

PANCHAYATI DHWANI

A Quarterly Publication

July 2015
Issue 1



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Greetings from our Team

Centre for Decentralised Local Governance (CDLG), Avantika Foundation works towards developing the organisation capacity of local governments, presently focusing on Gram Panchayats. We believe that true decentralisation is as much an outcome of effective institutions of governance, as it is about citizen empowerment. Leveraging organisation development principles, our work focuses on strengthening the supply side, i.e., to strengthen institutions.

We are launching this quarterly publication to provide an insight into our work with local governments. We endeavour to bring you interesting stories from the grassroots, share our learnings with a view to inform policy, and highlight challenges that we need to collectively ponder over. We welcome your feedback and suggestions!

The Mulbagal Project

Inking the partnership with RDPR, Karnataka:

The Mulbagal project is a step forward towards the strengthening of Gram Panchayat organisations in Karnataka and has emerged from the Gram Panchayat Organisation Development (GPOD) framework, developed at CDLG. The GPOD is a framework towards strengthening the institutional capacity of Gram Panchayats to enable them to deliver their mandate as per the 73rd Constitutional Amendment.

The Mulbagal project is a two-year partnership between the Department of Rural Development and Panchayath Raj (RDPR), Government of Karnataka and Avantika Foundation, with the support of the Government of India under the Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan (RGPSA). It was finalized through the signing of a MoU between RDPR and CDLG on December 30, 2014.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Greetings from our Team	1
The Mulbagal Project	1
Highlights	2
Project structure and GPOD Modules	2
Learnings and Challenges	3
Media Gallery	4
Upcoming schedule	4



Mr. Zulfikarullah, Director, Panchayati Raj-II and Mr TR Raghunandan, Founder and Mentor of Avantika Foundation, after signing the MoU

Objectives of the Partnership:

- ❖ To create a strong applicable framework for strengthening the Gram Panchayat organization in an entire taluka. The project covers all 30 Gram Panchayats in the taluka, comprising 389 villages and serving a population of 2.02 lakh citizens.
- ❖ To leverage skills and experience of ANSSIRD, Mysuru to develop a standardized training curriculum for replication of the GPOD to other Gram Panchayats.
- ❖ To showcase the results of strong Gram Panchayat organizations (enhanced clarity of roles, structures, performance of meetings, management of social infrastructure, comprehensive planning and budgeting).
- ❖ To leverage existing government systems such as PlanPlus, Panchatantra, Panchamitra etc, strengthen citizen engagement, by leveraging existing legal provisions & to develop recommendations for a better interface between Gram Panchayats and Taluka Panchayats.

Gram Panchayats in Mulbagal taluka have been in transition owing to the Gram Panchayat elections that took place on June 5, 2015. Direct work with the newly-elected members will thus begin in the second half of 2015. In the first half of the year, the GPOD-Mulbagal project has focused on building the institutional architecture for the implementation of the GPOD and development of the GPOD training curriculum along with the Abdul Nazir Sab State Institute of Rural Development (ANSSIRD), Mysuru.

Highlights

- ❖ **Formation and regular functioning of Project Management Committee (PMC):** The Project Management Committee, responsible for planning and execution of the GPOD project has been instituted in the Kolar Zilla Panchayat's office. The PMC held its first meeting under the chairmanship of CEO, Kolar in February 2015. The Executive Head of the project is from Avantika Foundation. The PMC has been meeting on a monthly basis ensuring quick resolution of issues and adherence to project plan.

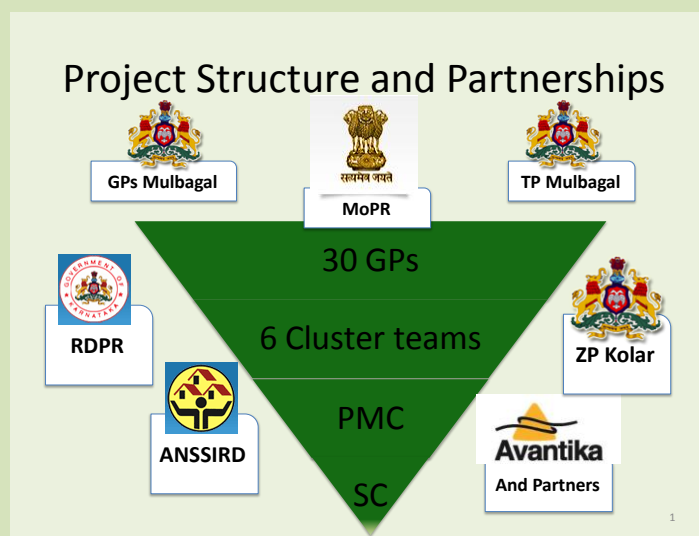


Illustration of the Project Structure & Partnerships

- ❖ **First quarterly meeting of State-level Steering Committee:** The Steering Committee that will provide thought leadership to the Mulbagal project was constituted through a government order and held its first meeting on April 10, 2015. The Steering Committee was chaired by the Additional Chief Secretary, RDPR, Mr T M Vijay Bhaskar, and Jt. Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Ms Sarada Muraleedharan is the nominee from the Government of India. The coordinator of the meeting is Mr SM Zulfiquarulla, Director Panchayati Raj, RDPR.

- ❖ **Staff recruitment:** Six field associates (FAs) who will be in charge of implementing the GPOD in a cluster of five Gram Panchayats, and an Assistant Project Manager have been recruited. ANSSIRD, Mysore has also identified six resource persons for the GPOD project.

❖ GPOD TRAINING CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The GPOD is designed as a scalable and replicable framework. A standardized training curriculum consisting of seven modules is thus being developed along with the ANSSIRD to facilitate replication of the GPOD to other Gram Panchayats.

Module 1 of the GPOD training curriculum has been produced, printed and disseminated to key stakeholders (Panchayat Development Officers (PDOs), FAs, ANSSIRD resource persons) who will be responsible for implementing the GPOD framework in Mulbagal.

GPOD implementation modules



Illustration of GPOD implementation modules

Module 1 focuses on environment building in Gram Panchayats and covers the following subjects– Orientation to the GPOD framework, Gram Panchayat resolution to work with the GPOD, Kala Jathas in each Gram Panchayat, process of selection of a Gram Panchayat cluster representative to facilitate the project institution, and training on administration of three tools to understand the current status of Panchayats: institution and stakeholder mapping, baseline data collection, Gram Panchayats’ rating on its functioning.

The production of the curriculum was preceded by curriculum development workshops that involved deliberation and critiquing of the GPOD framework by participants. The workshops have been well attended by Gram Panchayat members, resource persons from ANSSIRD, Mysuru, PDOs, HR professionals from PANARC Consulting and Avantika Foundation staff.



Former Gram Panchayat member of Dibburhalii, Nataraju pins up his Vision at a workshop

Four curriculum development workshops have been held as per the below schedule:

- ❖ **March 16–17, 2015** at Skill School, Kengeri: A critique of the GPOD framework and consolidation of critical learnings from the Action Research phase
- ❖ **April 16–17, 2015** at ANSSIRD, Mysuru: To develop methodology for developing GP Vision and Mission
- ❖ **May 12–14, 2015** ANSSIRD, Mysuru: To lay the framework for process mapping and

developing accountability structures in Gram Panchayats. The workshop also discussed the tools for Gram Panchayat rating and baseline data collection

- ❖ **June 25–27, 2015** at ANSSIRD, Mysuru: Workshop focusing on change management frameworks and techniques in the context of the Gram Panchayat.

Learnings and Challenges

The GPOD–Mulbagal project has been a learning process all along, since its conception. Our journey started on July 9, 2013, when we presented the proposed framework to the State Planning Department, Government of Karnataka, chaired by the then Principal Secretary, Mr T M Vijay Bhaskar. Two State Executive Committee (SEC) and three Central Executive Committee (CEC) meetings later, the project was approved as the first Innovation project under the RGPSA on July 8, 2014. After further consultations with state agencies, the MoU was signed between Avantika Foundation and RDPR, Karnataka. The total cost of the two-year project being Rs.2.63 crores, Avantika Foundation contributes Rs.62.4 lakhs, and remaining Rs.2.07 crores is being funded under the RGPSA.

As the project goes live in the 30 Gram Panchayats in the first week of July, it has taken us six months to set up the project structure and the cluster teams for the field. Curriculum development has been an ongoing exercise, where we collaborate with different organisations that work with Gram Panchayats. The positive support from Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Gol and the State agencies, RDPR, ANSSIRD, ZP and TP, has been very encouraging. As the project gets implemented in the field, we look forward to working with the Gram Panchayats, who will undoubtedly add invaluable inputs to further strengthening the GPOD framework.

The GPOD-Mulbagal project and its potential to transform Gram Panchayats in Karnataka have been favourably featured in leading print and online media publications in English and Kannada. We are proud to share some of the articles.

For more press coverage, kindly log onto <http://avantikafoundation.org/newsroom>

Media Gallery

Please find below, links to some of the media articles which showcased the project for strengthening Gram Panchayat organisations in Karnataka:

- ❖ Innovative pilot panchayat project in 30 GPs of Mulbagal–The Hindu, January 13, 2015

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/bangalore/innovative-pilot-panchayat-project-in-30-gps-of-mulbagal/article6785039.ece>

- ❖ GPOD: Bringing management principles to gram panchayats–India Together, January 28, 2015

<http://indiatogether.org/gram-panchayat-karnataka-strengthened-by-management-principles-government>

- ❖ GP members to launch ‘no Cash for votes’ during polls–The Hindu, February 24, 2015

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/karnataka/gp-members-to-launch-no-cash-for-votes-during-polls/article6929182.ece>



Illustration of Media Articles on project for strengthening of Gram Panchayat Organisations

- ❖ Despite corruption a ray of hope–Prajavani, May 24, 2015

<http://www.prajavani.net/article/%E0%B2%AD%E0%B3%8D%E0%B2%B0%E0%B2%B7%E0%B3%8D%E0%B2%9F-%E0%B2%95%E0%B3%82%E0%B2%AA%E0%B2%A6%E0%B2%B2%E0%B3%8D%E0%B2%B2%E0%B3%82-%E0%B2%87%E0%B2%A6%E0%B3%86-%E0%B2%AC%E0%B3%86%E0%B2%B3%E0%B2%95%E0%B3%81#.VWakvoaPUOw.gmail>

- ❖ Begin with the Gram Sabha– The Indian Express, June 04, 2015

<http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/begin-with-gram-sabha/99/>

Coming Up...

The Gram Panchayat elections in Mulbagal taluka took place on June 05, 2015, and new members have recently taken charge.

We welcome the newly elected Gram Panchayat representatives and look forward to an exciting few months ahead.

Upcoming Schedule (July–September 2015)

- ❖ Environment building activities in the field
- ❖ Training cluster teams and PDOs on first and second GPOD steps: Environment building and Developing Panchayat Vision and Mission
- ❖ Environment building activities in 30 GPs
- ❖ Developing Vision and Mission in the 30 Gram Panchayats

We would love to hear your feedback. You could reach out to us through:

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