



# *Rural Education & Action Development* **(READ)**

**Andimadam, Tamil Nadu, India**

## **ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT**

**Fiscal year April 2001- March 2002.**

### **Management Committee**

1. Mrs. M. Kalavathi  
*President*
2. Mrs. M. Leelamary  
*Vice-president*
3. Mr. D. Selvam  
*Secretary*
4. Mrs. V. Chitra  
*Treasurer*

### **Executive Committee**

1. Miss A. JosephinRani
2. Miss B. Thenmozhi
3. Miss M. Fathima Mary
4. Miss S. Jeyambika
5. Miss M. Francisca

### **Editorial Board**

#### *Local (INDIA):*

1. Mr. D. Selvam  
(M.A., B. Ed., B.L.)
2. Mr. S. Edward Sundaraj  
(M. A., M. Phil.)

#### *USA/Europe:*

1. Dr. Koen Van Rompay  
(USA)
2. Mr. Raman Singh (USA)
3. Dr. An Van Rompay (Belgium)

### **Address:**

D. Selvam (Secretary)  
1926 Sakthi Vinayagar St.  
Vilandai, Andimadam-621 801  
Tamil Nadu, India  
Phone: +(91)-4331-642583  
E-mail: readpen@sancharnet.in

### **Website: [www.sahaya.org](http://www.sahaya.org)**

(READ is registered under the Societies Registration Act 27 of 1975 and registered under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act of 1976).

**“Great things are done when men and mountains meet;  
this is not done by jostling in the street”**

Poet William Blake

### **Message from the Secretary:**

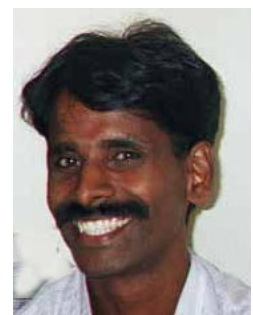
Great things need to be done in villages and for the villagers, because change occurring in villages is the real parameter to measure the development in a geographic region or a country.

READ strives for this purpose, and works hard to benefit poor, needy, marginalized and vulnerable rural people, and to bring a change in their present living condition. During the reporting period, important programs have been performed and/or initiated in its service area, particularly in the fields of health, disability and human resource development.

To implement these programs, READ has secured the friendship and partnership of several organizations, including the network of Sahaya International. In this reporting year, READ has also received support of several new development and funding partners.

I take pleasure in presenting this annual report, which documents our activities, before this honorable General Body of READ.

**D. Selvam**  
(Secretary, READ)



## ***Progress report:***

### **Table of contents:**

- A. Trainings
- B. Campaigns
- C. Rallies
- D. Schools & Educational coaching centers
- E. Special Projects.
- F. Networking
- G Staff capacity building.
- H. Accreditations
- I, Linking service.
- J. Celebrations
- K. Loan distribution
- L. Visitors
- M. Funding sources
- N. Thank-you's

### **A. TRAININGS**

#### **1). Job-readiness and job-oriented skill training:**

This is an ongoing program since 1996. Tailoring, typewriting, handmade greeting card production and computer training are offered to people from the surrounding villages of Andimadam. Except for the computer training course, all other trainings are exclusively for women.

#### **a). Tailoring:**

During this reporting period, 46 girls have received training on sewing, designing, cutting

and other technical aspects. At the end of the course, they were issued a course certificate. Nine of these girls are currently already earning income by doing home-based tailoring work.

#### **b). Typewriting:**

During this reporting period, 21 girls have undergone training in English and Tamil typewriting skills, and have appeared for the Government Technical Education Examination. Of them, 13 have passed the examination, while the remaining 8 are retaking the test.

#### **c). Handmade greeting card production:**

38 girls have been trained in this reporting period in making greeting cards. Eleven of them are currently employed in our card production unit and earn their income, while three are making cards at home.

#### **d). Computer training:**

Thirteen persons (11 girls and 2 boys) have received training in basic computer skills (MS office, excel, powerpoint, database and internet).

All these trainings have been conducted in two batches, each for 6 months (March to August, and September to February). A total of 118 young women and men have benefited from these training programs.



*Job-oriented skill-training programs offered by READ*

## 2). Self Help group (SHG) Training at Andimadam and Senthurai Centers:

Following the promotion of women self-help groups, further training is given to the members to build their capacity. The training is based on two pre-set modules; each module has a number of training topics, such as on further explanation and training in the self-help concept, collective action, group participation, savings, micro-crediting and participation of women in development. The number of SHG members trained in each module in each center is presented below:

Block/Center	Number of women trained in	
	Module I	Module II
Andimadam	158	129
Senthurai	82	60
Total	240	189

## 3). Animators and Representatives trainings (A & R Training):

This is an intensive training given to the leaders of SHGs who need to function as local Animators and Representatives of their groups and their villages. This training is based on 3 modules given on 3 different occasions. The training was on leadership, animator's role in motivating people and group management & accounts maintenance. The number of women trained in each module in each center is given below. These training programs are continuing after this reporting period.

Block/Center	Number of women trained in		
	Module I	Module II	Module III
Andimadam	159	129	69
Senthurai	91	71	69
Total	250	200	138

## 4). Accounts and finance management training to SHGs:

The SHGs due to their involvement in savings and credit activities, need to be familiar with simple accounting and banking systems. Also they need to be trained on finance and personnel management to maintain the group and to run their activities

without flaw. Accordingly, trainings on these topics were arranged to clusters of SHG members.



## 5). Rural Entrepreneurs' Development Training:

This training was given to the women in SHGs and to youth in both Andimadam and Senthurai Blocks with prospective entrepreneur qualities. This training was sponsored by different Government Departments as detailed below:

Name of Department sponsoring the training	No. of supported trainees	No. of days	Date of training
i). District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), Tamil Nadu government	55	7	Nov. 5-12, 2001
	56	7	Dec. 12-18, 2001
ii). Tamil Nadu Dravida Housing Corporation (THADCO), Tamil Nadu government	30	7	Jan. 4-10, 2002
	30	7	Jan. 29-25, 2002
iii). District Industries Center (DIC), Tamil Nadu government	29	7	Feb. 19-25, 2002
Total	210	35	

The local banks are linked with this training to extend credit to trained entrepreneurs to start different enterprises of their choice. The process of mobilizing bank loans is still ongoing.

## 6). Training for total sanitation in villages:

The government's "Total Sanitation program" aims to bring consciousness among villagers on rural sanitation and to bring total sanitation in rural areas by adopting house-based toilets in every village house. To aware and to train the villagers on the construction and upkeep of toilets and hygienic environment, a motivational training was given to select villagers (panchayat-wise and village-wise). These trainings were conducted on July 3 and July 6, 2001 respectively. The number of persons trained are as below:



Block/Center	Number of trainees	
	Panchayat-wise	Village-wise
Andimadam	17	32
Senthurai	13	23
Total	30	55

## **B. CAMPAIGNS**

Apart from Institutional trainings, READ reached into the communities and organized different campaigns to aware and educate the people on health, sanitation, environment, and civic responsibilities. The campaigns consisted of seminars, meetings, poster campaigns, counseling, rallies and visual shows.

### **1). National Environmental Awareness Campaign:**

This was sponsored by the Ministry of Environment and Forest, Government of India through the nodal agency, CPR Foundation, Chennai. It was held in three villages on different dates with different programs. All these campaigns were organized for women in SHGs, local students in Higher Secondary schools and young potential farmers.

Place	Date	Type of program
Senthurai	March 27, 2002	Rally on Environmental protection followed by a public meeting and video show
Cholankudikadu	March 28, 2002	Street theater on protected water, importance of latrines, environmental sanitation and afforestation
Thirakkalapur	March 29, 2002	Vermiculture demonstration in order to utilize organic wastes and planting of new seedlings, followed by a seminar on environmental protection

### **2). Pre Election Awareness campaign – 2001:**

The Panchayat election was held on 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> October 2001 in Tamilnadu. The Panchayat Raj, as visualized, must be a local administrative body of people's choice and aimed at electing the right kind of members to serve the Panchayat Raj Institutions – District, Block and Village level – a 3 tier system of self-governance.

But people are not fully aware of this self-governance system and worst of all, this system is also politicized and dominated by political bodies.

To aware people on the system and to educate them to make informed decisions to choose their best representatives, this campaign was conducted prior to the election for one week. 33 Panchayats in Andimadam and Senthurai Blocks have been covered through this campaign, particularly for SHG women, youth and select people from the community. A total of 1087 people in Andimadam Block and 952 in Senthurai Block were directly met by this campaign through lectures, participatory discussion and IEC materials.

### **3). Campaign on World Population Day:**

The population increase and its repercussions are important subjects that should be known and understood by the people. World Population Day was chosen to disseminate this information. READ in coordination with the Field Publicity Department of the Central Government campaigned in villages in Andimadam Block to aware the people with meetings, lectures, posters, pamphlets and film shows in the evening. A special half-day program of awaring the younger generation was organized for students in the Government Higher Secondary School, Andimadam with film show, speech competition and lecture.

### **4). Health awareness campaign:**

In 30 villages in both Andimadam and Senthurai Blocks, this campaign was held all through the reporting period. Our Health workers and a professional doctor provided health information, nutritious food counseling, preventive health education and reproductive health counseling to mothers. Posters, pamphlets, personal counseling and lectures were the methods used in these campaigns.

### **5). Child Health Education campaign:**

This was organized for mothers in SHGs. One campaign was held in each cluster of SHGs (each cluster has approximately 5 SHGs). Thus 56 campaigns have been organized both in Andimadam and Senthurai Blocks to cover all existing 302 SHGs. These campaigns consisted of closed-group meetings with mothers, and lectures and counseling methods were used as the tools to educate and aware the mothers on practices to promote the health of their children.



*Child rights awareness campaign: students play the “Katta Bommanna drama to learn about children rights*

**6). Child rights awareness campaign:**

Twenty villages in Andimadam Block were covered in this project. The subjects discussed were the rights of children to education, play, proper health care and recreation. The evils of child labor, undernourishment and improper health care and immunization were explained to select village groups represented mostly by members of labor families. A total of 52 children participated in this 2-day campaign.

**7). Campaign to strengthen national integration:**

Integration, tolerance, adjustability and selflessness are values that are slowly emerging among people in our community. The reasons for this are many, like religious fanaticism, traditional conservatism, increased competition in every field and so on. This disrupts the harmony of the society and ultimately the country.

In order to infuse and rebuild the feeling of

integration among people, this campaign was organized in several sensitive villages in both Andimadam and Senthurai Blocks.

News clippings on various communal and caste based problems, terrorism, religious excesses were used to disseminate the information on the need of local integration and national integration.

**8). HIV/AIDS awareness camp for migrant workers:**

In recent years, we have become increasingly involved in HIV/AIDS awareness and intervention activities in the district, because the spread of the disease is alarming. Since the need is warranted, we have organized exclusive HIV/AIDS awareness camps in Andimadam and Senthurai Blocks, covering the migrating labor population in the area who are supposed to be the risk population. This is only a preliminary action and we are hoping to undertake further projects in the future to cover all sections of the society.

**C. RALLIES**

Two important rallies were organized with the active participation of motivated youth and women in SHGs.

**1). AIDS awareness rally:**

In three villages – Elaiyur, Ananthavadi and Andimadam-, an AIDS awareness rally was organized on three different days starting from World AIDS Day (December 1<sup>st</sup>) onwards. About 1500 youth students and women in SHGs participated in these rallies with slogans, banners, placards.



*AIDS rally of school students and self-help group members at Anandavadi village of Sendurai block.*





*Students of the Mother Theresa school in Periyakrishnapuram.*

## 2). Anti-liquor rally:

A rally against the sale of illicit arrack was conducted by the women self-help groups themselves at Thirukalappur village. Illicit liquor was a menace in this area, and although many complaints were made to government authorities and police to take action against it, none were heard. So the women resorted to organize a rally to draw the attention of authorities. And with success! About 150 women from 10 SHGs participated in the rally with slogans, placards, and banners against illicit arrack. Following the rally, they made a personal appeal to the liquor sellers and producers to not indulge in such anti-social activities. It was a real awakening for the people, as it is a result of our development of motivation.

## **D. SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL COACHING CENTERS**

Also during this reporting period we were able to continue the three different educational programs:

### 1). Mother Theresa Kindergarten schools:

In Thirukalapur and Periyakrishnapuram villages, the kindergarten schools are being run with the following students and teachers strength:

Periyakrishnapuram: 12 students; 2 teachers.  
Thirukalapur: 23 students; 2 teachers.

Both the schools are being run in rented buildings and we are looking for philanthropic supporters so we can purchase land and a permanent school building for this activity.

### 2). “Anbagam” - Special schools for mentally retarded children:

We were already running a special school and home for mentally retarded children at Andimadam. This school received official government recognition on July 24, 2001. In addition, in this reporting period we have started another special school for mentally retarded children at Perambalur, as the need was pointed out by the District Collector and the District Disabled Rehabilitation Officer of Perambalur District. Both the special schools serve their purpose with utmost commitment.

We have made a plea to the District Collector to offer a piece of government land for this charity activity to construct a permanent school building for these mentally retarded children. And we are continuously looking for philanthropic supporters to help construct this school building and to offer quality training and rehabilitation service to these needy children.

### 3). Tuition centers:

Many students in villages are devoid of a stimulating educational atmosphere at home (due to lack of proper light, privacy, etc.) and they are also without tutorial support because their parents are illiterates.

To raise their educational achievements, evening tuition centers at 6 villages have been started in addition to the KKS project centers mentioned later in this report. Educated volunteers from respective villages have come forward to undertake coaching classes in these centers. This is a real educational booster program that strongly benefits many poor rural children.





*The evening tuition centers in the villages provide coaching and guidance for the students, and the attendance is always great! Learning and studying together is productive and fun!*

## **E. SPECIAL PROJECTS**

### **1). KKS funded project:**

Karl Keubalk Stiftung (KKS), a funding organization in Germany has supported a one-year project during the reporting period. This project is to promote health consciousness among rural mothers and to provide health and educational care to children in 5 villages in Andimadam Block.

The following programs have been undertaken through the project:

- Organization of 54 new women SHGs.
- Training and workshops to mothers in these SHGs on reproductive and child health.- Health education campaigns in these 5 project villages on nutritious food practices, environmental sanitation and preventive health education
- Medical camps – 10 camps on different occasions, at two camps for each project village. These camps involved medical officers of the local Government Hospital, health educators, nurses and READ's staff
- Management and accounts maintenance training

to SHG leaders

- Evening tuition centers – one in each project village to provide extra educational coaching to children. This was undertaken by an educated volunteer from the SHG and because of the success, this program is still being continued even now.

### **2). John M. Lloyds Foundation's project:**

Sahaya International Inc., USA, our partner and sponsor for many of our service activities, had mobilized a grant from the John M. Lloyds Foundation, USA to be executed by READ in its service area. It was a one year project carried out from April 2001 to March 2002.

The purpose of the project was two-folded. One was to undertake further preparatory work to build a base for longterm HIV/AIDS intervention programs in the area and two, to fulfill several social needs of the people to win their confidence and to ensure their participation in the forthcoming massive HIV/AIDS awareness and intervention





*The Anna Salai women self-help group of Keelneduvai has started an ornamental chain production unit to improve their economic status.*

project. As visualized this was successfully implemented with the following activities.

Under HIV/AIDS preparatory program, the activities carried out were:

- HIV/AIDS awareness survey in the whole Perambalur District.
- AIDS rallies (see above).
- AIDS awareness meetings for adult men, women in SHGs, leaders of other NGOs, high school and college students.
- Distribution of brochures, stickers with information on HIV/AIDS.
- During the month of December 2001, special lectures and discussions were also made by Dr. Koen Van Rompay, an AIDS researcher at the University of California (Davis, USA) and secretary of Sahaya International Inc., when he spent time at READ.

Under social need fulfillment program, the activities carried out were:

- Organization of 150 new women SHGs (which brings our total to 302 SHGs).
- Promotion of savings and crediting activities in the SHGs.
- Mobilization of revolving fund from the local bank to augment their credit extension and to enhance their access to more finances.
- Organization of skill-trainings to youth on tailoring, typewriting, hand-made greeting card production and computer operation
- Provision of educational materials and other school requirements to students in the two

kindergarten schools run by READ and other school requirements.

A total of 50 training programs and campaigns were executed during this reporting period under this project in various villages in Andimadam and Senthurai Blocks.

### **3). Belgian Student's fundraiser:**

During March 2001, thanks to the help of Fr. Filip DePloige, the schools of the St. Jacob parish in Borsbeek, near Antwerp (Belgium) organized a major fundraising event to remember Lent: students and their family and friends went on a 10 km walk or a 30 km bike ride. The money they raised was used for school children and orphans, and also to open Anbagam, a special school for mentally retarded children in Perambalur (see above). The money was also used to continue the evening tuition centers from January 2002 onwards.

## **F. NETWORKING**

READ has promoted a network of NGOs with similar objectives by the name of AIM network. At present 7 NGOs are in the network spread in Perambalur and Thanjavur Districts. Already, HIV/AIDS awareness survey was conducted in Perambalur District involving this network. And there are plans to use this network to undertake AIDS intervention activities in the District. The members of this network meet regularly, once every 3 months, to plan their activities.



---

## **G. STAFF CAPACITY BUILDING**

We are happy to report that in recent years, READ has become involved in a growing array of field and Institutional activities. Accordingly, it has to recruit new staff. To build the capacity of these staff to cope with an effective project implementation, they were sent for different trainings/workshops at reputed training institutions/organizations in the government and voluntary sector.

In this reporting period, 10 of our staff had undergone 61 different training/workshops on different subjects such as reproductive health, AIDS awareness methods, prevention of common diseases, training on disability, communication skills, trainers of trainees program and so on.

The following are some of the organizations that provided these trainings:

- ADD India, Trichy – on disability and related subjects.
- TNVHA, Chennai- Health and related subjects
- SIAAP, Chennai – on HIV/AIDS.
- VIDYASAGAR, Chennai – on disability.
- MASW, Madurai – on street theater.
- ICCW, Chennai – on children’s right.
- Children’s voice, Chennai – on child labour and rights- herbal cure.
- Women Development Department, State Government – on SHG training.
- DRDA, State Government – on Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking water and total sanitation scheme.
- State Government – on Panchayat raj.
- Health Department, State Government – on reproductive & child health.

(For further details on the names of staff and the trainings attended, see Annexure 2)

## **H. ACCREDITATION/RECOGNITION**

a). READ has been accredited as the District Resource Center and the District Facilitation center for Perambalur District to represent the Tamilnadu Voluntary Health Association (TNVHA), Chennai. With this status, it serves as the training center and organizer for TNVHA programs for NGOs in the Perambalur District.

b). READ was selected as a member of the District Local Level Committee for three years under the National Trust Act of 1999.

c).READ has been awarded the status of District Coordinator for the Tamil Nadu Science Forum in this reporting year. The purpose of this program is to organize eco-clubs among school children and youth in villages, and through these eco-clubs disseminate environmental information. Another goal is to identify “young scientists” among the school children and send them for state competitions. Accordingly, 5 eco-clubs have been organized so far in Thirukkalapur, Vilandai, Thennur, Periyathatur and Ponparappi villages. Mrs Sivagamasundari of READ was appointed as coordinator for this program, and she is partially paid by the Tamil Nadu Science Forum. The Science Forum donated, through READ, a radio with tape recorder to these 5 groups. The Tamil Nadu Science Forum broadcasts every Sunday at 3 pm a program through India Radio-Chennai Channel on environmental protection, science and technology and general affairs. It is expected that the eco-clubs listen to this broadcast (and also recored them on their tape-recorder) to enrich their knowledge and also disseminate it to others via the radio/tape recorder sets that were donated.

d). Anbagam, our special School for mentally retarded children in Andimadam was recognized by the State Government and to that effect an order was issued. This recognition order was handed over by the Ariyalur District Collector Mr.Rakesh Kumar Yadav I.A.S to READ at the Ariyalur Collectorate.

## **I. LINK SERVICE**

READ has been assigned to serve as a link agency between SAATHI (Solidarity & Action Against The HIV Infection India) , Chennai, and its sponsors in the USA. The grant funds from the John Lloyd Foundation (USA) were channeled through Sahaya International and READ to SAATHII. This project is aimed at mapping the HIV services in India. The collaboration between READ and SAATHII will continue to grow.

## **J. CELEBRATIONS**

-Annual Day of READ was celebrated on December 29, 2001, which was presided over by Dr. Koen Van Rompay, USA and felicitated by

Mr. Chandrahasan and Mr. Iddimannan, project officers of Perambalur District.

- Annual Day for Mother Theresa Kindergarten school at Periyakrishnapuram which was presided over by the Panchayat president Mr. Senthamilselvan of Periyakrishnapuram.
- Annual Day of Mother Theresa Kindergarten school at Thirukalapur which was presided over by Prof. Mani (Retired) of Thirukalapur.
- Annual Day of Tuition centers at Vilandai – which was presided over by Mr. Natarajan, Advocate at Vilandai.
- World women’s day at Periyakrishnapuram, which was presided over by Mr. Senthamilselvan, Panchayat President, Periyakrishnapuram.
- Radio Association celebration in which radio and tape recorder were donated to the Association by READ.

#### **K. LOAN DISTRIBUTION TO SHGs**

For the SHGs promoted by READ, efforts were taken to mobilize loans from the State Bank of India, Varadharajanpet to expand their credit activities. The SHG of Keelneduvai received a loan of Rs. 250,000 (approx. \$5300) to expand their “covering chain making unit”.

#### **L. VISITORS**

READ received frequent visits by dignitaries and government officials to participate in or to study and observe the many activities. During this reporting period, the following persons have visited READ:

- Dr. Koen Van Rompay, secretary of Sahaya International, USA.
- Ariyalur District Collector, Mr. Rakesh Kumar Yadav I.A.S Ariyalur
- Project officer, Mr. Chandrahasan, Perambalur.
- District Disabled Rehabilitation Officer, Mr. Sarangapani, Perambalur.
- Zonal officer, Mr. Kumar, TNVHA.
- ADD India, Trichy representatives Mr. Lobidoss and Mr. Murali.
- Mr. Raman Singh, President of Sahaya International Inc., USA.
- Ms. Britt-Marie Strandal and Ms. Monica, Sweden.
- Dr. Malathi Sankaran, Chennai.
- Miss. Sumathi Sankaran, USA.



#### **M. FUNDING SOURCES**

In this reporting year, READ received support from the following organizations/departments:

- Sahaya International Inc., USA, and its large network of volunteers in the USA and Europe.
- John M. Lloyd Foundation, USA.
- Karl Keubal Stiftung (KKS), Germany.
- DRDA & Women Development scheme, Perambalur (Government)
- Association for India’s Development (Oregon Chapter).
- St. Jacob Parish, Belgium.
- Local Donations.

READ raised considerable money through the sale of embroidered greeting cards that are produced by the trainees, and through job works in tailoring, typewriting and computer to local people at low recharge costs.

#### **N. THANK-YOU’S**

In addition to the organizations and volunteers listed above who provided tremendous financial support, READ had enormous moral and physical support from its well wishers, friends and board members.

We take this opportunity to thank all our donors and supporters without whose support we could not have done anything substantial in our mission.

Last but not least, I extend my heartfelt thanks to READ’s office bearers and its committed and service-oriented staff for their best cooperation and dedication to achieve our objectives in this reporting year.

While thanking all of you again, I also hope that all of you can continue your support and guidance in the next financial year to render our service to the needy.

We thank again each and one of you.