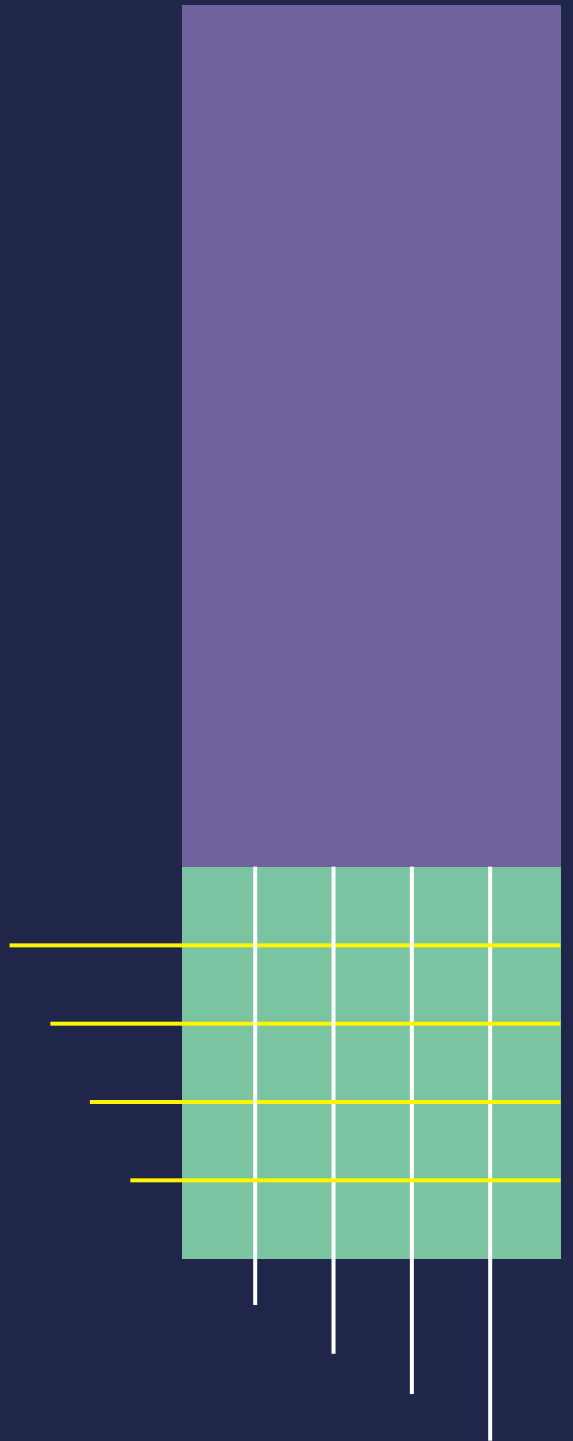
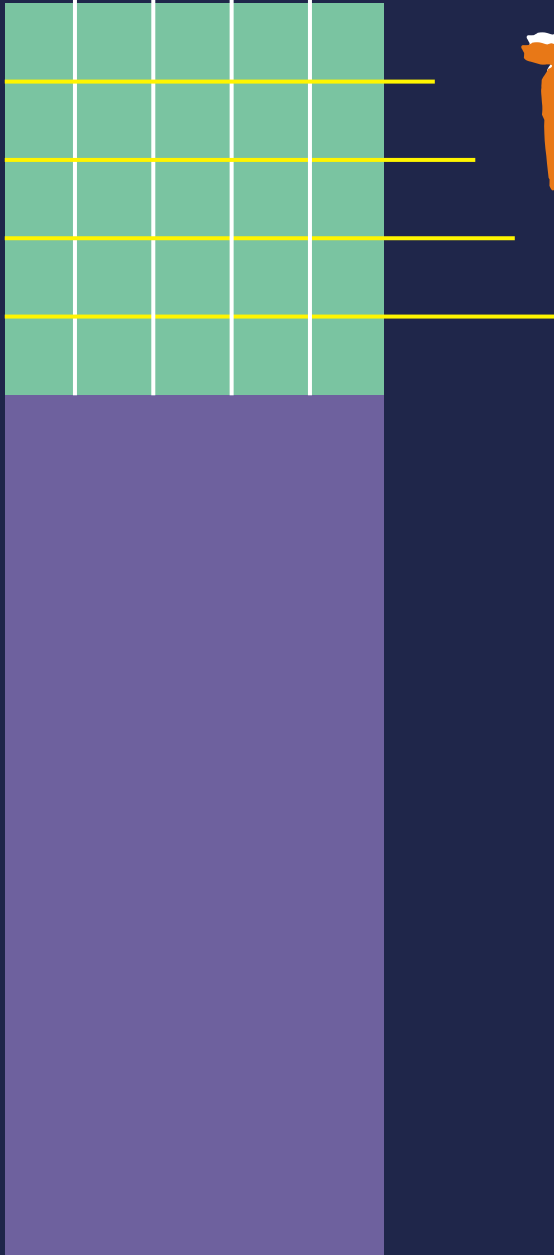


Dimensions 2010



VISION INDIA

Estd : 1996

www.vision-india.net.in

FOREWORD



Rev. Dr. E C John

B.Sc., B.D., M.A. (Cantab), D.D.
Principal (Retd.)
United Theological College, Bangalore

I am grateful indeed for being asked to write the FOREWORD to the DIMENSIONS 2010, the special Annual Number of VISION INDIA which has now completed twelve years of inspiring healing ministry for women suffering from mental disorders of one kind or another. The Abayashram in Kattamnallur, Bangalore, has been able to heal and rehabilitate a good number of mentally challenged women who have been virtually thrown out of their families, wander and 'lost'.

As we read the heart-rending stories of those who have been given shelter in the Abayashram, we realize how slow families and society as whole have been to realize that the root causes of mental disorders are to be traced to the respective families and society as whole, rather than to the patients.

With a lot of compassion, skill and patience the Trustees, Advisory Board Members and supporters have rendered most valuable service to those suffering, helpless women. They deserve every encouragement and support.

God bless and prosper these noble endeavours.

Date: 28.5.2010

Rev. Dr. E C John

FOUNDER



Miss **Daisy Mathew**, M.A., L.L.B.
Advocate



Born to serve
Loved the abused
Sheltered the abandoned
Toiled for poor
Stood for truth
Longed to give
Fought for justice
Stuck to faith
Lived as witness
Lifted to glory



VISION INDIA

A MISSION TO REALISE THE VISION

► THE ORIGIN

VISION INDIA, committed to the cause of suffering masses came into being with its registration as a Trust in the year 1996. It is basically an association of three professional social workers together with a Medical Doctor specialized in Psychiatry who came in one accord to endeavour for the realisation of the vision of VISION INDIA through the four fold measures viz: Education, Health & Sanitation, Public Utility and Community Development.

► THE OBJECTIVE

Vision India envisions ushering in a social order founded on equality, justice and peace; devoid of all forms of disparities and thereby ensure peaceful coexistence of the entire humanity. In realising this vision, it strives to optimise the potentials of the less endowed through measures of empowerment that would ensure the poor and marginalized economic independence and social dignity.

► IDEOLOGICAL PREMISE

“VISION INDIA” believes that every human being irrespective of caste, creed or colour has a rightful share in the abundantly available resources. It is the caste and class orientation that has become a virtual bane of the nation. Dispelling the disparities would become possible only through the concerted effort of the people in the state of affliction, willfully striving for their social and economic emancipation.

“VISION INDIA” endeavours to empower the poor and the oppressed by opening them to realities of life, making them aware of their own rights and responsibilities and thereby to secure bargaining power to avail their rightful place in the society and thus usher in a new social order.

VISION INDIA's immediate concerns encompass every conceivable element of affliction that the community is plagued with. The caste and class ridden rural atmosphere project a grim picture with its small and marginal farmers, land-less agricultural labourers and rural artisans deeply doomed in indebtedness and writhing in abject poverty. Women are not given their rightful place. Prevalence of social evils such as dowry, alcoholism, bonded labour system, child labour, child marriage, in-equal wages, atrocities against defenceless dalits and women are so much that it is a virtual challenge to Vision India to combat against these unjust social systems.

VISION INDIA's cherished aspiration was to endeavour for the socio-economic emancipation of the poor through viable measures though; within two years of its fruitful service, it realized the urgent need

for addressing to the demands of the mentally ill and vagrant women. This concern warranted VISION INDIA to recourse its direction and since 1998, care for them assumed utmost priority with the birth of ABAYASHRAM.

MISSION WITH A VISION

► ABAYASHRAM



Transitional Home in Kattamnallur

In response to the alarming rate of increase in the incident of cases of mental illness especially among women, Vision India has been running a home called Abayashram in Kattamnallur Village in a rented building. This area of relief and rehabilitation of mentally challenged and vagrant women has of late commands utmost priority for Vision India.

This rehabilitation centre for mentally ill and vagrant women provides residential care and treatment to those in affliction. Abused and abandoned, these women have nowhere to go and all of them are invariably picked up from roadside after getting dumped by the truckers. All the inmates are picked up from the street by our staff members, well wishers or by the local police. Most of them afflicted with HIV / AIDS and some of them not even aware of their pregnancy find this a home that cares and rehabilitates them with their respective families.

Vision India with its headquarters in Bangalore; has its operational base at Kattamnallur Village of Hoskote Taluk in Bangalore Rural District of Karnataka in Southern part of India. Easily accessible by Old Madras Road, it is 30 Kms away from Bangalore city. The Executive Trustee, a professional social worker together with a few kind hearted workers live along with the mentally ill patients.

► MEDICAL CARE

Provision of care for both mental and physical health is a stupendous task, as most of the patients are affected by mental disorders like schizophrenia, epilepsy, psychosis, mental retardation etc.; necessitating treatment and administration of psychiatric medicines. While we get expert guidance from Medical



Psychiatrists like Dr. Meera, Dr. Valsa Koshy and others through their periodic visits, the Resident Social Worker is responsible for their behavioral and occupational therapy, personal hygiene, counseling, personality development, food habits regulation and spiritual growth. He is also responsible for monitoring the medicinal intake and behavioral change.

► REHABILITATION

Assessment over IQ level, emotional problems, communicational skills, ability to make relationships, ability to work with other individuals, reaction towards different situations has been checked during their stay. After the symptoms of mental illness are arrested skill development training will be given to help them to lead an independent life. We make immense effort to trace their families or relatives. If we can't succeed in tracing the family, they will be shifted to other women institution or ashram, where they can earn for their livelihood. Family member or guardian will be given proper counseling at the time of discharge for how to handle the forthcoming situations in the patient's life.

► SKILL ORIENTATION



Occupational Therapy

Special efforts are being taken to get the mentally challenged and vagrant women get trained in vocational skills like stitch craft and household work. Some inmates are making paper cover, which are being sold to the local shops. Plans are on the anvil to identify and employ more such income generating programs and the basic requirement is adequate investment potential.

After treatment for considerable period ranging from

► DISCHARGE & FOLLOW-UP

6 months to 2 years, we help them to trace their families for a reunion. If we could not find their family, we solicit the support of other welfare organizations those could take care of them for rest of their life. All the discharged patients are visited by our social worker, at least twice a year to maintain constant contact. This sort of follow-up is deemed most essential to be able to continue with the process of counseling both the recovered patients and their family members. This pattern of expression of our concern also gives them a sense of assurance of all time support and nourish in them the feeling of being wanted..

► ACHIEVEMENTS OF ABAYASHRAM

We are glad to look back that our service is rendered to the poorest of the poor; most exploited and neglected class in the society. By protecting vagrant women we achieve protecting the community from spreading of sexual diseases like HIV or AIDS. We saved them from prostitution and unwanted pregnancy and also drug abuse. Legal support were given to inmates to get rightfull share in their family property.

As on date, the Abayashram has a total number of 35 inmates and has to its credit of having rehabilitated 165 abandoned women thus far. This mission, after all is being carried out purely on faith, hope and love.

CHALLENGES

► LOSS OF A VISIONARY, BUT NOT THE VISION

The biggest challenge Vision India ever faced was the sad demise of its founder Daisy Mathew on the 5th May 2007. It came as a big blow to our mission as she was the identifier of the afflicted, informant to the police, linkage with NIMHANS and above all the one to bathe, feed and clothe the women; besides being the bread winner through her practice in the court of law as an advocate. Nevertheless, with the co-founder Joby Jacob Varghese readily assuming the

responsibility and Sarah Joseph getting on to the Board of Trustees brought in a great relief.

► CRITICAL ISSUES

Rehabilitation of the mentally ill women with their respective families is our ultimate aim though; restoration of them to their senses has proved to be the most difficult task. Tracing the origin of the inmate and convincing the family to restore her to the family has always been a challenge. For an example, Palaniamma from Trichinapally (Trichy), Tamilnadu had not known when and why she left her home and how she got pregnant. Subsequent to the treatment for her anaemic condition and poor health she delivered a girl baby on the 10th October 2009, the World Mental Health Day. Getting the baby weaned and the process of adoption were not that easy. Meanwhile, it is not uncommon for the families identified after laborious task to reject their own mother / wife / daughter / sister leaving us with the onus of identifying alternate sources of accommodation.

► INFRASTRUCTURE

Over these years, Vision India got shunted from place to place starting with Thavarakere to Nimbaikaipura to Bhaktharahalli and now to Kattamnallur. The reasons are many. One for want of more room, another for having been charged for bringing bad omen to the village, yet another for not being able to bear the rent. Vision India's immediate need of the hour is an infrastructure. A most conservative estimate for this could be put at INR 20 million or US \$320,000 upward to US \$430,000. This one time capital cost would ensure Vision India to carry through the mission without any interruption as the recurring cost could be always generated through local means, the well wishers of Abayashram.

► HUMAN RESOURCE

This is yet another area of challenge as hardly anybody come up to live with and help people of Vision India's concern. The care for the inmates warrants professional expertise in the form of Social Workers, Health Guides, Nurses, Psychiatrists etc., that cost a lot. After all these are the days the element of humanism and volunteerism is getting lost due to the dictates of market economy.

► HIGHLIGHTS

It has been customary for the Abayashram to celebrate the annual World Mental Health Day on the 10th October 2009. As it was in the yester year, we had the privilege of having amidst us the new Lady Magistrate of the Hoskote Magistrate Court

The visit of the Minister of Higher Education of the Government of Karnataka Mr. Arvind Limbavalli to Abayashram came as a shot in the arm that we are desperately trying to lobby for the allocation of some land site to locate the ashram.

EMERGING NEEDS

VISION INDIA can not be unconcerned about the emerging needs at the expense of its preoccupation with the existing needs. After all, its mandate is to sensitively respond to the agony and anguish of those desolate and distraught so as to lessen their suffering. Perhaps the government can exercise its power to control the causes of such affliction though, VISION INDIA willfully accepts its responsibility to rehabilitate the victims.



Daisy Day Care Centre commissioned on 14.11.2008 has been catering to the need of the differently abled children of the local community in Sagar. This centre stands as a beacon of light in the locality that has a famous Ikkeri Temple. This ideal model of NGO and Panchayat Cooperation is getting stronger that it has already celebrated its first anniversary on the 14th November 2009.

Bidar after all is in the farthest northern part of the state abetting the boundaries of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. Trafficking women by the truckers has become almost a way of life that neither the government or the non-government agencies could do anything to check that. God willing, 2010 is likely to see an abode identical to that of Abayashram in Bidar which has high incidents of cases of mental illness and HIV / AIDS among women.

CONCLUSION

The alarming rate of increase in mental illness these days causes great concern. Whatever being undertaken by Vision India may not meet the need, though, a qualitative effort is being employed to address to the need through Abayashram. It is but a compelling call that demands more and more inputs, as we cannot overlook the afflicted being left on the streets and highways. As we pledge to gear up to meet new demands and challenges, we trust that our well wishers will continue encouraging us with their support that had sustained Abayashram thus far.



THE CHEERFUL GIVERS

“Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me”.
Mathew 25:37 - 40

The whole world and all that therein were created by God and He made man in His own image and made him have dominion over His creations. But man sinned against man and against God. After all, everything is enough for need but nothing is enough for greed. The bane of caste, class and gender has ripped apart the human fabric that the power, status and resources are not equitably and socially distributed leaving the whole mankind in disarray. The children of God nevertheless, put in their best to see that a new social order founded on social justice and human welfare could be ushered in where equality, justice and peace prevail. Givers give with commitment and conviction and after all, they have something great in store for them.

Abayashram of Vision India that has 35 mentally ill and vagrant women on its roll of inmates on date with the credit of having rehabilitated 165 women thus far; virtually depend on the free will offering of cheerful givers who are not cajoled or coaxed either. We take this opportunity to introduce a few of them hereunder:

▶ SANU'S LEGACY



Sanu, a young Male Nurse by profession must have had lots of dreams and desires in his life. But then, he knew that he would not live long as he was terminally ill with cancer. With his access to the pharmacy of the Government of Karnataka he aspired to fulfill his

commitment to the cause of the humanity. As patron of Abayashram in his own right, he had ensured regular free supply of drugs to our inmates through the TB Hospital. Sanu is no more today; but his legacy endures.

▶ SYMPHONIA



For Abayashram, the news below in a national daily came as a great Christmas gift. "One of Bangalore's well-known choirs, Symphonia, is all set to give the people of Bangalore a spirited performance under the theme "Christmas in our Hearts". Proceeds from the programme will go to two charitable organisations, Abayashram and Kadesh Children's Happy Home".

SYMPHONIA, even at the hour of its mourning of the demise of its doyen Gladys Mohanraj, willfully and liberally gave its best to Vision India.

▶ ST. MARK'S CATHEDRAL

St. Marks Cathedral founded in 1808 has completed its 200 years of fruitful ministry. As part of its Outreach Activities, the Cathedral has been playing significant role in the growth and life of other churches in the region, educational institutions and hospitals. The church has regularly collected and contributed funds to provide education and medical aid to the needy. Abayashram feels good to have got enlisted as its beneficiary for the provision of medicines for the inmates on a regular basis.

▶ NATIONAL LAW SCHOOL OF INDIAN UNIVERSITY



A member of The Association of Indian Universities (AIU) with its recognition and funding by UGC, the University assists in students to get financial assistance by way of Government Scholarships, Educational loans from banks, NLSIU Scholarships / Fee Waiver and Academic Assistance Scheme. The University ranked #1 amongst Law Colleges in the India Today-AC Nielsen-ORG Marg Survey of Colleges for 2006-07, has its extended and exceptional concern over Abayashram too.

▶ HOSKOTE MISSION

This celebrated outfit of Mar Thoma Mission in Hoskote has a tremendous influence in the life and growth of Vision India. Perhaps, Vision India would have not come into being but for the mission where Daisy Mathew, the founder of it got the vision to embark on this mission of care for the abused and abandoned women through Abayashram. The Mission, well known for its medical ministry continues with its concern for the inmates of Abayashram, with specific reference to those afflicted with HIV/AIDS right since its inception.

▶ CSI MEMORIAL CHURCH, WHITEFIELD

This church, noted for its outreach ministry has adopted Abayashram and has been extending its concern for the past several years. The Executive Director of Vision India, as a member of this church has been in constant touch with the Presbyter, Pastorate Committee and the members of the congregation and the ministry of the church and Vision India has become virtually integrated.

▶ MVJ MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL

This hospital offers free consultation. This great place of learning of medicine, not so far from Abayashram has been good enough to extend its concern by treating the

inmates for all forms of ailments. The Department of Psychiatry has assumed lots of responsibility in rendering assistance, whereby the need for total dependence on NMHANS has been considerably reduced; thus resulting in savings of precious time and money.

► SISTERS OF FATIMA

It was good to have the Novices of this Convent visiting Abayashram to express their care and concern for the inmates. Even as they, in batches of few tried to learn about the means and methods of extending socio-economic concern for the poor and marginalized, they also rendered their service of caring for the women in terms of their personal hygiene and well being.

► AND MANY MORE

The aforesaid are just a few of those many who have been continually patronizing the mission of Vision India through Abayashram. They are not mere givers, giving out of their opulence; but out of their meagre provisions and that remind us the elements of faith and hope that sustains the mission and also the love of those cheerful givers.

"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love".

I Corinthians 13:13



Visit of **Mr. Aravind Limbavali**
Minister of Higher Education
Govt. of Karnataka



Visit of
Justice Yeramel Kalpana



A picnic to Kaiwara

Tread Softly

By: **Sudha Rathinam**
Counselor

"Come along with me for a walk"
A walk?
Yes a walk.
"In this heat I can't".
You can't or won't.
I'm shocked at her analysis.

"Can you see them?
Who?
"Oh! Them my husband, my children, standing by the barbed fence and beckoning me to come. I've to go home, please don't keep me here, let me go, let me go".

"Do you know how it is to be poked(injected) with a sharp needle again and again, dressed up as a goddess, worshipped and then dragged into dark bushes....."

"My back hurts, I can't stand erect, 15 men sat on my back and did things to me Am I a witch?"

"My father is no more, my mother does not want me, I sought my own and found none to own me, now am here, can I escape from here, I know I can, do I want to be abused again you answer."

Heart rending narrations. I need Godly wisdom and Christ like knowledge to understand their turmoil.

Working for over 14 years as a trained counselor and with 30 years of teaching experience, am dumbfounded and helpless. No amount of reading or first hand listening, has helped me to be equipped enough to ease their pain or encourage them to "let go".

Am enlightened though: in 'letting go' for them... there is no shield to hide behind.

There is no solid rock to stand or dance in glee with phantom figures.

There is no shying away into the toilet.

There are no green cards / blue cards that can carry them across into Ulysses world of Lotus Eaters.

There will be no conversations, babblings, cursings and knowing laughters.....
So I

Let them hold on to their shields, rocks, toilets, green cards or blue and to lengthy conversations and laughters.

I learnt to tread softly into their world, they've taken me into their deepest voids, they trusted me into their bottomless fears and innocent light hearted smiles, and they are my guides and constantly teach that books are empty leaves. They taught me the 'vanity' of boastings, the nothingness and emptiness of promises made by boosters, the pitiable awareness less humans.

I hold on to their eye openings, I trust their experiences, I appeal to you too, to 'tread softly', into their world. Reach out to them with honest genuineness. Give them a moment, and don't shrug away saying "Am I my sister's keeper!"

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Joby Jacob Varghese
Executive Trustee
M: 91-98452 20194
jobyvj@rediffmail.com



Dr. Valsa Koshy
Trustee
M: 91-94438 97458



Emerson Samuel
Trustee
Tel: 91-80-25460318
E-mail: esamuel@vsnl.net



Sara Joseph
Trustee
Tel: 91-80-25533071



Our Team

Consultant Psychiatrist	: Dr. Meera Balaraj	Program Coordinator	: Shiju James
Consultant Psychologist	: Sudha Rathinam	Nurses	: Ruben Prasad & Bibin Philip
Advocate	: Anuroopa Giliyal	Supervisor	: Shanthi Joseph
Accountant	: Janci John	Care Giver	: Muni Lakshmi

For More Information:

Regd. Office : **VISION INDIA**
A-3, Kudhiramuka Colony, Sarjapura Road
2nd Block, Koramangala, Bangalore - 560 034
Ph: 91-80-25533071
www.vision-india.net.in

ABAYASHRAM
Kattamnallur, Virgonagar Post
Bangalore - 560 049
E-mail: ashramvision@rediffmail.com
Mob: 91-99455 18190 / 91-94488 03824

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