

BRINGING LIGHT, RESTORING DIGNITY

How DBRC helped a community resolve a 40-year-old high-voltage powerline issue.



THE ISSUE

For nearly 40 years, around 1,000 households from SC, ST, and BC communities including Yarakula, circus families, Patipapalu, Dudekula, Mala, and Madiga have been living in the village. Many lacked proper electricity access due to insufficient poles, with earlier infrastructure covering only 50 households across five streets.

The major issue was the high-voltage electricity lines running directly over their homes, preventing construction of permanent houses and causing frequent electric shocks during winds and rains. Despite repeated petitions to the sarpanch, officials, leaders, and MLA, the issue remained unresolved.



INTERVENTION BY DBRC

When DBRC staff visited the village, residents shared their difficulties—unable to repair roofs due to overhead power lines, water entering their homes during rains, and the constant fear of accidents.

DBRC staff approached Assistant Engineer (AE) Ankamarao, who advised escalating the issue to higher authorities. The matter was taken to DE-level officials and referred to municipal authorities. DBRC submitted a petition to the District Collector through the public grievance system, demanding a lasting solution.



ACTION & SOLUTION

Following multiple representations, the Collector discussed the issue with the SE, who directed the DE to act.

The DE assured relocation of high-voltage lines and installation of new poles. After persistent follow-up by DBRC, AE Ankamarao visited the village and assessed the situation.

Within a week, new poles were installed across five streets, and the high-voltage lines were shifted to the main road.

Additionally, the earlier 16 kV transformer, which supported only minimal usage, was replaced with a 100 kV transformer for three streets, enabling households to use multiple electrical appliances.



RESULT

This long-standing issue was finally resolved through DBRC's continuous efforts. Some households initially lacked meters and used direct connections, but DBRC coordinated with officials to ensure meter installation at a nominal cost.

Under the SC/ST sub-plan subsidy, electricity bills were waived during the month of November 2025.



IMPACT

- 1,000 households now have safer and reliable electricity access
- High-voltage lines removed from above homes
- Reduced risk of electric shocks and accidents
- Families can now repair and build secure houses
- Improved living conditions and peace of mind
- Strengthened trust in collective action and DBRC's role

Voices from the Community

“We had been struggling for 40 years. No one listened to us. DBRC stood with us, raised our voice, and brought real change to our lives. Now we live without fear.”

SUCCESS STORY

FROM HOUSE TAX BURDEN TO WATER ACCESS

DBRC's Intervention Transforms 280 Households in A.S.R. Colony, Vishakhapatnam



THE ISSUE

Households in A.S.R. Colony faced two persistent challenges for several years: high house tax and lack of access to individual drinking water connections.

These issues were identified by DBRC staff through community area committees formed earlier.

RAISING THE ISSUE

DBRC initially raised the issue through the Public Grievance Redressal System (PGRS) with the District Collector.

The Collector's office responded that only 2 out of 134 households were categorized as Below Poverty line (BPL), making them eligible for free water connections, while the rest were deemed ineligible.



ADVOCACY & ENGAGEMENT

To address this, DBRC staff actively engaged with multiple government officials.

- Met Mr. Ramana Murthi, Additional Commissioner of GVMC, and highlighted the burden of excessive house tax.
- He assured a field assessment and submission of a report recommending possible tax reduction.
- Further discussions were held with Mr. Ramu, Zonal Commissioner (Zone-5), regarding both house tax and individual water connections.
- The team also consulted Mr. Satish, Water Supply Engineer, who informed them that a detailed report on water scarcity was being prepared for submission to the Collector and MLA.
- The issue was further escalated through Ms. Rani, Joint Director of the Tribal Research Institute, Vishakhapatnam, and the District Coordinator Ms. Ramadevi, who communicated the challenges to the Tribal Welfare Department.



KEY LEARNING

Through this process, it became evident that reducing the house tax was critical, as it directly influenced the BPL classification of households, which determined eligibility for free water connections.



THE OUTCOME



House tax for **280 households** significantly reduced



Tax reduced from **Rs. 2,100 & Rs. 1,463 to Rs. 54**



Households reclassified under **BPL category**



Each household became eligible for **free individual water connections** (worth ~Rs. 7,000)



IMPACT



Reduced financial burden for vulnerable families



Access to safe & clean drinking water secured



280 families benefited directly



Strengthened trust in collective community action



“DBRC's persistent follow-up turned a long-standing issue into a life-changing solution for 280 families.”

Scrap Collection to Sustainable Livelihood

The Inspiring Story of Kamalgiri Pandu

Mr. Kammalagiri Pandu, also known as Paul, is a resident of Nupatividhi (ST Yanadi Colony), Denduluru Mandal, Eluru District. He lives with his wife Jyothi and their 3 children. Paul studying in 9th, Naveen in 8th, and Satish in 7th standards respectively.

Family Background:

About 30 years ago, Pandu's parents migrated to the Yanadi Colony in search of livelihood opportunities. Their family survived by collecting waste materials and segregating plastic, iron, wires, and other recyclable items from garbage, which were later sold to scrap shops. The small income earned through this work was used to support the family.

Following the same path, Pandu also continued this occupation until his marriage. Over time, he realized that the work was harmful to health and provided very little income, making it difficult to support his growing family. In search of better livelihood options, he shifted to different kinds of labour work such as catching rats in agricultural fields, fishing in canals and ponds, and cleaning drainage canals.

Transformation Through DBRC Support:

During a period when the family was struggling financially, the Dalit Bahujan Resource Center (DBRC) came to know that Pandu had skills and interest in fishing. Understanding his need and aspiration, DBRC supported him by providing fishing nets worth ₹ 8,000 to strengthen his livelihood.



Increase in Family Income:

Expressing his happiness, Pandu shared that earlier he used to earn only around ₹ 300 to ₹ 400 per day, which was insufficient to run the household. However, after receiving the fishing nets from DBRC, his income significantly improved. He now goes for fishing for more than 100 days a year and earns a minimum of ₹ 700 per day, while on some days he earns up to ₹ 1,500 per day.

This increase in income has brought financial stability and happiness to his family. Pandu gratefully stated that he and his family will always remain thankful to DBRC for improving his livelihood and helping his family live with dignity and happiness. ♦



Rescue and Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourers

The Dalit Bahujan Resource Centre (DBRC), in collaboration with India Labour Line, successfully facilitated the identification, rescue, and rehabilitation of bonded tribal labourers who had been trapped in exploitative working conditions for nearly a decade.

On February 5, information was received that tribal families were being forced into bonded labour at brick kilns located near Kalwakurthy Road in Telkapally Mandal of Nagar kurnool district. The information was shared by Nagendramma, a resident of V.Y. Colony in Kurichedu Mandal, Prakasam district. Acting promptly, India Labour Line filed a formal complaint with the concerned authorities.

Under the direction of RDO Suresh, a joint rescue operation was launched by the Tahsildar Vijay Kumar, along with officials from the police department, labour department, and the District Child Protection Unit. The team swiftly reached the site and identified six families comprising 29 individuals, including children, who were held in bonded labour conditions. The workers expressed distress over their situation and appealed for help. The authorities responded immediately, ensuring their safe release and transportation back to their native village.

A case was registered against the kiln owner, Lahu, and legal proceedings were initiated. Subsequently, a district-level review meeting was conducted under the Joint Collector of Prakasam district to assess the rescue operation and ensure adherence to Standard Operating Procedures

(SOPs). During the meeting, officials proposed re-registering the FIR to strengthen the legal case, and the administration assured necessary follow-up action.

To ensure sustainable rehabilitation, a comprehensive plan was developed involving multiple government departments. The key measures include updating Aadhaar cards, opening bank accounts, providing pensions, issuing job cards, allocating house sites, facilitating housing construction, exploring land allocation of up to two acres per family, and creating livelihood opportunities. Special attention is being given to children's health and nutrition, along with the provision of essential commodities.

Additionally, financial assistance under the Central Government's rehabilitation scheme has been sanctioned, with ₹ 1,00,000 for men, ₹ 2,00,000 for women, and ₹ 3,00,000 for individuals from special categories, also the release certificates to the bonded labourers. Officials have been directed to deposit these funds into the beneficiaries' bank accounts within the week and expedite all necessary surveys to ensure timely delivery of entitlements.

This successful intervention highlights the critical role played by DBRC and India Labour Line in protecting the rights of vulnerable communities. Their timely action not only secured the freedom of 29 bonded labourers but also paved the way for their dignified rehabilitation and reintegration into society. ♦



From Hair Picking to Skilled Employment

-The Journey of Kamadhula Bhavani

Kamadhula Bhavani, a resident of Nandi Velugu village, once relied on hair picking to support her family. With education up to the 10th standard, she earned her livelihood by selling household goods and hair, managing her household with limited and uncertain income.

Her life took a turning point in November 2025 when she received computer training which was supported by the Dalit Bahujan Resource Center (DBRC). This opportunity became a catalyst for change, equipping her with essential digital skills and boosting her confidence to explore new avenues of employment.

With the knowledge and skills gained from the training, Bhavani secured a position as a Bills

Receipt Clerk at Sangham Dairy. In this role, she now earns a stable monthly income of ₹12,000. This transition from informal trade to formal employment has significantly enhanced her financial stability and quality of life.

Today, Bhavani lives a more secure and dignified life with her husband and children. She expresses deep gratitude to the Dalit Bahujan Resource Center for empowering her with skills that transformed her livelihood and opened doors to new opportunities.

Her journey stands as an inspiring example of how skill development and timely support can create meaningful and lasting change in the lives of individuals.