

The key issues raised by the people were that they had been given APL cards though they belonged to BPL families and that they were thus deprived of some other facilities that were accessible only on producing a BPL card. The food inspector clarified that this issue could be sorted out only when the new survey was conducted and fresh cards were issued. Other major grievances raised were the misappropriation in weighing and measuring grains and kerosene, non-display of the list of commodities available and the date when the commodities such as kerosene would be distributed.

The food inspector assured that he would look into all these issues. Mr. Harish responding to the statement of the food inspector pointed out that no rules prohibit them from issuing fresh BPL cards. In fact, as per the departmental charter, it is the responsibility of the department to issue BPL cards within 30 days after a family applies for it. Ms. Manjula Devi supporting the grievances of Sanjay Nagar residents said that all families residing in those areas should be provided with BPL cards.

WATER

BWSSB solves long-standing problem of drainage



Ms. Manjula Devi of Devasandra ward, Ms. Poornima of Basavanapura ward and Ms Tejaswini of Horamavu Ward, Assistant Executive Engineer Mr. Murali and Assistant Engineer, Mr. P. Ramesh, BWSSB, Mr. Shivasanakaran of JAGO on the dais during a grievance redressal mela on water

A GRM was conducted in KR Puram on 20th July 2010 with BWSSB officials of Sub-Division V of East Zone, with regard to water supply. In order to extend the work to a larger geographical area, three wards were included for this programme, namely, Devasandra, Horamavu and Basavanapura. All the three councillors

representing these three wards namely, Ms. Manjula Devi of Devasandra ward, Ms. Poornima of Basavanapura ward and Ms Tejaswini of Horamavu ward attended the event. Assistant Executive Engineer Mr. Murali and Assistant Engineer, Mr. P. Ramesh, represented BWSSB. As these areas fall in the new BBMP area, a majority of the people are dependent on private water supply. Also there was clogging of open drains which created a lot of problems to residents. 52 grievances were submitted to the department before the GRM out of which 43 were resolved by the department before the GRM was held. Major issues that were flagged during the meeting were irregular water supply, supply of non-potable water contaminated with sewage, bad odour and presence of worms in the water supplied, problems with the valve-men. One of the freshly-elected councillors defended herself against all grievances that were expressed about her ward rather than asking officials to address the issues raised. Later, she gave a press statement stating that there was no water problem in her area.

The grievances that were raised during the GRM conducted in Sagayapuram ward were listed and a report on it was submitted to the department to take action on all grievances. Later, an application was filed under RTI seeking the action taken report on the submitted GRM report. This application triggered action by the department. Water seepage had damaged 11 houses of Giddappa Block in Ward 60. Residents had been forced to construct a drain inside their houses to drain out the water. The department solved this long-standing problem of 5 years.

HEALTH

Awareness programme enables Pregnant women to access benefits

In both Desiyanagar and Rajiv Gandhi Nagar people accessed private health services though public health service centers were located close to them. The communities were totally unaware of their entitlements and the facilities provided in these health centers. As the first step of our intervention, awareness programmes were organized in both slums on the public health services due to them.

In Desiyanagar slum, Dr. Chetana, Medical Officer of the BBMP Maternity Hospital located at Cox Town and Mr. Venu, Health Visitor of the BBMP's Urban Family Welfare Centre attended the programme on 17th July 2010 and gave awareness on the facilities available in both centres. 50 members from Desiyanagar community, Ms. Kathyayini Chamaraj from CIVIC and Mr. Bosco Antony from GRACE attended the

programme. Similarly, an awareness programme was conducted on health schemes of the government, such as Prasuthi, Janani Suraksha Yojana, Madilu and Bhagyalakshmi implemented by the K.R. Puram General Hospital and Primary Health Center for the Rajiv Gandhi Nagar community on 25th July 2010.



Dr. Chethana, Medical Officer of the BBMP Maternity Hospital and Mr. Venu, Health Visitor, of Cox Town participated in an awareness programme on the facilities provided by the maternity hospital

After these two awareness programmes, Grievance Redressal Melas (GRMs) were organized at both locations involving concerned officials. Grievances were read out on the stage in the presence of the member who gave the grievances. Officials responded positively assuring that all problems would be solved in the next few days.



Dr. Ansar Ahmed, Administrative Medical Officer, Mr. Shivakumar, District Health Education Officer, Mr. H.S. Sudarshan, Senior Health Assistant, Mr. V.E. Parameshwar, Junior Health Assistant, Ms. Asha Kilaru, Trustee of CIVIC during the GRM on KR Pura General Hospital

Impact of the GRM conducted on the primary health centre and BBMP maternity home of Cox Town :

A majority of the grievances were about doctors not attending to patients. Most of the time doctors would just refer patients to the tertiary hospital (Bowring Hospital) irrespective of the health status of patients. Concerned officials replied that due to shortage of staff, it was difficult to them to attend to patients round the clock. Community members also complained that there are no area visits to the Desiyanagar slum by the Health Visitor (ANM). The same reason of shortage of staff was repeated for this grievance also. Officials gave an assurance that action would be taken on all grievances submitted in the programme.



Ms. Kathyayini Chamaraj speaking at a GRM conducted at Cox Town

The GRM with KR Puram Government Hospital staff members conducted at Rajiv Gandhi Nagar was very fruitful. During the GRM, the community blamed that though the general hospital is 20 years old and all the poor of that area depend on the hospital, doctors are not providing quality service to the poor. Drivers of emergency ambulance-108 demand money from the patients. Doctors don't even touch the patients while examining them. Instead, they just listen to the patient and give some tablets. And another major complaint was about the defunct scanning facility in the hospital. Any patient, who needed to be scanned, was referred to a private centre. To this complaint, the AMO informed that there was a shortage of scanning staff and hence scanning is done only on every Monday, Wednesday and Friday in the hospital. After the GRM, this information was displayed on the wall in front of the scanning room of the hospital.

A boy named Jemshad and his parents complained that the doctors demanded Rs 300 to treat the boy for dog bite. The family didn't have a BPL card but obviously belonged to the BPL category. Having no money with them, they had returned without getting the boy treated. The Administrative Medical Officer

(AMO) explained that anti-rabies treatment is given charging the user fee of Rs 100 even for BPL families. Next day itself, the boy was treated for dog bite in the hospital. Another 13 year-old boy, Mahadev, who suffered from throat pain, complained that even after one year of treatment, the problem had not been solved. Recently, the doctor had stated that Mahadev needed an operation for which his parents would have to pay Rs. 5000, though the parents were BPL. The boy was asked to come the very next day and is now undergoing treatment without his parents having to pay for it and follow-up action is being continued by CIVIC. Five grievances were attended to next day itself.

Impact of GRMs - K R Puram Hospital agrees to set up Rogi Kalyan Samithi

The absence of the mandated Rogi Kalyan Samiti, a people's participation platform at the hospital for participatory decision-making, and the non-holding of the mandated grievance redressal meetings by it were highlighted. At the end, hospital officials admitted that the Rogi Kalyan Samiti was dysfunctional though it had been constituted. They agreed to constitute it afresh with representation to Rajiv Gandhi Nagar residents. They also agreed that a grievance redressal mechanism at the hospital was necessary and agreed to hold the next grievance redressal meeting on their own in the hospital premises itself. They asked CIVIC to push government to institutionalize these platforms. CIVIC with its follow-up action with the hospital is trying to institutionalize the Rogi Kalyan Samiti and the grievance redressal mechanism within the hospital as assured during the event.

Achievements under health

Information on the Bhagyalakshmi scheme of the Dept. of Women & Child Development through the awareness programme led to identification of eight mothers as beneficiaries under this scheme. Women were also able to get the benefits of Prasuthi, Madilu and Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) from the hospitals.

Anganwadi sanctioned for Desiyanagar

At Desiyanagar, many parents were not inclined towards utilizing the facility of the anganwadi. An awareness programme was organized to explain the functions and duties of an anganwadi and its benefits to children and the community. But change is happening slowly in this community.

Local livelihood opportunity: A permanent post of an Anganwadi worker was sanctioned to Rajiv Gandhi Nagar Anganwadi. The community was told about the opportunity available for a woman of the community to get a job as helper at the anganwadi. A woman came forward and her application for the post of Anganwadi worker was formally submitted to the Department of Women and Child Development. She is now waiting to receive the official appointment letter from the department.

EDUCATION

CIVIC gives suggestions on framing RTE Rules

CIVIC met the Principal Secretary, Primary Education, Mr. R.G. Nadadur, regarding the lack of a protocol in the education department for bringing the large number of drop-outs, as in Deshyannagar, back to school. He requested CIVIC itself to prepare and submit a draft protocol for bringing drop-outs back to school and also to get involved with SSA in the framing of rules under the RTE Act. CIVIC submitted the drafts asked for and has also been interacting regularly with SSA and other child rights groups in giving suggestions on the RTE Rules.

CIVIC imparts RTI training to head-teachers of schools



Mr. Venkatesh giving training on the RTI Act to HMs /PIOs of primary schools of North Zone-3, in the presence of Mr. Ashwath Gowda, BEO, and Ms Kathyayini Chamaraj.

CIVIC's applications to schools in its working area for their suo motu disclosures under Section 4(1) of the RTI Act had revealed that schools were unaware of the Act. On CIVIC approaching the Karnataka

Information Commission (KIC) on this, the KIC directed the Principal Secretary, Primary Education, to prepare a template for the suo motu disclosure under the RTI Act of all the 40,000 schools in the State. It also asked CIVIC in its order dated 1-6-2009 to provide training on RTI to all PIOs of schools. Consequently, an RTI training programme was conducted by CIVIC to all PIOs (head-teachers) of primary schools of North Zone-3 in the presence of the BEO, Mr. Ashwath Gowda, at his office in Shivajinagar. Participants appreciated the programme and said that they needed such trainings as it would help them in providing information about the school under RTI Act. They also recommended providing this training to all teachers, students and even citizens.

Residential Bridge Course for Deshiyanagar drop-outs

A field visit to Sanjay Nagar Residential Bridge Course (RBC) School near Hebbal was organized for the children and community members of Deshiyanagar to know more about RBCs and the facilities provided therein so that they could be convinced to send their own child drop-outs to the RBC that had been sanctioned for them. A few parents visited the centre and expressed their satisfaction with the facilities provided. They agreed to send their children to the RBC. However, they are yet to comply with this decision.



Deshiyanagar school drop-out children along with their parents visited RBC near Hebbal

Parents' meetings at schools initiated by CIVIC

As per SSA Rules, conducting parents' meetings in schools is mandatory. However, schools used to just take the signature of parents on the registers and show that meetings were being conducted regularly. With the support of parents and the school authorities,

CIVIC initiated parents' meetings in an effort to institutionalize these in all the schools where it is working. Initial meetings discussed the importance of such meetings and the relevance of parents attending meetings regularly. Parents too accepted that such meetings are essential to monitor the progress of their children in studies and also to sort out problems their children faced. Now, the schools are themselves conducting parents' meetings where issues related to teaching and facilities, such as drinking water, toilets, etc. are being discussed. A majority of the problems are also getting sorted out gradually.

SDMCs bring in transparency in school budgets

CIVIC has been involved as an SDMC member in two schools, namely, Triveninagar Primary School and KR Pura High School. In the Cox Town Government Primary and High Schools, SDMCs were defunct. CIVIC's intervention started by orienting the existing SDMCs on their proper constitution, roles and responsibilities which lead to the re-constitution of the SDMCs as per the norms during the open parents' meeting. Two students of the school are now represented on the SDMCs as per the SDMC circular.

An interactive meeting was organized between two SDMCs, namely, of KR Pura High School and of Triveninagar Primary School. SDMC members shared their experiences of the interventions of CIVIC. They were able to observe a positive change in the attitude of teachers and SDMC members themselves. Members expressed the constraints they have in attending SDMC meetings regularly as they don't get leave at their workplace to attend meetings.



SDMC members verifying the accounts and documents of school.

A few significant decisions were taken for the better functioning of SDMCs: To display all the income and expenditure details of grants received under various schemes on the walls of the schools for public information; to verify all the records related to finances of the school; to have some alternative arrangement to provide food when the midday meal doesn't reach the school; and to write to higher officials on the problems of the schools.

Grievance meeting results in toilet at Triveninagar School

GRMs were conducted at each locality jointly for KR Pura High School and Triveni Nagar Primary School at KR Pura and Cox Town Primary and High Schools at Cox Town. Major grievances focused on the quality of the mid-day meal, and poor drinking water and toilet facilities in the schools. Parents complained that children were coming home with shit in their under-pants as the only toilet was always kept locked. Concerned officials present at the GRM assured the parents that all the grievances would be resolved. CIVIC insisted on their fixing responsibility on particular officials to attend to particular grievances within a fixed time-line. As a result, toilets are being constructed in Triveninagar school now.

SJSRY

Grievance meeting results in action plan on SJSRY for Mahadevapura - 25th October 2010



Ms. Asha Kilaru, Trustee of CIVIC, Mr. Lakshapathi, APSA, Mr. Heera Nayak, Joint Commissioner, BBMP (Mahadevapura Zone), Ms. Bibi Jaan, President, CDS and Ms. Shanthamma, Vice- President, CDS of Mahadevapura, participating in a grievance meeting on SJSRY

Awareness programmes on the SJSRY scheme were continued by CIVIC for different Community Development Societies (CDSs) in this period also. Along with this, trainings on the Right to Information Act (RTI) were organized for CDS members to empower them and GRMs were conducted to sort out their grievances with officials. Follow-up action on the grievances submitted was with RTI applications.

The following major grievances were listed during the GRM organized at Mahadevapura Zone on the SJSRY scheme :



Community members sharing their grievance they are facing in SJSRY in the GRM.

1. Non-sanctioning of loans and subsidies by banks. Inaction by CAOs and COs in motivating communities to apply under the scheme and in getting banks to sanction money.
2. The CAOs concentrated on other BBMP welfare programmes rather than SJSRY. Hence the Rs. 49.56 lakh released under SJSRY has remained totally unspent in the year 2009-10.
3. No awareness programme has been organized by the department for the community. This has resulted in keeping the community dark regarding this scheme.
4. In the financial year 2009-10, 29 people had applied for loans and subsidies out of which only 5 members have got their loans/subsidies sanctioned.
5. Mahadevapura zone CDS has not been formed as per the guidelines of SJSRY. Existing CDS also doesn't have representation from all 17 wards. Instead 3-4 members are being selected from one ward leaving other wards unrepresented.

6. Due to the huge geographical area coming under one CDS, members are finding it difficult to meet and hence regular CDS meetings are not being held. Even minutes of the meetings held are not being circulated among CDS members.
7. Mahadevapura zone CDS did not even have a letter-head or seal in its name.
8. Revolving funds are not being released to SHGs.

Joint Commissioner, BBMP, of Mahadevapura Zone, Mr. Heera Nayak, assured APSA and CIVIC that if they submitted the grievances in writing, he would call a meeting with all concerned officials and take necessary measures to solve all the problems. He also said that a draft action plan would be prepared for all CAOs and COs working under SJSRY which would then be discussed with NGOs before being finalized. He also suggested that the president and members of CDSs should approach bank managers to get their loans sanctioned.

Outcomes of the GRM

1. Within one week after the GRM, a meeting was called by the JC, BBMP, to discuss the preparation of the draft action plan and by the end of the month, it was ready.

2. The plan was presented to the CDS for their inputs and then finalized.
3. Out of 24 members who were waiting for the loans/subsidies to be sanctioned, five of them have received them.
4. All meeting minutes are now being circulated to every CDS member. Resolutions have been passed to print letter-heads for the Mahadevapura Zone CDS and identity cards for the members.

Details of CIVIC's interventions are available on the Official blog of CIVIC

<http://civic-bangalore.blogspot.com>

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