

# MAHER

## ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25



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**MAHER**

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## MAHER ASHRAM

*A haven of hope, belonging, freedom, love and understanding  
A home for battered, exploited, destitute women, men and children  
A home where the society's vulnerable can rise to new life*

Maher (Mother's Home in Marathi) was founded by Sr Lucy Kurien in 1997 to provide care and shelter to destitute women, children and men, and to undertake various community development projects. The first Maher home was established in 1997 in Vadu Budruk near Pune. Since then, Maher has expanded its activities to various locations in Maharashtra, Kerala, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Karnataka, Bihar and Andhra Pradesh. Today Maher operates 70 homes across 7 states that provide an inclusive, loving, supportive home to 864 children, 302 men and 702 destitute women. In addition, our Teams work on 25 different outreach projects including 615 village self-help groups (SHGs). Over the years, Maher has provided shelter to over 50,000 women, men and children and impacted thousands through the various trainings and support offered to the self-help groups (SHGs).

Maher's contributions to social development have been recognized by numerous national and international organizations. The United Nations granted us special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, May 2017. Maher was also listed among the 'Top 10 NGOs' by the India NGO Awards.

## **Our Vision**

No matter who we are we walk together towards wholeness.

## **Our Mission**

- Create secure and loving homes for women, men, and children and enable them to find the power within and develop self-reliance.
- Provide women, men, and children with stability and unconditional love, thus raising kind and strong individuals.
- Assist members of impoverished villages in uplifting their communities and encouraging the use of sustainable agricultural practices.
- Embrace people of every religion, ethnicity, and social standing to bring love, compassion, and wellness.

## **Board of Trustees**

Maher Board of Trustees are collectively responsible for the overall operations of the organization.

- Ms. Hirabegum Mulla (President)
- Sr. Lucy Kurien (Founder Director)
- Dr. Nicola Pawar (Secretary)
- Dr. Pradeep K. Sharma
- Mrs. Mercy Mendonca
- Mr. Aniruddha Gadankush
- Mr. Yogesh Bhor

## Message from Sister Lucy

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



I am happy to present to you the Annual Report of Maher for the year 2024-25. Dear Friends, Supporters, and Well-Wishers, I am delighted to share Maher's latest progress report, reflecting the incredible journey we have undertaken together. With your unwavering support, Maher has continued to touch countless lives, bringing hope, dignity, and transformation to those in need. We are overjoyed to share that Three of our Maher girls has found her soulmate and begun a new chapter in her life through a beautiful wedding. Our children continue to make us proud with their remarkable achievements, securing jobs in various sectors and shaping a brighter future for themselves. A special mention to Gauri and Swapna who has secured a government job and our children have done very well abroad. Amar has completed his MBA from Omaha University and Ravina her MS in Clinical Mental Health Counselling from the University of Vermont. An inspiring milestone for all of us!

Additionally, our new construction projects are progressing well, ensuring that Maher continues to provide safe and nurturing spaces for those we serve. Our annual meeting was a great success, reaffirming our collective commitment to Maher's mission. Thank you Dr. Raghunath Anant Mashelkar for honoring Anjani Mashalker Inspiration Award to Maher with this award in recognition of our selfless service to society. This acknowledgment fills our hearts with

gratitude and strengthens our commitment to continue serving those in need with love and dedication. None of this would have been possible without the generosity of our donors, the kindness of our well-wishers, and the dedication of every individual who believes in Maher's vision. Your love and support empower us to keep moving forward, embracing more lives with love, care and compassion. From the depths of my heart, I extend my sincere gratitude to each of you who have walked alongside us in this journey. Together, we are making a difference—one life at a time.

Maher has been expanding within India for the last two decades and a half. We feel embracing a larger humanity to include it within Maher's work is not inconsistent with Maher's goals and vision.

A good number of Maher staff have given their best years to Maher. Many of them have now grown old and do not enjoy much of support from their home. Maher therefore feels it is now its turn to give them back a helping hand in gratitude in their twilight years. With this in mind, we plan to create a home for the aging Maher staff who are in need of such support.

We are planning expansion of other activities too and hope they will come to fruition in due course of time.

In this endeavor of ours, the well-wishers and benefactors of Maher have always stood behind us like a rock. I humbly take for granted their support and sympathy in the years ahead.



## Highlights of the Year

### **Maher Youth Camp offers many activities to slum children (20th April to 27th April 2024)**

As every year, Maher Youth Camp 2024 was organized at Maher, Vadhu, for the children of the slum area of Perne Phata. Thirty children participated in this seven day camp, which was filled with activities like yoga, prayer, meditation, study trips, and forest food.

### **She returned home after 7 years (06 May 2024)**



Maher's Vatsalyadham project works for mentally challenged women who are found roaming the streets in desolate conditions. Maher's employees Rupali Tribhuvan and Ajay Wankhede went to Madhya Pradesh and rehabilitated the two of such women.

Anjali Kol was admitted through Lonikand Police on 6/2/2023. Anjali was in a critical condition during admission and initially could not give any information. She was referred to a psychiatrist for medication and counselling. During counselling, she told her the address of Khairani Village, District Katni in Madhya Pradesh. After going home, we realized that Anjali had been gone from the home for six years. The family had searched for two years and then gave up on Asha, assuming her to be dead, and carried out the death process. On meeting her, tears of joy appeared in the eyes of all the family. She was happily accepted by all the family.

Another woman named Sumitra Sahu was admitted on October 26, 2023. Her mental condition was not good and he was referred to a psychiatrist for medication and counselling. After constantly communicating with him and asking about his family, one day she was

able to recall her husband's phone number. However, it was understood that he could not travel so far due to his physical disability. So Maher's staff moved her to Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh and rehabilitated her there. Sumitra was missing from home for three years and had a three-month-old baby at that time. She was happily accepted by her family.

Both the families thanked Maher and the Founder Sister Lucy Kurien.

### **World Environment Day observed (5th June, 2024)**

On World Environment Day, Maher planted trees and organized awareness rallies in nearby villages across Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Kerala, Bihar, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Kolkata. We spread the message about not cutting trees down, and instead planting them. Together, we can create a greener future! Years ago, children from Maher, Pune, planted gooseberry and other trees in Kerala. Today, we are proud to see these trees now fully grown, symbolizing growth, resilience, and our enduring commitment to the environment.



### **Annual House Mother's Meeting has rich inputs (10th to 12 June 2024)**

Our house mothers participated in a special 3-day training covering various subjects such as team building, effective communication, living a fulfilled life, and caring for the children, women, and men with love, and how to love ourselves. They also received fire control training, learned the proper use of electrical materials, health care for themselves and others, and essential training in yoga, prayer, and meditation. Additionally, they were guided on how to follow Maher's principles in their work. We are committed to continuous learning and

enhancing our care for the community. Mr. Aniruddha Gadankush conducted a session on how to control our anger while working with the children as well as the value of Maher. Last day of the meeting Maher organized a picnic which they greatly enjoyed. Great appreciation to Mini M J, Swati Patil, Meera Gaikwad and Sandhya Adagale who put in tremendous effort for this meeting.

### **The Herbal Garden in memory of Jose Kurien opened (28th June, 2024)**



In loving memory of Jose Uncle (Sr. Lucy's brother), a herbal garden was inaugurated at Vatsalyadham, as he loved herbal gardens. This green sanctuary now stands as a tribute to his passion for nature, promoting health and well-being for all.

### **Swavalamban Project (Self-Help Group)**

Maher's Swavalamban project is doing very well with the formation of new groups, including women's, men's, and friends'. The extensive reach in places like Kendur, Bakori, Shirur, Vadhu, Perne Phata, Shikrapur, Koregaon Bhima, Satara, and Ratnagiri is a testament to their commitment and impact.

In Jharkhand, the goal of women's empowerment is being actively pursued through formation of self-help groups. In June, the group provided training for women in various skills, including making spices, cakes, toran necklaces, tailoring, and weaving, along with business guidance. Four group meetings were held, during which all workers' registers and files were reviewed, and necessary instructions were given.

Additionally, a public awareness program was conducted on Environment Day, and a health awareness program was organized for



women in Shikapur and other groups. Efforts to increase voter turnout included spreading public awareness by performing road plays in villages. The self-help groups and social workers in Vadhu and Shikapur also played an important role in these

awareness campaigns.

Ramesh Dutonde held a six-monthly meeting to discuss how to carry out activities within their group. During the meeting, importance of regular attendance at group meetings was emphasised. It was reported that in June, women were guided to start machine classes in Karadi, contributing to their empowerment and self-reliance through the Swavalamban Project. Additionally, women's meetings were held in March to further support these initiatives. Our heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Vijay Tavar and his team for all the wonderful work that they are doing.

### **Parisharm**

This project seeks to empower rural women by training them in income-earning skills like sewing clothes, running a beauty parlour, chocolate making, mehndi drawing, ice cream making, cooking, toran making, masala making, paper bag making and others. 880 women and children have so far been trained in various skills. Women from Koregaon Bhima, Perne Phata, Vadhu Budruk, Kendur, Karandi, and Shikrapur have participated in these courses. Tejaswini Pawar has been putting hard work in this connection.

### **World Environment Day (8th June 2024)**

At this event, 50 saplings were planted at the hands of guests at Maher Shanti Niwas and the surroundings. Maher was praised for always organizing various awareness programs. Seventeen bhajan groups from different areas participated in a march, which included a



palanquin containing a plant, along with the holy books like the Bible, the Bhagavad Gita, the Quran and also an icon of Bhagwan Buddha. Around 300 to 350 people participated in the procession, which took place from Maher Shanti Niwas through Vikas Chowk, Medical Chowk, Bus Stand and Police Station.

Participants included Sachin Pawde and the staff of Dr. Pawade Nursing Home staff, Prajapita Brahmakumari Darshana Didi, Deepmala Malekar, founder of Sarva Dharma Sambhav Kalamanch, Padmakarbhai Raut, Abhaybhai Lambat of Helping Hand Foundation, Aniket Devrev and his family, Advocate Guddu Bhai Ali Shaikh and Nanduji Mankar. We are grateful for the support provided by Maher well-wishers Akash Devtare, Vinod Savarkar, Rathi Parivar from Selu, Dhanu Dandare, Palash Bhaturo and Gaurav. We also thank the Maher staff – Atul Shelke, Maya Shelke, Pramod Katve, Suraj Dhole, Shubham Zamre, Dipali Bhalavi, and Mohana Kadpate, for their valuable support and participation.

### **New Computer Lab Built In (March 2024)**

Maher Shelter Home prepared for a state-of-the-art computer lab in March 2024. This initiative is expected to revolutionize the learning experience of our children, providing them with access to the latest technology and digital resources. The computer lab will serve as a hub

for innovation and creativity, where boys can develop essential computer skills, explore educational software, and prepare for a future in the digital age.

### **Certificate distribution (13th March, 2024)**

At Jeevodaya Home, Gomia Project, tailoring and beauty parlour courses were conducted for the tribal girls and women to help them develop their income earning skills. More than a hundred certificates were distributed to 124 girls and women who had successfully completed the courses.

### **Sports Camp (12th to 14th June, 2024)**

A three-day Sports Camp was organized by Mangesh, Prashant, and



Amol. On the evening of 11th June, a special prayer was recited for the success of the camp. The team divided the children and staff into four groups consisting of Red House, Blue House, Green House and Yellow House. The opening ceremony was held on the morning of 12th June, where Ashutosh Tiwari - the District

Council of the Eastern Region of Chanho Block was the chief guest. Guest of Honour Mr. Nikhil Akhori - CCL N.K. Area CSR Officer, Mr. Kamlu Sahu - AJSU District Vice President, Munna Pandey, and others were present. Different indoor and outdoor events were held for the children and staff. Red House won the Championship, Green House won the 2nd place trophy, Blue House won the 3rd place trophy and the best discipline trophy was awarded to the Yellow House.

Praveen Kujur from the boys and Ronika Ekka from the girls were declared as the Best Players of the Year. Sahil Marandi from the boys and Kareena Bhagat from the girls were declared as the Best Captains of the Year. Mr. Kishore Toppo was declared as the Best House Master and Miss Tayyaba Khatoon as the Best House Mother. The sports camp was a great success and the children and staff enjoyed themselves. Our heartfelt thanks to Sr. Shaicy, Shobha Oria, Nira Minz, Rajesh K and all the Jharkhand team for making this camp a success.

### **Parliament Elections (14th June, 2024)**

Inter-house parliament elections were organized at Maher Jharkhand. The children elected a new Prime Minister, Sports Minister, Education Minister, Cultural Minister, Environment Minister, and Health Minister. This experience teaches the children valuable lessons about leadership, responsibility, and democracy, and we are proud of their enthusiasm and participation.

### **Summer Camp (7th to 8th May, 2024)**

Maher conducted a summer camp for the children of Kothaplli and Kalluru in Andhrapredesh. Mr. Prasad helped in organizing the camp, which was attended by 60 children and 2 teachers. The children participated in different fun games which are an excellent learning opportunities. Sr. Brony distributed gifts to the children, ending the sports camp on a positive note.

### **New Project at Molakalapudi (Santoshi women's home)**

Currently, both men and women are residing at our Andhra Pradesh centre. Construction of a new centre for women is being carried on at Molakalapudi. This land was given to us by the S.J. Fathers. Our heartfelt gratitude to Sr. Brony, Tukaram, Prasad and team for all the wonderful work that they are doing.

### **World Environment Day 5 June,2024**

Maher Anchal and Madhu Nivas home members participated in a rally that aimed to promote environmental awareness. One of the children, Rishi, was dressed as a tree to make the message more effective. Participants talked about taking care of Mother Earth and saving water and trees.



Trees were planted on the occasion in the area surrounding the home and Ayurvedic plants distributed to the people of the community. A skit on caring of plants was also enacted wherein the participants vowed to save trees.

### **Meditation and Interfaith Prayer (09.07.24)**

At Maher, we believe in the power of starting our day with meditation and interfaith prayer. We recently held a meeting for our house mothers, staff, and caretakers at Vadu, focusing on planning, strength, power, discipline, honesty, behaviour, and most importantly, unity. Together, we are stronger and more committed to providing our community with the best care and support. Thank you, Sr. Lucy Didi for organizing this meaningful prayer and bringing us all together in harmony and peace.

### **Rally for Justice (20.08.24)**

We hear these tragedies every day, and each time, our hearts break. We are still reeling from the brutal rape and murder of 31-year-old trainee doctor Moumita Debnath in a Kolkata hospital on August 9. We can only hang our heads in shame and cry in silence. But in spirit, we die with you, Moumita. At Maher, we vow to do everything in our power to ensure that such horrors do not happen in our villages. Where Maher is involved, we strive to create a safe, nurturing environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

Interconnected, decentralized networks of people rooted in kindness and compassion will change the world. Together, we stand for justice, and together, we will make a difference.



Maher Vadhu Center organized a powerful rally at Koregaon Bhima, joined by nearby villagers, doctors, our Self-Help Group women, and Maher friends. Together, we raised our voices for the urgent need to stop violence against women, demand justice, end rape, and stop shielding rapists. We stand united

for the rights and dignity of every woman.

We held a rally at Wagholi, joined by our well-wishers and a supportive local doctor, standing together in the fight for justice.

Where Maher is present, we are a force of protection and empowerment, creating spaces where safety and dignity are upheld. But this is not just about us—it's about all of us. Every woman has the power to raise her voice, fight for justice, and to ensure that no one suffers in silence. Together, we are unstoppable.

### **Taekwondo Tournament (30.08.24)**

Our Maher children showcased their strength and determination by participating in the sub-district level Taekwondo tournament, with 13 of our children competing. Their hard work paid off as two of our talented children were selected for the district level! Maher children brought home 2 Gold, 2 Silver, and 2 Bronze medals! A big thank you to all our well-wishers for their unwavering support and encouragement.

### **Empowering Women at Shikrapur Village (01.09.24)**

We are proud to share that 29 women from Shikrapur village have completed their Mehandi course! This course is more than just learning a skill—it's about empowering these women to start their businesses and become financially independent. At Maher, we support women as they take charge of their futures. Congratulations to all the participants on this wonderful achievement!

### **Marriage Celebration (10.09.24)**



A beautiful new chapter began when our Maher child Neha married Akkam in a heartfelt ceremony at Vadhu. We are overjoyed to witness this special moment in her life!

Thank you to all our well-wishers and supporters for your continuous love and blessings. Together, we celebrated Neha's happiness and new journey.

### **Mental Health Day (10.10.24)**



In recognition of the importance of mental well-being, Maher organized a Mental Health Awareness Program across all our centres. The program focused on educating everyone about the importance of maintaining good mental health and shared practical tips on how to keep the mind healthy and strong. Together, we can build a stronger and healthier community!

### Senior Citizen Day (19.10.2024)

We had a heart-warming program at Vadu & Shikrapur dedicated to the elderly from surrounding villages. We honoured them by washing



their feet as a symbol of respect and love. The day was filled with music, dance, and special gifts for each of them. It was a beautiful celebration of the wisdom and presence they bring to our community. In addition,

we organized a beautiful picnic for our beloved tribal elderly people from tribal community Thakarvasti at a Ganpati temple Ranjangaon . The day was filled with uplifting music, fun games, and heartwarming gifts. Seeing the joy and smiles on their faces was truly priceless! Vadu & Shikrapur staff took the efforts to make this gathering successful .

### Sports Camp (9 to 12. 11.24)

Our Maher Winter Sports Camp 2024 has come to a grand finish! Congratulations to the Yellow Group for winning the Champion



Trophy and to the Red Group for securing the Runner-Up Trophy! A total of 590 children showcased their talents across 43 different games, each playing

with incredible passion and dedication. We're so grateful to our amazing staff and housemothers for their unwavering support, care, and encouragement throughout the event.

## Wedding - New Beginning

Our daughter Sanskruti has begun a new chapter in her life as she marries Shamrao at our Vadu Centre. Wishing her a life filled with happiness, love, and blessings on this wonderful journey ahead.



Congratulations, Sanskruti and Shamrao! May your future together be bright and joyful.



Our Maher family is overjoyed as Joyce and Ryan begin their beautiful journey together. Wishing them endless love, happiness, and blessings as they step into married life. May God bless them abundantly!

## A Heartfelt Donation (13.11.24)



Hira, an elderly grandmother abandoned by family and friends, came to Maher with nothing but a kind spirit. Sr. Lucy welcomed her into our Shelter Home for the Abandoned Aged, where Hira found purpose, helping to care for the house and garden. Inspired by her heart, Sr. Lucy began giving her a small pocket money of Rs. 300. In a gesture that deeply moved us all, Hira saved Rs. 2000 from her pocket money and presented it to Sr. Lucy as her donation to Maher. Sr. Lucy said it was her biggest and most meaningful donation of 2024. Such moments remind us of the power of kindness and generosity, no matter the amount. Thank you, Hira Maa, for showing us that true wealth lies in the heart.

### **Empowering the Pardhi and Bhil Communities**

A special event was organized at Shirur for the Pardhi and Bhil communities, with guidance from our beloved Sr. Lucy (Didi), President of Jeevan Vikas Mandir School Ravindra Dhanak Sir, Dr. Shinde Sir, and Principal Todmal Sir. The program focused on: Life skills training, Health awareness, and the Importance of education. Approximately 80-90 people participated, and we distributed blankets, gifts, and food to support them. Most important, a pressing issue was highlighted — some families in the beggars' colony resist sending their children to school, viewing them as labour for quick money-making means. This sheds light on the urgent need for more awareness and interventions to ensure every child gets the education they deserve. Let's work together to break this cycle and create a brighter future for these children.

### **Three-Day Evaluation Meeting**



Three-day evaluation meeting brought together project in-charges and staff from seven states under one roof. It has been a wonderful journey of learning, sharing, and collaboration. This meeting reinforced the unity, strength, motivation, and inspiration that keeps Maher moving forward in its mission to serve humanity. We are grateful to everyone for their dedication and contributions. Together, we grow stronger!

### **A Beautiful Beginning for Pournima and Prashant**

We are overjoyed to share that our Maher girl, Pournima, has started a new chapter in her life by tying the knot with Prashant. Wishing them a lifetime filled with love, happiness, and togetherness. Congratulations to the lovely couple!

### **Happiness program (09.09.24)**

A special program was organized at Maher Mamtadham in Raxaul by Ajit Kumar Prasad, the director of Santam School, to celebrate his achievements. Attendees were welcomed with aarti and received a sandalwood mark on their foreheads. The event began with the song "Jyot Se Jyot Jalate Chalo" (light a lamp with one to another, let the river of love flow as you go along.)

During the program, Ajit Ji and his entire family were honoured by the guests. Ajit Ji personally served a lunch for all attendees, sharing his joy with everyone present. All the guests expressed their heartfelt gratitude to Ajit Ji and his family, and everyone celebrated with great happiness.

### **World Tribal Day (09.08.24)**

On the occasion of World Tribal Day, a joyous celebration was held at all Maher centres. An awareness program and rally were organized, aiming to educate and sensitize people about the issues faced by tribal communities and the importance of preserving their rich culture. Together, we stand in solidarity with our tribal brothers and sisters, committed to respecting and maintaining their heritage.

### **Maher Foundation Day (Jharkhand) (16.10.24)**

The 17th foundation day of Maher was celebrated with great pomp at Maher Ranchi. After a short prayer and lighting of the lamp by Shobha Didi and Neera Didi, the children performed a welcome song, filmi dance, and Nagpuri dance etc. Then Neera Didi read the report on the work of Maher. All the women were present and at the end all the children thanked Didi for opening Maher in Jharkhand. A deep gratitude to Didi and Hira Tai for their unconditional Love and

Support. Many thankful to Shobha Didi, Neera Didi, Fulmani, Megha and Diyugi Didi. For all hard work and efforts.

### **Computer & Tailoring Certificate Distribution (21.10.24)**

Tailoring and computer certificate distribution was offered by Sr. Lucy, Lino & Blanca, after starting our program with lighting of the lamp. Sr. Shiji read about the recent Report of Maher Karnataka and a cultural program was offered. Lino expressed the group's appreciation for the work of Maher and Sr. Lucy thanked all the people those who came for the function.

### **Inauguration of Santoshi Women's Home in Molakalapudi (03.08.24)**



It was a memorable day for whole of Maher family when we started a new house for the women in Molakalapudi village. First, we called Chief Guest, Guest of Honor, Guest, Sr. Lucy Kurien, Hira Thai and all the guests to take their Honourable seats that were arranged on the stage. We began our program by lighting

the lamp and then called the priests from different Religions to thank the almighty for the abundant blessings and for the healthy running of the Molakalapudi project. Sr. Lucy Kurien honoured all the dignitaries and staff with Maher shawls. The dignitaries, staff and all the Guests were invited for the Ribbon cutting and then all were invited into the house for a tour. They were amazed by all the services that Didi and Maher is doing for Orphans.

The visit was followed by a cultural program, beginning with a prayer dance by the Maher Andhra Pradesh staff. Then different dances by AP Maher staff and our Nutrition program children from Kallure. It was a

most joyful and memorable day which included a very simple but very delicious lunch.

After the lunch we held a press conference in which Didi explained the service that Maher is doing for the battered, exploited, destitute women, men and children. The program came to an end with a joyful moment.

#### **‘Bhumi Pujan’ Programme’s (22.07.24)**

After many days of waiting, at last a ‘BHOOMI PUJAN’ ceremony of MAHER Kolkata was completed (this is a special ritual of paying respect to the land goddess, Bhoomi Devi). Sr. Lucy Kurien, Founder of MAHER organization was joined by two foreign friends (JAN BURNER, LUCIAN PETERSMAN and PANKAJ JI & Pakash JI) along with priests of three religions Sri Sanjay Nanda, Brother Marcous and Moulana Sakib Ali who each prayed to God. We are thrilled that the building can soon be built and the helpless people can get shelter, without any obstacle or danger. Local residents, Madhu Nivas & Mayer Anchal Home members and some community friends were present as well as some friends of the society. Residents of the area are very happy that MAHER has taken such an initiative.

#### **Awareness program -Foster care (19.09.24)**

As per the Juvenile Justice Act, those who wish to adopt a child should consider the Govt.'s counter guardianship scheme. Pratipalakatva i.e. Foster Care scheme, is good for providing family to orphaned, destitute, neglected and deprived children in the society. The Government has implemented the Pratipalakatva scheme considering that if the children living in orphanages, orphans and orphans due to family problems want to get love and affection as well as education, rehabilitation care and protection, they can get more in the family. Couples who are childless for some reason may desire to adopt a child, but the waiting list for adoption is long. Instead, an orphan child will

be better off if he takes guardianship. Project Head of Maher Sanstha, social worker, Sunil Kamble asserted that interested parents should contact District Women and Child Development Officer Office, Child Protection Officer Office, District Child Welfare Committee, Ratnagiri. An awareness program was organized by Maher Sanstha for women of self-help groups in Dhamenwadi, Pochari, Taluka-Sangameshwar. Ritika Maraskolhe, Superintendent of Maher Balgriha, President of Simradevi Women's Self-Help Group, Aruna Dhamane, President of Adishakti Women's Self-Help Group, Anisha Dhamane, all the women members of Self-Help Group and local women were present for this program.

#### **Bhajan & Tree plantation (17.07.24)**

On the occasion of Ashadhi Ekadashi, all the devotees gathered together. This is a sacred day in the Hindu calendar where marks the commencement of Lord Vishnu's four-month-long slumber. The



children from the Bal Gopal Bhajan Mandal in Mahabala lit the lamps and started the bhajan (devotional songs) which were enjoyed by all the devotees at Maher Shanti Niwas. The women's bhajan mandal (local district) from Ghorad also participated. After the bhajan, everyone was served snacks.

Additionally, for Ashadhi Ekadashi and Moharram, the villagers brought tea and sherbet (juice) Rafiq Sir contributed spicy rice, and Guddu Bhau also brought spicy rice and brinjal curry for everyone. In memory of eight devotees and two women from Maher Hira Niwas, 10 saplings were planted at the

cremation ground and cemetery. Dr. Sachin Pawde and his friends, along with staff from Maher Shanti Niwas—Atul Shelke, Maya Shelke, Pramod Katve, Shubham Zhamre, Suraj Dhole, Dipali Bhalavi, and Sharda Tai—were present at the event.

### Navratri Festival (08.10.24)

Navratri festival was celebrated at Maher Shanti Niwas. Nine girls from the ages seven to seventy ladies as a custom were worshiped as the form of the goddess and were blessed. After that, aarti was performed (taking around the aarti thali). This awareness that God is



in woman and man was done through this program. After that all the guests were felicitated with shawls. Ankita Bhimrao Thul was felicitated as a warrior. Harsh Pramod Dekate was felicitated for being selected as an Agniveer (youth armed corps). The teachers of School

of Brilliant were honoured in the Rangoli competition. Then Meghatai Satish Supare's garba group of 30 women performed the garba and lezeem folkdance. After that, the tala garba of bhajani groups who came from outside the village, Bharud gavalan and cultural programs were performed. The program conducted by Kiran Pattewar, This program was attended by Atul Shelke, Mayatai Shelke, Pramod Katve, Suraj Dhole, Dipali Bhalavi, Mohana Kadpate, Reshma Adamne, Chhaya Surkar, Sharda Rahgadale.

### **Solar system inauguration (13.08.24)**

The Maher organization in Karandiwadi, Satara, inaugurated a solar net metering system. Paranjape Autocraft Company, Satara, donated a 15 KW solar net metering system to the Maher organization. Present at the event were Sr. Lucy Kurien, Hirabegum Mulla, Tejaswini Deshmukh, and Shri Shirish Pawar, along with representatives from the Paranjape Autocraft Company, including Prakash Kothawale, Abhijit Kamble, Snehal Kamble, Priyanka Wadhonkar, Sonal Nikam, and women and girls from the organization.

During the event, Sr. Lucy Kurien, Tejaswini Deshmukh, and Shirish Pawar unveiled the solar net metering system plaque. The girls performed a dance, and Abhijit Kamble conducted the event and presented the introduction. The chief guest lit the ceremonial lamp and Smt. Lucy and Smt. Tejaswini Deshmukh shared their thoughts and feelings about the occasion.

### **Cultural Program Kindergarten and Tuition Class (22.01.25)**



Maher hosted a vibrant Cultural Program filled with joy and laughter for all our kindergarten and tuition class students. The day was packed with cultural dances, fun games, delicious food, and thoughtful gifts for everyone. Watching the children showcase their talents and enthusiasm was truly heartwarming! A big thank you to our staff, teachers, and supporters for making this event so special for the little ones. Together, we celebrate culture, learning, and happiness!

### **Empowering Young Leaders (23.01.25)**

Maher, in collaboration with Slum Soccer, organized an inspiring



Shakti Girls Leadership Workshop filled with engaging games and activities. This workshop was dedicated to empowering girls, helping them build confidence, and encouraging them to become strong agents of change in their communities. By fostering

leadership skills and self-belief, we're nurturing a generation ready to take charge and create a brighter future. A big thank you to everyone who contributed to this meaningful event! Together, we empower, inspire, and uplift.

### **Special Program for the Transgender Community (26.01.25)**



Maher organized a heartfelt and inspiring program for the transgender community at our Vadu centre. The event was filled with motivation, inspiration, cultural dances, and singing performances, making it a memorable and meaningful day for everyone present. We also shared gifts and food as a token of love and

appreciation. Maher is committed to spreading inclusivity, joy, and empowerment for all. Together, we celebrate diversity and humanity.

## **Celebrating Eight Years of Interfaith Service and Harmony**

**(01.02.25)**

“Love is the essence of every religion.”

On February 1, 2025, the Interfaith Association for Service to Humanity and Nature (IASHN) joyfully celebrated its 8th anniversary at Maher Sanstha in Vadhu Budruk, Pune, India. The event brought together faith leaders from the Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Sikh, Jain, and Mahanubhava Panth traditions, along with hundreds of IASHN members, to honour this remarkable journey of unity and service. *A Legacy of Love and Commitment*

Founded in 2017 by Sr. Lucy Kurién, Maher’s founder and director, IASHN was established on the same date as Maher’s founding, reinforcing its commitment to interfaith harmony and compassionate action. Those who take the IASHN pledge commit to:

- Respecting all religions
- Observing a daily spiritual practice
- Performing at least one act of service each day
- Practicing wise stewardship of resources
- Caring for humanity and nature

### **A Celebration of Peace and Unity**

The anniversary celebration began with a peace rally, where participants walked behind the IASHN banner displaying the powerful message: “Love is Our Religion.” Chants of “Love is the True Religion” and “Let’s Respect All Religions and Preserve Humanity” filled the air, setting a deeply meaningful tone for the day.

The program was introduced by Maher social worker Ramesh Dutonde, followed by a stunning prayer-in-dance performed by

Maher children from our centre at Kendur, representing the beauty of multiple faiths coming together. Maher youth also actively participated, reinforcing the importance of interfaith values for future generations. *Voices of Wisdom and Reflection*

Faith leaders took the stage to share the essence of their respective traditions, emphasizing the importance of prayer, peace, and respect for all religions. Each of them were honoured by Sr. Lucy Kurien, who



presented them with a special gift as a symbol of gratitude and a reminder to carry the message of environmental stewardship to their communities.

A guided meditation led by IASHN Coordinator Mangesh Pol encouraged all attendees to reflect on a core truth: our primary duty, regardless of faith, is to respect and embrace one another.

Leadership & Spiritual Guide Ann Boothello and Youth Social Worker Ganesh Chavan extended heartfelt congratulations to IASHN and Sr. Lucy for their continued commitment to fostering interfaith harmony. Ann shared her belief in the urgent need to spread the message that there is “Beauty in Truth” worldwide, while Sr. Lucy reminded everyone that love is the essence of every religion. She emphasized that when we view all faiths with respect, openness & love, peace becomes possible. Religious discrimination and violence have no place in a world where faith is meant to uplift humanity.

### **Maher Day (02.02.25)**

The 28th Anniversary celebration of Maher took place at Awalwadi, Pune where the children showcased their talents through vibrant dance performances. During the event, Maher honoured its dedicated staff members who have consistently demonstrated outstanding work with awards.

Mr. Bapusaheb Pathare, MLA, delivered an inspiring speech about Maher, praising the organization's incredible efforts in caring for children, men, and women in need. He described Maher as a "holy place" that provides love and support to those who are vulnerable and marginalized. Mr. Pathare pledged his continued support, assuring the audience that he would do his best to assist Maher in its mission.

He also highlighted the remarkable work of Sr. Lucy, emphasizing her dedication and commitment to the organization. According to Mr. Pathare, Sr. Lucy has been a driving force behind Maher's success and has positively impacted many lives through her selfless work.

The event was a heartfelt celebration of Maher's 28 years of service, with many people expressing their admiration for the organization's unwavering dedication to social welfare.

### **RATNAGIRI**

The program began with the chief guest watering the tree, giving the message "Plant trees, save trees and nurture trees" and reading the preamble of the Constitution.

The destitute women and men of Maher Women's Department won the hearts of everyone by performing various dances. On the occasion of Maher's 28th anniversary, 24 social workers from Ratnagiri who have done useful work for society were honoured with the Maher Samaj Ratna Award. presented by the Founder Director Sister Lucy Kurien,

with a shawl, a shripthal(Coconut) and a certificate. The social workers who received the award said that they were encouraged for their social work by receiving this award. Mrs. Nanda Shelar, Coordinator of Matoshree Kamalbai Vispute English Medium School, who was

present for this program, said that the work being done by Maher Sanstha is energizing for all of us.



Police Inspector Rajendra Yadav of the Rural Police Station, Mahendra Mandavkar, Nanda Shelar of MKV School, former Sarpanch of Khedshi village Bhikaji Gawde, Nivali Ravanawadi Police Patil, Bhalchandra

Shitap, Khedshi village Police Patil Shalaka Sawant Desai, Karvanchiwadi Police Patil Swati Jadhav, well-wishers of Maher, citizens of Samarth Nagar Hatkhamba and all the children, women, men and employees of Maher were present. Over people attended this program.

### **Maher Day in Karnataka**

Sr.Lucy and 18 Staff visited our Ashram on 16th to celebrate 28th Maher Day. Mr. Abid Gadyal (Asst. Commissioner) as the Chief guest spoke about Maher and Sr. Lucy's great work. In addition we enjoyed a cultural program and dinner. Some villagers honored Sr. Lucy by giving her a bouquet and garland.

### **International Women's Day 2025 (8.03.25)**

Vadu Over 600 vibrant women were brought together from over 10 villages to honour their strength, resilience, and achievements including these highlights



- Recognition of Self-Help Groups: Twenty self-help groups were felicitated for their remarkable progress and empowerment.
- Self-Defence Demonstration: The Lathi-Khata Prashikshan inspired confidence and safety among participants.
- Awareness sessions: Informative sessions on pre-natal and ante-natal health care were conducted which empowered women with essential knowledge.

The event was a grand success, marked by an atmosphere of education, empowerment, and jubilation. Our heartfelt thanks go out to all the incredible women who continuously inspire and drive positive change worldwide.

Special appreciation to Sr. Lucy Kurien, Founder Director of Maher for her dynamic leadership and exemplary role in inspiring millions of women.

Vatsalyadham, Wagholi! held a vibrant celebration that saw the participation of women in large numbers. The event highlighted the importance of women's rights, equality, and empowerment. It was a day filled with inspiring speeches, cultural performances, street plays and fun filled activities that celebrated the achievements and contributions of women in various fields. The event was well-

attended and marked a significant moment in recognising and honouring the role of women in society.

The program organized in Shikrapur gave honour to the strength, achievements, and resilience of women in our community. Outstanding women's self-help groups were felicitated for their remarkable efforts in uplifting their communities. Women excelling in business were honoured with badges of honor, recognizing their dedication and success. The women participated in fun-filled games, and gifts were distributed, spreading joy and appreciation for all. A special moment of pride came when our beloved Sr. Lucy Didi was honoured by the Sarpanch of Shikrapur for her recognition as the 7th Most Inspiring Person in the World by CALL Magazine, Austria.

Vadgaonsheri, brought together around 200 women from nearby villages and self-help groups. The event was graced by a diverse group of friends and well-wishers of Maher, including media representatives, benefactors from India and abroad, as well as inspiring guest speakers.

A highlight of the celebration was the cultural brilliance brought by the talented Kathak dancers from Manisha Sathe Kathak Dance Academy. Their mesmerizing performances left everyone in awe, embodying the spirit of empowerment, grace, and resilience.

The vibrant atmosphere was filled with laughter, joy, and a shared commitment to uplifting each other and building a stronger, more inclusive society.

Kendur, Sanaswadi, Satara, Wardha brought together women from various communities to honour their strength, resilience, and achievements. Highlights included:

- Prayer Dance & Cultural Performances – A vibrant showcase of talent and tradition
- Girls' Protection Training – Empowering young girls with confidence and safety skills

- Skit on Women’s Empowerment – Raising awareness through creative performances
- Recognizing Self-Help Groups – Celebrating their dedication and progress
- Street Rally for Awareness – Advocating for women’s rights and empowerment

The spirit of empowerment and unity was felt throughout the celebrations, reaffirming Maher’s commitment to women’s safety, dignity, and progress.

Kolkata Maher is celebrating International Women’s Day across the nation! We are honoured to have Sr. Lucy Kurien, Founder & Director of Maher, leading the Women's Day celebrations at our Maher Centre in Kolkata, West Bengal. Her unwavering passion, commitment, and dedication continue to inspire and uplift thousands of women. Event Highlights:

- Bike Rally – 35 bikers rode for 5 km to spread awareness on #InternationalWomensDay.
- Rally and march – 230 participants marched together, raising their voices for women’s rights and empowerment.
- Awareness Program – Informative sessions and discussions were held to educate women about their rights, safety, and self-reliance.



It was a day of unity, strength, and inspiration, proving that age is no barrier when it comes to fighting for a woman’s cause. A big thank you to everyone who joined and supported this powerful movement!

Maher’s Annual Youth Camp – A Journey of Transformation!

We recently concluded our annual youth camp at the Maher Pune office, where 35 enthusiastic 12th & 10th -standard students embarked on an unforgettable journey of self-discovery, learning, and growth.

Under the dynamic leadership of Sr. Lucy Kurien, and the unwavering support of our dedicated staff and Camp Director, the camp was a true celebration of empowerment, inspiration, and life-changing experiences.

### **Highlights of the Camp:**

- Yoga & Meditation – Cultivating mindfulness and inner peace
  - Seva (Selfless Service) – Inspiring a spirit of giving and selfless service
  - Dance, Music & Drama – Unleashing creativity
  - Fun & Sports – Building teamwork
  - Career Counselling – Illuminating pathways to success
  - Sex Education & de-addiction Awareness – Equipping for life's challenges
  - Youth Rights and their duties – Empowering them to know their rights and duties.
- Goal Setting – Encouraging them to dream big and aim high.

The energy and enthusiasm were amplified by four vibrant teams working together under the camp's inspiring tagline: "I AM THE CHANGE"! A heartfelt THANK YOU to everyone who made this camp a grand success! Together, we're shaping brighter futures for India's youth.

### **Wardha Educational Program**

A special educational program was held. First Baba from Maher Shanti Niwas came in the morning. He cleaned the area in front of the temple and offered a special message to the society. Then Gajendra Surkar Sir guided and gave a demonstration to the people on the topic of superstition and anti-social behaviour regarding the snake. Next, Prof. Dr. Kamlesh Mankar Sir provided information about education

followed by Dr. Atish Dabare Sir who gave guidance on how to take care of health and cleanliness.

### **Jharkhand proud moment for Maher Ranchi**

Runia, one of the first girls raised in our Maher Ranchi Home, has grown into a remarkable young woman. Having lost both her parents at a tender age, she found love, care, and support at Maher. Through her hard work and determination, she completed her studies and now holds a respectable job. Today, she visited Sr. Lucy Didi with her wedding invitation card, as she prepares to start a new chapter with her fiancé, who works in the police force. Runia's journey is a testament to resilience, love, and the power of community. We wish her all the happiness and blessings in this beautiful new phase of life.

### **Black Day celebration (14.02.25)**

On 14th February 2025 Black Day was celebrated at Kaswagarh Village with villagers and Maher Children and women's. We organized a candle march with Mukhia Banti Oraon, Vice Mukhiya Kiran Devi, villagers and Maher staff.

## **ANDHRAP**

### **Children's Picnic (21.01.25)**



This was a wonderful way to promote bonding, exploration, and learning among kids. We chose a safe location, planned fun activities, packed a delicious meal, ensured supervision, and made it a theme-based picnic, all to create a memorable and enjoyable experience for the children. This picnic offers numerous benefits, including creating lifelong memories, promoting social skills, encouraging outdoor play, and fostering creativity.

### **World Religion Day (19.01.25)**

On 19th January 2025 we observed World Religion Day, promoting unity love and harmony among people of diverse faiths. This special event was spearheaded by Mr. Sreenu and Miss. Riya John, who demonstrated exceptional initiative and leadership in organizing the program Mr. Sreenu delivered a thoughtful speech. We created pledge card with the powerful quote “love is my religion “from our Esteemed Director Sr. Lucy Kurien. The atmosphere was filled with soothing religious songs, fostering a sense of peace and tranquility among all inmates.

### **Sports Day (15.02.25)**



On the occasion of Sports Day, Molakalapudi women’s home residents enthusiastically participated in a range of exciting sports activities. The event was organized to promote physical fitness, teamwork and camaraderie among the women. The action- packed day featured a series of thrilling competitions, including: running race,

kho kho game, shuttle badminton, cricket and carom board.

### **Nutrition Awareness program ( 28/02/2025)**

We visited a slum village where gave parents information about malnutrition in children. Eggs and Bananas were given to the children. We explained that with proper attention and nutritional food, the children will be healthy and avoid illness.

## **KERALA**

### **‘crayons 2025’ An Initiative By Rajagiri College Of Management**

A big cultural program event was organized for all the children from childcare institutions in Ernakulam district. Maher Kerala’s children

also participated in a variety of competitions held by Rajagiri College of Management. The children performed group dance, group songs, and single songs and participated in drawing and speech competitions.

### **Personal Development Class To Elder Inmates**

Sr. Annamma Jeevanjali on 29th January provided a class for the elderly male inmates, promoting their physical well-being and mobility, moral principles and holding a positive life-view.

### **AWARDS APLENTY!**

#### **Maher Shines Bright on the Global Stage**

Sr. Lucy Kurien, has soared to the 30th spot on the prestigious OOOM 100: The World's Most Inspiring People list. Published in OOOM Magazine, and available on newsstands in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, this eighth-annual list recognizes trailblazers from various fields. Sr. Lucy stood shoulder-to-shoulder with global icons like H.H. Pope Francis, President Biden, and Oprah Winfrey. Heartfelt congratulations, Sr. Lucy! Your vision, dedication, and compassion continue to inspire us all at Maher and beyond. Let's celebrate this remarkable achievement together.

#### **Honouring a Trailblazer: Sr. Lucy Felicitated by St. Teresa's College**

On 29th January 2024, St. Teresa's College had the honour of felicitating Sr. Lucy in recognition of her dedication to humanitarian causes and compassionate leadership. Sr. Lucy was bestowed with a special award. The ceremony was an acknowledgment of Sr Lucy's lifelong efforts to uplift the underprivileged sections.

Sr. Lucy's commitment to empowerment, compassion, and social change truly embodies the spirit of Maher. Let's join hands in applauding this incredible achievement! Your support has been a driving force in Maher's journey, and together, we continue to make a meaningful impact.

Our heartfelt gratitude to St. Teresa's College for this prestigious recognition. Maher family, let's celebrate this momentous occasion and share our love and appreciation for Sr. Lucy!

### **Syms Work of Mercy Award 2024**

Maher is very happy to announce that Sr. Lucy is being honoured with the Syms Work of Mercy Award 2024. We are so proud of her dedication and hard work. Join us in congratulating Didi for this well-deserved recognition!

### **The Pratibha Samman Award 2024**

The award ceremony by the Social Media Group took place at YS Resort, Laxmipur, Bihar. The award was bestowed upon Sr. Lucy in recognition of her outstanding contribution towards the welfare of the underprivileged in Bihar. Birendra Kumar accepted the award on behalf of Sr. Lucy.

### **Appreciation Award**

On the occasion of the 78th Independence Day, our beloved Sr. Lucy (Didi) received an Appreciation Award for her outstanding work in promoting unity, community, and interfaith harmony. Her unwavering support and dedication have made a significant contribution to our nation. We are incredibly proud of Didi and grateful for her tireless efforts that continue to inspire us all.

### **Suhana Kamal Seva Award**

We are thrilled to announce that our beloved Sr. Lucy (Didi) has been honoured with the prestigious **\*\*Suhana Kamal Seva Award\*\*** by Pravin Masalewale Trust! This award is a testament to her unwavering

dedication, hard work, and immense love for everyone. All of us at Maher—staff, children, and the entire community—are incredibly proud of Didi. Her tireless efforts continue to inspire and uplift us every day.

### **Adarsh Mata Puraskar**

Our beloved Sr. Lucy (Didi) has received the prestigious \*Adarsh Mata Puraskar\* from Jadhav Group of Institutes. She continues to be our guiding light and inspiration, showing us the power of love, compassion, and service every day.

Kasturba Gandhi Award - Honouring her unwavering dedication to empowering women and transforming lives.

Excellence Award by Hidhaya Charitable Trust, Kerala - Acknowledging her tireless efforts and lifelong commitment to serving those in need.

Aaryan Navdurga Award We are filled with pride and joy as the Aaryans Group of Companies honoured our beloved Sr. Lucy Kurien with the prestigious Aaryan Navdurga Award.

Anjani Mashalker Inspiration Award 2024. Our beloved Sr. Lucy Kurien (Didi) has been honoured with the prestigious award presented by the Anjani Mashalker Foundation. This recognition celebrates Didi's tireless dedication, compassion, and transformative work in uplifting countless lives through Maher.

The Yahova Christian Association has honoured our beloved Sr. Lucy Didi with a special award, recognizing Maher's noble work and Didi's unwavering dedication to serving humanity. This recognition is a testament to her tireless efforts in bringing hope, love, and care to those in need.

7th Most Inspiring Person in the World by CALL Magazine, Austria

We are overjoyed to share that Sr. Lucy Kurien, our beloved Founder & Director of Maher, has been recognized as the 7th Most Inspiring Person in the World by CALL Magazine, Austria! This incredible honour is a testament to Didi's unwavering dedication, compassion, and tireless efforts in transforming lives and spreading love across the world. Didi, your journey continues to inspire millions, and we are beyond proud to stand beside you in this mission of love and service.

Nari Shakti Award: For sr. Lucy Kurian works for orphaned women and men in Wardha. She was awarded the Lokmat Sakhi Nari Shakti Samman by the Honorable Guardian Minister and Minister of State Pankaj Bhoyar, Lokmat Editor Rajendra Darda, and District Collector Vaman Thi C. In Didi's absence, Maher Shantinivas Project Head Maya Atul Shelke accepted the award.

