



SUGRAMADA DHWANI

AN UPDATE OF ACTIVITIES—APRIL 2016 TO JUNE 2016

Special points of interest:

- SUGRAMA members participated actively in the training programmes of The Hunger Project and of other civil society organizations and NGOs.
- Gaining more visibility at all platforms at the taluk level/state level
- SUGRAMA members raising their voice against the non disbursement of pensions to the poor, old and widows
- SUGRAMA members have been prioritizing their issues and working towards redressing the same.
- SUGRAMA members have garnered support from other fellow members in interacting with the Parliamentarians to redress their issues.
- Members have been taking up issues of violence against women in their villages, panchayats and neighbouring taluks and working towards resolving the same.
- Members are now effectively monitoring the functioning of service deliveries to the community—anganawadi, PHC, schools/colleges, transport and so on and have garnered visibility.

Upon the conduct of SAMAVESHA of the newly elected members, the members especially the Steering Committee members met for the first time at Bangalore for their Steering Committee meeting in June 2016. Though being the first meeting, the meeting brought in insights of Steering Committee members in flagging the various advocacy issues to be taken up at the state level as well as at the taluk level. Amongst the issues, the most cropping issue has been of the forced resignation of the President and Vice Presidents in the Grama Panchayats.

At the taluk level, members have been actively participating in the workshops and training programmes conducted by the partner organisations of The Hunger Project, Karnataka. The month of April being the month of Grama Sabhas, the members were more so looking at conducting Grama Sabhas and Ward Sabhas in their Grama Panchayats. The period also congregated with the conduct of World Environment Day by the members and Presidents of some of the Grama Panchayats. The period has also seen several advocacy initiatives taken by SUGRAMA members at the taluk level.

All the Taluk Members

Dear Members,

Greetings.

SUGRAMA—Grama Panchayat Chunayitha Mahila Prathinidhigala Sangha—Karnataka has been successful in fulfilling its objectives as a federation representing the rights and interests of Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) of Karnataka.

While some of you members joined SUGRAMA in November 2015, it is heartening to see that more members are coming into the ambit of SUGRAMA. This shows the need for members to obtain due information and awareness on their respective roles and responsibilities. Some of you have been first timers. One of the points as brought out in the baseline survey conducted by The Hunger Project points out to 90% *first time* entrants to politics and 79% of the respondents did not have family members who had held any political office in prior elections.

Besides learning more on the governance and panchayat raj system, there is also a need for members to look at other horizons—monitoring of anganawadi, facilities at school, hospital and so on. This newsletter gives in a nutshell some of the advocacy initiatives of the taluk level SUGRAMA which led to the formation of standing committees following the interactions with the officials. The Grama Sabhas were also taken seriously by you all which led to the conduct of Grama Sabhas in your respective Grama Panchayats.

Hope the members continue to tread the path and work towards good governance.

Best wishes,

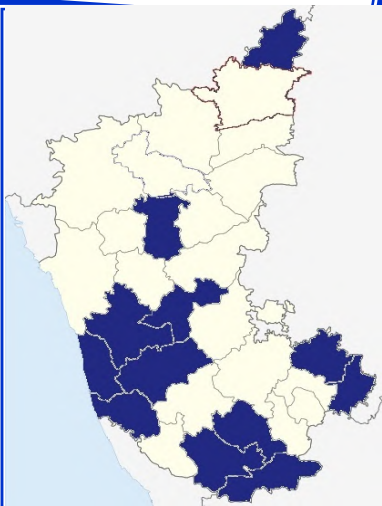
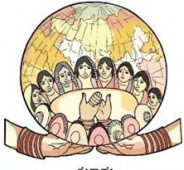
Padmini Ananth, The Hunger Project, Karnataka

(For and on behalf of Rathnamma, President, SUGRAMA)

Next Issue:

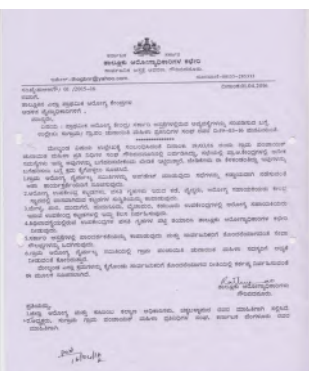
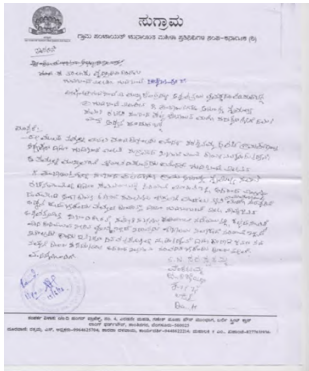
- State and Taluk reports
- Current status/Achievements of SUGRAMA
- SUGRAMA in the news
- Information on Panchayat Raj—Circulars of the RDPR Department

TALUK LEVEL ACTIVITIES:



SUGRAMA is formed in 25 taluks of 12 districts of Karnataka.

GLIMPSES OF LETTERS FORWARDED TO THE DEPARTMENTS:



Taluk level activities of SUGRAMA:

- ◆ SUGRAMA Members in their Grama Sabhas discussed of their plans prepared around developing ICDS centers, PHCS, Schools, and PDS shops, and toilets for girls in the schools and at GP office for the women and Girls.
- ◆ In order to ensure 100% enrollment to schools and 0% drop out of children in the Project area, members of the 'SUGRAMA' are actively Participating in the 'Nanna nade shale kade' –my walk towards school campaign. Accordingly EWRs have started their visit to the schools of their wards and collect the details of the school censuses, children enrolled and attendance.
- ◆ In order to bring transparency in the Public Distribution System EWR's have started to visit the Fair Price Shops of their area, collect details and demand to display the rate charts, timings, Vigilance Committee members list etc, in the Fair Price Shops.
- ◆ SUGRAMA members across Chamarjanagar, Mysore and Mandya have been demanding for BPL cards, Corruption in the fair price shops, poor service in the fair price shops, demand for reforming the vigilance committee and demand for new PDS shops etc. submitted to **Food and Civil service dept.**
- ◆ They have also been demanding for regular Doctors/Staff nurses and ANMs to the PHC where their is non availability, Strengthening the VHNC's and EWRs enrolment to the committees, Proper Implementation of the NRHM schemes etc. A memorandum to this effect was submitted to **THO.**
- ◆ After the state Steering Committee meeting, members across all the blocks sent letters to the Women and Child Development for new anganawadis and renovation of existing anganawadis following the order passed by the Government.
- ◆ Members of Bidar solved the problem of scarcity of water with digging of new bore wells, purchasing water from farmers & recharging old borewells.
- ◆ At the federation meeting, ASEDA invited the Taluk Health Officer (THO) to provide information pertaining to Village Health and Sanitation Committee (VHSC) and Arogya Raksha Samithi. The members also reiterated that though the formation of Village Health and Sanitation committees (VHSNC) have been made, yet the EWRs do not find a place as members in the community (as mandated) and this has been posing a difficulty in not getting the information. Dr. Rathnamma, Taluk Health Officer addressing the members mentioned that she would send a notice to all the ICDS centres and re-formulate the VHSNC in accordance with the provisions of the Act. This was covered in the media with the caption - **'Reforming of VHSNCs according to Guidelines'**.
- ◆ EWRs have been visiting work place of MGNREGA and interacting with laborers about payment of wages, work measurement, concession for aged and handicapped in measurement/work etc.
- ◆ With the help of the SELCO Foundation & local donors, fans and lights were installed in 7anganawadi centres wherein SUGRAMA members are the presidents of the coordinating committee and it has also been decided to install solar system to the Anganwadis situated in the operational area of SUGRAMA to complete by next year.

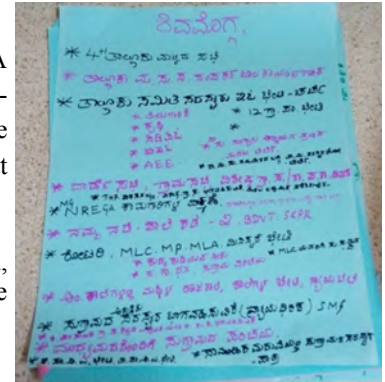
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

The 1st Steering Committee meeting of the newly formed elected state body of SUGRAMA – Steering Committee members and office bearers at the state level was conducted at Indian Social Institute, Benson Town, Bangalore on June 1-2, 2016. The members were first asked to highlight the activities during the last three months of being with SUGRAMA at the GP level and the taluk level.

The discussions revealed of the absence of anganawadi workers, ANM and ASHA workers on and often and thus posing difficulties to children in the anganawadi and in providing health care facilities to children and pregnant women. It was felt that this needs to be discussed at length in the taluk federation meetings and advocate regarding their absence at the taluk level.

The issues which need to be taken up at a larger level – taluk federation were consolidated, the following were some of the issues brought out which shall require interventions at the taluk level at the first level and which the state could advocate thereafter:

- Discussions regarding drinking water facilities across all anganawadi and schools
- Petitions regarding non requirement of recommendations of the MLAs with respect to selection of beneficiaries under various housing schemes
- Distribution of food in anganawadi and to that of adolescent girls
- Revenue villages
- Functioning of health centres and that of the staff – ANM, ASHA worker
- Demand for reopening of schools – Governments stand on closing of government schools with less number of students
- Non payment of honorarium
- Government notification regarding anganawadi buildings – new construction and renovation – letters to be forwarded by all the taluks



The members affirmed the need of effective implementation of NREGA and the role of EWRs in ensuring the work is being conducted in an effective manner. She also sought SUGRAMA’s support to demand for vehicle facilities to President and Vice President. Padmini mentioned that this was already put up in the manifesto of SUGRAMA but considering the need, the members would also require such facilities. An overview of 14th Finance Commission grants which could be utilised for developmental works in their respective wards as well was provided to the members.

Rathnamma stated the need of maintaining bank accounts at the taluk level and the membership fees at the taluk as members would require the money to organise meetings, etc. Over the years, SUGRAMA has found it feasible to operate and function with his financials at the state level and close down the bank accounts at the taluk level. Initially 50% of the membership fees was being deposited in the taluk bank account for the taluk to undertake their activities. But due to audit queries and lack of auditing of taluk level accounts, the state felt the need to close down the bank accounts at the taluk level and transfer the entire membership fees (100%) to the state level. There were discussions about number of members of SUGRAMA.

Following the queries of the President, The team reiterated that THP was supporting the SUGRAMA members to conduct their meetings (which are also funded by THP) and other activities and unlike earlier, SUGRAMA doesn’t have a staff of its own and the members need to look at it. Also, the letter of invite for the SC meeting would be henceforth done in the name of the President and THP would act as a support and guide to SUGRAMA. The members were given the status of membership across 25 blocks of 12 districts of Karnataka.

Padmini, The Hunger Project gave a brief of the quarterly newsletter and sought information of the members such as of their activities, challenges faced and achievements made so that the same could be highlighted in the newsletter. She also added that the case studies of EWRs irrespective of an office bearer or a member in the newsletter. It would also be a requisite if the President communicates with the state team and other members in the course of her activities.



ಸುಗ್ರಾಮ
ಗ್ರಾಮ ಪಂಚಾಯತ್ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ ಮಹಿಳಾ ಪ್ರಾಥಮಿಕ ಶಾಲೆ - ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ

**SUGRAMA—Grama Panchayat
Chunayitha Mahila Prathinidhigala
Sangha—Karnataka**
C/o The Hunger Project,
No. 4, 2nd Floor, Berlie Street Cross,
Opp. Ganesh Puja House,
Langford Town, Shanti Nagar,
Bangalore—560 025
Ph: (080) 2222 4779, 98453 17795

Account details of SUGRAMA:

Savings Bank A/c No:
32525017783

Richmond Town Branch, Bangalore,
Mission Road, Bangalore—560 027

IFS Code: SBIN0011352 through

**ADVOCACY BY SUGRAMA
MEMBERS—BIDAR TALUK**

GLIMPSES OF SUGRAMA



NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

