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**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development
and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly:
priority theme: strategies for the eradication of poverty to
achieve sustainable development for all**

Statement submitted by Vivegam Godfrey, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Various Sustainable Development Projects to Eradicate Poverty in Rural Areas

The Vivegam Godfrey trust, (VGF) has been working for six years to achieve the goal of poverty eradication within its limits and the boundaries present in the rural areas the organization conducts its work. We believe that to achieve the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, the UN, governments, institutions, and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) need to realise the urgency for poverty eradication to bring peace and equality among humans of the world.

Poverty has the potential to lead to various problems among people and nations such as inequality and the encouragement of poor persons to join terrorist groups to gain employment to feed their families.

VGF has identified three major project areas for focus to assist with poverty eradication:

- Uninterrupted basic education provided to all children including a facility providing care after school hours through the VGF Day Care Centre.
- Older age home for neglected older persons.
- Employment and shelter for destitute women in villages.

VGF Day Care Center

The Casteless Day Care Center in VGF is an active example of how to achieve and support the UN 2030 Agenda. Over the past six years the centre has supported and educated more than 2,000 various caste children from thirteen different villages. The children are taught not to practice the caste system and to treat all equally. Equality is encouraging by eating in common areas, and teaching good morals. Periodic meetings with parents take place to insist the importance of education particularly for young girls. This year in June, 16 schoolchildren graduated from the programme and joined various universities to engage in higher education.

In India the caste practice is abandoned by law but is still present in some areas particularly in rural India.

In India most rural areas higher education, especially for girls is still a dream. We are encouraging young girls to continue on to higher education. In order to achieve uninterrupted education among rural children, government and NGOs need to provide additional support to government schools and regular orientation to rural uneducated parents needs to occur. Education leading to work or self-employment has the power to reduce poverty in rural India.

Rural Self-employment (Rabbit Farm)

Self-employment is often the only viable alternative to menial labour for the ultra-poor. Yet many lack the necessary capital or skills to start a business that could earn more than casual labour. To alleviate these constraints, several international and local non-governmental organizations support programmes that foster a transition to more secure livelihoods.

VGF Rabbit Farms support many young people especially rural women to start their own small rabbit farm in order to earn regular income which is usually better income than menial private jobs in urban areas. VGF Rabbit Farms not only breed rabbits but provide training to women about the industry. The women in the program are trained to make various warm cloth products like glows, hat, and sweaters from the rabbit's that can then be sold for profit.

VGF Old Age Home

VGF are also providing accommodation for orphaned older persons in the VGF Old Age Home. The home is equipped with modern specialties and regular food clothing and good medical treatment. Moreover we conduct dignified funerals for older persons who are residents of the home.

The above programmes are assisting to achieve a considerable level of poverty eradication in the rural areas of India in which we work.
