



SUGRAMADA DHWANI

October 2016

Volume 6, ISSUE 3

AN UPDATE OF ACTIVITIES—July 2016 to September 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 ensuring effective implementation of the new amendments to Karnataka Panchayat Raj Act, 1993.
- SUGRAMA members working towards safeguarding the rights of the Presidents being forced to render their resignation despite the amendment to their tenure.

SUGRAMA is in its second full year term after its inception in 2009. SUGRAMA members at the state level met after SAMAVESHA for the first time in Bangalore for their first Steering Committee meeting. The two day meeting on June 1-2, 2016 reiterated the activities of the members at GP, taluk and state level while giving more impetus on the manifesto points and its additions towards the course of activities for advocacy.

The members were thereon oriented on their roles and responsibilities, division of their work—GP, taluk, district and state level, understanding and owning SUGRAMA, action plan for the next phase and so on.

The members thereon went on to not only participate in the activities conducted by the partner organisations but also went on to have their informal meetings prior to the conduct of interface meetings by the partner organisations. This helped SUGRAMA in collectivizing the agenda/advocacy issues and discuss it in a cohesive manner.

All the Taluk Members

Dear Members,

Greetings from the new President. I welcome you all on board of SUGRAMA. Being an elected member for the first time, it gives me immense pleasure to be associated with SUGRAMA. I am sure most of you all are first times like me and it has been a great privilege becoming a member of SUGRAMA. Yes, indeed it is. I am happy to be part of the large platform and hope that you too opine the same. I also went on to become the district representative with the support of my taluk colleagues and counterparts and thereon became the President of SUGRAMA. I am now leading the 2500 members towards strengthening the local self government. It is indeed a hurricane task but with the support of you all, I am sure I can take up the mantel as desired by you and work towards betterment of governance and decentralization in grama panchayats.

With the recent amendments to Karnataka Panchayat Raj Act, 1993, our work has become more required as it is our duty to ensure that the amendments made to the act are implemented effectively. It is our responsibility to ensure that they are in compliance with the act. It is really heartening to note the achievements of the previous members in bringing in 5 year tenure to the post of President and Vice President.

While congratulating the earlier members for their initiatives in strengthening SUGRAMA and ensuring good pointers in the way of amendment, our task is to ensure that SUGRAMA continues to bring in more visibility through its actions and ensure women play a pivotal role in grama panchayats.

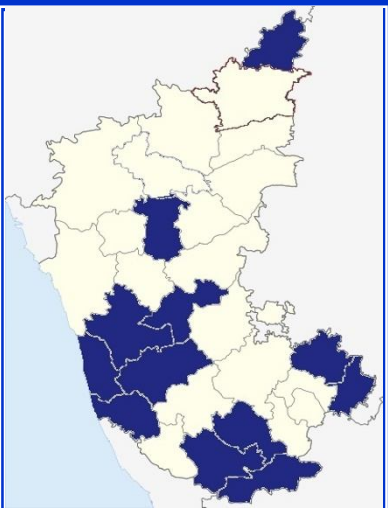
This newsletter will encapsulate all your activities and hence the reflections of such activities shall bring in a ray of hope to other members like us. Come, let us work towards bringing in a change in governance. Through our achievements, we shall ensure that women like us also work in a collective manner.

Rathnamma S.
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
- Did you know??

TALUK LEVEL ACTIVITIES:



SUGRAMA is formed in 25 taluks of 12 districts of Karnataka as follows:

District	Membership
Bidar	299
Chamrajanagar	135
Chickballapur	121
Chikmagalur	143
Dakshina Kan-nada	220
Davanagere	110
Gadag	125
Mandya	75
Mysore	151
Shimoga	115
Tumkur	53
Udupi	100
Total	1647

- SUGRAMA members of Gauribidanur taluk attended the meeting of PDOs wherein they also brought out the issues of the GP. The CEO has asked the PDOs to look at the issues and work towards resolving the same.
- SUGRAMA members with the partner organisations have also been working on collecting information pertaining to the President and Vice President in the wake of forced resignations in some GPs despite the amendment made.
- Members of SUGRAMA across all the taluks have been successful in helping the community in availing benefits through their GPs and also in submitting applications.
- As a redressal platform, members have been successful in resolving petty issues within the panchayat limits. This has helped them to be noticeable in their villages/panchayats.
- SUGRAMA members through the partner organisations have also been working on raising awareness on child marriage, malnutrition and VAW.
- Members are ensuring that Grama Sabhas are conducted in an effective manner.
- Members of SUGRAMA across all taluks have been associated with other platforms and associations and this has resulted in expanding the horizons of SUGRAMA.
- SUGRAMA members have also joined other networks and platforms and have participated actively in their pro grammes and meetings as well as awareness programmes
- SUGRAMA members were also successful in providing benefits and pensions to the old and needy. They also helped the community in speeding up the process of obtaining benefits without paying any commission to the officials.
- SUGRAMA members have been actively participating in the interface meetings, Need Based Workshops and federation meetings and raising issues affecting the community. The presence of resource persons under SBM, MGNREGA, etc. gave impetus to their functioning.
- There have been changes in the EC members in Gudibande and Gauribidanur taluks.
- Members have actively taken part in ensuring the developmental works under MGNREGA are provided to the job card holders. Issues have been taken up at the higher level.
- SUGRAMA members are personally visiting the anganawadi, schools, PHCs and so on and ensuring that the benefits are provided in an effective manner.
- SUGRAMA members have been successful in ensuring the formation of standing committees, SDMC committees and reformation of VHNC committees and ensured their presence in the committees.
- SUGRAMA was formed in Gulbarga (2 blocks) through the new partner of THP—Margadarshi Society
- A SUGRAMA member of Donagoan GP, Bidar received great applause from the officials and media for her participation in Janaspandana programme. The participation of EWR at Janaspandana was a welcome for effective functioning of EWRs.
- SUGRAMA members advocated for the installation of drinking water unit in their villages/GPs

STATE LEVEL ACTIVITIES:

Upon the successful completion of the first Steering Committee meeting in June 2016, the Steering Committee members underwent an Orientation Programme in Bangalore between July 12-14, 2016. Prior to the conduct of the Orientation Programme, the members were asked to fill in the Need Assessment Forms beforehand to know their needs. The orientation programme primarily dealt with:

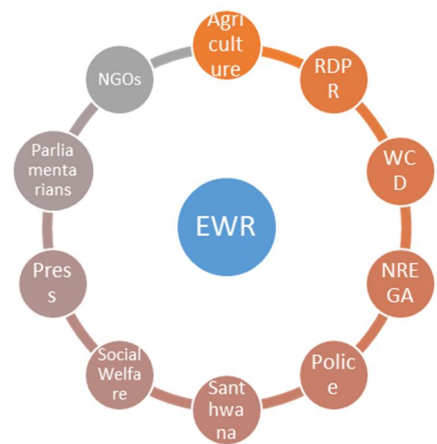
- The current status of SUGRAMA – SWOT analysis
- The activities undertaken during the last three months
- At an individual level, how have there been a correlation/linkage between GP, Taluk and Zilla level
- Changed leadership – how to understand it and make it create a positive impact and how to work towards other responsibilities
- As a state member, what is my role at the taluk and district level
- As a leader, how to look at inclusive growth and collective approach and sustain/strengthen SUGRAMA.
- Roles and responsibilities of members at the state level
- How to be a collective and how to sustain the collectivity
- Participation and empowerment of EWRs



The members were asked to perceive on:

1. Why did I join SUGRAMA? 2. What return could I expect/get upon joining SUGRAMA? 3. Over the last 3 months, what have been my activities as GP President/Vice President and member? 4. In the past 3 months, what activities have I undertaken as SUGRAMA member at the taluk/district and state level?

These gave her a reflection on her part as State Steering Committee member. Renuka, former President of SUGRAMA was invited to give inputs to the current Steering Committee members.



MEETING THE RDPR MINISTER:

Some of the SUGRAMA members had been talking about the five year tenure and the GP Presidents asked to step down irrespective of the law made to give chance to another. SUGRAMA advocated for five year tenure during the last 7 years and the Government brought in an amendment to the clause increasing the tenure from 30 months to 5 years. However, inspite of the new amendments made, the GPs were seen forcing members to opt out of their President's post. Taking into consideration the issue where SUGRAMA is formed, discussions were held regarding the issue and a visit was made to Vidhana Soudha to meet the Minister for Rural Development and Panchayat Raj, Government of Karnataka. The Minister taking note of the issue mentioned of taking due action and forwarding letters to the GPs to protect the law and respect the amendments made.



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RTGS/NEFT

SUGRAMA IN NEWS

PARTICIPATION OF SUGRAMA MEMBERS:



ISSUES OF INTEREST



ಕೇರಳ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಪ್ರತಿಜ್ಞೆ (Kerala Government's Pledge). A document with a list of 14 points regarding government school issues, signed by the Minister for Education.

ಸರ್ಕಾರಿ ಶಾಲೆಗಳನ್ನು ಉಳಿಸಲು ಸುಗ್ರಾಮ ಸಂಕಲ್ಪ (Sugrama's resolve to save government schools). A document with a list of 14 points regarding government school issues, signed by the Sugrama representative.