

When a School Smiles...

(Path breaking success stories from Raichur Taluk)



District Administration, Jilla Panchayath,
UNICEF Child Protection Project,
Public Education Department & Grama Vikasa- RAICHUR





Raichur Districts Administration, Jilla Panchayath, UNICEF supported District Child Protection Project (DCPP), Public Education Department and Grama Vikasa together decided to strengthen the School Development and Monitoring Committee's (SDMC) in schools with community participation. To make SDMC's more active, the members of 272 committees of Raichur Taluk have been trained in two months long training program. The training started on July 3, 2010 and ended on Sep 29, 2010. Except the schools which were in 2 Gram Panchayat's, all other schools have been covered under this training.

Training:

- In a systematic way the SDMC members of 266 schools were trained. During the training they have been sensitized about child protection; particularly on child labor, child trafficking and child marriage issue. Along with that the role of SDMC members about the issue of drop outs and child laborers has been mentioned during training. The members have been educated about Panchayathraj Act, Education Act (2009) and RTI.
- In total 1753 SDMC members and all 266 school head masters attended the training program.
- On January 26, 2011 an SDMC women members' convention has been organized at Raichur city. 472 SDMC women members attended this one day long convention, which was held at Rangamandir.
- On February 23, 2011 all SDMC student members' convention was held at Raichur. 212 SDMC student members were participated in this convention, which was held at Science Center, Raichur. During the convention the student members decided to come up with a 'mela'. That too, SDMC student members mela with the help of education department.
- After the above three training and convention the SDMC's of 49 school in Raichur taluk have become proactive with community participation.
- In 10 Grama Panchayat's Civic Amenity Committee (CAC) meetings were held and they decided that the responsibility of developing the Schools' in their territory is a priority and community is going to play the major role in it
- This lead to chain reactions. Gram Pancayat and SDMC's joined hands and in 3 GP's Children Grama Sabha's were held.

Due the series of above training and awareness program, the community has understood that the environment in and around a rural schools always shapes the future of their children's. Especially the status of schools in rural areas will be real indicator of in which path the next generation is moving and where it's heading. In most part of rural India, the Government run primary, higher primary and high schools lacks the clean environment in and around. Though it is better not to generalize this statement, in most cases this is true. Almost in all cases the space is the major issue and a group of children will be cramped in tiny rooms. There won't be clean drinking water, proper sanitation and play grounds in many of the school.

Generally we attribute lack of fund, human resource and knowledge for all the above lacking. No doubt those are the major reasons. But, a little effort in the ground level can make a lot of changes and that happened in the rural schools of Raichur Taluk. Raichur District Administration, Jilla Panchayath, UNICEF Child Protection Project, Public Education Department of Karantaka and Grama Viakasa jointly initiated this effort and there were some amazing results at the end. On this course with trainings the above institutions just initiated a thought process in the ground level. The local people, committees and administration they themselves acted and brought the desired change. Here we are presenting five of those success stories from Richur Taluk and which we feel is that path breaking and in real terms ground breaking success.

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Mittimalkapura: A neat and clean school

The Government Higher Primary School in Mittimalkapur stood as an example for the apathy in education system of rural India. Now that's a history. Before the change took place the entire school building was surrounded by the garbage and bushes. People used to throw garbage and litter in and around school premises. Instead of school becoming home for children, it was looking like a palace for pigs in the village. Children used to struggle to reach the school in between the heap of garbage, thorny bushes and bullying pigs. The entire environment was unhealthy and completely unhygienic for not only study, but overall living of human itself.



SDMC meeting:

On 17th September, 2010 SDMC meeting held.

During that meeting members discussed about unhealthy atmosphere in and around the school.

For the first time in the history of that school and the village SDMC took this issue as serious matter. They understood the pros and cons of the situation and the committee decided to take an immediate corrective measures.

Result: Within a week of SDMC meeting, the committee President Mahadev and other members themselves took the responsibility of cleaning the heap of garbage and thorny bushes surrounding the school. A local contractor Shivanand joined his hands to this 'clean the school' campaign and donated crusher powder and 'jelly' stones to spread in and around the school premises. Spending Rs.8000 in total face lift of Mittimalkapur Hihger Primary School happened. This success and continued follow up of DCP team motivated SDMC to have their meeting regularly and work on several issues pertaining to school development.

Mittimalkapura: Drinking water

The agony of Government Higher Primary School in Mittimalkapur was not just confined to above issues. Another major problem the school used to face is safe drinking water supply.

SDMC meeting:

In the same meeting the issue has been discussed. There was a water source near to school, but due to the absence of proper pipeline water never used to reach the school. During the distribution of mid day meal, kids used to run back to their home to fetch the water. In most cases the kids were not used to come back to school afternoon. They used to take mid day meal back to the home and never used to return. There was heated discussion took place and they have decided tackle this issue on ASAP.



Result: As promised in the meeting GP President and members took this issue very seriously and with GP fund they installed a proper pipeline. A drinking water tap has been installed in the school. With that the thirst of kids and agony of the teachers disappeared. Especially the percentage of afternoon absence decreased. Now kids are attending the school full day and the smile is back on teacher's faces.

Arishinagi: A Saga of Thirst

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Kadlur Grama Pachayath in Raichur Taluk consist seven villages. Karekal, Rangapura, Bevinabench, Kadlur, H Thimmapur, Arishinagai and Gurjapur come under this GP. The SDMC members, School Head Masters, Panchayath Development Officer (PDO) and GP President decided to conduct a Children Grama Sabha in the Panchayath. That casual meeting witnessed a dramatic moment. The children present at that meeting voiced their concern about the apathy of school, especially drinking water problem.



Grama Sabha

When the Grama Sabha took place on 30th November, 2010 some kids came up with an issue. There was a water tank in Arishinagi Higher Primary School and that was under repair. The kids in the school used to struggle fetch safe drinking water from faraway places. Meantime, there was a safe drinking water scarcity to prepare the mid day meal in the school. Over all the thirsty school used to struggle lot. The Children members took this issue and raised their voice and they demanded for immediate solution for the existing problem.

Result: The mighty voice of tiny kids touched the elder's heart in the meeting. They took it seriously and decided repair the water tank with GP fund. Within 45 days of Grama Sabha the water tank at Arishinagi School have been repaired. Along with that, the surrounding area has been cleaned. In the school premises 30 saplings have been planted and the ground has been demarcated. At the end those thirsty kids got safe drinking water, a play ground and green hope.

Palkamdoddi: 30 days deadline

Palkamdoddi is a small village in Shakhavadi Gram Panchyath limit of Raichur Taluk. The Higher Primary School in Palkamdoddi was lacking in almost all basic amenities. When the Civic Amenity Committee (CAC) meeting was held at Shakavadi GP on 18th August, 2010 the issue came up. The Panchayath members, School Head Masters, SDMC members and School Children were participated in that meeting chaired by GP President.



CAC meeting:

The higher primary school in Palkamdoddi had three major problems; scarcity for safe drinking water, play ground and cleanliness in and around the school. There was a water tank, but that was under repair. All around the school there were thorny bushes and the entire area was looking like garbage yard. In the meeting a unanimous decision was taken and they have decided to address all the issues within 30 days deadline.



Result: With the help of Grama Panchayath fund, first they repaired the water tank and safe drinking water supply has been restored. Along with that the entire area has been cleaned by the GP and SDMC members. The play ground has been marked and on the ridges 30 saplings were planted. With a single attempt the local body, committees and villagers marched towards the holistic development of their school. In most of the cases they worked voluntarily and brought a smile back in the students face. Now the students of this school are getting safe drinking water and they play happily in the ground. All these happened in a time span of just thirty days.

Linganakhanadoddi: Every drop counts

In Linganakhanadoddi Government Higher Primary School, each and every drop of safe drinking water used to count lot. The students from this school used to depend on a bore well in the premises of Linganakhanadoddi Grama Panchayath office, next to their school. Due to over usage and improper maintenance the bore well stopped working. For many days no one took the responsibility of repairing the bore well and students used to struggle to get a drop of water. This hampered the preparation of mid day meal also.

SDMC meeting: When SDMC meeting took place on 16rd August, 2010 the non working bore well became the center of discussion. There was a hue and cry about the responsibility factor. Grama Panchayath or SDMC? Who has to take the responsibility of repairing the bore well? During the meeting SDMC members decided to approach Grama Panchayath for the help and solve the problem.



Result: Grama Panchayath President Narasimhulu agreed and took the initiation and with the help of GP fund the bore well has been repaired. Within a month again bore well under went for repair. Again there was a hue and cry for drinking water. Kids started dropping out of school. Afternoon attendance dropped drastically. At the end in 23rd November, 2010 in Children Grama Sabha the same issue came up again. The members raised their voice and demanded for immediate step. Due to the enormous pressure Grama Panchayath President took the responsibility and the bore well has been properly repaired again. Now when ever those school kids feel thirsty, they run towards GP premises and happily drink the water which rushes out of bore well.