Background: Adruta Children’s Home is an effort of RAWA Academy of Bhubaneshwar to provide a home for uncared for girl children. Established on 1998, Adruta runs primarily on sporadic personal contributions and ad-hoc sponsorship. To provide for the home some of its patrons have incurred large amount of personal debt. As of October 2006, Adruta houses 40 girl children, the oldest being in her early teen, and the youngest still waiting to see her first birthday. The children of school-going age are sent to local schools. In addition they receive training in sports, athletics, yoga, meditation, drawing, music, Odissi dance and vocational fields from very competent trainers. Despite dire economic crisis the children have shown excellence both in academic field and in extra-curricular activities. For its good track record Adruta has received recognition in form of award of excellence in both national and state level. As of October 2006, their immediate problem is lack of a steady source of funding.

Summary of visit: I visited Adruta from October 5-7, 2006. I stayed in Adruta’s guest room to observe their day to day activities. I had chance to interact with the stuffs, functionaries and the children for two days, taste the same food as the children, and be part of their life. On the last day of my visit we had a field trip to Puri and Konarak with most of the Children. I had long sessions of discussion with Professor Mohanty, Dr. Mishra and other functionaries and stuffs about the mission, vision and present situation of Adruta.

Observations: At this point let me list some of the seemingly important observations I made during my visits.

1) The girls of all ages are energetic, confident and friendly, except perhaps the youngest one. I was pleasantly surprised with this, as from my experience I expected them to be relatively more reserved given their background.

2) The older kids are fluent in Hindi. Among, the younger ones, those who speak, speak only Oriya. There are a few Telugu and Bengali speaking kids as well. But, they are also fluent in Oriya and Hindi.

3) The home’s building was built with state government aid. But, due to corrupt application process, the home is yet to receive any recurring aid from the state government. The furniture were received in form of personal donations.

4) The dedication of the stuffs and functionaries are worth mentioning. Some of them are really qualified – academically, or otherwise. Rather than pursuing their own career they have dedicated their life to raise these children. Some of the functionaries have incurred personal debts to keep the home running.

5) The kids are encouraged to take part in extra-curricular activities. Some of the kids are quite good at sports, Odissi dance, and music.
6) Each day the kids live a very active life from early morning to late night. I was little bit concerned that they are not getting enough sleep.

7) Many of the kids are really attached to super Dr. Mishra and all the kids call her mom.

8) The kids are from either Hindu or Christian background. In the past there were Muslim kids in the home. The home performs a few of Hindu and Christian religious practices. They run in an ideology that all religions are same. Thus, the home is not affiliated with any particular religion.

9) The home receives some sporadic donations in kind from some local patrons. Also, Dr. Krushna Chandra Mishra chips in from his monthly income.

10) Dr. Krushna Chandra Mishra runs an affiliated health care center nearby.

11) The home is situated in an unsafe neighborhood. So, they always keep one guard at the door.

12) Their mission is to raise these kids in such way that they do not feel any way inferior to the children who have their parents.

Conclusions: Adruta is making great impact to these kids life. Their success is apparent from the self-confidence and success of the kids. Although their expenditure is on the higher side, Adruta will definitely make a good partner-group for Asha.