

# GRAAM

Grassroots Research And Advocacy Movement

An initiative of Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement



# ANNUAL REPORT

2012 - 2013

*“No Office in this land is more important  
than that of being a citizen”*

**Felix Frankfurter**

## **GRAAM ANNUAL REPORT 2012 - 2013**

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# Abbreviations

ADR	Association for Democratic Reforms	NCPRI	National Campaign for People's Right to Information
ANM	Auxiliary Nurse Midwife	NDPS	Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act
APF	Azim Premji Foundation	NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ARS	Arogya Raksha Samiti	NGP	Nirmal Grama Puraskara
ASHA	Accredited Social Health Activist	NRHM	National Rural Health Mission
AYUSH	Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy	NRLM	National Rural Livelihood Mission
CPDL	Centre for PWDs Development and Livelihood	PAC	Public Affairs Centre
CSO	Civil Society Organization	PDO	Panchayath Development Officer
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility	PHC	Primary Health Centre
DHO	District Health Officer	PHFI	Public Health Foundation of India
DPMO	District Programme Management Officer	PMC	Planning and Monitoring Committee
ELM	Educational Leadership and Management	PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
FANSA	Freshwater Action Network South Asia	PWD	People with Disabilities
FGD	Focus Group Discussion	RCH	Reproductive and Child Health
GP	Gram Panchayath	RDPR	Rural Development and Panchayath Raj
GRAAM	Grassroots Research And Advocacy Movement	RRI	Regional Resource Institute
HR	Human Resource	RTI	Right to Information
IBP	International Budget Partnership	SC	Scheduled Caste
IHDS	India Human Development Survey	SDMC	School Development and Monitoring Committee
ILR	ILR: Industrial and Labor Relations (refers to ILR School, Cornell University)	SERP	Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty
IVRS	Interactive Voice Response System	SLDP	School Leadership Development Programme
JSY	Janani Suraksha Yojana	SOCHARA	Society for Community Health Awareness Research and Action
KEA	Karnataka Evaluation Authority	ST	Scheduled Tribe
KSRLPS	Karnataka State Rural Livelihood Promotion Society	STEPS	Strengthening of Tobacco-control Efforts through innovative Partnerships and Strategies in Karnataka
KSRLM	Karnataka State Rural Livelihood Mission	SVYM	Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement
MNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act	THO	Taluk Health Officer
MoA	Memorandum of Association	TKM	Toyota Kirloskar Motor Private Limited
NASSCOM	National Association of Software and Services Companies	TSC	Total Sanitation Campaign
NCAER	National Council of Applied Economic Research	V-LEAD	Vivekananda Institute for Leadership Development
		VHSC	Village Health and Sanitation Committee
		ZP	Zilla Panchayath

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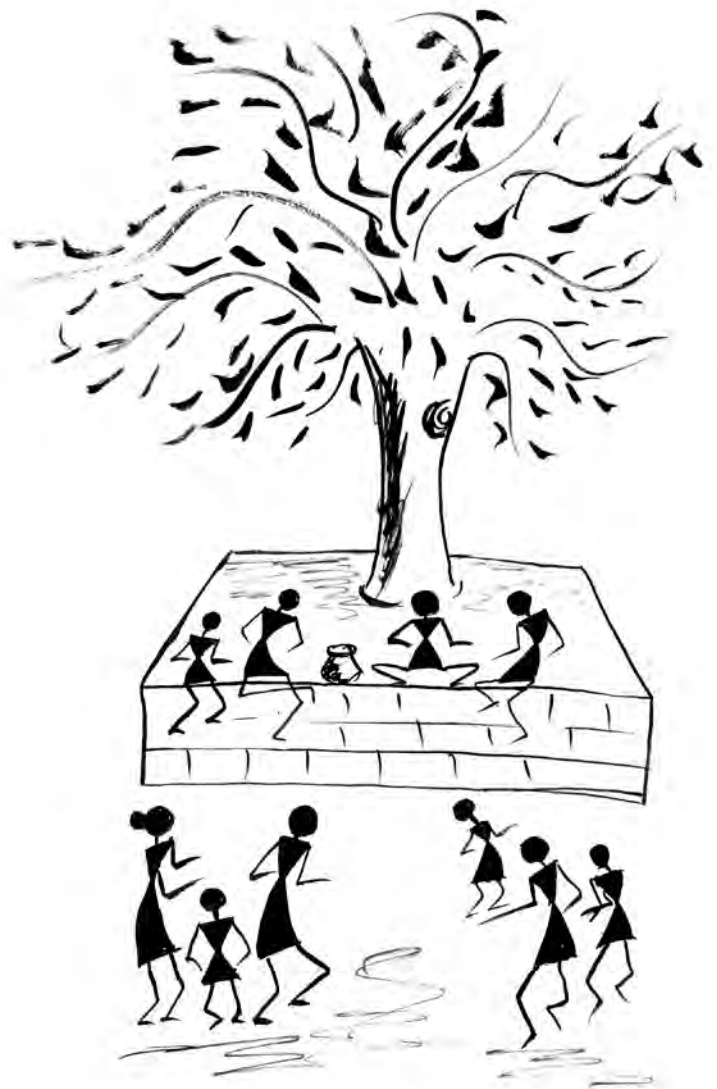
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# From the Founder's desk

Dear friends,

The idea of GRAAM was conceived from the experience of finding it challenging to combine academic scholarship and research with the experience of the development practitioner. Though there was so much that each had to offer to the other, it was very difficult to get them to have a dialogue in a language that was acceptable to both. It was amidst this that we felt that GRAAM could be that bridge, the meeting point where empirical research gets built on grassroots experience at the community level. An organization where academicians worked hand in hand with practitioners in the field and combined their knowledge, expertise and experience for the larger good of the communities that they served. We at GRAAM also understood that a lot of activism is driven more by emotions than evidence. We felt that GRAAM had to be that unique research organization where the outcome of research would lead to advocating policy change. And this advocacy would be driven by the philosophy of partnership rather than confrontation. The last two years and more have reinforced our conviction in this process. It has shown us what is possible and what is difficult. We have been overwhelmed by the response that we have received from our many partners – Government agencies, research bodies and Universities. We are now more than convinced that one can combine research and advocacy to bring out constructive change in the development landscape of India.

The last year has also seen us diversifying our approaches and work. GRAAM has worked in the health, education, livelihood and the CSR space. It is attempting to build interdisciplinary teams and working towards building a knowledge base in issues revolving around Communities and their development. As we grow and mature we are slowly building on institutionalizing the role of our Advisory Board and Fellows of GRAAM. The intellectual environment within GRAAM has also attracted Interns from different Universities and Public Policy Schools both within India and outside. We are now able to host doctoral students earnestly pursuing research in the domains that GRAAM operates in. For an organization as young as a little more than 2 years, it does sound a lot. But our young, energetic and committed team has been able to do all this and more. They are



keen on understanding Community Governance and the dynamics prevalent in rural India. They would like to network and build relationships with similar Institutes from around the world and share this knowledge and experience. They will also be working in the neighbouring state of Andhra Pradesh and embarking on the first International Collaboration with Cornell University, USA.

The constant evolution of GRAAM and its team members allows us to experiment with rather unconventional administrative processes. Being democratic without becoming chaotic means that the entire team has to redefine how we operate, how we interact with each other and with the outside world and how we are able to appreciate interdependence and reciprocity at a very deep but operational level. Though we are still a long way from building the ideal environment wherein the individual can flourish amidst the collective, we are confident that we can reach there with the support, encouragement, and participation of our partners, advisors, fellows and well-wishers.

As we present what we did and achieved in the last one year, we are looking forward to a very enriching and challenging year ahead.

Thank you,



**Dr. R Balasubramaniam**

Founder & Executive Director, GRAAM

Founder & Chairman, SVYM

October 2013



# GRAAM: An idea in action



Community consultation is a key aspect of GRAAM's approach. GRAAM team members interact with the community at a tribal hamlet in HD Kote, Mysore.

Over the course of more than two years, GRAAM has evolved from an idea to a distinct reality and in this process, the approach and focus are constantly being refined and strengthened on the one hand and also challenged and proven on the other.

GRAAM's approach flows from a spirit of enquiry and understanding of 'development' as a constant expansion of human capabilities. This understanding further guides the organization's vision and mission.

## GRAAM VISION

*Facilitating development that expands the capabilities and potential for growth within communities at the grassroots level, while respecting individual rights and values.*

## The GRAAM Approach

The inherent and visible components of GRAAM's approach include

- I. **Community participation:** We believe that community participation is a desired and necessary part of development. To capture the insights, information, knowledge, and experience that communities possess, we constantly strive to structure community consultation in our research activities.
- II. **Going beyond the data:** The field staff are our window to community perspectives and it is therefore essential that we not only consolidate the data they bring from the field, but also capture the experience, their perspective and views to draw a holistic picture. The community consultation process in GRAAM has been evolving primarily with the aid of the inputs and insights brought in by the field staff.



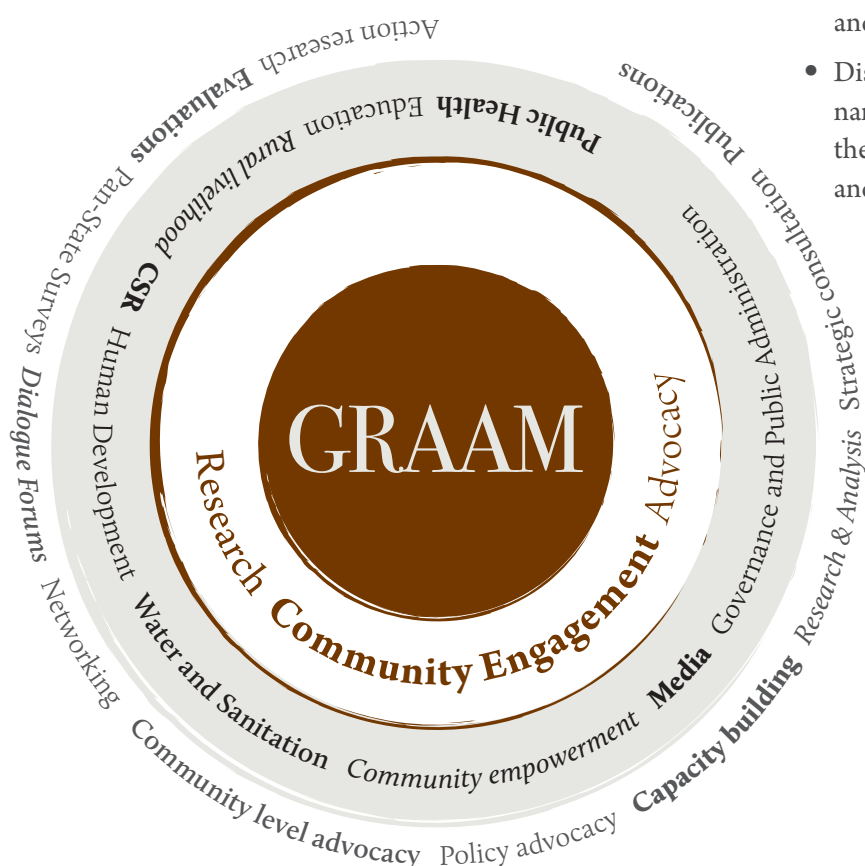
III. **Linkage to advocacy:** Most of the research, evaluation and consultation activities are linked to advocacy at various levels. We recognize the importance of utilizing advocacy opportunities that come in different ways and being prepared with empirical evidence drawn from not only GRAAM's projects but other studies as well.

IV. **Dialogue and reflection:** GRAAM's approach is also subject to questioning and challenge internally and there are forums such as the annual retreat and monthly staff meeting Grama Chinthana wherein the team engages in dialogue and reflection to make GRAAM's processes holistic, democratic and better. GRAAM's approach was also reflected upon during its first Advisory Board meeting which yielded specific directions in which the organization ought to move ahead.

## Milestones

Armed with the approach described above, GRAAM has crossed several milestones in its journey since its inception in January 2011.

- Starting from a team of 3 people including an intern, GRAAM is now a buzzing team of more than 15 professionals with diverse backgrounds, experience and interests.
- State level evaluations and studies have been undertaken and completed in the sectors of social security, health, sanitation and public distribution system.
- GRAAM has engaged in strategic consultations with the state government and private sector
- Engagement with top-notch universities and research institutes around the world has provided GRAAM with not only access to high quality research inputs, but also forums for recognition of GRAAM's work
- GRAAM has begun collaborative efforts with development sector bodies that have taken the scope of our work beyond Karnataka
- GRAAM has successfully used platforms to share its work and advocate on issues through
  - Presentation of GRAAM's work at National level symposiums and workshops
  - Engagement with state level media and chief editors of leading media houses
  - Engagement with political parties at the regional and national level
  - Discussion forums including workshops and seminars involving CSOs, bureaucrats, professionals in the corporate sector, community representatives and elected representatives.



# Projects

In the year 2012-13 GRAAM's projects have spanned different sectors including public health, sanitation, education, livelihoods, human development and corporate social responsibility, among others. The nature of projects undertaken also encompassed a spectrum comprising evaluations, action-research, pan-state surveys, advocacy at grassroots and policy level and strategic consultation. While some projects were carried forward from the previous year, there were several new projects initiated in 2012-13. Working with new partners and expansion of the thematic areas of work and a scope for applying multi-disciplinary approach have been some of the key features of the newer projects.

## Arogyashreni – Technology enabled community monitoring of health services

**Theme:** Public health, Action research, Community monitoring, Capacity building of communities, Advocacy

**Duration:** April 2011 to March 2014

**Project Partners:** Primary Health Centres, Mahiti Infotech

**Arogyashreni is a project aimed at capacity building and empowerment of communities to monitor and rank the healthcare services available to them through their Primary Health Centre – the basic functional unit of the rural health system in India.**

The project involves training and capacity building of community members and making them participate in the process of ranking their PHCs with the aid of technology on a periodic basis. The community respondents are part of a committee mandated by the National Rural Health Mission which envisions community participation in health as one of its key components.



*Dialogue between community members and PHC medical staff is a key element of Arogyashreni*

As part of Arogyashreni project, a team of field resource persons orient and train the community members on various aspects of health services and facilities they are entitled to and on the use of technology to respond to a questionnaire. The community members respond to a questionnaire about the availability and quality of services and facilities in their PHCs on their mobile phones using Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS). The responses are then compiled and analysed and district and taluk level ranking cards prepared. The rankings are further disaggregated based on categories of facilities such as infrastructure, medicines availability, RCH services, etc. This disaggregation aids in clearly understanding the areas of improvement for different PHCs.

The project covering 112 PHCs in rural Mysore District has completed its 2nd phase in 2012-13 and is now stepping into its third year of operation. The learning and experience of the first year led to changes in the second year that included

- Choosing the members of PHC Planning and monitoring committee as respondents to the questionnaire as they have a much more direct stake in the functioning of the PHCs
- Reviewing and reducing the number of questions in the questionnaire from 79 to 36
- Changes in the ranking methodology – moving from a simple scoring method to the use of weighted averages to reflect the significance of different performance parameters
- Expanding the scope of dissemination of ranking information to include officials of health department at the district and state health level, public representatives and publishing of ranking cards online

**The most important aspect of the project in the second year was the inclusion of community level advocacy leading to improvements in the PHCs through dialogue between community members and PHC staff.. Despite the challenges faced, there are a significant number of success stories that demonstrate that community participation can be a crucial driver of positive change.**

The project has received positive feedback from the health department officials and in the third year of the project, we would focus on research that would include factors affecting sustainability and scalability of the model.



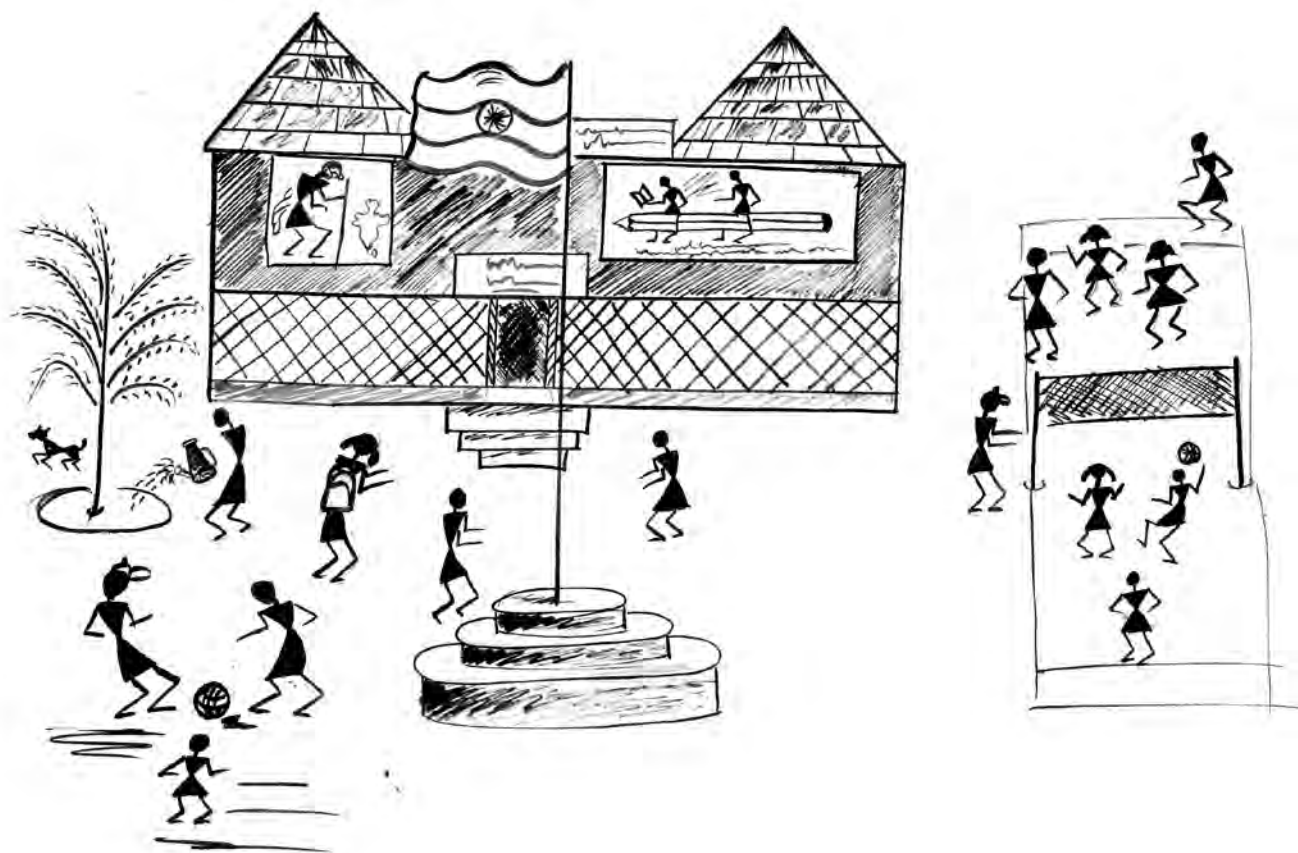
PHCs are the basic functional unit of the rural health system in India - a Primary Health Centre in rural Mysore

*“Community members using telephonic responses to rank the PHCs is a unique endeavour in our public health system. The opportunity to observe and work with the different communities within a Taluk to improve the hospitals has led to a lot of personal growth”*

**Kumar**  
Resource Person, Arogyashreni



# Research in School Leadership Development Program initiative in rural Govt. schools



**Theme:** Educational Leadership, Research and analysis, Behavioral studies

**Duration:** January 2012 to March 2013

**Project Partners:** Azim Premji Foundation

The School Leadership Development Program (SLDP) is a program implemented by Azim Premji Foundation (APF) with the objective of developing leadership among Head Teachers of Government schools leading towards development of their own schools. APF is implementing the program across different districts in Karnataka through locally based partner NGOs who are called Regional Resource Institutes (RRI). SVYM is the RRI implementing the program in Mysore District and GRAAM provides research and advocacy support to the implementation team of SVYM.

The SLDP uses the Training-Application-Coaching (TAC) model for leadership development of HTs. Training provides theoretical inputs followed by their taking up of School Development Initiatives where HTs apply the newly learned concepts in their schools with support and coaching from their facilitators.

The research process was divided into three phases. The first phase was a theoretical understanding of ELM and SLDP. This involved literature survey and interactions with other partners of APF and in events by APF.

**The second phase, an exploratory phase involved understanding of the field to develop research questions. This was done through observation of the delivery of the program, focused group discussions and open ended interviews with the participants. A rating scale was developed and administered to rate the participants on various parameters. The ratings were triangulated with the field notes and classroom observations to raise 3 main research questions.**

- How does the TAC model operate in leadership development in SLDP?
- What are the factors operating in the context of education leadership development in T Narasipura Block?
- What are the possibilities for carrying out advocacy in this area?

## Findings & Outputs

In the 'Training' stage, the participants viz. Head Teachers and Cluster Resource Persons (CRPs) are exposed to ideas such as visioning, educational leadership, stakeholder participation, teacher-cohesion, etc and their relationship to Quality Education. In the 'Application' stage, the HTs are required to apply the new concepts learnt through a process called 'school mapping' in their respective schools wherein they engage with different stakeholders while being 'coached' by the program facilitators.

The dynamics of the relationship between the school and its various stakeholders viz. community, GP, parents and the SDMC could be observed in this stage. The School Mapping exercise has resulted in bringing perspective shifts among the HTs about the community's support to the school. These relationships play a crucial role in how the HTs can exercise their leadership role. After the School Mapping the HTs scoped and planned projects for their schools called School Development Initiatives (SDIs). There were three types of SDIs undertaken by the HTs: School garden, Library and Resource mobilisation.

The SDIs provided a first of its kind opportunity for the HTs to showcase their schools and work in a professional environment and this was a turning point in their leadership development. Our analysis showed that when leadership behaviours were exhibited by the HTs, better results were found in the projects undertaken by them

(measured as 'tangible outcomes' in a ratings scale).

Further, our analysis of data showed that the TAC model supports leadership development slowly and incrementally by creating opportunities to practice new concepts and skills. A detailed report of the study of Roll Out-1 of SLDP is a major output of this phase of ELM research.

It was seen that in addition to classroom facilitation several factors such as policy aspects, personal characteristics of the participants, community dynamics, local governance factors and the professional groups to which the HTs belonged affect leadership behaviour. Based on these findings, a detailed study titled 'A study of factors affecting leadership' has been designed and proposed. This research proposes to examine the *Theory of Planned Behaviour* in studying education leadership development.

## Advocacy observations

During the course of the rollout of SLDP, GRAAM team members observed and noted the different kinds of issues that the schools in the region face. These observations were made during the classroom sessions of the program, school mapping exercises and different discussions with HTs and CRPs. An FGD with select HTs and CRPs was conducted in January 2013 which also threw up issues that need to be addressed. Overall a list of about 30 observations were made, out of which some issues would be selected and a local advocacy action plan would be developed around them.



A discussion with Head Teachers and CRPs of T Narasipura Taluk, Mysore



# Performance evaluation study of NRHM in Karnataka

**Theme:** Public health, Evaluation & Analysis,  
Pan-State survey

**Duration:** November 2011 to March 2013

**Project Partners:** Karnataka Evaluation Authority, Department of Planning, Programme Monitoring and Statistics, Govt. of Karnataka; National Rural Health Mission, Karnataka

**The National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) is one of India's nation-wide flagship programs being implemented since 2005, aimed at improving health care access especially to the rural poor.**

GRAAM undertook a project to evaluate the fund allocation and expenditure under the NRHM in Karnataka and look at the relationship between the fund allocation and expenditure and the status of health in the state at the district level. Based on the findings and analysis, GRAAM would also make recommendations to improve the efficacy of the program.

The evaluation was carried out in two phases. The first phase included literature survey and secondary data analysis to capture the overall fund flow mechanism, disparities in fund allocation, compliance of standard procedures and utilization of funds. The second phase of the project field research was carried out to validate the main findings from Phase I of the study.

Quantitative and qualitative data capture and analysis was carried out with field visits to 150 PHCs across 13 districts and 48 Taluks in the state. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with various health officials at district, taluk and PHC levels. VHSC members, ANMs and ASHAs were extensively interviewed. Further, community involvement in public health at the grassroots level was also examined.



*Interview with President of the ARS in a PHC in Shimoga district, to document community representatives' perspectives on health governance*

In trying to analyse the impact of expenditure on health indicators, numerous interconnected issues that have affected public health were re-explored. The major challenge was to maintain the focus on fund flow and planning while being cognizant of the field realities and suggest pragmatic recommendations.

## Key Findings

The analysis has brought out the following findings among others

- Karnataka's rates of fund utilization have considerably increased from 2009 onwards compared to the years 2005 to 2008.
- Though regional disparities in health are well recognized, planning processes of NRHM in Karnataka do not show long term practical strategies and commitment to reduce the gaps.
- The implementation and expenditure patterns of NRHM are driven by a top-down, stand-alone system with pre-defined priorities, rather than priorities emerging through a bottom-up process.
- NRHM expenditure patterns are 'facility based' rather than 'need based'. As a result, districts with higher number of facilities but comparatively less utilization get more funds than districts with lesser number of facilities. There is no evidence of prioritized fund flow to districts identified as vulnerable.
- Officers have a broad understanding of the goals and strategies of the NRHM but their perceptions of planning and monitoring are limited.
- The presence of field based personnel - ANMs and ASHAs - has majorly contributed towards increasing awareness levels in the communities and improving RCH related process indicators.

## UNIVERSE FOR QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

CATEGORY OF PERSONNEL	NO. INTERVIEWED
DHO/ DPMO	12
THO	30
PHC MO	60
ARS representatives	58
ANM	60
VHSC representatives	45
ASHA	47

## UNIVERSE FOR QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

TYPE OF INSTITUTIONS	NO. VISITED
Taluk Hospitals / CHCs	28
PHCs	150
Sub-centres	237
ASHAs	206
VHSCs	102

## Recommendations

Some of the recommendations for effective and better implementation of the NRHM were

- Capacity building of personnel to understand their roles, leadership, monitoring and planning with a significant focus on community engagement and administrative processes
- Making planning process more meaningful and useful by taking into account local needs and incorporating a decentralized and bottom-up approach towards planning in true spirit
- Addressing the regional disparities through need based funding approach
- Providing better work environments for ANMs and ASHAs and increasing field presence of other health workers
- Strengthening the role of community based organizations as effective monitoring bodies.

**This project is a crucial study for GRAAM as most of its public health advocacy strategy would be centred on the evidence generated from the study.**

# Monitoring of anti-tobacco articles in print media

**Theme:** Public health, Media monitoring

**Duration:** September 2012 to August 2013

**Project partners:** Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI)

GRAAM is one of the implementing partners of the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI) in implementing the STEPS project - Strengthening of Tobacco-control Efforts through innovative Partnerships and Strategies in Karnataka.

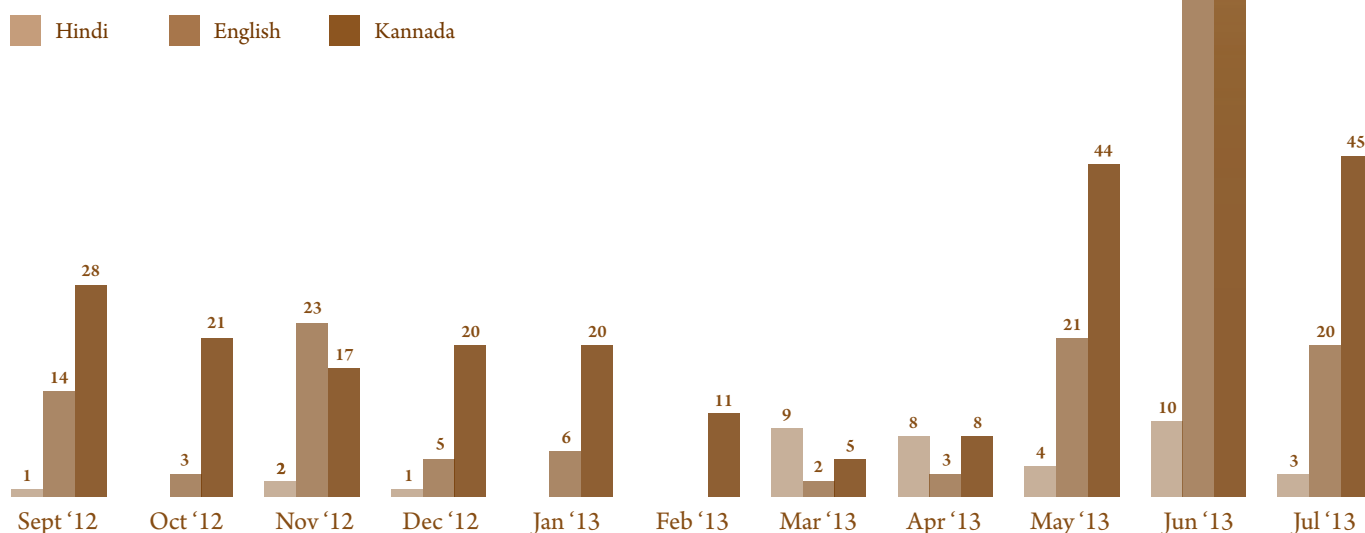
One component of project STEPS is producing a daily digest of newspaper reports on tobacco-related issues. GRAAM sources news articles published in Karnataka's newspapers (of Kannada, English & Hindi languages), including those being published at district level and having circulation of more than 50,000. 15 newspapers (English – 6, Kannada – 8, Hindi – 1) are being monitored. Articles in the local language are translated into English before being sent to PHFI, along with the original clipping.

The summary is useful in gathering the evidence of the extent of the role of media in supporting tobacco-control efforts. This is the second successive year that GRAAM has undertaken this project. This year the project activities were carried out with external support lent by Ms. Meghana, Ms. Archana NT and Mr. Kishore Kumar BV.

The graph below gives a snapshot of the number of anti-tobacco articles collected on a monthly basis.

*It is seen that there is a significant rise in anti-tobacco articles published in the month of June 2013. This is attributed to the proposed ban announced in May 2013 on the sale of gutka and other tobacco products imposed by different states in the country and the observance of May 31 as World No Tobacco Day.*

## NUMBER OF ANTI-TOBACCO ARTICLES COLLECTED ON A MONTHLY BASIS





# India Human Development Survey – II

**Theme:** Human development, Pan-state survey

**Duration:** April 2012 to August 2012

**Project partners:** National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER)

India Human Development Surveys I (2004-5) and II (2011-12) form part of a collaborative research program between researchers from the National Council of Applied Economic Research and University of Maryland. IHDS-II aims to re-interview the nationally representative sample of 41,554 households spread across 33 states and Union Territories of India that were interviewed in IHDS-I. The survey helps in documenting the changes in the life of an Indian household and understand the factors that allow a household to partake the fruits of growth or be left out of the growing economy.



*One of the nearly 4000 households surveyed across Karnataka in the project*



*Informal and open community discussion with villagers in Balaganur GP of Raichur District*

GRAAM partnered with NCAER for the project in Karnataka and undertook the pan-State survey covering 222 locations across 28 districts and reaching out to nearly 4000 families in a 4-month period.

A team of 64 members were trained on survey tools, linking questions, cross verification of responses using indirect methods, conducting survey in the field, communication with the respondents, handling the situation of opposition by the community, using GPRS technology for providing daily updates.

There were 6 sets of questionnaires administered to different respondents in the project. The questionnaires covered people in households, primary schools, health facilities and groups of people in rural locations. There were additional questionnaires for eligible women and skill tests for youth in the households. The surveyors gathered data to understand the way the respondents live, work, educate their children, care for their aged parents, and deal with ill health. The surveyors were also required to respond to phone based progress reports for each location and this was tracked through GPRS.

The survey was monitored to maintain the quality of the data collection. The supervisors tracked the daily schedules of each surveyor and did a thorough verification of all the completed questionnaires. The Survey Co-ordinator and Survey Field Co-ordinator carried out random verification of questionnaires in the field.

As an innovation, 'trackers' were introduced in the project who visited the survey locations ahead of the interview teams and helped in establishing relationship with the community and planning the logistics.

GRAAM succeeded in completing the survey by interviewing 3876 households in the 222 locations. The project was an opportunity for GRAAM to collaborate with a premier research organization like NCAER and be part of an internationally renowned study. It was a learning opportunity to learn about 'Panel Study' design in detail. It was a unique experience to conduct a large scale survey in a short duration. In addition to the scheduled interviews, GRAAM team also conducted open community discussions and informal interactions with community members in different parts of the state.

**It is a matter of pride for GRAAM that the project partners recognized the quality of survey in Karnataka as one of the best among several states where the survey was carried out.**

# Evaluation of CSR activities of Toyota Kirloskar Motor Pvt. Ltd.

**Theme:** Corporate Social Responsibility, Community consultation, Evaluation, Field analysis

**Duration:** June 2012 to December 2012

**In one of its first engagements with the corporate sector, GRAAM carried out an evaluation of the CSR initiatives undertaken by Toyota Kirloskar Motor Pvt. Ltd. (TKM) in the areas surrounding their manufacturing plant in Bidadi near Bangalore.**

The process involved the collection of primary and secondary data of the villages under the 4 GPs in the vicinity of TKM's premises. Field visits were carried out in each of the villages and discussions were held with Self-help group (SHG) members (both men and women), village leaders, youth and school children to understand their needs and their perception of TKM and its community development activities. The team also visited schools, Anganwadis and health centres to identify their needs and assess the extent of support received, if any.

A 4 member team from GRAAM stayed in Ittamadu village throughout the duration of the data collection, which lasted almost 2 months. The stay helped the team build a relationship with the community and experience and understand the lifestyle of the people living in the area. It also helped collect data in a formal and informal manner. The information thus gathered helped to understand the impact and efficiency of TKM's activities and to understand the perception of the company and its community development activities among the villagers.

## Findings

A detailed document on Community Development Initiatives of TKM was submitted in December 2012. It was found that the CSR wing of the company had involved in different activities. Some of these include

- Construction of a school building
- Distribution of bags and notebooks to children of select government schools
- Construction of toilets
- Tree Planting
- Drawing and painting competitions for school children on World Environment Day
- Health Camps in villages
- Awareness activities related to road safety

However, the effectiveness of these activities were limited since the utility was not upto the mark and some efforts were duplicated. It was found that needs analysis was required and based on the analysis, suitable and sustainable initiatives could be suggested.

**Community needs analysis:** With the help of a community expert, a needs analysis was then carried out in the 4 GPs. Subsequently a consultation exercise was also held with the community where the needs identified were placed before the Gram Panchayath. It was here that the needs were validated and new needs also identified.

For instance, Bidadi GP members indicated the need of Solid & Liquid Waste management and a graveyard/crematorium – these were not identified in the needs assessment process earlier.

**Strategy Document:** All these inputs are being considered for a strategy document for community development that is being developed with the help of a management consultant. The document takes into account community needs, capacity of the CSR wing of the company and lays an emphasis on sustainability of the initiatives and involvement of local community in the activities.

*GRAAM's key learning from this project experience is that dialogue between industries and the communities around their establishments is crucial for making the CSR initiatives meaningful and fruitful.*



## Preparation of Manual for empanelment of evaluation agencies

**Theme:** Consultation, Strategy development

**Duration:** July 2012 to March 2013

**Project partners:** Karnataka Evaluation Authority, Dept. of Planning, Program Monitoring and Statistics, Govt. of Karnataka

The Government of Karnataka was one of the first State Governments to evolve a policy on evaluation. The policy envisages that the outcomes of the evaluation should be used for improving program design and implementation. It specifies that schemes with an outlay exceeding Rs.1 crore need to be evaluated atleast once by an external agency during its plan period.

However, there exist several challenges in the current bidding and selection process of agencies which either result in underbidding by agencies eventually leading to substandard outputs, or exclusion of appropriate agencies that can deliver quality reports as per expectations. It is also noticed that different evaluation agencies had a different understanding of the same terms of reference.

GRAAM worked with KEA to develop a manual for selection and empanelment of evaluation consultants to put in place guidelines, indicators and parameters so that the best suited agencies get empanelled and deliver high quality evaluation reports.

**A desk research on the best practices in the global and Indian context was carried out and their applicability was studied while developing the manual for Karnataka. The empanelment manual took into consideration different issues and provided detailed norms for appraisal of the organisation – both technical and financial.**

**Key components:** The basic organisation appraisal includes the statutory documentation, human resources and infrastructure. The technical appraisal includes among others various research studies conducted, publications, sectoral experience, collaborations, and certifications held by the organisation. The financial parameters includes appraisal of basic financial documents, funding partners/clients and their quantum of funding. A precise scoring system of agencies was evolved in the process and this is the key component of the document.

The final draft has been accepted and a government order is awaited for the manual to be used by the Department.

## Preparation of Manual for benchmarking program evaluation or output grading of evaluation reports

**Theme:** Consultation, Strategy development

**Duration:** October 2012 to May 2013

**Project partners:** Karnataka Evaluation Authority, Dept. of Planning, Program Monitoring and Statistics, Govt. of Karnataka

With an aim of putting in place a framework for grading evaluation reports in a scientific and transparent manner, the Karnataka Evaluation Authority has made an effort in developing a manual for benchmarking program evaluations. In this context, GRAAM is providing its strategic consultancy services to the KEA in developing a manual with parameters to determine quality and standard of an evaluation report.

**Literature survey was conducted to understand the practices employed by United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), American National Standards Institute and British Council among others. The draft manual has taken into account several aspects with regard to evaluation and standards and as a result, the document provides an output grading plan and checklist for evaluating the reports. Gaps or limiting factors in assessing the work of the evaluation consultant were also analysed.**

The first draft has been presented to the KEA committee and a copy has been submitted for feedback.

# Preparation of Strategy Focus Document and Process for Establishment of KSRLM Activities in Karnataka

**Theme:** Rural livelihoods, Strategic Consultancy

**Duration:** September 2012 to May 2013

**Project partners:** Department of Rural Development and Panchayath Raj, Govt. of Karnataka

**The Karnataka State Rural Livelihood Mission was established under the Dept. of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj in December 2011. GRAAM has been consulted to develop a strategy focus document for KSRLM, develop an organization structure and organogram for State and District Mission Units and to review MoA / Bylaw of Karnataka State Rural Livelihood Promotion Society (KSRLPS).**

The strategy focus document has been prepared based on literature review, discussions with state and central government officials and consultations with experts and CSOs with notable expertise in rural livelihood activities. Focus group discussions with various stakeholders were carried out and visits were made to State Livelihood Missions of Andhra Pradesh and Bihar to understand the practices and strategies adopted in different places.

The consultative process adopted for the preparation of the document included visits and interactions with

- Mr. Vijaya Kumar, IAS, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India
- Prof. Sankar Datta and the livelihood team at Azim Premji University
- Mr. T. K Jose, former CEO of Kudumbashree – the poverty alleviation programme of the govt. of Kerala
- State RDPR officials
- Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP), Govt of AP in Ananthapur and Chittoor districts
- Bihar Rural Livelihood Mission (Jeevika), Patna, Bihar and Muzzaffarpur districts

These interactions helped in incorporating the best practices from these states in the document and also in ensuring that the spirit of the National Rural Livelihood Mission is adhered to.

Focus group discussions were held to get the inputs of organizations and experts in the field on probable

thematic areas of mission. GRAAM conducted FGDs on two specific issues: a. Inclusion of Marginalized Communities and b. Targeting youth and adolescents under the program, both of which received an overwhelming response and brought out numerous real-life scenarios and challenges that exist while dealing with the specific groups.

The organization structure for KSRLM was developed based on the functional requirements of the mission in the initial phase. The MoA and the internal documents of the KSRLPS were reviewed to ensure coherence and compatibility of the documents towards operationalization of its vision and mission.

GRAAM presented the Strategy Focus Document to the Principal Secretary to the Government, Dept. of Rural Development and Panchayath Raj and other top personnel of the department. The document has been appreciated by the department and GRAAM is continuing to engage with KSRLM in the process of initiating activities under the mission.

In addition, an annual action plan along with the budget was created for the KSRLM. A paper was also submitted to KSRLM on 'NGO participation in KSRLM activities'. The government has accepted and approved the Annual Action Plan prepared by GRAAM for the mission. The activities in the state mission have commenced and the recruitment of staff at the state level and district level personnel follows the recommendations made by GRAAM.

# Evaluation of Nirmal Gram Puraskar awarded Gram Panchayaths in Karnataka

**Theme:** Water and sanitation, Evaluation, Survey, Community consultation

**Duration:** February 2012 to May 2013

**Geographical spread:** 107 GPs across Karnataka

**Partners:** Nirmal Bharath Abhiyan, Dept. of RDPR, Govt. of Karnataka

**The Nirmal Gram Puraskar is an award installed by the state and given to those Gram Panchayaths that have been able to fully stop open defecation in their villages.**

The aim of this evaluation is to study the present status and assess the sustainability of the sanitation in NGP awarded GPs in the State. The evaluation is an effort to elicit characteristics that influence the behaviour and prioritization of the awarded GPs towards safe sanitation. This would help evolving further policy suggestions to keep up the momentum created by efforts like TSC and NGP.

The study will evaluate the GP on the activities carried out under the NGP, the status of infrastructure and its utilization. A sample size of 10% of the total awarded GPs (107 out of 1069) has been selected for physical verifications on the basis of region, year of award, proportion of award winners in a GP and representation from Jananirmal project areas. Based on the objectives and the exploratory nature of this study, a mixture of methods (including quantitative and qualitative methods) has been adopted.

**To understand the efficiency of the GP in its use of available resources and to understand its members' perspectives and prioritization on sanitation, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) at the GP level are conducted involving GP personnel and current members. The information collected in FGDs is verified during village and household surveys.**

Based on the initial field visits an inception report has been prepared and submitted to the Government. Further field visits would proceed subsequently.

The result of this study will give us an understanding of sustenance of sanitation with respect to efficiency of GP governance, status and management of natural resources, the community's involvement and participation in grassroots governance and the interlinkages between these issues. It will also gather deeper insights into issues affecting rural communities in different regions of the state.



*The project team members observing the status of community toilets as part of the evaluation exercise.*

# Preparation of District Human Development Reports of Kodagu and Kolar Districts

**Theme:** Human Development, Research and Analysis, Statistical Analysis, Documentation

**Duration:** 1 year starting November 2012

**Partners:** Human Development Division, Department of Planning, Programme Monitoring and Statistics and Zilla Panchayaths of Kodagu and Kolar Districts

The Government of Karnataka has taken up a very significant step of preparing the District Human Development Reports of all the 30 districts in the state. GRAAM has been commissioned as the Lead Agency for the preparation of District Human Development Reports (DHDRs) for the Districts of Kodagu (Coorg) and Kolar by the Human Development Division of the Department of Planning, Government of Karnataka.

The preparation of DHDRs is a collaborative effort with the Zilla Panchayaths of both the districts and several governmental departments on whose data we have to rely upon for analysis and presentation in the report.

**The report would contain a comprehensive account of the development of the districts taking into account multiple dimensions such as health, education, livelihood, housing and sanitation, gender issues, status of vulnerable communities, environment, governance, etc. GRAAM's endeavours would be towards ensuring that DHDR is not merely a status report, but can be used as a tool for future development planning.**

The basic indices of human development flow from UNDP's concept and guidelines, while the other indices would be done taking into account local factors.

The detailed chapter plans for the report has been prepared and the formats for capturing secondary data from the departments are being developed based on the list of human development indicators. The Census of India data from 1991 and 2001 are also being analyzed. The district development will be studied based on the inter-taluk differences in the development process.

The Zilla Panchayaths have formed sub-committees on different themes such as health, education, livelihood, women and child development, etc comprising officials from concerned departments. Consultative meetings with the sub-committees were held to take their inputs on

data formats, data availability, specific local information, perspectives, etc.

## A snapshot of the key indicators

CATEGORIES	INDICATORS
Health	Infant mortality rate, Maternal mortality rate, ANC registered, Immunization
Livelihood	Work participation rate, percentage of workers in each sectors, cropping intensity, decadal growth rate of employees
Education	Literacy, Dropout rate, SSLC & PUC pass percentage, enrolment rate, Transition rate, Pupil-teacher ratio
Housing , water and sanitation	Households with pucca houses, households provided with house sites, household with assets and amenities, Gram panchayaths selected for Nirmal Gram Puraskar awards
Participation indicators	Elected representatives in rural and urban local bodies, women and SC, ST representatives in rural urban local bodies
Demographic	Decadal population growth, Population density, Sex ratio

This project is an opportunity to thoroughly employ GRAAM's multi-disciplinary approach with almost the entire team being engaged in different sections of the development of the report and collaboratively working to deliver a product that is consistent in quality and depth throughout.

*The accuracy and reliability of the data provided by government departments is a critical link in this project as a significant amount of analysis would be done on this data.*



## ...in pictures



*From forests to villages to cities, the India Human Development Survey II project gave our team an opportunity to visit all kinds of places across the state of Karnataka, understand people's lifestyles, regional and cultural diversity in addition to issues of development in various parts of the state. In most places, the team members were well received and were touched by the hospitality and warmth that people even with meagre means offered.*



*'School Mapping' is an important milestone in the course of leadership development under SLDP wherein a school HT demonstrates her or his leadership ability by conducting the event and in the process reaching out to stakeholders in school development like never before. The uniqueness of the exercise lies in bringing the parent community, teachers, students, Gram Panchayath members, local leaders and Government officials all under one roof at the same time to dialogue. The experience of facilitating such an exercise itself can be transformational for the Head Teacher.*



# Advocacy Efforts

GRAAM has successfully stepped up its advocacy efforts in the past year and it has taken the shape of specific actions from a stage of initial concepts. From community level advocacy to advocacy at the state and the national level, GRAAM has made small but significant inroads into making its voice heard. Further, GRAAM's advocacy efforts have not only been multi-pronged, but multi-sectoral as well.

GRAAM recognizes that advocacy action and impact cannot necessarily be constricted into time-frames and there is always a necessity to respond to the circumstances as well as opportunities presented by the external world. At GRAAM, it is also realized and reiterated that advocacy needs sustained action at multiple levels viz. community, policy-makers, the political class and the media. In 2012-13, GRAAM has endeavoured to touch these different layers through various initiatives.

## Community level advocacy

The process of engaging with communities is a key feature of many of GRAAM's projects. However, community level advocacy was the primary component of the two specific projects that are described below.

### i] Health Action Plan with VHSCs

GRAAM had concluded a study of Tracking of NRHM Funds (JSY, Unaided and Maintenance) in Mysore District in 2011 with the support of International Budget Partnership. In addition to the issues with regard to timeliness and disbursement of funds under NRHM, the study experience had brought to light the gaps that exist in planning processes at the village and the PHC levels among others.

As a follow-up to this project, GRAAM undertook a community level advocacy activity that involved engagement with 3 VHSCs and preparing their health plans. The VHSCs chosen are under the purview of S Kallahalli PHC, one of the PHCs chosen for the study sample. They included Kallahalli, Maddur and Kadanahalli. Of these, two VHSCs have additional mandate of supporting one non-revenue village each and therefore our work spanned 5 villages.

The process of preparation of health plan commenced in January 2012 with PRA exercises conducted in the 5 villages. For a period of about 5 months, GRAAM team engaged with the community in recording detailed village data, identifying issues and challenges pertaining to health, drafting and reviewing health action plans and also earmarking priorities. 5 village health plans were submitted to Harohalli GP President and PDO in presence of VHSC members, grassroots health workers and other community members in May 2012. Copies of the plan and detailed village maps were also given to the PHC, Anganwadis and GP members.

**GRAAM was committed to ensuring that the efforts in developing the plans are taken to the next level by the community and therefore decided to continue work in the 5 villages despite no external donor support. The focus of the project now was to ensure that VHSC meetings take place regularly and the issues covered in the plan become the topic of discussions.**

Over a period of approximately 9 months, the follow-up efforts and continued engagement with the VHSCs and other community members of the villages under

Harohalli GP yielded the following results

- Improvement in frequency of VHSC meetings in the villages where we worked. When we interacted with the ASHAs of other villages that came under the purview of the said PHC, we learnt that the VHSC meetings were extremely irregular there.
- The data consolidated in the village health plan was maintained well at the Gram Panchayath and was also referred to while making other village plans. It was perhaps the first such compilation of village data and map and served as a useful reference for planning.
- We have been able to see discussions in VHSC meetings about topics other than untied funds.

**Challenges:** The process had several challenges as well with mobilization of community members being the most significant one. Though the response from the community improved over a period of time, we were unable to get the community to create and adopt a responsibility matrix for taking up specific actions in the health plan.

Positively, the GP President and PDO requested us to facilitate the preparation of such health plans in all the villages of the GP.

It would take longer and more sustained efforts to see changes such as bottom-up planning actually in place, but we believe that is a step in the right direction and the learning from the experience will certainly help in planning other community initiatives in GRAAM better. As a concluding step to the program, GRAAM would offer to conduct capacity building program for preparation of Village Health Plans to the GP members and VHSC members.



*Community representatives submit the Village Health Action plan prepared by them to the GP President at Harohalli GP*

## ii] Arogyashreni

Community level advocacy was taken up as a major feature of the Phase II of this project in addition to community response to questionnaire and IVRS that was used to rank the PHCs of Mysore District (rural).

18 PHCs were identified for intensive advocacy work at the community level. The Planning and Monitoring Committee members of these PHCs are not only required to answer the questionnaire, but are also encouraged to conduct regular meetings, discuss the issues about the PHC and try to resolve issues that could be addressed by them locally. The project field-team members coordinate these meetings and facilitate the discussion and creation of this forum of community members and their respective PHC's Medical Officer towards building good relationships and making people think and contribute according to their strengths.

**It was important for us to choose those issues that can be addressed mostly at the local level, so that the community notices visible changes in short spans of time. This is expected to boost their confidence and the belief that community involvement can bring change.**

Over the last year, we have been able to note visible changes in at least 15 of these 18 PHCs and even in some PHCs that were not identified for intensive advocacy work. The changes range from appointment of doctors, procurement of urgent medicines to infrastructural improvements.



*Community advocacy program at Vyasrarajapura PHC in Mysore District as part of Arogyashreni project*

## STORIES OF CHANGE

### KALALE PHC NANJANGUDU TALUK

This PHC faced a problem of inconsistent availability of the doctor. In the first meeting held in October 2012, the community members discussed this issue and the Gram Panchayath Vice President spoke to the District Health Officer regarding the issue. This was further followed up by a telephonic discussion with Taluk Health Officer later in the same month, but the response was not favourable.

Not losing hope, one of the members of the Planning and Monitoring Committee and the project resource person visited the THO in person and presented the urgency of the situation. As a result, the in-charge Ayurvedic doctor for the PHC was given full-charge in the same month itself. However, there were issues of the doctor charging money from patients with the justification that they were needed for medicines, as medicines were out of stock. This matter was taken up in the Gram Sabha held in December 2012 and subsequently, a lady doctor was appointed to Kalale PHC and has been discharging her duties to the satisfaction of the community.

In addition to resolving the issue of availability of doctor in the PHC, the Gram Panchayath was also able to give new water connection to the PHC, thus addressing the drinking water issue that the hospital was facing.

### MULLURU PHC HD KOTE TALUK

Despite being a 24 x 7 PHC, Mullur did not have a permanent doctor appointed as a result of which, the health services to the people were not delivered as required. The first advocacy meeting was held in November 2012 and was attended by Gram Panchayat President, members of Planning and Monitoring committee and other members, along with the doctor who was temporarily in-charge of the PHC.

The doctor found it difficult to work in two PHCs and conduct other field visits in all the villages under the purview of two PHCs. As the services were affected, the doctor himself insisted that people come forward and demand for the urgent requirement of permanent doctor for Mulluru PHC. The PMC members discussed this issue and escalated it to Zilla Panchayath member who persuaded with the Taluk Health Officer and now there is a permanent doctor appointed at Mullur PHC.

### MADAPURA PHC HD KOTE TALUK

This PHC had several issues such as lack of water, non-availability of lab facility and compound wall. The first advocacy meeting was held in October 2012 and it was attended by Gram Panchayath president, other members of the GP and PMC members. All the three issues were discussed in the meeting and relevant decisions were taken.

The water supply issue was rectified by replacing the damaged pipelines within a few days since the meeting and it was also decided that the compound wall would be built with NREGA funds. For the construction of a room for lab and to buy the necessary equipment, the community members were successful in getting a grant of Rs. 100,000 released from the Zilla Panchayath by constant follow-up with the local ZP member. The plan and estimation for the construction of the lab has been finalized and the construction is presently underway.

*"The questionnaire used by the community representatives in Arogyashreni project has helped them understand the minimum services that a PHC should offer and has facilitated discussion on how to fulfil the gaps in services. The project has also given opportunities for dialogues and improving our skills. I am happy to be working for this project."*

**Mangala**



## Policy level efforts

### NDPS Act

GRAAM engaged in the facilitation of bringing together stakeholders to amend certain provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985. The amendment seeks to ensure the availability of essential narcotic medicines to patients while upholding regulations on preventing misuse and diversion. The amendment also seeks to have a uniform national policy on the selected medicines.

Together with concerned stakeholders, discussions were held with MPs from across different political parties and also with key bureaucrats in the Ministries of Health as well as Finance to bring about awareness and highlight the importance of the amendments required. The amended act is currently listed for parliamentary discussion and approval. The Bill, if approved would bring in relief to hundreds of thousands of patients who need the medicines but are prohibited because of the antiquated NDPS Act.

### Policy for chronic diseases

In the year 2012-13, Dr. R Balasubramaniam has been a member of Karnataka Knowledge Commission's Mission group on Public Health and Department of Planning's Expert Group on Health. He has been able to make an active contribution to the State's effort in bringing out a policy for chronic diseases.

### Recommendations made by Karnataka Knowledge Commission's Mission Group on Public Health

The Knowledge Commission's Mission Group on Public Health was entrusted with the task of making a situation analysis of public health challenges and systems in Karnataka and suggest appropriate recommendations to address the gaps. The group made the following recommendations to the State

- Increase the public spending on drugs from 7% to 15% of government expenditure on health care
- Have an efficient and reliable medicine supply systems, reconfigure medicine procurement and supply chain system through a centralized procurement and decentralized distribution model

- To "develop an Urban Primary Health Policy to focus on multi-sectoral services through a primary health care approach reaching the urban poor and marginalized"
- To "evolve an integrative AYUSH and Public Health Mission to develop a plural public health system consisting of AYUSH and Public Health professionals"
- To "impart public health skills and capacities at all levels of the public health and primary health care system to the training modules"

### State Youth Policy

Karnataka State Youth Policy was drafted and submitted in November 2012 by the Department of Youth Services and Sports and Karnataka Knowledge Commission State Government. Dr. R Balasubramaniam was a member of the steering committee of the State Youth policy. The policy's vision is to Reach, Engage and Empower the youth of Karnataka in facilitating the all-round development of the state, nation and the world.

### Implementation of Forest Rights Act

Dr. R Balasubramaniam is a member of the Lok Adalat on Ecology and Environment as an expert on tribal issues. In this capacity, a note was prepared and submitted to the Hon'ble Lok Adalat on the issues surrounding the implementation of Forest Rights Act and the status of forest based tribals in Mysore District. Recommendations have also been made that primarily call for the implementation of the act in a humane and consultative manner.

Some of the key issues touched upon include the correct identification of deserving beneficiaries, coordination between different departments, stress on community applications for forest rights, and clarity on the implementation when multiple laws are in place concurrently.

### Performance Evaluation and Results Framework for Government Departments

Dr. R Balasubramaniam is a member on two Ad Hoc task forces of the Government of Karnataka – one on health, family welfare and medical education and the other on the Social welfare departments that include SCs, STs, Minorities, Women and Child Welfare. He lent his expertise to different departments on performance evaluation and the usage of a results framework for its processes.

This involves reviewing the preparation of annual Review Framework documents for these departments. The role of the task forces includes review, monitoring and recommendation of changes to the documents and also overseeing the achievement of results.

The objective of the engagement is to empower the departments to understand performance and its measurement and use it as a planning and evaluation tool and thereby improve performance.

## State Livelihood Mission

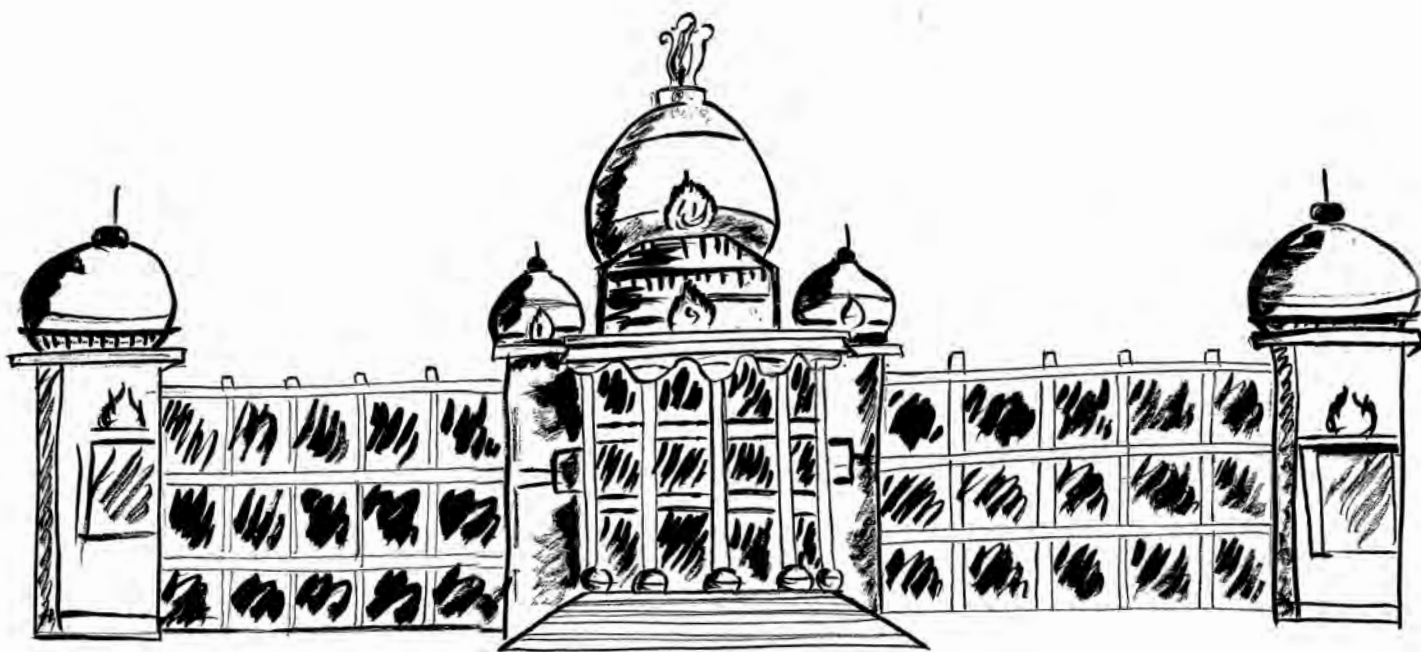
Dr. R Balasubramaniam and Basavaraju R were nominated as members of Advisory Committee of Karnataka State Rural Livelihood Mission in July 2012. Subsequent to the launching of National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) by the Government of India, the states have formed State Livelihood Missions and Society. Karnataka has a phased implementation of its livelihood mission starting with 20 Taluks in the first year and eventually covering the entire state in 5 to 7 years. As members of the Advisory Committee, they were involved in providing strategic advice to the mission on operationalizing the rural livelihood mission in the state. GRAAM is also provided consultancy support by involving with the mission to write the strategy focus document.

## Employment for people with disabilities

Dr. Susanne Bruyère - Director of Employment and Disability Institute and Associate Dean of Outreach, ILR School, Cornell University, USA and GRAAM fellow visited India in June 2012 and during the course of the visit several meetings and interactions were held where the issues related to employment opportunities of people with disabilities in various sectors were discussed. These included

- Meetings at NASSCOM Foundation, New Delhi and interaction with representatives of Microsoft, Wipro, Human Rights Law Network (HRLN) and National Association for the Blind (NAB) where ideas of making case studies of companies encouraging employment to PWDs and organization of a South East Asia and National level meets were discussed.
- Visit to initiatives of Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP), Hyderabad
- Meeting with Centre for PWDs Development and Livelihood (CPDL) and visit to their training centre and Gem factory located in Special Economic Zone in Hyderabad
- Visit to SVYM's Community Based Rehabilitation initiatives and interaction with beneficiaries in Mysore Taluk.

Dr. Bruyère's visit and interactions with different stakeholders facilitated a greater understanding of the issue and the work done by Employment and Disabilities Institute. It also laid a foundation for GRAAM to initiate projects in this sector which could lead to relevant policy advocacy in the long run.





## Strengthening democracy and advocacy on election manifesto

In the context of the 2013 Assembly elections of Karnataka, SVYM had initiated a series of actions towards strengthening the process of democracy and focusing on citizen's demand for good governance with the support of Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR). The various actions undertaken collectively constituted a campaign called 'Making Democracy Work' carried out in all 11 Assembly constituencies of Mysore district.

Dr. R Balasubramaniam and Rohit Shetti represented GRAAM and SVYM at different forums organized by ADR at the national and state levels and contributed to the training and orientation of the field team of Making Democracy Work.

## Advocacy on election manifesto

Engagement with political parties for inclusion of points in their election manifesto was one of the key agendas of 'Making Democracy Work' and yielded positive results. The idea was initiated by GRAAM Advisor and former Member of the Legislative Assembly of Karnataka of Karnataka Mr. DR Patil and his deep belief in people's participation in governance and especially the forum of Gram Sabhas.

Following an internal interaction, a letter was drafted containing points for inclusion in election manifestos and was sent to all major political parties in Karnataka signed by Justice MN Venkatachalaiah and Dr. R Balasubramaniam. The letter laid a strong emphasis on the implementation in letter and spirit of 73rd and 74th amendment to the Constitution of India aimed at bringing about local governance and decentralization.

These actions triggered positive responses from the political parties – both regional and national parties. While the President of the manifesto committee of a national party personally visited GRAAM for a discussion on the subject, the points mentioned in the draft have found space in the manifesto released by at least two other parties.



Advocacy on election manifesto coincided with a public campaign titled 'Making Democracy Work' by SVYM aimed at voter awareness and reduction of voter bribing

## Events – Workshops & Seminars

### Primer Workshop on Research & Advocacy

A 2-day primer workshop on research and advocacy was conducted for the members of Regional Resource Institutes (RRIs) working with Azim Premji Foundation for the implementation of School Leadership Development Program across Karnataka. The workshop touched upon the basics of research and research methodology, understanding the different facets of advocacy, group work on advocacy strategy and also practical tips on facing challenges that are likely to be encountered in the course of advocacy efforts.

Dr. Balasubramaniam, Dr. Jyothi MA, Sham N. Kashyap, Mr. Ashokanand, Basavaraju R and Rohit Shetti constituted the team of resource persons and facilitators during the workshop. The workshop was conducted at V-LEAD on 19 and 20 April, 2012.

### Towards Evidence based health advocacy

With a view to understand the different advocacy issues on public health in Karnataka as felt by different organizations and campaigns working in the field of community health, rural health, public health systems and services, etc, GRAAM and Public Affairs Centre (PAC) co-organized a workshop with civil society organizations, NGOs, CBOs and campaigns working to dialogue on an agenda for public health related advocacy in Karnataka with an emphasis on NRHM.

The 1-day collaborative learning workshop conducted on 29th May 2012 at V-LEAD was attended by nearly 40

participants from atleast 20 different organizations and served to enlist the different issues faced in public health. There were presentations by GRAAM, Public Affairs Centre and Institute of Public health as well as a talk on advocacy by Dr. Ravi Duggal from International Budget Partnership.

### Different Abilities, Equal Opportunities

Two events were held in Bangalore and Mysore on the issues surrounding employment for persons with disabilities titled 'Different Abilities, Equal Opportunities'.

- On 22nd June 2012, GRAAM organized an interactive session at Wipro Corporate head Office, Sarjapur Road, Bangalore in collaboration with Azim Premji University. Dr. Susanne M. Bruyère interacted with more than 50 members from the corporate and civil society organizations. The session was highly appreciated by the participants as it unveiled challenges and practices across the globe to employ People with Disabilities
- On 25th June 2012, GRAAM organized a panel discussion and talk by Dr. Susanne Bruyère at Vivekananda Institute for Leadership Development, Mysore. The panel discussed different issues pertaining to employment of persons with disabilities in private and public sector, the existing employment policies, opportunities and challenges faced, etc.

Along with Dr. Bruyère, the other members of the panel included

- **Mr. KV Rajanna**  
Commissioner Disabilities, Govt. of Karnataka
- **Mr. N Narendran**  
Managing Director, Vinyas Innovative Technology, Mysore



Ravi Duggal from IBP while addressing the participants of the workshop gave insights about Budget advocacy for transparency and accountability



Panelists at the event (R-L) Dr. M R Seetharam, Mr. K V Rajanna, Dr. Susanne Bruyère, Mr. N Narendran along with Dr. Arun Karpur



— **Dr. MR Seetharam**

President of Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement and expert on Community Health

— **Mr. Akshai Mallappa**

CISCO Technologies, Bangalore

The panel also interacted with the audience which not only had differently abled people but also special invitees who had worked in the sector of people with disabilities – thus enriching the interactions significantly. Following the panel discussion, Dr. Bruyère presented the work done by EDI, Cornell University and global practices regarding the employment of people with disabilities along with policy perspectives. The event received a very encouraging response with more than 80 participants and also good media coverage locally and regionally.

## Workshop on Citizen's empowerment

Citizen empowerment and citizen participation in governance though highly desirable are principles that exist more in concept than in reality. The maze of bureaucratic and the political system surrounding development schemes makes it difficult for citizens to understand their roles, rights and responsibilities and the level and extent to which communities can actually participate. What can be then done to make people, especially the rural citizenry realize their constitutional rights and make them exercise the same? In a true democracy, people should be supreme and not people's representatives. How can this equation be changed? How can the true spirit of Gram Sabhas be reclaimed?

Former member of Karnataka Legislative Assembly and GRAAM advisor Mr. DR Patil posed these question to the GRAAM team and towards finding ways of answering them and addressing other allied issues, GRAAM facilitated a workshop on citizen's empowerment on Jan 18, 2013 at V-LEAD with the staff of different projects of SVYM who work with communities, community representatives, NGO representatives and volunteers. The workshop was a unique opportunity for GRAAM to understand the views of field staff from different projects



*GRAAM Advisor Mr. DR Patil and other participants engaged in a brainstorming session at the workshop*



and GRAAM essentially played a facilitator and observer role, rather than that of active participation.

The workshop comprised sessions wherein teams brainstormed on

- Capacities that must be built among people
- Factors that influence community participation
- Community expectations from various stakeholders viz. Government, NGOs, voluntary bodies, private institutions, other organizations
- Ideas and possibilities to move forward in citizen empowerment

**Most of the participants placed a strong faith in Gram Sabhas and increased people's participation in the same. However, a deeper analysis of the effectiveness of Gram Sabhas was not explored. Understanding of citizen empowerment seemed to be limited to looking at citizen as a beneficiary of government schemes.**

Though it was well realized that a strategy for community empowerment could not be arrived at in a 1-day workshop, the event provided significant learning on the diversity of understanding of communitization that exists among different groups, limitations of community representatives' assertion of community needs, and how inadequately the current structures of communitization are critiqued. The scope for research and analyses on communitization and its true impact, especially through a participatory action research process is highly exciting and relevant for GRAAM.

## Further

Going further, the research and evaluation activities of GRAAM that have now matured will feed the necessary evidence to advocate for policy changes at the design and implementation level and thus the connection between GRAAM's research outputs and advocacy actions would be distinctly visible. The efforts will continue with the philosophy of collaborative and constructive engagement with the system rather than being confrontational, but without getting co-opted or constrained at the same time.

Some of the areas in which advocacy efforts will continue are

**Public health** based on the combined understanding and experience of district level to state level projects and collaboration with potential partners

**Educational leadership** towards creating a model of good practices and sustenance of the learning from SLDP and community engagement in improving the schools in a selected Gram Panchayath

**Strengthening Democracy** by continuing the advocacy on Election manifesto with political parties in the context of 2014 General Elections of India and supporting the campaign towards voter awareness and responsible voting in Mysore Parliamentary constituency

**Media engagement** by conducting district and state level events on development journalism

GRAAM is committed to making its advocacy efforts a collaborative process by networking and engaging with other civil society organizations, development agencies and communities.

# Publications

The following publications were issued by GRAAM in 2012-13. All of these are freely downloadable from [www.graam.org.in/publications](http://www.graam.org.in/publications)

## **FINAL REPORT OF THE EVALUATION OF OLD AGE PENSION SCHEMES IN KARNATAKA**

A report of the evaluation of two schemes that provide pensions for the elderly in Karnataka looking at critical issues in pension disbursement, beneficiary selection patterns, fund utilization patterns, socio-economic conditions of the beneficiaries and the relative importance of the pension to the beneficiaries

## **AROGYASHRENI ANNUAL REPORT 2011-12**

A report covering the activities undertaken in the first year of the project (Phase I) involving ranking and monitoring of Primary Health Centres across Mysore District by the communities with the aid of technology

## **TOWARDS EVIDENCE BASED HEALTH ADVOCACY**

Report of a 1-day collaborative workshop organized in partnership with Public Affairs Centre (PAC) with Civil Society organizations across Karnataka working on Public Health with the aim of understanding and identifying key public health advocacy issues in Karnataka

## **STUDY REPORT: TRACKING OF NRHM FUNDS (JSY, UNTIED AND MAINTENANCE) IN MYSORE DISTRICT**

Report of a pilot study conducted in Mysore district to track funds under NRHM viz. Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY), Untied and Maintenance funds. The study covers issues such as availability of funds, timeliness of disbursement, effectiveness of utilization, etc

## **GRAAM ANNUAL REPORT 2011-12**

The first annual report of GRAAM covering activities undertaken by the organization since its inception in January 2011

## **AROGYASHRENI: TOWARDS CREATING A REPLICABLE MODEL FOR COMMUNITY MONITORING OF PRIMARY HEALTH CENTRES IN KARNATAKA, INDIA**

A paper authored by Sham N. Kashyap and Dr. R Balasubramaniam based on the project presented at the 2nd National Conference on Bringing Evidence into Public Health Policy (EHPH 2012): Strengthening health systems to achieve universal health coverage held at Bangalore in October 2012

# GRAAM's Participation in Events

In addition to advocacy efforts, GRAAM has been steadily expanding its network through active participation at various events such as workshops, conferences and forums on development. Some of the major events that GRAAM team members participated in over the last year are:

## A SIGNIFICANT FIRST

*A paper on the project titled "Arogyashreni: towards creating a replicable model for community monitoring of primary health centres in Karnataka, India" was presented at the 2nd National Conference on Bringing Evidence into Public Health Policy (EPHP 2012) in Bangalore held on 05 & 06 October 2012.*

## MAY 2012

**8th National Conference on Electoral and Political Reforms organized by Association for Democratic Reforms at Bhubaneswar**

Dr. R Balasubramaniam, Rohit

## JULY 2012

**2 day seminar on "Altering Rural Landscapes - Structures, Households and Institutions" held at Annamalai University, Chidambaram conducted by Network of Rural and Agrarian Studies sponsored by Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR) & Ford Foundation**

Sham, Rohit

## AUGUST 2012

**3-day IBP India Partners meet on Budget advocacy strategies organized in New Delhi by International Budget Partnership**

Basavaraju, Rohit

**Karnataka Election Watch meeting in preparation of 2013 Assembly Elections of Karnataka organized by Association for Democratic Reforms**

Rohit

## OCTOBER 2012

**2nd National Conference on Bringing Evidence into Public Health Policy (EPHP 2012): Presentation of paper titled "Arogyashreni: towards creating a replicable model for community monitoring of primary health centres in Karnataka, India"**

Sham, Chandrika

## NOVEMBER 2012

**IBP Partners Initiative Annual meeting of organizations committed to open public budgets organized by International Budget Partnership**

Dr. R Balasubramaniam, Basavaraju



## NOVEMBER 2012

**Talk on ‘Role of Youth in elimination of child labour system’ on 30th November 2012 in Bangalore at “Youth for Child Rights” – a program organized by Bachpan Bachao Andolan, New Delhi and Child Rights Trust, Bangalore**

Basavaraju

## DECEMBER 2012

**2-day CSR NGO South regional conference held in Bangalore**

Rohit, (along with Sudarshan, Academic Director V-LEAD)

**2-day workshop on Karnataka Election Watch activities across the state held at Bangalore organized by Association for Democratic Reforms**

Rohit (along with Thippeswamy and Bhagyalakshmi from SVYM Bangalore)

**Interactive meeting of Public Health Education Network in Karnataka organized by SOCHARA, Bangalore**

Rohit

## JANUARY 2013

**Participation as resource person at Youth in Development for an interactive session with youth organized by Azim Premji Foundation, Bangalore**

Basavaraju

## FEBRUARY 2013

**Dedicated stall on ‘Arogyashreni’ project at 6-day Suttur fair in Mysore District**

Savitha & Mangala along with Arogyashreni field team

**2 day consultation on “Transparency in National Level Budgets in South Asia Region” held on February 14-15, 2013, in New Delhi organized by Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability**

Basavaraju

**2-day workshop on communications strategy for organizations working on budgets at Bhopal organized by National Foundation for India and Sanket Development Group, Bhopal**

Rohit

**4th National conference on RTI conducted by NCPRI at Hyderabad on 16 and 17 Feb.**

Chaluvaraju

## Internal Events

*"I am pleased to see the growth of GRAAM this past year, not only in the number of projects in which they are engaged but the breadth of topics as well. I also find that GRAAM's ongoing ability to work with foreign-based universities and research organizations is a testament to the credibility it has established with high-quality partners around the world. My hope for the future is that we can all support GRAAM in the coming year with our time, our talent, and our financial contributions."*

**Joe Grasso**

Associate Dean, ILR School Cornell University  
and GRAAM Advisor

## Advisory Board Meeting

**The first** Advisory Board meeting of GRAAM was held on 7th January 2013 at The President Hotel in Bangalore. The meeting was attended by the Chairman of GRAAM Advisory Board Justice MN Venkatachalaiah, advisors Mr. SK Das & Mr. Joe Grasso and the entire GRAAM team. Mr. Arun Raman, writer and entrepreneur, Mr. Sampath, a management consultant and Ms. Lisa from Cornell University also joined the meeting.

The meeting was an important milestone in GRAAM's journey and it was the first opportunity for the entire team to meet with the advisors and interact with them on issues that have been of concern to them, raise questions and seek answers.

During the meeting, Dr. R Balasubramaniam presented a detailed description of GRAAM's journey thus far, the projects, learning, successes, challenges and the growth of the organization. There were queries on various aspects and the discussion that followed evoked several questions and potential answers.



GRAAM advisors Justice MN Venkatachalaiah, Joe Grasso and SK Das with the GRAAM team at the first advisory committee meeting of GRAAM

The advisors and the invitees offered suggestions on how GRAAM's work can be taken forward. Some of the key suggestions that emerged from the meeting were

- Community to continue to be at the centre of GRAAM's activities
- Ensuring that communities build pressure to translate policy into action
- Building structures for effective implementation of good and sound policies that could include building a network of interested bureaucrats
- Coming up with a journal based on evidences surrounding development issues that is also open to contribution from community researchers. The journal could further have categories such as health, education, gender, etc.
- Engaging with street bureaucracy for both research and advocacy activities

Further, the advisors reiterated on the following two important propositions

- GRAAM needs to identify the sectors in which it would focus and carry out its work and not spread thin
- To reach its larger goals, GRAAM has to have the structure of an independent legal entity and towards this the process of separation from SVYM must be commenced

**The meeting thus was instrumental in not only reaffirming GRAAM's spirit and approach, but also in guiding the further course of action, especially with regard to its focus and structure.**



*Arogyashreni project field team at an internal workshop*

## Workshops with field staff

Field research and primary data collection are an integral part of many of GRAAM's projects and we recognize the immense value the field staff bring in to our projects. The role of field teams in GRAAM is far beyond that of just surveyors or data collectors and in recognition of this, a lot of stress is placed on orientation & training of the field staff towards capturing and interpreting qualitative and quantitative data.

**The field staff are our window to community perspectives and their observations along with the insights gained by them are critical inputs to GRAAM's body of research and better understanding of community issues, aspirations, etc.**

To capture the insights that our field teams gather, a practice of conducting workshops has begun in GRAAM wherein the field team members reflect on their experiences and dwell upon issues that communities articulate in their interactions as well as those that they themselves feel are critical in development.

- The field team of Arogyashreni project meets regularly to not only review the progress of the project and the community advocacy plans and processes, but also to participate in internal workshops designed specifically to capture individual perspectives and community responses. Some of these have been video documented as well.
- On 21st December 2012, a half day out-door workshop was conducted with some of the field team members who were part of India Human Development Survey – II and Evaluation of NRHM projects to specifically capture the definition of 'research' as per their perspective and based on their work in the two projects. The team members had travelled to various districts across Karnataka as part of the field work in both the projects and had carried out detailed interviews and data collection works and through the workshop we attempted to connect the micro-level work undertaken by the field staff to the larger objectives of GRAAM.

While these exercises have aided in eliciting different opinions and understanding of research and what are the essential components of a good research exercise, they have been helpful in providing a sense of the larger picture to the field team members. Further, this process is also aiding the evolution of GRAAM's understanding of community consultation. More workshops in the similar spirit are being planned with field teams of other projects as well.



## Community consultation exercise at Dadadahalli

Engaging with communities beyond the scope of specific projects is crucial for capturing inputs and insights about various socio-cultural aspects of the communities, their issues and sometimes uninhibited perspectives.

One such attempt to listen to the voices from the grass-roots was made on 28th December 2012 with a half-day interaction in a tribal hamlet named Dadadahalli in HD Kote Taluk with the Jenu Kuruba tribal community, whose traditional occupation is honey gathering from the forests, but who are now pushed into other forms of labour as a result of restricted access to the forest.

About 20 families reside in the hamlet in houses constructed by the government with a significant number of them in a dilapidated state. The team interacted with the community on various issues including their history, rituals, educational and social status, livelihood and migration related issues, access to health care, awareness on government schemes and provisions for them, etc.

From the interactions we gathered that they consider education as an important tool of development. Yet we could not find anyone in the community who has passed Class 10. Most of them migrate to Coorg seasonally for labour work, and they get better wages there than in HD Kote. The men and women sang traditional songs and participated in a village mapping exercise. They also took us to the place where they bury their dead; it was a patch of land that they revered most and emotionally connected with. It was evident that the community preferred to live within the forests where they were free to pursue the livelihood of their choice and perform their rituals. The chief needs articulated by them include a piece of agricultural land and suitable employment to look after their families.

*Almost the entire GRAAM team participated in this interaction and it was a first for some of the team members. While it was humbling to note the meagre assets with which people make a living, the experience revealed the complexity of issues the communities face.*



*Tribal women sharing about their lifestyles and issues at Dadadahalli*

## Retreat

GRAAM team conducted its annual retreat in December 2012 at the premises of Viveka Tribal Centre for Learning and Vivekananda Teacher Training and Research Centre, Hosahalli HD Kote. The campus is located on the fringes of Bandipur forest and near the Kabini backwaters and provided an idyllic setting for reflection and dialogue.

Over a period of two days, the team discussed about how GRAAM has carried out its work since the last retreat (February 2012), about how the team members could contribute in each other's projects and reflected on how work processes can be improved in GRAAM. There was collective reflection on whether the projects and activities that GRAAM is undertaking are aligning with its stated mission and vision.

Some of the key points that emerged from the retreat were

- There is enormous potential for team members to contribute to processes in different projects; we must take up and structure the work in our projects that allows for collective contribution.
- GRAAM needs to build a cross-cutting community consultation team whose members have responsibilities in multiple projects
- Documentation for advocacy must be strengthened viz. translating research findings to evidences supporting specific advocacy issues.
- Identifying more spaces and creating opportunities to share the work of GRAAM with the outside world

One of the highlights of this retreat was that the field team also participated in the sessions and shared their work, and about what it means for them to work in GRAAM.

## Platforms for sharing and learning

GRAAM has created different platforms and forums for internal learning and sharing. These include

- **Graama Chinthana:** This is a monthly meeting conducted on the 1st working Saturday of every month where new ideas, proposals and issues are discussed. The team members also present about learning and challenges they have come across in their projects which leads to a collective discussion on addressing them.
- **Monthly sharing meetings:** In addition to Grama Chinthana, a sharing meeting is conducted towards the end of every month, wherein team members are encouraged to question and critique on the work done while it is being shared. This helps in getting multiple perspectives across and aids the documentation process, making it richer and insightful.
- **Saturday sharing:** Saturdays have been earmarked as days for sharing and collective learning on new topics, film screenings and discussions, etc. Though it has not been possible to use all Saturdays for these activities, it is proposed that the fun and learning activities evolve as a regular feature of life at GRAAM.

Additionally, there are other spaces such as field visits, gardening work in the premises and group lunch outings that are contributing to the collective learning atmosphere and cohesiveness within the team.



*Collective learning and reflection: GRAAM team at its annual retreat in December 2012*



## ...in pictures



**REPUBLIC DAY AT V-LEAD** GRAAM team was given the responsibility of planning and organizing India's Republic Day celebrations on January 26, 2013 at the V-LEAD campus in Mysore. In alignment with our working philosophy, we invited community representatives working at the grassroots level and Chief Guests for the event as a way of bringing to light their silent efforts and honouring their work. It was also an opportunity for us to be creative and we added taste, colour and charm to the celebrations with competitions in cooking, painting, poetry and also traditional costumes.



### **NO NOTE FOR MY VOTE**

This was the central slogan of the 'Making Democracy Work' campaign conducted across Mysore District in the context of 2013 Assembly elections of Karnataka. A single message was communicated through numerous channels including stickers, handbills, posters, street-plays, public talks, door-to-door visits, text-messages and media articles. All units of SVYM including GRAAM contributed to the campaign in different ways.





SVYM's Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) initiative for the differently-abled has provided support to a large number of people with disabilities in Mysore Taluk through its efforts in socio-economic empowerment, medical attention, inclusive education, etc. GRAAM fellow and Director of Employment and Disability Institute, Cornell University Dr. Susanne Bruyère during her visit to India visited the CBR project sites and interacted with the staff, self-help groups and beneficiaries of the initiative. There was a rich exchange of perspectives and processes employed in the rehabilitation of people with disabilities.



**CHILDREN EVERYWHERE** Almost every field visit that our team members undertake brings us face to face with children either at schools, Anganwadis or homes. It is a joy to greet them and have them greet us back and their enthusiastic smiles never fail to refresh and energize us. At the same time, being with the children and noting the challenging environment that they have to grow up in helps us reaffirm our commitment to inclusive development and to work for a better future.



# People @ GRAAM

## GRAAM Team

GRAAM Team is a coming together of individuals with diverse backgrounds, interests and experiences, as a result of which multiple perspectives are valued and appreciated. The following individuals have been part of GRAAM's growing team in FY 2012-13.

**AS BIRADAR** has a Master's degree in Sociology and Social work and an experience of working in different development sectors including watershed development, self-help groups, etc. He engaged extensively in community engagement and monitoring work in evaluation of NGP awarded GPs in Karnataka.

**BASAVARAJU R** holds an MBA from University of Mysore and brings to the team of GRAAM his expertise in Project Planning, Designing Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism, Action Plan Development, Research and Advocacy. As Deputy Director of GRAAM, he oversees the administrative activities of the organization and is involved in strategic consultation projects in the areas of M & E, CSR and livelihoods.

**CHALUVARAJU J** has a Master's degree in Social Work from the University of Mysore. At GRAAM, he worked as a Community Coordinator and played a key role in implementing community engagement activities across different projects.

**CHANDRIKA SHETTY** holds a Master's Degree in Development Studies from the University of Mysore and has experience of working in the areas of media and development, disabilities and public health. Equipped with excellent communication skills with the community,



*The diversity of backgrounds, experiences and interests of people makes GRAAM a vibrant collective.*

she is the Action Research coordinator for Arogyashreni project and is contributing to other projects as a Research Associate. Her interests also include gender, development and socio-cultural aspects of communities.

**DIVYASHREE HR** holds a Master's Degree in Human Development from the University of Mysore. She has experience in office management, research assistance and community engagement. As a Research Associate at GRAAM, she has involved in different projects related to water and sanitation, CSR evaluation, media advocacy, nutrition and human development. She is also playing a key role in preparation of District Human Development Report of Kodagu and Kolar districts.

**DR. G ANANDA VADIVELU** has a background in Development Economics and a rich research background that includes working at various research organisations. As Research Officer at GRAAM, he has been involved in the strategic consultation initiatives of the organization and in the preparation of the District Human Development Report of Kodagu and Kolar districts.

**DR. JYOTHI MA** has a Master's degree in Science education and a PhD in Teacher Non-verbal Communication skills from the Regional Institute of Education (RIE), NCERT. She has a rich experience as a teacher, researcher and teacher-educator and her interests include Social & emotional climate of schools, Teaching-Learning and Teacher Development. As a Senior Research officer at GRAAM, she handled projects in the education sector and conducted research in the Educational Leadership & Management space among other projects.

**DR. R BALASUBRAMANIAM**, the founder of SYYM and GRAAM has been a development activist for the past 29 years and is an expert on public policy and leadership. He is a qualified physician with additional qualifications in Hospital Administration, Health Systems Management and Public Administration. As Executive Director of GRAAM, he leads the team with his multi-faceted expertise and experience in development issues and is also at the helm of GRAAM's advocacy efforts.

**LAKSHMI** holds a Bachelor's degree in Science and a Diploma in Statistical Process Control and Operational research. She has been playing a key role in project coordination and administrative support activities along with Statistical Assistance and media monitoring.

**RAVI CS** is pursuing his Bachelor's degree in Arts from Karnataka State Open University. He has a keen interest in community participation in development, especially

rural development and as a Community Coordinator, he is deeply involved in the different community engagement activities at GRAAM.

**RAVI HS** has a Master's degree in Financial Management. He worked at GRAAM as Admin Assistant providing administrative support to the team.

**ROHIT SHETTI** has a background in Engineering and has worked in the electronics industry for nearly 11 years with techno-commercial responsibilities. His interests include community dynamics, environment and social justice and sustainability in development. At GRAAM, he is the coordinator for advocacy, community consultation and IT.

**ROOPA S** holds a Master's degree in Business Information and Technology and has work experience in IT. At GRAAM, she worked as an Admin Associate and assistant to Deputy Director and provided administrative support to GRAAM team.

**SHAM N. KASHYAP** has a multi-disciplinary academic background with Masters' Degrees in Computer Science and Agricultural Economics. He has worked in various capacities including that of Social Scientist, Policy Analyst, Subject Matter Expert, Trainer and Panchayath Development Officer. As a Research Officer at GRAAM he has played a central role in conducting evaluation studies, analyses and action research in the sectors of public health, social security, micro-irrigation, water and sanitation, community monitoring and governance.

**SHARAVANA CG** has a Bachelor's degree in Commerce from University of Mysore and provides data entry support and research assistance to different projects at GRAAM.

**THRIVENI GANDHI** has a Bachelor's degree in Arts and varied experience in the development sector. She worked in the capacity of Research Associate and Team coordinator in different projects at GRAAM

**VIGHNESH NV** has a Bachelor's degree in Engineering and a Master's degree in Information Management and a keen interest in social issues of contemporary India. As a Research Associate at GRAAM, he involved in research activities in the sectors of education and public health and also contributed extensively to our website.



## Field staff

GRAAM's work cannot be accomplished without the tireless efforts of the field staff who bring in data, experience, perspectives and a sense of the ground realities that help in making our research and advocacy initiatives relevant and meaningful. Below is a list of individuals who were part of the field teams in GRAAM in various projects.

Abhilasha DR	Kumara	Parvathi S	
Abhilasha KC	Kumari KR	Pramila GV	
Annaiah LH	Lakshmamma YS	Praveen MN	Shubha KR
Ashwathe Gowda	Mahesh C	Puttadasa Nayak	Siddaramappa
Ashwini KP	Mahesh HP	Raghavendra DL	Somashekar
C K Murthy	Malathi RM	Rajendra Kumar	Somesha
Cheluvaiah	Mallesha	Rajesh MP	Subramanya
Cheluvaiah	Mamatha MM	Ramesh	Sumithra
Dakshayini MK	Mangala	Ravi Kumar PG	Sunil Kumar B
Devaki NR	Manjamma	Sathish CP	Swamy KE
Divya BV	Manjunath	Savitha Bai	Thara AP
Govindaraju BD	Mareshappa	Shanthakumari	Vedavathy N
Hanumanthu DC	Muthu M	Shashi	Veena KV
Harish R	Nandini KV	Shivakumar N	Vijendra
Indresha	Parvathi M		

**Subramanya**

*"Arogyashreni experience has helped us to improve our communication skills especially with Govt. officers, doctors & other staff, the officers at Panchayath, etc. Participation in GRAAM's survey on 'Indian Human Development Survey' across Karnataka has helped me learn and grow personally."*



*Interns and the field staff members are an integral part of GRAAM team*

## GRAAM Advisors

GRAAM has a distinguished advisory board comprising the following six members, who guide the organization in terms of strategy and direction.

- **Justice MN Venkatachalaiah**  
Former Chief Justice of India and Chairman National Human Rights Commission
- **Ricardo Hausman**  
Director of Center for International Development at Harvard University
- **Charles Rozwat**  
Vice President at Oracle Corporation
- **SK Das**  
Former bureaucrat, Public Policy expert and an advisor to Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)
- **Joe Grasso**  
Associate Dean for Administration, Finance and Corporate relations at ILR School, Cornell University
- **D.R.Patil**  
Former member of Karnataka Legislative Assembly. Expert on Panchayath Raj Institutions

## GRAAM Fellows

Eminent researchers and experts in the field of Public Health, Nutrition Sciences, Social Anthropology, Development issues, Disability studies, Human Resources, Labor Economics, etc are part of GRAAM in the capacity of research fellows, who provide insights and dimensions to GRAAM's projects. Currently, the research fellows on board are:

- **Gary Fields**  
Professor of Labour Economics at Cornell University
- **Sarosh Kuruvilla**  
Professor of Industrial Relations, Asian Studies and Public Affairs at Cornell University
- **Susanne M Bruyère**  
Director of Employment and Disability Institute. Associate Dean of Outreach, ILR School, Cornell University
- **Rebecca Stoltzfus**  
Director of Global Health Program at Cornell University
- **Paul Greenough**  
Faculty, Department of History at College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, University of Iowa

*“The Cornell University ILR School Employment and Disability Institute have now had several opportunities to work with GRAAM. We have partnered on affording research opportunities to students wanting to study economic development, micro-finance, and self-help group initiatives in India, and now are initiating a new partnership to collaborate on several new research initiatives. In all of these exchanges, we have been delighted at the depth of expertise and quality of product outcomes which the GRAAM team has produced. We are very much looking forward to our continued collaborations scheduled for the coming year.”*

**Susanne M. Bruyère**

# Contribution of Interns

GRAAM provides exciting opportunities for interns from India and across the globe to gain experience in development sector research. In turn, they bring fresh energy and new perspectives and contribute to the projects and to the organization itself in significant ways.

To streamline the process of selection of interns, map internship opportunities and provide orientation to the interns, an internship committee has been formed. Further each intern is mentored by a GRAAM team member on the work assigned to the intern. In 2012-13, six interns worked with GRAAM at different points in time.

**ANASTASIA KOLASALE** a graduate from the University of Minnesota Medical School and School of Public Health with a combined MD/MPH. She was associated with different projects over a 3-month period, but spent the majority of her time conducting a program evaluation of the prenatal care at the Vivekananda Memorial Hospital in Sargur. She conducted a retrospective chart review of prenatal care and deliveries at VMH in 2012 to evaluate the hospital's prenatal services with respect to the guidelines established by the National Rural Health Mission. Combined with other qualitative data and her own observations, she used the retrospective chart data to compile a program evaluation of the prenatal care at VMH.

**ANUSHA PRASAD**, an undergraduate from National Law School of India was associated with the project on preparation of Manual for Empanelment of Evaluation agencies in Karnataka. She was involved in a literature survey to examine the norms with respect to those of other states. She also gave inputs on the possible disclosure norms as per the Right to information Act.

**POOJA GALA** is a medical student from Cornell University with an interest in international public health. At GRAAM, she was associated with a project on maternal health and infant outcomes that comprised setting up of a pilot study on the effectiveness of multivitamin supplements before pregnancy on foetal outcomes. Her role included the writing of the proposal, getting approval from the institutional review boards of GRAAM and Cornell University. She was also part of the team creating the materials for the study.

*"I learned, analyzed, and examined the Indian education system in a way not possible anywhere else. Going into the field gave me new perspectives and ideas that enhanced my work. Thank you for this opportunity."*

**Simon Boehme**

**SHANE SEPPINI**, an undergraduate student from Cornell University, he studied the role of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in alleviating agrarian distress in Karnataka. Shane conducted preliminary research activities including literature survey to identify gaps and developed a concept note that can be the basis of further research in the area.

**SHRUTHI NADIG**, a medical graduate from JSS Medical College, Mysore had previously worked as an intern with VMH, Saragur. At GRAAM, she was associated with the Arogyashreni project and was involved in carrying out surveys of 15 PHCs to understand the services offered by the PHCs and the issues faced by the community in availing the services. Her background in medicine helped the team understand issues from a medical perspective. She created an advocacy handbook for Arogyashreni that dealt with the questionnaire used in the project and serves as resource material for the project team.

**SIMON BOEHME**, a senior from Cornell University, majoring in Industrial and Labour relations, minoring in education and law & society was associated with the research on School Leadership Development Program. He studied the policy documents related to education in India and worked with the SLDP implementation team and had a first-hand experience of researcher's and the practitioner's perspectives during the rollout of the program. Simon also made some recommendations for SLDP and developed a policy document for advocacy.



## Consultants

GRAAM engaged with experts in different fields who contributed to various projects at GRAAM as consultants. The consultants not only brought in their expertise, but also new perspectives and experience that benefitted GRAAM team.

### **RAMASAMY KRISHNAN**

*State Convener -FANSA*

*Executive Director-Support for Network and Extension Help Agency*

R Krishnan was involved with GRAAM as a community expert in evaluation of CSR activities and also participated in the Technical Advisory committee constituted for the evaluation of NGP awarded Gram Panchayaths.

### **HS SHAM SUNDAR**

*CEO & President, PCS-HR Future Orbit*

Sham has a rich corporate experience, especially in strategy development and management. He associated with GRAAM for the development of Community Development Strategy for Toyota Kirloskar Motors Pvt. Ltd. His focus was on not only developing the strategy, but also validating the plan prepared by GRAAM and assessing its feasibility in a corporate environment.

### **G ACHUTHA RAO**

*Expert – People Development*

*Rise Foundation, Mysore*

Achutha Rao has a rich experience in the development sector and is an expert in community processes, training & capacity building and has had a long association with SVYM. With his deep belief in community empowerment, he worked with GRAAM in community level advocacy with VHSCs by not only training the team in the process of developing Village Health Action Plans, but also guiding the efforts on the ground with the communities.

### **DR. SHANTHI GOPALAN**

*Sociologist and Expert in Tribal studies, Gender issues and Third sector governance*

Shanthi has been associated with GRAAM since its inception as a senior researcher and subsequently as a research consultant. Over the last year, she has provided guidance to GRAAM team in the areas of framing of research questions, adoption of research methodology and providing perspective at various stages of research and also contributed extensively to the process of distilling advocacy issues from research outcomes.

*“I felt very privileged to work with GRAAM and share the comments of my experience last year (2012-13). I could see that GRAAM was very systematic to initiate any work with its partners and participatory techniques have been used to take it forward at all levels. Also, it had very good review and monitoring systems to accomplish the work within the stipulated period of the project / activities. Importantly at every stage, the process of implementation has been thoroughly discussed and learning was documented.”*

**R Krishnan**

*“GRAAM’s focus researching on grassroots contemporary issues and advocacy with the stakeholders for planning, execution & community monitoring of social development projects is a new venture resulting in people development & empowerment. We expect evidence oriented research / study projects at GRAAM. There is a need to advocate pro-people research through GRAAM. We wish GRAAM all the success in its future endeavours”.*

**G Achutha Rao**

### **DR. G S GANESH PRASAD**

*Assistant Professor at Madras Institute of Development Studies*

Ganesh Prasad associated with GRAAM for the development of a manual for benchmarking program evaluations. His chief contribution was in developing the criteria for evaluations. Ganesh Prasad has also been lending his support and expertise in preparation of District Human Development Report by participating in discussions and workshops with GRAAM team.

### **DR. ANIL C**

*Health Systems Consultant*

Dr. Anil has experience and expertise in public health as well as strategy development. He has contributed to GRAAM with his inputs in development of Manual for empanelment of evaluation agencies and to projects in the public health domain.

# Partners & Collaborators

GRAAM would like to acknowledge with gratitude the support and contribution of a number of individuals and institutions that have helped us grow over the past year and on the basis of whose backing, we can stride ahead with confidence. In alignment with our philosophy, we have engaged with institutions from different sectors – academic, government, NGOs, private sector and most importantly communities.

GRAAM has been privileged to work with the following institutions and individuals over the past year.

## Academic & Research organizations

- Azim Premji University
- Cornell University
- University of Minnesota
- National Council for Applied Economic Research

## Corporate Sector

- Toyota Kirloskar Motor (India)

## Development Sector, Non-profits and Networks

- Azim Premji Foundation
- Association for Democratic Reforms
- Centre for Leadership and Management in Public Services (C-LAMPS)
- India WASH forum
- International Budget Partnership
- Karnataka State Pension Parishad
- National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER)
- Public Affairs Centre
- Public Health Foundation of India
- Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP), Andhra Pradesh

## Government Sector

- Department of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of Karnataka
- National Rural Health Mission, Karnataka
- Department of Planning, Programme Monitoring and Statistics, Govt. of Karnataka
  - Human Development Division
  - Karnataka Evaluation Authority
  - Directorate of Economics and Statistics
- Department of Rural Development and Panchayath Raj, Govt. of Karnataka
  - Nirmala Bharatha Abhiyan, State Water and Sanitation Mission
  - Karnataka State Rural Livelihood Project Society (KSRLPS)
- Zilla Panchayaths of Kodagu and Kolar Districts, Govt. of Karnataka
- DIET, Mysore

## Technology Partners

- Mahiti Infotech
- Saaranga Infotech

## Individuals

- **Dr. Arun Karpur**  
*Employment & Disabilities Institute, ILR School, Cornell University*
- **Dr. M R Seetharam**  
*President, SVYM and member of the Technical Advisory Committee for Evaluation of NGP awarded Gram Panchayaths*
- **Dr. Nandini Shekhar**  
*Researcher and Volunteer*
- **Ramesh Kikkeri**  
*Faculty, Sustainable Technology in Development and member of the Technical Advisory Committee for Evaluation of NGP awarded Gram Panchayaths*
- **Sasigolli Ravindra,**  
*Resource Person, SIRD, Mysore and Ex-President, Heggodu GP, Thirthahalli Taluk, Shimoga district*
- **Kiran Anandampillai**  
*Telecommunications Entrepreneur*

## Community members

- VHSC members of Kallahalli, Kadanahalli and Maddur villages of Harohalli GP in Mysore Taluka
- PHC Planning and Monitoring Committee members of PHCs across Mysore District





# Looking Ahead

## New & Ongoing Projects

GRAAM is poised to expand its scope of work with new projects in different areas and also different geographies. Some of the projects and activities that are in the pipeline are

- A Study on School-level Dietary Adequacy and Impact of Cultural Beliefs in Remote Rural Areas in Karnataka in collaboration with Azim Premji University
- Inclusion of People With Disabilities in Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) in Kolar District, Karnataka – A pilot study supported by Cornell University
- Evaluating Poverty Elimination Programs for People with Disabilities (PWDs) undertaken by the Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP), Andhra Pradesh, India – Study supported by Cornell University
- Madhyama Manthana 2013/14 – a media workshop on the theme of elections and role of media
- An action research project to study suitability of audio-visual material for teaching of secondary school subjects disseminated through Sir Ratan Tata Trust supported Prema Vidya project of SVYM in Yadgir district of Karnataka
- A study of the role of ‘Community participation in Governance’ in rural Karnataka in collaboration with Public Affairs Centre

In addition to the above, there are other State level research proposals under various stages of approval, which could potentially add to GRAAM's growing team and basket of activities.

Some ongoing projects will continue into the subsequent year 2013-14. These include

- Arogyashreni – Technology enabled community monitoring
- Preparation of District Human Development Report for Kodagu and Kolar Districts
- Research on School Leadership Development Program initiative in Mysore
- Strategy Document for Community Development by Toyota Kirloskar Motor
- Preparation of Manual on Output Grading or Assessment of quality of Evaluation Reports



- Preparation of Strategic Focus (Perspective) Document and Initiating Process for Establishment of KSRLM Activities
- Evaluation of NGP awarded Gram Panchayaths in Karnataka
- Monitoring of anti-tobacco articles in print media

Advocacy initiatives are planned at multiple levels and with different stakeholders on Public health issues, educational leadership, election manifesto, etc. GRAAM would also continue to network and collaborate with CSOs, research institutions, and other bodies to effectively further its advocacy agenda based on empirical evidence and grassroots experience.

## New Directions

**The future of GRAAM is full of exciting opportunities and challenges. GRAAM is slated to enter the financial year 2014-15 as an independent legal entity and while the legacy of SVYM is certainly expected to hold the organization in good stead, the legal separation would be a harbinger of greater responsibilities.**

Regardless of the legal status, the approach of GRAAM would continue to be community centric. Projects in GRAAM have cumulatively added to a better understanding of community consultation and future engagement with communities is expected to depict the evolved understanding. Newer and deeper questions about community engagement would continue to emerge and it would be our endeavour to dialogue and reflect on them and also apply them in practice.

At the same time, some of the projects being taken up in 2013-14 are characteristically multi-disciplinary. This gives the team an opportunity to collectively contribute to the work based on their strengths and interests and also offers the entire collective a prospect of understanding and appreciating multiple perspectives. The blending of multiple perspectives represents uniqueness about GRAAM and going forward, we would attempt to capture and document them through working papers and publications, in addition to academic research papers.

Lastly, integrating the scope of advocacy in all of our initiatives is a key tenet of GRAAM's approach and philosophy. To make the advocacy efforts more concerted and effective, it is essential that the themes to be focussed upon be narrowed down and earmarked. This holds good for the research areas that GRAAM would take up in alignment with one of the principal feedbacks received from the advisory board of GRAAM.

GRAAM would like to thank and appreciate every individual, organization, network, institution and community that has contributed to its success thus far and would bank upon their continued support and encouragement in its future endeavours.



## **GRAAM**

Grassroots Research And Advocacy Movement is a public policy research and advocacy initiative of Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement (SVYM) aimed at bringing about changes in public policies that make them sound, relevant and ensure that they reflect the real aspirations of communities. Founded in January 2011, GRAAM seeks to achieve this goal by focusing on research incorporating grassroots perspectives and advocacy based on empirical evidence. Making communities an integral part of all its activities and processes is GRAAM's constant endeavour in line with its understanding of development as a constant expansion of human capabilities.

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