



**VicenteFerrer**

*Empowering rural India*

**PRESS KIT |**  
**VFF USA**



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## BACKGROUND

The Vicente Ferrer Foundation USA (VFF USA) is empowering rural India to end the cycle of poverty. VFF USA focuses on marginalized people, especially women and people with disabilities in 4 major areas:

### Health Equity



### Education for Empowerment



### Rural Infrastructure



### Sustainable Agriculture



Despite India's economic growth in recent years and current status as one of the top emerging nations in the world, India is rife with contradictions and inequalities.

India is home to more poverty stricken people than the whole of sub-Saharan Africa with an estimated 360 million people surviving on less than \$1 a day.

According to United Nations estimates, more than 49 per cent of women in India are poor.

In 2014, India ranked 130 out of 188 on the Gender Inequality Index.

Since the beginning, VFF global operations have used a collaborative approach that brings together the principles of solidarity, community, entrepreneurship and trust.

The communities impacted by the organization are not simply recipients of aid but partners of change.



1875 Connecticut Ave NW  
10th Floor  
Washington, DC 20009



[www.vffusa.org](http://www.vffusa.org)  
[info@vffusa.org](mailto:info@vffusa.org)  
202.798.5269



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## MISSION

**To eliminate poverty in rural India.**

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

## THE VFF DIFFERENCE

Unlike other non-profit organizations, VFF USA champions empowerment with a holistic approach that supports our initiatives. We improve lives by working through transversal issues as problems are interconnected.



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## VISION

- ▶ **Supports** the most vulnerable populations: women, children and people with disabilities.
- ▶ **Guarantees** sustainability through participatory and community led programs.
- ▶ **Promotes** culturally sensitive and community designed programs.

## CORE VALUES

- ▶ The capacity of everyone to help themselves and their community.
- ▶ Efficient and accountable programs.
- ▶ Long term solutions that strengthen community.



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## VICENTE FERRER FOUNDATION: OUR STORY



“ My job is to achieve impossible dreams. ”

- Vicente Ferrer

**The Rural Development Trust - Vicente Ferrer Foundation was founded in 1969 by Anne and Vicente Ferrer. VFF USA partners with RDT - VFF in Andhra Pradesh, India.**

A majority of the population relies upon agriculture for their livelihoods, and the severe drought in the area makes basic nutrition a daily struggle for the rural poor. RDT - VFF is working to eliminate discrimination.

RDT - VFF is changing lives by addressing the interconnected web of issues affecting every impoverished family: hunger, housing, healthcare, education, discrimination and sustainable farming.

In this way, we are breaking the cycle of extreme poverty by empowering lives.

We're not asking for charity. We are seeking real solutions. We are seeking transformation.

Today, because one man dared to imagine the impossible, 3.6 million people have escaped extreme poverty and RDT - VFF continues this work in 3,662 villages.



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## WHERE?



**SERVING 3.6 MILLION PEOPLE IN OVER 3,600 VILLAGES**

VFF's efforts are focused within the Indian states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, in the southeastern part of India. Initially, VFF began working in the district of Anantapur, and for 50 years efforts to add scale beyond Anantapur have helped provide support for more than 3,600 rural villages.



## VFF USA AREAS OF IMPACT

### Health Equity

People living in rural areas of India have limited access to healthcare facilities. Barriers like distance from home and costs make healthcare inaccessible to a majority of the population. To complicate the situation, the gender inequality inherent in certain social practices, such as early marriage, decreased healthcare for women, nutritional deficiencies and selective birth of male children, leaves women particularly vulnerable.

**VFF hospitals treats on average 2,714 individuals each day, with a special focus on helping women. We support health infrastructure through:**

- ▶ Three general hospitals in Bathalapalli, Kalyandurg and Kanekal.
- ▶ Specialized professionals in pediatrics, orthopedics, obstetrics and gynecology, infectious diseases, hospice care, outpatient services, emergency care, ambulance services, and a sliding scale pharmacy that combines both western and eastern technologies.
- ▶ 13 rural clinics, including 7 full time, 4 school health and 2 mobile clinics that provide healthcare to the most remote areas at Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.
- ▶ 584.333 people with infectious diseases like HIV and TB receive medications and continuous care.



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## VFF USA AREAS OF IMPACT

### Education for Empowerment

Forty years ago, elementary school enrollment was under 10% for boys and less than 5% for girls in impoverished tribal communities. For the past 35 years, VFF has worked to raise awareness about the importance of education as a basis for development, building the understanding that education is an inalienable right.

Today, 99% of children across 2,806 villages where VFF operates education programs are enrolled in elementary school and 70% are enrolled in high school. Additionally, thousands of youth have gained access to college scholarships for both technical and professional degree programs.

### VFF supports local government schools and communities to ensure:

- ▶ 1,540 schools and 124 public higher education centers built period.
- ▶ 18,729 bicycles provided to high school students to eliminate the barrier of transportation.
- ▶ 19,944 scholarships for pre-university and university students.
- ▶ More than 90% of youth who received training at our Professional School found employment within three months.



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# VFF USA AREAS OF IMPACT

## Rural Infrastructure

People in rural areas often live in huts built from materials like grass or mud, which stand up poorly to harsh weather and other environmental conditions. To make matters worse, these houses are frequently overcrowded; 45% of the people inhabiting rural areas in Andhra Pradesh live in one-room houses, even though most of them house up to three generations at once.

Families with the greatest need for improved housing receive support from community leaders to advocate for subsidized land from local government.

## VFF helps to provide supplies for constructions and guides the process:

- ▶ 62,131 homes built for women and their families.
- ▶ 2,857 homes constructed and adapted for people with disabilities.
- ▶ 11,419 latrines built through our collaboration with local government in “Clean India” campaign.



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## VFF USA AREAS OF IMPACT

### Sustainable Agriculture

Throughout Andhra Pradesh and Telegana, low rainfall means drought is a constant threat. In rural areas where agriculture is the main source of income, people face high risk and low returns. Maintaining agricultural production is difficult in this region due to several factors, including outdated agricultural practices, degraded soils and lack of moisture conservation measures.

In 1987, VFF implemented an environmental sustainability plan to ensure the future of the families in the region, by raising public awareness about eco-regeneration.

### Our programs have improved agricultural production for thousands of families:

- ▶ More than 31,181 hectares of farming land with access to a well and irrigation systems installed.
- ▶ More than 8.7 million fruit trees distributed to farmers to diversify their crops.
- ▶ 12,419,200 trees planted to prevent erosions and increase the capacity of the land to absorb water.
- ▶ 3,152 water storage structures constructed to retain the monsoon rains and support local farming irrigation systems.



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## FOUNDERS



### **VICENTE FERRER**

*Co - Founder / President (April 9, 1920 - June 19, 2009)*

When Vicente Ferrer first landed in Mumbai, India, in 1952 he immediately felt connected to the plight of rural farmers, and resolved to make it his life's mission to support hope, opportunity, and an end to poverty.

In 1969, with the support of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, he returned to India and established the (Rural Development Trust (Now, VFF-RDT) in Anantapur. In 1970, he married his wife, Anne, a journalist who shared his resolve to bring to light the suffering of rural India that had for too long been kept in the dark.

The couple faced huge challenges in those early days. Located in one of the driest regions in India, Andhra Pradesh barely supported its inhabitants. For the rural poor, just getting basic nutrition was a daily struggle, not to mention the challenges caused by extreme discrimination in a society deeply divided along caste, tribal, and gender lines.

Vicente and Anne got started by helping the district's poorest families find work and gain access to food. They paid special attention to the most marginalized communities, including people with disabilities, and women. Over the years, their efforts have touched millions of lives, and have now supports 3,589 villages across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

### **ANNE FERRER**

*Co - Founder / President*



Her adventurous spirit inspired her to join her brother and depart on the long journey over land from her native England to India at the age of 16. Upon arrival Anne felt an immediate connection to the women fighting for equality. She completed her studies in India and after graduation she began working as a reporter for the news magazine, "Current".

During her work she met Vicente Ferrer to interview him for an article and joined the movement to support his return to India. They traveled together to build VFF-RDT in Anantapur, and married in 1970.

Anne Ferrer is currently the Executive Director of the Rural Development Trust - Vicente Ferrer in India. She is dedicated to establishing a strategic vision for the organization and coordinate the management team that oversees the organization's numerous projects.



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## EXECUTIVES



### MONCHO FERRER

*President of the Board*

Moncho Ferrer, born in India, holds a degree in international relations from the University of Keele. After finishing his studies, he returned to India to work on the Rural Infrastructure Project in Anantapur to support the legacy of his parents Vicente and Anna Ferrer — the founders of the Vicente Ferrer Foundation.

He became the Associate Program Manager in 2002 and alongside his mother has led the strategic vision as director of programs since his father's death in 2009.

Through his work with the Vicente Ferrer Foundation, Moncho has spearheaded the “India for India” initiative to mobilize Indian citizens and institutions to fight poverty and marginalization, led humanitarian aid operations throughout India, launched innovative and inclusive sports programs for disadvantaged communities, and built strong linkages with community partners ranging from grassroots to governmental organizations.

As shown through his efforts and accomplishments, Moncho whole-heartedly believes in the power of local community members to make change.

### ANGELINA KLOUTHIS

*Executive Director*



Angelina Klouthis is the executive director of VFF USA, where she guides strategic partnerships through her belief in harnessing the market's power to drive philanthropy from “spare change to real change.” With over a decade of development experience, Angelina has worked directly with over 40 organizations in the use of social media as a fundraising tool, grant writing, performance measures, transparency, sustainability, and community organization. Throughout her career, she has managed programs on a governmental level with the U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.S. State Department, the Colombian Ministry of Labor, and a diverse portfolio of private foundations and businesses.

She has also designed and implemented training programs for grassroots organizations in Colombia, Niger, Haiti, Nicaragua, Cameroon, and most recently India. Before joining the Vicente Ferrer Foundation, Angelina served the Office of Multicultural Affairs in the Refugee Program for the State of Maine. She has a degree in international relations from Florida International University, and a master's degree in Organizations, Social Responsibility, and International Development.

# VFF GLOBAL IMPACT

**2,460**

Associations for people with disabilities

**3,431**

Scholarships for university students

**119,335**

Sponsored children

**112,367**

Women leaders

**3,662**

Villages

**2,714**

Daily hospital patients

**8,138**

Women's associations

**3,648,591**

Partners in VFF programs





# CONTACT

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