



# Foundation for World Education

April 2012

NEWSLETTER

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## FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY

*For more than 20 years the Foundation for World Education has been supporting environmentally sustainable projects in Auroville and around the world*

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Beginning with its yearly grants in the 1990's to green workers to construct earthen bunds and tree nurseries on Auroville's eroded plateau, the FWE has contributed to a variety of projects that focused on various, sometimes evolving activities that promote sustainability. The primary need of those early days was to keep rainwater from washing out to sea through the large canyons that had already rendered the plateau a virtual desert fit for growing only peanuts. Another of those yearly grants was for an exhaustive study of Auroville's aquifers and its water table which has helped the community frame its future needs.

The Brundtland Commission of the United Nations defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." This requires, according to the 2005 World Summit, the reconciliation of environmental, social and economic demands, the "three pillars" of sustainability. Given this description, a large proportion of the FWE's grants to Auroville can be included in sustainable development, whether to complete the community solar kitchen or pay for a new school bus that is also used for the community. This article focuses on recent grants in the area of environmental sustainability, particularly in Auroville to which the FWE generally allocates approximately \$25,000 yearly through the community's Project Coordination Group.

From 2004-2006 the FWE gave a series of grants to the Auroville Forest Group to preserve and plant rare, threatened and endangered species of the local biosphere. This project is the result of a maturing understanding of sustainable land development. In the beginning years of Auroville, fast growing, non-indigenous trees were planted to quickly create stability in the soil and prevent rain runoff. One of these, an exotic tree from Australia known in Auroville as the "work" tree, soon sprouted everywhere. While the work trees were initially



helpful, over time it was discovered that they do not tolerate well the long term weather patterns of the Auroville region. Now many of these work trees are being cut down because they are not healthy or have died prematurely. The urgent current effort, therefore, is to propagate and plant native trees that are better suited to the local climate. Many of these native trees have become rare and usually can be found only in reserve forests and temple groves.

The report from the Forest Grant notes that "... the Forest Group raised and planted 37,435 Tropical Dry Evergreen Forest (TDEF) seedlings within Auroville, during the planting season.

These seedlings were of 181 varied species and were planted in 29 different locations. Out of these some 10,579 seedlings were on the rare, endangered and threatened species list (the RET list) which equates to 28%. These seedlings consisted of 26 different species, which means this year we planted 26 out of the 42 RET species, which equates to 63%. The funds

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received from the Foundation for World Education grant covered the costs of raising and planting 13,600 seedlings."

Another environmental group to receive funds from the FWE has been No More Pesticides which has been

trying to persuade local people to stop spraying DDT on their cashew trees, a practice that sends the chemical through the air and causes discomfort and illness. No More Pesticides has been experimenting with oil from the neem tree to keep cashew trees safe from infestation, as well as a variety of educational activities that have promoted organic agriculture.

*Funding the evolution of consciousness around the globe...*

In the area of sustainability education the FWE has given recent grants to three Auroville projects. The first is long term support for the Nature Camps which take Auroville and outreach students on a two week stay during the hot season in the Kodaikanal hills. There they can go trekking, explore the forests, and also do arts and crafts. Their report concludes with this: *"The opportunity to go to camp is a wonderful experience for the children of Auroville. They remember the events for the rest of their lives – it leaves a very profound impression, and I would like to thank the Foundation for World Education for the financial support they have given the nature camp over the years. It is a precious time, and it creates life-long bonds between people and a better understanding for the environment we live in."*

The second project is the Solid Waste Management Curriculum and Educational Materials for Schools, *"To research, design, develop and test comprehensive educational materials and a curriculum on solid waste for schools in Auroville. The long term goal is to increase awareness, motivate positive behavioral change and help students make better informed decisions about the products they buy and waste they generate."* This project is all the more relevant since the Pondicherry landfill now abuts the community of Forecomers on the south side of Auroville.



The third project that pertains to environmental education for sustainability is the Botanical Gardens Environmental Video Production grant. As the grant proposal stated, *"The Botanical Gardens were started in August 2000, and over the past ten years*

*developed in many ways. One of the major focuses of the work is environmental education which has been ongoing for the past four years. Every year over 100 school groups visit the gardens on day trips from the local area. The majority of these groups are from local government schools and the trip can be a real highlight. Unfortunately we do not have facilities to bring all of the children from each school, so in addition to the trips staff members make, outreach visits are made to the schools to give classes addressing some of the issues that are covered during the school trips. It is both for the school visits to the gardens and for the outreach visits that we wish to use the tool of video to get across our message."* In a previous grant the FWE gave funds for providing information on the flora and fauna in the garden using artistic, educational stone markers.

In addition to environmental sustainability, the FWE has supported Auroville experiments in community transportation and electric vehicles. In the 1990's a large grant was given to purchase an electric bus to serve Auroville schools and the community. More recently, grants have been given to develop an electric motorbike that is suitable for Auroville roads

as well as solar charging stations for the growing number of electric vehicles that can be seen traveling around the community.

At the forefront of this research is SaraCon, an Auroville research center whose *"aim is to find an environmentally friendly and energy efficient individual means of transport."* They have developed a variety of electric vehicles, including bicycles, motor bikes and even a prototype of an electric rickshaw. The solar charging stations are part of this research in sustainable transport.

In the area of Auroville farming, Buddha Garden has received grants from the FWE to develop a Centre for Sustainable Farming. The money was spent for computer equipment, irrigation research materials, and tools for the many volunteers who come to work there.

In the USA, the FWE has been supporting The Crestone Solar Corps Project in Colorado which was intended *"... to demonstrate one way a small town can become energy efficient quickly through grants and partnership with local students."* Working with a local school, the Project designed and constructed solar curtains to both take advantage of the high level of sunlight there and also insulate against the cold nights.



Through these various projects, the Foundation for World Education has tried to encourage the kind of experimentation, research and construction that results in sustainable development. We trust that the cyclone which recently ravaged Auroville will provide new information, insights, and motivation in the evolving understanding of sustainable living in the region. Over time powerful cyclones will certainly strike again. Improved techniques in construction and tree management could ameliorate damage. For example, after the cyclone, in a few areas well anchored solar panels kept buildings operating while other areas were without power for up to three weeks.

It is our hope that the efforts of Auroville and the Crestone Solar Corps will be in the forefront of efforts to change the level of consciousness towards a more sustainable way of life.

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“More recently, grants have been given to develop an electric motorbike that is suitable for Auroville roads as well as solar charging stations for the growing number of electric vehicles that can be seen traveling around the community.”

*Planting seeds of human unity...*

# IN THE WAKE OF CYCLONE THANE

## A FIERCE TROPICAL STORM RAVAGES PONDY AND AUROVILLE

On Friday, December 30th, 2011 a raging cyclone slammed into Pondicherry and Tamil Nadu with eighty-three mph winds, lashing rains, and a destructive five-foot tidal surge. Dubbed "Thane" (pronounced Tahnay)



the cyclone, its epicenter located next to Pondicherry and Auroville, battered the southeastern coast of India from Chennai to Karaikal and left in its wake a terrible trail of destruction. Although almost fifty lives were lost in the region, there was no loss of life at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram or Auroville. The damage to

trees and property in and around Auroville was devastating, however. Houses made of keet (woven coconut fronds) were torn from their foundations, and large numbers of solar panels and roofs made of corrugated materials were decimated. Many of the simpler buildings in Auroville, along with a great number of homes in the surrounding villages, were severely affected in this way. Houses, schools, offices, and industrial and public buildings were also damaged by heavy winds and falling trees. Thousands and thousands of trees, planted over a period of decades, have been uprooted or decapitated. In

vast areas of the green belt, more than seventy percent of the trees have fallen. Even the venerable Service Tree in the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and the Banyan tree near the Matrimandir suffered minor damage and lost branches.

Assessment of the cost for immediate emergency relief is estimated to be around US \$1 million. The estimated cost for long-term rehabilitation and restoration is much higher. The Auroville community asks its friends and well-wishers for financial help. The need is extremely urgent. Donations earmarked for Auroville Cyclone Relief can be made through AVI-USA, PO Box 1534 / Lodi, CA 95241 or can be sent by check or wire directly to Auroville.



### SUMMER 2012 AWARENESS THROUGH THE BODY EVENTS

Aloka Marti, assisted by Suryamayi (who grew up in Auroville), will lead the Awareness Through the Body workshops this year at Hastings House, a gorgeous space in Walpole, NH. For the first time in the US she will offer the Kindergarten and ATB 5 workshops.

ATB 1: June 28 & 29, 2012, Thursday and Friday

ATB Kindergarten: June 30th, 2012, Saturday

ATB 2: July 1-3, 2012, Sunday through Tuesday

ATB 3: July 5-7, 2012, Thursday through Saturday,

ATB 5: July 9-12, 2012, Monday through Thursday

*\*Note: ATB 1 must be taken before ATB 2, ATB 2 before ATB 3, and ATB 3 before ATB 5. ATB 1 is also a prerequisite for the Kindergarten workshop.*

All workshops will be held this summer in or near Walpole, NH. 30 min from both Keene, NH and Brattleboro, VT. For all questions, comments and details, please contact Margo MacLeod at [margowmacleod@gmail.com](mailto:margowmacleod@gmail.com).

For information and to register, visit [awarenessthroughthebody.com](http://awarenessthroughthebody.com).

### OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Foundation for World Education awards grants to incorporated nonprofit organizations around the world that support integral education, human unity, conscious evolution, and a transformed world as envisioned by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

The FWE provides a continuous stream of funding for current and future generations through responsible management of its endowment, receipt of donations and bequests, and discerning selection of grant recipients.

The FWE aspires to be instrumental in transmuting financial energy to its true purpose in the unfolding evolution and manifestation of a greater consciousness on earth.

*Long-term giving to transform the earth.*

# GUIDELINES FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Foundation for World Education invites grant applications from individuals, programs and groups who share the vision for a transformed world espoused by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. We emphasize granting initial "seed" money to innovative, future-oriented projects and rarely provide ongoing annual funding. While we consider larger grants, most are under \$3,000. **All proposals must be presented to FWE through the auspices of a nonprofit organization** and are subject to review by members of the Board before a decision is taken. Proposals must be received by the Board **four weeks in advance** of a scheduled meeting. Please email your proposal to the Secretary. If your organization is submitting a proposal for the first time, please include a copy of its nonprofit tax exemption status. See below for upcoming application due dates.\*

## PROPOSAL FORMAT

- **Summary/overview:** Name of your project/program and brief explanation of what you plan to do.
- **Need/rationale:** Justify the significance of your project /program in relation to your organization's mission and the work of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.
- **Program implementation and schedule:** Explain how you will implement this project. Include a time line and statement of the future viability of this project. Is it self-sustaining after initial seed money from the FWE, or will there be future requests to support the program?
- **Personnel:** Names and qualifications of groups and individuals directly responsible for project.
- **Project's contribution:** What is the duration and extent of influence your project will have for Sri Aurobindo and the Mother's vision of the Integral Yoga? How is your project related to other organizations or individuals currently engaged in the work of the Integral Yoga?
- **Current and future funding:** List sources of income and/or other funding sources for your project.
- **Budget:** Detail income and expenditure.
- **Final and progress reports:** Indicate the method proposed to evaluate the effectiveness of the project/program while in progress; written final report to be submitted within one year of completion of the grant or grant renewal. Indicate the name of person who will prepare the final report.

## \* DUE DATES FOR NEXT SCHEDULED MEETINGS:

- MAY 3, 2012
- SEPTEMBER 4, 2012
- JANUARY 7, 2013 (for main granting session)

## How you can participate ...

The Foundation for World Education allocates annual grants through disbursement from its endowment. Since grant requests keep growing, we are able to fund only a portion of the worthy projects we consider each year. We therefore seek to grow in our ability to give grants by increasing the endowment.

The FWE encourages donations, bequests, long term giving, and tax advantaged estate planning. We also welcome the establishment of designated funds for areas of special interest--see our website for further details. As we are a 501(c)3 non-profit foundation, contributions within the U.S. may be partially or fully deductible for income or estate taxes. Please consult with your own tax advisor to determine the specific tax benefits that may be available to you. (For additional information on wills and trusts go to [www.fwegiving.org](http://www.fwegiving.org).) We are happy to answer questions and work with contributors to build a plan for giving.

**Your gift to the FWE is a gift to future generations and to conscious evolution in diverse fields of human endeavor.**

## GRANT ALLOCATIONS 2011

### Grants \$40,355

Auroville (via the Projects Coordination Group) .....	\$19,905
- Auroville Archives.....	\$3000
- Solid Waste Curriculum.....	3000
- Saracon Solar Charging Stations.....	2477
- Auroville Radio.....	2378
- Management, Training & Development.....	2000
- AVI Ethiopia.....	2000
- Bhavana Memorial / Village Action.....	2000
- Botanical Garden.....	1800
- Auroville Film Festival.....	1250
Awareness Through the Body.....	5,000
Center for Integral Education.....	3,025
AUM Conference 2011 Scholarships .....	3,025
Auro Mira Service Society.....	2,780
Matri Karuna Vidyalaya, Delhi.....	2,000
Antioch-Auroville Teacher Exchange.....	2,000
Sri Aurobindo Learning Center Solar Curtains.....	1,114
Teacher Workshops in Auroville .....	1,000
Mickey's Fund Disbursements.....	506
- Matrimandir.....	\$368
- Matagiri.....	113
- Sri Aurobindo Center of Boston.....	125



FWE Board Members and Staff clockwise from top left: Jerry Schwartz, John Schlorholtz, Margo MacLeod, Gordon Korstange, Bhuvana Nandakumar, Heidi Watts, Paula Murphy, Jeanne Korstange and Dakshina Vanzetti

## Foundation for World Education

P. O. Box 297 • Saxtons River • VT • 05154 • U.S.A

E-mail: [secretary@FoundationForWorldEducation.org](mailto:secretary@FoundationForWorldEducation.org) • Website: [www.FoundationForWorldEducation.org](http://www.FoundationForWorldEducation.org)



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