

Message from RD's desk

The end of the year has been very hectic, filled with different types of events: the Convention of Objectives 2006, visit of members of International Directors Committee, Aide et Action (AeA) Paris and AeA International to India and Sri Lanka Programmes, Partners Meet and Disaster Management Study. The launch of the Website with more than 200 pages of information is another landmark in the history of the South Asia Programme.

While the team is strengthened with the joining of Mr. Kumar Rakesh and Mr. Neeraj Neer, three senior members Mr. Kashinath Bhoosnurmath, Ms. Pramila Mishra and Ms. Richa Silakari left the organisation. We wish them all the very best in their future endeavours.

December saw the culmination of many initiatives taken during the past few months, the highlights of which are given in this issue.

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Disaster Management

Disaster Management Training

In order to enable the youth and women of the Tsunami affected coastal areas of Chennai to cope with disasters, training in disaster management was imparted to 120 youth and 40 women through Arumbu Project.

The training began with an introduction on basic hygiene and sanitation and covered the following topics:

- Basic first aid
- Rescue operations in water during accidents, floods and Tsunamis

Practical training on identification of injuries, immediate care of the injured and assessing the oxygen level, pulse rate etc., were also dealt with.

The youth groups, who had never been exposed to such a training, participated enthusiastically and evinced keen interest in joining the first aid advanced course.

Disaster Management Study

A disaster management study, conducted in Mahendrapalli and Madavamedu villages of Sirkali district, aimed at assessing the vulnerability of these villages to disasters. Vulnerability mapping was done with the help of PRA tools, interviews and meetings with the local communities. The outcomes of this study will facilitate the preparation of village specific disaster management and mitigation modules.

Partners Meet

A Partners Meet was organized in Chennai for the South Indian partners on the 14th and 16th of December. The meet focused on operationalising the thrust areas identified during the previous partners meet and incorporated in the strategy paper. Towards this end, all the sessions were aimed at identifying issues in different thematic areas, reviewing the processes in implementation of programs and providing feedback on various formats suggested for use during implementation of programs in the field. Discussions were also held on identifying advocacy issues in education, planning for global campaign on education and resource mobilization strategies for partners.

Sessions	Major outcomes of group work
Quality Education	To strengthen ECCE centres and the Liberate School program, it was suggested to have local persons (women, adolescent girls) as facilitators.
Inclusive Education	Inaccessibility of resource agencies and trained staff, remoteness of areas of operations and lack of awareness on various government programs and schemes had been identified as the major issues that need to be addressed.
Resource Mobilization	Issues like enhancing credibility and visibility of the organisation, developing norms, establishing standards of performance, developing a database of project details and area of operation etc., were identified as important pre-requisites for resource mobilisation and writing of proposals.
Women's Education and Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiplicity of agencies promoting SHGs, lack of convergence between different development agencies, including government, social norms, cultural practices and restricted mobility of women were some issues that hindered women from participation in Self Help Group activities. • The adoption of flexible models of operation would ensure inclusion of the most marginalised sections in the SHG movement
Livelihood Education	Narrowing the gap between rural and urban areas, migration of populations and connectivity through communication & information technology have been identified as the main triggering forces for enhancing demand for service sector growth. Huge potential for setting up centres like LEAD was identified in all the areas.
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues such as enrollment, retention, gender discrimination, education of disabled and making education relevant to the lives and livelihoods of the poor are to be taken up for advocacy. • Community involvement and community led advocacy is mandatory at the local level besides data collection and presentation of the same to relevant officials and representatives, sensitization of elected representatives, participation in state and national level forums through existing networks and formation of new networks, if necessary.
EduAction Institute	The institute should serve as an action research resource centre and focus on thematic studies such as recent government interventions, regular publications, documentation of best practices, community ownership, policy advocacy on education, participatory project management, consultancy for other agencies and participatory evaluation (AeA and government).

Aide et Action in News... What the press has to say



Free dental camp

The Hindu - Chennai (13.12.2005)

A free dental camp for the Police Boys Club members was conducted at the Joint Commissioner of Police's Office at St. Thomas Mount on Sunday. A team of dentists from Sri Ramachandra Medical College and Research Institute led by Dr. Suresh performed the medical checks. C. Sylendra Babu, Joint Commissioner of Police, South inaugurated the camp. R. Nataraj, Greater Chennai Police Commissioner, advised the children

on the importance of staying healthy and studying well. The programme was jointly organised by Aide et Action and the City Police.

Silent procession in Neelankarai

Dinathanthi - Chennai (28.12.2005)

"In view of the Tsunami Remembrance day, and on behalf of the Arumbu project, a silent procession and memorial service took place in Periya Neelankarai...Candles were lit and silence was observed for ten minutes...youth, members of the Self Help Groups and more than 500 people joined the service... Vijayalakshmi, Arumbu Project director, delivered a message... the candles used for the service were made by the Self Help Groups of Arumbu project...Mr. Bosgo, the Arumbu programme coordinator, gave the vote of thanks."

Cycle rally for Tsunami victims conducted

The Hindu - Chennai (29.12.05)

About 600 youth, women and children participated in a cycle rally that began at Neelankarai and ended at Periyaneelankarai, as part of Tsunami Day on Sunday. The 45 minute rally culminated at the village temple with people sharing their memories of the day. Staff from Aide et Action India, an international development organisation with a central office in Paris, spoke to the gathering. The organization has carried out rehabilitation work in 15 Tsunami affected villages.

Aide et Action South Asia online!

The AeA South Asia website was launched by Director General, Claire Calosci, in November. You are welcome to discover Aide et Action programs in South Asia and access newsletters, reports, etc., at

<http://www.aeaindia.org>

Visitors...

- **September** - Mr. Gilles Oddos from Aide et Action, Paris was on a mission to India in order to make a film on the AeA's Tsunami interventions.
- **October** - Members of the International Directors Committee and AeA Paris visited the Tsunami rehabilitation projects in Sri Lanka. They held discussions with the WACCO and Siyath teams and visited Moratua village, Maduranguda village and Iqubal Nagar.
- **November** - Members of the International Directors Committee and AeA France visited AeA DFID Tsunami rehabilitation project at Nagapattinam, Arumbu Child Development Project, Chennai, and LEAD Chennai South. They interacted with the team members, children, women and the community in general
- **December** - Ms. Kate Coles of AeA Paris and Ms. Emmanuelle - a photographer, visited the Tsunami rehabilitation project at Nagapattinam. They visited Child Care Centers in 3 villages and interacted with the community. They visited the LEAD South Chennai centre and interacted with the trainees. They also met members of WSHGs involved in candle making and discussed various issues with them.

News on Staff

A Warm Welcome to our new staff!



Neeraj Neer

Neeraj joined AeA in December 2005. He is a post graduate in rural management from Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar. He has a bachelors in Chemistry. He has grassroot level experience of more than two years in the health sector in the slums of Patna and has worked for a year in Araku Valley of Eastern Ghats. He is also skilled in project planning, implementation and monitoring, social research methods, institution building and communication strategies.



Kumar Rakesh

Kumar Rakesh joined AeA in December 2005. He did his graduation and post graduation in history at Delhi University and L.L.B at Magadha University in Bihar. He has extensive field experience in carrying out socio-economic research, baseline surveys, resettlement and rehabilitation work, situation analysis, monitoring, evaluation and impact assessments of infrastructure projects. He has a sound knowledge of the Research & Rehabilitation policy of National Highways Authority of India, World Bank and Asian Development Bank. He is also well versed with the institutional and policy set up of government agencies and international donors.

Goodbye! We wish them the best in their future endeavours.



Pramila Mishra



Kashinath
Bhoosnurmath



Richa Silakari