

# CESCI

# Annual Report

## For the Year

# 2024 – 2025

From April 2024 to March 2025



Centre for Experiencing Socio-Cultural Interaction, Natham – Madurai NH,  
Chathirapati Post, Madurai, 625014. Ph: +91 85258 35218

Email: [cescimadurai@gmail.com](mailto:cescimadurai@gmail.com), Web: [www.cesciindia.in](http://www.cesciindia.in)

## **Table of Contents**

Introduction:

1. Peace Builders Forum India;
  - 1.1. Madurai, Tamil Nadu – (3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> May 2024) focused on grassroots approaches to conflict resolution.
  - 1.2. Jaipur, Rajasthan – (5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> July 2024) explored the role of history and culture in fostering peace.
  - 1.3. Kannur (Kerala), 30, 31<sup>st</sup> December 24 and 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025
  - 1.4. Dibrugarh, Assam – (10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2025) addressed regional conflicts and promoted mutual understanding.
- 1.5. Understanding Conflict and Peace:
- 1.6. Conclusion
2. Promoting a Nonviolent Economy:
  - 2.1. Key Achievements of Ahimsa Santhai 2022:
  - 2.2. Strategic Alignment with SDGs:
  - 2.3. Strategic Objectives:
  - 2.4. The Process:
    - 2.5. Swadeshi Product-Making Training Programme for Sri Lankan Women
    - 2.6. Anant Mandi & Anant Mahotsav: A Celebration of Nonviolent Economy and Youth Initiative in Bhopal.
      - 2.6.1. Anant Mahotsav: An Annual Festival of Artisans, Ideas, and Ecology
      - 2.6.2. Conversations and Culture on Stage
      - 2.6.3. Ecological Vision and Youth Participation:
      - 2.6.4. Conclusion:
  3. Network Activities
    - 3.1. Introduction:
    - 3.2. Kasturba Gandhi Kanya Gurukulam (KGKG), Vedaranyam
    - 3.3. Kerala Gandhi Smarak Nidhi (KGSN), Trivandrum
    - 3.4. Arippa Land Struggle (Aralam)
    - 3.5. Wayanad Land Struggle
    - 3.6. Sivarama Bharathi Trust, Palakkad
    - 3.7. Thambu, Attapady, Kerala
    - 3.8. Thottapally Anti-Black Sand Mining Struggle
    - 3.9. People's Movement for Peace, Kannur
    - 3.10. CALL Network Initiative
    - 3.11. Nonviolent Education Initiative
    - 3.12. International Gandhian Video Competition
    - 3.13. Conclusion:
  4. National-Level Advocacy and Nonviolent Movement Building: Hosted the core committee meeting of the Ekta Parishad team (in November 2024).
    - 4.1. Strategic Revamp of Ekta Parishad: A New Phase of Organizational Reorganization
    - 4.2. CALL South India Network Meeting.
  5. International cultural exchange: YIP Group Program.

6. Experiencing Gandhi, A Workshop on Slow Peace by Dr. Reva Joshi
  - 6.1. Overview of the Workshop
  - 6.2. Highlights from the Workshop
  - 6.3. Key Insights from the Workshop
  - 6.4. Broader Implications
7. Maja Koene Award 2024: Honouring Champions of Peace and Social Justice
  - 7.1. Event Details
  - 7.2. Chief Guest and dignitaries
  - 7.3. 24<sup>th</sup> Maja Koene Award Recipients
    - 7.3.1. Peace Activists
    - 7.3.2. Social Activists
    - 7.3.3. Social Journalists
  - 7.4. About the Maja Award
8. Strengthening Local Community Engagement (Village Program)
  - 8.1. Children's Education & Training
    - 8.1.1. Cultural and Physical Empowerment:
    - 8.1.2. Transforming Young Lives (Children's Education and Training Programs):
    - 8.1.3. Savings and Financial Literacy:
    - 8.1.4. Peace clubs a brief narrative;
    - 8.1.5. Theatre Performances in Villages and Theatre Workshop:
    - 8.1.6. Participation in Maja Award Day:
    - 8.1.7. The Volunteers and the details of the villages and children
  - 8.2. CESCI Village Women Programs,
  - 8.3. Federation's Activity:
  - 8.4. Other activities
    - 8.4.1. International Women's Day Celebration at CESCI
    - 8.4.2. A Store at CESCI Campus:
    - 8.4.3. Participation in Maja Award Program
9. CESCI Nagapattinam Centre: Initiatives
10. CESCI Campus and building
11. Campus local occupancy
12. Expanding Peace Promotion Efforts
  - 12.1. Supporting conflict resolution in Kannur and Manipur, providing communities with strategies to address disputes peacefully.
  - 12.2. A collaborative agreement is being signed between Gandhian Studies department of Gandhi Gram Rural University and CESCI to promote peace and nonviolence.
  - 12.3. International Collaboration:
13. Guest visits
14. Administration and New General Body
15. Promoting Inclusive and Nonviolent Governance
16. Conclusion

## Introduction:

The Centre for Experiencing Socio-Cultural Interaction (CESCI) has played an important role in promoting peace, nonviolence, and community development during the year 2024 - 2025. CESCI continues its commitment of empowering marginalized communities and supporting grassroots social activists through training, resources, and recuperative spaces. With a legacy spanning over three decades, CESCI has remained a key player in promoting social justice, land rights, women's leadership, and nonviolent action, particularly in South India, while expanding its influence in several northern states through its collaboration with Ekta Parishad and other likeminded organizations.

During the year 2024 – 2025, CESCI facilitated many programs and engagements in different parts of India, catalyzing numerous actions and strengthening leadership among different communities. Under CESCI's leadership, rapid response teams were mobilized to Manipur during the conflict, which offered critical relief through volunteers from Gujarat, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, etc.

On the global front, CESCI leadership played a significant role in organizing youth programs in Europe with the help of CESCI Switzerland. It also participated in peace initiatives in Canada, promoting Gandhian methods of youth engagement and action against nuclear armament.

This report captures CESCI's diverse range of activities and its deepening impact, both within India and internationally. Emphasizing Nonviolent Education, Economy, Social Action, and Governance, provided a thematic framework that guided many of CESCI's programs during the reporting year. We are thankful to CESCI Support Association, Switzerland, and Mercy Home Belgium for their generous support for organizing various activities.

## **1. Peacebuilders Forum India;**

CESCI has significantly expanded its peace dialogues through the Peace builder's Forum India (PFI), organizing events in multiple regions of the country:

- 1.1. **Madurai, Tamil Nadu** – (3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> May 2024) focused on Peacebuilders in South India and specifically how they are adopting grassroots approaches to conflict resolution.
- 1.2. **Jaipur, Rajasthan** – (5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> July 2024) explored the role of history and culture in fostering peace among civil actors in North India.
- 1.3. **Kannur, Kerala**, (30, 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 and 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025) Uniting diverse young people and others to do peace promotion through the arts (wall-painting, street theatre, etc.)
- 1.4. **Dibrugarh, Assam** – (10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2025) addressed regional conflicts and specifically looked at the Manipur situation.

An example of the Peacebuilders Forum India was the three-day workshop conducted in Madurai which brought together a diverse group of peace activists, scholars, and Sarvodaya/Gandhian leaders. Similar methodology was followed in the subsequent three workshops. The Madurai forum focused

on strengthening existing peace building initiatives being carried out at the local and explored ways of carrying out joint action at the national level. Specific interest was expressed on the Manipur issue.

**Understanding Conflict and Peace:** Each of the participants spoke about the kind of peace building they carry out. Some of them are working on: dialogue processes, collaboration with specific groups, and community-based peace.

In-depth discussions on the causes, consequences, and complexities of conflicts and looking at:

- Exploration of various tools, strategies, and methods for peace responses.
- Group activities where participants collaborated and presented their findings on peace building strategies.
- Short video presentations in which participants shared personal stories and experiences from the field.

**Peace building at Local and National Levels:** On this session the forum focused on multi-level peace building efforts.

- Local Level: Discussions centred around community-led peace building efforts and the importance of building local self-governance to address grassroots challenges.
- National Level: Dialogues explored policy advocacy, civil society engagement, and government collaboration to create a broader impact on peace building especially with regard to Manipur as this is conflict.

Participants engaged in focused group discussions on:

- Approaches to nonviolent action and peaceful conflict resolution
- The role of moral leadership and public participation in social transformation
- Relevance of traditional peace philosophies to modern challenges
- Developing collaborative peace building strategies
- Building stronger networks and alliances
- Sharing resources and knowledge for sustaining peace efforts



*(A group photo from the Dibrugarh program)*

## 1.5. Conclusion

The Peacebuilders Forums held in Madurai, Jaipur, Kannur, and Dibrugarh showcased the strength of community-led peace efforts and reaffirmed a shared vision for a peaceful and just society. The gatherings provided a unique space for reflection, dialogue, and planning, laying a strong foundation for long-term peace building.

## 2. Promoting Nonviolent Economy:

CESCI has taken major steps in promoting ethical and sustainable economic practices under the IGINP - Nonviolent Economy Network. This Network is a dynamic platform born out of the Ahimsa Santhai of 2022, which was a landmark five-day event held in Madurai, India. This gathering brought together over 250 grassroots producers, social innovators, and eco-conscious consumers, sparking meaningful dialogue around Gandhian and Kumarappa-inspired principles of nonviolence in commerce and sustainable livelihoods.

Promoting nature-based local livelihoods and empowering people to move out of poverty, the NVE network aims at mobilizing small producer groups with social business skills, along with the support of social organizations and young innovators. Besides being a critical strategy for climate change mitigation and adaptation, it showcases the power of collective action and cooperation, seeking to build a broad-based movement for economic transition to local, sustainable economy that is rooted in ethics and nonviolence.

The Network adopts a decentralized, collaborative model, inspired by the philosophies of Mahatma Gandhi and J.C. Kumarappa, as well as frameworks for peace and conflict resolution, and the network moves forward with values-led integrity. Organizationally, the Nonviolent Economy Network is structured as an informal, values-driven collective.

Since the Ahimsa Santhai, the NVE Network is gradually evolving into a national platform uniting diverse stakeholders, including agro-ecological farmers, handloom artisans, social entrepreneurs, and ethical consumers in the shared mission of creating commerce that is cooperative, inclusive, and regenerative.

### 2.1. Key Achievements Following the Ahimsa Santhai 2022 as the foundation of the NV Economy Network:

- a) *Community Engagement:* Over 300 youth volunteers and 2,200 students actively participated, nurturing a new generation of champions for nonviolence and sustainability.
- b) *Economic Impact:* Participating producers experienced significant boosts in sales, visibility, and customer engagement, with some reporting up to a 40% increase in footfall and revenue after the event.
- c) *Ethical Transactions:* Trust-based practices flourished, one notable example being a Karnataka weaver entrusting ₹24,000 worth of products purely on mutual goodwill.

d) *Global Recognition:* With dignitaries like Bhutan's former Prime Minister, Jigmi Y. Thinley in attendance, and wide media coverage, the event elevated the relevance of local, sustainable economies in the global climate discourse.

## 2.2. Strategic Alignment with SDGs:

This initiative aligns closely with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals:

- SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
- SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities
- SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
- SDG 13: Climate Action
- SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions



### Strategic Objectives:

- a) Strengthen grassroots-based social enterprises to expand sustainable livelihood opportunities.
- b) Establish decentralized eco-social markets, linking producers directly with conscious consumers.
- c) Promote nature-based solutions that address climate change while advancing social and economic equity and peace.

## 2.3. The Process:

During this year 2024- 2025 the team conducted various activities and they are by:

- Leadership and Coordination: Mr. Rabbi Jayakaran was appointed as a full-time coordinator for six months, ensuring consistent engagement.
- Ahimsa Brand under Ms. Lakshmi Menon Bhatia's leadership, the Ahimsa brand is being developed which is symbolized by eco-friendly bags, that are created by local women through sustainable livelihoods.

- Women's Empowerment: A women cooperative was formed around CESCI, enabling women to develop small-scale businesses.
- Multiple field visits to six handloom enterprises in 2024.
- Participation in the KULA CONCLAVE In December 2024.
- Numerous consultations with grassroots stakeholders
- Visited nonviolent economy initiatives in the western Ghats
- Anant Mahotsav was organized in Bhopal during February 28th, March 1st and 2nd, 2025, at Gohar Mahal, Bhopal
- Global Training Programs:
  1. 42 participants from 21 countries received training in Peace, nonviolence, rural economy principles, etc.
  2. 10 Sri Lankan women were trained in Swadeshi practices across 12 product areas, fostering self-sufficiency. (5<sup>th</sup> July to 4<sup>th</sup> August 24)
  3. Two training programs were organized with Home for Humanity friends (January 17, 2025), led by Ms. Rama Mani and Mr. Alexander, and this initiated a symbolic action for beginning unity forest in the CESCI campus to further global peace building efforts.

These engagements have revealed immense potential for integrating traditional livelihoods with ecological sustainability and contemporary markets. The vision is of a just, inclusive economy where marginalized communities especially women, Adivasis, and youth can lead and flourish.

#### 2.4. Swadeshi Product-Making Training Programme for Sri Lankan Women

A month-long training programme on Swadeshi product-making for Sri Lankan women was organized at the YMCA, Thiruvananthapuram, from 5th July to 4th August 2024 (32 days). This comprehensive programme focused on entrepreneurial skill development, emphasizing non-chemical, natural product creation. The training covered a range of practical skills, including soap making, food and beverage preparation, natural and herbal juice production, and pickle making with preservation techniques.

Gandhi Centre for Rural Development, Thiruvananthapuram in the **Swadeshi Festival**, led by Dr. Jacob Pulikan, and this training was facilitated. Prof. Rohan from Sri Lanka selected 11 participants for the programme, and Ms. Abiramy, a member of the Tamil Diaspora based in the USA, generously supported the participants' travel to and from Thiruvananthapuram. This initiative was a successful collaboration between Prof. Rohan in Sri Lanka, Ms. Abiramy in the USA, Swadeshi in Thiruvananthapuram, and CESCI, with additional support from Mercy Home, Belgium.

Over the course of the training, the women leaders acquired 12 valuable skills, including soap making, shampoo preparation, and umbrella making, particularly relevant for rural livelihoods in Sri Lanka. The training concluded with a celebration during the **61st Swadeshi Festival**, where the participants received certificates from Dr. P.V. Rajagopal and other dignitaries, recognizing their dedication and achievements during the 32-day training programme.

## 2.5. Anant Mandi & Anant Mahotsav: A Celebration of Nonviolent Economy and Youth Initiative in Bhopal.

The Bhopal Youth Team, affiliated with Ekta Parishad, organizes a weekly market known as Anant Mandi (*Mandi is a Hindi word for Market*) at Gandhi Bhawan, Bhopal. Held every Sunday morning, this vibrant marketplace features around a dozen stalls offering organic products, handicrafts, freshly prepared snacks, and home-cooked meals. It has become a popular local destination over the past five years.

Remarkably, Anant Mandi has operated without any external funding. While the initiative has not generated significant profit, it has also incurred no substantial losses, demonstrating a sustainable, self-sufficient model. What makes it truly unique is the voluntary labour of the youth, who manage and run the market out of commitment to community and sustainability.

### 2.5.1. Anant Mahotsav: An Annual Festival – Direct Market and Nonviolent Economy

Once a year, the spirit of Anant Mandi expands into a grand three-day celebration called the Anant Mahotsav. This annual event communicates the value of direct marketing and nonviolent economy. It brings together artisans, producers, youth, and the public through a dynamic combination of learning sessions, workshops, and cultural performances. It mirrors the intent of the Ahimsa Santhai, held by CESCI in Madurai in September 2022—both events representing a powerful confluence of Gandhian values, local culture, and sustainable economy.

The 2025 edition of Anant Mahotsav was held at the historically rich Gohar Mahal, a striking Indo-Mughal palace built in 1820 by Qudsia (Gohar) Begum, the first female ruler of Bhopal. The venue was beautifully illuminated and divided into three sections that hosted over 60 producer groups selling a wide variety of products, from food and healthcare to textiles and crafts. Workshops on hand-based crafts added to the learning atmosphere, making it an ideal space for interaction and exploration. Over the course of three days, more than 10,000 people visited the festival.

### 2.5.2. Conversations and Culture on Stage

A stage set up in one section of the venue hosted panel discussions on key topics, including a significant session on the nonviolent economy. This discussion highlighted the core philosophy of Anant Mahotsav—an economy rooted in fairness, sustainability, and mindful consumption. Producers and consumers were encouraged to engage in transactions based on mutual respect and ecological responsibility, fostering a just pricing system for sustainable goods.

The festival served not only as a marketplace but also as a modern-day agora—a space for dialogue, connection, and relationship-building. Buyers engaged directly with producers, not merely for transactions, but to form lasting networks that extended beyond the event through online platforms.

### **2.5.3. Ecological Vision and Youth Participation:**

The festival attracted a large number of young people, both as producers and consumers, many of whom expressed that the ethos of the event resonated with their ecological and ethical values. Anant Mahotsav offered them a space to express, explore, and support a sustainable way of life.

The cultural segment of the festival was equally vibrant, with dance performances, musical acts, and stage shows by both emerging and professional artists. The grand finale featured a moving performance by a well-known group of Kabir singers, drawing the festival to a meaningful close.

### **2.5.4. Conclusion:**

Anant Mahotsav was more than a market—it was a living, breathing example of how nonviolent economy, youth action, and cultural heritage can merge into a transformative experience. With no corporate backing, no major funding, and driven entirely by community spirit and volunteerism, it stands as a beacon for other cities and organizations seeking to create spaces rooted in sustainability, tradition, and inclusion.

## **3. Network Activities**

### **3.1. Introduction:**

During the year 2024-2025, CESCI played an important role in supporting and strengthening Gandhian, Sarvodaya, and various people's organizations across South India. Through its initiatives, CESCI facilitated grassroots movements, promoted nonviolent action, and provided a platform for dialogue and collaboration. By encouraging sustainable development, social justice, and community empowerment, CESCI continued its commitment to the principles of self-reliance and collective well-being, supporting its impact on transformative social change in the south Indian region.

### **3.2. Kasturba Gandhi Kanya Gurukulam (KGKG), Vedaranyam**

KGKG faced significant challenges due to the Tamil Nadu government's decision to acquire part of their land for a bus depot. CESCI actively intervened by writing appeals to key government officials, including the Chief Minister, Governor, and Chief Secretary of Tamil Nadu, advocating for the land's return. The Secretary of CESCI met with the District Collector of Nagapattinam to further discuss the issue. Additionally, CESCI connected KGKG with prominent personalities such as Mr. Basavaraj and Mr. Henri Tiphagene, advocate who provided strategic guidance and advocacy support.

### **3.3. Kerala Gandhi Smarak Nidhi (KGSN), Trivandrum**

KGSN encountered severe financial difficulties, on their request prompting CESCI to take some action. A meeting was convened with the committee of KGSN to discuss solutions. CESCI facilitated connections with financial and organizational experts, including Mr. Muthuvelayutham from Madurai and Mr. Ravi Auditor, from Bangalore to provide support. Additionally, CESCI reached out with an

appeal to six Members of Parliamentarians from Kerala for financial assistance and engaged with the Vice Chairman of the Khadi Board to settle outstanding dues.

### **3.4. Arippa Land Struggle (Arippa & Aralam)**

To address land rights issues in Arippa and Aralam, CESCI engaged with key stakeholders, including Mr. Binoy Viswam, General Secretary of CPI, and coordinated discussions between struggle groups and the Kerala Revenue Minister. Additionally, CESCI sought support from ASSEFA in Tamil Nadu to secure agricultural land for affected communities and are trying to collaborate with Good Earth to develop economic sustainability programs.

### **3.5. Wayanad Land Struggle**

In Wayanad, Kerala CESCI supported Adivasi communities by mediating discussions between the land struggle group and the Forest Department. As a result, the Forest Conservator visited the struggle site to meet with the Adivasis and initiated a process to resolve land disputes.

### **3.6. Sivarama Bharathi Trust, Palakkad**

CESCI played a vital role in supporting the establishment of a health center for mentally challenged persons in Palakkad. With the assistance of Shri Punalur Somarajanji of Gandhi Bhavan, pathanapuram Kollam, CESCI facilitated the transfer of land from the Shivaroma Bharathi family to Gandhi Bhavan. A letter was also sent to the Governor of Kerala, requesting an official visit to assess the trust's activities and support the foundation stone inauguration.

### **3.7. Thambu, Attapady, Kerala**

CESCI extended financial assistance of one lakh rupees to Thambu's Karthumbi umbrella-making project, which has become a successful and sustainable venture. The brand Karthumbi has gained significant popularity and generates income for the community. To strengthen their efforts, CESCI arranged for the Governor of Kerala to visit Attapady, providing greater visibility to Thambu's work. Letters were also sent to various government departments to address the land issues in the Attapady region.

### **3.8. Thottapally Anti-Black Sand Mining Struggle**

CESCI provided strategic support to the anti-black sand mining movement in Thottapally by organizing a Padayatra, engaging with media, and facilitating meetings with the District Collector. Legal assistance was arranged through Supreme Court advocate Mr. Sanjay Upadhyay. Additionally, an old laptop was donated to the movement to improve documentation and communication efforts.

### **3.9. People's Movement for Peace, Kannur**

CESCI actively supported the People's Movement for Peace in Kannur by supporting a coordinators fellowship and participating in the peace-building process. CESCI facilitated dialogue between

political leaders, government officials, and peace groups. Furthermore, the movement was linked with other peace initiatives across the region to create a network for sustained harmony. Support was also provided for organizing an annual peace conference in Kannur.

### **3.10. CALL Network Initiative**

CESCI initiated the Control and Access on Land and Livelihood Rights (CALL) network to support organizations working in Adivasi areas. This initiative aims to strengthen land rights advocacy and Adivasi economic development. Key contributors to the network include Mr. Rama Subramanian, Mr. Stephen from Madras School of Social Work, Mr. Siluvai, Mr. Dhanraj, Mr. Rajendra Prasad, and Mr. Shyam.

### **3.11. Nonviolent Education Initiative**

CESCI played a key role in promoting nonviolence education in Kerala. A proposal was submitted to the Minister of Education, advocating for the integration of peace and nonviolence into the curriculum. A documentary produced by Mr. Thomas, former director of Trissur Doordarshan, was widely screened to promote nonviolent education.

### **3.12. International Gandhi Video Competition**

CESCI supported the launch of an international Gandhi video competition at Rajbhawan Trivandrum, Kerala. This Gandhi video competition was organized by a Gandhian group in the USA, encouraging young people to speak about Gandhi. The initiative offers substantial prizes (5 lakh, 3 lakh, and 2 lakh rupees) to winners. The National Youth Project India is coordinating this effort alongside the American Gandhian group.

### **3.13. Conclusion:**

As an organization based in South India, CESCI has played a key role in strengthening institutions, supporting nonviolent social movements, and facilitating advocacy efforts at local, regional, and international levels. The vision of CESCI, summarized by the term "lighthouse," reflects its commitment to expanding its impact beyond Madurai, aiding communities across South India and beyond. CESCI remains dedicated to continuing this work and fostering sustainable social change in the years to come.

## **4. National-Level Advocacy and Nonviolent Movement Building:**

CESCI's work in nonviolent advocacy remained central to its mission. Coordinated and supported with nonviolent social movements and Gandhian organizations, ensuring wider community participation in sustainable activism.

- ✓ Hosted the core committee meeting of the Ekta Parishad team (in November 2024).
- ✓ Organized national committee meetings, strengthening Ekta Parishad's campaigns for social justice and nonviolence.

- ✓ CALL network group meeting held on the 29<sup>th</sup> March 2025

#### **4.1. Strategic Revamp of Ekta Parishad: A New Phase of Organizational Reorganization**

Between January 18 and 20, 2025, a significant strategic meeting was convened by the National Committee of Ekta Parishad at the CESCI campus in Madurai. This gathering marked a critical moment in the life of the organization, as it undertook a serious reflection on its structure, leadership, and direction for the coming years. The three-day meeting brought together key members of the national leadership, senior advisors, and grassroots representatives, all committed to steering the movement toward renewed strength and clarity of purpose.

After in-depth discussions and collective deliberation, the organization reached a landmark decision: the current National Committee of Ekta Parishad would be suspended in order to make way for a new process of reorganization. This decision was not taken lightly. It emerged from an honest evaluation of the organization's present challenges, a recognition of the evolving socio-political context in which it operates, and a strong desire to build a more agile and responsive organizational structure.

In the light of this decision, the responsibility of reorganizing Ekta Parishad over the next one year has been entrusted to two conveners. These conveners, selected by consensus, have been given the mandate to lead the process of restructuring with the full support of the wider Ekta network. Their task is to develop a new organizational framework that reflects the core values of Ekta Parishad—nonviolence, grassroots empowerment, and social justice—while also making it more effective in addressing current realities and mobilizing people's movements across the country.

Importantly, while the existing National Committee has been formally suspended, it has not been removed from the process altogether. Instead, the suspended committee will serve as an advisory body during this transitional phase. In this role, its members will provide guidance, institutional memory, and mentorship to the conveners, ensuring that the experience and insights of long-term leadership are not lost in the process of change. Their continued involvement is crucial for balancing innovation with continuity.

This transitional period is expected to bring fresh energy into the organization. It is an opportunity to reflect, recalibrate, and reimagine the future of Ekta Parishad in a manner that is both rooted in its past and responsive to the needs of the present. All members and allies of the movement are encouraged to participate actively in the reorganization process, offering their ideas, feedback, and support to build a stronger and more united platform for land and livelihood rights.

The next twelve months will be a time of hard work, experimentation, and collective engagement. With commitment and clarity, Ekta Parishad hopes to emerge from this process more resilient, inclusive, and effective in fulfilling its mission. As always, the spirit of satyagraha and people's power remains at the heart of this journey.

## 4.2. CALL South India Network Meeting

A meeting of CALL Network was held in CESCI on the 29<sup>th</sup> of March. About 30 people from 4 south Indian states participated in this meeting.

The discussion was conducted in a way that in the first round people could contribute to the common basket of learnings. Many of them shared their experience of the last many years in the field and the lessons they learned during that period. It was becoming clear that the social workers are facing a hard time as the system is not willing to entertain or support the workers who stand with the poor and marginalized. It was becoming clear that the conspiracy against the poor is deep rooted. So the first two resolutions are the following.

- This situation cannot be handled unless the network become larger by including more organizations and more individuals.
- There should be a lot more work to be done to promote new generation leadership and give them responsibility to take up the challenges.

It was agreed that the new formation at the South India level should identify with a name. Up till now this network was called CALL. This was left to the group to decide whether they want to continue the banner CALL or they want to change it. Involving new generation leadership was a serious challenge as young people are becoming victims of drug addiction and digital exploitation. It was proposed that each one of us identify some good young people so that they can be trained in CESCI in batches of 25 people every month. Promoting 300 young people in one year time will make the movement large and strong. From experience sharing and learning the discussion went on to action for the future. Two levels of actions were identified.

- To stop further downward journey of society. This will mean that it is urgent to stop people become victims of alcohol, drugs, trafficking, consumerism and digital slavery.
- Lifting people to a higher level of dignity. This will mean getting land, developing their land into organic farming, caring health and educational of children and promoting cultural aspect of life.

It was agreed that the new network will have to address both the dimension of the program in order to achieve this promoting a strong network of South India level and promoting new generation leadership is most important. A committee was formed to take this agenda forward the members are as below.

1. Mr. Rudra Shekhar Reddy, Andhra Pradesh
2. Mr. Siluvai, Tamilnadu
3. Mr. Selvakumar, Tamilnadu
4. Ms Sudha Srinivasa Reddy, Karnataka
5. Mr. Benil, Kerala
6. Mr. Rajendra Prasad, Kerala
7. Mr. Sreeraman Koyyon, Kerala

This process will be coordinated by a youth committee as following;  
Mr. Ajit, Mr. Suresh Mr. Dhanraj and Mr. Biju

At the end of the meeting it was agreed that the committee should meet as soon as possible to brainstorm and design strategies and programs to take this idea forward. Everyone was in agreement that in today's situation such an initiative is important for South India. And the meeting ended with a vote thanks.

## **5. International Cultural Exchange: YIP Group Program**

The International Youth Initiative Program (YIP) is a 10-month residential program focused on societal entrepreneurship for youth aged 18 to 28. In mid-November, 42 participants from 22 countries, primarily from developed nations, visited CESCI, India, for a one-month immersion after completing a three-month orientation in Sweden. The program aims to offer a holistic educational experience and to strengthen young people's ability to take personal and collective action in response to global challenges. The India visit was designed to deepen this learning through direct engagement.

Many of the YIP participants had previously attended alternative high schools, making them more open to the principles of peace and nonviolence, particularly those inspired by Gandhian philosophy. During their time in India at CESCI, they gained insight into grassroots community mobilization through their interaction with Ekta Parishad. The four-week training included exposure to Gandhian thought and the practice of development work centered on peace and justice. A highlight of their experience was the opportunity to engage with numerous resource persons who shared their practical experiences and knowledge.

The visit to CESCI proved to be transformative for many of the participants. Their daily schedule began with morning yoga and work programs, followed by lectures, informal discussions, and cultural exchanges with local villagers. The participants also undertook two community-based projects in neighboring villages, which involved extensive interaction with village youth and offered a meaningful glimpse into rural life in India.

## **6. Experiencing Gandhi, A Workshop on Slow Peace by Dr. Reva Joshee**

Report on the Pedagogy of Nonviolence Education: Teach-In for Peace Workshop  
Madurai, India | November 11-16, 2024

From November 11 to 16, 2024, the Centre for Experiencing Socio- Cultural Interaction (CESCI) in Madurai, Tamil Nadu, hosted a transformative six-day workshop titled "*Experiencing Gandhi: Pedagogy of Nonviolence Education – Teach-In for Peace*". The workshop, designed to integrate Gandhian principles of nonviolence and peace into education and governance, was facilitated by renowned experts, including Dr. Reva Joshee from the University of Toronto and Dr. Jill Carr Harris, an international peace educator.

## 6.1. Overview of the Workshop

The workshop's primary focus was to explore the core concepts of Gandhian nonviolence and their practical applications in modern contexts. The program engaged participants in discussions and activities addressing systemic barriers in education, economic inequities, and governance structures. The seven-day event was structured around thematic days that ensured a comprehensive understanding of peace-building, facilitating both individual and collective growth.

## 6.2. Highlights from the Workshop

### Day 1 - Orientation and Objectives

Participants were introduced to the workshop's goals and given the opportunity to build connections in a welcoming environment.

### Day 2 - Core Principles of Peace Education

Discussions focused on nonviolence in governance, led by Prof. Palanithurai of Gandhigram University. A community art session explored how creative expression can foster harmony.

### Day 3 - Cultural Immersion

The day included an exploration of nonviolence in economic structures, followed by a cultural tour of Madurai, enhancing participants' understanding of local contexts.

### Day 4 - Education and Slow Peace

Facilitators presented the concept of "Slow Peace," emphasizing inner peace as a key practice to counteract systemic violence in education. Participants also visited local village learning centers to observe community-driven educational models.

### Day 5 - Creative Peace building

This day focused on social action in nonviolent movements. Participants engaged in creative activities, including art for social change and theatrical performances, to explore the role of art in peace building.

### Day 6 - Bridging Local and Global Efforts

The final day of the workshop was dedicated to connecting grassroots peace initiatives with global movements. Alain Dangoise from Belgium, along with Dr. Joshee, led a session on the theme "*From Local to Global*".

## 6.3. Key Insights from the Workshop

Dr. Reva Joshee emphasized that nonviolence in education requires a fundamental shift in how educators and institutions address systemic inequities. Her concept of "*Slow Peace*" encourages a patient, reflective, and sustained approach to promoting love, care, and well-being for all.

Dr. Jill Carr-Harris shared practical strategies based on her global peace-building work, highlighting community-driven approaches as crucial to effective peace education.

Cultural immersion activities and site visits gave participants a tangible understanding of how Gandhian principles can be adapted to local contexts. This blend of theory and practical application made the workshop both intellectually enriching and practically valuable.

Rabi Jayakaran, a participant, reflected on the importance of using art forms in peace building and how leadership development can empower communities. Akhshaya Lalitha, a young teacher, expressed her newfound awareness of nonviolent education and her enthusiasm for incorporating these teachings into her classroom. She also noted the importance of self-reflection on one's emotions as a critical learning outcome from the workshop.

Dr. Reva Joshee, speaking with Alain Dangoise of Jai Jagat, emphasized that the workshop was about fostering reflection—both within oneself and in helping others engage in reflective practices.

#### **6.4. Broader Implications**

This workshop demonstrated the power of collective action and creative expression in advancing nonviolence. It encouraged educators, policymakers, and activists to incorporate peace education into their respective fields. The event aligns with the broader goals of organizations such as the Active Nonviolence Education Center and the Mahatma Gandhi Canadian Foundation for World Peace, Canada, both of which advocate for embedding peace principles into systemic practices.

### **7. Maja Koene Award 2024: Honoring Champions of Peace and Social Justice**

The 24<sup>th</sup> **Maja Koene Award**, a highly prestigious recognition, celebrates the tireless efforts of social activists, social journalists, and Peacebuilders who have demonstrated exceptional dedication to fostering awareness and addressing injustice, inequality, and poverty in society. The award also highlights the significant contributions of individuals and organizations promoting peace and nonviolence across the globe.

Instituted jointly in the year 2000 by the Centre for Experiencing Socio-Cultural Interaction (CESCI), India and Switzerland, the Maja Kone Award stands as a tribute to the memory of the late Ms. Maja Koene, whose unwavering commitment to social justice and cultural harmony continues to inspire so many people around the world.

#### **7.1. Event Details**

The 24th Maja Award Ceremony was held on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at the serene CESCI Campus in Majagram Chathirapati, Madurai. This year's event had a day of celebration, exchange, and reflection. The program scheduled as follows:

- Timings:**

○ 10:00 AM to 01:00 PM	Experience Sharing by the Award Recipients
○ 04:00 PM to 06:00 PM	Award Ceremony

**7.2. Chief Guest and dignitaries:** Ms. Hemaprava Devi (Mukthi), Social Entrepreneur, Guwahati, Assam graced the occasion and presented the awards to this year's distinguished recipients. Shri. S C Behar President of CESCI, Shri. Rajagopal PV Secretary, etc. were also present on the dais.

The ceremony included inspiring experience sharing by the awardees, and meaningful interaction among participants dedicated to the cause of peace and justice.

### **7.3. 24<sup>th</sup> Maja Koene Award Recipients**

This year's recipients represent a wide spectrum of efforts and initiatives aimed at creating a just, equitable, and peaceful society. Their work has significantly impacted local, national, and global communities. The awardees are as follows:

#### **7.3.1. Peace Activists**

- a) **Interfaith Forum Manipur (IFM)** for Interfaith Understanding, Peace and Harmony: Recognized for their courageous and consistent efforts in promoting peace and nonviolence in regions affected by prolonged conflict and unrest.
- b) **Ms. Sudha Sreenivasa Reddy**, (Bangalore): Honored for her impactful work in fostering inter-community dialogue and conflict resolution, bringing harmony to divided communities.

#### **7.3.2. Social Activists**

- a) **Mr. Ramesh Methala** (Kerala): For his transformative initiatives aimed at uplifting marginalized groups through education, livelihood training, and community development.
- b) **Ms. Bharati Nayak** (Orissa): A dynamic duo acknowledged for their collaborative work in combating gender inequality and empowering women through self-help groups and educational programs.
- c) **Mr. Jalandharnath Channole** (Maharashtra): Recognized for his unwavering commitment to rural development, poverty alleviation, and promoting Gandhian values through his artistic work.
- d) **Mr. Avani Kumar** (Delhi): For her relentless efforts for social equality, especially in providing economic support and skill development opportunities for underprivileged artisans, craftsman and women.

#### **7.3.3. Social Journalists**

- a) **Mr. A K Shiburaj** (Kerala): For his impactful investigative journalism shedding light on systemic injustices, advocating for the voiceless, and sparking necessary conversations on social reform.
- b) **Mr. Parameshwar Rajput** (Chhattisgarh): Celebrated for his fearless reporting on grassroots issues, highlighting the plight of marginalized communities, raising voice for voiceless and inspiring collective action for social change.

#### 7.4. About the Maja Award

The Maja Award serves as a beacon of hope and a testament to the power of collective action in creating a more just and compassionate world. Since its inception, the award has recognized and encouraged individuals and organizations whose exemplary work embodies the principles of equality, justice, and nonviolence. By celebrating these achievements, CESCI aims to inspire more individuals to contribute meaningfully to societal well-being.



### 8. Strengthening Local Community Engagement (Village Program Activities)

CESCI's grassroots efforts have had a transformative impact on local communities by working with children and women.

#### 8.1. Children's Education & Training:

- Trained village education coordinators in Dharmapuri (led by Meenakshi).
- Strengthened evening learning centers with support from Mr. Juori Meijer (CESCI Switzerland).
- Provided English coaching to local students (Fatima, Ravi, Surya, and Soundarya).
- Hosted international YIP students, promoting cultural exchange.
- Promoted kitchen Garden activities in all the working villages by providing vegetable seeds to the children.
- Independence Day was celebrated in the CESCI campus with the children. Sub Inspector of Police Chathirpati was invited as chief guest and hoisted national flag.
- Seed Ball making: Engaged children from the villages to make seed balls by using locally collected seeds. Ten thousand seed balls are made and distributed through different programs in the villages.
- Book reading hobby was promoted among children with the support of readers club. A small library is being established in Kadavur village by using the books received as gift from different friends.

### 8.1.1. Cultural and Physical Empowerment:

- Established martial arts centers teaching Silambam and traditional dance.
- Developed a dedicated children's theatre space, with plans for an annual Children's Theatre Festival.

### 8.1.2. Transforming Young Lives (Children's Education and Training Programs):

Children's Learning Centres (CLCs) is an initiative active in 13 villages around CESCI, where 226 rural children gather daily to learn, grow, and thrive under the guidance of voluntary leaders from their respective villages. These centres serve as vibrant hubs for education, skill-building, and creativity. The Children's Learning Centres of CESCI have successfully intervened in the lives of vulnerable children, diverting them from harmful addictive behaviors and guiding them toward positive growth. By:

- Providing alternative activities and hobbies.
- Promoting life skill education.
- Encouraging positive peer relationships.
- Engaging parents and community members



CLCs have proven instrumental in modifying harmful behaviour and fostering positive growth among vulnerable children. Through its activities it has observed the following impacts among the children.

- **Reduction in addictive behaviour:** numbers of children reported a significant decrease in addictive habits.

- **Improved academic performance:** 75% of children demonstrate enhanced academic achievement.
- **Positive behavioural changes:** 100% of children exhibit improved behaviour, including increased self-esteem and social skills.

#### **8.1.3. Savings and Financial Literacy:**

CLCs also promote financial literacy and responsibility. Children save a portion of their pocket money, which is then deposited into a common bank account. This savings habit teaches them the value of money management and goal-setting.

As they progress to new classes, the accumulated savings are distributed, providing a sense of accomplishment and motivation. This year they have a total savings of **Rs.70,819/-** In their Malarum Kulanthaigal bank account. This money will be disbursed just before the next academic year to the children and next year they will start collecting new savings.

#### **8.1.4. Peace clubs a brief narrative;**

Gandhiji's 155<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary was organized by children group in association with the Gandhi Memorial Museum. A total of 53 children participated in this meaningful event. The carefully planned program began with the garlanding of Gandhi's statue. Children led a peaceful procession from the entrance of the museum campus to Mahatma Gandhi's statue, accompanied by two children playing the traditional drum 'Parai'. As a mark of respect, the children garlanded Gandhiji's statue, watched warmly by the guests of honour. Following this, the children marched toward Gandhiji's memorial and offered floral tributes. Adjacent to the memorial, they planted saplings as a symbolic gesture reflecting Gandhiji's mission of protecting Mother Earth. After a formal welcome and felicitations from the guests of honour, a series of cultural programs followed. The children performed a heartfelt plea, reminding everyone to care for our earthly family. Their songs were inspiring, educational, and served as a guide toward a better world where love and truth reside in every human being. The highlight was the drama 'Pothai Raja' (King of Addiction), performed by the Children Theatre group that coordinated by Mr. R. Ravi, which received widespread appreciation for powerfully conveying Gandhiji's message on the abolition of alcohol.

#### **8.1.5. Theatre Performances in Villages and Theatre Workshop:**

Between January 2025 and March 2025, theatre performances were held across six of our working villages, with one performance in each location. These events were well-received and appreciated by villagers and visitors including Mr. Kude Meier, Switzerland Mr. Paul and Kathrine, Canada Ms. Loic Gerald and Veronique of France.

During 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> December a three days art and culture workshop was organized for the children in CESCI campus. This three days program was coordinated by Fathima and Soundhrya. 30 children participated and benefited. This three days' workshop was ended with a performance by the children with a play on the issue of environment protection.

On the 15th and 16th of February, a two-day theatre workshop was conducted. The program featured traditional arts, storytelling, creating art from scrap materials, and culminated in a powerful performance addressing the issue of plastic pollution, making it a highlight of the workshop.

### **8.1.6. Participation in Maja Award Day:**

On the 28th of March, children and volunteers actively participated in the Maja Award Day celebrations. With great enthusiasm, they decorated the entire CESCI campus using traditional materials, creating a vibrant and festive atmosphere. Beautiful kolams adorned the ground, adding to the charm of the event. As the award recipients were led to the stage, children performed joyfully, and little ones in colorful costumes gently held the hands of the awardees, guiding them from the library hall to the stage (open amphitheater) with grace and warmth.

### **8.1.7. The Volunteers and the details of the villages and children:**

S no	Village Name	Volunteer Name	Qualification	Boys	Girls	Total
1.	Kadavur 1	G Soundharya	BA B Ed	12	10	<b>22</b>
2.	Kadavur 2	L Jeyapriya	HSC	7	12	<b>19</b>
3.	Thethampatti 1	Rajalakshmi	Diploma	8	9	<b>17</b>
4.	Thethampatti 2	Chellamani	HSC	8	10	<b>18</b>
5.	Lingavadi	Anurudra Mithra	Msc	9	10	<b>19</b>
6.	Seegupati 1	Meenakanimozhi	BA B Ed	7	9	<b>16</b>
7.	Seegupati 2	Pounfathima	Msc B Ed	7	6	<b>13</b>
8.	Moonur	Potumponnu	Msc	6	12	<b>18</b>
9.	Thondamanpaty	Poompozhil	HSC	7	8	<b>15</b>
10.	V Meenachipuram	Kavitha	MA	13	7	<b>20</b>
11.	Poolampatti	Abinaya	Bsc B Ed	12	5	<b>17</b>
12.	Alagapuri	Meena	BA	7	7	<b>14</b>
13.	Mayagram	Manimegalai	Diploma	12	6	<b>18</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>115</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>226</b>

### **8.2. CESCI Village Women Programs:**

Empowering women, sustaining communities: Jeyam Pengal Kootamaippu is a 100 plus strong women from various SHGs, rural women federation. CESCI has been instrumental in fostering women's empowerment through self-help groups (SHGs), promoting financial inclusivity, and sustainable livelihood.

The federation was formally established, marking a significant milestone in the women's empowerment journey. The federation operates a separate bank account in the name of Jeyam Pengal Kootamaippu, having a total savings of Rs.4,79,299/- at the end of this financial year. (Women SHG Savings Rs.2,23,900/- + Rs.1,06,474/- Prayog, + Rs.28,925 YIP income + Rs.1,20,000/- CESCI Money) (Note: 24, 000 outstanding with women group members).

In the month of March 2024, the federation made an investment in two power sewing machines installed at the CESCI campus. This initiative aims to:

1. Promote cloth bags, contributing to environmental sustainability.
2. Foster nonviolent economic activities, ensuring ecological harmony.
3. Generate income and economic benefits for the women's group.



The federation comprises of following groups, categories based on their areas of interest and skills.

1. Tailoring and Printing Unit: Women of age group 25-40 years with tailoring, printing and design.
2. Natural Dyeing Unit: growing Auri plant for dyeing, cultivating cotton, and creating natural dyes for products.
3. Training and Development Unit: Training on entrepreneurship, capacity building, and mentorship and leadership.
4. Marketing Unit: Marketing and sales, and supply chain management. 8 persons are doing marketing activity of eco-friendly Napkins.

### 8.3. Federation's Activity:

**New SHGs:** During the year we have 13 new women groups was formed, and the federation has a total membership of 271, from 15 villages.

**Ahimsa Bags:** The tailoring unit of federation has achieved the following since its inception:

- 8000 bags stitched by federation women members.
- 75 bags sent to Canada
- In association with Prayog, Tilda, Chattisgarh, 2500 cotton bags are being stitched and despatched.
- This activity has provided employment to 15 women for two months.

**Interest Free Loans:** Rs.120,000/- received from CESCI was distributed among its Seegupati village women members to initiate small economic activities, such as Goat rearing, Fruit selling by head loading, Petty shop, Milk cow purchase for promoting financial independence and sustainability:

**Training Programs:** Empowering Women through Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Practices: The federation women participated in two significant capacity-building initiatives, enhancing their entrepreneurial skills and commitment to sustainable practices.

1. Entrepreneurship Training: A comprehensive entrepreneurship training programme was conducted. Mr. Velayutham, and Mr. Krishnan from Gandhigram Trust, Dindigul.
2. Workshop on Natural Dyeing: 11 federation members attended two-day workshop focusing on natural dyeing of fabrics, growing Auri plant and cotton.
3. Pickle and Soap making training: in the month of February 2025 two different training program was conducted to train women on pickles making by Ms Kavitha of Madurai and Soap making by Mr. Kanakavel of Madurai.

The workshop empowered participants to develop eco-friendly clothe production skills, and to understand and adopt nonviolent economic principles. These trainings have given them confidence to start business and make positive impact on communities. A total of 30 women got benefit from these training programs.

#### 8.4. Other activities

Many visitors came to villages to meet community members and interacted with them. YIP International students group members visited Vemparali and Kadavur villages and our women and volunteers facilitated their visit and organized shramdhan programs. Mr. Kude Meier from CESCI Switzerland and few other foreign friends also took time to visit our working villages.

##### 8.4.1. International Women's Day Celebration at CESCI

The CESCI Women's Power Group joyfully celebrated International Women's Day with enthusiasm and unity. The event was a vibrant expression of women's strength, creativity, and solidarity. The celebration began with a warm welcome, followed by inspiring speeches that highlighted the importance of gender equality, women's empowerment, and the vital role women play in building a just and compassionate society. Interactive discussions were also held, encouraging women to share their stories, challenges, and aspirations. The event created a safe and supportive space for dialogue and mutual encouragement.

The celebration concluded with a collective reaffirmation of the commitment to continue promoting women's rights and supporting each other in their journeys. The day left everyone inspired, energized, and proud to be part of a movement that values dignity, equality, and hope for all women.



#### **8.4.2. A Store at CESCI Campus:**

During the YIP students program in November-December, the Women Power group was given the opportunity to run a store on the CESCI campus. CESCI provided an advance of Rs. 10,000, and the group invested an additional Rs. 50,000. The store was managed by two women leaders, allowing them to gain hands-on experience in store management. By the end of the venture, the group successfully made a profit of Rs. 20,000, marking the initiative as both educational and profitable.

#### **8.4.3. Participation in Maja Award Program:** The members of the Women Power group actively participated in the Maja Award program at CESCI, showcasing their enthusiasm and commitment. Their involvement added a vibrant energy to the event, where they contributed in various capacities, ensuring the program was a memorable and successful celebration of talent and achievement.

### **9. CESCI Nagapattinam Centre: New Initiatives**

Under the leadership of Mr. Subramanian, CESCI's Nagapattinam Centre achieved remarkable progress during this year:

- Launched a learning center, tailoring unit, and computer class in PR Puram.
- Organized vocational training programs, equipping youth and women with skills for sustainable employment.

These initiatives have played an important role in empowering marginalized communities in the region. The centre is also planning to work on training on Disaster management, Youth engagement for peace building, Women's economic empowerment and Engaging with children

### **10. CESCI Campus and Building Development:**

During this year, we have upgraded the CESCI campus with more facilities for greater operational efficiency. The new facilities, including renovating the premises to create a more comfortable and clean environment. Additionally, we have purchased some more new bedding items to improve accommodation quality, upgraded the kitchen with new utensils and vessels, and installed a new power generator to ensure an uninterrupted power supply. A better WiFi connectivity is a new advantage. These improvements aims to enhance the overall experience for everyone on campus

### **11. Campus local occupancy:**

CESCI has played a vital role in capacity-building for various voluntary organizations:

- Venue provided **training programs for educational, human rights, and cultural groups.**
- Strengthened partnerships with **Gandhian organizations, NGOs, journalists, and businesses** at local, national, and international levels.

By fostering collaboration, CESCI has built a strong network dedicated to sustainable development and peace building. CESCI facilities have been extensively utilized by various organisation. A total

of 13 organisations have utilized CESCI facilities for their programmes. This utilization has generated significant funds, which have been allocated towards village development activities and campus management. The utilization of CESCI facilities and campus visit have not only contributed to the financial sustainability of our organisation but also reinforce our commitment to supporting community development and collaboration.

We have taken following steps:

- Continue to promote CESCI facilities to potential partners and organisations.
- Explore opportunities to expand service and programmes offered to the visiting organisations.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of village development and campus management initiatives.

The successful utilization of CESCI facilities and campus visit demonstrate its value proposition and commitment to community engagement. We thrive to building on this momentum and fostering further collaboration from the institutions.

## **12. Expanding Peace Promotion Efforts:**

CESCI has reinforced peace building efforts across borders by:

**12.1. Supporting conflict resolution in Kannur and Manipur**, providing communities with strategies to address disputes peacefully.

**12.2. A collaborative agreement** is being signed between Gandhian Studies department of Gadhwaram Rural University, Dindigul and CESCI Madurai to promote peace and nonviolence.

**12.3. International Collaboration:**

- a) Leadership of CESCI Participated in **Home for Humanity's program in Geneva, Switzerland**. Conducted workshops in **Switzerland and France** on nonviolent social movement building. Supported a **peace march in Canada**, showcasing global solidarity and strengthen ties by visiting different peace organizations in the **Middle East**.
- b) Hosted **Mr. Alain from the Jai Jagat Foundation, Europe**, to discuss collaborative projects.
- c) Welcomed and hosted many international visitors including Mr. Kude Meier and Joeri Meijer of CESCI Foundation Switzerland. Mr. Paul and Ms Kathrine from Canada, Mr. Louic and Ms. Veronique from France, etc.

## **13. Guests Visits**

**Mr. Joeri Meijer**, a Montessori Teacher, and a member of CESCI Support Association, Switzerland, spent a month at CESCI Madurai. He visited Children's Learning Centres, and engaged the children in varied activities, promoting interactive learning. He shared his expertise with the staff and volunteers. His visit, enhanced the teaching methods and pedagogy. It paved a way for cultural interaction between children, staff, and volunteers. Strengthened ties with CESCI Support Association, Switzerland.



**A group of international development trainees from Kanthari**, a training centre for social entrepreneurship, Trivandrum, Kerala visited CESCI, part of their programme of learning. The CESCI staff and volunteers had a fruitful discussion, experience sharing with them. They are appreciative of CESCI's work. Our children's theatre performed a play, *Pothai Raja* (addiction king). The founder of Kanthari, Ms. Sabrine, recipient of Maja Koene International Peace Award, in the year 2018, shared the possibilities of creating social plays together in future.

International friends like Mr. Kude Meier from Switzerland, Mr Paul and Kathrine Canada, Mr Louic Gerald, Ms Veronique France and Mr. Alain from France took lots of interest to understand the activities of CESCI.

Two MSW (Master of Social Work) inters, Mr. Akash and Ms. Nikila, from Loyola College, Chennai spent a month at CESCI, interacting with children in selected CLCs, village communities, women group members, and staff. Part of their internship, they prepared a report with constructive feedback on CESCI's activities.

## 14. Administration and New General Body

As of March 27, 2025, the General Body Meeting of CESCI has appointed a new General Body, which consists of:

1. Ms. Anuradha Shankar, President
2. Ms. Cynthia Tiphagne, Vice President
3. Mr. N. Muthuvelayutham, Secretary
4. Dr. Ravi Chandran, Joint Secretary
5. Mr. K. Panchaksharam, Treasurer
6. Mr. Aneesh Kumar KK, Executive Member
7. Dr Satya, Executive Member
8. Mr. Pramod P.K. Member
9. Ms. P. Uma, Member
10. Ms. Jill Carr Harris, Member

11. Mr. Krishnan Subramanian, Member  
12. Ms. Sudha Srinivasa Reddy, Member  
13. Mr. Vedarathiam, Member

#### **Patrons**

1. Mr. Rajagopal.P.V
2. Mr. S C Behar

### **15. Promoting Inclusive and Nonviolent Governance**

CESCI's governance model reflects its commitment to social equity:

- **New leadership team:** Ravi, Soundarya, Fatima, and Lalitha are coordinating the village program. Surya and Manoj are coordinating the campus activities.
- **Gender Balance:**
  - Kitchen staff includes **four women and one man**.
  - Learning centers are fully coordinated by **female volunteers**.

### **16. Conclusion**

CESCI's achievements in **2024 - 2025** demonstrate its unwavering commitment to peace, nonviolence, and community development. Through grassroots initiatives, international collaborations, and sustainable economic programs, CESCI has positively impacted thousands of lives. Moving forward, CESCI aims to expand its reach, strengthen its programs, and continue being a beacon of hope for nonviolent change worldwide.

