



Students of Nancy's Tamiranashe school in Norton, Zimbabwe



# kanthari Quarterly Newsletter 1-2024

*“One day everything will be well, that is our hope.  
Everything's fine today, that is our illusion.” - Voltaire -*

A gentle breeze is blowing over Lake Vellayani, the sun has not yet risen, and yet the water is teeming with life: colorful water birds, gathering in flocks on trees, always ready for a dive, fish snapping at swarms of mosquitos, our faithful water snake Lucy poking her head out here and there, as though she's watching us.

And then there's the entire kanthari team: our chefs, gardeners, guards, office staff, catalysts, and our three graceful housekeeping team members in their colorful saris. All of them rose early to help with the weekly lake cleanup. Right next to our hand-built island, nets are filled with large green-brown bales of dead plants and pulled ashore. Gigantic carpets

of water hyacinths, captured using floating PVC pipes connected with ropes, are pulled to our peninsula, and thrown onto land amidst much laughter and singing. There, the plants are spread out to fertilize the soil.

It won't be long before we can create a small garden on the peninsula, with benches and fragrant herb beds, all shaded by a banyan tree, which was planted in 2018 and is now more than ten meters tall. While from January-March we have been preparing the campus for the upcoming year, at the same time we have been closely following our participants from 2023 as they returned home and embark on their new ventures.



Above: after much hard work, this part of the lake is now clear of plants.

Far left: the entire kanthari team during the annual team building meeting

Left: catalysts Chacko, Riya, and Simon visit Karan Singh's Oda Foundation in Nepal (2023 kanthari)





Upon his return to Cameroon, Emmanuel visited Joshua (kanthari 2019), founder of Peace Crops



Mother and child visit the Oda clinic in Nepal

*Dear friends and supporters, We hope you've started the new year well. It's been three months since we bid farewell to the 14th generation. Saying goodbye wasn't easy, knowing that some of our kantharis had to return to crisis areas.*

*From Myat in Myanmar, we only hear a brief sign of life every couple of weeks. He wanted to join his family in western Myanmar to start a [permaculture training center](#) as well as a reforestation project of mangrove forests. During his journey home on a small ferry, soldiers attacked it. Luckily, he made it home, however, given the difficult circumstances, he is maintaining a low profile for the time being.*

*With his organization [Ndabuchiseh](#), Emmanuel from Cameroon trains youths to be peacemakers. On his way home, he had to travel through dangerous conflict zones to reach his family. We often think back to his speech, in which he talked about how even his young children can distinguish the sounds of gunfire from the different parties who are fighting each other. And despite dangers, crises, and several obstacles, most of the participants are confident and active.*

*Keerthi from Tamil Nadu in India started [Kuyili](#), an organization to protect bodies of water, birds, and insects. In the past three months, she has already organized several workshops, cleanup campaigns, and bird tours with children and youth. Keerthi, who at the beginning of the kanthari program was shy and especially feared public speaking, recently wrote: "I was invited to a discussion on the topic of*

*tourism and biodiversity conservation. I was given ten minutes for my speech and received great applause. I am grateful to kanthari where I learned how to deliver effective speeches and win over the audience for my cause. But above all, I overcame my stage fright."*

*Our catalysts Riya, Chacko and Simon met with several kantharis in Nepal. They were particularly fascinated by [Oda Village](#), a village community supported by Karan, who has an astonishing life story. At the age of twelve, he dropped out of school to earn money as a dishwasher in India to support his widowed mother. From a dishwasher, he became the manager of a rafting company. He used some of his earnings transforming his mother's cowshed, into the first maternity clinic in his village. Later he established a larger clinic and several schools, initiatives that significantly improved the living situation in Oda, a remote village in Nepal.*

## OUR ALUMNI

Claude Che - [CADA](#) - Cameroon (2022)

CADA Cameroon offers marginalized youth in Bamenda, Cameroon, a 6-month intensive training program. To keep young people away from drug abuse and crime, they receive training in art, entrepreneurship, and life skills. Despite the civil war that has been ongoing since 2016, 10 out of 15 participants successfully completed the training in March 2024 and received seed funding to start small businesses. The next training cycle for another 15 young people begins in April 2024.



Myat Tun, founder of Permaculture Institute Myanmar



Keerthi during a workshop in a school in Tamil Nadu

Nancy Mbaura - [Tamiranashe](#) - Zimbabwe (2022)

Nancy started a primary school in an old beer hall in Norton, Zimbabwe, which now has more than 1500 children enrolled. Poverty in this area is a major issue, causing many children to come to school with an empty stomach. To address this issue, Nancy and her team have started a new training for parents to learn how to cultivate and cook mushrooms.

Odunayo Aliu - [Bramble](#) - Nigeria (2018)

Bramble Network provides spaces where children in the rural district of Ibadan can develop their passions through alternative learning. All over the world, children are usually asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" But at Bramble, they are asked, "What problems do you want to solve?" This leads to a practical approach solving future issues. Bramble has already worked with more than 2,000 children, trained more than 120 educators and established five learning centers in 16 districts.

Anumuthu - [Snehan](#) - India (2017)

Anumuthu leads the NGO Snehan (Friends of all) and has been helping the needy in Puducherry since 2008. Many elderly men and women are abandoned on the streets by their own children because families cannot afford or do not want to pay for medical care for their parents. At the Snehan home, the needy not only receive medical care but if possible, they are helped to get jobs. Snehan works to restore the dignity of the homeless. With the opening of the Snehan house, Anumuthu has now fulfilled his long-awaited dream.

kanthari in the media:

- Invitation by the Trivandrum Management Association to speak on International Women's Day
- Article on International Women's Day in [The Hindu](#)
- Article about the work of Alumni Anumuthu in [New-Indian Express](#)
- Article about kanthari on the website of our new supporter the [Knodel Foundation](#).
- The latest [kanthari blogposts](#)

*Dear friends and supporters,*

*Following our annual three-day 'review – preview and curriculum development meeting', we feel well-prepared for the fifteenth year which will start with an online class on April 1<sup>st</sup>. By the end of May, the on-campus part of the course will start. Once again, many interesting change makers have found their way to kanthari, and we are very much looking forward to working with them.*

*All of this would not be possible without your generous and ongoing support. Thank you very much for your help.*

*Please share this quarterly newsletter with family, friends, colleagues and others who would be interested in our work at kanthari and by the kantharis around the world.*

*Best wishes and regards from Kerala,*

*sabriye and paul  
and the entire  
kanthari team*

To make a donation,  
please scan the  
QR code. Thank you



Odunayo and some of the learners at Bramble in Nigeria



Students at Tamiranashe in Zimbabwe



Anumuthu's Snehan Home in Puducherry

*Your donation makes a Difference!*

With your donation, you support the training of marginalized persons that enables them to run their own projects. Your donation has an impact over many years and reaches countless people in need around the world.

You can donate [here](#)

*Thank you!*