



# *Sristi Foundation*

2017-2018

## Annual Report



**Sristi Foundation**  
Konamangalam Village, Tindivanam Taluka,  
Villupuram District, Tamil Nadu - 604304, India  
Website: [www.sristivillage.org](http://www.sristivillage.org)  
E-mail: [sristivillage@gmail.com](mailto:sristivillage@gmail.com)  
Contact: +91 9047787887

Karthikeyan  
Sristi Foundation  
2017-2018

### **Project profile**

Organization Name	Sristi Foundation
Contact address:	Sristi Village, Konamangalam village, Tindivanam Taluka, Villupuram District, Tamil Nadu – 604 304 India
Phone:	+ 91 90 477 87 887
E-mail	<a href="mailto:sristivillage@gmail.com">sristivillage@gmail.com</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.sristivillage.org">www.sristivillage.org</a>
Executive Director	Karthikeyan Ganesan
Legal Status of the Organization:	
Registration	Registered under the Indian Trust Act Reg. 1009/2013 Dt. 12/09/2013, Puducherry
Government of Tamil Nadu	Registered under the Person with Disability Act 1995 – Reg. No. 402/2015
Government of India	Registered under the National Trust, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India Reg. No. TSRI16513809802
Income Tax Registration 80G 12AA	Registered under the exemption u/s 80G of the income tax act 1961 Reg. No. 9165E(1658)/CIT/PDY/2013-14 Registered under the u/s 12AA (b) of the Income tax Act, 1961 Reg. No. 9165E(1658)/CIT/PDY/2014-15
Ministry of Home affairs : FCRA	Reg. No. 076100075 Valid until: 28/03/2023

## Vision

Our vision is for an inclusive society where children and people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are respected, valued and have choices to lead holistic and dignified lives. We believe in an inclusive and sustainable world, where everyone should be given the opportunity to reach their full potential regardless of disability.

## Mission

Our mission is to enable disabled individuals and other marginalized groups to live as independently and as fully as possible through economic and social empowerment. This is achieved through providing a safe, secure place to live and providing training and education in skills that are transferable to a prosperous life in rural India.

## Challenges

Over 1.6 million people in India are registered as disabled according to the 2011 Census and approximately 75% of them live in rural areas. Unfortunately education and training provisions for disabled people are minimal, and concentrated in cities. This means that disabled people in India have little access to appropriate education and training opportunities and often face financial hardship and a lack of work opportunities. Additionally, social attitudes towards disabled people mean they are often ostracized from communities and their families.

Few projects exist in rural India which aims to empower disabled people to gain independence, rather than to become dependent on donors. We believe that our method of education and community living, alongside our sustainability and farming practices, present an innovative, workable model of advancing and promoting disability rights.

## What we do

### Sristi Village:



Sristi Village currently houses around 35 people living in our community, including 20 members with intellectual and developmental disabilities, 10 supporting staff and other five marginalized people. They were most times isolated, bereft of any social interaction and avoided by the community. The village provides food,

shelter, farm training and a safe, welcoming and supportive environment in which to live. All our members come to Sristi for different reasons, from being excluded from their community to living in the streets. As they embed in the Sristi community, we witness their transformation into valued and happy individuals. The loving atmosphere in our family-like community helps them to become independent and take part in daily life activities on their own. In our closest future, we hope to provide shelter, education and care to a larger group of students. With caretakers and teachers to engage the adults and kids on numerous activities including planting and irrigation, harvesting, milking and so on, we hope to make them socially and economically independent.

### **Sristi Special School:**

Our school has grown from three students in 2014 to 20 resident students and 20 day care students. Sristi Special School gives disadvantaged children the opportunity to attend school and learn in a way that is suited to their individual needs. With the support of the Indian Government we were able to fund

the Sristi Special School Van which enables us to pick up all our school children. This means our school can now cater to disabled children who live close to Sristi Village, as well as those who live

further away. There is more demand than we can meet from parents who want their children to be taught in Sristi Special School. Unfortunately we cannot yet fulfil this demand, so we intend in the next year to construct a new school building and employ more specialist teachers and a physiotherapist.



### **Sristi Farm:**



When we started our Village, the land was dry and infertile. Thanks to our rain harvesting and agro forest farming efforts, Sristi Village is now a green and fertile farm. The soil fertility has increased over the last three years and we are now successfully growing numerous plants, crops and trees and running a successful Dairy Farm.

Our next step is to formalize our farm training programme. It is based on a two-year curriculum designed to support our members to gain social

and economic independence. We will start with two new projects: the Good Spinach Project and the Zero-Budget Five-Layer Model. These will help us to cultivate our own food to cover the village's basic nutritional needs, over the course of the next year and beyond.

### **Beneficiaries**

Target group: Individuals with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities

Age: 3-16 (school); 16+ (village and farm training)

Gender: male and female

Socio-economic status: preferably below poverty line

Area: rural Tamil Nadu

## The Impact of Your Support

### The impact we have with your support at Sristi Foundation:

#### *Sristi Village*

##### Changing lives:

Sristi Foundation has had a life-changing impact on the people we work with. Over the last three years, we have worked with 20 adults and 20 children with disabilities or from marginalized backgrounds to give each of them intensive, long-term support that will give them far better opportunities in the future.



##### Pioneering best practice:

Sristi is dedicated to raising the profile of disability rights in rural India and to sharing the best practice we develop through our model. In 2015, Sristi Foundation received the Innovative Social Change Maker Award from Yuva Unstoppable, Tamil Nadu. Sristi was additionally awarded the Social Entrepreneur Award from the International Conclave for our groundbreaking work with people with disabilities and the Best Special Educator Award from the Government of Tamil Nadu for our incredible School Principal Mr. Muthukrishnan for his innovative and effective approach to teaching children with special needs.

##### Legacy:

Sristi can proudly confirm that we now have five former Village members who work and live independently. The average income of those former members who have gained independence since being part of Sristi Village is Rs. 5,000. They either have the chance to find employment in our village itself or a job elsewhere in the local community. Some of them were able to rejoin with their families,

while others build a new life. Shankar, who is employed in our village and Balaji, who was able to find a job in Pondicherry are just two examples of former members who were able to gain independence with the help of Sristi.

##### Case Studies:

###### **Shankar**

Shankar has cerebral palsy, which made it impossible for him to find a job in the past. After joining our community and training

with us for just one year we employed him as a farm worker. He showed such great enthusiasm,



especially when working with the cows, that he is now looking after 10 of our cows together with just one other employee. Additionally he is training our existing Sristi Village members in farming skills to enable more of them to become independent in turn.

## **Balaji**

Balaji had already completed Special Education and received vocational training to be an automobile mechanic from the Government of India when he came to Sristi Village. He initially started working in Pondicherry as an assistant mechanic, but because of his intellectual disability he was treated very poorly and could not make the most of his talent as he was forced to do low level jobs. He finally quit the job and was unable to find a new one. His mother came to us for help and we took him in to our community in Sristi Village. He stayed with us for three years, working really hard to learn new skills, including vegetable gardening and bamboo hut construction. As a result of his work and training with us, he was able to secure himself a job in the packaging industry in Pondicherry, earning Rs. 9,000 a month.

## ***Sristi Special School***

### **Yuvanesh & Darsan – Two Enthusiastic kids**



Yuvanesh and Darsan are two five year olds from nearby village with disabilities. After coming to Sristi Village, they have become more interactive and they participate in games and school activities. They have become more responsive and smarter, with more and more involvement and interaction. Their mother, who has four kids (two of them, who are normal), was finding it difficult to manage with menial salary, she earned as a house maid. Now, the kids are able to enjoy and interact, just like other children, in the neighbourhood.

## ***Sristi Farm***



As a preface to our outline of the progress and challenges of the farm, we want to thank our mentor Mr. Roland Frutig from Switzerland for his continued support and mentoring for the development of our Sristi Farm.

## Good Spinach Project

We are starting to grow spinach at Sristi Village. Our Good Spinach Project will help to provide more nutritious food for our members and staff, as well as improve the quality of our soil. We have partnered with Naala Keerai (Good Greens!)



## Agro forest Farming



Over the past few months, we have started using agro forest Natural Farming at Sristi. It is a low cost farming method. In this Farming nothing has to be purchased from the outside. All things required for the growth of the plant are available around the root zone of the plants. There is no need to add anything from outside. Our members, staff, volunteers and our friends from Bihar have been working hard in the fields. Firstly the field was prepared and ploughed, we then had the task of creating beds and trenches, and the next

step was planting various different fruit trees including papaya, pineapple and banana. We have also been learning how to make Jeevamirtham (a natural alternative to fertilizer). Mr. Vetri, our farm consultant and trainer helping us to reach our dream of self-sustainability

## Ground Nuts

This year we planted groundnuts at Sristi Village. As well as being a great source of protein for our members, we have found they grow bountifully on our land!



## Networking and Cooperation:

Sristi always envisioning the world of inclusive, green and sustainable community, we clearly understood it wouldn't be possible without the support of like minded people. So, we are identifying the right partners and succeeded some extent. Mr. Roland Frutig is uniting various organizations and helping us to achieve our vision.



**Vetri and Team:** Mr. Vetritchelvan is well trained and experienced agro forest trainer and practitioner who supporting us to manage our Sristi Farm and train our community members in farming. Also, he is helping us to achieve our vision of self-sustainability. Along with Vetri, we are creating a hub at Sristi Village to conduct various farm related training programme to farmers, students, Government officials both nationally and internationally.

Sristi Village slowly transforms into a model form and sustainable community. This will inspire others and learn from our community.

### **Network with kanthari s**

Many kantharis are empowering their own community through agriculture but they need an intensive training programme in agriculture, we at Sristi Village decided to support them through conducting various farm training programme, starting from visiting their field, meeting their community and give training at Sristi village. Mr. Neeraj, kanthari graduate already getting support through our Vetri team, some of our African kanthari also getting guidance and soon they will attend our farm training at Sristi Village.



### **Networking with other organizations:**

DACA, Dr. Dr Ambedkar Cultural Academy running a School and children's institute, through Sristi they are conducting farm training to their school students.



### **Upcoming Training**

For the past four years we have been learning and practising natural farming at Sristi Village. Word has spread of our efforts and people from various sectors are interested to learn our farm practices. In July 2018 we are organising a 15 days agro forest farm training summit for those interested to learn from us. Vetri and his team will train the participants.

### **Infrastructure requirements:**

At present, existing infrastructure is not sufficient to host people for conducting training programme, so we are looking for your support to construct a well equipped kitchen, dining and training hall to conduct various training programme. These infrastructures not only help our Sristi Village but also, these infrastructures become a hub for all community development programmes.

## Awards and Achievements



### Polestar Award

We want to express our sincere appreciation and thanks to the Polestar Foundation for recognizing Sristi Village with the Polestar Social Impact Award (under the 'Empowerment' category.) We are truly humbled and honoured to receive this award, given for the work we do, in empowering our members. We dedicate this award to all our supporters and volunteers for their commitment and continued support; without them it wouldn't be possible.

### Child Friendly Teacher Award

Mr. G. Muthukrishnan, Principal of Sristi Special School, received a Child Friendly Teacher Award from Trust for Youth and Child Leadership, Puducherry. We would like to extend our hearty thanks to Muthu for all his hard work to ensure the best education for our members and children.



### Our Team



Unity is strength... where there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved. Rightly said by Mattie Stepanek, without our wonderful team, we could not reach this level.

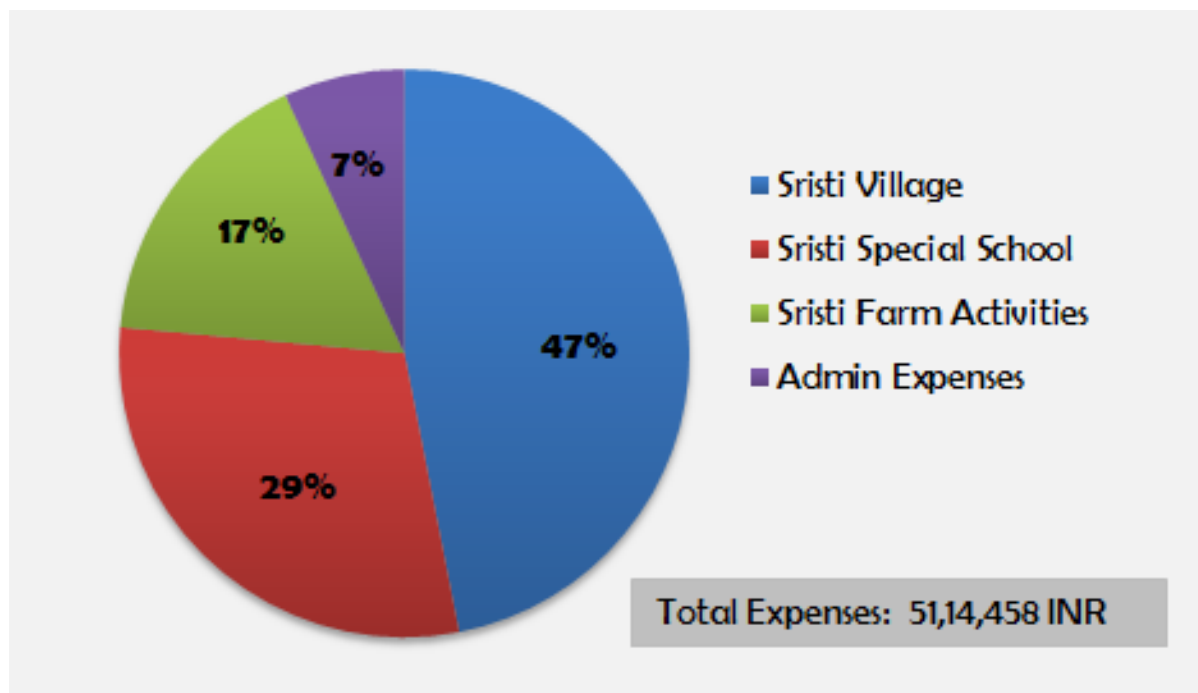
Sristi is very grateful to all the staff members who work with full of dedication and passion. They do not complain any time and they are ready to work any time of the day. They do not wait for instructions; they just do what needs to be done. They are always prepared to work hard. Thank you for bringing your positive attitude to work every day. Projects become easier to execute, changes become easier to implement and problems become easier to solve.

Sristi Village - Management & Staff Roles		
Sl. No.	Name	Role at Sristi Village
1.	Sri. Karthikeyan Ganesan	Director,
2.	Smt. Lakshmi Karthikeyan	Joint Director - Operations,
3.	Sri. G.Muthukrishnan	Principal
4.	Smt. R.Sarala	Teacher
5.	Smt. J.Saridha	Teacher
6.	Smt. Janagalakshmi	Nurse
7.	Sri. Vetri & Team	Farm Manager and Trainer
8.	Smt. Priya. V	Accountant
9.	Sri. Anand Raj.A	Member Associate
10.	Sri. Selvam	Village Manager
11.	Smt. K.Shakila	Caretaker
12.	Sri. Sankar	Dairy Farm worker,
13.	Sri. Malaiyanooran	Farm worker
14.	Sri. Shekhar	Cook
15.	Sri. K.Dheenadayalan	Driver

### Financial Highlights

#### Total Expenditure

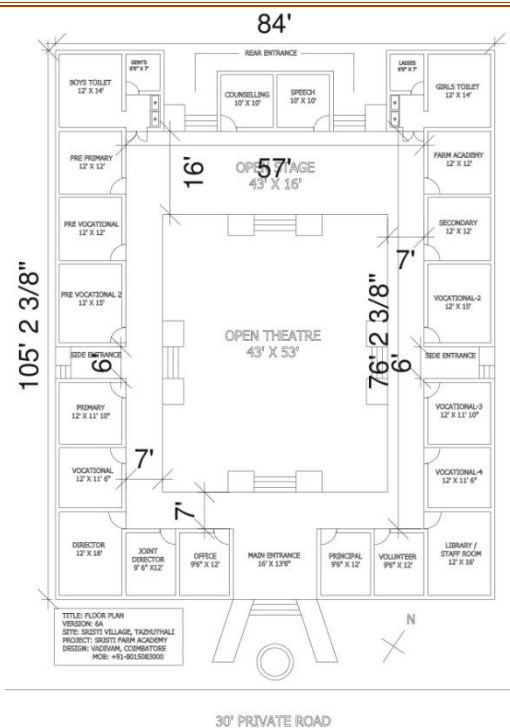
Our major expenditure is devoted for operations and maintenance of Sristi Village (47%) and the next major expenditure is used for running the special school (29%). The rest of the expenses are used for farm activities and administrative needs. The total expenses in last financial year is Rs. 51, 14,458/-



## Future Plans (School building construction, community homes, Community based rehabilitation, Farm training)

### Sristi Farm School:

We are putting a lot of effort into the construction of our School Building and Farm Academy training institute. Our long-term dream of constructing an eco-friendly farm school for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities is coming true! Our partner organization Stichting Zijn, (based in the Netherlands) has agreed to support us to build a school. This school will provide educational and farm-based training to 50 people with disabilities in rural villages surrounding Sristi.



### Community Homes:

We have land available to build more suitable accommodation for our members. As we launch our formalised training programme, Sristi Farm Academy, for 60 disabled people to live, learn and work at Sristi Village on our farm, we need to build fit-for-purpose accommodation to house our members. The accommodation will be such that it would each house 6 disabled members, and one member of staff as a 'house mother' or 'house father'. 10 houses would therefore accommodate 70 people – 60 members and 10 staff. We already have 20 members living at Sristi, so these would all be accommodated in the new housing, plus the additional members who will be participants in the Farm Academy. The houses will enable our members to live more independently and have a greater level of privacy than they do now, rather than being entirely dependent on Sristi –



they will be able to choose to cook for themselves if they wish (food to be provided by Sristi) and will learn basic domestic skills like cleaning, washing up etc. The houses would be made from natural materials and using natural building techniques, to ensure they are eco-friendly and accessible for disabled needs.

### Challenges

**Cost of Operations:** Our village would not function without our staff and we are aware that a reasonable salary is important to keep the motivation high and enable our staff members to support their families and live a decent life.

Finding funders for our running costs is most challenging because most funders want to contribute in construction projects or new projects. Covering our day-to-day costs is just as important as the support we get for new projects and without this funding we would not be able to carry out any of our activities. That is why we would be immensely grateful for supporters to help us cover our running cost.

## Gratitude

Sristi Village – our community members, parents, staff, and neighbours - would like to express our sincere gratitude to **all our donors and well wishers** for their support and donating their kindness and tremendous efforts to Sristi Village. A million thanks.... for everything. We would not exist without you.



As you can see, the funding you have provided has been very important for our Sristi Village community. We have run a successful project and this has really improved things for a lot of people in our community. Please feel free to get in touch if you would like any more information.

The funding you have provided over the past year has allowed us to build up our inclusive, self-sustaining and eco-friendly village for the marginalized and people with intellectual disabilities and transform the lives of more people. We have developed successful activities which we hope to continue in future. We have also gained valuable experience which will help us run new activities in the coming year.

Meanwhile, we will keep you updated on the Sristi Village activities through our quarterly newsletter and monthly emails.

Again, thank you for your ongoing support

Sincerely,

Karthikeyan Ganesan,  
Founder and Director