



Rural Education & Action Development (READ)

Andimadam, Tamil Nadu, India

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Fiscal year April 2002- March 2003.

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. Dr. An Van Rompay (Belgium)

Address:

D. Selvam (Secretary)
1926 Sakthi Vinayagar St.
Vilandai, Andimadam-621 801
Tamil Nadu, India
Phone: +(91)-4331-242583/242483.
E-mail: readpen@sancharnet.in

Website: www.sahaya.org

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



Honourable President and Members of the General Body,

READ has successfully completed its 9th year in its long service mission. While undertaking many tasks, READ was confronted by many challenges and hardships. Yet READ has faced them all boldly and continued its service.

Our thanks goes out to the support of our friends, partners and well-wishers. While thanking them all, I take much pleasure in presenting this annual report of our activities for the year 2002-2003 before this honourable General Body of READ for its approval and further guidance.

The activities are detailed under different programs implemented in this reporting period.

D. Selvam
(Secretary, READ)



Progress report:

Table of contents:

- I. HIV/AIDS awareness & intervention
- II. HIV/AIDS network
- III. Disability empowerment
- IV. Schools & Coaching Centers
- V. Women Development
- VI. Skill Development
- VII. Other Trainings/meetings
- VIII. General Programs
- IX. Recognitions & Membership
- X. Link Services
- XI. Celebrations
- XII. Administration
- XIII. Visitors
- XIV. Funding Sources
- XV. Conclusion

I.HIV/AIDS AWARENESS AND INTERVENTION PROGRAM

This is an on-going program being implemented since 1998. During the past years, this program has grown in different dimensions both with regard to the scope of activities as well as the extent of the implementation area. The activities carried out under this program are detailed below:

1.Awareness camps:

HIV/AIDS awareness camps have been organized in 30 villages both in Andimadam and Senthurai Blocks in this reporting period. These camps were performed by the cultural team of READ to disseminate information on HIV/AIDS in a practical way. These camps benefited approximately 1850 people in rural areas and enabled READ to identify 14 HIV-infected persons from this area.

Apart from that, school AIDS education camps have been organized in 15 schools for the students studying in 9th to 12th Standards. 825 students benefited from this program. All these camps were supported financially by Sahaya International.

2. AIDS orphan children support services:

Three children in Andimadam Block whose parents had deceased because of AIDS were supported in this reporting year with food, medical needs, accommodation and educational needs. Ten

other children were provided with school materials only (books, notebooks, stationery and uniform dress) and one boy was supported with his hostel fees for one year in this reporting period.

Besides them, 10 AIDS orphan children under the care of CST organization at Namakkal were also supported for 3 months with food and hostel needs.

Financial support for these activities came from the John M. Lloyd Foundation, USA; Sahaya International Inc., USA and the children of the St. Jacob Parish in Borsbeek, Belgium. The support from the Belgian parish is the continuation from the last fiscal year, which was utilized for the first 3 months in this reporting period.

3. Meetings on HIV/AIDS prevention and care:

This was organized for women self-help groups (SHGs) both in Andimadam and Senthurai Blocks. The meeting contents emphasized women to give serious attention to this social menace and also made them peer-educators in their respective villages. It was a one-day program in each SHG, and 50 meetings were organized. The John M. Lloyd Foundation, USA, offered financial support to these activities.



World AIDS Day: Women's awareness rally at Vardharajanpet

4. Staff training:

To enable the staff with the skills to undertake the HIV/AIDS education/awareness programs most effectively and systematically, two special trainings were organized for the staff involved in this program – one for 3 days and the other for 2 days. A total of 22 staff members of READ have underwent these trainings. Dr. Venkatesh Chakrapani and Ms. Latha Mani from SAATHI, Chennai conducted these trainings. Besides, 4 staff



Dr. Venkatesh Chakrapani (center, white shirt) provided training to the AIM network on HIV issues.

members were sent for a 6-day special training on HIV/AIDS at SIAAP, Chennai. The John M. Lloyd Foundation, USA, offered financial support to this activity.

5. World AIDS day Rally & campaign:

To mark the World AIDS Day during December, we have organized a World AIDS day campaign in 25 villages both in Andimadam and Senthurai Blocks. READ staff conducted these campaigns in which local VIPs participated together with the general public.



World AIDS Day: awareness rally of school students.

6. Collaborative service with SAATHII:

SAATHII, an organization in Chennai undertook a mapping work on HIV/AIDS services in India. For this project it also has a branch unit at Kolkatta. READ is a collaborator in this work in terms of fund transferring and monitoring the financial aspects of this project. Similarly, READ extended its collaborative financial service for another program – Gay/lesbian/bisexual/transsexual program – which was undertaken by Dr. Venkatesh Chakrapani of SAATHII.

II. HIV/AIDS NETWORK PROGRAM

During the past year, READ had promoted a network of NGOs by name “AIM NET-IN” to undertake HIV/AIDS programs in a wider area. 7 NGOs (READ, OSAI, GGS, INDO Trust, GUIDE, SUBIKSHA and CST) are members in this network at present, and they are from Perambalur, Salem and Thanjavur Districts. 32 staff members from all these 7 NGOs was specifically trained in this reporting period on HIV/AIDS education and intervention activities. SIAAP Chennai, and SAATHII Chennai provided the trainings.

This network had collected information about the health delivery Institutions and medical



Mrs. Latha Mani of SAATHII trains AIM network social workers on HIV issues.

professionals in the area; the network identified HIV infected persons in the area, provides awareness, referral service, pre-test/post-test counseling and possible medical support for opportunistic diseases in HIV infected persons.

Besides, it has developed a link with the Government Sanatorium at Tambaram near Chennai to mobilize medical aid to the HIV-infected in the area. Thus, once in a month the HIV-infected persons are taken to this hospital for medical assistance by the network members.

Apart from that, this network had produced IEC materials, stickers with slogans on the prevention of HIV/AIDS and distributed to the public. In this reporting year, two rallies and 4 camps were organized in 6 Blocks to mark the World AIDS day. This network covers the whole Perambalur District and a part of Thanjavur District with its HIV/AIDS prevention and intervention services.

Three committees have been formed in this network – one for Documentation, one for Evaluation of activities and the 3rd one for Fundraising work. READ is the convener of this network.

III. EMPOWERMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITY

Community-based rehabilitation (CBR) service to persons with disability is a program initiated during the previous fiscal year and expanded in this reporting period with various activities. The details are outlined below:

1. Staff Training:

Five staff members of READ underwent a special training on Disability at ADD India, Trichy. This

training was given in 5 sessions for a total of 45 days. This was the preparatory training to undertake the CBR activities in a professional way.

2. Data collection on disabled in the area:

The trained staff was first inducted to conduct a census survey in Andimadam and Senthurai Blocks to identify and list the persons with disability. After identification, they prepared a face sheet and case study about each disabled person. Thus a basic data sheet was prepared and documented for the forthcoming rehabilitation services.

3. Organizational meetings and Sangam formation:

Meetings were organized for these persons with disability and their parents/guardians in different villages to make them understand the need and importance of an organized structure/forum for the



Mother Theresa Standard English School of Periyakrishnapuram



Children of the evening tuition center at Kattathur

disabled to speak out their voice and to represent them. Following this, Sangams were formed – 10 in Andimadam Block and 10 in Senthurai Block – exclusively of persons with disability. These Sangams were educated and motivated to function as self-help groups to bring prosperity to the disabled. This program is successful, and we are continuing the process of forming more Sangams for the disabled in different areas.

4. Community Study by the trained staff:

In order to involve the community in this disability service with more clarity on disability, a community study was undertaken by the trained staff. Observation, interaction, interviews and questionnaire methods were used to study the level of understanding of the community on disability and to study the training/education required for them to be a supportive partner in this service. This worked well and we were able to identify a homogenous community willing to cooperate in our activities.

5. Sangam Leaders Training:

Two trainings were organized for 30 members of the sangams at READ's training center. It was a

2-day training on leadership, group functioning, available resources, educational possibilities, support services and other training possibilities. The leaders who were equipped this way will be the motivators to their sangam members.

6. Training to Parents:

Training was organized for the parents of disabled children – one at Perambalur and the other at Andimadam. It was a 2-day program in which 75 parents participated in each training. The training enlightened the parents on disability at home, resources available for rehabilitation, institution and support services available and so on. The training at Andimadam was given by ADD India and the Spastic society of Trichy. Mr. Sethulingam of PULO organization gave the training at Perambalur.

7. Physiotherapy training:

Since physiotherapy is a much required support service in CBR activity, READ had sent one of its staff for the Physiotherapy training at ADD India, Trichy. This was a 45-days training which provided professional skills to the trainee.

8. Cultural team formation:

For an effective CBR activity, the need for a cultural team was felt essential to disseminate the information easily and effectively. Thus a cultural team was formed comprising READ's staff, volunteers and disabled persons from the community – a total of 22 persons. Training was organized for them to prepare, design and enact street theatre, folk drama and so on, on disability issues.

9. Special Medical Camp for Disabled persons:

READ has arranged a special Medical camp to assess the percentage of disability in order to obtain an Identity Card (ID) from the District Disabled Rehabilitation Office. The team of special doctors and Health Inspectors and government hospital authorities were participated and assessed the disabled persons. Different category of disabled persons, a total of 692, attended this camp and 360 persons were eligible for getting Identity cards.

10. Awareness material development & collection:

To use in the CBR services, several IEC materials were purchased from ADD India, Trichy such as Posters, Cassettes, Video and Audio CDs.

IV. SCHOOLS/SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND COACHING CENTRES

Since its inception, READ has been involved in educational activities through schools and this program was also continued in this reporting period.

In addition to the already functioning pre-primary schools – Mother Theresa Kindergarten schools- a new primary school, namely the Jawahar Matriculation School at Andimadam joined READ's administration in this reporting period.

The two special schools for mentally retarded children – at Andimadam and Perambalur- are functioning well serving the bereaved community. In this reporting period two special educators were appointed for these schools. We have applied for Government land on lease/charity to construct a permanent building for these schools. This is in progress.

In addition, we are running educational coaching centers/tuition centers in 8 villages to help students avail tutorial support and additional educational training. This program was initiated during last financial year and is being continued in this year also. A volunteer from the respective village functions as the honorary teacher in this program.



The Annai self-help group members of Andimadam are harvesting ground-nuts.



Typewriting training at READ.

These 7 centers are located in Vilandai, Thanjavuranchavadi, Periyakrishnapuram, Kovilvazhkai, Thirukalappur, Kilneduvai and Kattathur villages.

V. WOMEN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Women development through SHG formation, trainings, micro crediting and resource mobilization has been an ongoing program of READ for the past four years. In this reporting year we have continued have substantial activities in this area.

a) Self Help Group training:

Training was given to 110 groups in this year covering 1725 women members. The training is on self-help concept, collective thinking and action, savings and micro crediting, accounts maintenance and group management.

b) Promotion of new SHGs: (CAPART-assisted Project)

75 new SHGs were promoted in this year, with assistance of CAPART. These groups are spread in both Andimadam and Senthurai Blocks. As in the other groups, these groups were also given training on self-help concept, savings, micro-crediting, micro-enterprise development, collective planning, group management and accounts maintenance. Efforts are being taken to link these SHGs with the local banks for financing support.

c) Entrepreneur Development Training:

In this year, 222 (195 women and 27 youth) were

given Entrepreneur Development training through READ, which was financially supported by the 'Mahalir Thittam' project of State Government.

VI. SKILL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

This has been an ongoing program of READ since 1996, which is funded by both outside funding sources and self-support and self support through trainees fee.

a) Greeting card production training:

25 girls underwent training in this vocation for 6 months through support of AID (Association for India's Development), USA. All the trainees were absorbed in READ's production unit on piece rate payment. Thus these girls are able to earn at least Rs.400 per month.

b) Typewriting training:

25 girls were trained in 2 batches for 6 months in both English and Tamil type-writing and were sent for Government Examination. 75% of them passed the examination, which was a proud achievement of READ. At this juncture, I am happy to inform you that this Typewriting institute has obtained government recognition and the above students form the first batch after the accordance of the recognition. This training is a paid training.

c) Tailoring training:

This year 95 girls from Andimadam Block and 40 girls from Senthurai Block were trained in tailoring through a 6-months course. This is also a paid training, with collection of training fees from the students.

VII. OTHER TRAININGS/MEETINGS

a) Staff training:

A 3-day capacity building training was conducted to READ's staff members. Mental fitness, role play, adjustments, adaptation, leadership, hierarchy, code of conduct and many other issues were discussed in this training to make the staff fit in the office. Mr. Kennedy from Sivagangai was the key trainer in this program, which was financially supported by Sahaya International Inc., USA.

b) Accounts maintenance training to SHG Leaders:

It is heartening to record that the savings and



The Thirukkalapur women self-help group volunteering 4 days of their time to deepen and desilt a water reservoir to benefit their community.

credit operation in SHGs has grown amazingly, beyond the expectations of SHG members themselves. Being illiterate/semiliterate people, they find it difficult to maintain the accounts and transact credit business. Therefore, a special training was organized for SHG leaders on accounts maintenance and credit business system. This was a one-day training.

c) Staff review meetings:

In order to avoid misconception and misunderstanding among staff, these review meetings are arranged every weekend. This year also these review meetings were properly conducted, raised coordination in the work place and also promoted a feeling of unity among staff.

d) Drought management training:

CAPART had arranged a drought management program at Perambalur to manage the drought situation in the area in this reporting year, due to the failure of the monsoon. READ participated in this training and as a follow-up, it had surveyed Andimadam and Senthurai Blocks and identified the drought relief activities for the area.

e) Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation training:

The Institute of Health Management, Aurangabad, had arranged a Planning Monitoring and Evaluation training for health aspects. READ's Executive Director has participated in this 10 days residential training at Pachod, Maharastra.

VIII. GENERAL PROGRAMS

a) Tamilnadu Science Forum:

READ is the District Coordinator for the Tamilnadu Science forum. In this respect it has organized 10 children's groups in this reporting year to work on environmental protection and to identify and encourage 'young scientists' from rural belts.

b) Health awareness program:

10 SHGs were selected for this year and provided health awareness particularly, reproductive health and child health. This program was given in 3 phases, each phase being 2 days. 10 villages were covered in this program.

c) Consumer awareness program:

This was a 4-day program for SHG women to



Annual Day of READ's schools

aware them on the problems related to consumerism. Rural consumers who are totally unaware of these problems commonly consume second quality, under-weighted and adulterated products. This program was an eye-opener for them. 165 women from various SHGs participated in this program. The Coordinator of District Consumer Forum was the key person in this program.

d) Environmental Clubs:

The eco-clubs formed among school-going children during the previous year continued its activities also in this year. A tape recorder with radio was given to these clubs through the Tamilnadu Science Forum to learn more on environmental issues.

e) National Environmental Awareness Campaign:

This is a government of India sponsored program being implemented every year in our area. This year the environmental awareness campaign was organized in Elaiyur, Iyanthathanur and

Andimadam villages on the topic 'Water conservation'. Following this, a rainwater-harvesting pit was established in the Training Center of READ at Andimadam for demonstration.

f) Awareness Generation program:

This program was conducted for 25 rural women from 5 villages at READ's training center. It was an 8-day program during the month of February 2003. The subjects discussed were leadership quality development, population education, entrepreneur development, home based production activities, role of women in development, politics and so on. Many dignitaries including the local Block Development officer, and health educators participated in this program. The cultural team of READ 'Vidiyal' performed folk drama and songs to supplement the lectures. The Tamilnadu State Social Advisory Board, Chennai, financially supported this program.

g) Total Sanitation program:

Under this program, the government is supporting rural people to construct public toilets. READ has been sanctioned Rural Sanitary Mart (RSM) at Andimadam. READ was entrusted the responsibility to purchase and supply required materials by the DRDA. We have supplied those materials to T.Palur, Senthurai Unions and to OSAI organization, which also undertook this construction program.

h) Reproductive Health and Rights program:

This was a Tamil Nadu Voluntary Health Association (TNVHA)-sponsored program executed through READ for NGOs in Perambalur District. Under this program, 9 NGOs were each entrusted to identify 100 potential women in a Block in Perambalur District in the age group 15-45 years and impart education on reproductive health and rights. As you know, READ is a permanent member of TNVHA, Chennai, and also the District Resource Center, District Facilitation center for Disabled activities and Convener NGO for the District Co-ordination Committee for TNVHA.

i) Old age Home:

READ supports 40 aged people through a Home at Andimadam with food, medical care, recreation and family care. This is a consoling center for the

aged people who were deserted or neglected by their children.

j) Campaign Against Child Labor activity:

READ works to eradicate child labor in the area in collaboration with CACL, Tamilnadu. For this, READ has selected 18 girls, involved in cashew industries or silk weaving, to participate at the Conference on child labour at Chennai and Mysore.

k) Educational support:

READ supports a student who is doing an Agriculture Degree course with his college fee, books and educational needs. READ also supports many school students for the purchase of schoolbooks, educational needs and school uniform etc.

IX. RECOGNITIONS AND MEMBERSHIP STATUS

READ's Typewriting Institute has received government recognition in this reporting year. Further, READ was accorded District membership status in the following district and national level Forums:

1. District Local Level Committee for National Trust (for autism, cerebral palsy, mentally retarded)
2. District Hospital Development Advisory Board
3. District Task Force for Adolescents
4. District Family Welfare Advisory Committee
5. District Local Level Committee for National Trust (for autism, cerebral palsy, mentally retarded and multiple disability)
6. Block Level Task force for female victims
7. Block level Sarva Siksha Abiyan(SSA- Education to all) Committee – Andimadam/ Senthurai
8. All Panchayat level SSA Committee and Building Committee at Andimadam.
9. CBR LAN Network Board member
10. CACL, Tamilnadu

Besides, READ was accorded the status of Regional Representative office for AYA (Alliance for Youth Achievement) Inc., USA, in this reporting period, and as Nodal Agency for Sahaya International Inc., USA.

X. LINK SERVICES

READ is serving as link agency between SAATHII (Solidarity & Action Against the HIV Infection in India), Chennai, and its sponsors in the USA. This is a continuing program.

XI. CELEBRATIONS

READ celebrated the following important international and national days-

- World AIDS day – though it was celebrated in villages with different programs as detailed in this report, READ remembered this day with a simple celebration at its office.
- World Disabled Day- was celebrated during December 2002 at READ's Training center. The District Collector Mr. Rajesh Lakhoni, I.A.S., the District Disabled Rehabilitation Officer and many local dignitaries participated in this programme in which Identity Cards and 15 wheel chairs were issued to disabled people. A short training course was also organized for the parents of mentally retarded children on home-based support services to their children.
- Independence Day and Republic Day was celebrated by hoisting the national flag in its office.
- School Annual Day and READ's Annual Day – all schools run by READ together organized this Annual day function at Andimadam. The Project officer of Mahalir Thittam was chief guest during this celebration. He issued the certificates that completed the sewing, typewriting, computer and card making trainees.

XII. ADMINISTRATION

A new School building was rented in this reporting period for **ANBAGAM SPECIAL SCHOOL** at Perambalur.

10 new staff were recruited in this reporting period both for fieldwork and office work.

XIII. VISITORS

Several dignitaries visited READ in this reporting period as below:

- Ms.K.R. Selvamani, Asst. Project Officer, Tamilnadu State Social welfare Advisory Board,

-
- Chennai.
- District Educational Officer, Udayarpalayam
 - Mr. Chandrakasan, Project officer, Mahalir Thittam, Perambalur
 - Mr. Sarangapani, District Disabled Rehabilitation Officer, Perambalur
 - Mrs. Joanna L. Conti, Alliance for Youth Achievement, USA
 - Dr. Venkatesh Chakrapani, SAATHII, Chennai
 - Ms. Lathamani, SAATHII, Chennai

XIV. FUNDING SOURCES

In this reporting year READ received support from the following organizations/departments to carryout the above activities:

- Sahaya International Inc., USA
- John M. Lloyd Foundation, USA
- Global Strategies for HIV Prevention, USA
- LA Trobe University, Australia
- ADD India, Bangalore, India
- AID, USA
- Water net. Tamilnadu Federation
- TNVHA, Chennai
- Tamilnadu Social Welfare Advisory Board, Chennai
- TNDWC Ltd., State Government,
- CAPART, Government of India, Hydrabad
- DRDA, Government of Tamilnadu, Perambalur
- Tamilnadu Science Forum, Chennai
- CPR Foundation, Chennai
- TWAD Board, Perambalur

- CIIL, Mysore
- BDO, T. Palur
- Local donations, greeting card sale and vocational training fee income.

XV. CONCLUSION

READ has completed its 9th year in its long service mission with the tremendous financial support of all the organizations, government departments and individuals listed above. READ also secured valuable moral and physical support from its well-wishers, friends and board members when it faced problems.

I take this opportunity to thank all our donors and supporters especially Dr. Koen Van Rompay, his network of friends, his family in Belgium who stood on our side in all our activities and service mission.

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

While thanking all of you, I sincerely seek your support and cooperation also in the coming year to fruitfully continue our service and to undertake more and more service programs.

My heartfelt thanks to each of you.

