



eureka SuperKidz

An AID INDIA Education Initiative

Issue 7: Aug-Sep 2011



Greetings from Eureka Superkidz!

Eureka turned 15 years in August 2011! We celebrated the event in Chennai with Eureka Teachers and children from all our 11 districts. It was a time to reminisce the past and honor all those whose support, dedication and commitment has brought us to where we are today. As we celebrated this 15th year, we also received the happy news that a special jury had chosen our work for the Times of India Social Impact award 2011. It was a great moment to recognize the collective effort of people from all sections of society who are committed to make a change in the lives of the poorest. Thank you all for your support – it motivates us to strengthen our efforts to deliver the best education for children of our villages.

11 Districts

59 Blocks

987 villages



Ashwini: An example of how lives are transformed

Our work won the Times of India Social Impact Award 2011 for 'Global Contribution to India's Development'. The Selection Jury had eminent personalities like Mr. Nandan Nilekeni, Ms. Aruna Roy, Ms. Sunita Narain, Mr. Nitish Kumar who chose AID for the award although we had not applied for it. In a special function on October 2nd in New Delhi, attended by several leaders of industry, Govt. and the Opposition, in the presence of the Prime Minister, the AID team received the award from Ashwini. Her story is told below...

Ashwini lives in Nerakunampattu village of Kanchipuram District. The Eureka team first met Ashwini when she was in the 4th std. in 2005. Ashwini's father left the family when she was a baby. Her mother is mentally ill and Ashwini lives with her grandparents. 9 year old Ashwini was an under-confident child who could not even read simple words in Tamil. Given her situation, she would soon drop out of school. That year, the Eureka reading classes started in her school and village. Muthlakshmi, a young Eureka tutor from her village started taking classes for her and other children every day.

Last month, when our work won the Times of India Social Impact award, Ashwini came to New Delhi to present the award to the AID team on October 2nd in the presence of the Prime Minister in New Delhi! As Ashwini, who had never been on a train before, took her first flight journey to share the award with our team, it was a proud moment for her family, friends and teachers in her village – a true recognition of her grit and determination to never lose hope and do her best, despite all odds.



Ashwini with her family outside their hut

Slowly Ashwini learnt to read and write and started doing well in school. The Eureka team also supported her with a scholarship and conducted several workshops for her to motivate her to do better. Today Ashwini is a confident young girl, and has cleared her 10th std. examination! She draws, writes poetry and small stories. She also helps the younger children in her village by teaching children now enrolled in our Eureka classes.



Ashwini dreams of becoming a teacher or a writer. She reflects the aspirations of millions of such children in villages all over Tamilnadu. Her resilience and perseverance is an inspiration to all of us. It is also an example that makes us strongly believe that sustained, long-term work can dramatically change lives.



Eureka turns 15 years! Celebrating the journey ...

Eureka's 15th year celebration was held at Music Academy in Chennai on August 13th and 14th. Prior to this event, a 'Young Storyteller' competition was held in 900 villages and winners were chosen at the block and district level. 100 children from 11 districts and around 500 Eureka tutors came to Chennai to participate in the event. On the 1st day, children went on a tour to an amusement park near Chennai, while Eureka tutors visited the beach and other tourist attractions at Mahabalipuram. In the evening, the group gathered together at Chennai to attend a discussion on gender issues and watch a short documentary about education. The next day, children had fun listening to stories by resource persons Jeeva Raghunath and Rangashree, while Eureka tutors participated in various parallel sessions – origami, games, songs, and theatre games. Awards were presented to the best Eureka tutors in each block.



Children enjoy a story session by Jeeva



There was a huge turn-out of our donors, volunteers and well-wishers for the evening's event at Music Academy. In the 'Eureka & You' session, several volunteers from companies and colleges spoke about how they were contributing to the Eureka program. Eureka children's 'Silambaattam' (a popular martial art) performance was the hit of the evening. The presentation of the Eureka 15 year journey was a time to honour people from the field whose long-term commitment and dedication has been the backbone of the organization. People from each district came up on stage to unfurl the 'Eureka 1000 villages' banner and launch the campaign.

The evening culminated with a panel discussion with our special guests for the evening – Dr. Aruna Rathnam, UNICEF, Dr. S.S. Rajagopalan, Educationalist, Mr. Ramesh Mangaleswaran, McKinsey & Co, - and Dr. Balaji Sampath, Secretary AID INDIA. Before returning home, the entire audience took a pledge to continue their efforts until good quality education is guaranteed for every child.

1st Learning Center Inaugurated!

One of the suggestions of the Joint Review meeting with donors in July was that we need to improve the infrastructure in which Eureka classes are run. Recently, with support from an individual donor, Mr. T.S. Subramanian, a Eureka learning center was constructed at Mudinampattu in KV Kuppam block of Vellore District. Land for this center was donated to us by the community. Having better space and lighting is now helping children learn more effectively.

With your support, we hope to construct centers in many more villages in the next year.



Laughs from the field!

Maruthur village Eureka center had a unique problem to address. Children suddenly stopped coming to the Eureka Center because of a rumor that a ghost was prowling in the street where the classes were run!

Project Manager Arivazhagan had to intervene by personally visiting each house and explaining to each child that there was no such ghost and it was safe to come to class. After much convincing, children started attending class again!

Please renew your support to your adopted villages!

Thanks to your support, we reached close to 30,000 children last year. We hope to reach around 60,000 children this year in 1000 villages of Tamilnadu. But before we expand to new villages, we would like to ensure that we have continued support for your adopted villages. To renew your contribution to your adopted villages...

Donate online: <http://eureka.aidindia.in/donate.php>

Donate by Cheque in India: Send a cheque payable to 'AID INDIA' to 7/4, Besant Road, Royapettah, Chennai-86.

Donate by Cheque in US: Send a cheque payable to 'AID' to C/O Srinivas Chadaram, 63, Willow Bridge Drive, Durham, NC 27707, USA

Please write to us if you have any queries. Your support means a lot to us!