

Mission Samriddhi

SOCIAL IMPACT ENTERPRISE

Issue 4 April-June 2019

THE QUIET GOOD NEWS

A quarterly from Mission Samriddhi

CHANGE BEGINS WITH SELF-BELIEF

”

*Arise, awake
and do not stop
until the goal is
reached*

- Swami Vivekananda

Stories of change have their roots in self - belief.

Mission Samriddhi is social impact enterprise focusing on something fundamental to change - the belief system. Belief in oneself. Belief in the community. Belief that change is possible if we put our mind to it. If we can dream it we can do it!

The cover story of this issue focuses on the dream launch of MSHARP - Mission Samriddhi Action Research Project to facilitate creation of model villages in 63 select Gram Panchayats of Assam, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra through strengthening their institutional capacities and facilitating in Gram Panchayat development Planning.

Mission Samriddhi is a social impact enterprise focusing on something fundamental to change the belief system

We cover this and other stories of changes that are sprouting in the various programmes of Mission Samriddhi.

Hope you enjoy the issue and if you'd like to participate in or know more about some of these programmes do feel free to get in touch with us at info@missionsamriddhi.org with your name and number. We will get back to you immediately.

Team Mission Samriddhi

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A DREAM LAUNCH

MSHARP - MISSION SAMRIDDHI
HOLISTIC ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT

Flashback.....

”

Independence must begin at the bottom. Thus, every village will be a Republic or Panchayat having full powers. It follows, therefore, that every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs even to the extent of defending itself against the whole world."

**Chapter 25 : Panchayati Raj
" India of my Dreams " M. K . Gandhi**

Such were the lofty ideals that were visualised by Gandhiji!

Mahatma Gandhi made it clear that when Panchayati Raj is established, public opinion will do what violence can never do - the Panchayat will be obeyed and the Panchayat can only work through the law of their making.

It took almost 60 years before the Government of India passed the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act that provided a Constitutional status to the Panchayati Raj Institutions in India through insertion of Article 243 to Part IX of the Indian Constitution.

Current Scenario

Yes ...Fast Forward another 25 years to 2019 and where do we stand with regards to Panchayati Raj in the country?

Barring Kerala and to some extent Karnataka and West Bengal, Panchayati Raj in our country has been a mixed bag. While Kerala immediately adopted the 73rd Amendment in letter and spirit and went on through their People's Plan campaign to institutionalize local self governance through complete devolution of funds, functions and functionaries, the same hasn't happened across the country. Lack of awareness on the Panchayati Raj as an institution followed by limited capability of the Elected Representatives to plan and implement their GPDP are still the major impediments to development. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj over the years, have to some extent pushed for institutionalizing Panchayati Raj through revised GPDP guidelines. Not only that, they have pushed for capacity building & Training through a comprehensive Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) Framework.

And yet, we barely see any quality GPDPs leading to model Panchayats.

Why this ARP from NIRDPR....

The goal of the GPDP ARP is to facilitate creation of replicable models of holistic development in selected GPs through strengthening their institutional capacities. This will be realized through preparation, planning, handholding and implementation support of high quality GPDP in its true spirit so that other GPs are inspired and motivated to follow suit.

Milestones to achieve

- Design and implement Capability Building and intense Training & Non-Training interventions to enable the ERs/Functionaries of the selected GPs.
- Seed and prepare the growth mindset of the ERs/Functionaries through 'Samridhi Yatras & UnMukt workshops' and thereby broaden their vision for economic development and social justice.
- To facilitate creation of demonstrative examples of technically feasible, economically viable and replicable models of GPDP for other GPs to emulate.

Ram Pappu, Programme Director Mission Samridhi interacting with the MSHARP candidates



How can this be achieved

Mission Samridhi Holistic Action Research Project (MSHARP) is being launched under the aegis of NIRDPR in 10 select Gram Panchayat Clusters (63 GPs in all) of Assam, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra.

10 Young Fellows - supported by their State level Programme Coordinators and the National Project Lead - will assimilate within the rural communities, observe, learn and become true catalysts for grass-root development. They will eventually enable quality GPDPs and thereby facilitate institutional empowerment of GPs.

Over 4 intensive weeks in May and June, the MSHARP team designed and executed a recruitment process that saw 350 applications, 190 of which were complete, 75 of whom were invited for a Written Test/GD/Interviews, 38 confirmations, 24 Finalists amongst which 11 were finally selected! All of them have been offered Fellowships and all have confirmed!

3 fellows for Maharashtra, 4 for Chhattisgarh, and 3 for Assam and 1 Programme Coordinator for Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh were selected.

Going Forward....

These "Extraordinary Eleven" completed a month long Training stint starting July 1 that included 20 days at NIRD Hyderabad followed by visits to Hiware Bazaar and Ralegan Siddhi and a quick orientation in Chennai before they hit the ground at their respective clusters on August 5th. All of them have adapted themselves very well and are already in the thick of

It is against this backdrop that NIRDPR in 2018 conceptualized the Action Research Project (ARP) to usher in institutionalized development in a sustainable manner through a quality GPDP.

action supporting the recently launched People's Plan campaign in their respective clusters.

As much as they are, we too are equally excited in our common purpose of empowering these 10 clusters.

10 clusters is just the beginning. Very soon, it would lead to a 100 and in a matter of 5 years, we should target the 10000 clusters or 50000 GPs under Mission Antyodaya.

If we are aligned in our thinking and make this commitment, it will surely happen and what better 150th birthday present can the Mahatma ask for!

FEATURE



GETTING RURAL INDIA READY FOR SELF GOVERNANCE

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND PANCHAYATI RAJ.

The National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRD&PR), an autonomous organisation under the Union Ministry of Rural Development, is a premier national centre of excellence in Rural Development and Panchayati Raj. Recognised internationally as one of the UN-ESCAP Centres of Excellence, it builds capacities of rural development functionaries, elected representatives of PRIs, bankers, NGOs and other stakeholders through inter-related activities of training, research and consultancy.

The mission of NIRD&PR is in two parts:

1) To examine and analyse the factors contributing to the improvement of economic and social well-being of people in rural areas on a sustainable basis with focus on the rural poor and the other disadvantaged groups through research, action research, consultancy and documentation efforts.

2) To facilitate rural development efforts with particular emphasis and focus on the rural poor by improving the knowledge, skills and attitudes of rural development officials and non-officials by organising training, programme workshops and seminars.

The NIRD&PR is mandated to:

- Organise training programmes, conferences, seminars and workshops for senior level development managers, elected representatives, bankers, NGOs and other stakeholders;
- Undertake, aid, promote and coordinate research on its own and / or collaborate with state, national and international development agencies;
- Analyse and offer solutions to problems encountered in planning and implementation of programmes for rural development, decentralized governance, Panchayati Raj and related programmes;
- Study the functioning of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and rural development programmes across the states;
- Analyse and propose solutions to problems in planning and implementation of the programmes for rural development; and
- Develop content and disseminate information and transfer technology through periodicals, reports, e-modules and other publications.

Action Research Project of GPDP

As a think tank of the Ministry of Rural Development under Government of India, the Institute will be in the forefront in the implementation of the Action Research Project of Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP), which was launched at Gwalior on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti in 2018.

Under the Action Research Project on GPDP (100 plus Panchayat Cluster Development Programme for Sustainable Development), NIRDPR has identified 700 gram Panchayat in 150 clusters from 115 Aspirational-cum-Mission Antyodaya districts in 28 States and 8 Union Territories. By partnering with government, non-government, CSR, philanthropists, trusts and academic institutes/ organisations, NIRDPR intends to bring quality in planning through professionalism and scientific approaches.

The objective of this initiative is to reinforce the efforts of the States / the MoPR by enabling the selected GPs in the 100+ Clusters to apply all or most of the available good practices in GPDP in the

country. This target will be achieved with specialized, value-added and incremental capacity-building and sustained handholding support through a Young Fellow and two Beacon Panchayat Leaders per Cluster.

The selected GPs under the Clusters will be treated as "Schools of Practice" in terms of professional GPDP preparation and effective implementation. The Project will provide support to these GPs to demonstrate themselves as "Beacon GPDPs". 'Seeing is believing' - observing the good results in these GPs which would function as the training hubs would have a spillover effect on the nearby GPs to learn how to replicate the good practices for further development through this Action Research Project.

To that end, the following are the objectives of the Action Research Project on GPDP:

- 1) To develop a clear and common understanding about the purpose, approach, focus, institutional arrangements, stages and processes of overall GPDP
- 2) To clearly understand the objectives, institutional arrangements and methodology of implementing the Action Research Project on GPDP alongside the mainstream People's Plan Campaign for GPDP
- 3) To enable the Beacon Panchayat Leaders to visualize how the GPs in the Clusters can acquire the distinctive features of Beacon GPDPs and demonstrate themselves as "Islands of Success"
- 4) To clearly understand the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders, including the Beacon Panchayat Leaders, in the Action Research Project on GPDP.

Mission Samiriddhi is working with NIRD&PR, implementing this Action Research Project in 10 clusters across the three states of Assam, Maharashtra and Chattisgarh to begin with. This project is already gaining traction.

GYAN YATRAS - LEARNING TRIP**I) PUNSARI**

Punsari Gram Panchayat

**A smart village worth emulating!**

For most of us city dwellers, it is tough to imagine a village that offers WiFi connectivity for all, has an RO water plant functioning in a public-private partnership model, a Biometric system to record the Panchayat employees' attendance, a well maintained health centre, multiple schools, banking facilities, toll-free complaint reception service.....the list is pretty long. Such a village does exist and this is not a village / Panchayat in Kerala that we are talking abouta state which is known to have ISO 9000 certified Gram Panchayats with facilities that beat many corporate offices. We are talking about Punsari, a village located in Sabarkantha district, about 80km from the state capital, Gandhinagar in the state of Gujarat, has all of this and more.

Having heard and read about the highly celebrated and acclaimed smart village, Punsari, and the man behind it, we were curious to learn more. So, on April 6, 2019, a small group from Mission Samridhi, went on a Gyan Yatra to hear firsthand about this amazing story of achievement.

How often has one heard about lack of funds being a major deterrent for development? And one tends to blame the Government for this, right? However, what we heard here was quite different. "I managed to achieve this transformation without any support / funds from CSRs, NGOs or NRIs. All the funding was sourced only from central and state government sponsored schemes" says Himanshu Narendrabhai Patel who was first elected as the Sarpanch of Punsari in 2006, at the age of 23 and has served 2 terms as a Sarpanch. In 10 years (2006-2016), Punsari has received and utilised Rs.20 Crore from various Government funds / schemes...an excellent example of what an informed and aware Sarpanch can achieve! Punsari GP had a negative budget when he took over as Sarpanch and he decided to focus on first fulfilling the basic needs such as proper drainage, electricity, clean drinking water and found schemes to fund all of this. Like they say, 'where there is a will, there is a way'.



Innovative ways of generating own source funds crept into the conversation. Himanshu spoke to us about 1) leasing out mobile toilets for functions/celebrations to generate revenue for the Panchayat, 2) encouraging youth of the village to set up an RO water plant which not only provides clean water, is a sustainable entrepreneurship model but also generates funds for the Panchayat.



Himanshu opined that a Sarpanch must work full time and run the Panchayat like a CEO. Coincidentally, Arun Jain Founder of and catalyst at Mission Samridhi had made the same comment during the UnMukt workshop for Panchayat leaders / members held at Wardha earlier. Yes, a Sarpanch is like the CEO of a company who has to manage several thousand people.

A heart warming initiative that Himanshu shared with us was about Kalam Sandesh – a 'positive news' newsletter, involving school children as contributors, reporting the good things happening in their village. Talking to us about Kalam Sandesh, Himanshu explained how school children were asked to make notes on their way to and from school about anything in the village that caught their attention. Initially the children could not differentiate between positive news and a complaint but gradually learnt to observe and record the positive things happening around them e.g. the road outside the house of 'X' is kept very clean, 'Y' family has some celebration because of so and so achievement, 'Z' family has bought a new vehicle etc. Once a month, the children would sit with Himanshu, read out their notes and this would get printed in the newsletter that was distributed to every household. This inculcates a sense of reporting and journalism in the children. But more importantly, they were able to look for and recognise the positives around them.

That evening, after listening to the story of Punsari and having seen what Himanshu Patel had managed to achieve, we left with a question in our mind – what will it take to replicate such a model elsewhere? The will to make a difference? Innovative and smart planning? A dedicated and aware Sarpanch? Probably, all of the above and it would definitely help if we can convert Himanshu Patel's step by step journey as a Sarpanch, his ability to source funds and his learnings along the way into a training module for aspiring Sarpanches.

II) RAJOURI

Sowing the seeds of hope

The usual headlines on Jammu & Kashmir sow a sense of uneasiness in us, for those of us who live in stable territories. It is in these conditions that a team from Mission Samridhi landed up in Rajouri District of J&K on April 10th, 2019 for a 5 day learning tour. This tour was organised by Major Ved Prakash Sharma of Gramonnati Trust in collaboration with the Indian Army.

Gramonnati has been engaged with Army and Civil authorities in Rajouri and Poonch Districts of J&K for the purpose of supporting rural development and entrepreneurship opportunities for local youth, women and retired soldiers since July 2018. The Indian Army is closely involved in developing social harmony in the state through their Sadbhavana and similar outreach programmes.

The purpose of our trip was to see the on ground problems being faced by the people living in the villages of these border regions. The tour was well-planned and showcased the efforts being made by Gramonnati and the Indian Army in order to bring change and improve the living conditions of people in these villages.

On reaching Rajouri, the team participated in Rajori Day, which gave us the opportunity to interact with other Development Accelerators (DAs) introduced by Mission Samridhi and Grammonati. The DAs were TERI, Sun Moksha, Hygienic Homes, Prantik International and Ullas Trust. The purpose was to collectively think of solutions to various problems. It was also an opportunity to showcase the work done by Mission Samridhi and Ullas to the senior Army officials like Brig. Saurabh Sharma and GOC Major General H. Dharmarajan.

A rural governance workshop was also organised as part of the Sarpanch Conclave. This session was facilitated by Chandrashekhar Pran of Teesri Sarkar who spoke about the importance and power of Panchayats.

The Sarpanches (from are Sadhbavana trip) were thrilled to have us there. Our visit strengthened their belief in us. Moreover, 60 odd Sarpanches visited the gallery and interacted with us.

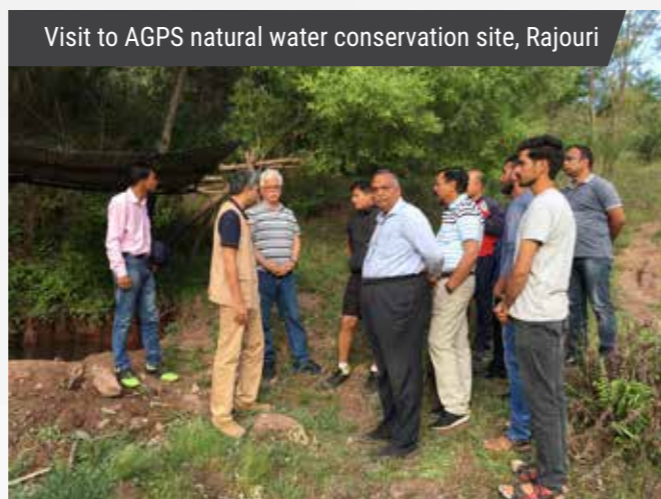


Akis Nasir, a young 24 year old Sarpanch from Jamola Village was among the Sarpanches who visited our stalls. He was very enthusiastic and invited the team to his village. When the team reached Jamola, a group of 80 people consisting of men, women, children were eagerly waiting to meet us. While interacting with the villagers, the major problem that came to our notice was the unavailability of water for drinking as well as for agriculture. A roadmap was prepared and examples of other model villages were shared with the villagers which gave them hope and encouragement to work towards a positive future.

Meeting with the villagers at Jamola, Rajouri



Next, the team visited the Army Goodwill Public school (AGPS) to see the initiatives being carried out there. AGPS was established under the Sadbhavna initiative of the Indian Army with an aim to impart quality education to realize the dreams of children from militancy affected backward areas of J&K. It was a pleasant experience to see the kids discussing about their role models and their dreams. Their dream career ranged from an Army Officer to Successful Entrepreneur to a Teacher. Children listened intently as we interacted with them.



Visit to AGPS natural water conservation site, Rajouri

While interacting with the kids, Major Ved Prakash discussed about the importance of organic farming and why youth should be connected to agriculture. He also shared ideas on growing their own vegetables in school. The kids were very excited about this intervention and promised to take it forward. The team also visited the natural water conservation site within the school campus and finalised the location for Organic farming opportunities with the support of the school authorities.

Sukanya interacting with the kids at AGPS, Rajouri



III) KERALA

MS team with Kudumbrashree Mission team, Aloor



ISO Certified Family health care center, Eraviperoor



Learnings from the land of volunteerism

Recently we undertook a Kerala Gyaan Yatra to understand for ourselves why Kerala is God's own country not only with respect to tourism but also to do with Panchayat Empowerment. Our Yatra covered 3 destinations - the Kerala Institute of Labour Administration (KILA), the Gram Panchayats at Aloor, Alagappa Nagar and the award winning Eraviperoor.

KILA is a role model by itself - an institution unlike any other in India that has holistically shaped good governance and administration for local governments in Kerala, rural and urban. Our KILA experience gave us some perspectives on why and how the Panchayat system succeeded in Kerala. Ideally, KILA should be replicated in every state in India.

Fundamentally, Kerala has succeeded in Panchayat Raj because of strong political will and the spirit of volunteerism. Additionally, Kerala, because of its achievements in literacy, land reforms, equality in education and a politically aware population was well positioned when the 73rd Amendment came in October 1992. KILA was formed in 1990 and the concept of local government was already gaining

shape in Kerala, thanks to the efforts of progressive CMs such as EMS Namboothiripad, EK Nayanar later and finally AK Antony. The People's Plan campaign that happened in 1995-96 was the trigger to completely establish the concept of Panchayat Raj across the entire state.

Once the people were aware of their rights in terms of funds, functions and functionaries, the next question was - how do we make this happen? Herein lies the courage and honesty of the government who decided to adopt a Big Bang approach and decided that in a single move, they would transfer powers including 1/3rd of the state development budget for local governance. After this, institutions like KILA worked hand in hand with the various State Government committees to implement processes that are truly world class with complete de-centralisation and appropriate checks and balances at all levels. Capability building is done by KILA in the truest sense that has participation from all the stakeholders - citizens, civil service organizations, line department functionaries, volunteering organisations all working together as a complete eco system. An example of this which we got to see was a child friendly local

government training programme which had multiple stakeholders coming together to deliver the training. KILA does many innovative things including field exposure trips, virtual classrooms, content delivery through radio and TV, a HelpDesk, and a Panchayat Raj magazine.

20 years after the Peoples Plan and what do we see today!

All the 1000 plus local self government bodies in Kerala are empowered with most of them having surplus budgets delivering a full range of citizen friendly services and some of them being ISO 9000 certified!

This was a unique system where most of the 29 subjects including the funds, functions and functionaries are truly working at the behest of the local government. Line department officials are supervised, controlled and managed by the Panchayats while receiving their paychecks from the state government, where Panchayats raise their own

source of revenue through appropriate taxes. This has been going on for more than 20 years and is still working beautifully. Well then, what's the catch? Why isn't the rest of the country emulating the same? " Oh, its a different culture - wont work in our state", are some of the comments.

While it is difficult to replicate Kerala across other parts of our country , we could perhaps replicate some of their best practices that we discovered in our visits to Aloor, Alagappa Nagar and Eraviperoor.

Kerala - a state with a strong political will that has implemented local self governance in letter & spirit.

Sports Academy, Eraviperoor



SHG Canteen, Allagappa Nagar



Solid Waste Management, Eraviperoor



1. Preparing the Soil – Kerala Gram Panchayats have proved that they are 'MODEL VILLAGES' for other villages across the country. To seed and expand the growth mindset, we must in the future plan Samridhi Yatras to KILA and Eraviperoor , from our existing clusters and MSHARP cluster with multi stakeholders - GP functionaries, Line Dept functionaries and local Political leaders,
2. Panchayat Empowerment - 1)Strengthening Gram Sabha - involving political leadership, GP members, line department functionaries, 2)Gram Sabha/ Ward Sabha of Special Categories –Differently Abled, Senior Citizens, Women, Youth and 3)Bal Sabhas or 'Child-friendly Panchayats -an SoP/book/AV can be distributed in our clusters for awareness and implementation.. 4)Kudambashree model of social development by propagating GP related information can be explained and attempted with SHGs in our clusters.
3. Education, Sports and Culture - 1) Kitchen Garden in schools – to augment ICDS intake of vegetables, 2) School children can be taken on Vidarthi Samridhi Yatras for seeding the growth mindset early. 3) Eraviperoor sports council model of sports promotion could be made into an SoP and attempted in our clusters 4) "Admission Festival", (a festival on the 1st day of school to celebrate school admission rather than worry from anxiety), 5) Art Festivals in schools, 6) Mango / Jackfruit festival in schools.
4. Livelihood - 1) Kudambashree model of economic development through livelihood options of NutriMix and Sayam Prabha mix should be tried out with SHGs in Wardha, Yavatmal, Betul. 2) Locally grown rice, fruit and vegetables can be used for ICDS food and nutrition requirements.

These are only some of the important measures.

Most importantly, the greatest learning that we as well as our friends from other parts of the country experienced from our visit to Kerala is the seeding of the growth mindset - self belief that if you can dream it , you can do it.

If Kerala can, so can you!

CASE STUDY - KILA, THE GAME CHANGER.

Depiction of a traditional Gram Sabha



Kila library



Mission Samridhi lays a lot of emphasis on learning from the grassroots to develop workable models that can be scaled up significantly, are sustainable, are innovative in their approach, and replicable across geographies.

Toward this end, a Team from Mission Samridhi visited the Kerala Institute of Local Administration [KILA] in Thrissur, Kerala - a pioneering institution that has proved to the country the possibility of governance with the people through effective and efficient local self-government structures. The KILA team included its Director - Dr. Joy Elamon, Associate Prof. Dr. Peter M Raj and KILA faculty members, PV Ramakrishnan and Renukumar.

Started in 1990 KILA is owned by the Local Government and is the Nodal & Sole training Institute for Rural and Urban bodies - LG (Local Government) and LSGD (Local Self Government Department). It began in the Pre 73rd Amendment era and its training programme are implemented across 941 Gram Panchayats in Kerala. The impetus began with the Literacy program, went on to the People's Plan Campaign (PPC) in 1996 - an experiment in

de-centralisation of powers to local governments with focus on local planning, and a strong political will with the Kerala State Government supporting and leading this initiative. Another unique element for success is the voluntary participation of the local community [retired officials, bureaucrats.

GPs under the KILA umbrella scrupulously follow the basic principles of decentralization: Autonomy, Subsidiarity, Role Clarity, Complementarity, and Uniformity. Other tenets close to KILA's action include - People's Participation, Accountability, and Transparency. Kerala's decentralization takes the third form: devolution. Authority is transferred to autonomous local governments granting them powers to plan, make decisions, raise revenues and monitor activities.

The key mandate of KILA is 'Strengthening Local Governance through Capacity Building and Training'. The focus is on Training for ALL. However, other areas of work include - Policy Research & Action Research, Policy Advice/ Support, Handholding, Resource Support and Publications. The methods used include - Classroom teaching, participatory

exercises, interactive sessions, exposure & field visits, dissemination & feedback, on-the-spot evaluation, etc. Emphasis is laid on the 5Fs of Panchayat - Functions, Functionaries, Funds, Fraternity and Freedom. The Newly Elected Panchayat Representatives [ERs] Training Plan of KILA includes: Oath Taking (on a single day) - for all Panchayat Presidents only, within 6 months - Panchayat Plan Training for 2 days. In 6 months - training for President + Member + Secretary. In one year - 3 days training - subject-wise for Joint Standing Committees (Gram Sabha member & transferred Department officials). They can handle 50 batches for training in 1 day - using videos and booklets.

The most innovative part of KILA is how a small staff of 5 or 6 trainers manage to conduct hundreds of training programs through the sheer power of the ecosystem they have developed - consisting of retired government staff, currently serving line department functions, college staff, Panchayat staff, and SHG members. The beauty is that all these

people come together and conduct a training program with full involvement as if it's their own and they take pride in being associated with KILA. Credit goes to KILA for creating such a wonderful ecosystem.

KILA has demonstrated successfully how people at the Gram Panchayat level are empowered to make decisions, implement and monitor them in a participatory manner. It has also taught Gram Panchayats to be self-sufficient, earning adequately through Own Source Revenue and striving to provide holistic development to the Panchayats through effective leadership, enhanced all-round socio-economic development through empowerment of its citizens. KILA has also demonstrated the importance of technology and efficiency in providing services to the people at the Gram Sabha level through Quality control mechanisms, community-led monitoring thereby ensuring accountability and transparency.

MS team at KILA



MS team interacting with Dr Joy Elamon



UPCLOSE

INTERVIEW- VIJAY ANAND

Mr. S.M Vijayanand at MS summit, 2018

**WHEN EXPERTISE
MEETS PASSION,
CHANGE BEGINS.**

An interview with
Mr.S.M. Vijayanand,
Former Secretary,
Ministry of
Rural Development.



In this issue we meet up with Mr. Vijayanand who served for 11 years as Secretary, Local Self - Government. He's refreshing in his optimism, brimming with ideas on how we can make self governance a reality in India. As a pioneer in the area of self-governance he has a track record to prove that it is possible.

During his tenure, he played a key role in the devolution of funds, powers and personnel to the local government institutions, while serving as Member-Secretary of the Senate Committee on Democratic Decentralisation and member of the State Finance Commission headed by economist Prabhat Patnaik.

We had a chance to gather some insights from Mr.Vijayanand, on how we can take a leaf out of the successful experiment with Kerala's model Gram Panchayat into other clusters.

Q: You've spent many years in the Ministry of Rural Development as Secretary. What was your vision for local self governance?

A: Our mission was to help the local self government perform their duties. We, the key policy makers took an idealistic stance that we will make things work and ensure that self governance is established. Also we've seen through our experience that when one is able to build social accountability then bureaucratic resistance can be overcome. So we were optimistic. Also Kerala's access to untied funds was a great opportunity to build local self governance. And we put all our efforts in taking this forward.

Q: What were the challenges you faced in your journey as the Secretary handling self-governance?

A: Establishing decentralisation can throw up problems, many of which we cannot anticipate in advance. We need to address them quickly so that it leads to positive action. To handle this, we set up a Co-ordination Committee that had the power to take operational decisions. Whatever issues the Gram Panchayat faced such as lack of clarity in a Government Order or doubts in the allocation of funds, were brought to our notice. And the Committee met every Wednesday and spent two hours intensely discussing all these issues, decisions were taken and the issues were resolved in two to three weeks. This speed of resolution of issues lent momentum and built trust.

Q: What are the learnings from the success of Kerala model of local self governance?

A: Kerala's success can't be attributed solely to the State's high literacy rate.

- The State's political will and consensus across various Governments in power have a big role to play. This has helped the local Self-Government Institutions become meaningfully empowered through massive transfer of resources as well as administrative powers.
- Informal blocks such as the Kudumbashree Community Network, (which is part of the poverty eradication and women empowerment programme of the Kerala Government started in 1997), lent a huge support to local self government institutions. With a total membership of 43,93,579 Kudumbashree offers incredible support to organise, demand responses and reinforce the mission of self governance.
- Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA), an autonomous institution functioning for the Local governments in Kerala engaged in myriad capacity building interventions such as training, action research etc on local governance and decentralisation.

Q: From your experience what can be used to activate self governance in Gram Panchayats under Mission Antyodaya?

Firstly we could use participatory planning as an entry point to engage the community in order to build capacities. Volunteerism from civil society should be explored. A process for members of civil society, such as activists or retired civil servants, to participate in the 2 day Gram Sabha would be a good start.

Secondly we need to create a symbiotic partnership with functional Self Help Groups leveraging their skills. They need to be treated as partners of Panchayat supporting with tasks such as extension jobs, cleaning, accounting, creating awareness etc.

Another avenue of resource could be Block Level officers who can be used to service the Gram Panchayat and their expertise used in whatever way possible. A Government Order could be issued to this effect.

Since most of the Panchayat offices now have a computer and connectivity we could explore possibilities for capacity building through using ICT and e-governance.

A local Gram Panchayat Association could be set up as a lobbying body that could be involved in Panchayat related decision making.

On the financial front, we could make the most of the 14th Finance Commission's recommendation of grants to local bodies limited by minimal conditionalities.

These are a few things we could try to make the process more effective in the Antyodaya Mission GPs.

SPOTLIGHT: ANODE GOVERNANCE LAB

BY SONALI SRIVASTAV

Anode Government Lab was set up to work with public institutions, which play a key role in delivery of basic services, especially to the country's most vulnerable population that do not have an exit option. Aiming to work towards bridging gaps in our villages, rather than direct intervention in various sectors, our focus has primarily been on strengthening institutions in rural areas, where paradoxically, poverty and poor facilities co-exist with unspent budgets. Rural local governments, the Gram Panchayats (GPs) are at the centre of our interventions.

Is GP a geographical unit or an institution? While most government and non-government organisations will vouch for its institutional status, most times, their initiatives are planned with GPs as bystanders, or with their token consent. We would like to change this. Empowering GPs to us implies building confidence in citizens to self govern. How do we build these capacities? The dominant method has been to provide classroom training, which is not sufficient to address the complexities of change required. Studying various change management processes, we found we could draw from organisation development (OD) methodology and principles, in which members participate as drivers rather than recipients of change process. Can Panchayat (elected) members be the drivers of change? We have a deep faith in rural people's thinking, empathy and ability. What they find challenging is to function as formal organisations and participate in public systems, understandably, as they have not been involved in their design and establishment. Anode's Gram Panchayat Organisation Development (GPOD) framework, developed based on our work with 80 odd GPs across 4 states, and in collaboration with multiple partners, is to enable Panchayats to design their organisation and operationalize their various systems and processes.

Our results have been encouraging, but not as much as we would like them to be. The process is able to generate high levels of motivation and involvement among elected members, who are able to function as a coordinated institution and impact many functions positively: Better access to government schemes and extension training by farmers, collaboration between schools and Panchayats to resolve issues, creating the required vibrancy in classrooms, close monitoring of anganwadis to ensure adherence to child care norms, streamlined operations and maintenance of drinking water systems etc. While these undoubtedly benefit the citizens, our aim is to ensure the momentum continues, and GPs move towards higher levels of institutional maturity. This requires continued handholding.

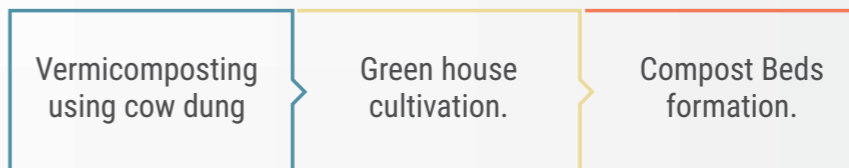
Moreover, how do we trigger change in other GPs? On one hand, organisation building requires deep facilitation and nurturing, which is resource and time intensive. On the other hand, the numbers are large - the two lakh odd Panchayats across the country have to function effectively to leap frog into next level of development.



Solutions, we feel, lie in strengthening public institutions responsible for developing capacities of local governments, establishing strategic partnerships and funding streams from private sector, and exploring technology led solutions for triggering change at scale.

BAGHPAT UPDATE

Samridhhi Farms: A demo farm growing chemical free vegetable, fruits and flowers is now ready using the following:



EDUCATION

- Tarkeybein is working with 24 primary and upper primary schools in Khekra, Baghpat. The field newsletter 2.0 (Shiksha Sakhi Tarkeybein) with teachers & Education Officers in Baghpat was launched. In this we highlighted and appreciated the efforts that teachers are putting in their classrooms to ensure children's learning.
- Block level teacher training in March,** Tarkeybein got a chance to become a part of a 5 Day long Block level training on Learning Outcomes from Block Education Officer where they interacted with 114 teachers and shared their thoughts on implementing the Quality

Learning Initiatives in classrooms. In the month of April, a successful teacher's collective was done with Khekra and Sankrond Cluster at the Block level.



- **Ullas Bal Kendra (UBK):** Ullas Bal Kendra is operating in four villages where the students from government schools learn through fun. One of their aspirations was fulfilled when a computer was donated by Goonj on the request of Tarkeybein and Mission Samridhi, The children of UBK had an exposure visit to the Red Fort in Delhi and the Science Museum. This was the first time that these kids stepped out of their village. Seeing and learning so many new things was an amazing experience for them.



Ullas Bal Kendra visit to Red fort

OTHER INITIATIVES

- **Cleanliness Drive in DAULA -** Weekly Cleanliness Drive campaign is urging the community of Daula Village to work for their own environment. It was driven by the Gramin Avam Paryavaran Vikas Sansthan and Sukoon.



Cleanliness Drive in Daula

- **Women empowerment initiatives:** On 4th of April, Mission Samridhi had a conversation with the communities with special reference to women power and awareness. The session was designed as a one-on-one conversation with the local community in order to know their mindset and the challenges they faced.



Women empowerment initiative

- **Hygiene:** Another session was held in collaboration with the District hospital. Dr Nupur and Dr Shilpa conducted a session for women and young girls on menstrual hygiene. Women were able to clear their health related doubts too.



Session on menstrual hygiene

WARDHA UPDATE

Kharra - free village Initiative

A team of two from SYPM, New Delhi visited Ashta and Ekurli, where they interviewed different stakeholders such as peer educators, children, primary and middle school teachers, members of School Management Committee, Sarpanches, ASHA and Anganwadi Sevikas to prepare an Impact Assessment Report for the Kharra-free Initiative. This report indicates how the initiative can be replicated in other villages. For more details on SPYM please visit www.spym.org



Kharra-free village initiative

Agriculture Tool Bank

The Lonsavali and Dhamangaon Agriculture Tool Banks have generated a rent of Rs. 4570/- and Rs 990 in the month of April and May respectively.



Agriculture tool Bank

Kitchen Garden Initiative (KGI)

Under the KGI 109 women from 5 villages harvested and consumed vegetables & fruits to the tune of Rs. 85791. Between May and June 2019 more than 400 women were trained on setting up of Kitchen Gardens, Land preparation, Jeevamrut preparation and application, seed treatment, sowing methods and preservation of seeds. Eight new villages have additionally been identified for the KG initiative.



Kitchen Garden initiative

NEWS & EVENTS

JAMMU RAJOURI DAY 12 APRIL 2019

Convergence with MSRLM - UMED

Mission Samridhhi signed an MoU with MSRLM-UMED on the 20th June to expand the Kitchen Garden Initiative to 240 villages in Wardha district. As per the MoU, Mission Samridhhi provided 7,200 seed packets and UMED is responsible to capture data and conduct hemoglobin tests for all 7,200 women between July 2019 and March 2020. A two day training was also conducted for all CTCs by UMED at Yatri Nivas, Sevagram on 15th June 2019.



Convergence with MSRLM-UMED

Soil Testing

Mission Samridhhi partnered with IFFCO, Wardha and conducted demonstrations on soil testing. In all, 200 soil samples were collected and sent to the IFFCO laboratory in Gandhi Nagar, Gujarat.

Mission Samridhhi partnered with IFFCO, Wardha and conducted demonstrations on soil testing.

Demonstration of Waste Decomposer

Demonstrations on Waste Decomposer were given to 129 farmers from 12 villages in Wardha district. The Waste Decomposer [bacteria from desi cow dung] is available at a very low cost which is mixed with 200 litres of water and 2 Kg of jaggery. This liquid can be used as S9 culture to de-compose the fertilizer and helps to increase the number of micro-bacteria in the soil.



Waste decomposer demonstration

In Feb 2019, Gramonnati and Mission Samridhhi successfully conducted a 15-day tour for 20 selected Sarpanches and ESM (Ex-servicemen) from Rajouri and Poonch with the following objectives. 1) Learn about best practices in rural governance from successful grass-root leaders and rural development experts (includes visiting model villages). 2) Learn about rural innovation, entrepreneurship and simple-to-use technologies that can be deployed in their own villages. 3) To provide a basic framework for the Sarpanches to initiate holistic transformation plans for their villages to be model villages in next 18-24 months. 4) To showcase highly impactful and low-cost rural innovations to ESM and Sarpanches.

In April a team from Mission Samridhhi and Ullas Trust was invited to Jammu, to be a part of Rajouri Day on 12 Apr 2019. This visit was a step forward, based on the inputs and suggestions of Sarpanches and Army officials engaged with Gramonnati. 'Rajouri Day' is celebrated on April 13 every year to commemorate the bravery and valour of the Indian Army soldiers who laid down their lives for the liberation of Rajouri district from rebels and Pakistan Army. Many other organizations like TERI, Sun Moksha, DHP, Ullas, Hygienic Homes participated in the event.

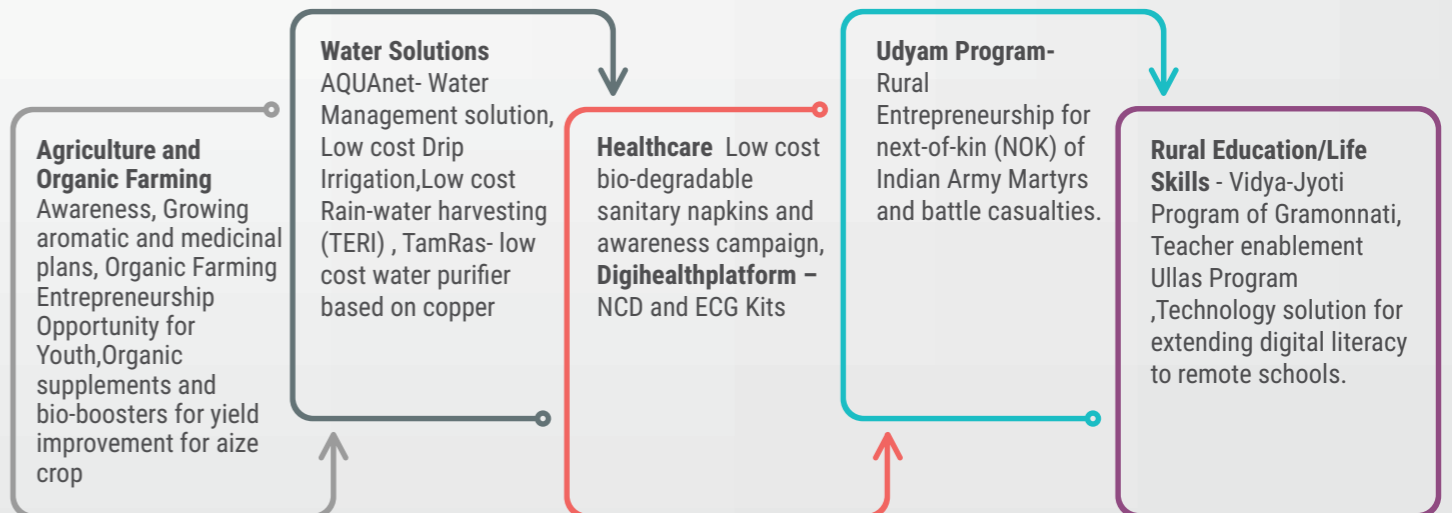


In conversation with Brig Saurabh Sharma and GOC Major General Dharamrajan



Sarpanch Conclave on Rajouri Day

The following solutions were planned for briefing and demonstration to all in this event.



SIMPLE STORIES OF IMPACT



Kishor Jagtap of Mission Samridhi honored with 'Seva Ratna'

On June 22nd, 2019 Kishor Jagtap of Mission Samridhi was honoured with the '**Seva Ratna**' award by Freedom Trust at Anna University, Chennai for his dedicated efforts in Vidarbha, Maharashtra that resulted in 500 people to walk. In his acceptance speech, Kishor reaffirmed his commitment to eradicate the negative imagery of Vidarbha around farmer suicide, drought and usher in Samridhi.

In our interaction with Panchayat representatives and community leaders through various discussions, we have documented some good practices which you may want to adopt. They are no cost or low cost activities and yet have potential for high impact.

Grammotsav, Sitapur, Uttar-Pradesh

In Sitapur, villagers celebrated Grammotsav, a celebration of rural life that showcased the essence of unity amongst the villagers. The idea was to bring people from different castes, class and gender on a common platform thereby breaking barriers within the community. Activities at the festival included 'Namakaran' of new born babies, celebration and welcoming new brides into the village, honoring elderly couples, farmers and artisans.



Grammotsav, Sitapur, Uttar-Pradesh

MSHARP

As a part of the 100+ GDP Programme, Mission Samridhi has collaborated with NIRDPR on the mission to facilitate the creation of institutionally strengthened GPs to demonstrate Beacon GDPs that would motivate other GPs to follow suit. The Mission Samridhi Holistic Action Research Project (MSHARP) has been initiated in 10 clusters which include 3 clusters in Assam, 4 clusters in Chhattisgarh and 3 Clusters in Maharashtra. A team of 10 Young Fellows and 1 Programme Coordinator has been engaged for this Project.

Freedom Trust Camp (May 2019)

The assessment and distribution camp was held at Wardha, Nagpur, Nagbhid, Dhamangaon, Daryapur and Amaravati. Dr Sunder Subramhanyam and two students of Bombay Scottish School, Mahim were present at the distribution camp held at Wardha on 11th May 2019 and the camp held at MLA Hostel, Nagpur on 12th May 2019. Most of the amputees were first limb users and tribals. Around 209 Limbs were distributed at these camps.

The event also had a special session by Chandrashekhar Pran Teesri Sarkar on Rural Governance. More than 60 Sarpanches were present in this session. It was an interactive session where Dr. Pran discussed on the responsibilities of a Gram Panchayat and how it could act as an effective institution for Rural Governance.



Vikky from Amravati getting a prosthetic limb

Seema Mahenge, Sarpanch, Belura, Maharashtra.

In order to prevent open defecation, school kids gifted flowers to people defecating in open. Such targeting through friendly gestures exposes wrong doers without being harsh or critical.



Seema Mahenge, Sarpanch, Belura, Maharashtra

Bal Sabhas, Pindarkon, Jharkhand.

The children in Pindarkon GP are creating awareness around cleanliness through BalSabhas. During a recent fete, they made sure that every stall has a dustbin and with the help of the Panchayat stuck warnings and fined the defaulters.



Bal Sabhas, Pindarkon, Jharkhand

Narali, Yavatmal, Maharashtra

The villagers celebrate the birth of every girl child by planting trees. This shifts their mindset from disappointment to pride in their girl child.



Narali, Yavatmal, Maharashtra

If you would like to contribute such simple stories that can impact communities in a big way do share with us at info@missionsamridhi.org

Mission Samriddhi

SOCIAL IMPACT ENTERPRISE