

Dear Aman Kaur

Thank you for meeting me and allowing you to tell you about our program.

Amar Seva Sangam Ayikudy (ASSA) was founded in 1981 with the purpose of empowering people with disabilities and operates various programs including Rehabilitation, Education, Empowerment, Advocacy, Training, Employment and Social Inclusion programs. Our organization is headquartered in the rural area of Tenkasi District of Tamil Nadu and through partnerships we are reaching people in multiple states of India. Please see [www.amarseva.org](http://www.amarseva.org)

What makes Amar Seva Sangam unique is that it is largely run by people with disabilities. Our founder and President, Mr.Ramakrishnan (Padma Shree Award Winner 2020) has a spinal cord injury, the Co-Chairman, Mr.Sankara Raman has muscular dystrophy and our Chief Financial Officer, Mr.Rajeswaran has a spinal cord injury and all are wheelchair users. Many of our staff are people with disabilities and therefore they understand the population we are trying to serve. I am a physician and assistant professor at the University of Toronto and am based in Toronto, Canada. I am also the Director of Strategy of Amar Seva Sangam's Enabling Inclusion program. I am connected with ASSA for 20 years after seeing the impact the organization is having and due to a personal connection with people with disabilities including my uncle (Mr.Sankara Raman), brother-in-law and niece who all have disabilities.

There are major barriers to access of rehab, education and vocational training services for children and youth with disabilities in India due to a lack of service providers, cost and lack of last mile delivery. To address this, ASSA launched a community based rehabilitation (CBR) program in 2014 supported by the Enabling Inclusion® app which connects community workers and parents to the expertise of rehab specialists and provides a technology tool for documentation and reporting, validated child and family evaluation tools, progress tracking, monitoring, evaluation and learning and intervention planning. Enabling Inclusion® is a high impact, family centered and community participatory model for early intervention and child rehabilitation services using the Enabling Inclusion® app for end-to-end case management and rehabilitation. Please see [www.earlyintervention.amarseva.org](http://www.earlyintervention.amarseva.org). I thank you for allowing me to show a brief demo, and am happy to arrange a more detailed demo with our IT team.

Through funding from Grand Challenges Canada, Azim Premji Foundation, Standard Chartered Bank, Handicare Intl. and the Government of Tamil Nadu's Differently Abled Welfare Department, we are able to provide services for children and youth in 31 Blocks of 3 full Districts of Tamil Nadu, reaching nearly 6000 children, making it the largest NGO run child rehab CBR program in India.

Research was conducted on our Enabling Inclusion® (EI®) model and app by global educational institutions including University of Toronto, McGill University, Harvard University and Utrecht Centre for Global Challenges and published in international journals and presented at global conferences. The results showed that the EI® model using the app improved child development, decreased caregiver strain, increased parent empowerment, improved service provider job satisfaction and knowledge, increased community awareness and increased child school enrollment and inclusion. See: <https://earlyintervention.amarseva.org/publications/>

In 2021, we decided to scale-up our initiative throughout India and globally by establishing Amar Seva Global Association, a non-profit organization that licenses the Enabling Inclusion® app to other organizations.

In 2022, we launched the Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Rehabilitation and Development of Children and Youth with Disabilities as a department within Amar Seva Sangam, with the mission to create a collaborative ecosystem of stakeholders including national, state and local government, NGOs, private-sector, parents, children, and service providers in order to provide and support high quality child development and rehab solutions to thousands of children, families and communities globally. We have received funding from Grand Challenges Canada to cover some of the operational costs of the CoE over the next 4 years. We support the

other costs of the CoE from licensing fees we receive from licensed NGOs. The CoE supports 3 type of partners: Amar Seva Sangam's own Direct Implementation divisions, other NGOs and Government departments.

### **(1) Direct Implementation**

Amar Seva Sangam is providing development, rehabilitation, education and vocational training services for children age 0-24 in 3 full districts via home, village and centre-based services using the EI® app and model. We have reached 5836 children and youth and 4103 are actively enrolled. The program has been funded by Azim Premji Foundation, Standard Chartered Bank, the Govt of Tamil Nadu Department of Welfare of Differently Abled and other funders.

### **(2) Other NGOs**

We have licensed the EI® app to 8 NGOs across 5 states in India and 3 NGOs in Ethiopia, Africa. These programs include home-based, mobile clinics, centre based and school based (please see website and slide deck for more information). In total, 971 children are being reached via these partner NGOs

### **(3) Government Departments**

The Govt of Tamil Nadu Department of Welfare of Differently Abled Dept has funded ASSA to directly implement the program in 23 Blocks over 3 Districts of Tamil Nadu. We have also worked with this Department as knowledge partners to scale-up our model of home based services using community rehab workers to the entire state of Tamil Nadu. This is being done via the Tamil Nadu RIGHTS project via funding from the World Bank and we have deputed two of our staff to work with this department for this project.

We have an MOU with the Govt of Tamil Nadu Department of Education's Samgara Shiksha (SS) Program, in which we are part of a state level Project Management Unit (PMU). In this PMU, we are co-creating a technology solution (using our expertise with the EI® app) for inclusive education to reach 150,000 children throughout the state. In addition, the Tenkasi District's Govt SS Program's special educators and physiotherapists are using the EI® app as a pilot to guide learnings for the development of the state wide tool.

The divisions of the CoE include Technology, Support and Monitoring & Evaluation, Training, Partnership Development, Research and Admin.

### **(1) Technology**

We have an in house IT team and also work with a third party developer to develop the EI® app and have upgraded multiple times based on user feedback and to meet the needs of organizations to maximize their program impact.

For partner organization, this department provides the following services

1. Software – Web, Mobile EI® App Setup
2. Domain creation
3. App Configuration to meet community and operational set-up of partner
4. App Customizations (modifying assessments, adding new assessments, tool, etc)
5. App Deployment
6. Set-up of Logins for all users
7. Unlimited Users of app
8. Free Updates
9. Server Purchase and maintenance (if partner doesn't have their own cloud base server)

## **(2) Support and Monitoring & Evaluation**

This department provides the following support services for partners

1. Application Help Desk for all levels (L1, L2, L3) of tech support (Response time usually within hours and most issues solved within 24-48 hours)
2. Rehab and Implementation support (dedicated support team for partners)
3. After initial training, we offer monthly online support and feedback sessions for first 1 year.
4. We provide site-visit on request to see how the program is running and provide additional support.
5. We obtain continual feedback from partners to drive improvements, changes to the EI® app

### Monitoring & Evaluation

6. Reporting – provide customized report templates for any data query a partner wants.
7. We provide partners with reports on key performance indicators on app usage staff and key program indicators (number of children, staff, child outcomes, etc.)
8. We provide periodic free seminars and group discussion forums for management and rehab team that help improve and advance their program and interventions.

## **(3) Training**

This department provides onboarding training for implementation of the project for the management, IT, rehab service providers and all users of the app at partner organization. Additional training is provided for service providers, parents, government workers (Anganwadi workers, nurses, etc) and a global audience of educators and health workers via webinars, conferences and symposiums. Thus far, we have provided training for 10,506 workers. We have a knowledge bank containing EI app manuals, rehab resource manuals and rehab and app training videos which we share with partners.

## **(4) Research**

We have a dedicated research which has partnerships with global research institutes including Manipal Academy of Health Sciences, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, University of Toronto, McGill University, Harvard University and University of British Columbia. This department conducts studies on new innovations in the field of early intervention, child and youth rehab and we have numerous publications and conference presentations.

## **(5) Partnership Development**

This department is charged with awareness building of our technology and other innovations and building partnerships with NGOs, governments and others.

## **Our Needs**

### **(1) Direct Implementation**

As noted above, we are directly implementing our program in 31 blocks of 3 Districts of Tamil Nadu. We have secured funding to operate the program in 8 Blocks via various CSR (Azim Premji Foundation, Standard Chartered Bank, Kal Raman Foundation).

The Tamil Nadu Government's Department of Welfare of Differently Abled had been funding us to operate the program in 23 Blocks of Tamil Nadu since 2020 and that funding has ended this year. They will be transitioning funding of NGOs to the World Bank funded RIGHTS project through a graduated approach where different

districts are on boarded into funding over the next few years. However, these 23 Blocks will not be coming under this potential funding scheme in the near future, leaving us with a funding gap

Therefore, we seek to raise money and your support for the operational expenses of these 23 Blocks, which includes the technology cost. The expenses are 3.5 crores INR per year to cover 2600 children and youth (13,500 INR per child per year). After securing this funding, we would also aim to raise funds for scaling up to new blocks and districts for direct implementation.

## **(2) NGO Licensing**

The licensing fees we raise through Amar Seva Global are given to Amar Seva Sangam and used to cover some of the costs of the CoE associated with providing and supporting the technology solution to NGOs and providing knowledge partnerships to government departments.

NGOs across India are very interested in partnering with us and want to license our app and use our solution. The main barrier they face is they don't have the funds to pay for the licensing and technology costs. Therefore, we seek your support to help new, existing and potential partner NGOs pay the licensing cost. We can focus in on the geographical priority areas of Bajaj Finserv CSR, in addition to high quality partner NGOs throughout India.

## **(3) Capital Expenditure**

The Centre of Excellence currently has 25 part and full time staff, of which 16 work at the Amar Seva campus in Tamil Nadu. Currently, they are using an old school classroom as their office. We would like to raise money to construct a dedicated office building for the Centre of Excellence in our campus in Tenkasi, Tamil Nadu. The budget for this 2 Crore INR.

**Before submitting the concept note and budget, we would like to seek some clarifications:**

- (1) Which of the following areas of needs we have highlighted above would you advise that we can include in our proposal?**
- (2) If we were to request support for (2) NGO Licensing, would this funding go to the NGOs directly and if so, how we account for it in our budget proposal? Or could we request funding directly to Amar Seva to cover the cost so that we can provide the solution for free or at a more affordable rate. For example, could we request funding for Bajaj for X number of servers and for developer support costs, so that we can provide the solution at a more affordable rate or for free to partner NGOs.**

Regards,

  
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Dr.Dinesh Krishna

Director of Strategy

Amar Seva Sangam's Centre of Excellence in Rehabilitation and Development of Children with Disabilities