



VicenteFerrer



# Vicente Ferrer

Barcelona, Spain, 1920 - Anantapur, India, 2009

Vicente Ferrer **arrived in Mumbai, Maharashtra in 1952** for the first time. He immediately dedicated himself to working with the poor farmers and their progress in Manmad, Maharashtra. Over the next ten years, he fought against the rigid social hierarchy prevalent at that time and **worked to improve the land and water systems** and to form grassroot teams.

In 1969 after a brief stay in Spain, Vicente Ferrer, along with Anne Perry, a journalist from Mumbai who had joined his cause, and two other volunteers arrived moved to Anantapur and co-founded the Rural Development Trust (RDT). A year later, he married Anne Perry.

Located in one of the driest regions in India, Anantapur barely supported any agricultural activities or its inhabitants. Furthermore, the people also endured discrimination in a society deeply divided along the lines of caste, tribe and gender. In a land condemned to be a desert and where people couldn't fulfill their basic needs, Vicente Ferrer was **determined to pursue the belief that even the poorest of people ought to have a life of dignity and equality** while in harmony with the environment.

Loved and admired by the people, lakhs attended his funeral; his legacy continues to live through RDT and its work.

Being the visionary of the organisation, Vicente Ferrer, along with the support of Anne Ferrer and few other volunteers, closely worked with the people in Anantapur on the **Food-For-Work project in the 70s and gradually implemented programmes that reached out to people all over Anantapur** and beyond. Today, with the support of a staff of over 2500, RDT successfully executes comprehensive development projects involving all areas of development.

He received numerous recognitions and accolades in India and internationally for his work. Most notably, he was **nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2010**. He penned his thoughts in two books, *An Encounter with Reality* (in Spanish) and the posthumous *The Power of Action*.

Vicente Ferrer was much loved and admired by the people. He passed away in 2009 and **lakhs of people from Anantapur, other parts of India and abroad attended his funeral**. His legacy continues to live through RDT and its work.