

Annual Report 2023-2024

Overview

Vincentian Social Services – India Kottayam (De Care) is the philanthropic wing of the St Joseph Province of the Vincentian Congregation. Since its inception in 1993, it has been active in championing for the needs of the marginalized. It works in establishing an egalitarian society by taking care of the children in need of care and protection, destitute men of the society, the hunger on the streets, victims of the disasters, marginalized communities like HIV infected and affected population, women in need of empowerment etc. Located in the capital city of Thiruvananthapuram, it reaches specially to the coastal and tribal regions of Trivandrum.

Our Motto

Caring for the Globe

Our Vision

Towards a caring, peaceful society, with concern for the empowerment and well-being for the last and the least in the spirit of St Vincent de Paul, our founder and inspiration.

Our Mission

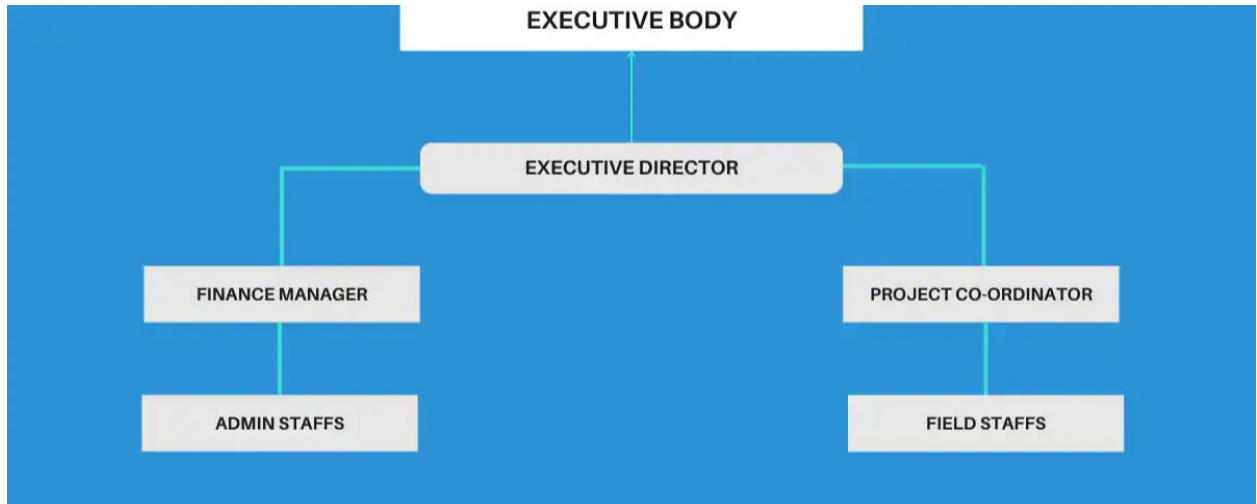
Caring to promote education, health, equity, socio-economic advancement, so as to ensure descent standards of living and well-being to the underprivileged, ultimately aimed at fostering sustainable development of communities.

Our Objectives

- Engaging in the capacity building of the people at the margins through education, livelihood training, entrepreneurship development initiatives.
- Provide relief and rehabilitation to the disaster victims in different parts of the country and assisting them to rebuild their lives.
- To promote health and family welfare activities, and to provide for treatment and counselling services. especially to the alcoholics and the drug addicts.
- Advocacy for the causes of the people and groups at the margins.

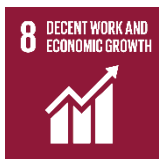
- Promoting environment friendly activities and responsible citizenship.
- To advocate for social justice, ensuring gender equality and engaging in social change efforts.

Our Administration Structure



Our Services

In the reporting year, Vincentian Social Services extended its activities upon various sectors, focusing on the fulfillment of the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals). Joining hands with the world nations, we march towards more peaceful, prosperous and sustainable future for all. The following were the different areas of our services;



Decent Work and Economic Growth – Weaving Lives



Zero Hunger – SDG 2



Quality Education – SDG 4 – De Scholars



Good Health and Wellbeing – SDG 3- Koottu



Safe and Affordable Housing – SDG 11.1 – Habitat Development



No Poverty – SDG 1 –



Gender Equality – SDG 5



Reduced Inequalities – SDG 10

Education

We believe that education is the key that will allow many other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved. When people are able to get quality education they can break from the

cycle of poverty. Education helps to reduce inequalities and to reach gender equality. It empowers people everywhere to live more healthy and sustainable lives.

Education is also crucial to fostering tolerance between people and contributes to more peaceful societies.

De Scholars

De Scholars is a scholarship program aimed at the educational uplift of economically weak children from all over India. It was launched in the context of the second wave of covid 19 pandemic where many children from our country lost either of their parents. By May 2021 we began with identifying children from poor financial backgrounds, the priority being COVID victims. In this program, we assist the education of school going children and the students pursuing degree courses from the colleges through educational scholarships on a sustainable basis.

As of now, De Scholars reaches to around 70 children from different parts of the country. Currently, we are updating the program with a view to ensure the quality and transparency of the program.

Our interventions target children and adolescents facing vulnerabilities such as loss of parents during COVID-19, socio-economic barriers to education, fragmented family backgrounds, and economic marginalization. We also prioritize support for children affected by HIV/AIDS. These high-risk groups need holistic, sustainable social work interventions to mitigate adverse outcomes and build resilience.

Skill Development Program

Having the right skills is the need of the hour. By the grace of God, we could begin a new program (Skill Development Program) on behalf of Vincentian De Care. In collaboration with KIMS hospitals, we could enroll around 20 students from the coastal community of Poonthura, Trivandrum for the Patient Care Assistant course, which is a one year program. Under this program, the students are provided a stipend of Rs 5000 per month.

Digital Transformation Program- Partnering with National NGO Confederation

De Care, being one among the project implementing agencies of the National NGO Confederation, successfully partnered in the execution of the Digital Transformation India

program by distributing laptops for the students pursuing higher secondary and degree studies. Around 40 laptops were distributed as part of the project.



Koottu (A Malayalam term signifying friendship, support etc) – **Good Health and Wellbeing**

Koottu is a project designed for the socio-economic empowerment of the HIV affected and infected population of Trivandrum district. This project includes financial scholarships for the affected students, capacity building programs, distribution of medical aid, school bags, cloths, education materials, capacity building initiatives, entrepreneurship development initiatives for women etc. De care undertakes this project in collaboration with Kerala state AIDS control society (KSACS) and TDNP+.

Weaving Lives

Weaving Lives aims to break the vicious circle of poverty and to save the lives of women affected/infected with HIV through providing livelihood by giving them tailoring machines and making them independent. As part of this program, we distributed around **45 tailoring machines to women of Trivandrum and Kollam districts**. Prior to the distribution, there was training organized by De Care, **funded by the CSR of ESAF**. We also aim to establish market linkages for these women.



Zero Hunger

Zero Hunger forms part of the organization's commitment to the sustainable development goal 2, Zero Hunger. The Vincentian houses in Ambattoor, Bangalore, Mumbai (major cities of India) are actively engaged in the mission of feeding the poor. The beneficiaries of this programme include the poor, pavement dwellers, patients etc. The Zero Hunger program in Mumbai reaches out daily to more than 500 people visiting the well known TATA hospital. The Vincentian fathers and the volunteers distribute grocery kits (15 items) to 100 families every month. Also fruits packets are supplied thrice in a week to around 200 terminally ill patients at Lokmanya Tilak Hospital, Mumbai. The program also takes care of the medical and other needs of the patients. This year, we have begun 'Zero hunger' programs attached with our units, Trivandrum, Kaloar, Kuravilangadu etc. At Trivandrum, our office team conduct the program every Wednesday by providing 150 packets of cooked meals for the patients and bystanders in Medical College, Thiruvananthapuram. At Kaloar and Kuravilangadu, under the leadership of De Care animator and volunteers, food packets are provided to different rehabilitation centers and old age homes.



De Care Communities

This program envisages the formation of De Care Communities attached to every Vincentian community. De Care Community is a group consisting of dedicated and societally committed individuals aiming to extend the activities of Vincentian Social Services (De Care) to the grassroots and spreading the beauty of Vincentian charity to the neighborhoods. The De Care Communities function actively undertaking activities such as constructing houses for the homeless, providing medical aid, educational scholarship etc. De Care aims to establish De Care Communities attached to its every unit. De Care Community is conceptualized as a lay fraternity of De Care which is guided by the De Care Animators (the social service directors of each unit). Through the constant efforts, new De Care Communities were formed in Trivandrum, Kanjirappilly, Kuravilangadu, Kaloor, Aruvithura, Thodupuzha and Myladi. At the same time, the department feels proud of the various activities undertaken by the De Care Communities that already exist.



Wellness Village

Wellness Village (Palliative Care in Vincentian Neighbourhoods) is a community based palliative care service program launched in association with the festal celebrations of the of our inspiration, St Vincent De Paul. Under this program, the Vincentian communities (De Care Communities) devote themselves this year in a special way for the palliative care in the neighborhoods. Each community adopted a minimum of five families who are financially backward, socially deserving and in ill health. We strive to accompany the selected families on a sustained mode with the participation and cooperation of the local people. One of the ways

to get to the right person was to seek out the help of the ASHA workers/representatives of the local self-governments. In some cases, we used our own network to identify the needy families. Once we started the program and visited the families, we came across with the different needs and funds were required to meet them. We mobilized the resources from the local community itself.

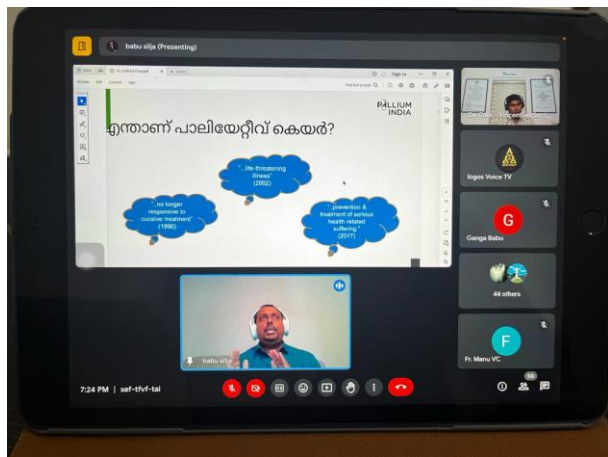
Our activities included:

- House Visits
- Spiritual and Emotional support
- Economic assistance
- Distribution of food parcels (only if necessary)
- Distribution of medical and grocery kits (only if necessary)
- Working to create a friendly environment around the patients and their families.
- Linkages with various organizations working in the field of palliative care.

The program is guided by the principle that there is enough social capital available to build a safety net in the community around the patients.

Capacity Building for De Care Communities

As part of capacity building of the De Care Communities, we arranged a one hour Google meet session on the practical aspects of Wellness Village, the palliative care outreach program. The resource person for the session was Dr Sunil, winner of Cancer Aid Society International Excellence Award, 2023. The session shared meaningful insights on the different aspects of palliative care clearing the doubts of the volunteers. The session would definitely enlighten the volunteers and the De Care Animators in pursuing the Wellness Village program. Around 30 participants attended the meeting.



Dhoshth- A group for the Migrant Labourers

The De Care Kanjirappilly unit organized a highly successful assembly for migrant workers in and around Kanjirappilly, hosted at St. Dominic's Higher Secondary School. The event garnered a remarkable turnout of more than 50 attendees, underscoring the community's active participation and the profound impact of the initiatives undertaken. At the heart of the gathering was a meticulously organized medical camp, where devoted healthcare professionals provided invaluable services to the participants. Furthermore, Vimukti Mission conducted an enlightening session shedding light on the adverse effects of drug abuse, significantly contributing to the overall well-being of the attendees. The seamless execution of the event was well coordinated by the animators of the De Care Kanjirappilly unit.



Barrier Free Home

Accessibility has been a topic of serious discussion since the beginning of the 21st century. Many schemes, policies, programs, etc. have been brought in to ensure this at national as well as state levels. Yet, the question of accessibility remains, and that poses a serious question on the efficacy of thus formed policies and programs. It is thus evident that there is a gap in the policies and their realization at the grassroot level. Capacity building of all the associated stakeholders is one solution that could be brought in to bridge this gap and that should begin with the policy makers associated. Vincentian Social Services (De Care) in association with ESAF Foundation, Barrier Free Consultancy Cell (BFCC) under Social Justice department, NeoMotion and Pallium India, hosted a capacity building workshop on 14th December 2023 (Thursday) at the J.C.Alexander Hall of Architecture and Planning Department of College of Engineering Trivandrum (CET). The program was attended by various dignitaries including Mr. Medayil Vikaraman (Public Works Standing Committee Chairperson), representatives from the National Institute of Speech and Hearing (NISH), Vocational Rehabilitation Center (VRC), SCERT, Social Justice department, architects, planners, architecture students and social workers.



Women On Wheels

Women on Wheels, a project of National NGO Confederation in collaboration with the different Project Implementing Agencies aims at the empowerment of women. This project provides two wheelers for women working in the services sector with 50% subsidy. Being one of the Project Implementing Agency, De Care – Vincentian Social Services distributed Honda Activa Scooters for selected women.



Health; A Universal Right

De Care in view of extending its activities to the tribal habitations of Trivandrum and as part of its commitment to the health of the rural populations, conducted a medical camp at Kottoor, a tribal settlement in Trivandrum. The CSR department of ESAF bank, ESAF foundation, KIMS HEALTH and Sree Nethra Eye Hospital co-partnered in this program. Around 100 people including the children in the tribal hostels from the tribal settlements attended the camp. The camp was really helpful for the people living in the tribal hamlets who otherwise will have to travel a long distance to avail the service of the primary health Centre. The camp was inaugurated by G Manikandan, President of Kuttichal gramapanchayath.



SMART SCREEN

“I fear the day that technology will surpass our human interaction. And the world will have a generation of idiots” - **Albert Einstein**

The world has gone digital and all generations, the young and the old alike are increasingly using screens for entertainment, information and day to day activities. For many, the use of digital devices has become an integral part of their life and they have developed tolerance for screens. The excessive dependence on screens or digital addiction has by now become a global health crisis, especially in the post COVID era. This situation calls for grassroot level interventions and research. The project, “SMART SCREEN” aims at promoting a healthy digital life among the school going adolescent children in the coastal areas of Thiruvananthapuram, the capital city of Kerala. It endeavours to study the extent of screen addiction in children and undertake interventions to combat it.

De Care undertakes this new project in collaboration with the Loyola College of Social Sciences and Trivandrum Social Services (TSS). We are looking forward to collaborate with the Kerala Cyberdome, D- DAD and other agencies. The stakeholders of this project would be

1250 children from seven schools in the coastal regions of Trivandrum, their parents and teachers. We are at the initial phase of the project, ie, the data collection and assessment and many more activities are to follow.



Home: A Promise of Dignity

Homelessness is a situation of human right crisis and it calls for a devoted and immediate solution. The De Care Housing Program has ever been committed to the homeless in the society. We laid the foundation for a new house at Chittazha, Thiruvananthapuram.



Presence in Social Media

De Care – Vincentian Social Services has made its presence alive in the various social media platforms like youtube, instagram and facebook. The website was also updated as part of it. The following are the links to our social media pages. We would be posting our activities and updates and reaching to you as well as the public through these pages. Kindly subscribe, share and follow:

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/vincentiansocialservices>

Website

<https://www.decare.co.in>

Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/decaresocialservices/>

Youtube

<https://www.youtube.com/@DeCare-VincentianSocialService>

Our Partners

Our partners of this reporting year were Loyola College of Social Sciences, ESAF Foundation, KIMS HEALTH CSR, National NGO Confederation.