



We have completed yet another year of service in the annals of Amar Seva Sangam and we have immense pleasure in presenting the activities that the year 2002-2003 witnessed.

The year under report was unique, for the year had the distinction of Amar Seva Sangam receiving the National Award at the hands of the President of India for the Best Institution serving the cause of the disabled. This Award coupled with the Award the Institution received from the Government of Tamilnadu in the year 2000 has indeed given not only recognition to the various activities Amar Seva Sangam is engaged in but has also given boost to it to work towards its goal with more vigor and enthusiasm.

His Holiness Shri Jeyandra Saraswathi Swamigal of Kanchi Mutt awarded Mr.S.Ramakrishnan, the President of the Sangam, with Golden Medallions on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee celebrations of His Holiness having ascended the Abode of the Mutt.

One of our Amar Seva Sangam's Founding members Mr.K.Chidambaram who has been the pillar of support for the organization has been awarded by Bharathi Yuve Kendra, Madurai-3 the "Best Achievement Award" during the year for his prodigious social services. He is also the Sangam's senior mason and belongs to the village of Ayikudy. Apart from extending valuable support to the Sangam since its inception, he has also been doing yeomen services to the community. The Award is a fitting recognition for his services.

Mr. Gerhard Fischer continued his support this year also by his magnanimous donation of Rs.8 Lakhs towards the construction of the First Floor of our Nursery School. His contribution along with his other contributions towards our Caliper making unit, Vocational Training Center, special facilities for the Rehabilitation Center and the Campus will be imprinted in golden letters in the history of Amar Seva Sangam.

LIC of India has donated a much-needed Health Van to the Sangam this year. For this purpose one of our Advisory Board Members Shri R.Thothadri of Bangalore, who was earlier Managing Director of LIC, and who also helped us in getting the first Health Van, has to be thanked for the special efforts that he took in preparing the project report and in guiding the Sangam. This is the second van given by LIC, the first one being donated by them in 1995. The Sangam is ever obliged to this noble organization for its magnanimous gesture.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that for the first time in Tamil Nadu a new bus station has come-up in Tirunelveli city which is a complete Barrier-Free-Bus Station and easily accessible for all kinds of Persons with Disabilities. Amar Seva Sangam played a very important role by conducting 'Access Audit' and giving guidance to the Corporation Authorities in introducing facilities such as ramps, special toilet and a specially designed waiting room for physically challenged persons, after obtaining necessary permission from the District Collector and the Commissioner of Municipal Corporation, Tirunelveli. We also recommended engraved floorings and tactile blocks for visually impaired persons along with

signboards and special car parking facility. The students of Government Engineering College, Tirunelveli also helped us in designing a hydrolic lift for wheel chair users sponsored by M/s. Chennai Petro Chemicals, Ltd., Chennai.

The maintenance of these facilities of this Bus Station has now been entrusted with Amar Seva Sangam and we do this as free service. Everyday 12-15 Persons with Disabilities report to our Help Line and take the services. It has also been well praised by the Public and Media. We are looking for sponsors who would meet our Annual expenditure for the maintenance of this important facility.

The new area of activities that the Sangam has undertaken is in the area of Mental Illness. Persons affected by Mental Illness are often the most misunderstood and neglected segment of our Society. Taking the affected persons to the nearest Doctor / Psychiatrist and helping with properly selected medicines with prescribed dosages helps the affected persons to improve quickly. The Persons with Disabilities Act has included Mental Illness as one of the disabilities and it is now possible for these persons also to avail the schemes introduced by the Government for disabled persons. Amar Seva Sangam has taken up this area of disability also during the year as many persons with Mental Illness were identified in the course of our field surveys. In this connection we are happy to get the support of Vidya Sagar, Chennai, Dr. Vijaya Rengan, Tuticorin and Dr. Rameswari, Govt. Hospital, Tenkasi.

Another major initiative in bringing Community Participation is the experimentation with the Respite Center concept. So far, four Respite Centers have been established. The idea is to bring the parents of severely disabled and Mentally Challenged Children together and organize them to form an association to take care of their own children and their requirements. The ultimate objective is to make the Respite Centers as fulltime care unit.

DHAN Foundation sponsored the Secretary of the Sangam through the aegis of FORD Foundation for undergoing training in Management Appreciation Programme for Voluntary Agencies (VOLAG MAP) conducted by Indian Rural Management, Anand (IRMA). The training was for a period of one month from 25th November 2002 to 22nd December 2002. Assisted by his wife the Secretary found the training very useful.

Secretary had the privilege of meeting Dr.V.Kurien, the Father of the Milk Revolution in India and also the Founder Chairperson of IRMA for the first time in the participants get-together. This living octogenarian doyen, still bubbles with enthusiasm and spirit and administers IRMA as Founder Chairperson. He is a person who believes that there is a need for more Kurians in this country. "Revolutions cannot take place in sequence", he declared "but should happen simultaneously in different directions. The society (India) needs faster progress." Amar Seva Sangam got a donation of Rs. one Lakh from him, which the Sangam considers as very invaluable.

Now coming to the activities of the Sangam

Amar Seva Sangam's activities are broadly classified as:

- q **Institution Based Rehabilitation (IBR)**
- q **Village Based Rehabilitation (VBR)**

Now we proceed to provide a brief account of each of our constituent sections.

Institution Based Rehabilitation (IBR)

1. Rehabilitation services

1.1. Home / Day Care

It offers residential care to the disabled children.

Six years old parentless polio affected, crawling boy was admitted in home by his grandma. Residential care, therapy and education have made him join degree course in Drawing and Arts, supported by the Sangam. Now he is mobile and independent, use a battery operated Try-Cycle.

Sl. No.	Stages	No. of Children 2002 - 2003
1	Residential Care Students at the beginning	47
1.2	? Children Promoted to Village Based Rehabilitation	5
1.3	? New Children Inducted under Residential Care	11
1.4	? Discharged	2
2	Day – Care Students at the beginning	1
2.1	? Promoted to Village Based Rehabilitation	--
2.2	? Transferred to Residential Care	--
2.3	? New Admission	1
Total	Under Residential Care at the end of the year:	51
	Under Day Care at the end of the year:	2

1.2. School for Special Children

Our census showed that the incidence of CP¹ & MR² has been on the increase and unless the problem is addressed on a war footing, our Nation may get the dubious distinction of having the maximum number of CP & MR cases. The problem is to be attended at the initial stage itself. Knowing the magnitude of the problem, Amar Seva Sangam has been reaching out the hitherto unreachable at their doorsteps. Towards this end, the Sangam has established a sub-center at Elathur for CP & MR children and is on the process of establishing Respite Centers.

¹ Cerebral Palsy

² Mental Retardation

SI No	Particulars	Year 2002 - 2003		
		Boys	Girls	Total
1.	Children at Amar Seva Sangam centre	16	9	25
2.	Elathur Sub-center	2	4	6

1.3. Caliper workshop

This year's accomplishment of this section is:

SI. No	Appliances	Consultation Offered	Appliances Delivered	Appliances Repaired
		'02-'03	'02-'03	'02-'03
1.	Prosthesis	1	1	4
2.	Long Caliper	23	20	183
3.	Long caliper with Knee Joint	2	2	100
4.	Extended Caliper	3	2	69
5.	Extended Caliper with Knee Joint	4	2	80
6.	Seat Caliper	6	5	10
7.	Seat caliper with Knee Joint	4	2	17
8.	Knee Cage	9	7	9
9.	Sandals	83	75	263
10.	Walking Aids	16	13	177
11.	Short Caliper & Splints	18	12	14
12.	Others	44	39	80
Total		213	180	1006

1.4. Medical Testing Unit:

The Medical Testing equipments available are made use of not only by the inmates and staff, but also by out patients. The trained staff with the help of an experienced honorary Doctor takes care of the needs of the following categories of the disabled.

Details	Year 2002 - 2003
CP / MR	25
Polio	43
Hemiplegia and Paraplegia	11
Others	87
Total	166
Treatment Given	91

Particulars	New OPs - 2002-2003	No. of patients treated (including old & new patients) 2002-2003
Out patient service	166	532
Home and Spastic	8	54
Total	174	586

1.5. Hostel for Disabled Trainees:

Kalaivani 22 year girl came from Chennai to Sangam in a wheelchair, dejected and worried. She became mobile through physiotherapy and appliances. She learnt computer, type writing; joined IGNOU completed CIC and joined B.C.A. She left Sangam as a most promising and cheerful person.

Under VBR, Amar Seva Sangam helps the disabled form Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and such Groups are encouraged to identify eligible candidates for under going training under our IBR. Such members are given Vocational Training depending upon their interest. During the period of training, which normally lasts for six months, the students are given free lodging, boarding, and physiotherapy that will help them increase their mobility. Thus under one umbrella, all the facilities are afforded to the Disabled Youth Trainees (DYTs). Since the population to be covered in the four blocks adopted by the Sangam is more than seven thousand there is a need to restrict training period to six months and in exceptional cases to a maximum period of one year.

Particulars	Beneficiaries 2002 - 2003	Strength as on 31st March 03
DYTs stage – 1	9	6
DYTs stage – 2	36	29
Guardianship	5	4
Temporary care	3	1
Staff	7	7
Total	60	47

Legend: PAC – Post Acute Care; DYTs – Disabled Youth Trainees

1.6. RHC Section**Support Services Offered:**

S.NO.	PARTUCULARS	2002-2003	Cumulative Total
1	No. of patients who attended the polio and other camps	-	636
2	No. of Surgeries done	14	71
3	No of persons who received medicines and tablets.	-	355
4	No. of CP/MR children who received training at Chennai Spastic Society Of Tamil Nadu.	-	10
5	No. of persons treated at G. H. Tirunelveli.	-	38
6	No. of Tuition Students.	-	241
7	No. of students who received Notebooks.	175	1364
8	No. of students who received School Scholarships.	121	1446
9	No. of students who received School Uniforms.	49	261
10	No. of students who received School fees.	49	159
11	No. of Job placements given.	-	41
12	No. of cataract surgeries done.	-	193
13	No. of persons for whom Bank loan was obtained.	7	42
14	No. of persons who received Identity cards.	72	1629
15	No. of persons who received Bus passes.	28	325
16	No. of persons who received Hearing aids.	1	17
17	No. of spectacles provided.	1	83
18	No. of persons who received Tricycles & Wheel chairs.	28	212
19	No. of persons who received Artificial limbs.	1	23
20	No. of persons who received Maintenance Grant.	18	152
21	No. of persons who received Railway Concession Certificates.	29	446
22	No. of Village Councils Formed	-	10
23	No. of disabled who received Sewing Machine	-	1
24	No. of Tuition Centers opened	-	10
25	No. of Training Programmes Conducted for the Village Council Leadership	-	6
26	No. of persons participated in State, District level sports	4	47
27	CP / MR Camp conducted	5	5
28	Marriage Grant.	3	4
29	No.of the clubfoot persons who got the bicycle		4

2. Vocational Training services

2.1. Spirulina Section

The production during the year registered a sharp decline. The decline was due to absorption of the high opening stock.

Particulars	Quantity in Kgs. 2002 – 2003
Opening Stock of Spirulina	485.57
Spirulina Produced	161.52
Spirulina sold	498.00
Closing Stock of Spirulina	149.09

2.2. Tailoring / Needle Work / Plastic Wire Knitting / Frp Moulding / Toys & Doll Making Section

This section has performed reasonably well.

Nature of Trades	No of Trainees Trained 2002 - 2003		
	Normal	Disabled	Total
Tailoring	30	27	57
Needle Work	-	27	27
Wire Knitting	-	27	27
Plastic Moulding	-	-	-
Total	30	81	111

2.3. Notebook making section

Here again, the number of Notebooks produced during the year was less than 40% of what was produced during 2001-2002. However number of books bound showed a very substantial increase over the preceding year. The volatile fluctuation in Notebook making was due to non-receipt of order from Government sources during the year under report. Efforts are being taken but with little success to get the orders from the Government.

Details	2002-2003
No. of Note Books of different sizes and volumes produced	32721
No. of Books bound during the year	4115
No. of Students trained	3

2.4. Two-wheeler section

Manned by a physically challenged person who has multiple skills in areas such as Notebook making, Binding and Two-wheeler mechanism

∅ No. of Cycles repaired	-	51
∅ No. of Wheel Chairs repaired	-	73
∅ No. of Tri-Cycles repaired	-	116
∅ No. of Two Wheelers repaired	-	01

2.5. Typing section

The year under report was significant for this section, for during this year the section got Government Recognition and the first batch of students brought laurels to the Institution as the statistics furnished below indicate: Our experience is that persons who acquire a reasonable proficiency in typewriting are easily able to adapt to computer keyboard and therefore we encourage our disabled youth to undergo training in typewriting.

Particulars	Disabled	Normal	Total
No. of examinees who appeared for Government examination from ASSA	11	4	15
No. of students who got distinction	8	2	10
No. of students who got first class	2	1	03
No. of students who secured second class	1	1	02

Thus all the students forming the first batch sent under the name and style of Amar Seva Sangam Vocational Training Center brought Colour and credit to the Institution.

Course	No. of Student Benefited 02-03			No. of Student Completed			No. of Student studies on 31-3-03		
	N	D	Total	N	D	Total	N	D	G/ Total
English Lower	34	39	73	29	25	54	5	14	19
English Higher	8	4	12	6	2	8	2	2	4
Tamil Lower	7	10	17	5	6	11	2	4	6
Tamil Higher	3	2	5	2	1	3	1	1	2
Total	52	55	107	42	34	76	10	21	31

2.6. Sri Sathya Sai Centre for Computer Training

- I. The following table shows the number of Courses commenced and completed during the period.

Name of the Course	No. of Courses started during the Year	No. of Courses completed during the Year
D.E.O	3	4
D.T.P	1	2
M.S. Office	1	1
Summer Course	0	1

- II. The following table shows the various courses completed and studying by the students during the period and their strength.

Name of the Course	Completed Students strength					Strength of Students Studying				
	Disabled		Staff Concession	Normal	Total	Disabled		Staff Concession	Normal	Total
	Free	Concession				Free	Concession			
D.E.O	21	0	2	11	34	2	0	0	3	5
D.T.P	0	4	1	4	9	0	9	0	3	12
M.S. Office	0	5	1	4	10	0	3	0	0	3
Summer Course	0	0	0	6	6	-	-	-	-	-
Total					59	20				

Legend: - DEO - Data Entry Operator, DTP - Desk Top Publishing, MSO- Microsoft Office

Special Events:

1. Mr. Louis, Representative of Japanese Consulate visited our computer centre on 19-06-2002.
2. Two faculty members from Tamilnadu Polytechnic visited the centre on 17-8-2002 for evaluation of Final Examination papers.
3. 13th Steering Committee meeting was held on 19-9-2003 at Amar Seva Sangam.
4. Our staff T.Arasu attended the Management Development Workshop at Tamilnadu Polytechnic, Madurai, from 20th November to 23rd November 2003.

With the opening of computer centres in every nook and corner, the strength in our center has been showing a declining trend over the past couple of years. However, the fall in the strength has been more than made up by increased enrollment for IGNOU programmes, which enables Amar Seva Sangam to put to optimum, use of the computer lab.

3. Educational services

3.1. Middle School

A) Middle School	2002 - 2003		
	Boys	Girls	Total
Strength at the beginning	214	138	352
Admission	39	38	77
Withdrawals	23	7	30
Middle School strength at the end	230	169	339
B) Nursery School Strength	143	137	280

Strength of the disabled	2002 - 2003		
	Boys	Girls	Total
Middle School	31	15	46
Nursery School	NIL	Nil	Nil
Total	31	15	46

The successful students from our middle school gets have a choice of either continuing here upto 8th STD or opting for any other Govt or private school. Since the middle school run by the Sangam is a Govt. recognized one the successful students can pursue there further studies without any difficulties. Most of the withdrawals are 8th STD completed students.

3.2. Sivasankari Public Library

Named after the famous writer and social writer Smt. Sivasankari, the Library is popular amongst the locals

No. of books in the library - 1032

No of membership enrolled - 118

3.3. IGNOU

The first batch of students enrolled for MCA / BCA will complete their programmes by end December 2003.

Particulars	Normal		Physically Challenged		Total
	Gents	Ladies	Gents	Ladies	
MCA 1 st Year	5	7	-	-	12
MCA 2 nd Year	5	9	-	-	14
MCA 3 rd Year	-	12	-	-	12
BCA 1 st Year	5	4	-	1	10
BCA 2 nd Year	11	5	1	3	20
BCA 3 rd Year	7	7	1	-	15

B.Com 1 st Year	3	1	1	-	5
PGDRD	-	1	-	-	1
DNHE	-	1	-	-	1
CNCC 2002 – 2003	2	-	-	-	2
CIC 2002 – 2003	7	4	-	1	12
CFN January 2003	-	2	-	-	2
Total	45	53	03	05	106

Village Based Rehabilitation Initiative (VBRI)

The aims are

1. To involve the local communities in the decision making process.
2. To make the Persons with Disabilities independent and assertive.
3. To extend the current physical rehabilitation programmes to social and economic integration.
4. To establish democratic People Level Institutions for the proper utilization of the infrastructure created in the Sangam and make it a " *Valley for the Disabled*".

4. Empowerment

Nageswaran aged four, a CP child with high spasm from kadayanallur center who could neither sit, speak nor identify colour and shape, on giving therapy attends day care center and identifies people.

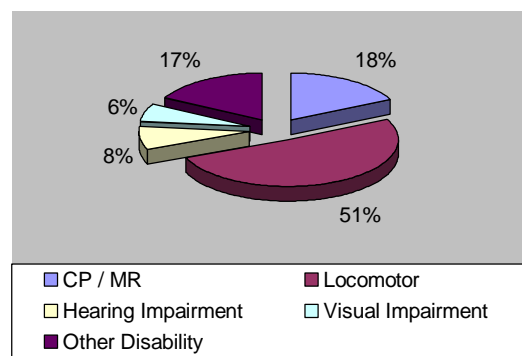
Amar Seva Sangam's mission is to empower the disabled citizens by establishing a "Valley for the Disabled" as a Rehabilitation and Development Center for the region and to develop models for self-help initiatives by integrating the disabled individuals with the society for improved living conditions in the village.

S.No	FIELD ACTIVITIES	2002-2003	Cumulative Total
1.	Total No. of SHG Formed	16	59
2.	Total No. of Members in SHGs	202	638
3.	No. of SHGs in Savings & Credit	35	45
4.	No. of Sangah Materials Developed	25	51
5.	No. of Awareness Materials Developed	29	42
6.	No. of Awareness Programmes Conducted	107	261
7.	DPP Programme Conducted	8	17
8.	Leadership Training - First Level	4	4
9.	Leadership Training - Second Level	4	4
10.	Leadership Training - Advanced Level	6	6
11.	Parents Training - First Level	4	4
12.	Parents Training - Second Level	4	4

13.	Parents Training -Advanced Level	10	10
14.	Face sheet prepared	277	1906
15.	OP Card	222	1300
16.	Community Analysis	12	82
17.	No. of Case Studies	129	435
18.	Appliances Identified	30	223
19.	Appliances Issued	32	91
20.	DDRO Schemes Beneficiaries Identified	284	1290
21.	DDRO Schemes Benefits Achieved	192	664
22.	Persons under care by CRW-I	135	365
23.	Persons under care by CRW-II	225	368
24.	Individual Counseled	13,857	25739
25.	Families Counseled	6137	10177
26.	No. of Students Integrated in the Inclusive Education in Primary Schools (Normal School)	8	25
27.	No. of Students provided with Basic Education in other forms (Special School HI)	6	6
28.	Trainers in Self Help Skills (ADLs) Development (Discharge of PWD's from CRW I, CRW II Therapy care)	77	95
29.	PWD Discharged for non co-operation	20	20
30.	Persons groomed in the Development of productive skills	5	6
31.	Income Generation Support Recipients	9	12
32.	No. of BPT Visit	122	293
33.	No. of OT Visit	94	160
34.	No. of BPT Camps	27	47
35.	No. of OT Camps	17	12
36.	No. of Speech Therapy Camp	6	6
37.	No. of Screening camp for new born camp	6	12
38.	No of New born Screened	30	90
39.	No. of Vidyasagar Visits	15	21
40.	No. of Advisory Committee Meetings	4	4
41.	No. of Dr. John Mathew's Visits	2	3
42.	NABARD Training	5	5
43.	Placement created	8	9
44.	Special Materials produced	21	57
45.	Resolving Issue of the SHGs	8	9
46.	No. Of Children introduced for early stimulation activities	10	22

Census Data of:

Sl. No.	Disabilities	2002 - 2003	
		Male	Female
1.	CP / MR	29	20
2.	Locomotor	108	33
3.	Hearing Impairment	10	12
4.	Visual Impairment	11	6
5.	Other Disability	30	18
Total		188	89



Muthulakshmi a polio girl from Parvathipuram village on completing 12th idling at home, joined our SHG, underwent entrepreneur training and now is profitably engaged in self-employment of producing and selling toiletry items.

Amar Seva Sangam conducted a series of one-day workshops for Self-Help group members of the 50 SHGs. The aim of the programme was to motivate group action for generating self-employment. Totally 10 workshops were conducted and the response was very encouraging. The programme was funded by NABARD and the credit goes to Shri R.Sridharan, AGM-. NABARD³ Tirunelveli for his active involvement in conducting the programme. Totally 431 PDs were trained at the cost of Rs.30, 000/-. Several important persons like District Disability Rehabilitation Officer Mr.N.Selvaraju, Tirunelveli, Project Officer, DRDA⁴ Tirunelveli, Mr.Abdul Razik, Area Manager, Pandiyan Grama Bank, Mr.Puzhukandi, Local Bank Managers from IOB, Managers of Canara Bank, Pandiyan Grama Bank, Union Bank and Primary Agricultural Cooperative Banks, local BDOs⁵, Coordinator of Women's Self-Help Groups of this area and representatives from RVS Farm participated in this workshop as guest faculties.

The workshop eventuated in the formation of "Vetrikkarantal⁶" a movement for disabled with the motto "Work Hard, Get Rights and Raise". This exercise also resulted in opening of Bank Accounts and identifying several trades for possible business ventures. Ponpozhi group has already started manufacturing bio-fertilizer manure out of coconut fiber waste, which is available in abundance in the area. The key feature is the sharing of resources of members and also the involvement of local Panchayat⁷

5. Training Programmes

In India Learning Disability (LD) is not considered to be a disability even though in other countries like US, LD is also considered to be a disability. Dyslexia, Attention Deficiency Disorder (ADD) and similar other LDs have become important. Unlike Autism the children

³ National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development

⁴ District Rural Development Agency

⁵ Block Development Officer

⁶ Meaning Winning Hands

⁷ The Panchayat has passed a resolution allotting a porambokku land for the use

with LD problems are more temporary in nature and they become normal as they grow. Therefore while Autism is a disability in India, LD is not. But adequate preparation of the teachers in the schools is very important to handle children with LD so that it doesn't lead to permanent disabilities like MI or disable the child from competing with others in the education system. Sadana Trust conducted a training programme for our school-teachers and the village rehabilitation workers for two days in May this year.

The State Government has taken special interest and obtained the support of the World Bank in revamping the training programmes for ICDS⁸ workers. This is a very important programme whereby awareness and education is given to the basic grassroots' level workers in prevention and early identification of disabilities. The rate of childhood disabilities in the non-polio segment greatly depends on prevention for which the focus has to be on educating the public, particularly on matters like marriage with relation and pre-natal / post natal care. We are happy to say that Amar Seva Sangam is involved in the consultation process and in preparing a note for this State Level Programme.

Amar Seva Sangam has now been made a Nodal Agency for the Districts of Tirunelveli, Ramanathapuram, Sivaganga and Dindigul for carrying out the above Programme. Amar Seva Sangam will be training about 180 ICDS workers over a period of six months from February 2003. Grant to the tune of Rs.3.8 lakhs has also been worked out and the G.O. in this regard is expected at any time now from the Tamilnadu Government.

6. Advocacy

The needs of PDs have to be represented to both the Government and Private sectors. Some of the main issues pending before the PDs are the non-implementation of PD Act, difficulties faced in transportation, inadequate facilities for Barrier Free Environment in School and Educational Institutions, and lack of non discriminatory environment in Employment and non availability of care and attention services for Mentally Challenged and severely and multiply disabled persons.

After several years of advocacy and repeated representations the Government of India has come out with Barrier-Free-Environment and started implementing them through Central PWD⁹. The Government has also come out with several affirmative actions in this regard. India has become a signatory of Beijing Declaration for Asia Pacific Nations on disability and there has been time bound programmes for bringing equality in opportunities and protection of rights of disabled persons. We had the opportunity of attending a training programme on 'access for all' concept conducted by Government of India where the disabled persons themselves were the resource persons and conducted the classes. The programme was held at NIMH Secundrabad. Amar Seva Sangam made representation on the difficulties faced in conducting the training programme for VHNs¹⁰ and Integrated Child Development Workers, at the initiative of the Spastic Society of Tamilnadu. We also represented the need for registration of all NGOs¹¹ and the implementation of the PD Act.

We attended a meeting organized by Micro-credit Summit Campaign, which is an International Body with a mission to bring more than 100 million families of the poorest among the poor within the fold of Micro-credit systems. Since Amar Seva Sangam is already

⁸ Integrated Child Development Scheme

⁹ Public Work Department

¹⁰ Village Health Nurses

¹¹ Non-Government Organization

doing work with SHGs of PDs the concept of Micro-credit has already been introduced and implemented among these members. The definition of who is poor has been a widely debated issue and it is the lack of access, which is more of a generic cause for a disadvantaged society that has been accepted as being poor than the narrow definition based on economic criteria. Therefore all the groups of PDs are considered to be poor in terms of access to social participation, equal opportunities in education, medicine, rehabilitation, employment and so on. Amar Seva Sangam has also become a member of this International Forum.

One of the important developments during the year was the active interest shown by the Central Govt. in the implementation of National Trust Act for the Mentally Retarded persons and for Multiple Disabled persons. Recognized training for Caregivers, formation of Parent's Association and District level committee have already being started in several parts of the country. Amar Seva Sangam on its part is in the process of forming Parent's Association. This has opened the doors for many of the parents of such disabled children / adults who need support.

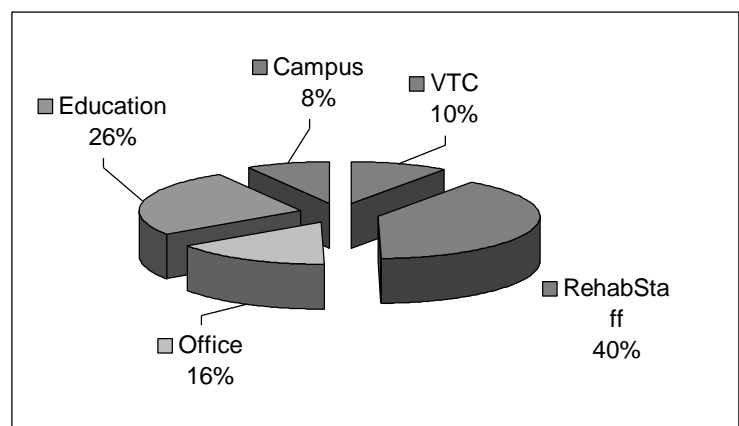
The Govt. of Tamilnadu has formed a Special Directorate for the implementation of SSA¹² programme and Amar Seva Sangam is one of the Core Committee Members of the State Level Policy making body. Now under this programme inclusive education and admission of children with disabilities in all schools is being implemented in the State of Tamilnadu through various NGOs of the State. Special Educators in each of the education Blocks are appointed and Special Training programmes are conducted to the Block level resource persons and the teachers in all the schools. In addition, village committees are being formed which will supervise the implementation at the grass-root level. Amar Seva Sangam in addition to being a core committee member has taken the responsibilities for the seven Blocks in Tirunelveli District for the implementation of the project.

The Secretary was able to convert his personal wheelchairs into a battery operated one. For this purpose lot of efforts was taken by Mr.Rajabathar of Trichy to accomplish this task. This demonstrates the capabilities of the Indian Engineers, which often go unnoticed.

7. Human Resource Development

The staff annual day was celebrated on 8th June 2002. The families of all staff members were invited for the lunch. Sports and various competitions were organized for the staff members and their families. The families of the staff members also staged various entertainment programmes.

The Rehabilitation staff constitute the majority in our work force and naturally so, given the focus of our activities. Supportive staff such as faculty, teachers and technical support personnel also does play a very important role in the process of



¹² Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan – 100% school enrolment of all children within a short time frame is the aim of the programme.

rehabilitation. Besides fund raising campaigners and administrative staff also play a vital role in an organization like ours.

Staff Pattern at Amar Seva Sangam

VTC	14	10%
Rehab Staff	58	40%
Office	23	16%
Education	38	26%
Campus	12	8%
Total	145	

8. Exchange programmes

The Secretary had the privilege of attending seminars and share the experience of Amar Seva Sangam at various platforms during the year. This gave us an opportunity to learn from others' experience and also share our experience with others. Whenever we go on tour, we make use of the trip by attending meetings and seminars. On some occasions when we are specifically called for a meeting, we make use of the trip for fund raising as well.

We all know Gandhigram, an organization based on Gandhian principles is playing an important role in the rural development of villages surrounding Dindigal area. They are the pioneers of rural management profession through its educational institutions, which has now become a separate University by itself. They have requested Amar Seva Sangam to be the guide for their Sivasailam unit near Alwarkurichi. Mr.K.Chidambaram and Secretary visited Gandhigram Ashram in August and later participated in the Advisory Committee meeting of the Sivasailam Unit.

The Secretary participated in the four days symposium organized by DHAN Foundation and chaired a session on 8th March 2003. The symposium helped in highlighting the various issues in the disability sector in the savings & credits.

The Secretary of the Sangam and Mr.V.O.C.S.Chidambaram visited the villages around Madhuranthagam near Chennai where Agro Foundation has been carrying on adult and children's literacy programme in the rural areas. They are utilizing the computer technology for educating the public and also for teaching them the basic literacy. Even school going children were able to make use of this visual learning process, which helps kids to develop and understand the language in a better way. Amar Seva Sangam was able to appreciate the whole exercise and the project undertaken by Agro Foundation, which was founded by Late Shri C.Subramaniam, our Former Patron-in-Chief. There is plenty of scope for Amar Seva Sangam to bring similar technology in the rural areas where Disabled Self-Help Groups are being established.

9. NGOs Networking

Networking helps in sharing of resources and creates a common platform for presenting the problems before the public. It creates a forum for wider level representations and helps in building common protocols and standardization.

ADD India has been with Amar Seva Sangam for its Village Based Rehabilitation Initiative since 2000. Their support in planning and execution of the programmes by way of conducting training, issuing campaigning materials and organizing leadership programmes has been very useful. Amar Seva Sangam expresses its gratitude to ADD India and looks forward for their continued support.

Many of our home children, persons in our Village Based Programme and DYT¹³ students got surgical corrections in **Hindu Mission Hospital, Chennai**. We also happened to visit the Hospital and had very useful interaction with Mr.D.K.Srinivasan, Secretary of the Institution. During the year 10 persons¹⁴ got free surgical corrections.

The partnership with **Vidyasagar**, Chennai has further strengthened this year with Vidyasagar extending their support not only for our VBR activities but also to our School for Special Children. We have this year extended our rehabilitation to the mentally ill persons also.

KYM, which is a renowned Yoga teaching Centre in Chennai, has come forward to extend their expertise and teach Yoga to our Special Children in the School, Home and the Disabled Youth Trainees. The Secretary of the Sangam met shri Desikachari during January 2003 and was very thankful for his gesture to come forward and help Amar Seva Sangam.

We would like to place on records our sincere gratitude to Hindu Mission Hospital and Vidyasagar for their support for our cause.

10. Fund raising programmes

HCI Canada has been supporting us for more than a decade. They are sponsoring 35 children in the home, 4 in the School for Special children, 11 children in the VBR rehabilitation programme and 2 Disabled Youth Trainees. They are also giving several Kamadhenu Sponsorships every year.

CBR Forum has sponsored a part of our Village Based Rehabilitation programme. We originally had planned to start the Village Based programme only in three pockets but we have also extended the activity to Kadayanallur. We have informed the CBR Forum about our expansion of activities and larger coverage. We have also been giving them the reports and feedbacks in the format given by them. We would also like to further request them for

¹³ Disable Youth Trainees

¹⁴ From April 2002 to March 2003

continuing their support for subsequent period of two more years since as of now their support is only up to 2003-04.

In this connection we are happy to note that **M/s.AMP Sanmar** has sponsored the Group Insurance Scheme for the Self-Help Group (SHGs) members of Amar Seva Sangam. The SHGs are exclusively for the persons with disabilities and the gesture is most welcome and perhaps a trendsetter for others to re-look their policies in insuring PDs.

This year **M/s SPIC** has contributed Rs.5 lakhs as their contribution for our corpus. It was a great gesture on their part and we all thank them for the same.

The **Woodlands Hotel of the Hong Kong** has conducted a fund raising programme and has contributed Rs.4.32 lakhs to the Sangam. Mr.S.M.Uzair, Managing Director of the Hotel was the key person for mobilizing this fund by organizing a show called "Eat As Much As You Can - Pay As Much As You Wish".

Secretary met Mr.Krishnamurthy of Simson Group of companies in April 2002 and thanked for the support extended by them and also explained the various activities of the Sangam. He was also invited to visit our organization.

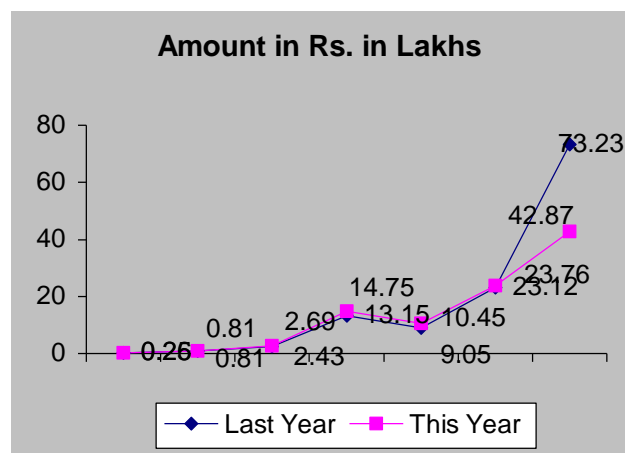
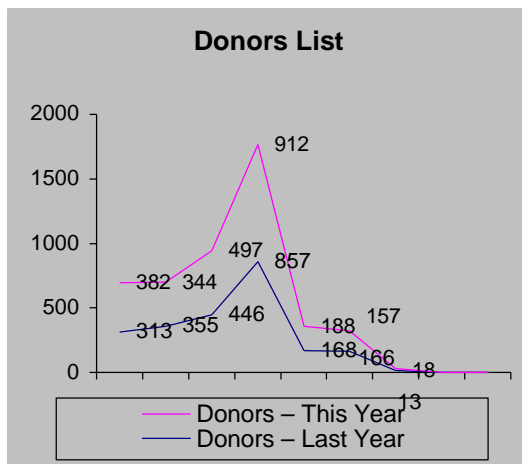
10.1. The area-wise distribution of donation is as follows

Region	Total No. of Donors – Last Year	Amount in Rs. in Lakhs (Last year)	Total No. of Donors – This Year	Amount in Rs. in Lakhs (This year)
FOREIGN	74	9.27	63	24.75
OTHER STATES	376	47.24	455	15.51
GOVT. GRANTS	-	7.62	1	5.21
TAMIL NADU	1405	51.80	1600	39.10
LOCAL	463	6.11	379	11.01
	2,318	122.04	2,498	95.58

10.2. The donor support base of Amar Seva Sangam is as follows:

Donation Range	No. of Donors – Last Year	Amount in Rs. in Lakhs – Last Year	No. of Donors – This Year	Amount in Rs. in Lakhs – This Year
RS. 1-100	313	0.25	382	0.26
RS. 101-499	355	0.81	344	0.81
RS. 500-999	446	2.43	497	2.69
RS. 1000-4999	857	13.15	912	14.75
RS. 5000-9999	168	9.05	188	10.45
RS. 10000-99999	166	23.12	157	23.76
RS.100000 & ABOVE	13	73.23 ¹⁵	18	42.87
	2318	122.04	2498	95.58

The real support base of the Sangam is the support within the State and in the below Rs. 5000/- group. About 85% of the donors are below Rs. 5000/- group and contribute nearly 18% of our donation on an average in value terms.



11. Finances

The total assets of the Sangam have gone up to **Rs. 497 Lakhs from Rs. 447 Lakhs**. The income and expenditure for the year 2002-2003 are as follows: -

	Last Year Rs. in Lakhs	This Year Rs. in Lakhs
Donation (Non-Corpus)	34.13	43.20
Central Govt. Grants from Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment	7.62	5.22
Other Receipts	36.16	37.83
Total Income	77.91	86.25
Total expenditure	75.70	83.62
Cash surplus/Deficit	2.21	2.63

12. General

We have made representations to the Authorities of Commercial Taxes for waiving sales tax on the Spirulina produced and sold by the Sangam. We met Mr. Arun Ramanathan, IAS who was the then Chief Commissioner of Commercial Taxes at Chennai. The papers are now lying in the Secretariat and need follow-up.

M/s. Raju & Co., Chartered Accountants, Trichy was appointed this year to do the Internal Audit for the second half of the Accounting Year 2002-2003. They were also requested to do the fixed assets schedule, which has been not well organized all these years.

All India Radio continued their support to the organization by broadcasting the interviews of the Secretary and the President and also the programmes of the children. The Sangam expresses its gratitude for the media support extended by them.

A separate Advisory Committee also supports the Village Based Rehabilitation. This Committee met on August last year. The deliberations were also useful for evaluating the work performed by the staff and also the effectiveness of the programme. It also helped to educate some key staff in other departments of the Sangam.

IOB¹⁶ had organized a get-together function with the Chairman, Mr.S.C.Gupta at Tirunelveli where we represented Amar Seva Sangam with our PR¹⁷ staff. While thanking the Bank for sponsoring the building, we also referred to the inauguration of the Nursery School building by the Managing Director of IOB and also invited the Chairman to visit the Sangam.

Mr. Nataraja Sundaram of Mumbai visited our Sangam on 27th January 2003 a higher official in BSNL and also a Honorary Lecturer in Nehru Memorial Planetarium. He took special interest on our children and brought the Telescope all the way from Mumbai to demonstrate it to our school, home hostel students. This gave them an opportunity to view and enjoy the fantasies of the sky through the Telescope. We are immensely grateful to him for all the efforts taken by him.

Local Sai Samithis are continuing their services by conducting Bajans every month. Such activities promote spiritual development among the children, which is a very important component in the personality development and ultimately in their empowerment.

Conclusion

We take this opportunity to thank our Patron-in-Chief and our Patrons who are standing as pillars of support for our organization. We also thank our beloved Collector of the District, who is the Chairman of our Advisory Board for his encouragement, which is a major source of our strength. We also thank the Advisory Board members for their valuable advice and wholehearted support. The day-to-day support extended by the General Body members and the Executive Committee members are exemplary and selfless. The honorary services of our Statutory Auditors, consultants, local Doctors and volunteers deserve our special thanks and gratitude. The donors' who have contributed their might in no small measures and which is sustaining this organization merits our special appreciation and thanks. It is a feeling of joy and satisfaction that one gets on seeing such a positive and responsible support from people for a right cause and we all should be proud of being in such a public spirited society. Last but not the least is the staff of this organization who are the backbone of our activities and they work without any day or time constraints. Let us pray for all the good souls who are with us. Thanking you.

Yours in Lord's Seva

S.Sankara Raman
Secretary

S.Ramakrishnan
President

Date: 18.8.2003
Place: Ayikudy.