



embracing the world®



# THE HUMANITARIAN INITIATIVES

OF SRI MATA AMRITANANDAMAYI DEVI  
(MATA AMRITANANDAMAYI MATH)



embracing the world®

is a global network of  
charitable projects  
conceived by the  
**Mata Amritanandamayi Math**

(an NGO with Special Consultative Status to the United Nations)

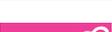
[www.embracingtheworld.org](http://www.embracingtheworld.org)



my religion  
is love

Amma

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The world should know that a life dedicated to selfless love and service is possible. Amma



Amma was born in a remote coastal village in Kerala, South India in 1953. Even as a small girl, she drew attention with the many hours she spent in deep meditation on the seashore. She also composed devotional songs and could often be seen singing to the divine with heartfelt emotion. Despite her tender age, her compositions revealed remarkable depth and wisdom.



When Amma was nine years old, her mother became ill, and Amma was withdrawn from school in order to help with household tasks and the care of her seven siblings. As she went door to door gathering food scraps from neighbours for her family's cows, she was confronted with the intense poverty and suffering that existed in her community, and in the world beyond it.



Where Amma encountered people in need, she brought them food and clothing from her own home. She was undeterred by the scolding and punishment she received from her family for doing so. Amma also began to spontaneously embrace people to comfort them in their sorrow. Responding to her affectionate care, they began to call her Amma (Mother). In turn, she naturally referred to them as her children.



↙  
**AMMA HAS NEVER ASKED ANYONE TO CHANGE THEIR RELIGION, BUT ONLY TO GO DEEPER INTO THEIR FAITH, AND TO LIVE BY ITS ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES.**

# Amma's Life

Amma was deeply affected by the profound suffering she witnessed. According to Hinduism, the suffering of the individual is due to his or her own karma — the results of actions performed in the past. Amma accepted this concept, but she refused to accept it as a justification for inaction. Amma contemplated the principle of karma until she revealed an even more profound truth, asking a question she continues to ask each of us today. "If it is one man's karma to suffer, isn't it our dharma (duty) to help ease his suffering and pain?"

With this simple yet profound conviction — that each of us has a responsibility to lend a helping hand to those less fortunate — Amma moved forward with confidence in her life of service and compassionate care for all beings, uniquely expressed by the motherly embrace she offers to all who seek solace in her arms.

In Amma's community, it was not permissible for a 14-year-old girl to touch others, especially men. But despite adverse reactions from her parents, Amma followed her heart, later explaining, "I don't see if it is a man or a woman. I don't see anyone different from my own self. A continuous stream of love flows from me to all of creation. This is my inborn nature. The duty of a doctor is to treat patients. In the same way, my duty is to console those who are suffering."

Each of Embracing the World's projects has been initiated in response to the needs of the world's poor who have come to unburden their hearts to Amma and cry on her shoulder. More than 25 years ago, the administrators of a local orphanage confessed to Amma that they were out of funds. They told Amma that before long, they would have no choice but to turn the children out on the street. Amma diverted the money that had been saved to build her ashram's first prayer hall and used it to assume care of the orphans. With this, Embracing the World was born.

Today, Amma's birthplace in Kerala has become the headquarters of Amma's India-based spiritual and humanitarian organization, the Mata Amritanandamayi Math (MAM), and the worldwide headquarters of Embracing the World. Home to 3,000 people, thousands more visit every day from all over India and the world. The centre's residents and visitors alike are inspired by Amma's example and dedicate themselves to making a difference in the lives of those less fortunate.

Throughout her life, Amma has embraced and comforted more than 33 million people. When asked where she gets the energy to help so many people while also building and running a massive humanitarian organization, Amma answers: "Where there is true love, everything is effortless."



As long as there is enough strength to reach out to those who come to her, to place her hand on a crying person's shoulder, Amma will continue to give darshan. To lovingly caress people, to console and wipe their tears until the end of this mortal frame — this is Amma's wish. Amma

## Amma's Darshan

Truly a citizen of the world, Amma holds free public programs throughout India, Europe, the United States and Australia, as well as Japan, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Malaysia, Canada, Africa and South America. In her talks, she offers words of wisdom and guidance on both personal fulfillment as well as the most pressing matters of our time. And to this day, she concludes every program by embracing each person attending the event.

Once asked by the BBC, "Why do you hug people?" Amma replied, "That is like asking a river, 'Why do you flow?' It simply flows because that is its nature. In the same way, this is Amma's nature — a mother expressing her love to her children."

This unique, extraordinary expression of universal love is known as Amma's darshan. It can extend up to 20 or more uninterrupted hours in a single day. This motherly embrace, repeated hour after hour, day after day for the last 40 years, has become both catalyst and symbol for the growing humanitarian movement that is Embracing the World.

THROUGHOUT HER LIFE, AMMA HAS EMBRACED MORE THAN 33 MILLION PEOPLE. THIS SIMPLE YET POWERFUL ACT HAS BECOME BOTH CATALYST AND SYMBOL FOR THE GROWING HUMANITARIAN MOVEMENT NOW CALLED EMBRACING THE WORLD.

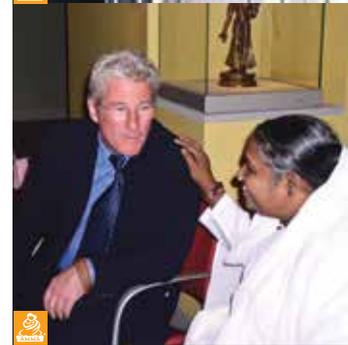


## International Acclaim

For nearly 20 years, Amma has been a regular keynote speaker at international forums concerned with world peace and religious harmony. In 1993, the Parliament of the World's Religions Centennial named her President of the Hindu faith. She addressed the United Nations' Millennium World Peace Summit, and was presented with the 2002 Gandhi-King Award for Nonviolence by UN Messenger for Peace Dr. Jane Goodall and the late UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Sergio Vieira de Mello. In 2006, Amma, along with 2005 Nobel Peace Prize winner Mohamed ElBaradei and actor/humanitarian Richard Gere, was presented with the James Parks Morton Interfaith Award by the Interfaith Center of New York for her role as an outstanding spiritual leader and humanitarian. While presenting the award, Reverend James Parks Morton said of Amma, "You embody everything that we stand for." In 2010, the State University of New York at Buffalo presented Amma with an honorary doctorate in humane letters in recognition of her tireless efforts on behalf of world peace, as well as her commitment to education and to relieving poverty worldwide.

At each of these forums, Amma has taken the opportunity to share her vision of the way humanity can traverse the difficult road ahead — navigating from interreligious discord to harmony; from terrorism to peace; from competition between the sexes to mutual trust and co-operation; from war between nations to a collective war on poverty, and from environmental chaos to the restoration of nature's balance. Amma's observations invite each of us to reflect deeply and to get involved in the process of rebuilding a concerned and caring society.

Taken together, Amma's speeches form a prescription for a humanity in crisis, addressing each of the most pressing issues of our time with clear, practical recommendations for positive change.





## SUNY-Buffalo Presents Amma with Honorary Doctorate

In May 2010, The State University of New York (SUNY) presented Amma with an honorary doctorate in humane letters. SUNY bestowed the doctorate upon Amma in recognition of her tireless efforts on behalf of global peace, for her commitment to education and for the far-reaching impact of her charitable organizations in relieving poverty and human suffering in India and around the world. Addressing the gathering, University President Dr. John B. Simpson said, "Through this conferral, we pay tribute to the far-reaching contributions of a distinguished educational leader, prominent humanitarian and esteemed spiritual leader. Through her leadership of Amrita University as well as through her humanitarian work, Chancellor Amma exemplifies the values of international dialogue and dedicated public service in the global arena. These are values at the core of our mission as an internationalized public university seeking to prepare our students to contribute meaningfully to the global world."



President of India presenting Pazhassi Raja Award to MAM

## President of India Presents National Award for Charity

The President of India Mrs. Pratibha Patil presented the 'Dharma Khadgam' award to Swami Amritaswarupananda at the presidential palace, Rashtrapati Bhavan on 19 February 2010. The award was presented in recognition of Embracing the World charitable activities in India, which are conceived and carried out by

M.A. Math. The Pazhassi Raja National Royal Awards are distributed by the Pazhassi Raja Charitable Trust for exceptional contributors to society from all walks of life.



## Awards & Conferences

*New York, 2010:* Amma receives an honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

*New Delhi, 2009:* Amma inaugurates the Vivekananda International Foundation.

*Jaiapur, 2008:* Amma is a keynote speaker at the Summit of the Global Peace Initiative of Women.

*Paris, 2007:* Amma is awarded the Prix Cinéma Vérité for her humanitarian activities and work for peace at the Cinema Verite Film Festival.

*New York, 2006:* Amma receives the James Parks Morton Interfaith Award in New York.

*Pune, 2006:* Amma receives the Philosopher Saint Sri Jnaneswara World Peace Prize.

*London, 2005:* Amma receives the Mahavir Mahatma Award.

*Kochi, 2005:* Amma receives Centenary Legacy Award of the Rotary Club International.

*Barcelona, 2004:* Amma delivers a keynote address at the 2004 Parliament of the World's Religions.

➤ **TAKEN TOGETHER, AMMA'S SPEECHES FORM A PRESCRIPTION FOR A HUMANITY IN CRISIS, ADDRESSING EACH OF THE MOST PRESSING ISSUES OF OUR TIME.**

*Geneva, 2002:* The World Movement for Non-violence confers upon Amma the Gandhi-King Award for Non-violence at the UN in Geneva.

*Geneva, 2002:* Amma is the keynote speaker at the Global Peace Initiative of Women Religious & Spiritual Leaders at the UN, Geneva.

*USA, 2002:* Amma receives Karma Yogi of the Year Award from *Yoga Journal*.

*New York, 2000:* Amma is a keynote speaker at the Millennium World Peace Summit, UN General Assembly.

*Chicago, 1998:* Amma receives the Care & Share International Humanitarian of the Year Award.

*New York, 1995:* Amma addresses the Interfaith Celebrations at the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN.

*Chicago, 1993:* Amma addresses the Parliament of the World's Religions' 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, where is she named President of the Hindu Faith.

*USA, 1993:* Amma receives the Hindu Renaissance Award from *Hinduism Today*.

## Amritavarsham50 A Prayer for World Peace and Harmony

September 2003: More than a celebration of Amma's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, Amritavarsham50 was a prayer for world peace and harmony — an expression of Amma's power to unite humanity for the benefit of the world. Hundreds of participants marched in procession, carrying river water from seven continents and flags from the 191 countries of the United Nations into the packed stadium, which reverberated with the chanting of the ancient peace prayer "*Om lokah samastah sukhino bhavantu*" (May all the beings in all the worlds be happy). In a prayer for unity and world peace, Amma poured each of the waters into a single urn. International educators, spiritual leaders, environmentalists, entrepreneurs, India's foremost political leaders and cultural artists as well as 200,000 participants packed the stadium every day.



Representatives of 191 countries and 200,000 people daily attended Amma's 4-day 50th birthday celebrations.

## Special Consultative Status to the United Nations

In India, Embracing the World Projects are conceived and carried out by the Mata Amritanandamayi Math (MAM). In 2005, in recognition of MAM's outstanding disaster relief work and other humanitarian activities, the United Nations conferred "Special Consultative Status" to MAM, thus enabling collaboration with UN agencies. In 2008, the UN's Department of Public Information approved MAM as an associated NGO to help its work of disseminating information and research into humanitarian issues.

## Luminaries Speak About Amma

"Amma has done more work than many governments have ever done for their people... her contribution is enormous." — Prof. Muhammad Yunus, 2006 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and Founder, Grameen Bank

"Amma is truly such an enormous fountain of energy and love and compassion. I think if all of us were to get even a fraction of it within our own beings, there would be only joy in the whole world... Whatever little I can do with her inspiration, I will strive my best to accomplish it." — Dr. Rajendra K. Pachauri, Chairman, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007 while Dr. Pachauri served as IPCC Chairman)

"I was very struck by how much of what is generated, how much of the money that is mobilized, actually goes and benefits directly those in need. Amma acts on the spontaneous and instinctive. And that has given a lot of speed and momentum, cut out the bureaucracy, and made it possible to inspire people and to move with them to actually provide timely and quality support to those in need. And I think international NGOs and UN agencies have something to learn from the work of Amma and what she has been able to build." —Olara A. Otunnu, former President, UN Security Council; former Chairman, UN Human Rights Commission

"I want to share with you what I have learned from Amritapuri [Amma's Ashram]: *Giving*. That is the message I get from Amritapuri. Go on giving. You can give. It's not only money. You can share knowledge. You can remove the pain. And you can even go to the person who is suffering. Every one of us — the rich and poor — can give. There is no greater message than Amma's giving to all the people of this region, and Kerala, and India, and to the world." —Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, former President of India

"I believe that she stands here in front of us — God's love in a human body." —Dr. Jane Goodall, PhD, primatologist, anthropologist, UN Messenger of Peace

"When I think of Amma and her life of devotion and service, I see a shining example for all of us of the spirit of reverence, compassion and care." —Dr. Steven C. Rockefeller, PhD, philanthropist, educator, social activist

"Amma presents the kind of leadership we need for our planet to survive. This is the most heroic person I've probably ever met. Because she is sitting there hugging people. This is the most heroic thing that any of us could do now. Because shooting each other is not heroic. The most heroic is caring, and she does that." —Alice Walker, Winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction

"By her emphasis on selfless service and charity, Amma will, I believe, hugely influence the future world." —Brother Dr. Wayne Teasdale, PhD, Catholic monk, former Trustee, Parliament of the World's Religions

# Embracing the World® International

Embracing the World is a global network of local and regional charitable organizations and projects which grew out of the India-based charitable projects of the Mata Amritanandamayi Math. Currently active in more than 40 countries around the world, Embracing the World exists to help alleviate the burden of the world's poor through helping to meet each of their five basic needs — food, shelter, education, healthcare and livelihood — wherever and whenever possible. We believe that having these needs met is the fundamental right of any human being, and that it is the responsibility of each of us to strive hard to ensure that one day, every human being can live in dignity, safety, security and peace.

Amma teaches that everyone — rich or poor — has the power to make a difference in the life of another, and that no selfless gesture is insignificant. Rather, it is the selfless actions we perform for one another that hold the keys to true peace — peace in the individual, peace in the community and peace among diverse cultures, nations and faiths. Amma's centres in many countries contribute to this humanitarian effort by inspiring people to serve selflessly in the building of a better world.

↑  
ETW PROJECTS ARE SUPPORTED BY  
AMMA'S CENTRES AROUND THE WORLD.  
PICTURED (FROM TOP): SPAIN, FRANCE,  
USA, CANADA, GERMANY,  
MAURITIUS, JAPAN, AUSTRALIA,  
SWITZERLAND AND BELGIUM



# disaster relief

- \$1 million for children orphaned by the Japan tsunami/earthquake, 2011
- Supplies, food and scholarships for children, Haiti earthquake, 2010
- \$10.7 million for survivors of Karnataka / Andhra Pradesh Floods, 2009
- \$465,000 in relief for survivors of Bihar Floods, 2008
- \$1 million in medical care for survivors of Mumbai Floods, 2005
- \$1 million in relief for survivors of Hurricane Katrina, 2005
- \$46 million in relief for survivors of the Indian Ocean Tsunami, 2004
- 1,200 new homes for survivors of Gujarat Earthquake, 2001



Andhra Pradesh flood survivors receiving medicines



West Bengal cyclone refugees receive clothing



Mobile Emergency Unit operating after the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami

## Rapid Response Worldwide

Most well-known for our 46 million USD tsunami-relief project, our volunteers have been at ground zero in several of the decade's most devastating natural disasters. In 2011, Embracing the World volunteers were on the ground in Japan just three days after the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami struck. In 2010, we responded to the earthquake in Haiti by sending several shipments of emergency relief supplies to Partners in Health, and providing food and scholarships for children affected by the disaster. In 2009, Embracing the World announced a 10.7 million USD relief package for survivors of floods that displaced 2.5 million people in South India. In 2005, our volunteers responded to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita with a multifaceted, technologically sophisticated relief effort.

With a dual focus on rapid response and extensive long-term rehabilitation, over the past decade ETW has developed a reputation for being first on the scene and the last to leave—long after the spotlight has faded away. Amma's empathy and concern for the disaster survivors is so complete that she responds to every aspect of their situation—not only fulfilling their material and emotional needs, but also keeping an eye on their future. ETW's provision of long-term support for disaster survivors has carried thousands through the darkest periods of their lives into the light of a hopeful future.



ETW volunteers clearing debris after the disaster



ETW volunteers prepared and served food for refugees at crisis centres



The Governor of Miyagi Prefecture accepts ETW's donation of \$1 million for the education of orphans

## Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami

Within three days of the disaster, Embracing the World sent its first group of volunteers to the affected areas to assess the situation on the ground and to distribute food and water for the refugees. After working near the disaster's epicenter, ETW's relief teams soon focused their efforts on Rikuzentakata, a remote coastal town of 23,000 people in dire need of support.

Located more than 150 kilometers from the nearest major city, Rikuzentakata was hit hard by the earthquake and tsunami but had not received sufficient relief assistance before ETW's teams arrived.

And yet help was badly needed: about 10% of Rikuzentakata's population died in the disaster, and at the end of April 2011, at least 70% of the original population was spread across 88 refugee centres, as their households were damaged or destroyed. After their initial visit, the city's Disaster Relief Management Office submitted an official request to ETW to continue its disaster relief efforts there. ETW began to organize regular relief trips to the town, bringing food, supplies, and hands willing to help.

ETW's work at Rikuzentakata included: supporting the refugees in the camps by cooking and serving food; maintenance and laundry services; removing mud and debris from damaged houses; cleaning up public spaces; sorting and transporting relief supplies, and delivering tons of fresh vegetables. The volunteers also worked to clear rubble from farmers' fields, so they could start cultivation in time for the growing season.

In July 2011, during Amma's visit to Japan, ETW donated \$1 million to help pay for the education of children orphaned by the disaster.



Volunteers pack staple foods for distribution



ETW sent 11 palettes of medical supplies.



## Haiti Earthquake

After the catastrophic earthquake struck Haiti in January 2010, Embracing the World immediately joined relief efforts by flying 11 palettes of medical supplies two weeks following the disaster. The supplies were received by Partners In Health, a Boston-based charitable organization that has been working in Haiti for the past 20 years.

The supplies included assorted medications and surgical equipment and supplies, diagnostic supplies, blankets, tents, sleeping bags, obstetric and infant-care supplies, wheelchairs, crutches, braces, splints, and saline solution. In advance of Haiti's rainy season, a truckload of high-quality industrial tarps weighing 44,000 pounds was also delivered to PIH. Later, a 40-foot container of sheets, blankets, towels, nutritional drinks, wheelchairs, and medical supplies was sent. ETW representatives also made several visits to Haiti and distributed staple foods like rice and beans to affected families.

## Scholarships for Children

With the help of principals at three different schools, ETW identified 30 children who had been good students before the earthquake but had since been unable to return to school. Many of them had lost parents or other close relatives in the disaster, and their families could no longer afford to pay for their school-related expenses. ETW is now providing scholarships for those 30 children, and all of them have since returned to school.



The Chief Minister of Karnataka, Sri B.S. Yeddyurappa, receives the symbolic key to the first 100 houses.

## Relief Package for Karnataka Floods

In September and October of 2009, the Indian states of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka were ravaged by unprecedented floods, destroying millions of acres of crops and displacing 2.5 million people. In response, Embracing the World announced a 10.7 million USD (Rs. 50 crores) relief package for the flood survivors in both states. As part of this package, food, clothing, bedsheets, blankets and satellite-supported specialized medical care were immediately provided, with a team of 12 doctors and dozens of paramedical assistants making regular rounds through the refugee camps and affected communities, treating more than 500 patients a day.

On 17 February 2010, just 20 days after entering into an agreement with the Government of Karnataka to provide new homes for displaced flood survivors there, ETW had already completed 100 new houses. ETW was the first nongovernmental organization to complete homes for the survivors of this disaster. The Chief Minister of Karnataka expressed hope that ETW's rapid progress would inspire other organizations to move quickly in their relief efforts.

**By 2012, 1,000 new houses had been completed and handed over to the refugees.**

A view of homes built for displaced flood survivors in Raichur District, Karnataka





The Mobile Telemedicine Unit went by train to Bihar

## Flood Relief Work Bihar

In August 2008, one million people were rendered homeless in Bihar when the Kosi River overflowed its banks. Half the state was underwater. On September 10, Embracing the World pledged 465,000 USD (Rs. 20 million) in relief. Emergency ambulance and telemedicine units were sent to the area via rail from Kochi, a total of almost 2,500 kilometres. AIMS Hospital dispatched teams of specialists and paramedics who treated more than 500 patients daily. 1,500 flood survivors were housed in seven temporary shelters in the districts of Purnia and Supaul. A temporary hospital was maintained in Supaul for one month. The medical team remained in Bihar for more than two months, treating 50,000 people through 100 medical camps. 70,000 USD (Rs. 30 lakh) in medicine was provided. Thousands of tents, blankets and tarpaulins were distributed along with cooking stoves and vessels, food, clothing and school supplies.

Bihar's Minister for Labour, Avdesh Narain Singh, expressing his gratitude, said, "The people of MAM [Embracing the World's India-based NGO] are working day and night to serve the flood survivors. In fact, I wonder if they are even sleeping at night! We are very thankful to MAM for accepting our appeal and rushing to help us in this time of need."



Tutoring session at a flood refugee camp in Bihar

Bihar 2008 — planning the flood relief work



Earthquake relief - Kashmir



Flood relief - Mumbai



Earthquake relief - Gujarat

## West Bengal

In May 2009, Cyclone Aila hit West Bengal and Bangladesh, leaving 330 people dead and one million homeless. Medical camps ran for 10 days, with ETW doctors treating approximately 3,000 people, dispensing more than 2,080 USD worth of free medicine (Rs. 100,000). ETW volunteers also distributed approximately 800 articles of clothing and blankets, served 6,000 free meals and gave away two tons of rice.

## Kashmir

In response to the 2005 earthquake that devastated areas on the border of Kashmir and Pakistan, ETW sent a relief team to console survivors and distribute food, blankets and other supplies.

## Mumbai

In July 2005, torrential floods affected millions, especially slum-dwellers, whose makeshift houses were washed away. ETW immediately provided food and bedding. Doctors, accompanied by two fully equipped ambulances, attended to about 50,000 patients and distributed medicines worth a total of 1 million USD (Rs. 4.3 crores).

## Gujarat

In January 2001, Gujarat suffered a devastating earthquake, in which 20,000 people were killed. Amma dispatched a disaster-relief team of 12 doctors, two ambulances and 100 student volunteers from Amrita University. Embracing the World adopted three entire villages, rebuilding 1,200 homes.

In August 2006, the city of Surat suffered severe flooding. 300 people were killed. ETW sent a medical team that attended to more than 3,000 patients and distributed 31,500 USD (Rs. 14 lakhs) in medicine.



## Relief for Survivors of Kumbakonam School Fire Tamil Nadu

In July 2005, 92 children lost their lives and 18 more were severely burned when the thatched roof of a nursery school caught fire in a small village in Tamil Nadu. Amma met personally with 140 of the surviving parents and siblings, as well as many of the children who had survived the fire. In addition to consoling them for their loss, Amma looked for ways to help them get back on their feet. These families had been poverty-stricken even before having had to bear the weight of this tragedy. Ultimately, Embracing the World would build 51 houses for affected families, and provide sewing machines for many of the affected mothers to help them earn a livelihood.

## Hurricane Katrina USA

Following hurricanes Katrina and Rita, more than 100 Embracing the World service groups throughout North America responded by delivering food, clothing, school supplies and other essential items. Extensive medical care and emotional support were also given. Volunteers visited relief sites and helped the displaced to locate one another via a website they built for survivors. In December 2005, on behalf of Embracing the World, the Mata Amritanandamayi Center donated 1 million USD (Rs. 4.3 crores) to the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund. The donation is one of the largest the Fund — run by former US Presidents George Bush, Sr., and Bill Clinton — received from an NGO.

Life-saving operations in Gujarat



Former US President Bill Clinton receives a cheque from MA Center for Hurricane Katrina relief



2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami as it hit Kerala, moments before the waves washed into Amritapuri Ashram

## 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami

The relief and rehabilitation work conducted by Embracing the World in the wake of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami stands today as one of the most multi-faceted, comprehensive and sustained disaster-relief projects ever undertaken by a nongovernmental organization. What made ETW's work unique was its holistic nature—virtually every aspect of the tsunami survivors' lives was considered and improved. In the end, many survivors stated that in terms of their quality of life and economic independence, they were better off after the tragedy than they had been before.

The tsunami struck Amma's Amritapuri Ashram and neighbouring villages on the morning of December 26, 2004. 140 villagers were killed. Thousands of people, including the 20,000 people in Amma's ashram that day, were evacuated under Amma's direct supervision. Within hours, the nearby Amrita University was converted into a giant relief camp. Amma personally arranged all necessary supplies, taking into account every last detail. ETW fed not only 2,000 village evacuees but also 15,000 people in 12 government shelters. In the immediate aftermath, volunteers consoled distraught villagers and helped clear away the sludge and rubble surrounding their homes. 11 ambulances and teams of doctors and nurses rushed to the affected areas on both coasts of India and set up multiple 24-hour medical centres. The ambulance teams provided on-the-spot intensive care, visiting all the relief camps every few hours. Amma's monastic disciples assisted with cremations. ETW provided counselling, education and homes for orphaned children.



Amma consoles distraught refugees at an ETW relief camp in the days after the tsunami



Embracing the World distributed 350,500 USD (Rs. 15 million) to families in the Kerala districts of Kollam, Ernakulam and Alappuzha for replacing cooking vessels. ETW served 10,000 meals three times a day at relief camps and at 18 food counters in the villages near Amritapuri. Within a few weeks of the tragedy, construction of nine shelters on MAM land was complete. Each had electricity, ceiling fans and separate bathrooms. In Alappad, Kerala and in Samanthampettai, Tamil Nadu, Embracing the World provided shelter for 550 families. ETW connected its temporary shelters with AIMS Hospital and the Amritapuri Ashram hospital via telemedicine satellite link. During the first three months following the tsunami, more than 20,000 ETW volunteers, from India and abroad, helped with the relief work.

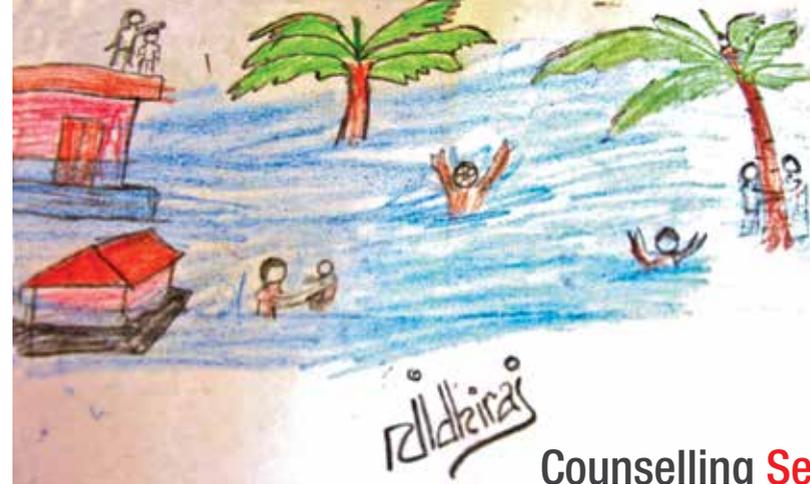


Temporary shelters in Kerala

## Amma's Pledge

In January 2005, Embracing the World pledged 23 million USD (Rs. 100 crores) in tsunami-relief aid. ETW proposed to rebuild all the homes that were completely destroyed by the tsunami in Kerala, as well as to take up reconstruction in Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

By the end of 2006, after two years of relief effort, ETW had given double its original pledge, having spent 46 million USD (Rs. 200 crores) on tsunami relief.



A picture drawn during a child's therapy session

## Counselling Service

Within a few days after the tsunami, Amma assembled a team of psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers to begin counselling families. Many survivors experienced symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, especially those who had witnessed their children and loved ones drown. The counsellors helped the children and adults to express and cope with their pain. The children were encouraged to draw and paint as part of their therapy. Many drew pictures of flooded villages and people clinging to coconut trees to save themselves. ETW also provided swimming lessons for the children to help them overcome their post-trauma fear of water. This counselling gave the families the courage to return to their seaside villages.



Amma helps a child overcome her fear of water



Cash handouts for cooking vessels



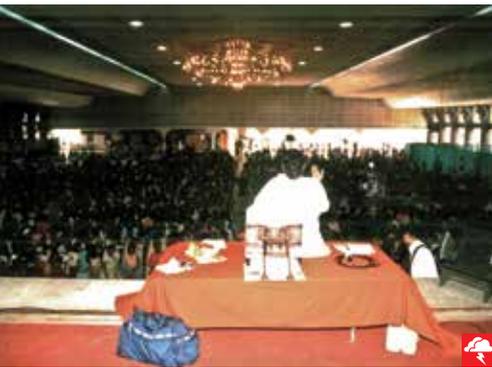
FROM COOKING VESSELS TO COUNSELLING, AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN: EVERY ASPECT OF THE TSUNAMI SURVIVORS' LIVES WAS CONSIDERED. IT WAS THIS HOLISTIC APPROACH THAT MADE ETW'S RELIEF WORK UNIQUE.



Amma with twins Eknath and Amrita Kripa

## Medical Help for Bereaved Mothers

Some of the mothers who lost their children in the tsunami had previously undergone tubal-ligation as a form of permanent contraception. With the shock of their irrevocable loss, some became depressed, even suicidal. Amma offered such women the opportunity to undergo fallopian-tube recanalisation to reverse their sterilization surgeries. Six women underwent the procedure at AIMS Hospital. Embracing the World covered all the expenses. As of October 2008, all six mothers had given birth, three of whom had twins.



Amma addresses the tsunami-affected children from Kollam District

## Children's Camps

Embracing the World conducted special training programs in yoga, English and Sanskrit for children from the tsunami-affected areas of Kollam and Alappuzha, Kerala. More than 10,000 girls and boys underwent these courses, which were held in April and May of 2005, just months after the disaster.

On each occasion, approximately 5,000 children stayed at the ashram. Since the tsunami had left many children afraid of water, Amma personally took the children to the ashram's swimming pool to help them overcome this fear. They were also given opportunities to express their talents and perform cultural programs. For many children, it was the first time they had received any form of cultural education.



Amma addresses the tsunami-affected children from Alappuzha District



ETW's evacuation bridge, built over the backwaters of Kerala

## Amrita Setu Bridge

In the months that followed the tsunami, warnings and evacuation orders were twice issued for another impending tsunami. While the warnings turned out to be false alarms, Amma was concerned about the overcrowded boats and the length of time it took to evacuate the coastal area. It was then that Amma decided to construct an evacuation bridge, connecting the peninsula of Alappad Panchayat with mainland Kerala.

On December 20, 2006, then-President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, inaugurated Amrita Setu, Embracing the World's evacuation bridge. The bridge provides a centralised escape route allowing 15,000 people to evacuate in 30 minutes, should Alappad face another natural disaster.

The bridge, which took only one year to complete, was completely paid for and constructed by ETW, at a cost of 1.32 million USD (Rs. six crores). Had the bridge been constructed by an outside contractor, the cost would have been double.

May this bridge not only connect two shores, but remain forever as a symbol of love and brotherhood, uniting human hearts as well. **Amma**

Amma with then-President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, at the inauguration of Amrita Setu





Amma with Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahindra Rajapaksa during a visit to a tsunami relief camp



Amma met with then-President Chandrika Kumaratunge



This grateful husband said, "Amma paid for our marriage; she gave us a boat with an engine, and also this house. Now, we have a new baby. Through Amma we can live family life again."

## Sri Lanka

In 2006, Amma was invited to Sri Lanka by the government "to bless Sri Lankans of all faiths and races and to bring peace and prosperity in their lives." During her three-day visit, Amma visited two relief camps in the Tamil area of Ampara, where she distributed 15,000 saris and dhotis. Accompanied by Prime Minister Mahindra Rajapaksa, Amma also visited a relief camp in the Sinhalese area of Hambantotta.

In Ampara, both Sinhalese soldiers and LTTE fighters came for Amma's darshan. Amma met President Chandrika Kumaratunge and expressed to her how pained she was by the people's suffering. On behalf of Embracing the World - USA, Amma initiated a 685,000 USD (approx. Rs. three crore) relief fund for building new homes in both Sinhalese and Tamil communities. The 96 homes were completed in January 2007.

## Vocational Training

After the tsunami, villagers asked Amma to help them find employment that did not require them to rely on the sea. In response, Amma initiated programs for the men to learn new trades and for women to take up employment, often for the first time. It was in large part this expansive view of disaster relief that drew the praise of government agencies, world-leaders and members of the United Nations as being something 'above and beyond.'



Amma at a key distribution ceremony with then-Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Dr. M. Karunanidhi



Boats and engines in Tamil Nadu awaiting distribution

## Tamil Nadu & Pondicherry

The tsunami devastated the coasts of Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry — especially Nagapattinam District, where 7,000 people were killed. There, Amma's monastic disciples set up a disaster-relief operation, organising medical aid and clothing for 9,500 refugees. Over the next several months, ETW also distributed 185 tons of uncooked rice.

Hundreds of students from Amrita University, doctors from AIMS Hospital and volunteers helped and consoled people in the affected areas. ETW established seven relief camps, built shelters for 100 families and adopted entire villages, reconstructing thousands of homes and community facilities. ETW also provided education and vocational training for children and adults.

In February 2005, Amma visited the region and the families living in ETW's temporary shelters. Thousands came to her, still in distress. Amma lovingly reassured them and calmed their fears about living next to the sea.

Temporary shelters in Nagapattinam

Amma giving new clothes to a tsunami survivor





Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu

## Tsunami Housing: 6,296 Homes Completed

The core of Embracing the World's massive tsunami-relief project was the construction of 6,296 houses in the Indian states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu, as well as in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Sri Lanka. In both Tamil Nadu and Kerala, ETW was the first non-governmental organization to complete tsunami-relief houses according to government standards. As of October 2008, all 6,296 houses had been completed and turned over to the recipients.



Vadakku Vanchiyoor, Kairakal, Pondicherry



Ernakulam, Kerala



Typical tsunami-relief house, Kerala

Out of his admiration for Embracing the World's work, India's then-President, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, visited both a housing construction site in Tamil Nadu and Amma's main ashram in Kerala, where he met with tsunami survivors and personally handed them the keys to their new homes, built by ETW. (A long-time admirer of Amma and her humanitarian achievements, upon initially taking office in 2003, President Kalam had donated the first ten months of his salary to fund Amma's charitable initiatives.)



**ETW WAS THE FIRST NGO IN INDIA TO COMPLETE TSUNAMI-RELIEF HOUSES ACCORDING TO GOVERNMENT STANDARDS. AS OF OCTOBER 2008, ALL 6,296 HOUSES HAD BEEN COMPLETED AND TURNED OVER TO THE RECIPIENTS.**



Samanthampettai, Nagapattinam, Tamil Nadu



Pudukkuppam, Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu

### Tamil Nadu

In the districts of Cuddalore, Kanyakumari and Nagapattinam, ETW built entire villages, complete with electricity, sanitation and clean drinking water, roads, buildings for childcare and other amenities.

### Kerala

Many houses constructed along the backwaters or on islands were inaccessible to supply trucks. Ashram residents and volunteers from around the world helped carry bricks, sand and gravel from supply stations. Houses were constructed in the districts of Kollam, Alappuzha and Ernakulam.



Mela Pattinacherry, Nagapattinam, Tamil Nadu



Apartments in Thekkawatta, Kalutara, Sri Lanka

## Tsunami Housing:

### Sri Lanka & South Andaman

96 homes were constructed in the Sinhalese-populated village of Thekkawatta (Kalutara District, Western Province) and in the Tamil-populated village of Periyaniavanai (Ampara District, Eastern Province). The housing colonies in each place consist of three-storey buildings, each containing 12 apartments.

Situated 1,000 kilometres off the east coast of India, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands bore the brunt of the tsunami. Embracing the World built 200 homes in Bamboo Flat and Austinabad in South Andaman. As all the building materials, an estimated 1,000 tons, had to be shipped from mainland India, the cost amounted to 4.8 million USD (Rs. 20 crores). The houses are duplexes, with each half measuring 500 square-feet and having an attached bathroom with toilet. The steel-framed structures are earthquake-resistant. The houses were completed in September 2008.



Duplex houses in Bamboo Flat, South Andaman



Apartments in Periyaniavanai, Ampara, Sri Lanka



Tsunami-affected fishermen ready to set sail in their new boats

## Long-term Tsunami Relief Projects

By October 2008, each of the 6,296 pledged homes in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Sri Lanka had been completed and distributed. In two villages in Tamil Nadu and in the area around the Amritapuri Ashram, women who had been widowed by the disaster were given lifetime monthly pensions. ETW donated 700 fishing boats, engines and fishing nets, at a cost of 1 million USD (Rs. 4.3 crores), to disaster-hit communities in both Tamil Nadu and Kerala. On average, each boat supports seven families. Free education and vocational training was provided for more than 2,500 young people, including 800 nursing assistants trained at AIMS and 1,000 automobile drivers and security guards trained at ETW's vocational-training centre. Seven women were trained as teachers at the Amrita School of Education in Mysore, and more than 700 women were trained in tailoring and handicrafts.



Women training to become tailors in Kerala



Distribution of monthly pensions



# ♀ empowering women

empowering more than 100,000 women from impoverished communities with vocational training, start-up capital, microcredit loans and microsavings so they can start their own home-based businesses



## Amrita S.R.E.E. Self-Reliance, Education & Employment

Embracing the World's Amrita SREE program, born in the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, was formally launched in 2006 with a goal of aiding 100,000 women through the development of 5,000 self-help groups. **In 2010, that goal was surpassed. There are now more than 6,000 ETW self-help groups, with more than 100,000 women participating across India.** In the neighboring Andaman Islands, we have established an additional 1,000 self-help groups.

In providing vocational education, start-up capital, marketing assistance and access to micro-credit loans and microsavings accounts from government-regulated banks, ETW is working to equip unemployed and economically vulnerable women with the skills and means to set up small-scale, cottage-industry businesses. Research has shown that empowering women with equal economic opportunity is one of the most effective ways to reduce poverty throughout entire communities.

ETW's self-help groups are based upon a formula established by the Reserve Bank of India and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development. Volunteer program coordinators first identify each targeted community's particular needs and existing skills and resources before launching a phase of vocational training. Courses are selected from proposals that emerge from the targeted communities and offered at reputed vocational institutions. Finally, self-help groups are formed according to geographic proximity, each consisting of approximately 20 women. (Men who are family members of the women in the group are also eligible to receive vocational training.)

While the self-help groups operate autonomously, ETW nurtures them towards successful independence. In addition to providing vocational training, ETW helps each group come up with a viable business plan and assists in packaging and marketing the group's retail products.



## Microfinance

Embracing the World provides each self-help group with a grant in start-up capital. In order to maximize the groups earning capacity, ETW also helps each group to open a bank account upon its inception. Each group member is required to deposit a minimum of Rs. 10 each week. When a group's bank balance reaches Rs. 1,000, the group can begin to withdraw money and commence internal lending with a minimal interest rate.

During the first six months of the group's account activity, the bank assesses the group's financial management capacity so that eligible groups may apply for venture-capital loans. Additionally, any money deposited during the group's first six months is matched by the bank at a ratio of four to one — thereby increasing the group's initial investment by 400%. **So far, ETW has helped 4,000 groups to receive microcredit loans to expand their businesses; more than 60,000 families have benefited.** To ensure that microcredit works in the group's favor, ETW works only with banks managed by the Government of India's Reserve Bank of India. These banks' microlending policies are subject to governmental oversight.

## Economic Independence

Once vocational training is complete, the group transitions into a more autonomous, income-generating company of its own. ETW assists the group in locating a common facility centre, where the group will carry out their work. Some groups opt to use a group member's home as the facility centre. While ETW provides training and raw materials, the groups are encouraged to take a majority of the initiative to jumpstart and sustain their respective ventures. Accordingly, the group members receive total profits from products sold. ETW receives no compensation or financial return at any time for its work with the self-help groups. ETW self-help groups are currently operating their own businesses in a wide range of fields including handicrafts, accounting, female hygiene products, stationery, bakeries, tailoring, culinary products and more.



**ETW IS CURRENTLY PROVIDING VOCATIONAL TRAINING & START-UP CAPITAL FOR 100,000 WOMEN. RESEARCH HAS SHOWN THAT EMPOWERING WOMEN IN THIS WAY IS ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS TO REDUCE POVERTY THROUGHOUT ENTIRE COMMUNITIES.**

## Life-, Accident Insurance for 100,000 Women and Their Families



As part of Embracing the World's Empowering Women project, every member of the Amrita SREE self-help groups—more than 100,000 women as of March 2011—has been enrolled in a subsidized insurance plan with the Life Insurance Corporation of India. The plan will protect their family's future in the event that the policyholder is injured or passes away. As part of the agreement, the Life Insurance Corporation is also providing scholarships to the children of 15% of the policyholders. ETW plans to rotate these scholarships on an annual basis so that every family will receive scholarship benefits.



## Training for 100,000 Home Nurses

In recent years, India has seen a marked increase in the numbers of elderly people with illnesses and disabilities who have no one at home to care for them. To help combat this alarming trend, and to empower women with a trade that is much in demand, in 2011 Embracing the World launched Amrita Santvanam, a program to train 100,000 home nurses. Embracing the World will provide the six-month training through its own network of medical institutions. Aside from training, room-and-board as well as a stipend will be provided to each trainee. 1,000 trainees have already been enrolled in the program.



# building homes



building not just 100,000 homes for the homeless but whole communities complete with town halls, roads, wells, electricity, sewage systems and clean drinking water

more than 1,600 families relocated from slums into new apartments



Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh

## Homes for the Homeless: Amrita Kuteeram

One in six people alive today lacks adequate shelter. As a result of poor shelter, polluted water and inadequate sanitation, 50,000 people — mostly women and children — die each day. The problem is disproportionately concentrated in the developing world. In India alone, there are more than 2.3 million homeless — and that figure doesn't include the 170 million slum-dwellers.

But homeless does not have to mean hopeless. In 1997, Embracing the World launched the Amrita Kuteeram project, an initiative to build 25,000 homes for the homeless throughout India. In 1998, Atal Behari Vajpayee, then-Prime Minister of India, handed over a symbolic key for the first 5,000 free homes to beneficiaries in Kerala. By 2002, the initial target of 25,000 homes throughout India had been met. With an average of six people living in each ETW-built house, that meant 125,000 people had moved from the streets or inadequate shelters into the safety and comfort of their own home. Upon completion of the project, Amma immediately announced a second goal to build a total of 100,000 homes for the homeless throughout India. To date, more than 45,000 homes have been constructed in more than 75 locations across the length and breadth of India.

Kolkata, West Bengal



HOMELESS DOES NOT HAVE TO MEAN HOPELESS: SINCE 1998, ETW HAS BUILT MORE THAN 45,000 HOMES FOR THE HOMELESS AND SLUM-DWELLERS THROUGHOUT INDIA.





Mangalore, Karnataka



Jaipur, Rajasthan



Satyamangalam, Tamil Nadu



Rameshwaram, Tamil Nadu



Mysore, Karnataka



Hassan, Karnataka

## Building Communities

State governments throughout India provide the land for Embracing the World to develop. Amma's monastic disciples supervise the construction of the houses, the building of roads, the provision of electricity, the drilling of bore wells and the installation of water tanks. Houses commonly have two rooms, a verandah and separate bathrooms.

For each development, ETW builds a community centre where residents celebrate festivals and public holidays. Since the ETW community residents no longer need to pay rent, they have more money to buy the essentials they previously had to go without. Local branch centres of the Mata Amritanandamayi Math support the ETW communities in their area by providing informal schooling and helping the adults find jobs. ETW communities are thus instrumental in providing people with a whole new start in life.



Ernakulam, Kerala



Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh



Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh



Cuddapah, Andhra Pradesh



Durgapur, West Bengal



Pune, Maharashtra



Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh

## Relocating Slumdwellers

In 1999, the Hyderabad government requested Amma to complete 20 blocks of flats and provide homes for 900 families. Many had earlier been living in a slum that had been destroyed by a fire, and had been waiting years for new homes, living in makeshift huts. After receiving the government's request, Amma visited them and promised she would help. Their new homes were completed in 2002. Also in 2002, in Ajanta Nagar, Pune, ETW rehoused 700 families who had been living in a slum that sprawled across eight acres. The project was a joint venture with the government. ETW built 11 new blocks of five-storey apartments. During construction, families stayed in adjacent temporary housing that was also built by ETW. Amma's Pune Ashram provides free medical camps every week inside the new complex. Today, ETW volunteers continue to serve the residents of Ajanta Nagar. The Amrita Chetana project is dedicated to reducing drop-out rates by providing school supplies as well as free tutoring and other extracurricular activities for the children of the former slum as well those still living in slum settlements.



A new village for earthquake survivors in Bhuj, Gujarat

## Gujarat: Adopted Villages

The earthquake that struck Gujarat in 2001 claimed the lives of almost 20,000 people. Amma's response was immediate: AIMS Hospital dispatched a disaster-relief medical team and monastic disciples who remained long after the crisis, working tirelessly to help rebuild the people's lives. ETW constructed three villages — a total of 1,200 earthquake-proof houses, as well as community centres, a school, several temples and a mosque. Amma's support made such an impact on the people that four years later the village leaders made the three-day journey to Kerala to help Amma rebuild houses for tsunami survivors.



Athi River, Outside Nairobi, Kenya: Until now, this river water has been the primary source of drinking water in the area.

Residents of Jam City using the new water tap



## Clean Drinking Water

### Amrita Watoto Boma Nairobi, Kenya

The new bore well at the Amrita Watoto Boma Care Home for Children in Nairobi, Kenya will provide clean drinking water daily to residents of the nearby Jam City slum as well as members of the Masai tribal community. Until now, these people were forced to walk long distances and pay for clean water. In reality, most people drank and cooked with water from the nearby river. 80% of diseases in this community are caused by consumption of unsafe water.

### Kollam, Kerala

In May 2007, ETW gave 85,000 USD (Rs. 33 lakhs) to sponsor the provision of clean water to 7,100 families living beneath the poverty line in Chavara and Panmana Panchayats, Kollam District, Kerala. The water is taken from the Shastankotta Backwaters and purified.

## Vocational Training Centre for Slumdwellers

### Amrita Watoto Boma Nairobi, Kenya

The Amrita Vocational Training Centre, equipped with 35 computers, was built to serve the population of the nearby slum settlement Jam City. In the Centre's first course, 50 young adults, who had been forced to leave school at a young age, received training in basic computing. Beyond the training itself, course participants say the Centre has become like a second home for them.



Students at the Vocational Training Centre



## HOUSING PROJECTS BY LOCATION

<b>RAJASTHAN</b>	Sanghaneer, Jaipur
<b>UTTAR PRADESH</b>	Telibagh (Lucknow-New Brindavan Yojana Dt.); Koraon (Mirzapur Dt.); Pratap Nagar (Ghaziabad Dt.)
<b>MADHYA PRADESH</b>	Piplani, near SOS Village (Bhopal Dt.)
<b>GUJARAT</b>	Dagara, Mokhana & Modsar (Bhuj, Kutch Dt.)
<b>MAHARASHTRA</b>	Ajanta Nagar (PCMC, Pune Dt.)
<b>WEST BENGAL</b>	Puljour Amaravathi & Bidhan Nagar (Durgapur Dt.) Panihatti (Kolkata Dt.)
<b>ANDHRA PRADESH</b>	Gudimalkapur (Medipatnam, Hyderabad Dt.) Filim Nagar (Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad Dt.) Amrita Nagar (Pradhatur, Cuddapah Dt.)
<b>ORISSA</b>	Baleshwar, Bhubaneswar
<b>PONDICHERRY</b>	near Deepak Cables, Pondicherry Taluk
<b>KARNATAKA</b>	Hirisave (C.R. Pattana, Hassan Dt.); Mulki (Mangalore Dt.); Hosahalli (Mandya Dt.); Madhuvanahalli (K.R. Taluk, Mysore Dt.); Gandhi Nagar (Mysore Dt.); Gokulam (Mysore Dt.)
<b>TAMIL NADU</b>	Amritapuram (Rameshwaram, Ramanathapuram Dt.) Panagudi (Rosmiyapuram, Valliyoor, Tirunelveli Dt.) Amirpalayam (Sattur, Virudunagar Dt.) Scavanchers Colony (Sivakasi, Virudunagar Dt.) Aruppukkottai (Virudunagar Dt.) Kollencode, Kaliyakavila, Marthandam, Kuzhitturai, Kulachel & Kanyakumari (all in Kanyakumari Dt.) Ettimadai, Nallampalayam & Madukkarai (all in Coimbatore Dt.), Arikkambedu & Vellanur, Ambathur, Avadi, & Maduravoyal (all in Tiruvallur Dt.) Karikattukupam, Ernavur & Kovalam (all in Chennai) Ramabelur, Pinjumedu, Satyamangalam, (all in Erode Dt.) Kumbakonam
<b>KERALA</b>	Thousands of individual houses spread throughout the districts of Alappuzha, Ernakulam, Idukki, Kannur, Kasargode, Kollam, Kottayam, Kozhikode, Malappuram, Palakkad, Pathanamthitta, Trissur, Trivandrum and Wayanad. Village colonies in the cities of Trivandrum (Airport Colony) and Kochi (Ambulungal)



## 6,296 HOMES FOR TSUNAMI SURVIVORS

<b>KERALA</b>	Villages and individual houses in the districts of Ernakulam, Alappuzha and Kollam
<b>TAMIL NADU</b>	Villages in Cuddalore, Kanyakumari & Nagappatinam Districts
<b>PONDICHERRY</b>	Kairakal
<b>ANDAMAN ISLAND</b>	Bamboo Flat and Austinabad, South Andaman
<b>SRI LANKA</b>	Thekkawatta (Kalutara District, Western Province) Periyaniavanai (Ampara District, Eastern Province)



# community outreach



lifetime financial aid for more than 55,000 widows  
and victims of poverty and disability throughout India  
care homes for the elderly  
sponsored weddings for the poor  
international service-oriented youth movement  
free meditation courses for soldiers, prisoners and the general public



## Care Homes for the Elderly

The elderly come to Amma's homes for refuge or to spend their final years in a tranquil spiritual ambience. The care homes have a family atmosphere, and residents regularly participate in activities around the home.

The care homes are located in Sivakasi, Tamil Nadu; Kottayam, Kerala (managed by AIMS Hospital), Bangalore and Karwar, Karnataka. The care homes have prayer halls where community functions and cultural programs are held. Neighbours and friends also participate.



## Hospital Visits and Meals on Wheels

Embracing the World volunteers throughout the world visit hospitals, nursing homes and the elderly and infirm in their own homes. Volunteers also write letters of support to those battling serious illness.



## Sponsored Wedding Ceremonies

In India, marriage is essential for the stability of the entire family. For decades, Amma has sponsored the weddings of impoverished couples. Each year, during her birthday celebrations, Amma conducts sponsored weddings. In 2012, free marriages were conducted for 59 couples who could not have afforded a traditional wedding. Embracing the World provides all the items necessary for a traditional ceremony, including the bride's wedding sari, new clothes for the bridegroom, gold ornaments, and a feast for all the wedding guests. After the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, Amma conducted free weddings for hundreds of poor couples affected by the disaster.

## Prisoners' Welfare Project

In North America, Embracing the World runs a program called "Circle of Love Inside," through which volunteers write letters of hope and solace to people serving prison sentences in the US. Books of Amma's teachings are sent free of charge to inmates and prison libraries. Currently, the program is active in 18 states. Upon request, prisoners are taught Amma's simple Ma-Om Meditation by mail. ETW volunteers teach Amma's IAM — Integrated Amrita Meditation Technique® in youth and adult correctional facilities.

## Women's Hostel

### Trissur, Kerala

This hostel is owned and managed by ETW to provide a secure, peaceful abode for 100 women working in government and private institutions, as well as for female students and travellers.





Kenyan members and local teenagers work together to clean-up a slum in Nairobi



American members volunteer at a soup kitchen

## Youth in Action

AYUDH ([www.ayudh.org](http://www.ayudh.org)) is a youth movement empowering young people to integrate universal values into their daily lives. Starting with themselves, AYUDH wants to help establish a future of hope, peace and social engagement while maintaining an awareness of spiritual principles. AYUDH stands for Amrita Yuva Dharmadhara, which is Sanskrit for “youth perpetuating the wheel of dharma (righteousness).” In Sanskrit, ayudh also means ‘peace.’

Since its launch in 1985, AYUDH has initiated youth projects in India, Africa, Europe, the United States, Australia and Japan. These include social-service activities such as caring for the elderly, homeless and handicapped and empowering young people living in slums to change their environment.

AYUDH also organizes charity concerts and environmental activities. Annual retreats in Europe, America and Australia provide unique opportunities for intercultural exchange. Through talks and discussions, spiritual practices and creative workshops, the youth explore, develop and express their personal potential and become active members of society. In Europe, many of AYUDH’s projects and camps are supported by the Youth in Action program of the European Commission for Education and Culture. In India, AYUDH has been widely involved in the ABC Initiative to clean public areas, spread awareness about public health and the conservation of Nature.

In Mumbai, AYUDH holds weekly classes for children from slum areas. Every Sunday, around 80 children receive free food served by the youth volunteers. AYUDH - Mumbai volunteers also conduct regular classes in organic farming. In Delhi, AYUDH members distribute free blankets and clothing to the poor, and have planted more than 300 trees at the Amrita Farmhouse near the Amma’s ashram in New Delhi.

“GrowIn’ - One Seed at a Time” ([www.ayudh.org/growin](http://www.ayudh.org/growin)) is an international green initiative by AYUDH to encourage youth to cultivate their own food.



# Meditation for Everyone

## IAM-Integrated Amrita Meditation Technique®

IAM-Integrated Amrita Meditation Technique® is a powerful meditation technique synthesised by Amma to help people find fulfillment in life. The technique refines one’s mind — bringing relaxation, concentration, a more expansive sense of self and greater awareness.

A five-year study published in 2010 by the international journal *Evidence-based Complementary & Alternative Medicine* found that practitioners of the IAM Technique experience a reduction in stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol, and also experience immunological benefits. Embracing the World volunteers teach the technique free of charge in all parts of the world, not only to individuals but also to corporations and universities. In both the United States and in Italy, the IAM Technique has been offered to prisoners in correctional institutions.

Currently, Embracing the World is undertaking the massive project of teaching the technique to India’s 1.3 million (13 lakh) paramilitary personnel. ETW has not accepted any remuneration for its work with the soldiers. Classes have been given to the Border Security Force (next to Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tibet, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Myanmar), the Central Industrial Security Force, Sashastra Seema Bal, the Central Reserve Police Force and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police. Classes have also been taught to soldiers of the Indian Army and Navy.



**AMMA SAYS THAT SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE IS THE BIRTHRIGHT OF HUMANKIND, AND THAT TO CHARGE FOR MEDITATION CLASSES IS LIKE CHARGING A BABY FOR BREASTMILK. THAT’S WHY AMMA’S MEDITATION TECHNIQUE IS ALWAYS TAUGHT FOR FREE.**



Indian paramilitary soldiers practicing IAM Meditation, Vellore District, Tamil Nadu



IAM Meditation course in USA



Students of Amrita University practicing IAM Meditation



## Financial Aid for Life

Since 1998, Embracing the World has provided monthly pensions for 50,000 widows and other victims of poverty. In 2006, the project was expanded to benefit the physically and mentally challenged and now serves a total of 55,000 beneficiaries. Ultimately, ETW will provide monthly pensions for 100,000 impoverished men, women and children who are struggling to make ends meet.

Recognizing that disability and/or the loss of a family member can consign those in the developing world to a lifetime of hardship, our pensions have no expiration date—they are given for life.



## Seed Distribution

In 2006, ETW launched a homestead organic vegetable gardening project, encouraging people throughout Kollam District to grow their own vegetables. Seeds were distributed to 5,000 families.

*Distribution of monthly pensions*



*Amma blessing seeds for distribution to poor families*



# care homes for children



Paripally, Kerala: orphanage for 500 children where the children consistently win awards in music, sports and dance and more than 1 in 3 go on to earn college degrees

Nairobi: care home for children from impoverished communities across Kenya



Children from Amrita Niketan orphanage with Amma at Amritapuri



Daily assembly at the orphanage



Orphanage children perform panchavadyam



At Amrita Niketan, girls are encouraged to participate in art forms traditionally reserved for boys

## Amrita Niketan Orphanage

### Paripally, Kerala

In 1989, Amma took over an orphanage and school whose owners had gone bankrupt. The children were in an extreme state of neglect and malnutrition, and the buildings were in a deplorable condition. Embracing the World immediately set about caring for the children, rebuilding the orphanage and re-establishing the school.

Today there are 500 children living at Amrita Niketan. Half of them are from poor tribal communities. With the nourishing food and loving care and encouragement they receive from Amrita Niketan's dedicated staff, the children gain the confidence and the strength to move forward in life.

During holidays, many of the children visit Amma's ashram. They have developed a deep bond with Amma and say that they feel she is their own mother.

The children excel in music, sports and dance. They are well-known for their talents in *panchavadyam*, Kerala's traditional temple music. Though generally taught only to boys, the orphanage also encourages girls to learn this art form. The children also study traditional dance dramas like *koodiyattom*, *poorakkali* and *kolkali*, as well as musical instruments like the *veena* and *tabla*. In state and local cultural competitions, the children often win first prize.

The children attend the Amrita Sanskrit Higher Secondary School, run by Amma's Ashram, which is located next to the orphanage. More than 35 percent of them go on to pursue higher educations, all of which are fully sponsored by ETW.

**WE'RE PROUD OF OUR KIDS: AMRITA NIKETAN'S CHILDREN CONSISTENTLY WIN AWARDS IN SANSKRIT, MUSIC, SPORTS AND DANCE — AND MORE THAN ONE IN THREE GO ON TO EARN COLLEGE DEGREES.**





During her visit to Kenya, Amma presented the children with sets of new clothes and school supplies.



Children at Amrita Watoto Boma



A view of the grounds at Amrita Watoto Boma

## Amrita Watoto Boma Care Home for Orphans and Disadvantaged Children



A Kenyan child after receiving school supplies and a new uniform from Amma

During Amma's visit to Nairobi in April 2009, she officially inaugurated Amrita Watoto Boma, a care home which will ultimately be home to 108 children. Ground had only recently been broken on the site, and the care home would not officially open its doors until 2011. However, as a sign of her commitment to the children of Kenya, during her visit, Amma met personally with 54 children in need, giving each of them new sets of clothing and school supplies, and initiating scholarships for them.

Spread across 11 acres on the banks of the Athi River, Amrita Watoto Boma provides shelter, food, education and healthcare in a loving environment, managed and run by ETW volunteers. Facilities include dormitories, classrooms, a playground, sports facilities and a medical clinic. The children are either orphaned or living beneath the poverty line, in vulnerable families where the parents have difficulty providing for them. The children come from across Kenya, identified with the help of the Kenyan Government's Children's Officers as well as social workers, village chiefs from poor slums and references from local church pastors.



In April 2011, during Amma's visit to Nairobi, the Vice-President of the Republic of Kenya, His Excellency Kalonzo Musyoka opened the Amrita Watoto Boma Care Home for Children, built by Embracing the World's representative organization in Kenya, the Mata Amritanandamayi Math Charitable Trust - Kenya. Amrita Watoto Boma has been formally registered as a children's care home with the Government of Kenya. Initially, the children's home is accommodating 50 children.





# public health



improving public health and restoring India's natural beauty  
cleaning public areas, constructing public toilets  
and spreading awareness about the proper way to dispose of trash  
more than 1,000 clean-up drives have already been undertaken  
personal handkerchiefs for one million schoolchildren



## Amala Bharatam Campaign Clean India, Beautiful India

The Amala Bharatam Campaign (ABC) is a program aimed at improving public health and at restoring India's physical beauty. Through this campaign, Amma is calling on all citizens of India to embrace practical new initiatives to clean India's public spaces, promote health through hygiene, sort garbage, recycle, and properly dispose of waste. The campaign is also working to make people more aware of the need to avoid littering, spitting and urinating in public, and to maintain environmental cleanliness. This awareness campaign is ongoing in every language and every state in India, and has already reached millions of people nationwide.

Through ABC, volunteers are cleaning public areas, constructing public toilets and spreading awareness in schools regarding the proper way to dispose of trash. In Kerala, where the campaign was first launched, clean-up drives have been conducted in every major town and city. The campaign has already spread throughout India. In New Delhi, several high-ranking government officials, including the Chief Minister of New Delhi, Mrs. Sheila Dixit, as well as the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister and the Union Minister for Agriculture personally participated in clean-up drives.

ETW is also distributing handkerchiefs to more than one million school children and educating them to use them instead of spitting on the ground.



CHAIRMAN OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE, DR. RAJENDRA PACHAURI, PARTICIPATES IN AMMA'S CAMPAIGN TO DISTRIBUTE HANDKERCHIEFS TO ONE MILLION SCHOOLCHILDREN.



## Nationwide Public Health Initiative Environmental Awareness Campaign

More than 1,000 clean-up drives have been undertaken. The fourth Sunday of each month has been designated as Clean Sunday, with clean-up drives to be held on this day every month. The campaign is intended to ultimately spread throughout India, with Amma calling upon citizens to form small committees, each responsible for a stretch of two kilometers. "A chain of such committees could really bring about a massive transformation," she has commented. "These committees should ensure their localities have trashcans in various places as well as signs telling people not to throw trash on the roadside or to spit. The waste should be collected regularly and properly disposed of."

Amma has also stated that the Mata Amritanandamayi Math is ready to take up the responsibility of constructing toilets and installing trash cans in government schools and along roads all over India, if it has the support and cooperation of state and local governments.

Amma is also calling upon all citizens of India to take to recognize in principle that the earth is the mother of humanity and that cleanliness is godliness, and to pledge to work with dedication for

the realization of environmental cleanliness and hygiene. This pledge has been taken by more than one million people throughout India.

**The Amala Bharatam Campaign has the potential to have a powerful impact on India's public health goals. Lack of sanitation is the world's leading cause of infection.**



# education for everyone



100,000 scholarships for children  
from desperately impoverished agricultural communities  
special schools for the hearing-impaired and mentally challenged  
award-winning literacy and vocational training  
for India's indigenous tribal population



Hearing-impaired students give a dance performance

## Amrita Speech- and Hearing-Improvement School



Amrita Speech and Hearing Improvement School

### Trissur, Kerala

ASHIS is one of the few schools in Kerala that scientifically teaches hearing-impaired children to speak. More than 120 children attend the school, which provides hostel accommodation for boys and girls. The students work hard to overcome the limitations created by their speech and hearing disabilities. The children have a 100 percent pass rate in the Secondary School Leaving Certificate Exam, and do very well in obtaining employment. They are also encouraged to develop through dance, art and handicrafts.



ASHIS students learning to speak

## Projects for Tribal People

### Attappadi, Kerala Idukki, Kerala

In the rural district of Attappadi, ETW is working to empower tribal people to build informal schools. Three schools have already been constructed.

In Idukki, ETW has established a number of afterschool centres to complement the regular schooling of the tribal children. These children are not supported at home by their illiterate parents, and the dropout rate is high after the 3rd standard. At ETW's centres, they are given supplementary tutoring to ensure they get the support they need.



Afterschool tutoring for tribal children



## 100,000 Scholarships for Children of Farmers in Crisis

In recent years, suicide has been spreading like an epidemic among farmers in India who suffer from debt and crop failure. Experts say that more than 200,000 farmers have committed suicide in India since 1997. Often, seeing no hope for themselves or their future generations, whole families commit suicide together.

In 2007, Sri Vllasrao Deshmukh, then Chief Minister of Maharashtra, the state worst-hit by the suicide epidemic, reached out to Amma for a solution. Amma responded with Vidyamritam, a project to provide scholarships for children in the affected communities. Four years later, Deshmukh observed, "Amma has created new hope for the farmers."

Through providing scholarships to 100,000 children of farmers living below the poverty line, Embracing the World aims to lay a stronger economic foundation upon which these families can base their lives. Through the program, called Vidyamritam, ETW is already providing scholarships to 40,000 students from the states of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala. Many of the beneficiaries are children who have lost one or both parents to suicide. The children (ages 10 to 15) receive a monthly stipend until they finish their education, subject to their scholastic performance. Vidyamritam is a permanent humanitarian program of ETW, with new students taking over the scholarships of graduates.

As an extension of this project, ETW is conducting camps and seminars for Vidyamritam beneficiaries in order to help inculcate values and a sense of empowerment. One such camp — for 10,000 Vidyamritam beneficiaries — was held at Embracing the World's headquarters in Amritapuri, Kerala in September 2009. Symposiums on environmental preservation are also being conducted. Further, ETW is providing alternative employment for members of agricultural families in AIMS Hospital in Kochi. In 2009, the scholarship program was expanded to benefit children affected by AIDS.

Scholarship distribution in suicide-wracked Washim



Scholarship recipients await their bus to school





Amrita Sanskrit Higher Secondary School, Kollam, Kerala

Class of Attappadi tribal children, Kerala

## Amrita Sanskrit Higher Secondary School

### Kollam, Kerala

The Amrita Sanskrit Higher Secondary School has 4,000 students and is the largest school in Kerala where Sanskrit, the language of India's cultural heritage, is taught. Through a satellite link with Amrita University, the school operates an e-learning resource centre. This provides video-conference-style lectures with teachers from the university campuses. The facility is open after school and on Sundays, for use by students, teachers and the general public.

The school is also attended by the children residing at ETW's orphanage in Paripally, ensuring that the orphans receive a high-quality education. More than one in three of the orphanage residents go on to earn college degrees.

## School for Differently-Abled Children

### Kozhikode, Kerala

In December 2009, ETW launched a new institute for the differently-abled, the Amrita Institute for Differently Abled (AIDA), dedicated to the welfare of differently-abled children, including those with Down's Syndrome, epilepsy, autism, and intellectual developmental disability. 23 children attend the day-care centre. Proper developmental therapy incorporating daily skills, early social integration and schooling are provided. Personalised therapy is provided based on each individual's mental and physical abilities. These programs provide these children with basic life skills and fundamental concepts that will help them function as independently as possible on a day-to-day basis.

## Award-Winning Adult Education

### Idukki, Kerala Sivakasi, Tamil Nadu

In order to best confront the unique challenges associated with providing adult education for South India's indigenous population in remote areas lacking even basic infrastructure, MAM, Embracing the World's India-based NGO, has engaged in a partnership with the Government of India under the Government's adult-education grant program (JSS). Under JSS, the Government funds NGOs all over India who are working in the field of adult education. JSS is funded with government grants recommended by UNESCO, in collaboration with the National Literacy Mission. In 2008, Embracing the World's project in Sivakasi, Tamil Nadu won the UNESCO / NLM national award for being the most effective and efficient administrator of JSS funds in India. With the support of JSS funds, ETW runs literacy and vocational training programs serving the poorest tribal communities in Idukki, Kerala and Sivakasi, Tamil Nadu. ETW offers a range of more than 100 courses in occupations varying from candle-making to computer science. Graduates receive assistance in learning how to package, market and distribute their products through suitable outlets. ETW also encourages participants to "pay it forward" by going on to volunteer in their own communities. For example, participants in ETW's school-uniform tailoring program always donate their first uniform to a child who cannot afford one. Participants also go on to teach neighbors, friends and family how to read and write. Participants also volunteer their time in ETW's suicide-prevention program. After completion of a training program with support of ETW volunteers, counselors go door to door in their own villages, working to counter-act Kerala's rising suicide and drug abuse rates. And every year, the program's staff and students work together to provide 1,000 packages of dried foods to the elderly, homeless and neglected.

Literacy training in the tribal district of Idukki



Having been trained to manufacture pappadam, these tribal women started their own business





## Amrita Silpa Kalakshetra School for Traditional Arts

In June 2009, Amrita University launched an institute dedicated to reviving the traditional craft of wood carving, as part of a broader mission to help preserve India's cultural heritage. The institute is intended to serve as a model for additional schools, each of which will aim to preserve a selected traditional Indian handicraft through the training of talented craftsmen.

The school's courses have been specially designed to address issues that have plagued the handicrafts industry in recent years. In order to raise quality standards while simultaneously increasing output capacity, the courses incorporate modern machinery-based sculpting skills. The school also trains its students in negotiation as well as how to work effectively with financial institutions. The school intends to train 1,000 students over the next five years, taking care to select students who have a natural aptitude for the craft. 30-day as well as six-month courses are offered. Each student receives a monthly stipend to cover living expenses during their studies. The school is also working with some of Embracing the World's women's self-help groups.



## Industrial Training Centre

Karunagappally, Kerala

Founded in 1989, Embracing the World's Industrial Training Centre (ITC) provides training for 500 teenagers in 11 trades. The institution strives to build the confidence of the adolescents, giving them a sense of self-reliance so that they can take up their trade in a wide range of work environments or become self-employed. The centre has more than an 80 percent graduation rate and is highly regarded by employers. In 2001 and 2005 students gained first rank in the All-India Trade Test in two vocations.

After the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, ITC opened its doors, free of charge, to hundreds of local youths in order to help them rebuild their lives after the disaster.



UNIVERSAL EDUCATION HAS PROVEN TO BE THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS OF ELIMINATING ENDEMIC POVERTY, AND ON AN INDIVIDUAL LEVEL HAS BEEN SHOWN TO BE THE MOST SUSTAINABLE ESCAPE FROM POVERTY'S CLUTCHES. FROM THE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED, TO THE ADULT WHO NEVER FINISHED SCHOOL, TO THE CHILDREN WHO CANNOT AFFORD SCHOOL SUPPLIES — ETW IS WORKING TO HELP ENSURE THAT EVERYONE WHO WANTS TO GO TO SCHOOL HAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO.

## Free Online Classes for College Students Nationwide

Amrita University's Amrita E-learning Research Lab (AERL) is pioneering an online education initiative — Free Online Tuition Program, for all college students. The online program is being developed with funding from the Government of India's Ministry of Human Resources Development's National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NME-ICT). An initial market survey found that students are highly interested in learning career opportunities in their respective fields and enhancing their soft skills. On that basis, to begin with, AERL decided to conduct free tuition classes for Career Development (more than 32 live sessions have been conducted so far). Subsequently, other subjects will be added. The classes are transmitted through Amrita University's award-winning e-learning platform A-VIEW (Amrita Virtual Interactive E-learning World).

For more information, please visit: <http://onlinegurukul.in/index.html>



# research for a better world



world's first-ever wireless sensor network system for landslide detection  
virtual reality systems to bring vocational training into remote areas  
satellite-enabled telemedicine network  
breaking new ground in nanotechnology  
state-of-the-art, cost-effective, automated biomedical devices  
virtual laboratories, distance learning and  
cutting-edge educational technologies



Munnar, Kerala: Amrita's detection system monitors soil conditions and sends an alert when landslides are imminent

## Wireless Technologies for Humanitarian Relief

Amrita Center for Wireless Networks and Applications (AmritaWNA) is a cutting-edge research center focused on the emerging fields of wireless networks, wireless sensor networks (WSN), wireless communication, 3G, 4G, and LTE technologies. AmritaWNA develops scientific and technological applications for practical humanitarian benefit. AmritaWNA integrates interdisciplinary research areas such as computer science, electronics and communication, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, information technology, geology, hydrology, and environmental engineering to develop low-cost systems for disaster management, healthcare for the rural population, smart energy distribution systems, environmental monitoring solutions, low-cost cyber-physical systems for surveillance and security, and improved educational technologies for the poor.

In 2009, Embracing the World researchers at Amrita University deployed the world's first-ever wireless sensor network system for landslide detection in Munnar, Kerala, an area prone to fatal landslides. The system uses wireless sensor technology to provide advance warning of an impending landslide, allowing for early evacuation and disaster management. This project was awarded the Indian Government's NABARD Innovation Award in Technology for Rural India in October 2012.

The center is also developing wireless robots to assist in search and rescue operations, surveillance, and for victim assistance as well as help with care of the elderly; delivery of improved healthcare through the development and implementation of wearable wireless sensors to provide real-time monitoring and diagnosis of rural and elderly patients; environmental monitoring (quality water, water wastage, air, wind, soil quality, climate changes); energy solutions (smart grid to minimize energy wastage in electrical transmissions, detection and monitoring of power theft, line fault detection, automatic supervision, notification, and billing); MicroGrid Systems that can harness renewable and green energy sources to provide a self-sufficient and sustainable power source for the rural population; global classroom systems that aid in harnessing the faculties of leading universities to help train students in other newer institutions, especially in rural areas; and a Remote Triggered Virtual Wireless Network Laboratory to enhance learning availability and to provide research facilities for students and researchers who don't have access to appropriate resources.

# Human-Computer Interaction for Everyone

AMMACHI Labs is working to provide innovative, affordable technological solutions designed to improve quality of life for the least fortunate among us. Using human-computer interaction technology, powered by the modalities of multimedia and haptics and with a focus on improved accessibility and scalability, AMMACHI Labs aims to provide skill development, life enrichment education, healthcare, disaster risk reduction and much more.

The goal of AMMACHI Labs' SAVE Project, funded in part by the Ministry of Human Resources Department of the Government of India, is to foster technological innovation in vocational training to help alleviate poverty and to preserve traditional skills. SAVE has developed educational applications using multimedia, virtual reality and haptic technologies to enrich the individual's learning experience by simulating real-life situations and providing portable, cost-effective, scalable and standardized vocational education and training courses.

Through their Women Empowerment (WE) project, funded in part by the United Nations Democracy Fund, AMMACHI Labs is working to innovatively empower 3,000 disadvantaged women utilizing SAVE's computerized, university-certified Vocational Education and Training, complemented by Life Enrichment Education. Women from Kerala made global headlines recently when they broke through many barriers to successfully take on the challenging profession of plumbing. In addition to plumbing, the women will have the opportunity to choose from tiling and installation of solar panels for their vocational training. Non-technical trades such as fabric painting, vegetable cultivation, soap making, ornamental jewelry making and artificial flower making are being taught as well. As of 2012, 1,000 women predominantly from impoverished communities have received training through this project.

AMMACHI Labs' MoVE project (Mobile Vocational Education) is a mobile school on wheels that delivers vocational and life enrichment education to remote communities. 70% of India's population resides in rural and tribal areas where lifestyles are intertwined with the land and the seasons. Industrial development is changing the landscape faster than the communities can adapt, adversely impacting lives on multiple dimensions. For these remote communities to survive and thrive, education, which is sustainable for livelihood is crucial. So, AMMACHI Labs designed and implemented the MoVE mobile van, which utilizes fully equipped vehicles powered by solar energy to provide vocational education for sustainable development in logistically and geographically diverse areas. MoVE has increased outreach, reduced operating cost, and helps in teaching at multiple locations. The mobile school currently serves remote communities in support of the Women Empowerment Project and has so far been instrumental in training over 400 beneficiaries in various vocational trades.



A-VIEW allows a professor at one location to teach students at another location.



A-VIEW at the 2011 World Education Summit

# Education Everywhere: A-VIEW Distance Learning

In 2003, in the early days of the Amritapuri campus of Amrita University, there was a shortage of experienced faculty in certain subjects. However, these teachers were available at other campuses of the university. Based on the advice of Amma (Amrita University's Chancellor), a project was created to allow teachers to teach across multiple campuses. This was the genesis of the Amrita E-learning Research Lab, launched in 2004.

In 2009, the former President of India, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam inaugurated A-VIEW (Amrita Virtual Interactive E-learning World), a versatile e-learning tool for enabling distance education. A-VIEW is funded by the Government of India's MHRD, and developed by Embracing the World researchers at Amrita University. It enables distance education using basic communication modules like audio/video, whiteboard, document-sharing and chat, as well as advanced features like animation and a quiz mode. ([www.aview.in](http://www.aview.in))

A-VIEW is also being used for large-scale teacher training programs, thereby raising the standard of education on a broad scale. Users can view previously recorded A-VIEW classroom sessions. A-VIEW runs on Windows, Mac and Linux operating systems and also runs on desktops, laptops and Android smartphones and tablets.

In 2011, A-VIEW won the Jury Award for Best Innovation in Open and Distance Learning at the World Education Summit in New Delhi. Computer World Magazine (USA) recognized AERL with the Computer World Honors Laureate (under the Training Education Category) and Educational Award in the field of Educational Technology at the Indo-Global Education Summit and Expo, in 2012

A-VIEW has so far been installed in more than 2,000 higher educational institutions across India and is gradually being extended to schools and vocational centres.



SPANNING A DIVERSE ARRAY OF DISCIPLINES, ETW RESEARCH PROJECTS SHARE A SINGLE GOAL: TO HARNESS THE POWER OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE, TARGETED AID TO COMMUNITIES AND INDIVIDUALS IN NEED.

Haptic device for vocational training



MoVE Mobile Educational Van



Empowering women plumbers





## Virtual Labs

To help bridge the gap between institutions and industries that can afford high-budget physical laboratories and educational institutions with fewer resources, Amrita University's VALUE (Virtual and Accessible Laboratories Universalizing Education) project are developing virtual laboratories with state-of-the-art computer simulation technology. The virtual labs simulate real-world scientific laboratory environments. With funding from the Government of India's Ministry of Human Resources Development, VALUE is pioneering virtual labs in a

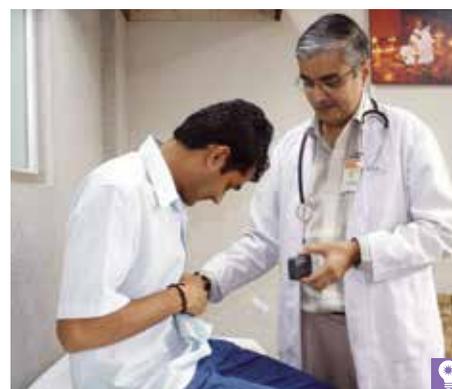
broad range of fields ranging from biotechnology and mechanical engineering to the chemical and physical sciences. Web-based graphical user interfaces ensure global accessibility to high-quality educational resources, regardless of geographic location. As lower-budget institutions typically cater to the needs of those in the lower end of the income spectrum, these virtual labs can help to eliminate the educational handicaps that have typically served as obstacles to higher education for the poor.

## Educational Technologies

### CREATE @ Amrita

With the goal of designing accessible and affordable educational technologies, the Amrita Centre for Research in Advanced Technologies for Education, or CREATE, conducts research initiatives in areas such as personalized and adaptive learning, online science labs, mobile learning, tabletop technologies for collaborative learning, and computer assisted language learning labs. Social and educational systems for young children are designed in such a manner that creativity and values are nurtured along with knowledge. Over 27,000 students in rural schools are using India's first-ever computer-aided adaptive assessment and learning program. In partnership with Intel, the centre provides free ICT training to women teachers in the use of computer-aided teaching-learning methodologies.

CREATE has built a simulation lab for STEM skills to develop and deploy immersive educational experiences using 2D and 3D simulations. It works as a consortium partner in various research projects with renowned International institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology, C-DAC, Carnegie Mellon University, UC-Berkeley, HP Global Social Innovation and under research grants from the Government of India. ([www.amrita.edu/create](http://www.amrita.edu/create))



*Use of automated insulin pump is demonstrated to patient at AIMS Hospital*

## Biomedical Devices for Affordable Diabetes Management

For an Indian living with diabetes, as much as 25% of family income is spent on diabetes care. At Amrita University, Embracing the World researchers at the School of Biotechnology are developing state-of-the-art biomedical devices specifically geared toward providing high-quality, low-cost, precise and personalized care for the burgeoning diabetic population of India. The School is currently working on India's first indigenously designed (US patent # 8,034,019 B2, Oct 2011) automated insulin pump and glucose sensor. When introduced into the field, these devices will allow for diabetic patients to monitor and regulate their blood glucose levels in an easy and affordable manner.

## National Research Award for Amrita University's Dean of Research

Marking a notable achievement in the history of Amrita University, its Dean of Research, Dr. Shantikumar Nair, received the prestigious National Research Award from the Ministry of Science and Technology in New Delhi on February 28, 2011. This award, given to just one scientist in India every year, was bestowed upon Amrita's Dr. Nair for his spectacular contributions to the emerging field of nanosciences and nanotechnology. The award was handed over to Dr. Nair by Professor C. N. R. Rao, Honorary President of the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR) and Scientific Advisor to the Prime Minister of India. Dr. Nair is also the Director of the Amrita Centre for Nanosciences, which recently began a successful foray in investigating nanotechnology applications for solar photovoltaic cells.





Laser Scanning Confocal Microscope for viewing structures inside cells by optical sectioning



Raman Confocal Microscope for Raman imaging of cells and their internal structures

## Medical Research

AIMS has an extensive research capability with projects supported by the Indian Council of Medical Research, the Department of Science & Technology, the Department of Indian System of Medicine & Homeopathy and other national and international research bodies.

### The Amrita Centre for Nanosciences and Molecular Medicine

The Amrita Centre for Nanosciences and Molecular Medicine was established in 2006 at the Kochi campus of Amrita University. The focus of the Centre was to explore applications of nanotechnology and nanomaterials in biomedical and energy areas. These have included nanomedicine, tissue engineering, solar cells, supercapacitors and batteries. Currently the Centre has 20 PhD faculty with post-doctoral training from all over the world. The Director of the Centre is Professor Shantikumar Nair, PhD (Columbia University), recipient of the Presidential Award (United States) and a recipient of the National Research Award from the Government of India. The Centre was the very first nanotechnology centre funded by the government of India in the biomedical area. In 2008, a major new program was established at this centre in the field of solar photovoltaics using nanotechnology as an enabling technology to enhance efficiency. This new program is also supported by the Department of Science and Technology. A large program in energy storage devices supported by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) followed this. Also in 2008, a major initiative in the toxicity of nanomaterials has been initiated at this centre with funding from the Department of Biotechnology, the Government of India. In 2011, the Nanomission of the Government of India designated the Centre as a Thematic Unit of Excellence in Tissue Engineering and Medical Bio Nanotechnology. This is only one of nine Thematic Units of Excellence in the country. In addition to the nano programs, the Centre has also active programs in molecular medicine with a focus on cancer biology, neurodegenerative diseases and infectious diseases. The Centre has a very active academic program with three MTech programs – one in Nanoscience and Technology (biomedical applications); one in Nanotechnology (energy applications) and one in Molecular Medicine (clinical applications). In addition, the Centre is fully supporting about 75 PhD students in various areas of research.



# health care



more than 2.6 million patients treated for free  
more than \$70 million in charitable medical care since 1998  
outreach programs bringing cutting-edge technology  
to remote tribal areas with more than  
100 free medical drives every year



## Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences (AIMS)

AIMS Hospital ([www.aimshospital.org](http://www.aimshospital.org)) was created out of Amma's desire to provide outstanding medical care in a spirit of compassion to all, regardless of one's ability to pay. AIMS is dedicated to the service of humanity, and the institution offers charitable care to the fullest extent possible to those in need. Most patients receive free or subsidised care.

The 1,300-bed tertiary care hospital houses 51 departments and 12 centres of excellence. The hospital has 24 operating theatres, 210 intensive care beds and a 240-bed extended care facility. An attached medical college hospital has a 500-bed facility.



Patient care is enhanced by state-of-the-art diagnostic clinical laboratories and body-scanning facilities. The fully computerised Hospital Information System ensures rapid transmission of diagnoses to surgeons and physicians. AIMS also has extensive paramedical-outreach and support services.

Since opening its doors in 1998, AIMS and its satellite hospitals and clinics run by Embracing the World treated more than 7.6 million patients. During that time, they have provided more than 70 million USD (Rs. 380 crores and 80 lakhs) worth of charitable medical care; more than 2.6 million patients received completely free treatment.

AIMS is the first university teaching hospital to be accredited by NABH, NAAC, NABL and ISO.



*Pediatric intensive care*



*Monitoring diabetes*

## Patient Care

AIMS offers sophisticated and compassionate care in a serene and beautiful atmosphere. The hospital is recognised as one of the premier hospitals in South Asia. The institution has attracted a highly qualified and dedicated team of medical professionals with international experience. Patients come to AIMS from all over India and the world.

Outpatients have rapid and easy access to a wide range of medical departments at a very low cost. Cross-specialty consultation assures thorough, outstanding treatment for each patient.

The AIMS Centre for Holistic Medicine offers integrated treatment for various diseases, combining modern medicine with yoga, ayurveda and naturopathy.

## Special Outreach Projects



*Before and after cleft-palate surgery*

Diabetes is a major life-threatening disease in Kerala. AIMS' Dept of Endocrinology set up the Amrita Diabetes Welfare Society to increase awareness of the disease and to provide free insulin for poor patients. The association organises regular medical camps to promote preventive measures.

Cleft palates and lip-palate defects are the fourth most common deformities in the world. 35,000 babies in India are born with such conditions every year. The AIMS Head and Neck Department provides reconstructive surgeries and runs regular free screening camps to locate and treat new cases. In 2010, AIMS performed 42 free cleft-palate surgeries for poor patients.



The Mobile Telemedicine Unit

## Telemedicine

In 2002, AIMS established the first Telemedicine Centre in Kerala in partnership with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). The centre allows highly trained doctors at AIMS to guide doctors at remote locations through complex procedures via satellite video feed. Telemedicine was used extensively to facilitate Embracing the World's relief work following the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. As of January 2011, the AIMS Telemedicine Centre serves more than 40 hospitals throughout India, as well as Embracing the World's own Village Resource Centres in remote tribal areas, the popular pilgrimage sites of Amritapuri and Sabarimala, and the Andaman Islands.

AIMS also operates a Mobile Telemedicine Unit, the size of a city bus, which brings sophisticated medical care to remote areas. The Mobile Telemedicine Unit was sent to Bihar by train to assist ETW's flood-relief operations there in 2008. As of November 2011, the mobile unit has been used to treat more than 500,000 patients throughout India.

In 2009, AIMS Telemedicine Centre became part of the India's PAN-African telemedicine network. Through this telemedicine network, AIMS provides e-health services to Benin, Burkina Faso, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal and Seychelles. The network makes medical consultation in various medical specialties available to care centres and hospitals in these rural areas.



Palliative home care for the terminally ill

## Pain and Palliative Home Care

Started in 1999, this department has provided loving medical care and psychological support to impoverished patients with terminal diseases. Doctors visit patients in their homes, supply drugs, counsel the families and supervise nursing care. 75,000 patients are treated annually — all free of charge.



Dental and eye camps in remote villages

## Free Medical Camps in Remote Areas

Every year AIMS conducts more than 100 free health camps in remote, impoverished areas. Eye camps screen for cataract conditions. When necessary, patients are sent to AIMS for free operations. In 2010, AIMS performed free cataract surgeries for 726 patients.

AIMS Hospital Mobile Medical Assistance provides free medical care to remote tribal villages. The villagers are screened for serious diseases and given free medicines. Serious cases are referred to AIMS.

AIMS disaster-relief teams have conducted hundreds of medical camps during disasters such as the 2001 Gujarat earthquake, the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, the 2005 Mumbai floods, India's 2006 Chikungunya epidemic, the 2008 Bihar flood and the 2009 West Bengal cyclone.



A patient receiving a consultation via telemedicine link



NOT EVERYONE CAN MAKE THE TRIP TO AIMS, AMMA'S TERTIARY CARE HOSPITAL IN KOCHI. THAT'S WHY ETW HAS ESTABLISHED SATELLITE HOSPITALS IN REMOTE AREAS AND CONDUCTS MORE THAN 100 FREE MEDICAL CAMPS EVERY YEAR.



## Community Medicine Department

### Amrita School of Medicine

This department provides family-oriented health education, training doctors in the art of community medicine with a strong emphasis on field experience and on-the-ground training. The department manages a rural health centre in Njarakkal, 25 kilometres from AIMS, and an urban health centre in Kaloor. The centres serve 200 people daily.

For government agencies, the department has trained health-workers who work in the community, counselling thousands of impoverished mothers. It has also trained 200 tribal villagers in basic nursing, enabling them to promote health and hygiene in their villages. AIMS students play an active role. They also conduct seminars in schools and colleges focusing on reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, and drug and alcohol abuse.

*Health awareness camps at rural and urban health centres in Njarakkal and Kaloor.*



*Charitable hospital in Kalpetta.*

*Charitable hospital in Amritapuri.*



*Charitable hospital in Pampa.*



*Charitable hospital in Mysore.*



## AIMS Charitable Hospitals

### Kalpetta, Kerala

Most patients belong to tribal communities. As many as 200 people visit the outpatient clinic daily. Out of deep concern for the indigenous population, the doctors also make rounds to remote tribal hamlets.

### Amritapuri, Kerala

This hospital provides care to the residents of eight coastal villages, as well as to Amritapuri's residents and visitors. Nearly 10,000 people are registered as out-patients.

### Pampa, Kerala

This hospital offers 24-hour free medical service near Sabarimala, a popular, remote hilltop temple. The 25-bed hospital provides for the hundreds of thousands who make the pilgrimage every year. It has two fully equipped ambulances and a 15-member medical team, including cardiac specialists.

### Mysore, Karnataka

The 20-bed hospital serves the needs of more than 100 poor villages in Bogadi.



AIDS Care Centre, Trivandrum

## Amrita Kripa Sagar HIV/AIDS Care Centre

Trivandrum, Kerala

Amrita Kripa Sagar is a Community Care Centre dedicated to the economically challenged HIV infected and is situated at Nedumangad, Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala. The centre has a 25-bed inpatient facility, a physical rehabilitation department and a general OP which also caters to the healthcare requirements of the locals. Placed in a serene rural setting, the care home provides a total comprehensive rehabilitation for persons living with HIV and AIDS (PLHAs). Apart from quality healthcare, services include psycho-social and spiritual counseling, group therapy, home care, educational support for PLHAs' children and vocational training. A nearby government clinic provides anti-retroviral drugs, allowing ETW's care centre to focus on providing material and psychological support for people living with HIV and AIDS in a culture where the disease still carries a strong negative stigma. An outpatient clinic, open daily, provides free medicines for the poor and is particularly geared toward supporting people with HIV/AIDS.



AIDS Care Centre, Trivandrum

## Amrita Kripa Sagar Cancer Hospice

Mumbai, Maharashtra

Since 1995, this hospice has been providing free care and spiritual solace to patients suffering from terminal cancer. It also provides free medicine, rice and other food items to the poor. Books are also regularly distributed to impoverished children.



Cancer Hospice, Mumbai



Health Centre, Andaman Islands

## Amrita Health Centre

Port Blair, Andaman

After the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, the islanders requested Amma's help to establish state-of-the-art medical facilities. The centre provides the specialist services of cardiology, pediatrics and general medicine. The centre is equipped with fully computerized Lab, digital X-ray, ECG, TMT Colour Doppler, a tele-medicine unit and ambulance services.



Amrita Ayurveda Medical College and Hospital

## School of Ayurveda, Hospital & Research Centre

Vallikkavu  
Amritapuri, Kerala

The Amrita School of Ayurveda was established to revitalize India's traditional medical heritage. The school runs a 160-bed hospital equipped with state-of-the-art facilities, including X-ray, ECG, ultrasound, ICU, operating theatres and a fully equipped pathology laboratory. There is also a casualty section, a labour room and a pharmacy that dispenses 400 types of natural and allopathic medicines. The hospital offers traditional *panchakarma* (ancient purification treatment) for inpatients and outpatients.



Ayurvedic herb nursery

The hospital's five-acre herbal garden maintains more than 750 species of medicinal plants. In addition, the hospital accommodates a drug-manufacturing unit, Amrita Life, where medicines are prepared according to traditional texts. At the Amritapuri Ashram, an ayurvedic clinic also provides panchakarma treatment for visitors.



Manufacturing traditional ayurvedic medicines



# fighting hunger

feeding more than 10 million people every year throughout India distributing uncooked rice, milk and other staples to remote tribal areas serving more than 100,000 meals to the homeless and hungry internationally, including more than 75,000 people in 47 cities throughout North America

## Anna Danam: the Gift of Food

When the majority of India's people earn less than Rs. 80 (1.66 USD) a day, and the price of a kilo of rice ranges between Rs. 20 and Rs. 80, it is no wonder that nearly 50 percent of India's population suffer from malnourishment. Through Amritapuri, Amma's main ashram, and its branch centres, Embracing the World feeds more than 10 million poor people every year throughout India.

The centres welcome people as their guests and serve them hot meals. In this way volunteers also get to know the people and their needs. At the Mumbai ashram this service has been running for 15 years.

In the first six months after the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, ETW provided more than six million free meals to disaster survivors, as well as more than 185 tons of uncooked rice to help the survivors make ends meet.

Along with food distribution, the ETW centres often provide a free medical camp with several specialist doctors in attendance providing free medicines.

For longer-term provisioning of people in more remote areas, ETW centres also distribute uncooked rice, milk and clothing.



Palakkad ashram, Kerala, hot meal service



Staple foods are regularly distributed to remote locations accessible only on foot.



Street children receive regular meals in Mumbai



## Mother's Kitchen

In the United States, one in eight Americans (more than 35 million) don't have dependable, consistent access to food due to limited money and resources, and nearly 60 percent of Americans between the ages of 25 and 75 fall below the poverty line for at least one year.

Embracing the World is committed to making a difference wherever and whenever possible. Through a program called Mother's Kitchen, volunteers provide more than 75,000 meals a year for the homeless in 47 cities throughout North America. Mother's Kitchen volunteers support social-service groups using their in-house kitchen facilities to provide meals: e.g. in soup kitchens, women's shelters, old-age facilities, half-way houses etc.

On a regular basis the volunteers take over the shopping, cooking and serving of a meal, providing much needed support for the full-time staff. In this way they serve the hungry and also those who serve the hungry. This project builds long-standing bonds between volunteer organizations, and between the volunteers and those they serve. Some Mother's Kitchens are now 10 years old.

In Spain, Amma's centre collects donations of staple foods such as vegetables, fruit, bread, milk, yogurt, and regularly redistributes them to more than 200 families in need. All together, our international volunteers serve more than 100,000 meals to the homeless and hungry around the world.



ETW VOLUNTEERS HAVE BEEN SERVING THE HOMELESS AND HUNGRY IN CITIES ACROSS NORTH AMERICA FOR MORE THAN 10 YEARS. IN 2009, AMMA'S CENTRE IN SPAIN LAUNCHED A PROGRAM TO PROVIDE REGULAR DONATIONS OF STAPLE FOODS TO MORE THAN 200 FAMILIES IN NEED.



# green initiatives



using permaculture, eco-friendly buildings, and recycling projects to create exemplary sustainable living communities at Amma's centres worldwide member organization of the United Nations Billion Tree Campaign promoting local participation in conservation efforts worldwide more than 1 million trees planted globally since 2001



Amma endorsed the Earth Charter in 2009

## Earth Charter

In New York in 2009, Amma endorsed the Earth Charter, a declaration of fundamental principles for building a sustainable and peaceful world. The drafting of the Earth Charter was coordinated by renowned philanthropist and activist Dr. Steven C. Rockefeller, who was on hand to witness Amma's endorsement.



THROUGHOUT HER LIFE, AMMA HAS BEEN EXPRESSING DEEP CONCERN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT. SHE HAS PUBLICLY CALLED ON ALL OF HER ADMIRERS AND DEVOTEES TO TAKE CONCRETE STEPS TOWARD THE RESTORATION OF NATURE'S DELICATE BALANCE, INCLUDING CONSERVATION OF RESOURCES, REFORESTATION EFFORTS, AND LIFESTYLE CHANGES.

## GreenFriends



GreenFriends, the environmental branch of Embracing the World, is a rapidly growing international movement to foster lifestyles that respect nature. GreenFriends encourages us to reawaken our awareness of the unity between nature and humanity, and to cultivate love and reverence for nature. Throughout the world, Amma's main centres are working to become exemplary, educational ecological sites. Through their examples, they promote the principles of self-sustaining eco-communities. By encouraging sustainable living principles in all Amrita institutions, Amma and her volunteers are sowing the seeds of a better future.

GreenFriends is also a key actor in developing informal education models in the field of sustainable living. Several of our projects and events have been formally recognized by UNESCO as part of the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development. Through concrete projects, participants can develop knowledge and skills in the fields of permaculture, tree-planting, organic gardening and the restoration and preservation of wildlife sanctuaries. GreenFriends also conducts nature retreats and group meditations in forests and other natural settings. GreenFriends volunteers also build eco-friendly dwellings, promote the use of Effective Microorganisms (EM) as a sanitizing agent and develop recycling projects and ways to preserve land and water. A member organization of the United Nations Billion Tree Campaign, GreenFriends has planted more than one million trees globally since 2001.

## Case Studies

In Kerala, India, ETW maintains three medicinal plant gardens that conserve coastal, midland and forest ecosystems and provide employment for local women. The Coimbatore campus of Amrita University maintains an Environmental Studies Centre, which conducts research on eco-friendly techniques, manages an organic farm and has implemented the use of Effective Micro-organisms for recycling the university's wastewater.

In France, in a project supported by the European Commission DG Education and Culture, Amma's volunteers built a walk-in bee sanctuary that offers the educational experience of living with bees. ([www.greenfriends-france.org](http://www.greenfriends-france.org))

Throughout Europe, Greenfriends is using organic cultivation methods and developing seed banks to preserve local, ancient and/or endangered seeds.

In 2007, Amma asked that 1,000 fruit trees be planted at M.A.Center, San Ramon (USA). Today, with rolling hills of fruit trees, GreenFriends Farm has blossomed into an educational center for ecologically conscious agriculture. It is a destination for enjoying nature, and a vibrant spot for volunteers of all ages.

## The Plastic Project

This project utilises simple tools and traditional weaving techniques to recycle plastic packaging. Soft plastic yarn is made for crocheted items and stiff plastic strips are woven. Production includes shopping bags, purses, sandals, hats, mobile phone covers, etc. The Plastic Project is active in India, America, Japan and Europe. In India, volunteers from all over the world are using otherwise nonrecyclable hard plastic packing straps to weave bed bases for metal-framed foldaway beds for disaster survivors.



Eco-friendly waste-water management (Amrita University)



Building an educational bee sanctuary in France



Seeds collected for a seed bank in France



Recycling plastic to produce beds for disaster survivors



# amrita institutions

Amrita University, one of the fastest-growing universities in India  
with 16 schools across five satellite-linked campuses  
working in partnership with 30+ leading universities worldwide  
57 primary and secondary schools throughout India  
with more than 100,000 students across all institutions  
Amritapuri Ashram and branch centres throughout India and worldwide



## Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham - Amrita University

Under the enlightened leadership of Chancellor Amma, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham (Amrita University) has emerged as one of the fastest-growing institutions of higher learning in India. Headquartered at Coimbatore, the university also has campuses at Amritapuri, Kochi, Bengaluru and Mysore. ([www.amrita.edu](http://www.amrita.edu))

With a focus on inculcating values such as compassion, kindness, and service to those in need, the university offers 150+ undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral programs in Engineering, Business, Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Nursing, Journalism, Biotechnology, Information Technology, Arts and Sciences, Health Sciences, Education, Microbiology, Hospital Management, Communication, Social Work, Nanosciences and Ayurveda.

Based on evaluation of all campuses and programs by a peer review committee, the university has been accredited by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) with an 'A' grade. Amrita has a student population of over 17,000 and faculty strength of 2,000, including over 300 faculty members with PhD/DM qualifications. The university also has 25 research centers and 300 projects that have yielded more than 2,500 journal publications, 300 awards, 125 books, 250 book chapters, and 50 patent filings in recent years.

Research at Amrita is focused on societal benefit. Professors are encouraged to come out of the lab to deploy their research and make a difference in the lives of those less fortunate. The preeminence of the schools of engineering, medicine, biotechnology, nanotechnology, management and sciences has brought an inter-disciplinary flair into all of Amrita's research projects.

The Amrita Center for International Programs actively promotes student exchange programs with universities across the world. Through the semester exchange program, Amrita aims to provide students with a meaningful overseas experience, incorporating study, which counts toward their degree.

### International Alliances with USA, Europe and Asia

More than 30 leading universities worldwide, including the UC Schools in California, Stanford, USC, MIT, University of New Mexico, the UT Schools in Texas, SUNY Buffalo, Carnegie Mellon, University of Michigan, NYU, University of Maryland, Mayo, EPFL in Switzerland, VU in Amsterdam, TU Munich, Roma Tre, ETH Zurich and the University of Tokyo are working together with Amrita University to enhance higher education and research in India. Industry partners include Infosys, IBM, Phillips, NSN, Bosch, National Instruments, Qualcomm, HP, ISRO, and TCS. Amrita University is also a partner in the Erasmus Mundus exchange program between nine European and seven Asian universities.



This is not just another university, but a very high-quality, world-class university... focusing on technology and research, dealing with very concrete issues which have immediate applications. 2006 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Prof. Muhammad Yunus

## Schools of Amrita University

AMRITAPURI: School of Arts & Sciences	amrita.edu/asas
School of Engineering	engineering.amrita.edu
School of Ayurveda	ayurveda.amrita.edu
School of Biotechnology	biotech.amrita.edu
School of Business	amrita.edu/asb
Department of Social Work	amrita.edu/msw
Amrita Research	amrita.edu/research
Amrita Center for International Programs	amrita.edu/global
BANGALORE: School of Engineering	engineering.amrita.edu
School of Business	amrita.edu/asb
COIMBATORE: School of Engineering	engineering.amrita.edu
School of Business	amrita.edu/asb
School of Communication	amrita.edu/ascom
Department of Social Work	amrita.edu/msw
Amrita Research	amrita.edu/research
KOCHI: School of Medicine	aims.amrita.edu
School of Dentistry	aims.amrita.edu
School of Nursing	aims.amrita.edu
School of Pharmacy	aims.amrita.edu
School of Business	amrita.edu/asb
Centre for Nanosciences	amrita.edu/acns
Amrita Research	amrita.edu/research
MYSORE: School of Arts & Sciences	amrita.edu/asas
School of Education	amrita.edu/ased



Amrita Vidyalayam students interact with then-President of India, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam



## Amrita Vidyalayam Schools

MAM has established 51 Amrita Vidyalayam English-medium schools throughout India, as well as five Malayalam-medium schools and one Sanskrit-medium school. Amrita Vidyalayams have state-of-the-art learning facilities. They use 'Amrita Learning', an educational software developed by Amrita Technologies and inaugurated by former President of India Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. A phonics-based program grounds children in language skills. Broadband Internet allows investigation of approved educational websites. All Amrita Vidyalayams boast a 100 percent pass rate in board examinations.

Values play a central role. Children are encouraged to develop both head and heart and to practise selflessness, compassion and respect for others in all activities. Students are exposed to India's rich, ancient culture through the arts, yoga, meditation and chanting Sanskrit prayers. Ample opportunities are provided for participation in a variety of sports, martial arts and environmental activities.

Amrita Vidyalayam students and schools regularly garner national awards and even international attention. Most recently, our schools won 16 out of 100 national sanitation and environmental conservation awards, with more than 10,500 schools competing. Two Amrita Vidyalayam students were among 10 students nationwide selected to represent India at the International Science and Engineering Fair held in May 2013, in Phoenix, Arizona, USA. ([www.amritavidyalayam.org](http://www.amritavidyalayam.org))



NOW HOME TO MORE THAN 3,000 PEOPLE, AMMA'S BIRTHPLACE HAS GROWN INTO AN INTERNATIONAL PILGRIMAGE CENTRE AND THE HEADQUARTERS OF AMMA'S WORLD-WIDE SPIRITUAL AND HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATION.



## Amritapuri: Amma's Ashram

**Mata Amritanandamayi Math (MAM)**

**Vallikkavu, Kerala: International Headquarters**

Amritapuri Ashram is the headquarters of Mata Amritanandamayi Math (MAM), Amma's India-based spiritual and humanitarian organization, and the international headquarters of Embracing the World. It is also home to an international community of more than 3,000 people. Permanent residents include monastic disciples and families from all over India and abroad. Inspired by Amma, they have dedicated their lives to attaining the goal of Self-realisation and serving the world. It is here that they live with Amma, imbibing her teachings, practicing meditation and participating in selfless service.

Amritapuri is also an international pilgrimage centre for people searching for solace, inspiration and inner peace. Thousands of people come to the ashram every day to experience Amma's boundless love. Amma makes herself available day and night to meet everyone who comes, and to advise the disciples and volunteers managing the many humanitarian projects of Embracing the World. Daily, Amma leads the evening prayers and devotional singing. Several times a week, she sits with all the residents in meditation and holds open question-and-answer sessions on spiritual topics.

Embracing the World International was conceived by MAM, and in India, Embracing the World projects are conceived and carried out by MAM. It is from Amritapuri that Amma's disciples and volunteers are instructed to go out to manage MAM's institutions and branch centres, and to conduct public programs in India and abroad.

## Amrita Families

People whose lives have been touched by Amma keep in touch with one another through 'Amrita Families,' or 'satsang groups.' Through their local satsang group, families and friends come together regularly to chant, sing devotional songs, meditate and engage in service projects. These gatherings create peace and harmony within the family, within the community and in society as a whole. Today, there are thousands of such satsang groups throughout India and hundreds abroad.

## Branch Centres

MAM has established hundreds of branch centres and service groups throughout India and abroad. Many centres include temples and schools. The monastic disciples in charge conduct public programs and organise selfless-service activities in response to the needs of their area. Major centres exist in USA, Europe, Brazil, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, Reunion Island and Mauritius as well as throughout India.

## Brahmasthanam Temples

In 1989, Amma began consecrating Brahmasthanams, temples that emphasize the essential unity underlying the different forms of God. Besides being places for prayer, their purpose is to re-educate people in the true principles of temple worship. Amma personally consecrates these temples. She was the first spiritual leader in Kerala to appoint women as temple priests. As of May 2011, there are 20 Brahmasthanam temples throughout India and one in Mauritius.



## Amrita Keerti Award

MAM initiated this award in 2001 to encourage and support Indian culture. It is conferred on distinguished persons making significant contributions to India's heritage and to those engaged in national or social service. The award is given at the state and national level.



## Publications

MAM has published more than 30 books detailing Amma's teachings. There are also scriptural commentaries, books of devotional songs, poetry and Sanskrit *mantras*. The books are available in 25 languages.



Two magazines, *Matruvani* and *Immortal Bliss*, present Amma's teachings, inspiring articles and the multifaceted experiences of people whose lives have been touched by Amma. *Matruvani* is available in English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Finnish and Japanese, as well as in Malayalam, Gujarati, Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, Telugu, Kannada and Tamil.

## Audio-Visual Products

Amma's soul-stirring devotional songs and other spiritual music are available on a wide range of CDs. MAM also produces a number of educational CD-ROMS that explain the principles of *dharma* and spirituality. Amma's Indian and world tours, her speeches at international forums and her humanitarian projects are presented on DVDs.

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## AMMA'S DREAM

Everyone in the world should be able to sleep without fear, at least for one night. Everyone should be able to eat to his fill, at least for one day. There should be at least one day when hospitals see no one admitted due to violence. By doing selfless service for at least one day, everyone should help the poor and needy. It is Amma's prayer that at least this small dream be realised.



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## Amrita Recycling and Composting Center

In order to provide an educational model of professional waste management designed to meet the needs of India's rapidly increasing population, the Amrita Recycling Center at Amritapuri Ashram has been developing techniques to efficiently clean, compost and recycle the waste of its 3,000 ashram residents, 2,000 students, and countless annual visitors.



All ashram waste is picked up from specially designed waste-stations around the ashram which demonstrate basic segregation of biodegradable waste from non-biodegradable waste. The four main segregations of waste include food waste, paper, soft plastic, and hard items such as metal, glass and hard plastics. More extensive waste sorting is conducted at the Amrita Recycling Center, where over 70 categories of waste are designated for shipment to recycling plants in India. 80 percent of all ashram waste is successfully recycled. Every day, efforts are made to find more re-uses for the waste.



Educational courses are being developed on the importance of proper waste management. The waste management compound serves as a tour model for visiting groups of schoolteachers and children, businesspeople, political officials, and others.

The composting team processes over 1.5 tons of food waste daily and produces about 30 tons of compost every month. Worm compost, first- and second-quality composts are sold to local agricultural projects and provide organic relief to agriculturists who would otherwise have limited access to organic resources. (Across all Amma's institutions in India, 8 tons of organic waste are processed each day.)

The labor involved in the total waste management efforts of the ashram volunteers adds up to approximately 4,000 hours per month. No paid labor is involved in the pick-up, sorting, cleaning, or composting of the ashram waste.



Chief Minister Oomen Chandy distributing the seeds to program participants.

## Organic Farming Initiative

More than 10,000 members of Embracing the World's women's empowerment self-help groups are being supported to grow organic vegetables on their own land. ETW is distributing free seeds to all the participants, and is arranging free training and demonstration classes by traditional farmers and agriculturalists adept in organic farming.

Inaugurating the initiative, the Chief Minister of Kerala Sri. Oomen Chandy remarked, "The social-service activities executed by the Mata Amritanandamayi Math are always conceived with foresight. Assisting these 10,000 people to cultivate organic vegetables on 1,000 acres, [Amma's organization] is becoming a role-model for society."

In announcing the project, Amma said, "The goal of this initiative is to sustain the tradition of organic farming and to revive the culture of growing vegetables that one consumes, without using chemicals and pesticides. Everyone should be able to eat vegetables grown organically at least once in a week... Even if a person is able to do organic farming in one cent (1/100 acre) of land, it is a big step in restoring the lost harmony of nature. We have not inherited the land from our ancestors; we have borrowed it from our children. We have to return this land to the coming generations without allowing even the slightest damage to happen to it."

## Amrita Vocational Training Center

In partnership with the Government of India, Embracing the World launched a new Vocational Training Center for Women at its Amritapuri headquarters. Both 45-day and 120-day courses are offered. The women receive a stipend to cover their living expenses during the course, and upon completion of the course are qualified to begin a career in tailoring. 110 women per year will graduate from these courses, which are offered free.



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[www.embracingtheworld.org/indeed](http://www.embracingtheworld.org/indeed)



## Dialogue and Diversity in Asia South Pacific Region — 亚洲南太平洋地区视角



### Amma Addresses the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in Shanghai

In November 2012, Amma participated in the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Regional Consultations for Asia-South Pacific. The focus of the UNAOC is to improve mutual understanding and cooperation between nations, cultures and religions, while helping to counter the forces that fuel polarization and extremism. The conference, held in Shanghai, China, was titled “Harmony Through Diversity and Dialogue.” More than 150 delegates from throughout Asia and the South Pacific – representing governments, academia, corporations, NGOs and cultural organizations – took part in the two-day event. Other dignitaries participating were Jean-Christophe Bas, Senior Advisor, Strategic Development and Partnerships UNAOC; Ambassador Chen Jian, President of the UN Association of China and Jorge Sampaio, UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations and former President of Portugal.

Amma was the only spiritual/religious leader invited to the conference. She spoke on the subject, “Coexistence and Engagement Between Cultures.”

Supporting her points with practical examples and suggestions based on decades of humanitarian work in culturally diverse regions, Amma invited everyone to contribute to the global conversation on coexistence by setting an example of respect and tolerance.

Amma also called for a balance of rights and respect, saying, “When we engage others with respect, understanding and acceptance, then we will be able to communicate at the level of the heart.” This was Amma’s first visit to China.

# 4.6 million USD in Humanitarian Aid

In conjunction with Amma’s 59th birthday celebrations, Amma announced charitable initiatives worth a combined total of 4.6 million USD.



Certificates are distributed to designated recipients of free heart surgeries and kidney transplants during Amma's 59th birthday celebration.

### 200 Heart Surgeries and 50 Kidney Transplants Performed Free of Charge

Over and above its existing charitable work, Embracing the World’s AIMS Hospital is performing 200 heart surgeries and 50 kidney transplants for patients who would otherwise be unable to gain access to the care they need. The patients will not be charged anything for these procedures or any other related expenses.

### Housing Project Expands

Embracing the World will begin construction on 500 new homes throughout the state of Kerala for those subsisting in inadequate shelter. ETW has already constructed 45,000 homes toward a goal of 100,000 homes for the homeless throughout India.

Amma embraces survivors and the bereaved affected by the Sivakasi fireworks factory fire.



### Financial Aid for Fire Disaster Survivors

In the late summer of 2012, there were two tragic accidents in South India. A fire at a fireworks factory in Sivakasi, Tamil Nadu killed 38 factory workers, and many more were injured. In Kanur, Kerala, an overturned LPG tanker exploded and claimed 15 lives while injuring 35 more and destroying 45 homes. ETW gave aid packages of \$1,800 USD to each family who lost someone to one of these disaster, and \$900 USD in aid to each family with an injured family member.



Amma meets with President of India Pranab Mukherjee in January 2013 during her North Indian Tour. During the tour, Amma expanded her scholarship program to benefit a total 41,000 recipients.



The Missionaries of Charity came to meet Amma in January 2013 during her first-ever programs in the Indian state of Odisha. During the tour, Amma expanded ETW's lifetime financial aid program to benefit a total 59,000 recipients.

During Amma's 59th birthday celebrations, 3,000 additional recipients were enrolled in ETW's lifetime financial aid program. Their first checks were distributed by Finance Minister K.M. Mani.



### Scholarship Program Expands to Reach 41,000

Embracing the World is working to provide 100,000 scholarships for children living below the poverty line. On Amma’s birthday in September 2012, 3,000 additional recipients were enrolled in the program. In early 2013, an additional 1,000 were added to the rolls, bringing the total number of recipients to 41,000. Most of the children are living in communities affected by the ongoing farmer suicide crisis; others are from families affected by AIDS. The scholarships give the children new options to break out of the cycle of poverty and give hope to the whole family, thereby working to prevent suicide.

### Lifetime Financial Aid Program Expands to Reach 59,000

Since 1998, Embracing the World has provided monthly pensions for widows, as well as the physically and mentally challenged and others living below the poverty line. On Amma’s birthday in September 2012, 3,000 additional recipients were enrolled in the program. In early 2013, an additional 1,000 were added to the rolls, bringing the total number of recipients to 59,000.

Ultimately, ETW will provide monthly pensions for 100,000 impoverished men, women and children who are struggling to make ends meet.

In inaugurating the expansion of the program, K.M. Mani, Kerala’s Minister for Finance, Law & Housing, remarked, “Amma’s service activities are unparalleled even by the government.”