

# **CONSOLIDATED EVALUATION REPORT**

**Agricultural Development & Training Society (ADATS)  
&  
Bagepalli Coolie Sangha (BCS)**

November 2011

*PREPARED BY*  
**SRIRAMAPPA. G,  
ANTHYA MADIATH,  
SURESH KUMAR KEJRIWAL**

## SECTION - 0 INTRODUCTION

### **0.1 ADATS:**

ADATS was incorporated as a registered Society under the Public Societies Registration Act 1 of 1350 on 1 October 1978. The aims, objectives and powers of the society and the rules and regulations as defined in the Memorandum of Association and Rules and Regulations of the Society respectively are broad, all encompassing and not unlike other most societies registered under the same Act. The Rules and Regulations were amended in April 1988 and have remained unchanged since then.

*The Governing Body:* There is a general body and a governing body. Membership in the General Body is only by invitation of the Governing Body. The General Body presently consists of 9 members. The Governing Body is elected every 5 years from amongst the members of the General Body. As per its Rules and Regulations, ADATS' Governing Body should be comprised of 5 members including a President, Secretary and Treasurer. The President is vested with the power to preside over meetings of both the general and governing body, to appoint and discipline staff, control and direct the organization and nominate the Treasurer. The next important office is that of the Treasurer who is responsible for safe guarding the financial interests and monies and maintaining the accounts of the society. The governing body is expected to meet at least once in six months.

Presently, ADATS' Governing Body consists of 6 members, 4 men and 2 women. Men currently hold the office of President and Treasurer. The Secretary is a woman. Four of the 6 members are qualified, longstanding developmental practitioners. Two are businessmen. All members of the Society have been members since several years. Three members of the Governing Body are former employees. All members have had a long association as colleagues and friends with the main promoter of the Society, Ram Esteves.

### **0.2 Bagepalli Coolie Sangha ( BCS):**

The Coolie Sangha is a membership-based organization of poor, small landed peasants and landless agricultural labourers promoted by ADATS<sup>1</sup>. The primary unit is at village level and is called the Coolie Sangha Unit (CSU). Membership is to be renewed each year. Until recently members were obliged to pay a percentage of their declared annual household income as what is called 'Sangha Tax'; this payment is now changed to Rs.300/- per household per year.

The Bagepalli Coolie Sangha (BCS) is a registered body under the Trusts Act. This trust was registered in the year 1987. The original Trust Deed was modified in 1999. The BCS was established to 'give shape and structure to the organized unity of coolies at village, Cluster and Taluk level and to provide a forum to organized coolies to meet, debate and decide on issues concerning their lives'. The coolie members (CSUs) are therefore the beneficiaries of the BCS. Individual Coolie Sangha Units are deemed to be branches of the BCS. Their properties (moveable or immovable) vest with the BCS.

---

<sup>1</sup> This is not a beneficiary organization of ADATS as it is quick to declare but an independent, democratic community based organisation. The organization is now 25 years old.

Four permanent and 8 elected trustees make up the Board of Trustees that is responsible for managing the trust. They are not entitled to the Trust's income or profits. All the trustees elect a President and Treasurer every 3 years. Elected trustees enjoy a 3-year term (in rotation). The Board of Trustees is expected to meet twice a year. The Board oversees the election of CSU representatives, Cluster and Taluk Secretaries. Four elected Executive Committees, representing each of the five Taluks covered by the BCS further ensure the involvement of the member CSUs in the running of the trust. The President and Treasurer jointly operate the main bank accounts of the BCS. The Treasurer is a mandatory signatory of bank accounts held at the Cluster and CSU unit level. A series of meetings starting from the CSUs, to the Cluster to the Taluk level ensure the functionality of the coolie organization. Women have been given prominence at all levels in the organization.

**SECTION - I**  
**PROGRAMME ASPECTS**  
**by G. Sriramappa**

**0.1 Purpose of the Evaluation**

The key aspects of the programme review included

1. Assess the extent to which the Current ADATS Programme has been relevant to the needs and priorities of the Coolie Sangha and individual Families and the Changes brought to Member Coolie families, village CSUs, and the community at large; Positive and negative outcomes and impacts arising from the project.
  - Ensure that the associated Assumptions/External Factors are also reviewed; Comment on project implementation and monitoring processes
  - Analyse gender disaggregated data to identify the current roles, status and involvement of women in the project (at community and organizational level), their control of and access to project resources
  - Identify the most crucial drawbacks/weaknesses of the project if any, and examine what effect they had on the project
2. Assess whether the rationale for the project was valid and whether the Original goals, objectives and activities were relevant from the viewpoint of the beneficiaries, ADATS and the Coolie Sangha
  - Assess what mutual advantage has been obtained by ADATS and the Coolie Sangha
  - Identify the effects on the project of external events/changes and analyse the impact of these external factors (social, political and climatic) on the rationale for the project
  - Assess whether the project processes and outcomes are contributing to project sustainability, and what factors affected this sustainability
  - Assess the efficiency of the programme implementation: Were activities cost-efficient? Were objectives achieved on time? Was the programme implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?
3. Recommend appropriate changes to the design of the project to improve its effectiveness and responsiveness, reduce any negative developmental impacts, And promote sustainability.
  - Recommending modifications to the project's design and implementation to improve its effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, development impact, and sustainability
  - Suggest changes to the project's objectives or Additional activities which should be considered
  - Suggest changes to existing monitoring systems and improved/additional indicators to measure achievement of objectives
4. Expectations as articulated by the ADATS team: seeking third opinion
  - How we could enhance effectiveness of our work to change property in the name of women and how we could overcome the challenges.
  - How we could strengthen the role of women within the family level

- How we track/use the youth in cities and the in potential could be utilized to strengthen
- Ideas for technical improvement in Biogas, A/R CDM initiatives, (how to improve survival percentage)
- What are the alternative options for livelihood enhancement for the youth.
- Through light on the external factors affecting the work of ADATS and. Impact of the work of ADATS on feudalism.
- ADATS came out with the ideology of dismantling caste, with strong position against parochial identities. What is the current situation of the BCS and CSU Members in this respect? Has it been successful in promoting new identities based on class (including Madiga, Mala, Muslim, other backward caste on the platform/identity of Coolie Sangha)
- Fair Climate network (FCN) – will ADATS being part of FCN based on Business model on carbon trading dilute the identity of Coolie Sangha. Almost 75 % of Ram Esteves’ time is spent on FCN. Will it affect BCS.
- Assumptions: Feudalism has almost ended in most of the target areas but the capitalism and consumerism has taken deep root that has started to impact on the lives. There are both opportunities and challenges.

## **0.2 The process of evaluation and methodology**

The Team that assisted during the review process including facilitation of field visits included:

1. Mr Venkatanarasappa, President Bagepalli Coolie Sangha
2. Mr Towfeeq, Coordinator
3. Ms Shaheen, Mahila Trainer Chintamani
4. Ms Radha

After the initial introduction meeting with all the key staff members to orient the evaluation team on the activities/programmes of ADATS, small group mentioned above assigned to assist the reviewer developed a detailed action plan for the field visit on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> August 2011. The orientation meeting comprised of Field Workers from 16 areas, 12 Mahila Trainers, Taluk Secretaries, Extension Workers relating to children/youth programmes, with experience of working with BCS from less than 10 years to more than 25 years. This meeting was an opportunity to listen to their expectations and get a feel of the achievements as perceived by the team members. This was followed by the field visit to different villages that was developed by the team keeping in view the impact indicators as outlined in the log frame.

Travel from Bangalore to Bagepalli

1/09/11 Planning with the team, Bandollapalli, Bagepalli Taluk

2/09/11 Kotagal Coolie Sangha Meeting, Chintamani Taluk

2/09/11 M. Gollapalli, Chintamani Taluk – GP level meeting

3/09/11 Meeting with DSS representatives on identity of CS and Dalit Sangha.

3/09/11 Meeting with women – stories of success /challenges.

3/09/11 Brief participation in BCS monthly meeting at Bagepalli

3/09/11 Gundlupalli, CSU meeting,

4/09/11 GP Meeting at Valsalapalli, Siddalaghatta Taluk

4/09/11 Visit to Non project village in Gowribidanur Taluk  
5/09/11 Mahila Meeting at Ullodu – CSU, Gudibanda Taluk  
5/09/11 Margankunta GP meeting  
6/09/11 Debriefing and return back

## **1. General frame conditions affecting ADATS and problem analysis**

Income has actually increased. Current wage rates are Rs 80 to Rs 100. Political clout of the BCS/ADATS has sometimes led to some individuals are earning much more through questionable deals and contract works. As income increases, the Coolie Sangha control over the community has decreased. Increased incomes do not suggest that poverty has been eradicated. The Public Distribution System (PDS), wages under the Employment Guarantee Act (EGA) and Migration are still crucial for large section of people.

Although wages have increased, expenditure has also gone up due to penetration of market and impact of consumerism in the project villages including the Coolie Sangha Members. E.g. modern consumer goods like shampoo or toothpaste. We cannot oppose the purchase of motorcycles, televisions on instalments even in the remotest villages. Cell phone usage has become common place.

Coolie Sangha values are not strong enough to counter the values unleashed by the onslaught of modernization. People are trying to keep up with their neighbours and in many cases failing, especially with regard to new systems such as Equated Monthly Instalments (EMI's) on goods purchased. Thus even though Individual incomes have increased, but not resulted in improved condition for families.

Feudalism is dead in most of the Taluks, except perhaps in Chintamani where the dominance of feudal Reddy's continues and the Coolie Sangha does not have the necessary capacity to deal with challenges posed by the Reddy's who control the politics of the Taluk. Independent of the political party that gains power its always from the Reddy community.

## **2. Analysis of the effectiveness of the PME system**

Fantastic information and database management system in place for more than 15 years (the *InfoNeeds*) and we need to commend the organisation; further the capacity development of the field level workers and staff Mahila Trainers, Field Workers to use the systems with ease has made the process of review easier as well as enriching. We could get the necessary information needed on any aspect of the programme readily especially the quantitative information against the output indicators as outlined in the log frame.

Review of the documents revealed that the processes of strategic planning has been very Elaborate with extensive consultations with CSU and BCS and ADATS staff members facilitated by an external consultant. It is commendable that the project document and log frame that was developed was shared in local language also so that this becomes a practical document which is used during the course of the project implementation. ADATS management was very upright in articulating that they followed result based management system. Six monthly Effects Monitoring system seems to be quite well developed and the ADATS/BCS team seemed to be fully conversant with the process. The outcome of the Effects Monitoring process is quite clear.

Weekly Panchayat level meeting consisting of the two CSU Representatives, Cheque Signatory, the CSU Representative of Mahila Meeting, Village level health worker are present in this meeting facilitated by Mahila Trainer and Field Worker from ADATS. Had an opportunity to

attend 3 Panchayat level meetings and M Gollapalli, Chintamani Taluk, and Margankunta, Bagepalli Taluk, and Valsalapalli, in Siddalaghatta Taluk.

BCS monthly meeting at Bagepalli: Opportunity to briefly participate in BCS meeting at Bagepalli revealed that it was mass meeting with more than 300 members where communication has been a challenge. The quality of meetings with 300 CSU Representatives seems poor. Effective communication in such large group is not easy. It is recommended to hold smaller better structures meeting focussing only on critical issues that need Taluk/organisational level attention. Other wise this tends to duplicate the Cluster level meeting. It is recognised that it is not easy to change the process and habit that has been ongoing on for over 25 years and members are habituated. We need to reflect how to enhance the effectiveness of such meetings. Community mobilization and dharna may not be solutions for all problems. We need to strategize the actions of BCS to make an impact on the lives. The issues being raised needed deeper and systematic discussion and strategizing. The spontaneous response was to mobilise community and organize dharna for to ensure realization of entitlements. Some of the issues discussed needed systematic data gathering, research and use the data to achieve specific changes by advocating with the key stakeholders rather than mobilisation.

#### Role of Cluster/GP level Coolie Sangha:

It meets on weekly basis with CSU Representatives of one men and women from each CSU in the Cluster/Panchayat; Sharing achievement, problems and challenges faced and how they were resolved. It is a forum for learning and sharing of experiences of individual CSUs. The issues that could not be resolved at individual CSU level are discussed at Cluster/GP level. The issues are reviewed and advise provided by the Cluster/GP Meet. Cluster/GP Meet also act as a mutual control mechanism and monitors the compliance to the regulations and values of the Sangha Members. On vey critical issues affecting the entire Cluster/GP Meet gives an opportunity to exercise collective wisdom of the leaders and make appropriate decisions and action plans. One example was to make decisions to break the FDs to fund for the scholarship of students for higher education. The Cluster/GP Meet approved the plans for providing scholarship in each of the villages. The number of children benefiting in different villages ranged from 12-22 with amount of Rs. 6000 to 11000 allocated towards scholarship support.

The large size of the meeting at the Taluk level with more than 300 people is not effective in terms of communication. It is highly recommended that such a general body meeting be held every six months rather than every month. It is also the significant cost involved which leads to dependence on external donor funds. This meeting could limit to 2-3 persons from each Panchayat rather than from each villages. The process of how this meeting is conducted and what kind of agenda is to be discussed at Village, Panchayat and Taluk level with out over lapping need to be worked out by ADATS and BCS.

Managing Staff performance: While there has been a mechanism for assessing the performance at BCS level with series of meetings the mechanisms for assessment of performance of ADATS staff need to improved.

Monday morning meetings: there has been a realization that “We monitor too late and hence not able to follow up”. Monday morning meeting is an opportunity to identify the challenges and problems and take immediate remedial actions. While this is true, and useful in operational planning and follow up, we feel in addition to Monday morning meetings, we need to develop mechanism to develop work plans for different staff members and review of the on a regular basis to ensure the performance of the staff is in line with the organizational plan. At present there does not seem to be a systematic mechanism for regular monitoring and assessing the work of

individual staff members. While several decisions were made based on the 7<sup>th</sup> Effects Monitoring process, the implementation of all the decisions are followed through in a systematic manner. Outputs/Progress achieved by staff against plans need to be captured through periodic reporting system. While informal trust based monitoring has its advantages for a team of size and complexity of ADATS more structured monitoring could contribute to strengthening the work of ADATS/BCS.

Entitlements Annual Action Plan for each CSU for based on comprehensive analysis of entitlements for every members of the families and converting that in to an annual action plan from realizing and monitoring the progress. This is to some extent being undertaken as part of customer demand and satisfaction survey, we need to develop a proactive and comprehensive approach to realising the entitlements of the all the family members of the Coolie Sangha. When the idea was explained in the Margankunta GP meeting they felt it would be very useful and would like to develop an action plan.

### **3. Analysis of the effectiveness and relevance of programme implementation and Impact of the programme**

#### **3.1. Is the caste identify breaking, giving way to the new identity of Coolie Sangha**

Discussion with Dalit Sangharsh Samithi (DSS) members on the issues of caste and identity of Coolie Sangha revealed that ADATS/BCS has been successful in breaking the caste identities. ADATS started around the same time as the DSS in Karnataka. Interactions with Mr Venkatesh, from Madiga community and active members of DSS, who is currently member of Zilla Panchayat and a few other members of the local DSS was helpful. DSS has been associated with ADATS from the beginning. The support from ADATS/BCS was critical in election of Mr Venkatesh to Zilla Panchayat. ADATS has addressed the issues of caste through *Sahabojanam*, labour sharing as part of Dry Land Development Programme. It has supported DSS in addressing other Dalit issues like Inter caste marriages. Financial spot DSS received was crucial in dealing with cases of inter caste marriage, atrocities on Dalits etc. Entitlements is another area DSS and BCS has worked together. Political development of DSS members in ADATS operational areas, was always with support of ADATS. NREGA effectiveness is because of significant work of ADATS/BCS. DSS had significant campaigning on education particularly establishment to support higher education for Dalits by demanding hostel facilities and scholarships. Landlordism is still there in Chintamani, Kolar and Srinivaspura and poverty among Dalits still persists. While ADATS/BCS has made conscious attempts to break the caste system in the villages, the system and identities are so deep rooted they still persist. *Mandalisation* has resulted in the creation of ethnic elite. Leaders of such clubs find acceptance in political parties. Upper caste oppression has vastly decreased. Ethnic elites have benefited. The best village CSUs lose the most, since strong caste leaders are vulnerable to be co-opted by the mainstream political parties.

But there is some significant changes in attitude of upper caste to Dalits, with reduced dependence due to initiatives of BCS for economic development and promoting collective identity of Coolie Sangha consisting of SC, ST, BC and other caste as well. While DLDP has made some impact it is still a long way to go. Perhaps higher level of education among the members of the Coolie Sangha and employment in formal/govt. sector might help in breaking the barriers of caste further. While the practice of untouchability in public spaces has not been there, in private spaces like houses, marriages these remain. What is changing is the exploitative relationship between different caste groups even though social identities are persisting and in some cases becoming stronger. This does not undermine the great work ADATS has been doing



to break these barriers. Some of the other factors that has also contributed to breakdown of the caste is due to spread of education consumerism and individualism resulting from spread for capitalism in an accelerated manner after liberalization. One of the ways the Sangha identity could be promoted is thorough a BCS Flag as symbol for collective identity to be used in all CSUs, activities and mobilisation processes.

### **3.2. Impact of Coolie Sangha:**

Discussion in the M. Gollapalli, Margankunta and Valsalapalli Panchayat level meetings and CSU meetings revealed some the key areas where the CSUs/BCS has made an impact are:

- Ending of slavery and exploitation by rich and landlords: CCF visualised to reduce the dependence of exploitative money lenders/upper caste farmers for credit for agriculture and animal rearing, support off farm income generation initiatives of the members.
- Working towards equality of women, upholding the dignity of the members when confronted with the upper caste/landlords investing in quality education of the children of the CSU Member. Almost all the boys and girls have completed up to 10<sup>th</sup> grade with support from BCS/ADATS.
- Dry Land Development Programme which has been a core activity to develop the solidarity among the members has been instrumental in breaking the barriers of caste system through sharing of labour for agricultural activities, sharing food and water. The solidarity is reflected through slogans like '*Sanghame ma praanam*'.
- NREGA – 100% members have job cards; during 2007-08 as inn other villages 100 days of employment was provided to all the job card holders and with individual earnings up to Rs. 8,200 However during the 2008-09 and 09-10 the dominance of politically powerful Reddy's in the Taluk was high and JCB were engaged in NREGA and funds from NREGA were misused. Through active mobilization and campaign during 2010-11 form -6 were issued and the works restarted. Three secretaries were suspended. Rs. 45 lakhs of payment on NREGA is still pending.

Similarly in Margankunta GP meeting there are 1,250 families of which 305 are Members of CSUs of which 290 are active and 15 are cancelled. There are 3 non CSU villages with about 250 families. The Panchayat has 50 land less families. The work in this Panchayat started as early as 1986. And DLDP started in 1994. 2 pilot of A/R CDM started in 09-11. The impact on NREGA programme is similar to that in Bagepalli Taluk in which during 07-08 100 days of employment for all the card holders was realised, at Rs. 8,200 per person.; 08-09 100 days employment; 09-10 100 days of employment provided. Payment is pending for 50 days work; 10-11 15 days of employment provided at rate of Rs. 125 per day

### **3.3. Empowering women in distress**

Formation of CSU and Mahila Meeting at the village level, which can engage in struggles against exploitation and oppression. These groups have enabled individual Coolies access health care, education, skill training, legal advice etc. Women have gained confidence and physical mobility, e.g. the right to attend meeting, training programmes, etc., which has been now accepted by men and community. Enhanced knowledge and awareness of their own situation, which has increased the ability of women confront oppressive practices such as violence against women, both within and outside the family. Women and men have begun to collectively address issues like minimum wages, equal wages for men and women, women's share in the family property, and right to

maintenance in the event of divorce/desertion/widowhood. The enhanced access to credit has enhanced earning capacities leading to investment in education of girl and boys. As a result most of the most of the children have completed 10th grade in school. Significant achievements reduction in domestic violence as cases of violence against women are raised and discussed in the Mahila Meetings and CSUs and resolved. Due to conscious education and discussion in Mahila Meetings the age of marriage is pushed up to 22-23 years in majority of the cases. This is also due to the fact the more than 50% girls are completing High School and many of their continuing with higher education in nearby towns.

Conscious efforts of the Mahila Meetings while dealing with problems like desertion by husband, harassment by in-laws, second marriage, have attempted to get a share of land/property from their father's or husband's property registered in their name is a strategic in empowering them. Further entitling poor Coolie women with land is a necessary component for enhancing food and nutritional security and contributing to improvement in health status. In a few cases, steps to entitle women through title deeds of the extra land conferred by the DLDP programme, and efforts to get the property transferred in the name of women has been commendable from the point of empowering the marginalized women.. Thus the strategy to target the women in difficult situations through the Women's Fund involving part grant and part loan is very effective. Given below are some of the stories of significant impact that I came across during the visits to CSU and other meetings.

### **3.4. CSU and Political power**

CSU are active in the electoral politics at the Panchayat level and they have stated to function as third force, or sometimes align with one of mainstream party. CSU leaders/nominees have become ward members and president at Panchayat levels. While discussing the current role of the elected CSU Representatives within the Panchayat, it was learnt that elected ward members represents the interests of CSU/BCS members. They do so by lobbying based on the Quota system of dividing the benefits available to all members equally and not necessarily based on the needs of CSU Members. After long discussion in the meeting the leaders agreed that we need to do way with the Quota system. Elected CSU Representatives need to influence the functioning of Gram Panchayat to address the interests of the most marginalized/CSU Members and make them genuinely accountable to the CSU Members/Gram Sabha in particular. This was appreciated by all the leaders present in the meeting. It was agreed that the role of elected CSU Representative in not of postmen to convey messages about the scheme but as a leader should represent the interests of CSU Members especially the most marginalized members in the village. This should also influence the way plans and budgets are made, and implemented, monitored and evaluated.

Similarly interaction with GP at Valsalapalli in Chintamani Taluk reveal that this Gram Panchayat is politically hyper active. At one stage the Coolie Sangha has total control over the gram Panchayat. In the recent gram Panchayat elections, in Bushettihalli Panchayat, out of 17 wards, 9 contested from Coolie Sangha or which 3 won. The CS is able to bargain and negotiate with JDS and congress for power in the Panchayat. CS had influence on the Panchayat. Are we able convert this gain/access to power at the Panchayat level in to developing an accountable gram Panchayat where the interests of the Coolie Sangha Members/other poor and marginalized are taken care of and their entitlements are realised. What are the mechanisms of accountability. The focus of elected members seems as in other Panchayats seems to capturing the share of funds/scheme for elected members. There is a need to strengthen the down ward accountability of Panchayats to CSU/Gram Sabha. Can we represent the interest of the marginalised in planning

and budgeting process and effective delivery. We could use our ability to influence Panchayat to enhance sustainability of our core interventions like Balakendra.

Similarly the meeting at Margankunta Gram Panchayat, Bagepalli Taluk revealed that Lottery system for allocating programmes to different villages at Gram Panchayat. Members had good knowledge of entitlement like: ration card, Cement road, Gram Swaraj (shopping complex) to generate un-tied funds for Panchayat, rain water harvesting. OAP, widow pensions, Ashraya houses. Considering the CSU representatives have had control over Gram Panchayat for several years, it had a positive impact to influence they way NREGA programme is implemented. An annual action plan is prepared and implemented against this plan. When discussed about possibility of using special component plan funds for supporting Balakendra Teacher, to enhance sustainability it was suggested this was very much possible. We need to monitor this promise closely and follow it through.

Thus it could be stated while political power is gained by CSU at Gram Panchayat and Taluk level, no clear mechanisms/systems are in place to ensure conversion of this political power to realisation of entitlements for the most marginalised. ADATS/ BCS could work towards a systematic approach to realising these entitlements and how CSU influences the planning, Budgeting and implementation of programmes and activity to address the needs of the CSU members and other marginalised group in the Gram Panchayat.

### **3.5. Welfare activities of ADATS**

1. Old age pensions for old Coolie Sangha Members/CSU Representatives.
2. Emergency health support for CSU Members and other crisis.

VHW work is more of distribution of medicines with small from CSU for minor ailments rather than supporting reproductive health and health education as more substantive activity of education and development nature.

Example of Kotagal Coolie Sangha Meeting, Chintamani Taluk Mahila meeting There are 58 Mahila members of which 20 are cancelled and 38 are active members. There are 2 village health workers in this village due to large size of the village. It is not clear from the interactions if these Health workers are trained adequately, especially in critical areas relating to reproductive health. Their training seems to be more in curative support service and diseases rather than preventive. The criteria for their selection is more of helping the women in distress with small benefits and in that process empowering and developing them as leaders. Small funds from Sangha to provide medicines for minor ailments. They are trained by doctors. Several issues and problems are raised around reproductive health. Our approach is more of providing referral services. Transport for critical medical and emergency needs- delivery, uterus operations. Good fruitful links are established with MS Ramaiah hospital to organize the camp at Kaivaram villages to identify cases. The cases are then referred to MS Ramaiah hospital (old) as the new one is very expensive. The hospital charges nominal cost of medicines, food, ward charges are provided free. Coolie Sangha has some emergency funds if smaller needs are met from this. If the costs are substantive ADATS meeting the costs. Sometime different members share the costs by contributing. There was a recent case of uterus operation. There was need of Rs. 8,000 towards meeting the costs. This was met from Advance from Dairy cooperative as the person is a member of coops.

BCS needs to rethink the strategy on reproductive health care it could provide training to adolescent girls on reproductive health to assist them understand the issues and contribute to prevention of reproductive health problems.

#### 4. Conclusions, Observations

1. Fantastic information and database management system in place for more than 15 years (the *InfoNeeds*) and we need to commend the organisation; furthermore, the capacity development of the field level workers and staff - Mahila Trainers, Field Workers to use the systems with ease has made the process of review easier as well as enriching. we could get the necessary information needed on any aspect of the programme readily;
2. Strong sense of ownership of the group by the Coolie Sangha Members of the target group in the active villages – Mala, Madiga, Muslim, BCM-A and BCM- B.
3. The process of raising resources mobilizing resources for BCS through Sangha Tax based on assessment of income levels in the 435 active CSUs seems to have been institutionalised. The tax amount is stabilized a minimum of ` 300 per year and about 10-15% of the families pay higher tax based. This amounts to almost ` 30 lakhs per year and could contribute to enhancing sustainability of CSUs.
4. Perseverance/commitment of the ADATS as an organisation to mobilise support for the more than 34 years raising significant resources for the CS processes and members (led by charismatic and strong leader) to sustain the support beyond one generation is admirable. Commitment of a voluntary organisation to provide solidarity support for lifetime to provide is rare and exceptional.
5. This is different from the common thinking of INGO/NGO thinking on the empowerment models where the role of the NGO is that of capacity building of the organisation for sustainability the target group and the promoting organisation phasing out. The organisation strongly believes the ADATS support to the BCS is needed even though the extent and the nature of support would vary at different points of time in the dynamic external environment.
6. Key interventions-
  - a. Organizing and strengthening the CSU processes with participation and involvement of women inbuilt in to the processes; key functions like Cheque Signatory, Mahila Meetings, VHWs played by women at the CSU level. most of the meetings and process envisage participation of 50% of women. The CSUs formed earlier in Bagepalli went through adult education process with action-reflection-action before consolidation while the subsequent villages were more through the process of DLDP and in the later cases like SCNZ was through children and women interventions.
  - b. DLDP for several years seems to be the key intervention contributing to the strong CSUs and BCS driven by the ideology of the Sangha; E.g. Agriculture of CSU Members is at par with or even better than that of other farmers from upper castes upholding the dignity of the target group members. DLDP for more than 20 years institutionalised the practices of *sahabojanam* (eating together), labour sharing in the fields that led to much closes working together breaking the caste

<i>CCF - Key Rules and Principles</i>
---------------------------------------

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No interest</li> <li>• 10% of loan amount as contribution to the Sangha fund.</li> <li>• No guarantor</li> <li>• No writing off loans</li> </ul> |
|---|

barriers. Initially started with no money. from out side but based on labour sharing by Coolie Sangha Members. Subsequently Novib supported at ` 5 per day. Women M.Sc. Ag. were in charge of the DLDP at each Taluk. Bunker Roy (Tilonia) and Sam Pitroda (DoT) visited and DLDP was one of the models that contributed to evolution of NREGA.

- c. CCF visualised to reduce the dependence of exploitative money lenders/upper caste farmers fro credit for agriculture and animal rearing, support off farm income generation initiatives of the members.
  - d. Emergency support fund and legal aid fund at Sangha level is to prevent dependence on exploiters during crisis situation and when ever legal support is maintained. substantive support if needed is met from ADATS sources while smaller needs are met from Sangha funds.
  - e. Women's Fund: Visualized to provide support women those in distress with grant/loan to economically empower them and participate in the Sangha process as well as enhance their status within the family seems to be effective in empowering the targeted women.
  - f. Celina Fund: Additional revolving fund from specific donors for cross bread cow which has mixed results. the women have not benefitted from the support in several cases as their capacity to manage the cow, in terms of veterinary care, fodder (because of landlessness). need to rethink and consider alternate investments of this fund to enhance effectiveness.
  - g. Biogas/Woodstove: initiated to value the domestic work of women by converting it in to carbon revenue, reducing drudgery, improving reproductive health and in long term as source of income from carbon revenues;
  - h. Horticulture/plantation (Mango, Cashew, Tamarind): the initiative started 10 years to uphold the dignity of the CSU Member farmers vis-à-vis the landlords has been reengineered as A/R CDM initiative. The other farmers are now following the CSU Members as they are much advanced and would be learning from the people they oppressed decades ago. Technological initiatives like rock wool in addition to saving water and improving survival rate contributes to changing the social relations and the dynamics between the communities in the village. Four models of plantation are envisaged
7. Visit to non Sangha village: Kanaganakoppa Gowribidanur Taluk. It is only 16 km from the Chickballapur field centre. There are 75 families in Dalit Colony (Madiga) It is ironic that the board on Ambedkar Dalit Sangha is prominently there for last several years as we enter the road. It was distressing the status of these families. The implementation of NREGA is appalling. A local contractor, Babu Naidu (who has come from distant Ramnagar area) to live in Manchenahalli. He has taken all the job cards to loot NREGA funds. Gram Panchayat member from the colony (a lady elected as part of reservation policy), has attended 7 Gram Panchayat meetings. Still she does not know anything about NREGA programme, the contractor paid ` 100 to each family for using the card. No one knows where the card is. Old age pension, Widow Pension, are not being paid for last five months. This was sorry state of affairs in contrast to some of the Coolie Sangha villages.

## 5. Recommendations

1. **Dropped villages:** How long will they be dropped villages, Will they ever come back? what are the processes and mechanism to bring these villages back to the Coolie Sangha?

Are we right in sitting on the Sangha fund/fixed deposits for several years there by denying opportunities for these target group members to benefit. Interactions with Cluster level meetings reveal that neither CSU Functionaries nor ADATS team nor the BCS leaders at Panchayat/Taluk level seemed to be concerned about this. This is a major cause of worry. The key concern is with passage of time the communication and engagement weakens and if this exceeds more than 10 years, the generations may change, and making it further difficult to bring them back. If we do not intend to bring them back do we have moral right to keep the Sangha funds in these village with BCS.

**Recommendation:** ADATS/ BCS should formulate a policy for dropped-out CSUs and members which would decide the future course of action to be taken. Otherwise, an increasing dropout rate could affect the morale of the organization. It is strongly recommended to develop and implement a positive and committed approach to bring back the drop out CSUs is most urgent and essential before more and more CSUs drop out. The current attitude towards the dropout villages is that of indifference and it must change if Coolies Sangha identity need to thrive and develop. I strongly recommend a proactive approach and a systematic plan to address this teething problem.

**Recommendation:** BCS should evolve performance indicators and evaluate the CSUs on the basis of these indicators, every 6 months and take up appropriate remedial measures, to prevent them from dropping out.

**Recommendation:** A focused drive to increase women membership in the existing Sanghas by transferring membership from irregular male could be one of the ways to arrest the decline in membership in the short term. In the longer term we need to engage with the men who control the decisions and win them back to the Sangha.

2. **Coolie Credit fund:** The main activity at the CSU level is the disbursement of the Coolie Credit Fund (CCF). The CCF has encouraged many Coolies to embark into the beginnings of entrepreneurship. Non-repayment of loans is a major problem with certain CSUs. This problem is result of weak enculturing, their members to the new Coolie culture. As this new culture is not internalised. A weak Coolie Sangha could cause the onset of complacency. Therefore, instead of allowing individuals/CSUs to drop out of the Coolie Sangha the BCS, helped by ADATS, should go into the non-repayment problem seriously. All members of the Coolie Sangha should be oriented/inducted to Coolie Sangha culture and values there by enhancing the organizational and cultural stability.
3. **CCF and other funds management:** Effective of utilisation of these funds from the donors for the purpose they were envisaged need to be improved.. Revolving funds need to be managed more effectively and efficiently. Significant balances seem to be lying in the bank in 900 plus villages. It is strongly recommended to work towards enhancing the effectiveness of these funds and minimise the balances that lie idle in the bank accounts in 900 plus villages. The revolving fund. With the change in the goal from that of exploitation from money lender/feudal lords to globalization related challenges it is strongly recommended to rethink how we could make better use of this vast resources (almost ` 8.44 crores). BCS should consider the idea of charging Nominal interest from these funds as an additional source of untied income for BCS to enhance sustainability. BCS members are paying interest on loans received from other sources like public sector banks, cooperatives, self help groups (in some villages).

4. **BCS Women's Bank:** Considering that BCS is now moving in to more business models as in CDM projects, It is strongly recommended that the CCF be recast and envisage a BCS Bank in line with the ideology of the Coolie Sangha and addressing some of the futuristic interventions and needs (e.g. higher education fund for increasing number of college going students managed by a BCS Women's Bank). With the success of NREGA in the villages, many members have capital to save (as learnt from Margankunta GP meeting) which could be captured in the BCS bank to the advantage of the members and further strengthening. BCS Women's bank could continue to provide all the credit related services it is currently providing and finance higher education fund.
  5. **Develop BCS capacity to do advocacy:** It need to be systematic in approach and should be much beyond mobilization and protest. The state structures in the recent years have become insensitive to such protests. They need to be backed up with quality research on the issues and use of communications media to influence the policy, in favour of the poor.
  6. **Appointment of women staff:** At the senior level in ADATS it is necessary and would contribute to strengthening the voices of women's team Mahila Trainers (primarily from grassroots); This gap is felt after the leaving of earlier Children's Programme Coordinator, Mamatha Esteves.
  7. Have the activities and interventions changed with the change in the goal for 2009-12: While the analysis during the strategic planning has recognized the impact of globalization and market penetration and rightly articulated that the real challenge is the forces liberated due to capitalism and market mechanism resulting in withering away of joint families leading to more and more nuclear families. Assertion of individual identities has sometimes led to weakening of communities and there by the collective solidarity with the Coolie Sangha. This is acknowledged in the project document. Some of the activities have aimed at utilising opportunities arising out of globalization and market penetration. For example Life skills trainings- BPOs/retailing linked to organizations in Bangalore/Puttaparthi where more than 300 youth have been trained and linked with jobs in the cities. The successful efforts in ensuring completion of secondary education of almost 100% boys and more than 50% girls is commendable. There are some ad hoc welfare attempts to provide support for higher education through scholarship.
- Recommendation:** It is strongly recommended to review the current approach to supporting higher education (plus 2 and above level) which at is more on an ad hoc basis. It is recommended to develop and institutionalise higher education fund as a core intervention of BCS, mobilise funds for this purpose and develop mechanisms for loan/ grant to support needy students to pursue higher education including Technical course like medical, engineering, nursing etc. This is critical as most of boys and girls are completing secondary education as a result of successful efforts of ADATS/BCS during last 15 years and the demand for higher education is much higher. This should be a high priority and core intervention; This activity is an opportunity to ensure the younger generation is able to access the benefits from the opportunities in the globalised world where skills and education are important. Design of the Higher education fund should also include resource mobilisation from communities, local corporate and give scholarships/schemes and other sources and communities should take responsibility for managing these funds. Interest margin from BCS Women's bank could be significant, and it could finance the higher education fund, could generate significant capital to for Coolie Sangha that could be used

for carbon financing, as well as funding other significant income generation initiatives for the communities and CSU families.

8. Is Coolie Sangha declining due to impact of globalization and penetration of market in Coolie Sangha territories: Even though wages have increased, expenditure has also gone up due to penetration of market and impact of consumerism in the project villages including the Coolie Sangha Members. E.g. shampoo or toothpaste. motorcycles, televisions and mobile phones have become common in villages. 3-4 MLAs were decided by the might of the Coolies Sangha. At one stage, 70% of Gram Panchayat elected CSU Representatives won by Coolie Sangha. During the recent Taluk Panchayat/ZP elections was a total washout. This is signified by the fact that in December 2010, the Coolies Sangha Membership has declined from 17,000 to 11,000 which is a major cause of concern. This makes one to think if the Coolie Sangha lost its relevance. The vision and ideology of Coolies Sangha is relevant but need to be located in the context of globalisation and its impact on the communities. Some of the key challenges faced by Coolies Sangha-Corruption in Coolie Sangha; Co-option of leaders of Coolies Sangha by mainstream political parties, spread of consumerism and strengthening of individual identities, nuclear families side by side with decline of large/joint family structures, weakening of communities.
9. Loans in the name of CSU Members for BCS for construction of Shadi Mahal or other infrastructure. This should be separated from other uses so that monitoring overdue is more effective, there by contributing to effective utilisation of Coolie credit fund.
10. There is a potential risk of dilution of Ideology and focus of Coolie Sangha due to biogas and other CDM projects. Out of total of 9,566 biogas units built, 4,549 (48%) are non CSU families. And out 2,340 plants under construction 1,833 (almost 78%) are non CSU families. These units are built under the world's first 2 CDM projects registered with UNFCCC. This is understandable as the Biogas plants require some minimum number of livestock's to feed the biogas (detailed in 7<sup>th</sup> Effects Monitoring Report). From the point of view of operationalising the carbon trading this is a fantastic achievement. However this would dilute the identity of the Coolie Sangha. There high probability that the leadership in the CDM projects could shift to non CSU families. Thus it is likely that Fair climate network (FCN) and involvement of ADATS in it, and the business models being pursued relating to carbon trading would certainly contribute to dilution of the identity of the Coolie Sangha.  
From another point of view of sustainability and the context of globalisation , this could be looked at as an opportunity for the Coolie Sangha to transform and realign itself in line with the globalization processes and market mechanism by exploring business models and operationalizing them to enhance sustainability and emerge as a strong organisation independent of donor support. BCS need to consciously explore strategy how benefits from Biogas and A/R CDM projects could be targeted to the original constituency of the Coolie Sangha.
11. Changing role of ADATS as BCS takes more responsibility for BCS. while ADATS would continue to be ideologue, mentor, connector with the external world, source of ideas and innovations for BCS, can BCS take more responsibility in terms of financial management, management of various funds possible decentralization. At present BCS is totally dependent for financial management. The Capacity of BCS functionaries could be developed to take higher responsibility.



12. BCS needs to rethink the strategy on reproductive health care it could provide training to adolescent girls on reproductive health to assist them understand the issues and contribute to prevention of reproductive health problems. VHW work is more of distribution of medicines with small from CSU for minor ailments rather than supporting reproductive health and health education as more substantive activity of education and development nature.

Example of Kotagal Coolie Sangha Meeting, Chintamani Taluk Mahila meeting There are 58 Mahila members of which 20 are cancelled and 38 are active members. There are 2 village health workers in this village due to larger size of the village. It is not clear from the interactions if these Health workers are trained adequately, especially in critical areas relating to reproductive health. Their training seems to be more in curative support service and diseases rather than preventive. The criteria for their selection is more of helping the women in distress with small benefits and in that process empowering and developing them as leaders. Small funds from Sangha to provide medicines for minor ailments. They are trained by doctors. Several issues and problems are raised around reproductive health. Our approach is more of providing referral services. Transport for critical medical and emergency needs- delivery, uterus operations. Good fruitful links are established with MS Ramaiah hospital to organize the camp at Kaivaram villages to identify cases. The cases are then referred to MS Ramaiah hospital (old) as the new one is very expensive. The hospital charges nominal cost of medicines, food, ward charges are provided free. Coolie Sangha has some emergency funds if smaller needs are met from this. If the costs are substantive ADATS is meeting the costs. Sometime different members share the costs by contributing. There was a recent case of uterus operation. There was need of Rs. 8,000 towards meeting the costs. This was met from advance from Diary cooperative as the person is a member of coops.

### **Recommendations for strengthening processes for realising Entitlements/Rights of CSU members**

13. An Annual Action Plan for realising Entitlements for each CSU for based on comprehensive analysis of entitlements for every member of each family (Children, Women, men, disabled, old etc.) and converting that in to an annual action plan for reviewing and monitoring the progress. This is to some extent being undertaken as part of customer demand and satisfaction survey. We need to recognise that the knowledge and awareness of the CSU members on entitlement is at best fragmented. ADATS/ BCS team need to develop comprehensive knowledge base of schemes, programmes and entitlement which could be basis for developing the annual action plan. When the idea was explained in the Margankunta GP, the leaders felt it would be very useful and would like to develop an action plan.
14. Leveraging BCS political power at Panchayat level to realize and achieve the above action plan and strengthening Panchayat as a responsive institution accountable to the marginalised groups and the Gram Sabha. Can we mobilize Panchayat Grants under SCP (Special Component Plan) to sustain the Balakendra Teacher's cost? This should be certainly possible especially in Panchayats like Margankunta, where CSU have significant influence over Panchayats. Once this is demonstrated as a precedence, similar demands could be made in other Panchayats based on this successful experience.

15. CSU role in strengthening and enhancing effectiveness of Gram Sabha process through participation of the marginalised as well as ensuring interests of the marginalised are incorporated in the action plans and budgets of Panchayats.
16. It was recognised during the interactions at field visits, ADATS/ BCS consider it is their responsibility to demands arising out of customer demand and satisfaction survey are realised. BCS /ADATS should play the role of empowering Mahila meetings / CSU and Panchayat level bodies to take primary responsibility. BCS at higher level should focus on empowering the lower level units rather than doing the work for them.

**Recommendations for enhancing sustainability of BCS/CSU**

17. Strong sense of ownership of the group by the Coolie Sangha members of the target group in the active villages- MALA Madiga, Muslim, BCM-A and BCM-B. The process of raising resources mobilizing resources for BCS through Sangha Tax based on assessment of income levels in the 435 active CSUs seems to have been institutionalised. The tax amount is stabilized a minimum of Rs. 300/- per year and about 10-15% of the families pay higher tax based. This amounts to almost 30 lakhs per year and could contribute to enhancing sustainability of CSUs. This will be helpful if the earlier recommendation on drop out villages is implemented.
18. Perseverance/commitment of the ADATS as an organization to mobilize support for the more than 35 years raising significant resources for the CS processes and members (led by charismatic and strong leader ) to sustain the support t beyond one generation is admirable. Commitment of a voluntary organization to provide solidarity support for lifetime to provide is rare and exceptional. This is different from the common thinking of INGO/ NGO thinking on the empowerment models where the role of the NGO is that of capacity building of the organization for sustainability the target group and the promoting organization phasing out. The organisation strongly believes the ADATS support to the BCS is needed even though the extent and the nature of support would vary at different points of time in the dynamic external environment
19. BCS Women Bank to mobilize savings of CSU Members through NREGA incomes as detailed in the section above could greatly contribute to enhancing the sustainability and make BCS process truly independent of external funds and grants.
20. Sustaining leadership with vision, values of Coolie Sangha: It is recommended to take initiatives to ensure continuity and change in the leadership to ensure rejuvenation and revitalization of the Sangha with influx of new leadership? Promotion of children/ youth parliaments could be one initiative that could contribute to this process. Special efforts need to be made to integrate the people joining the Coolie Sangha at later stages with the mission and the ideology of the Coolie Sangha. This would promote cohesiveness of the organisation *and promote solidarity with shared vision and values. In the early stages of BCS the adult education initiatives used to provide this orientation and vision development. In the current context a structured investment of time, energy and resources is strongly recommended to nurture and sustain the values of the Coolie Sangha.*
21. Transferring the ideology, vision and values of BCS to the next generational and the youth: It is strongly recommended to study other successful interventions to BCS functionaries ADATS team members could be helpful in strengthening the ideas. Example: A visit to the work on Neighbourhood children parliaments/ youth parliaments implemented by Neighbourhood community Network (NCN) is highly recommended which could be helpful. This would be the institutional mechanism to develop/ transform

the vision/ values of Coolie Sangha to the next generation and thereby enhancing sustainability as well as deepening democracy. Transferring the ideology, vision and values of BCS to the next generational and the youth

**Recommendations for enhancing sustainability of Balakendras:**

22. The initiatives on Mobile banking, Biogas CDM project, leveraging resources from Special component plan provide opportunities to ensure sustainability of Balakendras in all the CSU villages.
23. Mobile banking business correspondent: ADATS has initiated a innovative mobile banking initiative linking with local bank called financial inclusion project an initiative of the national government. This gives an opportunity to ADATS/BCS to enhance its sustainability. The envisaged income of Rs. 1,000-1,200 pm from this could help the Balakendra Teacher to earn a regular income and contribute to sustain the Balakendra without depending on the external grants/ donor funds. Some investment in capacity building on values and vision of BCS as well as technical aspects of education would be needed.
24. Biogas Case worker and Balakendra Teachers: because the CDM Biogas initiative has capacity to fund biogas workers on the long term basis this could be an opportunity to utilise the Balakendra Teachers (TC) as Biogas Case Workers that are funded from Biogas CDM project related incomes.
25. Leveraging resources from Panchayat for Balakendra and Special Component Plan as explained in section 14 above.

**Recommendation for strengthening PME System:**

26. While there has been a mechanism for assessing the performance at BCS level with series of meetings the mechanisms for assessment of performance of ADATS staff need to be improved. Monday morning meeting is an opportunity to identify the challenges and problems and take immediate remedial actions. While this is true, and useful in operational planning and follow up, it is recommended that a mechanism to develop work plans for different staff members and review them on a regular basis to ensure the performance of the staff is in line with the organizational plan should be in place. At present there does not seem to be a systematic mechanism for regular monitoring and assessing the work of individual staff members. For example, while several decisions were made based on the 7<sup>th</sup> Effects Monitoring process, the implementation of all the decisions are NOT followed through in a systematic manner. Outputs/Progress achieved by staff against plans need to be captured through periodic reporting system. While informal trust based monitoring has its advantages for a team of size and complexity of ADATS more structured monitoring could contribute to strengthening the work of ADATS/BCS.

**SECTION - II**  
**ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT**  
**by Anthya Madiath**

**Observations and Recommendations**

**1. ADATS**

**1.1 Governance**

The Assistant Project Director is the Treasurer. The Project Director, Ram Esteves, is a member of the General Body only. None of the Governing Body members are related to each other. Conversely, two of the Governing Body members (the Secretary and the Treasurer) are related by blood to members of the General body. Furthermore, four members of the Society (1 from the Governing body and 3 from the General body) are also employed by the Society. His brothers son who is both a general member and an employee. ADATS does not hide this information; the donors are aware of these facts and this information was made fully known to the evaluation team.

In the last two years, in keeping with the rules and regulations of ADATS society, the Governing Body has met twice each year and the General Body has met once a year. The Minutes of these meetings are brief and essentially capture attendance, important information pertaining to approval of project grants, and resolutions involving key decisions of the Governing or General Body (e.g. purchase or sale of land or other assets, approval of the Auditor's report, salary increases, salary advances or bonuses to Directors).

The essential role of ADAT's Governing Body it would seem is to fulfil statutory requirements (upward accountability to the Registrar of Societies, etc.). The Governing Body members with whom a discussion was conducted in the course of the evaluation affirmed that given the level of their confidence in the leadership of ADATS and the maturity of the people's organization, they were there largely as an expression of solidarity with the Coolies and ADATS' leadership. They did not see the need to play an active oversight, directional, or policy-making role. In the same vein, structured interaction between members of the Governing Body and the staff does not take place considering the informal nature of the organisation. Governing body members interact with them informally when they visit ADATS. Nevertheless, the Governing Body, it was affirmed would be fully available in times of crisis.

The Project Director pointed lots of interaction that takes place with members of the Governing Body on a more individual level outside of formal meetings and brings insights into the work of the organization. ADATS believes in Governance mechanism that looks beyond conventional thinking and is reflective of ADATS conceptual understanding wherein the domain of governance extends beyond the domain of the board, the board being only one element and no longer the primary 'home' of governance which also has a lot to go with leadership.

**1.2 Conflict of interest**

The following issues that maybe regarded as material interest are in terms of context of interest: Appointment of relatives to the board or in senior management positions, ownership or partial ownership in organisations that are engaged or may seek business or consultancies, payment of

fees and remuneration, directorship or management position in other NGOs, Providing consultancies in personal capacity, having commercial interest in any decision or resolution.

Ways to mitigate conflict of interests are Removal, Disclosure, Recusal, Third Party Evaluations, and Codes of Ethics that help to minimize problems with conflict of interests.

In ADATS the Project Director's brother is the Assistant Director. His brother's son is a member of the general body, is an employee and is also permitted to use domain knowledge derived from ADATS to run a private business, some products of which are sold to members of the voluntary sector and the Fair Climate Network promoted by ADATS. The Secretary is the wife of a member of a general body member who is also an employee of the FCN Tech Team.

ADATS has clearly disclosed these to overcome the conflict of interests if any. Nevertheless, it is recommended that ADATS develops and adopts a conflict of interest policy.

### **1.3 Staff**

As of 20 July 2011, ADATS had a total of 88 staff on its rolls the details of which are as follows of which 15 are located in central office based and as many as 73 are based in field offices. It is notable that 2 office bearers of the BCS Trust (President and Treasurer) and 5 Taluk Secretaries are paid by ADATS. With their inclusion, the total number of staff paid by ADATS stood at 95 in July 2011. Viewed against the total active membership of the Coolie Sangha of 11,639 in early 2011 the ratio of staff to members is about 130. The bulk of the field staff is from the operational villages or thereabouts except a few desk workers, the extension workers and the IT Instructor.

Most of ADATS's staff are recruited locally on the recommendation of an existing staff member or Coolie Sangha functionary. Many of the field staff belong to Coolie Sangha member families and have witnessed and lived the Sangha's struggles over the years. Persons wishing to work with the organization are invited to join on trial for anywhere between 1 to 3 months at the end of which both parties arrive at a mutual decision. The formal decision to appoint staff vests with the Project Director. The current staff has all received appointment letters. Appointment is contractual and for the duration of the project.

Salaries were last revised in 2008. Salaries paid to staff (the evaluation did not examine what is known as the "Tech Team" located in Bangalore) range between Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 15,000 per month. In ADATS's own words salary scales at ADATS are reasonable but not on par with 'market rates'. This is so because ADATS believes that "a parity has to be found between the personal and the political". The only scope for an improvement in salaries in ADAT is through periodic salary revision. Structured annual increments as part of a scale of pay for each staff designation does not exist at ADATS. This is so because ADATS salary policy does not take into account years of service in the organization.

The ADATS' staff costs as a percentage of the overall budget in the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2011 is less than 20% of the total budget, which is very reasonable. Perquisites include free modest accommodation, electricity and water, group medical insurance (Mediclaim) for staff and their immediate dependents, reimbursement of children's educational expenses at local schools and subsidized mess facilities for single staff who wish not to cook. These perks are said to be provided uniformly across all staff categories. ADATS also reimburses the house rent (to a ceiling of Rs. 250/- per month) of those who do not live on campus because they choose not to or

due to a shortage of accommodation. These perquisites are funded out of a ‘staff fund’ budget line in the budget funded by ICCO/EED. In addition to the above perks, perusal of expenditure booked to the staff fund includes contribution to marriage expenses, admission fees to educational centres, hostel fees, additional medical aid over and above coverage under Mediclaim, and the purchase of household appliances for field centres. As a policy, ADATS supports staff children through college, provided they get free and merit based seats. ADATS staff policy also includes the provision of payment of 15 days of salary for each completed year of service based on the last drawn salary for staff that decide to leave the organization; does not contribute towards a provident fund for staff. Despite its lower than market salary conditions, ADATS believes that it cares for its staff and refers to several examples when it has stepped in with unprecedented assistance beyond the normal call of an organisation.

Two issues of are of concern with regard to staff compensation in ADATS - the quantum of salary paid to staff and the absence of an annual salary increment to value length of service with the organization that need to be addressed. Inflation, particularly food inflation in India has touched unprecedented levels. An annual salary increment acknowledges this fact whilst it also values and incentivizes years of service to the organization. The evaluation is well aware that both these suggestions have financial implications and come against the backdrop of global recession and the shrinking availability of funds for the NGO sector. It is for ADATS to consider and strategise if and how it takes these suggestions on board.

#### **1.4 Human resource development**

Very few of the staff are academically qualified. More than 75% of staff are below graduation level including several who never went through formal education. They have learnt on the job. Since many of the field workers are from Coolie families they identify and gel well with their customers. This is a big advantage. Nevertheless, the Project Director admits to the fact that he does miss not having a few academically qualified staff at the Taluk level.

ADATS does not send its staff to training events conducted by other NGOs or agencies. Freshers learn from their seniors on the job. The meetings that take place, primarily the “Situation Meetings” every Monday, provides staff with the knowledge they need to have on the subjects covered by ADATS (current topics include climate change, NREGA, afforestation). The Project Director is the main tutor and ideologue. In hindsight, the Project Director admits that a more systematic approach to staff capacity building would have been more beneficial.

Despite these conditions, the table below points to a relatively stable staff situation more than 68 out of 95 staff have been working for more than 5 years at ADATS. Furthermore, the staff is well informed on the issues that the organization deals with – climate change and carbon credit markets, afforestation, biogas, the NREGA, electoral politics and land development for instance. At the skills level, almost everyone in the organization including field workers is comfortable using a computer and the in-house InfoNeeds system. This is a striking feature in ADATS.

ADATS is likely to require staff with specific expertise for future CDM projects. Such staff will come at a different price from present staff salaries to ADATS. Higher salaries to such staff could possibly lead to disgruntlement amongst a section of the staff, a decline in commitment and a decrease in organizational performance.

## 1.5 Management

ADATS describes itself as a lean organization with a flat structure. After the Governing Body, the Project Director and Assistant Project Director are at the top of the management structure. Both these positions are appointed by the Governing body and report directly to it. The powers of the society as per its rules and regulations vest in the President. In practice, these powers have been transferred to the Project Director. After these two positions, the organizational structure becomes quite flat. There is a central secretariat at Bagepalli that essentially maintains the accounts and computerized information database. Then, there is the field organization consisting of five field units, one in each of the five Taluks in which ADATS works. These units are self-contained and include office and accounting capacity through the position of a desk-worker, an extension worker, Mahila trainers and field workers. Despite the existence of job descriptions, field staff multi task, share responsibilities and work as tight knit teams (non hierarchical).

In 2002, compelled by concerns for sustainability and continued relevance, ADATS introduced a Results Oriented Management Culture (published on their website). In a gist, this approach is all about “objectively verifiable results and accountable performance”. It begins with the development of a Strategic Plan linking Vision, Mission (Goal), Purpose, Project Outputs and Activity Schedule based on planned inputs and processes, continuing on to the monitoring of performance against this plan and the establishment and practice of ‘enabling performance’ through leadership, process management, staff motivation and empowerment.

According to ADATS, process management overcomes the limitations of the Logical Framework Analysis in so much as it emphasizes the management of activity processes. Next steps include: recognizing and naming processes, making everyone in the organization aware of the processes and their importance, developing measuring systems, digitization, and earning to think of Coolie Sangha members as ‘clients’ and not ‘beneficiaries’.

**Leadership** in ADATS clearly vests with the Project Director. He is the organisation’s thinker and ideologue, strongman, chief informant, interpreter of the complexities of the outside world and connector to that world. By ADATS own admission, rhetoric has played a big role in overcoming the hostile socio-political environment within which the Coolie Sangha was forged and has grown. The Project Director it would seem has been the main strategist and protagonist in the application of ‘rhetoric’ as a tactic of the Coolie struggle against feudalism. Though ADATS acknowledges the limits of rhetoric, it does appear that the ADATS team including the office bearers and functionaries of the Coolie Sangha are casualties of this experience. Consequently, has strong leadership inherently produced a strong band of followers and not fellow thinkers? This question cannot be well answered by this evaluation (1 week is too short to unravel such complexities) and is left to ADATS to ponder.

**Work Culture:** ADATS has an interesting work culture. Field teams appear to work quite independently on a day-to-day basis. They seem to clearly know what they need and are expected to do and get on with their business with little to no interference or excessive direction from the Project Director or Assistant Director. These two leaders do not attempt to micro manage the field. Yet, they keep themselves closely informed of the field situation.

**Planning and monitoring:** ADATS has developed a 10-year strategic plan (2009-2019) through a long-drawn out, participatory and bottom-up exercise. It has also developed its monitoring methodologies through a robust process. Once a year ADATS conducts an Effects Monitoring

exercise based on which it produces an Effects Monitoring Report. It has developed 5 Goal indicators and 7 Purpose indicators to measure impact at the end of the current project phase. InfoNeeds, software specially tailored to ADATS information needs and analysis updates, has revolutionized the task of monitoring within ADATS. Unlike most organizations, information is truly available at the click of a computer button in ADATS.

**Learning and change:** The main formal point of working conversations is what is called the “Situation Meeting” that takes place every Monday morning in ADATS. ADATS staff and Coolie Sangha functionaries attend this meeting lead by the Project Director. It serves the purpose of stocktaking, information sharing, short-term agenda setting and so forth. It is said that this meeting also provides individuals and the organization the opportunity to acquire new information and knowledge, and identify changes that are occurring at various levels with the organization, the Coolie Sangha units and the world around and move toward embracing new practices or skills that could be beneficial to the organization.

### **1.6 Infrastructure**

Over the years, ADATS has built up reasonable infrastructure covering a relatively small and tightly packed central campus at Bagepalli town, and four field centres in each of the five Taluks where ADATS works. These campuses, consisting of modest office space, single bedroom flats for staff, rooms for bachelors, a mess, meeting spaces, etc. are intended to “provide moral and physical security and the sharing of common facilities”. Among other things, ADAT’s campus approach to living is said to be conducive to child rearing, welfare and development. Children are “not considered a burden” on these campuses; everyone keeps an eye on them. In addition, the central office at Bagepalli has 3 four-wheelers and each of the field offices has a four-wheeler with the exception of Chickballapur. A fleet of 40 two – wheelers spread across all five offices ensure the mobility of the field staff. Being a computer savvy organization (across all categories of staff), all offices are well provided with computers. In addition, the main office at Bagepalli has an IBM server, Thin Clients and a scanner. Funds permitting, ADATS could consider meeting the gaps in staff accommodation that are said to exist.

### **2. Bagepalli Coolie Sangha: Governance and other issues**

The Trust Deed of the BCS is fairly comprehensive and ensures both upwards and downwards accountability. The Board of Trustees meets as required and minutes of meetings are maintained. The President, Treasurer and other trustees work fulltime for the Trust but receive their remuneration from ADATS. Except for the fact that BCS and ADATS are two different legal bodies with different boards and assets, both organisations more or less work as one. It is hard to draw the boundaries between the two organisations outside of the exceptions mentioned in the sentence before. BCS shares a common purpose and agenda with ADATS and is guided by the same 10- year Strategic Plan, information and other systems as ADATS. ADATS maintains the books of accounts of the BCS. Since ADATS pays the remuneration of BCS functionaries, they are as much accountable to ADATS as they are to BCS. BCS is dependent on ADATS for its interface with the outside world. From all accounts, a serious difference of views and priorities has never occurred between the two organisations. So, the question is: is this good for the Coolie Sangha membership or not? From prevailing information, admittedly, the Coolie Sangha membership has benefited immensely from this dual organization policy and practice. In the future, the strength of the partnership is likely to depend on the strength of ADATS leadership and organization.



**SECTION - III**  
**FINANCIAL EVALUATION**  
**by Suresh Kumar Kejriwal**

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon our specific TOR we have assessed the current Financial Management System of ADATS/BCS and other relevant issues and our main conclusions based on our observations on each area of work as well as recommendations thereon can be summarized as follows :

1. Legal Framework :
  - 1.1. ADATS is registered as a society and has necessary registration both under Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act as well as under Income Tax Act, 1961.
  - 1.2. BCS is registered as a trust and also has registration both under Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act and Income Tax Act, 1961.
  - 1.3. Both the organisations are also filing annual returns as required under the acts. However there are some operational practices both in ADATS/BCS which require review in terms of operational requirements under the applicable acts and at the same time the organisations have to take certain immediate steps in view of the new FCRA, 2010.
2. Financial Framework :

The present financial framework of ADATS/BCS sufficiently complies with legal requirements and is also able to meet the information need of the various stakeholders though relevant changes are required to make the present system more useful, technically sound and relevant for the organisation.
3. Internal Control System :

We find the lack of documentation of process and approvals makes the internal control system in most of the key areas insufficient and therefore relevant changes are required to make the system more reliable.
4. Budgetary Control System :

The present budgetary control system practiced by the organisation is directed towards monitoring the unspent balance instead of monitoring the periodical expenses incurred with the corresponding periodical plan and therefore the budgetary control system practiced by the organization needs relevant changes.
5. Fixed Assets Management :

There is a complete accounting control over the fixed assets owned by the organisation and at the same time the organisation is maintaining fixed asset register in excel sheet. However relevant changes are required for bringing necessary improvement in the management of fixed assets.
6. Whole of the accounts of the organisation is subject to audit and the statutory auditor also issues management letter at the time of finalisation of audit.

7. Presentation of consolidated annual financial statement : The organisation is preparing the consolidated financial statement of the organisation as a whole but relevant changes are required so that the financial positions are correctly reflected and at the same time the consolidated financial statement can be useful for fund raising.

8 Financial position :

ADATS :

- 8.1. The total unrestricted fund with ADATS as on 31.03.2011 is Rs. 37.45 lacs and the major part of the organisation's fund is found to be invested in land & building and the bank & cash balance is only Rs. 11,462/-. Hence the organisation has practically no operational fund and at the same time ADATS has no source of regular unrestricted income in its hand.
- 8.2. Presently ADATS is totally dependent upon grants and we find that presently most of the funds comes from Consortium partners and therefore ADATS is mainly dependent upon the Consortium Fund for its ongoing program.
- 8.3. Moreover we find the dependency on funding core cost on Consortium fund is increasing on year to year basis.

In BCS :

- 8.4. BCS is holding a total amount of Rs. 176.7 million comprising of Sangha fund, CCF fund, Restricted Fund and Organisation's Own Fund.
- 8.5. There is no regular source of unrestricted income in the hands of BCS and most of the core cost of BCS are taken care of by ADATS as its program expenses under the approved budget head group 'Community Organisation' and therefore, BCS is totally dependent on ADATS for funding of its core costs.

9. Specific issues concerning Consortium Funded Program :

- 9.1. The original budget was initially approved for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2009 to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2012 i.e. for a period of three years and the total sanctioned amount was Euro 4,58,000. The project period was subsequently revised and has been extended upto 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2012.
- 9.2. Accounting & operational framework :
  - For Consortium Funded program the organisation is maintaining separate operational bank account and all the grants received through designated bank account is transferred to this operational bank account.
  - Separate set of books of account is maintained for Consortium funded program and therefore the opening balance, grant received, expenditures incurred and closing balance for the Consortium funded program are easily identifiable & ascertainable.
- 9.3. Verification of expenses with the supporting documents :

We have, on test basis, checked the expenditures reported under this program with the supporting documents and related records and we find the expenses are duly supported by verifiable supporting documents. Some specific observations, on our test checking, are summarized as under :

  - There are significant variances under certain heads of expenses.
  - In certain cases expenses have been booked under different accounting heads.

- Instances were also observed where expenses were booked on the basis of internal bill from ADATS/ BCS. However it has no impact on the amount of expenditures reported to have been incurred.

#### 10. Recommendations :

The evaluation has also made certain recommendations for bringing necessary changes on the issues observed during the course of evaluation and most of the key recommendations are also be agreed upon by the organisation. The key recommendations include :

##### 10.1. Legal Framework :

The organisation should review the present operational practices in terms of the operational requirements under the applicable laws including the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, 2010 and should take corrective actions wherever advised.

##### 10.2. Financial Framework :

- Necessary training should be organized for the staff working under the finance function on the financial management system, accounting concepts and other technical issues.
- A separate designated bank account maintained for receiving foreign fund should not be used for receiving local fund. A separate bank account should be opened for receiving local fund.
- ADATS should amend its bye-laws as regards operation of bank accounts or should have the bank operation in conformity with its bye-laws.

##### 10.3. Internal Control System :

- Documentation Process : The organisation should document each process i.e. withdrawal of cash from bank, system of making advances, purchasing after obtaining quotation so that the basis of each financial transactions can be verified at a later stage.
- Documentation of approval process : The organisation should document the approval system presently practiced and wherever possible expenses should be processed involving the person who has incurred the expense, the relevant Project Coordinator/location head, the accounts department and the Executive Head of the organisation.
- Mode of Payment : It is to be ensured that wherever possible the payment should be made by a/c payee cheques only.
- Reconciliation :  
Cash : Physical cash balance should be verified on day to day basis with the books of accounts and it should be authenticated periodically by the Assistant Project Director.  
Bank : Bank Reconciliation Statement should be prepared on regular intervals at least monthly.

##### 10.4. Budgetary Control System :

At the time of monitoring, the expenses incurred for a particular quarter should be compared with the budgeted cost allocated for that quarter, instead of comparing with the total budget.

##### 10.5. Management of Fixed Assets :

The process of verification of fixed assets should be documented and a report should be prepared summarizing therein the assets as per assets register and the

assets as per physical verification and this verification sheet should be authenticated by the team who have undertaken the physical verification of fixed assets.

10.6. Presentation of Consolidated Annual Financial Statement :

- Restricted fund, unrestricted fund, fixed asset fund and other funds should be disclosed separately.
- Significant accounting policies and related party transactions should be disclosed.