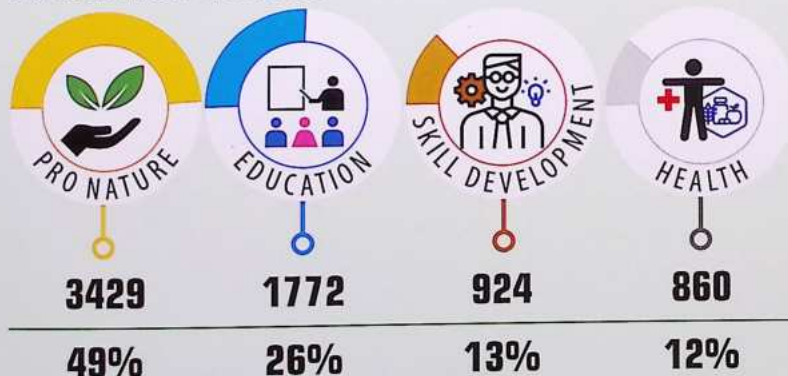
Murugan states: *"Membership and footfall has increased from 300 members to 5,000 members after community need-based services were introduced in the library. The library also houses 5 lakhs plus books and has been helping community members even through monetary aid and support as per their needs and requirements"*.

Murugan describes the following life changing scenario - *"In a village we wished to establish a library but the villagers were not willing to accept us because they believed it was going to be an unnecessary expenditure for them. But eventually the children of the village wanted the library. So we brought it in for free which helped to educate the children and women of the village"*. According to him this has been a remarkable progress in the attitudes and immediate behavioural change of villagers towards the library and it has fuelled the energy in him to be a community trailblazer.



Outreach 6,985 M: 3,406 F: 3,579

Thematic Areas of Services

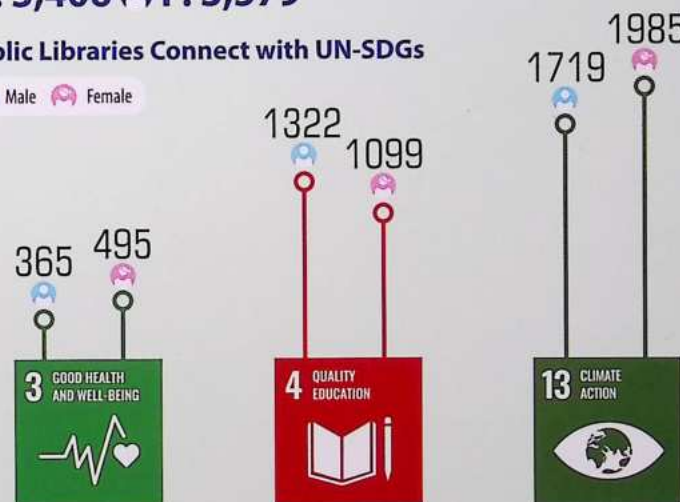


- **Education:** Reading Mission and awareness for students
- **Health:** Yoga awareness, tele-health programs on several health issues
- **Pro Nature:** Awareness on environmental protection and reducing the usage of plastics
- **Skill Development:** Summer camps, chess coaching, drawing competitions, computer-aided learning programme

Murugan is also renowned and appreciated for his efforts on climate literacy and action among adults and youth which is unique to the global goals on Climate Action. Several tree plantation drives have also been initiated by him whereby close to 1,500 – 2,000 saplings have been planted in schools and other institutions with the support of several stakeholders. He has extensively worked towards environmental conservation by running mass campaigns on plastic ban and

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Male Female



making villages around the library as plastic free zones. These zones are now litter free and people have been made aware on the harmful effects of plastic use. Significant reduction and in certain cases zero use of plastics has been registered through this branch library.

Murugan on Co-creating Pathways for Change

Murugan is planning on expanding the scope of innovative services and activities of the library to cover all the UN-SDGs possible. According to him, *“Streamlining the work of public libraries through government support and enhancing the pace of work done by them through adequate grants and funding, including community engagement is the need of the hour in the Indian Public Library scenario”*.



9. Mr Sairam A



28 Years of Experience



District Central Library, Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu

“ Good food leads to good health. Good food and health aids quality education. Food, health and education ensures employment ”

District Central Library - Tiruvannamalai

Key Milestones

Outreach **18,555** M: **10,025** F: **8,530**

4 Specific Target Groups benefitted - *School students, Youth, Adults including farmers & differently-abled*

23 Innovative Community Need-based Services (*locale-specific & demand driven*)

7 Thematic areas expanded

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

2016 - 2019 : Best Librarian Award, Government of Tamil Nadu & Best Library Award for reaching out to 18,555 community members

Sairam has innate qualities of positive thinking, passionate, creative, people centred, compassionate and efficient decision-maker. Prior to 2015, Sairam has focused on encouraging reading habits among children only. Similar to other libraries, this library has faced financial constraints, non-cooperation among colleagues, attitudinal concerns in staff and other related issues for eons.

Through MSSRF's capacity building programme, Sairam highlights an improvement in his attitude, skills and knowledge has taken a swirl and he now chooses to reshape libraries striving towards community development and societal change. He attributes the success and accomplishments to the support rendered by everyone who are valuing this library as a Next-Generation knowledge hub. Sairam has expressed *"I directly interact with communities,*

which has increase multi fold, just to learn on their needs. This is allowing me to plan new need-based information activities".

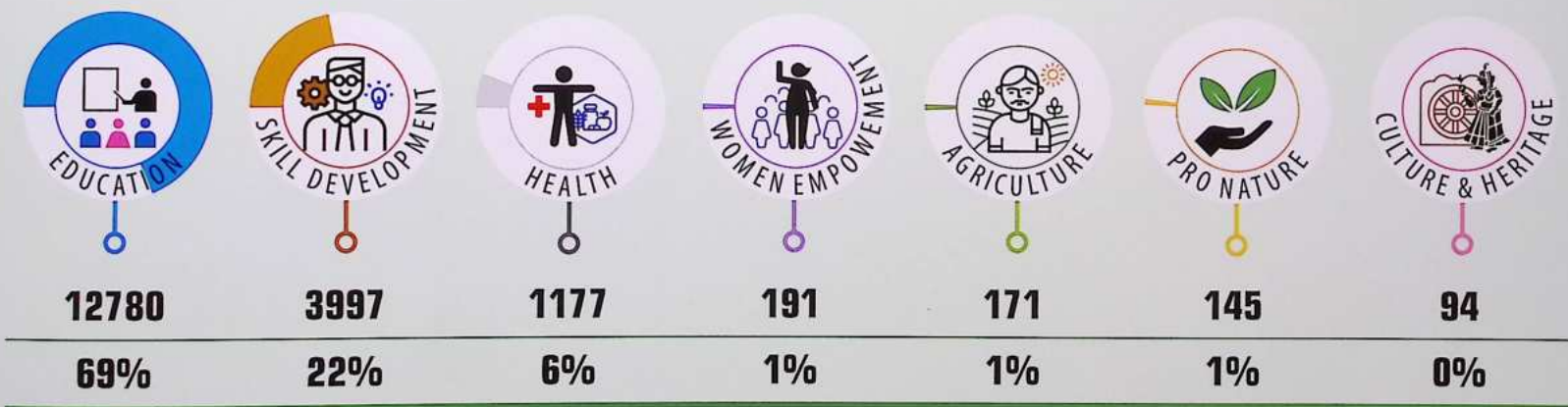
Sairam innovates and has introduced health campaigns, plant clinics for farmers, audio advisories, soil health, free competitive exam coaching, skill development, Reading Mission and awareness programmes among different age groups. The library has been able to bring into its fold, diverse age groups hence adopting the cradle to grave approach.

Sairam has streamlined the library services towards India's National Priority. Additionally, his focus has been on integrating key UN Goals such as Life on Land, Reduced Inequality and Good Health and Well-being in recent times.



Outreach 18,555 M: 10,025 F: 8,530

Thematic Areas of Services



He has highlighted that the work of donors and patrons have supported him generously and continuously for delivering community need-based services through direct funding and in-kind contributions. He has expressed that exposure to international trending libraries, can allow librarians to re-shape the future of Indian libraries.

- **Agriculture:** Agri-audio advisories, soil health and plant clinic for farmers
- **Culture & Heritage:** National day and mother tongue day celebration
- **Education:** Mass reading programme *Padi... Pidi... Sol...*, literacy programme, coaching classes for TNPSC and IAS, basic computer course
- **Health:** General health camp, Tele-health programme, eradication of anaemia
- **Pro Nature:** Create awareness about the importance of maintenance of forest and water management
- **Skill Development:** Spoken English, conduct drawing story-telling competition, vocational training, tailoring training, social media awareness
- **Women Empowerment:** Micro entrepreneur training for women

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



Sairam on Localisation of Knowledge Hubs

"Self-sustainability of public libraries is important. Libraries must have a strong vision and mission in place, & strong partnerships and collaboration. Librarian's dedication, outreach with wider community & broad mindset builds Knowledge Hubs. A librarian must upgrade soft skills, digital knowledge, documentation and trending / upcoming skills and ensure quality services are delivered for community transformation".

"Interlinking of UN-SDGs in public libraries is an essential contribution in building India's knowledge societies".

He intends to uphold their excellent performance by reaching the unreached through impactful and quality community services. He credits MSSRF for identifying librarians as community developers and agents of change.





10. Ms Sanjeevani Prasad Atre



10 Years of Experience



Pune Marathi Granthalay,
Maharashtra

“A public library is a non-discriminatory space of learning and knowledge sharing for everyone”

Pune Marathi Granthalay - Pune

Key Milestones

Outreach **13,233** M: **8,132** F: **5,101**

4 Specific Target Group benefitted - *Toddlers, School students (including differently abled), Adults & Senior Citizens*

3 Innovative Community Need-based Services (*locale-specific & demand driven*)

4 Thematic areas expanded

5 Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

2017-2019 - Wanchit Vikas Award instituted by Ranwara Magazine, Best Librarian Awards - Wanchit Vikas (Organisation) Sanstha & Sidhartha Library Award, Maharashtra Sahitya Parishad & INELI India (Reading Mission)

The librarian at Pune Marathi Granthalay (PMG), Sanjeevani is dedicated for the cause of community development. In the past, the library did deliver community need-based services in local vernacular but very often was challenged both in operation, and management of day-to-day function. She has been keen on supporting children from marginalised communities.

Sanjeevani's participation in MSSRF's capacity building programme gave her an opportunity to apply her thinking to design newer ways to strengthen the existing systems in the library. Since then, she has received cooperation from her colleagues and the management. Based on her learning and takeaways from this program, the library, now has a regularly functioning website managed by the authorities. New activities were initiated wherein the library is partially digitized, English books were procured and have expanded services to diverse age groups, thereby adopting cradle to grave approach.

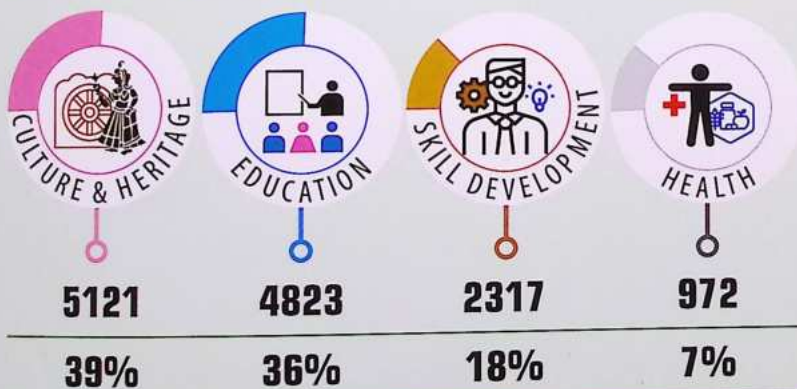
PMG has become renowned for its work of providing equal opportunities for all making libraries an inclusive space irrespective of their caste, class, creed, gender, religion or occupation. It is in this light that the library has been running book banks and skill development services for the children of sex workers from Pune, providing them a secure environment to learn and grow. Close to 600 children have been taken into the wings of the library in collaboration with local NGO. Together, they are working towards improving the quality and way of life of these children despite the rough environments and social barriers.

Through these initiatives, the efforts of the library have been streamlined towards the UN-SDGs with specific focus on Sustainable Cities and Communities, Responsible Consumption and Production, Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, besides other goals.



Outreach 13,233 M: 8,132 F: 5,101

Thematic Areas of Services



- **Culture and Heritage:** Day celebrations and awareness programs on festivals, rakhi and ganesh idol making workshops
- **Education:** Book donation drives and Reading Mission programmes
- **Health:** Tele-health programs, Importance of yoga, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan awareness program
- **Skill Development:** Summer camps for children

The primary funding for the library comes through diverse sources – NGOs, readers forum, public, private, international investors and the government. In recent years, the library has also obtained financial support through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funding from a corporate tech based firm in Maharashtra. The library is now organized and operates on an efficient in-house functioning system.

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



Sanjeevani on Knowledge Hubs

Sanjeevani is always recognised for her consistent and dedicated efforts towards community welfare and inclusivity proving to be a community trailblazer for reaching the unreached. She strongly asserts “Self-sustainability of a public library comes with its staff to adapt to changing circumstances and tap opportunities. There must be continuous services ideated, along with welcoming of newer, trending and cost effective technology and facilities. This has to be supported by aligning policies and government interventions & streamline librarians’ efforts to bring about appropriate inter-connections for community development”.





The Change-Makers

The Change-Maker's profile in this section are about library leaders who are innovating using their innate skills, and have been able to overcome challenges. Each one of them have risen by demonstrating change leadership. They chose to collaborate, connect and are creating inclusive libraries in India. Each one of them have remarkably increased options for their users, enabled events, activities and services contributing to sustainable and equitable growth in countries at various stages of development. They are the trending role models for public library leaders alike.



1. Mr Chezhan P



10 Years of Experience



Village Library, Sanniyasipatti, Salem, Tamil Nadu

“Self-Driven with access to adequate and accurate information to impact community welfare and development”

Village Library - Sanniyasipatti

Key Milestones

Outreach **840** M: **371** F: **469**

3

Specific Target Group Benefited - School students, Youth & Senior Citizens

12

Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

4

Thematic Areas Expanded



Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Chezhan is a single librarian and has been an active participant of the MSSRF's capacity building programme and is passionate about the services he renders to the community. He is a fast learner and an efficient implementer whereby he has successfully been able to adopt the learning by doing approach to bring necessary changes.

According to Chezhan, the library is progressive and has active community participation and stakeholder support. Based on his learnings, he now envisions a library providing access to diverse information through regular activities/ events and services. He

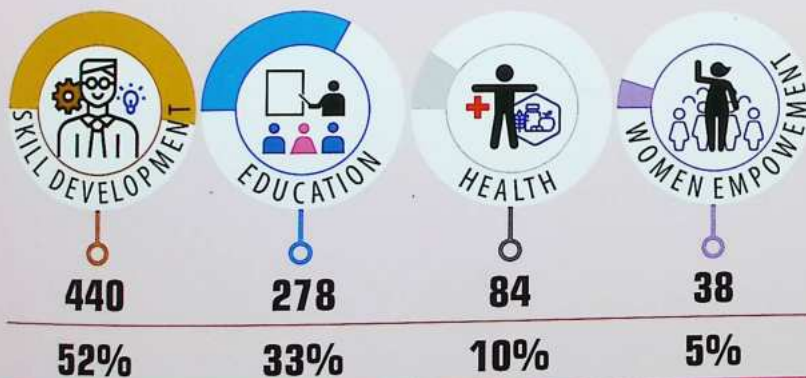
has redefined the use of the limited library space by adopting a flexibility principle and re-orienting the existing infrastructure. He allots the space to diverse target groups (Children Corner, Readers Forum, Senior Citizens Forum, Computer section, Women's Forum) visiting the library in accordance to their requirements and time convenience.

Besides library promotional and awareness activities, the innovative services offered through this library are aligned with the UN-SDGs, having specific focus on Good Health and Well-being, Gender Equality and Decent Work and Economic Growth.



Outreach 840 M: 371 F: 469

Thematic Areas of Services



- **Education:** Reading Mission, Computer-Aided Learning Program (CALP), information on government schemes and science exhibitions as online services
- **Health:** Tele-health program
- **Skill Development:** Preparation for competitive exams, project work by school and college students, story-telling, career guidance for employment, art competition for children
- **Women Empowerment:** Embroidery training, handicraft making training, toy making

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



Chezian on Leading for Change

When aligning services with the global goals, he is very keen on bringing strong awareness on Gender Equality in this village for breaking various social issues, which would build stronger inclusive societies.



2. Dr Deepamala M A



10 Years of Experience



Former Librarian of Vedapatti Village Library, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

“Bringing about a positive change and shift in mindsets and attitudes towards role of public libraries”

Village Library - Vedapatti

Key Milestones

Outreach **617** M: **331** F: **286**

3

Specific Target Group benefited - School students, Youth & Senior Citizens

8

Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

6

Thematic Areas Expanded



Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Deepamala was the ex-village librarian of the Vedapatti Village Library, Coimbatore district as of 2019. Until this period, she has served and strengthened the functioning of the Vedapatti Village library. Deepamala has qualities of agility, growth oriented, perseverance, self-motivated and opportunistic. She has stated that initially she has focused on reading, lending of books and over all library management. She expressed that public library was forgotten and abandoned by the community due to advancements in technology. As a single librarian, she has faced issues related to finance, shortage of volunteers and delivery of services.

Deepamala appreciates and is grateful for her selection in MSSRF's librarian capacity building programme which has allowed her to overcome many challenges and has identified ways to meet and create a learning path. According to her, the interaction with local communities had increased that supported her in spreading awareness on reading and role of public libraries as inclusive community learning hubs. Deepamala has expressed "A librarian is a social mentor contributing towards community

development by dialoguing with focus groups. Many innovative services could be delivered in confidence with support from different target groups".

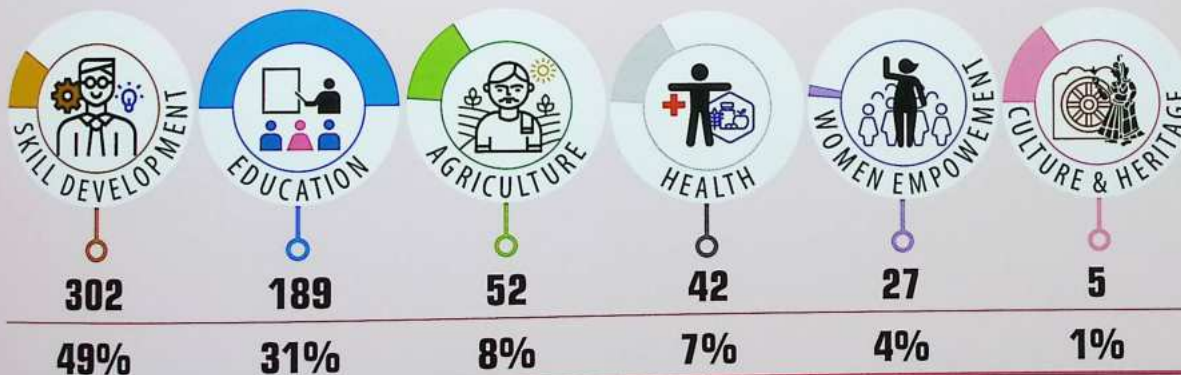
Deepamala had initiated day-to-day discussion on "Food is Medicine, a programme offered through social media for more than 230 local communities". Also, she has promoted adult literacy especially for women who have now learnt to read and write in Tamil and English. She has executed Computer-Aided Learning Programme (CALP) service for school children in 2017-18 and has also taken forward activities to promote home and nutri-gardening.

On an ongoing basis, efforts were made to gather traditional manuscripts from the community to preserve under rare books collection in the library. Since such initiatives, the backward communities to this village had approached her to seek need-based services for their livelihood enhancements as well. Excluding library promotional and awareness activities, in this library efforts, were taken to showcase the relevance of UN-SDGs specific to Gender Equality, Zero Hunger and Good Health and Well-Being.



Outreach 617 M: 331 F: 286

Thematic Areas of Services



- **Agriculture:** Awareness program on nutri and terrace gardening
- **Culture and Heritage:** Collection and preservation of rare books and literature on palm leaves
- **Education:** Digital literacy, reading awareness camps, library visits for children and students, Computer-Aided Learning Programme (CALP)
- **Health:** Importance of healthy food and its medicinal values, living a life without allopathic medicines via social media
- **Skill Development:** Oration and communication skills, story-telling, language class, chess, reading, writing, and educational tours
- **Women Empowerment:** Entrepreneurship and self-employment for women tailors

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



Deepamala on Leading for Change

Deepamala highlights that inspiration is an integral element for sustainability of public libraries apart from sustained and continuous efforts made by the librarian. Future of public librarians and their development is dependent on a shift in mindsets and adequate training towards community development is required. In her current position - Assistant Librarian, National Institute of Design (NID), The Acharya N G Ranga Agricultural University, Namburu, Andhra Pradesh, she aims to focus on environmental sustainability, and build awareness apart from regular library services.



3. Dr Janakiraman Amirthalingam



14 Years of Experience



Former Librarian of Bhoothalingam Library, M S Swaminathan Research Foundation, Chennai, Tamil Nadu

“A librarian equipped with technology and research can positively contribute to sustainable development”

Bhoothalingam Library - Chennai

Key Milestones

Outreach **401** M: **188** F: **213**

4 Specific Target Group benefited - School students & Adults including Farmers, Fishers & Research Scholars

2 Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

2 Thematic Areas Expanded

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Janakiraman was the librarian at the Bhoothalingam Library, MSSRF until 2020. He has participated in the capacity building programme for librarians. He is a doer, strategic in thinking, taps into opportunities, resource mobilizer, pro-environment and uses trending technology where possible. He has gained confidence and is strongly influenced to work in transforming libraries for everyone. A platform has been co-created to formalise a librarian's network in South Asia, for which he is acting as a Network Coordinator.

Janakiraman has provided services in the library which are tied to the foundation's objectives and target groups it caters to – farmers, fishers, school children, research scholars, academicians, etc. The visitors mainly access scientific papers and articles for their references from e-journals, archives, user

guidance, circulation and CD-ROM search including document delivery services etc. The library also has forums such as Society for the Advancement of Library and Information Service, Alumni Association of Library and Information Service and Special Library Association. Library has integrated AUTOLIB Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) for strengthening search system for its online users.

Janakiraman has taken significant strides towards focusing on conservation of resources and climate action. He has transformed the library space into a green and eco-friendly library driven by solar energy. This allows for reduction of power cost, reduced carbon footprint and carbon dioxide emissions thereby meeting Goal 7 of the UN-SDGs on Affordable and Clean Energy.



Outreach 401 M: 188 F: 213

Thematic Areas of Services



359

90%



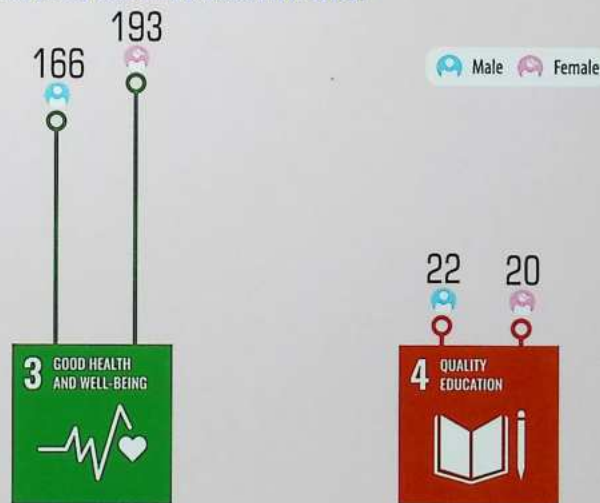
42

10%

■ **Health:** Awareness and tele-health camps in collaboration with Apollo Hospital, Chennai on Infectious, communicable and non-communicable diseases including tuberculosis, diabetes, chicken pox, etc.

■ **Skill Development:** Software training and basic services for children

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



Janakiraman on Rebuilding Libraries for Communities

Janakiraman has stated that: “It necessary for a librarian to be a transformational leader having a vision to empower communities through libraries. One must be equipped with knowledge, stay up-to-date with current trends and skills associated to technology, innovation and its relevance to library services. There is a definite need to undertake high value research on library services to keep pace with changing circumstances and constantly be driven by collaboration, coaching and facilitation. The power of networking through librarians is also a means to rebuild the libraries in this region”.



4. Mr Jayasankar B



13 Years of Experience



District Central Library,
Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu

“Adopting an all-round and holistic approach for sustainable development through public libraries”

District Central Library - Tiruchirappalli

Key Milestones

Outreach **9,498** M: **5,440** F: **4,058**

4 Specific Target Group benefited - School students, Youth, Senior Citizens, & Adults including visually challenged persons

23 Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

7 Thematic Areas Expanded

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Jayasankar, a librarian from the District Central Library in Tiruchirappalli has been focusing on organizing various initiatives (readers' forums, Japanese art, origami, story-telling and other skill development initiatives for children, nature conservation program, waste recycling, yoga classes, women empowerment program and most importantly, coaching for aspirants of competitive exams and government jobs). Since his participation in MSSRF's capacity building programme, he has been inspired on the role of libraries beyond books. Jayasankar's library has been one among a handful of other libraries that has attempted to provide counselling and guidance on employment opportunities to those who have approached the library for help.

This library houses more than 23 innovative services covering 7 thematic areas on a regular and continuous basis, ideated collectively by the librarians, staff, readers' forum and associated stakeholders. This collaborative and cradle to grave approach has benefited a larger target audience of 9,498 members including visually impaired. Jayasankar identifies

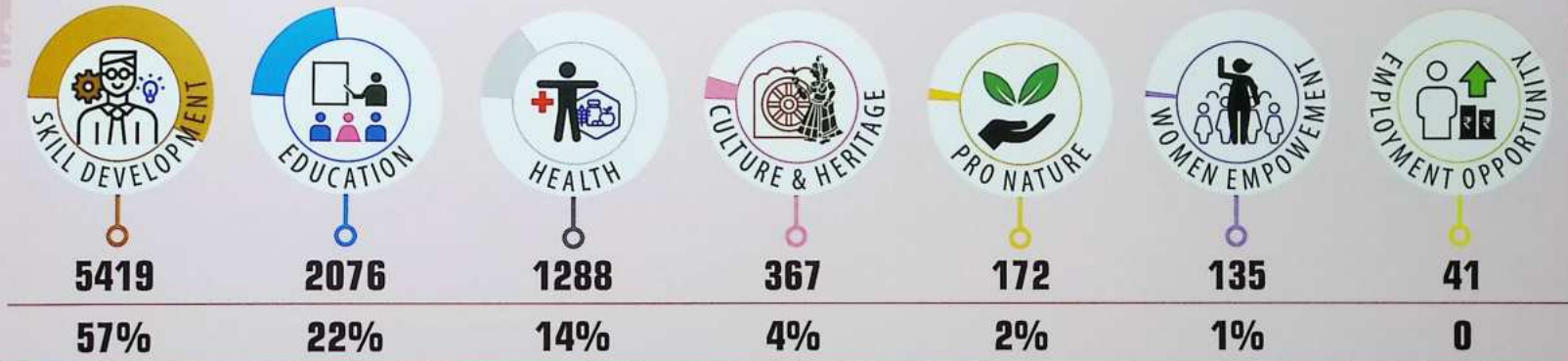
the library has progressed in the past years despite having faced by internal and external hurdles. He has overcome his own inhibition through the learnings from MSSRF's capacity building programme.

These initiatives continue to benefit the communities in Tiruchirappalli and the library has showcased the relevance of integrating more than 7 Global goals in public libraries including Goal 16 on building local partnerships.

Jayasankar on Strengthening Access to Information and Services

“There is a need to be inspired, remain agile and be able to devote time to the services of the community. Information Access is a two-way flow and must benefit everyone including those who are yet to register with the library”. He has learnt that a librarian can facilitate and be instrumental in bringing changes not just to users but those who are still yet to access the library. He attributes the success and major accomplishments to the dedicated mentors and members of readers' forum.

Thematic Areas of Services



Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

🧑 Male 🧑 Female

- **Culture and Heritage:** Day celebrations and awareness on festivals, local traditional events and elements of national significance
- **Education:** Civil services exam coaching, reading camps for students, learning Tamil language
- **Employment Opportunity:** Awareness programmes and employment opportunities talk and forum
- **Health:** Yoga classes, medical camps, eye checkup camp
- **Pro Nature:** Awareness on protecting planet earth, recycling and craft making out of waste
- **Skill Development:** Origami, chess classes, spoken English sessions, story-telling and others
- **Women Empowerment:** Women's day celebration, awareness on health and women's rights, entrepreneurial activities and tailoring class





5. Mr Kannan S



25 Years of Experience

Kannan is a team player, highly motivated, people and network oriented and dedicated librarian. He has strong communication skills which he exhibited during his participation in the MSSRF's capacity building programme. He found many inspiring tools, ideas and has gained insights on the role of UN-SDGs, their relevance to both National Priorities and applicability in the public libraries. He is very agile and keen to improve his knowledge and self-confidence, when possible.

Pudukkottai district is an agriculture belt and Kannan has been instrumental in reaching out and supporting farmers and their community since 2017. With the consistent support and interest of fellow librarians, readers' forum and immediate officer, many ICT based agricultural need-based services were introduced such as plant clinic, audio advisory, agri helpline, phone-in-programme and soil testing for the farmers. Kannan has been able to adopt the hub and spoke model in this library. For example, in Kothamangalam village, the library has



District Central Library, Pudukkottai, Tamil Nadu

organised more than 15 plant clinics in association with MSSRF's plant doctors. Post programme, more than 170 farmers have joined through the library and receive agro advisories which has allowed them to gain clarity on cropping, yield increase, management of pests and diseases, use of bio inputs and so on. Also, through farmers' helpline services, these farmers have access to and are able to receive updated information through agricultural experts.

Additionally, more than 14 phone-in-programme in different thematic areas such as agriculture, animal husbandry, health & nutrition and career guidance was delivered. The hub and spokes model allows the participation of users and non-users from other libraries of the district, hence amplifying the outreach of every service. Besides these services, "Vasipai Nesipom", awareness creation on coronavirus also organised on a regular basis by the library. Interestingly, it is aimed to build information and literacy awareness among community. One such is implementation of sustained library services -

**“ Powered by self-confidence
and dedication for community
development ”**

District Central Library - Pudukkottai

Key Milestones

Outreach **3,818** M: **2,514** F: **1,304**

3 Specific Target Group benefited - *School students, Youth, & Adults including Farmers, differently-abled visually challenged persons*

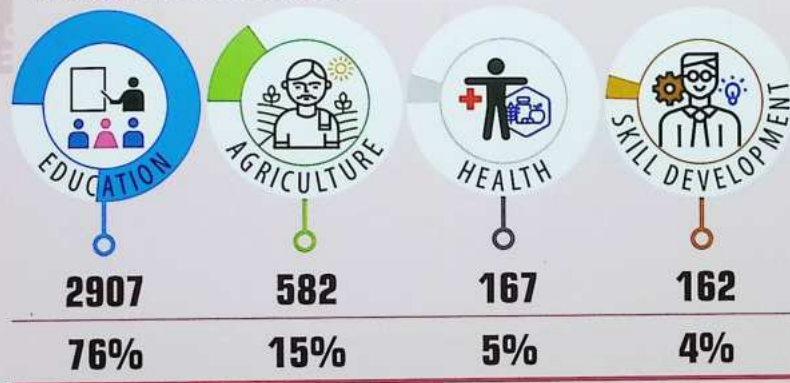
8 Innovative Community Need-based Services (*locale-specific & demand driven*)

4 Thematic Areas Expanded

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

👤 Outreach 3,818 🧑 M: 2,514 🧑 F: 1,304

Thematic Areas of Services



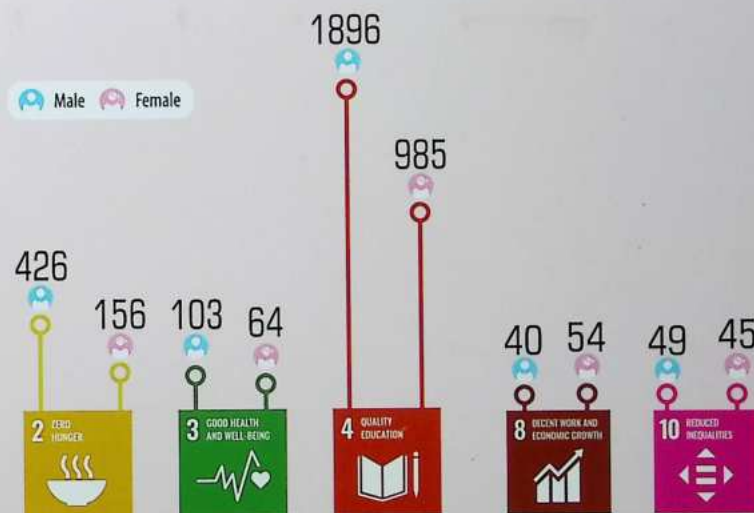
- **Agriculture:** Plant clinics, audio advisories, helpline, phone-in-programme through hub and spokes model
- **Education:** Reading Mission, competitive exam coaching classes, literacy awareness and day observations
- **Health:** Telehealth programs and health & nutrition phone-in-programme
- **Skill Development:** Summer camp programs, special programs for visually-abled

monthly lecture series on trending topics. Likewise, the importance of book reading is an ongoing popular programme among readers.

Moreover, this district library is benchmarking inclusivity by housing independent section for differently-abled, having audio books and braille collections. Further, a separate reading space is dedicated for Book owners and those preparing for competitive exams.

The progress and visible changes are attributed to the pillar of the library - "the readers' forum" members have mobilized 25 lakhs INR and have constructed a new library building which was inaugurated recently. They meet twice a month and analyze the library progress and plan accordingly for further development.

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



Kannan on Reaching the Unreached

"The library is progressively taking the steps towards community development. I have taken extensive interest in learning the needs of the farming communities through the library thus reaching the unreached and focusing on areas other than education. I find much inspiration from my fellow peers, who are applying their learning's to integrate various services. These efforts have resulted in the work of the library being aligned to the UN-SDGs". Moreover, he considers that the performance of public libraries and librarians should be adequately recognized, supported and rewarded. This in turn would allow librarians to take more effort.



6. Ms Kulbir Kaur



31 Years of Experience



Retired Chief Librarian of Musafir Memorial Central State Library, Patiala, Punjab

“Public librarians are stars and ambassadors of knowledge and community learning”

Musafir Memorial Central State Library - Patiala

Key Milestones

Outreach 1,090 M: 648 F: 442

3 Specific Target Group benefited - School students, Youth & Adults including Defence Personnel & Teachers

8 Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

3 Thematic Areas Expanded

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Sahitya Kalash award given by Punjab Sahitya Academy

Kulbir Kaur has retired as a public librarian, in 2019, from the Musafir Memorial State Central Library (SCL) in Patiala, Punjab. Kulbir highlights that she has observed changes in herself – “I am feeling more confident, become a good public speaker, well organized, good manager, problem solver and have ample international exposure. My horizon has widened, attitude has changed”.

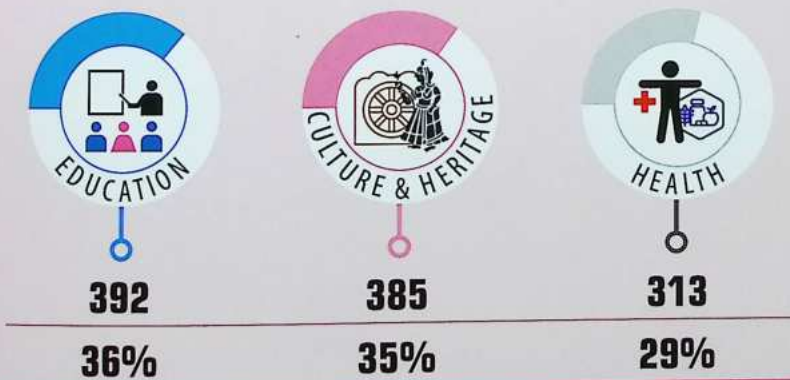
Since her participation in the MSSRF's capacity building programme, and during her tenure in this library, she has been able assert services to diverse age groups from children to senior citizens. The library houses several sections (reference, children, periodicals, and archives, including reading space) and have provided access to internet for the public. The auditorium and lecture halls are rented out to the community for various educational and cultural purposes.

Kulbir had imbibed through MSSRF's capacity building programme to connect and engage more with the community. The first few initiatives were associated to tele-health awareness and Reading Mission. Kulbir stated “Now the community are more engaged in the outreach services organized in the library. For children, summer camp is being conducted every year from 1st to 15th June. Children's Day is observed for a week every year. Various schools visit library regularly, rhyme and story-telling session are held. In Reading month Radio talk was organized. Outreach activities on various occasions were taken up, visited Sikligar community on Book Day. Library space is used by students preparing for competitive exams, and various literary forums organize their program. Membership has also substantially increased in the library overtime”.



Outreach 1,090 M: 648 F: 442

Thematic Areas of Services



- **Culture and Heritage:** Day celebrations and festivities of national significance
- **Education:** Awareness on reading, spoken English courses
- **Health:** Tele-health programs on diverse themes, yoga day celebration

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



Kulbir on Public Libraries as Knowledge Hubs

Kulbir attributes the changes brought through the library was due to “*knowledge, good communication skill, power of decision making, time management and strategic thinking are the important factors that improve the performance*”. Despite retirement, Kulbir has shared her passion: “*I want to help community in education, health, livelihoods and cleanliness awareness programs. I also want to sensitize the public on the role of public library as lifelong learning centre – our community’s third space*”.



7. Dr Mohanasundaram M



17 Years of Experience



Full Time Branch Library, Inam, Karur, Tamil Nadu

“Revolutionist transforming the public library into a knowledge centre”

Full Time Branch Library - Inam

Key Milestones

Outreach **354** M: **198** F: **156**

2 Specific Target Group benefited - School students & Adults

2 Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

2 Thematic Areas Expanded

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Best Library Achievement Award 2016 from Government of Tamil Nadu

Mohanasundaram aims to transform the role of public libraries as a community learning hub. By participating in MSSRF's librarian capacity building programme, he has been able to enhance his strategic thinking, innovate ideas for community services and his interpersonal skills. His decision-making skills have improved, has changed his attitude on building a community network, hence his interaction with the community has also increased. He has created awareness on reading and the use of public libraries in several schools.

The library provides basic facilities, there are sections for references, periodicals and caters to a diverse age group ranging from children to

senior citizens. In the functioning and working of the library, Mohanasundaram highlights “We have faced financial constraints and non-cooperation from fellow on certain issues which we have resolved through public sponsorship and internal discussions, respectively. We have initiated changes to the library, slowly understanding the learning needs and disseminating key information and awareness programmes accordingly. This has given me a very enriched experience to be a library innovator for life”.

The library has so far been able to bring in the participation of 354 community members in the areas of Health and Education, specifically focussed on children.



Outreach 354 M: 198 F: 156

Thematic Areas of Services



324

92%



30

8%

- **Education:** Summer camps, promoting reading habits among students
- **Health:** Importance of natural foods and yoga class, organised health camp

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Male Female



Mohanasundaram on Building Bridges

"I have identified myself as an impact mediator between the library and public. I am learning to be a revolutionist by initiating services in the library as a knowledge centre". In the coming days he is planning to enhance and improve the facilities within the library by focusing on "creating a pleasant, eco-friendly space with solar air-conditioned facility". Through his forthcoming initiatives, he will focus on improving access to the library and will reduce inequalities due to social taboos for bridging the urban – rural divide. Mohanasundaram said "I urge librarians to bring visibility of their library services for reaching the unreached. Together, we must showcase the significance of interlinking National Priorities in public libraries. This is a transformational beginning for me, the librarians and our libraries".



8. Ms Mumthaz Beegum



18 Years of Experience



State Central Library, Kavaratti Island, Lakshadweep

“Collaborative and consistent efforts through public libraries and their stakeholders can contribute to India’s development scenario”

State Central Library - Lakshadweep

Key Milestones

Outreach **131** members

2 Specific Target Group benefited - School students & Youth

2 Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

2 Thematic Areas Expanded

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Mumthaz works as a librarian at the State Central Library, Lakshadweep. The library provides basic facilities, reprography services, reading room, and section for reference and periodicals. It caters to a diverse age group ranging from children to senior citizens. Interestingly, most of the islanders know each other and is sparsely populated.

Mumthaz recognises her strengths of being ethical, dynamic, a hard worker, determined, confident and is dedicated which has helped her to rebuild the library based on a plan conceived by her. She did have a mindset to work towards community development but was unsure of the ways and methods of implementing her ideas and bringing them into action. She has faced issues and has worked at resolving these concerns through personal

interactions and discussions with concerned individuals.

The library now has new facilities, and her plan has come into fruition - “I have set-up a children’s section, a smart class room with modern facilities and providing internet access. I have been organizing events, formed Youth Forum, Children’s Forum & Teacher’s Forum. I have submitted proposals for Automation, Women’s section, Conference hall, Mini theatre, Lift, installation of V-sat for internet, installation of Solar Panels etc. are already approved and is under process”. She has encouraged women’s participation through women empowerment services. Likewise, the library has also been able to support victims of the 2018 Kerala Floods through collection and distribution of relief materials.



Outreach 131

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Thematic Areas of Services



120

92%



11

8%

- **Education:** Summer camps, promoting reading habits
- **Skill Development:** Essay writing, painting competition, seminars, etc.

131



Mumthaz has expressed “I could set up a full-fledged Children’s section for the first time in the 60-year-old library. Recently, the library building was newly constructed and expanded. The internal facilities were reoriented. I got the inspiration and ideas from MSSRF’s programme and my peers”.

Mumthaz on Self-sustainability

“Being able to interact and exchange ideas with legends and library professionals in India and the rest of the globe has been a life changing scenario for me. The network of public librarians connect has helped me to seek resources for the library. In the coming days, I would focus specifically on gender equality and integration of technology as the way to increase access to information. As far as our library is concerned uninterrupted network connectivity is the main pillar for its self-sustainability. Though there are some hurdles in the process, I am determined to create a learning hub for the islanders”.



9. Dr Neeza Singh



17 Years of Experience



T S State Central Library, Chandigarh

“Serving community with passion through my profession - proud to be a librarian”

T S State Central Library - Chandigarh

Key Milestones


 Outreach **5,560**  M: **2,717**  F: **2,843**

4 Specific Target Group benefited - Children & School students, Youth, Adult and Senior Citizens

12 Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

6 Thematic Areas Expanded

 Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

 Zindadil Award received from NGO Tamanna

A community change-maker from the T S Central State Library in Chandigarh, Neeza Singh is self-driven, persistent, confident, influencer and determined. She has strengthened her professional network of librarians across India and the world through MSSRF's capacity building programme.

The working of public library has seen issues such as non-cooperation and attitudinal concerns. Also, her understanding of a public library was that it is hub providing basic services to the users, visiting the library. Now, issues have been addressed due to the efforts put in by her and the staff. The library is now fully digitized with other facilities like sections for reference, children, periodicals, reading rooms, section for the differently-abled, collection of periodicals, etc. The library has a website run by the National Informatics Centre (NIC). It caters to all age groups ranging from toddlers to senior citizens thus adopting cradle to grave approach. Community need-

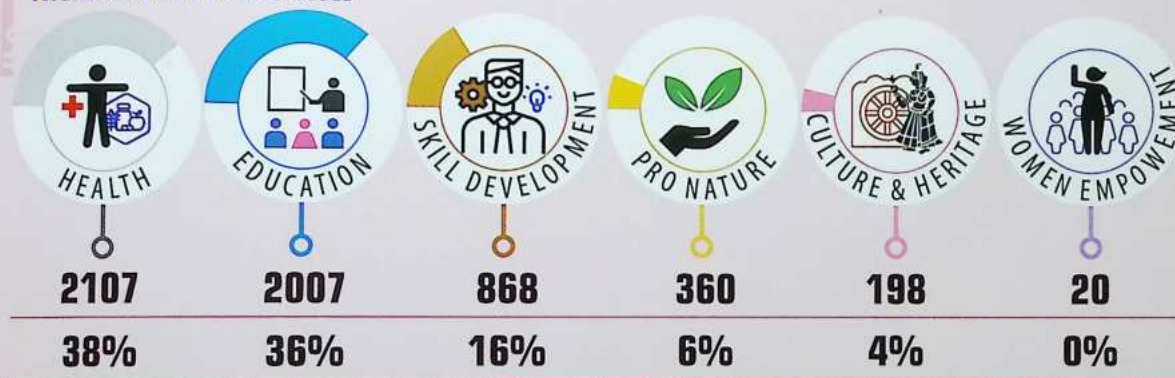
based services provided by library and interactions with the society at large has increased.

Neeza shares one of her experience wherein, “When I visited the juvenile home for a library outreach activity, one of the boy, a keen reader, got motivated to use the library. He is a regular visitor of the library now and pursuing his bachelor's degree in arts, and has a job”.

Neeza is keen to enhance services for students through partnerships with government schools and would continue to implement Reading Mission every year. Further, some of the above mentioned services are aligned with UN-SDGs, specifically centred to Goals on Gender Equality, Affordable and Clean Energy, Climate Action and Responsible Consumption and Production. In the coming years her focus will be on Gender Equality and Hygiene and Sanitation for the library.

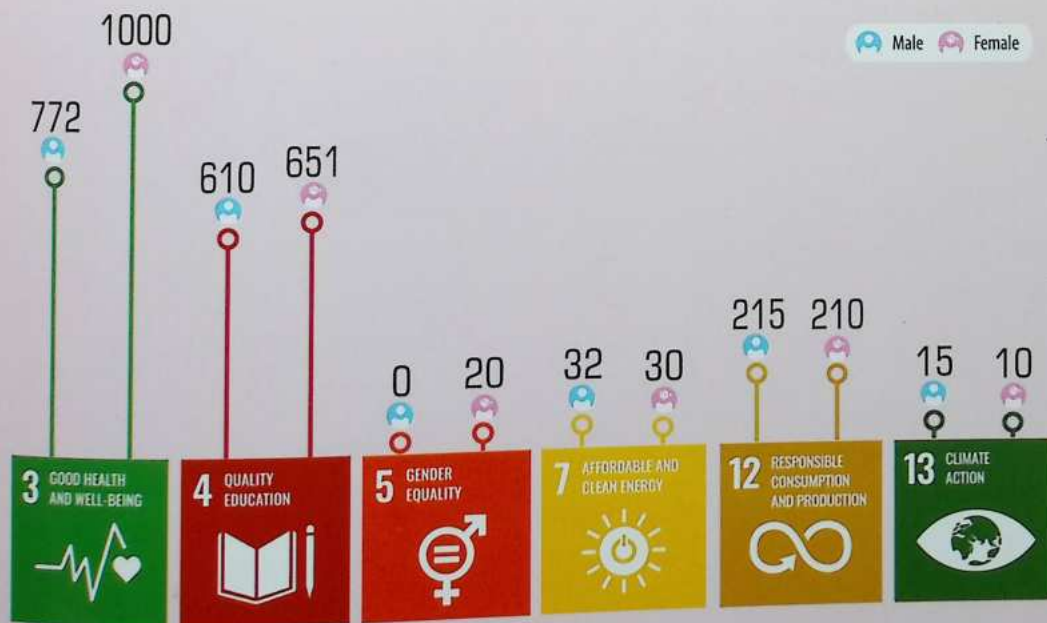
👤 Outreach 5,560 👤 M: 2,717 👤 F: 2,843

Thematic Areas of Services



- **Education:** Digital literacy and reading awareness programs
- **Health:** Tele-health programs on types of cancer, lifestyle-based diseases, etc.
- **Pro Nature:** Programs promoting the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan of the Government of India – awareness, hygiene drives, Swachata Literacy camps
- **Skill Development:** Forums for different age groups
- **Women Empowerment:** Awareness talks and outreach programs on days of international significance – International Girl Child Day, etc.
- **Culture and Heritage:** Sessions highlighting the importance of days of national significance

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs*



Neeza on Self-Sustainability

"Now the library has active community engagement in library services. There are many stakeholders who are supporting the library. Still, there remains few problems due to internal and external factors which is mostly sorted through regular follow ups. More funding, flexible government rules for functioning and necessary staff training on regular basis and IT skills for librarians so that we are not dependent on others in the way of day-to-day working", she has enunciated these are the essential factors contributing towards self-sustainability of a library.

* Only those services aligned to UN-SDGs were mapped, the remaining are part of outreach services



10. Mr Pawan Kumar Pareek



26 Years of Experience



Former Librarian, Dr Radhakrishnan State Central Library, Jaipur, Rajasthan

“Awareness on the work of public libraries and alignment with UN – SDGs for best development results”

Dr Radhakrishnan State Central Library - Jaipur

Key Milestones

Outreach 178 M: 122 F: 56

4 Specific Target Group benefited - Children & School students, Youngsters, Adult and Senior Citizens

5 Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

3 Thematic Areas Expanded

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Pawan Kumar is a former state librarian from the Dr Radhakrishnan State Central Library in Jaipur. Pawan shared, “My perception about the functioning of public library was to provide books, magazines and reading materials to the users. After my participation in MSSRF’s online leadership course, it gave me a newer definition of rebuilding libraries for community. My communication skills and building team spirit has given me a new sense of confidence to act as agent for change. There are problems like shortage of manpower, day-to-day functioning coordinate and non-cooperation from fellow colleagues. This gets resolved through discussions and by motivating colleagues and staff”. He credits this change in his attitude, skills and knowledge due to the learning’s from the MSSRF programme and motivation from fellow participants.

The library has improved accessibility for differently-abled with ramps, braille signs, and tactile and is

now functional as an inclusive space for all. Now, specific groups such as slum-dwellers, differently-abled, jail inmates and business entrepreneurs have access to the library. Besides, Pawan has integrated need-based services like awareness on reading for all age groups, and has focussed on good health in collaboration with local hospitals. He has ensured there is consistency in the delivery of basic facilities, constructed a new hall for capacitating the job seekers and the children’s section has been revamped with new books and games for building their cognitive development. Moreover, the library houses sections for references and browsing, dedicated section for women having books related to their interests.

Interestingly, the library has installed solar panels and rain water harvesters, since 2019. This action has helped them significantly reduce cost on electricity and contribute to the conservation of natural resources, respectively. Steps were taken to

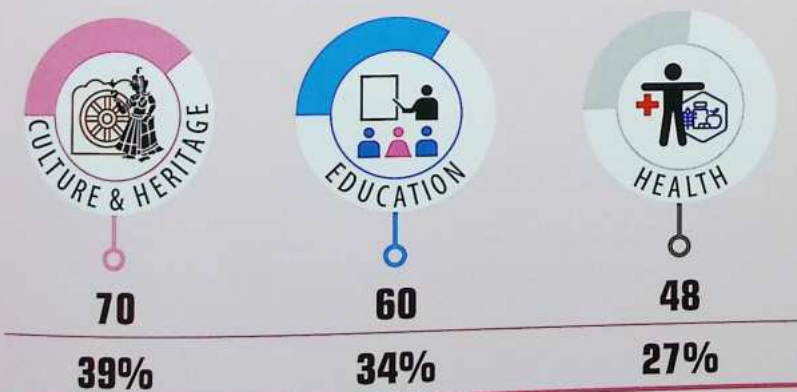


integrate National Priorities through campaigns and week-long programs such as "Swachh Bharat" - awareness on clean and green environment and preventing wastage of resources.

Libraries can make a difference and evidences are being built to showcase the need for an integrated approach in improving access to information to the community and align with IFLA's UN-SDGs.

Outreach 178 **M: 122** **F: 56**

Thematic Areas of Services



- **Education:** Reading awareness programs
- **Health:** Tele-health awareness programs
- **Culture and Heritage:** Day celebrations and festivities of national significance

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Male Female



Pawan on Building Self-sustaining Libraries

Presently, Pawan is posted as district librarian in Sawai Madhopur Government Public Library states: "The library has found newer horizons of welfare initiatives which could be provided to the community. For the self-sustainability of a public library, most importantly, it is a requirement to build a network, cooperation and participation of different stakeholders. I would like to focus on initiatives for reducing all forms of inequalities."



“Innovation, ideation and co-creation for community development”

Comrade Sohan Singh Josh Library - Amritsar

Key Milestones

Outreach **9,681** M: **5,463** F: **4,218**

4 Specific Target Group benefited - School students, Youth, Senior Citizens and other mixed groups including service men and prisoners.

31 Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

6 Thematic Areas Expanded

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

2018 - Best Library Services Award & Special Services Award

11. Dr Prabhjot Kaur



22 Years of Experience



**Comrade Sohan Singh Josh Library,
Amritsar, Punjab**

Comrade Sohan Singh Josh Library was established in 1982, named after the late Indian Communist activist and freedom fighter Sohan Singh. Prabhjot is currently the district librarian in-charge of Amritsar and the Chief Librarian of the M M Central State Library Patiala, since 2020. Prior to joining as Chief Librarian, she has done several paper presentations and has attended several conferences and seminars at national and international levels. She was capacitated by MSSRF and the learning has influenced her to work selflessly for the community and to make the library a community knowledge centre. Confidence, perseverance, self-motivation, dedication, agility, networking, influencing, risk taking, and positive attitude are her major strengths which has helped her re-conceptualise the Next-Generation Library for everyone.

In the past, her perception of public library and its functions were limited to circulation of books,

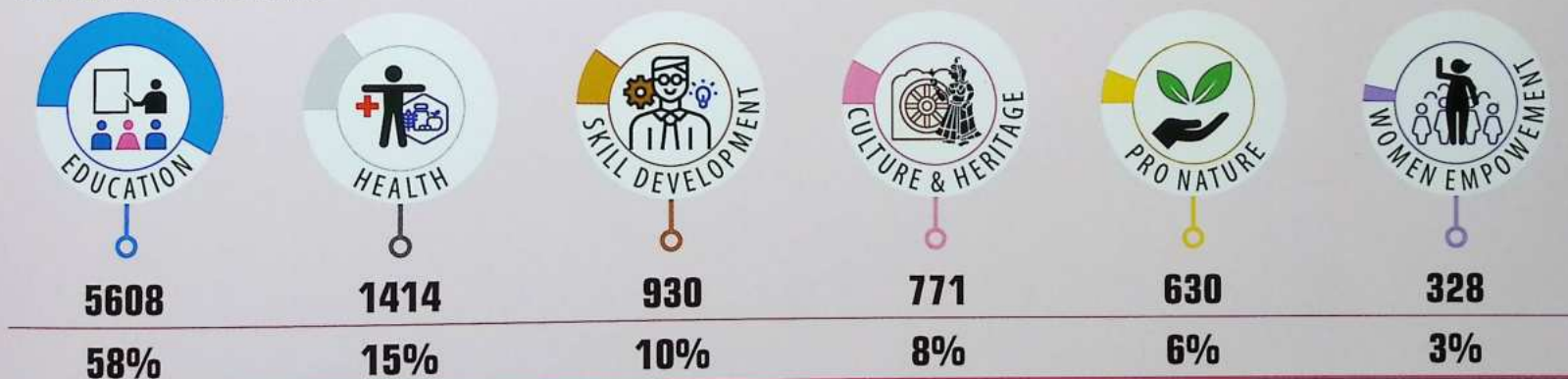
academics and research. Prabhjot enunciated “Prior to this program I had few ideas in my mind and I was hesitant to implement them due to lack of confidence and motivation. I valued MSSRF’s programme that has made a difference. I realized that I can implement my ideas to improve the library services. That is one of my cherished moment as a librarian; it made me proud and strengthened my confidence and other capabilities. Since then I have been actively engaged with the community to make them aware of the fact that public libraries can function beyond books”.

The library was started with a meagre collection of less than hundred books and now it has more than fifty thousand books with various sections. Besides lending and borrowing, the library provides various other services like free internet, study circle, meditation session, story-telling session, guidance to library and information science students and various awareness programs regarding academics, health and



Outreach 9,681 M: 5,463 F: 4,218

Thematic Areas of Services



environmental issues. She has engaged diverse age and socio-economic groups and the success is captured through the delivery of services across thematic areas.

Prabhjot, a single librarian, is supported by two staff, a technician and a caretaker in this library. *"Every time when a program is being conducted, I have to move the tables and shelves, so that there is enough space for the audience to be seated and I rearrange them once the program gets over. Community relies largely on the infrastructural facilities provided by the libraries. If there is a small assembly hall it would encourage more people to come and participate in the programs".* Furthermore, Prabhjot is keen on expanding the access of library to school students and has provided training to other school librarians, based on her learning's from the MSSRF's programmes. Through networking and partnerships,

- **Culture & Heritage:** Day celebrations and awareness on events of national significance
- **Education:** Book releases, reading awareness and outreach programs for school students
- **Health:** Medical camps, awareness on diseases – dengue, breast cancer, blood pressure, awareness on importance and promoting meditation and yoga
- **Pro Nature:** Sessions on preserving the ozone layer, celebration of World Environment day, harmful effects of stubble burning, etc.
- **Skill Development:** Story-telling, poetry recitation, art workshops, open mic events, awareness on safe usage of internet
- **Women Empowerment:** Celebration of Women's day, International Girl Child day, sessions on importance of female literacy, forums for women, etc.

she has been able to mobilise 1 lakh INR from the Cabinet Minister for providing sanitation facilities for both men and women, and to refurbish the building. She has taken steps to identify a heritage building as a new library space for the public, which shall unfold in 2022.

Prabhjot has tapped into various opportunities and has aligned most of the services with UN-SDGs, especially Gender Equality, Climate Action, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Reduce Inequalities, and Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, which are well reciprocated by all.

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



Prabhjot on Self-Sustaining Libraries as Knowledge Hubs

"There is a need for self-sustaining of public libraries. It does largely depend on passion and creative ideas of the librarians added to the efficient use of library resources. Government must bring in uniform policies and guidelines which act as a framework for all the libraries in the country for ease of functioning of public library. Any library can be sustained by mindfully building localised network of knowledge and financial partners with key stakeholders-individuals, patrons, CSRs, volunteers, NGOs, and local administration. Co-creating such elements will allow the library to be a hub and the stakeholders as the spokes in delivery of services with prime focus on environment, apart from quality education. With such a vision, any librarian can transform and redefine library spaces for everyone".





12. Mr Ranganathan S



22 Years of Experience



Full-time Branch Library, Anna Nagar,
Chennai, Tamil Nadu

“Bridging the digital divide by equipping senior citizens with changing technologies”

Full-time Branch Library - Anna Nagar

Key Milestones

📍 Outreach 2,406 🗣️ M: 1,784 📺 F: 622

3 Specific Target Group benefited - School students, Youth, Senior Citizens and other mixed groups including servicemen and prisoners

19 Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

3 Thematic Areas Expanded

2 Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

🏆 Best Librarian Award received from Government of Tamil Nadu

Ranganathan is a keen learner, reflective, people oriented, influencer, builds network, and is passionate about making libraries a relevant information powerhouse for everyone. After his participation in the capacity building programme organised by MSSRF, Ranganathan stated “I have been able to think and execute various community need-based services for different age groups, without hesitation. I have become confident, my peer exchange ideas more frequently and my adaptability to changes has also increased”.

The library through his efforts are focused in the areas of enhancing standards of living, well-being of senior citizens, computer-aided learning programs for women, children's quality of education, library infrastructure development, digitization and reconstruction and vocational training for women. The library has been organising civil services coaching class for civil aspirants.

Besides other services, and despite difficulties, Ranganathan expressed “The Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission (TNPSC) and civil services coaching program of the library has made remarkable progress. They have been able to achieve a higher pass percentage of civil aspirants over the years. It has been a proud moment for me, and my staff. The achievement is that three aspirants have passed group - 1 exam in 2019 batch and posted as IAS, IFS and Assistant Commissioner of Commercial Taxes in Tamil Nadu. Furthermore, nine aspirants have also cleared group 3 and 4 exams during 2016 - 2019. At present, there are more than 110 students using the library and its facilities for their civil exam preparation on daily basis”.

The library is also renowned in its locality for its outreach and support it provides to senior citizens. Besides reading books, initiative on digital literacy for familiarizing the elders with usage of smart



phones, writing and sending emails, other mobile applications of interest were undertaken in recent times. Furthermore, forums for senior citizens to dialogue on issues and sharing of their experience, is also organized by the library from time-to-time. Likewise, the efforts taken through the library by Ranganathan have not merely transformed specific target groups but most of their services have also contributed to global goals.

Outreach 2,406 **M: 1,784** **F: 622**

Thematic Areas of Services



1314

55%



606

25%

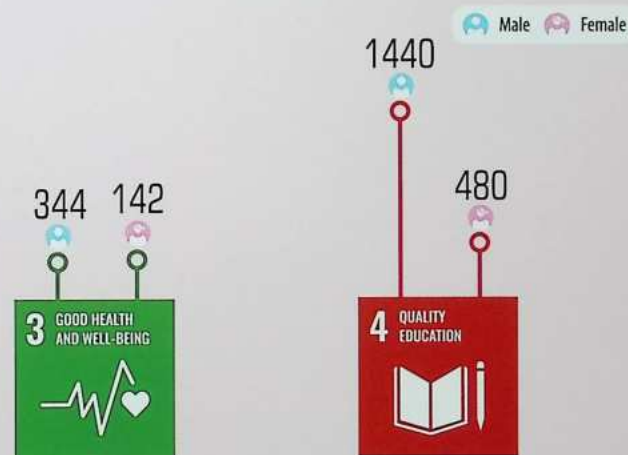


486

20%

- **Education:** Quiz competitions, simplifying mathematics, reading awareness for different age groups
- **Health:** General medical camps, yoga classes, laughter therapy, awareness on good habits and healthy lifestyles
- **Skill Development:** Workshops on music and dance, traditional games for children, letter writing and story-telling workshops, familiarizing senior citizens with usage of latest technology

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



Ranganathan on Building Lifelong Knowledge Hubs

Apart from education and skill development, Ranganathan urges librarians to weave innovative services which are focussed on global goals. Ranganathan has expressed "Libraries must be open to all, allowing anyone and everyone to read, write and learn at any given point of time. Libraries can become self-learning space for building stronger communities. The success of an evolving library is in the hands of an empowered librarian. The librarians' leadership, attitude and passion matter in making a difference to both library and the communities. For this, any librarian must be a part of a network that empowers and builds their skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis".



13. Ms Sangita Bomjan



10 Years of Experience



State Central Library, Manan Bhawan, Gangtok, Sikkim

“Policy efforts combined with changing nature of work of public libraries can help attain the 2030 United Nation’s agenda”

State Central Library - Gangtok

Key Milestones

Outreach **167** M: **65** F: **102**

2 Specific Target Group benefited - *School students, & Adults*

2 Innovative Community Need-based Services (*locale-specific & demand driven*)

2 Thematic Areas Expanded

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Sangita works at the State Central Library, Manan Bhawan in Gangtok, Sikkim. In the early days of her career as a public librarian, she believed a library was a repository of books also undertaking cataloguing procedures. However, after the networking and interacting with public librarians across India and the world through MSSRF’s capacity building programme, her perceptions changed. Sangita increased the scope of activities of the public library expanded and became more community need oriented. Her work has become community centric with an understanding that library services can also be outbound than merely being restricted to the library space.

The library provides basic facilities of electricity and clean water, reading rooms and sections for reference, periodicals, etc. It caters to a different target group,

including men and women ranging from students, government employees, research scholars, adults and houses a separate section for children. Similar to other libraries, there are constraints and challenges faced to redefine the library. Updating the authorities and officials on National Priorities has influenced their thinking to make the library an inclusive space. In due course of time, the library has extended access to computer and internet for public use. The library has also participated in the Reading Mission 2022 in spreading awareness and inculcating reading as a habit.

Quality Education and Culture and Heritage are the key goals integrated in the library and in near future a more interactive hub for community learning is being planned.



Outreach 167 M: 65 F: 102

Thematic Areas of Services

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



147

88%



20

12%

- **Culture and Heritage:** Celebrating Librarians' day and highlighting the importance of public library in the society
- **Education:** Reading awareness programs, distribution of books and sharing of learning's



Sangita on Self-Sustaining of Public Libraries

"There is a need to expand library services, including application of modern technology in the process of community development and welfare. By formulating National and State Library Policies addressing financial matters including appointment of librarian cadres, and promotional avenues of the same, would bring a shift towards self-sustainability of the public libraries". She also intends to focus on library services related to environmental conservation and protection.



14. Ms Santhanalakshmi B



15 Years of Experience



Full-time Branch Library, Thiruvanniyur, Chennai, Tamil Nadu

“Adopting a lifecycle approach to community development by enhancing knowledge of children – the citizens of tomorrow”

Full-time Branch Library - Thiruvanniyur

Key Milestones

Outreach **1,617** M: **858** F: **759**

2 Specific Target Group benefited - *School students, & Adults*

14 Innovative Community Need-based Services (*locale-specific & demand driven*)

4 Thematic Areas Expanded

3 Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Santhanalakshmi, a librarian from Thiruvanniyur library, changed her outlook towards the role of public libraries after her participation in the MSSRF's capacity building programme. She took a leap of faith by participating and learning from the leadership course. She became confident in her communication, agility, responsible, and people-centric. Furthermore, Santhanalakshmi has imbibed and understood the importance of innovative services in the spheres of health, environment, employment, skill development apart from education. She has initiated computer training programs for her library staff apart from the services for the community.

Another major achievement has been to start a full-fledged children's section, and to have a Readers' Forum in the library. The library has good local partnerships especially NGOs and has improved

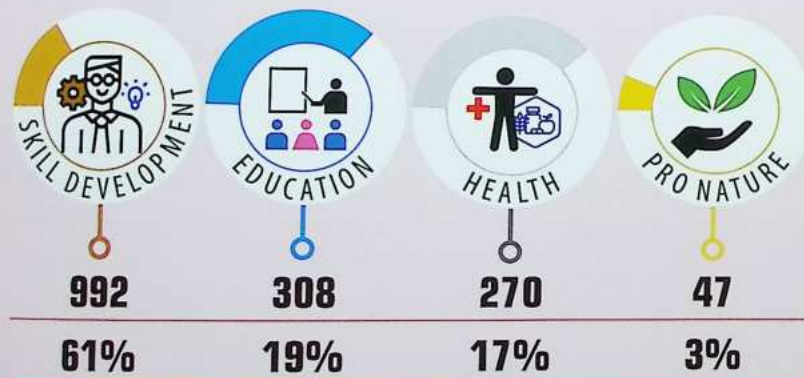
its infrastructure and services as well. It has been receiving in-kind support from the Samskriya Foundation and enhance the skills of students in the area of science by demonstrating small experiments in order to make them understand what the science is. Santhanalakshmi has conducted French and computer classes for the students who have visited the library regularly, organised handicraft making, promoting reading habits among the students through the Reading Mission initiative. Moreover, it has an active Readers' Forum with diverse people and knowledge who are supporting the library services. Besides focussing on Quality Education, these initiatives have also helped in meeting UN-SDGs.



Outreach 1,617 M: 858 F: 759

Thematic Areas of Services

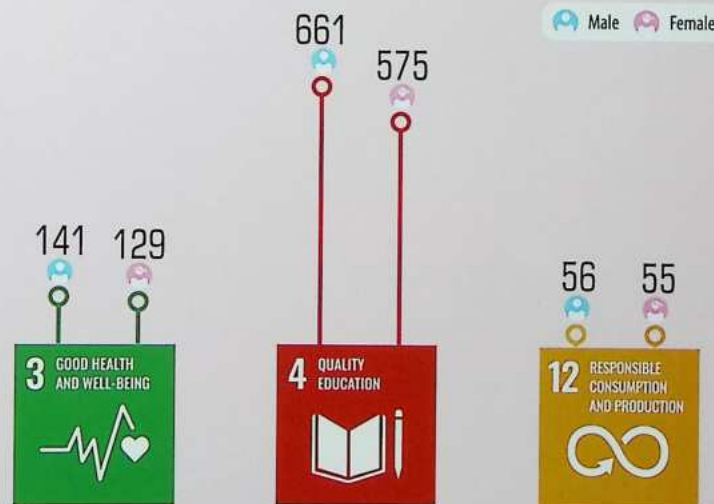
Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



- **Education:** Science experiments, interactive English learning sessions, Reading Mission
- **Health:** Tele-health programs, dental care for children, yoga classes, awareness talks on life without medicines
- **Pro Nature:** Recycling of waste and craft making
- **Skill Development:** Classes on time management, story-telling, computer learning, languages, educational movie screening, etc.

Santhanalakshmi on Leading for Change

"A library can become sustainable if its staff have adequate and accurate information and the skills based on changing circumstances in the society. Major factors currently influencing performance of the library have been identified to be funding, technology, availability of new books based on community needs. The librarian has to act as an agile facilitator which can attribute to the success and effective functioning of libraries. There is need for partnership based services and we must empower our children and youth in the near future".





“ Riding on the path of knowledge – a bike librarian ”

Branch Library - Thottiyam

Key Milestones

Outreach **3,064** M: **1,245** F: **1,819**

4 Specific Target Group benefited – *School students, Youth, Adults & Senior Citizens including farmers*

15 Innovative Community Need-based Services (*locale-specific & demand driven*)

5 Thematic Areas Expanded

6 Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Best Librarian Award, Best Poster Presentation Award, Membership Target Achievement Award between 2016 – 2019

15. Mr Selvamani V



15 Years of Experience



**Branch Library, Thottiyam,
Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu**

Selvamani from Thottiyam, Tiruchirappalli district in Tamil Nadu is popularly known in his network as a *‘Bike Librarian’* after joining the MSSRF’s leadership course. He was capacitated to transform the public library into a lifelong knowledge learning centre. Since then, he has remained ignited to bring in novel ideas for reaching the unreached through library. He has enhanced the functioning of the library, implemented innovative services and has established the Readers’ Forum. He has overcome many challenges due to his positive attitude, perseverance, agility, and dedication. Moreover, Selvamani being a people’s person has created a pool of patrons who are supporting library services and its facilities.

Now, the library provides facilities of computers, printers, audio–visual systems, water purifiers, notice and sign boards, etc. Thus, re-orienting the library as a welcoming place in this town. Attempts are being made to green the library. The children’s corner was

inaugurated in 2019, after his participation in the international knowledge exchange tour of visiting Singapore Public Libraries. Like few others librarians in Tamil Nadu, where relevant, Selvamani, also has engaged with farmers and has organised many integrated pest and disease management sessions. This concept has gained popularity and the demand to organise more sessions on a continuous basis has been urged by the farmers.

Selvamani’s burning desire and passion, he initiated *“Knowledge on Wheels”*, a novel idea in those villages not having library and are yet to be provided with public transportation. On a weekly basis, like in the village of Varadharajapuram more than 50 books are borrowed and read by the locals, especially children. Selvamani also tells stories to them on different thematic areas, hence increasing their learning, listening and reading skills. Being inquisitive of this initiative, the nearby schools organised study tours



Outreach 3,064 M: 1,245 F: 1,819

Thematic Areas of Services



1546

50%



899

29%



475

16%



81

3%



63

2%

- **Agriculture:** Farmer counselling and Plant Clinics
- **Education:** Apart from books, conducting summer camps, basic computer learning programs, civil services exam coaching, reading habits and story-telling initiatives for children
- **Health:** Yoga classes and tele-health programs
- **Skill Development:** Creative laboratories for children to enhance their IQ, competitions, teaching senior citizens to use recent technology to bring them at par with the younger generation
- **Culture and Heritage:** Spreading awareness on the importance of days of National Priorities

for its students and teachers to visit the Thottiyam branch library. Since then both the library membership and user access has increased. Selvamani has received appreciation for his ideas from the community.

Selvamani has expressed "I'm grateful to the leadership coursework. I have strengthened my knowledge, skills and demonstrated my capabilities. My interaction with the community has increased and I am able to understand their needs".

Various library initiatives is integrated National Priorities and brought relevance to Global goals such as Zero Hunger, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Decent Work and Economic Growth, and Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, besides other goals.

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Male Female



Selvamani on Role of Empowering Librarians

"I am inspired by S R Ranganathan - Books are for use and Save the time of a reader. During his time, he had used bullock cart to disseminate information to the community with no facilities. I am adapting his idea to suit present times for reaching the last mile."

Selvamani has been able to build a network with librarians from different states and union territories allowing for imbibing and implementation of innovative ideas. According to him *"To be a successful librarian, we must upkeep with changing trends, adapt to changing situations, tap into opportunities, build on local partnerships, and facilitate for and improving access to good information to avoid further redundancy in all libraries. Libraries must continue to provide community need-based services using ICTs, where possible, support women empowerment, farmers, girl children and sensitize men. Librarians can build a local network to receive adequate support from multi-stakeholders for self-sustaining libraries"*.





16. Ms Shanthi C N



12 Years of Experience



Branch Library, Thuraiyur, Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu

“Developed libraries and informed librarians for community welfare”

Branch Library - Thuraiyur

Key Milestones

Outreach **1,056** M: **556** F: **500**

3 Specific Target Group benefited - *School students, Adults including drivers & Senior Citizens*

6 Innovative Community Need-based Services (*locale-specific & demand driven*)

3 Thematic Areas Expanded

3 Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

2016 – 2019: Highest Library Membership Award at the District Level, Nullaga Aarvalar Virudhu at State Level & Best Patron's Award

Shanthi, a librarian of the Thuraiyur Branch Library, has been focusing on community need-based services directed towards women, children, senior citizens, drivers, library members and readers, etc. Her participation in MSSRF's capacity building programme has enhanced her attitude, skills and knowledge; enabling her to easily organize and facilitate programs through the library for community development. The learning's from the

leadership programme has given her confidence to interact and communicate with the target groups. Beyond books, users are now requesting for services for health, skill development, women related topics for discussion.

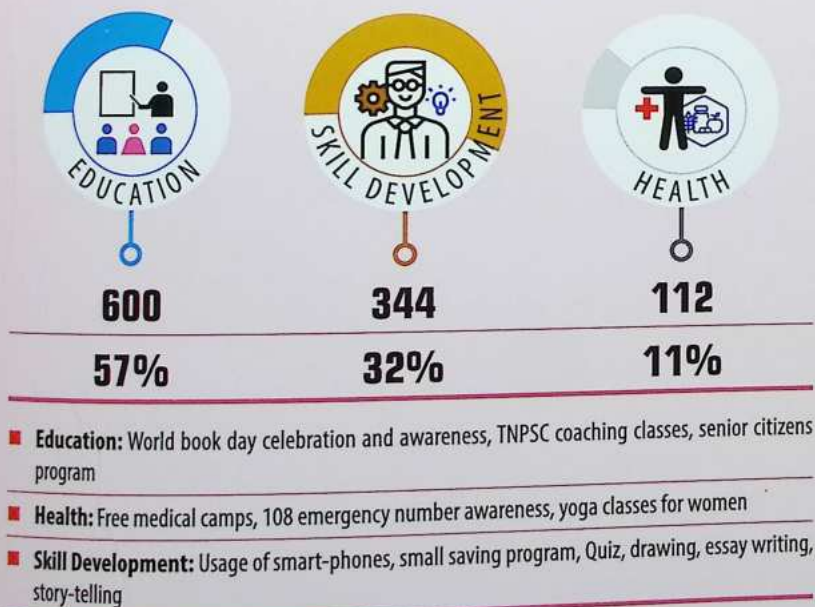
The community welfare efforts through the dedication of Shanthi and the library are also aligned to the UN-SDGs.



Outreach 1,056 M: 556 F: 500

Thematic Areas of Services

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



Shanthi on Progressive Libraries

"I would like to extend my focus in the areas of legal and road safety awareness, books made accessible for prison inmates, and learning programmes for Narikkuravas (Indigenous community). Our libraries must have latest technology and need-based actions which must be implemented by the librarians. Only then we can build progressive libraries".



“Building inclusive spaces for all and resolving community issues by voicing concerns to relevant stakeholders”

State Central Library - Thiruvananthapuram

Key Milestones

Outreach **1,050** M: **675** F: **375**

3 Specific Target Group benefited - *School students, Youth & Adults*

4 Innovative Community Need-based Services (*locale-specific & demand driven*)

3 Thematic Areas Expanded

3 Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

17. Ms Sobhana P K



21 Years of Experience



**State Central Library,
Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala**

Sobhana is a state librarian at State Central Library of Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. She is known for her ability to create a positive environment of work and possesses a wide understanding of the community at large. The library has been a reputed and recognized institution in the country which actively participated in community development. The target groups are always from cradle to grave, using the premises for library services.

MSSRF's capacity building programme has strengthened the work done by her as a public librarian. In the past, the library has faced issues with respect to non-cooperation from fellow colleagues, issues in day-to-day functioning, bureaucratic delays and gaps, etc. These issues were primarily addressed through interaction and discussions with the higher authorities and political leaders which was facilitated by her through the key takeaways of the leadership program.

Sobhana has been able to transform herself by becoming more responsive to the library members, easily delegating work among staff, giving staff the freedom to operate with responsibility of the tasks they have taken up, thus building an enabling environment. The program has given her a platform to tackle these issues and has guided to work creatively due to her participation in international knowledge study tour.

Since then, the library is fully digitized, brought visibility and has seen increased community participation. Sobhana stated *“it is said to be the first public library in India to have given membership to transgender. IT based interventions and programs, wider learning spaces for her members and reading programs for women and children have also been introduced in the library. Given the learning's from the program, I seek opportunities, have become persistent, and I do not hesitate to step up to the situations”*.



Outreach 1,050 M: 675 F: 375

Thematic Areas of Services



745

71%



225

21%



80

8%

- **Culture and Heritage:** Celebrating Malayalam as a language, Children's day celebrations
- **Women Empowerment:** Women's day celebration and awareness
- **Skill Development:** Summer camps, poetry recitation for children, scrabble game to improve vocabulary, etc.

As an example she has shared the library premises for disaster recovery and rehabilitation in 2019 Kerala Floods and has coordinated the efforts. The initiatives organized has showcased the relevance to UN Goals such as Gender Equality and Sustainable Cities and Communities, besides Quality Education.

Sobhana on Building Knowledge Hubs

The state central library can become self-sustainable, in the years to come. The idea of delivering sustained services through libraries, Sobhana iterates "It is

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



always dependent on infrastructure, staff motivation, continuous training, and support from senior leaders. Positive and innovative outlook of librarians can build a community centred learning hub, with trending technology, playing a critical role in streamlining the functioning of public libraries". Sobhana shall contribute towards community development by providing policy suggestions and streamlining the way forward for public libraries through deliberations and discussions with government officials, media and other stakeholders. She also intends to shift focus and bring awareness on changing climate and environmental protection.



18. Mr Sivakumaar S S



27 Years of Experience



District Central Library, Karur, Tamil Nadu

“Team working is the way towards building inclusive spaces”

District Central Library - Karur

Key Milestones

Outreach 12,690 M: 5,863 F: 6,827

3 Specific Target Group benefited - School students, Youth & Adults including jail inmates and visually challenged

10 Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

4 Thematic Areas Expanded

6 Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

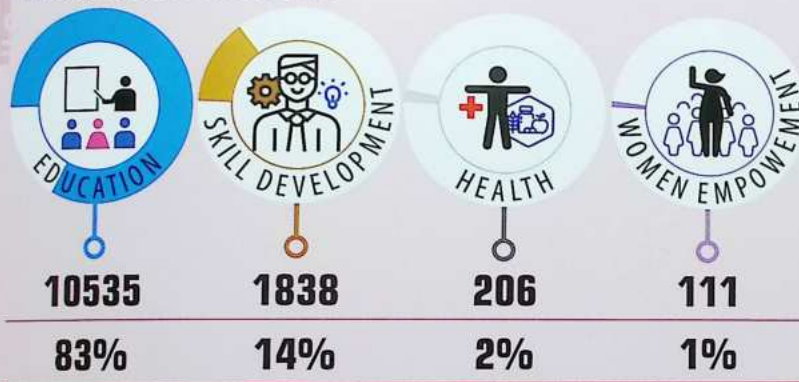
1 Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Best Public Librarian Award - 2016

Sivakumaar, a librarian from Karur district of Tamil Nadu, is a participant of MSSRF's capacity building programme. He is keen on serving the communities and taps opportunities, influences for change, positive approach, through networking and partnerships. The library continues to provide basic facilities. Sivakumaar, like other librarians remained conventional in his approach. Through Readers' Forum, the library has initiated diverse services such as access to internet, opened children's section, SALIS, Thinker's Forum, drawing competition for jail inmates, guidance for competitive examinations, library awareness programs among students, etc. The library also had a functioning website maintained and updated by the librarian from time-to-time. SMART CARD services has also been initiated. The library has introduced Braille and Audio facilities, e-Magazines, and e-Book Readers. The library

caters to a wide age group of community members. Interestingly, the librarian has helped set up a library in the police station as a means to support the mental well-being of police officers. Initially library has focused in the areas of education and skill development and now has expanded to areas of environmental protection and climate action. These innovative services also have relevance the global goals including Decent Work and Economic Growth, Gender Equality, Reduced Inequalities, Sustainable Cities and Communities. Despite developmental progress the library faces there are problems and constraints in functioning due to shortage of funds and manpower resources. The support for these was obtained from philanthropists and the patrons of Readers' Forum of the library.

Outreach 12,690 M: 5,863 F: 6,827

Thematic Areas of Services

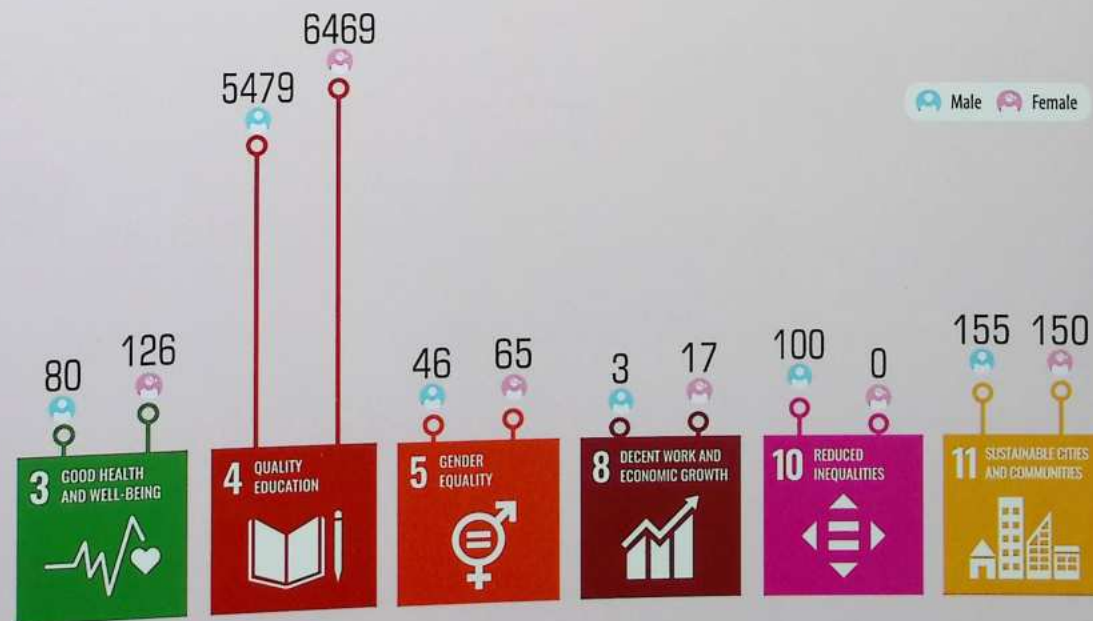


- **Education:** Reading awareness program, book fairs, book release, career guidance, psychological counselling, library awareness programme, e-magazine, coaching students for competitive exams and national day observation
- **Health:** Dengue awareness program, tele-health awareness
- **Skill Development:** Counselling, Book reading and drawing competitions, career guidance to specifically motivate prison inmates, thinker's forum, essay writing, training in drawing, playing chess, music, story-telling
- **Women Empowerment:** Awareness and vocational training for women on several grounds

Sivakumaar on Transformational Leadership for Building Knowledge Hubs

"I have transformed from a librarian to a social mentor. I have learnt the importance of documentation, initiating new innovative services, making a difference to diverse target groups and building a learning hub for all. I would like redesign services for children and train them young as they are our future leaders. Self-sustainability is associated with team work - developing interpersonal skills, sharing my knowledge, co-creating through ideas with both my co-staff, peer and stakeholders is a necessity. I am keen on finding ways to reduce inequalities by bridging societal divide, especially between the urban and rural. Providing equal opportunities for all must be co-created by us".

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs





19. Mr Subramanian R



29 Years of Experience



District Central Library, Villupuram, Tamil Nadu

“A well-informed public library community leader and change-maker”

District Central Library - Villupuram

Key Milestones

Outreach **1,893** M: **1,078** F: **815**

3 Specific Target Group benefited - School students, Youth & Adults including farmers

7 Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

4 Thematic Areas Expanded

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Government's recognition for completion of unblemished 25 years of service, Vijaya Readers' Forum Award - 2018

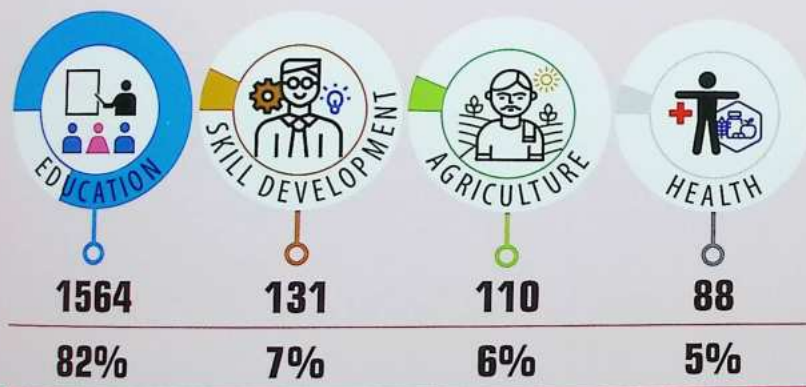
Subramanian has been keen on serving the community especially students, youth, women, including farmers. As he is passionate, thoughtful, and dedicated to strengthen the relevance of libraries for the unreached, he was selected in MSSRF's capacity building programme. Then, he was as a grade one librarian. He had faced challenges in the delivery of services and their day-to-day functioning, including fund constraint. He has learnt to create a network of stakeholders to support the efforts made through the library. The library members and readers are also in-kind contributors. Subramanian has stated *"I found simple tools, ideas, knowledge and skills and felt inspired from the trainings provided by MSSRF. I have transformed myself and make the effort to be well informed, understand the current and upcoming trends, and equipped to lead for change."*

Currently, the library has upped their services by providing access to computer-aided learning, internet, periodicals, magazines, and references. There are reading rooms, own book reading spaces, along with specific sections for children, women, and youth. He has facilitated phone-in-programme and plant clinics for the farmers and tele-health initiatives through the hub and spokes model. In recent times, he has also been working on expanding employment opportunities for job seekers. This library has been able to integrate Decent Work and Economic Growth and Zero Hunger goals.



Outreach 1,893 M: 1,078 F: 815

Thematic Areas of Services



- **Agriculture:** Phone-in-programmes for farmers in collaboration with MSSRF
- **Education:** Reading Mission, coaching for competitive exams
- **Health:** Tele-health and healthcare program
- **Skill Development:** Summer camps for children, motivational talks, career guidance and counselling

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



Subramanian on Self-Sustaining Libraries

Subramanian promoted as the District Library Officer in-charge of Villupuram public libraries, in 2017, has expressed "Self-sustainability of a public library is an ongoing process. It is driven by the attitudes and mindset of the community and their support towards the functioning of public libraries, government support, policy recognition and adequacy of financial and other resources. Another vital factor is on shaping an ideal trailblazer public librarian having interest in being tech savvy and applying their leadership abilities".



20. Mr Vijayakumar R



13 Years of Experience



Village Library, Valikandapuram, Perambalur, Tamil Nadu

“Understanding community needs and objectives of UN-SDGs to effectively work towards community welfare”

Village Library - Valikandapuram

Key Milestones

Outreach **3,477** M: **2,210** F: **1,267**

2 Specific Target Group benefited - School students & Adults

3 Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

2 Thematic Areas Expanded

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

State Level Best Library Award 2016-17 and Highest

Sponsorship Award 2016-17, Best Librarian Award in the District 2018

Vijayakumar a single librarian of Valikandapuram Village Library has participated in MSSRF's capacity building programme. He has been focusing on initiatives for students and children of different age groups. Prior to this, he has devoted his service in maintaining and upkeep of books, records and book lending requirements. Post participation, Vijayakumar highlighted "A successful public librarian is one who understands the needs of the community, maps UN-SDGs and ensures delivery of quality need-based services to the community".

"I have been able to overcome the issues of stage fear and inferiority complex, after participating in this

programme. My personal development has been strengthened. I have learnt and able to apply the ideas and tools in planning and implementation of services for our communities. I understand that Libraries can tackle many social issues and are major contributors building the knowledge economy and well informed society". Vijayakumar has been able to initiate innovative services in the library on thematic areas of Education and Skill Development benefitting a total of 3,477 community members mainly children and other target groups. Most of these services are aligned with Quality Education of the global goals.



Outreach 3,477 M: 2,210 F: 1,267

Thematic Areas of Services



2194

63%



1283

37%

- **Education:** Book reading and awareness programs, library membership drives, computer classes
- **Skill Development:** Story-telling, essay writing and competition, motivational awareness program, etc.

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

2210

1267

Male Female



Vijayakumar on Creating Knowledge Hubs for Everyone

Vijayakumar is keen on expanding the scope of services focussed on life on land, clean water and sanitation, zero hunger, health and well-being and no poverty. Vijayakumar has stated: "I believe public libraries can be a knowledge powerhouse for its communities. Our librarians must be recognised for their efforts, require adequate collaboration and support from colleagues, and stakeholders such as the public, NGOs, the government and other institutions. Government intervention and updated policy legislations would streamline the work of public libraries in India and ensure quality of community need-based services thereby reaching the unreached".



21. Mr Vijayan P



13 Years of Experience



Government Public Library, Kovaipudur, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

“Community awareness for community development through public libraries”

Government Public Library - Kovaipudur

Key Milestones

Outreach **7,519** M: **3,669** F: **3,850**

3 Specific Target Group benefited - School Children, Youth & Adults

5 Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

4 Thematic Areas Expanded

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

State Level Best Library Award 2016-17 and Highest Sponsorship Award 2016-17, Best Librarian Award 2016, Best Library Award 2019

Vijayan is a public librarian from the Kovaipudur Government Public Library, Tamil Nadu. Participating in MSSRF's capacity building programme has allowed him to streamline his efforts, scale-up the outreach, sought partnerships and innovatively has addressed community needs. In the recent times, literacy awareness programmes, and Reading Mission are key services through the library.

Vijayan has stated *“This program has always given me the guidance and motivational support to be a change-maker. I have learnt to network and build on local partnership for delivering innovative services. Such learning has culminated in seeking, facilitating and mobilising external support, including financials for the library services”*. Despite challenges of

being a single librarian, his persistent efforts have shown remarkable results – membership and user participation has increased with introduction of new services.

The library services have seen participation of individuals from different groups and ages such as children and school students, youth and college students and adults, including senior citizens and women. These initiatives have shown relevance to Good Health and Well-being and Gender Equality goals besides others.

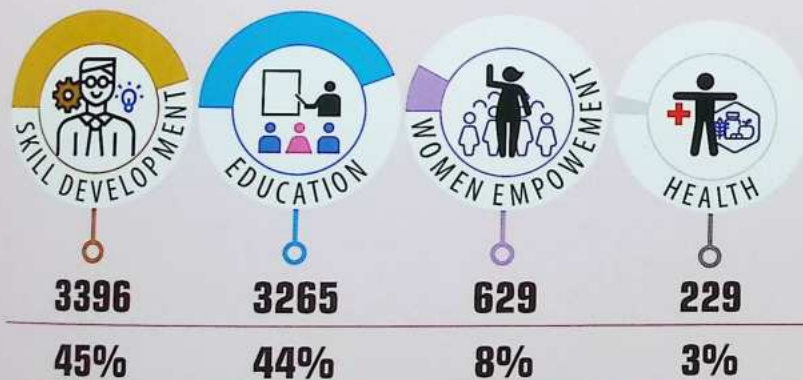
He is dedicated and taps into opportunities for building partnerships in the library.



Outreach 7,519 M: 3,669 F: 3,850

Thematic Areas of Services

Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



- **Education:** Reading Mission, coaching for competitive and government exams, book exhibitions
- **Health:** Awareness camp on dengue, food is medicine campaign, etc.
- **Skill Development:** Competitions on elocution, story-telling programs for children
- **Women Empowerment:** Forum for girls and women, Women's day celebrations

Vijayan on Knowledge Hubs

Vijayan aspires for giving the best for the community. According to him, "There is need for building awareness on the role of libraries as knowledge hubs among the public and the government. Every librarian across the states must lead for change by taking a leap of faith". He would like to expand efforts towards creating awareness on rainwater harvesting, organic farming, government initiatives, and promoting LPG Safety measures and insurances are few upcoming activities for creating social impact of change.





22. Ms Zirsangzuali



8 Years of Experience



State Central Library, Aizwal, Mizoram

“A Librarian with ability to learn and interested in technical know-how can concrete a better tomorrow for anyone.....”

State Central Library - Mizoram

Key Milestones

Outreach **313** M: **147** F: **166**

2

Specific Target Group benefited - School Children, Youth & Adults

3

Innovative Community Need-based Services (locale-specific & demand driven)

2

Thematic Areas Expanded



Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs

Zirsangzuali, an Assistant Librarian from the hill town in Mizoram state is diligent and passionate about the work she does. She states “It is my participation in the MSSRF’s capacity building programme that has allowed me in making libraries centred towards social development”. It has also helped her learn to enhance her leadership skills, increased confidence, realigned her mindset and be more professionally oriented. Zirsangzuali has stated *“I am avid learner, independent, learnt to communicate and participate more in macro level meetings. The exposure to this programme has made me a community leader and enabler”*.

The library caters to a diverse age group ranging from toddlers to senior citizens and provides a variety of services like reading rooms, internet access, career guidance, etc. Innovative services introduced

include competitions for children on essay writing, story-telling, mass campaigns on reading awareness and importance of public libraries. Despite many challenges faced by her, being a hilly region, she was able to increase the footfall to the library, and have positively impacted 313 community members in the hill town of Aizwal. Her efforts have been in improving services focused on Quality Education thereby ensuring a step forward towards eradication of illiteracy in Mizoram.

Soon newer initiatives on Good Health and Well-Being and Clean Water and Sanitation including activities like career counselling, integrate ICT services, library awareness campaigns and providing e-resources would be introduced.



Outreach 313 M: 147 F: 166

Thematic Areas of Services



219

70%



94

30%

- **Education:** Mass campaigns on reading awareness
- **Skill Development:** Competitions for children on essay writing, story-telling, etc.

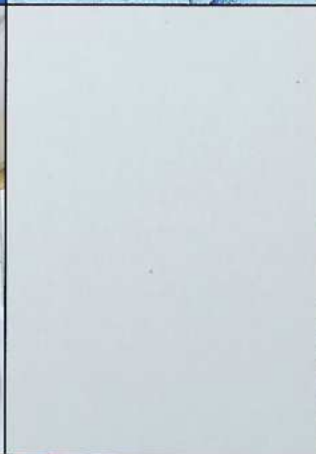
Public Libraries Connect with UN-SDGs



Zirsangzuali on Self-Sustainability

"Self-sustainable public library takes into consideration of partnership and volunteer engagement. Capacity building programmes like that offered by MSSRF must be made available for all librarians to learn new skills, knowledge and understand the current trends. Some like me can be self-taught, many require cohesive understanding to step up the system. This will allow a systemic contribution in building adequate resources and supply of funds, which are essential for a streamlined functioning of a public library. Furthermore, technology is a key factor contributing to the future of our public libraries."

Zirsangzuali would newer initiatives like career counselling, integrate ICT services, library awareness campaigns and providing e-resources. In the coming days, she would plan activities on Good Health and Well-Being and Clean Water and Sanitation, thereby also aligning the work of the library to National Priorities.





The Innovator

Library Innovators have taken on an understanding of building Next-Generation Libraries, address barriers, and are taking steps to lead for change. Most of them, have shared their experience on an ongoing basis. Albeit, there have been certain constraints to share data consistently during the course of implementation and hence this section articulates only the collective action taken by them through their libraries. Each one of them are equally passionate, open minded and are contributing towards transformation of communities through their respective libraries.



1. Mr Abdul Naseem



27 Years of Experience



State Central Library, Port Blair, Andaman and Nicobar Islands

“Perseverance is the ability to understand social nerves of the community is essential to uplift their status of well-being”

Abdul Naseem is an experienced library innovator from the State Library of Port Blair. Working in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, he stated *“there is a need for bringing in innovative services for mass outreach through public libraries. As many areas are inaccessible in the islands, it would help to include different sections of the society, thereby reaching the unreachable.*

Abdul has stated, *“Since this Union Territory is my birth place, I understand the social nerves of the islanders who reside at different islands accessible and inaccessible. My primary goal is to involve the ethnic communities and the vulnerable tribal groups, bring a positive shift to the present situation pertaining to staff position, implement new services, and build a stakeholder network for the public library system in the islands. As they are the greater section in the*

society, their involvement and participation in library activities and programs would steer the effective functioning of this library”.

By joining MSSRF's capacity building programme Abdul was able to confidently voice the much needed changes to be made in the library. He stated *“Since there is no fixed cadre for public library services, I have suggested in writing to the authority for the same to be in function as soon as possible, without which the ideal public library services would only be a day dream for the state library. I am initiating steps to bring subtle shifts in the services provided through the library”.*

Currently, the library caters to diverse age groups from children to senior citizens providing basic facilities. The major sections include – reference, children's, women's, youth, senior citizen and periodicals sections, and a cell for career guidance.



Specific target groups such as farmers, fishers, self-help groups, tribal and ethnic groups, slum-dwellers, tourists, prison inmates, orphans, juveniles, menial workers, abuse victims, businessmen and entrepreneurs, etc., are all catered to by the library from time-to-time.

The library is now partially digitized. Community interaction is on the rise with more awareness being spread through mobile library services.

Abdul has stated *“Organized library related programs involving different local communities, visited all colleges and technical institutes and motivated students to become library members and as a result a good number of student admission has been recorded”*. This has allowed for remarkable progress on the footfall and membership levels in the library.

Abdul would address issues of Poverty, Education and Sanitation through new services. According to him, the need of the hour is more of positive government intervention and policy legislations in favour of public librarians in India.





2. Mr Ambedkar S



24 Years of Experience



Full-time Branch Library, Thirumanur, Ariyalur, Tamil Nadu

“Transforming public libraries into lifelong knowledge learning centres by focusing on niche areas of development and welfare**”**

Ambedkar is a public library innovator from the Full-time Branch Library in Thirumanur, Ariyalur district of Tamil Nadu. He has been taking efforts and the library currently caters to diverse age groups including farmers, self-help groups, menial workers, entrepreneurs, etc. Innovatively, Ambedkar has brought in services for IAS coaching, and developed new forums for youth and other readers. The facilities provided in the library include access to internet, reading rooms with sections for reference, periodicals and browsing.

Ambedkar has stated: *“With time and support from peer librarians and mentorship provided by MSSRF, I have been able to bring about a change in the functioning of the library. Membership has increased and there are more visitors to the library through the provision of several development-oriented services”.*

In the coming days, Ambedkar would expand services from education and literacy to other areas like environmental awareness, providing access to information to students from rural areas, tree breeding, Reading Mission, etc. He also mentions that adequate government intervention and support would help improve attitudes and mindsets towards the work done by Public Librarians.



3. Ms Arshi Naaz



18 Years of Experience



Pratham Community Library, New Delhi

“Coining and fulfilling the 3E strategy of public libraries - Education, Entertainment and Ethics for community development.....”

Arshi Naaz is the Program Head at the Pratham Community Library in New Delhi. It is an NGO library which centred towards children and pre-teens skills and capabilities. Community-oriented services are provided by the library, primarily directed towards children through use of science, art and technology, reading assessment mela, storytelling, competitions, hand crafts making etc. Prior to joining MSSRF's programme, Arshi has felt that a library was a place only for those interested in reading and not the community at large.

Through the programme, Arshi has improved her ability to ideate and be more innovative. Prior, she has faced difficulties in procuring supplies and materials for children. Now, she is attempting to gain support and recognition for the library by networking and reaching out to several philanthropists. She has strengthened and enhanced her professional skills by enabling engagement of stakeholders and has facilitated fund raising. Through projects and NGO funding, the library has been able to provide internet facilities and tabs for its members.

Arshi has stated: *“Funding, volunteers and ownership by community are essential pillars for self-sustainability of a public library. One needs to be tactful to raise adequate fund and build on technical know-how is a necessity to perform better and render support to the community in fast changing circumstances. Also,*

I have become performance oriented and dedicated in providing key services for the children which has contributed to the welfare through my unique ideas, efforts, teamwork, motivation and the grit to readily accept change”.

Arshi has expressed: *“The progress of any library is centred on 3 E's – Education, Entertainment, and Ethics with a shift in mindset that libraries are not merely storehouse of books but are also a space for community interaction. I am keen to focus on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women through the use of technology. I sense the future development of public libraries need an integrated effort of government intervention and policy legislations, and taking steps in making these third space more global”.* She is also keen to strengthen the role of librarians in South Asia through the regional network.



4. Mr Balen Kalita



12 Years of Experience



Branch Library, Dispur, Guwahati, Assam

“ *Creating awareness on the role of public libraries in revamping and reshaping the society* **”**

Working at the Dispur Branch Library in Guwahati, Assam, Balen is currently focusing on increasing awareness among the community regarding the role that public libraries as positively revamping and reshaping their lives.

Prior to joining MSSRF's capacity building programme, Balen has faced issues on finance, non-cooperation from fellow colleagues, and issues in day-to-day functioning of a library. He attempted to solve these issues through interactions and support from the library staff and management which he was able to initiate through the enhancement of his attitude, skills and knowledge. He has improved his communication skills.

Now, the Dispur branch library is partially digitized and has a functional website maintained and

managed by the staff. Library footfall has increased significantly due to the availability of newer books, increase in working hours of the library, and have provided internet access. Specific motivation and library awareness programs for school children are regularly organised, for them to study and prepare projects through the use of library. It caters to a bandwidth of diverse age groups from students, research scholars, differently-abled, youth, senior citizens, etc. Also, the library houses reference, reading, children, periodicals, differently-abled and lending sections, besides other basic facilities.

In the coming days, Balen intends to use the key takeaways and learning's from the capacity building programme to reach the unreached.



5. Mr Brijesh Kumar Pandey



12 Years of Experience



Government District Library, Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh

“Quick decision-making and effective communication to reach the unreached in small yet significant ways”

Brijesh, a public library innovator is working at the Government District Library, Jaunpur, providing community need-based services and reaching out to diverse groups. On an average, more than 50 users visit the library on a daily basis, which provides basic facilities, including public access to internet and photocopy.

Brijesh has been a participant in the MSSRF's capacity building programme that has enhanced his communication skills besides other learnings on leadership capabilities. *“Before the program my perception about functioning of a library was different. Now the learning is deeper. I have learnt on time management, setting goals, awareness on 21st century librarian skills, and role of library for community welfare”*. Like other librarians, Brijesh has faced several challenges which he overcame confidently,

yet there is more collective action has to be taken for the development of the library.

Brijesh has expressed: *“The essential pillars for a library to become self-sustaining include skilled-staff; adequacy of funds and most significantly the extent of digitization of a library make a stark difference to the functioning of public libraries in an independent manner”*.



6. Dr Carlos M Fernandes



31 Years of Experience



**Former Curator at Sanskruti Bhavan
State Central Library, Panaji, Goa**

“Engaging with communities and transforming public libraries into warehouses of positive change and welfare...”

Carlos is the former Curator at the Sanskruti Bhavan State Central Library is placed in the coastal town of Panaji with 120 staff members. During his tenure, he has built and maintained an informational library for everyone. This is an ISO 9001 certified library which has a well-established modern infrastructure integrated with technology (fully digitized, book kiosk, book lift, magnifier, mini theatre, etc.).

Besides specific sections, there are diverse services for different target groups (menial workers, self-help groups, orphans, prison inmates and differently-

abled). Also, the users have access to archives, book preservation, audio-visual, browsing, etc. The library footfall has increased, in past years.

Being a participant of the capacity building programme, Carlos has improvised on his attitude, skills and knowledge. His current performance is driven by pro-activeness, positivity, time management, innovation, networking and the right communication mechanism. Through continuous follow ups, involvement and delegation with the library staff, he has been able to showcase this library as community hub. Interestingly, it is located along the banks of the river having mangroves which is used by the visitors.

Carlos has expressed: *“A positive mindset makes an immense difference to one’s style of working and would lay the path for self-sustainability. A successful librarian is attuned to meet needs of our community having*

calibre to evolve and adapt to changing circumstances. He/She must remain technically competent and be updated on recent trends in public libraries”.

The mobile-van library was a CSR initiative evolved in association with Automobile Corporation of Goa Limited and coordinated by the Rotary Club of Panaji. Besides this, he has established 2 new libraries in the village with an aim of bridging the urban rural divide. He is a recipient of many awards such as best librarian award of the Goa state in 2017. Also, the Goa state library has received best library award in 2018.

In 2020, he was transferred as an Assistant Professor at Goa University and would like to venture into expanding the mobile library concept in parts of Goa. He is also keen to strengthen the role of librarians in South Asia.



7. Mr Garware Amol Dattatray



18 Years of Experience



Nehru Wachanalaya, Mayani, Satara, Maharashtra

“Unity of dedicated and potential library staff brings out latent abilities of public libraries to contribute to sustainable development”

Amol, a librarian from the Nehru Wachanalaya in Satara district of Maharashtra, strongly believes in the potential of Indian public libraries being able to reach the unreached. According to him, MSSRF has provided a platform to network with peer librarians across India thereby providing a scope to innovate, ideate and co-create through the public library.

He has initiated services such as lectures for various competitive exams, educational counselling and guidance, trainings, awareness on government schemes, access to internet (emails, job search, filling and submitting online applications), and photocopier machine, and separate sections for women, children and senior citizens. Moreover, school and college students access the library to work on academic projects.

Amol has expressed: “I am seeking CSR funding to increase the pace of community development. Also, I am motivating staff to understand customer services as it is an essential pillar for self-sustainability of a public library.”



8. Mr Kamal Nath De



24 Years of Experience



State Central Library, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh

“Building an inclusive nation through education for all and eradication of information poverty”

Kamal Nath, a librarian of the State Central Library, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh, has changed his perception on redefining of public libraries as learning hubs. Since his participation in the MSSRF's programme, his work has become community centric. He has shared *“I have peers across states and internationally to network and interact with on the changing library trends and I have come a long way, become more inclusive, ensuring all basic facilities are provided for the users”*.

Kamal Nath, has initiated services such as library awareness among school children, coaching for entrance examinations, public access to computer with free internet and air-conditioned reading rooms, besides basic facilities. He has stated: *“I have been able to resolve many concerns through official interactions and discussions with Raja Rammohun*

Roy Library Foundation (RRRLF), which has been declared as the Nodal Agency for the National Mission on Libraries. My management skills have enhanced, and confident to facilitate services for building stronger communities through the library. INELI platform shall continue to recognize public librarians as nation builders and social reformers”.



9. Mr Manoj Kumar M



24 Years of Experience



District Central Library, Mahabub Nagar, Telangana

“Literacy and equality are essential pillars supporting the development of any community”

Manoj is a well informed and a well-read librarian constantly motivating others, focusing specifically on bridging the urban – rural divide and eradicating illiteracy from the communities the library caters to. He has said *“The major functions of a public library should be to inculcate reading and writing habits among the common people and to help students who are preparing for competitive exams”*.

MSSRF’s capacity building programme became a platform for Manoj to learn and grow professionally. He has said *“I understood the idea to extend services to the unreached, through libraries. Now, the library has expanded and have provided access to internet for the public. Students are encouraged to learn hardware handling of computers and training is provided. Public access to internet is made available for various browsing purposes such as shopping, internet banking, payment of electricity, house tax and day-to-day transactions.*

Since introduction of these services, the library footfall has increased. Also, the space for student section has expanded to prepare for competitive exams”. Besides, the library also provides services to specific groups such as tribal and menial workers.

Manoj has expressed: *“Libraries and community go hand-in-hand for which technology can play a role in two-way communication. I would like to provide better services to the readers of all age groups, irrespective of caste. In the near future, I am keen to bring apt interlinkages to improve cottage industries, and look at different possibilities for the economic upliftment of backward communities. These are some of my major goals. Additionally, the idea of a localised self-sustainable public library is possible with constant support by governmental and non-governmental funding, besides a consistent vision of the librarian”*.



10. Dr Partha Sarathi Das



15 Years of Experience



National Library, Kolkata, West Bengal

“Transforming public libraries into inclusive spaces for community interaction through policy documentation”

An Assistant Library and Information Officer at the National Library of India located at Kolkata. Dr. Das has more than 15 years of professional experience as a Librarian and is very positively motivated. His vision and understanding of public libraries have made him live by the adage that public libraries are inclusive spaces for community interaction.

The National Library of India at Kolkata has adequate and well-maintained facilities at its disposal. It has a fully functioning website maintained by the staff. It houses the following sections – Reference, Childrens', Periodicals, Archives, E-resource Centre browsing and Quite Reading Spaces for the Research Scholars.

The National Library of India is the largest Library in India and its objectives and functions are quite different from Public Libraries. There are many challenges in working in large institutions, like

Interpersonal, Managerial, Administrative and Manpower Issues effective Time Management. These challenges were slowly tackled by Partha Sarathi transforming himself with improved abilities to innovate, manage time, think strategically and network. He has also been able to hone his leadership skills in the process.

With MSSRF's capacity building program for public librarians, his interaction with the community has increased and the library has been able to implement user orientation training for e-resources. He identifies the library to be in its growth stage with adequate efforts being taken by the library and its librarians targeting a responsive audience. Through a transformed self, he was able to contribute to the increased footfall in the library and introduce new community need-based services.



Partha Sarathi is actively involved in transforming self through professional networking experience and leadership skills and is able to deliver and contribute by:

1. Creating an impetus in formulating an improved Annual Action Plan for Outreach activities, specially designed towards inclusive Community Development.
2. Managing human resource through effective distributed delegation of power, adopting innovative managerial methods to increase work output and thereby, effecting more improved library services' to the Stakeholders.
3. Effective Communication with Users' and hierarchical communication with Top Level management as well as parallel communication with subordinates, showing results through strategic thinking, also helped to bring a culture of Change Management in the Professional Divisions headed by Partha Sarathi.
4. Learning from Time Management module, he has learnt the best way to prioritize work and through applying various tools. This has allowed him to achieve self-productivity within a very short time.

Way Forward: According to him, commonly directed effort must be made in the country regarding functioning of public libraries and this must begin with policies and apt government intervention at several levels. He hopes to contribute in this regard through strategic thinking, policy documentation and content development.



11. Mr Peer Mohammed



26 Years of Experience



Public Library, Androth Island, Lakshadweep

“Connectivity and awareness among the younger generations would uplift and support the work done by public libraries towards sustainable development”

Peer is a dedicated public librarian having a positive mindset to societal change. He was introduced to the idea of streamlining the delivery of need-based services through MSSRF's capacity building programme. Prior to the program, he had an understanding that library space is for reading and book lending. When the intention of transforming the library for its community was introduced, he has strategically implemented the services among the Androth islanders living in Lakshadweep.

Peer Mohammed has articulated *“The library has introduced activities such as courses for women and their empowerment, agricultural and organic farming learning sessions, reading programs and separate services for senior citizens. Books were re-arranged for the age groups, providing quicker and easier access to the users. Since then, I have seen an increase in*

library footfall. I am interested on strengthening access to internet and connectivity. The discussion on the same with the authorities has started.”

Peer is also keen in building a network for self-sustainable libraries catering to diverse learning needs for the islanders and urges the network, including the government, to help redefine Indian Public Libraries. He has expressed: *“I have received ample guidance from INELI. This space has nurtured librarians as a network and was able to take up risks to support community needs. I am keen to expand services in the areas of agriculture, gender equality and reduction of all forms of inequalities”.*



12. Ms Rachna Dewan



33 Years of Experience



Former Librarian, District Library, Sirsa, Haryana

“ *Development is a continuous and ongoing process which requires professionals including public librarians to remain updated* **”**

A dedicated, passionate, involved public librarian, Rachna has worked at the District Library in Sirsa, Haryana. In the past, the library did cater to community needs and she felt that the library was complete and idealistic in nature, until her involvement in the MSSRF's capacity building programme. She was able to improve her professional learning and implemented both online and offline services. The library has sections for children, women, etc., with required internet, audio-video facilities and other technical requirements. Innovative services such as book exhibitions, career guidance and placement training were provided to those seeking employment. In due course, it was observed that community participation has increased. The library has catered to orphans, slum-dwellers and entrepreneurs. Interestingly, the Sirsa

District Library was the first in Haryana state to be declared as an e-Library, due to the efforts taken by her and her colleagues.

Rachna has expressed: *“Through INELI, I have grown as an individual and was able to become more efficient, innovative and hardworking. Even though I am retired, I choose to contribute to the network of public librarians on volunteer basis for strengthening the role of libraries in India”.*



13. Ms Radha M



10 Years of Experience



Village Library, Sattur, Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu

“ Skill development of librarians are financial support to libraries are essential to provide community need-based services beyond books ”

Radha is from the Sattur Village Library in Tamil Nadu. Through the mentorship and guidance provided to her through MSSRF's public librarian capacity building programme, she has been able to expand the facilities and services in the library. She has been instrumental in sensitizing clean water and sanitation efforts by facilitating the construction of a toilet. Many sponsorships were received to re-orient the library space and to strengthen the infrastructure with steel racks, cupboards, and books. Many initiatives were organised for women and health awareness programs. Recently, the library has received the Best Readers' Circle Award.

Radha is a dynamic influencer of change and very much people oriented. She has articulated: *“I feel there is a need for training, skill and professional development of librarians and there has be financial*

allocation from the government for steering innovative need-based services. For creating a knowledge society, there is also a need for localisation and stakeholder engagement”.



14. Mr Ramsankar M



29 Years of Experience



District Central Library, Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu

“Community development requires cooperative and continuous efforts of all relevant stakeholders at all levels bring together by public libraries”

Ramsankar is keen learner, open minded, agile, people-oriented, and keen on serving his community. The district central library has more 1,27,795 book collections with 19,200 + registered members. Based on the learnings from the capacity building programme, he has initiated innovative services for diverse target group. These are browsing facilities for the public, computer section, organised free coaching classes for competitive exams, and seminars on women development. Specific focus was on promoting reading as a habit among all age groups. General medical and eye camps were often

organised to keep the community well-informed on health and nutrition preventive care.

In addition, the library has given a separate space for civil aspirants where more than 20 students have prepared for their competitive exams on daily basis. There is a section for differently-abled with braille and audio books. Further, the library has been contributing to protecting the environment by creating awareness on plastic ban among youngsters and college students.

Being a coastal city, Ramsankar has initiated a “literacy meeting” for its members to discuss regarding the Global Goal – Life Below Water. With these services, the library is observing an increased footfall, and is well supported by the members of readers’ forum.

Ramsankar has expressed that “Self-sustainability of a public library depends upon the cooperation and continuous efforts taken by various stakeholders”. He is a confident librarian who is immensely thankful for the support from the government and MSSRF’s capacity building programme which has helped him through all the work he has done in the public library domain. According to him, “The knowledge exchange visit and the detailed programme on shifting library into a Next Generation Library through transformational leadership of librarians was an eye-opener for me”. Ramsankar also has been a recipient of 3 state and 2 district awards from the Government of Tamil Nadu. In the coming days, he has a plan to focus on the areas of education accessible to all, ensuring gender equality and create newer opportunities for employment and economic growth.



15. Mr Sai Avinash Srirala



11 Years of Experience



Former Librarian, State Central Library, Warangal, Telangana

“Redefining the work and role of public libraries beyond its four walls by integrating outreach services for community development”

A public library innovator, Sai Avinash was posted at the State Central Library, Warangal in Telangana. He is dedicated, passionate and friendly by nature and has seen a transformation in him after joining MSSRF's workshops and convening's. He has stated “a public library is a space to empower the public through right and timely information. Apart from users participating in learning programs using competitive books, we took classes for their interpersonal development of communication skills, capacity building, mental well-being etc. Free and safe drinking water RO Plant and projector room for conducting classes were also installed in the library. We are seeking financial aid through voluntary organizations for conducting activities in the library.”

Sai has highlighted, “I have written proposals to various organizations including National Mission

on Libraries, Kolkata and an amount of 112.25 lakhs INR was sanctioned for providing infrastructure, digitization, furniture, books, etc. I have personally transformed from being a routine oriented librarian to a dynamic library leader, reaching out to the community”.

In mid of 2019, Sai has been transferred as a librarian to Raj Bhavan, Somajiguda in Hyderabad and has expressed: “We should reach out to villages where literacy rate is low and engage them with reading as a habit by sharing mother tongue books. It is the need of the hour for supporting foundational literacy”.



16. Mr Selvakumar T



24 Years of Experience



Branch Library, Koothanallur, Thiruvapur, Tamil Nadu

“A holistic development of a public library not merely benefits readers but also uplifts the communities situated around it”

Selvakumar, a public library innovator, is keen on nurturing resilient communities through the library. Skill development, awareness on reading and empowerment of women activities were initiated through the library and he has been instrumental in identifying the entrepreneurship skills and abilities in youth. They have participated in many vocational trainings and workshops and have begun their own business. As a dynamic librarian, he continues to strive towards making a difference. The library has received the Rotary Club Award, Supreme Court Bar Council Award, and Nikhil Foundation Award.

He has expressed: *“I was able to mobilise and showcase significant progress in the functioning of library because of networking and partnerships with local stakeholders and their dependable support. Being part of INELI, and with the skills and knowledge*

imbibed through the workshops has allowed me to update myself. It is a life changing scenario for me”.

According to Selvakumar *“Self-sustainability is continuously driven as a goal coupled with collective action and team effort. There is a need to revive the role of librarians - adequate training and motivation to innovate, ideate and co-create must be provided. Provision of resources and funds must be an integral part for building resilient communities through libraries. A holistic bottom-up approach can be adopted through libraries into full scale services for the society. I am planning activities related to eradication of poverty and hunger, ensuring health and nutrition, gender equality and sustainable partnerships”.*



17. Dr Talitemsu Ao



14 Years of Experience



State Central Library, Kohima,
Nagaland

“Being result oriented towards community development and welfare”

As a reference librarian and planning officer at the state central library in Kohima, Talitemsu has said, “I have been able to apply all the skills which I have learnt during the training process from the International Librarian Leadership program to real-life scenarios. It has helped me to remain motivated and mobilize resources better from various stakeholders. I have become a result-oriented individual and have understood that complaining and cribbing is a waste of time. It is about staying focussed on understanding the need, and having a goal for facilitating a progressive community.”

Kohima is a beautiful hill station in India’s North Eastern Province, now has a state library which

is well-equipped with adequate infrastructure. Tali has also facilitated the creation of a separate computer section for public access, provides free internet browsing to the public who seek information in areas of finding employment opportunities, academic research and project work, details of loan and scholarships, healthcare, government services etc. Now, digital literacy training and photocopy services are permitted. Efforts have also materialized towards partially digitizing the library. Volunteers are encouraged to be involved in library services as a means to strengthen community engagement.

Currently a Deputy Director, Directorate of Border Affair since 2020, Tali has expressed “I and my colleagues are planning to work towards scaling-up of services, especially related to providing quality education and eliminating poverty”.

According to Tali “A library can sustain itself when community participation and refining of existing facilities happen in a continuous and sustainable manner. Enhancement of public librarians’ skills to newer dimensions such as on marketing and business for future sustainable management of public libraries. Educating citizens through awareness and distribution of free publications and distribution of reading materials which have public and historical importance”. He envisions that the future of public libraries in India would need government intervention, changes in policy and integrating of UN-SDGs. For this, he is an active network member of ANLiF keen to strengthen the role of librarians in South Asia. These all would play a major role in transforming the work of Indian public libraries and could be building and directing the work towards reaching the unreached.



18. Mr Unnikrishnan V N



14 Years of Experience



District Library, Thrissur, Kerala

“Through self-growth and self-confidence, a public librarian can accurately enhance the quality of a million lives in the community”

Unnikrishnan is a self-confident library innovator and a keen learner, always looking at ways to grow professionally. In line with increasing access to relevant and timely information, the library hosts regular discussion forums on recent issues and topics of community interest.

Unnikrishnan has initiated many community need-based services having a total of 750 community members of diverse target groups. These services include thematic areas of Culture and Heritage (Day celebrations, program on evolution of Indian cinemas), Education (Reading awareness programs, English literature sessions), and Health (Talks and discussions on monsoon diseases and issues of excessive salt consumption).

Like in other libraries, there are issues to be faced every day. He has developed his leadership skills


through his participation in the MSSRF's library programme. It has allowed him to tackle some of the issues based on discussions and interactions with the management and related stakeholders. The levels of community participation and interaction in the library has increased as services are strengthened with in-depth information. The library also has a functional website managed by the staff, infrastructure was improved and renovated section-wise, during this period.

According to Unni, “Self-sustainability of a public library is an ongoing and continuous process, requiring both support and involvement of related stakeholders, most importantly the staff, management and the public”.









Impact Stories





Fixing India's Hunger Problem from the Roots

Mr ANBAZHAKAN M

BRANCH LIBRARY, THIRUKOVILUR, VILLUPURAM, TAMIL NADU



Agriculture in India faces issues on economic, social, cultural, environmental, political and other fronts. Of these, issues also tend to be persistent at a micro-level and very often affect the yield and hence, income security of a farmer. According to the Development and Access to Information 2017 report there are about 570 million farmers from 161 countries¹, of which "13% are in lower-income countries and farms less than 2 hectares comprise of 12% of world's agricultural land and family farms make up 75% of the world's agricultural land" (DAI2 Report, 2018). Similarly a recent study by the Council on Energy, Environment, and Water (CEEW) supported by Food and Land Use Coalition (FOLU) have reported that less than 4% of Indian farmers have adopted sustainable agricultural practices and systems². It is recommended that investments to be made in building capacities, encourage information exchange and cross learning's for skill and knowledge development on sustainable agricultural practices among farmers.

At MSSRF, the scientist and researchers work closely with farmers by introducing technology, develop

locale-specific content, identify pest and disease, share best practices on integrated farming among rural men and women. Using the hub and spokes model, many outreach programmes have been delivered to support small-holding farmers in many pockets of Tamil Nadu. Against this backdrop, the team of the Special Library Programme found opportunities to support those librarians who were keen on initiating agricultural and allied activities among farmers. An outcome of this effort has been that more than 37 public libraries have showcased diverse agri-related services by engaging farmers.

Public Libraries Linking Agriculture - Outreach Activities

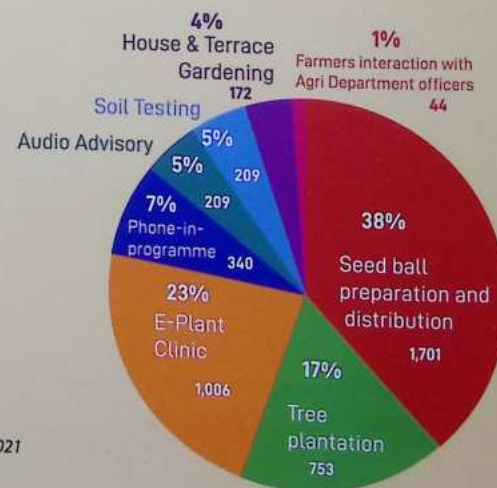
Total Outreach **4,434** M: **2,693** F: **1,741**

37 Public Libraries Initiated Awareness, Drives & Implementation

- Tree Plantation
- Seed Ball
- House and Terrace Gardening

ICT Based Interventions

- E-Plant Clinic
- Phone-in-programme
- Soil Health and Testing
- Farmers Interaction with Agri-department Officials
- Audio-advisories



1. <https://da2i.iffa.org/wp-content/uploads/da2i-2017-chapter3.pdf>

2. <https://www.ceew.in/publications/sustainable-agriculture-india-2021>

According to Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 25% of the crop loss is due to pest and diseases that invest during the growing phase. The health of crops is of utmost important to combat issues at the farm level. In these plant clinics, farmers could bring samples of their affected crops, problematic soil, etc. and seek assistance through scientists from MSSRF also popularly known as plant doctors. The plant doctors examine the crop through a microscope and diagnose the problem and provide advisories. Taking this forward, spearheading the initiative in Tamil Nadu from Villupuram district Mr Anbazhakan M, who has been reaching out to the public through innovative services in the areas of agriculture, health, education and skill development. The plant clinic initiative in the recent past has benefitted more than 1,000 farmers across several regions of Tamil Nadu. His efforts have resulted in farmers gaining support and adequate insights on plant and soil health, schemes for farmers and other areas of agrarian assistance.

It began with an interaction at MSSRF whereby root destruction of crops was seen as a major concern for farmers around Villupuram district. Hence, a forum was initiated to make awareness to the farmers regarding the provision of services through the plant clinics. Given his reputation in the community and popularity as a public librarian, the farmers placed faith in him, and information was circulated through the lead farmers of villages regarding the plant clinic initiative and allied services to farmers. Media forms such as text messages, WhatsApp, newspaper advertisement, posters and pamphlets were also used to inform farmers whenever the plant clinics were organized and conducted.

In the initial stages, concerns did arise among the farmers when they felt that how the library has

address the farmer's issues. They even had several questions as to who the plant doctors were, where they came from, why was their village chosen specifically, etc. Anbazhakan and the MSSRF team was able to explain the details to them and hence gained their confidence.

Having crossed several obstacles and hurdles, the first plant clinic was organized in Jambai village in the Villupuram district of Tamil Nadu. 40 farmers from the village had gathered to discuss issues they faced with their crop and soil health. Samples of soil and diseased crops were brought where the plant clinic organised. Insights on the usage of manure and other components were also elaborated to the farmers. The plant clinic acted as a forum for farmers to cross learning relate to the issues that may arise in cultivation and ways to combat them. Helpline cards were also provided to the farmers for them to constantly stay in touch with plant doctors than wait for the next plant clinic to be conducted which may hinder cultivation.

Extensive stakeholder support, the help of library staff and members have motivated and allowed the librarian to organised 4 such plant clinics consistently in the recent past. Subsequently, owing to the success of the initiative and rising demand for such farmer forums, plant clinics were reorganized in villages of Manalurpettai, Melanthai and Devarediyarkuppam in the past year. More than 1,000 farmers have benefited from these plant clinics, many of them becoming regular participants of the program. The bandwidth of issues discussed has expanded over the period from crop and soil health to other aspects such as damage to crops due to pest attacks, water issues, and etc.

Anbazhakan is grateful to MSSRF and the local government for their constant guidance and support in helping farmers of the Villupuram district thereby contributing to the UN-SDG on Zero Hunger (Goal 2). The plant clinics have also economically benefited in establishing forward and backward linkages for farmers whereby they have been able to promote their products and collaborate with shopkeepers to sell their produce.

The benefits and significance of these plant clinics have spread through their success and farmers forming a network amongst them. In recent times, farmers living 20 – 35 km away from villages where plant clinics have been organized have also taken part and requested for more such initiatives to be organized.

Anbazhakan will continue this dedicated service and extend benefits to other areas where farmers face concerns such as information on schemes, insurance, bank loans, procurement of farm inputs, etc. Amidst the distress faced by farmers in India's agricultural sector, the efforts of Anbazhakan to put together a holistic support forum for farmers has indeed been a milestone in reducing not merely the problems faced by farmers but also giving them the respect they deserve as India's backbone and food providers.

"Public libraries have showcased diverse agri-related services by engaging farmers"





All Roads Lead to Vedaranyam - A Librarian in the Times of Need, is a Community Trailblazer Indeed

Mr ASAITHAMBI M

DISTRICT CENTRAL LIBRARY, THIRUVARUR, TAMIL NADU



The coastal districts of Thiruvavar, Thanjavur, Nagapattinam, Pudukottai and the surrounding regions are known for their lush green paddy fields and their scenic beauty. But it all changed forever after Cyclone Gaja that literally ripped everything apart. Days and months have passed, but the scars of devastation remain fresh in community trailblazer Mr Asaithambi's mind when he describes the scenes of uprooted trees, crumbling houses, and crowds of unemployed young men and women who after the cyclone were forced to while their time away, aimlessly. He has 14 years of experience as a public librarian, currently working at the District Central Library, Thiruvavar district in Tamil Nadu.

With a lack of awareness and neglect of the warnings issued by the Tamil Nadu Meteorological Department, residents of areas around Vedaranyam depicted a care free nature towards the approaching cyclone. The evening before the storm, Asaithambi was busy penning a poem on the cyclone. It was then that a friend who had visited him alerted that they had to go warn the villagers to be cautious.

Asaithambi took his two-wheeler, set out to issue warnings, and met all the residents in the area, who mostly lived in thatched huts and secluded houses, and tried their best to inform the residents to leave their homes and relocated in the camps arranged by authorities. Several of them took their advice seriously and left for the camps which were arranged by the authorities.

Having done their part, Asaithambi and his friend, a doctor, returned to his place and continued watching the television on the preparation of the Government and the National Disaster Forces in facing the approaching cyclone. However, the power supply was cut and before they knew it, they were faced with cyclonic winds. The streets were full of noises of men and women crying and screaming in panic. Despite the warnings and pleas from his family, Asaithambi had to step out of the house to help them. Right in front of his eyes, the wind lifted his scooter off the ground and casually flung it aside. An unnerved Asaithambi stepped back in and closed the door.

The second gush of winds around 3:30 a.m. caused houses to collapse and buildings to fall. People were

out on the road rescuing those stranded and rushing children into safe spaces. Asaithambi went out and gathered his friends and began helping the people. He observed the destruction that was caused – infrastructural damage, uprooted trees, electric poles and houses that were ripped apart by the cyclone.

Given the magnitude of damage, Asaithambi and his friends decided to organize for help and relief for those stranded. They provided shelter in their respective homes, 70 of them were accommodated on the terrace of a friend's house. Another harrowing experience they encountered was when the roof of a particular house was blown away by the fierce wind and how the residents managed to survive by hiding under the cot, clutching their young children in their arms. The instances were horrifying. Asaithambi and his army of friends managed to feed the survivors, young and old, by borrowing cooked food from the neighbours.

It was at this point when a hard-hitting reality struck Asaithambi and his close acquaintance, his doctor friend. A thousand questions haunted them. How are the people going to handle the impact of the

calamity? How are they going to start rebuilding their lives and livelihood? It was here that Asaithambi's community trailblazer instincts helped him serve the needy. He arranged for extensive relief and rehabilitation material for those in need by coordinating with several donors.

Help began arriving from all over the state – corporation and municipality sanitation workers, electricians, employees of the Electricity Board, relief and rescue forces, Non-Governmental Organizations, volunteers, etc. Asaithambi describes the scenes from the relief camps, "The survivors began reliving the trauma of the cyclone. The mobile phones didn't have their signals. People found it difficult to live in the midst of darkness, with nothing to do. Worse was the plight of the parents who had to keep waving the palm-leaf fans in orders to keep the mosquitoes away so that their children could sleep peacefully while losing their own sleep. Possessing candles and mosquito coils had become signs of affluence. Like garbage that lies strewn around dustbins, people slept around mosquito coils. Much to their annoyance, they found mosquitoes flying above and around the burning repellents. They realized that life was hell without electricity".

He further adds, "The sight of 100 and 150 - year - old tamarind trees, mango, jackfruit and coconut trees that earned more than qualified professionals working in the city lying uprooted made the hearts of the farmers bleed and many died of shock". The subsequent days saw inspections of the cyclone affected areas by bureaucrats and politicians, an upheaval among the people for support and relief materials. Asaithambi's friend, the doctor, used his influence to arrange for relief materials from Chennai.

The duo even visited the neighbouring areas where there was reckless damage caused by the cyclone. This damage was not merely to human life but also to lagoons, wildlife sanctuaries, several coconut trees, and etc. Monetary donations were also provided to those who had lost their families due to the cyclone.

The post-cyclone period was a very difficult phase to tide past, damage and destruction all around, no electricity, lack of food and basic necessities, no roof above the head, dependence on relief supply of water and food, health concerns, etc. Wherever he went, devastation greeted him. Wet clothes were drying on electric wires. People were trying to salvage electric appliances like mixers, grinders, and TVs, along with books and documents, by drying them in the sun. With no electricity, shops had sprung up to charge the mobile phones and inverters on generators. People were waiting outside those shops for hours to get their devices charged. This was a golden opportunity to make extra bucks. So was the case with essential commodities, from milk to candles. People were thronging to buy used roof tiles for their broken homes. A few yards away, the doctor saw young men from north India cutting down the fallen trees, in order to remove them. Some residents were making the most of this opportunity by felling the highway trees that were causing troubles to their homes. The leaves and debris that the cyclonic winds had carried with them were deposited in the ponds and water-bodies in the area. They had started to decay, and a foul smell was emanating from them. Drinking water sent through lorries from Chennai were being pumped through generators and distributed to the people. When asked, however, people continued to state, point blank, that they were not getting any relief and rescue items. There were also some who were hoarding the bed sheets

and blankets that were distributed to them for free, and we reselling those items away at any price.

*"It's obvious that you weren't here on a
constructive mission,
I know that you wouldn't leave without destroying
everything
Spare at least the trees and crops
Teach the thankless humans a lesson they won't
forget.
For him to forget the fake
and get back to what's real,
To forget everything and stand together to
conquer a cyclone,
Oh cyclone, feel free to strike each and every
year...
Like a local fair!"*

Concluding his narration to the MSSRF team, he added, "The adage, 'All roads lead to Rome,' was slightly modified that day. All roads led to Vedaranyam, with vehicles full of relief material. A sincere thanks to all who had extended humanitarian aid to the people in need". He states that he had confidence and felt the courage to coordinate the effort due to those capacities build through MSSRF for librarians as community change-maker.





Building Inclusive Spaces and Reaching the Unreached – A Caregiver of the Irulas in the Outskirts of Chennai

Mr BANIC PANDIAN

BRANCH LIBRARY, THIRUVOTTIYUR, THIRUVALLUR, TAMIL NADU



A public librarian and community trailblazer from Thiruvottiyur, Thiruvallur district of Tamil Nadu, Mr Banic Pandian lives by the adage of reaching the unreached through public libraries. Parts of Tamil Nadu were extensively affected by the floods in the year 2015 during which the worst hit was the poorest of the poor. One such community that was drastically affected were the Irulas who lived closer to Thiruvottiyur in the outskirts of Chennai. While this community has a rich history and a diverse culture, they are very often discriminated and alienated by the urban dwellers.

Banic happened to first interact with this community while distributing relief materials to the flood-affected victims. While he observed everyone to be rushing and breaking queues to collect the relief packages, taking extra materials, etc., the Irulas waited patiently for their turn and took exactly 41 packages for the 41 families which were affected. This raised a sense of respect towards this community in the eyes of Banic. Eventually, in the year 2018, he directly began engaging with the community by establishing a demo library in their locality. Over time, on interacting with the community on a regular

basis, he observed that many of them suffered from skin diseases and in certain cases even leprosy.

Majority of the Irula's happen to be fisherfolks who catch fish and crabs from the canals for a living. The children too are forced to catch worms and bugs popularly known as the *erapoochi* owing to their agility and tender hands. Though this happens to be illegal, the children are made to skip school and engage in this activity during the day, especially during the monsoons. It is believed that this activity and making direct contact with water in the canals and slush which causes skin infections and diseases.

One such family was that of Pandian, a child studying in 2nd standard who was identified to have leprosy. His father was the only earning member of the family and Pandian was among the 4 children of the house. Owing to the need for money and also pressure from the contractors, Pandian too was sent for catching bugs causing him to contract skin diseases and leprosy. Banic took up initial medical expenses for the boy and facilitated with the donor and caregiver for his health expenditure and recovery.

Since this experience Banic is keen on as certaining space to give the children education and create a healthy learning environment such that the children do not succumb to small-scale work. He has instituted a centre for learning and skill development of children managed from time-to-time by him and a few of the library staff. They ensure that school dropouts are reported to him and necessary action is taken accordingly to ensure that children are sent back to school. He hopes for children to study until 8th grade in their village beyond which they are to join in high school elsewhere. He is working towards enhancing facilities for the same.

The centre in the village and the demo library has books, toys, sports supplies, etc. which are used by children from time-to-time to play. Banic has also arranged for craft and jewellery making for the women of the community but however their interests have been dwindling despite the willingness of the library to constantly help them if they wish to start SHGs along those lines. On a macro level, Banic intends to ensure that all the 35 children in the community receive basic education and child

rights and are not forced into manual labour at the cost of education. He also hopes for organising regular health camps and work towards curing skin diseases and ensuring good health for the Irulas thereby reaching the unreached through the UN-SDG of Good Health and Well-being (Goal 3) thereby ensuring inclusivity in development and welfare actions.

In addition to directly caring for and supporting the Irulas, Banic through the public library in Thiruvottiyur has also helped and extended support to LGBTQ by making them members and regular users of the library, individuals with special needs by providing them with a forum to learn and interact, training centres for those with special needs seeking employment, evening tuitions for school children, etc. All of this and many more highlights the extensive role that Mr Banic play in holistically shaping the society towards a better tomorrow.





A Library has No Boundaries – Initiating Creative Homes: A Defeat Covid Initiative

Mr BINOY MATHEW

VALAPATTANAM GRAMA PANCHAYAT LIBRARY, KANNUR, KERALA



The dedicated and single librarian Mr Binoy Mathew of Valapattanam Grama Panchayat Library, Kannur, Kerala; has 14 years of experience in the library field. In his opinion, a public library is a neutral space, serving individuals in the best possible way and must provide the needful information they seek. A rural library under the Department of Panchayats, Government of Kerala, the library was established in 1950 has now transformed by providing multi-services. Binoy states that it's a collaborative effort with the community and he plays a role in finding opportunities and filling the information and service gaps, as and when required.

Following the nationally respected vision of *"Service Before Self"*, Binoy initiated the *"Creative Homes – Defeat Covid"* movement. This movement began through the library in Kerala for the young children thereby in a true sense, reaching the unreached during the massive Covid lockdown period in India. While the library had to shut down abiding by the government norms and regulations, they started a platform online, connecting 150 children and their parents through WhatsApp in late March 2020. Through this portal, several events, activities and

creative assignments were assigned to children. This not only kept the children occupied in the difficult times but also helped enhance their skills and creativity.

The enthusiasm amongst children began by them forming teams of 7, guided by a senior citizen men to reach of them being asked to come up with creative names for their group and introducing the same. Having broken the ice, several drawing and painting, art and craft, story-telling, and other competitions were conducted through the forum. Given the upsurge in the pandemic and the need to spread awareness on social distancing, the children were also made aware of the problems caused by the Corona virus and a follow up event on the poster making on the same theme was conducted.

The 7 team of children also conducted a survey covering 576 persons in 140 households, providing insights on family and home dynamics in times of lockdown. Their studies revealed that 4% of husbands continued to stay away from the kitchen, all family members were under a roof owing to the lockdown. A significant and environmentally friendly move was

that kitchen gardening had increased by 70% in a week's period. Other aspects covered in the study included changes in lifestyle, food habits, family time and relations, sleep cycles, screen time, etc.

Certain other fun-filled events such as origami-based story-telling, fancy dress competition, interaction with several renowned artists of Kerala have also been organized by the library. Children were also guided through bird watching by environmentalists. Day celebrations such as Earth Day, Biodiversity Day, etc. also formed an integral part of their events. The children's forum has initiated National Children's Network to share and showcase diverse culture and heritage practices between states (Tamil Nadu, Chandigarh so far) and across international borders (Singapore), since August 2020. This initiative has now become a new experience with entertainment and knowledge sharing simultaneously, helping children to enhance their skills and talent. Initiatives continue to be undertaken through online with the intention of remaining connected and spreading creativity. The platform has now grown, culminating in a virtual exhibition of diverse skills and young talent.

Additionally, during the lockdown, library has lent its space for aggregation of food and relief packages for migrant workers who they align with the Kerala Government to respecting them as **"Guest Workers"**. 619 in total in the Panchayat, the library actively involved themselves in the distribution of the materials proving to be community trailblazers in times of need and distress. The library in June 2020 has also been conferred with the position of Taluk Career Guidance Centre of Kerala's State Library Council for a period of three years. To this front, an initial grant of INR 28,000 has been assigned to the library for operations of this centre. Furthermore, the library was renovated having new facilities of a solar power plant, digital classroom, and eco-friendly furnishings. The investment of 3.4 million rupees was received from the MLA Asset Development Fund and was inaugurated on 6th February 2021.

He continues to serve as the Transition Committee member of the Regional Librarians Network of South Asia on a voluntary basis, having the vision to empower librarians.





'Tran' for Transformation – Library Opens Its Doors for the Third Gender

Dr DEEPAK KUMAR SHRIVASTAVA

GOVERNMENT PDDU DIVISIONAL PUBLIC LIBRARY, KOTA, RAJASTHAN



The Government PDDU Divisional Public Library situated in Kota, Rajasthan is popularly the country's second library and Rajasthan's first library to have opened its doors for the third gender and preventing any form of discrimination and misbehaviour against LGBTQ community. ***"It is high time the society accepts them (LGBTQ community). Through library memberships, we aim to provide them a platform. A new world will be opened for them, which was denied to them earlier"*** says Dr Deepak a trailblazer librarian who along with his staff at the library has initiated such a noble cause.

In his first interaction with the transgender community who in their custom has a god parent popularly called the Guruma, Dr Deepak presented to her the harassment that transgender subject civilian do for money. In response, the Guruma responded by sharing the concerns and worries of the transgender community and the way society mistreats and discriminates them. This rang a bell in his mind that what matters is just a shift and change in mindset aiming at respecting and ensuring equality for everyone irrespective of their sexual identity and orientation.

In due course of time, he interacted with the readers' circle and the library staff, the transgender began to be included in events of the library as guests and visitors. Pleased by the efforts towards inclusivity and non-discrimination, one of them is even said to have taken a lifetime membership at the library and actively engages in the work done. **Sahiba, a 42-year-old was the first member of the community who was encouraged to pursue reading and honing her skills through the library.** Deepak while issuing the membership made Sahiba observe the dedication of the visually impaired in reading and writing and hence requested Sahiba too to spread awareness in their group to encourage people to learn and grow when they had god's gift and the ability to do so. "It is a huge recognition for us to be part of a library and many people would be benefited from this decision," she added. Sahiba said that had the library opened its door for the community earlier, many of them would have joined its membership by now".

Facilities such as audio books, instant reading machine, availability of books, magazines, newspapers and journals in several languages, interaction and forums with children and senior

citizens have been organized to ensure that they too are one among the other individuals who visit the library. For a few of them, the library has now become their second home and a place to resonate with their inner self and grow as an individual. Deepak credits and thanks to the Aksham Foundation for their support in organizing weekend programs for the community through the public library.

In the coming days, efforts are being directed towards ensuring that the transgender community is empowered starting from their educational qualification. While societal conditions inhibit them from attending regular schools and colleges, efforts through the library are being made to get the support of education department to allow them to pursue distance education to obtain degrees and certifications. This according to Dr Deepak would be a foundation stone for their empowerment and ability to venture out into professional life and work.

He also shared that several hurdles had to be overcome in order to ensure dedicated and equal services were delivered to the third gender without any form of discrimination. Initially, it was believed

that their inclusion in the library would wreak havoc and create a nuisance in a library that is meant to be a silent place. Deepak says that mind sets have changed and they have been willingly accepted into the library, however, the willingness has been governed by social taboos of good luck being bestowed upon individuals and their work if they keep transgender happy. He hence says that means to create a progressive shift and yet there is a long journey ahead of them.

While this has been a breakthrough effort ensuring that public libraries are spaces meant for everyone, the Government PDDU Divisional Public Library in Kota is also popular for rendering other communities need-based services such as text-to-speech (TTS) facility in Hindi and English, instant reading machine, Focus 40, Braille books, e-books, offline audio books and Plectalk Vachak among other facilities. Tele-health programs, skill development initiatives, online assistance for children on their assignments and homework is also being regularly provided through the library.

In all certainty, the work and efforts of the library are aligned with National Priorities and UN-SDGs of Good Health and Well-Being (Goal 3), Quality Education (Goal 4), Gender Equality (Goal 5), Reduced Inequalities (Goal 10), Building Sustainable Cities and Communities (Goal 11) and others. With the tireless efforts of Deepak, he continues to support in finding ways to shape the role of libraries for the communities and it goes on to signify the need for public libraries and librarians as agents of development of the nation.





Keeping the Roots Strong - Nurturing Public Libraries as Versatile Spaces of Learning, Growth and Welfare

Dr GOPAL MOHAN SHUKLA

GOVERNMENT PUBLIC LIBRARY, ALLAHABAD, UTTAR PRADESH



With the advent of technology and smart gadgets, it seemed that the era of reading proper paperback books was over. Even today if you ask a book lover about their fantasy most of them would say: 'reading a book in a nook of a beautiful library'. The fact of the matter remains that even if the technology is progressing, nothing can take away the charm of reading a paperback book or even the romance of being in a library surrounded by books.

Ranked 6th in the India Today rankings, the library is houses with 1.25 lakh books and is also home to rare Arabic manuscripts and ancient parliamentary papers and documents. The Government Public Library, Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh, while has strengthened its roots by maintaining a diverse and nourished repository of books and other associated documents, it has also progressed with changing times by enhancing the role of public libraries in society. It has found newer and wider horizons to sustain welfare initiatives thereby contributing extensively towards social transformation.

The library has been providing innovative community need-based services in thematic areas of culture and heritage, education, pro-nature and skill development. It has evolved from catering to just readers to a mixed target group including children, students seeking professional development, entrepreneurs, farmers, women, unemployed, etc.

This library has become the epicentre for collective learning, growth and social transformation. The efforts of the library and the librarian, Dr Shukla has been aligned to National Priorities contributing towards the fulfilment of IFLA's UN-SDGs such as Quality Education (Goal 4), Decent Work and Economic Growth (Goal 8), Sustainable Cities and Communities (Goal 11), and Climate Action (Goal 13).

Dr Shukla has also extensively written about the impact and positive externalities that favourable collaborations and partnerships with/ by public libraries can have on community well-being. In an academic article, "INELI: International Network of Emerging Library Innovators - Global Movement of Public Libraries Transformation" co-authored by Dr Shukla. He writes extensively about the INELI project

and its efforts towards repositioning public libraries in India and the world through the enhancement of skill development of public librarians. He has extensively contributed towards the promotion and visibility of public libraries through his academic writing contributions and dedication to community well-being by being a community trailblazer of change. He firmly believes and recommends that the INELI programme has been a converging platform for reshaping the minds of public librarians. He opines that the programme and its components have helped public librarians in India and the world to bring about a positive shift in their attitudes, skills and knowledge and empowering the torch-bearers of learning, growth and well-being – the public librarians in transforming public libraries into inclusive spaces for one-and-all.

"Allahabad Government Public Library has become the epicentre for collective learning, growth and social transformation"



WALL OF FAME

Institutions (IFLA) wants to thank all the people and organisations that contributed to the GLA to recognise and celebrate the ideas, effort, time, energy of the library and information professionals around the world who have made the Global Vision a truly global conversation. Your contributions and ideas available to all librarians around the world.

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Jon Simone
Fabiane Simões
Virginia Insua
Elizabeth





Tamil Nadu's First Green and Clean Energy Library with Direct Current Technology

Dr JANAKIRAMAN AMIRTHALINGAM

FORMER LIBRARIAN OF BHOOTHALINGAM LIBRARY,
M S SWAMINATHAN RESEARCH FOUNDATION, CHENNAI, TAMIL NADU



A Non-Governmental Organization Library specifically catering to the needs of students, research scholars and the Foundation staff, the Bhoothalingam Library is unique in its own functioning. It houses a wide collection of books and journals on agriculture, natural resource management, food and nutrition, gender biodiversity and biotechnology. The library is also the only depository library of FAO in India. It has excellent digital access and an array of journals and peer-reviewed publications being made available to researchers and academicians. The librarian has focused on the most current and boiling issue of conservation of natural resources and fighting pollution by transiting to renewable energy forms. This was initiated as NGOs always rely on funding for administering the activities and Janakiraman was keen on looking build a green library to minimize the energy usage and expenditure of the library.

The MSSRF Library in 2017 entered into a partnership with renowned stakeholders to transform the Bhoothalingam Library into a solar-driven, clean and green energy space. A direct outcome of the initiative was the development of a centralized air –

conditioning system and humidity controller unit is driven by solar power.

The solar power panel became fully functional in March 2018 with a great shift made towards energy conservation implemented by KSolare Energy Private Limited, Pune. Based on an app and internal monitoring system, data has revealed that between January to May 2019, **the library has been able to reduce carbon-dioxide emission by 5.1 tons implying a further and 2 tons worth of coal has been saved in the period. The electricity bill has also been reduced on an average by INR 6,000.** This remarkable transition to renewable energy has not merely helped in the conservation of resources but has also significantly reduced costs for the library whereby electricity bills no longer remain a concern as payments do not have to be made. Instead, there is excess power generated, made available to the grid.

The success of this initiative has allowed for expansion into converting the entire MSSRF campus into a green and environment-friendly campus. Energy audits, carbon footprint estimation and the need to reduce existing carbon footprint, ban on plastic

usage, etc. have been initiated paving way for the next steps. However, he mentions that any initiative must have a common vision and purpose to support the earth, and its people.

Janakiraman takes pride in being a trailblazer librarian of Tamil Nadu's first green NGO library driven by solar power with direct current technology and aligns with indicators of UN-SDG (Goal 7) on Affordable and Clean Energy. To present a paper titled "MSSRF's Sustainable Green Library to achieve UN-SDG (Goal 7)", he was invited to represent the Foundation at the World Library and Information Congress (WLIC) at Athens in 2019 and has also been recognized as a prospective mentor for the network of public libraries across the state in adopting similar operational models of solar power thereby proving to be an effective space of interaction and hence sustainable community development.

This brings to light the fact that public libraries have the potential to innovatively go beyond books and contribute towards sustainable green buildings development and hence community welfare. Through the efforts of the librarian in collaboration

with the Foundation and other stakeholders has converted the Bhoothalingam Library into a clean energy centre paving the way for other institutions to also, adopt the 'green way'.

"MSSRF in collaboration with public librarians began 'Green Ways' to ensure the clean energy centre (or) renewable energy"





Taking Science and Technology Beyond Books – The STEM and STEAM Programs

Ms KALAISELVI M

BRANCH LIBRARY, KANJIKOVIL, ERODE, TAMIL NADU



A public librarian posted at Kanjikovil in 2014, Ms Kalaiselvi observed the learning patterns of children in the locality and also those who frequented the library to work on their school projects and assignments. Children were merely reading, writing and not taking their learning beyond books to the practical application of knowledge. During her interactions with these children, they requested her to host summer camps and competitions during their holidays in events such as elocutions, drawing and art, poetry recitation, etc. She was struck by an idea and chose to harness this competitive spirit among children in the area of science and innovation.

This was a stepping stone towards offering “Do it yourself” STEM and STEAM programs which then evolved into creativity being applied to science experiments and building working models of appliances of daily use. The children first made a working model of a train using cardboard with the librarian’s help. Having seen their interest grow, she urged the children to brainstorm and work on models themselves. This resulted in children forming groups, discussing possible ideas, procuring materials from households and mechanic shops and hence making

several models out of recyclable materials which otherwise are discarded from workspaces and houses. What she shared was just discussion, which led to ideation and that was enough for the children to engage in these activities.

What began with a group of 10 girls and 5 boys visiting the library every second Sunday of the month, became a regular affair with close to 20 – 30 children visiting the library actively engaging in this STEM and STEAM program. These children are school students between standards 3 – 10. **The children have made several appliances such as dustbins, rainwater storage tanks, refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, vending machines, popcorn makers, pinhole cameras, water purifiers, moving mini models of buses and trains, helicopters and even robots. Some of these inventions have been recognized and awarded at district, national and international forums.**

While learning has been taken beyond books with children becoming oriented to the practicality of science, the process was not short of hurdles and difficulties which the librarian had to overcome.

Having seen the children spend more time on building such models than reading from books, parents were anxious that there would be a decline in academic performance. Similar concerns were raised by faculty and headmasters of schools in the locality. In due course of time, it became evident that the academic performance of children had improved and they were balancing between devoting time to books versus their invention hub at the library. School teachers were also sharing that children were sharing more during learning and interaction in class.

That said, caste issues also became a concern wherein distribution of prizes to the children was considered to be biased and hence offending parents. This however was clarified that children were being awarded to be encouraged to perform better for themselves and that their recognition was solely on the basis of their talent and merit. **Some of these children have received awards and were recognised in some of the local competitive programmes. One child was also nominated to participate in the NASA Space programme.**

For these children to work, library space is also a concern, Kalaiselvi has allotted a separate rented space for the children to innovate, ideate and co-create and being a single librarian juggles between the main library and this space for children. She has realised that library is an interactive space for everyone and is keen to continue STEM and STEAM Programmes. She currently receives support from several stakeholders – members, readers circle, schools, NGOs and clubs, etc. for fuelling the creativity and talent in children and rewarding them for their efforts through prizes. Help has been provided by the library members and the office assistant even in qualitative manners such as taking time and monitoring and guiding the children during the course of the program.

Kalaiselvi has been a trailblazer public librarian who has taken quality education and learning beyond books to practical learning by doing enabling children to grow and understand science better, nurturing the scientist in each one of them. In the coming days, she would expand the scope of this program by gaining access to space and adequate infrastructure to establish a lab for children to do better and give them better opportunities for research and inventions.





A Step Towards Climate Literacy – Say No to Plastics

Mr MURUGAN A

BRANCH LIBRARY, ANDIPALAYAM, TIRUPUR, TAMIL NADU

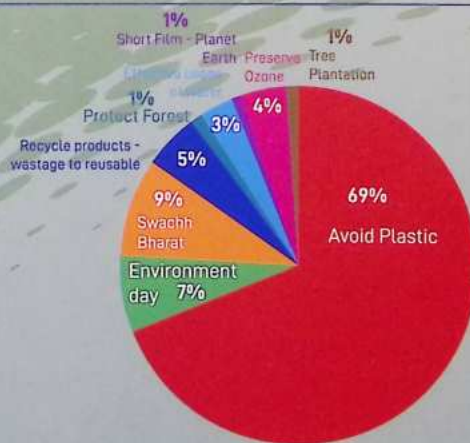


India generates 9.46 million tons of plastic waste annually, of which 40% remains uncollected and 43% is used for packaging, most of which is single-use, a new study by the UN has revealed. While plastic use is a threat and adversely affects the environment. Tirupur is a major industrial town in Tamil Nadu has seen issues regarding water pollution, poor disposal mechanisms leading to littering, land fillings, etc. Based on the participation of librarians in MSSRF's workshops on sustainable development, majority of the libraries have taken action to connect services on the Climate Action goal of IFLA's UN-SDGs, wherein the overall outreach is captured below.

Having understood the problems that this could pose to biodiversity and lives on earth, Mr Murugan, a public librarian from Tirupur district of Tamil Nadu has initiated efforts through the library to make people of this district 'climate literate' to improvise gaps on climate action. He is renowned for his ability to interact with the community at large, hence being able to reach out to 6,985 community members through diverse initiatives in the areas of Education, Health, Pro-nature and Skill Development.

Action for Climate Change through Indian Public Libraries

Total Outreach **4,651 M: 2,337 F: 2,314**



The younger generation was mainly chosen, comprised of middle and high school students, owing to their ability to influence citizens, he began mass campaigns and drives on plastic-bans,

problems caused by plastic use, need for clean and green surroundings, etc. In due course of time, he received favourable support from local leaders, trade unions and other stakeholders. Change in the use and throw of plastic has been brought about in areas of Kurinjinar, Aadipalayam, Bhuvaneshwarnagar and Adidraavidar Colony. It is said that each of these localities houses atleast 2,000 people, now all are aware of the impact of climate and are making extensive strides towards reducing and eliminating plastic use.

Through small yet significant steps many activities are being organised regularly such as making children read and discuss topics on pollution and environmental protection, video screenings for age groups of 18 - 45 years who visit the library, mass runs in towns and villages through public information systems to prevent plastic use, anti-littering and cleaning drives across villages which enabled tons of plastics to be collected and deposited with agents for accurate disposal/reuse in an eco-friendly manner.

As an extension to the anti-plastic drive, Murugan has also ensured that 1,500 – 2,000 tree saplings have been planted around the Tirupur district in school and library campuses. Eminent stakeholders have contributed towards planting and nurturing these saplings have now blossomed into well-grown trees. Seed ball activity to promote plant growth on available land spaces has also been initiated to make Tirupur a clean and green area.

The awareness and climate literacy drive run by Murugan, is a sustaining activity that he ensures to carry out once a week. According to him, this is a mechanism to reiterate to the community that plastic pollution is a major concern and threat to the environment, requiring affirmative action at the earliest starting from the household level.

Other innovative services in line with climate action and other UN-SDGs include treatment of sewage and reduction of water pollution. Tirupur being a hub of textiles and chemicals has many industries which Murugan has been able to positively influence towards reducing water pollution and ensuring proper disposal of industrial waste. Though a significant change has been brought about, Murugan firmly believes that climate literacy is a continuous and ongoing process requiring dedicated and committed efforts from everyone in saving planet earth.

"MSSRF in collaboration with public librarians began 'Climate Literacy' to ensure the plastics-ban and saving planet earth"





An Eco-Friendly and Sustainable Library Space for Everyone

Mr PAWAN KUMAR PAREEK

FORMER LIBRARIAN OF DR RADHAKRISHNAN STATE CENTRAL LIBRARY, JAIPUR, RAJASTHAN



As a State Librarian of the Dr Radhakrishnan State Central Library in Jaipur, until 2020, Mr Pawan Kumar has 24 years of experience in the public library field and has been dedicatedly rendering community need-based services in the areas of Education, Health and Skill Development which has benefitted 178 community members. In extension to the community need-based services provided by the library, recent efforts have also been made to revamp the library spaces by converting it into a green and eco-friendly campus. Since his visit to libraries in Melbourne through MSSRF's capacity building programme, he has planned many key activities for redefining the library spaces for the localities. The use of technology to build sustainable buildings was one of the key insights he received in Geelong Library. Taking inspiration, and having realized the need for shifting to renewable energy forms and reduce expenditure on electricity, the library considered the possibility of harnessing solar power.

Pawan initiated a discussion with library staff and later shared the idea with other major stakeholders, solar panels with a capacity of 20 KWP generating 78 units of power per day was set up in the library

campus in 2018. The power generated is used to run all appliances in the library space and additional power is also returned back to the grid.

The direct outcomes of this eco-friendly initiative have been a substantial reduction in consumption and utilization of power. In terms of financial costs, annual expenditure on electricity bills on an average reducing from INR 76,000 per month to INR 40,000 per month currently.

Through this initiative, the library has met the necessary requirements of IFLA's UN-SDGs of Affordable and Clean Energy (Goal 7) and Responsible Production and Consumption (Goal 12). In addition, the library also contributes towards being eco-friendly approaches by having implemented rainwater harvesting, planting saplings in and around the campus, and having programmes on environmental conservation awareness for its communities.

Pawan, who has spearheaded the solar power project for the library has planned that 10 other public libraries in the locality become solar powered in the next two years. In addition to this primary focus, he also mentions that need for holistically conserving

resources through small yet significant steps such as preparing compost from garden waste, clean and hygienic practices will be implemented through the library.

This clearly signifies the role and the ability of public libraries in societal transformation and development beyond books in all other essential spheres of life such as environmental protection, climate action and conservation of resources.

"MSSRF in collaboration with public librarians began 'Solar power driven space' to ensure the eco-friendly implementation"





Public Libraries as Nutrition and Gender Sensitive Spaces – Eradicating Anaemia among the Girls of Tiruvannamalai District

Mr SAIRAM A

DISTRICT CENTRAL LIBRARY, TIRUVANNAMALAI, TAMIL NADU



With more than 50% of India's population being females, it becomes mandatory to ensure that essential human development services are also feminized to meet the needs of the women and girls of India. Having understood the lifecycle approach to humankind and a woman being the epitome of this cycle, Sairam became aware of diseases that may plague a woman's health, a dominant one being Anaemia. Primarily appearing in young and adolescent girls, anaemia is the deficiency of iron in blood with several negative implications on health and well-being.

Having realized the need to combat and eradicate anaemia through the public library in Tiruvannamalai, Sairam has collaborated with several stakeholders and medical professionals to understand and eliminate anaemia among school girl students of the district in a phased manner. He intended to help a minimum of 50 girls in the first round. He did not realise the magnitude of this problem, until he took a leap of faith.

Sairam has learnt from the children that they lived with their grandparents or guardians since their parents were away at towns and cities as menial workers. While fresh and healthy food is prepared and made available for them at home and through the Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS), the children avoid these owing to lack of taste, sometimes due to cyclic menu which deviates them for cravings of tasty, spicy, and junk foods served along the streets. This is recognised as one of the key factors resulting in them lacking of holistic nutrition they deserve and becoming weak and anaemic. This initiative began when the blood test of 300 girl students studying in classes 9th – 12th in government schools of the district, reported that 80% of the girls were tested positive for anaemia with a minimum reading of haemoglobin level of less than 4.0 gram/100 ml. The teachers were shocked with the reports, as the school has provide iron and folic acid tablets to the girl students on a weekly basis. Having seen the magnitude of this problem, Sairam instantly started

awareness campaigns and administered medical help to these students.

Importance of iron supplements through folic acid tablets and intake of iron rich foods on a regular basis was emphasised by the visiting doctor who on probono basis chose to be a part of the awareness programme. The doctor also insisted on planning a healthy diet with locally available and seasonal foods and following a regular diet for their well-being, which was highlighted to the students and their families. The possible problems associated with anaemia could cause among girls – delayed pregnancy, heavy and irregular menstrual cycles, etc. were also highlighted, and urging them to take immediate and necessary steps to improve their health. Follow up of check-ups and health camps resolving other issues were also organized continuously by Sairam.

Sairam heavily disturbed by the difference in performance and stamina levels of boys and girls

who visit the libraries, the girls being relatively weak and unhealthy took an oath to eliminate this kind of imbalance enabling the girls too to have better health and hence equal opportunities to learn and grow. Having overcome several hurdles such as lack of awareness on their personal health among students, non-cooperation from school management and faculties, availability of lab spaces to carry out tests, etc.; what began as a health camp for 300 students of a school have now expanded to 4 schools with benefits reaching close to 660 students in the district. At the end of the first year, most of the children had tested and the impact of change was observed with increase in haemoglobin count between 10.0 to 11 gm / 100 ml. The program and its impact has sensitized several volunteers and faculty of schools to join the mass anaemia eradication initiative.

In the coming days, with the support of the library staff and the stakeholders Sairam is planning to scaleup anaemia screening test of 1,000 school girls. With necessary reports and valid data, he would like to influence measures to eliminate anaemia and promise a healthy future to the girls at the policy advocacy level.

While eradication of anaemia remains his primary focus, he has also extensively worked on skill development and ensuring employment opportunities through vocational training on tailoring for victims of domestic abuse, child marriage, school dropouts and AC repairs training for young boys and adults. Other initiatives of the library also include created forums for senior citizens, plant clinics for farmers, activities and initiatives for children through forums and competitions. The work of the library has been able to showcase the possibilities of interlinking IFLA's UN-SDGs.

Through several such initiatives, Sairam has justified that public libraries are essential pillars of economic development, in building informed knowledge societies and welfare, working for societal transformation beyond the four walls of the library space. He urges a need to evolve and expand the development efforts through the library and other public libraries too wake up attending to the call of development duty.





Leading them from Darkness unto Light – Public Libraries as Inclusive Spaces for All

Ms SANJEEVANI PRASAD ATRE
PUNE MARATHI GRANTHALAYA, MAHARASHTRA



The Pune Marathi Granthalaya is a NGO library working towards building inclusive spaces and delivering community need-based services and efforts have been initiated in the areas of Health, Education and Skill Development which making a difference to the lives of 13,233 community members.

This NGO library reaches out to those children whose learning needs are never fulfilled and are driven to be the victims of circumstances. While prostitution in India remains illegal and an act shamed and looked down upon, it shows an upward trend with an increase in the number of women being forced into prostitution. While accurate data is unavailable owing to its illegal and veiled status, a report from the Ministry of Human Resource and Development (MHRD) states "Although current estimates about the number of prostitutes is not available, a 2007 report submitted to the Ministry of Women and Child Development, reported that there are 3 million sex workers in India with 35.4% of them being less than 18 years old". Often, millions of sex workers are compelled into prostitution and continue to be victims of human trafficking and forced sex. However, there are millions of other women who turn to sex

work to escape abject poverty, and continues to be alucrative source of income, the act however, has several negative implications with the victimization of not merely the sex workers but also their children owing to its illegal status in the country. Years of social stigma, the majority remain without formal education or have access to learning spaces.

Ms Sanjeevani Prasad, a librarian at the Pune Marathi Granthalaya states that **"all children equally belong to the society but are veiled, discriminated and apartheid, being denied of their opportunities to learn, grow and flourish like other children"**. She narrates her experience as game changer of the journey towards making the library a more inclusive space by extending the services to children of sex workers in Pune.

Sanjeevani chose to celebrate her child's birthday at Vanchit Vikas, an NGO, with many sex worker's children as an act of kindness. This step initiated a Samaritan to the NGO! Sanjeevani realized that the MSSRF's capacity building programme touched on UN-SDGs making it relevant to anyone which allowed her to initiate the vision she has for the

library. One of her immediate steps taken was to provide learning space to sex worker's children for supporting their learning needs, otherwise, totally neglected by the mothers and impossible task to achieve, given cultural taboos.

Sanjeevani had a pit in her stomach while voicing a strong recommendation to the library on the inclusion of these children into the array of services provided by them. Surprisingly, the thought was welcomed by her colleagues. It's been 3 years since the library has collaborated with Vanchit Vikas and the services continue to include a book bank scheme and donations towards milk and edibles to these children. Their services have expanded through the NGO into 6 areas in Pune and more than 100 books distributed to these children when they are brought to the Vanchit Vikas daycare centres. The books are updated and replaced every month. These books broadly include interactive ones, pop-up books, picture books and those with big alphabets allowing early learning for these children who are otherwise not exposed and do not have access to any formal system of learning. Such experiences allow the children to feel connected to learning and skill development

which otherwise an opportunity is denied to them owing to the criticism and discrimination they face in the society thereby preventing them from joining schools.

The initiative has grown from 15 children in one centre to more than 600 children in due course of time between age groups of 1 to 15 years where the majority of them are females. Her observation, the children seem to have come a long way from being timid and unable to even hold books to understand the content and also in certain cases read and write in recent times. She identifies that the learning curve of the children and their creativity depict a positive trend with the scope and their ability to reach greater horizons. According to her, these are significant steps and development in the lives of their children who are deprived of their basic rights of safety, security, trust, health, access to education and most importantly their childhood.

Sanjeevani and her colleagues have also played their part in identifying capabilities and unique potential of these children which in turn allows them to be recommended for enrolment in special schools. The mothers of these children were also very restrictive of their children being taken to the library due to the fear of them being abused by the society at large and additionally the fear of them being trafficked or forced into commercial sex work. Every mother dreams for her child is having a better significant literate and educated life than succumb to the same fate.

Having gained the confidence that the children are comfortable with the library staff, Sanjeevani with the support of the library chairman, Mr Dhananjay Barve and other colleagues are having these children

take part in the workshops such as rakhi making, idol-making, etc. organized by the library.

When asked about the hurdles faced in bringing about this service, she mentions that there was always a fear of how the rest of the society would react to these children and hence she never disclosed their identity and considered them one among the others.

Sanjeevani finds joy while receiving feedback from mothers who are grateful for the care and concern extend to their children. Such opportunities are the only way these children can learn and grow like any other child. However, owing to their rugged way of life, is possessive and fear for their children's safety and possible challenges they would face while walking on this opportunity of change. According to Sanjeevani, "there will be chaos while making a change, walk not in fear, but in compassion, the walls are meant to be broken for anyone around us."

Through the delivery of these services, the efforts of Sanjeevani and the Pune Marathi Granthalaya has directly contributed to some of the key goals of IFLA's UN-SDGs.

She states that though this has been an impactful service undertaken by the library with the support of several stakeholders and donors, there still exists a long way to go. She hopes for the complete freedom and right to a quality life for these children like other children in society. She hopes that in the coming days other public libraries would also take such initiatives towards improving the quality of life of such children and empower the sex worker women and fight for their rights bringing about a larger impact and ending discrimination of people in the country based on work and occupation.

"MSSRF in collaboration with public librarians "breaking walls for the deprived children"





E-Resources Through WhatsApp – A Virtual Initiative during Pandemic 2020

Dr DEEPAK KUMAR SHRIVASTAVA

GOVERNMENT PDDU DIVISIONAL PUBLIC LIBRARY, KOTA, RAJASTHAN



At the Kota Government Divisional Public Library, when the COVID 19 lockdown began on 23rd March 2020, Dr Deepak Kumar Shrivastava, a librarian felt a need to support users on an ongoing basis. The library was closed; regular users did not get their daily dose of information. Many had reached out asking alternative ways to read books from the library. Initial weeks of lockdown, many were engulfed with fake news, leading to stress, tension, depression and anxiety. Deepak realized that people can get influenced by misinformation and hence felt a need to rapidly deploy a combination of services using social media tools and ICTs to mediate access to e-resources.

According to Deepak, building an inclusive society means being open to options and tapping opportunities, which makes him a Game Changer among his communities. To ensure that the library users have access to the books collections, he created a WhatsApp group: "Knowledge at your doorstep". This group connects people of all age group and the purpose is to share rich digital content in the form of e-books and e-journals. All e-based books including stories, fiction, self-help, Indian authors,

Indian leaders, National e-newspapers, and many others are being shared with the local communities in pdf formats, freely and in local vernacular during the time of unprecedented lockdown.

This digital collection for adults was provided in all languages which drew attention to Indian communities in Canada and Africa. Until then, he did not realise the influence it has brought into people's lives. He says that users had shared access to these resources among friends and relatives in their network. With an initial 25 members, the group expanded to 250+ in the first month. Many were seeking to join this group given the localised content that was being shared for the users. He is sharing links to the users to access various National e-newspaper as well.

Beyond this, he has taken steps to also support other target groups such as students. E-resources such as Saakshaat, Swayam Prabha (For Science Students), Consortium for Education Communication (CEC), EPG Pathshaala, e-Gyankosh, open textbook, National Digital Library, Open Educational Resources (OER), Acharya Virtual Lab Project (IIT Mumbai) was made

available for students for their self-learning. Deepak has also facilitated links to career building, technical skills building, education awareness, and interview preparation websites through local partnerships. He shares that important of having access to well informed network having the heart to be more involved for a cause, makes a whole lot of a difference to a librarian who is keen on building empowering communities.

Since its introduction in March 2020, the group has grown and reached more than 500 people and Dr Deepak is hosting in two WhatsApp groups. More than 1,700 users in Kota Divisional Library are accessing these resources, besides the regular updates received through the WhatsApp group. At this point, there are articles, competitive research literature and other educational material collections in Rajasthani are being shared by the local universities. This is gaining popularity.

Deepak strongly urges his fellow library friends who build networks that will support in sharing relevant and key information to their community. He says the majority of the fear and anxiousness can be

avoided when access is enhanced. In the months to come, he strongly feels a need to fight against misinformation and support the community's mental health by providing relevant information for their learning needs.

"Knowledge at Your Doorstep - connects people and share rich digital content in the form of e-books and e-journals in the time of Covid lockdown"





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