



The way

First Year of PAADHAI – a note from Ramesh

Friends,

It is less than Ten and a half months, since the idea for Paadhahi was mooted. Thanks to international solidarity, we have made quite some progress.

As 2005 draws to an end, it is a good time to take stock. Here is a list of what Paadhahi has accomplished so far ...

- > Identified a few good NGOs to work with - Anawim, CTD, Myrada
- > Started working closely with Anwim - picked the projects where Paadhahi wanted to play a long-term role



Anawim team of teachers already working in over 20 DALIT villages

- > Paadhahi's focus was on - Education centers for children and Micro Finance for women in Dalit villages in and around Thiruchendur
- > Registered entities of Paadhahi were formed in India, Switzerland and France. Major efforts in Europe from these pairs Michael-James & Sylvie-Jean Luc
- > International meetings of Swiss and French associations took place periodically. It was nice to participate in two of these meetings in July & October.
- > First funds came from a school children's campaign in Swiss-French part - thanks to Laure
- > Thoppur was adopted for Paadhahi's first education center - aim was to offer land, building, basic training material and teaching assistance for three years; a micro-credit program associated with the women of the same village would ensure that they can take care of the salaries of teachers after the Third year; this way, Paadhahi can move on to another village.



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> With over 65 children, Thoppur needs this center more than any other village. The kids are moved in and out of the village community hall - the only solid structure among thatched roofs - and are without teachers since April 05, as funds from earlier projects dried out.



Thoppur children in the make-shift hall; performed for us, in Apr 05

> PaadhAI has organized a rented place temporarily running the center, till the structure is ready. Land has been procured and construction in progress for the new center. The center should be up and running by March 2006.

> There had been good response from people from different parts of the world - Switzerland, France, Australia and USA. Thanks to each one of you for supporting this cause - monetarily or otherwise.

> We are overwhelmed by recent contributions to PaadhAI by a Swiss association - a sum of ChF 30,000 - Sylvie, that was fantastic



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> In a recent meeting, we decided to deploy these funds towards the following:

A. Have a revised budget for Thoppur; make the center complete with toilets, solar lighting & storage



A typical center - with rain water harvesting !

B. Adopt another village - locate land & initiate construction activities

C. Offer Teaching support to Thoppur and the newly planned center for a year

D. Create basic libraries fro existing centers (over 20 of them)



Anawim has good training & production facilities; Villages have to make good use of these.



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E. Bring children from various villages to Anawim for use of computers, library & enhanced help

> Fair progress considering that Paadhai does not have a single employee or expense head - reaching out the entire 100% of collections to the needy

Each one of you have played a significant role in making this happen. My special thanks to James, Sylvie, Laure, Raju, Radhika and the Anwim Team.

I invite you to visit Thiruchendur, some time next year, by when these centers would be functional. If you live in India, this should not be a big issue

- if you live outside, it is a good reason to undertake a trip to India.

Hope the new year brings in Health, Happiness and Peace ... and we are able to offer a helping hand to others.

Many thanks and good wishes,

Ramesh Santhanam
Paadhai Trust

Ramesh SANTHANAM
Paadhai Trust
4/1, 22nd Cross 8th Main 3rd block
Jayanagar BANGALORE
560 011 INDIA
ramesh@ramsotech.com
www.paadhai.org