



SAHAYA INTERNATIONAL, Inc. Davis California, USA

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT - January-December 2006.

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Dear Friends,

It is with pleasure that I present to you this annual report, highlighting our activities of the past fiscal year. While this past year we did not secure any large grants from funding agencies, the support from our growing network of friends and supporters continues to pave our path so we can make a difference in the lives of many people in developing countries. My sincere thanks to many of you for being part of this effort! It is my hope that in 2007, we can continue to count on you and mobilize the resources to reach out to those in need.

Sincerely,

Koen Van Rompay (Secretary, Sahaya International)

Sahaya International overview of activities

READ (Rural Education & Action Development)- Tamil Nadu, India:



READ is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), active in rural areas of Tamil Nadu (India). READ has been our primary partner since the inception of Sahaya International. For a more detailed description of the many activities of READ, including copies of their latest annual reports, please visit www.sahaya.org.

General programs

Through its general fundraising activities (including the sale of cards and solicitation of contributions), Sahaya International continues to support the general programs of READ, including 3 kindergarten/elementary schools, 2 schools for mentally disabled children, HIV programs, rehabilitation programs for physically disabled children, skill-training programs for girls (including card-making, sewing, type-writing), and women's and men's self-help groups.

Child sponsorship program

Sahaya International and READ have an orphan sponsorship program, similar to the program that was initiated with READ by the Alliance for Youth Achievement (www.allforyouth.org). For a monthly contribution of \$30, the children receive basic necessities such as nutrition, clothing, and school expenses. Some money is set aside and given at the end of the year to the guardian to start an income generating program. Currently, 45 children are being sponsored directly through Sahaya International. Three of them, being HIV-infected, have also a second sponsor who pays for anti-HIV medications, which has resulted in improved health. The sponsors receive regular letters and photographs.

HIV awareness program

In 2005, READ implemented the Perambalur Education and Prevention Program, sponsored by a grant awarded by the Elton John AIDS Foundation (UK) to Sahaya International. For more details on this HIV peer education program, please see our previous annual reports and Sahaya's website. During 2006, some activities still continued, including distribution of educational materials, condoms, and the HIV street theater program.



HIV Cultural Programs: In addition to song, dance and drama skits with actors, the street theater performances now also include a puppet show.

HIV/AIDS care and support services and HIV positive peoples' network.

READ had previously started a HIV-positive network named "Malarum Mottukal" (meaning "blossoming flower") to assist persons living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHIV). The network meets monthly and provides counseling, medical assistance and referrals. Thanks to the improved awareness and uptake of voluntary counseling and testing created by the our HIV peer education programs in 2005, this network has grown to approximately 100 members. Approximately 88 members of this network traveled regularly to the Government Hospital for Thoracic Medicine in Tambaram (near Chennai), and 12 members (including 5 children) were receiving antiretroviral drugs. Due to distance and/or health issues, usually approximately half of the members are able to come to the monthly meetings.

The HIV/AIDS positive network meeting was conducted on the 15th of every month. We reimbursed one way travel expenses to the government hospital in Tambaram to all PLWHIV to pick up more medications. Additional travel expenses were given to 3 widows. This support and care program was sponsored by a grant from Gilead Sciences to Sahaya International and by donations from individuals.

The life stories and photographs of several members of the positive network have also been featured in the Los Angeles Times article and online documentary "AIDS ravages rural India" (www.latimes.com/aids).

Indian HIV awareness cartoons.

In collaboration with READ and I-TECH (www.go2itech.com), Sahaya International had previously developed simple cartoons on HIV/AIDS that were used to educate low-literacy populations as part of the Perambalur Education and Prevention Program. During this past year, translations have been prepared in Telegu (by Mr. TN Swamy of Andhra Pradesh) and Bengali (by the SAATHII team of Kolkatta). In addition, new cartoons are being developed with more detailed information on prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, especially the controversial topic of transmission via breast-milk.

Through a collaboration with Operation Mercy and Ramin Yazdani, we are currently working on adapting part I of our HIV flipcharts for use in the middle-east by adapting the cartoons and translating the text into Arabic and Farsi. See the special section in this report for more details.

Public Hygiene Project.

Most people in rural areas such as Perambalur district don't have access to toilets and therefore have to use fields and other common spaces for defecation. This poses many health risks for the community. The absence of sanitation facilities is especially difficult for women and girls who have to wait until it gets dark to go into the fields, and then risk rape and violence. They also try to drink minimal water, which leads to other health problems. To alleviate these problems, Sahaya International volunteers had raised \$5339 in 2005 for a public hygiene project. After further consultations with experts and the local communities, it was decided that instead of building a single community toilet building (with several stalls) in the village, most people preferred an individual household toilet in close proximity of their hut. Accordingly, the money has been used to give loans to people to construct such toilets, and the repaid money is used to provide loans to new families. So far, more than 60 families have already been provided with such loans. While the most simple structure (a stall with only a toilet) costs approximately \$120, some families have supplemented the loan with some of their own resources to build a larger structure with also a water basin or shower room. Thanks to additional donations that were received near the end of 2006, additional toilets will be built in the upcoming year.

PEDIATRIC HIV WARD - Tambaram (India)

Sahaya International continued to be the fiscal agent for the collection of donations to improve the pediatric HIV ward at the Government Hospital for Thoracic Medicine in Tambaram (near Chennai, India). This project is led by Tom Furtwangler (I-TECH, Seattle). A social worker and better infrastructure (including



Public Hygiene Program (India): already more than 60 families have been helped in 2006 to construct a family-unit toilet near their hut or house.

toys and games) have been helping many children. For more information about this exciting program, please visit www.tambaramkids.org.

children, and is located near Madurai. Currently 8 children who live at the home are sponsored by well-wishers via Sahaya International.

**RHEMA EDUCATIONAL TRUST
- Gujarat (India)**

A total of \$550 donated by a Community Gift of the St. James Parish of Davis, and an individual donor was used to assist the Rhema Educational Trust (Gujarat), which runs a small school (Silent Valley English Medium School) for underprivileged children. The money was used for general expenses (visit www.sahaya.org for more information).

**HIV AWARENESS PROGRAM OF
THE DEAF - KENYA**

This program, currently led by Jackie Odwesso, is funded by a 2004 grant of the Development Marketplace program of the World Bank. This project is executed in close collaboration with GRACE (Grassroots Alliance for Community Education; www.graceusa.org). This program developed a peer education curriculum with Kenyan sign language vocabulary, and created a Peer Education Network to teach deaf youth and adults about topics of sexual health & hygiene, puberty, relationships, and HIV/AIDS.

**EMBRACING HANDS
- Madurai (India)**

Embracing Hands is a home to support needy

During the past year, additional activities have

HIV Awareness of the Deaf (Kenya): Games and stories have been developed as part of a training curriculum to teach deaf people about many HIV-related issues, including the need for preventive measures to protect against HIV infection. The activities have been compiled into a training manual that is currently in its final stages of review and editing.



been formulated and field-tested. A close-to-final draft of the manual is currently being reviewed for planned release in 2007.

CONSULTANT & COLLABORATOR ROLE OF SAHAYA INTERNATIONAL

Sahaya International receives almost daily requests from NGO's or individuals for assistance, especially for HIV programs. Although we don't have the resources to extend financial assistance, we do our best to provide advice and assistance via e-mail or by sending CD's with information.

Sahaya's secretary, Koen Van Rompay, also subscribes to several e-mail list servers focused on HIV/AIDS, and regularly posts messages with replies to inquiries and other information. Sahaya's involvement with HIV treatment programs in developing countries also was one of the reasons that Koen was invited to participate in the third World Community Advisory Board (WorldCAB) meeting on second-line antiretroviral regimens with Abbott Laboratories and Gilead Sciences, held in London on July 12-14, 2006.

Mother Teresa School of Periyakrishnapuram:

This school, which is run in a large hut (left), has grown from 9 students in 1998 to more than 50 children in 2006. In January 2006, 2 Sahaya board members, Mirriam Rafiq (below) and Elisabeth Sherwin also visited this school. During the past year, we have been raising the funds to start construction of a much-needed school building with separate class rooms.



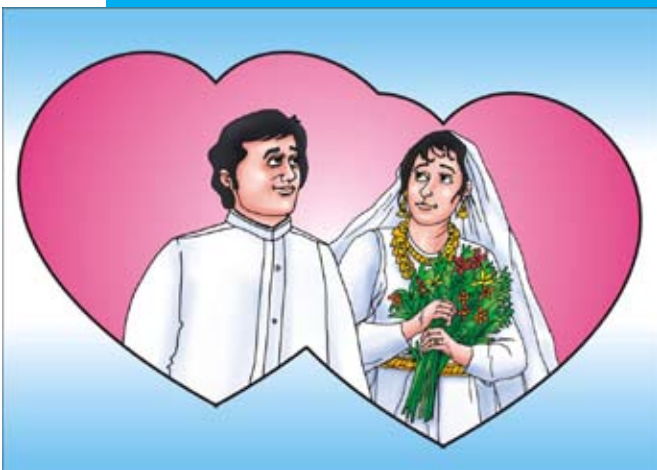
DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS ON HIV/AIDS:

In collaboration with I-TECH and Global Strategies for HIV Prevention, Sahaya International and READ had previously developed two educational sets of flipcharts: Part I on HIV Prevention, and Part II on HIV Treatment and Care.



In 2006, translations into Telegu and Bengali have been made. New Indian cartoons were developed to provide more detailed information on prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV.

In addition, we have started a collaboration to adapt the basic sets of flipcharts for use in the Middle-East, by modifying clothing and other cultural attributes. The text will be translated in Arabic and Farsi.



Sahaya International

fundraising activities

In addition to submitting program-specific grant proposals to funding agencies, our dedicated team of volunteers also solicits regularly donations and contributions from the general public through various ways:

Evening of Indian Dining & Entertainment

On June 3, 2006, the local Sahaya volunteer team organized an “Evening of Indian Dining & Entertainment” at the International House in Davis. The event included a delicious Indian dinner (prepared by Mary Philip, Susie O’Bryant and their volunteers), a silent auction, slide show and Odissi dance (by Tanaya Pattnaik). This fundraiser raised more than \$6,000 towards the construction of a much-needed school building for the Mother Teresa School of Periyakrishnapuram. We thank the many volunteers and sponsors of this event.

Tea for Vasanthi

On Sunday, August 20, a tea & fingerfood gathering was organized by Elisabeth Sherwin and friends to raise money to help Vasanthi, a young woman who lives in the villages of READ, to fulfill her dreams of becoming a nurse. She started nursing school in September 2006.

Belgian Beer, Friet/Fries and Waffles.

On Saturday November 25, the Belgian Club of Northern California (www.bcnc.com) hosted this annual fundraiser event in Hayward, California. The proceeds of this event (see separate page) were divided and 3 charities, including Sahaya International, received \$1,670 each. We thank the many volunteers who made this such a big success.

Community Gift Awards.

During this past year, the St. James Parish of Davis, California, awarded Sahaya International a \$525

Community Gift, which was used to support the Silent Valley school, run by the Rehema Educational Trust in Gujarat, India.

GSA Garden Party.

On May 6, 2006, the GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance) club of Davis organized a picnic, with lots of good food, entertainment (songs, skits) and a silent auction. All proceeds went towards Sahaya International’s fundraising efforts for the Mother Teresa school in India.

Poker tournament.

Anson Tharayanil and his Sigma Chi fraternity at the University of California-Davis put their efforts into organizing a poker tournament and donated the proceeds (\$780) to READ’s school program.

Dinner with slide presentations.

Several Sahaya supporters in Davis (Elisabeth Sherwin, the family Frank-Bobelle), hosted dinners for their friends, at which Koen gave a slide presentation summarizing the history and activities of Sahaya. These dinners led to several orphans being sponsored and other general donations for our programs in India.

SAGA.

Students Against Global AIDS (SAGA) is a group of students from the University of Maryland (Baltimore County) and the University of Maryland Medical School, that is led by Tara Raviprakash. Throughout the year, they raise awareness on HIV to their fellow students and raise money for Sahaya’s HIV programs.

Sale of embroidered greeting cards.

Our international network of volunteers continues to sell the embroidered greeting cards made by READ’s trainees to friends, relatives and colleagues

(including at Davis Farmer's Market, UC-Davis, University Retirement Community). On November 11-12, volunteers also staffed a Sahaya table at the Women's Guild Bazaar at St. James, and on December 3 at the Alternative Gift Fair at the Davis Community Church; at both events, many cards were sold.

We thank the many volunteers who helped us in all these fundraising efforts. We simply couldn't have done it without you!



More than 150 different designs of embroidered cards are produced by the trainees of READ to support their programs.



On Saturday May 6, 2006, the GSA club of Davis organized a garden party with food, music and silent auction (above). That same evening, the family Frank-Bobell organized a dinner with slide-show (above right). The Wednesday Night Dinner Club, consisting of an international group of friends living in Davis, has also embraced Sahaya's activities (right).



"An Evening of Indian Dining & Entertainment" was held on June 3, 2006 at the International House in Davis. The event included a delicious Indian dinner (prepared by Mary Philip, Susie O'Bryant and a large team of volunteers), silent auction, slide show and Odissi dance (by Tanaya Pattnaik). This fundraiser raised more than \$6,000 for the construction of a much-needed school building for the Mother Teresa School of Periyakrishnapuram.



On Saturday, November 25 2006, the Belgian Club of Northern California organized its annual "Beer, Waffles and Fries" fundraiser. In addition to the legendary food, the evening was also filled with a silent auction, kids games, and a DJ. All proceeds were donated to 3 charities, including Sahaya International. We thank the dedicated team of volunteers for their amazing efforts.



Sahaya International in the news

A partial list of articles mentioning Sahaya-sponsored activities.

- “Fighting AIDS with information.” (by E. Sherwin, Davis Enterprise, February 26, 2006; <http://www.davisenterprise.com/articles/2006/02/27/features/308fea0.txt>).
- “What I’ll take back.” (by E. Sherwin, Davis Enterprise, February 28, 2006).
- “A taste of Indian life.” (by E. Sherwin, Davis Enterprise, February 27, 2006).
- “40 million lives. Activists work to make more HIV drugs available and affordable in developing countries.” (by E. Sherwin, Davis Enterprise, August 11, 2006).
- “AIDS ravages rural India” (by Francine Orr, Los Angeles Times, December 21, 2006; www.latimes.com/aids).
- “Flush away health hazards in India.” (by E. Sherwin, Davis Enterprise, December 13, 2005).
- “AIDS onderzoeker Koen Van Rompay bouwde ontwikkelingsorganisatie uit.” (by Peter De Meyer; Gazet van Antwerpen, Belgie, December 9 and 10, 2006).

SAHAYA ILLAM

Please remember that visitors are always welcome to visit READ and stay at the Sahaya-sponsored guesthouse Sahaya Illam. The house has 4 bedrooms (each with western toilet and shower). A cook is available to prepare delicious south-Indian meals. Transportation can be arranged to visit READ’s programs or to visit the famous temples in the area. For more information, please see www.sahaya.org/guesthouse.html

