

**End poverty.
Together.**

37-years of turning rights into reality!



act:onaid
End poverty. Together.

Who are we:

ActionAid works with poor and excluded people in 24 states and one union territory in India and over 50 countries worldwide to end poverty and injustice.

We believe that the primary responsibility for ensuring rights and justice rests with the State. We mobilise people's alliances and the civil society to come together and engage with the State to bring about changes in laws, policies and institutions that work against the interests of the poor and excluded.

We take sides with Dalits and indigenous people, Muslims, Most Backward Communities, Persons Living with HIV and AIDs, Persons With Disabilities, Urban Poor, Sex Workers, Informal Workers, Trafficked People, People Affected by Natural or Manmade Disasters.

Our Vision

A world without poverty and injustice, one in which every woman, man and girl and boy enjoys the right to life with dignity.

Our Mission

To work with poor and excluded women, men and girls and boys to eradicate poverty, discrimination and injustice.

Our Values

Solidarity with the poor, the powerless and the excluded will be at the core of our struggle against poverty and injustice.

Courage of conviction, requiring us to be creative and progressive, bold and innovative – without fear of failure – in order to make both the greatest possible impact on the causes of poverty, exclusion and injustice.

Equality and justice, requiring us to work to ensure equal opportunity to every person, irrespective of caste, class, race, age, gender, sexual orientation, colour, class, ethnicity, disability, location, and religion.

Humility and modesty in our conduct and behaviour, recognising that we are part of a wider alliance against poverty and exclusion.

Honesty and transparency, demanding that we are accountable at all levels in order to be more effective in our actions and open in our judgements and interaction with others.

Independence and neutrality from any religious or party-political affiliation.

Life is better today with nutrition

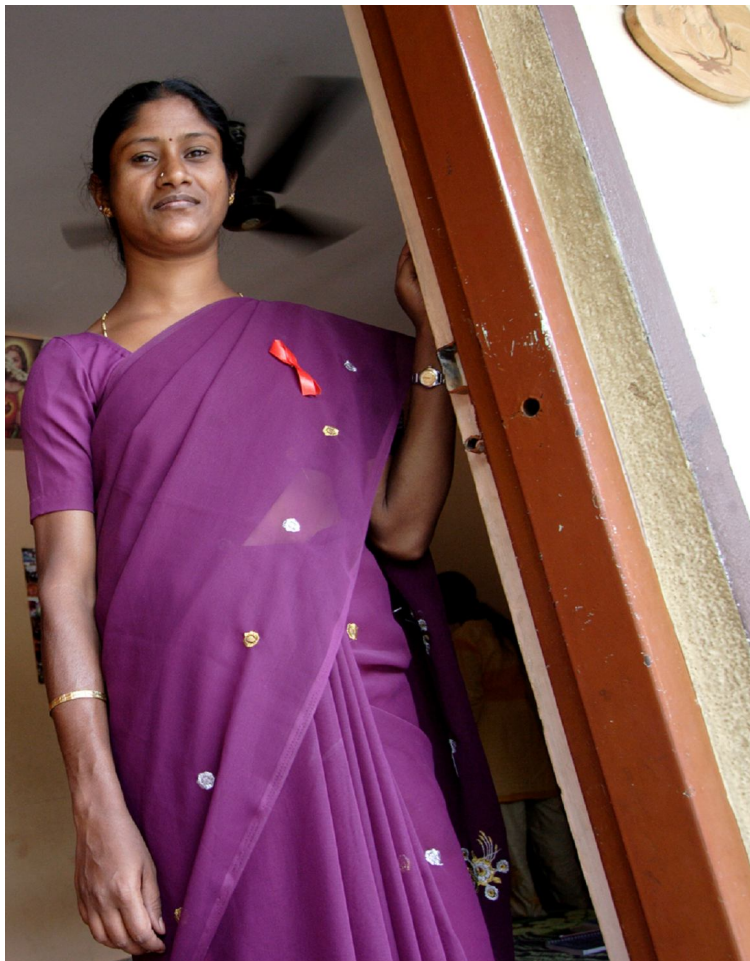
Anusuya, aged 32 is on ART since the last four years. Nutritional counseling gave her newer information and the counsellor helped her in making a diet chart.

But as single mother caring for three children, she found it hard to provide for good nutritious food for her family.

"I was almost killed by these medicines," she says.

"as I never ate a good meal. Without good food, my body was not strong enough to hold them. The food assistance programme from ActionAid benefited me and my family. I now eat balanced meals 3 times a day," she adds

She has, over a period of two years, seen her weight rise from 51 kg to 69 kg. She attributes this to having had access to both antiretroviral and adequate food.



Fact:

India's **indigenous people** are facing an unprecedented threat to their livelihoods and cultural identity. The mega mining projects, dams and special economic zones are not only destroying the niche ecological spaces in which the tribal communities live, but also endanger our collective environmental security.

Action:

ActionAid supports their struggle against forced displacement by allowing them to assert their constitutional and special rights to forest and self rule. Assertion of their social cultural, economic and religious rights is also our areas of priority.

Results:

Over **a hundred thousand** acres of community/forest land ownership was established, while application for the community rights over **1,18,077** acres of land was submitted.



A human wall to save forest and life

Over 20,000 tribal men and women from Orissa's Niyamgiri area marched through the dense forest to create a 17-km-long human wall across their God-mountain Niyam Raja that faces destruction from mining.

In an unprecedented show of solidarity, the indigenous people recreated the centuries-old bond with the mountain and the forest, in which they have lived a sustainable life.

"I woke up long before sunrise to reach where villagers gathered to stand around Niyamgiri. How could I not come, it is our life," says 45-year-old Dongria Kondh.

She walked 70-km from Khambehi village in Rayagarh today to take part in the human chain that is part of the ongoing peaceful stand-off between the tribal families and mining giant Vedanta, which is attempting to build an access to the mountain for mining.



Fact:

India is home to the world's second largest population of people living with HIV and AIDS. Poverty, discrimination, violence against women, trafficking and migration are all fuelling this epidemic. People living with **HIV/AIDS** and their families face extreme discrimination, deprivation and exclusion.

Action:

ActionAid lends support to the PLHAs in confronting and combating the virus and the stigma attached with it. We also campaigns with the government for better health facilities, medicines, treatment and care for the affected people.

Result:

About **2,700** HIV positive persons were able to access state health support due to lobbying by our partners in 2008-2009 alone. Over **6,000** widows living with HIV have started receiving state pension. Last year **70** people living with HIV got loans from state and banks.



Kolkata's homeless seek citizenship

As the mid-day sun beats down on Kolkata's streets, groups of the city's homeless are already arriving at Naren Dey Park in Shovabazar, well before their 2 p.m. meeting is due to start.

As the crowd swells, colourful drapes, sarees and bindis dazzle under the glare of the summer sun, as if defying the daily struggle to make two ends meet.

Under the government's public distribution system, families with an income of less than Rs 15,000 a year are entitled to subsidized food and free education, medical treatment and legal aid - a lifeline for poor families, but only if they hold a BPL card.

Amid rising food prices, a BPL card means the difference between going to bed with a full or an empty stomach. The card holders can purchase 35 kg of grain at Rs.4.15 per Kg for wheat and Rs.5.65 for rice - three times less than the market.



Fact:

Denied equal participation in society on the basis of their caste, Dalits are one of the most marginalised people in India. Over 167 million Dalit men, women and children face hunger and abject poverty even today.

Action:

We work with alliances and platforms led by **Dalit** community to end discrimination, gain access to the rights entitled to all citizens. We also support their livelihood and freedom from inhuman practices.

Result:

4,895 Dalit women get 7,929 acres of land in 4 districts of Andhra Pradesh. In 1,000 villages of Tamil Nadu over 10,000 women applied for land in 2008-09.



Women reap the fruits of struggle

Once an agricultural labourer, Kalliammal would earn between Rs 30 and Rs 50 per day and also graze cattle to make ends meet.

"But now I have my own land, I harvest enough to last the family for the whole year," she smiles holding out her patta (record of rights) for 30 cents of land.

"I'm respected by my husband and son because I have a property in my name. And it is my daughter who will inherit this land," she explains proudly.

The community has reclaimed land through the Dalit land rights federation which works in partnership with ActionAid.

Eight years ago, with support from DMK and ActionAid, the community embarked on collective protests and a legal battle to identify and reclaim Panchami lands.



Fact:

81 million people in India's cities live in a state of acute poverty. Without access to a roof over the head, water and toilets, they feed over half of India's national income. The poor migrant workers constitute about 93% of India's workforce.

Action:

ActionAid supports the **urban poor** in their fight against forced eviction while lending them support to fight for voter identity cards, ration cards, birth certificates, shelter and civic amenities.

Result:

We help community organisations and urban poor to build alliances while raising awareness about the constitutional provisions and Supreme Court judgments. Over **18,500** families were able to access shelter rights through Indira Awas Yojna in 2008-09 alone.



Rhymes of change

Not far from Delhi, the Meo Muslims in Rajasthan are not only sending their girls to school but are also fighting for more amenities and teachers.

"Ab to padhen nu jawanga. Ab nahin bakari charawanga! (Now I will only go to school. Now I will not graze goats!)," each and every Meo Muslim girl in Mizarpur village can now chant this rhyme without fear.

"These girls are the first in the village to have stepped out and travel to take part in public meetings to raise the needs of their village," says Pooja Gupta, 21-year-old community worker.

Students have started demanding access roads, toilets and more teachers for the village.

"Whenever the state officials make an appearance on the Independence Day and Republic Day functions, the girls raise demands and take a commitment on behalf of the community," adds Noor Mohammad.



Fact:

India is home to the largest number of malnourished people in the world. One in four Indians goes to bed hungry. Half of India's child population is underweight. Ironically, the reason for this **hunger** is not food shortage. In fact, India's grain silos are brimming.

Action:

We work with marginalised groups to claim land titles, BPL cards and access Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS). We support villagers to access at least 100 days of employment under NREGA and getting minimum wages for their labour.

Result:

193548 people received job cards, 143530 got work under NREGA. We were able to get 9,946 senior citizens to access Annapurna food support, the poor got 1,46,155 ration cards, 15,134 and over a 1,000 ICDS centres were activated.



A lifeline

"We have to go half stomach many a time during non agricultural seasons when there is no work available" laments Kasamma, a 43 year-old single woman from Malchapur village in south India.

When the rainfall is insufficient, waiting for the administrative machinery to declare a drought and the commencement of public work programmes often prove to be too late.

However, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) is changing her life. After sustained pressure from civil society to protect the right to work, the Indian government passed the act in 2005.

Permanent social protection measures like cash-for-work schemes offer a reprieve for poor landless labourers and farmers like Kasama. For the past two-and-a-half months, she has been employed on an irrigation canal.



Fact:

Every second child in India drops out of school before turning 14. Of every 100 children who drop out, 66 are girls. The country is home to world's largest child labourers under 14.

Action:

ActionAid works with child labourers, street **children** and those living on railway platforms, disabled children, and children of manual scavengers, sex workers and migrant workers.

Result:

We worked with government schools to get over **55,000** children enrolled, **2,428** schools started giving quality meals and close to **700** schools were made functional in 2008-09.



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