



## **SAMETHAM -“Light up...Live forth...”**

‘**Sametham**’ is a humane project of the institution to succor the comprehensive development dynamics of the adopted villages of Vazhayur and Vazhakkad. The word ‘**Sametham**’ in Malayalam denotes **togetherness**.

### **Objectives of the Practice**

- To chip in to the socio-economic development of the locality of the Vazhayoor and vazhakkad.
- To extend the educational and economic support to the community living in Vazhayoor and vazhakkad.
- To seek measures for making good the loss of employment in the context of the pandemic covid 19.
- To create a rapport with domestic traditions and customs.
- To widen the knowledge horizons in concert with scientific and technological advancements.
- To create awareness among the people of the locality regarding the need for preserving their health.
- To create awareness regarding climate borne diseases and how to prevent and overcome them.
- To impart the required skill and knowledge for the conversion of kitchen waste into organic fertilizer.

### **The Context**

In the context of the outbreak of the flood of 2019 the students and teachers of the institution volunteered in many disaster management activities such as cleaning the flood affected schools and houses and also dished out food kits to the victims in the locality of vazhakkad. This has resulted in awakening an awareness of social responsibility of students of the institution.

The experience volunteer ships in the context of the flood of 2019 stood in a good stead for the student to take up volunteer ship in the context of the outbreak of pandemic covid 19. On account of the pandemic many people who belong to Vazhayoor and vazhakkad who had been working abroad for many years, lost their employment and had to return their native places. It is



in this context that it occurred to the academic community of the institution to be responsible to extend their helping hand to the community.

In order to inculcate social responsibility of the students, the institution has conducted a survey to estimate the development indicator status of the Panchayath of Vazhayoor and Vazhakkad. This has resulted in launching of a community initiative program called SAMETHAM, an extensive project of social interaction. It aims at drawing the attention of the students towards contributing to the comprehensive growth of both the villages on social, economic and emotional levels.

### **The Practice**

The efforts of various departments and committees of the institution are coordinated and directed towards creating positive impact in the villages. The range of the activities of community extension project called 'Sametham' includes rehabilitation of affected people and distribution of food kits during festivals such as Onam and Eid, inculcating scientific temper among school students and provides financial support for needy people. Street plays were enacted and cultural activities were held to create social awareness and to provide entertainment to the people of the villages. Alert to the concerns of the needy, the students themselves volunteer to raise funds for distribution of food kits and other necessities.

**Edu support:** Books and other learning materials have been provided to the needy students. The department of English conducted training program to selected students and the trained students conducted an English language skill development program for the upper primary school, who were appearing for scholarship examination. Conducted games and culture programs for kids. Institution collected books for libraries in flood affected area.

**Health Care:** Awareness programmes on vector borne diseases are conducted on regular basis. Issuing health cards, organizing blood group test camp, blood donation camps and installing Bio-



Pedestals and Composts to improve soil structure. A camp for testing the glucose contents of the blood has also been organized. On holidays and weekends in particular, the trained volunteers

assist, associate and accompany the members of Vazhayur Palliative clinic while visiting the homes of patients. The institution organized virtual workshop on testing food adulteration for school students.

**Rehab Drive:** The village being prone to natural disasters like flood, the institution volunteers for rehabilitation activities such as cleaning of flood affected houses, **testing the quality of drinking water in wells**, reinstating libraries and **distribution of relief kits**. Training with respect to employability has been provided to those who lost employment abroad in the context of covid 19. A survey of 120 such people was conducted before administering the training.

**Scientific Temperament:** Science Expos and students Lab launched to inculcate scientific temperament among the students of the Government schools in the locality.

**Paraplegia Camp:** The emotional support is at its best during the paraplegia camp when the campus hosts the bedridden patients for two days. Their bystanders from the family are replaced by the volunteers who by then transform the classrooms to dormitory facilities to receive and accommodate the guests. Their constant communications and concerns help create a lasting rapport between them.

### **Evidence of Success**

- The project has been evidently influential in impacting the life of the people of the village. There has been an increase in the number of entrepreneurs and enterprises.
- At the initiation of 'Sametham' students were lacking smart phones endowed with same to attend online classes. Learning materials such as note books, pen, pencil, school bags were given to the needy students in the locality.
- The entrepreneurial training given to people from Vazhayoor and Vazhakkad who lost employment abroad due to covid 19 could we rehabilitated.



- As result of the English language skill development program the English language skill of the school students enhanced.
- The mobiles gifted by the students of SAFI institution enabled the recipients to attend online classes provided by the education department during the period of the pandemic covid 19.
- Science exhibition and training organized by science club of the institution help to develop the scientific temperament of budding students of locality.
- Through the activities, the students are made to realize the objectives of the project. Many of them are now active volunteers or part of NGOs inspired to uplift the lives of the people around.

### **Problems Encountered and Resources Required**

In spite of all the facilities and a calm serene atmosphere enjoyed by the institution, the location of the campus as aloof from the populated residential areas reduces the access of the students to the point of service and their timely involvement in social service in the neighborhood regions especially during holidays remains an obstacle. Consequently, convening expected number of events of interaction during vacation has its limitations, which affected fruitful sessions of physical, mental, emotional and social uplifting of the target community. Seasonal climatic variations such as unexpected rain, flood and drought also lag the quality of practical lessons in living together, the volunteers learn from real life situations. Due to the lack of sufficient transport facilities, scheduling events before or after the college working hours result in reduced number of participants as the majority students depend on the conveyance access facilitated by the institution.

SAFI Institution of Advanced Study, a non-profit educational institution, run by Social Advancement Foundation of India, SAFI aims at transforming the students into socially responsible citizens. The curriculum and the faculties focus on widening their knowledge realms



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by and beyond texts. Actively interacting with and working for the vulnerably marginalized communities, the students develop habits of caring for each other which guide them to prioritize humanity over every other shallow material aspects of life. These realizations, in turn contribute to the better social ambience in the society.