



Rural Education & Action Development (READ)

Andimadam, Tamil Nadu, India

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Fiscal year April 2010- March 2011

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



Honourable President and Members of the General Body,

I take pleasure in welcoming all and presenting READ's activities and accomplishments for the fiscal year 2010-2011. READ completed yet another year in its long journey of serving the poor and the marginalized sections of the population. We continued our regular activities from previous years, including formal and special schools, vocational training, children sponsorship, care and support services for people living with HIV/AIDS, women empowerment trainings, service to differently abled, microfinance activities and link services to NGO partners elsewhere in the country. But in this reporting year our focus was more on microfinance activities as this proved to be the best tool for economic development of low-income families. In this connection our Microfinance Institution (MFI) was rated by CRISIL- one of the leading rating agencies in India - on capacity, strength and weaknesses in executing MF activities and suggested the areas of improvement.

As in the previous years, Sahaya International Inc., USA, Sahaya International.eu (Belgium) SAWES and their networks of volunteers and contributors in the USA and Europe continued to be the major partners supporting READ's welfare and development activities. Nanayaturabhi Development Financial Services (NDFS) and State Bank of India (SBI) were the major contributors of microfinance loan funds in this year that were lent forward to our SHG clients. I extend my heartfelt thanks to them all for their generous support in executing our activities without constraints. I wish and request everyone's cooperation and patronage to continue also in the coming years to take READ to the next level of program implementation.

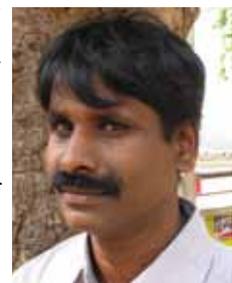


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1. EDUCATION

READ established and runs Educational Institutions both for normal children and intellectually disabled children from poor social groups in Andimadam, Periyakrishnapuram and Perambalur.

1.1. Formal education.

In Andimadam and Periyakrishnapuram villages, READ runs schools to offer formal education to poor normal children. The Jawahar Nursery and Primary school at Andimadam offers LKG, UKG and I standard to VII Standard education. The medium of instruction is English but Hindi is also taught to students in addition to their mother tongue Tamil. In the academic year 2010-11 the student strength in this school was 185(117 Boys and 68 girls). 12 qualified teachers and 6 Non-teaching staffs are working in this school. Two pick up vans transport children from distant areas to school and back home.

The Annai Teresa Nursery and Primary school at Periyakrishnapuram village has Kindergarten and I to V Standard of Primary education. The

medium of instruction is also English here. In the academic year 2010-2011 the students strength is 163 (95 boys and 68 girls). 7 trained teachers, one assistant and one driver.

Besides education, these schools have the objective to nurture their inherent talents in extra-curricular activities and their leadership qualities.

These schools offer free education and free uniforms to orphan and semi-orphan children who are part of our child sponsorship program. Once a year, a parents meeting is held to directly discuss the progress of their children and to get the parents involved in the further development of the schools.

Special events in this year:

- i) The birthday of our then visionary Chief Minister Kamaraj was celebrated on 15th July as “Education day”
- ii) The 64th Independence Day of India was celebrated with flag hoisting on 15th August.
- iii) Voice on climate crisis – a globally organized event:

Through 7347 events, 188 countries across the world came together to speak with one voice and to call the attention of the world community on the climate crisis – the pressing global problem. The organization 350.org coordinated this event globally. The children of our schools also participated in this “save the world” call on 10th October 2010 and the event was featured on the 350.org web site including the video documentary <http://youtu.be/Z-PoOkvz6v8>. The event was also published in a leading Tamil Daily newspaper “Thinathandi”.

- iv) On 10th November 2010, Mr. Pelle and Ms. Gitten, child sponsors from Sweden visited our school and interacted with our children and teachers.
- v) On 14th November 2010, the birthday of our then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was celebrated as Children’s day.
- vi) On 10th January 2011, Annual Day was celebrated and presided over by the Assistant Elementary Education Officer. In this grand celebration our schools correspondent Mr. Selvam, our schools patron Dr. Koen Van Rompay (Sahaya International, USA), READ’s President Ms. Leelamary and Treasurer Mr. Gunasekaran participated in this event.



The **Mother Teresa Standard English School** of Periyakrishnapuram village currently provides basic education to 171 children from underprivileged families. During 2010, the classrooms were provided with desks and benches. Our plans for the next few years construction of a 2nd level to accommodate the many students, and construction of a bridge at the entrance, where the moat turns into a torrential river after heavy monsoon rains.





On October 10, 2010, the READ schools participated in the campaign on global climate change.

1.2. Special Education Schools.

READ runs two Special Education schools, named “Anbagam” for intellectually disabled children, one at Andimadam and the other at Perambalur, 90 Kilometers away from Andimadam. Children with different levels of disability are admitted and trained according to their learning abilities. The children are trained on daily living activities, to understand concepts like shape, color and objects, persons and environment around them, and to adapt to the family and social

environment they are living in. These schools are recognized by the Tamilnadu government. These schools receive support from Rob Van Beurden, Diamond House, Belgium.

ANBAGAM Special School, Andimadam:

24 children (15 boys and 9 girls) are in the rolls in this academic year in which 22 are regularly attending school. Seven new children were admitted in this reporting year. Two special educators and one female helper are there to care for the children. This school is being run in



The Jawahar Matriculation School of Andimadam, of which construction was completed in 2009, provides currently basic education to 184 students, ranging from kindergarten to 6th Standard. Achievements in 2010 include the delivery of desks and benches to all classrooms, and the construction of a wash basin. Ongoing fundraising activities are focused on improving the infrastructure of the school.





Ranjitha, Manjula and Selvarani are 3 bright students from poor families. Thanks to our sponsorship program they are currently in college.

READ's Community Resource Center Children were divided into 2 sections by age - 5 to 10 years of age in one section and 11 to 16 years of age in the other. Among the total children 6 are mild mentally challenged, 7 moderate mentally challenged, 1 Down syndrome, 4 Autism and 6 are Cerebral palsied with Mental retardation. Each child gets special attention during school hours that starts by 9.30 am and ends by 3.30 pm. A school bus picks up children from distant places and returns them back home.

A file is maintained for each child with his/her base information like date of admission, case history, family profile, photocopy of identity card and progress chart. The curriculum includes cross-motor exercise, fine motor exercise, meal time behavior, dressing, grooming, toileting, receptive language, expressive language besides concept understanding. As extra-curricular activities the children are protectively allowed to play ball, to fill bottles with water, skipping, running, collection of stones and so on. Visual learning through television and pictures is also provided. We observed vast changes in the regular activities of the children, which were confirmed by their parents.

Special events in this year:

- i) During December Mr. --- from Jayankondam visited our school and distributed sweets and educational materials to our school children
- ii) During January 2011, two special educators from Vidya Sagar, Chennai (a reputed special education school and training center) visited

our school on our invitation and gave advice on vocational training to children, physiotherapy exercises, taking children to different places in local areas and so on.

- iii) A picnic was arranged for children on 17th February 2011 to Gangaikondacholapuram, a temple monument place. The children enjoyed the trip with songs and dance.

ANBAGAM Special School, Perambalur

This school has 28 children enrolled who are cared for by 4 special educators and one caretaker. Among the children are 8 children with mild disability, 19 are with moderate disability and one with severe disability. The same curriculum adopted in Andimadam school is also followed here. Being in a town, many mentally challenged children seek admission in this school, but due to inadequate space and funds, admission is limited.

2. ORPHAN AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

This is an ongoing program helping poor orphans, semi-orphans, vulnerable children and HIV-infected children in rural areas to meet their educational and health needs. The international network of Sahaya International (USA) and Sahaya International.eu arrange individual sponsors to each deserving child identified by READ. In this reporting year 193 children were sponsored individually.

In addition to this, Sahaya international (USA) raised funds through the annual Hope Walks Davis event to support 12 HIV infected and affected children in this year.

The sponsorship generally meets the cost of food, educational materials, school fees, school uniform dress and medical expenses. In addition, some children received other items from their sponsors, such as a bicycle, reading/writing desk, stationery and so on. Some sponsors also helped their children's families to start income-generating activities. The support of HIV-infected children includes the cost of their medical and nutritional needs.

The sponsorship helps older children to also pursue college studies including engineering, nursing and other professional courses.

In the month of December, the sponsored children were taken on a one-day trip to Silver



The PLHIV network has elected 9 leaders in 2010 (top). Training of READ staff on the basics of HIV, including interactive games to break the stigma about condoms.

Beach in Cuddalore in the company of Dr. Koen Van Rompay, Andy Lauer, Josh Gibson (all from USA).

3. HIV/AIDS CARE AND SUPPORT PROGRAM

This is an ongoing program of READ for the past 8 years. Sahaya International (USA) raised funds through the Hope walks Davis event to support HIV infected/affected children and vulnerable children. A total of 19 children received support in this reporting year, of which 14 received full support (i.e. including monthly provision of nutritious food supplements, medications and doctor consultation charges) and 5 received partial support.

In addition, through grant support from Gilead Sciences (USA), we continued previous programs and undertook new programs:

i) The Gilead Health center offers basic health services and distributes condoms. The Gilead

Counseling center offers individual and family counseling, conflict resolution, and legal advice to PLHIV. These centers are located at READ's Community Resource center, Andimadam.

ii) PLHIV network meetings continued to be held once a month to discuss their needs and activities.

iii) A monthly stipend of Rs. 300 was given to 108 members of the PLHIV network for their food expenses and for their travel expenses to obtain antiretroviral therapy (ART) from the Government Hospital of Thoracic Medicine at Tambaram or the government ART centers at Jayankomdam, Ariyalur or other nearest ART center.

iv) Training was given to 14 members in the PLHIV network on micro-loans and starting micro- enterprises.

v) Two READ staff were appointed as Outreach Workers (OW) to prepare and revise training materials, pre/post questionnaires and feedback

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- forms, and to review the HIV information booklet and flip chart to print the next edition.
- vi) 5000 booklets on HIV and 100 flip charts were printed and purchased, respectively.
 - vii) READ staff gave training on home-based care to 25 adult PLHIV.
 - viii) Training was given to 2 PLHIV to become part-time HIV peer educators. They did outreach activities with the barbers and self-help group leaders, and visited needy PLHIV at their homes to help provide HIV awareness among the relatives of PLHIV.
 - ix) Refresher training was given to 25 barbers.
 - x) The READ OWs and the part-time peer educators started meeting barbers and SHGs to provide HIV awareness and to distribute condoms. The HIV booklets and flip charts were also used in the refresher awareness program.

4. PROGRAMS FOR DIFFERENTLY ABLE PEOPLE

Differently able people need capacity-building trainings, confidence-building meetings, educational and career guidance, skill trainings and resources to face challenges in life. Lack of these support services totally isolate them from the mainstream life and make them dependent. READ, already active in the field of disability service, intends to address this problem by promoting self-help groups (SHGs) among disabled people similarly as among the rural women. Once the disabled people are organized into smaller groups they can be trained, motivated and educated in groups to get rid of their problems caused by their disability. With this understanding SHGs were promoted for disabled people in villages. In this reporting year 10 SHGs were promoted and the following programs were conducted for the members:

- i) A one-day training for the leaders of all the 10 SHGs on leadership, on organizing and conducting meetings, on information about disability services, on educational possibilities and resources and resource mobilization.
- ii) Monthly meetings in each group to interact among themselves, share and build confidence in
- iii) A World Disability Day program was conducted on (add date), with (say a few lines).
- iv) Efforts were taken to organize a camp to

assess the disability level in each disabled newly organized and to get Identity card from the District Disabled Rehabilitation Department of State Government.

5. READ COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER PROGRAMS

With funding from the Government of Japan, the READ Community Resource Center (RCRC) was previously constructed to accommodate a number of skill training, education, health and other development activities under one roof. In this reporting period the following activities were undertaken in RCRC:

5.1. Hand-made greeting cards training and production.

This activity is continuing for the past 13 years and is a fund-raising activity. In this reporting year, 10 girls have undergone training in this unit. Five among them intended to work in the production unit of READ and were employed along with the existing 5 card makers. Now 10 young women are making greeting cards mainly to be sold by our partner organization Sahaya International in USA and Belgium. In this year 2488 cards were produced in which 2105 cards were sent to USA and Belgium for sale. Further in this year our cards were displayed in the special exhibition organized by Vidya Sagar Special school, Chennai for handicrafts produced by charity organizations.

5.2. Tailoring training.

This is another ongoing program since READ's inception. In this reporting year 73 girls/women underwent training, from which 26 trainees passed the certificate level training. Training is offered on dress designing, stitching, packing and marketing. Training on kids wear and women's wear are given priority. This is a six-months training course. As a special training, 15 women from the Senthurai nutrition program center attended a 20-days crash training in tailoring in this unit.

5.3. Computer training.

READ offers basic computer operation training to rural school educated girls and youth in MS office, internet and other simple applications. In this year 36 students underwent training and successfully completed the course.

5.4. Typewriting training.

This course is a government recognized course, meaning that the candidates who pass the examinations conducted by the government will get a valid technical education certificate from the government department. This certificate is valid to pursue government employment. In this reporting year a total of 20 students were trained. In the examination conducted during August 2010, six of our trainees participated and 2 came out successfully. In the examination conducted during February 2011, two of our students participated and both came out successfully. The other students are preparing again to appear for examination in August 2011.

5.5. Book-binding training.

This activity was started in 2008 to train physically challenged and hearing impaired adults to earn for their life. The training is offered on notebook making including accounts book, ledger etc., and on spiral binding and regular bookbinding. Along with training, job work is obtained from the schools run by READ to supply the required notebooks to their students. In this reporting year 3 physically handicapped persons were trained in this unit which is managed by one physically handicapped woman and one hearing impaired man.

5.6. Mini health and physiotherapy center.

This unit was originally intended to serve the students in our Anbagam Special School run in the same complex because physiotherapy is an auxiliary unit of this Special School. But its services were extended two years ago to other differently-abled people in the community (in the SHGs promoted for disabled people) and to the members of READ's PLHIV network. Thanks to the support from Gilead Sciences, USA, the center is now called the Gilead Health center. One Nurse and one physiotherapist are working in this center.

Physiotherapy exercise is offered to Special School children regularly. Apart from that the following services were done in this reporting year:

- First aid and primary health care to 1083 persons including Special School children,

PLHIV network members, disabled people and normal people from the community and staff of READ's programs.

- For Anbagam Special School children – once weekly nail-cutting, once monthly weight checking and once in 6 months height measurement.
- For Jawahar school children and staff – first aid services to children who got bruises or cuts while playing and other primary health services.
- For all sponsored children – once monthly weight checking and once in 6 months height measurement; primary health care services.
- For members of PLHIV network- condom distribution, simple medications and once a month weight checking.

5.7. Gilead Counseling center.

This is a special center funded by Gilead Sciences (USA) to offer individual and family counseling to the members of the PLHIV network. Around 30 PLHIV members availed this counseling service in this reporting year. One counselor is appointed for this center.

5.8. Anbagam Special School for mentally challenged children.

This school has 2 spacious class rooms, recreation and play facility, teaching learning materials. The RCRC has also 2 dormitory rooms and dining facility to assist this school.

5.9. Library with photocopying center.

RCRC houses a library and a photocopy center. Valuable books were collected and stored in this library. Children and trainees attending training at RCRC use this library. The photocopying machine placed in this library is used to take copies of school records and READ's records on cost basis. It also provides commercial service by taking photocopying orders from outside. It is both a service and income -generating activity accruing reasonable income for READ.

5.10. Training/workshops, seminars in RCRC.

RCRC has 2 training halls, training equipments, dormitory and dining facilities. READ organizes all trainings in RCRC. In this reporting year the following trainings/meetings were conducted:

- Training to 14 members in the network of



In the READ Community Resource Center (CRC), READ provides a variety of vocational skill-trainings and health-related services to many children, adolescents, differently abled people, and HIV affected people.

PLHIV on micro-loan and starting of micro enterprises.

- Training given by READ staff on home-based care to 25 adult PLHIV in the network.
- Training to 2 PLHIV to be part-time HIV peer educators and to do outreach activities with the barbers and self help group leaders.
- Refresher training to 25 barbers.
- Monthly PLHIV network meetings to discuss their needs and activities.
- Staff review meeting every month.
- Annual General Body meeting.
- 3 Executive board meetings.
- Parents meeting of Special school children
- Other trainings including self-help groups.

6. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

The empowerment of women through SHG promotion, training and micro-financing is one of READ's major ongoing programs. SHGs are also the best platform in the villages through which READ can implement a number of community development information programs and activities. In this reporting year 63 new SHGs were promoted and 211 trainings were given on capacity building, leadership development, community resource mobilization and other topics.

119 SHGs from the already promoted groups had been rated on their economic capacity to make them eligible for bank linkages and for availing credit and other microfinance products.

A total of 1945 women members in the SHGs were distributed micro-loans in this reporting year (see microfinance activities section of this report). Apart from these activities, the SHGs continue their monthly meetings and monthly savings practices.

In this reporting year HIV awareness programs were also implemented again in SHG meetings by Outreach workers and Peer Educators as part of the program funded by Gilead Sciences (see above).

7. MICROFINANCE PROGRAM

Mere provision of developmental information, training or education will not fully empower women unless it is complemented by financial services. Before the advent of SHG and microfinance (MFI) concepts, poor and low income group people seldom had access to

finances to develop their economic activities and aspirations. SHGs and MFI came as a blessing to poor people particularly labor women to have more easy access to finances to fix their livelihood. Sensing the importance of MFI, READ undertook this program 5 years ago, and it has now grown multiple-fold to help poor women in SHGs raise their economic standard.

In this reporting year, Nanayaturabhi Development Financial services (NDFS) lent Rs.5,000,000 and State Bank of India (SBI) lent Rs.10,000,000 as capital fund for microfinance operation in READ's service area. HDFC Bank did not partner with READ in this year. With spinning money in the earlier operations and with current capital fund from the above two finance Institutions micro-credit disbursed to SHG clients in this fiscal year 2010-2011 is tabulated below.

Branch-wise micro-credit disbursed in the fiscal year 2010-2011 and outstanding amount at the end

| MF branch office | No. of SHG | No. of borrowers | Amount disbursed in INR | Loan outstanding at year-end |
|----------------------------------|------------|------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Andimadam | 38 | 515 | 6,110,000 | 3,538,430 |
| Srimushnam | 24 | 336 | 3,425,000 | 2,410,251 |
| Sendurai | 70 | 1018 | 12,240,000 | 5,379,477 |
| Variyankaval | 6 | 78 | 1,050,000 | 968,590 |
| Individuals in different places# | - | 57 | 743,000 | 380,459 |
| Total | 138 | 2004 | 23,568,000 | 12,677,207 |

Individuals include mostly members in PLHIV network

The loan recovery rate is 98 percent. The economic activities developed through these micro-credits include:

- Rural based business like vegetable shop, tea shop, street vending
- Service units like bicycle repair shop
- Animal husbandry – dairy, goat rearing and poultry
- Agriculture/horticulture activities
- Weaving
- Non-investment activities like educational expenses, medical expenses etc.

Evaluation of the economic impact and social performance of these microfinance programs are planned to be done in the coming year.

8. INSURANCE SCHEME

Insurance has been made compulsory for the

clients availing micro-credit from our MFI. This is a life insurance. In the event of death of the client during the loan period, the outstanding loan amount on the deceased client's account will be deducted from the death compensation amount given by the insurance company. In this reporting year the insurance links were arranged with ICICI prudential and TATA AIG insurance companies.

9. AWARENESS PROGRAMMES

9.1. Voice on climate crisis by READ school children.

On 10/10/10, people at 7347 events in 188 countries got together to work on climate crisis, as part of the 350.org movement. The school children at READ also participated and were educated on global warming. They also planted trees in the school yard and took some tree seedlings home. The school children were also featured on the 350.org web site including the video documentary <http://youtu.be/Z-PoOkvz6v8>.

The school children's event was also published in the local daily news paper "Dhinanthi". By the day's end, it was clear people of all kinds in just about every place on earth are calling for a fair, ambitious and binding global climate treaty.

9.2. HIV awareness on World AIDS Day.

To commemorate World AIDS Day, a rally was organized on December 15, 2010 in Andimadam. The members of the PLHIV network participated and carried placards and banners depicting HIV information.

9.3. National Environmental Awareness program.

This environmental awareness campaign was conducted on March 10, 2011 at Vadakupalayam village near Srimushnam, Cuddalore district. A rally was organized followed by a meeting and tree sapling distribution to participants. 300 SHG leaders and 200 school students participated in the rally and other program. It was a one-day program on the theme "Awareness on biodiversity conservation". The event included lectures by experts, posters and pamphlets.

10. PROMOTIONAL VIDEO

Sahaya International arranged a promotional video-documentary in collaboration with ReelAid (www.reelaid.org), a Hollywood-based organization consisting of people working in the film industry who use their available resources and expertise to help make promotional videos for small charity organizations at reduced cost.

ReelAid director/actor Andy Lauer and

Insurance details of clients of READ's microfinance for the year 2010-2011:

| Insurance Company | No. of insurance applications | Premium amount 2010-2011 (INR) | No. of previous year insurance applications | Total no. of insurance applications processed | Total premium amount in 2010-11 (INR) |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| ICICI prudential | 2358 | 137,150 | 3820 | 6178 | 835,900 |
| TATA AIG | 785 | 166,212 | 73 | 858 | 186,787 |
| Total | 3143 | 303,362 | 3893 | 7036 | 1,022,687 |

Death benefit claimed from insurance companies for deceased clients in this year 2010-11:

| MFI Branch Name | Received claims from insurance companies | | | Issued claims from insurance companies | | | Claim amount INR | Processing charges INR |
|-----------------|--|----------|----------------------------|--|----------|----------------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| | ICICI | TATA AIG | Birla sun life (last year) | ICICI | TATA AIG | Birla sun life (last year) | | |
| Andimadam | 28 | 1 | 0 | 27 | 1 | 0 | 430,000 | 23,000 |
| Sendurai | 5 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 55,000 | 4,000 |
| Srimushnam | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Variyankaval | 3 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 50,000 | 2,500 |
| Total | 36 | 2 | 2 | 35 | 2 | 2 | 535,000 | 29,500 |

cinematographer Josh Gibson spent 2 weeks from 11 December through 23 December 2010 in READ, India to take video footage for a cutting-edge documentary about Sahaya's programs with READ. The final product, expected to be released in 2012, will be beneficial to generate funds through sales of DVD and online viewing.

11. THIRD PARTY PROJECTS

READ functions in this reporting year also as third party partner and fiscal intermediary as in the previous year for several projects and partner agencies functioning in States other than Tamilnadu as detailed below:

- Project undertaken by Public Health Research Institute of India (PHRII) funded by the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, USA
- PRERANA clinic project of PHRII, Mysore supported by Sahaya International Inc., USA
- ANM Training program of PHRII, Mysore supported by the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, USA
- Ethics training of PHRII, Mysore, supported by the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS foundation, USA
- OSOM, HRM, PATH, ALAMERI projects of PHRII, Mysore by different agencies in USA
- SHAMA WELL G.V. Naidu school project funded by SHAMA Inc., USA
- (SHOULD WE ADD SEE-TRUST?)

12. INCOME SOURCES

For READ's direct activities-

- Sahaya International Inc., USA
- SAWES, Belgium
- Sahaya International.eu, Belgium
- C.P. Ramasamy Aiyar Foundation, Chennai
- State Commissioner for differently able, Chennai
- NDFS Loan fund for Microfinance activity
- SBI Loan fund for Microfinance activity
- Local donations and members contributions
- Income from RCRC activities.

For READ's third party activities (READ as fiscal intermediary)

Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, USA

Public Health Foundation enterprises, USA

PATH, USA

Sahaya International Inc., USA

SHAMA Inc, USA

Frank Melzerch, Germany

13. VISITORS TO READ

In this reporting year the following persons visited READ:

- Koen Van Rompay, USA
- ReelAid director/actor Andy Lauer and cinematographer Josh Gibson, USA
- Pella wallin and Gittan, Sweden
- Shawn C.Kefavver & Txell Genesca, USA
- Leen Hellinckx, (Belgium)
- Mary Philip (USA)

14. PUBLIC STATUS OF READ

- READ had the following status recognitions:
- District Resource center for Tamilnadu Voluntary Health Association (TNVHA, Chennai)
- NGO member and convener of local level Committee, Perambalur and Ariyalur Districts for National Trust, New Delhi – a statutory body of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India for mental retardation, autism, cerebral palsy and multiple disability
- Ariyalur District Rajiv Gandhi Drinking Water and Sanitation Committee, Board Member
- Social Action Movement(SAM), Ariyalur, Convenor
- District Coordinator for Special Olympics.

15. CONCLUSION

READ tirelessly continued its service to the vulnerable and marginalized sections of the population in rural belts through various projects and in collaboration with many organizations. Many social issues and unmet needs of poor people still need to be addressed. Because of READ's limitations in funding and administrative areas, we are doing our best to find solutions and the resources so we can continue and expand our service to as many needy people as possible.

Currently READ is focusing much on microfinance activities as it proved to be a successful development tool to empower poor communities, that we will aim to implement more widely also in the coming years. At the same time, it is important that we also continue many

of our other programs because they address many social issues.

READ takes this opportunity to thank all the donors, partners, friends, consultants and overseas supporters who help and travel along with READ in undertaking its missions to achieve the goals. Particularly READ thanks from the bottom of its heart Sahaya International Inc. (USA) and Sahaya international.eu (Belgium) for their selfless support and contributions to all READ's activities. READ also thanks Gilead sciences, SAWES, TNVHA, Chennai, Ministry of Environment and forest, State commission for Disabled, Chennai for their funding support. As microfinance is a big focus of our activities, we are grateful to NDFS and State Bank of India to have extended loan funds to READ. We also thank our staffs and the board members whose cooperation and support was vital to implement all these activities.

While thanking everyone, we also wish and request all of you to continue your support and cooperation also in the forthcoming years so READ can continue its human service.

Thank you,
D. Selvam
Founder Secretary

To take READ's programs that are supported by Sahaya International to the next level, reach a larger audience and widen our ripple effect of "making a difference," a cutting-edge promotional video that highlights our activities would be extremely useful. Because making a high-quality promotional video is expensive, Sahaya International and READ started a collaboration with ReelAid (www.reelaid.org), a Hollywood-based organization started by movie actor/director Andy Lauer. Reel-Aid consists of people who work in the film industry and who use their available resources and expertise to help make promotional videos, 10 to 15 minutes long, for small non-profit organizations - such as Sahaya - at a much reduced cost.

From December 11 through 23, 2010, Andy Lauer and Director of Photography Josh Gibson spent time in India to take the video footage, which included interviewing several families. After months are spent on editing and production, the video is expected to be completed in 2012. For more information, visit www.sahaya.org/video.html.





VASANTHI - ~~nursing student~~ Nurse

Vasanthi grew up in Vilandai, Andimadam, in a poor family. She was a very good student in high school, and dreamt of becoming a nurse. Because her family was not able to support higher studies, Sahaya board member Elisabeth Sherwin organized two “Tea for Vasanthi” fundraisers in 2007 and 2008, and a yard sale in 2010. Vasanthi has been passing all her exams. In August 2010, she completed her 4 year of studies at the Chidambaram College of Nursing in Chennai. Recently she obtained her official diploma. She wrote in a letter:

*My heartfelt thanks to Elisabeth and all of you.
Thank you for all your guidance and support. I will
always be very grateful to you.*
Vasanthi

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The production of the video continues to make good progress, as the interviews that were filmed in India in December are diligently being transcribed by our super-volunteer Senthil. Check out www.sahaya.org/video.html to learn how you can get involved and be in the credits of the film.

Portraits of Andimadam
vimeo.com

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March 2011: Picnic of the children of Silent Valley English Medium School (www.sahaya.org/rhema.html) sahayainternational.wordpress.com
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