

Dear Maitri Friend,

We would like to share an update with you on Widows of Vrindavan for the past quarter. We have ensured our focus of keeping wellness and overall well being of our residents and beneficiaries remains strong, and they engage in yoga, meditation, hymn singing (Kirtan) for physical and mental wellness.

Our elderly widows receive the necessary support to live a comfortable life at Maitri Ghar. They are provided with nourishing meals, daily milk and fresh fruits, regular health check-ups, and access to mental health care. We also offer them group therapy and counseling. All our women have been provided with ID cards, they have been facilitated with bank accounts with zero balance. Most of the widows also have voter cards, ensuring voting rights, thus ensuring their informed rightful choice to legislature representatives. Efforts are ongoing to get them widows pension/ elderly pension.

We would like to share with you that while we were facing a challenge to transport the widow mothers to the hospitals for check ups and treatment, we have procured an ambulance for emergencies so that there is no delay in taking them to the hospital. (Vrindavan has a challenge where public transport is not available most of the time).

We lost two widows just last month. We provided them with the best healthcare we could, but because of lack of resources we could not provide them with better and skilled healthcare and facilities. One of them got diagnosed after more than a year with stomach cancer, though she was admitted in different hospitals for periods of time for investigation and diagnosis, unfortunately, it did not get detected in time and we lost her because Vrindavan does not have any cancer treating facility. The second lady got diagnosed with tuberculosis and asthma simultaneously, she was hospitalized for nearly six weeks before she said her last goodbye to the world.

We would like to introduce you all to the challenges we face while addressing health concerns for our widows and beneficiaries. The widows of Vrindavan, a small town in Uttar Pradesh, India, face numerous challenges, including social exclusion, poverty, and limited access to healthcare and transport. Many of these women have migrated to Vrindavan in search of solace and spiritual refuge after losing their husbands. Unfortunately, their health conditions often

deteriorate due to neglect, lack of resources, and limited medical facilities.

This following section of our report sheds light on the health issues faced by these widows. We thus aim to highlight the urgent requirement of funds to provide the needed care and specialized treatments. We solicit your kind generosity for making it possible.

1. Health Conditions of Widows in Vrindavan

a). **Malnutrition:** Many widows in Vrindavan suffer from malnutrition due to limited access to nutritious food. Their diet primarily consists of cheap, unhealthy options, leading to deficiencies in essential vitamins and minerals.

b). **Chronic Illnesses:** The prevalence of chronic illnesses among widows in Vrindavan is alarmingly high. Conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, respiratory diseases, and arthritis are common and often go untreated due to financial constraints.

c). **Mental Health Challenges:** The widows of Vrindavan often experience mental health issues, including depression, anxiety, and loneliness. The absence of emotional support, coupled with the stigma associated with widowhood in Indian society, exacerbates these challenges.

d). **Lack of Access to Healthcare:** The majority of widows in Vrindavan do not have health insurance or sufficient financial resources to seek medical help. Limited healthcare facilities in the area further restrict their access to essential treatments and specialized care.

2. Urgent Need for Specialized Treatments:

a). **Nutritional Support:** Providing regular nutritious meals and dietary supplements can significantly improve the overall health of widows in Vrindavan, reducing the risk of malnutrition-related complications.

b). **Medical Camps:** Organizing regular medical camps in Vrindavan can help diagnose and treat chronic illnesses among widows. These camps can provide essential medications, conduct screenings, and refer patients for further specialized care.

c). **Mental Health Support:** Establishing counseling centers and support groups specifically tailored for widows can address their mental health challenges. Trained professionals can offer therapy, emotional support, and guidance to improve their overall well-being.

d). **Access to Specialized Care:** Collaborating with local hospitals or establishing partnerships with healthcare organizations can ensure that widows receive specialized treatments for chronic illnesses.

e). **Financial support** can be provided to cover the costs of consultations, medications, surgeries, and post-treatment care.

3. Request for Funds:

We earnestly request your support for the specialized treatments required by the widows of Vrindavan. The funds will be allocated towards nutritional support, organizing medical camps, providing mental health services, and enabling access to specialized care including hospitalisation, surgeries, diagnostics and rehabilitation. These initiatives will significantly improve the health and quality of life of the widows, empowering them to lead more fulfilling and dignified lives.

4. Conclusion:

By providing specialized treatments and support, we can alleviate their suffering and improve their overall well-being. We appeal to philanthropic organizations and individuals to contribute funds towards these initiatives, enabling us to make a positive impact in the lives of these marginalized women. Together, we can help restore dignity and hope to the widows of Vrindavan. Thank you for your valuable support.

Here are some photographs for your viewing pleasure:

1. *Birthday celebration of our eldest mother, aged 103 years.*



2. *Nutritious lunch underway for all mothers:*



3. *Specialised medical care underway for an ailing mother:*



4. *Milk distribution underway for all mothers:*



5. *Medical attention by nurse underway for mother with an eye-infection:*



6. *Ambulance purchased for the Ashram by Maitri, enables timely medical travel:*



Thank you for making the above care possible.
We look forward to your continued generosity towards serving these homeless elderly women.

Thank you again.

With warm regards,
Maitri Team