

Case study 2

Change Maker: Mariyappa a leader from SC community Migrating Labourers Acquired Grip and Power in Grama Panchyath

Budapanahalli is most backward village in Byadagi taluk of Haveri district, Karnataka. The village is covered 4300 population. Harijans, lambanies, kurabas, walmikies are the major casts. Landless people are more in number, area is fully dry and depended on good monsoon for their livelihood. Village is having left out some degraded forest, it helps little for cattle grazing and collecting firewood in small quantity. Agriculture is not most productive due to poor practices and lack of resources. Landless and marginal farmers depended on agriculture wages, it was very low and seasonal, at the time men were getting Rs.40/- to Rs50/- and women were earning Rs.30/- to Rs.35/- per day only. The landless, marginal and small farmers always migrating to coffee estate, costal belt and byadagi chilly traders/factories for earning. It was high during lean period (November to May).

VRDS initially started women empowerment by organizing Self Help Groups, and later started organizing labourers group with the support of Andheri Trust. Laborers are most unorganized, combination of men and women group is highly challenging at village level. But found it is necessary for brining husband and wife, sister, brother together under MGNREGA. Because the scheme itself says 100 days work per family, we started family approach and brought Job card holder and eligible job card holder together for building awareness on the scheme. The process of organizing group started in ward sabha and grama sabha. Finally VRDS promoted four labours group in the village.

Among four one is Dr. Babujagajeevanram Kooli Karara Sangha was promoted in Harijan oni, by 60 labourers came together and formed it. Members got awareness, training and knowledge on how to approach Grama a to access their right to work under MGNREGA.



Sri Mariyappa leader of the above group sharing his experience. In the initial days we did not go to the Grama Panchayath, it was not functioning properly and we did not ask anything. After labour group formed we asked the work under MNREGS, but panchayat said no it is not planned, what our higher officers says we are working and they did not given importance for their request.

When the training was organized in the presence of Panchayath President and Panchayath Development Officer (PDO) they understand proper procedure for demanding job. The Mariyappa said that previously all our job card was with Contractors, they were using the JCB machine and claiming wages by cheating and violating norms by contactor and officers of our panchyath by showing falls manual works instead of machine work. There were lot more such irregularities were happened in our panchayat, it was not noticed by any higher authority. We faced lot of problem, threat, violence, non cooperation from contactors, corrupt officers and upper caste, people but we did not go backward.



So in our sangha all the laborers started their name for registering under MGNREGS and demanded issue of their job card. Then they understand form No 6 for demanding job format. We applied systematically and asked Panchyath for work. As per law panchyath should give job within 15 days from the receipt of our application, otherwise they have to give compensation. So then faced question that how many days job should be demand, as per scheme guidelines they asked 100 days work.

Then Implementing officers and elected members become alert for planning and allotment of work plan on the above demand. Mariyappa added that all our 60 Labouers got continuous 100 days work in tank desiltation. Rs. 14.00 lakhs wages earned, both men and women got equal wages. It

made all happy and confidence on MNRGES work. Mariyappa proudly said that in the past many members of our group were out of our village for many days to Goa or Karwar. Now we are all working here, we all not thinking for migration. My wife purchased five goat from her wages and happily rearing.

Further he said that other member of our group regularly visiting panchyath, discussing with elected members and officers on the scheme. We are aware and learnt how to demand work and getting actual wages. We also attended grama sabha and involved in work planning. We demanded tank and forest work. Panchayath also listening our words, and incorporated in their plan book. Presently 8 laborers groups active in our village. Total 500 to 600 laborers are working under the scheme in our village and getting Rs. 234/- wages per day, directly depositing to laborers account.

Without corruption and mediators we all involved and got job. We have done tank desiltation , horticulture and forest development works. Haveri zillha panchyath and Byadagi taluk panchyath conducted meeting in this village and selected this Panchayath as pilot development panchayat for demonstrating model works under MNREGS.

Mariyappa and his family members said that all these changes taken place, because of Vanasiri rural development society and Andheri trust entered our village, visited our house, educated us, helped to organize our group, given training and empowered us on how to approach legally. All village laborers are getting more number of days work even in the drought condition, we stopped migration. getting recognition, increased self esteem and value for our voice. Due to our different work tanks are filled full of water, forest covered more greenery, getting good drinking water from bore wells, children are attending regular anganawadi and primary schools.

In the recent Grama Panchyath election 3 persons from labour group contested and they got elected as panchayath members. So, we got power in our grama panchyath to take up labour and other works. Many thanks to VRDS and Andheri Trust/ Andheri Hilfe Bonn for their active support and shows good path to our life.

►► Mariyappa Harijan,
Dr. Babujagajeevan Ram Koolikarara Sangha,
Budapanahalli, Byadagi taluk, Haveri district. Karnataka.

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Islampura slum got school and brought bright future for the children "



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