



ASHA KIRAN

Asha-Seattle's quarterly Newsletter

VOLUME 12 - ISSUE 1
ANNUAL REPORT
JANUARY 2006



editorial

Greetings Everyone,

A brand new year is upon us and it's time to look back at the past year and its achievements. To give you an idea of our operational reach, a group of volunteers have compiled a summary of the financial details for the year 2005 with brief description of our ongoing projects and partner groups.

As usual, 2005 was marked by a variety of Asha Seattle led initiatives and popular programs that highlights the prevalent socio-economic conditions in India. Asha Seattle hosted a couple of social activists like Harsh Mander and Ravi Kuchimanchi who gave public talks on social justice and India's rural development. Sunil Laxman, a long time Asha Seattle volunteer, has penned his thoughts following the discussion session with Ravi in his blog. We present the second part of this three part article from Sunil's blog in this issue of the newsletter. Asha Seattle, along with Sangati, a learning-based organisation exploring social and developmental issues, also hosted Michael Mazgaonkar who presented his grass roots perspective about social development in India.

The Bhopal gas tragedy of 1984 marks one of the darkest events in this century. In an effort to raise awareness about the unresolved and festering issues surrounding the Bhopal gas tragedy victims, Asha and partner organizations hosted a series of Bhopal-related events throughout the year in the Seattle area, including a public screening of the documentary Bhopal: The Search for Justice. On November 29, 2005, the Seattle City Council issued an official proclamation declaring Dec. 3rd as the "Bhopal Remembrance Day". In doing so, Seattle became the second city to declare support for the victims, following a resolution passed by the San Francisco City Council in April 2004. The proclamation marks an important step in the rising demand for justice over the Bhopal issue, whose victims feel betrayed by the actions of Union Carbide and Dow Chemical.

Asha Seattle has been deeply involved in the immediate as well as follow-up relief operations in Tsunami affected areas in India. The donations received by us have been mainly channelised through our partners like Anugriha, RIM and Suyam. A big hand to all of you out there who helped us make a difference in these people's lives through your generous donations. Besides hosting other media events, we organized a candle light vigil at the UW Lawns to remember the fallen as well as to give hope to the ones who are trying to make it in the face of tremendous odds.

We also thank those who donated for Asha Seattle in the various corporate-sponsored "Give" campaigns, the "Seattle to Portland" biking and the "Miles for Smiles" marathon event. Every year, cultural events are organized to raise funds for deserving projects in India; AllGoRhythms, our flagship fund raiser concert, and Geetanjali had been very successful this year. Donations received from all of these events are dedicated to certain chosen projects which this year had been Vigyan Ashram, Uthnau, Muskaan, SUPPORT, Tsunami relief and the Kumbhakonam school fire relief fund. We apologize for the fracas about dinner served during AllGoRhythms and thanks to all of you who stood behind us and supported us through this.

To expand our learning and knowledge base and also to create volunteer awareness about the current socio-economic issues of India, we have decided to hold regular workshop meetings. We hope that these workshops, along with the intensive discussion sessions with the "Advocacy" focus group, will be a great learning experience for all volunteers, old or new. These workshops also will foster interaction with peer volunteers and serve as a conduit for the exchange of ideas between different projects.

Do check out our webpage for announcements about upcoming events. And, if you want to make a difference, do join us as a volunteer or simply walk into one of our workshop sessions or simply shoot an email to seattle@ashanet.org

We thank all of our donors for your generous and continued support which goes a long way to make "a socio-economic change through the medium of education" possible. Last but not the least, kudos to all of you volunteers who worked tirelessly to arrange these year long events for Asha Seattle.

We are proud to let you know that Asha for Education has maintained its 4 star rating (Charity Navigator) for organizational efficiency, organizational capacity and fiscal responsibility for the second year running. For more information, visit our website, www.ashanet.org/seattle. Do contact us at seattle@ashanet.org if you have any comments or suggestions.

Thank you,

The Asha Seattle Team.

Learning to AID: problems and solutions –Part II

by Sunil Laxman

(This article is in continuation of a previous article appearing in the October '05 issue of Asha Kiran (Learning to AID)).

Here, Sunil continues his discussion about Ravi Kuchimanchi's (the founder of AID) focus on efforts at finding indigenous solutions to existing problems. Without brandishing the so-called fire-brand radicalism, Ravi exhorted the affected people to find practical and contextually relevant solutions to everyday problems.

This is an article in three parts describing Ravi's grassroots experience and discussing the ramifications. This originally appeared as a blog entry by Asha volunteer Sunil Laxman following Ravi's talk at Seattle (<http://balancinglife.blogspot.com/2005/08/learning-to-aid-ii-walking-tightropes.html>). Please post your comments and queries on Sunil's blog.]

This discussion was about how sometimes good intentions can go wrong, when the understanding of local dynamics are incomplete. The discussion was free flowing, and allowed plenty of room for us to come to our own conclusions. The discussion also reiterated the fact that villages comprise of different communities, with fragile threads holding them together. Consider a small village (Ravi used a specific real example), which has one large well as the source of its drinking and cooking water (with say a tank or pond farther away, used for bathing and cattle). Now, all the women in the village go up to this well with their pots and carry back the water. The road leading to this well is not particularly fantastic, and this daily ordeal for the women is tough.

This village has three different communities living in it (say A, B and C, where A, B and C can be people of different religions, castes, linguistic groups or any such difference). All of them live together in peace, and use this same well for their water. Now, it so happens that the three communities live in different parts of the village, A being closest to the well, B a little farther away, and C being farthest. Also, A has the largest population, followed by B and then C.

It would make a world of difference to the people of the village if the water could reach their houses directly, instead of them trudging up to the well, drawing out the water, and carrying it back on their heads. A simple pump and pipeline could take the water from the well to their houses. Let us say a well meaning NGO decides to help out the villagers by building such a simple pipe, and providing say a single tap per household.

Now, most NGOs (at least most of the sincere and efficient ones) are cash-strapped, and try to make every cent count. The

"most bang for a buck" is the unofficial motto. If the funds are limiting, an organization will often decide that it is better to help some rather than help no one at all. So a "cost-benefit" analysis is done, purely with economic and financial criteria. They find that the cost of laying pipelines to colony A is cheapest (since the distance is shortest), AND the number of people benefited is the highest here. Deciding purely on these economic criteria, and the fact that at least say 60% of the population of the village benefits, the NGO might go ahead and construct pipes to provide water only for A, with the intention that they will go back a year or two later (when there are more funds) and complete the task for B and C.

This good intention can immediately acerbate relations between A on one side, and B and C on the other, as one (A) suddenly becomes a "have" while the other two (who already have to put in more effort to reach the well in the first case) become "have-nots".

Sometimes even this does not damage relations, and let us say B and C agree to wait a year for their pipes. Meanwhile, A, since it has tap water, dramatically increases water usage (since there is no longer a need to walk up to the well to fill buckets, careful rationing of water ends). This results in a fall in the water table in the well. In order to "solve the problem", A could decide to go and cover the well to minimize evaporation losses. Now B and C are far worse off than they were before all this started, and this will strain relationships between communities. This situation thus has all the ingredients necessary for a communal riot.

So, the original "good intention" of the NGO (to at least provide piped water to one community) can unintentionally result in tremendous social unrest.

A corollary to this analogy is that when you create opportunities for the "have-nots" to bring them on par with the "haves", it will not create much animosity. For example, take three other communities A, B and C in a village. A and B have water hand pumps or electricity lines, but C does NOT. In this case, if a group or an NGO decides to provide C alone with a new water hand pump, there rarely is serious animosity in the village from A and B against C. This is because A and B already have hand pumps, and what is offered to C is not something that is creating inequality, but is creating equality. You are not taking something AWAY from them.

Usually aid and NGO agencies are outsiders to the community. It becomes paramount for outsiders to be aware of these aspects and dynamics, because they are outsiders. And seemingly simple decisions can result in vastly diverse results.



Call for Advocacy Group Meetings

Advocacy group (<http://volunteerthoughts.Blogspot.Com/2005/10/advocacy-group-formal-introduction.html>) meetings will be held on the following dates (second Monday of every month except for January):

- Monday, Jan 23rd, 2006
- Monday, Feb 13th, 2006

- Monday, Mar 13th, 2006
- Monday, Apr 10th, 2006

Time: 7:00pm

Venue: Microsoft Bldg 42/3600

Please feel free to attend these meetings. If you want join the group or its mailing list, contact Rahul at rahul.lahoti@gmail.com. The activities of the group are reading and presentation on different socioeconomic issues, writing articles, contacting other organizations for networking, etc. Also, be on the look-out for articles posted on Asha Kiran by different members of the Advocacy group.

Asha Seattle Project Update, 2005: *Asha Seattle has been supporting, financially and otherwise, a number of partner groups in India through the years. Here we are summarizing our work with out partner groups in the year 2005*

I. Alternatives in Education

a. Gramya Sansthan: Gramya Sansthan has been active in UP's most backward taluka, Naugarh (district Chandholi) since 1996. Naugarh district was divided into 10 villages to improve its social, economic and educational situation. The main focus of the organization is related to human rights, violence against women, and child development. This area is the home of the Mooltaya adivasi (tribe) with a literacy rate of 22%. Female literacy is only 8%. Gramya Sansthan actively participates in helping the 10 villages of Naughad taluka. Gramya Sansthan has undertaken activities such as: Bal Kendra for children who do not go to school, self independence of women, and group activities involving both men and women of the tribe.

b. Puvudham: In this drought-prone area of Tamil Nadu, a couple Meenakshi and Umesh started a school in 1992. The school has a variable fee structure, depending on the economic situation of the child's family. Because of the school's generous fee structure and support policies, there are a handful of girls studying in the school, who otherwise will not have been able to go to any school. The school believes that children learn most by engaging in hands on activities. The school does not follow a very structured timetable. However they include teaching English, Tamil, Math and even art work. The school is attempting to introduce farming in the curriculum.

c. Sumavanam: In a remote part of AP the school provides quality education to 20 children who come from economically deprived neighboring villages. The system is based on the teaching methodologies of David Horsburgh of Rishi Valley. The older children take part in teaching the younger ones. Students are also engaged in extra-curricular activities and are taught to have concern for the environment.

They have taken part in putting out forest fires and have saved small animals in and around the school.

d. Vikasana: Located in rural Karnataka, Vikasana is a rural center that provides free education to children of all ages. Besides the children of landless farmers of neighboring villages, children of migrated parents who cannot fit into other institutions also join the center. The class size is restricted to twenty five in order to providing holistic and quality education. The emphasis is on self-learning including caring for the environment, linguistic harmony, Yoga, handicrafts and sports. The children who are interested in taking the government level exams at the 7th standard and S.S.L.C level are given the necessary help by way of coaching and enrolling them as private candidates in a govt. school. Those who do not wish to sit for such exams are encouraged to develop their talents. Future plans are to impart knowledge in subjects such as primary health, first aid, and prevention of illness. The center with the help of a doctor plans to train women and children groups to carry on the work in their family and community.

II. Child Homes

a. CMS – See below (IV (a))

b. Odanadi Seva Samasthe: Odanadi Seva Samasthe runs a relentless campaign to expose and curb the flesh trade. They have rescued over 400 girls, most of them minors, from flesh traffickers in various parts of Karnataka. As many as 350 women have been rehabilitated with an alternative livelihood into mainstream society. The younger children are provided informal education from 1st through the 6th standards and formal education at government schools nearby. These children also reside at the center and are provided food and other facilities.

III. Community Awareness Programs

a. Aralu: This project involves preschool and day-care centers for children of working women in Bidar district of Karnataka. The goal is also to provide non-formal education at these centers.

b. MICDA: To eliminate the Mathamma Practice prevalent in the scheduled caste Madiga community in 24 Mandals in Chittor District of Andhra Pradesh. Mathammas are girl children who have been dedicated to Goddess Mathamma due to variety of reasons including strong religious beliefs, ignorance and encouragement. These girls are sexually abused from very young age (early teens). Almost all of them take to prostitution to survive and feed their children. The project involves comprehensive (Madiga) community and pediatric health care programs, education of mathammas and awareness campaigns by a group of social workers, one per Mandal, covering 24 Mandals in the district.

c. Spastics Society: The aim of this Tamil Nadu project is to create a facility where computers can be used to help children in the age group of 6-17 with multiple disabilities have access to better means for learning and for expression in terms of speech and writing.

d. SUPPORT: Society for Undertaking Poor People for Rehabilitation is a group dedicated to fighting AIDS and Drug Abuse among street children in Mumbai. From 1993, SUPPORT has expanded its activities to Grant Road, Kamathipura, Dadar, Matunga and Mahim areas covering a wider range of street population including sex workers and eunuchs. A rehabilitation center has been opened for child addicts below 16. The plans of SUPPORT are to develop knowledge, attitude & skills for better living, mostly in form of basic education & some basic business skills. They also aim to reduce stress, anxiety & tension of living on the street through counseling services.

IV. Community Based Interventions

a. Champa Mahila Society: Champa Mahila Society was established in 1984 in the Basanti area of Sunderban in West Bengal. Basanti is ecologically a part of the delta between the Hooghly River and the Bay of Bengal. Approximately 95 percent of the total population depends on agricultural activities for their livelihood in this monocrop area. The group was created to promote projects in the area to build a self-reliant community and develop a feeling of cooperation with focus on women's groups. It has formed 32 women's groups each having 10-15 members. Issues raised by these groups include dowry, health, sex discrimination and women's rights. This was Asha Seattle's first project, and is still going strong

b. UMBVS: Urmul Marusthali Bunkar Vikas Samiti of Jaisalmer district in Rajasthan running 13 Aanganpathshalas, 13 Shikshakarmi schools and 50 non-formal education centers. A total of 4500 girls and boys attend these schools. Besides, UMBVS is implementing a women's empowerment program and an integrated rural development program in 13 villages of the Jodhpur and Jaisalmer Districts. A total of 90 villages are being covered by the organization, under the aegis of income generation, education, women empowerment and integrated rural development programs. The organization is expanding their area of work and increasing their target group. It now helps women, children

and dalits who are economically, socially and politically backward. The organization's vision has grown to one which seeks the establishment of an equal and a society free from exploitation. It's programs include aspects of income generation, health, education and women's development.

c. Uthnau: Mallarpur Uthnau is an effort to raise community awareness towards sustainable development in several tribal villages in Birbhum, West Bengal. Asha's partnership with Uthnau includes several early childhood education centers and after school tuition centers, where Uthnau tries to make education meaningful and effective by using the children's mother tongue and rich cultural tradition. We have supported Uthnau in providing health care on a regular basis as well as in emergencies. We also support Uthnau's efforts in mass education on various issues relevant to the lives of these people.

V. Disabilities

a. Astha: Alternative Strategies for the Handicapped: is located in New Delhi. An outreach project in the slum communities of Govindpuri, in South Delhi initiated in Jan 1996 - providing rehabilitation services to children with disabilities such as Polio, Blindness, Speech and Hearing impairments, Epilepsy, Mental Retardation and Cerebral Palsy and support to their families. Funded since 1998.

b. CMS – See Above (IV (a))

c. Jeevan Gyanodaya: Jeevan Gnanodaya is a school for children with hearing disability, speech-impairedness & mental retardation from poor, rural backgrounds. They are provided special speech therapy classes in addition to the regular curriculum. The school has started an ITI where they will acquire technical and industry-based skills like Fitting, Turning, Carpentry etc. Vocational Skills like Weaving, typing and sewing are already being imparted to the children. All the facilities provided by the school are free, including food and lodging.

d. Mamata Vidyalaya: Drs. Asha & Kuber (Appa) Vaidya started the school in 1981 to help their mentally challenged daughter, it is the first school in Jalgaon district, Maharashtra for mentally challenged and disabled children. The school has 50 children and is registered under the Societies Registration Act & Public Trust Act. Since the State Govt. recognizes only children of age less than 18 to be eligible for being students of Mamata Vidyalaya. The Savali Project is proposing to engage these mentally challenged and economically backward children to be productive by engaging in agricultural activities and the income be given to the participating children.

e. Overcoming Hemophilia (Reviving Hope): Hemophilia is a rare genetic disease that slows down the process of blood clotting. It's linked with the X chromosomes & affects the males. Men/boys with this blood disorder suffer numerous other problems caused by prolonged bleeding

mainly their joints & muscles. Untreated this can make joints immobile -the cause of crippling disabilities. Two young boys suffer from Hemophilia in Chitradurga district of Karnataka. We have been helping them with their surgeries followed by physiotherapy. Right now we are helping them with their treatment. Hemophilia has been a huge burden on their family emotionally & financially.

f. Shastri School: The school is for children who are hearing impaired. Most children come from under privileged or low income families and cannot provide basic schooling. Many students are orphans with no support for basic necessities. The school provides shelter, food, clothing, amenities, etc for about 40 such children in addition to basic education for about 120 of them. 40 students currently live in school premises and in the homes of a few school teachers. The instruction is in Kannada and follows the state board syllabus. The school does not have any funding from Government and is run by donors.

g. Spastics Society: See above (III (c)).

h. Udhavum Karangal: The Chennai based team serves to abandoned orphans for over 15 years. Asha's support goes towards the educational expenses of the children including fees, books, and uniforms. Udhavum Karangal has been rescuing wandering mentally sick persons from the street those who have no other facilities available. There are nearly 600 patients who are under treatment, care and rehabilitation. During this process they have also picked up number of mentally retarded children. There are already 100 such children below 10 years who are under their care, they are being provided with treatment and care but no special education and training program.

VI. Formal Schools

a. Bhoomiheen Seva Samiti: is located in Aau, U.P., and aims to provide basic education and skills to children of the landless and extremely poor kids of the Banda District in UP state of India. Has been funded since 1998.

b. CMS: See Above (IV (a))

c. ISDGEI: The Institute for Socially Disadvantaged Groups' Educational Improvement (ISDGEI), currently operates a Creche Unit, a Primary School, an 'Open' school, a Vocational Center and a Community Service Unit in the slums of Rajendranagar near Kolhapur, Maharashtra. Asha-Mich St. partially funds the Creche Unit. Education has been pivotal in holistic development of socioeconomic development of vulnerable section of the society i.e. SC, ST and NT. ISDGEI also works at bringing child labour mainly girl child labour from the work place to the mainstream of education and for the economic empowerment of the illiterate women residing in slums (i.e. Rajendra Nagar).

d. Rural Development Trust: RDT runs a school for the children of migrant Andhra workers in Tamil Nadu. Asha Seattle has supported this project since its inception in June

2005 and will continue supporting this project for a period of one year, after which time RDT will approach the state government to sustain the school under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan scheme. The school aims to wean children away from construction labor jobs and juvenile delinquency by providing them with formal education opportunities. To this end, it serves as a bridge school, enabling children to study through classes 1-8 at Navalur, TamilNadu, eventually helping them to continue their education in Telugu schools once their parents return to Andhra Pradesh.

VII. Non-formal Education Centers and Vocational Training

a. Aralu & CMS: See Above (III (a) & IV (a)).

b. Bharati Trust: is a non-profit development organization working for the cause of upliftment and empowerment of Irula Tribal communities living in the interior pockets of Thiruvallur district.

c. Door Step School: Door Step School is a registered non-profit organization working in Mumbai and Pune, India. They conduct non-formal education classes for out of school and working children (7 to 18 years of age) residing in slums, on pavements, docks etc. With the introduction of the "School on Wheels" bus, Door Step has come closer to fulfilling one of its major objectives - making basic education easily accessible to a larger number of children. The bus drops off the children to school and also acts as a classroom for 5 sessions during the day.

d. Jagriti Bal Vikas Samiti: The JBVS operates in the Kanpur District in UP and runs the Swami Vivekananda Vidyalaya at Lodhar. The central idea of the project is to evolve a "Children Education Package", concentrating on economically disadvantaged migrant sections of the society. Activities include generating educational material, conduction science experiment workshops in neighborhoods and providing practical vocational training.

e. RHEDT: Rural Educational Development Action Group is a nonprofit voluntary organization working for the welfare and development of orphan, destitute children of Thally district in TamilNadu since 1987. The group serves both sexes by educating them and satisfying their basic needs. Children once admitted stay permanently and do not go to their biological relatives' houses even during holidays. All basic needs such as food, shelter, education, clothing, entertainment, etc. are met by the Home. Some children are physically deformed and some are mentally unsound. There are 20 children including 13 boys and 7 girls, between 5 and 18 years of age. Four boys are undergoing an industrial training course in Madras run by Inter Mission. One boy is studying in the I.F.G. Bible College. These five boys are staying in hostels and are being financially supported by way of stipends. The remaining 15 children continue to go to school and stay in the Home in Thally.

f. Vigyan Ashram: Vigyan Ashram located in Pabal near Khed is about 80 km and a 2 hr drive from Pune. Vigyan Ashram was started about 25 years ago by Dr. Kalbag with the intention of creating an education system that is relevant to rural needs. The methodology for teaching was to be based on hands on learning and the use of scientific thinking. The culmination of Vigyan Ashram's efforts is a 1-year course, DBRT (Diploma for Basic Rural Technology) besides other programs. Asha's funding is used for the one year DBRT course and is being considered for this model to be spread to other schools in that area.

VIII. After School Support Centers

a. CHETANAA: is located in Kurukshetra (near Delhi). This group targets children from very poor families. They are provided after school education and training, and are admitted into government schools. In addition, the children also get uniforms, books and health checkups. The project has been funded since 1997.

b. Each One Teach One (EOTO): Each One Teach One Charitable Foundation is a development organization working towards overall development of municipal school going children. It works with children from socio-economically deprived sections of the society. The organization has targeted these children from the lower strata from 5 municipal schools in Mumbai, 2 schools in Bangalore and 1 in Bhopal. EOTO provides for one-to-one sponsorship of children upto 12th grade. Students are tutored by older students. Children are supported until they graduate from High School, University or Vocational Schools, and are expected to contribute to EOTO either monetarily, or by tutoring other students.

IX. Fellowship

a. Ravi Aluganti: Ravi Aluganti is an Asha Fellow working in Madanapalle mandal in Andhra Pradesh. At present Ravi is working in fifteen government schools in the district of Chittoor. Ravi's main focus is on improving the quality of education in these schools. He has also started a new program called Gramina Vidya Vahini (Mobile Library) in 2003 to inculcate reading habits among children. Asha Seattle has been supporting the fellowship program since 2001 and Mobile Library project since 2003. Ravi's objectives include but are not limited to training government school teachers in multi-grade teaching, research and develop learning material in various areas of primary education, initiate parental involvement in school, and scientific learning.

X. Working with the Government

Asha Seattle is working with groups trying to improve government school curriculum. AVEHI Abacus is one of our partner groups working within the existing educational structure to make the school experience more relevant, meaningful and enjoyable for children as well as teachers.

AVEHI (Audio Visual Education Resource Center): AVEHI is

a voluntary, non-profit organization based in Mumbai that acts as a resource center for development and dissemination of material that will contribute to the cause of education. The ABACUS project provides supplementary curriculum for economically deprived Mumbai schools that helps children make a connection between what they are taught in school and what they experience in their daily lives. In a major expansion of the program, they are in the process of introducing the Sangati curriculum in all the municipal schools in Mumbai.

XI. One Time Funding

a. Jeevan Bhimanagar School: Asha worked with a government school in Jeevan Bhimanagar, Bangalore to help build an overhead water tank and sump. Before this tank was built, this government school had no running water and now the children have drinking water as well as water for the toilets. This was a one time funding provided by Asha.

b. Tamil Nadu School Reconstruction: On 16th July 2004, there was a serious fire-accident at a school in Kumbakonam, a town in Tiruvarur District, which claimed the life of more than 92 children. The Government of Tamilnadu has ordered every school in the rural and urban areas to remove thatched roofs and lite-roofing for safety reasons, otherwise they face closure. While funds for this work at government schools are provided by the government itself, many government aided schools under private management are in desperate need for funds for it. Such schools are supported by farmers who are currently under financial pressure themselves due to a long drought followed by sudden rains and floods a month ago.

XII. Disaster Relief

After the disastrous Tsunami broke in last December Asha Seattle volunteers grouped to form a team with the primary objective of coordinating relief efforts and aid in effectively channelizing support to various organizations working towards immediate and long-term sustenance efforts in the affected areas. Asha Seattle has identified individuals and groups who are local to the area - being very sensitive and aware of the local culture, conditions and needs. Here is a brief summary of the partner groups we have worked with and have supported both monetarily and non-monetarily.

a. Asha Chennai: Following the Tsunami we had immediately sent financial support to Asha Chennai for urgent relief work. Couple of Asha Seattle volunteers had also helped out with direct relief work on the ground.

b. Anugriha: is located in Arasavangadu in Tamil Nadu. The group has a model school providing a unique educational approach using the techniques of Glenn Domain. This school ensures that children from underprivileged families get high quality education.

c. RIM: The Rejuvenate India Movement in the Nagapattinam district of TamilNadu has been actively involved in tsunami relief efforts. As part of their short term rehabilitation work in tsunami-hit areas, RIM is working with Asha-Seattle on a

"Cash for work" program. The project is focused on working with farmers regarding reclaiming their saline lands. Water which is a scarce resource is an essential one for draining out the salt from the land. The only alternative to this is to plough the land when dry so that when the rains arrive, the land would get aired and drained. The total estimate for ploughing stands at Rs. 6.24 lakhs (approximately \$16000).

d. Swajyot: The killer waves of the tsunami had severely destroyed the coastal settlements of tribals and non tribals, road, schools, Light house (Known as Indira Point), government buildings and other service centers in the southernmost part of Andaman and Nicobar islands. There is a need for resettlement at new sites due to several areas still being submerged under water. There is severe dearth of drinking water, clothing, electricity, food and

even education people they are able to sustain their own livelihood. Swajyot is a non-government organization for welfare of society (including tribal societies) and protection of forest and environment in these islands, based at Port Blair. Swajyot was founded in 2004.

e. Suyam: The tsunami of December 2004 affected the schools being run by the Suyam Charitable trust in TamilNadu. In order to help return the children to normalcy, Suyam tried to ensure continued education for the children of the school. They realized that traveling to school was a big obstacle for the children. Hence they started to provide transportation to and from school, by renting a van and driver.

XIII. Support a Child Schemes:

This is amongst one of Asha's most

popular projects, where donors are matched with individual kids of their choice. If the project concerned is willing the donor can even have a personal communication with the sponsored child. This usually means the sponsor spends between \$10-20 a month for the child. The present projects being supported under this scheme are: CMS, EOTO, Overcoming Hemophilia (Reviving Hope), Shastri School, Udavum Karangal.

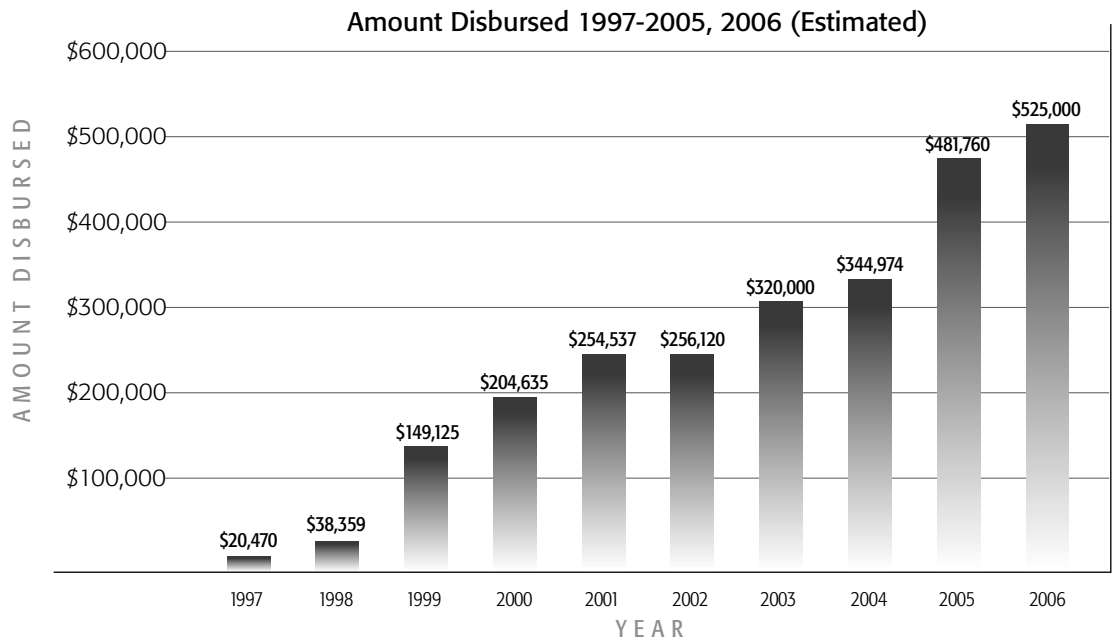
In addition to all the projects described above, there are few donor specific projects that Asha Seattle has supported in 2005. These are projects where the support amount does not come from Asha Seattle's General fund. A donor donates specifically for a project and we send whatever amount we get from that donor to the project. However, regular Asha project criteria apply to these projects too.

financials

The following table shows Asha Seattle's finance numbers for the year 2005.

| Description | Income | Expense | Net |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| Donations | \$651,168.43 | \$0 | \$651,168.43 |
| Bank Interest | \$9,317.19 | \$0 | \$9,317.19 |
| Grocery Coupon Scheme | \$7,750.00 | \$4,750.00 | \$3,000.00 |
| Merchandise | \$92 | \$0 | \$92 |
| Project Support | \$0.0 | \$481,760.71 | (\$481,760.71) |
| Special Events | \$70,155.36 | \$16,922.41 | \$53,232.95 |
| Total | \$738,483 | \$503,433 | \$235,050 |

Our current project commitment for 2006 is approximately \$525,000. The following graph shows how we have grown as an organization over the past few years in terms of amounts disbursed to our project partners in India.



Asha for Education
PO Box 2407
Redmond, WA 98073-2407



Return Service Requested



Asha Contribution Slip

~ I am enclosing: \$25 \$50 \$100

~ I would like to make a quarterly contribution of \$_____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

email: _____

Please make your checks payable to 'asha for education'.

You can mail your contribution to:

Asha for Education
PO Box 2407
Redmond, WA 98073-2407

100% of your contributions go towards Asha's projects in India. Your contributions are Tax deductible.

Printing services for this newsletter were donated by Microsoft Corporation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

All are welcome to join us at our bi-monthly meetings. For information, please go to www.ashanet.org/seattle/resources/meetings/

Feb. 2, 2006 - HUB Room 204N, University of Washington

Feb. 15, 2006 - RTC/LWSD No 414, Marton Johnson Room
(16250 NE 74th St)

March 2, 2006 - HUB Room 204N, University of Washington

March 15, 2006 - RTC/LWSD No 414, Marton Johnson Room
(16250 NE 74th St)

For specific requests and queries, please contact us at

Email: seattle@ashanet.org

Phone: **425 890 8515**

Donations are welcome, and will go a long way in changing many lives in India.



Printed on recycled paper

Save some paper! Prefer to receive your newsletter by email?
Send an email to asha-seattle-info@yahoogroups.com

Geetanjali

Music for Charity

Geetanjali is a nonprofit orchestra with a generous heart helping charities and associations in India, Sri Lanka and the Pacific Northwest. Its first performance was in 1992 for Seattle Tamil Sangam with just four music enthusiasts. Since then the group has grown considerably and has been performing regularly throughout the Pacific Northwest.

This year, Asha Seattle will be hosting the Geetanjali concert at the Kane Hall, University of Washington on March 4.

All proceeds from the event will fund Jeevan Gnanodaya and Asha, two Asha Seattle projects. For more information, please contact arindam2@u.washington.edu