

# **ARUMBU CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

## **A REVIEW**

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## **PREFACE**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

## Chapter I

# Introduction

“Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day.  
Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.”  
-Chinese Proverb

“The foundation of every state is the education of its youth.”  
-Diogenes Laertius<sup>1</sup>

As India begins to find its place among the world’s superpowers in the twenty-first century, strengthening its human capital and improving the standards of living of its people are issues of top-most priority. The latter part of the last century brought to the forefront the issues of “sustainable development,” “poverty alleviation,” and “equity.” Central to these issues is education; as the above quotes suggest, enabling individuals and communities to become educated and self-reliant, and thus opening up better opportunities for them, achieves far more to improve their quality of life than does simply handing out essentials that they might need.

Hence, with a view to reduce poverty in half by 2015, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were devised by members of the United Nations in 2000. Two of these goals fit in directly with Aide et Action’s vision, “a world where dignity is ensured for all men and women by education – lever for development”<sup>2</sup>. These are: MDG 2, “Achieve universal primary education,” and MDG 3, “Promote gender equality and empower women”<sup>3</sup>. It is essential to educate the country’s youth and to ensure their all-round personality development in the process not only for them to become successful and well-adjusted adults, but also to form a responsible and inclusive society in the future. To this end, Aide et Action (AeA) has several programs which are active in the field of education, such as Liberate School and Back 2 Basics, which aim to create a more nourishing and all-round learning environment and enhance the quality of primary education, respectively.

The Arumbu Child Development Project, a recent AeA initiative carried out in conjunction with the Chennai City Police serves the urban underprivileged populations of the city of Chennai. The project, through its boy’s and girl’s clubs, aims to provide a positive and enabling atmosphere where children from weaker sections of the society are “given equitable and sustainable opportunities for their learning, development and growth.”<sup>4</sup> A recent report stated that the average dropout rate in primary schools in

<sup>1</sup> « Education Quotes ». The Quotations Page. <<http://quotationspage.com/subjects/education/>>.

<sup>2</sup> “About Us”. Aide et Action. <<http://www.aea-india.org/aboutus.htm>>.

<sup>3</sup>The UN Millennium Development Goals. <<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>>.

<sup>4</sup> Aide et Action. <<http://aea-india.org/arumbu-project.htm>>.

Chennai is 6.75%, with officials claiming that “[t]he strategies adopted for tackling dropouts among children in the slum areas are inadequate.”<sup>5</sup> Through Arumbu, around a hundred dropouts have been streamlined back into school. Thus, the clubs are not only places where help is given for academics, but are really avenues through which the children are able to enhance their talents and skills, engage meaningfully with others in their peer groups, and find opportunities for overall growth.

This report seeks to summarize the progress and status of the project since its inception in 2005, identifying the various stakeholders and also presenting their views on the project. The report is organized as follows: Chapter II provides the background and rationale for the project, with a brief project history. Chapter III describes the methodology adopted in gathering data in Chennai from all the stakeholders, while Chapter IV presents the key findings from the field visit. Based on this, Chapter V then presents key recommendations for project sustainability, followed by the conclusion.

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<sup>5</sup> Shekhar, Anupama. “City witnesses high dropout rates in primary classes.” *City Express*. Chennai, 6 Nov. 2006: 3.

## Chapter II

# Background and Rationale

The Arumbu Child Development Project of Aide et Action (AeA) was launched in September 2005 with a view to strengthen an existing initiative of the Chennai City Police, the Police Boy's Clubs. The concept of having boy's clubs associated with the Police Department in Tamil Nadu has been around for a long time, but was only formalized by the state government in 2003 with the passing of a Government Order. Targeting at-risk boys between six and eighteen years of age, these clubs were established in and around the slums of Chennai under the purview of an affiliated Police station in order to give the boys an avenue to constructively channelise their energies outside school-hours. However, the clubs soon began to struggle due to a variety of reasons, rendering the majority defunct by 2005. An opportunity thus opened up for AeA, and, keeping in line with AeA's vision and objectives, the clubs provided a ready base to which the organization could extend its outreach. The Arumbu Child Development Project (Arumbu) began last year with the main goal of ensuring "that the children of Chennai slums are given equitable and sustainable opportunities for learning and growth," and has now been expanded to give the same opportunities to girls as well. At present, the project has a coverage area of 175 slums, with 78 boy's clubs and 14 girl's clubs in various stages of operation.

### 2.1 Objectives of this Study

The study on the Arumbu Child Development Project of Aide et Action South Asia, being implemented in Chennai in collaboration with Chennai Police, documents the processes and interventions of the project with a view to identify its scope vis-à-vis its goals. The study also provides recommendations on strategies to be adopted in order to ensure sustainability of the interventions following the withdrawal of the AeA support. The main objectives of the study are as follows:

- To gain insight into the processes and development of the project since its inception.
- To identify the roles and responsibilities of the project stakeholders.
- To understand and assess the impact and utility of the project on its stakeholders.
- To make recommendations for project sustainability based on stakeholder perceptions.

### 2.2 Project History

The concept of the Police Boys Clubs in Tamil Nadu is quite an old one, with the first club being established in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century at Chintadripet under the British; however they were formally started under the Second Five Year Plan, with three clubs set up in

Chennai and one in each district. Over a period of time, unfortunately, these clubs became defunct. Realising the potential of this concept, of aiding in the growth of the youth by engaging them constructively outside school-timings, as well as helping to lower the crime rate through the reduction of exposure to high-risk behaviour, the Tamil Nadu government formally advocated the establishment of 64 boy's clubs around the state, with 25 in Chennai by issuing a Government Order, G.O. Ms. No. 33<sup>6</sup>. This initiative was also a way to build a positive image of the police in the minds of the communities it served, and from 25, the clubs expanded to 86, one at each of the city's police stations.

The clubs targeted school-going children in slum areas of Chennai, aiming to provide a safe and friendly environment where they could occupy themselves in a productive manner after school, each evening. The main goal was to help the young boys indulge in positive and constructive activities after-school, aiding them in their overall development. It was also hoped that a positive “spin-off” of [the boys clubs would be the] curtailment of crime, by encouraging the boys to become law abiding self-reliant citizens.”<sup>7</sup> However, for two main reasons, only males were targeted for this program: first, it was thought that given the conservative nature of society, parents would not be willing to send their daughters to the clubs in the evenings, especially keeping in mind the negative connotations of visiting a place associated with the police; and second, as put by one senior police official, the police did not want to have co-educational clubs which could potentially increase the risks of relationships and elopements among the members.

A member of the local community was appointed as scoutmaster to lead the daily activities of the club while another was appointed as the caretaker of the facility. The main activities of the clubs focused on sports, literacy, and good citizenship; as it happened, however, in reality the emphasis was largely on sports. While the positions of scoutmaster and caretaker were viewed as voluntary, the government had on its roster twenty-five clubs to whose scoutmasters and caretakers it paid an honorarium of Rs. 2,000 and Rs. 1,000, respectively, every month. The rest had to depend on other patrons, such as local sponsors, Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs, etc. However, the payments made by the Police Department were rarely ever on time or in full. Thus, given the constraints on funding, as well as a lack of other resources such as equipment, academic materials, and even basic infrastructure, gradually the majority of the clubs became defunct.

Aide et Action came into the picture in 2005 with the initiative of Mr. K. Ananth, who, as the then Regional Manager, identified the revival of the Police Boys Clubs as an opportunity for AeA to extend its outreach in the city. Until then, AeA had been more active in rural Tamil Nadu, and this project provided a ready base to which it could expand its operations. Not only that, but the project was also in line with the organization's mission of “[making] education the lever for development.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Youth Welfare & Sports Development Department. G.O. Ms. No. 33. 20 June, 2003.

<sup>7</sup> “Community Policing”. Chennai Police. <<http://www.chennaicitypolice.org/policing.htm>>.

<sup>8</sup> “About Us”. Aide et Action. <<http://www.aea-india.org/aboutus.htm>>.

Aide et Action's intervention, in collaboration with the Chennai City Police, aims not only to revive the existing Police Boys Clubs, but also to extend these opportunities to the girls within the coverage area. To this end, in the areas where interest has been demonstrated, teachers have been appointed and girls clubs set up; currently there are eleven functioning girls clubs under Arumbu, and another three are under observation to assess the potential to take them up in the future. These clubs do not come under the jurisdiction of the police department, although efforts are under way to encourage the government to issue a government order on girls clubs. The scoutmasters and teachers of all the boy's and girls clubs have been provided with capacity-building trainings and meet periodically with the Arumbu project team to enable them to help them in their tasks. Furthermore, AeA has tried to ensure that a minimum level of infrastructure and facilities are available for the clubs, in addition to a minimum range of academic, sports, and recreational materials and equipment.

## Chapter III

### I

# Methodology

In order to get a complete picture of the Arumbu Child Development Project, it was essential to obtain the views of all those involved in a systematic manner. For the purpose of this study, a participatory approach was adopted, whereby not only were secondary documents extensively reviewed, but diverse tools and techniques were utilized to gain a first-hand understanding of the perceptions held by the various stakeholders. These included one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions, as well as a questionnaire based on Quantified Participatory Assessment (QPA) and various Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) exercises. For data analysis, tools such as SWOT analysis and spider diagrams were used to concisely present the data collected. This chapter describes the methodology adopted and the steps undertaken for collecting data in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

### 3.1 Identification of Stakeholders

Stakeholders can be defined as those who have a direct interest in the development of the project. Through discussions with the senior Aide et Action staff in both Hyderabad and Chennai, as well as through a review of project documents, the following stakeholders were identified:

- Aide et Action senior staff
- Arumbu project team
- Chennai city police
- Members of the boy's and girls clubs
- Teachers (of girls clubs) and scoutmasters (of boys clubs)
- Parents of club members
- Club patrons/donors
- Other community members

The role played by each stakeholder varies greatly and to gain insight into these roles, as well as the capacities required by each to fulfill their responsibilities, the following methods of enquiry were utilized.

### 3.2 Methods of Enquiry

#### 3.2.1 Background Research

The process of analysis began with a review of relevant project documents and newspaper articles to gain a better understanding of the project, its background, and the activities and programs conducted through it. These included the initial project proposal, the Convention of Objectives documents (for the years 2006 and 2007), and a project report covering the period since project initiation to June 2006, all of which highlight the objectives and status of the Arumbu child development project. Monthly reports at both

the cluster- and project-levels were also studied, which contain details of major activities and any issues that may have come up each month. In addition, various secondary sources were also consulted to gain a better understanding of development in the country and around the world in general.

While the project documents proved valuable in gaining insight into the monitoring processes and tools of the project, it was felt during the course of review that the analysis could have been more efficient had there existed more comprehensive baseline data. Time and again the need for such data was felt as it proved difficult to identify a representative sample of clubs, which had been initially hoped would primarily on the basis of socio-economic characteristics. In the end, the sample was randomly chosen keeping in mind the following factors:

- Location of club (geographically within the coverage area, and also whether inside or outside the feeder slum(s))
- Occupation of parents
- Reach of club (i.e. size of feeder slum(s))
- Date of starting and
- Whether the club is AeA- or government-sponsored (in the case of boys clubs).

### 3.2.2 Approach and Tools

Given the different backgrounds, roles, and settings of the stakeholders, diverse approaches and tools were employed to collect data from them. My first points of contact were the Aide et Action staff members, with whom I conducted one-on-one as well as group interviews and focus group discussions. A Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) exercise, specifically, the Spider Diagram, was used during the discussion with the Arumbu team (Cluster Coordinators and Associate Project Coordinator) with a view to gain more detailed perceptions about the project from them. In addition to the team, four senior staff members were also interviewed on multiple occasions in order to get their views.

Next, focus group discussions were conducted twice with the teachers and scoutmasters of the clubs; once with just the teachers of the girls clubs present, and once with 65 teachers and scoutmasters together. The discussions were centered on the participants' perceptions regarding subjects such as daily activities of the clubs and the manner in which they support in the club members' overall development; special activities and programs that have been conducted; access and targeting; capacity-building trainings that they have undergone and that they would like to have in the future; and sustainability of the project. In addition, the participants were asked to fill out a questionnaire (see the Appendix) where they were asked to describe and rate several aspects of the project.

More detailed information about club proceedings and the issues facing the clubs came from individual club visits. Visits were made to four boys clubs (Virugambakkam, Chintadripet, Otteri, and Koyambedu) and four girls clubs (Chintadripet, Otteri, Palavakkamkuppam, and Seven Wells), randomly chosen, and all at various levels of

operation. Efforts were made to visit at least one club under the jurisdiction of each of the six cluster coordinators; however, a visit could not be arranged to the North Chennai cluster due to personal circumstances of the teacher at the Palagaitthottikuppam girl's club, as this is the only club in this cluster.

Specifically, the procedure for sampling focused on the processes involved rather than on measuring the population parameters based on the sample. Simple random sampling was used, with club-specific criterion being used. The details of the clubs are presented in Table I in the Appendix.

At each club, extensive discussions were had with the children about their views regarding the club, their interests, their perceptions about their future, and so on. To this end, another PRA exercise was made use of, the Snakes and Ladders diagram (see Appendix), which is based on dream mapping. It had been hoped that, at the very least, such an exercise would be carried out at half the clubs visited, but due to insufficient time, it was only possible to do so at one boys club. At the remaining clubs, however, the discussions were centered on the same objectives as that of the exercise.

Furthermore, parents and patrons of clubs were also met with; while the former were met with at three clubs, discussions with the latter were had at three (different) clubs. It is of interest to note here that the response of parents was much higher at the girls clubs than at the boys club; all three clubs where parents - mothers, incidentally - actually came for the discussions happened to be girls clubs. Both these groups of stakeholders were asked for their views, especially on what they perceive to be their own roles with the project, the impact of the club on the surrounding community, and how they can aid in making the initiative more sustainable in the future.

Additionally, informal discussions were also conducted with alumni and volunteers at the Police Boy's Clubs at Virugambakkam, Chintadripet, and Otteri, and Palavakkamkuppam girls club.

Another major stakeholder in the project is the Chennai City Police, which started the Police Boys Clubs. To gather their views on the clubs and on Aide et Action's intervention, one-on-one interviews were conducted with six police officials, including the Commissioner of Police.

For the purpose of analyzing the data collected, I made use of tools such as SWOT analysis as well as spider diagrams. While the former helps in presenting the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of the project, the latter depict subjective ratings of specific aspects of the project, which could perhaps be supported by evidence collected through a more detailed study in the future.

The following chapters report the findings of the field visit and then present recommendations for improvement and sustainability.

## Chapter IV

# Key Findings

Extensive interactions with the various stakeholders in the Arumbu Child Development Project revealed a considerable amount of information regarding several key aspects of the project. This chapter highlights how the project was planned and grounded, and then the roles and perceptions of each stakeholder. Subsequently, the issues of capacity-building, networking, and leadership are discussed, followed by an analysis of the internal and external strengths and weaknesses of the project.

### 4.1 Project Planning and Grounding

Following the decision to intervene and to support the Police Boys Clubs, an initial survey was undertaken in June 2005 to obtain a picture of the situation on the ground. The clubs were then kept under observation for a few months, before finally starting the Arumbu Child Development Project in September 2005. Almost all the clubs were then provided with academic and recreational materials and equipment, as well as basic amenities and infrastructure, in a phased manner.

Out of a total of 78 Police Boys Clubs, currently 53 are sponsored by Aide et Action and the rest (25) by the government. Sponsorship in this case refers only to the payment of the honoraria of the scoutmasters; all clubs are overlooked by the Arumbu Project Team. Of the 25 under the purview of the government, however, six are defunct due to various reasons, such as absence of scoutmaster, community conflicts, etc. AeA's initiative also seeks to provide equal opportunities to the girls living in the coverage area, and thus 11 clubs sponsored, with 3 more currently under observation.

At the clubs visited, the greater part of the time was spent on academics (including homework), while sports, indoor games and reading for pleasure were undertaken during the rest of the time, mostly on weekends. Activities such as dance and music are only conducted when practicing for special events. Club hours do not always provide adequate time to encourage reading for pleasure, although at one club a lending library has been started, while at another the children can read at the club on the weekends. Although some library books have been provided by AeA, a review of these books pointed that the selection is not always age-appropriate or that which is appealing to the children. The major programs conducted over the last year include health camps, a cultural *mela*, and exposure visits for the children to the circus and the zoo.

Interestingly, coaching centers at two of the Police Boys Clubs have been developed for band and carom and they are proceeding very successfully, with active participation of the children. The project would benefit greatly from such successful ventures if ways could be found to extend such activities at other clubs.

However, there is no standardized schedule of activities followed at all the clubs. It is up to the individual scoutmaster or teacher to decide whether a timetable is to be followed or not: at some clubs, a daily or weekly schedule is followed, with time divided equally between academics and other activities, while at others, there are no such structures in place. According to staff, there is an imbalance in nature of activities observed at several clubs – tuition vs. sports and recreational activities. While the field visits indicated more focus towards academics, this may not be the case at all clubs.

A point to note is that of low attendance in some areas, especially in tsunami-affected areas, where other NGOs with similar projects or coaching centers are also present. Parents expect incentives and/or tangible benefits when children are sent to the clubs, as are received at the other centres, and then sometimes choose not to send their children to the clubs when they find out that is not the case here.

## **4.2 The Stakeholders: Their Roles and Perceptions**

This section describes the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders of the Arumbu Child Development Project and their perceptions regarding various issues related to the project.

### **4.2.1 Aide et Action Project Staff (Project Coordinator, Associate Project Coordinator, and Cluster Coordinators)**

The Arumbu Project Team consists of six Cluster Coordinators, the Associate Project Coordinator, and the Project Coordinator. Across the city of Chennai, and including the tsunami-affected areas in the north and south of the city, the number of clubs in each cluster ranges from seven to twenty-five.<sup>9</sup>

The Cluster Coordinators aim to visit two to three clubs within their cluster each day, monitoring the club activities and helping out with any concerns that are raised by the teacher or scoutmaster. Monthly reports are written describing these visits, giving details of club activities, major programs held, and any other issues that come up. However, there is no set format that is followed for these reports, in that some coordinators provide details of the major events or issues, while others provide daily reports of their visits.

In relation to the above, while the coordinators were provided with basic capacity-building trainings when the project first started, those who joined later on in the year only received an initial orientation. It would be beneficial to organize further capacity building sessions for the team, focusing on areas such as local resource mobilization, fund raising, and especially monitoring and evaluation, in order for them to hone their skills.

The Associate Project Coordinator and the Project Coordinator play a more supervisory role, helping out with the clubs as needed, but focusing more on organizing workshops

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<sup>9</sup> This number includes six Arumbu Child Development Centers each in the two tsunami-affected clusters as well.

and trainings held after each monthly meeting with the teachers and scoutmasters, and other major events that are held throughout the year.

From time to time, the project staff is required to help out with other AeA events and projects also, for example, for iLEAD and the Telugu migrant project, and this seems to take them away from their already overloaded responsibilities. Since the actual responsibilities undertaken can sometimes go beyond their mandate, investment in additional human resources would ease the burden on the team and, at the same time, ensure more concentrated monitoring of the clubs in each cluster.

### ***PRA exercise: Spider Diagram<sup>10</sup>***

In order to find out information about the project from the Arumbu Project Team and to garner its perceptions, a PRA exercise, the Spider Diagram, was undertaken, through which the team was to devise its own indicators for gauging project performance till date.

Following discussions about the project, the stakeholders, and the team's own role, the team came up with the following indicators of project performance, the ratings for which ranged from a scale of 0 to 5, with zero being the lowest:

1. *Community involvement* (3): How well the team thinks the community participates in the events organized by the club, and how involved it is in the running of the clubs.
  - The team was generally satisfied with the level of community involvement, citing reasonably good turn outs at such events as the health camps and cultural celebrations, giving this indicator a rating of three.
2. *Capacity of project team and club staff* (2): Trainings given and how effective they have been at meeting the needs of the team and the club staff.
  - It was felt that while the capacities of both the project team and the club staff have greatly improved with the trainings that had been provided, there are still many gaps to be filled. Thus this indicator was given a rating of two.
3. *Participation of children* (3): Regularity of attendance and their rate of participation in various club activities and events.
  - The rate of participation of the children was given a satisfactory rating of three, with the overall feeling being that the children were enthusiastic about coming to the clubs and taking part in the various activities.

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<sup>10</sup> See Appendix for Impact Diagram.

4. *Awareness and motivation among community (3)*: Awareness about the club and its activities among the surrounding community and its motivation to be active participants/collaborators.
  - It was felt that more could be done to increase awareness about the project in the community and to motivate community members to become more involved. This indicator was given a rating of three.
5. *AeA's support for education and building life skills (4)*: Provisions made by AeA for advocating literacy and education, and for building life skills such as leadership and communication skills, of the children.
  - It was felt that good progress had been made by AeA in advocating literacy and life skills at the clubs, creating the right kind of atmosphere and providing the necessary materials and equipment. At the same time, however, it was felt that more emphasis needs to be placed on all-round development of the children, with focus on providing more opportunities and trainings for building life-skills. This indicator was given a rating of four.
6. *Collaboration with other stakeholders (3)*: collaboration with community members (donors, volunteers, etc.) and the Police.
  - While collaboration with community members is on the rise, that with the Police Department is declining overall, partly due to the change in government earlier this year. This indicator was thus given a rating of three.

While the issues of access, targeting, and gender did come up during the discussion, they were not high on the list of indicators that the team thought important. Specifically, it was felt that as many people as can be targeted are currently being targeted and that the problem of access is not for accessing the clubs, but for attending special workshops, events, etc. that are at different locations in the city. Creating awareness of gender related issues and proceedings at the girls clubs were thought to be not as important as the indicators listed above. However, everyone acknowledged the importance and need for work in this area. The overall project performance was given a rating of 3 by the team.

#### **4.2.2 Chennai City Police**

The role of the Chennai City Police as anticipated by Aide et Action at the time of initiating the Arumbu Child Development Project incorporated several tasks. AeA envisages extensive police participation in all AeA-initiated processes, from the planning stages to the monitoring stages. It also seeks to strengthen field-level activities by encouraging the police to mobilize funds from the government and to aid AeA in mobilizing the participation of the community and other stakeholders. With regards to the girls clubs that are to be, or already have been, set up by AeA, the police are expected to lend their support in not only finding suitable places where the clubs can be run, but in mobilizing community support for various activities at the girls clubs.

Presently, however, the overall involvement of the Police Department is at best peripheral. The main reason for this is two fold: first, even though there exists legal framework pertaining to the boys clubs within which the department has to operate, its involvement is deeply dependent upon the efforts and interests of individual officers at the district and/or ward levels. Second, and perhaps of more relevance to AeA, is the fact that the Police Department seems to view the organisation's presence as solace that matters at the clubs are taken care of and that, therefore, it does not have to play a larger role. At the moment, the department takes the clubs under its wings as part of its "Community Policing" initiative, and Inspectors visit the clubs on their patrols; the frequency of visits or deeper interactions with the scoutmasters varies from club to club. Moreover, politics also seem to affect the police's involvement, as has been observed following the recent state and local elections.

Scoutmasters and AeA staff all recognize that the Police Department has more pressing obligations and priorities to fulfill and it can not devote as much time and resources as would be ideal to the boys clubs. In the past, the responsibilities taken on by the police included, but were not limited to, general overseeing of the clubs; providing contacts for potential donors; providing transportation to and from special events; obtaining discounts on entry tickets for field trips such as to the circus and the planetarium; providing refreshments for children at special events; and arranging premises for holding various events such as competitions, health camps, etc. In addition, at almost all major events which have been organized over the past year, senior police officials have been invited as chief guests, thus building up an image of the initiative within the higher levels of the department.

#### **4.2.3 Scoutmasters and Teachers**

The scoutmasters and teachers are responsible for the day-to-day proceedings of the boys clubs and girls clubs, respectively. Most of the former were appointed by the Police Department when the clubs were initially founded, while the latter were selected by AeA. Over the course of the last year and a half, the club staffs have been provided with capacity building trainings, such as first-aid training, the play-way method of teaching, and administration, among others, to aid them in their roles of teachers/scoutmasters. They have also been made aware about several social issues that they may or may not have dealt with before, such as inclusive education, and such informative sessions have been welcomed by all. At this stage, however, care should be taken to evaluate how effectively these trainings have been applied on the ground.

Staff at various clubs feels that basic amenities like electricity or even proper premises need to be ensured as soon as possible, since, of course, this limits how well they can engage the children. In addition, many claimed that when they ask for volunteers from their community, not many people are willing as monetary compensation is expected in return for time spent at the clubs. Thus, strategies to aid them in attracting club volunteers would prove beneficial.

Related to this is the issue of compensation of the staff themselves: while they are paid an honorarium for their services, this is not meant to be their only source of livelihood. Sometimes this fact gets overlooked and it should be clarified again.

Since Arumbu started, the teachers and scoutmasters feel more confident about the direction in which the project is going, and for many, progress has been above expectations as they had extremely low or no expectations at all going by past experience. Overall, they feel that the clubs are having a positive impact on their communities.

#### **4.2.4 Club Members**

The boys and girls clubs are targeted at children and adolescents between six and eighteen years of age. All of the children I met with are extremely enthusiastic about attending the club, and most did not face any opposition from their parents when they first joined. They feel that through their participation at the clubs, they have gained self-confidence, are more disciplined, respect their elders more, and, most importantly, that their involvement with the clubs is giving them an opportunity for better prospects in their future. Their exposure to high-risk behaviour has now been mitigated, and this point was echoed by their parents and the club staff as well. Another positive outcome of their participation is that their fear of the police has also been allayed, and on the whole, a better relationship with the police has been developed.

The children like engaging in various activities at the clubs, not only recreational activities, but also the academics, as they feel the club provide them with an environment more conducive for studying. While at some clubs their opinion is asked regularly on what activities they would like to engage in, this is not the case at others; however, this does not seem to dampen their spirits as they do realize the constraints facing the clubs. At the same time, however, members at all clubs expressed the desire for more classes for spoken English, computers, painting, dance and music. The children would also like to see more inter-club competitions as these provide opportunities for them to display their talents and engage in teamwork.

Since not all clubs have a playground on the premises or even have one nearby, it is not always possible for them to have outdoor activities. This is especially true for the girls clubs, where the girls are largely kept engaged inside.

The girls themselves feel that they are getting equal opportunities as the boys around them and have high, but achievable, aspirations for the future. Most would like to become either teachers, doctors, or join the Police when they are older. The boys expressed their desires to become engineers, doctors, lawyers, policemen, or civil servants.

#### **4.2.5 Parents**

The majority of parents of the club members are engaged in occupations such as daily-wage labour, auto-rickshaw drivers, factory workers, coolies, construction workers,

fishermen, vendors, and house-maids. They wish for their children to have a better quality of life in the future than they do presently and for them to live up to their potential. They view Arumbu as a trustworthy avenue where they can send their children, helping them build skills that will help them in future life. In particular, parents seem to like the focus on literacy and education, but are more than glad to observe positive changes in other aspects of their children's personality also; for example, greater self-confidence, better discipline, and a greater sense of initiative and responsibility.

The role of parents within the project is quite negligible at the moment. Monetary contributions are not quite possible, it was claimed during discussions – interestingly, in one instance it was said that were it possible to contribute a decent sum of money towards such development of their children, then they would instead be attending tuition centers and not the club. It is precisely for the fact that the club is free that parent are sending their children. On a bright note, however, parents are willing to help out in other ways, as ascertained by the women's self-help groups (SHGs) formed in two of the communities that were visited. Thus, there is great scope to collaborate with and include such groups of parents in future project processes, ensuring sustainability.

#### 4.2.6 Community

Over the past year, the role of the community with the project has augmented, albeit gradually. As Arumbu gains ground, and its positive impact is felt within the community, more and more people are willing to accept its presence, and individual patrons are also coming forward. At the same time however, there is a need for creating greater awareness and there is scope for the club members to reach out into the community and create awareness about the project through various activities, including community service. Formulating and strengthening Club Development Committees would greatly aid in further involving the community as well.

##### **Case Study I: Dealing with Community Conflict**

A positive development that had taken place at the Palavakkamkuppam girls club in the recent past dealt with the issue of access of the children of minority community members. The community consists primarily of fishermen, with the minority constituting migrant tenants. A number of non-governmental organizations have been operating in the area in the aftermath of the tsunami that occurred in December 2004, and their presence had catalyzed a dispute between the fishermen and the tenants. To ensure that the services of the club are available and accessible to all members of the community, the teacher of the girls club, along with that of the Arumbu Child Development Centre situated at the same premises, took care to inform the tenant families that their children should still make use of the services offered by Arumbu. Facing opposition from several members of the community, it is heartening to know that she made sure that the migrant children were still able to

**Case Study 2: Alumni as Volunteers**

The Otteri Police Boys Club, falling under the jurisdiction of the P2 Police Station, has been quite successful at retaining a number of club alumni as volunteers, who then become mentors or peer leaders for the younger club members. I met with two such alumni, who had heard about the club from the scoutmaster and had been enthusiastic participants since 2003. They felt that the club had provided them with a safe and positive environment where they could express themselves. By taking part in structured activities that they would not normally have had the chance to, they also got the opportunity to develop their talents and skills; in fact, the duo had won the inter-club carom championships held in 2005. Their involvement with the club also led them to become more active within the community, exemplified by their participation with the night patrols of the police. They felt that by receiving the encouragement that they did from the scoutmaster, subsequently, their parents, they became more motivated to do something constructive with their lives. At present, Ajith\* is studying and Paul\* is working as an air-conditioner repair mechanic. (\*Names changed).

### 4.3 Capacity-Building

Since the inception of Arumbu, AeA has worked to increase the capacities of both the club staff and its own project team with a view to enhance the efficacy of the boys and girls clubs. Trainings have been provided to the teachers and scoutmasters on a range of matters such as management and administration, the play-way method of teaching, and first aid. They have also been sensitized to the issues of inclusive education and mental health illnesses. At the same time, however, while these trainings and information sessions have had an extremely positive impact, there is still much left to be desired on the ground. In order to ensure the all-round development of the children who attend, it is imperative for the club staff to play the role of mentors, becoming their guides in more ways than one.

Both the project staff and the club staff need to be given training on documentation and monitoring and evaluation, and should be sensitized to the need for periodic evaluation. They themselves have expressed the desire for the following capacity building trainings: spoken English and Hindi, counseling, computers and typewriting, management and administration, resource mobilization and fund-raising, leadership and personality development, and yoga.

An important issue on which some more awareness is needed is that of gender. While considerable work has been done to empower the girls and create equal opportunities for the girls clubs, there are still some areas where the need for establishing girls clubs is not felt at all.

### 4.4 Networking

Aide et Action has a gradually expanding network of individuals, companies, and institutions that all collaborate in the functioning of the boys and girls clubs. Apart from the Chennai City Police, these include corporate donors such as Satyam and TCS; local donors in the form of either businesses or individuals; and volunteers. Corporate donors

have donated books and computers to numerous clubs, and talks are currently in progress with Satyam to provide more computers as well as training to the clubs in a phased manner. Several clubs have a few alumni that come and volunteer regularly, but at this time it seems that this number is quite small. In addition to alumni, a number of club staff and cluster coordinators have been successful at identifying individuals who come and teach various skills to the children; for example, volleyball, yoga, and painting, to name but a few activities. However, such volunteers are not uniformly spread across all the clubs, and only a few seem to reap their benefits.

Thus, there is much scope to identify more volunteers such as these in all areas and to tap their services. This can be done with the help of the club development committees that exist and that are planned for the future. As they are strengthened, they can aid in expanding the network of collaborators further by raising awareness and building up club image. Related to the issue of networking is the fact of documentation; as recognized by the project staff, it would greatly aid the project if a concise database of all donors and patrons is maintained.

## 4.5 Leadership

### **Aide et Action**

The Head of the Arumbu project is largely responsible for its overall administration. She also establishes the much needed networks of donors and collaborators, especially with the Police Department. In addition, major events such as health camps and cultural celebrations are organized by her. **Leading the way to now shift focus onto strengthening and expanding existing networks at all levels – from the highest at policy-level to the lowest at the ground around the clubs** – would greatly aid in ensuring the sustainability of the clubs.

### **Chennai City Police**

Given the recent elections and the appointing of new senior officials within the Police Department, it will take some time to gauge the intentions of the Police regarding the project. While the recognition of the work being done through Arumbu exists, there need to be sincere efforts made at the highest levels to ensure that officials at the lowest levels are carrying out their tasks relating to the clubs.

## 4.6 SWOT Analysis

Based on the above findings, on the next page is presented an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of the Arumbu Child Development Project. While the strengths and weaknesses of the project are internal, the opportunities and threats are dependent on external factors.

**Strengths**

- Structured after-school activities for children, mitigating their exposure to high-risk behaviour
- Raises self-esteem of participants
- Creates positive image of Chennai City Police- clearer, more positive relationship with community/ children
- Has a positive influence on the community; proper evidence may reflect qualitative improvements
- Is a sustainable model
- Able to bring in donors to clubs with a clear cut mandate

**Weaknesses**

- Overworked project staff
- Lack of proper documentation at both administrative and managerial levels
- Greater capacity building of project and club staff needed
- Not enough awareness about project among bureaucracy & corporates
- Police currently plays a very peripheral role; needs to be strengthened
- Low rate of alumni as volunteers
- More regular monitoring and evaluation needed
- Scoutmasters/caretakers and teachers need to be clearer about part-time nature of position

**Arumbu Child  
Development Project****Threats**

- Lack of will on part of the Police, especially at senior levels could have adverse effects on sustainability
- Political interference
- Community opposition and/or disputes can affect attendance at clubs (both long-term and short-term)

**Opportunities**

- Scope to integrate Project with other existing programs like the Bharat Scouts and Guides
- Can apply innovations observed at certain clubs, such as savings' group and lending library, to all clubs
- Scope to further include local and corporate sponsors/donors
- Can tie-up with local Corporation schools for various activities
- Scope for club alumni as volunteers
- Can extend the program to other cities around the country & create a macro level policy
- Scope for tie-ups with donors like UNICEF in such a case

## Chapter V

# Key Recommendations

Over the past year and a half, the Arumbu Child Development Project has demonstrated considerable overall progress, proving to be a successful initiative for Aide et Action. Interactions with all the stakeholders, especially with the teachers and scoutmasters, point to accelerated impact of the project being felt on the ground since AeA intervened in this Chennai City Police program; for example, in the capacity of the teachers and scoutmasters, and in the level of confidence and initiative of the children. At the same time however, there remains much room for improvement and, with a view to strengthen the sustainability of project benefits, I recommend particular attention to the aspects presented below.

### 5.1 Club Environment and Activities

In order to ensure the overall growth of the children, vocational and leadership training, and personality development should be brought into further focus. Keeping this in mind, it would also be of importance to note that the role of scoutmasters and teachers should be that of a mentor; thus, relevant capacity building trainings should also be given to them in this regard.

The project can be solidified further if more opportunities for developing and strengthening inter-club relationships are created, for example, through more inter-club competitions. In this manner, the children also develop their skills and gain confidence.

To uphold a minimum standard at all clubs, a uniform schedule of activities to be followed at all clubs, fulfilling certain requirements, during the year. Additionally, innovations that are observed at certain clubs and that are easily replicable should be noted and implemented across all the clubs; for example, the lending library at Palavakamkuppam, and the savings group for adolescent girls at Seven Wells Girls Club.

### 5.2 Collaboration with the Chennai City Police

In order to ensure sustainability of the project, it is imperative for AeA to interact more closely with the Chennai City Police, particularly in terms of sensitizing it to the greater role it must play. Special attention must be paid to those clubs that fall under the Police Department's sponsorship. Currently, the Police, for the most part, seem to have washed its hands off the project, comforted by the knowledge that the clubs are (at least in part) taken care of by AeA.

Furthermore, greater collaboration with the Police Department would be key in tapping more local resources, although some progress has been made in increasing local resource mobilization over the last year.

### 5.3 Collaboration with Parents and the Local Community

The most important aspect regarding the sustainability of the clubs and their relationship with the local community is that of the Club Development Committee. It must be ensured that the Committees are strengthened through a proper mandate.

The role of parents should be enhanced through monthly structured meetings with the teachers/scoutmasters, as feedback from both sides would aid in the children's progress as well as in improving club activities. In addition, wherever there are women's self-help groups (SHGs) in the surrounding area of the clubs, they should be approached for providing support to the clubs. Several mothers at two of the clubs I visited were members of local SHGs, and were willing to play a greater role if desired by the teacher/scoutmaster.

At the same time, however, greater awareness about Arumbu still needs to be created among the target communities, especially in areas where there are children not accessing the clubs.

### 5.4 Continuing Management Capacity

As Arumbu moves successfully into the next stage of operations, objectives should be revisited and consolidated, and changes should be made accordingly. In particular, further investment in terms of time, professional support, and planning would prove beneficial for the project. Enhancing the capacity of the Arumbu team would also be of value in this aspect.

Not only managerial roles, but also the project overall would greatly benefit with more comprehensive monitoring and evaluation, as it is directly linked with the desired project outcomes.

### 5.5 Scope for Further Tie-Ups

Not only does Arumbu demonstrate excellent potential for further integration with other AeA projects, such as iLEAD and the Telugu Migrant Project, but it also points to scope for bringing in more volunteers and donors. Regarding other AeA initiatives, steps already taken to incorporate youth from Arumbu to iLEAD, for example, can be further strengthened and formalized. Creating more awareness about the program would aid in this respect, especially through further sensitization of the teachers and scoutmasters on the opportunities available for the children as they grow older.

There is much scope for attracting more volunteers at the clubs. Club alumni, members of the local community, college and high school students, and even businesses and corporations could be potential volunteers. Publicizing the project in local schools and colleges could lead to a greater number of volunteers getting involved with the clubs, where there is great need for more help. Keeping in mind the concept of "corporate social

responsibility” and the current interest in it, there is also scope for increasing collaboration with corporations and businesses.

Moreover, greater focus could be put on building up the image of the project and to publicize it further, especially among potential corporate donors and the bureaucracy. Additionally international agencies such as UNICEF could also be brought in, given the fact that this project serves to achieve two of the Millennium Development Goals relating to children and education.

## **Conclusion**

Great potential for the future is demonstrated by the progress made so far by the Arumbu Child Development Project. The immense efforts put in by all the stakeholders, especially Aide et Action, the club staff, and the Chennai City Police, **have not been for nothing as its positive impacts are being felt across the various communities of Chennai.** Through the strengthening of its networks, much more can be achieved, with the capacity to influence policy and replicate the project around the country.

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## Appendix

### Questionnaire for Teachers and Scoutmasters

<b>1.</b>	<b>Details of the Club</b>	
1.1	Name of club	
1.2	Number and names of feeder slums	
1.3	Location of club, with respect to location of feeder slums (within slum/outside slum/central location for all feeder slums, etc)	
1.4	Number of children covered: i. Regular attendants ii. Infrequent attendants	i. ii.
1.5	Reasons for irregular attendance	
1.6	Social composition of club members (caste, religion, etc.)	
1.7	Proportion (%) of school-going children	
1.8	Proportion (%) of working children	
1.9	Number of eligible children not currently attending club. Please give reasons.	
1.10	Factors determining access & participation (e.g., timing, location, lack of infrastructure, social reasons like participation of certain sections of community, etc.). Please give details.	
1.11	Staff strength	
1.12	Infrastructure available (Y/N). i. Pukka building ii. Playground iii. Electricity. Is it authorized? iv. Fan v. Tubelight/ bulb vi. Toilet vii. Other, please specify	

1.13	Tools and materials in use at club: i. No. of books; their condition  ii. Other reading materials (number & condition) iii. Art equipment iv. Musical instruments v. Board games and other indoor games equipment vi. Sports equipment vii. Other, please specify	
1.14	Records maintained (Y/N): i. Attendance register ii. Stock register iii. Visitors' notebook iv. Daily report v. Other, please specify	If yes, interval between updates. i. ii. iii. iv. v.
1.15	Daily activity schedule maintained and followed? (Y/N)	
<b>2. Details of Scoutmaster and Caretaker</b>		
<b>2.1 Details of the Scoutmaster</b>		
2.1.1	Name	
2.1.2	Age	
2.1.3	Educational background (please tick one)	i. Primary School
		ii. High School
		iii. Higher Secondary
		iv. College
		v. Vocational Training
		vi. None
2.1.4	Date of joining club	
<b>2.2 Details of the Caretaker, if present</b>		
2.2.1	Name	
2.2.2	Age	
2.2.3	Educational background (please tick one)	i. Primary School
		ii. High School
		iii. Higher Secondary
		iv. College
		v. Vocational Training
		vi. None
2.2.4	Date of joining club	
<b>3. Capacity-Building</b>		
3.1	Number of capacity-building trainings received since joined	i. 0-3 ii. 4-6 iii. 7 or more

3.2	Types of trainings received. Please indicate number alongside each type.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Play-way method of teaching</li> <li>ii. Health and hygiene</li> <li>iii. First-aid</li> <li>iii. Counseling</li> <li>iv. Child rights</li> <li>v. Leadership and personality development</li> <li>vi. Resource mobilization &amp; fund-raising</li> <li>vii. Inclusive education</li> <li>viii. Computers</li> <li>ix. Other (please specify)</li> </ul>	
3.3	Trainings desired for the future (please specify).		
<b>4. Club Activities and Participation of Children</b>			
4.1	Regular activities undertaken at the club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Art</li> <li>ii. Dance</li> <li>iii. Music</li> <li>iv. Cricket</li> <li>v. Volleyball</li> <li>vi. Tennis</li> <li>vii. Athletics</li> <li>viii. Chess</li> <li>ix. Carrom</li> <li>x. Coaching for school subjects</li> <li>xi. Reading for pleasure</li> <li>xii. Other, please specify in adjoining column</li> </ul>	
4.2	Level of reading for pleasure among children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Very poor</li> <li>ii. Poor</li> <li>iii. Satisfactory</li> <li>iv. Good</li> <li>v. Very good</li> </ul>	Reason for choice:
4.3	Level of development of life skills of the children (e.g. leadership qualities, communication skills, vocational skills, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Very poor</li> <li>ii. Poor</li> <li>iii. Satisfactory</li> <li>iv. Good</li> <li>v. Very good</li> </ul>	Reason for choice:
4.4	Special activities/programs organized by club. Please give details.		
4.5	Frequency of input taken from club members (about activities & programs, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Once every week</li> <li>ii. Once every 2 weeks</li> <li>iii. Once a month</li> <li>iv. Once every 3 months</li> <li>v. Half-yearly</li> <li>vi. Annually</li> <li>vii. Never</li> </ul>	

4.6	Frequency of input taken from parents (about activities, programs, etc.)	i. Once every week ii. Once every 2 weeks iii. Once a month (PTO) iv. Once every 3 months v. Half-yearly vi. Annually vii. Never	
4.7	Level of regular attendance	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
4.8	Level of children's motivation to participate	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
4.9	Outreach to minorities (SC/ST/ migrants, etc)	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
4.10	Outreach to disabled children	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
4.11	Outreach to children from single-parent households	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
<b>5. Collaboration with Others</b>			
5.1	Level of awareness among parents and community about club	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
5.2	Level of motivation of parents and community members to participate	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
5.3	Level of collaboration with parents and other	i. Very poor ii. Poor	Reason for choice and nature of collaboration, if any:

	community members	iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	
			(PTO)
5.4	Level of regular help received from volunteers	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
5.5	Level of participation of club alumni	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
5.6	Level of local resource mobilization	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
5.7	Details of local patrons, if any		
5.8	Level of participation of local police	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
5.9	Level of participation of local Corporation officials	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
5.10	Accessibility of AeA staff	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
5.11	Level of collaboration/interaction with other clubs	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
5.12	Status of Club Development Committee	i. No Committee formed. ii. Committee formed, but no meetings held. iii. Meetings held as	

		iv. & when needed. Regular meetings held, with some members attending. (PTO)	
		v. Regular meetings held, with all members attending.	
<b>6. Impacts Observed</b>			
6.1	Rate of enrolment of children at club	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
6.2	Improvement in reducing dropout rate	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
6.3	Mitigation of exposure to and involvement in high-risk activities (e.g. drinking, drugs, petty crime, unsafe sex, etc.)	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
6.4	Improvement in access to club	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
6.5	Improvement in self-esteem of members	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
6.6	Improvement in life skills of club members (i.e. leadership and communication skills)	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
6.7	Improvement in bringing community closer together	i. Very poor ii. Poor iii. Satisfactory iv. Good v. Very good	Reason for choice:
6.8	Other general improvements observed in community, if any		

## PRA Exercise Conducted at Virugambakkam Police Boys Club

### Snakes and Ladders Exercise

- Purpose of exercise:
  - To identify the present state and the aspired state of the children.
  - To identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and risks that factor into the attainment of the aspired state.
- The purpose of the exercise was explained.
- It was initially intended that the exercise would be carried out on the ground, but given the lack of light, it was decided to use charts instead.
- The children were then divided into two groups, and asked to choose one member to be their spokesperson/leader. They were then told to discuss among themselves and describe their present state, with visuals as well as words.
- The two groups then described what they had written about their **present state**:

Group 1 (12 members)	Group 2
<p><b>1. Confidence-level:</b> the life-cycle of a tree was drawn (4 stages, from seed to tree), and the children’s current confidence-level depicted as a sapling (stage/rating 3). Stated that they had no confidence in themselves when they first joined club, and, while it has improved considerably there is still room for improvement.</p>	<p><b>1. Band:</b> Currently concentrating a lot on the band, not enough on studies. But club does provide a place for studying and the proper encouragement for it. They are becoming more responsible now.</p>
<p><b>2. Studies:</b> Education a life-long process and they still have a lot to learn, they are only about “half-way there.” (Still only at low-level).</p>	<p><b>2. Sports:</b> Reached zonal-level in volleyball competitions and have the confidence to go further. Old net at club was damaged, received new one.</p>
<p><b>3. Sports:</b> currently only at 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> place – want to win and be first. Do currently have the self-confidence to win.</p>	<p><b>3. Premises/Facilities:</b> now have a proper space to play so don’t bother other people by playing in streets.</p>
<p><b>4. Extra-curricular activities:</b> everyone has various skills. They practice and compete, but improvement needed. Would like professional teachers, but they also learn from each other.</p>	<p><b>4. Studies:</b> while they have the confidence and will to perform better, they feel that the facility/infrastructure (esp. lighting) is lacking at the moment, and this is a hindrance.</p>
<p><b>5. Club:</b> helps in overall development - time is used better, they learn how to discipline themselves. But still in “growing stage.” Need monetary and material support from others.</p>	<p><b>5. Equal opportunity:</b> everybody is given a chance to participate, especially in sports, which is not always the case at school. This raises their dignity.</p>
<p><b>6. Helping tendency:</b> know first-aid, box given to club. Willing to help others as needed.</p>	

- The boys then made a separate chart for their **dream state**:

Group 1	Group 2
1. Want to achieve great things for the country. Are willing to sacrifice to “reach the peak” (visual of waving Indian flag on Mt. Everest – “without the ‘REST’”). Specifically, want to make achievements in the area of science and technology, industry, and education. Want to put the country on the world map (“one is able to see the Great Wall of China from outer space; we want the same for India”).	1. Get a degree, e.g. B.Sc. – Club helping them to reach that goal.
2. Want to be the President of India.	2. Become IPS; they like the police.
	3. Follow in the alumni’s footsteps (who are their role models).
	4. Volleyball – win state-level volleyball competitions, which will help them get jobs in the future; e.g., in the railways.
	5. Once turn 18, be good citizens – have lots of friends and develop good habits.
	6. Band – become music director. Participation in band today gives them confidence and develops skill. Encouragement received from SM.
	(Overall, willing to make sacrifices to do well in life.)

- It can be seen from the above two tables that while Group 1 had quite unrealistic aspirations for the future, Group 2 seemed a bit more grounded in their hopes.
- We then collectively discussed the “**ladders**,” that is, the forces that will help the children achieve their dream state:
  - Concentrating on education to get to the top.
  - Sharing what you learn with friends
  - Having good people to support, guide, and encourage. (They feel they are currently getting that support.)
    - The above two reasons help to raise confidence.
  - For sports:
    - Having a good coach.
    - Having good equipment (balls, pitches, gym equipment, etc.)
    - More matches – i.e. more opportunities to compete, e.g., through more inter-club interaction/competitions.

- Proper toilet facility – currently lack a water source.
  - Spoken English classes and maths coaching for weaker students.
  - Coaching (general) – need to be pointed in the right direction; also to the right resources for help.
- The children were then asked to identify which of these “ladders” were internal, i.e. their strengths, and which were external, i.e., the opportunities available to them, and then rate each category.

<b>Ladders</b>	
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
Support and encouragement from parents/teachers/SM, which leads to greater self-confidence	Good coach
Concentration on education	Adequate equipment and facilities
Sharing what you learn with friends.	More opportunities to compete with others
	Coaching classes
<b>Rating - 7</b>	<b>Rating – 3</b>

- This was followed by a discussion of the “snakes,” or the forces that obstruct the achievement of the dream state.
  - Greater concentration on sports and other activities rather than academics
  - Family pressure to work rather than study
  - Lack of monetary help – not only will this lead to infeasibility in engaging in academics, club activities, etc, but it will also lead to lower levels of confidence and motivation.
  - Lack of encouragement from parents
  - Bad habits – drinking, smoking, loitering
  - Distractions
  - Discouragement from school – i.e. teacher discourages you because you don’t attend her tuition classes (experienced by one participant).
  - No self-confidence
- The above “snakes” were then divided into internal and external forces, i.e., their weaknesses and risks, respectively, and given ratings.

<b>Snakes</b>	
<b>Weaknesses: Rating - 4</b>	<b>Risks: Rating - 3</b>
No confidence	Forced to stop studies and work instead
Bad habits and distractions	Lack of monetary help
	Lack of encouragement, including from school teachers

- When asked how many of them were confident of reaching their aspired state, all of the children present affirmed that they were.

**Table I: Details of Clubs Visited**

Cluster	Boys Club	Club-specific Criteria	Girls Club	Club-specific Criteria
I	-	-	Seven Wells	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ West Chennai. Situated centrally within Seven Wells Market to cover 4 slums (pop. 950).</li> <li>▪ 35 children registered.</li> </ul>
II	Virugambakkam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Location: Central Chennai. Situated centrally, outside slums, to cover 4 slums (pop. 1,100)</li> <li>▪ Special activities: Police Band training given</li> <li>▪ CDC-formed</li> <li>▪ 55 children registered</li> <li>▪ AeA-sponsored</li> </ul>	-	-
III	Chintadripet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Location: East Chennai. Situated centrally, within slum, to cover 9 slums (pop. 5,050).</li> <li>▪ Situated in Corporation building</li> <li>▪ Oldest club</li> <li>▪ Carrom-coaching centre on premises</li> <li>▪ CDC formed</li> <li>▪ 45 children registered</li> <li>▪ AeA-sponsored</li> </ul>	Chintadripet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Location: same as boys club. Different building, however, donated by local charity.</li> <li>▪ 40 children registered.</li> </ul>
III	Otteri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Location: Central Chennai. Situated centrally, within slum, to cover 4 slums (pop. 1,900)</li> <li>▪ Govt.-sponsored</li> </ul>	Otteri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Location: same as boys club. However, the room is without proper walls or roof.</li> <li>▪ Under observation by AeA</li> <li>▪ 35 children registered</li> </ul>
IV	Koyambedu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Location: South Chennai. Situated, centrally, outside slums, to cover 4 slums (pop. 1500).</li> <li>▪ CDC formed</li> <li>▪ 30 children registered.</li> <li>▪ Govt.-sponsored</li> </ul>	-	-
V	-		Palavakkamkuppam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Location: South Chennai, tsunami-affected area.</li> <li>▪ Situated on beach within community. (1 village)</li> <li>▪ 26 children registered.</li> <li>▪ Conflict within community members over membership of club.</li> </ul>
VI*	-		-	-

\*It was not possible to visit Cluster VI.

### Project Performance Indicators

