



ARUNTHATHIYAR SOCIAL JUSTICE FEDERATION



2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT

IN ASSOCIATION WITH





SECRETARY'S STATEMENT

I'm proud to share ASJF's annual report.

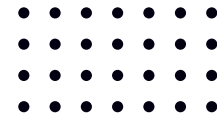
The Arunthathiyar community, often called 'Dalits among Dalits', still faces severe caste discrimination and poverty. Breaking this cycle and restoring dignity is vital. By empowering them today, we ensure the next generation can live without fear or exclusion

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Dhvani Foundation, for their unwavering support. Through the VOICE program's trainings, they've strengthened ASJF into a powerful voice for thousands of Arunthathiyar people. Their guidance has been the backbone of our growth and leadership. Together, we move forward with hope and unity.

Warm regards,
Alamelu
Secretary, ASJF



ASJF - OVERVIEW

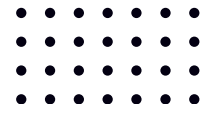


The Arunthathiyar Social Justice Federation (ASJF) was formed in 2019 as a state-level collective of 61 community-based organizations led by Arunthathiyar members from across Tamil Nadu. By 2025, our membership has grown to 72 organizations, showing our increasing unity and strength.

We are committed to protecting the rights of the Arunthathiyar community, especially women and children. Our work focuses on ending caste-based discrimination, violence, and exclusion. We aim to improve access to education, support economic empowerment, and promote social justice.

Through collective efforts, we at ASJF are working to break the cycle of poverty and build a future of dignity, equality, and inclusive growth for all Arunthathiyar people.

VISION



Dignified Arunthathiyar Community

MISSION

- Eradicate manual scavenging and its associated practices.
- Advocate for a 6% inner reservation for the Arunthathiyar Community.
- Facilitate access to high-quality higher education for 2,000 Arunthathiyar children by 2028.

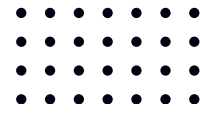
PURPOSE

To make positive changes in the lives of Arunthathiyar community by impacting the policies and programmes and by strengthening the Civil society organisations working for this cause.

GOAL

To impact 100 organisations in Tamil Nadu

ASJF - MEMBERS MAP



ASJF's member organizations span 23 districts in Tamil Nadu, with the head office located in Salem district, collectively empowering over thousands of families.



ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (2024–2025)

In the last financial year, the Arunthathiyar Social Justice Federation (ASJF) focused on strengthening the organization and uniting its member organizations. Our aim was to build a strong foundation for the federation and promote better cooperation among members.

Main Areas of Work

Member Services

We provided various services and support to help member organizations grow and function effectively.

Policy Advocacy

We took part in efforts to influence policies

Visibility and Credibility

We took important steps to increase its visibility and strengthen its credibility as a federation

MEMBER SERVICES

ASJF promotes member-led coordination by giving leaders clear roles and responsibilities. Our structure supports collective action through 7 subgroups, 7 subcommittees, 7 Common Minimum Programs and focused Member training.

Sub Committees

Advocacy & Policy Influence

Capacity Building

Resource Mobilization

Networking & Collaboration

Standards & Accountability

Communication & Awareness Building

Sustainability & Impact

MEMBER TRAINING

We conducted two state-level training programs with over 90% member participation. The Dhwani team joined and reviewed the ASJF board on its roles and responsibilities and the current challenges.



NIRANTHARA LITE TRAINING PROGRAM

20 members were selected through an interview process and trained under the Niranthara Lite program by 3 master trainers trained by Dhvani Foundation. This strengthened the skills and capacity of our member organizations.



POLICY ADVOCACY DOCUMENTS

STATUS REPORT

ASJF and Dhwani Foundation did a **study report** on **Educational Status Of Arunthathiyar Children In Salem District,**

TN, highlighting systemic barriers linked to caste, poverty, and access.

Major Findings

- Parental illiteracy: 35% illiterate; only 5% completed 12th grade.
- Economic hardship: 50% parents work as daily wage laborers; 85% lack permanent jobs.
- Low enrollment: 30% of school-age children dropped out; irregular attendance common.
- Nutrition gaps: 55% children lack 3 meals/day, worsening during parents' work hours.
- Caste barriers: 30% face discrimination in schools; safety fears deter girls' education.
- Awareness gaps: Poor knowledge of govt. schemes limits access to scholarships/support.
- Data deficit: Lack of community-specific data hinders targeted interventions.

POLICY ADVOCACY DOCUMENTS

RESOURCE BOOK

A concise guide compiling Central/State Govt schemes for Arunthathiyar communities.

Includes: Eligibility criteria, application steps, and guidance.

Purpose: Empower member organizations to educate and assist the community in claiming entitlements.

Collaboration: Developed with Dhvani Foundation's technical support.

Tribe (ST) communities as defined in the constitution and presidential orders. The act came into force on 30th January 1990. It has been subsequently amended in 2015 and 2018 for incorporating more stringent provisions. This Act provides for stringent punishment for atrocities against SCs and STs, including offenses like assault, wrongful confinement, intimidation, and insult. It also provides for special courts for speedy trial of such cases.

Process of availing benefit under this act:

- Victims or their representatives can lodge a complaint at the nearest police station under the PoA Act.
- Police must register an FIR, and special courts are designated for trial.
- Victims can approach the District Magistrate or State Human Rights Commission for rehabilitation and monetary relief.

Source:

<https://socialjustice.gov.in/writereaddata/UploadFile/POA%20Act.pdf>

Schemes

Central Government Schemes

National Action Plan for Mechanized Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE)

The scheme has emerged out of The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013. The scheme which is ongoing came into effect in the year 2022 and benefits manual scavengers and their families, including the Arunthathiyar community. It aims to eliminate hazardous cleaning, stop deaths of sewer and septic tank workers and ensure their safety and dignity.

NGOs can assist in identifying and profiling eligible workers, provide training on occupational safety and skill upgradation, and help in forming and strengthening waste picker collectives such as cooperatives and Self-Help Groups (SHGs). NGOs can also facilitate

State Government Policies:

Tamil Nadu Arunthathiyars (Special Reservation) Act, 2009

The Tamil Nadu Arunthathiyars (Special Reservation) Act was enacted in the year 2009 and came into effect on 14th December 2009. This act provides for reservation of seats in educational institutions including private educational institutions in Tamil Nadu while also providing reservation in appointments or posts in the services under the State to the Arunthathiyar community which is a subgroup in the Scheduled Caste community. This provision is from within the 18% reservation allocated to Scheduled Caste community. The Special Act for Arunthathiyar Reservation (2009) is an independent state initiative with no central law equivalent.

Process of availing benefit under this act:

access to social security schemes and promote awareness campaigns, thereby contributing significantly to the scheme's success

Eligibility Criteria:

- Sanitation Workers: Individuals engaged in cleaning sewers and septic tanks.
- Waste Pickers: Persons involved in the collection, sorting, and management of solid waste.

Documents Required:

- Proof of Occupation
- Identification Proof

Process of availing benefit:

- Beneficiaries will be provided with occupational safety training to enhance their skills and ensure safe working conditions, along with PPE kits for protection during their tasks.

POLICY ADVOCACY DOCUMENTS

STRATEGY PLAN 25-28

ASJF's 2025-2028 Strategy Plan was developed with technical support from Dhvani Foundation, incorporating insights from workshops, expert consultations, and member feedback. Structured around community-identified challenges, it defines problem statements, actionable goals, and measurable outcomes. A thorough internal analysis on the federation's capacity has also been done



VISIBILITY AND CREDIBILITY

STATUS REPORT RELEASE PROGRAM

ASJF's 2025-2028 Strategy Plan was developed with technical support from Dhvani Foundation, incorporating insights from workshops, expert consultations, and member feedback. Structured around community-identified challenges, it defines problem statements, actionable goals, and measurable outcomes. A thorough internal analysis on the federation's capacity has also been done



VISIBILITY AND CREDIBILITY

PARAMETER IMPLEMENTATION

ASJF has successfully implemented 132 out of 158 organizational development parameters outlined by Dhvani Foundation's Niranthara program. This achievement underscores our commitment to strengthening key operational areas, including compliance, finance, governance, leadership, social media engagement, policy formulation, fundraising, and policy advocacy.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK USING AI

ASJF, with support from Dhvani Foundation, collected 323 community feedback inputs using Apurva AI to inform our three-year strategic plan. The analysis highlighted significant impacts in education, skill development, and economic empowerment. This community-driven insight provides clear direction for refining our programs to better serve evolving needs.

VISIBILITY AND CREDIBILITY

PARTICIPATION AND COLLABORATION WITH GOVERNMENT

ASJF has actively collaborated with various government departments by participating in conferences and meetings aimed at bridging gaps between NGOs and governmental bodies.



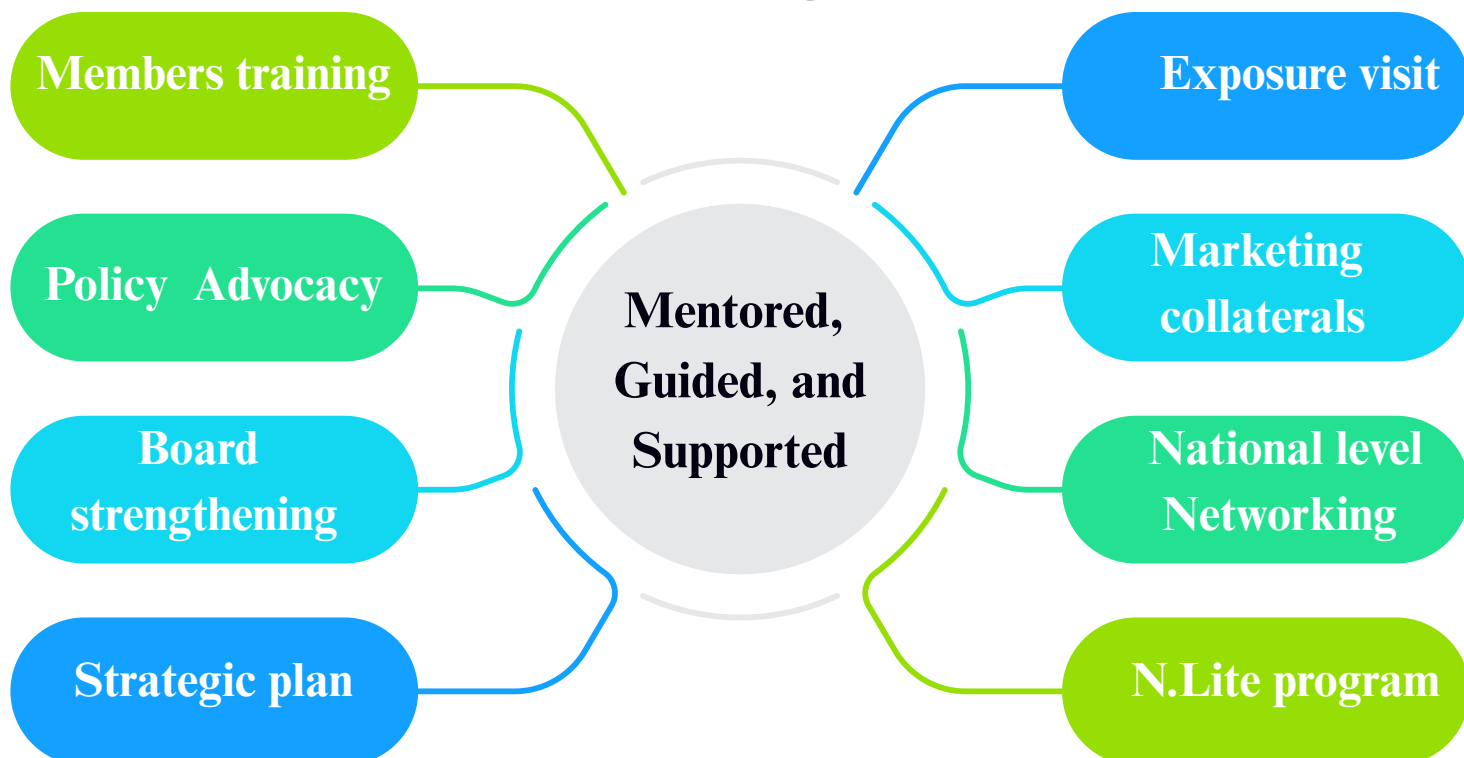
ASJF–Dhwani Foundation Partnership

ASJF is deeply grateful for Dhwani Foundation's transformative partnership!

Dhwani Foundation's VOICE Program: Empowering NGO Federations

The VOICE program by Dhwani Foundation is a three-year initiative aimed at strengthening NGO federations in South India. Federation leaders engage in workshops, case studies, and exposure visits to learn from successful models. The program supports collaboration among federations and connects them with donors and experts

Dhwani Foundation has guided and supported ASJF in the following areas





ARUNTHATHIYAR SOCIAL JUSTICE FEDERATION



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