

Association of Relief Volunteers (ARV) is a non-profit humanitarian organization established in 2001. ARV envisions a just and inclusive society where every person can live with dignity, equality, and opportunity. Guided by the principle “Serving the poor is serving God,” ARV works with most vulnerable, discriminated and marginalized communities. ARV promotes sustainable solutions to poverty, inequality, and social exclusion. ARV brings together community action, partnerships, volunteers, and development expertise to create lasting social impact. ARV’s key programmes focus on safe housing, clean drinking water, food security, education, sustainable livelihoods, disaster preparedness and building communities’ resilience to climate change and disaster. Over the years, its programmes have benefited nearly **60,000 people across more than 100 communities**.



ARV Volunteers removing fallen tree to restore Electricity

Women who lost everything to super cyclone



Origin of Association of Relief Volunteers

ARV was founded by **Ravi Kumar Tantepudi**, inspired by his experience in relief and rehabilitation activities among the super cyclone-affected communities during May 1990 in coastal delta region of Krishna River in Andhra Pradesh. The super cyclone with windspeeds of 230 km/h devastated 125 villages and submerged them, killing nearly 1,000 people and making 3.00 million people homeless, killed 100,000 cattle and destroyed standing crops in 435,000 acres; more than 150,000 people were evacuated to relief camps. The total damage to crops and property was estimated at over \$600 million (1990 USD). The cyclone was described as the worst disaster in southern India since the 1977 tidal wave.

Sea water contaminated fresh drinking wells, prompting warnings about outbreaks of Cholera and Typhoid as many people were drinking and cooking with water from the drains which was causing stomach disorders. With over two decades of development experience, he has worked in housing, livelihoods, food security, disaster response, and community empowerment.

Born in coastal Krishna delta-plains, Ravi Kumar’s family are survivors of these cyclones/storms, tidal-wave, floods during the last 50 years. He saw relief and rehabilitation of victims of natural disasters as his natural responsibility for him as a survivor himself. His professional journey includes work with **Churches Auxiliary for Social Action, Habitat for Humanity India, and Foodfirst Information Action Network International (FIAN)** provided him good experience in development work.



Indigenous Yanadi Family

Our Stakeholders : ARV works in geographical areas where indigenous communities like Scheduled Castes (who face caste discrimination), Adivasis (who are forest-dwelling communities evicted from forest since 1880s), Most Backward Castes (whose traditional occupations like pottery, leather crafts, handloom weaving, inland fishing, traditional indigenous medicines etc.,), vulnerable women & children, religious minorities, migrants, LGBTQs.

Our Areas of Work : Andhra Pradesh and Telangana State where ARV is working are considered as developed states among the 29 states with high Gross State Domestic Product and per capita income, literacy rates and officially declared poverty rates of 14.96% and 5.77% respectively. But, as per government civil supplies department which provides subsidised/free foodgrains to below poverty families, 53.93% families in Telangana State and 63.79% of families in Andhra Pradesh are registered for receiving subsidised/free foodgrains under “below poverty line” category. This wide gap in the data/information of government departments challenges the poverty information. Hence, ARV works in remote villages which are affected by natural disasters like storms/cyclones, floods and drought where majority of population are Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. These remote villages are located far from the state capital and district administrative headquarters and government welfare schemes don’t reach the poorest of the poor.



Our key Activities and Achievements

Housing: India faces an urban housing shortage; projections warn shortage up to 70 million units by 2030 due to rapid urbanization. Good housing is dream for the poorest of the poor belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, widows/single women. **350+ permanent houses** were built, providing safe shelter to more



Proud House Owners after House Dedication

than **1,750 people**, including widows and disaster-affected families in Andhra Pradesh State and in Telangana State.

83 cyclone-resilient homes constructed following Cyclone Hudhud with model rehabilitation concept for entire tribal village in Visakhapatnam District with basic infrastructure for tribal families with partnership of Habitat for Humanity- India, Wells Fargo, Bank of America and HSBC.



83 houses built after Hudhud Cyclone

Education: Children belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes face unfair competition and challenges in education like caste-based discrimination, poverty which affects their learning abilities; while learning gap between Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes boys and boys of other dominant castes is around 25%, the gap among girls is nearly 40% and school drop-out rate is high among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes children. Hence, ARV



Supplementary Education Class

provided Supplementary Education to 2,000+ rural children belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in 12 centres run in 12 villages of Andhra

Pradesh State and Telangana States. 2,000 School Dropouts were helped to continue their education through scholarships and school supplies.



Education Kits Distribution

Safe Drinking Water-Sanitation-hygiene programmes: India faces a deep drinking water paradox: while basic infrastructure access is high in government reports, millions of households still consume unsafe water plagued by biological and chemical contaminants. As per government, over 95% of Indian households have access to basic or improved water source, yet only about 28% use effective water treatment methods (such as proper boiling, filtration, or chlorination). Nearly 62% of households rely on electronic purifiers but people in rural areas have no access to water treatment technology. Further, villages of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled



Tribal Women Collecting water at handpump

Tribes are always located away from the main village where dominant castes live and lack basic facility of safe drinking water. So, ARV installed 20 borewells in 20 villages of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, benefiting approximately 4,500 families and 17,000 people with access to safe drinking in Andhra Pradesh and Bihar with kind support of Ms. Audra Wood, Executive Director, Fresh Water Friends, Inc.. ARV followed up this with awareness on sanitation and hygiene in 25 villages, reaching approximately 5,000 families and 20,000 people.



Tribal Children enjoying at new handpump



Women participating in training session

Women Empowerment: 50% of Scheduled Caste & Scheduled Tribes women are excluded from formal financial institutions like banks. National Sample Survey (NSS) show a massive institutional credit gap between



Tribal Women leader demanding rights



Tribal Woman explaining problems in Govt. Schemes

Upper Castes and SC/STs. For STs, 62% of the credit gap is driven by unexplained discriminatory practises and or systemic biases. To address this discrimination ARV formed women Self-Help Groups and strengthened in 25 villages covering 12,500 Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe women and gave orientation on mobilising bank finance and government schemes.



Formation of Self-Help Group of Tribal Women



Health Camp

Health Care: While metros in India are becoming hubs of corporate healthcare and health tourism, rural areas lack primary healthcare. Government is focusing on insurance-based treatment by corporate hospitals rather than prevention. In this situation, ARV is engaged in connecting rural communities to the public health centres for medical treatment and vaccinations on time for children in 15 villages.

Food Security & Nutrition: India produces over 330 million tonnes of food grains and ranks as the world's second-largest producer of wheat and rice, yet roughly 233.9 million people remain undernourished, and over 74% of the population cannot afford a healthy diet. ARV focused on awareness on nutrition, providing dry-ration kits during emergencies, accessing government welfare schemes and sustainable farming, with focus on nearly **12,000 Women in Partnership with Foodfirst Information Action Network-International and Norwegian Human Rights Fund.**



Children given boiled eggs as nutrition



College girls in career guidance session

Youth Career Guidance, Counselling: India has about 382 million (27% of population) youth between 15-29 years age. An estimated 87 million are classified as NEET—Not in Education, Employment, or Training as of 2021—according to the NITI Aayog report; majority of them are youth from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. ARV works with Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe youth in 25 villages, providing career guidance, vocational training, digital skills, employment and entrepreneurship.

Climate Change and Disaster Preparedness: As per Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2026, India slipped 13 places down from its previous 10th rank and reached 23rd place (from “high performer” to “medium performer” category). According to the World Meteorological Organization, extreme weather events like floods, droughts, and heatwaves cost India approximately **\$4.2 billion** in direct damages from floods alone in 2022. In drought-prone districts where agriculture is main livelihood, 83% population more likely to experience high poverty levels compared to others. Inland fisheries ecosystems and fishing-based livelihoods depend upon a range of climate-related variability; extreme weather events, floods, droughts, changing patterns and abundance of fish stocks, through changes in aquatic ecosystem structure and productivity. Fish population in wetlands have experienced a decline as much as 54% during 2006-2025.



Paddy crop destroyed by floods



Drought dried up paddy field and reduced inland fish

ARV raises awareness on climate change and disaster preparedness and promotes tree planting, water conservation, sustainable agriculture, waste management, natural resource protection and disaster preparedness. Through village-level activities and partnerships with schools, government departments and local organizations, ARV supports climate-resilient communities.



International volunteers constructing houses for the poorest of the poor

Interaction with Global Volunteers: ARV facilitated around 1,000 international volunteers from seven countries so that they can participate in community development, house construction, education promotion and cross-cultural service in 10 villages from Japan, USA, Canada, England, Hongkong and Taiwan.



Coastal region non-governmental organisations consultation

Networking and Alliance building : ARV in collaboration with Foodfirst Information Action Network - International organised consultation with coastal region non-government organisations to build alliance on right to food, right to water, food security, climate change and disaster preparedness and building communities' resilience.

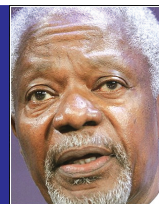
ARV believes that development is the expansion of human freedoms rather than merely the growth of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or national income and a country cannot be

considered truly developed if it has high economic growth but suffers from widespread poverty, illiteracy, gender inequality, or poor healthcare. ARV realises that poverty not merely as low income, but as the deprivation of basic capabilities that prevents a person from living a dignified life; We believe that true development requires eliminating major sources of "unfreedom," such as poverty, tyranny, social deprivation, poor healthcare, and lack of political rights or economic opportunities ability to live a healthy life, access education, participate in social and political life, and maintain dignity.

ARV believes that sustainable development begins by listening to communities and working alongside them. We therefore seek to build partnerships with individuals, foundations, churches, charitable organisations and international donors who share our commitment and mutual experiences, knowledge and to build strong partnerships. We sincerely invite you to join us as a partner in this mission of serving communities and building a more just and compassionate society.

"In an age where community involvement and partnerships with civil society are increasingly being recognized as indispensable, there is clearly a growing potential for cooperative development and renewal worldwide".

Kofi Atta Annan, 7th Secretary-General of the United Nations. (1997 - 2006)



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