

DR. V. EKAMBARAM

1917–2003



Upon completing his M.B.B.S., Dr. Ekambaram served in the Indian Army. After five years, he left the army and became involved in leprosy work in India. In 1950, he was posted to the Leprosy Department in Stanley Medical College, Madras. From that day onwards, he dedicated his life to the elimination of leprosy in India.

He went on to become an eminent leprologist and the First State Leprosy Officer in Tamil Nadu. At Karigiri, he was considered a “Teacher of Teachers” in the field of leprosy. The Dr. Ekambaram Endowment Prize has been established for the best outgoing NMS student at SLR&TC at Karigiri.

Before his association with AIFO, he held the post of Secretary for the Damien Foundation India Trust. He joined the AIFO as the Representative in 1979. Under his guidance, that AIFO expanded the quantity and quality of work done in India. He was instrumental in initiating the projects associated with NGO’s, as well as the government programs.

In 1983, he spearheaded the MDT program in Chittoor District of Andhra Pradesh. He went on to build the Bangalore Urban and Mandya District Programs in 1992, a pioneering effort of collaboration between government and NGO’s.

He conceived the idea of District Technical Support Teams, which still exist today. He was the driving force behind projects like Sumanahalli, Shantha Jeeva Jyothi, Arogy Matha Seva Kendra in Bhalki, MOB in Mandya and many other projects. He continued to serve as the Special Representative of AMICI Di Raoul Follereau and Chairman of the AMICI Trust, Bangalore, until his death.

He was the recipient of the prestigious International Gandhi Memorial Award. In 2002, he was the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Leprologist award, presented by the Hind Kusht Nivaran Sangh.

A man of great commitment, endurance, and vision—he will always be remembered and cherished.

—Jose M. V.