



## Vision 2022

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### **Mission:**

- Our mission is to help destitute women, children and men from all over India exercise their right to a higher quality of life, irrespective of gender, caste, creed or religion.
- Identify and understand the root causes of violence and despair experienced by women and children in India.
- Develop and deliver services to address these root causes and their effects in villages and slums, so women and children are healthy, happy and self-reliant.
- Where possible, support family reunification, providing services, counseling, work training and more, as needed to support healthy and stable homes .When family reunification is not possible or desirable, provide safe and loving residential educational and developmental services for children and women.
- Enable sustainable communities by addressing economic, education, health and environmental issues focusing in villages and slums.

### **Vision:**

No matter who we are, we walk together towards wholeness. All have the opportunity for a decent life, dignity and happiness irrespective of caste, gender or religion. To work until there is no longer any need for organizations such as Maher.

### **Values:**

- Embracing all people regardless of caste, class and ethnicity.
- Interfaith values in daily life and all operations.
- Unconditional love and respect for all.
- Social justice for all regardless of caste, class or gender.
- Truth, transparency and fairness in all interactions and in distribution of resources.
- Re-awakening our personal relationship with Mother Earth and treating her as the Body of the Divine.
- Life-long learning and continual re-evaluation and change.

**Till date, Maher has impacted 38,860 beneficiaries.**

## SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS:

Since its founding in 1997, Maher has grown from one small home to 43 homes in three Indian states.

### Beneficiaries of Maher:

	Total Number of Adults Served	Total Number of Children Served
Residential Homes	4060 women + 200 men	3100 children
Slum and Village Outreach Programs	10,000+ (SHG beneficiaries)	4000 (kindergarten beneficiaries)
Livelihood Training	2,500 women and youth	
Awareness Programs	15,000+ (indirect beneficiaries)	
<b>Total</b>	<b>38,860</b>	

Maher's efforts to strengthen India by providing values-based education and advancement opportunities to individuals and communities have been recognized nationally and internationally, through designations, books and film, and honors such as:

- Special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN – ECOSOC) in May 2017.
- Around 130 awards and honors (national and international), including the prestigious Nari Shakti Puraskar for Maher's contribution to the betterment of women. This was awarded at the hands of the President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee in March 2016.
- *Sister Heart: The Story of an Indian Nun*, Rocafilm, 2015
- Honorary Attendance at The Clinton Global Initiative, 2015
- *Women Healing Women: A Model of Hope for Oppressed Women Everywhere*, Will Keepin, PhD, Cynthia Brix, MDiv., 2009
- *"Dignity from Despair – A step by step guide for transforming the lives of women and children"* by Darcy Cunningham from USA
- *"Beyond an Encounter in Art"* a book edited by Kultureformen from the Hartheim Institute, Dr. Wolfgang Schwaiger and Kristiane Petersmann
- *"Sneha Veedu"*, a book written in Malayalam by one of our staff, E.R. Vijayan from Kerala
- *"Life is Love"* by Maher students.
- a 14-minute CD prepared by Sanjay Hal Beery

### Funding and support:

- Currently, Maher Friends organizations in Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the U.S. provide ongoing funding to support Maher's operations and projects.
- Maher also receives support from many Indian corporate companies and international organizations.

### Growth:

Maher has grown rapidly and organically based on urgent community needs and available donor support during its first 20 years. Sr. Lucy believes that "(each time a person in need is placed in front of me, someone to help also comes forward)." As Maher has become more well-known, it has become a trusted referral source for law enforcement, NGOs, villagers and slum residents.

## SWOT Analysis:

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experienced, visionary leadership</li> <li>• Positive, respected outcomes. Presence of Maher homes in many places.</li> <li>• Outstanding relationships with local communities</li> <li>• Healthy community values promoting inter-faith tolerance</li> <li>• Trained social workers. Committed staff</li> <li>• Sr. Lucy has developed a network of Indian and international friends and donors</li> <li>• Maher Youth Ambassadors in India, US, Europe, Uganda</li> <li>• Growing, influential group of Indian volunteers and supporters</li> <li>• Maher alums give back to Maher</li> <li>• International network of volunteers</li> <li>• Maher work is well recognized and appreciated.</li> <li>• Corporate representation in the board, along with representation from other likeminded NGOs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Challenges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing demand that challenges “there’s always room for one more”</li> <li>• Limited administrative staff so as many resources as possible can be dedicated to direct service for India’s most vulnerable</li> <li>• Government regulations and oversight</li> <li>• 100% reliance on grant and donor funding</li> <li>• Absence of dedicated Administrative Operations person and Fund Development Coordinator requires Sr. Lucy and Hirabegum to spend valuable time on issues relating to daily operations, which means planned, coordinated, sustained donor solicitation often falls through the cracks</li> <li>• Lack of adequate technological infrastructure in Maher offices (laptops for staff)</li> <li>• Lack of advisory board – knowledgeable legal and financial advisor</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for homes like Maher</li> <li>• Utilize Maher’s positive outcomes to obtain multi-year General Operating Support for residential homes</li> <li>• Strengthen Maher’s long-term capability to build a better India by adding two administrative positions. One position would be dedicated to Fund Development and one would be dedicated to Administrative Operations.</li> <li>• Expand global awareness of Maher in ways that support Maher financially</li> <li>• Maher has a number of highly-trained young people who are committed to the work and join the staff formally</li> <li>• Bring about awareness of our Interfaith Association for Service of Humanity and Nature.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate companies may stop funding anytime, depending on their priorities.</li> <li>• Community interest and demand for Maher’s model outpaces space, capacity, staff capabilities</li> <li>• While Sr. Lucy’s faith that the funding will come has a strong track record, this method causes some Board members &amp; volunteers concern</li> <li>• Incapacitation of key personnel, such as Sr. Lucy Kurien, Hirabegum Mulla, National Center Manager would pose a significant issue to the organization in spite of succession planning efforts</li> <li>• Future expansion requires additional staff</li> </ul>

**Conclusion of Situational Analysis:** Maher has been successful in its mission till now and is known for its transparency. More and more people are inviting us to start similar type of work in different villages of India.

## **PATH FOR THE FUTURE:**

(Based on a question and answer session with the Founder, Sr. Lucy Kurien)

### **1. Describe your ideal for Maher in 5 years:**

My ideal for Maher is when we could increase the reach of our projects, both in terms of direct and indirect beneficiaries. I would like to expand Maher to as many places as possible within India. Also, in terms of leadership, I hope to find and groom a suitable successor, so that the operational management of Maher may shift from my hands to another. I wish to use more of my time to mentor and guide more women, children and men, whether they are inmates of Maher or even outsiders who might need help. Also, I wish to make better known the interfaith ideals I believe in. I would like to have more time to function as an advisor for other organizations modeled on Maher. Of course I would continue to be deeply involved in Maher activities, except that I would like to be able to work on it from a larger context without having to be pinned down by the time-consuming detailed operational level issues. I want to see Maher receiving more support from new friendships both with individuals and foundations/organizations. Maher has recently seen a rise in the funds coming from within India. I want to work to increase this further while being grateful to all our past donors and continuing our association with them.

### **2. What do you want Maher to become in that time?**

#### **i. Characteristics, description and direction**

Maher has always come across to the world as an organization that runs on the values of transparency and integrity. I want Maher to continue its work on the same values. The core philosophy of Maher is a sincere and loving approach to improving the condition of the disadvantaged and underprivileged, with which I founded Maher 20 years ago, and on which Maher still stands strong. I wish to continue the work of Maher on the same philosophy. "Maher" means "mother's home" in the local language Marathi, and I want it to continue to be the same both in letter and in spirit. It is not just an institution, but a "home" to its people giving them the freedom and love one experiences in one's own home.

#### **ii. Outreach level**

Maher has been founded with the objective of protecting destitute and battered women and children. An additional Maher objective is to shelter aged/mentally ill, homeless men. We also have multiple projects for village and slum development.

Maher is not only involved in charitable work for fulfilling the immediate urgent needs of the poor, but also works with long-term developmental goals so that the poor may no longer remain poor and

marginalized. Maher's long term mission is to work until there is no longer a need for organizations like Maher.

In the coming future also, we intend to continue with our work in this aspect and continue the village development projects we now have and we may go in for more need-based programs such as mobile clinic, mobile computer classes and spoken English classes for Maher and village children. We will also have a clothes delivery van for the poor.

**Direct Beneficiaries:** In the coming 5 years, we want to increase the level of our outreach **by another 50%** by increasing the number of our direct beneficiaries to 1900 (**1200 children, 500 women, 200 men**) from the current number of 1231. This we hope to do by increasing our funds collected. Further details on funds are mentioned in answer 2 (v).

**Non-residential and Indirect Beneficiaries:**

- Maher has general awareness programs in the remote villages on issues like gender bias, AIDS awareness, health and hygiene, family planning etc. We have reached out to **15,000+ indirect beneficiaries** through our awareness programs. On an average, we have 50 awareness programs a year which will increase as per the needs of the communities we work in.
- Currently Maher has helped in forming **552 SHGs** (Self Help Groups) which are microloan groups that teach and aid the villagers to save their money. The count of Maher's non-residential beneficiaries (SHGs, Livelihood Training programs, Kindergarten programs) is **16,500+**, which will increase further in the future. We project an outreach of 22,000+ non-residential beneficiaries by 2022.

**iii. Number of Maher centres**

With the construction cost of 1 home ranging between Rs. 60 lakhs-1 crore (Rs. 1,00,00,000), in the next five years, we hope to increase the number of homes from **43 to 50**. At the moment, the total future plan includes the following fixed asset projects:

S. no.	Project Title	Approximate Cost in INR	Project Completion Year
1	Play ground and Fencing for Apti children's home	7,70,000	2018
2	Kitchen and compound wall for Thakarwasti Children's Home	8,35,000	2018
3	Production Unit at Vatsalyadham	30,00,000	2018
4	School bus for Ranchi Children's Home	24,03,275	2018
5	Home for Aged Men in Sanaswadi	85,00,000	2019
6	Swagat Home (Admin office) new building construction	1,25,00,000	2020
7	Home for the HIV AIDS affected in Ratnagiri	58,00,000	2020

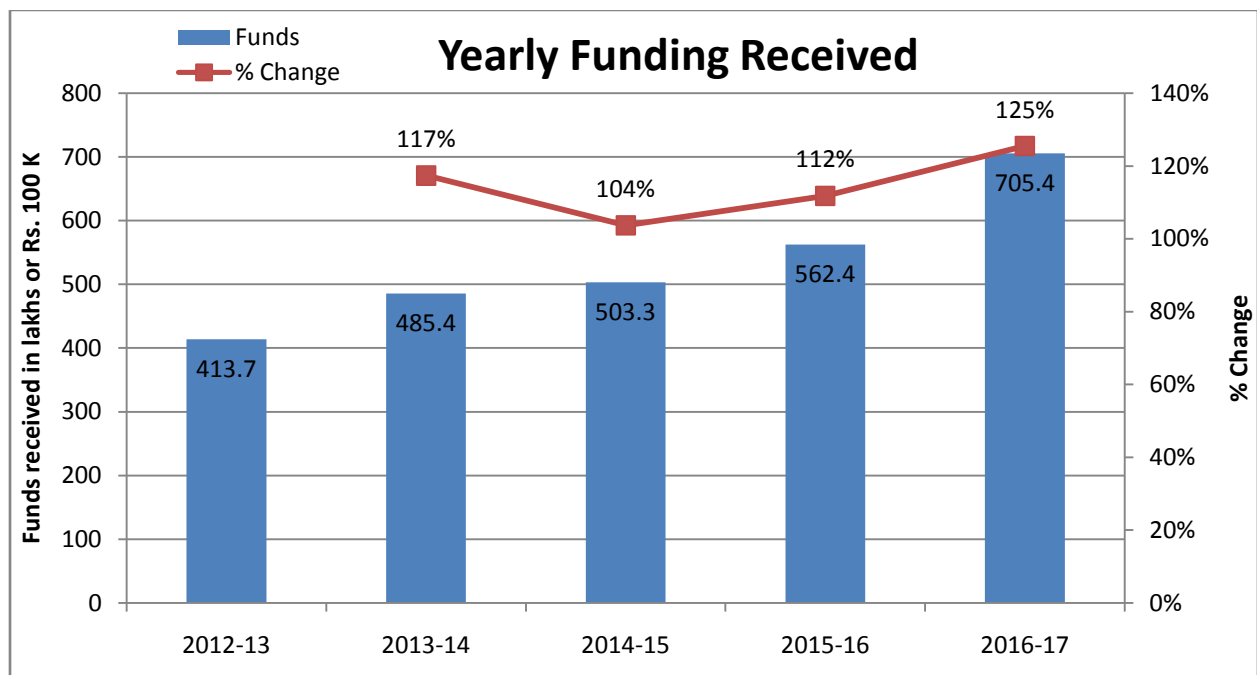
S. no.	Project Title	Approximate Cost in INR	Project Completion Year
8	Home for the mentally challenged	65,00,000	2022
9	Homes in Satara for destitute women and children (3 homes)	1,92,00,000	2023
10	Staff quarters at Vatsalyadham	72,00,000	2023
11	Matruchaya home for destitute women and children in Kolkata (3 homes)	1,98,00,000	2025
12	Homes in Ranchi for destitute women and men	1,33,00,000	2025
13	Staff quarters at Ranchi, Jharkhand	40,00,000	2025
14	Staff quarters in Kolkata	22,00,000	2025
15	Staff Quarters at Satara	25,00,000	2025

#### iv. Locations

We would like to increase our focus on Jharkhand as the plight of the people there is very poor. Maher is currently located in Maharashtra, Jharkhand and Kerala. As of now, we have plans to expand Maher in other places like **Kolkata, Karnataka and Satara district in Maharashtra**. In the next 5 years, I intend to develop Maher centres well in these areas, while continuing to increase the scope of its centres in the present locations.

#### v. Fund size and Growth rate

Our fund size has grown at the following rate in the last 4 years:



***The reasons for this variation in growth are as follows:***

- 2014-15 saw a dip in the growth rate (from 17% to 4%) because of lack of adequate staff for fundraising.
- Later years have shown an increase in funding (from 4% to 12% to 25%) because of: (A) the presence of staff dedicated to fundraising. (B) More fund intensive building projects in 2016-17. (C) The change in Indian Laws with regard to CSR support making its mark known gradually. Please see further details in Answer 2 (vii) – bullet point 3.

We hope to continue at a modest 8% growth rate per year in the next 5 years to cross the **Rs. 10 crore (Rs. 10,00,00,000 or approximately USD \$1.5+ million) mark by 2022.**

This we plan to increase by:

- Raising awareness about Maher in Indian and international companies/foundations
- Individual contacts to be increased
- Sale of items produced in Maher production centre
- Maher ex-students funds to be increased. Maher has tried to create values in children to give back to society.

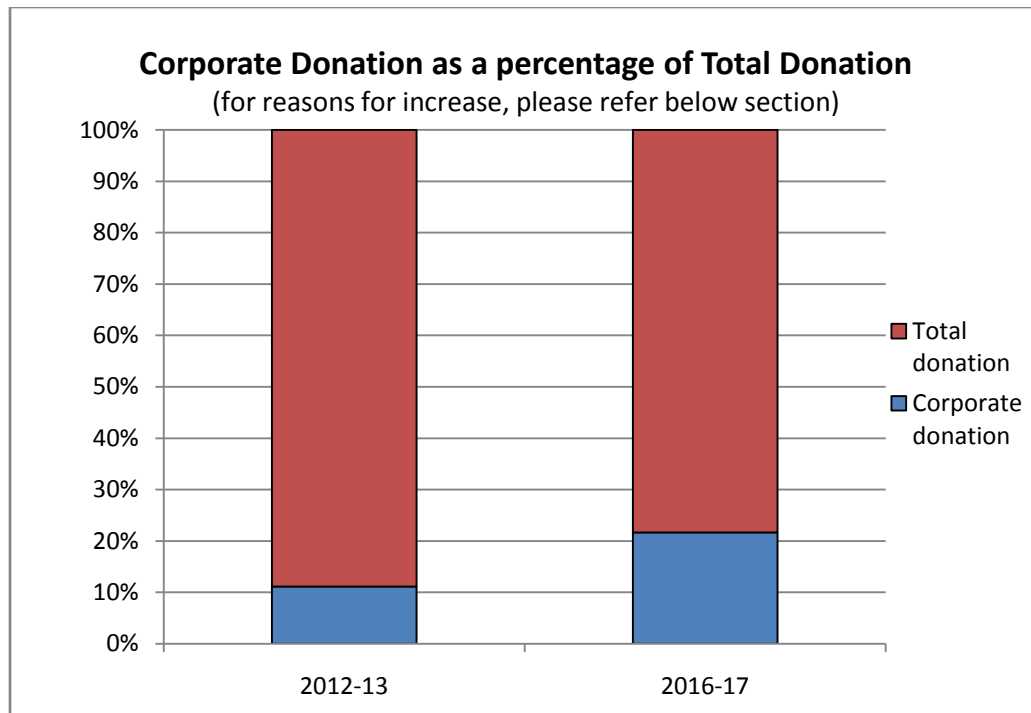
***vi. Project types***

In the next five years,

- ***Production centres:*** I want to begin production centres similar to the one in Vadhu in Vatsalyadham, Jharkhand, Sanaswadi, Ratnagiri and Kolkata. I would like to increase the focus on the livelihood projects in these areas, while continuing to strengthen the basic shelter services for the destitute.
- ***Balwadis:*** I would also like to start more kindergartens or Balwadis in Jharkhand.
- ***Mobile Computer Class:*** I want to bring into Maher’s purview a project for increasing computer literacy in backward interior villages through the use of a Mobile Computer Van equipped with computers. This project has been on my mind for quite some time however I am waiting to receive funding for it.
- ***Mobile Health Clinic:*** A mobile clinic is another new service that I would like to bring about for the remotest villages.

***vii. Strategic partners and opportunities***

- ***Payment Gateway:*** In the next few years, we need to develop a payment gateway option for the Indian donors of Maher through the medium of our website. We do not have this service presently and are looking for solutions to bridge this gap in our system.
- ***Networking:*** I would like to partner with other NGOs towards increasing the scope and visibility of Maher.
- ***Corporate funding:***



***Reasons for increase in Corporate Funding:***

Maher's corporate funding as a part of the total funding has more than **doubled in size over the past 4 years (grew from 12.5% in 2012-13 to 27.7% in 2016-17)** and reasons for this sudden increase are as follows:

- Increasing support from the Indian corporate companies due to the amendment in the Company's Act 1956 in the year 2013 encouraging more Indian companies to donate a percentage of their profits for CSR activities. This amendment is slowly making its mark known in terms of our corporate funding.
- Increased expansion of Maher's funding requests with the help of our top leadership, international volunteers and office employees.
- Also, Maher is gaining more popularity through the medium of the internet, so I expect that we continue to grow tremendously in this aspect. Maher is especially popular in a diverse nation like India because of its tolerance towards all religious beliefs.

***viii. Employees***

One of the biggest strength of Maher is the people who work for Maher. I would like to increase the overall strength of the workforce from 200 to **270**, while bringing about a situation where the number of employees working at Maher for 7 years or more is high. **This number is already high (45% of the total number of employees have worked at Maher for 7 years or more)**. Maher has been able to maintain a high retention rate over the past 20 years. I wish to continue in the same way and continue to bank on the loyalty of my people towards Maher and its blessed work.



In terms of funding, I would like to receive more support/funds to pay the staff, so as to be able to attract more qualified talent.

**ix. Tracking of beneficiaries – Database**

Maher has recently refurbished its database to include more extensive and easily available data about our beneficiaries, however we also need to improve the tracking of our youth leaving Maher after they become independent and get a job. Maher has an ex-student association “Maher Kiran” and I see this association growing in size with so many of our first-generation Maher students now growing up, becoming financially independent and moving out of Maher.

**3. In 5 years, what would make you excited about Maher’s growth?**

**i. What results or improvements have you made?**

What gets me most joy is when I see my young Maher children grow up and become responsible, independent individuals capable of managing their own finances and settle down successfully. Many of our Maher students have got married and it is a joy to see them happily managing their lives.

Another joy is the love I receive from the villagers where Maher has successfully established its work. To think that these were the same people who rejected and suspected me 20 years ago, I am very happy to see that Maher’s sincere approach to social work has won so many hearts. Also, I am grateful to Maher friends and well-wishers, both in India and abroad, who motivate me and my staff to give our best.

**ii. What challenges, problems or issues have been fixed?**

Maher has always advocated its zero tolerance of corruption and because of not paying bribe, we have many a times faced delays in our work. However, Maher has never let go of its values of integrity and transparency and we have always faced our problems with a determination to succeed. Many a times, Maher has faced hostility from villagers who are ignorant of our work but we have always tackled matters with love, diplomacy and dexterity.

**Conclusion:**

***In 5 years, what has to happen in Maher for you to be happy with your role and results?***

I would like to increase the outreach of Maher while increasing the scope to include the growth of pro-environment groups. I would like to increase the friendships of Maher with organizations and individuals and attract people who would love, care and accept my people (the beneficiaries of Maher) as they are. I would like to see my staff taking more ownership and accountability for their work. In the future, I wish to groom a successor who could lead Maher’s day-to-day operational activities giving me the freedom to

guide Maher as a spiritual advisor concentrating on inter-faith values. My aim has always been to empower people to come out of their misery and live a life of dignity.