



ANNUAL REPORT

2014 - 2015



Vision: "Creating synergy for city transformation"

Mission: "Empowering churches, institutions & young individuals, resulting in networks that care for marginalized & vulnerable communities through

- Education
- Healthcare & Advocacy
- Leadership development
- Networking

In the Name & Spirit of Jesus Christ.

FOREWORD

“ACT’s Board and I are grateful to present the 2014–2015 Annual Report. At the heart of ACT is a commitment to empowerment. In this report, you will read inspiring stories of marginalized women, men, and youth whose lives are being transformed through opportunity, support, and empowerment.

You will read about ACT’s training of volunteers who serve communities like the community worker who made sure that the police registered a FIR - First Information Report on rape. She also on another occasion made sure that the doctors turned up in time to treat poor Tuberculosis patients.

Advocacy for the poor is an essential skill for all of us. Standing up for justice is a key value in ACT. Read the story of the girl who was trafficked and abused several times and her rehabilitation. A young man’s journey from an HIV positive family from hopelessness and the ability to dream new dreams, find direction and eventually a career and a job.

As you look through the details of the fruit of ACT’s involvement with the poor you will see how our staff have developed many others through coming up alongside.

We send out this report with gratitude for our staff lead by our CEO Dr. Alita Ram. Our partners and partner organizations and friends have stood behind us in support and encouragement over this last year.

Thank you.

VIJU ABRAHAM
CHAIRMAN

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Passion is the energy that keeps us going, that keeps us filled with meaning, and happiness, and excitement, and anticipation. Passion is a powerful force in accomplishing anything you set your mind to, and in experiencing work and life the fullest extent possible.

Ultimately, passion is the driving force behind success and happiness that allows us all to live better lives. At Association for Christian Thoughtfulness (ACT) we are passionate about people. This is the energy that drives us to make a difference in the lives of the poor and marginalized.

As ACT we also remember that we cannot do it alone. Since we live in communities and we are passionate about networking and learning with one another through the length and breadth of this city and nation of India.

The story of our founder Viju Abraham continues to inspire and challenge us as we step into the 41st year of our existence as ACT.

The wide reaching and vast impact that we have had as an organization is testament to the fact that inspiration and dedication and passion can truly move mountains. From a humble beginning of directly working in one or two communities to now empowering 20 communities we have come a long way.

Our journey is long winded with many a twist and turn. We began initially with conducting direct community development work but in the 1990s we felt quite strongly that sustainability of development will only occur if we envision and empower the community for development rather than conduct the process.

We have seen the communities through this process for 3-5 years and it is with great pride that can state that around 40 percent of these communities that we have partnered with are continuing the process that we helped them begin. Some of them have blossomed and grown as organizations that now play a crucial role in this city.

DR. ALITA RAM
CEO

OUR BOARD MEMBERS



Viju Abraham



Vivian Fernandes



Johnson Samuel



Adrian Lopes



Perola Menon



Shirish Ahaley

OUR AIM



Association for Christian Thoughtfulness (ACT) partners with other organisations and has a multi-pronged strategy for cities to be transformed through churches that impact lives and their communities.

Develop networks with other organisations to -

- Envision and empower churches for social action.
- Equip young people to make positive lifestyle choices.
- Establish counseling services for vulnerable women and children.

WORKING THROUGH LOCAL COMMUNITIES



BENEFICIARY DETAILS



LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Envisioned
16

Actively working
in the community
10



DIRECT BENEFICIARIES

Above 18 years
3510

Below 18 years
2852



DIRECT BENEFICIARIES

Above 18 years
2194

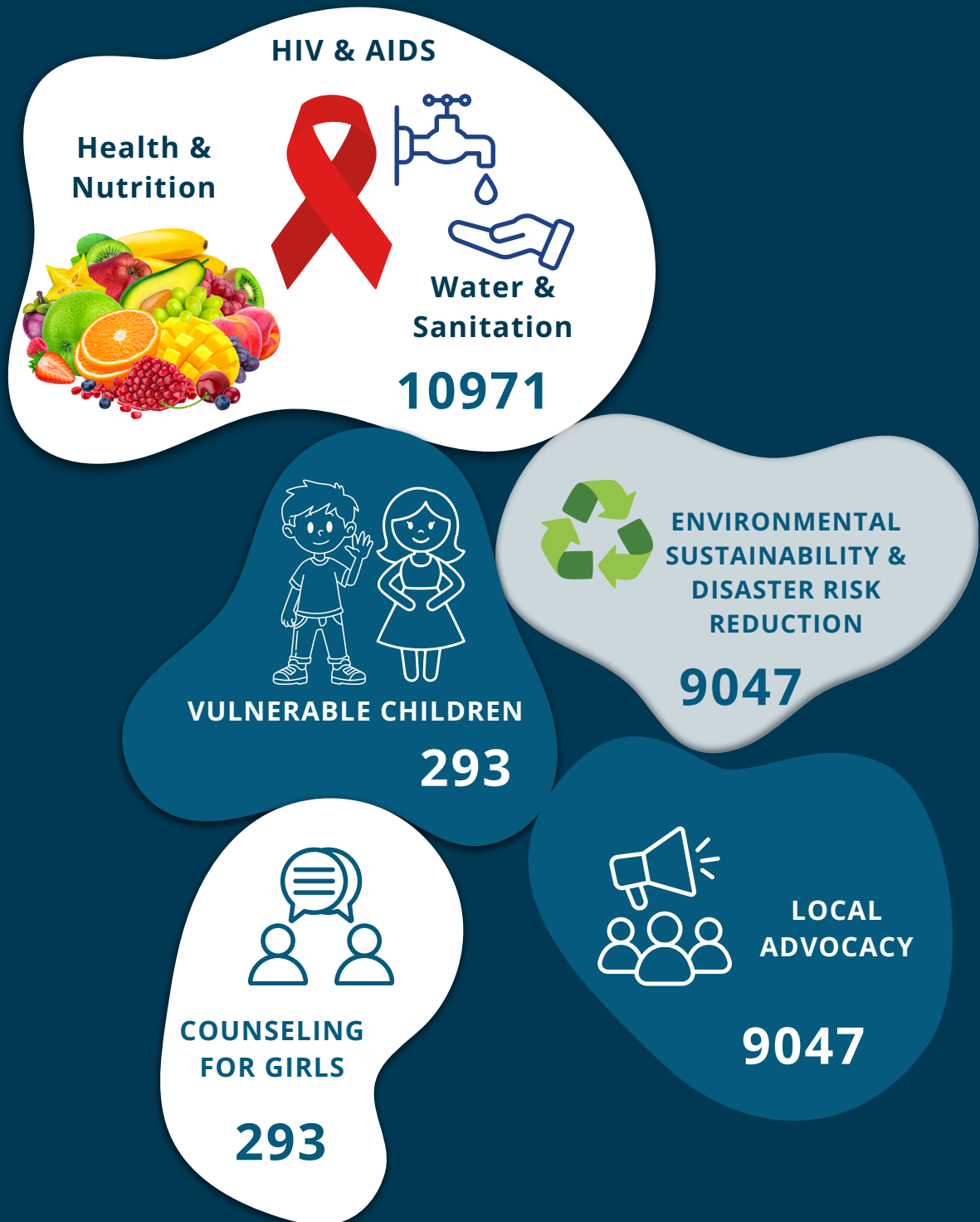
Below 18 years
2414



TOTAL NUMBER OF DIRECT BENEFICIARIES

10971

BENEFICIARIES BY SECTOR



IMPACT OF COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Immanuel Prayer House partners with Association For Christian Thoughtfulness (ACT) to conduct various activities that encourage the development of our community. ACT appointed me as the supervisor for these activities. I was trained in how to impart knowledge about topics like health awareness and I was also trained in advocacy, counseling and youth leadership. Prior to this I had mainly been involved with people within the church only but post ACT's training in these areas I learnt how to communicate, build a rapport and nurture relationships with people who were not specifically part of my community.

I also noticed a change in myself. I became more confident, ready to talk to more people and discuss serious issues with them. I realized how this training had developed my mind, how it had changed me from within into a person who could use this knowledge with the skill that would bring change to the community. The most important part was that I actually started to notice things in my surroundings that I could change.

A member of our community, Sanjay was a tuberculosis patient. But he didn't have the necessary medical reports and he had experienced difficulty in getting them in the past. Joshua who was appointed with me as a community worker and I went to a nearby hospital, MT Agrawal Municipal Hospital along with Sanjay to support him while he got his tests. We went early in the morning at 7:30 am. But until 9:30 am there were no doctors, nurses or anyone to attend to us.

Some of the patients who had come to get their tests done and meet the doctors left out of exasperation. Even Sanjay began to get frustrated. "Let's go home," he said. "I don't want to do this test. It's taking too much time." It was the first time I was doing this kind of work so I asked the department why the doctor was taking so much time and nobody had come yet. They replied that they didn't know and the doctors usually came in their own time. I didn't like this. It made me very angry and I decided to do something about it.

Now the advocacy training that I had learnt through ACT came into practice. I went to meet the CEO of the hospital. I told him what had happened to us and explained the kind of work that I was involved in. I had a conversation with him and tried to explain that this was not the right way to treat patients.

Similarly I saw my advocacy training come into action in another case.



The CEO replied that he had no clue that this was happening in the hospital. He came with us and took action immediately. He apologized to all the patients and admonished the doctors who had not come on time. Now when we go to the hospital, they have begun to start early and there is a proper procedure and system for everything.

One night at around 1 am, I got a call from one of the members of the community saying that a girl from tribal area had been molested and was missing. I woke up my husband, Paul and both of us went to their community.

The man who molested her was a 57 year old man, one of her neighbors. She had been beaten very severely. The girl had told her mother the two of them had gone to the police station and tried to file a complaint. However the police would not file it because they wanted their area to look like there weren't as many cases of crime as other areas.

When the girl heard this she had run away from home and her mother had called us to come and help.

We searched for her all night and finally found her in the morning in her friend's house. I counseled her about the incident and persuaded her that she was safe and we would take action. I called a member of the ACT staff, Suresh Shinde.

"What should we do about this case?" I asked him. He told me to go back to the police station and try to file an FIR again.

"This time you ask them why they haven't filed the FIR yet," he said. He also gave me the number of an advocate that I could call in case the police refused again.

It was the first time I had gone to the police station like this. Most people are afraid but because I knew the staff of ACT would support me so I could go forward bravely. I talked to the Chief Inspector and told him that it's wrong not to file the case. It was his job to take care of the citizens under his jurisdiction.

The policemen suddenly realized that I was serious and they better do this job. They arrested the man who had committed this crime. I had never in my life done this kind of work. It was very scary but also empowering for me. I'm very glad that I did it. In my mind there was only one thought: I need to do this for this girl, she needs justice.

Another time when I was standing and eating at a vada pav stall outside a hospital in Mulund and I realized that one of the people who was supposed to be washing the plates was not using soap. He was barely dipping the plate in water at all!

Because I was involved in health awareness work, the sight of this disturbed me greatly. The owner of the stall was a local thug, someone that most members of the community would be scared to talk to.. But washing the plates was not using soap. He was barely dipping the plate in water at all! Because I was involved in got the courage from my previous experiences and I went up to him and told him the right way to wash his plates.

The confidence that I showed in doing this work was all because of my training through ACT. This work has helped me in all walks of life. It gives me great pleasure to continue to do these activities, working for the Lord by bringing great change to my community and uplifting so many people through my work.

WORKING THROUGH LOCAL COMMUNITIES





DIRECT BENEFICIARIES

7 9 3 8



Health



Advocacy



Impact of Trauma Counseling



10-year Rani jumped up and down in excitement-it was the best day of her life. Her life in a small barren village in West Bengal was finally over. She was going to the big city. Her yearning for the good things in life would now be finally fulfilled.

Her maternal aunt traveled with her for 3 full days and finally was taken to a crowded street in the city of Mumbai. Dazed and exhausted she was then treated to a day out on a beautiful beach on Marine Drive. Her aunt informed her gently that there would be another man" uncle" on the day trip with them. As evening drew near they went back to the crowded room and given a drink laced with a drug. She woke up raped, bruised and battered.

She was now a commercial sex slave without any money or control over her life. After a couple of years being in slavery she was determined to return. She escaped in the heat of the afternoon to the nearest train station and took a train back to her village.

Expecting her parents to be elated to see her-she was sorely disappointed when they refused to accept her and disowned her. Forced to survive she came back to the only life she knew-being a sex slave in the tiny ugly brothels of the shanty of Kamathipura.

A couple of months later a organization involved in rescue conducted a raid and rescued her from the trade and she was then placed in a Government Aftercare home since the case against the brothel owners was being tried in court.

She hated the confined and restricted lifestyle of the home and decided to run away. While on the railway station platform waiting for the next train to anywhere she met a man who said that he had fallen in love with her and wanted to marry her. He took her to his house in Nashik where she lived with him for 6 months and soon realized he was already married. Her life again took a turn for worse when this man who had professed love for her abandoned her while she was 7 months pregnant.

Lost and alone she decided to return to the only profession and place she knew-Mumbai. While she was on her way back she met a kind lady who took her to Home wherein she finally found a group of loving nuns who helped her deliver a baby and very reluctantly gave the child up for adoption at birth. She lived with the nuns till she was 18 years.

After care rehabilitation Home for major girls offered her, so that she could find her niche and thus fulfil her purpose in life. Rani lives with 5 other girls in a beautiful well-furnished apartment in the suburbs of Mumbai. She is a slow learner and the past trauma especially the loss of her new born baby has added to her learning disability. She feels fulfilled only when around children and hence she has been working as a helper in the preschool for the past 1 year.



Counseling

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES

378



School Counseling

Impact of Youth Leadership

Hello everyone. I am a youth, I am going to share the story of my life.

Some years back I was just a normal boy with very few expectations and dreams in life. A normal average student in academics and sports also. I did not know about this world and its reality.

I was living a life with no meaning as I lost my father when I was 2 years old due to HIV. I use to wonder why my mother takes so much medicine and goes to different hospitals. Even I have seen her often falling sick. Years later I learnt that my mother too was infected with HIV. Many years I lived with anger against my father and against God by looking at my mother's situation and I found myself totally helpless... I was in fear that my brother and I may also be infected.

This life continued till I met ACT organization. They counselled my brother and me to do the HIV test; with the help of ACT we did our HIV test and found that we both are not infected. It gave me a ray of hope to look towards life. A good salary, own house and happy family was only aim of my life. But ACT shaped my life through their teaching on various aspects of life such as 'Truth', 'Loyalty', 'keys of life', 'wishes & dreams' and so on, but best among them which motivated me is the Youth Leadership Training (YLT). I understood how our values, beliefs inside of us determines the action in life. In short I can say ACT organization inspired me to see life in new prospective.

At present I am doing Engineering diploma in civil course. I got lot of encouragement from ACT to take this course. I am a humorous person I can create laughter at any moment in any of the situation but 'ACT' taught me the values of patience, kindness, respect etc. In YLT session I learnt more about communication and relationship. ACT helps me to put the theories into practice.

I have been with ACT for last 8 – 9 years; they helped me to develop my character, career & confidence in this short span of my life. I am somewhere in this world just because of ACT. Thank you all.





Life Skills

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES

2,046

Health Awareness



Advocacy

