

# APRIL 2019 - MARCH 2020

VFF USA

# DEAR FRIENDS

Years of great challenge have always showed that the only way humankind can progress is through unity, solidarity and a passionate belief in a better future for all. Only by working together and supporting each other can we truly achieve astonishing results. This past year, each of us experienced dramatic changes that we never could have imagined. Beyond the social pain of isolation, this pandemic also brought hunger, unemployment and human suffering for the most vulnerable communities in rural areas.

Not only people, but also organizations were tested by this crisis. I am proud to say that the Vicente Ferrer Foundation USA and its partners in rural India have shown a tremendous response to the pandemic. We have received support from hundreds of individuals, families, and corporations in India and the United States, as well as from Indian government agencies. Your donations to the VFF USA COVID-19 Relief Fund have helped us feed hungry migrant families, sew millions of masks, produce essential medical supplies and ensure that our hospitals and medical personnel have everything they need to help save people's lives.

Fifty years ago, my father and mother started an organization that believed in the transformation of the human spirit, and the right of every person to live with dignity despite their circumstances. We are committed more than ever to reach this goal, and we only can do it together with the help from donors and supporters like you.

I'm pleased to share this Annual Report with you, covering April 2019 – March 2020, to showcase the long-lasting impact that your support has brought to rural areas. Most of that time pre-dated the COVID-19 crisis, and thus this report features our results in the areas of education, rural hospitals, community health, disability inclusive development, and ecology and sustainable livelihoods. In addition to these results, we have included data on our initial response to alleviate the terrible effects of the pandemic.

Most importantly, I want to stress that no human disaster can stop our continuous work for the betterment of rural communities. We are proud to report that most of our projects have been restarted despite the pandemic, while new ones are becoming reality as well.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment, generosity and trust that you have shared with the Foundation this past year! I am looking forward to our collaborative efforts in the coming months.

#### **THANK YOU!**

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# MONCHO

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD VICENTE FERRER FOUNDATION USA

# TOWARD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

India faces significant challenges due to its overpopulation (about 1.4 billion people) and growing socioeconomic polarization of the society. **Currently, more than 400 million people live below the poverty line** and rural communities struggle with finding new economic opportunities. We continue our work toward sustainable development for rural communities and equal opportunities for all.

## **OUR MISSION**

OUR MISSION IS TO EMPOWER RURAL COMMUNITIES TO IMPROVE THEIR LIVING CONDITIONS.

We work to empower the most marginalized members of society by removing barriers and breaking the cycle of poverty.

## **OUR VISION**

A FAIR AND CARING SOCIETY, BASED ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

**We Support** the most vulnerable populations: women, children and people with disabilities.

We Guarantee sustainability through participatory and community led programs.

**We Promote** culturally sensitive and community designed programs.

## **OUR VALUES**

The capacity of everyone to help themselves and their community.

Efficient and accountable programs.

Long term solutions that strengthen community.

Percentage of population with an income below \$3.20 per day

**24.6%** // World Data Lab (2019)

Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 inhabitants)

// WHO (2020)

Neonatal mortality rate (per 1,000 live births) Prevalence of Malnutrition **14.5%** 

**TELANGANA** 

ANDHRA PRADES

Growth delay in children under 5 **38.4%** 

Incidence of tuberculosis (per 100,000 inhabitants)

**199** 

WHAT MAKES VFF USA UNIQUE

VFF USA champions empowerment with a holistic approach that supports our initiatives.

Secondary school completion rate **85%** 

Position according to the Gender Inequality Index compared to other countries **1222 / 162** // UNDP (2019)

The Vicente Ferrer Foundation USA has no political or religious affiliation

## MEASURING OUR IMPACT: VFF USA KEY SECTORS

Education for Transformation | Habitat | Community Health | Rural Hospitals | Women's Empowerment | Sports | Disability Inclusive Development | Ecology and Sustainable Livelihoods

2019 AT A GLANCE

Last year, thanks to our generous donors, sponsors, and volunteers, VFF USA supported 18 key projects benefiting over 8,500 people in rural India. Some of the larger projects included water purification unit and water access in Gundigalipalli, hospital equipment for Bathalapalli Hospital, and nutrition support in Adoni Region. We have almost doubled the number of sponsored children (currently, 62), while continuing to support rural women through our women's empowerment initiative. Overall, since 2013, over 700 individuals and organizations have supported VFF USA's work.



# **BENEFICIARIES OF OUR** PROJECTS



### 25 students

Bicycle Project // Irigepalli, Rolla

23 students Bicycle Project // Vaddipalyam & Kundurpi

#### 73 students

Bicycle Project // Vengalamma Cheruvu, Kothacheruvu

#### 58 students

Bicycle Project // Chinaganipalli & J.K.Palli, Gorantla

36 students Bicycle Project // Thippanapalli, Settur

#### 26 students

Assistance to RDT Professional School for Foreign Languages // Anantapur



209 students Equipment for RDT Primary School for Inclusive Education // Anantapur

## HABITAT

#### 200 Families Water Purification Unit and Water Access // Gundiganipalli-(BHS), Settur

2 Families Houses // Ramanjineyulu, Venkatapuram

4 Families Houses -Gollapalli-(NRP)

## WOMEN'S $\mathcal{Q}$ **EMPOWERMENT**

28 women Van for Women Entrepreneurs // Thummalabailu Women

205 women

Social Integration of Widows and Deserted Women// Anantapur

#### 14 women

Tailoring Training and sewing machines for Rural Women //Kothacheruvu

## RURAL HOSPITALS

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#### COMMUNITY HEALTH



42 children Rehabilitation of HIV-infected

children residing at RDT Orphanage // Kanekal

815 children, pregnant and nursing mothers Nutrition Support // Adoni



#### 5,772 HIV/AIDS & TB patients

Hospital Equipment // RDT Bathalapalli Hospital Department of Infectious Diseases

## CELEBRATING THE LEGACY OF VICENTE FERRER 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY GALA DINNER IN WASHINGTON, D.C



MONCHO FERRER: "CAN YOU SUCCESSFULLY ERADICATE ABJECT POVERTY? YES, YOU CAN, LITTLE BY LITTLE." **ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2019, VFF USA CELEBRATED 50 YEARS OF SUCCESSFUL TRANSFORMATION IN RURAL INDIA.** The Gala, held at the Capital Hilton in Washington, featured a delicious mix of Spanish, Indian and American cuisines, while bringing together a diverse and intimate group of VFF USA's supporters from the Greater DC area, NYC, Anantapur and Barcelona.

The evening of culinary masterpieces, authentic Indian and Spanish music, and vibrant holiday colors featured chef tasting stations, with chefs from Indique, Boqueria, RASA, Taberna del Alabardero, Indigo, Innovation Cuisine, and Xiquet. The prestigious Spanish ham brand "5 jotas" also offered delicious bites at this event. Gala guests were also able to bid on a wide range of great silent auction items, including signed jerseys from La Liga women's soccer teams, a basketball shoe signed by an NBA star, unique artwork by José Carlos Casado, restaurant certificates, chef's packages, local winery tours and many other items.

The event sponsors included City National Bank, Lladró, Bastion, EnDyna, Ganey Law Group, The Embassy of Spain, WHEELS Global Foundation, and Capital IIT.

The event culminated in a live auction of our key projects which attendees bid on to support, including building houses, providing support for widows and their families, scholarships for the Professional School of Foreign Languages for young women, PCs for boys and girls at the Anantapur Sports Academy and a mini-van for a group of Chenchu women working at the Areca Leaf-Making unit in the Nallamala region of Andhra Paradesh. We closed the evening with a wonderful performance by Los Ninis, a flamenco music band.

"WE ARE SO PROUD OF THE WORK YOU DO...WE ARE PROUD OF THE WORK OF THE FOUNDATION."

- HIS EXCELLENCY AMBASSADOR OF SPAIN SANTIAGO CABANAS ANSORENA



TAXE AND A

BASTION

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CITY NATIO

LLA

"THE KINDNESS THAT I RECEIVED, THE LOVE THAT WAS IMPARTED, AND THE SKILLS THAT I LEARNED IN THE SCHOOL HELPED ME IMMENSELY." - RAKESH THIPPAREDDYPALLI, A SUCCESSFUL IT ENGINEER WORKING

IN THE BANKING SECTOR WHO WAS SPONSORED AS A CHILD



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411

#### "VFF IS NOT CHARITY - IT IS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT." -dr. srilekha palle, loyal

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GANEY LAW GROUP

DONOR AND VOLUNTEER

Y NATION

# PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

## EDUCATION FOR TRANSFORMATION:

How Child Sponsorship Transforms Families and Local Communities

In the rural regions of India, many children cannot finish school. Poor families lack sufficient food, clean water and proper health care, so children start working early to support their parents financially. In addition, some families force girls to marry early to reduce financial stress, so high school completion rates are still lower for girls than for boys.

VFF USA Sponsor a Child Program raises awareness about the importance of education to break the cycle of poverty. The program helps sponsored children to finish their education and is one of our key community development programs, as it supports not only the child, but also the whole community.

Many US sponsors appreciate the impact this program brings to local communities in rural India. Carlos is a veteran, author and impact investor with extensive senior public service experience in the Middle East, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe. He strongly believes in "the power of communities and education." Carlos shared that "what Vicente Ferrer set up in India as a system to tackle the disparities of poverty is impressive." Vanessa is an accomplished journalist who currently works in the Greater Washington, D.C. area. Vanessa shared, "Since I was a child, I learned from my parents that education and health were the most important heritage they could give me and my sister...so I was really lucky for that, and now I want to give that same heritage to other children who did not have this opportunity."

#### HOW ONE BICYCLE CAN SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND GRADUATION RATES

Providing access to high school education to rural children is one of the objectives of our organization. There are many remote villages in the Anantapur area which lack access to school buses, making it difficult for children from these areas to reach their schools. This creates a major challenge for continuity of education of rural students, especially for girls living in remote villages. To address this problem, we provide bicycles to rural children from economically disadvantaged and remote villages to get to their high schools, which are often located 2-8 km from their native villages. Our Bicycle Program improves attendance rates and academic performance. We provided 215 bicycles to students this year.

"I am a 7th grade student. Both of my parents depend on agriculture as their main occupation. I have a brother who studies in the 3rd grade and my sister is in the 6th grade. We do not have good transportation from our village.

Before I got my bicycle, I was not going to school on time. During the morning, it was difficult for me to get ready and for my parents to prepare my food for arriving to school at 8 am. But now I am very happy because the bicycle saves my journey time. I am able to get to school just in 20 to 30 minutes. I am able to reach home early in the evening and do my homework. My parents are also very happy."

#### HOW PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES IMPROVES NEW GRADUATES' EMPLOYABILITY

A majority of rural graduates from disadvantaged communities are unable to find good jobs in cities. The main challenge is that these graduates lack English language conversational and communication skills, soft skills, computer and basic accounting skills. To address this challenge, in 2012, Rural Development Trust (RDT), our local partner in India, started the Professional School of Foreign Languages which provides a wide variety of professional development courses. In fact, 60% to 75% of those who were trained in the professional school found a job placement six months after successful completion of their course. This year we funded a sixmonth course to improve English and professional development skills for 26 female students, including three girls with disabilities.

"Before joining this course, I didn't know how to speak in English fluently, how to communicate with others professionally and also informally. I felt fear and shyness. In this course I gave PowerPoint presentations and participated in group discussions. Thanks to the course, I improved my self-confidence and got a job where I can use the skills I learnt."

-CHAMUNDESWARI MANDALA, WHO GRADUATED WITH A MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN PHYSICS

#### - CHITRALINGA, 7TH GRADE STUDENT

#### **PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS**

## COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAM

#### Providing Supplementary Nutrition to Children and Mothers

RDT has been implementing Nutrition Projects for the past two decades to address challenges faced by rural communities. Recurring droughts in Anantapur intensify poverty conditions resulting in undernutrition and anemia. The Community Health Program provides access to supplementary nutrition for children (1-5 years) and pregnant and nursing mothers, but also to persons suffering from chronic sickness and seniors who lack family or community support. The main objective is to save lives and improve the health status of both children and mothers.

Bastion Life Foundation, one of our foundation partners, helped in addressing the Dhone area's nutritional needs. A total of 815 people spread across 29 villages of Dhone area, in the Adoni region of Kurnool district, have benefited from the program.

#### Shelter, Nutrition, Healthcare, Education, and Emotional Support for Orphans Living with HIV

In rural India, many children infected by HIV are orphaned and they are exposed to abuse, neglect, stigma, and discrimination. Many of them have no choice but go out on the street, where they are exposed to multiple threats and infections. To address this problem, RDT created an orphanage for children living with HIV.

This year, Sangeeta Prasad, one of our loyal donors, made a generous donation to support this orphanage. These funds helped provide orphaned children living with HIV with shelter, nutritional support, emotional and psychological care, and a proper education. The congenial atmosphere at the orphanage improves their quality of life and ensures that children reach their best potential.



## **RURAL HOSPITALS**

People living in rural areas of India have limited access to healthcare facilities. There is a shortage of skilled labor and adequate public health infrastructure, and private hospitals are not affordable for them. RDT created a network of three hospitals to provide affordable and quality healthcare to rural communities. RDT Bathalapalli hospital incudes the Hospital for Infectious Diseases (HID), which caters to the needs of individuals affected by HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis (TB). The hospital has been operational since 2006 and has become a referral center in South India. The hospital received 5,772 admissions in FY19 and 59,994 visits for consultation.

Thanks to several VFF USA donors, we funded new medical equipment for the RDT Bathalapalli Hospital, in order to provide quality and timely diagnostic services and treatment to the HIV/AIDS & TB patients. This has been an investment in the health and well-being of these communities, as India is still largely affected by TB. In 2017, 10 million people around the world were infected by TB, and one in four cases were diagnosed in India, affecting 2.7 million people. IN FISCAL YEAR 2019: 5,772 admissions

**59,994** visits for consultation

# HABITAT

The primary objective of the habitat program is to give people access to decent housing with sanitary facilities and to carry out necessary community infrastructure, such as water purification systems. This is crucial for overcoming social inequality. In rural India, many people belonging to disadvantaged communities live in small huts in precarious and unsanitary conditions. Huts don't have bathrooms, and open defecation is a significant health and safety challenge in rural communities. To support the most disadvantaged, the houses built by our local partner become the property of the women of the family or of a person with disabilities.

Anantapur District in Andhra Pradesh is one of India's driest regions. The Anantapur district receives the second-lowest rainfall in India, after Jaisalmer in Rajasthan. More than 90 percent of its drinking water supply comes from groundwater. However, over the past twenty years, the water supply has dramatically reduced. Last summer, according to Indian Express, over 600 villages in the district faced acute water shortages. In addition, the ground water across Anantapur is contaminated with dangerously high levels of fluoride, which causes both dental fluorosis and deformed bones and joints. This problem can be resolved by use of reverse osmosis filter systems.

VFF USA, with the support of Vipin Desai, CEO of MVS Inc., funded the construction of a new water purification plant with reverse osmosis and the drilling of three new bore wells in Gundiganipalli village of Anantapur. This project helped deliver safe and affordable drinking water to 200 families, and even provided water for cattle in the village.

#### **PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS**

## WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

#### Supporting women entrepreneurs

Last year, VFF USA and RDT partnered with WHEELS Global Foundation to implement "RDT-on-WHEELS," a women's entrepreneurship project helping women artisans from the Chenchu tribe in Srisailam Region. Thanks to a generous grant from WHEELS, the new project is supporting sustainable livelihoods of Chenchu women through production and sale of cups and plates made from leaves, ultimately leading to their integrated development and empowerment.

#### **Training Programs for Women**

Thanks to VFF USA's generous donors, Durgavathi, a young woman from Bukkaraya Village, was able to learn tailoring skills. Today she is a successful tailor sharing her talent with the world. "Because of my disability, I used to be afraid of people...and now, thanks to this training program, I am free from fear and have a voice," shared Durgavathi.

"My name is Soni Bai, I'm 27 years old, and I studied until 10th grade. After my marriage, I stayed at home doing household work. I had a desire to learn any skill and to earn money from home, so I grabbed this opportunity when RDT provided this tailoring training. I am doing my tailoring work at my home, some of the villagers are giving me work now. Recently, due to COVID-19, the government and RDT approached us to produce masks. RDT provided a halfday training on stitching masks. At that training, we learnt cutting and stitching masks. They provided cloth and we stitched the masks at our homes. I earned 12,500 rupees per month through this work. It is a great opportunity for us to use our skills and earn some money from home. We are thankful to RDT and the donors based in the US for supporting women like me to improve my skills and develop our lives. Thanks to donors and RDT, I will always remember them in my life."







Thanks to VFF USA's generous donors, Durgavathi, a young woman from Bukkaraya Village, was able to learn tailoring skills.



## DISABILITY INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

In rural India, people with disabilities still face numerous challenges, including discrimination and medical neglect. To address this challenge, we support educational programs focused on children with disabilities. RDT operates five primary and one secondary inclusive schools. Mr. Dasarath, Director for the Disability Inclusive Development Sector, said, "When we decided to build our first school, almost no one understood why we were investing in such a beautiful building to house and educate kids with various disabilities. Now this school brings the best out of children who didn't have any hopes to succeed whatsoever."

VFF USA has been fortunate to have many passionate donors. We are delighted to share that we have received a generous grant from an anonymous donor to supply various educational materials, including books, speech therapy kits, measuring instruments and other supplies for children with hearing loss and hearing impairment at the RDT Bukkaraya Primary Education School.

# **TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**



# DONORS' CORNER

This year, our housing program got a boost from a new donor. Ms. Ananya Singh, one of our first Youth Ambassadors, who is a high school student from The Ursuline School, New Rochelle in NY, became a true fundraising champion. Ananya raised funds for one house for a family from one of the most vulnerable communities in Anantapur. To reach this goal, she actively promoted VFF USA's projects at her school, created a personal fundraising page and reached out to her local community. VFF USA's Youth Ambassadors Program (YAP) provides a unique opportunity for American youth to volunteer, fundraise, and make a difference in rural India through a wide range of VFF USA's programs.

## THANKING OUR DONORS

Adler, Beth Aegis Wealth Ahmed, Famin Alcala, Victor M. Apple Inc. Aradhya, Kerry Arteagoitia, Igone Atencio, Levda Band, Adam Band, Michael Basavappa, Ravi Basavappa, Shanthala Baslev. Natasha Belton, John Borrego, Maria Gabriela Cabanas Ansorena, Santiago Cambero, Jose Carlos Campabadal, Cristina Campos, Orlando Carayol, Jose Carrasco, Francisco Casado, Jose Carlos Castegnaro Velasquez, Ana Patricia

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Singh, Jyotsna Singh, Rajit Sola, Juan Souto, Antonio Taylor. Christina Terrones, Carlos Thati. Prasanna The Ursulina School Thippareddypalli, Rakeshchakravarthy Trenor, Ramon Vaddi. Sudheer Valipireddy, Raghu Vazquez, HECTOR Vcare Charitable Trust Verma, Grace Verma, Himanshu Vidal, Ivis Vijay, Tirumalasetty Wheels Global Foundation Williams. Shelton Wilson, Nicola Wilson, William

# REVENUESAMOUNTCONTRIBUTIONS & GRANTS\$554,346OTHER REVENUE(\$64,477)TOTAL REVENUE\$489,869

TOTAL EXPENSES	\$473,282
FUNDRAISING	\$62,039
ADMINISTRATION	\$146,524
PROGRAMS	\$264,719
EXPENSES	AMOUNT

# VICENTE FERRER FOUNDATION WORLDWIDE

#### 2,734

people served daily in our hospital network

#### 3,794

Awareness sessions on health and hygiene

#### 41,575

people receive food daily in the Nutrition Program.

### 929

volunteers trained in health care

#### LAKHSMI DEVI, VOLUNTEER TRAINED IN RURAL HEALTH:

"My job is to bring health care to people who live in villages. In my medicine cabinet I carry medication for HIV or tuberculosis so that sick people do not stop taking them if they have to spend a lot of time going to the hospital to collect them".

### 3,454

houses and latrines built (Total: 78,986).

## 811,984

trees planted (fruit trees and autochthonous species for reforestation).

## 118

structures built to store water

#### 2,253 farm families with access to

irrigation systems

#### ADINARAYANA AND NASARAMMA GROW LEMONS AND MANGOS:

"We have finally acquired ownership of two hectares of land. In addition, we have solar panels and drip irrigation. We don't have to look at the sky to see if it rains."

1,279 active tutoring schools

## **6**,**781**

bicycles distributed to secondary school students

### **481**

students at the Professional Language School

### 17,682

students in the pre-university and university scholarship program

**3**,**326** new women homeowners

## 11,042

microcredits granted to women

#### 8,245 young women scholarship holders for higher education

#### PEDDAKKA, TEACHER AND LEADER OF THE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION:

"I got married when I was twelve and was running away to study. My husband was coming to take me out of school. Now my goal is for girls to grow up with respect and freedom."

4,624 mobility support devices manufactured

**348** boys and girls in inclusive primary schools

## 663

scholarships for higher education

#### NARESH, ATHLETE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY:

"I have represented India at the Los Angeles Special Olympics. Now everyone recognizes me in my town."

#### INITIAL COVID-19 RESPONSE (MARCH TO JULY 2020)

**19,204** People who benefited from food distribution

5,544,653 Face masks produced

**6**,**200** COVID patients treated at RDT Bathalapalli Hospital

**528** Medical and support personnel working with COVID-19 patients at RDT facilities

## 403,154 Food

packages prepared and distributed to migrant and day laborers during the lockdown



## HELP US ERADICATE POVERTY IN RURAL INDIA

1100 15th Street NW, 4th Floor Washington, D.C. 20005

www.vffusa.org info@vffusa.org 202.798.5269



