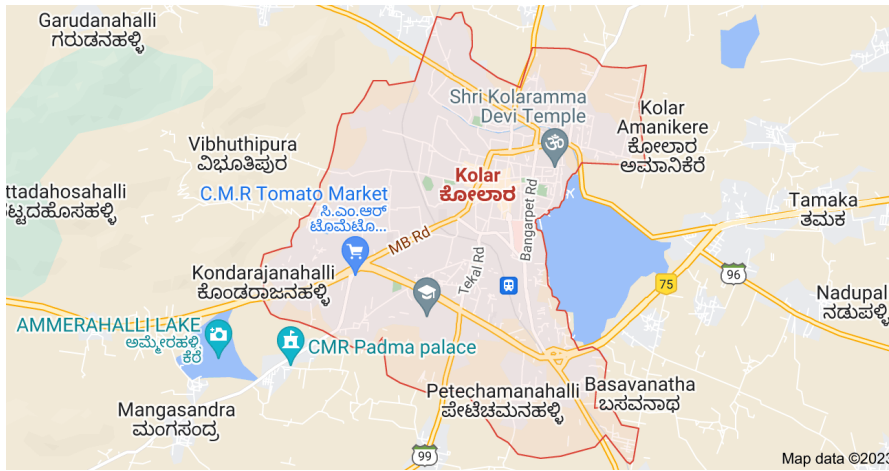


BSWI'S NEW START IN KOLAR DISTRICT OF KARNATAKA

Bangarapet (Karnataka)

Bangarapet is a Town and Taluka in Kolar District of Karnataka. In India, a taluka is a sub-division of a district that is responsible for the administration and revenue collection of a particular area within the district. It is an important part of the local governance structure, and plays a crucial role in the development and administration of its local community.

According to census 2011 information the sub-district code of *Bangarapet* Block (CD) is 05593. Total area of *Bangarapet* taluka is 860 km² including 786.91 km² rural area and 73.09 km² urban area. *Bangarapet* taluka has a population of 4,52,832 peoples, out of which urban population is 2,17,492 while rural population is 2,35,340. *Bangarapet* taluka has a population density of 527 inhabitants per square kilometre. There are about 99,691 houses in the sub-district, including 48,366 urban houses and 51,325 rural houses.



When it comes to literacy, 69.95% population of *Bangarapet* taluka is literate, out of which 75.60% males and 64.23% females are literate. There are about 371 villages in *Bangarapet* taluka.

1. INTRODUCTION

This Baseline Survey to get the presents the findings of survey of 210 households in 8 hamlets in KGF Gram Panchayat villages of Kolar district in Karnataka state that was conducted in April- May 2022.

The survey was designed with three main purposes:

1. To understand the needs of the population with regard to food, water, health, education and livelihood;
2. To understand the demographic characteristics, livelihood and social capital profile of the village.
3. To provide better level of information to BSWI about the existing situation of the village, to bring new and improved livelihood and capacity building programs and schemes.

Bethamangala is a Gram Panchayat village in KGF Taluka of Kolar district. The villages comprises of small hamlets scattered around, they are called as *Halli* or *Grama*. The people speaking Kannada language are known as 'Kannadigas' or 'Kannadigaruru' in the native language. Kannada is the official administrative language of Karnataka.

The villages are administered by an *Adhyaksha* (Sarpanch) who is an elected representative of village as per the constitution of India and Panchayati Raj.

2. METHODOLOGY

Methodology of Survey Questionnaire:

The nature of the questionnaire is both the qualitative and quantitative in order to establish baseline data so that future projects of BSWI can be fashioned using this data and also to keep track of the changes over the duration of the projects and evaluate the success of the projects themselves. Qualitative data was collected through open-ended questions which usually provided the categorical data variables which were then filled by the numerical data provided by quantitative questions. The questionnaire included the following themes to get a comprehensive profile of the villages surveyed:-

(a) General Household Information (b) Education (c) Agriculture (d) Health Care (e) Migration (f) Water: Drinking and Irrigation (g) Skills (h) Cultural life (i) Food habits (j) Forest Dependency (k) Public Transport (l) Peoples Organization (m) Existing Government Schemes (n) Type of housing (o) Sanitation conditions (p) Financial Institutions- Bank (q) NGO's work.

The questionnaire was organized keeping in mind the ease of doing it in fieldwork in terms of going from questions of general nature to questions of personal nature and an extra sheet is kept at the end of each questionnaire to document the researcher's observations in each household.

Methodology of Field Work

Three interns stayed in the accommodation provided by HAPPY HOME, a child home in KGF (Bangarapet) for the duration of one month (March) in 2022. These months were found quite suitable for the research because, in the life of villagers, this time of the year is relatively idle than the rest of the year during which they are busy with farming and hence, they were able to afford their time and attention to the research interns in this period.

The questionnaire for the baseline survey was formulated with insights provided by a pilot study in the first week and the next three weeks were devoted to collecting data from the villages. Initially, 20-30 minutes were spent on each household in every village and after which it is reduced to 10 - 15 minutes per household owing to the fact that certain answers were recurring since they are common to that particular village. The social norms in the village are such that the researchers found themselves talking to mostly male members of the family and women typically don't talk in front of men. Therefore, opportunities were created by the researchers to get women alone in order to talk to them. It was usually achieved by engaging with them when they washed clothes (which was a task of women and done collectively outside the home in a common area where water was accessible) or accompanying them when they fetched water (which was again a task assigned to women and it was done collectively outside the home).

Another tactic used by researchers to collect data was to use the camera not only as a tool for the purposes of documentation but also as a tool to explore the villages. In the process of taking photos of the surroundings of the village, it was discovered that this process provided enabling condition which prompted more questions and was answered right then and there. This exercise was very useful in establishing the material and spatial context of the village and provides insight into the social relations among the villagers.

As it is mentioned already, the questions asked were not limited to the prepared questionnaire alone. Follow up questions were asked to get more details from the respondents. Therefore, the interview followed the semi-structural format. The researchers' observations were recorded meticulously then and there.

Two in-depth interviews were conducted with local youths who are educated and are employed in private jobs. They acted as mediators between the villagers and hospitals in the former and BSWI in the later. They were identified as the local experts in the Health

and Education sectors respectively. Their documents were also used as source materials for this report.

Base Survey Report:

The survey has been completed and the work of report compilation has also be completed. The study report will be published soon.

BSWI's current works in Bangarapet:

Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM)

Removing rural poverty, estimated at 41.8% is the key challenge before India. Poverty is highest among the farming and labour communities. Building on its experiences in North Bengal, BSWI feels that it needs to strengthen community-based institutions, promote integrated natural resource management, enhance productivity and up-scale proven market-oriented production models. There is urgent need to foster convergence with on-going Government programs for tribal and rural development. There is need for an emphasis on tribal people, women, youth and small and marginal farmers, and the strategic objective of greater access to agricultural technologies and natural resources.

Distribution of the benefits of growth to poor rural people has been limited by: inadequate physical and social infrastructure, poor access to services, low investment, a highly stratified and hierarchical social structure, characterized by inequalities in assets, status and power; and ineffective, inefficient implementation of pro-poor programs, owing to governance loopholes. There is now a genuine and widespread recognition that, without inclusive growth, the social and political consequences of rising inequalities could be very adverse. Besides, about 40% - 50% percent people aged between 18 and 35 live in rural areas are forced to migrate seasonally or permanently, without the skills and competencies required by the modern economy.



Migration of tribal population is a historical phenomenon. There exists distress migration of rural SC and tribal people from many pockets of rural Bangarapet. Lack of productive employment, low agricultural productivity, erosion of natural resource base together with improper functioning of government welfare schemes and programs have forced the tribal men and women of rural Bangarapet (KGF) to migrate to other areas in search of wage employment. Common occupations are seasonal agricultural labour and industrial areas.

Villagers put forward their priority needs as follows:

- Overall, lack of employment opportunities and job requirements are listed as a priority both by tribal and target group households. This will be followed by irrigation and extension services.
- Lack of job and employment opportunities is a key factor for their poverty.



Watersheds (Ponds) maintenance and summer cultivation for tackling drought situations

BSWI's Efforts:

BSWI wants to address livelihood development by inducing four main components, namely: (i) Community Empowerment; (ii) Integrated Natural Resource Management; (iii) Livelihoods Support; and (iv) Project Management. The interventions that BSWI intends to implement are expected to build resilience of the households, community and the ecology to climate change. With this objective BSWI has initiated training and awareness programs in a few villages of Bangarapet and supporting the marginal farmers with training, hand-holding supports in agricultural activities and collaboration with the block level agricultural department.

Awareness generation on Climate Change issues

The State of the Environment Report by the Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF) clubs the issues under five key challenges, which are climate change, food security, water security, energy security, and managing urbanization. Climate change will also cause increased frequency of extreme events such as floods, and droughts that the rural areas of Kolar are already witnessing. These in turn will impact rural food security problems and water security. As per the Second National Communication submitted by India to the United Nation Framework Convention

on Climate Change (UNFCCC), it is projected that the annual mean surface air temperature rise by the end of the century ranges from 3.5°C to 4.3°C whereas the sea level along the Indian coast has been rising at the rate of about 1.3 mm/year on an average. These climate change projections are likely to impact human health, agriculture, water resources, natural ecosystems, and biodiversity. Rural areas are equally prone to stress and pressures from natural resource exploitation. In this context, schemes for rural development and livelihood programs are very much needed that is absent till now in the area (and in other areas).



Girls' rally for Climate Change Awareness



Students' Awareness Meetings

Awareness on promotion of organic and low-chemical agriculture, and increased soil health and fertility to sustain agriculture-based livelihoods are much needed. This will help mobilize and develop capacities of rural communities to utilize natural resources in a sustainable manner and their potential can be further developed. This needs to be done either through a direct focus on economic indicators like employment generation, youth mobilization, and building up assets of the poor, or indirectly through social indicators of human development with emphasis on health, education, and women's empowerment.

BSWI's Efforts:

BSWI has started organizing the target communities to learn the effects of climate changes and is conducting village level workshops and awareness generation meetings with the villagers. Supports in the form of technical, managerial and financial assistance from government and private sectors are needed to implement sustainable and comprehensive livelihood models.

Education for the disabled children:

Providing educational opportunities for disabled children is crucial as it can help them develop the skills necessary to lead independent and fulfilling lives. Education can empower them to contribute positively to society, become financially self-sufficient, and achieve their full potential. However, disabled children often face significant barriers to accessing quality education due to the lack of accessible infrastructure, trained teachers, and appropriate curriculum.

To ensure inclusive education for disabled children, schools and educational institutions must be equipped with appropriate infrastructure, including wheelchair accessibility, ramps, and elevators. Additionally, teachers must receive specialized training to support the

unique learning needs of disabled children, including the use of assistive technology and alternative teaching methods.



Teachers' Rally for Inclusive education



Teaching in the classroom

BSWI's Efforts:

BSWI has partly been supporting a local organization towards feeding the wretched children who are left out and orphans. The local organization has been providing residential support, educational materials and other things according to their capacity. The local NGO raise local contributions but the same is meager and they need external assistance both in terms of good training, management and financial.

With a good amount of experience, BSWI is sharing with the organization to improve curriculum according to accommodating the learning needs of disabled children, with a focus on developing their communication, cognitive, and social skills. Inclusive education is also being promoted by fostering friendships and reducing the stigma associated with disability. Providing educational opportunities for disabled children requires a collaborative effort between the government, educational institutions, and the community.

BSWI is very much eager to help allocate adequate resources to support inclusive education. There is need that BSWI and the local organization should work together to create a supportive and inclusive environment for disabled children. By prioritizing inclusive education, BSWI will ensure and create a more equitable society and empower disabled children of Bangarapet to reach their full potential in course of time.