

The story of Edith Douglas High School founded by Victoria Robert in Bangalore

School's Beginnings

Edith Douglas High School started in the early nineties, when Mrs. Victoria Robert could not find a school for the 60 orphans who were living with her. She wanted these children to have an equal opportunity to succeed in life and knew that a good education was an essential first step. She first went to all the schools in the neighbourhood, but discovered that there was no school that was in a position to take in all the children. She even tried the government school (which had no capacity constraint), but the indifferent attitude of the staff there made her resolve that the children deserved something better. After all options had been exhausted, only one option remained on the table – to start her own school. And so, in 1991, an institution was born which, in these two decades, has provided education to thousands of children with almost 600 students currently enrolled.



About the School Entrepreneur

Mrs. Victoria Robert's pride in her school is evident. The school facilities are in pristine condition as she had undertaken regular renovation work. She treats the school as her own home because...as we discovered...it is! Victoria brings in one of her students, a bright-eyed and well-kept teenage girl to her office and begins to tell us her story. "5 years ago she was dropped off at my school with nowhere to go. Her father was a drunkard and she watched as he threw kerosene on her mother and burned her to death. I knew if I didn't take the girl she wouldn't have survived; this was God's plan so I took her in as my own. Now she is about to take her exam for 9th standard and my goal is for her to go to Medical school. I always tell her she can be whatever she wants to be. Gratefulness is the key to life. I take her with me everywhere and no one knows she is an orphan – she calls me mom." The school is Mrs. Robert's life's work and she has passed on her love and dedication to her daughter, Mary Rita, who teaches at the school.

Why Varthana

Although she plans to add another level to the building in order to create additional capacity, Mrs. Robert's immediate need was to add new benches, a library and a computer lab. Seeing that Varthana's products are designed specifically to fit the variety of needs a school like hers faces, she decided to take a Rs. 5 lacs (USD 9,250) loan to address her immediate needs. This small loan from Varthana is now allowing Mrs. Robert to give her students the opportunity to learn and grow in new ways.

Going Forward

In time, Mrs. Robert wants to tackle the larger project to expand the school's capacity as well as make additional improvements that help the students. Knowing that she now has a long-term partner allows Mrs. Robert to aspire to build on her already impressive achievements.

About Varthana

Varthana aims to fill the current gap of financing affordable private schools by providing loans to help school proprietors grow and improve their schools' infrastructure. Varthana offers loans ranging from USD 2000 to USD 80'000 at interest rates ranging from 20% to 25% with monthly repayments over a 2 – 5-year period.