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SUGRAMADA DHWANI

January 2017

Volume 6, ISSUE 3

AN UPDATE OF ACTIVITIES—October—December 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.

The last quarter of the year 2016 saw some tumultuous achievements and activities with SUGRAMA members interacting with the Parliamentarians. Post the orientation to SUGRAMA Steering Committee members in July followed by Need Based Workshops by partner organisations of The Hunger Project thereon, the activities took a diverse approach with members getting to know more about MGNREGA, RTI and so on. The need based workshops gave them knowledge about the act per se, as well as the strategies to be evolved to ensure its effective implementation.

The second Steering Committee meeting of SUGRAMA members was held in November 9-10, 2016 with agenda ranging from issues taken up in the first meeting and reflecting on the manifesto to bring out a 10-point agenda for further advocacy. This got reflected at the taluk level, where members went on to take up signature campaign, post card campaign and other advocacy initiatives to stall the Government's initiative of cash transfer in lieu of public distribution system. Further, the campaign also saw the reflection of members in interference of MLAs in selection of beneficiaries under Basava Vasathi Yojana. Discussions also were held on delay in payment of bills under MGNREGA, sitting fees, honorarium and so on.

All the Taluk Members

Dear Members,

Greetings. We are in the last quarter of the year 2016. Its been more than a year since we have coveted our posts as elected representatives and a year upon obtaining the membership of SUGRAMA. It is now the time for renewal of our membership with SUGRAMA. The office bearers of SUGRAMA of all taluks need to ensure that the members pay their renewal fees on time. While reflecting on our activities over the past one and half years after election, SUGRAMA has supported us by enhancing our knowledge, empowering our leadership capabilities and resolve issues through suitable strategies and advocacy. Things wouldn't have been the same otherwise. Though patriarchy continues to exist in the society, we have been able to break the shackles of male dominated politics by being active politicians.

With 155 women presidents in the SUGRAMA blocks, we have ensured that none of the Presidents have succumbed to the political pressure or threats to resign from their president's post. The experience of one State Steering Committee member who was pressurized to resign from Presidents post has taught us a great lesson and we have ensured that no one else succumbs in this manner.

The quarter has seen SUGRAMA members undertake many activities—both in their GPs at the community level as well as at the taluk level, which are highlighted in the upcoming pages. The quarterly issue will now on highlight the case studies of members who have brought in changes in their community. SUGRAMA members across Gadag, Bidar and Gulbarga have also been supporting the respective partner organisations of The Hunger Project in a project to look at options beyond child marriage. A snippet of this shall also be shared hereon. Wishing you all a great year ahead.

Next Issue:

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



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TALUK LEVEL ACTIVITIES:

ACTIVITIES OF SUGRAMA MEMBERS DURING THE PERIOD:

The Hunger Project undertook a project on **'strengthening the leadership of elected women representatives in gram Panchayats, to empower and build the agency of young adults, particularly adolescent girls'** funded by American Jewish World Service (AJWS) and looked at exploring a multi-pronged approach to empower young adults, particularly adolescent girls. The project looked at:

- Imparting awareness and the knowledge on the issue of Early Child Marriage (ECM) and the legal framework around it, among the Elected Women Representatives, engaged through the project's key interventions.
- Increase in the awareness and knowledge among young adults/adolescents about the issue of ECM.
- Increase in the awareness among young adults and adolescents about their rights and opportunities like public livelihood programs/services/schemes.
- Fostered linkages with government departments and training institutes to look beyond the ambit of 'marriage' and enable the children to visualise their dreams by linking them to skill building interventions; rejoining school and pursue their education.

Goal: Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) are empowered through multiple initiatives, to raise awareness amongst young adults, particularly adolescent girls of their rights and opportunities, thereby reducing vulnerability to ECM.

- Members across Davanagere and Gadag have raised their objections towards cash transfers in lieu of PDS and undertook post card campaign. Similar campaigns have also been undertaken in other districts as well.
- SUGRAMA members collectively stood against claiming wages without undertaking any work under MGNREGA in Honnali taluk
- Members across the blocks of Mysore, Chamaraajanagar and Mandya took up silent protest against the cash transfers and reiterated the need for regularization of provisions and continue with the same practice.
- EWR's of Bannuru, Perabe, Konaje, Kolnadu, Manchi who had attended the NBW have raised the issues in the grama panchayaths meetings and sub committees were reconstituted as per the new Act. Its found that, members of the Vittal Padnuru, Manchi, Kolnadu, Kodimbady, Paladka, Konaje panchayaths have already declared their assets and liabilities as per the new Act and the said process is under progress in all the GP's of project area.
- In Udupi block 20 applications were submitted seeking help for the construction of individual drinking water wells, 9 application for construction of cow-shed, procured 20 job cards, fruit saplings and Horticulture garden facilities for 6 families under MGNREGA.
- **AIR Partnering with 'Sugrama':** During the reporting period three programmes were recorded to broad cast in Mangaluru Radio Station.
- **Special Grama Sabha:** Special Grama Sabha's on MGNREGA were conducted in all the grama panchayths as per the orders of the government. THP Project staffs were participated in these special Grama Sabha's held in Ramakunja, Kedambady, Koila GP's of Putturu Taluku, Balepuni and Kolnadu GP's in Bantwala Taluku, Talapdy and Konaje Gp's in Mangaluru Taluku and Varamballi GP in Udupi Taluku.
- A daily quarrel between husband and wife has been settled and compromised in Gama, Singanamane and Kambadalhosuru GP
- A police complaint raised against the men who beaten women member during the quarrel between neighbors in Aralahalli, Baranduru and Karehalli GP
- PDO and Secretaries were not giving respect to EWRs in Kappanahalli and Hitla GP. SUGRAMA federation interfered in this respect and given a warning
- 72 EWRs written a letter to Chief Minister and Food minister, Karnataka stating that 30 kg rice and 15 kg wheat for BPL card holders.
- Two Interface Meetings were organized at Ron and Channagiri on September 19 and October 25 respectively. Taluka Planning Officer explained the process in evolving plan at GP level, members assured to participate in planning process. BEO, Ron appreciated initiative by SUGRAMA and suggested to involve women in SDMCs.
- SUGRAMA members have been actively involved in formulating 'Namma Grama Namma Yozana' (5 year Plan 2017-2022) in 40 GPs;
- SUGRAMA President, Ron, questioned PDO and Nodal Officer (BEO) during special Grama sabha at Hole Alur GP about conducting **Jamabandhi** without intimation to GP members; Executive Officer, Ron instructed PDO, Hole Alur to conduct **Jamabandhi** with proper intimation well in advance;
- SUGRAMA members Joining hands with Karnataka People's Forum for land Rights (KPFLR) to pursue claim over Land Rights by –landless, marginalized and forest de-

The 2nd 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 November 9, 2016. The change of signatories of the Bank Account of SUGRAMA was also taken up at the meeting. One new member—district representative of Gulbarga participated for the first time. The following points were earmarked for advocacy at the taluk level and the state level. Strategies such as signature campaign, press meets, visits to officials, pooling out required information prior to advocacy were also discussed at this juncture:

Issues taken up	Plan of action	Roles and Responsibility		Deadline
		SUGRAMA Member	Partner organization	
Interference of MLAs over selection of beneficiaries under various housing schemes – Basava Vasathi Yojana	it was decided that members get 4-5 instances of such interference by the Parliamentarians to suffice the issue	Get the instances as required	Partners could help in this regard	The members were told to collect the evidences, work on the issue and table it to the state by December 10, 2016 for further advocacy initiatives in December 2016.
Distribution of provisions in PDS outlets and no to cash transfers	take up a signature campaign across all taluks to advocate for providing provisions and food grains as against the cash transfers	Undertake signature campaign	A letter/campaign letter could be drafted and enable members to sign on it	
Nonpayment (Non-clearance) of bills under MGNREGA	Letters from GPs and members which shall be thereon taken up at the taluk level	Evidences to be collected and passed to taluk level	Supporting the members	
Nonpayment of bills for construction of toilets thus hindering the goal of reaching ODF	Evidences of nonpayment of bills to be collected and thereon will be taken up at the taluk level	Evidences required	Partners could help in collating the evidences	
Mounting pressure to resign from President’s post inspite of the amendment to KPR Act increasing the tenure from 30 months to 5 years	Needs to be looked at with proper evidences and case studies to highlight the issue at the state level.	The members need to look at the issue and bring it up with proper evidence	Partners need to look at such issues and document the same	
Ensuring effective implementation of the recent amendments to Karnataka Panchayat Raj Act, 1993	Press meets could be held across the blocks. Letters could be forwarded to the officials. Further, these will be addressed at the advocacy meet proposed to be held in December 2016 at the state level	Members to stress their demand through press meet and letters	Letters to be drafted across the blocks	
Ensuring regular payments of sitting fees and honorarium are being made			Bring out the evidence and document the same for further follow up	
Ensure safe and secure environment to EWRs in the Grama Panchayat				
Giving more importance to Akrama – Sakrama				
Avail permission to attend KDP meetings				

With reference to the housing it was decided that members get 4-5 instances of such interference by the Parliamentarians to suffice the issue. Through the vast membership of SUGRAMA, the members can take up a signature campaign across all taluks to advocate for providing provisions and food grains as against the cash transfers. While SUGRAMA has the evidence of Poornima's resignation to Presidents post, Somashekar affirmed that taking cue of such cases, after the visit to the Minister in July 2016, a letter was forwarded to all GPs to take measures to ensure the amendment from 30 months to 5 years is duly taken



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**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
RTGS/NEFT

ADVOCACY BY SUGRAMA ON PDS VS. CASH TRANSFERS:



GLIMPSES OF PARTICIPATION OF SUGRAMA MEMBERS



NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

