

## Annual Report 2017 - 2018

United Nations



Nations Unies

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS BRANCH  
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27 April 2017

Dear NGO Representative,

### Subject: Follow-up to the decision of the Economic and Social Council

I am pleased to inform you that the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) at its Coordination and management meeting of April 2017 adopted the recommendation of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to grant **special** consultative status to your organization, **Maher**. On behalf of all staff of the Non-Governmental Organizations Branch/OESC/DESA, please accept our heartfelt congratulations.

Consultative status for an organization enables it to actively engage with ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies, as well as with the United Nations Secretariat, programmes, funds and agencies in a number of ways. In order to better understand this relationship, we take this opportunity to provide some critical information about the **privileges** that consultative status with ECOSOC confers on your organization as well as the **obligations** that your organization will be required relationship. We therefore urge you to take the time to carefully



**MAHER AWARDED "CONSULTATIVE STATUS"  
BY THE UNITED NATIONS (APRIL 2017)**



# MAHER

## ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18



नव जीवनाची सुरुवात

# MAHER

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**MAHER**

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॥ सर्वधर्म समभाव ॥



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# ANNUAL REPORT -2017-18

(1 APRIL 2017 - 31 MARCH 2018)



## Preface

I am very happy to present this Annual Report of Maher Activities for the period 1 April 2017 - 31 March 2018. Following are some of the notable developments over the period:

The most important of the events during this period has been award of the 'Consultative Status' by the United Nations. It has been a matter of great pride and satisfaction for all Maherites that the United Nations took the notice of Maher's work and selected it to be among the chosen few NGOs from all over the world to be associated with its work. We hope Maher would be able to benefit from this new status in terms of experience and insight as also help the United Nations and the fellow organisations in their common mission.

The inauguration of Maher Kurien Kaladalan was a long dream come true. Since its inception in 1997, Maher has always strived to bring in some meaning and purpose to the life of the abandoned, the poor and the disturbed. Of these the mentally handicapped and the disturbed are probably the most neglected sections of our society. Maher always planned for making the life of these unfortunate souls a little better and satisfying to themselves. The building, 'Maher Kurien Kaladalan', was inaugurated on the day of Maher's 21st anniversary.

The function was presided over by Swami Agnivesh, one of India's staunch secularists and believer of interfaith philosophy. The function was also attended by Ms Rashmi Shukla, the Police Commissioner of Pune, who released 'Naunihal Maher', a book on Maher in Hindi.

As during earlier years, Maher's work kept expanding this year too. We have been working in India's four states- Kerala, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and West Bengal. Yet it is often that we receive requests from our friends in other states – Karnataka, Bihar, Odisha for example- to begin our work there. When that happens, it enables Maher to reach more of India's marginalised and poor, and we do our best to do so.

This February the Interfaith Association founded by Maher on 2 February last year completed its first year and I am happy that its message of love, peace, joy unity, happiness and respect for mother earth is steadily reaching more people through its efforts. We have had two meetings so far, and an increasing number of people are becoming its member. The ideals of the organisation are fundamental to our work and are in fact backbone of our country. I am particularly happy that Maher youth are evincing keen interest in them.

March this year, I attended an Interfaith Conference at Costa Rica along with two of Maher's young students. It was very satisfying that the ideals of interfaith harmony are being universally accepted. The conference was a wonderful experience of learning and sharing. I feel happy to see Maher youth receiving exposure to noble values in life that would certainly go a long way in their life and help them to be good citizens of our country and the world.

With these words, I express my feelings of gratitude and thankfulness to all Maher well-wishers, benefactors, government authorities, and conclude this preface.



***Sister Lucy Kurien***  
Founder-Director, Maher

## A BRIEF REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES DURING THE YEAR 2017-18

### APRIL-DECEMBER 2017

#### ■ MAHER YOUTH CAMP 2017 (28 MARCH-28 APRIL 2017)

The Maher Youth Camp 2017 held for one full month from 28 March to 28 April saw as many as 85 youth participants and some staff-members participating in a variety of activities. Some of these were as follows:



Sister Lucy with the Youth Camp enthusiasts

#### 1. Workshops and discussions:

The camp included a large number of workshops and discussions which contained themes like the following:

Value based education, positive thinking, anger management, time management, gift within us, career guidance, communication skills, compassionate listening, stress management, gender equality, power of yes, power of listening, power of silence, meditation and the like.

#### 2. Skill training:

These skills included tailoring, cooking, dance, drama and yoga.

#### 3. Events:

These included Talent show, Youth Parliament Debates, Talk show with professionals, Community games, leadership activities, field trips to NGOs, spiritual outing and industrial visits.

The camp concluded with a well-organised Graduation Ceremony.

The camp was organized by Gaus Sayyad, the noted student at Maher, and his colleagues at Maher, Mangesh Pol, Yogesh Bhor,

Vinayak Gade and Vikram Bhujbal. They were ably supported by 8 staff-members. The camp was held every day from 5.30am to 10.30pm. Despite such busy schedule, it was enjoyed by one and all.

## ■ **UNITED NATIONS HONOUR FOR MAHER (APRIL 2017)**

Maher has added a distinguished international honor to its long list of awards and laurels. It has been included by the United Nations in its list of international NGOs on whom it has conferred the prestigious 'Consultative Status'. The credit for this wholly goes to incessant efforts over last 20 years on the part of Sister Lucy and her colleagues. However special thanks are due to Vitoria Verzura and Marie-Laurence who put in extensive efforts for Maher to gain this status. Maher also wishes to thank profusely its members of the Board of Trustees for their valuable contribution and time.

The status has been conferred upon Maher by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) which was established in 1945 by the United Nations Charter as one of the 6 principal organs of the United Nations. The Council aims to promote:

- (a) Higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development;
- (b) Solutions of international economic, social, health, and related problems; and international cultural and educational cooperation; and
- (c) Universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.

This status enables the Council to consult Maher on social issues. In turn Maher will have an opportunity to express its views on matters of its concern and benefit from the experience or technical knowledge of the UN and other NGOs worldwide.

Thus this relationship is beneficial to both the Council and the Maher. There are approximately 3500 NGOs now holding the



consultative status at present. It is a matter of great pride that Maher is now a part of this small group of UNa ffiliated NGOs.

## ■ FORMATION OF THE NEW MAHER PARLIAMENT AND CABINET (26 JUNE 2017)

Maher parliament has proved to be a highly successful experiment in educating the youth in the principles of democracy and freedom of expression. Maher believes that it is through experiments like these that the youth learns the spirit of tolerance of dissent. This year the cabinet was formed on 26 June with Chand Patel as prime minister and the following Maher youth as the members of the cabinet:

Akash Salunke (Education), Ram Lonkar (Sports), Tripti Shinde (Health, Manali Kate (Cultural Affairs) and Pooja Bade (Environment).

Maher boys and girls who had successfully passed their 11th and 12th standard examinations were also felicitated at the hands of Shri Pravin Nikam, the noted motivational speaker. Shri Nikam on the occasion exhorted the unsuccessful students not to be daunted by their failure but once again determine to put in more intense efforts to ward their goal.



Members of Maher Parliament with Sister Lucy

## JANUARY-MARCH 2018

### ■ INAUGURATION OF MAHER KURIEN KALADALAN (4 FEBRUARY 2018)

The Maher anniversary function this year featured an event which will go down as one of the most important landmarks in Maher's evolution: the inauguration of the Maher Kurien Kaladalan.



Maher trustees and other well-wishers seen at inauguration of the KurienKaladalan.

Since its inception in 1997, Maher has always strived to bring in some meaning and purpose to the life of the abandoned, the poor and the disturbed. Of these the mentally handicapped and the disturbed are probably the most neglected sections of our society. The house will now cater to the special needs of these people.

The function was presided over by Ms. Rashmi Shukla, the Pune Police Commissioner.

### ■ 21ST MAHER ANNIVERSARY WITH SWAMI AGNIVASH PRESIDING (4 FEBRUARY 2018)

It has been one year now since Maher completed two decades of its work for the uplift of the poor and the marginalized. On 4



Swami Agnivesh and Sister Lucy in dialogue with the Maher youth on the occasion of Maher Day.

February 2018, it celebrated its 21st anniversary with usual enthusiasm and zest on the part of its children, staff and volunteers. The function was aptly presided over by one of India's most prominent social crusaders and Arya Samajists, Swami Agnivesh.

The function featured an event which will go down as one of the

most important landmarks in Maher's evolution: the inauguration of the Maher Kurien Kaladalan.

Since its inception in 1997, Maher has always strived to bring in some meaning and purpose to the life of the abandoned, the poor and the disturbed. Of these the mentally handicapped and the disturbed are probably the most neglected sections of our society. Sister Lucy always dreamt of making the life of these unfortunate souls a little better and satisfying to themselves. When Sister talked about her dream to a few of her family members, they were only too willing to support a project of this kind. With a sumptuous donation from her brother Sibi and others, Sister Lucy's dream soon started taking a shape in the form of a building on the premises of Vatsalyadham. The building, 'Maher Kurien Kaladalan', aptly named in honour of her family, was inaugurated on the day of Maher's 21st anniversary at the hands of her brothers, Sibi and Vakkchalil, and he's wife Mrs Vijita.

Following the inauguration of the Maher Kurien Kaladalan, Swami Agnivesh presided over the main anniversary function where in his speech he underlined the importance of interfaith principles in one's life and admired Maher for following them in the everyday operation of the organization.



Chief Guest Swami Agnivesh and others release the book 'Naunihal Maher'.

The function also featured release of 'Nawnihal Maher', the first Hindi book on Maher written by Prof. Vasant Ambade. It was released at the hands of Ms. Rashmi Shukla, Pune's Police Commissioner, who had also graced the anniversary function as one of its honoured guests. Mr. Vijay Patkar, the famous Marathi actor also spoke on the occasion a few words of appreciation of the work of Maher and conveyed his best wishes.

The most exciting part of the program was the distribution of awards- Best Maher Boy, Best Maher Girl, Best Maher Housemother and Best Maher Driver and Best Maher House. All the awardees were felicitated at the hands of Swami Agnivesh who admired their contribution toward Maher's goal.

In keeping with Maher's interfaith philosophy, the Chief Guest also felicitated on the occasion Maher staff who had entered into an interfaith and interstate marriage.

## ■ INAUGURATION OF VARIOUS HOMES

### ■ Inauguration of Anand Vasatigrih at kendur (11 January 2018)

Anand Home for girls was held on 11 January 2018, in the presence of Dr. Ujjal Bhattacharya, Managing Director, India, of GKN Sinter Metals, Pune, and Maher Board Members, Dr. P. K. Sharma and Dr. Nicola Pawar. The function was attended among others by Ms. Anna-Luna of Manos Unidas, Spain and a prominent group of village leaders. The girls looked very happy moving into the new home. The organisers expressed on the occasion their gratitude to the Maher well-wishers and benefactors who had lent strong support for the creation of this home.



Shri. Ujjal Bhattacharya and others at the opening of Anand Vasatigriha

The architect Mr. Kanchan Gajeshwar was felicitated on the occasion. Mr. Jayant Pawar kindly agreed to be the Chief Guest of the function in the absence of Mr. Sharad Pawar who could not be present due to his preoccupations.

### ■ Inauguration of Priyata, the new home for mentally challenged women. (24 August 2017)

At Manjari Budruk now there is a new home exclusively for mentally challenged and disturbed women at Maher. These women were until now housed at Vatsalyadham though in



separate rooms. Now they will have a place of their own. This will facilitate more effective treatment for them. The new home was inaugurated at the hands of Maher's long time friend Dr Wolfgang Schwaiger, Sister Lucy and Maher President Hiratai.

### ■ **Snehsagar Children's Home, Bakori, (24 June 2017)**

The home was inaugurated at the hands of Maher benefactor and Chairman of the Weikfield Group Shri Bahari Malhotraji in the presence of Sr. Lucy, Ashwini Malhotra, Managing Director of the Weikfield Foods and Anil Goel, Chairman, Duroshox, Pvt. Ltd.



Shri. Bahari and Shri. Ashwini Malhotra on the occasion of the inauguration of Snehasagar Home at Bakori

As always the ceremony was blessed by interfaith prayers.

### ■ **Snehasadan, shelter for elderly destitute women, Ratnagiri (11 February 2018)**

A new home, called Snehasadan, was recently created by the Ratnagiri unit of Maher. The home meant to shelter the elderly destitute women was inaugurated on 11 February 2018 at the hands of the Collector of Ratnagiri, Mr. Pradip Pand Maher benefactor Dr. Wolfgang Schwaiger. The opening ceremony took place in the presence of Mr. Dilip Redkar, Director of Ashadeep, and other honourable guests.



Ratnagiri Collector Pradeep Pand and Sister Lucy with the Snehasadan staff on the inauguration of the house.

Ms Suprabha Alhat who is presently in charge of the Vatsalyadham center and Ms Meera Gaikwad of the Ratnagiri project spoke about Maher activities while Mr. Sunil Kamble Project-in-charge of the Ratnagiri unit introduced the guests to the audience. Later Mr. Pradip P invited all the children and staff to his residence and interacted with them over refreshments.

## ■ Ashakiran (18 June 2018)

In the presence of more than 150 people, a new Maher home, Ashakiran was declared open by Shri. Vivek Valse Patil, Vice President, Zilla Parishad, and other dignitaries present on the occasion. Mr Patil in his speech appreciated the efforts of Maher in rehabilitation of the destitute men, women and children.



Shri. Vivek Valse Patil declaring Ashakiran Vasatigriha open

In keeping with Maher tradition, the inauguration was marked by prayers recited by representatives of different religions. This was followed by Prayer Dance by Maher children.

## ■ SR. LUCY AT THE INTERNATIONAL INTERFAITH CONFERENCE AT COSTA RICA (12 MARCH-16 MARCH 2018)

Sr. Lucy Kurien along with two of Maher's best students Mangesh Pol and Soni Chhatrapati attended an international conference held in Costa Rica from 12 March to 16 March 2018. The conference titled 'Dawn of Inter Spirituality in Latin America' discussed 'breaking new grounds across the traditions and inspiring new spiritual pathways' and was attended by international leaders and seekers from many different religious traditions and spiritual paths. After this conference Sr Lucy attended a similar UN meeting at New York from 18th March to 22nd March.

## ■ WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS (MARCH 2018)

Maher was founded with the primary objective of helping women in need and without support. As such the International Women's Day celebrated



Maher Vatsalyadham women at a Women's Day rally

all over the world on 7 March is one of the most important events for Maher every year. This year too various Maher units observed the day marking it with a variety of activities. This is clear from the following:

**1. Vadhu (7 March 2018):**

- **Guests:** Television and film artists, Mr. Rahul Jagtap, Mr. Amit Kulkarni, Ms. Shivani Ghadge and Mr. Navnath Temghire. Sarpanch of Bhima Koregaon, Ms. Sangeetha Kamble, Sarpanch of Village Apti Ms. Mumtaz Patan
- **Programme:** Programmes related to self motivation among women and entertainment through traditional art performances like lavni dance. Address by the Chief Guests and performance by Maher artists, 7 of whom were felicitated.
- **Guidance:** Ms. Shivani Gadhge and Dr. Rajesh Vyahare
- **Attendance:** 700 women.

**2. Vatsalyadham, Avhalwadi (11 March 2018)**

- **Guests:** Avhalwadisarpanch Ms. Lalita Awale and other members of the Grampanchayat, Dr Suni Abraham, eye surgeon, Mr. Bharad of Primary Health Centre.
- **Guidance:** Manjri, Ms. Pallavi Baghvat , psychologist, therapist and councillor.
- **Programme:** Eye check-up and drug distribution, rally for creation of awareness on mental illness among village residents, sports competition for women, discourse on awareness of mental fitness and lifestyle, traditional dance and Singing
- **Attendance:** 400 women.

**3. Maher Viswadeep, Miraj (8 March 2018)**

- **Programme:** Women Empowerment
- **Guests:** Ms. Vinaya Pathan and Ms. Anita Pagam of Rashtravathi Mahila Agadi Party, Miraj and Sangli.
- **Attendance:** 50 women

#### 4. **Mahe Ratnagiri (8 March 2018)**

- **Programme:** Appreciation of on duty staff at various facilities pertaining to Mahe & experience sharing session by Mahe inmates.
- **Guests:** 1. Ms. Tejal Parab, Ms. Pranali Kokre, Ms. Saniya Dhumad, Ms. Sayli Bhole, Ms. Asmitha Dhumal
- **Guidance:** Mr. Sunil Kamble, Mahe Ratnagiri Project Incharge
- **Attendance:** 55 women

#### 5. **Mahe, Shirur**

- **Programme:** Speech on importance of spending quality time for self and unity.
- **Guests:** 1.Mrs. Pramila Hiwale, Pace Foundation, Shirur. 2.Ranip Kardile, President of Ramli Mahila Unnati NGO, 3.Mrs. Keshu Thai, Sarpanch, Kardilewadi, 4.Mrs. Meera Thai, Gram Panchayat Member Ramling, 5. Mrs. Sandhya Kardile, Gram Panchayat Member, Kardewadi
- **Attendance:** 70 women

#### 6. **Mahe Gomiya, Project Karyamandal, Village, Gomiya, Jahrkhand**

- **Programme:** 1.Speech on creation of awareness against child marriage and dowry system. 2.Speech pertaining to importance of girl's education.
- **Guests:** Mr. Banti Urav, Sarpanch, Karmatai Panchayat, Bhawan
- **Guidance:** 1. Mrs. Shobha Odiya, Mahe Project Incharge, 2. Mr. Banti Urav, Sarpanch, Karmatai Panchayat,
- **Attendance:** 150 women



**MAHER'S PROGRAMME IN COOPERATION WITH THE ROTARY CLUB, PUNE  
(April-July 2017)**

Maher organized a number of programmes in cooperation with the Rotary Club, Pune, during the first four months of the financial year. These have been listed below:

S No.	Date	Place	Programme theme and the number present (in brackets)
<b>APRIL 2017</b>			
1	7.4.2017	Bakori	Family planning (100)
2	8.4.2017	Pernefata	Immunization for children (175)
3	8.4.2017	Vadhu	Sex education (80)
4	15.4.2017	Bajrangwadi, Shikrapur	Health and hygiene (65)
5	18.4.2017	Khandyachi Vasti, Thakerwasti	AIDS awareness (150)
6	27.4.2018	Bahul	Health during pregnancy (70)
<b>MAY 2017</b>			
1	5.5.2017	Apti	Health of unborn and newly born babies (80)
2	16.5.2017	Awalwadi	Health of unborn and newly born babies (50)
3	24.5.2017	Arambh Society Talegaon D	Health & Hygiene (72)
4	26.5.2018	Patvasti Shikrapur	Importance of girl education (65)
5	31.5.2018	Satavvasti Kharadi	AIDS Awareness.
<b>JUNE 2017</b>			
1	4.6.2017	Pimpalkhori Thakervasti	Health of unborn and new born babies (150)
2	8.6.2017	Sherevasti, Kendur	Health and hygiene (65)
3	18.6.2017	Kendur	Family planning (200)
4	23.6.2017	Shikrapur	AIDS awareness (Pimple J) (70)
5	24.6.2017	Bakori	Immunization for children (300)
6	28.6.2017	Shikrapur	Health during pregnancy (70)
7	29.6.2017	Kesnand	Importance of girl education (300)
<b>JULY 2017</b>			
1	11.7.2017	Pimpalkhori, Thakesvasti	Immunization for children (83)
2	11.7.2017	Tathwadewadi, Kendur	Family planning (70)
3	15.7.2017	Bakori	Importance of girl education (100)
4	15.7.2017	Bhagatwasti, Thitewadi, Kendur	Health and hygiene (48)
5	18.7.2017	Teli Samajik Bhavan, Shirur	Health care of unborn and newly born babies
6	26.7.2017	Patwasti, Shikrapur	Immunization for children
7	28.7.2017	Sai sideshwarnagar, Pernefata	Health during pregnancy (70)

**In brief (2017-18)**

■ **Anti-addiction Awareness Programme (22 April 2017)**

The programme organized by the Adivasi Kalyan Kendra at Kendur aimed at educating the audience with regard to the ill-effects of addictions and importance of hygiene and cleanliness. The speakers, Asha Dalvi and Prafulla Sardar, underlined the high possibility of liver injury and cancer caused by excessive alcohol and gutakha consumption.



**Maher children staging an anti-addiction streetplay at Thakarvasti**

The villagers were presented with chappals at the end of the programme.

■ **The 8th anniversary celebrations of Maher Snehabhavan, Kerala (31 May 2017):**

These took place on 31st May in Maher Snehabhavan with Project Manager, Mr. E.R. Vijayan, presiding. The programme was inaugurated by Gandhi Bhavan Vice Chairman Shri M. Thankappa Menon. Prizes were distributed by Sr. Annamma Jeevanjali to the students of class 8th, 9th, 10th, & 12th who secured very good marks in their examinations.

■ **Felicitatation of successful 10th& 12th standard Adivasi students (11 July 2017)**

At a gathering of more than 100 people under the auspices of the Adivasi Kalyan Kendra at Thakarvasti, Kendur, Maher felicitated on 11th July 2018 its Adivasi students who had successfully passed the 10th and 12th standard students. The function was presided over by social activists, Dattoba Gawade, Sakharam Bhalekar and Dadabhau Bhalekar who presented students token educational gifts in appreciation.

### ■ **Distribution of school stationery (26 July 2017)**

This programme was organized at Shirur under the auspices of Maher Gammatshala Project. It was attended by more than 40 children with around 30 women. Mr. N. Patil, Dy. Inspector of Police, lauded the work Maher was doing and asked children to cultivate a socially conscious attitude in them. He pointed out that education was the only means that can take a person out of his poverty and backwardness.



Vijay Tavar and Meena Bhagvat at the distribution of the school stationery in the Paradhivasti

### ■ **Awareness programme about adult education (10 August 2017)**

A programme to create awareness about adult literacy and education was held at Thakarvasti, Kendur, on 10th August 2017 by Maher social workers. The speakers, Manisha Shinde and Asha Dalvi, underlined the importance of literacy and education in improving the standard of living of women. In this context they also stressed the significance of bachat guts. Their appeal however unfortunately met with little response from the women present.

### ■ **Sister Lucy, Hiratai and Maher staff in dialogue with Maher children (13 August 2017)**

The purpose of the above dialogue was to shape the overall personality of children so that they become good student, good Maherite and above all a good human being. It also contained a 10-minute meditation. In her dialogue, Sister Lucy touched upon such important topics as the relations among children, their demeanour toward housemothers, importance of yoga, responsibility of older children, use of official phone and care of elderly in the family.

The programme concluded with a short film on the above theme.

### ■ **Medical check-up for rag pickers (9 September 2017)**

This programme which was organized under Maher's Gammatshala Project aimed at creating hygiene and health awareness among the rag picking community at Shirur. It was attended by a number of doctors and around 100 members of the rag picking community. They were advised by the doctors present to use gloves while picking up trash on the streets or elsewhere. This will help them protect themselves from contracting oral, digestive and lung diseases.

### ■ **Workshop on Social Leadership Development (9 September 2017)**

This 1-day workshop organized as a part of the 3rd anniversary of NGO Deepstambh, was attended by Maher President Hirabegm Mulla with her senior colleagues, Suprabhaa Alhat and Ramesh Dutonde. It was addressed by social activist Kumar Saptarshi, former IAS officer Daulat Desai, entrepreneur Pallavi Sabale, University Women's Association President Shabnam Poonawala and Deepstambh President K. C. Karkar.

Mr Desai said on the occasion that there were as many as 17000 companies in India with their CSR funds. It was important to reach them and involve them in fruitful social work. Shri Saptarshi underlined the need for creating a corruption and caste free society. The speakers also highlighted the need for cooperation between the government and concerned lay citizens.

### ■ **Health Camp (21 September 2017)**

The above health camp was organized by the Maher Adivasi Kendra to check the hemoglobin percentage of all women at the Thakarvasti and to give them essential information about basic hygiene and Hb percentage. The camp was attended by Dr. Swati Yellevad and her nurse and technician colleagues. The participants were told about the importance of including the green leafy vegetables in their diet and of visiting the doctor in case of excessive weakness. The Hb percentage for men must not be less than 13.5 gms for men and 12 gms for women, Dr. Yellevad said. The camp was attended by more than 80 women.



## ■ Awareness programme for expectant mothers (27 September 2017)

The programme aimed at informing expectant mothers with regard to care during their pregnancy. This was brought out through a street play that featured two families with varying care of the pregnant mothers. The woman who was properly cared for during her pregnancy delivered a healthy baby as against one who delivered a still born baby due to lack of care during her pregnancy. The chief guest, MsSulabhaKokade, advised women to have nutritious and sumptuous meals.



Maher youth staging a street play at the Perne Phata facility



Maher girls at a street play on care during pregnancy.

## ■ Children's gettogether (17 November 2017)

Around 500 children attended a grand gettogether at Bakori on 17 November 2017 where they not only enjoyed a magic show but also learnt writing poetry and doing yoga. The guests Hanumant Chandgude, Prakash Shirole and Khandekar respectively regaled the children with poetry writing, magic show and yogasanas. The programme concluded with a dance by the Maheer children.



Girl participants in the magic and yoga performance

A similar national level gettogether at Talegaon Dhamdhare on 30 November 2017 was attended by as many as 1500 children. It featured a dance by Maheer children.

## ■ Maher children stand out in Taekwondo competition (26 November 2017)

Thirty-two Maher children attended the 10th anniversary celebrations of the Ekalavya Taikwondo Academy at Ahmednagar on 26 November 2017 and



Sister Lucy interacting with the Taekwondo participants

won many laurels at the Taikwondo competition held on the occasion. The coveted medals and their winners were as follows:

- **Gold Medal:** Mayur Shinde, Sangharsh Kamble, Babu Shetty, Laxman Lonkar, Rhishikesh Unap
- **Silver Medal:** Rhishikesh airat, Shrivatsa Tamang, Dnyaneshvar Londhe, Chaitanya Kunjir, Gaurav Memane, Shubham Tujare
- **Zinc Medal:** Kajal Natekar, Ritija Gaikwad, Aditya Gawali, Ganesh Belankar, Divya Shetty

## ■ Blanket distribution (23 January 2018)

Maher organized under its Gammatshala Project a blanket distribution programme on 23 January 2018 which was attended by as many as 30 children and 90 men and women. The purpose was to help the poor take care of their health during the winter season. The guests Shri N. Patil and Sanjay Panchge appreciated the work Maher was



Tribal friends pose for a photo following the blanket distribution.

doing among the poor and the abandoned. Mr. Panchge underlined the need for proper documentation in implementation of various developmental projects.

## ■ Opening of Jidnyasa Abhyasika tuition class (8 February 2018)

The programme was organized at HazareVasti at Kanersar. It aims to render extra help to school children who are members of the Jidnyasa Abhyasika. The function was attended by more than 100 students and was presided over by Rohidas Daundkar, Upasarpanch. It was hoped by the guests that the activity would greatly benefit the students. The programme concluded with a cultural presentation by the Maher children.



Ms Daundkar inaugurating the study as others look on

## ■ Tailoring Class Certificate Distribution (29 March 2018)

The tailoring class in which 16 women participated had been organized by Maher jointly with CAF during the period 20 November 2017 to 17 March 2018. The certificate distribution function included a few appreciative speeches by the students about their training. The guests on the occasion appreciated maher's efforts to make women self-reliant through various skill training programmes. In the cooking competition held on the occasion the participants were given following prizes: 1st Prize- Vaishali Gavhane and Parvati Kshirsagar; 2nd Prize- Madhuri Rokade and Gita Sherkar; 3rd Prize- Shveta Bhkare and Jyoti Kanchan.



Women at work as part of women empowerment programme

## ■ Skill development programmes by Mahila Fulwa Sanghatna, Gomia, Jharkhand:

The Sanghatana has more than 160 SHGs (Self Help Groups) under its care covering a large population of poor and needy

women. The skill development programmes include those for tailoring, beauty parlor, Ayurvedic medicine and the like.

Premlata Devi took tailoring classes in Ghutidad village by Maher. She completed the



Women who successfully completed the tailoring/beauty parlour course

training successfully and has now opened a tailoring shop in her village. This has made her economically independent and boosted her confidence in life. The tailoring classes were also held in Naitola, Hosir Patak Tola, Tendu Kermatand No.3, and Dendeh Tubul Bagatara.

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Darshan and Nikita with Maher friends on the wedding day.

#### The incredible story behind a Maher wedding

The wedding of Darshan and Nikita on 3 February 2018 was a culmination of a hard and arduous journey of life of a young Maher boy. It was a very jubilant event for all Maherites in that they were both a part of Maher. The wedding follows an incredible story of Darshan. Darshan came to Maher when he was just 9 year old. His mother was mentally sick and was searching frantically for her husband who had left her and their two children, Darshan and Naman, to fend for themselves. As misfortune would have it, Naman was lost somewhere during their search, aggravating Darshan's mother's mental sickness. They were brought to Maher by Maher social worker, Ms Ranjana Gaikwad. After they were admitted to Maher, the mother was given medical treatment and Darshan was admitted to school.

In course of time, Darshan who was good at school completed his studies and even got a job at WNS company. As residents of Maher, both Darshan and Nikita knew each other and decided to be partners for life. They approached Sister Lucy to inform her about their intention and seek her advice in the matter. Sister Lucy after her motherly advice gave her blessings to the couple and made arrangements for their wedding. The marriage was solemnized on 3 February 2018 at Maher.

A powerful and stirring story indeed of how Maher drags people from their wretched existence and renders their life a touch of beauty and meaning.

### ORGANISATION OF SPECIAL DAYS

The Maher men, women, children and the staff observed and celebrated various special days over the year, focusing a specific social issue of concern or paying respects to the country's iconic personalities or simply bringing in moments of joy and happiness. These activities may be summarised as follows:

Sr No.	Name of the Day	Date	Place	Chief Guest	Notable features
1	Independence Day	15 Aug 2017	Shikrapur	Dr. Ram Pote & others	Saree presented to a needy woman by children through their pocket money.
2	Annabhau Sathe Jayanti	5 Aug 2017	Ashakiran Vasatigruha, Kendur	Ramesh Chaudhari	Heartfelt respects by Shri Sathe by students
3	Acharya Atre Jayanti	13 Aug 2017	Thakarvasti Kendur	Prafulla Sardar	Speech by Shri Sardar highlighting Acharya Atre's personality
4	Rakshabandhan	11 Aug 2017	Ashakiran, Kendur	Yogitabehn, Deepikabehn Bapusaheb Chaudhari	Guest speeches highlighting the spiritual significance of the festival
5	Baldin	14 Nov 2017	Vadhu	Rajendra Daundkar, actor, & others	Various collective games
6	Dahihandi	15 Aug 2017	Ashakiran, Kendur	Shri. Jondhale	Dahihandi, dance
7	Mahatma Gandhi Jayanti	2 Oct 2017	Vadhu	Shri. Vitthal Pawar	Rally from ZP School through Vadhu village with children holding placards about Mahatma Gandhi & Lal Bahadur Shastri
8	Mahatma Gandhi Punyatithi	30 Jan 2018	Anand Vasatigriha, Kendur	Ms. Friska Forbes, Ms. Ashvini Veluskar	20 minute meditation and talk on Mahatma Gandhi's thoughts by girl students from various hostels
9	Gurupurnima	9 Jul 2017	Ashakiran Vasatigriha, Kendur	Maher Social Workers	Ambika Khandare's speech placing parents as one's first Guru, teachers as second and the peer group as third.
10	Gurupurnima	9 Jul 2017	Maher Snehsadan, Shirur	Kaluram Gaikwad of Vidyadham School, Wadegavhan	Shri Gaikwad's absorbing talk on ancient Gurukul system in India
11	Haldikumkum	19 Jan 2018	Khandevasti, Thakarvadi, Kendur	Khandevasti, Kendur	A talk on significance of haldikumkum



## INFORMATION ABOUT MAHER PROJECT

Sr No	Projects	Starting Date	How Many Houses/Classes
1.	Mamtadham -Home for Destitute Women	02 Feb 1997	7
2.	Vatsalyadham -Mentally Disturb Women	29 Feb 2004	03
3.	Suksandhaya- Home for destitute aged Women .	29 Feb 2004	02
4.	Aashai - Home for expectant mothers	12 May 2001	01
5.	Kishordham - a home for orphans and children from broken homes	02 Feb 1997	30
6.	Ushalaya - Kindergartens in Villages.	1997	10
7.	Vidyalaya - Coaching classes for poor village children	1997	13
8.	Premalaya - Creche cum day-care center	10 Feb 2000	1
9.	Ekta -Free provisions to poor families.	1997	25 Family
10.	Aadhar - Job placement for village women and youth	1997	Many
11.	Dnyan ganga - For Library	02 Dec 2005	9
12.	Kalasagar -Open school for drop-outs.	09 June 2003	6
13.	Parishram- Center for vocational training and production.	1999	Different trainings going on
14.	Pragati-Rural outreach programs.	1997	3 state
15.	Swachata-Building of toilets and vermiculture pits.	1997	Many
16.	Swavalamban- Self- help groups	1999	554 SHG (Women and Men)
17.	Tantragyan -Technical training for youth.	1997	Many
18.	Vidyadhan - Outstation Children.	1997	Higher Education
19.	Karyamandal- Administration	1997	On
20.	Lokmangala -General Outreach	1997	Help
21.	Gamatshala - Day care for children of migrant workers.	2008	03 village
22.	Adiwasi Kalyan Kendra- Welfare activities for tribals	1997	1200
23.	Gomia -Mahar phulwa mahila Sangathan	2008	Different Village
24.	Karunalya - Mentally Disturb Men home	15 August 2013	02
25.	Priyata - Home for mentally challenged Women.	24 August 2017	1





**Maher (Mother's home) is an interfaith and caste-free organization providing shelter and care to the destitute and battered women and children. Maher was founded in 1997 by Sr. Lucy Kurien and is located at Vadhu Budruk about 32 kilometers from Pune in Maharashtra, India. Over the years, however, its activities have spread to the surrounding rural villages and even beyond Maharashtra.**

**Maher currently has 25 projects covering nearly 875 children, 65 men and approx 356 women. The women and children seeking refuge at Maher are often abused, oppressed and abandoned. The women seeking refuge are mostly accompanied by their children. Most children are orphaned while others carry a background of broken homes. At Maher they are all welcome irrespective of their religion, caste, creed, color or social status. Efforts are made while they are at Maher to bring them into the social mainstream by training them for self employment and by uniting them with their families, if traced successfully. The women may however continue to remain at Maher, when this is not possible. The women and children from all over the country seek refuge at Maher, and Maher embraces them all.**

#### **MAHER**

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