



# eureka SuperKidz

An AID INDIA Education Initiative



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## Greetings from Eureka Superkidz!

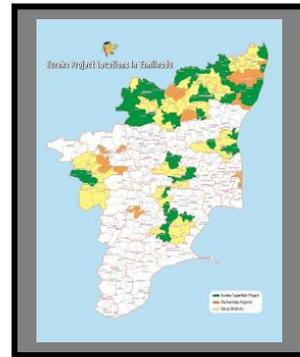
Welcome to a new academic year in the Eureka Program. Various activities were conducted to encourage enrollment and more children have joined students from last year. Centers began with an initial evaluation of children's skills.

We also conducted a 'Joint Review Mission' this month - Eureka donors and patrons visited Eureka SuperKidz centres and observed the program. The visits culminated in a feedback meeting and discussion of how children were benefitting from Eureka currently and what improvements can be made in this year's program.

**11** Districts

**59** Blocks

**871** villages



## Community demonstrates ownership of the Eureka Program

Shubatha Devamanoharan and Ammie Singh, students at the York University, Toronto, spent two months interning with Eureka. They visited several Eureka villages to understand how low-cost high impact programs work.

They report, "Working with Eureka has introduced us to many stories of communities working together to support and encourage what they believe in. Pamparam Sutri village in Lalgudi block has one such story to tell. When we visited the village, we met the Eureka Teacher Karthik. He is a college student. To support his education, he cleans schools during his free time. He teaches children of his village at the Eureka SuperKidz centre in the evening.

Coming from a poor family, it was hard for Karthik to find the Eureka children an appropriate place to study. The classes originally took place in front of his home. However the classes were frequently disrupted by passers-by and other village boys teasing Karthik for his efforts.

On a Sunday afternoon, Karthik and a few other Eureka teachers visited the families of children enrolled in Eureka centers and shared the problem with them. Parents appreciated Karthik's effort in contributing to their children's education and promised to do something about it. Within a week, parents spoke to a local women's group and found a small room where classes could run. They even got together to provide a fan and a light so that the children could study comfortably.

Now children can continue to learn even after dark or on a rainy day. We were very happy to see how the Eureka program was getting parents and the community to take ownership to support their children's efforts to learn."



District	Blocks	Villages
Coimbatore	4	53
Cuddalore	4	66
Dharmapuri	4	60
Kanchipuram	6	79
Krishnagiri	6	86
Pudukottai	1	10
Sivagangai	6	90
Tiruvallur	7	130
Tiruvannamalai	7	107
Trichy	6	117
Vellore	8	73
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>871</b>

## Joint Review Mission: External feedback about our Eureka Program

Last June, the Eureka SuperKidz program started in 200 villages. Now at 817 villages, we soon aspire to reach in 1000 villages and provide quality education to 75,000 poor children in Tamilnadu.

As we grow, we realize the need to focus on constantly improving the program to achieve better results this year. Continuous improvement is possible when we start with the acceptance that status quo is not perfect. Last year we focused on the basics – village identification, teacher appointments and regular classes.

This year we need to move to the next level – focus on teacher training, teaching techniques, and better quality of delivery. We also need to get parents more engaged with Eureka and demand better quality for their children. For this we need continuous feedback about our program about areas that need strengthening. Since the Eureka Team visits frequently, we sometimes take things for granted and miss out on specific details that would be obvious to an external eye. To get this external perspective from donors, patrons and other people working in education, we organized a ‘Joint Review Mission’ in July. A team of donors and domain experts visited Eureka villages and observed the program. The visits culminated in a meeting in Chennai on July 15<sup>th</sup> where the team gave their feedback and suggestions for next steps.

### The Joint Review Mission team

- *Mr. Jayanth, Wheels India*
- *Ms. Chithra Ramesh & Ms. Meenakshi Ramesh, Pratham*
- *Village donors, Ms. Sumathi & Ms. Meera Menon*
- *Ms. Gayatri, Curriculum Director-Hippocampus Learning Centers*
- *Mr. Balaji, a professor of Mathematics from the US*
- *Ms. Kalyani, Education Consultant*
- *Mr. Rangarajan, India Literacy Project*
- *Ms. Shreya Krishnan, AID Austin.*



*The team collectively visited 18 villages in 10 blocks across Tamil Nadu from July 11th -15th.*

### JRM Findings: What are we doing well?

- The Eureka approach - ‘Make a promise, measure and deliver’.
- Well-researched and attractive learning materials
- Great enthusiasm among children and parents about the Eureka centers
- Eureka Teachers extremely motivated and interested in the teaching children of their village.
- Committed Eureka Block Teachers tracking children’s skills meticulously
- Evaluation & measurement is a key focus at all levels

### What do we need to do better?

- Poor infrastructure – lack of space and proper lighting decreasing class effectiveness.
- Blackboards needed for all centers
- Better training needed for Eureka Teachers on content and Class management
- Simpler English content and better training on pronunciation
- Better communication with parents on Eureka Goals and methodology

*We are discussing each of these aspects and will address these issues in the next few months.*

*“Children are extremely enthusiastic about the Eureka classes. I was surprised to find that some of them were walking more than 1km to study at Eureka!” – Balaji*

*“I found that the Eureka Teachers were very strong in the Std. 4-6 class content. Content for Std. 1-3 and Std. 7-8 needs more focus” – Rangarajan*

*“The Eureka Teacher needs to be able to handle variations in children’s skill levels better in the class. If a particular method has not worked with a child, she must be able to come up with a different one” - Gayatri*

*“Eureka Teachers in villages are really motivated. In the village I visited at Vandavasi, we came across a teacher who had refused to move to Chennai when her husband got transferred, so that she could continue teaching children of her village” – Meenakshi*

*“Although focusing on a specific goal every month is good, 1 month seems to be too narrow a focus and there is not enough time to deliver outcomes. Teachers should understand and deliver on a quarter’s outcomes” - Chitra*

*“The Eureka Block Teacher is instrumental to the center quality. Wherever he/she is aligned to the Eureka goal and methodology, centers are of much better quality” - Kalyani*