

## Libraries in 5 government primary schools in Chittoor district, Andhra Pradesh

Asha Boston has been working with Sahanivasa for the last 18 years to help children in government schools in Chittoor district in Andhra Pradesh. Generations of children have benefitted from the supplemental education programs for 15 primary schools and 10 high schools in the region.

There is now a threat to some of these government schools. As discussed in the [latest report](#), the government wants to close down schools where there are fewer than 25 children to cut costs. The advent of English medium private schools has contributed to some extent (along with migration of parents for work) to lower enrollment in government schools. Private schools are often poorly run and ill-equipped, and charge fees. Further the private schools are often 3-5kms away from the village and this can make the difference between a child going to that school or not. The government is also eager to close schools and is less focused on making the government schools deliver good quality education.

Government schools are the only option for poor and disadvantaged communities. Sahanivasa is working on reversing the trend of closing government schools, and working with the local communities to maintain enrollment in government schools and fight against closures of government school. One of the areas Sahanivasa wants to focus on is improvement of English learning. **In other projects we have seen a good school attracts children from private schools to government schools, in particular English language learning is highly prized by parents.**

Asha Boston would like to support libraries in 5 primary schools to help improve quality of learning (reading, writing, English) in these schools. Books are one of the best ways to improve reading, writing, and language skills, and learning English remains one of the tough challenges in government schools. Asha Boston's goal is to create libraries that would help improve reading and writing in both Telugu and English. Books have been proven repeatedly to help in learning a language well. A habit of reading learnt young will help the child throughout life. The child will learn to look beyond textbooks and develop a broad perspective as he or she grows older. Lately the focus on rote memorization has affected even basic reading and writing skills. A habit of reading can reverse that.

From other projects we have identified three sources of books for young children.

1. Tulika books. These are a set of 100+ books, some in Telugu, and some in Telugu and English (the same line will be in both Telugu and English). Other projects have found that these books help learning of English. The stories are localized and the illustrations colorful and attractive for a child. Approx. budget Rs. 12000 per book set. Tulika has been very supportive in providing discounts to make the books available to children in rural areas.
2. Pratham books. Well-illustrated and colorfully attractive to children. Approx. budget Rs. 3000 per set.
3. National Book Trust books. These are also highly regarded books. Approx. budget Rs. 3000 per set.

4. We will identify some more books to build the habit of reading at an early age, and also materials to help learning of English.

**Total budget request per school: Rs. 20,000**

**Total budget for 5 primary schools: Rs. 100,000**

Sahanivasa appoints a supplementary teacher for each primary school. This teacher will be trained to help the children use the books and develop a reading habit.