



kanthari participants visit at Fireflies



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"Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced." - James Baldwin -

"Allow us to enjoy ourselves, allow us to enjoy ourselves!" 26 voices drowned out the booming speakers, and it wasn't long before they would have jumped up and started dancing in the swaying bus.

It was early in the morning of September 5th, marking the last leg of our 12-day study tour. The trip, organized solely by Riya, one of our catalysts, took us through three states in South India: Kerala, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu, where we visited around 26 different social and environmental projects/organisations.

We often spent the nights on trains, sometimes in hostels, or stayed at the projects themselves. Despite the exhaustion and lack of sleep, there were no significant signs of cabin fever. Riya had put together a good

choice of projects. There was something for everyone: agro-forestry, waste management, social projects for people with disabilities and mental disorders, alternative schools for indigenous children, and many youth projects dealing with issues like fear of the future, unemployment, and school boredom.

An exciting part was meeting the founders of kanthari projects. Hearing their unique stories and how they had overcome great challenges, offered important takeaways from the tour. And they shared a significant message for this year's participants: "Make use of every minute at kanthari. You'll never again have so much time to work on ideas for your vision, and implement all kanthari tools, as they will make your life a lot easier."



A fishpond on the kanthari Campus



Riya (white t-shirt) at the kanthari campus with participants



Visit at Fireflies



Maker-space of Project DEFY

kanthari alumni on our journey:
Gautham NC - Fireflies - (kanthari 2022)

Chiminekodde was our first stop on the tour. It's a small sanctuary for young people who otherwise don't get much attention in Kasaragod. Kasaragod is often regarded as a remote, overlooked city in Kerala, and it certainly felt that way as we navigated the bumpy roads to Gautham's project after a long, sleepless night on the train. But as soon as we stepped through the gate, it felt like we had entered another world. Young people of different ages welcomed the kantharis and had planned a memorable day for all of us filled with cooking, discussions, music, dancing, and games. Some shared their experiences, emphasizing how much Gautham and his team helped them embrace life again. Gautham's project aims to give young people a new future through volunteer work. Together, they help in disasters, clean beaches, and organize youth meetings where they learn to appreciate their once-despised surroundings.

Abhijith Sinha and Answer Nzuma - Project DEFY - (kantharis 2015)

Abhijit is the founder of the well-known organization Project DEFY (Design Education for Yourself). The project could be described as a "school without teachers." And this initiative is indeed catching on. Over 30 of these projects in India, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zimbabwe are already running successfully. Young and old come to these workshops to educate themselves independently based on self-chosen product ideas.

Keerthi (kanthari 2023) and Ragunath - (kanthari 2019) - Kuyili

Keerthi's passion for birds helped her break out of her very oppressive con-

servative family structure. Together with Ragunath, a former world sailor and ship engineer who longed for forests and nature, she runs Kuyili, a bird and wetlands protection project. And when she took us on a bird-watching tour, we found fewer birds than plastic waste. We rarely experienced a problem so drastically. It was right at our feet, and Keerthi had everything prepared for a cleanup drive. In just 20 minutes, we collected four heavy bags full of plastic waste from no more than a 20 meters roadside stretch. It was a highly illustrative demonstration of how important Kuyili and similar environmental projects are because the interest of the general public seems to be missing.

Anumuthu - Snehan - (kanthari 2017)

"Why don't you focus on homeless children?" this was a question by one of the participants. Anumuthu, the founder of Snehan, a home for homeless elderly people answered:

"Although we learn as children to respect the elderly, many elderly people are rejected by their children as soon as they no longer function as parents. That makes me angry and sad, but it also gives me the strength to do something for a group that not many have time for." We sat on a cozy meadow where we listened to his moving stories.

After his kanthari training, with the help of Reto Müller, a longtime Swiss supporter of our kanthari institute, Anumuthu trained as a nurse. Today, he employs 16 staff who selflessly care for the often very run-down older men. The home he created for them is clean and inviting, birds chirp in a large cage, "a gift from a family who thanked Anumuthu for helping the grandfather get back on his feet."



At Kuyili the participants were put to a clean up drive



Visit at Snehan in Pondicherry

Karthik - Sristi Village - (kanthari 2012)

Another impressive place is Sristi Village, a small community of people with and without disabilities. Karthik's organisation focuses on mental disabilities. Everyone has their own tasks: milking cows, feeding chickens, cleaning solar systems. This gives all a respected status in their community. They are integrated and gain self-confidence. Some of the disabled adults even find work outside of Sristi Village. Karthik's story is full of setbacks, but also successes, and most of our participants, who doubt their own abilities, gain confidence visiting Sristi Village.

Raja KR - Global Network for Equality - (kanthari 2011)

Raja is passionate about the children of prisoners. Many of these prisoners are in prison because they have killed their own wives. But Raja, who after the kanthari training graduated from law school, doesn't label the fathers of these half-orphans. On the contrary, he is now known for his impactful advocacy on prison reforms. He organized family rooms where fathers can do homework with their children. The children learn to accept their fathers, granting them a future without relapse. Like all alumni, Raja had important advice for the participants: "Stay focused, even when there are sponsors or other powerful people around you who want you to realize their ideas."

Many of this year's course participants agreed: There is something special that all kanthari alumni share: they are focused, don't get side-tracked, and they have a passion that they passed on to their colleagues and teams.

The 2024 participants have been

quite remarkable. They are seriously involved and show dedication in every aspect. They are currently going through the BASCH course: Business and Social Change. The highlight of this course is a public exhibition in the centre of Trivandrum on October 11 and 12, 2024. There they will present the Inani products developed in Act 1, and many will go public with their project ideas for the first time. More details are available at www.kanthari.org/spreadthespice.

kanthari in the media

- We spoke at the Enroot Festival in Trivandrum.
- Invitation to the [25th-anniversary celebration of the German support group](#).
- And you can read our [blog posts here](#).

*Dear friends,
With each passing quarter, our commitment to building a more just and sustainable world is strengthened. The stories and successes we have shared in this report would not have been possible without the continued support of our partners, sponsors, and friends.*

*We thank you to you for your trust and ongoing support!
Let us continue building bridges together, overcoming obstacles so it results in a better tomorrow. With warmest regards,*

sabriye and paul
www.kanthari.org

To make a donation, please scan the QR code, or [click here](#). Thank you



Raja is now a lawyer and a great advocate for the rights of prisoners and their children



Sristi Village - a special place

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

You can donate [here](#)

Thank you!