

## Other activities in Rekhapally, thanks to your donations

### Emergency healthcare

We provided emergency healthcare to four children who were suffering severely from malnutrition and anaemia. Tellam Bhadraiah (32) a mother of one of the children treated, 5 year-old Laxmanarao, told us, **“My son would have died if ActionAid and ASDS had not intervened. My son was having fits and I thought it was general weakness so I washed his face with water. But ASDS staff advised and supported me to take him to the hospital by ambulance. They also gave me Rs. 200 [£2.80] for expenses. My son was given a blood test and was treated for anaemia.”** Laxmanarao made a full recovery. ActionAid and ASDS also supported the family with tonics and Rs. 1,000 [£14] to provide nutritious food for two months. Laxmanarao is now also attending the government’s Integrated Child Development Services centre where he receives ongoing treatment and nutritious food.

### Education motivation camps

We held education motivation camps in 22 villages for parents, teachers and school volunteers to train them how to improve and monitor the quality of education and the performance of students. We also trained them how to approach and discuss with local government officials improvements needed in their schools. We will keep you updated with their progress.

### The gift of fun and learning

Thanks to donations to the Gift Fund we organised a drawing and colouring event for 93 children in two villages. Baby Karam (12) took part and told us, **“I was so surprised to receive a drawing book and colour crayons. I enjoyed taking part in the colouring activity at my school.”**

We also produced multi-purpose drawing, colouring and quiz books to promote creative, linguistic and numerical abilities of children. The books were given to 3,000 children.

If you would like to make a donation to the Rekhapally Gift Fund, please contact our colleagues in the UK on 01460 23 8000



We love our new colouring books



Laxmanarao, with his father, has made a full recovery thanks to your support

### Some of our plans for the coming year:

- Establish 10 grain and seed banks to ensure food security all year round for 200 families
- Train communities on the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) and how to apply for employment. We plan to sign-up 580 people to the scheme
- Hold five health camps to enable over 4,000 people to access healthcare services and treatment
- Work with the local government to ensure the full functioning of 35 Integrated Child Development Service centres so that 600 children, under the age of five, can receive regular pre-school education, nutrition and healthcare support.

All of these activities and achievements were only possible because of your sponsorship of a child in Rekhapally. On behalf of the children, their families and communities, we thank you for your generous support.

Children love to receive letters or postcards from their sponsors. If you would like to write to the child you sponsor or send a message of support to the community, please use the following address: **ActionAid, 139, Richmond Road, Bangalore – 560025, Karnataka, India.**

Please simply include your supporter and child’s reference numbers, and it will be our pleasure to pass these on for you. Don’t worry if you can’t find your reference numbers, if you call your UK Supporter Care Team on 01460 23 8000 they will be happy to help.

## Child Sponsorship in Rekhapally, India

### Progress Report

September 2011

Dear Sponsor,

Welcome to Rekhapally in Andhra Pradesh, South-East India, where the child you sponsor lives.

Rekhapally is home to the Koya and Kondareddy tribes, the most excluded and marginalised social groups in Andhra Pradesh. ActionAid is working in partnership with local organisation, Agricultural & Social Development Society (ASDS) to protect and promote the rights of tribal communities and improve their access to food, water, healthcare, education and employment.

In this update you will meet 6-year-old Vikas Reddy who is very excited to be going to school every day. You will also meet Babu Rao who will tell you how your support is helping people with disabilities realise their rights to government support, and you will learn how we are helping the poorest children feel welcome

and included in school through a cleanliness and hygiene programme.

We will also tell you about the emergency healthcare support we gave to four very sick children, the support we are giving to parents and teachers to improve education, and we will share some of our plans for the coming year.

Thank you for supporting our work here. As you will read in this update, you really are making a difference to people’s lives.

Yours sincerely,

*Rashmi Shetty*

Rashmi Shetty  
Sponsorship Coordinator  
ActionAid India



**“There is so much happening in our school now. The education volunteer tells new stories and teaches us new games,”** says 6-year-old Murla Sivaji who is in class two of Gulettivada Primary School.

Thanks to your sponsorship, ActionAid and ASDS have been training government education volunteers in skills to make learning fun and interesting. The volunteers are now inspiring the children through story-telling, playing traditional games, and singing songs.

## Enrolling children into school

“I didn't go to school most days because I liked playing with my friends in the fields and searching for fruits to eat. But one day, my classmate Bapujireddy Katalakal came home and spent the whole day telling me what fun he was having at school. He told me all about the new games and activities carried out by ASDS staff every week. From that day onwards I went to school every day. I enjoy playing games with my schoolmates in the school grounds. I am also enjoying my studies as well,” says Vikas Reddy (6) who is studying in class two.

To encourage children like Vikas to go to school regularly, we carried out the following activities:

- Held 34 school enrolment rallies involving 1,894 children about the importance of education
- Visited children who were absent from school and invited them to take part in drawing activities and games at the school

As a result, students in each class noted down the names of children from their village who were absent from school and promised to visit those children and encourage them to join them at school.

So far, 39 children like Vikas have enrolled or re-joined school. With your continued support, we will encourage more children to go to school and realise their right to education.



Children on a rally encouraging every child to come to school



Vikas Reddy is happy he has gone back to school

## Pride in their appearance helps children take pride in their education

“We help our juniors to keep themselves clean, neat and tidy,” says Karam Sujatha (12), a class six student from Pedamattapalli village school.

Children from the poorest families were often ignored by their teachers and other children would not want to play or do group work with them. This was because these children turned up to school with dirty and unkempt hair, long dirty finger nails, torn clothes, shirts without buttons, or dresses without hooks.

When a family is so poor and they have to spend all their time and energy trying to provide food and basic necessities, there is little time or energy to spend on keeping their children clean and tidy.

To prevent children from the poorest families being discriminated against and to encourage them to continue going to school, ActionAid and ASDS is running a hygiene and cleanliness programme in 22 schools.

The first stage of this programme is to help children keep their uniforms clean and tidy. This involved:

- Providing sewing and cleanliness kits to 22 schools. These kits contain buttons, hooks, thread, needles, safety pins, combs, nail cutters, rubber bands and mirrors.
- Forming self-help teams of senior students and training them in stitching and sewing buttons and hooks. The older students have taken on the responsibility of repairing uniforms for the younger children and ensuring their hair is combed and nails are trimmed. They will do this before classes begin or during lunch break.

The children now feel proud of their appearance. They are also happy that the other children want to play and work with them, and they are no longer ignored by the teachers. This will have a positive effect on their educational performance.



Karam Sujatha shows younger children how to repair their clothes

## Promoting the rights of people with disabilities

“The local government doctor cancelled my disability certificate without any reason. He was influenced by a powerful local villager with whom I had some enmity. I was without a disability certificate for almost eight months, which meant I could not access any of the benefits I was entitled to like a pension, bus pass or employment. ASDS staff helped me to get another certificate from the government doctor. It was such a relief to me. All people with disabilities will surely benefit from your work,” says Buraka Babu Rao (30) from Annavaram village who has polio.

Government doctors issue disability certificates at medical assessment camps. These certificates enable people with disabilities to access many government welfare services like pensions of Rs 500 (£7) a month, bus passes, scholarships, and employment cards.



Buraka Babu Rao, with his wife and child, is relieved to have his new disability certificate

There are 251 people with disabilities (156 women and 95 men) in our working area. Most of them suffer from locomotive disabilities and only 44 of them have disability certificates. Six people including Buraka Babu Rao were helped by ASDS to renew their certificates and we will continue working to ensure all people with disabilities receive their certificates and the government support they are entitled to.

The government's National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), which guarantees 100 days employment to poor, rural households should also provide employment for people with disabilities. But in many cases people with disabilities are excluded or are given work that it is inappropriate for them.

To help people with disabilities benefit from the NREGA scheme, we organised a meeting with 225 people with disabilities and the local government development officer. During the meeting it was explained how to apply for work and assurances were given that work would be allocated based on their ability. As a result, 139 people with disabilities who are eligible to work have registered for their job cards.

To ensure people with disabilities can realise their rights and access the government support they are entitled, we are currently forming self-help groups. We will keep you updated with our progress in our future updates to you.