

## MAKING GOLABANDHA A CHILD-FRIENDLY GRAM PANCHAYAT : A CASE OF MR. B. MADHAB RAO

Golabandha is a coastal Gram Panchayat spanning 423 hectares of land, with a population of 4082 residing in 938 households. According to the 2011 census, the community exhibits a literacy rate of 58.3% and predominantly converses in Telugu. Governed by 11 wards, Golabandha boasts a commendable 73% representation of women in local governance.

Despite its achievements, Golabandha faces numerous challenges, particularly concerning its children. The population of children aged 0-18 is 507, and they have identified several issues. These include inadequate infrastructure for drinking water, toilets, and handwashing facilities in schools and anganwadi centers. Additionally, the village grapples with cases of child marriage, dropouts at the primary school level, and instances of domestic violence.

Gram Panchayat Sarpancha, Mr. B. Madhab Rao, took these challenges seriously upon his election. He envisions inclusive development and aims to transform Golabandha into a child-friendly Gram Panchayat. Recognizing the importance of children's voices, he actively involves them in the planning process and encourages their participation in Gram Sabha meetings. Mr. Rao has initiated discussions on children's issues in various meetings and Gram Sabha sessions, attentively listening to their concerns and vulnerabilities.

Incorporating the Children Action Plan into the Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP), he allocated a budget for various projects related to child development. He specifically prioritized maintaining cleanliness, safety, and hygiene in anganwadi centers and schools, recognizing that children spend their time there reading and playing.



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He enhanced WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) facilities in these institutions by improving drinking water supply to Anganwadi Centers (AWCs) 1 and 2, installing toilets, handwashing facilities, and ensuring proper drinking water facilities in the high school and primary school. Additionally, he focused on implementing waste management facilities.

He ensured 100% immunization for children through healthcare service providers, along with achieving 100% birth and death registration and zero school dropouts in Golabandha. Moreover, he actively requested and engaged all elected officials, specifically women Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) members, to visit institutions and events for children. Their role included monitoring activities of service providers and improving service delivery in each village.

He encouraged elected women officials to actively participate in planning, implementing, and monitoring, supporting the Gram Panchayat for inclusive development. His emphasis was on the successful implementation of programs for children and women, ensuring that the benefits reached the intended beneficiaries.

He has undertaken necessary IEC activities to disseminate helpline numbers for the safety and security of children, including school helplines, police helplines, and child helplines, in prominent places throughout the village.

He has organized campaigns against child marriage, child labor, and gender-based violence against children. He encourages people to promptly report any such activities by parents or children by directly contacting the Sarpanch or through the childline





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Additionally, he has played an active role in establishing the Village Level Child Protection Committee (VLCPC) and has activated the Gram Panchayat Level Child Protection Committee (GPLCPC). He has allocated an amount of 70,000 rupees for various projects from different sources of untied grants for the Gram Panchayat, demonstrating his commitment to making Golabandha a child-friendly Gram Panchayat.

He has outlined plans to establish a library, children's park, and complete all infrastructure development to provide basic facilities and ensure social security for all vulnerable individuals and families. Given the coastal location of the village, he recognizes the importance of risk-informed planning and development at the Gram Panchayat and aims to incorporate a disaster risk reduction (DRR) plan

