

AUROVILLE FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2005-2006

AUROVILLE
TAMIL NADU

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INTRODUCTION

It has been evident for many decades that the World is facing a crisis of dimensions so complex that it seems to defy any solution. We have been told that even though it may appear to be a material crisis, such as endemic poverty, environmental degradation and ceaseless conflicts, that essentially this crisis is spiritual in nature as the naturalism of humanity is stifled by Ignorance and error and only a fundamental change in consciousness will remedy it.

It was in this context that Auroville was born as a proclamation that this crisis is to be challenged. Understandably the task handed down to us by the Mother is monumental in proportion to the skills we are endowed with. Yet here we are. It maybe true that we progress too slowly but it is also true that we press, ceaselessly, towards our future and towards the fulfilment of the promise of a new creation on Earth.

This year in Auroville has seen many changes that herald the next steps towards fulfilment of Auroville's destiny. With efforts taken in collaboration with by our Chairman, Dr. Karan Singh, we have seen the introduction of the Land Consolidation Committee, created to tackle the tenacious problem of securing the lands so that Auroville can begin, after much delay, the development of the City in a consolidated manner. We have also seen the beginning of the Unity Fund, a first and vital step towards building a new economy based on ideals expressed by the Mother. Much work has gone into strengthening ties with our neighbours with the founding of the Edayanchavadi Development Council. Work has continued with Tsunami Relief which has now moved into the direction of developing a lasting and improved infrastructure, such as clean drinking water and livelihood training. This and as the following pages demonstrate Auroville has been active and developing in ever wider dimensions.

Auroville has grown in many directions of which this report may give a glimpse. We have also witnessed the return of Aurovilians born in Auroville who have left for years of study or work, bringing their experience, enriching our lives here.

In order for Auroville to be truly relevant it will have find and realize within herself the answer to the most pressing of questions faced by humanity today. How to realize and manifest the City that the Earth needs? And further, how to give a concrete and collective body to the ideal of Human Unity?

“ This birth of Auroville wasn’t preceded by any thought; as always, it was simply a Force acting, like a sort of absolute manifesting, and it was so strong that I could have told people, “Even if you don’t believe in it, even if all circumstances appear to be quite unfavorable, I KNOW THAT AUROVILLE WILL BE. It may be in a hundred years, it may be in a thousand years, I don’t know, but Auroville will be, because it has been decreed.”

The Mother, 21 September 1966

“And nothing happens in the cosmic play But at its time and in its foreseen place.”

Sri Aurobindo ‘Savitri’, page 389

AUROVILLE FOUNDATION

The Auroville Foundation was notified on 29.01.1991 as a statutory body under the Act of Parliament- the Auroville Foundation Act 1988. The Foundation has been functioning under the administrative control of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India. The Foundation consists of three authorities namely

- (a) the Governing Board;
- (b) the Resident's Assembly; and
- (c) the Auroville International Advisory Council.

Under the provisions of the Act the general superintendence, direction and management of the affairs of the Foundation vest in the Governing Board [Ref: Sec. 11(3)].

The Governing Board

The Governing Board consists of nine members nominated by the Central Government. Present Board was notified vide no. F-27-50/2002-UU dated 6th September 2004 for a period of four years, with the following members,

- Dr. Karan Singh** (MP, Rajya Sabha), Chairman;
- Dr. D.P. Chattopadhyaya**, Member;
- Shri Ajoy Bagchi**, Member;
- Dr. (Smt) Aster Mira Patel** (Resident of Auroville), Member
- Mr. Roger Anger** (Resident of Auroville), Member;
- Ms. Malini Parthasarthy**, Member;
- Dr. (Ms.) Mallika Sarabhai**, Member;
- Shri S.K. Ray**, (JS & FA), Ex- Officio Member;
- Shri Keshav Desiraju** I.A.S., Ex- Officio Member

The International Advisory Council (IAC)

In November 2004 the following persons were nominated for a period of four years:

Dr. A.T. Aryaratne, leader of the Sri Lankan ‘Sarvodaya’ (Universal Awakening) movement (re-nomination); Sir Mark Tully, British Indian-based journalist and commentator, born in Calcutta, has been BBC’s India correspondent for 22 years, and awarded a knighthood in the British Queen’s New Year’s honours list in 2001; Prof. Diana Eck, Professor of Comparative Religion and Indian Studies at Harvard University; Mr. Doudou Diène, special rapporteur to the U.N. on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and director of intercultural, inter-religious dialogue and peace culture at UNESCO; Dr. Marc Luyckx Ghisi, a theologian, researcher in global cultural transformation; previously advisor to the presidents Delors and Santer at the European Commission.

Former members of the International Advisory Council are: Ms. Mary E. King, President Global Action, Inc., Washington ; Dr. A.T. Aryaratne, President Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement, Sri Lanka ; Mr. Kireet Joshi; Prof. Norman Myers, CMG, environmentalist; Prof. Amartya Sen, Indian Nobel laureate and economist; Mr. Maurice Strong, former Secretary-General UNCED; Dr. Ervin Laszlo, Director World Future; the late Mr. J.R.D. Tata, foremost Indian industrialist; Snr. Federico Mayor, Director General of UNESCO; Mr. Bertrand Schneider, Secretary General of the Club of Rome; Mrs. Hanne Strong, President Manitou Foundation; late Mr. Nani Palkhivala, eminent Indian lawyer.

The Secretary

For the day-to-day management of the Foundation, the Central Government appoints a Secretary who is responsible to the Chairman of the Governing Board. The Secretary is a high-level officer from the Indian Administrative Service or a similar organisation. The Secretary lives in Auroville. Shri. S.R. Sharma, I.A.S. (Retd.) who was posted as Chief Secretary of Pondicherry during 1996-98, joined the AV Foundation as Secretary on August 2nd, 2003 and retired in July 2005. Since then Finance and Administrative Officer, Shri.P.R.Srinivasamurthy is the Acting Secretary.

Previous secretaries include Shri L.K. Tripathy, I.A.S., Dr. S.C. De, I.P.S., and Shri. N. Bala Baskar, I.A.S.

MATRIMANDIR

The Completion of Matrimandir structure is projected for the end of 2006. As work has been progressing very well in the past year, Matrimandir's completion team is doing all efforts to complete the main structure and most of the infrastructure of the future Matrimandir Island (an oval measuring 360 m x 290 m) by the end of 2006. It is hoped that it will be ready for 36th anniversary of Matrimandir and the Mother's 139th birth anniversary, on 21st February, 2007.

PROGRESS OF THE WORK DURING THE PAST YEAR:

1. Matrimandir's outer face

Almost three years ago, the waterproofing membrane of the entire structure had been found defective and it was decided to remove and re-do it entirely (at the expense of its manufacturer who acknowledged that it was his mistake). This huge work has just been completed (mid-June) and of the golden discs have already been re-installed. Completing the four entrance doors, and the decoration above and around these, still requires a lot of work. A large marble clad symbol of the Mother has been made and installed in place this year under Matrimandir.

2. Inside and top of Matrimandir

Inside Matrimandir:

Inner Chamber: Modifications to its ceiling and AC plants were carried out successfully this year. The Chamber had to be closed and was re-opened after completion.

Inner skin: About half of the skins RCC space-frame and the Ferrocement triangles have been scraped of paint and re-painted. The design of the highly sophisticated lighting modules has been finalised. All aluminium triangles have been manufactured, have been powder-coated and 1/3 have been re-assembled and equipped with their white fabric and are thus ready-to-install.

Twin spiral ramps: They have been scraped of old paint and re-painted. All technical questions have been resolved satisfactorily.

Top of Matrimandir: Major modifications were carried out this year. By the end of June, the water-proofing will be over and the heliostat installed for good. All works in this area have been completed - except for very minor details.

3. Twelve large, petals with meditation rooms

Masonry work in all twelve rooms has been completed. Six rooms have been painted. (AC plants are yet to be installed in 10 rooms and lighting in some of these.) In the area just below Matrimandir the beautiful marble pool with its more than 200 curved white marble petals has been completed

4. Paved pathways on the future Matrimandir Island

This work has progressed very well this year, with all 12 radials almost complete now (11 have been paved), and about half of the work on portions of the "Garden Path" complete.

5. Computerised irrigation system and electrical infrastructure

Most of a Rs 70 lakhs contract for a fully-automatic irrigation system for the entire oval has already been completed by a company from Bangalore. Most electrical cables and conduits have now been laid.

6. Gardens within the future Matrimandir Island

Most of the final contouring of the red earth of all gardens has been completed.

Experiments with various varieties of lawns are being carried out. Top soil has been removed from both sides of the "Service Path" and will soon be replaced. A custom-made machine to sieve top soil and compost has been manufactured and has just been commissioned. More designs have been proposed for the (12 + 1) gardens and full-scale mock-ups are being made in three of these gardens before a decision can be taken.

7. Lake around the Oval Island and possible need of underground water tanks

Studies on how to build the future Lake and keep it full are underway and are progressing steadily. Studies are also underway on how to procure this water (i.e.: store rainwater).

THE CITY IN THE MAKING

a) L'AVENIR D'AUROVILLE – AUROVILLE'S FUTURE

Auroville's Town Planning Office and Centre for Urban Research

BRIEF BACKGROUND:

In the year 1965, The Mother appointed Mr. Roger Anger, a French practicing architect as Chief Architect to build the city of Auroville: a unique experiment in human habitat, where volunteers drawn from all over the world will live and work together towards realizing a concrete Human Unity based on true spiritual values.

The Mother named the department of architects, planners and technicians to assist the Chief Architect, as 'L'Avenir d'Auroville – Auroville's Future', commonly known as 'Aurofuture'.

ACTIVITIES DURING 2005-2006

A. Research Documentation:

1. 'Auroville: an Eco-city in the making' – Guidelines for Sustainable Development Practices (2005 edition) prepared for and on behalf of the Central Pollution Control Board, Delhi.
2. Research for an Auroville Telecommunication Network and Electricity Distribution Grid System.
3. Preliminary studies: 5-year Development Plans 2007-2012
 - 3.1. Bio-region
 - 3.2. Land Consolidation
 - 3.3. Environmental assessment
 - 3.4. Infrastructure
 - 3.5. Communication
 - 3.6. Urban-Rural Landscaping

- 3.7. Mobility
- 3.8. Organic farming
- 3.9. Village development
- 3.10. International Zone
- 3.11. Habitat area between the Administrative Area and the Crown
- 3.12. City Centre
- 3.13. Cultural Zone
- 3.14. Architectural designs for:
 - Main Town Hall: study
 - New building for Auroville Foundation offices: study

B. On-going Applied Research and Demonstration Centers:

1. 'Sangamam Model Village': ongoing project aiming to solve the housing problems of Auroville's workers. The special features of this project include an innovative architectural design based on the combination of earth rammed walls and other ecological and local materials, a rainwater harvesting system, a decentralized sewage treatment system, and eco-friendly solid and water management systems. Work done over the year:
2. Roof top water harvesting system in Administrative Area: with a capacity of 100 cm. The water is filtered and dynamised to bring it to drinking quality. Work done over the year:
3. De-centralized Root zone wastewater treatment plant: with a capacity to suit 150 person equivalent. The quality of the recycled water is suitable for gardening (over 2000 liters per day). Work done over the year:

C. Survey and Mapping:

1. Land Consolidation
2. Matrimandir gardens
3. Residential Settlements
4. Matrimandir lake
5. Industrial Zone access road
6. The existing underground infrastructure
7. Public buildings

D. Geographic Information System:

The survey and mapping data form the basis of GIS, which is a powerful tool for Planning and maintenance of the developing township.

Completed work:

- a) Using the surface modeling software (Surfer) each and every radial, ring road and water bodies have been systematically studied and the corresponding 3D maps have been prepared.
- b) A detailed study has been done on six service roads and the section map has been created.

- c) The topological error has been cleaned and the existing buildings in Auroville have been inserted as polygons. The corresponding topology has been created.
- d) Detailed proposed maps have been created for Cultural and International Zones and for each of these two zones various maps for environment, infrastructure and land ownership have been produced.
- e) The proposed build up and path areas have been calculated for each building in the Cultural and International Zones for the purpose of Rain Water Harvesting.
- f) The errors in the cadastral map have been rectified with the correct survey numbers.
- g) Various utility maps such as electricity, telecom and water pipes have been updated.

Ongoing Research on GIS:

- a) The 3-D urban model has been created for the surveyed area. It needs to be completed but all the data are not available.
- b) Using Google Earth Software, the satellite image of Auroville Township and region is extracted.
- c) Detail study has been carried in terms of the land use, the land ownership and the environmental aspects of the planned Village Model in the North of Auroville.
- d) The detailed land use study has been carried for the complete Auroville Township.

E. Workshops and Seminars:

In collaboration with the Central Pollution Control Board, Government of India, Auroville's Future organized 2-day a demonstration workshop on 'Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems' in March 4 & 5, 2006. The object of the workshop was to present a new generation of decentralized treatment systems that the CPCB has been promoting as part of the efforts that this institution has been undertaking in this field.

b) THE DEVELOPMENT DURING THE YEAR 2005-2006:

The city of Auroville has been envisaged by the Mother as having four main zones, the International Zone, the Industrial Zone, the Cultural Zone and the Residential Zone. The Matrimandir stands at the centre, the Soul of Auroville. Between the Matrimandir and the Industrial Zone, the Administrative Area can be found. The zones are to be surrounded by a Green Belt of farms and forests. In the year 2005-2006, progress has been made in all the sectors.

In the Administrative Area the year 2003-2004 saw the Auroville Centre for Urban Research (ACUR), commonly known as the Town Hall, come to life. In 2005-06 a second administrative building cum-multi-media centre next to ACUR was completed including a restaurant, cinema and offices for essential services such as the Economy Group and the Entry Group. This building has been funded, through the channel of one of the world-wide network of Auroville Internationals, by a large private donation.

In the Residential Zone, several housing projects for the residents of Auroville were completed. Funding for all these projects came largely from the residents.

In the International Zone the dormitory of the American Pavilion was completed and seed funds for the construction of French Pavilion, the Italian Pavilion, the German Pavilion and the African Pavilion are gradually accumulating. In the meantime all of them are carrying out programmes and activities. Construction of the Pavilion of Tibetan Culture.

In the Industrial Zone, the main project under Auroville Fund is the new Integral Learning Centre which is nearing completion. Most of the development in the Industrial Zone is being carried out by the various commercial Trusts.

In the Cultural Zone some funding was received for infrastructure development. Most of the development in the Cultural Zone was undertaken by SAIER.

In the Green Belt and beyond further funding has been received for the development of the Botanical Gardens, a new forest community and for organic farming at Annapurna, Aurogreen, Discipline and Service Farms as well as for environmental projects at Annadana. There are three ongoing projects to educate the local farmers on the health hazards of spraying the local crops with pesticides and demonstrating the effectiveness of alternative organic solutions.

THE RESIDENTS OF AUROVILLE

CENSUS

On March 31, 2006 total of 1838 residents of Auroville (aged eighteen years and above) coming from 35 nations were living in Auroville. There were 982 male residents and 856 female residents. There were also 434 minors (aged below eighteen years) living in Auroville. Country-wise details of residents including minors is as follows:

ALGERIAN	1
AMERICAN	65
ARGENTINIAN	7
AUSTRALIAN/FRENCH	1
AUSTRALIAN/GERMAN	1
AUSTRALIAN	12
AUSTRIAN	10
BELGIAN	18
BELORUSSIAN	1
BRAZILIAN	3
BRITISH	51
BULGARIAN	2
CANADIAN	23
COLOMBIAN	2
DANISH	3
DUTCH	76
ETHIOPIAN	2
FINNISH	1
FRENCH	274
FRENCH/BRITISH	1
FRENCH/IRISH	1

FRENCH/ITALIAN	5
FRENCH/SPANISH	2
FRENCH/SWISS	3
FRENCH/UKRAINIAN	1
GERMAN	227
HUNGARIAN	1
INDIAN	754
IRISH	1
ISRAELI	25
ITALIAN	85
ITALIAN/SPANISH	1
JAPANESE	4
KAZAKH	1
KOREAN	22
LATVIAN	2
LITHUANIAN	2
NEPALI	1
NEW ZEALANDER	1
RUSSIAN	42
SLOVENE	2
SOUTH AFRICAN	1
SPANISH	30
SRI LANKAN	4
SWEDISH	11
SWISS	48
TIBETAN	7
UK/AUSTRALIAN	1
UKRAINIAN	16

TOTAL : 2132

Entry Group Functioning:

For the past three years, the Entry Group has been working under a mandate ratified by the Resident Assembly (please refer to earlier Entry Group Report). At present, the Community is working on a new proposal which will be presented to the concerned groups soon.

LAND

The Auroville Foundation owns only half of the land in the designated Auroville Township Master Plan area. On an urgent priority basis, it still needs to secure some 225 acres of private land in the City Area and about 180 acres of critical roadside land in the Green Belt, which are prone to real estate and commercial developments. In addition, approximately 100 acres are required for providing new access roads to the future township and, eventually, some 2000 acres for the completion of the Green Belt in its entirety.

During the financial year 2005 – 2006, Rs. 60.58 lakhs was donated by well-wishers and friends of Auroville to the Auroville Land Fund: 66% of the funds came from abroad and 34% from within India.

In view of the urgency to secure core areas and priority lands for the Auroville Township, the Residents' Assembly through its Working Committee submitted a proposal to the Governing Board in September 2005 to set up a Land Consolidation Committee. In March 2006, an 11-member committee, which includes the Secretary and Finance & Administration Officer of the Auroville Foundation, was constituted by the Governing Board. The mandate and overall thrust of the Land Consolidation Committee is to secure the remaining land within the Master Plan area for the realisation of the Auroville Township.

More specifically, the Land Consolidation Committee will focus on:

- a) designing a comprehensive land consolidation plan based upon the present-day development dynamics and market realities in the Auroville area;
- b) setting priorities and looking into various methods of securing essential lands for Auroville;

- c) developing appropriate and effective strategies to protect and consolidate Auroville's landholdings in specific core/priority areas;
- d) approving specific land purchase, sale and exchange proposals;
- e) raising the necessary funds within India and abroad for the consolidation of Auroville's landholdings;
- f) looking into possibilities of internal financing and stimulating participation and contributions from within the community.

The Auroville residents hope that the creation of the Land Consolidation Committee will give a new élan and a fresh impetus next year to secure the land for the manifestation of the Auroville Township, as envisaged by the Mother.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

a) THE AUROVILLE 'FUNDS AND ASSETS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE'

FAMC Membership

The membership is constituted of representatives of Auroville working groups and areas of activity.

Introduction

The Funds and Assets Management Committee (FAMC) was originally created in 1996 on request from the Governing Board to the Working Committee of the Auroville Residents' Assembly. During 1997, the Government of India has notified the Auroville Foundation Rules under which a slightly different formulation of the FAMC was proposed. However, after deliberations certain amendments were proposed to bring it in line with the original proposal of 1996 which are under consideration by the Government. In the meantime, the FAMC is functioning under the presumption that the proposed amendments would soon be notified. The FAMC has taken up several functions related to the management of funds and assets of the Auroville Foundation.

During the Year 2005-2006 the FAMC has discussed and made recommendations on the following issues:

Issues Related to Accounts and Accountability

Renewal of 10 (23c) iv Tax Exempt Status: Application for renewal is being filed for the years 2006-07 and 2008-09, while exemption for the previous years 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 are still under consideration.

Renewal of 80G Tax Exemptions: 80G tax exemption on donations received has been granted up to the year 2010. This is the first time that 80G is being granted for a 5 year period.

Auroville Unity Fund/Budget Coordination Committee: A subgroup was constituted to explore the details of the practical implementation of the Auroville Unity Fund proposal. The Auroville Unity Fund proposal was approved by the FAMC and ratified by the Residents' Assembly held on February 10th, and following formal endorsement by the Governing Board the Office Order was issued by the Secretary-in-Charge on March 31st 2006. Implementation is in process for 2006-07.

IPAI Report: Auroville Foundation has initiated a Systems review and internal audit by the Institute of Public Auditors India for Auroville Units and Trusts.

House Tax Meeting: A subgroup was constituted to organize an updating of data on the payment of House Tax. Housing Service, Auroville Planning & Development Council, Working Committee and Auroville Fund will participate in discussions and the group will make its recommendation to the FAMC.

Issues related to Economy

Financial Services Management Group Report: The quarterly report of the Corpus Fund was received and recommendations reviewed for the settling of minor unrecoverable liabilities.

Economy Group Review: A review process of the Economy Group, mandated in December 2004 to function for one year, was initiated.

AV Health Fund: The Economy Group is investigating medical insurance options for group coverage as some cases have required more funding than is currently available.

New Pour Tous and Pour Tous Fund Proposal: The Pour Tous Study Group made its proposal to the FAMC for endorsement. The first phase is towards a more comprehensive provision of material support for Aurovilians in-kind, by establishing a Distribution Scheme for food and sundry items. The new service, located in the Solar Kitchen complex area, opened on March 1st and will be evaluated after 6 months for long term implementation. A running budget has been provided from the Central Fund and there is an emphasis to provide participants their meals from collective kitchens and restaurants, the balance of goods offered from the Distribution Centre.

Auroville Economy Research Project: Professor Henk Thomas, the Netherlands, and Mr. Manuel Thomas, Chartered Accountant, Chennai, made a brief presentation on completion of their economic study, with data spanning 25 years (1981 – 2005). The study has been made possible through a grant specified from the Dutch foundation, Stichting De Zaaier.

Issues Related to Housing

Housing Corpus Fund: A subgroup was formed to examine various aspects of collective housing projects for Auroville such as fund raising, creating a revolving fund, and aspects of taking external loans. It is suggested to raise an amount to augment capital already available with Housing Fund. Various institutions like HUDCO and HDFC are being considered. The major question needing attention is how to provide Aurovilians entirely supported by community funding with affordable housing. The APDC has made a proposal with regard to future housing development within the City area.

b) AUROVILLE FUND

Auroville Fund is the unit of the Auroville Foundation that receives and disburses all the foreign donations for all the many activities and projects that flourish in Auroville. Auroville Fund received and disbursed funds to approximately thirty units, 80 separate ongoing activities, each with an activity coordinator and approximately 106 time-bound projects each with a project holder in charge.

Activities

Auroville Fund receives funding for approximately 80 on-going activities. These include community facilities such as the library, the music library and the archives. Many educational and cultural research activities receive funding under the umbrella of the Sri Aurobindo International Institute of Educational Research (SAIIR). However there are a wide range of educational and cultural activities in and around Auroville that are grouped under Auroville Fund.

There are educational facilities for Aurovilians both young and older such as After School, a facility for young Tamil Aurovilians who want to study for 10th and 12th standard examinations. The Management Training and Development Program is funded from abroad to provide the opportunity for Aurovilians of all ages who want to follow courses or attend programs and seminars in India or abroad that will upgrade their understanding and skills in their given field of work. Funding is also received for Auroville's very active basketball teams and community sports activities. This year funds were received to build a new tennis court.

There are also educational facilities for the surrounding villages. Auroville Fund received donations for two village schools providing 1st through 12th standard education to children from Bommaipalayam, Kulapalayam and Edayanchavadi. The Auroville community of New Creation is dedicated to providing free progress education to local children and Auroville Fund received donations for several of their activities such as the Kindergarten and the Bi-lingual School as well as the boarding facilities. The Child Development Centre and the Rural Education Centre also received funding. Ilaignarkal night school for working children provides education to young people from the villages in the International Zone and the western Green Belt.

Health activities under Auroville Fund include the Multipurpose Health Centre. This small clinic is situated in the Bharat Nivas compound, and provides allopathic and homeopathic health care for Aurovilians, Auroville workers and local villagers from the western sector of Auroville. There is also an active Midwife Service providing prenatal, delivery and postnatal care for Aurovilians, for whom the inspiration of the Mother in the conscious development of the child from conception onwards is very important.

Cultural activities include the activities of the many international pavilion groups as well as several artists and drama groups.

Publications of a wide range of journals and books are financed through Auroville Fund. This includes the weekly News and Notes, which is distributed to every household with up-to-date reports on meetings and events. Auroville Today is a monthly journal rich with current affairs and views and progress reports with a world-wide circulation among Auroville's friends and supporters as well as Aurovilians and their families. Auroville Outreach is a quarterly journal focusing on officials and members of the public whose goodwill is important for Auroville's continuing development, keeping them informed of progress and new developments. The Auroville Website provides a wide range of information for anyone in the world who wishes to know more about Auroville.

The Visitor Information Centre provides facilities such as refreshments, boutiques and toilets as well extensive information on all aspects of Auroville to the many thousands of visitors who come to Auroville every year usually just for a few hours. For those who come for longer there are numerous guest houses and guest programs to help them gain a deeper insight and understanding of Auroville.

Units

Thirty Units with their own executives and management are grouped under the Auroville Fund account head. Their activities range through city planning, land management, Matri-mandir and city construction. There are two health care units, Deepam, which works with handicapped village children, and Auroville Health Services that concentrates on prevention both in Auroville and the surrounding villages. SEWA is dedicated to Auroville workers' welfare providing a retirement fund and facilitating various workers' insurance schemes for workers in the unorganized sector.

Many of Auroville's service units, which provide basic services for Aurovilians within the context of Auroville's ongoing social and economic experiments, are grouped under the umbrella of Auroville Fund. At the hub of these services is Auroville Maintenance Fund, which wants to facilitate a cashless economy in Auroville, a city of which the Mother dreamed that one day there would be no exchange of money. The Auroville Maintenance Fund also constitutes a corpus fund from which funds can be invested in a revolving fashion in projects and activities to facilitate the growth of Auroville. Other services include Pour Tous, the main food distribution centre, the collective Solar Kitchen,

which serves over a thousand meals a day, and the adjacent Solar Café, which provides snacks throughout the day. Auro Orchard produces organic crops for Auroville and the local market. There is a ready-made clothes and tailoring service for many adults and all the children, called Nandini. Water is a scarce and precious resource within Auroville and the bio-region. The scattered nature of the communities implies a lot of wells and pumps, which are taken care of by the Water Maintenance Service.

Conclusion

Auroville Fund is a major administrative and accounting hub channelling funds and supervising accountability for units, projects and activities that cover the whole spectrum of life in Auroville. The year 2005-2006 has seen continued progress in all sectors of the community's development.

EDUCATIONAL & CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

a) SRI AUROBINDO INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH (SAIER)

The Sri Aurobindo Institute of Educational Research (SAIER) aims to give concrete form to the new concepts, methodologies and programmes which have been envisaged for the progressive realization of creating in the world a new consciousness in humanity conducive to durable peace, world harmony, international understanding and human unity. The social, educational, and cultural research project of Auroville is long-term, as it is envisioned to be an international educational township, whose goals and principles include the creation of a “new education for a new humanity”, “life-long education”, a “learning society”, and a “laboratory of evolution”.

The following is a brief account of the work of some of these teams and their areas of activity, based on the SAIER for the year 2005-2006

EDUCATION IN AUROVILLE

A) *Transition School*

Transition School is a school for the children of Aurovilians and Newcomers. Our enrolment this year was 130 students, who range in age from 6-15, and come from about 16 different nationalities, and many states of India. Many of the students were born in Auroville and have spent their lives in India. The population of Transition School reflects that of Auroville, and provides us with a rich environment for our continuing research in integral education, a holistic approach which perceives each being as unique and aims to guide each individual in the quest for self-knowledge.

Performance and Presentation in Grade 1-2

This year marked the 8th year of our multi-age class project for 1st and 2nd grades. This has been a very successful project. Over the years it has developed

from two parallel classes sharing a common space into a real double class where the children work together whenever possible, while still providing the possibility for separate classes as needed.

Performance and Presentation in Grade 8 - "Auroville Project"

For the past few years, the oldest students at Transition School have been doing an independent research project on Auroville. This gives them the chance to learn valuable skills such as research, interviewing, time management and presentation. They are then expected to share their findings and their knowledge with parents and other students through a research paper and a presentation.

Integral development of children through performance and presentations

Theatre, role play and student presentations of their research and their work provide many opportunities for self-development and the exploration of issues, ideas and relationships. We believe that presentations such as music, theatre, academic projects, and other topics, are a tool to help children reach their full potential as they encourage the development of the whole child.

B) Future School

Objectives include

- To provide a student-centred, integral education for Aurovilian youth between the ages of 14 and 20 (this year 50 students of 12 different nationalities);
 - To develop and offer educational programs that emphasize quality, practical skills, group dynamics, and awareness of all the planes of the being (physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual);
 - To conduct educational research related to values, integral development, and human unity.

Student Empowerment and Community Involvement through following programmes

- i. Auroville Youth Centre
- ii. Celebration of Earth Day 2006
- iii. Voluntary student mentors for new students
- iv. Annual Open House
- v. Students as Teachers

New Educational Initiatives

- i. School Interactions/Exchanges
 - a) Springdales School, Delhi – In July of 2005,
 - b) Korean students
 - c) German students
 - d) American International School, Chennai (AISC)

ii. Future School Investment Group (FSIG)

A new course was offered this year with the goal of providing hands-on experience to students in the fields of business investment and finance. Students were given a grant of Rs. 10 lakhs, by an Aurovilian donor, and the responsibility of selecting business proposals to invest in with the aim of improving Auroville's economy in cash, kind or by creating workplaces for Aurovilians. It is hoped that with this course, students will become aware of the various economic issues in Auroville and will play a role in improving Auroville's economy.

iii. Educational Field Trips conducted to

- a) Neyveli Power Station
- b) French Naval Ship, Pondicherry
- c) Police Station, Morattandi
- d) Shiva temples in Tiruvannamalai, Tanjavur, Madurai and Rameswaram (part of a GOI - funded research project)

New Classrooms

With very generous funding from the GOI, we were able to complete a new block of 8 rooms. Seven of these will be used as classrooms and one will be used as an 'activity room', a place for group or individual study hall, for art classes or to work on making products for various classes and projects.

C) Last School/Super School

Our mission is:

- To experiment with Free Progress education so that the students progressively take over the responsibility of their own progress
- To unify the education of the instrumental nature (mind, life and physical) around the aspiration of the soul
- To unify the education of the instrumental nature
- To design an Aurovilian syllabus, free from the determinations of the certificate systems.

Highlights

A group of five students (aged 15) continued the Free Progress program fulltime. They determined their own time-table together. For the first time, learning about Sri Aurobindo's thought was asked by the students. They specifically asked to study The Life Divine.

They have also dedicated a lot of hours to languages: French, Tamil, Sanskrit, German, Spanish and Italian, besides English. In English, it was possible to have a very rich program, as part of the Super School Program. It included Poetry (Yeats, Keats, Sri Aurobindo and others), literature (Shakespeare, B. Brecht, O. Wilde. G. Orwell and others) and current events as a way to approach the contemporary world, philosophy

and Indian culture. For those who were French speaking, a history of French literature was given from the 15th to the 18th century. Math courses were delivered for each one according to their level and a Natural Science class was given to all.

Courses on Sri Aurobindo have continued with youth from Auroville (around 20 years old). The approach is more Socratic than didactic and Sri Aurobindo is used as a way of opening new questions rather than bringing definitive answers. Auroville society is also examined in this light.

The Pyramids Art Centre has kept working on the same lines: aspiration to harmony and perfection in the different workshops (drawing, painting, sculpture, crafts), where Art is not pursued for its own sake but as an instrument for self-education.

Sports: All the students followed the Dehashakti Sports Program, two of them also becoming teachers-assistants for the younger students.

Adult students: This year our activities widened to adults who expressed the wish to know more about Sri Aurobindo's thought, and for whom weekly classes were offered, one of them for the teachers in Udavi School. There were also visiting students (from The US, Germany and Bombay) doing field studies in Auroville, for whom similar sessions were organized.

Specialized studies:

The Dhammapada, Vedas, Upanishads and Tantras were introduced. Fundamental concepts were studied.

Indian Psychology: The different parts of the being and planes of existence.

F) Deepanam

Deepanam School has been in existence since 2001. Year by year it has been evolving towards an active free progress education, following Sri Aurobindo's and Mother's principles and guidance. We also integrate the work of other educational researchers and pioneers, which are in tune with these principles.

This school year (2005-2006), classrooms have been replaced by areas of work and play, where children can move freely, following their own rhythm and inner guidance. These different areas are: Languages, Mathematics, World and Science, Arts, Role-play, Workshop (clay/ carpentry), Garden and sports ground. In each of these areas children can find a variety of consciously chosen material, and a guiding person to assist them. The teachers also make sure that the prepared environment is always organized, safe and updated with new material. Besides this, several projects of different durations and covering various subjects are always offered. Children can choose, whether they want participate in them or not. This year projects have been: Gardening, Sanskrit, Reader's club, Yoga and Consciousness in Matter, Tamil, The Middle Ages, Fairies, Math, French, Egypt, Cooking, Theatre etc.

G) *Kindergarten - Nandanam - Pre-Creche*

There are three campuses and programs for the youngest students, 2.5 to 6 years of age, and each provides a unique form of child-centered, free-progress education. In each programme children are nurtured by caring instructors who offer a wide range of stimulating activities while allowing the children to guide their own development toward integral fullness.

For example, this year at the centre-field Kindergarten, a special project provided each group, from three years to six years, with the opportunity to identify in-depth with a type of local tree and to learn as much as possible from and about the familiar tree. At Nandanam, sandplay with miniature figures was introduced as a central feature of the curriculum, and the development of awareness and creativity were emphasized. The Pre-Creche, which offers parents an opportunity to interact with each other and share experiences with and about their infants and toddlers, focused on festivals that are commonly celebrated in India and around the world. In each of these environments the groundwork begins for the experience of international living and the discovery of oneness among many nationalities and cultural backgrounds.

H) *Dehashakti Physical Education Centre*

Team spirit — Aurolympics

The most important goal of the Dehashakti School is to make our children participate in all the various activities we offer in all sincerity and with complete commitment. We hope to achieve this goal by holding two Aurolympics during the academic year.

Aurolympic events are competitions between teams, hence the contribution of every member adds or subtracts from the total points chalked up by the team. It is an excellent illustration of the motto “one for all and all for one”. With the introduction of “Houses” some years ago, regardless of their varying capacities and degrees of participation, the children have found an increasing quantum of coordination and harmony within their House. They have obtained a firm moral support within the precincts of their team and acquired a sense of purpose as well as physical and psychological growth. And the team itself finds more and more its sense of dependence on the individual members and of its fulfilment through him.

SCIENCE AND CULTURE IN AUROVILLE

A) Centre of Research in Communication and Publication

The research work of CRCP, which aims at producing a series of monographs on the theme Illumination Heroism and Harmony has continued during this year 2005-2006. This research work is conducted under the guidance of Shri Kireet Joshi, former Special Secretary in the ministry of Human Resource Development and former chairman, Auroville Foundation. It is specifically devoted to the study of the vital being, and how it can be uplifted through the presentation of great examples, heroic destinies.

During this year, we have prepared the publication of 4 additional monographs (6 were published last year):

- Jean Monnet (140 p.) (already published)
- Joan of Arc (132 p.) (already published)
- Gods and the World (132 p.) (in preparation)
- The Crucifixion (124 p.) (in preparation)

B) Savitri Bhavan

Meditations on Savitri

One of the treasures of Savitri Bhavan is the unique collection of oil paintings entrusted to us by the Ashram artist Huta. From 1961 to 1966 she worked under the guidance of the Mother to create a series of 472 paintings illustrating selected passages from the whole of Savitri. It was Huta's intention that the entire series of paintings should be on view to the public in sequence, according to the Mother's expressed wish. After the opening of the New Hall at Savitri Bhavan in November 2004, our architect undertook research on suitable display conditions for the paintings of Huta. On the basis of this research a prototype cabinet was designed and built in the autumn of 2005, using a grant provided for the purpose by the Foundation for World Education, U.S.A.

Ever since these paintings came to Auroville in June 2001, Huta has been asking us to arrange for a new set of films to be made of the paintings, to replace an earlier series prepared in Germany. It became possible to take up and complete this work in June-July 2005, with the help of two Italian Newcomers, Manohar and Giorgio, who set up a photographic studio in the room where the paintings were being stored.

Classes and Courses

- In October 2005, a new series of recorded talks of the Mother, "Notes on the Way" was presented.
- A new activity was added on Tuesday evenings, from August 2005 onwards, guided by Narad (Richard Eggenberger): inner exploration through Om chanting.
- A course offered by Professor Kittu Reddy of the Ashram school, on Sri Aurobindo's *The Ideal of Human Unity*, was completed in February.
- From January to March 2006, Savitri Bhavan hosted two series of twelve-week courses being held in the context of the Auroville Winter Integral Studies Programme. The first was a twelve week course entitled "Savitri : the Aswapati Yoga Cycle, Vedic structure and the psychology of Transformation", led by Rod Hemsell. The second focused on Vedic literature and then the Upanishads, and was led by Vladimir Iatsenko.

Throughout the year, many interesting speakers were featured and exhibitions were held, in addition to the regular programme of classes, and the Auroville Guest Service made a regular 2 hour visit to Savitri Bhavan for introductory talks a regular feature of its programme.

Construction

In April 2005 an amount of Rs. 5 lakhs was allotted to Savitri Bhavan under the SAIER Development Scheme for 2004-05. This was to initiate construction of a first module of the Core Building of the complex, estimated to cost Rs. 26 lakhs and to be completed in 12 months.

In October 2005, a further amount of Rs. 10 lakhs was granted from the first installment of the construction grant for 2005-06. In January this was supplemented by an additional amount of Rs. 2 lakhs from the SAIER construction fund.

In March 2003, an amount of Rs. 5 lakhs was transferred from the Savitri Bhavan donations account to the construction account for this building, in anticipation of allotment of a further Rs. 9 lakhs from the 2nd installment of the Development Scheme grant for 2005-06.

With these amounts the structure has been completed, and finishing and fitting works started (electrical wiring, flooring, doors and windows, landscaping, etc.)

It is expected that the module can be fully completed and made ready for use by mid-June 2006.

C) Book: Awareness Through the Body

Publication of a book: "Awareness through the Body" – It is meant as a guide for those who want to discover the existing connections between mind, emotions and the physical body and to offer ways in which to integrate these different parts into a more harmonious whole, organised around their inmost centre. It helps to enhance concentration, relaxation and self-knowledge in children and adults.

D) Musical Mastery

Pushkar is an accomplished pianist and music teacher who has offered regular classes in a wide range of musical skills, including piano lessons, recorder and flute lessons, singing lessons, composition, and music theory, to students of all ages and levels of accomplishment. In addition, Pushkar has given performances both individually and with guests and students throughout the year.

E) Pitanga Cultural Centre

Workshops

In the past twelve months fifteen workshops were offered to the community in Pitanga. Apart from two workshops given by Aurovilians, the majority of workshops were offered by friends of Auroville from abroad. Highlights in the Yoga discipline were the workshops offered by Aadil & Mirra Palkhivala from Washington and Sama Fabian from London.

Cultural Education

Pitanga offers space for music and theatre rehearsals. The 3 different choirs in Auroville (Auroville Adult Choir, Auroville Renaissance Cappella, and Auroville Children's Choir) practice 4-5 times a week. Further, six piano and 3 theatre rehearsals regularly

take place. For the first time, Pitanga is able to offer a space for an art program: since the beginning of this year, a Korean Newcomer and master in his field is teaching “Japanese Calligraphy” to Aurovilians. Together this amounts to 16 classes of Cultural Education.

Health Care

Though not being primarily a healing centre, Pitanga is also open to health enhancing activities where the student becomes a recipient of therapies and treatments. The community benefited from quite a variety of therapies offered this year: Acupuncture, Auricular Therapy (Ear Acupuncture), Ayurvedic Massage, Breema Body Work, Homeopathic Service, Jyotish (Vedic Astrology), Physiotherapy (3 different kinds), Psychotherapy with Tarot, Reflexology, Reiki, Shiatsu, Structural Integration Work (Rolfing), Thai Yoga Massage.

Exhibitions

Pitanga is encouraging the development of art as a means for spiritual growth where artists are seeking further ways of expressing their inner dimension and supports regularly individual Aurovilians to express themselves in arts and to share their outcome of research and work with the Auroville community. This effort is reflected in a number of 13 exhibitions which were held between April 2005 and March 2006 at Pitanga.

Cultural Performances

Among the 17 cultural performances this year, two outstanding contributions from artists from abroad need to be highlighted: Nathalie Houtmann & Raphael Collignon from France who were mesmerizing the audience with their virtuosity on recorder, Spanish baroque guitar and percussion as well as Lin Ying from China who gave a presentation of Chinese Folk Songs from ten provinces of China. With her “A tour through China” Lin Ying was the first Chinese Singer presenting her work in Auroville.

Regular classes

In the field of Physical Education we are differentiating our activities in four main groups: Yoga, Dance, Martial Arts and Exercises. The following classes were offered in the past twelve months:

1. Yoga (• Yoga Asanas for beginners and intermediate students • Yoga for pregnant women • The Yoga Sutras of Pathanjali • Yoga Therapy • Yoga: Awareness through Breathing in Asana)
2. Dance (• Balkan Dance • Contemporary Ballet • Odissi Dance • Nia Dance • Gurdjieff Sacred Movements)
Martial Arts (• Aikido • Tai Chi Chuan • Chi Yoga)
3. Other Exercises (• Exercises for babies from 3 – 12 months • Back Exercises • Pilates)

F) Unity Pavilion

Activities and Programmes

1) Auroville International (AVI) and the different Pavilion work groups run their offices in the Unity Pavilion during working hours. Regular meetings of different work groups are taking place (International Zone Group, Pavilion groups and Youth related work groups). A research library is being developed.

2) Student / Volunteer Programmes:

One of the functions of the Unity Pavilion in the International Zone is to organize and support student exchange programs. These programs share the common goal of developing students' civic consciousness and raising it to a global level, and therefore promoting the ideals of human unity and understanding. For young people who want to learn about Auroville by working and serving the community a support service (AVIS) is offered.

3) Research:

Activities in the Unity Pavilion are part of the ongoing research into the soul of a nation or culture, and the role of that nation or culture in the larger family of nations. It is participating in the research towards finding "the soul of each nation" and its "dharma" – its true work, as a part of the development of humanity and the evolution of life on earth.

Concept of the International Zone

During four months of the third phase of the research project on the concept of the International Zone, the following activities have been carried out:

1. A compilation on Human Unity and World-Union from writings by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother has been produced for the participants of the research workshop "Human Unity and the International Zone".
2. A workshop on "Human Unity and the International Zone" was organized and conducted on 25 March 2006 at the Unity Pavilion.
3. Materials were prepared for the publication of a working paper consisting of structured compilations from writings by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on the themes that are important for and related to the concept of the International Zone, with an introductory article describing the process of research, its content and purpose.

One of the main components of this research project were workshops that aimed at addressing the main themes and ideas expressed in the writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother that are of special relevance to the conceptual understanding of the role of the International Zone. We have experimented with ways to prepare and conduct the workshops.

G) *Botanical Garden Research Programme*

During the year, the gardens began to mature, five years after the project was begun (August 2000). The construction of the education pavilion was completed and has since provided a venue for the educational programmes that have been held there.

In November, December and February, a regular workshop was held with the eldest class from New Creation School. They came three mornings a week and were involved in garden activities as well as being introduced to the concepts of nature observation through activities such as bird watching and plant collecting.

Programmes were held simultaneously with classes from Udavi school. These children were involved in planting in the forest and the arboretum, as well as in-depth study of the Tropical Dry Evergreen Forest, a continuation of project work that they were undertaking in class.

b) CENTRE OF INDIAN STUDIES/CENTRE FOR RESEARCH IN INDIAN CULTURE

1. A Conference organized from January 6-8, 2006 on the theme: "All Life is Yoga" - Sri Aurobindo

The Conference aimed at an exploration of the theme and a sharing of our individual experience so as to enrich and widen our understanding. The programme focused on a diversity of modes of exchange – verbal and written, through art exhibitions and through music. The proceedings were recorded and published on a CD. A website has also been set up – though it has yet to be fully operational– so that people can continue to inter-act on the theme. We also brought out on this occasion two publications, for which we had obtained permission from the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. These publications were planned in a rather original manner and will possibly serve a singular purpose.

- a) The Synthesis of Yoga – the 'Introduction' of 50 pages to this major work was published independently in a compact form, so as to offer an access to the entire work. This was the first time this text was taken out of the body of the work, thus highlighting its significance.
- b) A more comprehensive compilation of texts, of 156 pages, entitled 'Introduction to Integral Yoga', consisting of texts from 'The Synthesis of Yoga' 'The Supramental Manifestation' – and some words from The Mother.

2. An exhibition of large-sized photographs of Flowers, highlighting essential steps and qualities on the path of 'Integral Yoga'... according to the spiritual significances given by the Mother was organised at the Sense of the Infinite Hall during the Conference.

3. Inter-active sessions with professors and students of California Institute of Integral studies, San Francisco, who were in Auroville for a study period – on the 'In-

tegral Yoga' of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother.

4. Guest Lecture by Dr. Richard Stein, of the Jungian Institute, San Francisco.
5. A lecturer in History at the Madras Christian College and now a fellow of the University Grants Commission, Shri Surendran Purushotham, has come to live here for two years to work on a Ph.D. thesis. The title of his thesis is "Experiments in Ecology – A Historical Study of the Auroville Experience".
6. Publication of a new series entitled the 'Bharat Nivas Chronicles - I'
7. Talks and papers presented at Conferences and Centres – in the country and the U.S.A.

Among the usual activities of the Centres –

1. The Centres serve as 'resource areas' within Auroville – and also for guests.
2. Sanskrit classes continue over the week-end.
3. The Centres continue to work for the further growth of the Bharat Nivas campus as a whole.

c) AUROVILLE LANGUAGE LABORATORY

1. TOMATIS RESEARCH CENTRE

The Auroville Language Laboratory has opened India's very first centre of "Audio Psycho Phonology". Based on the work of a French ENT specialist, Dr. Alfred Tomatis, this is a path breaking method of learning languages, addressing various learning disorders including dyslexia, improving communication, speech and general well being. It even addresses problems such as autism, developmental and speech delays etc, through auditory re-training.

This very specialized method is practiced in some 200 centres around the world. In 2001, we had the chance to meet the scientist who developed it, Dr. Alfred Tomatis, a visionary researcher, a humanist and one of the few Western scientists who had a deep respect for the work of Sri Aurobindo. Thanks to the continuing support from the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited, and in particular its generous grant in the last year, we have been able to open India's first centre for Audio Psycho Phonology and make it fully operational.

In the last year, an Audio Recording Studio was created for this research project, with the additional participation of Aryo Charitable Foundation USA. An existing temporary building was converted and extended for this purpose. The studio is equipped with high-level professional equipment to give us recordings of very high quality. Recordings for research work were started in Tamil. Further texts to be recorded are being identified. Persons to do the recordings are also being identified. The Research protocol to identify the 3 Tomatis parameters for Tamil was clarified after much effort and research in the last year. It has involved discussions with several Tomatis practitioners in Europe and other technicians in India and elsewhere.

We have established collaborative relationships with Tomatis Centres in Belgium (St. Truiden and Arlon), France (Paris – 2 centres, Avignon, Bordeaux, Montbrison), Spain (Barcelona, Pamplona) and Germany (Molln/Lehmrade). Web domains www.tomatis-india.com and www.tomatis.in were bought and registered in name of the Tomatis Research Centre, Auroville Language Laboratory.

Production of new language assimilation data : A donation of CDs for German, Spanish and Italian Language Integration was received. Spanish and Italian have been entirely transcribed. New recordings at 24bit were made for English Intermediate, passive Chinese, Tamil and French. English data was edited and is ready for utilization. Our materials are of much higher quality than the CD24s converted from original Revox tapes sold in Europe. It is our task to re-record digitally the entire language assimilation data in different languages.

Software Alternatives to the Electronic Ear/Brain Activator : Since the Brain Activator remains extremely expensive and hard to service in India, we have been instrumental in pushing for a software alternative which will incorporate all the features of the Brain Activator as well as new features such as voice analysis. German technicians have actually done the work; we already contributed our comments to the alpha edition; the beta edition is now out for testing.

Audiometer Re-Calibration : The Audiometer was recalibrated in Delhi and the difference between the Tomatis calibration and the normal audiometric calibration was studied with the help of technicians from Germany, Belgium and Denmark.

Continued Research : The wide ranging applications of the Tomatis Method require that we keep abreast of developments in many varied fields. Thus continued reading and research on several topics is ongoing in our Centre. Books on the Tomatis Method have also been acquired in different languages, and contacts made with a range of people including equipment suppliers, international distributors, and researchers in connected fields.

AUROVILLE LANGUAGE LABORATORY

Some 270 students studied different languages at the Lab in the last year, including English, French, Tamil, Hindi, German, Spanish and Sanskrit. A donation received from Avison, Auroville facilitated expansion of the computer facilities. The Laboratory is open to non-Aurovilians as well, and receives students from the surrounding areas including Pondicherry. The Laboratory offers a unique “mediatheque” with very high-quality software and audio-visual material for learning over 26 languages. The Laboratory has previously received recognition from UNESCO, and is quite unique in being a demonstration site in the use of technology for language learning. Students can learn very fast using these methods. Some programs allow students to repeat after native speakers, record their own voice and compare the spectrographic analysis

of their own voice with that of the native speakers, to correct pronunciation defects. Several levels of testing help acquire vocabulary and grammar.

d) AUROFILM: AUROVILLE FILM PRODUCTION

The Aurofilm office, at Kalabhoomi, houses the computer workstation used for the purpose of making of the short films and documentaries, along with a small TV and other digital media and software. The entire Aurofilm team contributes, in appropriate ways, in this process which is mainly led by Gerard, the founder and director of Aurofilm.

The primary goal of this activity of Aurofilm is to study the work of contemporary art filmmakers of India and to prepare, in the form of pedagogical tools, detailed portraits – including extracts from their films (in the chronological order of their making) as well as pertinent biographical sketches excerpted from actual interviews and other media. The grassroots production of (short) fiction films to highlight all aspects of filmmaking while tapping the creative potential of individuals is another important objective. To document various (worthwhile) activities, in Auroville, involving expressions of different art forms is also included within the overall framework of this goal.

Program/Activity details:

This year's film production resulted in the making of 6 short films: Shaji N. Karun (duration 2min 06'), Adoor Gopalakrishnan (8min 25'), Girish Kasaravalli (4min 37'), Buddhadeb Dasgupta (14min 32'), Shyam Benegal (8min), and the film on Perseus the Deliverer (48min).

The short film made on the theatrical rendition of Sri Aurobindo's play, Perseus the Deliverer, was made by shooting it on location and subsequent editing.

The production of short films and documentaries is really a continuous work, guided by our concentrated efforts to focus on Indian filmmakers and, as such, the time required for the making of single film is subject to the availability of appropriate material for the purpose.

HEALTH ACTIVITIES

AUROVILLE HEALTH SERVICES

Auroville health Services (AVHS) provides a preventive health care service to the community of Auroville and to the surrounding villages. This year, 2006, AVHS fifth year in existence saw a change of management with Dr. Bina Ramesh Naik leaving the service and Manfred Lehnert taking over the day to day management of the service with a team of four people in administration, four in our medical clinic and two health education instructors.

The activities of Auroville Health Services can be broadly grouped in the following categories:

1. Medical activities:

- Morattandi village health clinic: was established in January 2006, it is open six mornings per week offering free health care to the local population. It is run by two doctors.
- Health education: Daily classes are held at the clinic on aspects of the environment and health. These are attended by groups of school children and women's groups.
- Pongal fair medical tent: We were involved in an initiative with the Sri Annai students group who formed a medical tent in Kuilapalayam during Pongal fair, where villagers came and got free medical testing.
- Ear plug supply for the Auroville community. With materials imported from Germany ear plugs were made that were adapted individually for each user ear.
- Travellers health tips: The travellers health tips document was updated and circulated this to guest houses and restaurants in Auroville.

2. *Sanitation and water activities:*

- Public toilet survey – in December, AVHS carried out a survey on twelve public toilets built by Auroville for the surrounding villages, most units were unkempt and in a state of disrepair. It was clear that when there is no provision for cleaning and maintenance, facilities will be abused.
- Thenkodipakkam eco-sanitation project – This is a project aimed at bringing individual eco toilets and sanitation education to householders in this village. This was done with the full co-operation of the village self help groups through Palmyra.
- Education campaigns – AVHS has started awareness training for villagers on personal hygiene, safe sanitation and the spread of disease. These programs are carried out at weekends or in the evenings when villagers have time and include lectures, film and drama presentations on these issues.
- Water purification installations – AVHS funded the installation of a system in Auroville Health Centre in May 05 and in Aspiration kitchen in September 05.
- Water tank cover – AVHS funded a cover for the water tank to the main water supply in Thenkodippakam in co-operation with the women's self help group.
- Sanitation group – AVHS host a monthly meeting for of all those involved in sanitation in Auroville with the purpose of sharing knowledge, resources and potentially working together on joint projects.

3. *Food safety and Health education*

Hygiene and food safety- Sante Pour Tous -This service provides personal hygiene, food safety and kitchen management skills to hundreds of local people employed to help in fifty food facilities in Auroville. A weekly, on site series of classes and facility inspections have been carried out, which includes, the topics of food safety and prevention of food-borne disease. A liaison was established with the HACCP movement of The World Health Organisation to follow optimal proforma for food safety in the tropics.

Hygiene competition - AVHS launched an annual food hygiene competition in January 2006 for the most hygienic standards and practices in Auroville. Regular on the spot inspections of kitchen and unit facilities are carried out and a report with suggested improvements and training, if necessary, is offered. On an annual basis AVHS will award a prize and certification for the best and most improved standards in Auroville. Health warnings – AVHS channels health and food safety warnings to the community and the surrounding villages through our health care workers, noticeboards and the Auroville news.

Hygiene course for village groups: a monthly food and personal hygiene class was given to representatives of 30 women's groups in Palmyra. These women take the knowledge back to their villages and educate members of their individual groups.

Health education In April, AVHS launched a new health education program designed to help local people improve their health knowledge. It is aimed at individual and family health, at identifying the causes of ill health and disease and giving practical advice on how to re-establish and maintain a healthy system. Special emphasis is placed on low cost effective nutrition, natural remedies – locally grown herbs and plants, lifestyle changes and basic allopathic care. This program is delivered to local people that work in the units and kitchens in Auroville, we would like to expand this to the village population in the Auroville bio-region.

Personal hygiene and safe sanitation – AVHS are giving awareness training in the villages around Auroville on the importance of safe sanitation and adequate hygiene.

Exhibitions – AVHS hosted four exhibitions on various aspects of health and disease.

Organic farming– AVHS was in a position to give 1 lakh to the organic farms in Auroville to support their development from the proceeds of Dr. Bina Ramesh Naik's food publication "Moments of Magic" , this book continues to be sold through over forty locations in Tamil Nadu with all proceeds go to support the development of organic food.

4. Co-ordination:

AVHS has its administration office in Aurelec, this is manned by four people who are

involved in Co-ordination and management of existing projects, providing back up support and development, fundraising and publication relations, Accounting and Liaising with other groups in the field.

Fundraising: The service exists solely on funds raised through donations that are channeled through Auroville fund. These come mainly through personal contacts in India and Europe and various appeals we organise. We also had one donation this year through the Auroville International network, AVI Germany.

Partnerships: We actively seek out partners to share aspects of projects. This year we have worked with Palmyra, Village Action/Tsunami relief, UNICEF and Local Government(DRDA).

Publication sales: Any income received from the food publication "Moments of Magic" go directly to the organic farming group, they received 1 Lakh this year to spend on irrigation.

-Liaisons

AVHS is a member of the village co-ordination group which is a body for all those

who work in village related activities in Auroville. We meet on a weekly basis to share information. We also host the monthly sanitation meeting.

b) THE AUROVILLE HEALTH CENTRE

The Auroville Health Centre was established in 1972 as a Primary Health Care Unit. At present we are in the process of starting a project for the destitute and neglected old people in the villages, for whom we hope to provide a place for rest, medication and proper nutrition. There is also an already functional project for the education of needy children, which covers the cost of their tuition fees, books and uniforms.

The village health care program

A program for providing primary health care for the local population was started in a small way in 1992. Currently the program covers 20 villages. The program is implemented through 22 village health workers who are women selected from each village, given basic and continuing training, and who are then responsible for 100 to 200 families each.

NEWS LETTER (KUYIL)

Every 4 months (April, August & December) we are publishing a free news letter called KUYIL in English and German.

c) AUROVILLE DENTAL CENTRE

For more than 25 years, the Auroville Dental Centre has provided oral health care service for more than 25,000 people living in the surrounding rural area of Auroville. The originality and efficiency of this Centre is based on a new universal Concept applied in dentistry -the "Zero (Ø) Concept"- a human-centered Concept or Health-oriented Concept.

The 3 basic keys are the following:

- Zero Concept Zero (Ø) represents symbolically Health. Ø Health is absence of need for care.
- Proprioception is the instinctive logical response of the body to perform an act in open space. It is common to all human beings.
- Global terms are used for easy and precise communication :
 - break linguistic barriers
 - short the time reaction of brain
 - less risk of errors

In short, this method is universal and applicable everywhere in the world, - even in the most primary conditions - a real breakthrough in acquiring dental skills.

The facilities of the Dental Centre consist of:

- ◆ A modern clinic in Protection, with the appropriate Japanese equipment for 2 dentists and 1 hygienist who treat Aurovilians and visitors patients.
- ◆ A training Centre on Ø Concept.
- ◆ An additional Dental Clinic at the Aspiration Health Centre serving the surrounding village population.
- ◆ 11 subcentres in the bioregion of Auroville.

Thanks to the financial support of foreign donations and NGOs, the Auroville Dental Centre has also developed in collaboration with the Auroville Health Centre a network of 18 village women trained as dental hygienists working in 11 sub-centres to promote hygiene, education, prevention, and to provide basic dental care and medical dressings. These health workers provide “ART technique” (Atraumatic Restoration Treatment). This painless and simple manual technique is at the disposal of non-professionals in the most basic conditions. Recommended by the WHO, this method is used in more than 90 developing countries with more and more positive results.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES

a) FORESTS: AUROVILLE FOREST GROUP

Forest Protection

The Forest Group manages approximately 1350 acres of greenbelt and city land for Auroville, this land being divided up into 42 stewardship areas of various size plots. Each plot is managed by an Aurovillian land steward whose work is to protect and develop appropriately the forest. The protection against livestock grazing, land encroachment and firewood/timber extractors is an ongoing work and is carried out with the help of 64 permanently employed watchmen.

Afforestation

The ongoing work of re-introducing the indigenous flora designated as the 'Tropical Dry Evergreen Forest' into the auroville greenbelt continued this season with the planting of 29,000 seedlings. These plants were made up of 125 different species of trees, shrubs and lianas and were planted in 19 different locations. This work was partially funded by a grant from Foundation of World Education.

Soil and Water Conservation

The land stewards maintained the existing contour bunding grids and carried out the necessary maintenance of earth dams and check dams.

Forest Maintenance and Aftercare

This year much time was spent carrying out general forest maintenance. The removal of dead exotic pioneer species, the control of certain straggler and thorn species in planted areas and basic mulching of young planted seedlings were some of the main tasks executed. In some plantation areas with harsh conditions the previous years seedlings were also irrigated.

Finance

All the activities mentioned above except the F.W.E. tree planting project have been funded by a combination of Auroville Central Fund, monies created by the sale of forest produce (e.g timber, firewood, cashew etc.) and private donations.

b) THE FARMS: AUROVILLE FARM GROUP

The same fourteen farms remain responsible for a total of 374 acres of land. No new farms have joined the farm group in the current year.

Rice production

Centered on Annapurna and Siddhartha Farms and funded largely by Maroma rice production has continued to increase and deliveries of free rice to the solar kitchen totaled 7,311 kg with a value of Rs. 2,03,011.

Vegetable/ Fruit

Production has continued to grow slowly, the farms are restricted by what they can grow and high production costs which results in prices not being competitive with the local market. None the less the farms continue to improve skills and production. In excess of 50 varieties of fruit and vegetables are produced by the Auroville farms.

Organic registration

Annapurna, AuroAnnam, Service, Brihaspati and Discipline Farms have all become registered organic with IMO, a Swiss based internationally accredited certification agency. The intention is that all the farms be registered within two years. This is seen as increasingly necessary with organic farming becoming more popular so verification increasingly becomes an issue, particularly in relation to selling outside Auroville.

Investment

Investment levels remain constant and low with a total of 15.6 lakhs of new capital was introduced into the farming economy, this was sourced from:

Central fund	1.4 lakhs
Maroma - free rice scheme	2.6 lakhs
External Funding	6.6
Private funding	5.0

Of this money 5 lakhs has gone into balancing the books, i.e. making up losses. Of the remaining 10.5 lakhs left for investment, 2.6 lakhs is specific to rice production leaving 8 lakhs for investment on the remaining 12 farms. The equivalent of 66,500 per farm. This is obviously insufficient and how to prioritize scarce resources remains a problem for the Group.

All farms, with the possible exception of Annapurna remain chronically underinvested. Many of the farms lack even the most basic infrastructure: adequate fencing,

livestock buildings or storage space let alone irrigation systems, nurseries etc. This problem is particularly acute with the two newer farms, both of which are stewarded by Tamil farmers, who while they bring needed skills to Auroville do not have the access to private funds or external networking that has traditionally underpinned Auroville farming.

Marketing and distribution

The farm group has been a part of Pour Tous Study group and is obviously supplying produce to the new Distribution centre. Food is a basic need and the farms have from the very beginning been seen as the providers of food to Auroville. However at the present time the farms only supply a small proportion of Auroville's food, there are several reasons for this, one of which is cost. Auroville farm produce is more expensive than locally available crops, partly because we farm organically and in part because we pay wages in what is essentially a subsistence economy. Additionally Indian farmers are heavily subsidized, and these subsidies are not available to Auroville farms. Whilst recognized as a service the farms are expected to function commercially and in competition with the local market, something they are inherently unable to do. High costs of production make our products expensive, thereby reducing demand and placing upward pressure on prices which in turn reduce demand.

We need as a community to find a way to break this cycle if the farms are to fulfill their role as a service providing food for Auroville. The Farm Group is, with the Pour Tous Study Group and the Economy Group looking at alternative ways to address this issue.

c) AUROVILLE WATER HARVEST

Auroville Water Harvest is a service under the Auroville Foundation. Initially under the umbrella of Auroville Water Service, it was launched the 15th August 1996 as a project to promote sustainable water management practices in Auroville's Bioregion and fight a sustainable water future. Since 1995, degradation and fast depletion of the ground water was monitored in the coastal aquifers, due to over-pumping of ground water and the decay of the monsoon harvesting tanks. However, these physical causes are deep rooted in the way water is perceived and handled by individuals and society. The environmental, social, technical and economic challenges are all interconnected. Hence "Harvest", an agency promoting sustainable and integrated water resources development was launched.

The house is divided into teams as follows:

Social Team

Water Resource Investigation

GIS / database management / Satellite Imagery Team

Tank Rehabilitation / Engineering Team

GPS Survey Team

The various projects executed during the past year are as follows:

Major Activities during the year:

- Impact assessment of the Tsunami on Water and Sanitation conditions in the temporary shelters all along the coast of Tamil Nadu
- Active participation on Water and Sanitation committee at state level in regard to Tsunami affected area
- Impact assessment of the Tsunami on ground water resources and other related work
- Launch of a 3 years duration integrated water management program in a local sub-watershed with a participatory approach.
- Groundwater recharge structures development
- Social mobilization in 50 villages in Auroville Bioregion
- Water Resource Investigation Auroville bioregion, including GIS integration, satellite imagery interpretation and modelling.
- Pre-feasibility study on integrated water management for Auroville
- Topographic Survey using Differential GPS equipments
- Promotion and development of appropriate sanitation structures along the coast of Villupuram District in 6 villages
- Wastewater management for various Tsunami affected site, industries and privates.
- Provision of Student Research and Internship programs.
- Tsunami

Researches - Following the catastrophe coastal India has to faced due to the Tsunami, Harvest has been deeply involved in assessing the pollution and risks generated on fresh water resources and the depending population. This investigation made jointly with other agencies is now used as a reference document by TNTRC. Harvest is also included in various networks at state and regional level dealing with the post Tsunami situation in regards to water and sanitation. Advocacy, concept paper and on site analyses is part of our on going activities.

In parallel, Harvest is participating to a study on long term impact of sea water intrusion in the aquifer system and its remediation. This study is made jointly with Stanford University, USA and Pierre & Marie Curie University of Paris, France.

Sanitation - Considering the seriousness of the risk the coastal population is facing due to lack or inappropriateness of sanitation facilities, Harvest is involved in developing appropriate sanitation complexes and treatment facilities in 6 villages of Villupuram District (through UNICEF funding) but also in several places in Kanyakumari and Nagappatinam Districts (various fundings) , and also to create the necessary awareness and mobilisation in the population. These projects are conducted jointly with CSR and Aquadyn.

Groundwater Recharge – Following our observation of the massive changes of groundwater quality along the coast, Auroville Water Harvest decided to address this very alarming problem. About 60% of the daily fresh water supplied to the coastal population was not available from one day to the other, and the risk of further invasion of salty water cannot be neglected. It was proposed to construct several ground water recharge structures in the gully and canyons in order to catch the large volume of fresh water lost to the sea every year. A grant was received in August from the City of Hilden, Germany, which allow us to do the work which should be completed by June 2006.

Pilot project on Sanitation

In order to develop appropriate solutions both technically and socially, Auroville Water Harvest got a grant from a German agency to launch a Pilot Project for the Sustainable Development of Sanitation and Public Health in the village of Kottakarai. The population of this village is particularly at risk because of the shallow aquifer. The work is conducted chiefly through the women Self Help Groups, key factors of the improvement of daily life in the villages. This project attends to stimulate the interest of the population at larger scale and later on to use this village as a demonstration site.

Salinity Moderating & Proofing of Coastal Aquifers: Integrated Water Management with a Participatory Approach

Auroville Water Harvest launched a 3 years mini watershed project, starting in January 2006 and ending in December 2009 in an area particularly threatened by salinity intrusion in the Vanur Taluk of Villupuram District, Tamil Nadu, India. The development of the mini watershed is based on an integrated approach, which comprises water, land, ecology, sanitation, livestock and people. The funding is coming from a French agency, the Fondation Ensemble.

At the environmental level, the impact of the project will be strengthened by these geographic characteristics and should improve the groundwater situation on an area evaluated to 5 to 10 times the project area, with the related population.

A team of qualified social workers experimented on water management, sanitation, organic farming gender issues etc is created and supported by the engineering team and water resources investigation team, under the supervision of a Project Coordinator.

Tank Rehabilitation Project of Pondicherry

The Project Management Unit, Tank rehabilitation Project – Pondicherry, Government of Pondicherry in co-ordination with the European Union has started a project for rehabilitation of tanks in the Pondicherry region in 1998. The wider objective of the project is for a long-term increase in agricultural income from irrigated crop production in Pondicherry region by restoring the full potential of the existing 84 irrigation tanks

in the region. In that way reliance on groundwater will be reduced, thus halting the process of salinisation of the aquifers.

Water Resource Studies

An ongoing partnership launched in 1999 with a group of highly qualified French scientists allows us to build-up our knowledge but also to come to consolidated scientific assessment on the same. Through this collaboration, Auroville's Bioregion is recognised by UNESCO under the HELP Basin Program under the reference Kaluvelly-Pondicherry coastal sedimentary basin. The basin is used as a pilot area to create a collaborative framework for integrated water management with a focus on studying the relatively unknown processes and dynamics of aquifer salinization in this basin and ways of remediation, as well as stakeholders participation. Several publications has been made in regard to this work.

An other research study called "Potential of Sustainable Water Resource Management for The International Zone Of Auroville" is now under completion.

Geographical Information System

Since 1998, Harvest is involved in GIS activities. Auroville Water Harvest's GIS activity has for objective to build a geographic database to support hydrogeological studies and watershed management. Harvest is using its GIS equipment as the backbone of its investigation and decision making process, but also as a tool for advocacy towards the authorities.

Activities implemented:

- Integrating field information in the geographic information system: groundwater resource monitoring, hydrological monitoring,
- Analyses and modeling: drainage modeling, geological contour mapping and modeling, 3D modeling and aquifer capacities estimates, land cover mapping for groundwater recharge studies with the help of satellite imagery
- Direct and effective use of GIS for projects implementation: groundwater recharge projects defined with the support of GIS analyses, advanced hydrological studies

Wastewater Treatment

As the availability of water becoming more scarce HARVEST is working in partnership with CSR on wastewater. Fifteen Wastewater treatment system has been designed, both for domestic or industrial effluent, for Auroville but also for other areas like Nepal, with project sizing from household level up to 2500 users for a factory.

The Students & Volunteers Program (SVP)

Started in 1997, the Auroville Water Harvest Students & Volunteers Program facilitates the intervention of students and volunteers on project and research studies. The

contribution of students brings a focused and efficient intervention in specific fields of investigation that the regular staffs does not have either the skills or the time to explore and is therefore extremely valuable.

d) PALMYRA

The Palmyra Centre for Ecological Landuse, Water Management and Rural Development was founded in 1990 and is situated in Aurobrindavan, Auroville. Its objectives are to promote ecological concepts of landuse as well as rural development programmes.

Below are short notes on projects which are ongoing at the Palmyra Center.

A) ICEF Tank Rehabilitation Project

A five years project (July 1999 to June 2004) "Rehabilitation of Integrated Tank Management Systems in the Kalivelli Watershed" funded by the Indian Canadian Environmental Facility (ICEF) was approved in the year July 1999. However the project has been extended for a further period of 16 months till October 2005.

The ultimate goal of the project was to achieve sustained and integrated management of the natural resources and environmental regeneration of the Kalivelli watershed by the active participation of the local communities. The specific measurable objective of this project have been to set up a practical and sustainable community based mechanism to manage the irrigation tanks and their associated natural resources. These goals and objectives have all been achieved.

Water User Associations

Two tier organizations namely, water user associations in all the tanks and water resource villages and a federation federating the WUAs of the project area were instituted there by providing a practical, equitable and sustainable mechanism for the management of those irrigation tanks, their Ayacut and related natural resources.

Tank Rehabilitation - Overall outcome

Tank rehabilitation and on-farm development work components were executed in 29 tanks and water resources of the project area, subject to the respective contribution and priorities of WUAs to ensure efficient & optimum use of water and enhancement of ground water recharge.

B) Community Mobilization – Women

Women Pattadaars Groups (WPG):

(Women Pattadaar implies the women who owns land in the tank commands)

The concept of women Pattadaar groups is a new approach tried in Palmyra – ICEF project for the first time in the whole of the nation. This concept has emerged for empowering them especially in decision-making aspects of tank rehabilitation and

irrigation management. The main idea and primary objective of these WPGs are assisting the respective WUAs in all their routines and functions related to sustainable tank management and agriculture production.

Women Self Help Groups (SHGs)

With the basic idea of improving the livelihood of the landless poor in the ICEF Project area of Vanur and Marakkanam blocks, SHGs were started and formally registered under the Tamil Nadu Women's Development Corporation from the year 2000 onwards.

Activities

1. EC & GB Meetings: The Executive Committee meeting is being held in monthly once at Palmyra centre. The federation has conducted one General Body Meeting on 15.3.2006. There were 2 women from each SHG participated in the GB meeting and discussed the federation / SHG activities and planned for the next financial year.
2. Health Camp: The federation organized health program on 15.12.2005, as follow up of the health camp, the SHG members would like to get an identity card from the Mahatma Gandhi Hospital for which each SHG member have paid Rs.10/- for printing of the ID Card.
3. Linkages with Line Departments:
Pucca House Scheme: The DRDA, BDOs & Bankers approached Palmyra to utilize the scheme of housing program for rural poor people.
4. Savings Box: The federation GB members showed interest to buy the savings box, a module was copied from the SEWA organization.
5. SHG's Federation Building: The village of Kiliyanur where the SHG building is situated halfway between Pondicherry and Tindivanam on Highway 49 in the Vanur block of Villupuram District in Tamil Nadu. The primary objective of the building is to provide a physical environment to house a women's-own-bank by the women SHGs federation with the assistance of Palmyra. The building will also be used for conducting trainings, awareness programs, teachings on maintenance of SHGs records and accessing women development programs as well as providing medical assistance for its women members.
6. Safe Drinking Water System: The Basic Water Needs Foundation, Holland sponsored Rs.1.4 Lakhs for installation of safe drinking water system in Thenkodipakkam Village with people's participation

C) Integrated Wasteland Development Programme

The Project "Integrated Wasteland Development Programme" (IWDP) has been sanctioned to Palmyra on March 2002. This project mainly aims for various treatments of Soil and Water conservation measures, Natural Resource Development and improved agricultural methods in the Vanur and Marakkanam blocks of the Villupuram District in Tamil Nadu.

D) Jatropha curcas - the Bio Diesel plant

In total 83,000 *Jatropha* seedlings were planted in Kaluveli watershed areas during the year 2002-03 to 2005-06. Enough awareness has been created about the *Jatropha* cultivation as an alternate bio-energy. Seedlings which are planted two years ago is started its fruiting now and the seeds are utilized for further multiplication.

E) German and Austrian Indian Children's Fund

The German and Austrian Indian Children's Fund (DIK/OIK) project was started in 1995 with an average funding of Rs.20 lakhs per year. The project consists of several parts. It supports educational institutions, Health Services in the villages, Sports Activities for local youth and a great range of socially relevant programmes which need help and encouragement.

1. Kuilappalayam Higher Secondary School
2. Pavendar English School, Alankuppam
3. Arulvazhi School, Moratandi
4. After School, Auroville

F) Health Service in the Village

Health activities is being continued at Kilkoothapakkam village near Kilianur. Counseling for some accidents and suicide victims is also being provided while serious cases are being referred to the major hospitals. Here also we are continuing our nutrition programme. Its beneficiaries are children and ailing patients which are coming to the Centre for treatment. The food consists mostly of indigenous nutritious grains such as ragi, kambu, dried fruits, palm sugar and ayurvedic food supplements. This goes a long way in supporting the healing and general health conditions of the people who need it most.

G) Palmyra DIK/OIK Sports Programme

During this year the following teams and villages have been provided with cricket and sports materials:

1. Annai Nagar Cricket Club
2. Edayanchavadi Cricket Club
3. Alankuppam Volley Ball club
4. Thuruvai Volley Ball Club

H) Strategy in Tsunami-hit Fisherman Communities

Through Formation of Women Groups in Anumandhai Kuppam Village, Marakkanam Block Anumandaikuppam is the fishermen settlement of Anumandai, a village located on the East Coast Road between Pondicherry and Marakkanam, at 30 kms distance from Pondicherry. Anumandaikuppam has been affected by the tsunami in December 2004. The fishermen community approached Palmyra to assist them for rehabilitation work to improve their livelihood.

1. Purchase of New Fishnets: The two women groups decided that on a priority basis new nets of different varieties should be purchased.
2. Marketing Fish - Purchase of Three Wheelers :
All women members participated in a one day workshop on “Viable Activity Identification” at Palmyra Centre
3. Model House: The village panchayat donated 1500 square feet of land in the village to the SHGs to construct a model house as envisaged by Palmyra.
4. Eco-sanitation: Ecological and economic re-use of solid and liquid and human wastes, quick and efficient recycling and re-use of waste and of water resources, sustainable agriculture, eco-friendly approaches to hygiene.

1) Promotion of Bio-energy plantation and Bio-diesel Extraction

The Project on “Promotion of Bio-energy plantation and Bio-fuel extraction” was sanctioned and Memorandum of Understanding is signed on 4th of March 2005 by and between Palmyra, Aurobrindavan, Auroville represented by Mr. Jurgen Putz, as Project Director and the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), Pondicherry Union Territory, represented by its Project Director, Mr. P. Mathew Samuel.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

a) Auroville Centre for Scientific Research and Aurore Trust

Auroville Centre for Scientific Research main areas of applied research include:

- appropriate building technologies and architecture, renewable energy, water and sanitation. Other activities are social research, trainings, organizing of seminars and workshops, communication through films and publications.
- Commercial activities for the mature products happen through the units under AuroRE Trust.
- New unit activities which joined the two trusts include Auroville Water Harvest and AquaDyn.

The main focus during the past year was largely on water and sanitation issues, due to the occurrence of the tsunami event.

Research topics during this year include:

- A study for assessing the pollution and related risks on fresh water resources and the supporting population. The out coming document on the investigation, made jointly with RedR, is used as a reference document by TNTRC (Tamil Nadu Tsunami Resource Centre).
- A study concerning the long term impact of sea water intrusion in the aquifer system and its remediation. This study is a joint project with Stanford University, USA and Pierre & Marie Curie University of Paris, France.
- Impact assessment of the Tsunami on Water and Sanitation conditions in the temporary shelters all along the coast of Tamil Nadu.
- R&D on a biodiesel sterification plant with different capacities for taking out the glycerin from any plant oil.

- A prototype small three-wheeler good carrier running on bio-diesel.
- A prototype dehumidifier for coastal climatic zones, able to dehumidify the air within large areas at 1/8 running cost of a normal A/C. The prototype was able to successfully dehumidify the conference room, and creating a real comfort zone during the hottest period of the year. The machine will be developed and improved upon further.
- A prototype fish solar dryer for use on the coastal fishing villages.
- R&D for solar LED lighting based systems.
- R&D for solar street lights in coastal climatic zone.
- R&D for pressurized solar water heaters for hospitals and other similar places.
- Performance enhancement of small non-pressurized solar water heaters.
- Solar Reverse Osmosis machines for water supply to coastal villages, adaptation of the machines which were received from GE, installation and maintenance schedules.
- Field trials for improved solar lanterns in rural areas.
- Introduction, fine-tuning and commercialization for ETC (evacuated tube collectors).
- 12kW biomass gasifier running on 100% producer gas, introduced with a local enterprise for producing cheese and other related milk products. Fine-tuning, maintenance and trouble shooting of the installed machine.
- R&D for cold room with hybrid wind and solar with MNES grant
- R&D for indigenous development of small scale wind generator
- R&D for development of standardized Dewats treatment systems for 100 users in ferrocement and 200 users in FRP (Fiber Reinforced Polyester).
- R&D on water purifiers and dynamisers

Commercial activities during this year include:

- Developing further and wider the activities of the renewable energy service provider.
- Market study for introducing several cost-effective products, including light bulbs and motors, leading to considerable saving of energy and reduction of energy bills.
- Scheme of rent-a-light in the area of micro lighting, with solar lanterns and battery pack
- Opening of market channels for the different mature products.
- Bulk purchasing for better quality and price control.

Major Trust Activities during the year:

- Developing of prefabricated ferrocement sanitation complexes and standardized Dewats (Decentralised Waste Water Treatment Systems) treatment facilities in 6 villages of Villapuram District (through UNICEF and Borda funding), and in Kanyakumari and Nagapattinam districts.
- Salinity Moderating & Proofing of Coastal Aquifers: Integrated Water Manage-

ment with a Participatory Approach. A 3 year project duration for the development of a mini watershed area targeting 13 villages with 1000 farming households for improvement of groundwater resources.

- Tank rehabilitation Project – Pondicherry, Government of Pondicherry in co-ordination with the European Union, an ongoing project for rehabilitation of tanks in the Pondicherry region since 1998
- Ongoing research and data gathering for the UNESCO supported HELP Basin Program under the reference Kaliveli-Pondicherry coastal sedimentary basin, which included the Auroville's bioregion. The basin is used as a pilot area to create a collaborative framework for integrated water management with a focus on studying the relatively unknown processes and dynamics of aquifer salinization in this basin and ways of remediation, as well as stakeholder's participation.
- Pilot Project for the Sustainable Development of Sanitation and Public Health in the village of Kottakarai. The population of this village is particularly at risk because of the shallow aquifer. The work is conducted chiefly through the women Self Help Groups, This project attempts to augment the interest of the population in issues of sanitation.
- Building of "Integrated child development" centers for Villapuram and Kancheepuram district – post Tsunami.
- Preparing of a design and construction manual for the "ICDS" for the district of Kancheepuram, Villapuram, Cuddalore, Karaikal and Nagapattinam.
- Training of teams, local villagers and unskilled workers for the construction in the district of Villapuram for 26 centers.
- Preparation of settlement planning and design guidelines for the rehabilitation of the Tsunami affected coastal villages
- Design and models of prototype shelters for beneficiary consultation meetings
- Conducting and monitoring of consultation process for shelter programs.
- Active participation in Water and Sanitation committees at state level in regard to Tsunami affected areas
- Impact assessment of the Tsunami on ground water resources and other related work
- Starting a 3 years duration integrated water management program in a local sub-watershed with a participatory approach.
- Water Resource Investigation Auroville bioregion, including GIS integration, satellite imagery interpretation and modeling.
- Pre-feasibility Study on Integrated Water Management for Auroville. This study aims to research and develop water resource management for Auroville and its neighbourhood, both technically and socio-economically.
- Topographic Survey using Differential GPS equipments. Auroville Water Harvest's GIS activity has the aim to build a geographic database to support hydro geological studies and watershed management. The GIS should be able to provide input data for hydrological models and should be able to act as an interactive database to generate analyses and reports for decision making.

- Wastewater management models for various Tsunami affected sites, industries and private parties. Fifteen Dewats treatment systems have been designed, both for domestic and industrial effluent, with project sizing from household level up to 2500 users for a Nepalese factory.
- Constructing several ground water recharge structures in the gully and canyons in order to catch the large volume of fresh water lost to the sea every year. A grant was received from the City of Hilden, Germany, for this purpose.
- Design and construction of the audio-visual centre in the Visitors Centre.
- Design and construction of a public toilet block at the Visitors Centre.
- Two excavators donated by TATA Trust are involved in the rehabilitation of various tanks, ponds, recharge and drainage structures, and also works for other water programs over Tamil Nadu and neighboring states.

Trainings, Seminars

- Basic Need Services in Sanitation, national 2 day seminar on the topic Who does what in Sanitation, with the participation of major national and international organizations and stakeholders.
- Workshops conducted for architects: 'Towards Sustainable habitats'
- Towards a Sustainable Future, national workshop programs for general public.
- Dewats trainings for general public and architects, engineers.
- Ongoing Ferrocement technology training and awareness programs.
- Water study Programs and trainings for students and internships.
- Design workshops for Post-Tsunami shelter program, including preparation of settlement planning and design guidelines for the rehabilitation of the Tsunami affected costal villages, design and models of prototype shelters for beneficiary consultation meetings, conducting and monitoring of consultation process for shelter programs
- Trainings for mobilisation, awareness creation, creation and organisation of tank associations, ensuring participation of people in the entire process of rehabilitation of tanks, data collection and preparation of reports on community organisation work.
- Public awareness and social mobilization programs in 50 villages around the Auroville Bioregion.
- Presentation of the Socio-economic Survey of Auroville Employees to the Auroville Community.

Training received :

- 2 week-training in Social Research methodologies and a 3-month post-graduate diploma programme in Universalizing Socio-economic Security for the Poor, attended from the Social Research Centre.

Publications

- Towards a Sustainable Water Resources Management for Auroville and

the Bioregion. Proceedings of UNESCO endorsed international seminar. A scientific monograph bringing together 21 research documents dealing with water management in the wider context of complex socio-economic issues in the Auroville bioregion.

Films

- Towards a Sustainable Future, in collaboration with ISRO, French translation.
- Dewats at Aravind Eye Hospital, a 14 minute introduction with 3D rendering of the different waste water devices.
- A DVD to be used for outreach training programs for appropriate building technology.
- Innovative sanitation, post-tsunami solutions, a 14 minute visual document on implemented coastal sanitation projects.

b) EARTH INSTITUTE

The Auroville Earth Institute was previously named the Auroville Building Centre / Earth Unit, which had been founded by HUDCO, Government of India, in 1989. The Auroville Earth Institute is researching, developing, promoting and transferring earth-based technologies, which are cost and energy effective. These technologies are disseminated through training courses, seminars, workshops, manuals and documents. The most promoted technology today is Compressed Stabilised Earth Blocks (CSEB). The Institute is also offering various services, and provides consultancy within and outside India. The Auroville Earth Institute is part of a world network with CRATerre (The International Centre for Earth Construction), ABC Terra in Brazil and a number of other NGO's (Indians and worldwide). A training convention has been passed with the School of Architecture of Grenoble, France, for giving long-term training courses to their students.

The Auroville Earth Institute is today the representative and resource centre for South Asia of the UNESCO Chair "Earthen Architecture, Constructive Cultures and Sustainable Development" (See annex). This Chair aims to accelerate the dissemination of scientific and technical know-how on earthen architecture amongst the higher education institutions, in the following three domains: environment and heritage, human settlements, and economy and production. (See annex)

The Auroville Earth Institute is also partner of BASIN (Building Advisory Service and Information Network) for South Asia and it provides information and guidance to whoever asks for it.

The training course activities and the endeavour to promote raw earth as a building material for sustainable and cost effective development has brought, over the years, a series of awards: Ten national awards and one international award

The Auroville Earth Institute has been pioneering the research, development and dissemination of earth based technologies and architecture in India and it became over the years one the world leader in this field.

The Auroville Earth Institute is presently in the process to get a governmental recognition for the research and training course activities which had been conducted over the years. After some time it will be able to grant some diplomas, after one year studies.

Activities

Regular two-week courses are conducted in Auroville. With the collaboration and under the request of CRATerre and other organisations, the Auroville Earth Institute is also conducting training programs outside India, as has happened in Zaire, Eritrea, Turkey, Sri Lanka and Brazil to date. Other programmes are conducted in Auroville, or elsewhere in India, under the request of various NGOs or Centres, such as: HUDCO, "APTibet", Kutch Nav Nirman Abhiyan, Catholic Relief Services, Development Alternatives, Vivekananda Kendra, etc.

Training: Regular programmes are conducted every year in the following fields, at the Auroville Earth Institute:

- Production of CSEB
- Masonry with CSEB
- Theory of arches, vaults and domes
- Building with arches, vaults and domes
- Long-term training for students of architecture
- Awareness programmes on appropriate building technologies

Research & Development

Focus is laid on applied research and development of materials and technologies. It does not only include product development, equipment creation but also understanding of the consciousness hidden in the earth. The contact with this consciousness helps the latter to evolve, as well as our own consciousness.

Publication and Dissemination

Earthen architecture is promoted through publications and sales of manuals and various forms of media. Participation/organisation of national and international seminars plays an essential role, as well as an advisory service in earth architecture.

Design and construction

Architectural design and construction projects are undertaken for the development of Auroville and its bioregion. Architectural design can also be undertaken elsewhere, as dissemination of research.

Applied Research – Production of Materials

Materials are produced for use within Auroville only, as an application of research. Quality control will be essential to ensure high-quality building materials, which are needed to build the city of Auroville. This expertise is taught and disseminated widely.

AUROVILLE INFORMATION SERVICE

The inauguration at the Auroville Visitors Centre, on 30th of March 2006, by Dr. Karan Singh of a new building, to house the Auroville Information, Exhibition on Auroville and video room for the public was the high point of this year.

a) OUTREACH MEDIA

Services of information, accompaniment, co-production and follow-up for journalists, photographers and film crews

Most professional press people approach the Auroville OutreachMedia team prior to their intended trip to Auroville via e-mail.

Detailed activities

- TV reportage on the Quiet Healing Centre, Auroville for a series "Body and Soul"- George Varghese, Star One, India
- TV documentary on Auroville- Jane Magnusson, Sveriges Television, Sweden.
- Documentary on Auroville- Patrick J. Santiago, Symbiosis Institute Pune, India
- Art documentary/essay "A Spiritual Journey "with reportage on Auroville- Peter Zorn, Francke Foundation, Germany.
- Reportage on Auroville, - Josh Sims, Aygo Magazine, UK
- TV reportage on homes in Auroville for a series the "World's Most Extreme Homes" Home and Garden TV- Kate Hebden, Pioneer Productions, UK
- Photo reportage on Auroville- Johan Mangelshotts and Luc Vleugels, the Standard newspaper, Belgium
- Short article on Auroville, - Charles Seiverd for The Noise, USA

Pre-visits

Apart from these major productions/publications, the team has also catered/caters to a good number of individuals who have come for pre-visits in order to orient themselves, which may or may not result in future documentaries for non public purposes, articles in magazines/newspapers or university papers.

Auroville Outreach Newsletter

This publication, produced on a quarterly basis since its start in 1999, aims at summarizing the “good news” from within Auroville. It is now sent to some 1,300 addressees, including Auroville International Centres, the Central, Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry government officials, Governing Board and International Advisory Board members, NGO’s, funding organisations, certain embassies and consulates in India, and various friends of Auroville in India and abroad.

Outreach via the Auroville Visitors Centre

Two members of the OutreachMedia team are regular contributors at the Auroville Visitors Centre, interacting with the many hundreds of daily visitors from around India and abroad, introducing the Auroville project by way of video, answering questions and guiding and helping people as required.

VILLAGE OUTREACH

Village Action

Auroville Village Action Trust (AVAT) is the human resource development unit of the Foundation. This year the activities were registered as five separate units under the Trust, each with their own executives. These include Life Education Centre, Mohanam/Svaram, Lively, and Auroville Industrial School, which have been reported on elsewhere in this document) and Village Action. Village Action includes the activities of the 24 year old "Auroville Village Action Group" which works with about 100 women's self help groups in about 50 villages, and also the activities of the "Auroville Tsunami Relief and Rehabilitation Project" which began last year.

Auroville Village Action Group

The activities of the Village Action Group this year have focused on sustaining the savings and credit activities of about 100 women's self-help groups. This year a major focus was to find the best way to support their self-management. Previously, they had saved and lent to each other through a single common account, but a safer method of supporting their accounting while they save in local banks was adopted. Women's SHG members were active in finding and defining the new organization. A tailoring training programme was carried out with SHG members, with 22 graduates.

Auroville Tsunami Relief and Rehabilitation Project

Under the umbrella of the Auroville Village Action Trust, the Auroville Tsunami Rehabilitation Centre has been functioning since December 26th, the day the tsunami hit the Tamil Nadu coast. After 3 months of relief activities, for the last 12 months we have been working on a wide range of activities for the rehabilitation of the tsunami struck areas. For a period of 24 months, our program aims to assist communities to quickly rebuild their lives to the level that existed prior to the disaster, or, preferably, to a higher level than that which existed before. To avoid creating imbalances between tsunami-affected villages and indirectly affected villages we have decided to enlarge our target area and include inland villages as well. We are working now with 34 different hamlets or communities, located along the coastline and in and around Auroville.

Not all our projects cover our entire target area.

We have concentrated on five major work areas: NGO Coordination and Knowledge Center, Community Institution Building, Livelihoods Development, Shelter and Infrastructure and Ecological restoration. Details of each of these are provided below.

NGO Coordination and Knowledge Resource Center:

NGO coordination creates a common platform for all NGOs working in Villupuram district to obtain and spread relevant information, to get together with government officials and to avoid duplication of activities. NGO Coordination works hand in hand with the Knowledge Resource Center.

Knowledge Resource Center's task is to share the knowledge that Auroville has accumulated over the last 30 years with the government and other NGOs. The aim behind the collection of information and the sharing of it is to make sure that reconstruction and rehabilitation happen in an environmentally friendly way, with good planning and on the basis of scientific and technical expertise. Knowledge Center works together with CSR (Centre for Scientific Research), Auroville Earth Institute, Shakti and Water Harvest in Auroville. Workshops and presentations for other NGOs and government officials are organized on topics such as sanitation, sustainability, building technologies, etc.

Community Institution Building:

The shift from relief to rehabilitation has meant making a shift from charity work to a policy of "helping-them-to-help-themselves." As an initial step to forming such a partnership, ATRRP established "Paalams" (Tamil word for bridge) in 17 fishing communities. These are groups of three youths for each village, who meet regularly with ATRRP field staff to share information and plan together. By doing so, the paalams act as links between the village, Auroville, and any other NGOs. Paalams also help Women's and Men's groups in the villages take up various projects for village improvement. Till today 137 micro projects have been carried out (village improvement, health projects and cultural projects). Eleven community centers have been constructed along the coast in which fisher folk sit together in the shade, mend their nets, and exchange their thoughts and ideas.

Livelihood Skills Development:

To ensure full recovery one of the chief factors is that the people have viable livelihoods to lift them out of poverty. ATRRP activities in this area include the following projects:

A dramatic response in the aftermath of the tsunami was the training of fisherwomen, many of whom had never held a needle, in making Tsunamika. Tsunamika is a little doll made from recycled fabric. The project has taught women to make Tsu-

namikas, which are bought from them by Auroville and then given away in exchange for a suggested donation. Tsunamika has thus both provided livelihoods skills training and evolved to become a successful model of “gift economy”. This project is carried out in cooperation with Upasana Design Studio, Auroville.

Vocational Training Programs

- a. Auroville Industrial School
- b. Educational Loan Scheme
- c. Micro finance
- d. Enterprise Development
- e. Ecological Restoration
- f. Shelter and Infrastructure

THE “OUTREACH” SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION CENTRES OF SAIER

There are currently several schools in Auroville that provide educational services and programmes primarily to local village families, each with its own unique mission and specializations. They are: Ilaignarkal Education Centre, Isai Ambalam School, New Creation Bilingual School, Arul Vazhi Education Centre, Udavi School, and Evening School serve a population of over six hundred primary and lower secondary students in a variety of child-centered programmes, with an emphasis on academic as well as vocational, social, technical and artistic development. A brief profile of each is presented below.

a) ISAI AMBALAM SCHOOL

Ponni Group

This preschool group (3+ years) consisted this year of 41 children (20 boys and 21 girls). The parents of these children were also involved in their learning. Use of computer educational CDs is continuing for all the children in this group.

Vaigai Group

This preschool group (4+ years) consisted of 21 children (8 boys and 13 girls). Use of computer educational CDs for learning about general things continued. As in the Ponni group, this group of children more than fulfilled their individualized learning programs. Narmadha Group

This group of Primary level students consisted of 24 children (9 boys and 15 girls). Three students at the first standard level learnt to use Phonics Method for Reading in two months and were able to blend and read quickly. Three students at the 1st standard level had learnt 15 general knowledge topics by using computer CDs; they have also learnt to use the CDs for pronouncing English properly. All the 5th standard level students have learnt to use the computer CDs pertaining to English language learning whenever they faced any difficulty in learning any aspect of that language.

b) ILAIGNARKAL EDUCATION CENTRE

The goals of this school project are:

- 1) To provide increased educational opportunities for each age group, mainly youth (15 and above) appropriate to their specific needs, and increased training facilities to gain a greater range of vocational skills, communication skills and improve income-generating capacities.
- 2) To carry on research in Tamil, the language of this bio-region as well as one of the four languages for Auroville as suggested by the Mother, and trial development of teaching methods and materials particularly suited to first generation learners. In collaboration with local and national educational institutions such as CIIL (Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore), Gandhigram Rural University, Kasturba Kanya Gurukulam, Vedaranyam, we disseminate the materials in order to increase the skills of existing teachers in non-formal schools and thereby contribute to raising standards in the bio-region and in alternative schools.
- 3) To include all innovative education methods which build self-awareness, self-esteem and self-confidence in order to draw out, develop, and support community leadership, by providing channels for beneficiaries to be constantly in touch with their higher aspirations.
- 4) To provide improved, harmonious and beautiful physical resources which will have a multiplying effect on the above objectives. Our mission remains to give exposure to young people of the ideals of Human Unity.

c) NEW CREATION BILINGUAL SCHOOL

Our mission is to provide an appropriate kindergarten, primary and intermediate education for children from Kuilapalayam and other villages which are geographically connected to Auroville, based on the principles of integral education as defined by the founders of Auroville, the Mother and Sri Aurobindo. The school strives to maintain a creative and joyful atmosphere, where the uniqueness of each child is respected and nurtured.

The school's aim is to provide a high quality bilingual education in Tamil and English, covering all of the standard academic subjects, physical education, and a wide variety of vocational options to prepare children for life in a rapidly changing world, while still maintaining contact with their Tamil cultural heritage. Eventually, children may earn equivalency certificates so that secondary education can be continued in a school which is recognised by the Tamil Nadu Government.

Teacher Training Seminars and Workshops

The NCBS Support Group has formed a sub-group to focus on teacher training and professional development programmes at New Creation this year and cre-

ated a model for what the group hopes to be able to put in place some day in the future.

To introduce and upgrade teachers' knowledge and skills, the group incorporated a variety of in-service professional development activities such as Workshops, Courses, Study groups, Team meetings, and the services of a Mentor to help with implementation of important ideas or new approaches in the classroom.

d) ARUL VAZHI EDUCATION CENTRE

This centre has five areas of activities-

- i. Kindergarten (4 - 5 years): Importance is given to the development and use of the sense organs. Along with this is added the cultivation of discrimination and aesthetic sense, the capacity to choose what is beautiful, harmonious, simple, healthy and pure.
- ii. Body awareness and cultural expression group (6 - 16 years): For this group apart from freehand exercises, sports and games, the children are encouraged to practice and develop indigenous forms of art, folk songs, stage plays etc. computer education is started from the age of 9 years onwards.
- iii. Training programme for girls (16 - 18 years): Three girls are trained in child care, physical education, dance and drama.
- iv. Yoga: Yogasana classes are conducted from 6.30 a.m. to 7.30 a.m., in which many children (9 - 18 years) participate. Girls are given equal importance as boys in all respects.
- v. Puduulagam: This group of children are from middle and high schools in the neighbourhood. They attend classes from 5.00 p.m. to 8.30 p.m., which includes their curricular and extra curricular activities.

e) UDAVI SCHOOL

French Language

At the beginning of this year we announced that adding French will be the main focus for improvement in our school. As per the matriculation board rules that we follow, students are given an option for a second language starting from grade VI. Some of our students choose French at that stage and the others study Tamil as a second language. We have of course always made sure that those who opt for French also learn Tamil, as it is their mother tongue and an extra effort is required to be made by them to study their mother tongue also. However, taking into account the special significance given to the study of French by Mother, we introduced French through the whole school in a fun way. This was a very successful programme and brought in a great love for the French language amongst our children. It may be worthwhile to mention that, in the matriculation exams of this year, two of our students scored very high marks in French.

TDEF project

Another highlight of this year was the collaboration with the Tropical Dry Evergreen Forest (TDEF) program being carried out in Pitchandikulam. Four groups of our students, were actively involved with this project. The activities ranged from introduction sessions in the school, and getting familiar with the acronym TDEF and its meaning/relation with Geography, to field trips to nearby forests and places like Puthupet (known as the "Miracle" Grove).

Extension of upper levels 10 + 2

We made a decision this year to keep our students with us till 12th grade. It was felt that an additional two years will greatly help in cementing the values that the children imbibe during their stay in the school.

f) TAMIL ULAGAM EVENING SCHOOL

Tamil Ulagam evening schools (after-work schools) are joint ventures involving Secours Populaire of France (SPF). La Ponds, the Patch Work, SAIER and the villages committed to educational activities. Eleven village night schools, which have been functioning since 1980, have been included under the outreach educational programs of SAIER since 1992.

The night schools were mainly started to help disadvantaged working children who did not get any opportunity to attend regular school in the daytime. Originally, they were meant for the drop-outs, stay-outs, pulled-outs and pushed-outs, but there was also a great need to give tutorial guidance for school-going children who hailed from multi-purpose educational centres, in response to local needs and requests from parents.

The teachers at each school are volunteers from the native village. They maintain the building and take care of the children in the evenings. Between 6 and 8.30 p.m. every day, they conduct special classes during examinations, and organize cultural programmes, study tours and visits, work camps, and other such co-curricular activities. Artistic talent (in music, dance, painting, theatre. writing, kolam-drawing and other hobbies) is encouraged, and sports activities are also conducted.

g) LIFE EDUCATION CENTRE

The Life Education Centre (LEC) is an Auroville outreach school. It provides ongoing vocational training for semi-educated girls between the ages of 14-21 years from local villages. In addition to the skills training in tailoring, typing, crochet, computers, these young women are involved in group discussions which provide a forum to share and express their needs, successes, struggles and difficulties. In this safe setting, they develop a growing sense of security, improved self awareness, increased empowerment and an awakened eye for beauty.

Research Publication (...where different paths meet...)

The booklet, which is a record of all the personal life histories/case histories of the students at LEC, is based on interviews that were done as an introduction to the Core Qualities Empowerment Project. It was a starting point for the students to recollect strong and weak phases in their lives in order to develop self awareness. However, this booklet has been designed as a storytelling process. Through this storytelling, students become more aware of their own talents and natural qualities. By reviewing their dreams, ideals, and sometimes traumatic experiences, the students are equipped to use them in planning their future and setting goals.

Sanskrit Language Learning Project

The aim of the project was to introduce Sanskrit to the local Tamil children on an experimental basis, as a way to connect them to Indian culture and improve their language skills. Students who completed their 8th Grade exams at New Creation Bilingual School in December 2005 were taught the language for four months. The teacher taught them twice a week for 3 hours. Students learned spoken Sanskrit as well as the script. The method that was used in the classroom is interactive rather than instructive.

Introduction to Integral Education

In this project, a workshop and a series of talks that were given by Sraddhalu Ranade on education were transcribed, and then organised into a book with many drawings. A series of six audio CDs of the talks was also edited, which has been presented in a nice box. This audio set is also available in MP3 format, and along with the book will be released in 2006.