

## GANGADEVIPALLI A MODEL VILLAGE IN UNDIVIDED ANDHRA PRADESH

**T. Brahmanandam**

Faculty in CMDR (An ICSSR Institute), Dharwad, Karnataka, India

### ABSTRACT

“If the village perishes India will perish too. It will be no more India. Her own mission in the world will get lost”.

-Gandhi

**KEYWORDS:** Model Village

### INTRODUCTION

The majority of the people in India live in villages. Technology has changed the entire world but the quality of life in the villages remain the same without much progress. Gandhi was having a great vision about an ideal village, which later termed as “model village” by the ministry of rural development, government of India. Gandhi visualized the villages are a productive center by using appropriate technology without disturbing existing environment. Gandhi said that “a village unit as conceived by me is as the strongest. My imaginary village consists of one thousand souls. Such a unit can give good account of itself, if it is well organized on the basis of self-sufficiency”. Till recently, Gandhi idea of model village was remained a dream.

The concept of model village is where the villagers will be a decision makers, partners, and beneficiaries with multi-sectoral and multifunctional with integrated development to achieve the holistic and sustainable development backed up by futuristic and progressive skills leading to higher levels of productivity and improvement in overall quality of life.

A model village is one with modern, secular, democratic system empowered with prosperous and harmonious life covered with human values and sublimated with spiritual inspiration. The pivotal of village development should be managed by villager who as a partner and beneficiary of the activity. This scenario needs a suitable social and psychological environment to foster cooperative and voluntary spirit among people in a pragmatic and people-centric development policy and setting up of appropriate people friendly institutions by aiming for effective people’s participation and partnership. In this context, model villages play a vital role in transforming the villages into self-sufficient and supporting units, which ultimately augment the overall development of the country.

Further, the ‘model village’ where the thrust and emphasis would on hygienic aspects of village, especially under Total Sanitation Campaign. Individual Health and hygiene are largely dependent on adequate availability of drinking water and proper sanitation. There is, therefore, a direct relationship between water, sanitation and health. Consumption of unsafe drinking water, improper disposal of human excreta, improper environmental sanitation and lack of personal and public hygiene have been major causes of many diseases in developing countries. India is no exception to this. Prevailing High Infant Mortality Rate is also largely attributed to poor sanitation conditions. It was in this context that the Central Rural Sanitation Programme (CRSP) was launched in 1986 primarily with an objective to improve the quality of life of the rural people and also to provide privacy and dignity to women.

The concept of sanitation was earlier limited to disposal of human excreta into open ditches, pit latrines, bucket system, etc. Today it connotes a comprehensive concept, which includes liquid and solid waste disposal, food hygiene and personal, domestic as well as environment hygiene. Proper sanitation is important not only for the general health point of view but it has a vital role to play in our individual and social life too. Sanitation is one of the basic determinants for quality of life and human development index. Good sanitary practices prevent contamination of water and soil, and thereby prevent diseases. The concept of sanitation was therefore, expanded to include personal as well as public hygiene includes sanitation, safe drinking water, garbage disposal, excreta disposal and waste disposal. In order to encourage cleanliness and healthy atmosphere in the villages, the governments have introduced awards for best model villages under Nirmal Gram Purshkar Yojana. With the introduction of awards to the best model villages, the leaders in the villages started preparing their villages to achieve this award. It even brought a competition among the villages to achieve this award. At the same time, in these villages the society and governing institutions are working in tandem and are ushering in sustained all-round development. One such successful 'model village' is Gangadevipalli in Warangal district of Andhra Pradesh.

In this connection, one need to mention about 'Ganadevipalli'-a tiny village in southern India. Ganadevipalli not only created with "Nirmal Gram Purskar" but also emerged as 'model village' by virtue of its model code of conduct for its inhabitants, responsive and transparent local self-governing institution and several other distinct features. The elected representative in Gangadevipalli made constant and sustained efforts to reach to the present stage. The continued and systematic efforts made by the local leadership, the villagers' commitment, the process of local self-governance and the manner in which poverty alleviation and development programmes were implemented provides an understanding of the emergence of model village. Based on the above analysis, the paper try to present different activates and their continues persuasion by the villagers in this direction.

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE GANGADEVIPALLI VILLAGE**

Gangadevipalli is a tiny village located in Geesukonda Mandal of Warangal district of undivided Andhra Pradesh State in India. The name of the village is linked to a local deity called 'Gangadevipalli' goddess in village. Before 1876, the village was far away from main road. In 1876, due to severe floods, the villagers have settled at the present place which connects the main road between Narasanpeta and Warangal. The total population of the village is 1350, out of it 706 belongs to men and the remaining 644 are women members. The total number of households are 248 and most of them lives in pica houses and very few lives in thatched huts. The major caste composition comes from two major backward communities, i.e., Munnrukapu and Padmashali castes. All these villagers get their ration from government Public Distribution System (PDS). Almost all the in this villager's avail PDS scheme. Initially these villagers used to go to Machapuram for both primary and secondary level of education. In 2001, the villagers themselves started a community school and got permission from the Government. A present, there are 467 villagers who have completed 8th standers and 57 persons are degree holders. This village is having 630 hectares of agricultural land, out of which 30 hectares is wet land. The main crops in this village are green chili, cotton, and maize. The source of drinking water in this village is through an overhead tank.

On 13Th September, 2007 this village was declared as Model Village by Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh presented a certificate of Appreciation to the Village Sarpanch. However, prior to receiving the coveted honoras "Model Village", there have been consistent efforts from the local leadership. Though it was not an easy task, yet the inspired

leadership initiated difficult measures, which, in turn, started yielding good results paving way for attaining the model village status. An enquiry into the measures undertaken in the village reveals that it was simple and sustained efforts on the part of local leaders which yielded good results. The initial efforts in the beginning were simple but its spin-off effects are marvelous. Above all, it is the commitment of local leaders and the participation of villagers which are the cornerstones of success behind the success of Ganagdevipalli as 'model village' Study of such process indeed will be useful to derive lessons for the future as well as for adopting the same by the other villages in order to make rural India more vibrant.

### **A NEW BEGINNING FROM THE PAST**

Like any other backward villages in India, Ganagdevipalli also faced problems like poverty, lack of leadership, internal conflicts, alcoholism, political interference, vulnerability, etc. the village was socially, politically and economically lagging behind in all these aspects for nearly 18 years. It was under the leadership of Mr. Rajmoulli, who was the former Chairman of Gesukonda Co-operative Society and the present Sarpanch of the village, visualized the problems and took special interest to change the face of the village. To bring a change in the village, he first attempted to tackle the problem of liquor and approached the women and youth convinced and informed them to stop drinking on alcohol. They also requested contractors to stop selling the alcohol in their village but they did not heed to their request. Mr. Rajmoulli discussed with women and youth and organized them to fight with contractors for stopping the same in their village. After lot of arguments and conflicts with the contractors, villagers succeeded in throwing alcohol contractors out of the village. They convinced villagers that consumption of alcohol weakens their body. Now alcohol selling and its consumption as banned in the village. When the villagers were facing the scarcity of drinking water, Mr. Rajmoulli found that in the nearby village one organization named Bal Vikas Samiti was involved in constructing overhead tank for drinking water. He pursued the matter (construction of over-head water tank in their village) with Bal Vikas Samiti representatives and discussed about the water scarcity in his village. With their support overhead tanks were constructed in 1993 and 1998. All the villagers joined the mission of constructing overhead tanks. This was the period when Drinking water committee was formed and some rules and regulations were set for the villagers and the villagers followed the same scrupulously. During that time villagers came together and worked collectively. The villagers achieved success under the guidance of Bal Vikas Samiti and the water problem was solved in the villages which was severe before 1993. From 1993 onwards drinking water committee is supplying water to the villagers from morning 6 to 9 through taps. They also supply fluoride free drinking water to villagers at Rs/2 per 20 litres. Bore wells were working properly since 1993. After that villager never faced water problem. This shows the success of village committees and their sincerity in doing their jobs and maintaining their resources.

### **EMERGENCE OF LEADERSHIP IN THE VILLAGE**

Mahatma Gandhi was of the view that villagers must take responsibility to develop their village and utilize the resources with judiciously. He further says that They should not wait for the outsiders, as no one will come to solve their problem. Villagers must understand their problems and find a solution to their village itself. Mr. Rajmoulli, a person with middle level education (9th class) and hails from a middle-class family, was perhaps impressed by the words of Mahatma Gandhi. He discontinued his education as his father asked him to do so. His father wanted him to give a helping hand in agriculture. His father owned 5 acres of land. Rajmoulli was interested in studies and received an award for scoring highest marks in mathematics in 7th board examination. He was very active in his school days and joined in student committees.

He wanted to study further but his family's economic condition didn't permit him to continue further. He showed his eagerness to join telecom department but his family discouraged him to do so.

He was very keen to do something for his village. In the year 1975-76 he was elected as the President of the Farmer's society. During his tenure the society received the award of Uttam Society. While working as President for this farmer's society, he approached Bal Vikas Samiti to help and advice for the drinking water problem of this village. Before formation of Drinking Water Committee only two committees existed in the village a) Anti – liquor Committee and b) Street Light Committee. After drinking water management committee, villagers seriously started thinking about the problems of the village and formed different committees like Health committee, Dish connection committee, women's committee and artisan committee, etc. These committees helped in changing the mindset of the villagers and they started thinking for the village development. Many government authorities, officials, and organizations have visited Gangadevpalli village to study and replicate the same in other parts of India.

Due to vibrant leadership, commitment, transparency and accountability of the village, set an example for other villages and receiving accolades from various organizations. Now the village has all the basic facilities like CC road, individual household toilet to every family, Upper Primary School, Veterinary Hospital, etc., available. Once the village was not even known in the district but now it attracts lot of people both inside and outside the state. The village has set an example for many other villages in India. Every problem has a solution and success is not impossible if all work together. One has to come forward to guide and others have to realize their responsibility. Gangadevpalli village has all the qualities to be called as "Adarsh Gram".

## **PROMOTING PARTICIPATORY APPROACH**

Village development is not possible with one individual. The ideas, thoughts and solution must come from the villagers itself. Many government programmes and projects were unsuccessful because of lack of participation of the people. Village resources are belong to all the villagers and they should realize that it is their responsibility to preserve them for their future generation. Group is more powerful than an individual. Work can be distributed as per the capability of the people. Village development is possible when all the villagers unite together, work in coordination and cooperation. Identified development work can be done by sharing the responsibility among villagers and making them accountable for their work. By way of this principle, the people of Gangadevpalli villagers realized their dream under the able leadership of Mr. Rajmoulli and worked with cooperation to improve their village. When they started working in committees, they realize the importance of saying "Our resources and Our Village" instead of calling my village and my resources. As the village is developing, villagers started enjoying the success of development.

As the village started moving towards development, they formed different committees to supervise their village development in much wider manner – Gram Panchayat Committee, Drinking water maintenance committee, Street light maintenance – local problem sorting committee, Anti Liquor committee, Ganga Dish committee, Health committee, Loan recovery committee, Civil supply committee, Education committee, DWCR group committee, Temple management committee, Bal Vikas Mahila Podupu Sangam. The following paragraphs will be discussing on the functioning of these committees:

The unique feature of Gangadevipalli villagers is their commitment to roles and responsibilities. The local leadership ensured the same in a systematic and sustained manner and also kept in view the attitude and behavioural aspect as well. In fact, the success of local leadership lies in their acumen to form appropriate committees and assigning requisite responsibilities. These committees played a vital role in ensuring participation from the villagers. The following are the details of different committees formed and the roles and responsibilities assigned to them.

### **Gram Panchayat Committee**

The most important aspect noticed in Gangadevipalli is the choosing their village representatives unanimously like ward members and sarpanch and this in turn, helped the villagers to avoid unnecessary expenditure on account of election campaign. Choosing their representatives unanimously also helped the representatives to develop their village much more coordinated and consciously way. It even helped the villagers to join with their representatives by paying their house tax regularly. The collected money is spent through village committee for the village development. Village development committee works under the leadership of Sarpanch. In the village committee, one member from each family is given chance. The purpose of this module is to take decisions collectively. Whenever the problem arises they call village meeting in the evenings at the Panchayati Office to resolve the problem mutually. As per the framed guidelines at least one member in the family will attend these meetings without fail. These committee members are working for the village development without getting any remuneration. Gram Panchayat committee understands the problem of the village and trying to find ways and means to solve.

### **Anti-Liquor Committee**

It is first and foremost committee that they had formed to supervise the alcohol should not entry into their village. Before 1982, people from this village used to consume local made alcohol. Due to alcoholic, many families were suffered with financial problems, By observing this factor in the village, youth and women had requested the contractor not sell liquor /alcohol in their village. However, the contractor outrightly rejected their request due to some of the drunkard's support. In 1985 Anti Liquor committee was formed with the help of Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) group members and their active participation and involvement enforced the contractor stop supplying the alcohol into their village. The active participation of the villagers along with DWCRA members had destroyed the liquor/alcohol making center in the village. Villagers even threatened the contractor if he induces people to consume liquor again. All the villagers had identified alcoholics along with contractor and taken public rally in the village by putting the tins on their heads. This has resulted into substantial reduction in consumption of liquor, almost to a negligible level, in the village. The committee also passed twoa resolution to supervise or monitor the village from alcoholic free village i.e., All the members of the village agreed not to sell alcohol in the village, and they also watch that the villagers will not drink the same even in outside their village also.

### **Drinking Water Management Committee**

As it was presented in the earlier para that they formed a committee on water supply or drinking water management committee. The drinking water management committee will again an important committee. It consists of 25 members and one third of the committee members will retire every year. Members from all the wards will get the chance represent in this committee. When Rajmouli was President of the village, hecame to know that their neighboring village was adopted by a Christian missionary called Bal Bikas Samitiand constructing a overhead water storage tank. He then met

the Bal Bikas Samitihead and requested them to help on solving their water problem and they agreed contribute 15 percent of the total cost. It took almost two years for the committee members to convince the villagers. Finally, on 14-11-1993 first overhead tank with a capacity of 90,000 litres was constructed. Later, as the population increased, a second overhead tank was also constructed with a capacity of 1.10 lakh litres on 2-9-1998. By 1993, tap connections were installed to all the households in the villagers by charging Rs.1000. Now, the committee is charging Rs.3000 for a new connection. No monthly rental is charged for the tap water usage. Out of 248 households 232 households have individual tap connection.

Drinking water committee has 18 members elected by different groups without giving chance to any kind of bias, be it community, caste and economic status. If there is any kind of irritation among the members on any issue, they all sit and settle the matter amicably. General Body Meeting takes place at the end of every year and as per the resolution all the households who are having Tap connection must attend this meeting. In case anyone fails to attend the General Body Meeting, an amount of Rs 50 will be imposed as a fine. However, if any person is taking leave on that day, he/she has to take prior written permission with his group leader. Whenever the water problem arises or a complaint is lodged against anyone. The committee members keep a watch for 2-3 days. The tap water is not allowed to be carried through pipes for garden work; villagers have to store water for gardening. If the committee receives complaint against anyone, they prohibit them from using tap water. Committee members meet every month on the second Saturday to discuss the progress. For new water tap connection villagers have to pay the amount fixed by the committee. If there is any leakage in the pipe, the owner is responsible for getting it rectified. There must be on-off point in taps. The surroundings of the tap are to be kept clean. Villagers are not allowed to waste water at any cost. Used domestic water is also not allowed to flow on to roads. Those who don't have tap connection have to pay a fixed amount to the committee for availing drinking water facility. If anyone installs extra tap in their house without informing the committee, then that ward leader will impose fine and immediately seize the connection. New connection is given to him when he accepts his mistake and pays a penal amount of Rs.100.

Water Purifying Machine – In 2004, Tata Projects Ltd donated a water purifier to the tank in the village. It purifies 1000 litres per hour. The requirement for the village is 12000 litres. The committee charges Rs.1 per litre. Those who need purified water have to come and collect water from the area where the machine is installed. The water tanks and the purifying machine are maintained by the village committee. The money they collect for the installation of water taps is deposited in the bank as fixed deposit and the interest is used for the maintenance and village development works.

### **Street Light Management Committee**

This committee will oversee the street light management and resolving problems in the village. There are 11 members in the committee, including the President. Before 1973 there was no street light in the village. One kerosene lamp was kept in the middle of the village. Later electric connection was given to the village and it followed the household electrification in the village. Wherever electric poles are required or repairs, the surrounding people must contributed money for repair. As the street light is important for the village, they sat together and formed into groups to solve the issues related to it. Earlier few street lights were there but later as the population increased the requirement of street lights has increased. Villagers realized the importance of street lights and discussed among themselves and formed a committee for street light management. At present, 57 street light poles were erected by spending 10,000 – 12,000 Rs. All members in the committee spent the amount judiciously.



### Health Committee

The health committee is one of the important committees which takes care of the villagers health needs by supervising both viral and non-viral diseases. In this committee the ANM, Anganwadi worker, Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) and Rural Medical Practitioners will be members be the committee. in the village. The committee supervise the medicines for small ailments and suggest precautionary measures. When villagers suffer from malaria, chicken guinea, and other health problems committee members inform the Sarpanch. Lions Club of Ekashila, Warangal, and Mandal health officers organized camps and provided health services to the needy. The population of the country is increasing by enormously. In order to check the population, the committee members tried to convince the newly married couples for family planning. ANM, ASHA, and Anganwadi worker are playing major role in convincing families for family planning. They convince them by telling the difficulties and problem faced by the members having a greater number of children. The committee is working hard although their efforts are not visible physically. Because of their hard work villagers are planning for two children only.

### Mahila Poddupu Sangam (Self-Help Group)

All the women of the village are members of different Mahila Sanghams. This is really a success. With the initiation and guidance of Bal Vikas Samiti various Mahila Sanghams were formed by the villagers.

DWCRA Group – these groups are in existence since 1990. There are 18 DWCRA groups in the village. Every year they distribute interest amount as bonus to their members.

Once or twice in a month they meet and discuss the progress. Loans are extended for health problems, education and house repair, etc. The unique thing among these 18 groups is Santosh Mahila Poduppu Sangham, which came into existence in 1995. It was started in 1992 but registered in 1995 under Cooperative Societies Registration Act. 174 women of this village are members of this Mandal. It is running successfully. It is highlighted here that this group is having a saving of Rs. 15,68,000/- they have one scheme. When the members join the group, they ask them to deposit certain amount towards insurance. The scheme is called Abhay nidhi vipatti sahay. Under this scheme those who are in the group of 18-35 years have to deposit Rs. 500 and above 35 and below 55 age group have to pay Rs. 700. Those who are more than 55 years of age are not included in the scheme. At the time of death of the member the nominee receive Rs. 10,000.

The Gangadevipally has got several awards from the Government as well associations, viz, a) the President of India, Shri A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, honoured the village by giving Nirmal Gram Purskar; Before the this Nirmal award the district collector also given award, Adarsh Gram Award-Government inspired by the work and selected Gangadevapalli village for Adarsh Gram. And some of the awards the village received are – Pratham Uttam Gram Panchayat award at Mandal level, Pratham Uttam Gram Panchayat award at district level, Beema gram award from VIC Warangal, Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Ati Uattam Gram Panchayat Award.

### CONCLUSIONS

The gram panchayat identifies various issues connecting their village including lack of livelihood opportunities, absence of scientific livestock management, poor health care, improper land use and ground water depletion among others. The model focusses on building rural capabilities and mechanisms. It is an end-to-end strategy caters to need and analysis situation and make plans for proper implementation of their action plan in the village. The intention of the project is

bringing all the people into action through participatory approach. The progress of the project can be seen through the following four steps. It try to bring all people by Community mobilization, Capacity building training, Baseline survey, Enhanced convergence.

## REFERENCES

1. Iqbal Narain, Sushil Kumar, Mathur & Associates, "Panchayati Raj Administration – Old controls and New Challenger", New Delhi, Indian Institute of Public Administration, 1970.
2. Mehta Jagat. S, Panchayati Raj (Grassroots Decentralisation in the age of Globalization), Man and Development, Dec 2006.
3. AP village becomes model for others, <https://www.indiatvnews.com/news/india/ap-village-becomes-model-for-others--21280.html> accessed in2013.