

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

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The denial of access of children to decision-making processes and participation in matters pertaining to their rights have hindered their development in health, education and the ability to make their choices. The recent amendments by the Government of Karnataka in the Panchayati Raj Act introduce guidelines for the strict implementation of Makkala Gram Sabhas (MGS) every year in November under the Makkala Snehi (child-friendly) Grama Panchayati Abhiyan. The 10-week programme with weeks of prior preparation commenced on 14 November 2020 extending to 24 January 2021. It is indeed a progressive initiative towards institutionalising the protection and promotion of child rights in the state.

Makkala Snehi (child-friendly) Grama Panchayati Abhiyan



The Government of Karnataka circular on the systematic implementation of MGS is a revolutionary move towards a new era for children's protection and rights. The government circular insists that every Gram Panchayat under the Panchayat Development Officer (PDO) collects data about children (0-18 years) in the village to identify children deprived of basic amenities, and to take steps to improve their status through immunisation, nutrition, mental-health awareness and skill education. Additionally, the PDO should promote indigenous games, sports and cultural activities among the children.

Prior to the MGS, a village makkala sabha, constituting the village leaders, CRC members and other stakeholders is to be conducted, where the children discuss their agenda for presentation to the officials during the MGS. Two selected leaders from the makkala sabha represent the children of the village at the panchayat MGS. The elected child leaders ensure that their demands and issues are heard by the concerned authorities and actions are directed towards solutions.

Another initiative Oduva Belaku Karyakrama ensures that children between the age of 6-18 years can access the village library through free registration.

A Facebook page for child rights in every GP is an innovative approach through which children and the elected local representatives can post about child rights and related issues, and children's recommendations.

A Makkala Dhwanipetti is to be installed in every panchayat at various public locations for children and adults to drop in their complaints and concerns. Complaint forms are made available at every panchayat office and the supervision and regular monitoring of the complaint box is the responsibility of the Anganwadi workers and the Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA).

Another innovation to reach out to children and listen to their problems is the concept of Panchayat Bala Mitra. Local organisations or child representative institutions are appointed as a Bala Mitra, who is advised to ensure that the child protection systems at the panchayat function duly respecting children and fulfilling their duties towards child protection. The Bala Mitra can use the government-institutionalised initiatives Makkala Gram Sabha and Child Rights Club (CRC) as important preventive child protection measures. The responsibilities of the Bala Mitra are shared with the CRCs in every village to ensure that complaints of children are immediately considered for action and discussions at the panchayat meetings.

DEAR CHILDREN, ATTENTION PLEASE!



Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department

I AM YOUR PANCHAYAT BALA MITRA.
YOUR WELL-BEING IS MY PRIORITY!



Every year in the month of November we hear your problems and suggestions to improve lives of children in the village, school and even in your home through Makkala Grama Sabhas.

This year, due to COVID-19, if we are unable to meet you face to face, we have come up with new ways to reach out to you and hear your voices.

ARE THERE ANY PROBLEMS YOU ARE FACING?

- » **IN YOUR VILLAGE:** Are you facing any problems with basic facilities & infrastructure like water problems, sanitation issues, school or Anganwadi facilities etc?
- » **AT HOME** - are you eating nutritious food? Are you healthy and well? Are you feeling scared or are you neglected or hurt in any way?



Think of the problems in your village



Problems at home

Problems related to your safety and protection (abuse, child marriage, child labour, school drop-out, child trafficking, bonded labour or any other hardships)



MAKKALA KORIKEY PATRA

- ✔ Get a **MAKKALA KORIKEY PATRA** from any Anganwadi teacher or your school / college teacher and fill your problems in that form
- ✔ Give your Korikey Patra back to your school / college teacher, Anganwadi teacher or...
- ✔ Drop it in a **MAKKALA DHANI BOX** near you – in school / Anganwadi / dairy center / panchayat office / ration shop (fair price depot) / post office or bank



MAKKALA DHANI BOX

Children – drop your problems / questions / requests here! Just write your problem / suggestion on a Makkala Korikey Patra and drop it in a **MAKKALA DHANI BOX** (you can use a blank sheet if you don't find a Korikey Patra)



Anything that bothers you



CHILDREN ARE BORN CITIZENS!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO GROW UP TO BE AN ACTIVE CITIZEN!

In Kalaburagi, the title was bestowed on Don Bosco PYaR in recognition of its vital involvement in child rights promotion and protection. The Education Officer has issued a circular to all the GPs declaring Don Bosco PYaR as the district Bala Mitra for the year. This recognition is a credit to the organisation and an honor and appreciation of the CREAM interventions over the years.



This year, inspite of the limitations of the pandemic, the initiatives by children and the local institutions have ensured that Makkala Gram Sabhas were conducted in November. CREAM facilitated/participated in Makkala Gram Sabhas in eleven districts so far. The elected officials and the representatives have, unlike before, acknowledged their obligation to report on actions initiated against the issues raised by children in the previous gram sabhas.

Makkala Gram Sabhas with CREAM Participation

SN	District	MGS Conducted/Facilitated	Taluks	Villages	Participants		
					Children	GP-level stakeholders	Other Adults
1	Ballari	6	3	6	321	77	31
2	Koppal	9	3	9	318	111	34
3	Bidar	13	6	13	151	341	84
4	Chitradurga	1	1	1	53	16	22
5	Davangere	3	2	3	161	25	24
6	Haveri	4	2	4	213	35	33
7	Shivamogga	2	1	2	96	12	17
8	Kalaburagi	5	2	5	162	152	63
9	Raichur	8	3	8	248	88	77
10	Ramanagara	5	2	5	142	90	90
11	Yadgir	86	7	86	2017	1305	1845
Total	11	142	32	142	3882	2252	2320



◀ Ratifying the present for a promised future

A bright sunny day, children gathered on the school ground before the show of local governance in Bablad Gram Panchayat, Kalaburagi. The adults, elected representatives, PDO, Block Education Officer and the other stakeholders were present. The Makkala Gram Sabhas have become a yearly practice and with hopes of comforting children with polite words for their concerns, the adults didn't really worry. The meeting began and one by one, the children raised their issues. But this time, the authorities realised the strength in their voices and the determination of their questions. Children were clear of thought and precise in their needs. They did not just raise their proposals and recommendations but requested a report on the actions taken on issues raised during the MGS in the previous year.

Yeilding to the strength of the CRC and the children, the discussions were taken seriously and promises were reviewed. Among the many issues presented at the MGS in 2019 were the old broken structure of the Government Primary school, Bablad. The renovation of the school building and the repair of the broken infrastructure had been a demand of the children over the past few years and yet their complaints had gone in vain. But the committed advocacy of the children did not stop at the MGS. They submitted an appeal to the MLA, followed up the case at the Gram Panchayat and the same was presented during the KSCPCR visit to Kalaburagi.



As a result of these sustained efforts, the school building is currently under construction. The old broken structure was demolished and a new building was constructed in its place ensuring that the children have all the basic amenities in the school. The maintenance of the school and its premises was provided for under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

UNICEF states that short-sighted policy making that fails to take children into account has a negative impact on the future of all members of society. This real incident is evidence that the participation of children in decision-making can highly contribute to the development of society and in raising the standards of care for children.

Hold their hands today and they will give cause to raise our heads tomorrow.



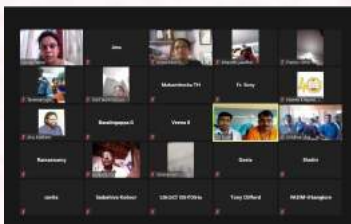
CALENDAR

December 2020

- Training for CREAM Directors and staff in Bangalore & Hospet
- Canonical visitation to BREADS by the Provincial, Sacred Heart Province, Bangalore
- Online training on Village Justice Committees for CREAM staff
- Makkala Gram Sabhas in the CREAM districts

January 2021

- Job fair at DB BEST Academy
- ICICI bank recruitment drives in Kerala & Karnataka by TVS Training & Services Ltd.
- Makkala Gram Sabhas in the CREAM districts
- St. John Bosco feast celebrations in all Don Bosco presences
- Inauguration of Batch 14 at DB BEST Academy



[Training for CREAM staff on Child-Friendly Panchayats](#)

On 16 December 2020, BREADS Bangalore organized an online Training of Trainers (TOT) for the CREAM project directors, coordinators and social activists from the twenty districts of Karnataka. Ms. Kripa Bhat- Coordinator [...more](#)



[KISMAT quarterly review meeting held at Kristu Jyothy Animation Centre, Kottiyam.](#)

The review meeting of the project – Kerala Interstate Migrants Alliance for Transformation (KISMAT) was held at Kristu Jyothy Animation centre, Kottiyam on 21 & 22 November 2020. The meeting was participated by the Coordinators from 11 Migrant Help Desks (MHD), [...more](#)



[Three- day CREAM III training in Bangalore](#)

A three-day training for CREAM III programme coordinators and social activists was organized at Don Bosco Provincial house, Bangalore from 1-3 December 2020. In adherence to COVID safety protocols, the 50 staff members from the 20 districts were divided [...more](#)



[CREAM III training at Don Bosco Hospet, Ballari from 8- 10 December 2020](#)

Three days of training for the second batch of project Directors and staff of CREAM III was organized at Don Bosco, Hospet from 8 – 10 December 2020. The event was inaugurated by Mr. HC Raghavendra, Member, Karnataka State Commission [...more](#)