



Vicente Ferrer

Empowering rural communities

VFF USA

ANNUAL REPORT

April 2023
March 2024

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A NOTE FROM MONCHO FERRER

As we reflect on our journey, it is clear that human resilience has been the cornerstone of the Vicente Ferrer Foundation. We have always believed that local solutions hold the key to addressing global challenges. By building local capacity, we have supported communities to become the main actors in their own development.

What began with my parents' initial efforts to dig 10,000 borewells as part of the Food-for-Work Programme, has grown into a wide-reaching mission of compassion, care and courage. Our local implementation partners have become dependable in the face of crises, helping communities build a dignified life for themselves.

From supporting communities through the Food-for-Work Programme to setting up nutrition centres, our journey has been one of collaboration and gradual progress. Over time, our work has grown to include areas like women's development, healthcare, education, and sustainable livelihoods, focusing on addressing the challenges faced by communities. Through these collective efforts we aim to create opportunities for individuals and families to move towards self reliance while enabling holistic growth and resilience.

Through natural resource conservation, water and sanitation projects, and sustainability initiatives we have helped communities grow in harmony with nature. Sports has also played a vital role in this journey. The Anantapur Sports Academy has provided opportunities for young athletes to rise above their challenges, proving that with support, human potential can break barriers and achieve extraordinary things.

As we celebrate this ongoing work, I extend my gratitude to our partners, supporters, and the dedicated local implementation teams. Together, we have helped communities build futures rooted in dignity, equality, opportunity, and sustainability.

Guided by my parents' vision of a world without poverty, we continue to move forward with hope and determination. Each step we take reminds us that change is possible, and together, we can achieve a better future for all.



MONCHO FERRER
Global Program Director,
VICENTE FERRER FOUNDATION

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.



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.

VALUES

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

The Vicente Ferrer Foundation USA has no political or religious affiliation.



MEASURING OUR IMPACT: VFF USA KEY PROGRAM AREAS

Education for Transformation | Community Health | Women's Empowerment | Pediatric Cancer | People with Disabilities

2023 AT A GLANCE

Throughout the year, thanks to our generous donors, sponsors, and volunteers, VFF USA supported 16 key projects, benefiting over 3,215 people in rural India. Some of the larger projects included pediatric cancer support, housing for vulnerable families, educational support for rural children (bicycles and scholarships), nutritional support, professional training programs for rural women, and support for schools for people with disabilities. The number of sponsored children has increased, and we continued to provide vital support to rural women through our women's empowerment initiative.

CONTRIBUTIONS BY PROGRAM AREA:

14%
Women's empowerment

31%
People with disabilities

46%
Education

8%
Community health

SNAPSHOTS OF PROJECTS FUNDED BY YOU

Support for Education: Bicycles
and STEM Scholarships

115 children

Education



Economic Empowerment
of Single Mothers

76 women

Women's Empowerment



Child Sponsorship,
Sports & Education

261 people

Education



Pediatric Cancer and
Hospital Support

502 people

Health



Life Skills Education and
Income Generation

83 students

People with Disabilities



Nutrition Support

1367 people

Community Health



Support for Inclusive
Education

415 students

People with Disabilities



GENDER EQUALITY

VFF USA works to achieve a society free from gender discrimination and violence where women are guaranteed equal rights and can access equal opportunities and take their own decisions. Through financial assistance and awareness, VFF USA aims to challenge patriarchal values and break gender stereotypes.



Training Vulnerable Women to Take Charge of Their Livelihood

Millions of rural women in India have not completed high school education. These women often struggle to find jobs and lack a voice in their families and society, facing economic and independence challenges. VFF USA works to narrow the gender gap by creating access to training opportunities, economic resources, and income-generation activities.

VFF USA supports women's professional and technical skills training, such as tailoring, embroidery, and cattle rearing, and provides them with tools, and necessary marketing skills to start their income-generation activities and support their families. Thanks to our generous donors, several rural women have completed tailoring training, allowing them to improve their living conditions and those of their communities.

Single Mothers' Social and Economic Integration

In rural India, widows often face societal rejection due to superstitions, leading to gender-based discrimination and economic challenges. VFF USA supports vulnerable single mothers by providing essential resources like nutrition, healthcare, and educational opportunities. During the 2023-24 fiscal year, VFF USA assisted many mothers and children. This support included access to adequate nutrition, healthcare, counseling, awareness programs, capacity building, and educational opportunities for their children. Thanks to receiving several generous donations, these significantly supported these single mothers and their children.

LAKSHMI'S JOURNEY FROM ADVERSITY TO EMPOWERMENT

Lakshmi, a 25-year-old woman from Karnataka, migrated to Bangalore in 2018 due to financial hardships. Working in the garment industry, she earned Rs. 8000 monthly. However, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019 caused her and her husband to lose their livelihoods, prompting Lakshmi to return to her mother's home.

Lakshmi's life changed when she learned about the VFF tailoring training center in her village. She secured a spot in the program and excelled, quickly mastering new skills thanks to her garment industry experience. She became a role model and motivator for her fellow trainees. Now, as a skilled tailor, Lakshmi is earning a good income and has gained a reputable name in her community. She appreciates VFF for the quality training and the sewing machine provided.

Lakshmi advocates for continued support for women in her community, emphasizing the need for education and skill development to combat early marriages and cultural practices that restrict women's freedom. Her story highlights the transformative power of community support and the potential for women to drive change in their communities.



HEALTH & WELL-BEING



To make accessible, affordable, and quality healthcare and awareness a reality for all, VFF USA aims to ensure quality and affordable healthcare by addressing the accessibility gap in medical services. Through a network of rural hospitals, rural clinics, community health centers, and mobile clinics, VFF USA's implementing partner promotes access to quality healthcare and services. In 2023-24, 500 people availed treatment at the Hospital Network.

Improving Health and Wellbeing through Nutrition and Awareness

Bastion Life Foundation has made a significant impact in the Lingala area of Telangana by addressing the nutritional needs of the Chenchus aboriginal tribe. This program has reached 1367 people, providing not only food support but also crucial health awareness workshops and iron supplements to reduce anemia among mothers.

The awareness sessions have been particularly life-changing for many beneficiaries. For example, Bhavani, a 23-year-old pregnant woman, was unaware she had a high-risk condition called placenta previa. Through the project, Bhavani received regular checkups, nutritious food, and close monitoring of her pregnancy. The dedicated health staff ensured she received the necessary treatment, leading to the safe birth of her healthy baby girl at the Achampeta government hospital. Bhavani expressed her gratitude, saying the village-level health camps were vital in helping her and ensuring her baby's safe delivery.

Similarly, Nimmala Sivamma, who was four months pregnant, benefited greatly from the project. Initially hesitant about vaccination due to misinformation, she learned about the importance of immunization during an awareness session. Following the health staff's advice, she received the tetanus vaccine and attended regular checkups. Nimmala now understands the value of vaccines and the importance of eating nutritious foods like fruits and green leafy vegetables for her health and immunity. She expressed her thanks for the knowledge and support provided by the project.

These beneficiary narratives highlight the essential role of village-level awareness sessions in improving the health and wellbeing of pregnant women in the Chenchus community. The nutrition project not only provides vital information about pregnancy, immunization, nutrition, and childbirth but also supports the nutritional needs of mothers. By offering a platform for seeking assistance and guidance, the project ensures healthier pregnancies and safer deliveries, contributing to the overall wellbeing of the community.



SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

To promote mechanisms that enable individuals and communities to live in harmony with nature and to initiate sustainable, innovative projects that protect our Earth VFF USA uses a holistic approach to promote communities to live in harmony with nature by encouraging people to incorporate sustainable daily habits and contribute to their community to build a healthier world. We achieve this through raising awareness at the individual level and in the communities and with initiatives to protect the planet through afforestation, water conservation projects, organic farming and waste management.

Dreams That Get Wider

Shilpamma's life changed when she started organic farming. Together with her husband, she raises two cows to sell milk for a living and grows her own vegetables to provide for her family. They run a dairy, selling 15 liters of milk every day. Shilpamma is actively involved in committee meetings and support groups for farmers, and she leads her village's sangham and the dairy cooperative, which benefits 90 families.

Thanks to the implementation of a sprinkler irrigation system and the construction of a reservoir as part of VFF USA's ecology projects, Shilpamma was able to save water and use her resources more sustainably. "We no longer depend on the rain or fear drought as much. The contained water allows all the land in the area to benefit," says Shilpamma. Now, with bigger ambitions for a better future, she wants to expand her fields, increase production, and sell food crops. This will help her family increase their income and secure a sustainable future.

"We no longer depend on the rain or fear drought as much: the contained water allows all the land in the area to benefit," says Shilpamma, farmer, Nizavalli.

CHILD PROTECTION & EDUCATION

To ensure that children and adolescents fulfil their potential with access to education, a safe environment and equal opportunities, paving the path to their holistic development VFF USA aims to bring out the full potential of every child by providing them equitable access to resources. Beyond imparting knowledge, VFFUSA focuses on equipping communities to drive positive change and have access to quality education through supplementary schools and scholarships, along with enabling children to exercise their right to play, which accompanies them in paving paths to brighter careers.

Child Sponsorship Transforms Children's Lives and Local Communities

VFF USA's child sponsorship program is an impactful drive to provide holistic support to children from vulnerable rural communities in India so that children get access to quality education and can pursue their career goals. By sponsoring a child, one can be part of the child's life journey and can experience how their little contribution is helping a child to grow and thrive.



- The sponsorship program gives girls and boys access to education and health care.
- Children with disabilities receive additional benefits like prostheses and physiotherapy.
- The contribution goes to a direct fund that benefits the child, their family, and the community.
- Most importantly, the sponsorship provides the seed of change for the most disadvantaged rural communities because your support ensures their development and hope for a better future.

In 2023-24, 121 children were sponsored through VFF USA's Sponsor a Child program.

Inclusive Education

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STEM Scholarship for Rural Youth

During 2023-24, VFF USA facilitated STEM scholarships for 15 deserving students hailing from underprivileged rural communities in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. This initiative provided comprehensive support covering tuition, accommodation, meals, study materials, healthcare, and more, empowering these young minds to pursue technical education and secure brighter career prospects.

Bicycles for Continuing Education

The lack of proper public transportation poses a big challenge for rural students, especially girls in remote villages, to attend school regularly. In the fiscal year 2023-24, VFF USA supported 100 students in rural India. Many of these students live 3 to 5 miles away from their school. One student highlighted the impact of the project, stating, "Our parents, who are agricultural laborers, have difficulties affording our transport cost, which ranges from Rs 250 to Rs 300 a month (\$3.5 to \$4.20), depending on the distance from the village to the high school. Riding a bicycle relieves their financial burden and is beneficial for our health."



The Impact of Inclusive Education: Mahalakshmi's Experience

Mahalakshmi lost her vision at three years old due to an epileptic seizure. Her mother, Nageswari, recounts how a hospital in Anantapur informed them of the partial vision loss and referred them to a specialized hospital in Hyderabad. Despite starting a three-year treatment plan, financial constraints soon made it impossible for them to continue.

Nageswari was disheartened but had to adjust to their new circumstances. However, a call from the village school director introduced a new possibility. Our local implementation partner had set up an inclusive primary school in Bukkaraya, designed to support children with different abilities. Though initially apprehensive about sending her daughter away, a visit from teacher Radha provided reassurance. Radha brought Braille books and explained how Mahalakshmi could learn to read and study using these materials.

Within a year, Mahalakshmi not only mastered Braille but also grew in confidence. Her mother proudly shares that Mahalakshmi now aspires to become a teacher to help other children like herself. Every visit to the school reveals Mahalakshmi teaching the alphabet to other girls, showcasing her newfound skills and leadership.

Mahalakshmi's experience underscores the importance of inclusive education. It demonstrates how providing tailored support and resources can empower children with disabilities, offering them opportunities for growth and a brighter future.

SOCIAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

To empower individuals and communities with the tools to enhance their social and economic well-being, VFF USA aims to support rural communities in accessing basic infrastructure and achieving collective asset ownership through awareness campaigns and mobilization of public resources. Our goal is to assist them in forging a path toward self-sufficiency and fostering confidence to lead dignified lives.

Through collaborative efforts with local communities and government agencies, we place particular emphasis on empowering women, persons with disabilities, and tribal communities. This approach encourages active participation in driving their own positive transformation.

Eeramma, a woman with an intellectual disability, lives with her parents in a village where they work as agricultural laborers. Their old mud house, which had been in poor condition for years, leaked heavily during the rainy season, causing significant damage to their household items.

Their lives changed dramatically when VFF USA provided them with a new house, complete with a bathroom and toilet. This development significantly enhanced their self-respect and security, especially for Eeramma, who struggled with the distance to the previous outdoor toilet.

The new house feels like a palace to them, with a kitchen, living room, and bedroom. The well-arranged kitchen, with a platform for the gas stove and shelves for utensils, has made daily life much easier. A spacious verandah allows them to sit and enjoy the fresh air in the evenings. Additionally, a special ramp makes the house accessible for Eeramma.

The family's happiness and comfort have soared since moving into their new home. They expressed immense gratitude to the VFF USA donor, emphasizing that such a transformation seemed like a distant dream before. Eeramma's father, Hanumanthu, highlighted the social respect his daughter has gained with a house in her name, showcasing the profound impact of secure housing for women and disabled individuals.

Eeramma's experience underscores the critical need for safe, accessible housing, demonstrating how it can uplift lives, restore dignity, and foster social respect.



OUR COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 to end poverty, reduce inequality and build more peaceful, prosperous societies by 2030.

Catalyzing positive community impact towards an equitable and prosperous future for people and the planet has been at the heart of VFF USA's work. Through our local partners in India, we have constantly been working to transform rural communities in India so that no one is left behind. Programs supported by VFF USA are aligned with global goals, and our program monitoring framework measures our commitment and progress toward SDGs.



FINANCIALS

Fiscal year 2023: April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024

Revenues Amount

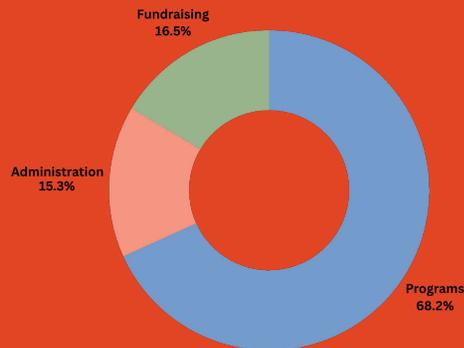
Contributions and Grants \$552,710.00

Total Revenue \$552,710.00

Expenses Amount

Programs \$361,310.00
Administration \$81,030.00
Fundraising \$87,192.00

Total Expenses \$529,532.00



Check our audited financial statements and 990 form at <https://www.vffusa.org/transparency/>

VICENTE FERRER FOUNDATION WORLDWIDE



People and their power of action are the basis of the comprehensive development program of the Vicente Ferrer Foundation. The communities of more than 3,800 villages are involved in the projects that the organization promotes and that guarantee them a decent life and future opportunities. We highlighted key data reflecting our work during the year. They are the results of a joint commitment and effective collaboration between the communities, the people, partnering institutions and companies, the volunteers, and the foundation's team.



VicenteFerrer

Empowering rural communities

HELP US ERADICATE POVERTY IN RURAL INDIA

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