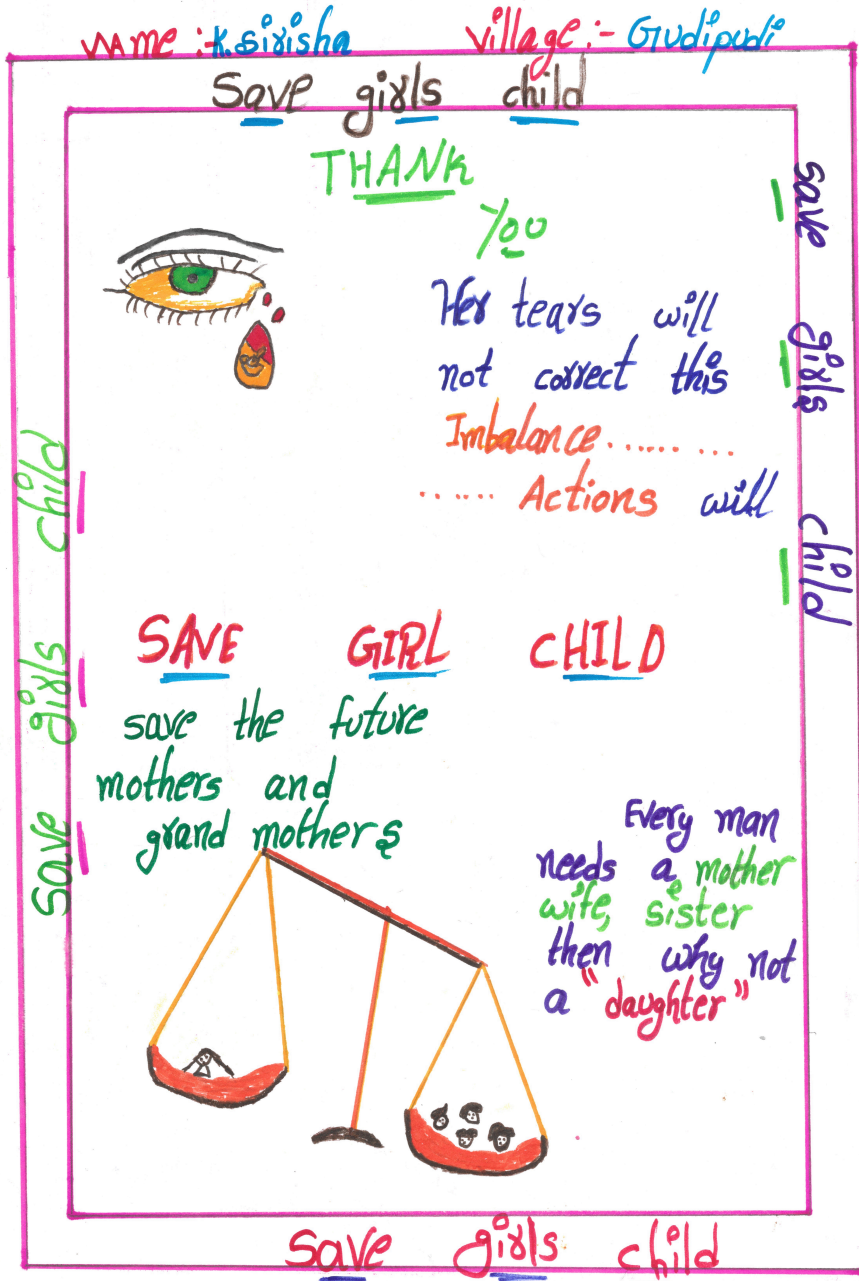


On International Woman's Day
A Girl Child's Art



I don't know about you, but I have a perceptual emotional filter that numbs the "hard stuff" of life: the untimely death of a friend; the homeless person I pass sleeping on the park bench; the plight and execution of women in Iran.....

My filter is functioning during my visits to our PADA service area. And although the area is severely impoverished, families have shelter, food....there's the color of the saris and smiling children. I see neglected children; I hear the stories of the fathers' ravaging alcoholism; I'm confronted by parents seeking money for the needed medical procedure to save their daughter's life. During the height of covid donors doubled and we provided rice to destitute elders and families. BUT....but I did not anticipate the plea of a young 9th grade girl in a "Thank You" Study Center art sharing.

The story starts with my plan for innocence and fun: spend 6 cents for a small crayon box and a fresh sheet of white paper. I asked the children in our Study Centers to make a 'Thank You' note for the donors back in America. I suggested they think about their family, home,

something about their country, something beautiful they'd like to share with donors. Do understand that a box of 8 colors and a clean white sheet of paper to create whatever you'd like to share is a rare or never-given opportunity.

But among the hundreds of somewhat "ho hum" pictures of peacocks, India's flag, tracings of the State of Andhra Pradesh, "stick" families, and homes was this one gem: *Save Girls Child* by Sirisha, a 9th grader, in the village of Gudipudi.

I am not going to moralize on Sirisha's art on this International Woman's Day.....may it pierce some of your comfort filter as it has mine. Also know that your donation makes a difference. PADA in our 40+ villages is about women and children and empowerment. Sirisha spoke because there's hope in the wind. **You are her audience and she has spoken.**

murray

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LINKAGE PADA INC. is a register 501c3 non-profit organized in the USA to fund PADA India [People's Action for Development Alternatives], Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh, India.

100% of your donation goes to our Indian non-profit. All domestic expenses and travel are donated.

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Etcetera.....

A frequently asked question: "Is PADA a religious organization?"

No, PADA is strictly secular. The majority of women and children PADA serves are Hindu. Approximately 30% are Christian, and a few are Muslim.

More about Sirisha:

I have asked our Social Worker Sarah to enquire about Sirisha and her family. Her art, Save Girls Child, won the "Best" award among 500+ entries. She has received a 500 Rupee First Prize [\$6.25 US or two day's wages for a woman picking chili peppers]. What prompted this poster? Perhaps it was parental pressure to labor in the pepper fields and earn the \$3 daily wage for family support. As harsh as this sounds, this is a burden of family survival which is true around the world....even in our USA slaughter house cleaning crews (recent news). As for her village, The Rotary Club of Clarke County, VA sponsors her Study Center and other PADA activities in that village. The village of Gudipudi is a recent organizing success story. Thanks to PADA and Administrator Yohan's community organizing skills, this village rose out of a "squatters" swamp area; the swamp was drained; thatch huts have been replaced with 500 masonry homes.

Fund Raising for the 2023-24 PADA fiscal year:

Donations for the new PADA fiscal year which runs from April 1 to March 31 are being accepted. Make your checks payable: LINKAGE PADA INC and mail to Murray in Takoma Park.