



CAG 40 YEARS OF ACTION
Citizen consumer and civic Action Group



Climate Action Month 2025

Content

- Acknowledgements..... 4**
- Introduction..... 6**
- Design & Approach..... 8**
- Events & Stakeholders.....10**
 - Schools..... 12
 - Colleges..... 15
 - Public, Community and Institutional Engagements..... 20
- Testimonials..... 29**
- In the press..... 31**
- Key Learnings from the Field..... 33**
- Conclusion..... 36**
- Recommendations..... 38**

CAM 2025 at a Glance



45+ Events



8000+ People Reached

Stakeholder Groups



Schools



Colleges



Communities /
RWAs



Government /
Institutions



Companies

Engagement Formats



Kuppai Thiruvizha



Exposure visits



Wetland/Nature walks



Oratorical
competition / talks



Documentary
screenings



Creative formats
(puppet shows,
street plays)

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the many individuals whose time, insights, and commitment contributed to the successful implementation of Climate Action Month (CAM) 2025. We extend our sincere appreciation to our guest speakers, Dr. S. Sankar, Professor and Head, Department of Environmental Health Engineering, Sri Ramachandra Faculty of Public Health, Sri Ramachandra Institute of Higher Education and Research (SRIHER), Mr. Omjasvin M.D., Principal Correspondent, The Times of India and Ms. Ganga Dileep, CEO, Clean Tamil Nadu Company Ltd., for lending their expertise and perspectives to the campaign and for helping set a strong and thoughtful tone for the month's engagements.

As part of CAM 2025, CAG also conducted the final round of the oratorical competition at Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University, which saw the participation of nearly 100 students, reflecting strong interest and engagement from the academic community. The competition concluded with the distribution of prizes by Ms. Supriya Sahu, I.A.S., reinforcing the importance of youth voices in advancing conversations on climate action and climate justice.

We would also like to acknowledge the support of officials from the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) for granting permissions to conduct events in public parks and beach spaces. We further thank the Tamil Nadu Police Department for facilitating permissions and for their cooperation in enabling the smooth conduct of events in public spaces.

We place on record our sincere appreciation for the educational institutions that partnered with us by hosting and actively supporting CAM 2025 activities on their campuses. Their openness to collaboration and commitment to engaging students in meaningful climate conversations played a vital role in the success of the campaign. We gratefully acknowledge the support extended by A.M. Jain College, Meenambakkam, MCC Public School, Chetpet, Prince Group of Schools, Madipakkam, Don Bosco School, Erukkancheri, Justice Basheer Ahmed Sayeed College for Women, Velammal School, Vidhya Ratna School, Prince Venkateshwara College, Scholars Academy, Dwaraka Doss Goverdhan Doss Vaishnav College, Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies, Hindusthan College of Arts and Science, Government Higher Secondary School, M.G.R. Nagar and Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University.

The effective execution of CAM 2025 was further strengthened by the cooperation and support of several partner organisations and community stakeholders. We sincerely acknowledge the contributions of Poovulagin Nanbargal, Madras Film Screening Club, Gummidipoondi Municipal Corporation and Panchayat, Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB), Tamil Nadu Food Safety Department, The Quest, Kodungaiyur Residents' Welfare Association, Erukencherry Residents' Welfare Association, Puliyanthope RTO, and Namma Ooru Foundation, whose collaboration enabled wider community engagement across Chennai and its surrounding regions.

We also express our sincere appreciation to the resource persons who readily came forward to support and enrich CAM 2025 through sustained facilitation and engagement. Their expertise,

preparation, and on-ground involvement were instrumental in deepening public understanding of climate issues and encouraging meaningful action. We gratefully acknowledge the valuable contributions of Mr. Vasu, Mr. Suresh Kumar, Mrs. Seethalakshmi, Mr. Sanjay, Mr. Saravanan, Mrs. Alphonsa, Mr. RJ Karun, Mr. Palayam, Mr. Manikandan, Mr. Kirubhakaran, Mr. Geo Damin, Mr. Sowmyo Dutta, Ms. B. R. Easwari, Mr. Kalaivanan, Mr. Jai Ganesh, and Mr. Selvam, whose active participation significantly strengthened the impact and reach of the campaign.

Introduction

In Chennai, climate change was felt long before it was named. It was present in the rising summer heat that made classrooms and workplaces unbearable, in neighbourhoods that flooded repeatedly with each monsoon, in shrinking water availability, and in the everyday struggles of communities living close to pollution hotspots. These experiences shaped how people move through the city, how they earn a living, and how safe they feel in their own homes. Climate change, in this context, is not a distant global phenomenon, it is a local, lived reality.

The impacts of climate change in urban settings like Chennai are closely tied to questions of equity, access, and resilience. Those with fewer resources are often the most exposed to environmental stress, whether through unsafe housing, limited access to clean air and water, or insecure livelihoods. Addressing climate change, therefore, requires approaches that go beyond technical solutions and place people, communities, and everyday experiences at the centre of the response.

While governments and industries play an important role in shaping development pathways and regulating environmental impacts, meaningful climate action cannot be achieved without informed and engaged citizens. Yet, for many people, climate change still feels overwhelming or disconnected from daily decision-making. Bridging this gap between awareness and action, between concern and participation, remains one of the key challenges in building long-term climate resilience.

It was in response to this challenge that Citizen consumer and civic Action Group (CAG) initiated Climate Action Month (CAM) in 2020. CAM was envisioned as a sustained public engagement platform that brings climate conversations into spaces where people already live, learn, and gather. Rather than positioning climate change solely as a scientific or policy issue, CAM seeks to frame it as a shared social challenge that demands dialogue, creativity, and collective responsibility.

From its inception, CAM has been designed as an open and inclusive platform. It encourages people to question existing systems, share ideas, learn from lived experiences, and explore practical ways to respond to climate challenges. Over the years, CAM has engaged a wide range of participants, including school and college students, educators, artists, professionals, civil society organisations, community groups, and members of the general public, reflecting the belief that climate action must be broad-based and participatory.

As the campaign evolved, so did its scope and depth. Earlier editions of CAM focused on building foundational awareness and introducing climate issues through accessible formats such as workshops, public installations, performances, and discussions. Subsequent editions expanded these conversations to include themes such as waste, energy use, mobility, food systems, biodiversity, and sustainable lifestyles, while strengthening partnerships with educational institutions and community organisations across the city.

Climate Action Month 2025, conducted throughout July 2025, marked an important phase in this journey. With over 45 events organised across Chennai, the campaign placed renewed emphasis on people-centric climate communication. CAM 2025 deliberately integrated multiple dimensions of the climate crisis, legal and justice-based perspectives, cultural expression, mental health, lived experiences of climate impacts, and practical action-oriented solutions.

Through sustained school and college engagements, facilitated workshops, structured discussions, oratorical competitions, climate anxiety conversations, survivor testimonies, and selected public-facing activities, CAM 2025 created diverse entry points for participation. These efforts were aimed not only at informing citizens but at encouraging reflection, empathy, and a sense of shared responsibility.

By grounding climate action in local contexts and everyday realities, CAM 2025 reaffirmed that lasting change emerges when people are empowered to understand the problem, question existing systems, and act collectively. The campaign underscored a simple but powerful idea: climate action is most effective when it is rooted in community, shaped by lived experience, and sustained through continued engagement.

Design & Approach

Climate Action Month (CAM) is designed around the conviction that climate understanding must be both inclusive and engaged. Building on lessons from earlier editions of CAM, which combined school and college engagements with community outreach and creative formats to build climate awareness among multiple demographics, CAM 2025 took a deliberately enriched pedagogical approach.

While awareness remains a core objective, CAM 2025 emphasised structured experiential learning, dialogue, and critical thinking, recognising that sustained climate understanding arises from interaction, reflection, and context-specific engagement. This approach was rooted in the belief that climate literacy must extend beyond exposure to information, enabling participants to question, relate, and internalise climate issues in everyday life.

Learning as the Foundation

At its core, CAM 2025 treated learning as an iterative process rather than a one-off event. Most sessions were structured as interactive workshops, facilitated discussions, screenings with dialogue, and applied activities that allowed participants to engage with climate concepts actively. These formats encouraged participants to reflect on local climate challenges, articulate their understanding, challenge assumptions, and explore solutions that resonate with their personal and community contexts.

Institutional Embedding

Educational institutions continued to be central to CAM's design, reflecting the strategic importance of reaching young minds in formative spaces. Rather than treating schools and colleges as event venues, CAM 2025 integrated climate conversations into their regular academic and co-curricular rhythms. Facilitators collaborated with teachers and college faculty to ensure that sessions complemented institutional learning processes, making climate engagement meaningful and locally relevant.

This institutional embedding allowed multiple touchpoints within single school/college environments, reinforcing continuity of learning rather than isolated interactions. It also created a space where participants could build on previous discussions, deepening understanding over time.

Facilitation Over Broadcasting

Facilitators played a critical role in shaping the quality of engagement. Rather than relying on one-time expert lectures, CAM 2025 invested in facilitator-led dialogues that encouraged participants to ask questions, share perspectives, and grapple with complex topics such as climate justice, behavioural change, and resiliency. This signalled a move away from

one-directional information delivery toward co-constructed learning experiences where knowledge was negotiated and contextualised.

Multiple Dimensions, Integrated

CAM 2025 explicitly integrated multiple dimensions of climate change, scientific, emotional, cultural, and practical, into the design. While evidence-based climate information formed the base, sessions also wove in:

- Critical thinking and rights perspectives through oratorical and debate formats
- Emotional resilience through conversations about climate stress and anxiety
- Practical skills and everyday actions through exposure visits and demonstrations
- Selective creative engagement where appropriate, to support deeper reflection and retention

This multi-layered design acknowledged that climate change is not only an environmental or scientific issue but also a social, emotional, and cultural one, something that affects the way people live, work, and think.

Balance of Depth and Outreach

While workshops and institutional engagement were primary, CAM 2025 also included public-facing activities that complemented the internal learning process. These activities were strategically positioned to extend the reach of climate conversations without compromising the depth of learning within institutions.

In essence, CAM 2025's design blended the awareness and outreach logic of earlier editions with a learning-centred, contextually grounded approach. By prioritising depth, facilitator-led engagement, and institutional continuity, the campaign moved beyond simple dissemination of information, supporting participants to meaningfully integrate climate understanding into their worldviews and civic identities.

Events & Stakeholders

Inaugural Event

Climate Action Month (CAM) 2025 was inaugurated at A.M. Jain College, marking the commencement of a month-long series of engagements focused on strengthening climate understanding, critical thinking, and action among students and communities. The inauguration was held in the presence of Ms. S Saroja, Executive Director, CAG, along with members of the college faculty, whose support enabled the launch of CAM activities on campus.

The inaugural session was designed to introduce students to the multiple ways in which climate change intersects with communication, livelihoods, and individual agency. Mr. Omjasvin M.D., Principal Correspondent, The Times of India, addressed the students on the importance of climate change reporting and the role of journalism in shaping public understanding of environmental issues. He encouraged students to actively engage with climate narratives and highlighted the responsibility of the media in amplifying climate realities and voices from the ground.

Dr. S. Sankar, Professor and Head, Department of Environmental Health Engineering, Sri Ramachandra Faculty of Public Health, Sri Ramachandra Institute of Higher Education and Research (SRIHER), spoke about climate change, its immediate and long-term impacts, and how small but consistent individual actions can collectively contribute to positive climate outcomes. His address helped students link scientific understanding with everyday behaviour and responsibility.

The session also featured Ms. Ganga Dileep, representing the Tamil Nadu Thoomai Mission, who shared her journey in climate entrepreneurship. She spoke about translating concern for the environment into practical solutions and highlighted the growing role of young people in driving innovation and action in the climate space.

Adding a vital lived-experience perspective to the inauguration, Mr. Palayam, representing the fisherfolk community, spoke about the visible impacts of climate change on coastal ecosystems and fishing livelihoods. He highlighted changes in fish availability, rising uncertainties at sea, and the increasing vulnerability of fishing communities, emphasising how climate change directly affects everyday survival and economic security.

The inauguration witnessed the participation of approximately 200 students from various departments, reflecting strong interest and engagement from the academic community. The session set the tone for CAM 2025 by foregrounding learning, dialogue, and the importance of listening to diverse voices, particularly those already experiencing the impacts of climate change.



The fourth edition of the Climate Action Month was inaugurated at the A.M Jain college (Left to right: Mr. Palayam, Vettiver collective; Ms. S Saroja, Executive Director, CAG; Mr. Omjasvin M.D., - Principal Correspondent at The Times of India; Ms. Ganga Dileep, CEO, Clean Tamil Nadu Company Ltd (CTCL); Dr. M. M. Ramya, Dean, A.M Jain College Meenambakkam, Dr. S. Sankar, Professor and Head at the Department of Environmental Health Engineering, Sri Ramachandra Faculty of Public Health, Sri Ramachandra Institute of Higher Education and Research (SRIHER).

Schools

School engagements formed a core component of Climate Action Month (CAM) 2025, with a strong focus on introducing climate concepts to students through age-appropriate, interactive, and creative learning formats. CAG engaged primarily with students from Classes 6 to 9, recognising middle school as a critical stage for building environmental awareness, values, and everyday sustainable habits.

Across multiple schools in Chennai, sessions were designed to move beyond one-way instruction and encourage participation, reflection, and discussion. Storytelling, games, drawing activities, documentary screenings, and waste segregation exercises were used to communicate climate concepts in ways that were accessible and engaging for young learners.

At Madras Christian College Higher Secondary School, Chetpet, CAG conducted a climate impact storytelling session for students of Classes 6, 7, and 8. The session used narrative techniques to explain climate change and its impacts, followed by an interactive discussion that encouraged students to share their thoughts and questions. The programme engaged around 100 students and faculty members, fostering collective learning within the school environment.



Students from MCC Public School, Chetpet, participating in the storytelling session on climate change

Visual media was used as an effective entry point for climate discussions at several schools. At Prince Group of Schools, Madipakkam, a documentary screening of Love Nature was organised for students of Classes 6 and 7. The screening was followed by a facilitated discussion, with 100 students actively participating and reflecting on environmental protection and human responsibility. Similar documentary-based engagements were conducted at Vidya Ratna PTS Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Adyar, where a screening of the Story of the Adyar River engaged around 100 students from Classes 6 and 7, highlighting the ecological importance of the river and the need for conservation. This documentary was also screened for students of Government Higher Secondary School, K.K. Nagar, reaching approximately 100 students from Classes 6 to 9.

Interactive activities were a key feature of CAM 2025's school engagements. At Don Bosco School, Erukencherry, CAG conducted multiple sessions using participatory formats. A "Tick the Picture" activity encouraged Class 6 students to identify daily choices that contribute positively or negatively to climate action, engaging around 60 students. In another session titled "Trash and Crash", waste management and segregation concepts were introduced through games and discussions, reaching around 300 students from Classes 6, 7, and 8.

Hands-on learning around waste management was further strengthened at Velammal New Gen School, Madhavaram, where CAG conducted a waste management and segregation session combined with interactive game-based activities. The programme engaged approximately 300 students from Classes 6 to 9, making it one of the largest school-based engagements during CAM 2025.

Creative expression was used as a tool to help students visualise climate impacts. At Vidya Ratna PTS Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Adyar, CAG organised drawing activities for Class 6 students, where participants illustrated a "Healthy Earth" versus an Earth affected by climate change. These sessions engaged around 50 students, encouraging creativity while reinforcing messages around environmental protection and sustainable living.

Smaller group engagements allowed for deeper interaction in community-linked learning spaces. At The Learning Community at The Quest, Besant Nagar, CAG conducted a "Tick the Right Pictures" activity, followed by a discussion on climate change impacts. The session engaged 20 students from different age groups, allowing for more personalised discussion and reflection.

CAM 2025 also emphasised institutional adoption of sustainability practices within schools. At Scholars Academy, Injambakkam, CAG, conducted a Zero Waste School programme for students, focusing on waste reduction, sustainable practices, and the importance of adopting zero-waste habits in daily life. The student session engaged around 50 participants and was complemented by a separate zero-waste awareness session for teachers, attended by 10 faculty members, reinforcing the school's commitment to sustainability at both student and educator levels.



Teachers from Scholar's Academy listening attentively to a session on waste management by team CAG

At Government School, Velachery, CAG conducted a waste management and segregation session for 50 Class 9 students, using interactive games to explain segregation practices and responsible waste handling in an engaging manner.

Across all school engagements, the emphasis remained on building foundational understanding through participation, creativity, and dialogue. By combining storytelling, visual media, games, and hands-on activities, CAM 2025 ensured that climate education for school students was not only informative but also relatable and action-oriented. These engagements helped foster early awareness of climate change, waste management, and sustainability, encouraging students to reflect on how everyday choices contribute to environmental outcomes.

Colleges

College engagements formed a significant pillar of Climate Action Month (CAM) 2025, with a strong focus on deepening climate literacy, encouraging critical thinking, and exposing students to real-world climate challenges through experiential and interdisciplinary learning formats. Across multiple colleges in Chennai, CAM 2025 reached students from diverse academic backgrounds, engaging them through workshops, exposure visits, webinars, documentary screenings, cultural programmes, and competitive platforms.

The campaign was formally inaugurated at A.M. Jain College, Meenambakkam, marking the beginning of CAM 2025. The inauguration brought together around 200 students from various departments, along with faculty members. The session featured multiple perspectives on climate action: Mr. Omjasvin M.D. spoke on the importance of climate change reporting and encouraged students to engage with environmental journalism; Dr. S. Sankar discussed climate change impacts and highlighted how small individual actions can collectively contribute to positive climate outcomes; and Ms. Ganga Dileep, representing the Tamil Nadu Thooimai Mission, shared her journey in climate entrepreneurship, emphasising the role of young people in driving sustainable change. A perspective from the fishing community was also shared by Mr. Palayam, who spoke about climate impacts on coastal livelihoods.



Ms. S Saroja, Executive Director, CAG, Ms. Ganga Dileep, CEO, Clean Tamil Nadu Company Ltd (CTCL), and Dr. S. Sankar, Professor and Head at the Department of Environmental Health Engineering, Sri Ramachandra Faculty of Public Health, Sri Ramachandra Institute of Higher Education and Research (SRIHER) (left to right) at the inaugural of the environment club at A.M. Jain College

Experiential learning was a key feature of CAM 2025's college engagements. Students from A.M. Jain College and Vels University participated in exposure visits to Micro Composting Centres and the Kodungaiyur Dump Yard, where they observed waste processing systems and the consequences of improper waste management. At the Egmore Micro Composting Centre, Mr. Saravanan from Namma Ooru Foundation led a live demonstration explaining composting processes in detail. The Kodungaiyur exposure visit, facilitated by Ms. Chandra and Mr. Jai Ganesh, engaged around 50 students, offering insights into the environmental and health impacts of dump yards on surrounding communities and highlighting the need for citizen-led waste solutions.



Exposure visit to Micro Composting Centre (MCC) at Pudupet, ward 63, maintained by Namma Ooru Foundation.

Climate issues linked to livelihoods and consumption were explored through several thematic workshops. At Justice Basheer Ahmed Sayeed College for Women, Teynampet, CAG conducted a session on native food and food safety in collaboration with the Food Safety Department. Food Safety Officer Mr. Jebaraj and Mrs. Seethalakshmi from OFM spoke about making informed food choices and the climate impacts of food systems, engaging around 200 students across departments.

CAM 2025 also addressed the built environment and energy use through sessions on passive cooling techniques and rooftop solar solutions. These workshops were conducted at Prince Venkateshwara College, A.M. Jain College, and Vels University, Pallavaram, reaching over 450 students in total. The sessions highlighted low-cost, climate-friendly cooling strategies, sustainable building practices, and the role of renewable energy in reducing emissions and enhancing climate resilience.



CAG team talk on passive cooling techniques at Prince Venketeswara College.

Water bodies and ecosystems were a recurring focus across college engagements. At D.G. Vaishnav College, Arumbakkam, Ms. B. R. Easwari, Civil Engineer with the Tamil Nadu Wetland Mission, conducted a session on the importance of wetlands, introducing students to the Mithra app and encouraging citizen participation in wetland conservation. Documentary screenings on the Story of the Adyar River were organised at Prince Venkateshwara College, engaging around 300 students, and fostering discussions on urban rivers, environmental degradation, and restoration.



B.R Easwari from the Wetlands Department at D.G Vainnav College for a session on wetland awareness

Mobility and digital consumption were also addressed as emerging climate concerns. Sessions on sustainable mobility were conducted for MBA students at Vels University, Besant Nagar and Pallavaram, engaging around 140 participants, and highlighting the role of young professionals in promoting low-carbon transport choices. At Hindusthan College of Arts and Science, Padur, a workshop on internet emissions engaged around 100 students, drawing attention to the often-overlooked climate footprint of digital infrastructure.

Career pathways in sustainability were explored through online webinars on green job opportunities, conducted for students of A.M. Jain College and Vels University. These sessions, led by Dr. Sowmyo Dutta, engaged around 200 participants, offering insights into emerging roles in the green economy and the importance of aligning career choices with climate action.

Critical thinking and climate justice were foregrounded through an oratorical competition conducted at SOEL Law College, Taramani. The preliminaries, held in both English and Tamil, centred on the theme “If Climate Were a Person, What Would They Sue Us For?” and engaged 20 student participants. The final round was conducted during the CAM closing event at Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University, with around 100 students in attendance. The winners were awarded prizes by Ms. Supriya Sahu, I.A.S., reinforcing the role of youth voices in climate discourse.



Ms. Supriya Sahu, I.A.S., reinforcing the importance of youth voices in advancing conversations on climate action and climate justice

Across all college engagements, CAM 2025 demonstrated the value of combining classroom learning with exposure-based, experiential, and participatory approaches. By engaging students through diverse formats and real-world contexts, the campaign strengthened critical understanding of climate change, sustainability, and justice, while encouraging young adults to see themselves as active contributors to climate solutions.

Public, Community, and Institutional Engagements

Public, community, and institutional engagements formed a substantial pillar of Climate Action Month (CAM) 2025, enabling climate conversations to move beyond educational spaces into government institutions, residential neighbourhoods, workplaces, and open public environments. These engagements were designed to situate climate change within everyday civic systems, livelihoods, and community practices, ensuring that climate action was discussed in contexts familiar to participants.

Engagements with government institutions focused on linking climate change to public systems and regulatory responsibility. CAG conducted workshops on sustainable mobility at the Puliyanthope Regional Transport Office (RTO), where sessions highlighted the climate impacts associated with improper vehicle maintenance and unsafe driving practices. The discussions focused on practical ways in which vehicles can be maintained and used more responsibly to reduce emissions and environmental harm. Each session was attended by approximately 35 participants, including RTO officials, ensuring strong institutional participation and reinforcing the role of public institutions in climate mitigation.



Mr. Kumar, a bike mechanic, gave a talk on bike maintenance to license applicants at RTO East, Puliyanthope.

Community-level engagements were carried out in collaboration with Residents' Welfare Associations (RWAs) to address locally relevant climate concerns. A session on native foods and their link to climate change was conducted for members of RWAs at the Residence of Kasthuribai Nagar (ROKA), facilitated by Ms. Seethalakshmi from OFM. The discussion focused on the climate impacts of imported food and the environmental benefits of traditional, locally sourced diets. The session was attended by 10 participants, along with RWA representatives.

Another RWA engagement focused on climate change through the lens of working women in Chennai and was conducted at the Errukencherry Residents' Welfare Association, engaging 20 participants. The discussion highlighted the unique challenges faced by working women in adapting to climate impacts, including heat stress, mobility constraints, and household responsibilities, while emphasising community-driven solutions.



A talk on waste management and segregation was conducted at the Thirumudivakkam, The Royal Castle Apartment Welfare Association, by team CAG.

Further RWA engagement took place at the Kalakshetra Colony Residents Welfare Association, where CAG organised a session on passive cooling techniques and rooftop solar for domestic use. Held at The Quest, the workshop was attended by 20 residents and focused on climate-friendly cooling methods, energy efficiency, and renewable energy adoption to reduce emissions and improve household resilience. At the Kodungaiyur Residents Welfare Association, a session on the Global Plastics Treaty engaged 25 participants, explaining the key elements of the treaty and encouraging residents to take action by signing a public petition.

CAM 2025 also extended climate engagement into workplace settings, recognising offices as important sites for behavioural change and sustainability awareness. A workshop on internet emissions was conducted at NeubAltics Tech Pvt Ltd, Guindy, engaging employees in discussions on the environmental footprint of digital technologies. At PTK Architects, Nungambakkam, CAG conducted a waste management and segregation workshop for 20 employees, combining awareness-building with interactive activities to encourage sustainable practices within professional environments.

In addition, CAG carried out a film set waste audit at Royapuram and Ennore, assessing waste generation at shooting locations and highlighting the issue of film set pollution through a detailed article. This engagement brought attention to the environmental impacts of the entertainment industry and the need for improved waste management practices within the sector.

Public-facing engagements formed a vibrant component of CAM 2025, reaching diverse audiences in open and accessible spaces. At Thanthai Periyar Park, Tondiarpet, CAG organised a cultural public event titled “Aadalum Paadalum”, featuring a magic show and dance performance by Sanjay and Vasudevan. Following the performances, the team engaged the gathered audience in discussions on climate change and the importance of individual action. A similar public programme was conducted at Ennore Burma Temple, where a Parai Isai performance and street play by Selvam and his team conveyed climate change messages in a simple and engaging manner.



Dance performance for the public by Wilson and team

At Besant Nagar, CAG conducted a public event in collaboration with the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) that focused on promoting alternatives to plastic carry bags. The programme featured live cloth bag stitching using old clothes donated by the community, supported by mobile tailors as part of the Manjappai (Mela) - an initiative of the Tamil Nadu government. TNPCB officials and the CAG team engaged directly with the public to encourage reuse and upcycling as sustainable practices.



CAG and TNPCB collaborated for a cloth bag stitching and distribution event at Besant Nagar

Another public engagement was organised at CMRL Park, Shenoy Nagar, where Sanjay and Vasudevan conducted a magic show and dance performance focused on climate change awareness. The event combined entertainment with education, drawing public attention and facilitating discussions on climate impacts and individual responsibility.

A waste management awareness session was conducted at The Quest, Besant Nagar, engaging 20 participants through interactive discussions on waste segregation and sustainable practices. An important experiential activity was organised at Pallikaranai Eco Park, where a wetland walk was conducted. During this engagement, B. R. Easwari, Civil Engineer associated with the Tamil Nadu Wetland Mission, and Mr. Prashanth, Engineer, spoke about the importance of wetland conservation and its link to climate impacts. They highlighted how wetlands act as natural buffers against floods, support biodiversity, and help regulate local temperatures, and encouraged participants to use tools such as the Mithra app to remain informed and engaged in wetland conservation efforts.



Wetland walk conducted by CAG with the help of the Wetlands Department of Tamil Nadu

CAM 2025's public outreach also included creative and participatory formats aimed at wider community engagement. A puppet show on climate change was conducted at Gummidipoondi by the Kalaivanan Bommalattam puppet troupe, reaching approximately 200 participants. The performance used storytelling and visual engagement to communicate messages on conservation, climate impacts, and collective action. In addition, CAG, in collaboration with the Madras Film Screening Club, conducted a public documentary screening at The Quest, Besant Nagar. The screening featured four thematic films focusing on urban flooding, unsustainable development, water conservation, and climate change impacts, followed by discussions with around 50 participants on sustainable urban planning and community-driven climate action.



Puppet show at Gummidipoondi



During the screening of the "Home" documentary at the Backyard Clan, Adyar

Through these diverse public, community, and institutional engagements, CAM 2025 ensured that climate conversations reached citizens across different social, professional, and geographic contexts. By grounding discussions in real locations, lived experiences, and facilitated dialogue, the campaign reinforced the understanding that effective climate action requires participation from institutions, communities, workplaces, and individuals alike.

Kuppai Thiruvizha, CAG's flagship Zero Waste Carnival, was organised as part of Climate Action Month (CAM) 2025 at Justice Basheer Ahmed Sayeed College for Women. The event served as a vibrant platform to engage students with practical zero-waste alternatives while foregrounding the links between waste, consumption patterns, and climate change.



Marking the beginning of Kuppai Thiruvizha 2025 — CAG's ninth Zero-Waste Carnival

Since 2016, CAG has conducted eight editions of Kuppai Thiruvizha, making this the ninth edition of the initiative. Over the years, the event has evolved into a key public-facing intervention that combines awareness, demonstration, and hands-on learning to promote sustainable lifestyles and reduce dependency on single-use plastics.

At the Justice Basheer Ahmed Sayeed College campus, CAG, with the help of zero-waste vendors, set up multiple stalls showcasing zero-waste practices and climate-friendly solutions. These stalls introduced students to alternatives to disposable products and demonstrated everyday sustainable choices related to waste reduction and responsible consumption. The event witnessed nearly 1,000 footfalls, reflecting strong interest and enthusiastic participation from the student community.

As part of the carnival, a palm-leaf ornament-making workshop was conducted for students, offering hands-on experience with natural, biodegradable materials. The workshop was facilitated by Mr. Geo Damin and Mr. Azhar, who guided participants through the process while explaining the environmental benefits of using traditional, plant-based materials over plastic and synthetic alternatives. The activity helped students understand how craft, culture, and sustainability can intersect to offer viable low-waste alternatives.



Workshop on Palm leaf ornament making for the SIET college students during Kuppai Thiruvizha

Through Kuppai Thiruvizha, CAM 2025 reinforced the message that addressing the climate crisis also requires rethinking everyday consumption and waste practices. By combining interactive stalls, demonstrations, and skill-based learning, the event encouraged students to reflect on their own habits and explore practical pathways towards adopting zero-waste and climate-conscious lifestyles.

Testimonials

“As part of our Climate Action Month, we had the opportunity to engage with CAG, which provided us with valuable insights into sustainability, climate change, and responsible citizenship.

A session with Mr. Palayam, a fisherfolk leader, highlighted the impacts of plastic pollution and waste on marine ecosystems, drawing attention to SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 14 (Life Below Water). Our exposure visit to the Kodungaiyur Waste Yard, facilitated by Mr. Jai Ganesh, offered a stark view of the consequences of poor waste management and reinforced the importance of SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).

Sessions conducted by Mr. Manikandan and Mr. Kirubakaran on renewable energy further deepened our understanding of sustainable electricity and energy transitions. All these initiatives were coordinated by Mr. Afroz, whose passion and commitment to environmental protection inspired us to reflect on and adopt more responsible practices in our daily lives.

Overall, the sessions were enriching, practical, and thought-provoking, strengthening our commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals. We sincerely thank the School of Management Studies and CAG Chennai for this meaningful learning experience.”

— **Sanjay N. R.,**
II Year MBA (General – B),
Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies (VISTAS)

“Thank you for organising such a meaningful and insightful session as part of Climate Action Month. The engagement provided valuable perspectives on sustainability and climate action, many of which we will strive to incorporate into our daily lives and institutional practices.

The session was truly eye-opening, not only for the faculty but especially for our students, who were able to engage with real-world environmental challenges and gain a deeper understanding of their implications. We are confident that this experience will contribute positively to shaping their perspectives and actions toward environmental responsibility.

We look forward to staying connected with CAG and contributing meaningfully to collective efforts aimed at advancing environmental and climate action.”

— **Dr. Brindha P.,**
Professor,
Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies (VISTAS)

“I had the opportunity to participate in several events organised by CAG in collaboration with the Enviro Club at A.M. Jain College. The engagements included a material recovery facility visit, a fisherfolk waste audit along the beach, a webinar on green job opportunities, a seminar on passive cooling techniques, and an interdepartmental competition focused on climate change.

These activities provided valuable exposure and helped me understand the importance of sustainability, waste segregation, and eco-friendly career pathways. I gained insights into renewable energy, particularly the functioning of solar panels and their role in reducing environmental pollution.

The session on passive cooling techniques offered a deeper understanding of how building design can naturally regulate indoor temperatures through strategies that prevent heat gain. Overall, the programme helped me identify environmentally responsible career options through which I can contribute meaningfully to society while pursuing my professional goals.

I am grateful to CAG for providing this enriching and impactful learning experience.”

**— Mukisha P.,
III B.A. Public Administration,
A.M. Jain College**

In the press

Climate Action Month (CAM) 2025 received positive attention across print and digital media platforms, helping extend the campaign's reach beyond on-ground participants to a wider public audience. Media coverage highlighted CAM 2025's focus on locally grounded climate issues, citizen participation, and practical solutions, reinforcing the relevance of the campaign in Chennai's urban and peri-urban context.

Several articles and features focused on themes such as waste management, plastic pollution, sustainable mobility, and community-led climate action, reflecting strong media interest in solution-oriented and people-centric climate narratives. Coverage of public events, exposure visits, and flagship initiatives like Kuppai Thiruvizha helped bring visibility to alternative consumption practices and the role of citizens in addressing environmental challenges.

Importantly, media stories also amplified voices from diverse stakeholders, including students, community members, and practitioners, highlighting how climate change intersects with livelihoods, public health, and everyday life. This helped position CAM 2025 not only as an awareness campaign but as a platform for informed dialogue and collective reflection on climate action in the city.

The press engagement around CAM 2025 contributed to broader public discourse on climate responsibility and sustainability, supporting CAG's objective of making climate conversations accessible, relevant, and rooted in lived experiences.

Kuppai Thiruvizha - Vendors share their eco-journeys

Catch a glimpse of 'Kuppai Thiruvizha', a one-day sustainability carnival organised by CAG at S.I.E.T College, Chennai. S. Saroja, Executive Director of CAG, mentions the harmful impact of single-use plastics, especially on marine life. Vendors share their eco-journeys and how we can all drive change

‘Kuppai Thiruvizha’: Products made from reusable and eco-friendly materials showcased at Chennai exhibition

Updated - July 22, 2025 05:55 pm IST - Chennai

THE HINDU BUREAU

☰ READ LATER

 Add as a preferred source on Google



An article by The Hindu covering CAM's flagship event "Kuppai Thiruvizha", July 2025

தீனமலர்
உண்மையின் உரைகல்

காலநிலை மாற்றம் குறித்து
பொம்மலாட்ட விழிப்புணர்வு

கும்மிடிப்பூண்டி, ஜூலை 29-
கும்மிடிப்பூண்டி அருகே புவி வெப்பமயமா
தல் மற்றும் காலநிலை மாற்றம் குறித்த பொம்ம
லாட்ட விழிப்புணர்வு நிகழ்வு நடந்தது.
சுற்றுச்சூழல் பாதிப்பால் ஏற்படும் புவி வெப்
பமயமாதல் மற்றும் காலநிலை மாற்றம், அதன்
விளைவுகள், அதற்கான தீர்வுகள் குறித்து,
கும்மிடிப்பூண்டி அடுத்த புதுகும்மிடிப்பூண்டி
கிராமத்தில் விழிப்புணர்வு நிகழ்வு நடந்தது.
சி.ஏ.ஜி., என்ற தனியார் சுற்றுச்சூழல் பாது
காப்பு அமைப்பு சார்பில் பொம்மலாட்டம்
வாயிலாக விழிப்புணர்வு ஏற்படுத்தினர்.
பிளாஸ்டிக் பயன்பாட்டை தவிர்ப்பது, மரம்
வளர்ப்பது, இயற்கை வளங்களை பாதுகாப்
பது, குப்பை கழிவுகளை தரம்பிரித்து அகற்
றுவது உள்ளிட்டவை குறித்து விழிப்புணர்வு
ஏற்படுத்தப்பட்டது. ஏராளமான கிராம மக்கள்
பொம்மலாட்ட நிகழ்வை காண குவிந்தனர்.

An article by Dinamalar covering CAG's awareness campaign as part of CAM 2025 on climate change at Gummidiipondi through a puppet show, July 2025

Key Learnings from the Field

Climate Action Month (CAM) 2025 offered valuable insights into how different groups understand, experience, and respond to climate change when engagement is rooted in lived realities. The campaign's diverse formats and settings, ranging from classrooms and campuses to neighbourhoods, public institutions, and open spaces, enabled CAG to observe patterns in awareness, behaviour, and participation across stakeholder groups.

Experiential learning strengthens climate understanding

One of the clearest learnings from CAM 2025 was the effectiveness of experiential and place-based learning. Exposure visits to waste management facilities, wetland walks, and site-based audits enabled participants to connect abstract climate concepts to visible systems and impacts. These formats helped participants grasp the scale and complexity of environmental challenges more clearly than classroom-only or lecture-based sessions.

Students and community members consistently demonstrated deeper engagement when learning involved observation, interaction, and reflection, underscoring the value of experiential approaches in climate education and awareness programmes.

Climate conversations resonate when linked to everyday life

Across schools, colleges, and public engagements, climate change resonated most strongly when discussions were connected to everyday experiences, food choices, waste generation, mobility, energy use, and livelihoods. Sessions on waste management, sustainable mobility, native food, and digital consumption elicited active participation because participants could relate these topics directly to their own routines and surroundings.

This reinforced the importance of framing climate change not only as a global or future concern, but as an issue embedded in daily decisions and local contexts.

Young people are receptive to nuanced and critical discussions

Contrary to assumptions that climate engagement with students must be simplified, CAM 2025 demonstrated that school and college students are capable of engaging with complex climate issues when presented in accessible and interactive ways. Middle-school students responded well to storytelling, games, and creative activities, while college students engaged meaningfully with discussions on climate justice, livelihoods, policy, and career pathways.

Competitive and dialogue-based formats, such as oratorical competitions, exposure visits, and thematic workshops, encouraged critical thinking and reflection, moving students beyond surface-level awareness.

Public awareness of government climate initiatives remains limited

A recurring observation across public and community engagements was the gap between government action and public awareness. While Tamil Nadu has initiated multiple programmes related to waste management, renewable energy, wetlands, and climate resilience, many participants were unaware of these efforts or unclear about how they could engage with them.

This gap highlights the need for stronger citizen-facing communication and collaboration between institutions and civil society to translate policy intent into public understanding and participation.

Community spaces enable dialogue and collective reflection

Engagements conducted through Residents' Welfare Associations, neighbourhood spaces, and public parks revealed the importance of community-based forums for climate dialogue. When climate issues were discussed in familiar, local settings, participants were more willing to share experiences, raise concerns, and explore collective solutions.

Community-level discussions also highlighted how climate impacts intersect with gender, livelihoods, health, and infrastructure, reinforcing the need for inclusive and context-specific approaches to climate action.

Creative formats are effective entry points, not endpoints

Creative and cultural formats, such as puppet shows, street performances, magic shows, and cultural programmes, proved effective in attracting diverse audiences and initiating conversations. However, CAM 2025 reinforced that creative engagement is most impactful when paired with facilitated discussion, allowing audiences to reflect, ask questions, and connect performances to real-world actions.

This learning emphasises the importance of designing creative formats as gateways to deeper engagement rather than standalone awareness tools.

Sustainable alternatives exist, but access and visibility remain challenges

Flagship initiatives such as Kuppai Thiruvizha highlighted the growing ecosystem of entrepreneurs offering zero-waste and sustainable alternatives. At the same time, the event revealed persistent barriers faced by these entrepreneurs, particularly in accessing consistent markets and reaching consumers beyond one-time events.

This underscores the need for sustained platforms, institutional support, and community-level markets to enable wider adoption of sustainable products and practices.

Climate engagement benefits from continuity beyond campaigns

While CAM 2025 succeeded in generating dialogue and participation over a concentrated period, interactions with participants repeatedly pointed to the need for continuity. One-off engagements can spark interest, but sustained follow-up through schools, colleges, communities, and institutions is essential to translate awareness into long-term behaviour change and collective action.

Conclusion

Climate Action Month (CAM) 2025 marked a significant milestone in Citizen consumer and civic Action Group's ongoing efforts to deepen climate awareness and action in Chennai. With over 45 events conducted across the city and its surrounding regions, CAM 2025 reached approximately 8,000 individuals, engaging a wide spectrum of stakeholders including school and college students, residents' associations, public institutions, workplaces, and the general public. The scale and diversity of participation reflected growing interest in climate issues and reaffirmed the relevance of sustained, community-facing climate engagement.

Unlike earlier editions, CAM 2025 placed strong emphasis on contextual and experiential learning, ensuring that climate change was discussed not as a distant or abstract issue, but as a lived reality shaped by everyday choices, livelihoods, governance systems, and urban development. Engagements with schools and colleges demonstrated that young people are increasingly receptive to nuanced conversations on climate change, sustainability, and justice when learning is participatory and grounded in real-world examples. Students responded positively to formats that encouraged dialogue, hands-on activities, and critical reflection, indicating the value of moving beyond one-way information delivery.

Public, community, and institutional engagements highlighted the importance of meeting people where they are, within neighbourhoods, workplaces, public offices, and shared civic spaces. Residents' associations, government institutions, and public events provided platforms for discussions on waste management, mobility, consumption patterns, ecosystem conservation, and climate resilience. Exposure visits, documentary screenings, and the wetland walk demonstrated the effectiveness of experiential formats in helping participants connect environmental issues to local systems and visible impacts.

CAM 2025 also reinforced the importance of solution-oriented engagement. Events such as Kuppai Thiruvizha revealed both the growing ecosystem of zero-waste and sustainability-focused entrepreneurs and the persistent challenges they face in reaching consumers. While interest in sustainable alternatives is increasing, limited access to consistent platforms and markets continues to hinder wider adoption. These insights underline the need for sustained spaces that connect climate-conscious producers with consumers beyond one-off events.

A key learning from CAM 2025 was the continued gap in public awareness regarding existing government initiatives on climate action in Tamil Nadu. While the state has introduced several policies and programmes related to renewable energy, waste management, and environmental conservation, many participants remained unaware of these efforts. This disconnect points to the need for stronger communication and citizen-facing engagement that bridges policy intent with public understanding and participation.

Overall, CAM 2025 demonstrated that climate engagement is most effective when it is inclusive, locally grounded, and action-oriented. By combining education, dialogue, experiential learning, and community participation, the campaign strengthened public understanding of climate challenges while fostering a sense of shared responsibility. As climate impacts intensify, initiatives such as Climate Action Month play a critical role in building informed, engaged, and resilient communities capable of contributing meaningfully to climate solutions.

Recommendations

Based on observations, field experiences, and stakeholder interactions during Climate Action Month (CAM) 2025, CAG offers the following recommendations to strengthen climate awareness, participation, and action across schools, colleges, communities, institutions, and the general public in Tamil Nadu.

Move from Awareness to Action-Oriented Climate Education

While climate education is increasingly present in academic settings, there is a need to shift from conceptual awareness to action-oriented learning. Schools and colleges should be supported to integrate experiential modules such as waste audits, energy-use tracking, wetland visits, and community mapping exercises into existing curricula. These approaches help students connect climate concepts to everyday systems and local realities.

Institutionalise Experiential and Place-Based Learning

The effectiveness of exposure visits, wetland walks, and documentary screenings during CAM 2025 highlights the importance of place-based climate learning. Government departments and educational institutions should collaborate with civil society organisations to regularly facilitate ecosystem walks, infrastructure exposure visits, and neighbourhood-level learning programmes that support climate adaptation and resilience.

Strengthen Citizen–Institution Interfaces

CAM 2025 revealed significant gaps in public awareness of existing government climate initiatives. Dedicated citizen-facing engagement platforms, such as public workshops, open days, and collaborative campaigns, should be created to help bridge this gap. Institutions like transport offices, pollution control bodies, and urban local bodies can play a proactive role in making climate governance more visible and participatory.

Support Community-Led Climate Action

Residents' Welfare Associations (RWAs) demonstrated strong interest in engaging with climate issues when discussions were grounded in daily concerns such as waste, energy use, heat stress, and water management. The government and urban local bodies should support RWAs through technical guidance, incentives, and recognition programmes to enable sustained neighbourhood-level climate action.

Create Sustained Platforms for Sustainable Entrepreneurs

Insights from Kuppai Thiruvizha indicate a growing pool of entrepreneurs offering zero-waste and sustainable alternatives, alongside persistent challenges in accessing consumers. Regular, decentralised community markets and institutional procurement opportunities should be

promoted to provide sustained visibility and economic viability for sustainability-focused enterprises.

Expand Climate Engagement in Workplaces

Workplace-based engagements highlighted the potential of offices and professional environments as sites for climate action. Government and industry bodies should encourage organisations to adopt climate awareness programmes, waste reduction initiatives, and sustainability audits as part of workplace culture and responsibility.

Use Creative and Cultural Mediums Strategically

Creative formats such as puppet shows, street performances, and magic shows proved effective in engaging diverse public audiences. These should be used strategically, particularly in public spaces and communities, paired with facilitated discussions to deepen understanding and avoid superficial engagement.

Strengthen Communication on Responsible Consumption

There remains a strong need to promote responsible consumption across food, energy, water, clothing, and digital use. Public campaigns should focus on normalising reuse, repair, thrift, and mindful consumption, while discouraging disposable and “use-and-throw” practices. Messaging should be localised, practical, and supported by visible alternatives.

Improve Monitoring and Learning from Public Engagement

Future climate campaigns would benefit from simple but systematic tools to capture participant feedback, learning outcomes, and behavioural intentions. This will help refine engagement strategies, strengthen accountability, and ensure that awareness efforts translate into meaningful action over time.



No.103 (First Floor), Eldams Road, Teynampet,
Chennai 600 018

T: +91(44) 2435 4458 | 2435 0387

helpdesk@cag.org.in

www.cag.org.in



@CAGChennai