

## Visit to Belagavi post being affected due to heavy rains and flooding during August – October 2019

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> November 2019

Team for the visit: Shivamurthy Bhandarkar, Srinivas Ganiga, Kavita Ratna, Nishita Khajane, Manjunath KT

Name of the panchayats visited: Maskenahatti and Mangenakoppa, Khanapur taluk; Pashchapura, Hukkeri taluk, Managutti, Chikkodi taluk

### Damage cause to Belagavi district due to heavy rains and flooding

Belagavi district is located in the northern part of Karnataka and shares its border with Maharashtra. Out of the 10 taluks in Belgaum district, 4 taluks were severely affected by the flood: Hukkeri, Chikkodi, Khanapur and Gokak. This has also been cross checked as per the circular issued by the NREGA Commissionerate, indicating the 103 blocks of the 22 districts of Karnataka, that were affected due to floods. Our team visited 3 out of the 4 taluks to study the extent of damage caused due to heavy rains and flooding. Due to the by-elections that were scheduled to take place in Gokak taluk, our team could not visit the flood and rains affected panchayats in Gokak.

As per an article in Deccan Herald, dated October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019, Belagavi, yet to recover from the flood-fury two months ago, once again bore the brunt of the heavy downpour. The Meteorological department recorded 58.1 MM rain from Sunday evening to Monday morning in Belagavi. Rainwater gushed into many houses in low-lying areas in Chikkodi and some other places, forcing people to take shelter on roof-tops. Three houses collapsed in Shahpur, a suburb of Belagavi city. In Belagavi district's Gokak town, water from the Ghataprabha River inundated many areas, creating panic among the residents. The town was badly affected by the floods in August.<sup>1</sup>

Another report in the Deccan Herald, dated August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019, mentioned that as many as 5,137 houses have suffered partial damages and 11 houses were completely collapsed due to heavy rains and 57,887 people have been evacuated. A total of 151 relief camps opened wherein 65,155



<sup>1</sup><https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/heavy-rains-create-flood-scare-in-parts-of-karnataka-1611603-2019-10-21>

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inmates have been sheltered. 98,607 people have been displaced due to floods in 331 villages. The floods have left trails of destruction. Crops in 1,36,529 hectare are under water. According to official sources, 1,410 kilometres of roads, 4,019 government buildings, 211 bridges and concert drains, 92 water supply units and 2575 electrical related damages have been reported. Union Minister of State for Railway Suresh Angadi has visited rain-affected areas in Ramdurg and Savadatti taluk.<sup>2</sup>

### Our overall observations from the visit

Most of the people from the flood affected areas are depending on coolie or agriculture lands for their livelihood. But the rainfall and the flood destroyed their agricultural land completely this year. Many houses are badly destroyed by floods and are unfit to live in. Some of the families have received 25,000/- as compensation amount according to the first list made, based on the government survey with specific criteria developed by the government. The four criteria identified by the government with regard to the damage faced are as follow: A – Complete damage; B – Roof damage; C – Minimum damage to walls and windows; D – Any noticeable damage. Rs. 25,000/- would be offered to the houses identified in the D category. The maximum limit for the compensation amount was Rs. 5,00,000/- and some of the families had received the first instalment of Rs. 1,00,000/-.

People have raised the issue that their houses had been marked under the wrong category and thus received inadequate compensation amount. Many people do not have the information regarding which category their damaged property belongs to with regard to the compensation. We have also observed that there was no clarity among the affected families regarding the next steps in claiming the compensation. Another crucial observation is that the houses identified in the 'weak and vulnerable to damage' was not featured anywhere in the list of categories. It has also been noticed that some of the families were left out from the first list even though their houses are completely damaged. Proper information has not been given to those families when they enquired about this at the gram panchayat.

Many donors have come forward to support flood victims with immediate effect comparing to the actions taken by the local or State Government. The response from the government to rebuild the community and their life has been very slow and ineffective. There was either slow response or no response at all and generally it was observed that the gram panchayats did not have a robust plan of action for rebuilding the community. For those who are affected from this were provided the alternate sites/houses identifying government lands and also compensation was given. But many of them are not yet received the rights of records of such sites/lands/houses. And some didn't get any

<sup>2</sup><https://www.deccanherald.com/state/karnataka-districts/331-villages-in-belagavi-affected-by-flood-753165.html>

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compensation as well. In most of the places that we visited, communities and the children had no idea or information that such a severe flood would hit.

Schools and anganwadis are completely destroyed by flood. Flood has also caused the loss of thousands of acres of agricultural lands and agricultural produce that was stocked up after harvesting. No specific compensative schemes/programmes are planned yet for children, women or senior citizens who affected from flood. People are still in temporary shelters and relief camps even after three months of being affected by flood. The Additional Officer, in-charge of the office of Executive Officer and holding the special charge of NREGA also mentioned to the team that there disaster management guidelines have not been passed after 2015. The present guidelines are only applicable for drought prone areas and not flood affected regions. The discussion with the NREGA Commiserate in Bangalore also reinforces the above stated fact. There are no special provisions under NREGA scheme for the post flood reconstruction.

The panchayat has announced and given an amount of Rs. 25,000/- for some of the affected families. The mental trauma that the families have faced is immeasurable and the question as to who will help the affected families reconstruct their lives from the scratch still remains unanswered. With everything gone and washed out completely, the families are still recovering from the shock and horror of the loss due to the floods.

in several places, people have shared with us that their houses have been marked in the wrong categories during the surveys, due to which they have received insufficient relief measures from the panchayat that are not commensurate with the magnitude of the damages that they have faced due to the floods. The schedule of payment is neither clear not known to them. Those who have already received support are not ready to support people who have not received any aid from the panchayat.

\*Note: Some of the issues that children have raised with regard to the flood appear in the child rights section. There may be overlaps with the categorization of the issues.

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Detailed documentation and observation from our visits to the affected panchayats

Maskenahatti panchayat, Khanapur taluk: Visited on 25 <sup>th</sup> November 2019 Meeting with 30 children of the Govt. Lower Primary School of Maskenahatti panchayat, Khanapur taluk Team from Jagruti Mahila Okkuta: Sharada Dabade, Ashok			
	Observations	Statements	Recommendations
<b>Flood Related</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to heavy rains, some houses have been destroyed completely and partially.</li> <li>• Extent of damage: Roofs fallen, walls have crumbled, cracks developed in the walls, structure weakened in some cases.</li> <li>• The sugarcane crop has been destroyed due to heavy rains.</li> <li>• An elderly couple, whose house was affected due to floods also spoke to the team during the visits. During the time when rescue was being made, the elderly man refused to come without his aged wife. The family does not have any close relatives that can help them and they do not know whom to approach for</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “During rains, the nearby stream had been flooded and the water had risen so high that it entered some of the houses in the area. Due to this, some villagers that were stranded on the other side of the stream could not cross the stream. They were stranded without food. We had to pack jowar rotis in packets and hurl it across the stream. Sometimes this would be successful and sometimes, the packets would get washed down the stream.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A bridge measuring 100 feet has to be constructed for people to easily pass by the stream. This bridge is also necessary for transportation of essentials such as milk. People need to travel to the neighboring village Sonenahatti and they need the bridge. Teachers also find it difficult to reach Maskenahatti.</li> <li>• Special attention has to be given by the gram panchayat to the senior citizens of the village.</li> </ul>

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	help.		
<b>Child Rights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children’s gram sabha has been conducted but since it was held in a school in the neighboring ward, children have not been able to attend it.</li> <li>Many children, especially young girls of school – going age, have dropped out of school as bus facility has been stopped due to lack of availability of proper roads. The bus drivers ask the villagers to get roads repaired and that they would start service only after roads are repaired. The children have raised this repeatedly in the gram Sabhas but the panchayat has not paid heed to their demand. Due to this problem, the girls of marginalised Muslim families, willing to go to school, are unable to do so.</li> <li>4 boys and 4 girls are not going to school because of lack of bus facility due to improper roads. Children are still going to high school and coming back home by 9 PM.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Due to lack of availability of roads, we are unable to go to college. The bus drivers ask us to get our roads repaired and till then they are not ready to come into the village. Therefore we have had to drop out of school and college”</li> <li>“We have faced lot of issues to provide medical support to pregnant women due for delivery. There is no Primary Healthcare Centre in the village to provide basic medical support”</li> <li>“The school does not give eggs as a part of the midday meals”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tar roads have to be built in the village so that buses can come inside the village and help children access bus facility to reach schools and colleges.</li> <li>A Primary Health Care Centre has to be set up in the village.</li> <li>Eggs have to be given to children in school.</li> </ul>
<b>NREGA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The wages under NREGA are less and therefore adolescent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“As the wages that they get under the scheme is less, some of the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wages have to be increased under the NREGA scheme.</li> </ul>

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	children and their families are migrating to Vittakhanapur and Kolhapur in search of construction labour jobs.	villagers travel to Vittakhanapur and Kolhapur in Maharashtra for construction work.”	
<b>Mangenakoppa panchayat, Khanapur taluk: Visited on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2019</b> <b>Meeting with 20 children of the Children’s Sangha, with whom the Mahila Jagruthi Okkuta is working in Mangenakoppa panchayat</b> <b>Team from Jagruthi Mahila Okkuta: Sharada Dabade, Ashok</b>			
	<b>Observations</b>	<b>Statements</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<b>Flood Related</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 houses have been destroyed completely.</li> <li>• The panchayat has given them the basic survival kit for clothes, toiletries and other essentials.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “For houses that have been destroyed completely, the panchayat has given them partial financial support only”.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counseling support must be provided for children of distressed families.</li> <li>• Houses in bad condition need to be repaired and maintained.</li> <li>• Prior warning regarding impending floods has to be issued by the panchayat and pro-active steps has to be taken by the people immediately.</li> <li>• Houses in bad condition, have to be renovated on priority basis.</li> </ul>
<b>Child Rights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gram Sabha has not been conducted with the participation of all the children in the panchayat.</li> <li>• Earlier Akshaya Patra had been catering to the midday meal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “There is no college here”.</li> <li>• “Children are not given eggs in school.”</li> <li>• “High school food is not of good quality. It’s being transported by an organization of ISCKON”.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school gives holidays for untimely deaths of dignitaries, that’s not needed.</li> <li>• Prior intimation needs to be given by the panchayat and the time of the meeting, needs to</li> </ul>

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	<p>scheme programme. They have now discontinued as they have refused to use onion and garlic due to cultural preferences as a policy and also supplying eggs to children at school. Right now, we do not have details on who is supplying the midday meals for high schools across the State. Under the Right to Food Act, there are no clear guidelines to address malnutrition post floods and other natural calamities. A glaring gap in the recommendations mentioned in the Justice NK Patil led committee to assess malnutrition in Karnataka is that no attention has been given to the recommendations in relation to addressing malnutrition post floods and other natural calamities. The action plan makes no reference whatsoever to the aggravated situations of vulnerability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The vessels in which food is stored and served are not clean. Sometimes food become stale and unfit to consume.”</li> <li>• “The Panchayat library has been damaged due to rain. The roof is leaking and some books have been damaged.”</li> <li>• “The anganwadi center is too in a bad condition, with roof leaking and it’s not yet repaired.”</li> <li>• “In high school though there is provision for water supply, there’s no water supply and bathrooms are not in good condition.”</li> <li>• “In primary school, there’s good water supply, but there are no bathrooms, there are no toilets for teachers as well.”</li> <li>• “There’s no compound in the school.”</li> <li>• “The water tank is in a very bad condition, with cracks developed and is very dirty.”</li> <li>• “Children face problems due to monkeys and dogs.”</li> <li>• “There are no separate teaches for English high school, this problem is faced by schools in the nearby villages as well, this is the case for math and science as</li> </ul>	<p>be fixed in consultation with all the children in the panchayat.</p>
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		<p>well.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “There’s no bus facility, for children to reach Kittur.”</li> <li>• The food served in the high school is unfit to be consumed by children. It is fit to be consumed by cattle!”</li> <li>• 14 children have not received their cycles. We are already in Class 10!”</li> </ul>	
<b>NREGA</b>	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Families are migrating to Vittakhanapur for work.”</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Pashchapura panchayat, Hukkeri taluk: Visited on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2019</b>  <b>Meeting with 20 women of the distressed families and 50 children of the Govt. Higher Primary School, Pashchapura</b>  <b>Team from Jagruti Mahila Okkuta / GRAKOOS: Shivaji Kaganikar, Vishweshwara Hiremath</b></p>			
	<b>Observations</b>	<b>Statements</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<b>Flood Related</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water has flooded many houses, with the water level reaching up to 7 feet in many houses situated in low lying areas.</li> <li>• The extent of damage has been severe, with moisture trapped in some of the walls, as a result of the flooding, leading to cracking of the walls, and weaker of the structures of the buildings.</li> <li>• There are several houses that are</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “285 houses have been destroyed in the village.”</li> <li>• “Many stored crops have been destroyed.”</li> <li>• “Women and families faced severe hardships while shifting children to safe places overnight with no power.”</li> <li>• “It was really difficult to reach the relief camp setup in the village.”</li> <li>• “There was no doctors in the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We need to put pressure to get media coverage to document the extent of damage caused due to floods and lack of support from the panchayat in this regard.</li> <li>• A letter has to be submitted to the DC of Belgaum district, to bring to his attention, the issues related to flooding and urge him to take necessary action.</li> <li>• Also need to check if the survey</li> </ul>

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	<p>fragile due to the damage caused by the flooding water and have developed deep cracks and the walls and roofs have been weakened. There is no mechanism in place to address the repairs to such houses to prevent further damage that could be caused due to such flooding in the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An elderly man also shared his woes about how he has not been able to claim his property. Legally it belongs to four owners and hence there is no clarity regarding ownership of the property. We observed the lack of legal aid faced by the family and hence being unable to claim property rights.</li> <li>• Another lady lost her son, who came to actually help them from Bangalore. But he died during the floods. His family has received Rs. 25,000/- as compensation.</li> <li>• A woman’s house in Pashchapura was not included in the list of damaged houses to claim compensation.</li> </ul>	<p>Primary Healthcare Centres.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “We received food and clothes from the neighboring villages as donations.</li> <li>• “We cooked for ourselves at the relief camps.”</li> <li>• “There has been a lot of confusion in getting relief fund from the panchayat under different categories.”</li> <li>• “Survey results of houses marked wrongly under different categories, have been rectified.”</li> <li>• “There were about 70-80 children in the relief camps.”</li> <li>• “We had to face the situation of begging to procure our daily necessities like food, water and shelter!”</li> <li>• “We need to elect the right kind of candidates during elections. We must see who will support us during our distress times and vote for them!”</li> <li>• “People from neighbouring villages came forward to help us!”</li> <li>• We ourselves started cooking for our families at the relief camps”</li> <li>• “There was no power for 15 days. It was a completely terrifying experience!”</li> </ul>	<p>results to determine the houses that are damaged due to heavy rains and flooding are accurate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women must come together as a collective and put pressure on the local govt. to hold them accountable.</li> <li>• Our team suggested that the family goes to court, with an affidavit / death certificate of the two deceased brothers to claim the property.</li> </ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “We were affected with several health issues for which we received immediate medical support.”</li> <li>• “Crop insurance has not been given for the damaged crops and nobody is raising about this issue with the panchayat!”</li> <li>• “The Anganwadi Centre has been completely closed ad it took a long time to resume functioning.”</li> </ul>	
<b>Child Rights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school building has become very weak, prone to damage caused by heavy rains and flooding.</li> <li>• 6 new classrooms are being constructed.</li> <li>• The children and school authorities, have informed the BEO regarding lack of toilet.</li> <li>• The school authorities have notbeen notified or been invited to be part of KDP meetings held at the gram panchayat.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Our classes are running in shift system, as there are only 4 functional classrooms.”</li> <li>• “The children of 14 families faced severe distress and they were stationed, at the relief camps or about 15 days.”</li> <li>• “The damaged houses are still not repaired and some families are currently staying in rented houses.”</li> <li>• “Snakes had entered our houses during flooding.”</li> <li>• “Many cases of typhoid were observed.”</li> <li>• “Some families had stayed back in their homes even after the panchayat had issued prior notice.”</li> <li>• “Many of our belongings and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trees should not be cut.</li> <li>• The usage of plastic has to be reduced to reduce pollution.</li> <li>• Houses have to be constructed much stronger.</li> </ul>

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		<p>important documents have been destroyed.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “We have received a new set of textbooks by the panchayat.”</li><li>• “There is no drinking water or proper toilets in school”</li><li>• “We have to carry plates to eat food from our homes and even water to wash our plates from our own homes!”</li><li>• “Though there are toilets, they are not functional without water. There are no funds for toilet management. We are ready to wash the toilets, but there is no proper water supply to do so.”</li><li>• “The overall annual budget that we receive is Rs. 25,000/- to cover all maintenance work, sports equipment, library materials, participation of children in events, celebrating festivals and birthdays of famous personalities.”</li><li>• Showing a bulky fact file: “These are the number of issues that we have raised with the gram panchayat with regard to the school. There have been no solutions for these issues.”</li></ul>	
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Managutti panchayat, Chikkodi taluk: Visited on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2019

Visit to the community to examine houses of distressed families and 60 children of Govt. Lower primary Kannada medium school

Team from Jagruti Mahila Okkuta / GRAKOOS: Shivaji Kaganikar, Krishna Gudagi

	Observations	Statements	Recommendations
<b>Flood Related</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The houses of 'Maruti Chowgala' and 'Ramesh Balappa Patil' have been completely destroyed and falls under 'A' category. They have not received any financial support from the panchayat till date.</li><li>• Most people, whose houses have been destroyed due to rain</li><li>• The house of a lady named Renuka has been completely destroyed. As her husband is blind, she is going around to the panchayat to figure out how she can claim money to reconstruct her house. Even though a member of the Managutti panchayat resides on the same lane as theirs, there has been no response or support extended from the panchayat. The family does not even know which documents to submit. They are now staying in a rented house</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "We have received no prior warning from the gram panchayat regard the impending danger"</li><li>• "Many people have taken photos but they have received no help!"</li></ul>	NA

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	<p>like most people, who have lost their homes during the flood and they have not received any support from the panchayat in terms of receiving rent.</p>		
<p><b>Child Rights</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There has been no intimation from the gram panchayat regarding the impending danger due to floods and rains.</li> <li>• The walls in the classrooms in the Govt. school have developed cracks and have become weak. The panchayat has sanctioned only 2 out of the 6 classrooms that are damaged due to the rain and flooding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “About 40 houses have been destroyed partially and completely.”</li> <li>• “The school classrooms have been damaged, especially ‘Nali-Kali’ classrooms.”</li> <li>• “We have collected about 2000 rupees through donations, to support families that have been affected by floods.”</li> <li>• “The wall of our house has collapsed, we have tied a tarpaulin sheet as a makeshift arrangement.”</li> <li>• “We had informed the school authorities that classrooms are weakened. The panchayat has agreed to rebuild only 2 out of the 6 classrooms that are damaged”</li> </ul>	<p>NA</p>