

Annual Report 2010-2011



Message from the President/ Director

Welcome to all. It is always a pleasure to be with you every year to report on the latest developments and achievements at SOPAR. I personally will not go into details about our programs and projects. I will let my colleagues do that in the course of the following presentations. After each of the presentations, you will be invited to ask questions.

The key highlight this year was the preparation of a new five year proposal to CIDA. SOPAR largest single donor is the Canadian International Development Agency or CIDA. SOPAR is now in the last year of the five-year funding agreement with CIDA that ends March 31, 2012.

CIDA has recently changed its process to receive funding applications from not-for-profit organizations like SOPAR. In the past, an organization could apply to CIDA at any time. CIDA now issues a formal call for proposals within a set timeline. The periodicity of those calls for proposals, (i.e. yearly, more or less often?) is still unclear. So when a call was made for proposals to be sent by March

31, 2011, SOPAR quickly reacted and got to work, with its Indian partner Bala Vikasa, to develop a new five-year proposal.

Preparing such a proposal represents a huge amount of work for a small organization like SOPAR. The proposal, including all the annexes, covers over three hundred pages. It is very detailed and looks at all stages of the proposed program, including detailed activities, costing, etc. Costing a proposal for five years, given the unknowns associated with exchange rates, inflation, salary trends in India and Canada, is a complex process that requires careful analysis.

To support the preparation of the proposal, SOPAR held a day of reflec-

tion with representatives from Bala Vikasa. We then put in place a special committee. The founders of SOPAR continued to be key contributors to this exercise. Thanks to modern electronic means, consultations between Canada and India could take place practically on a daily basis.

Our first step was to hire an outside consultant to conduct an independent evaluation of SOPAR in Canada and in India. As in the past, the evaluation was excellent. It underlined the strong results of SOPAR programs and projects on the ground and the high level of professionalism and commitment of the SOPAR and Bala Vikasa staff.

Based on those results, the new proposal focuses on the SOPAR programs that have already demonstrated their value. These programs will be expanded and new features, such as drip irrigation for farmers, have been added to reflect emerging needs in the field.

We are now waiting for a reaction from CIDA. We should know if our proposal has been retained for



Continues from page 1...

Further discussions within the next four months. Hopefully, a new five-year agreement will be in place by April 1, 2012.

I now wish to thank our staff in Gatineau: Shobha, Mathieu and Laura for their commitment and professionalism. Laura joined us last August to take over from Sonia who had decided to return to university. Unfortunately, Mathieu is leaving us later this month. The whole family is moving to Quebec City. He will be replaced by Mélanie Leduc. Welcome Mélanie.

I must highlight the important and continuing contribution of the founders, Angèle

and André Gingras, as their dedication and advice are an inspiration and a guide. I also wish to thank our volunteers. They help us a lot, conduct fundraising drives, arrange meetings and presentation, give us contacts and advice and do other supporting work.

I never fail to be impressed by the commitment and quality of the staff of our sister organization Bala Vikasa in India. Incidentally, we have the pleasure to have a delegation from Bala Vikasa with us for this meeting. Welcome to all of you and thanks for your work and dedication. I also thank my colleagues on the Board of SOPAR for their contribution.

Finally, all the work and efforts mentioned above would have little impact without the contribution of our generous and loyal donors. Their support gives us encouragement and the means to achieve our mission of helping people help themselves.

Thanks to all.

André Bourassa

A WORD FROM THE FOUNDERS...

« Integration », « Integrate », « Integrated » are key words that best describe SOPAR's development approach. The experience and knowledge gathered from the field over the last 40 years have convinced us of the importance of the tight interdependence that must exist between the people and the many activities that stimulate their ability to become the masters of their own development.

When we had to find the right title for our latest five-year funding proposal that we recently submitted to CIDA, we felt compelled to use the following words:

SOPAR 2012-2017 Program: A Model for Integrated Community Driven Development for the Rural Poor.

It is important to keep in mind the ten rules of development developed by SOPAR and Bala Vikasa to better understand the rationale and the importance of this close "integration" in the process of community development. These rules are the outcome of an in-depth reflection on our work in India.

It would also be helpful to read again our booklet on « Action- Reflection- Action published in the Sharing Series by SOPAR-Bala Vikasa to fully comprehend the meaning of the work "integration". A drinking water well, a water purification system, the grouping of women who learn to become leaders in the development of their village, the mobilisation of the youth as agents of change in their communities all become triggers that, taken together, provide a fertile ground for a new mindset that will nourish the villagers' motivation for a development that is rooted within the community itself.

Moreover, based on our experi-

ence, sustainable community development is only possible if and when all those elements are brought together and systematically integrated: the economic and the social but also the political, environmental and the cultural elements as well.

Finally, community development is feasible only if all segments of society are mobilized: women for sure, particularly those that may be considered as second class citizens; marginal farmers; jobless youth; children who do not receive any education yet are tomorrow's hope.

For SOPAR, « integration » also has another dimension; a dimension that is perhaps not as well articulated, particularly in the context of international cooperation.

Globalisation means integration: it addresses the interdependence that exists between all people as exemplified in the activities of SOPAR that take place both in Canada and in India.

Although CIDA recently decided to separate its funding for overseas activities and those for development awareness in Canada, SOPAR has sought to demonstrate in its recently submitted proposal to CIDA the tight knit that exists between its Canadian and Indian activities.

For example, the internships on community development given in India by SOPAR-Bala Vikasa provide inspiration to young Canadians from UQO, the Dominican College, Carleton and many other Canadian universities to implement the SOPAR-Bala Vikasa approach in a Canadian context. A two-way ex-

change!

Another example of interdependency: the Walk for Water that successfully and simultaneously mobilized several thousand Canadian and Indian school children on March 22, on the occasion of the International Water Day. On that day, SOPAR-Bala Vikasa helped participants send a loud message on the importance of water here and over there, and on the need to take action to protect and conserve this too often wasted but essential, precious and life supporting resource.

The experience of SOPAR and of Bala Vikasa in community development and the implementation of the principle of integration was not the outcome of isolation. They were developed through the support and contribution of many people in Canada and in India: those who were part of the past and those who are part of the present in this quest for human solidarity and sharing: members of the Board, donors, employees, volunteers, etc.

It is with affection and gratitude that we say thanks. Thanks from the bottom of our hearts for your unrelenting contribution and for the support that you continue to offer us.

Let's continue our work with determination and perseverance; the poor of the world are still knocking a tour doors. Is it not simply a matter of justice?

Angèle (Bala Theresa) and André Gingras

Co-Founders SOPAR and Bala Vikasa



WOMEN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Results 2010-2011

- 193, 410 women members;
- 6, 410 new members joined this year;
- Women registered from 6 villages for literacy classes and signing of their names in English;
- 5, 101 group leaders were trained;
- 6, 128 women received loans to develop a small business
- Program supported 10, 233 widows;
- 27.5 days of training for field coordinators;
- 2, 000 women participated in a State level Convention.

This movement, which brings together **193,410 Indian women in 2011**, has become a model for the empowerment of women in rural India. The program empowers rural women using a holistic approach. With a strong focus on self-help groups, the village women come together to form support networks - and the coordinators, who are trained social workers, help women by organizing different development initiatives such as capacity building, economy, health, environment, society and democracy.

They now understand that, through unity and solidarity that they are able to solve problems in their community and obtain justice. They have learned, through a wide range of training activities, to save money and increase their incomes, improve their health practices and the diets of their families and so much more. Besides taking care of their families, they also for-

mally commit to taking care of the orphans, widows and elders in their own community, which would otherwise be left to themselves.

The women in the program, particularly those who joined long ago, have acquired a strong sense of their capacity and have become agents of change in their community.



CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM

Over the past 34 years, SOPAR-Bala Vikasa have gained a wealth of knowledge in implementing successful programs that have changed the lives of millions. In order to enhance the capacity of Agents of change and to share our knowledge, we established in 2002 the People Development Training Center (PDTC).

Today, the PDTC is recognized as a "Center for Excellence in Community Development". Approaches, strategies, lessons learned and issues identified through our programs are documented and shared with the international development community through publications, trainings, seminars and workshops.

In **2010-2011**, we published a new volume, no.9, of our Sharing Series entitled "**NLP: Motivation and Community Development**" to share the successful experience in applying Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) techniques while implementing community development programs such as

with the women in rural areas.

Training programs can take many forms. **One hundred and sixty-six** participants joined in seminars and workshops on the topics of Safe Drinking Water, Digital Social Networking, NLP for Community Development and Organic Farming.

In a continuous desire to train internal staff, **69** women coordinators who were eligible, keen and committed, were supported to study and write exam for the first year of a Bachelors degree in Public Administration, Political Science and Sociology. Additionally, **4** women coordinators completed their Masters degree in Social Work (MSW) this year adding to previous successful candidates still proudly working for Bala Vikasa.

As we have been doing for several years now, staff from Indian NGO's come to the PDTC for training on development issues such as sustainable community development, project proposal writing, the ABCD ap-

proach, conflict resolution and more. This year a total of **235** participants from **142** organizations from **19** different states in India participated in our training program.

Another milestone for the PDTC was to increase the number of sessions to three for the "Community Driven Development (CDD)" Certificate. This year, **93** participants took part from **16** different countries, including **19** students from Canada. As well, **31** participants attended a certificate course only for Asian NGO's.

« I was very poor before Bala Vikasa came in to my life. But through regular training programs and encouragement from Bala Vikasa, I became bold enough and started a new venture which has helped me to come out of deprivation and hardship. »

Vangaveeti Neeraja,
Maripeda Village,
Warangal District ,
Andhra Pradesh

WATER PROGRAM

Our water program, meant as a trigger for a process of sustainable development in communities, has three components: the construction of manually operated bore wells, water tanks and water purification system. These projects are all priorities for the communities we work with in rural Andhra Pradesh. What does it achieve?



- Sanitary and hygiene conditions have improved thus reducing medical expenses and allowing more working days;
- Women spend less time fetching water which is not only time consuming but physically demanding;
- Children who used to walk long distance to fetch water now have more time for school;
- Fewer community conflicts over access to water;

- Increased community solidarity and;
 - Participation and ownership of the project by villagers.
- villageois.

Results 2010-2011

- 100 Manual Bore Wells
- 8 Water Tanks
- 37 Purification Systems
- Total of 40,885 beneficiaries

«Purchasing water from commercial companies by paying 10 to 12 Roupies (Indian Currency, 1\$Cdn = 45 Rs.) for 20 liters was possible only to the economically well-to-do families (10% of the families in the village) before the project. But now even the poorest in the village are able to purchase the water from Bala Vikasa project as the water is sold at just Rs. 3 for 20 liters. This is a big help. We are able to save money and protect our health.»

Mrs. Mathangi Laxmamma

YOUTH PROGRAM

In rural India, a large number of youth between the ages of 18 to 25 are deeply affected by poverty and lack of opportunities. Drawing upon the model of our women program, we started the Youth Program 4 years ago with the aim of building up their capacity, and strengthening their confidence and skills through concrete projects in their community.

The youth are organized in groups. During their monthly meetings, they discuss ways to improve their lives and to be more proactive about their situation. They learn they can improve their future life by relying on their own capacities.

The program also offers activities such as seminars and field visits to enhance

motivation and show them how they can best contribute to the overall quality of life in their communities.

For example, many have helped their local schools by denouncing teacher absenteeism, monitor the free lunch program, facilitate access to clean water and sanitation, and through the “clean and green” initiative, have planted trees, cleaned roads and other public areas.

These activities have offered them opportunities to show their dynamism and become agents of change in their personal lives, their families and their communities. The results are encouraging, to the delight of all!

Results 2010-2011

- 4,156 youth members, divided into 400 groups in 55 villages;
- 1,308 youth members participated in the National Youth Convention;
- 10 training sessions were conducted for 400 youth leaders;
- Youth members participate in seminars on self-employment, personality development and new technologies;
- They helped 24 schools implement the health and sanitation projects;
- Clean and green initiatives implemented in 40 villages such as the planting of 2,619 trees;
- 20 social theatre presentations organized by youth
- 15,000 youth from 19 schools walked in 1st edition of Walk for Water

EDUCATION

Education and knowledge are fundamental for success and that is why we want to contribute to the education of young Indians, especially the orphans.

In 2010-2011, with your help, SOPAR supported the education of 2,402 children, of which 1665 are orphans, 99 semi orphans, 262 from very poor families and 376 disabled.

This success substantially rests on SOPAR's Women Development Pro-

gram. These women identify the orphans in their village, find them a boarding school and take care of them on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

This year, 59,279 women attended the solidarity events with the orphans, each donating the equivalent of 1-3 working days earnings for their education. The orphans are also given love, affection and psychological support by

the women.

This year, 1,200 orphans participated in the Annual Talent Show, which is organized to motivate and encourage the children.

Finally, since many orphans have now reached college age, a special day was organized for 193 of them to offer them counseling and guidance.

HUMANITARIAN

Although Sopar is primarily a development organization, the plight of the forgotten destitute people, has obliged us to extend our support to them. As a humanitarian program, in **2010-2011**, we have assisted **1, 000** very poor and abandoned elders. We have also carried out free cataract surgery for **500** of them.

We also support **100** mentally disabled individuals by providing them with daily meals.

The members of the Women Development Program also generously help the poor elderly in their villages. Many of them invite the poor elders of their village to their homes to share a meal, give them some clothes and spend time with them for emotional and psychological support.

SOPAR IN CANADA

CHILDREN CHANGING THE WORLD

The Children Changing the World (CCW) project, our lead public development awareness program, allows teachers to enhance the awareness of schoolchildren to the complex issues of access to water and education. More than just an awareness project, CCW is a concrete tool to allow children to become socially involved. In the course of the 2010-11 school year, 95 schools have involved their community through a number of fundraising activities that allowed the drilling of 112 water wells as well as provide 24 class rooms in India with desks and chairs.

Walk for Water: Canada-India United for Water

On World Water Day, last March 22, SOPAR arranged for 20 walks in 8 provinces involving more than 400 people. As part of a worldwide activity, and in order to enhance awareness to the water issues in India while raising funds at the same time, our partner Bala Vikasa joined to our initiative and also arranged in India 20 walks that attracted over 15000 people.

For this first edition, the Walk for Water was covered by more than 29 media outlets such as

Radio Canada, CBC Radio, la Presse Affaire, Le Droit, The Banff Grag and Canyon News (AB), Cornwall Seaway Valley News (ON) and man other. Further support included the City of Gatineau, Les Immeubles E. Tassé, Manucam production, la Semaine canadienne de l'eau and Provigo Mistassini.

The Walk for Water has shown great potential for growth as a leading SOPAR awareness activity. Canada and India will be united for water.



INTERNSHIPS IN INDIA

From a pilot project to three internships per year!

En In 2007, SOPAR launched a pilot project allowing Canadians to be trained in the basics of community development in India. This first experience laid the groundwork for what would formally become the SOPAR internships!



The program has expanded and we now offer three internships per year. In **2010-2011**, **18** Canadians from six provinces had the opportunity to undergo our training in community development in India.

This success is largely due to the support we have received from the Canadian academic networks.

Among others, we have developed university agreements where students get credits for their training in India, including with the Université du Québec in the Outaouais and the Dominican College in Ottawa.

Our one month internships consist of introducing participants to development strategies and then take them to the field where our agents show them how these strategies are applied in the real world!

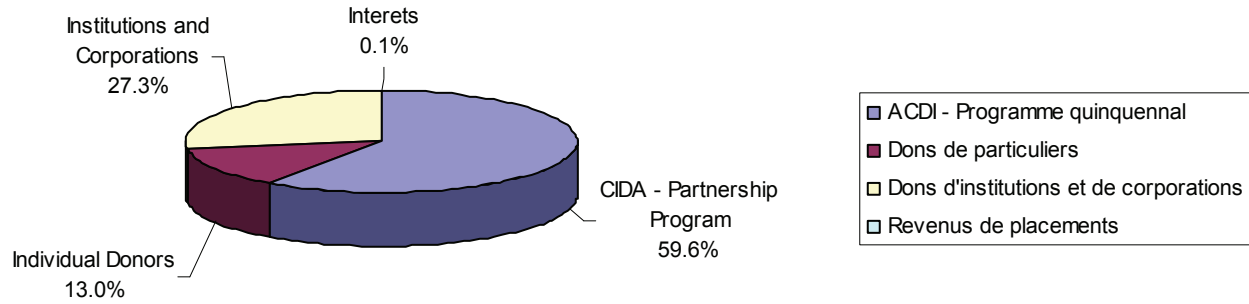
A very important feature of our program is that the trainees come from all over the world, from countries such as Pakistan, Afghanistan, South Africa, Nigeria, Germany and many more.

For more information about our internship, we invite you to visit our website at www.sopar.ca or contact one of our agents at **1-866-443-3616**.

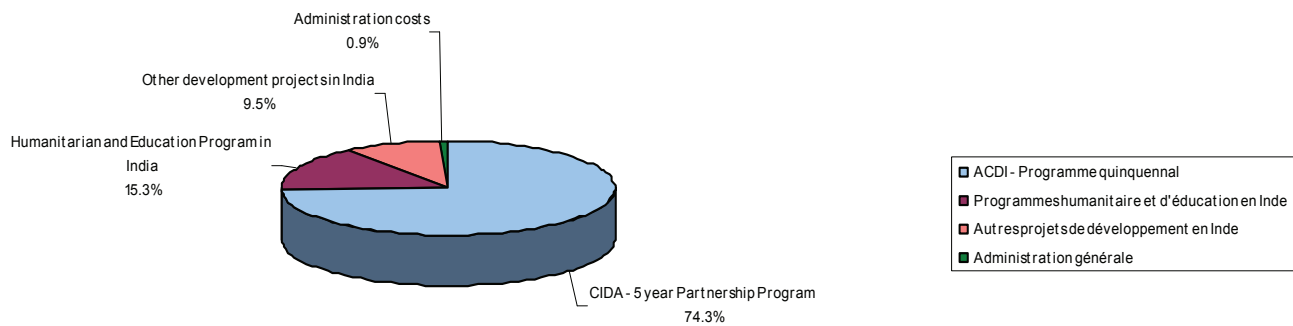
RESULTS ON MARCH 31ST 2011

	2011	2010
REVENUES		(recovered)
CIDA - Partnership Program	885,983	683,186
Individual Donors	193,089	195,528
Institutions and Corporations	405,450	441,613
Interest	1,872	3,110
	1,486,394	1,323,437
EXPENSES		
CIDA - 5 year Partnership Program	1,146,231	882,715
Humanitarian and Education Program in India	235,200	174,050
Other development projects in India	147,000	112,078
Administration costs	13,271	14,495
	1,541,702	1,183,338
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	-55,308	140,099

REVENUES 2010-2011



EXPENSES 2010-2011





**HELPING PEOPLE
HELP THEMSELVES**

1 Chemin des Érables

Gatineau, QC

J8V 1C1

Tel: 819-243-3616 or 1-866-443-3616

Fax: 819-243-6280

Email: sopar@sopar.ca

Website: www.sopar.ca

SOPAR is a non-profit organization devoted to international development in India. Since 1977, our approach has been to help people help themselves by providing the tools and resources necessary for communities to achieve sustainable development. We also encourage Canadians to open themselves up to the world and get involved with international issues as global citizens.



THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS...

SOPAR's work in India is made possible thanks to the generosity of hundreds of individuals across Canada who embrace world solidarity and dare to believe that the injustice and poverty on our planet today can be eliminated.

We also extend our gratitude to the teachers, principals and students of the schools across Canada that have participated in the Children Changing the world program. Today's child is tomorrow's citizen and it is never too early to show compassion...

Finally it is with the continuous support and partnership of Canadian Foundations, Institutions, Congregations and CIDA that SOPAR can year after year continue to help the people help themselves.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2010-2011

André Bourassa

President/ Director

Louis Guay

Vice-President

André Beauregard

Treasurer

Éric Gingras

Secretary

Bernard Giroux

Administrator

Marc Gingras

Administrator

Laurent Thauvette

Administrator

Stéphane Courtemanche

Administrator

Ester Van Gennip

Administrator

FOUNDERS

Angèle and André Gingras

SOPAR STAFF

Shobha Singareddy

India Program

Mathieu Montmartin

Canada Program

Laura Avalos

Communications

Philibert Lafrance

Accountant