

ASSIST/MORE:

COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN LANKAVANIDIBBA

PROGRESS REPORT: JANUARY–MARCH 2026

Lankavanidibba is one of the backward villages located in Repalle Mandal of Bapatla District, Andhra Pradesh. The village has been largely neglected in terms of education and health services. Additionally, there is no proper road connectivity to the village, which further limits access to essential services.

Being situated close to the Bay of Bengal coast, the groundwater in the village has high salinity, which adversely affects agricultural productivity and results in low crop yields. Due to these challenges, many villagers are compelled to migrate to other areas in search of livelihood opportunities.

Considering these circumstances, the village was identified by ASSIST for development intervention, and support was sought from the organisation "MORE" in The Netherlands. We are grateful for the lead taken by Mr. Evert de Blok in getting the support of Mr. Arnold de Haan to the tune of 50% and Reborgh Foundation to the tune of 25% while meeting the remaining 25% from MORE, The Netherlands. On behalf of the villagers of Lankevani Dibba and the staff of ASSIST, we are grateful to all the concerned Directors and Members of all the three Foundations for taking up this project.

With the guidance of ASSIST staff, the community initiated various developmental activities from January 2026 onwards, aiming to transform the village into an ideal and sustainable community. Following report explains the activities executed in the 1st quarter (from January to March of 2026):

1. Baseline Survey and PRA Exercise:

Lankevani Dibba is a village and panchayat of Repalle Mandal in Bapatla district, Andhra Pradesh. It is about 28 kms away from Repalle, mandal headquarters and 4 kms away from the Sea at the end of Krishna River and Bay of Bengal on other side. To know more about this village and to plan for appropriate developmental activities, in the beginning of this quarter, Baseline Survey followed by Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) exercise were conducted in the village.

Baseline Survey: The household survey was conducted from 2nd – 4th January 2026. The village comprises of 169 families with the population of 555 (270 male and 285 female). Among 169 families, majority number of 153 families belong to Backward community while 16 families belong to Schedule Tribe community. All are occupied either in Agriculture with paddy (rice) cultivation being a major crop or fishing is the primary economic activity and other agrarian activities and daily-wage labour.

Village History:

The village has a history of around 150 years and is situated approximately 200 meters from the banks of the Krishna River.

The origin of the village name dates back to the early settlement by a family named "Lanke," who migrated from another place and constructed a thatched house on a sand mound. Initially, the area came to be known as "Lankevalla Dibba." Over time, as more families settled in the area for livelihood opportunities, the name gradually evolved into "Lankavani Dibba."

The village is predominantly inhabited by backward communities. It comprises of 153 Backward Class families belonging to fishing community and 16 Scheduled Tribe families, making a total of 169 families residing in the village.

Occupation:

The majority of BC families in Lankavani Dibba village depend on fishing in the Krishna River as their primary source of livelihood. The fish catch is transported and sold in Nagayalanka with villagers traditionally traveling by boats for this purpose.

During the fishing ban season, the community engages in alternative livelihood activities such as cutting acacia trees and selling them as firewood in the Nagayalanka market. They also procure essential household items from the same market before returning to the village.

Earlier, the village lacked basic infrastructure facilities. There was no electricity, and households depended on kerosene lanterns for lighting during the night. The presence of poisonous creatures such as snakes and scorpions posed additional risks to the residents.

Over time, significant improvements have taken place. The Government provided electricity access to the village in the year 1985, enhancing safety and quality of life. Furthermore, until the year 2000, villagers relied solely on boat transport to access nearby areas. Subsequently, the State Government developed road connectivity and introduced bus transport services, greatly improving accessibility and mobility for the community.

Agriculture and Land Use:

As the village is located close to the sea (approximately 4 km), most of the land is alkaline in nature and not suitable for regular agricultural activities. Due to high salinity, farming has traditionally been very limited in the area.

Earlier, some farmers attempted to cultivate onions on sand heaps. However, over time, these sand heaps were washed away due to recurring floods, making such practices unsustainable.

In response to these challenges, 28 families collectively identified 36 acres of land located near an irrigation canal. With significant effort, they cleared the bushes, levelled the land, and brought it under cultivation. As a result, they successfully initiated paddy cultivation, marking an important shift towards sustainable agricultural practices and improved livelihoods in the village.

Hospital:

Due to the lack of proper road connectivity and transportation facilities, the village has been facing severe hardships. The situation becomes particularly critical during the rainy season, when mobility is drastically affected, making it difficult for residents to travel even short distances. In times of emergencies, villagers struggle to reach nearby towns, resulting in delayed or inadequate medical care.

Access to health services has been a major challenge. In the past, villagers largely depended on traditional midwives for deliveries, which contributed to a high infant mortality rate. Around the year 2000, after a road was constructed connecting the village to the main area, people began traveling to Visweswaram, located about 20 kilometres away, for critical medical needs and institutional deliveries.

Approximately six years ago, the Government established a Sub-Health Centre near Rajukaluva, about 7 kilometres from the village. However, due to poor road conditions and the absence of reliable transportation, villagers are still unable to access this facility effectively. In view of these ongoing challenges, the villagers are earnestly requesting the appointment of at least one doctor or nurse within the village and the establishment of a Sub-Health Centre locally to ensure timely and accessible healthcare services.

Village Tank:

In this village, a water tank existed with a spread area of about 5 acres. Earlier, villagers used to dig small basins to collect oozing water for their daily needs. Over time, canal water was diverted into the tank, and it began to be used for drinking and other domestic purposes. Subsequently, the Government constructed a storage water tank with a capacity of approximately 40,000 litres, and water is being distributed to households. The system also includes filter beds to ensure proper purification of water. However, since the main tank is not protected by fencing, cattle frequently enter the tank area, leading to contamination of the water. This has resulted in health issues among the villagers.

To address this problem, the villagers are requesting the provision of protective fencing around the tank to prevent contamination and to ensure safe drinking water.

2. People's Organisation:

On 27th January 2026, a mass meeting was organised in the village where all the 169 families in the village were told about the ASSIST, its activities, the adoption of this village, rural development in general and development of this village in particular, formation of VDS, election of a committee, membership etc. The villagers were explained the importance of the committee, roles and responsibilities and thereafter the members were elected democratically representing all sections of the population. The committee has 4 men and 7 women. The committee members decided to meet on the 11th of every month.

S. No.	Name	Father/Husband	Age	Designation
1.	Kopanathi. Venkateswara Rao	S/o Nagaraju	36	 President
2.	Kopanathi. Balasubrahmanyam	s/o Eswaradu	45	 Vice-President
3.	Kopanathi. Anusha	w/o Arjuna Rao	42	 Secretary
4.	Chilakalapudi. Nagalakshmi	w/o Khaderbabu	30	 Joint Secretary

5.	Pothabathina. Nagakumari	w/o Ramakrishna	33	 Treasurer
6.	Pothabathina. Nagaraju	S/o China Biksham	40	 Member
7.	Chilakalapudi. Venkateswaramma	W/o Nagababu	28	 Member
8.	Kokkiligadda. Veeranjaneyulu	w/o Venkateswara Rao	35	 Member
9.	Thammu. Ravindra	s/o Biksham	60	 Member

10.	Bommidi. Kumari	W/o Veerraju	44	 Member
11.	Nayudu. Chinnari	w/o Yesubabu	25	 Member

As decided, the committee entrusted responsibilities to each individual under the guidance of ASSIST Deputy Director and senior staff and the members have accepted the responsibilities and took oath in front of the villagers.

S. No.	Name	Designation	Responsibilities
1.	Kopanathi. Venkateswara Rao	President	Village clean and tidy
2.	Kopanathi. Balasubrahmanyam	Vice-President	Regular water supply
3.	Kopanathi. Anusha	Secretary	Education related issues
4.	Chilakalapudi. Nagalakshmi	Joint Secretary	Liaison with government officials (housing, roads, infrastructure etc.,)
5.	Pothabathina. Nagakumari	Treasurer	Thrift and credit, SHGs
6.	Pothabathina. Nagaraju	Member	Agriculture and allied related
7.	Chilakalapudi. Venkateswaramma	Member	Fisheries concerned
8.	Kokkiligadda. Veeranjanyulu	Member	Community based organisations
9.	Thammu. Ravindra	Member	Health, nutrition, immunisation
10.	Bommidi. Kumari	Member	Government entitlements
11.	Nayudu. Chinnari	Member	Collection of domestic wastage and garbage dumping

3. Leadership Training:

During the quarter, a total of three Leadership Training Camps were conducted. The first camp was organized on 17th February, the second on 18th February, and the third on 26th March.

The resource person for these camps was Mr. M. V. Rama Rao, Deputy Director ASSIST. He provided valuable insights on the roles and responsibilities of VDS committee members in village development activities. In addition, he emphasized the importance of personal hygiene, environmental cleanliness, and girl child education and child marriages.

A total of 72 participants attended the training programmes, including 11 VDS committee members and 61 members from Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and other community members.

Impact:

All the villagers came together in unity during the celebration of the village festival, without any disputes or heated discussions. They realised that this harmony was a result of the unity strengthened through the formation of the Village Development Society (VDS).

4. Cultural Programme:

To create awareness among villagers on various development issues, related activities, challenges faced during the process, and strategies to overcome them, a cultural awareness camp was organised on 26th March 2026 by *Melukolupu*, the cultural wing of ASSIST.

A total of 147 participants including 63 men, 56 women, and 28 children attended the programme held near the village water tank. The awareness programme was delivered through engaging methods such as songs, skits, dramas, mime acts, and playlets.

The following key issues were highlighted during the programme:

- ⇒ To motivate villagers to work together for the overall development of the village.
- ⇒ Importance of monthly savings
- ⇒ Environmental cleanliness
- ⇒ Child marriages and consequences
- ⇒ Principles of health and nutrition
- ⇒ Importance of girl education and send the children to school regularly.
- ⇒ To emphasise the importance of maintaining cleanliness in homes and surroundings.
- ⇒ To encourage people to use toilets and to stop the practice of open defecation.
- ⇒ Importance of vitamins how they play a major role in our life

Impact:

As a result of these efforts, villagers have started applying bleaching powder at water stagnation points and are diverting wastewater into proper drainage channels, thereby improving sanitation and preventing the spread of diseases.

House Visits:

All the 169 houses were visited twice during this quarter, and they were told about the project and its goal and activities among people.

- ⇒ Visited 36 families and emphasised the importance of maintaining cleanliness in homes and surroundings.
- ⇒ Awareness was provided to 46 families who were disposing of damaged fishing nets around their houses. They were motivated to adopt proper waste disposal practices for net waste, promoting a cleaner and healthier environment.
- ⇒ During the house visits, 60 families were met and it was observed that they were washing clothes and cleaning utensils in unhygienic and scattered locations. The team discussed and explained the importance and proper use of washing platforms for maintaining hygiene and cleanliness.
- ⇒ A total of 62 families were reached, and educational motivation among children has increased through counselling and support initiatives, encouraging regular school attendance and active participation in learning activities.
- ⇒ 46 families have been identified as they are using plastic bags to carry groceries and vegetables. They were educated on how plastic will injure our health and caused damage to our health. During second time visit it is observed 32 families are using cloth bags instead plastic bags. They declared in future they do not use plastic bags.
- ⇒ A total of 45 families were identified as having waterlogging around their houses, which had become breeding grounds for mosquitoes. They were educated on how such conditions adversely affect health, leading to illness, increased hospital visits, and unnecessary financial burden.
- ⇒ Motivate people on savings, child marriages and education.

Impact:

Gradually, the mindset of the villagers has been changing. They have started to understand and respond positively to the messages shared during awareness camps. As a result of these efforts, 22 families came forward to construct washing platforms, demonstrating a significant improvement in awareness and the adoption of better sanitation practices at the household level.

There is also a noticeable improvement in maintaining clean and tidy household surroundings, along with increased attention to personal hygiene.

5. Children and Education:

There are 9 boys and 11 girls in the 3-5 age group in the village. All of them are going to Anganwadi and there are 0-2 age group boys 7 and girls 8 total 15. There are 33 boys and 31 girls in the age group of 6-14 and all of them are going to school.

Class	Total studying			Local Schools			Hostels outside		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1 st class	3	2	5	3	2	5	-	-	-
2 nd class	2	4	5	2	4	6	-	-	-
3 rd class	3	3	6	3	3	6	-	-	-
4 th class	4	3	7	4	3	7	-	-	-
5 th class	4	4	8	3	4	7	1	0	1
6 th class	3	4	7	1	2	3	2	2	4
7 th class	5	3	8	3	1	4	2	2	4
8 th class	5	4	9	2	2	4	3	2	5
9 th class	4	4	8	3	2	5	1	2	3
Total	33	31	64	24	23	47	9	8	17

39 students studying who were studying 10th class and Intermediate respectively were prepared and appeared for the public examinations held during the quarter. Particulars of the 69 students studying 10th class and above are as follows:

Class	Total studying			Hostels outside		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
X class	8	9	17	-	-	-
Inter – 1 st year	6	7	13	6	7	13
Inter - 2 nd year	5	4	9	5	4	9
Degree – 1 st year	4	3	7	4	3	7
Degree – 2 nd year	3	4	7	3	4	7
Degree – 3 rd year	-	3	3	0	3	3
B. Tech – 1 st year	2	1	3	2	1	3
B. Tech – 2 nd year	1	2	3	1	2	3
B. Tech – 4 th year	2	1	3	2	1	3
T.T.C – 1 st year	1	2	3	1	2	3
Polytech – 2 nd year	1	-	1	1	-	1
Total	33	36	69	25	27	52

Impact:

With the support of government schemes such as Thalliki Vandanam (Assistance to Mother for Children Education), the village has made significant progress in ensuring access to education across all age groups, with 100% of children enrolled in schools. Early childhood care has also been strengthened, with all children in the 3–5 age group regularly attending Anganwadi centres, thereby laying a strong foundation for their learning and nutritional development.

6. Community Health:

In the village on every 3rd Saturday in the month, Government health workers organise an immunisation program. During this quarter boys 16 and girls 19 total 35 children and 5 pregnant women were immunised. However, in total seven pregnant women two have given birth, both the mother and baby are safe. They are under regular immunisation as per schedule.

Community Dustbins:

Five dustbins were strategically installed across the village to promote proper waste disposal practices. The villagers have actively started using these dustbins for disposing off household and surrounding waste.

As a result, there has been a visible improvement in cleanliness, with reduced littering and better waste management practices. The initiative has contributed to creating a cleaner and healthier village environment, while also encouraging a sense of responsibility among community members towards maintaining sanitation.

Washing Platforms:

22 washing platforms were constructed during the quarter. Women are using these platforms for washing vessels, clothes and bathing for children. Villagers are keeping the surroundings clean and tidy.

Impact:

Awareness has increased, and all women are using the dustbins provided in the village and maintaining clean surroundings.

7. Women Empowerment:

There are 14 SHGs with 148 members in the village. Out of 14 groups, 8 groups are active and every month by 5th, they are collecting saving and paying back their loans in time. While the 6 groups are irregular in their payments as they need more awareness. The total savings accumulated so far is Rs.758,600. The internal lending

amount from their savings is Rs. 100,000 only as on date. The balance savings amount is Rs.730,200. They have their meetings regularly.

Particulars	Amount in INR
Balance of 14 groups of 148 members as on 31 st December 2025	719,400
Add: Savings of 148 members of 14 groups (Jan – Mar 26)	39,200
Total	758,600
Internal loans recovered in this quarter – Principle	70,000
Internal loans recovered in this quarter – Interest	1,600
Total	830,200
Less: Internal loans extended to 5 members of 4 groups	100,000
Balance as on 31st Mar 2026	730,200

Details of internal loans:

Particulars	Amount in INR
Internal loans outstanding as on 31 st December 2025	1,202,400
Less: Internal loan recovered (Jan – Mar 28) – Principle	70,000
Total	1,132,400
Add: Internal loans extended to 5 members of 4 groups	100,000
Internal loans outstanding as on 31st March 2026	1,232,400

Bank Linkage Loans

Particulars	Amount in INR
Total Bank loans outstanding of 14 groups as on 31 st December 2025	13,320,000
Less: Loans repaid by 14 groups in this quarter (Jan – Mar 26)	592,000
Bank loans outstanding of 14 groups as on 31st Mar 2026	12,728,000

Impact:

Six SHGs who are irregular in their payments have also made streamlined because of leadership trainings and they have improved in paying their instalments regularly.

8. Housing:

6 houses are being constructed in the village, they are up to basement level with the support of ASSIST on the request of VDS members. The organisation has provided material support along with the assistance received from the local government.

However, 15 members have submitted applications in the village secretariat for the construction of new houses under PM-NTR Aavas yojana scheme during the quarter.

Restoration of old houses/repairs:

During this quarter 5 members have started repairing their old houses including household toilets with the support of ASSIST.

Impact:

Villagers are showing interest in repairing their old houses and applying for new housing scheme of the local Government.

9. Government Pensions:

71 eligible persons are getting pensions under different schemes. The details of people getting monthly pensions are as follows:

Pension Name	Members receiving pensions	Monthly Each INR	Monthly Total INR
Old age	14	4,000	56,000
Widow	18	4,000	72,000
Fishermen	29	4,000	116,000
Persons with Disability	7	6,000	42,000
Destitute women	3	4,000	12,000
Total	71		358,000

10.Land Development:

The village has a total of 36 acres of wet land among 28 farmers, and paddy was cultivated on all 36 acres. The land is being prepared for the next season.

Fisheries:

A total of 26 boats belonging to 4-6 members per each boat whoever is having license and are actively engaged in fish catch and they are getting diesel subsidy of Rs.9 per litre on diesel. In total each boat gets Rs.2,700 per month. As such collectively, this initiative has generated a total income of around Rs. 210,600 among 26 boats during the quarter (January–March) indicating strong economic impact and viability of the activity.

Place: Chilakaluripet
Date: 16th April 2026

M. Vishnu Priya
Associate Director

J. Ranga Rao
Director, ASSIST

Baseline Survey by Community organisers





Sensitisation programme by Cultural Team





Regular house visits by Community Organiser







Children in School



Mass Meeting





Monthly meetings of Self-Help groups





Housing





Monthly Meetings by VDS Committee members



Leadership Training Camp for Committee Members



Washing Platforms







