

PROGRESS REPORT

ASSEFA Highland Development Project
in **Thandikudi Region**

Reporting period
Upto March 2012

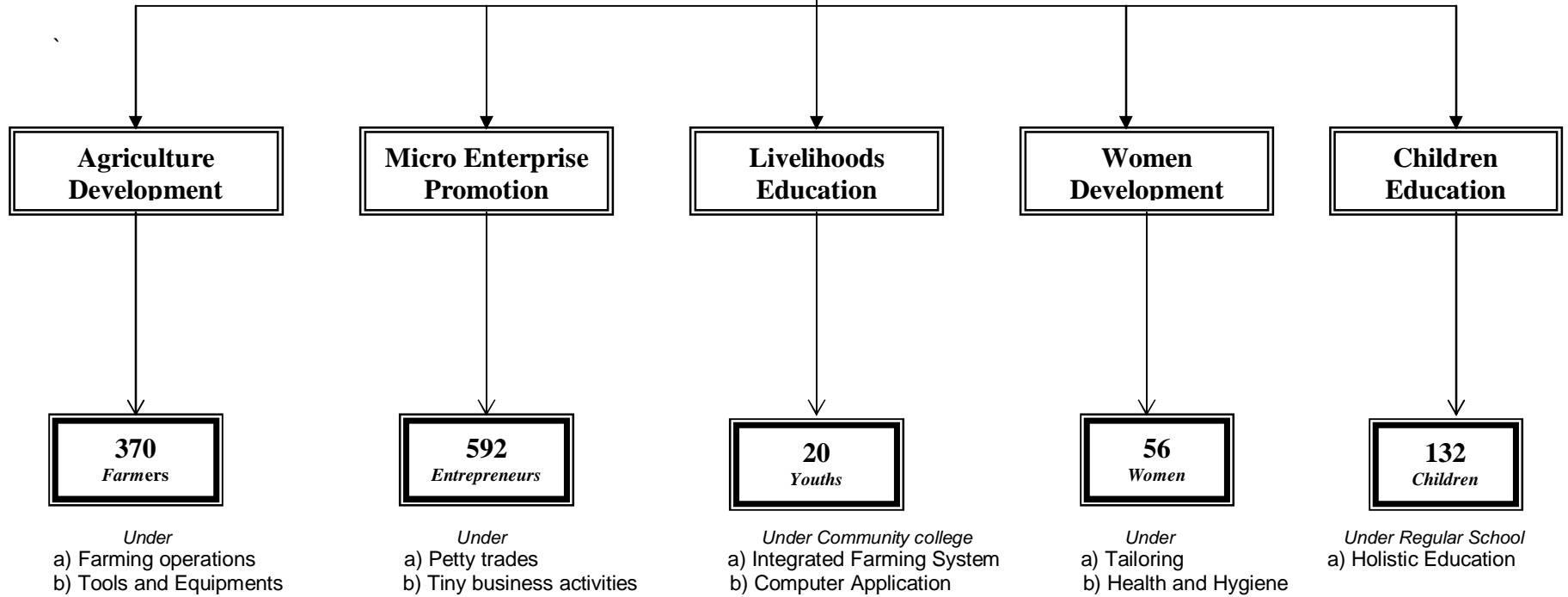
Submission to
ASSEFA Italia

By

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PROGRESS AT A GLANCE

Development of Highland People in Thandikudi Region



1. BACKGROUND

ASSEFA has started this project in 2010 with the purpose of providing greater livelihood opportunities to the economically vulnerable households to increase their income and to provide quality education to their children. The project area is predominantly with indigenous people and immigrants from the plain, who are economically vulnerable.

ASSEFA Italy has been collaborating with ASSEFA in supporting this project since the beginning. The present report narrates the progress of this project for the period upto 31 March 2012.

2. PROGRESS OF THE PROJECT

Various activities initiated are explained below.

2.1. Farmers Renaissance Program

a) Farmers' Registration: Farmers, mainly small and marginal ones, who are in need of external assistances have been brought under this program. As on 31 March 2012, 370 such farmers have been registered.

The area-wise coverage:

- Thandikudi Area : 207 *farmers*
- Pannaikadu Area : 60 *farmers*
- Adalur Area : 83 *farmers*
- Perumal Malai : 20 *farmers*

The farmers grow mainly 1) coffee 2) orange 3) spices and 4) vegetables (chow-chow and beans). Generally, rain-fed cultivation is practiced. In few cases, drip irrigation and sprinklers are used.

The common problems of these farmers are shortage of labours and access to financial services. The project addresses these problems by offering the following services.

- b) Financial Support for Farming operations: Farmers were assisted financially to undertake farming operations such as application of fertilizers, removal of weeds, harvesting of products, etc. As on March 31, 2012, 360 farmers were covered. Out of 360 farmers, 138 were assisted with ASSEFA Italy funds and the remaining 222 farmers with local resources.
- c) Tools & Machineries: In order to overcome the shortage of labour problems, the farmers were guided to apply labour saving farm implements. The interested farmers were given an orientation on the application of these implements for labour intensive activities such as weed removing, spraying medicines and digging pits.

In addition, the enrolled farmers were encouraged to participate in “Machinery Expo” organized by the Coffee Board at Thandikudi. More than 3000 farmers had benefited by this Expo, as it had linked the manufacturers with the farmers.

In order to support the farmers with suitable implements, a Farmers Committee with three members is established. The role is to identify and guide the farmers with suitable tools and machineries. As on 31 March 2012, 10 farmers have been assisted with the purchase of weed remover and sprayer units.

The farmers, who were assisted, are encouraged to build up a common revolving fund from the income earned out of the agriculture activities. This revolving fund shall be utilized to support other farmers on revolving basis.

- d) Alternative Livelihood Opportunities: This activity is delayed as the core team was focused primarily on the assessment of the main occupation, agriculture. The study on cattle wealth, especially dairying will be undertaken through discussion with the locals. Based on their needs, assistances will be provided.

2.2. Micro Enterprise Promotion

A large section of the locals, both men and women, have been involved in non-farm activities such as petty trade, tiny business, refreshment center, street vendors, etc. These people need short term finance for the purchase of goods to sell it.

Such entrepreneurs have been identified and brought under micro-enterprise groups. Depending upon their needs, short-term finance/credit was provided. As on date, 592 persons have been covered under this initiative.

These people were given a financial support of Rs 5,000 with the local funds and encouraged them to build up a revolving fund so as to support other persons. As on 31 March 2012, all 592 persons had received support under this program.

2.3. Women Development

As part of developing the local women, the project has started a tailoring training center. A qualified and experienced trainer has been appointed to train the interested women in stitching women/girls dresses.

As on date, 16 women have been enrolled. These women have two days classes in a week. The training period is 6 months. At the end of the training, these women will be able to stitch 16 kinds of ladies/girls dresses.

2.4. Health and Hygiene

Under this program, the major focus was given to the improvement of dwelling places. Supports were extended for replacement of roofing, improvement of flooring, upgradation of kitchen, construction of toilets, etc.

As on January 2012, 40 families were assisted with each Rs 10,000 to undertake this activity. The entire support was done with ASSEFA Italy funds.

2.5. Community College

ASSEFA has initiated the Community College to provide not only knowledge based support to the rural youths, but also to identify potential farmers and provide them extension services through the College students.

In order to conduct classes, the required infrastructure such as classrooms, library, Lavatory, etc., had been constructed. Initially, the following two courses were offered.

- Diploma in Integrated Farming System and
- Diploma in Computer Application.

The duration of these courses is one year. The successfully completed students will be awarded with Diploma by the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi. As on date, 20 students were enrolled for the January 2012 cycle.

- Diploma in IFS course : 12 *students*
- Diploma in Computer application : 08 *students*

Four faculty members, who are well qualified and experienced, were engaged for teaching. Their names and qualifications are as follows:

- Mr. S Sivakumar, B.Sc Agri, PG Diploma in Entomology & Agri clinic.
- Mr. M Navanetha Krishnan M.Sc Bio Informatics
- Mr. P Jayaraman, MCA and
- Mr. R Balachandar, Diploma in Hardware and Networking.

Contacts are being built up with Coffee Board Research Institute and progressive farmers in Horticulture and spices to use them as resource persons in the college.

2.6. Quality Education

ASSEFA has started the school in 2011 to provide comprehensive education to the children of tribal and other vulnerable families in Thandikudi area.

Apart from Government prescribed curriculum, other life skill education such as arts and crafts, sports and games, learning non-violence, yoga and meditation, etc., will gradually be introduced for holistic development of the children.

As on date, 132 students have been enrolled. This includes 75 boys and 57 girls. The class-wise enrolment of students is as follows:

- Pre KG : 22 *students*
- L.KG : 41 *students*
- UKG : 26 *students*
- 1st STD : 21 *students*
- 2nd STD : 12 *students*
- 3rd STD : 10 *students*

These students come from ten surrounding villages, as given below.

S. No	Village Name	Students	S. No	Village Name	Students
1	• Kongapetty	05	6	• Patlangadu	08
2	• Perumparai	10	7	• MGR Nagar	03
3	• Kanal Kadu	21	8	• Kodalankadu	14
4	• Mangalamkompu	30	9	• Kamanur	03
5	• Thandikudi	23	10	• Kaduguthadi	13

Pick up vehicle arrangements have been made for these children. The strength is expected to increase further in the coming years.

Presently, there are eight teachers, all selected from the local villages. They are given regular training so as to teach effectively. The teachers profile is as follows.

S. No	Teacher	Age	Qualifications	Experiences
1	Mrs. Veeranarmathadevi	29	+ 2	6 yrs
2	Ms. B Archana	22	+ 2	3 yrs
3	Mrs. G Rajalakshmi	38	B.A	10 yrs
4	Ms. J Rubana	20	+ 2	-
5	Ms. A Bhuwaneswari	22	D.Ed	1 yr
6	Mrs. G Mahalakshmi	27	BCA	-
7	Ms. K Subbulakshmi	19	D.Ed	-
8	Mrs. K Parameshwari	35	+ 2	-

To accommodate the existing and new children as well as to meet the requirement of the Govt for recognition, the following school infrastructures are being built up.

S. No	Requirements	Area in Sq ft
1	• 10 classrooms	6,785
2	• Science lab	568
3	• Computer lab	426
4	• Library	568
5	• PET room	569
6	• Scout room	427
7	• Admin block	1551
8	• Toilet and urinal blocks	1318

3. FINANCIAL STATUS

The total receipt from ASSEFA Italy as on 31 March 2012 was Rs 8,035,390 (Euros 123,546). The total receipt as per the year-wise programs is given below

S. No	Particulars	Program wise, Year-wise receipts		
		Upto March 12	April - March 13	Total
1	Training and Development Initiatives (euros 41,340)	2,619,061		2,619,061
2	Small tools and Machineries (euros 12,600)	750,771		750,771
3	Integrated farming practices (euros 8,400)	578,823		578,823
4	Health and Hygiene (euros 20,160)	505,273	810,352	1,315,625
5	Alternative Livelihoods (euros 16,800)	521,556	578,823	1,100,379
6	Quality education for children (euros 24,246)	1,670,731		1,670,731
	Total	6,646,215	1,389,175	8,035,390

Note * includes 5% administrative cost

Out of the total receipt of Rs 8,035,390, the project has spent a sum of Rs 3,918,551 towards program expenses. This includes.

❖ Training and Development Initiatives	:	Rs. 1,856,128
❖ Small tools and machineries	:	Rs. 228,000
❖ Integrated farming practices	:	Rs. 690,000
❖ Health and Hygiene	:	Rs. 400,000
❖ Quality education for children	:	Rs. 407,939
❖ Coordination & Administration	:	Rs. 336,484
❖ Total Expenses	:	Rs. 3,918,551

The detailed expenditure breakup against the proposed budget and actual receipt is enclosed in annexure I.

Hence, there is a balance of Rs 4,116,839 available with ASSEFA as on March 31, 2012.

4. CONCLUSION

This project area being new, ASSEFA is primarily involved in understanding the socio-economic culture of the locals, especially indigenous people and building good rapport with them.

Agriculture is the major occupation and many families are depended upon it for their income generation. Hence, ASSEFA has studied the farming system and started farmers group with interested persons. Depending upon their needs, financial assistances were given for farm related activities.

Farmers Committee is being established with progressive farmers as the members. This Committee is being trained to involve them in the following:

- To bring in potential farmers and arrange needs based assistance under the project.
- To assist in building up revolving funds by collecting surplus income from the farmers, who had received financial assistance under the project and
- To identify deserving farmers to support them with revolving funds in farm related activities and recover the funds as scheduled.

ASSEFA community college through agriculture course, the progressive youths have been trained in agriculture and supported other farmers through the trained youths. As part of establishing by-product unit, ASSEFA has been collaborating with Coffee Board to establish a coffee processing unit. Similarly, base works are being carried out to promote mushroom cultivation unit through interested farmers.

Under health and hygiene, financial supports were given for improvement of dwelling places (mainly replacement of thatched roofing with tin sheet roofing).

Out of the total financial assistance of Rs. 1,318,000, provided under farmers renaissance and health and hygiene programs, a sum of Rs. 969,000 has been built up as revolving fund to support the local communities to undertake similar activities on revolving basis.

The school program has been started to provide quality education to the local communities, especially to the tribal children. The teachers were selected from the surrounding area, given regular training by the senior team of ASSEFA Education program, on various teaching methodologies, subjects, etc. for quality services.

ASSEFA HIGHLAND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
Budget vs Actuals - upto March 2012

Sl. No.	Programmes	Physical	Unit cost	Units	Budget		Received		Actual		% of achie against Receipt	Balance in Rs	Remark
					in euro	In Rs	in euro	In Rs	Units	Amount			
1	Farmers Renaissance Programme												
a	Promoting & Improving Livelihoods Through Integrated Farming Practice in Hilly - agro - ecosystems	family	5,000	96	8,000	480,000	8,000	549,881	138	690,000	125%	- 140,119	Increase due to coverage of more farmers
b	Small Tools and Machineries in Reducing Farm Drudgery Work in Promoting Integrated Farming Practices	family	15,000	48	12,000	720,000	12,000	713,232	10	228,000	32%	485,232	Farmers supported through tie up with Coffee Board to enable farmers to get subsidy. Hence low in achievement.
	Sub Total (in Rs)				20,000	1,200,000	20,000	1,263,113		918,000	73%	345,113	
2	Alternative Livelihood opportunities												
a	Promotion of Alternative Livelihoods Through Increase in Cattle Wealth	family	10,000	48	8,000	480,000	8,000	495,478			0%	495,478	Demand is being assessed. Will support from 2nd year onwards.
	Sub Total (in Rs)				8,000	480,000	8,000	495,478			0%	495,478	
4	Health & Hygiene											0	
a	Promoting Hygienic Living & Improvement of Dwelling Places	family	10,000	48	8,000	480,000	8,000	480,000	40	400,000	83%	80,000	The balance fund will be utilised in the 2nd year.
	Sub Total (in Rs)				8,000	480,000	8,000	480,000		400,000	83%	80,000	
5	Training & Development Initiative to the Indigenous Population												
	Cost per Trainee	1 trainee	20737	20	6,912	414,740	3,562	245,489		189,550	77%	55,939	Training through community college progressing as scheduled
	Infrastructure												
	Class Rooms	1000 sq.ft	1200000	1	20,000	1,200,000	20,000	1,256,000					
	Lavatory	120 sq.ft	144000	2	4,800	288,000	4,800	301,440	2257	1,666,578	81%	- 410,578	Additional rooms for faculty members under construction.
	Library	400 sq.ft	480000	1	8,000	480,000	8,000	502,400	sq.ft				
	Coffee Processing Unit	1	100000		1,667	100,000	1,667	104,688			0%	104,688	Being collaborated with Coffee Board to establish an unit
	Mushroom Cultivation Unit	1	80000		1,333	80,000	1,244	78,092			0%	78,092	Similarly, interested farmers being identified to establish mushroom cultivation units.
	Sub Total (in Rs)				42,712	2,562,740	39,273	2,488,108		1,856,128	75%	631,980	
6	Promoting quality education to the indigenous population												
	Recurring Cost				5,175	310,500	5,162	355,721		407,939	115%	- 52,218	
	Non-recurring Cost				17,917	1,075,000	17,871	1,231,474			0%	1,231,474	Options to buy school bus being explored, as presently existing jeep is used for children pickup services.
	Sub Total (in Rs)				23,092	1,385,500	23,033	1,587,195		407,939	26%	1,179,256	
	Total (in Rs)				101,804	6,108,240	98,306	6,313,894		3,582,067	57%	2,731,827	
	Co-ordination & Administration cost (5% of Budget)				5,090		5,080	332,322		336,484	101%	- 4,162	
	Grand Total				106,895	6,108,240	103,386	6,646,216		3,918,551	59%	2,727,665	