



<b>Project Update</b>	October 2011
<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Accessible healthcare for women &amp; children in Palani Hills, Tamil Nadu</b>
<b>Project Objective</b>	To run regular clinics with a doctor, health worker and a facility to purchase medicines in isolated communities
<b>Project Funding</b>	£7,000
<b>Project Length</b>	1 year (starting October 2011)

**The Project** The Adventure Ashram donation of £7,000 will pay for a doctor and a health worker to make 3 weekly visits to local villages and administer a free nutritional programme and health check up for 150 children who attend local crèches.

ASHRA, *Action for Social Health in Rural Areas*, is run by Dr Arun Kolhatkar, who will be responsible for the health project.

**The Why** The isolation of communities in Palani Hills and the expense of making a trip to hospital means many people only visit when their health is critical. When a hospital visit is unavoidable daily wage earners not only lose a days wages, they are also burdened with the expense of travelling. Tradition dictates they often travel with one or even two family members, further driving up the cost of a visit. Sadly, health problems are simply left to deteriorate.

Working mothers are given the option to leave their children (3–5 years) at one of 3 creches run by the Betsy Elizabeth Trust in Kodaikanal. The creches provide a safe environment where children are cared for by dedicated staff, provided with nutritious meals and snacks, and given basic education. At the moment however, children are examined by a doctor only twice a year and those children failing to thrive go undetected and miss out on the essential care during fundamental years of growth.

**The Solution** ASHRA has developed a project called REACH, *Rural Education and Comprehensive Health*, to tackle the overwhelming problems that face women and children who spend long periods of time without proper health checks. Common infections such as pneumonia and diarrhoea can lead to serious illness.

Mapping children’s health over a number of years on a ‘Road to Health’ chart can indicate when children are not growing at the rate they should and extra nutritional supplements can be given. Calcium and Vitamin D promotes the growth of strong healthy bones and multivitamins helps them fight of infections.

## The Outcome

Improving the general health of a community is the single most effective way to make a difference in the future. Healthy, fit, active women decreases the incidence of infant mortality and ultimately reduces population numbers by creating confidence that children will achieve adulthood. If children are healthy from a young age they are more likely to do well at school, find employment and in the end support the elders in their communities.

## The Reality

Communities are slow to trust newcomers and the key to the success for projects like REACH is the development of positive relationships between health care professionals and the local people. Offering medical assistance for immediate health issues; such as treating an infected wound can help create a bond between health care professional and patient that can be developed. In time health check-ups and suggestions for better health practice will be introduced.

## The Benefits

Communities within the Palani Hills will experience:

- 1 improvement in general health
- 2 trusting relationships with health professionals
- 3 access to medicines at affordable prices
- 4 opportunity to explore different health practices to improve health

## Thank You

Thank you for the vital money you are raising, you are helping to ensure projects like this one succeed in improving the standard of living for some of India's poorest children.

## Our Aim

*Adventure Ashram* stems from the shared vision of a group of well-respected conservation, health and educational professionals in India and UK based social enterprise *Global Enduro*. The 'Adventure' part of our name comes from the company *Global Enduro* who run many spectacular adventure fundraising events across the globe, 'Ashram' is derived from the ancient Sanskrit word for protection.

Our aim is to help the poorest people on or around the routes *Global Enduro* take through India to help achieve a higher standard of living through better health and education. *Adventure Ashram* will continue to identify and establish projects, helping more and more people.

## Links



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