

Chapter 9

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES



Top: Japan, Bottom: Paraguay

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

As a result of the study of books, or in other words, as a result of secular education, one's intelligence may be sharpened and expanded. One can even deliver wonderful discourses on spiritual subjects. But one's spiritual life cannot be taken to have advanced in proportion. The teaching imparted to us by another person might not enter the heart and transform one's nature. This is the reason why learning without intensive culture of the spirit proves barren.

— Sri Sathya Sai Baba

By combining spiritual with secular education, by focusing on the underlying unity of all faiths and the 'oneness of all existence', and by encouraging the practice of human values in daily living, Sathya Sai Education has motivated generations of children over the past forty years towards virtuous and competent living in society. The transformation of children in diverse cultural and geographical settings, as elaborated in previous chapters, has been evidenced by positive character traits such as a respect for duty, a heightened capacity to face adversity, and a keen willingness to render selfless service, particularly to the poor and the needy.

A Strategic Education Plan

The establishment of Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation in 2006 provides a unique opportunity to unify, consolidate, and harmonise all Sathya Sai Education Programmes into an integrated and enriched, life-long transformation process, embracing all types (formal, non-formal, and informal) and levels (primary, secondary, and tertiary) of education.

As one of its first initiatives, the Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation has embarked on developing a *Strategic Plan for Sathya Sai Education*, with the objectives of harmonising and consolidating all Sathya Sai Education Programmes, worldwide, based on the authentic principles of Sri Sathya Sai Baba's universal teachings.

The Strategic Education Plan will strive to achieve these objectives by:

- promoting unity in diversity through the adherence to the core principles of Sri Sathya Sai Baba's universal teachings
- promoting Sathya Sai Education as a life-long transformation process, integrated through a continuum of informal, non-formal, and formal channels of education
- enhancing the quality of Sathya Sai Education through a continuous programme of refinements in the curriculum, teacher training and development, standard setting, and quality assurance
- managing the transition by streamlining the administration of all Sathya Sai Education Programmes and related institutional arrangements with a view to provide high quality leadership and management

"The soul of education is the education of the soul". Sri Sathya Sai Baba is putting back the 'Soul' into the soulless education system of today... It is the fulfillment of the dreams of all visionaries and thinkers in recent times.

— B.N. Narasimha Murthy



Argentina

- enhancing the awareness, understanding and outreach of Sathya Sai Education through international cooperation so that benefits of these programmes can reach all.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba says: First be, then do, and only then tell. Therefore, the harmonisation of Sathya Sai Education worldwide will have to start from those responsible for managing this transition. This will call for a new emphasis on introspection, by looking inwards, for that is where Educare begins and that is where all harmonisation and transformation must begin. Sathya Sai Education will then provide a pathway for everyone to rediscover the 'Self' and will lay the foundation for building a society in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, and friendship among all people.

Promoting Unity in Diversity

Inspired and guided by Sri Sathya Sai Baba, educational programmes and institutions bearing his name have spread to all continents over the past forty years. The universality of his message and its central emphasis on the five human

values, which are inherent in all human beings and are the underlying foundation of all religions and cultures, provide a strong basis for unity amidst the diversity of these programmes.

There is a broad-based consensus among Sai educationists from all over the world on the essential organising principles of Sathya Sai Education, although each country has adopted the programme in a unique way to suit its culture and needs. An important part of the future effort for harmonising Sathya Sai Education will focus on ensuring that these key principles are adhered to and implemented in diverse cultural settings. This will call for a reappraisal of different Sathya Sai Education programmes like SSE and SSEHV, with a vision of bringing greater coherence in goals and objectives while allowing the needed flexibility to suit the aspirations of local cultures.

Key Priority: All Sathya Sai Education Programmes promote unity in diversity by adhering to the guiding principles of Educare.

Nations are many Earth is One
Stars are many Sky is One
Beings are many Breath is One
Jewels are many Gold is One
Religions are many God is One
Appearances are many Reality is One

— Sri Sathya Sai Baba

A Life-long Transformation Process

Educational systems in many countries are embracing life-long learning through all types and levels of education, with a view to provide greater opportunity, flexibility, and diversity in learning. In contrast, Sathya Sai Education offers a life-long transformation process that not only prepares one for life but provides a pathway to reach the goal of life, "the awareness of the immortal spirit within, which is the spring of joy, peace and courage."

Sathya Sai Education Programmes not only provide formal education at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels through schools and colleges, but also provide a wide variety of non-formal education through out-of-school Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) classes and Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV), conducted through workshops, seminars, and holiday clubs. Additionally, Radio Sai Global Harmony provides a powerful channel for informal education across the continents.

Sathya Sai Education Programmes rely on experiential learning, are transformational in nature, and contribute to the development of a balanced, all-round human personality. There is growing recognition among educationists of the need to strengthen linkages between formal, non-formal, and informal education in

human values, which act as different channels for Sathya Sai Education.

Sai Global Harmony, in particular, has tremendous potential to link informal, non-formal, and formal education by beaming well-produced EHV programmes to Sai Spiritual Education classes in Sathya Sai Schools in all parts of the world.

Another way of strengthening these linkages is through the transfer of learning outcomes between different types of education. For example, the knowledge, skills, and values gained by school children through SSEHV in out-of-school classes could be transferred to formal education in mainstream schools. This could be achieved in line with established norms of local educational systems, through the evaluation of learning outcomes such as skills, knowledge and values, that learners have gained and then transferring them as part of a particular curriculum of formal education.

This may require some adjustments in SSEHV programmes in order that the learning outcomes could be transferable. The possibility of such transfer of outcome will greatly help in improving and strengthening SSEHV.

Similar initiatives may also be explored for the transfer of outcomes of SSEHV Diploma courses, currently conducted by the Institutes for Sathya Sai Education in different countries, to formal education offered at the degree level in Teacher Training Colleges. This would give greater recognition to SSEHV Diploma courses and help mainstreaming SSEHV in teacher training.

Key Priority: *Enhance linkages between informal, non-formal, and formal channels of Sathya Sai Education, providing a continuum of learning and transformation.*

Enhancing the Quality of Sathya Sai Education

As the demand for Sathya Sai Education increases the world over, sustaining and further enhancing the quality of its contents and delivery remains a key challenge. There is also a need to continually re-align the system to respond to the ever-changing emphasis in education policies in different countries. This gives rise to a need for new reform initiatives in the curriculum, teacher training and development and the delivery of Sathya Sai Education in terms of standards and targets.

Development of Curriculum

The curriculums of Sathya Sai Education at all levels of formal education: primary, secondary, and tertiary, as also for non-formal education such as SSE and SSEHV, have the primary focus of value-orientation. Thus, human values are integrated in curricular substance in a balanced and broad-based manner with a view to support students' physical, intellectual, and spiritual development, while preparing them for the next stage of education. The process of curriculum development is diversified, to meet

the legal and educational requirements of the country of origin.

There is a perceived need to develop an international framework for countries to adapt locally but with a clearly defined learning progression. The curriculum needs to clearly identify learning expectations. Guidance regarding the syllabus in order to meet those expectations will come from individual countries at a national level.

The rapid spread of Sathya Sai Education in different parts of the world has accentuated the need for suitably adapting the teaching and learning materials, which draw inspiration from their early beginnings in India, to suit local customs, traditions, and cultures in diverse settings. Good beginnings in this direction have already been made by dedicated educationists working in different parts of the world and in different languages. Speeding up this process will be an important priority.

There is growing concern in every society on how education could ensure that people have the cultural and personal resources to deal with changes in societal norms. The 1980s saw the emergence of enterprise culture in many societies. This was followed by a re-emergence of values debate in many countries in the 1990s, with new initiatives on: citizenship; personal, social, and health education; spiritual, moral, and cultural development; and social and emotional aspects of learning. Sathya Sai Education encompasses all these issues and lends itself ideally to respond to this new emphasis on values in educational policy. SSEHV programmes need to be responsive to this changing environment, and build strong partnerships with state and private schools for the delivery of values education.

Key Priorities:

1. *Develop an international framework for curricula at primary and secondary level for countries to adapt locally but with a clearly defined learning progression.*
2. *Move towards developing a core curriculum uniting SSE and SSEHV.*
3. *Teaching and learning material to suit local customs, traditions and cultures.*
4. *SSEHV to respond to new emphasis on values in national curricula around the world.*

Teacher Training and Development

Teachers are the standard bearers of Sathya Sai Education. Be they teachers of Sai Spiritual Education, or imparting Community Education in Human Values, or teaching in Sathya Sai Schools, they carry the primary responsibility of unfolding the innate human values in the children and fostering their nobility and ability. Sri Sathya Sai Baba inspires teachers to set shining examples of noble character.

The early development of Sathya Sai Education owed much of its rapid growth and achievement to the dedication of its teachers, inspired by Sri Sathya Sai Baba. With its continuing growth and expansion all over the world, an increasing demand for dedicated and competent teachers poses a major challenge to the current teacher training and development programmes.

Recent reviews of Teacher Training Programmes for SSE and SSEHV teachers clearly indicate the need for:



Fiji



Australia

- increasing the teachers' self-awareness of personal transformation
- regular self-review and peer review to support teachers in their quest for continually improving their teaching skills
- standardising training programmes to deliver SSE/SSEHV lessons with uniform competence
- addressing the special development needs of the children in different age groups
- steady improvement of teaching skills, particularly developing a capacity for educational innovation and creativity in designing lessons
- making heart-to-heart connection with the children.

All these point to the need for major reform in the current Teacher Training Programmes for SSE and SSEHV teachers and related institutional arrangements.

Sathya Sai Schools are expected to provide a model of integral education at the primary and secondary levels of education. Teachers in Sathya Sai Schools carry the primary responsibility for developing a learning environment and influencing learning outcomes that reflect the philosophy of Sathya Sai Education. Over the past decade, Institutes of Sathya Sai Education have developed diploma and advanced diploma programmes for teachers of Sathya Sai Schools as well as mainstream schools.

As part of the process for harmonisation and orderly expansion of Sathya Sai Education, the time is ripe to develop a strategic plan for teacher training and development that meets the highest quality standards expected of Sai educationists. A Charter for Sathya Sai Educationists could help to promote continuous development of teachers as part of a life-long learning and transformation process.

Key Priorities:

1. *Develop a strategic plan for teacher training and development to meet the highest quality standards expected of Sathya Sai Educationists.*
2. *Develop a Charter for Sathya Sai Educationists to promote continuous development as part of a life-long learning and transformation process.*

Standard Setting and Quality Assurance

Standard setting is a major challenge for any education that combines spiritual with secular education. A fundamental question is: how will standards be defined and monitored? How can one measure character development of an individual or of an institution? How does one fix standards for the practice of human values? Over the past decade, Sathya Sai Schools have become synonymous with excellence. It is in this context that self-introspection on the part of Sathya Sai Educationists, and self-evaluation and peer review on behalf of Sathya Sai educational institutions become important.

SAI 2000: Standards, Accreditation, and Inspection, represents a pioneering and innovative initiative for establishing standards and a quality assurance system for Sathya Sai Schools. The experience with its application in different parts of the world needs to be reviewed as a first step towards developing a new framework for standard setting and quality assurance of Sathya Sai Education.

Key Priority: *Review the experience with the implementation of SAI 2000 as a first step towards developing a global framework and regional accreditation and inspection mechanisms for Sathya Sai Education.*

Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation

Following the current phase of consolidation, the Institutes of Sathya Sai Education (ISSEs) are poised to embark on research projects in a range of areas relating to *Educare* and its impact on societies. Notable among these are the application of human values in education and work place, media, politics, the corporate sector, and professions. It is now well-recognised that education in human values contributes to positive health and well-being, increasing social capital, healthy family dynamics, and sustainable ecosystems. Research in partnerships between ISSEs and social and economic sector institutions, and the academia could facilitate assessments of how Sathya Sai Education contributes to sustainable social, economic, and environmental development and global peace.

In the area of education, it is time that an in-depth and independent evaluation of the impact of Sathya Sai Education Programmes is undertaken in different parts of the world. Such an impact evaluation would not only help in improving further the quality and outcome of these programmes but will also provide useful lessons to national and educational authorities in different countries, as they invest in educational reforms.

Key Priorities:

1. *ISSEs to invest in research in partnerships with academia and other national and international organisations on the impact of the application of human values to sustainable social, economic, and environmental development.*
2. *Undertake independent evaluation of the impact of Sathya Sai Education on personal and social development in different parts of the world.*

We consider certain fundamental values to be essential to international relations in the twenty-first century. These include: freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature, and shared responsibility. In order to translate these shared values into actions, we have identified key objectives to which we assign special significance.

— *The United Nations Millennium Declaration, 2000*

Managing the Transition

With the rapid expansion of Sri Sathya Sai Education over the past two decades, there is a growing need to bring harmonisation in the management and administration of Sathya Sai Education worldwide. This will be best achieved by following the emphasis laid by Sri Sathya Sai Baba on Unity in Diversity. The harmonisation process will therefore, be based on a unified and consistent approach to policy-making while ensuring diversity and flexibility in implementation, responding to local needs and cultures, and progressive decentralisation of authority to educational service institutions.

The key facets of this harmonisation include:

- Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation accepting the responsibility for ensuring order, authenticity, and accountability of all international education programmes
- establishing an apex education body (the Education Committee of Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation) to ensure coordination, coherence, and quality assurance of all international education programmes
- promoting high quality leadership in Sathya Sai educational programmes and institutions by inducting young men and women, endowed with character and self-confidence and imbued with Sri Sathya Sai Baba's teachings, in leadership positions
- enhancing coordination at the national level among all formal, non-formal, and

informal education programmes and related institutional arrangements

- promoting Sathya Sai Schools as models of Sathya Sai Education and establishing a close mentor relationship with Institutes of Sathya Sai Education
- strengthening communication and networking among the Institutes of Sathya Sai Education.

Following the establishment of the Education Committee by Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation, a worldwide review of current Sathya Sai educational programmes and institutions have already been undertaken with a view to improve coordination, coherence and quality assurance of Sathya Sai Education. Under the guidance of the Education Committee, educationists in every region of the world are reviewing their programmes with regard to past achievements and new opportunities and assessing the key issues and priorities to be addressed. The results of these reviews will be taken into account in developing the Strategic Education Plan.

A high quality of leadership will be central to the successful implementation of the Strategic Education Plan. Youth should find its rightful place in providing leadership to Sathya Sai Education. The Sri Sathya Sai University in India has already established a model for youth leadership by inducting young men and



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women, often the alumni of the Institute, into eminent positions in teaching and administration, for example, as the principal of a college or the warden of a students' hostel. These examples are worth emulating in other parts of the world.

Young men and women who have imbibed Sri Sathya Sai Baba's teachings for youth, are endowed with character and self-confidence and are willing to serve the society in a selfless manner, will therefore be encouraged to assume leadership positions in Sathya Sai educational programmes and institutions worldwide.

Attention is also needed to be given to gearing up institutional arrangements to respond to the growing need for the harmonisation and consolidation of Sathya Sai Education.

Formal education at primary and secondary level is delivered by Sathya Sai Schools. With few exceptions, the Institutes of Sathya Sai

Education play an important role in providing academic guidance and quality assurance to Sathya Sai Schools. The Institutes also carry the primary responsibility of promoting SSEHV in the community through a wide range of informal education programmes, including partnerships with community schools. In addition, the Institutes serve as the main resource for preparing teachers and trainers for SSEHV. The Institutes traditionally enjoy academic freedom in the administration of their programmes and are usually connected to the hierarchy of the Sri Sathya Sai Organisation at the zone level.

Since teacher training and development is vital to successfully manage the expanding education programmes, priority attention needs to be given to strengthening the Institutes of Sathya Sai Education in different parts of the world. This may require thorough self-evaluation and peer review of the existing Institutes with regard to the current mandates, capacities, and programmes. Possible options for strengthening

Only young men and women are capable of eradicating the evils prevailing in society. If we have virtuous youth, all ills of society can be removed.

— Sri Sathya Sai Baba

these Institutes may include upgrading selected institutes into full-fledged teacher training colleges, which could ensure the availability of an adequate supply of trained teachers for the growing number of Sathya Sai Schools, SSEHV, and SSE programmes.

Other options that need to be considered include opening satellite campuses of the established Institutes of Sathya Sai Education to provide for the training needs of countries in different sub-regions within a large geographical region. This has been successfully introduced in Africa. The viability of this option is already being considered in Europe.

The growing demand for opening new Sathya Sai Schools in different countries also needs priority attention. Sri Sathya Sai Baba introduced these schools as models for national education systems. The objective was also to introduce two key features of these schools - values orientation and free education for all into mainstream schools. Careful assessment is therefore necessary before establishing new Sathya Sai Schools so that they serve as true models for mainstream education. The Institutes of Sathya Sai Education carry a heavy responsibility to closely mentor every Sathya Sai School to ensure that they remain truly model schools. The institutional implications of these arrangements need careful study.

Key Priorities:

1. Encourage young men and women of noble character with good qualities of leadership to assume management positions in Sathya Sai education programmes and institutions
2. Enhance coordination at the national level among all formal, non-formal, and informal education programmes and related delivery institutions.
3. Enhance the capacity and outreach of Institutes of Sathya Sai Education making them frontline oversight institutions in the respective regions.
4. Develop Sathya Sai Schools as models of excellence of Sathya Sai Education and establish a close mentor relationship with Institutes of Sathya Sai Education.
5. Strengthen communication and networking among all Sathya Sai educational institutions.

International Cooperation and Exchange Programmes

Decision-making in every sphere of development, be it social, economic, or environmental, can be radically transformed into a soul-uplifting exercise when it is inspired by human values. The impact of such decisions can go far beyond meeting the immediate objectives and can truly contribute to build a just and peaceful society.



Sathya Sai Educationists help SEAMEO and UN-HABITAT to mainstream Human Values-based Water Education in South East Asian Countries

The extensive experience gained by Sathya Sai Education over the past four decades in bringing human values to education in all parts of the world has drawn the attention of many education authorities as also of international agencies like the United Nations. International cooperation and the exchange of experiences are of critical importance in enhancing awareness and understanding of Sathya Sai Education so that the benefits of these programmes may reach all.

The cooperation forged by the United Nations with the Institutes of Sathya Sai Education in bringing human values to environmental education has, over the past five years, spread to 12 African countries and, more recently, to the Asia-Pacific region. Independent evaluation by the United Nations has underscored the success of this initiative in contributing to the development of a new ethics of responsible natural resource (water) management in

society. The success of this initiative could be attributed to the sound pedagogy of human values education and the enthusiasm it has created among educational policy makers and practitioners in the participating countries.

Sharing this experience with other international agencies, which invest in promoting education in countries around the world, will be of strategic importance. A good beginning in this direction has already been made through new partnerships being forged with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the South East Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO).

ADB has expressed interest to introduce education in human values through its education sector projects in the Asia-Pacific region. This will improve the effectiveness and sustainability of ADB-funded infrastructure projects in the education sector.

SEAMEO has entered into a cooperation arrangement with the United Nations to promote human values-based water education in South East Asia. This is expected to lead to developing a centre of excellence for education in human values within the region.

The Millennium Development Goal of Education for All by 2015 provides yet another strategic opportunity for Sathya Sai Education to contribute to literacy campaigns in developing countries by bringing added value to these campaigns. The Institutes of Sathya Sai Education and national education authorities can cooperate in these literacy campaigns, starting with the countries where cooperation with the United Nations is currently operational.

In future, greater consideration may be given to establishing regular exchange visit programmes between the staff of public educational institutions and the Institutes of Sathya Sai Education. A beginning in this direction has already been made under the auspices of the United Nations.

Key Priorities:

1. *The Institutes of Sathya Sai Education should promote:*
 - awareness raising and the exchange of experiences on education in human values through partnerships with universities, teacher training colleges, and curriculum development institutes
 - partnerships with ministries of education and local educational bodies to introduce education in human values through the curriculum
 - collaboration with institutes in other regions to jointly conduct workshops and seminars on education in human values
 - study visits to the institutes by professionals from the education sector from other countries.
2. *The Education Committee of Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation should build strategic partnerships with international organisations like the United Nations to promote education in human values.*

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