



A project for Peace



*"I have signed a peace agreement: to contribute
to unity among nations and peoples"*

Vincent Fox





Rescuing the most neglected communities from oblivion and taking them out of poverty, the greatest disease of our century, can be a reality. This idea inspired Vicente Ferrer, and 40 years after he started his first project in a small village in Anantapur (India) it has turned into the biggest legacy in cooperation's history. Today the resulting development project covers 2,313 villages and benefits more than 2.5 million people. It stands as a successful project and an unlimited challenge that defines the model to be used to end extreme poverty and exclusion.

This model has given dignity back to millions of people in India and there are two factors that make it different from the great majority. First of all, its permanent engagement. It does not offer provisional help but it works on the idea of permanence, that generates and maintains stable ties in each community. Secondly, it is an integral model that transforms extreme poverty into dignity by individual and collective commitment: it defines a system of rights and liberties, it promotes solidarity, it gives people the capacity to make decisions, and it generates a resource system that enables the community to establish their own priorities and criteria in order to meet their needs.

In brief, it is a human, social and economic model that has enabled the most marginalized communities in the Hindu caste system to lead their own comprehensive transformation process.

People die but work remains. Vicente Ferrer died this year but the Foundation maintains his commitment. It is an unlimited work, a singular and revolutionary project that moves the construction of peace forward. Therefore, because of the effort to rescue the most disadvantaged from poverty and because it is a model of future, hope and peace, Foundation Vicente Ferrer deserves the recognition of the Nobel Peace Prize 2010.

A Model for the Future





Anantapur, a district of 19,130 km² and 4 million people situated in the state of Andhra Pradesh, is the second most arid area in India, only after Rajasthan desert.

With more than 80 percent of its population directly depending on agriculture, the extreme and perpetual deficiency that characterises the region has serious consequences among the poorest.

In 1969, the project started in the region with only six volunteers. At present, more than 1,800 people (99 percent of which are native to Anantapur) form the work team. The program covers 2,313 villages and benefits more than 2.5 million of women, children, disabled and men of the lowest castes: dalits (untouchable), tribes and backward castes.

The development proposal does not aim to achieve immediate solutions but to promote social transformation through people participation, with no time limits. Each village is transformed into a small "nation" where its citizens form a small government, thus encouraging solidarity.

The goal of this process is to create a strong community model that guarantees individual protection in critical times such as hunger, drought, unemployment or illness.

It does not create a rich man out of every poor but it strengthens society through an integral process of transformation.



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Education as the basis for development

Creating supplementary schools for the lowest castes favours social integration.

- Number of schools: 1,696 (90 percent administered by the communities own development committees)
- Number of teachers: 2,190
- Number of students: 143,000 students in primary and secondary schools; 900 students at university

Women: leaders of change

A system based on the Shangam (women's associations) promotes their economic interdependence and makes them conscious of their rights as active members of the community.

- Number of shangams: 4,978
- Women affiliated: 67,135



A health system within the reach of all

Each population group counts on local sanitary workers who make up a network of primary caregivers and give advice. In 2008, the Foundation's healthcare network provided assistance to more than 420,000 people.

- General hospitals: 3
- Rural hospitals: 14
- Family planning centre: 1
- VIH/AIDS care centre: 1
- Sanitary workers: 1,180

A decent home for every family

In order to give a decent home to the lowest castes, the Foundation repairs and builds housing estates.

- General residences: 27,793
- Residences for the disabled: 1,700



Ecology: to save the earth in order to save the people

The Foundation's long-term environmental development plan encompasses several areas: soil conservation to stop erosion, the creation of structures both for preserving water from rainfall and irrigation, reforestation, the use of alternative energy sources and family-based horticulture.

- Structures to save rainwater: 2,309
- Drip irrigation systems: 5,859
- Horticulture (trees planted): 2,749,840
- Biogas units installed: 2,949

In favour of integration for the disabled

A specific program for the disabled, unique in India, intends to promote their social and economic integration and their future economic independence.

- Associations of disabled people: 1,232
- Disabled people affiliated: 16,446
- Residential schools: 18
- Students in residential schools: 1,463



The Silent Revolution

This development project has had exceptional results in terms of creating prosperity, dignity and liberty, and the model continues to expand throughout the south of India.

Foundation Vicente Ferrer supports community development by building homes, schools, sanitary centers and shangams. However, it is the people, the strength of the small governments of each village, who generate and maintain the economic and production cycles that are required to meet fundamental necessities related to education, agriculture, the environment, assistance for the disabled, the Women Bank, and a special fund for emergencies, drought and health.

This cooperation model announces that the challenges of the new millennium can turn real. Revolution has already begun in India. A silent revolution, though.

The Foundation Vicente Ferrer candidacy for the Nobel Peace Prize 2010 aims to give voice to this revolution and make a good practice model out of this project. This is not only about making history. This is about recognising and giving the necessary strength to continue making this dream become true in India and across its borders.





“Now, the Nobel”

The platform for the Foundation Vicente Ferrer candidacy for the Nobel Peace Prize 2010 collects and channels the different initiatives that appeared worldwide to support the foundation’s nomination after Vicente Ferrer’s death.

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