



**DEEPAM**  
Children with special needs

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## DEEPAM

For centuries in South-India the Deepam Festival of light has been celebrated with the full moon at the end of the year. An oil lamp with an open flame is called a "Deepam". We chose this name for our project because we want to bring light into the lives of children who are challenged by disability.

## THE HISTORY OF OUR PROJECT

Our work started out small in 1992, as a playground for children with special needs in the South Indian village of Kulapalayam. In 1995 we were able to build our first therapy room near the Auroville Health Centre. Since then we have gradually expanded and grown into a center with a creative day-care program and an outpatient facility. Over the years we have been able to employ more team members and offer training to them. We have extended our work to twenty surrounding villages, caring for around a hundred children and youth with various special needs.



Angelika Ehrle, who is from Germany and Lawrence Selvi, who is born in India are in charge of the growing project. Angelika is an occupational-therapist by profession. Selvi is a qualified nurse and received further training for speech-therapy.



## MANY ASPECTS OF OUR WORK

We take into consideration the family situations of our children which are often poor and have no regular income or financial security. As many of our children will require specialised help for the rest of their lives we need to involve their parents in doing exercises. Our work requires much patience and persistence and results are achieved mostly in small steps. The tropical climate with its high heat and humidity, many dry months followed by drenching monsoon, bad roads and frequent power cuts add extra challenges to our work. Many children require medical help because of malnourishment, intestinal parasites and infectious diseases. If required, we refer our patients to specialists and help in arranging for surgery or providing appliances such as hearing aids, callipers and wheel chairs. In some cases we make house visits. Babies and small children receive physio-, occupational- and speech-therapy as outpatients. A day-care program is offered to the older children and youth who can not attend the mainstream schools because of their disabilities. Each child follows a program specially designed for its particular needs. Simple Maths, reading and writing are taught in individual sessions or small groups. Our children learn how to take care of their teeth, wash their hands, dress themselves and use a toilet. Together they play games, do handicrafts, gymnastics, go swimming and go on outings. Being in a group helps the children to learn social skills such as considering others and working together.



## WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- ★ We are able to offer qualified therapy to children with various special needs.
- ★ With our school van it became possible to pick up children from far-out villages and offer them therapy and day-care.
- ★ We provide nutritious snacks and a healthy lunch.
- ★ The children receive basic health care and follow up.
- ★ For about 25 students who attend our day-care program we provide basic education and social care.
- ★ We teach vocational training skills to the older ones, or help them to find training options outside of our center.
- ★ Babies & small children come with their parents for treatment as outpatients.

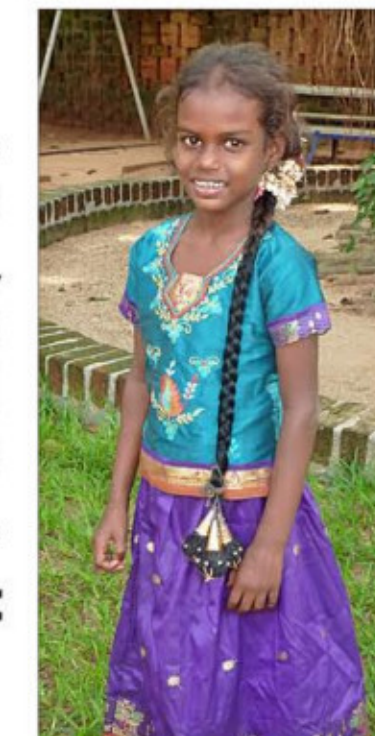
## DONATIONS

Deepam project is entirely financed from donations. As we expand the scope of our work, the expenses for salaries, building maintenance, transport, nutrition, medicines, aids and material are rising. In India we are facing constant rising of prices. We are grateful for your donations which make our work for the children possible and offers them a brighter future.

For any questions please contact us at Deepam:

Phone: +91-413-2623254

Email: [deepam@auroville.org.in](mailto:deepam@auroville.org.in)



Donations from abroad and within India can be sent via:

Bank: State Bank of India  
Branch: Auroville International Township  
Branch address: Auroville Main Road Kulapalayam,  
Vanur TK Villapuram DT./T.N./INDIA  
Branch code: 3160  
IFSC Code: SBIN0003160  
Swift Code: SBININBB474  
MICR Code: 605002007  
Account no.: 10237876508  
Beneficiary: Auroville Unity Fund  
Purpose: Donation for Deepam

In several countries there is the possibility to send donations through the established Auroville International Centers: [www.auroville-international.org](http://www.auroville-international.org)

