Vision for Child-Friendly Anandapuram Smart Mandal

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ABOUT THE SOCIETY FOR PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH IN ASIA (PRIA)

Established in 1982, PRIA is a global centre for participatory research and training, based in New Delhi. It has field offices in eight states and linkages with over 3,000 NGOs to deliver its programmes on the ground. PRIA's work is focused on the empowerment of the excluded through capacity building, knowledge building and policy advocacy. Over three decades, PRIA has promoted 'participation as empowerment', capacity building of community organisations, and people's participation in governance. Initiatives are undertaken in the overall perspective for '**making democracy work for all**' – in the political system, as well as in the very fabric of families, communities, and society at large. PRIA aims to bring about participatory democracy with active citizenship.

The mission of PRIA is to *build capacities of citizens, communities and institutions, to enable vibrant, gender-equal societies.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To achieve a vision for development, the vision and goals must be created, collectively and inclusively formulated, before being established. In the context of the 'Smart Village Smart Ward' programme in Andhra Pradesh, in line with the state's *Sunrise Vision, 2029,* PRIA has facilitated the creation of this document with support from UNICEF, to outline the people's vision of Anandapuram Mandal ('the Mandal'). This vision is the collectively refined vision of the communities and key stakeholders of the Mandal. The needs and goals of all stakeholders, especially of marginalised sections of the community, are the basis of this proposed vision of the Mandal. The envisioning process was aligned with the overall vision of the state (*Sunrise Vision, 2029*) and potential resource availabilities, as perceived by its rational stakeholders.

The context for the activities and development in Anandapuram is presented in this document, along with the demographic profile of the Mandal. The document also tries to draw resonating relationships between the state's vision and that emerging at the Mandal level. The document details out the methodology for creating this vision, which included a 'Mandal Visioning' exercise and extensive participatory research to identify community needs. Finally, this document outlines the vision for the Mandal based on a three-year period, as has emerged from its key stakeholders and communities. This vision will be useful for converging and informing future activities and projects in the Mandal. Through a shared understanding of where its residents want to see their Mandal in the long-term, key players can work together to achieve this vision and realise a high standard of living for all its community members.

INTRODUCTION

The Constitution of India, as per the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts, mandates *panchayats* and municipalities to prepare perspective and annual development plans. Even without such constitutional provisions, planning is essential for the functioning of *panchayats* as institutions of local governance. Planning should be attempted with a clear vision. Every country or state or local body needs a vision statement, which stirs collective imagination and motivates all segments of society to participate in their developmental activities. A good vision document is an essential step in building a political consensus on a broad development strategy, which encompasses, inter-alia, the roles and responsibilities of citizens and other stakeholders, including the government, media, academia, the market and civil society groups. The vision must be based on the objective assessment of facts and realistic appraisal of possibilities.

The vision represents a dream, which inspires action.

Anandpuram is a relatively backward Mandal in the Vizag district of Andhra Pradesh. PRIA has been supported by UNICEF and mandated by the State Government of Andhra Pradesh to promote citizen engagements and strengthen participatory processes so that the Mandal evolves as a smart Mandal. The State Government of Andhra Pradesh is committed to achieving a holistic, inclusive and sustainable development of the state. To achieve this goal, the State Government has embarked upon an ambitious initiative to make its 12, 918 *gram panchayats* and 3,465 wards 'Smart' under the 'Smart Village Smart Ward' (SVSW) programme. This envisioning of state development incorporates achieving high standard of living and human development index for all its citizens at every level. The Government aims to achieve this through participatory planning that emerges from the community itself, as a bottom up approach to planning processes.

Launched in January 2015, the SVSW programme encompasses sustainable and inclusive development of all sections of a local community, so they enjoy a high standard of living. To ensure this, the Government has developed 20 non-negotiable indicators that need to be achieved before attaining a 'Smart' status within a definite period. These 20 non-negotiable parameters, as outlined in **Table 2.2** below, have been developed under the broad themes of human development, social

development, economic development, environmental development, and good governance.

The SVSW initiative is aligned to the Swarn Andhra Vision, 2029, of the State Government of Andhra Pradesh. Accordingly, the Government envisions transforming the state into a 'Happy and Globally Competitive Society' with the objective of becoming one among the three most developed states in India by 2022, achieving the status of a developed state by 2029, and making Andhra Pradesh a leading global destination by 2050. To realise this long-term vision, the State Government has launched strategic initiatives and campaigns, such as the SVSW peogramme, in line with which the Mandal aspires to become a 'Smart Mandal'. According to the draft vision framework for the state, the *Sunrise Andhra Pradesh Vision, 2029*, this vision will be achieved through six interrelated areas of transformation – *Human Development, Inclusive Growth, Global Competitiveness, Knowledge Economy, Sustainability*, and *Governance.* Under these primary areas of transformation, the state has developed further development initiatives under the sub-segments of *Policies and Institutions, Strategies, Engines*, and *Basic Services* that together make up two major programmes – (I.) the Inclusive Governance Programme, and (II.) the Globally Competitive Economy Programme. This vision for Andhra Pradesh understands that to achieve economic growth in the state, human development and inclusive growth are key to address inequalities and poverty, before creating a holist and sustainable state for all.

1. Initiative to Support Evolution of Anandapuram as Smart Mandal

Facilitating the process of transition of the Mandal into a 'Smart' Mandal, the state strives to ensure that every village in the Mandal has access to 20 non-negotiable development indicators, as defined in the SVSW initiative of the State Government. Most of these development indicators comprise core sector (education, health, livelihood, equality, *et al.*) development initiatives at *gram panchayat* and/or mandal/district levels. Some of the indicators (out of these 20 development indicators) require advance infrastructure and skill development, such as access to high speed internet and industries, requiring macro investments by State and Union Governments. That is a very large part of the 'Smart' dream that could be realised by institutions of the Panchayat Raj, which are mandated to act as local self-government units promoting local economic development and social justice.

That implies that people in villages and *panchayats* of the Mandal should co-dream and co-act to collectively achieve the targeted development indicators within a mutually agreed peiord. The annual development plan preparation is one of the significant opportunities for people to collectively think and act for the development of their *panchayats*; but it is important for every planning exercise to have a long-term as well as short-term visions. Making a *gram panchayat* smart is linked to the creation of a 'Smart Mandal'. Thus, the process should begin with the collective envisioning of Mandal development. Accordingly, all *panchayats* could align their envisioning process to it.

This document is a description of such a Mandal envisioning process. It reflects the collective aspirations of *panchayat* leaders, civil society members, children, students, the market, and Government officials. As per its preparation process, however, this document accords more weightage to the voices of *panchayat* leaders and of the people in the *panchayats*. Wherever possible, due regard has been given to inputs and suggestions from other stakeholders as well, but primary focus has remained on the collective dreams of the people of the *panchayats*.

As per standard definitions of a vision document, it should provide the description of the possible future development of the subject in question, in this case the Anandpuram Mandal, considering the felt need and current status of the Mandal. The vision document should also reflect the collective vision of all key stakeholders in the Mandal. Accodingly, the present document contains an outline of the envisioned core requirements. It is not a detailed project plan, but it is also not a mere political statement. The document presents data based on benchmark statements, which provide the basis for realistic development planning. It is a collective output grounded on data-based debate, discussions and the mutual agreement among majority of the stakeholders. It communicates the fundamental 'why' and 'what' for the initiative and is a standard benchmark against which all future decisions should be validated.

PRIA, in collaboration with UNICEF and the State Government of Andhra Pradesh, is facilitating a participatory process of envisioning and planning a child-friendly, 'Smart Mandal'. The objectives behind such process are to:

(i) Evolve a common understanding about non-negotiable development indicators (as stipulated by the SVSW initiative of the State Government of Andhra Pradesh)

(ii) Appreciate the need to achieve these parameters by collective actions

(iii) Encourage *panchayats* to take leadership of collective thinking, collective planning and collective actions for achieving a 'Smart' development status

(iv) Support *gram panchayats* and *gram sabhas* in undertaking realistic participatory development planning, as mandated by Art 243 G of the Constitution of India, and as guided by the recent Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) initiative of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India, and the State Government of Andhra Pradesh

(v) Support *panchayats* and the people in implementing their annual development plan, as prepared above.

The Anandapuram Mandal has been chosen as a pilot Mandal for 'Supporting the Building of a Child-Friendly Mandal' to act as a learning lab for other Mandals to follow. In this way, other Mandals can take up similar processes and learn from Anandapuram. This initiative acts as a means to converge the efforts and resources in the Anandapuram Mandal, while engaging communities to prioritise areas of need and create a platform for citizens to be involved in the SVSW initiative. During this intensive engagement with partners and community leaders, emphasishas been given to facilitate participatory processes for co-planning and collaborative actions to make the Mandal 'Smart' and child-friendly.

As part of the project, this vision document has been created through active participation by key stakeholders and the community of the Anandapuram Mandal. The document intends to bring out the collective vision and realistic goals for the entire Mandal in a participatory manner. This document will be useful for groups and individuals at all levels for an overarching vision that all activities in Anandapuram can strive towards. Through a common understanding of what the stakeholders/communities want the Mandal to achieve in three years, both those living in the Mandal well as its key supporters can understand what activities and steps need to be undertaken.

To be effective, most vision statements need a time frame for achieving the overarching vision. However, in consultation with communities and other stakeholders of the Mandal, it was agreed that the current document should be short-term vision of three years. In some senses, as some members in the communities commented, this also reflects a sense of disappointment with erstwhile long-term plans and development visions of the Government that failed to take off.

2. Current Status of Anandapuram Mandal

The sub-district of the Anandapuram Mandal, located in the Vizag district of Andhra Pradesh, is spread over 205.32 sq. km. There are 26 *gram panchayats* (GPs), 32 revenue villages with 108 hamlets in the Mandal. Among them, Anandapuram Village is the most populous, with a population of 7,707; and Tangudubilli Village is the least populous with a population of 295. The Mandal is located 23 km from the city of Vizag.

According to Census 2011 and data shared by the Mandal development office, the Mandal is home to about 60,819 people, among them about 30,576 (50.27%) are male and about 30,243 (49.73%) are female. Eighty-nine per cent of the whole population are from the general caste category, 9% are from scheduled castes and 2% from scheduled tribes. Children (aged under six years) make up 4,623 (8%) of the population, of whom 2,398 are male (52%) and 2,225 are female (48%).

There are 14,035 households, 85 schools, 70 *Anganwadis*, and 23 hostels for 2,393 children. The Mandal accounts for 100% institutional deliveries, 100% enrolment in schools, a zero infant mortality rate (IMR) and maternal mortality rate (MMR). There are 1,125 women self-help groups (SHP) with 13,834 members. The literacy rate of the Mandal is 48.52, with 29,497 literate members, which is significantly lower than the state average of 67.41 (**Table 2.1**).

Table 2.1: Demographic Details

Name of the Mandal	**Anandapuram**	Number of GPs	26
Number of Revenue Villages	32	Number of Hamlets	108
Name of the Constituency	Bheemili		
Name of Zilla Parishat	Visakhapatnam		
Total Population	60819	**Total Households**	**14,035**
Male	30576	**Total Ration cards issued**	17,878
Female	30243	BPL Ration cards	16,854
Male Children 0-6 years	2398	Annapurna Ration Cards	23
Female Children 0-6 years	2225	Antyodhaya Annayojana	1,001

		Cards	
Senior Citizen Population	2354	SC Population	4,651
Differently Abled Population	814	ST Population	1,714
Birth Rate	15.2%	Maternal Mortality Rate	1.04 per lakh
Death Rate	5.1%	Number of Malnourished Children	1,138
Infant Mortality Rate	12.3 per thousand	Average Literacy Rate	48.52%

2.1   Economic Resources

The Mandal has a total of 10,105 hectares under agriculture. Out of this total area, the net irrigated land is approximately 2,749 hectares. The households of the Mandal have almost 36,000 animals as rural livestock, which accounts for a major profession among the local community of Anandapuram. The livestock consists of sheep, hens, goats, cows and buffalo. There are also marginal small scale industries like steel products, plywood, fabric units, seafood processing and aqua seeds processing units.

Table 2.2: Current status on 20 non-negotiable indicators of Anandapuram Mandal

S.No	Non-negotiable Indicators	Current Status of Mandal
1	Homes for all – with access to toilet, safe drinking water and regular power	An average of 100 houses needed for each GP. About 65% of households constructed ISLs. Out of 65% of ISLs constructed 70% are not used due to lack of awareness Mandal has 80% drinking water supply; supplying water to houses located on hills is challenging Regular power supply is provided across the Mandal
2	Every household has diversified livelihood opportunities and/or micro-enterprise	MGNRGES is providing work for 100 days. The state government is planning to increase it to 150 days Mandal provides livelihood option in flower and vegetable farming Demand for daily labour from nearby industries Driving trucks and assisting drivers is another professional area
3	SHGs and youths have access to skill development	There are 1,139 functional SHGs with 14,012 women members in the Mandal

	and Village Enterprise Development with bank and market linkages	Skill development programmes provided to youth at district headquarters
4	End defecation in the open	So far three GPs – Boni, Vemulavalasa and Peddipalem – have reached ODF status, next year 6 more GPs targeted as ODF. Huge campaign required for ODF status; 65% toilets have been constructed so far in the Mandal
5	Has functional solid/liquid waste management system	No solid/liquid waste management plant currently available; needs to be established
6	End all preventable maternal and infant deaths	1.04% maternal mortality rate and 12.3% infant mortality rate
7	100% institutional deliveries	100% institutional deliveries
8	Zero school drop outs among boys and girls up to 12th standard	Zero school drop outs till standard 10. About 30% drop outs are noted in 11th & 12th standards. Accurate data not available as students go to private institutions. School teachers and officials mention that child marriages take place after 10th standard
9	Functional toilet, potable water, electricity available in Anganwadi Centres (AWCs), schools, health centres, GP/ward buildings	In terms of community buildings, 70% of AWCs do not have toilet and water facilities, the newly constructing AWC buildings have basic facilities. It was found that only about 40% of AWCs and 100% *gram panchayat* buildings had water facilities in the Mandal. None of the health sub-centers have water, toilet or electricity facilities
10	Malnutrition free (children below 9 years)	There are a total of 1,138 malnourished children in the Mandal, accounting for 25% of the children below 6 years Condition of AWCs is pathetic; most function in rented buildings without basic amenities
11	No girl-child marriages (girls below 18 years)	Unofficially child marriages still take place, especially between the ages of 16 and 18 across the Mandal. Data unavailable
12	Every farm has soil health card, enriched essential micro-nutrients and diversification with livestock and trees	Soil health cards provided across the Mandal
13	Every village household has a functional bank account/ PM	Yes, every household has a bank account. Recently all pensions and all scheme benefits were transferred to accounts

	Jan Dhan Bank Account	of beneficieries. Villages started practicing cashless transactions
14	Every GP/ward has its own dynamic development plan prepared by community participation	The level of community participation is very poor across the Mandal. Only 50% of *gram sabhas* were successful
15	Every GP/ward has green trees all over its geographic boundaries	Mandal has green foliage and trees along its streets and roads
16	Every GP/ward has functional water conservation and harvesting structures	Yes Soak pits and farm ponds are available in every GP 289 farm ponds and 2,478 soak pits available in the Mandal
17	17. Every GP/ward has functional Information Center, computer lab, and Mee-Seva Centre	Total of 9 centers established for 26 GPs at: Sontyam, Gandigundam, Tarluvada, Gambheeram, Sirlapalem, Vemulvalasa (2 units), LV Palem and Vellanki
18	18. Every GP/ward has telecom/internet connectivity	Only 4 GPs have connectivity: Vellanki, Vemulavalasa, Anandapuram and Sontyam
19	19. *Gram sabha*/ward *sabha* are held four times a year with minimum two-thirds attendance	4 *gram sabhas* are conducted every year in every GP
20	20. Every GP/ward has a functional grievance redressal system	Yes, VROs and secretaries are the focal points. Unofficial complaints are handled by the people's representatives

3. Process of Envisioning the Development of Anandapuram Mandal

The methodology used to create this collective vision was participatory and centred around those who best know the realities of the Mandal. They include community members and local leaders, local government officials, local civil society organisations, local academic institutions and the local market. Such a methodology emphasises the informed participation of local stakeholders. Ensuring participation stimulates and encourages the community to take ownership of the process and its product. Hence, it was expected that with informed participation of communities, a collective development vision will emerge. Moreover, this participatory vision will become the shared vision of the community with collective ownership. Though the

envisioning exercise was part of a larger project, the process could be disaggregated into the following five major steps, as discussed in the sub-sections below.

3.1 Environment Building

As part of the overall objective of promoting community participation for co-thinking, co-planning and co-action to achieve desired development goals, it is important that an enabling environment is created for the same in the community. As a first step to create an enabling environment, the project was launched jointly by UNICEF, PRIA and the State Government of Andhra Pradesh in a district level workshop. The project objectives and overall approaches were elaborated to seek suggestions and comments from local communities for improving project strategies. The district administration, led by the district collector, as well as the community, led by *panchayat* leaders, made public commitments to co-operate and support the process. With these commitments, the workshop provided larger legitimacy and positive enthusiasm among all stakeholders.

Following the workshop, key stakeholders were contacted and their support sought in mobilising local communities for their participation at different stages of the project. These active engagements of *sarpanches* and *panchayat* secretaries were very helpful in building an enabling environment.

3.2 Data Base Building and Analysis

For any development vision to be realistic, it is important that data on the actual status of community development and its resources (both available and possible) become known in advance. For a realistic vision, the required data was collected, compiled and analysed. The details of this data and their analysis are given in **Annexure 1**.

3.3 Orientation Programmes

The elected leaders of *gram panchayats* and local community-based organisations were invited to participate in various orientation programmes to build their perspectives about the project. The project methodologies were shared with them to

build their capacities for supporting community processes at the local level. Such orientation programmes not only helped the participants in improving their methodological capacities, but it also helped others to appreciate the seriousness and importance of the initiative. All these also added to environment building as well as to data analysis.

3.4   Group Discussions

The entire population of Anadapuram is divided into a number of socio-economic and political strata. Hence, different groups may not be initially comfortable in sharing their concerns and suggestions in the presence of others. Thus, to facilitate sharing from all community strata, small group discussions were separately organised. Such groups included those

Focus group discussion on women issues at Boni Gram Panchyat

of children, women, NGOs, youth, senior citizens, SCs and other such homogenous categories. Their concerns and suggestions for the development of their villages and of the Mandal were recorded to ensure that their voices are included during the collective envisioning process.

3.5   Collective Visioning: Multi-stakeholders

The collective envisioning workshop for the Mandal was held on 16th November 2016 at the MPDP office of the Mandal. A time frame of three years was mutually set for this envisioning exercise, which targeted the development of the 'Anandapuram Mandal 2020'. About 50 key stakeholders participated in the process. They included elected representatives, *panchayat* officials, Mandal officials, and the stakeholders from civil society organisations to collectively work towards creating a shared vision.

Event: Envisioning 2020;Anandapuram Mandal on *16-11-2016*

The workshop began with the reminder of the governmental goal of achieving 20 development indicators. These indicators fall under broad sectors of water and sanitation, education, livelihood, health, agriculture and forest, and social development. Subsequently, the general findings of the base line data were shared. It was pointed out that as per data analysis and group discussions, **water and sanitation** *were one of the most important development desires of the community*.

The envisioning process was explained to the participants in the form of a question, "Where do you see Anandapuram in the next three years in the light of emerging needs, challenges and opportunities, as reflected in the findings of base line data analysis?" Before responding to these questions, some elected members wanted to discuss their current challenges, though not directly related to the question asked. Those changes, however, were important for *panchayat* leaders to participate wholeheartedly in the process.

It was, therefore, decided that to ensure full participation, it was important that the questions raised by the elected *panchayat* representatives be discussed with a larger audience. One of the most discussed concern was related to timely availability of funds. Cordial and data-based discussions on the question helped *panchayat* members feel assured and included in the process.

It is, therefore, important that apprehensions, aspirations and mutual suspicion of stakeholders must be addressed/facilitated carefully so that everyone participates in the process collectively. Once the actual discussion on the envisioning process started, the voices were motivated and moderated following participatory approaches and actual data on demands and supplies. Showing of realistic mirror (facts and figures on local development needs and locally available resources) at different stages of expressions of the articicants' aspirations for Mandal development was very helpful in arresting such multi-stakeholder discussions from going off track. To do that, each of the 20 development indicators were taken up one by one for identification and agreement of collective minds. Finally, possible resource-based prioritisation by the participants resulted in a concrete development vision of the *Anandapuram Mandal Development Vision, 2020*.

4. Anandpauram Participatory Mandal Vision 2020

The vision for Anandapuram Mandal in three years includes a healthy, inclusive and sustainable Mandal, where every adult and child enjoys a high standard of living. This includes sanitation for all in terms of becoming open defecation free with proper solid and liquid waste management. Moreover, there will be sufficient access and availability to good quality water for everyone. Cement concrete roads will be laid out fully and all roads will be in good condition, which will include proper drainage systems in the Mandal. Furthermore, there will be improved transportation for increasing connectivity within as well as outside the Mandal. Every school will have

all necessary infrastructure, including compound walls and playgrounds with sufficient classrooms. The government schools will have high enrolment and zero dropouts for both girls and boys. There will be a PHC Centre with 30 hospital beds and each sub-centre will be in good condition with quality care. In other words, quality healthcare will be accessible to every resident of the Mandal. AWCs will be sufficient in numbers, providing quality care, with proper infrastructure and facilities. In addition, girls and women will be safe from sexual harassment as well as from child marriages. There will be homes for all, and everyone will have access to every necessary civic infrastructure, such as electricity and water connections in their homes. Livelihood options will be sustainable, diverse and plentiful with opportunities for skill development. Overall, Mandal community members will live a holistic and enjoyable life with their basic needs met and opportunities for furthering their education and careers. High quality of life for every child and adult will result in an engaged, motivated and healthy citizenry living in a 'Smart' as well as a 'Child Friendly' Anandapuram Mandal.

School students activily invoved in a discussion on their village mapping.

Discussions with participants during the Mandal envisioning exercise threw up a list of what they saw the Mandal would have within a period of three years. The list is as follows:

A. Regular & Safe Drinking Water Supply

1. A water reservoir for the entire Mandal at Jagammagadda in Kusuluvada Gram Panchayat

2. RO water plants to ensure safe drinking water

B. Complete Sanitation

1. Each household needs toilets

2. Required funds for entire Mandal to be allocated to each GP for sanitation facilities. Funds will be used for salaries of frontline sanitation workers, cleaning materials, transport for collection and dumping of garbage

3. Cattle sheds in all villages (preferably outside village premises) to ensure sanitation is maintained on all village roads

4. Facilities at burial grounds with water, a shade and a road leading to it

C. All Weather Road Connectivity and Public Transport System

1. Extension of BT roads across the Mandal

2. Need for urgent road transportation facility to connect all GPs and Mandal to Vizag

D. Green Anandpuram

1. Tree guards and water supply for all plantation activities undertaken across the Mandal

E. Better Non-Agricultural Livelihood Options

1. More livelihood options, including some degree of industrialisation and appropriate skills training

F. Recreational Facilities for Children and Adults

1. Compound wall and playground for all schools

2. Library for each GP

3. Community play grounds

Once the above list was prepared, the facilitator reminded participants about data-based felt needs (as reflected in base line data analysis) and all available/ potential resources of the *panchayats*. In the light of the limitation of available financial and

human resources, participants were encouraged to collectively prioritise their above collective list. Finally, the following prioritised list was agreed upon for the development of the Mandal during 2017-20:

1. Sanitation for the Mandal with focus on the maintenance of overall sanitation, and attaining an 'open defecation free' status, maintenance of sanitation workers (human resources and salaries) and dumping yard for all *panchayats**

2. A reservoir in the Mandal to access safe drinking water and an increase in the ground water level

3. Cement concrete roads and drainage across all *gram panchayats* in the Mandal
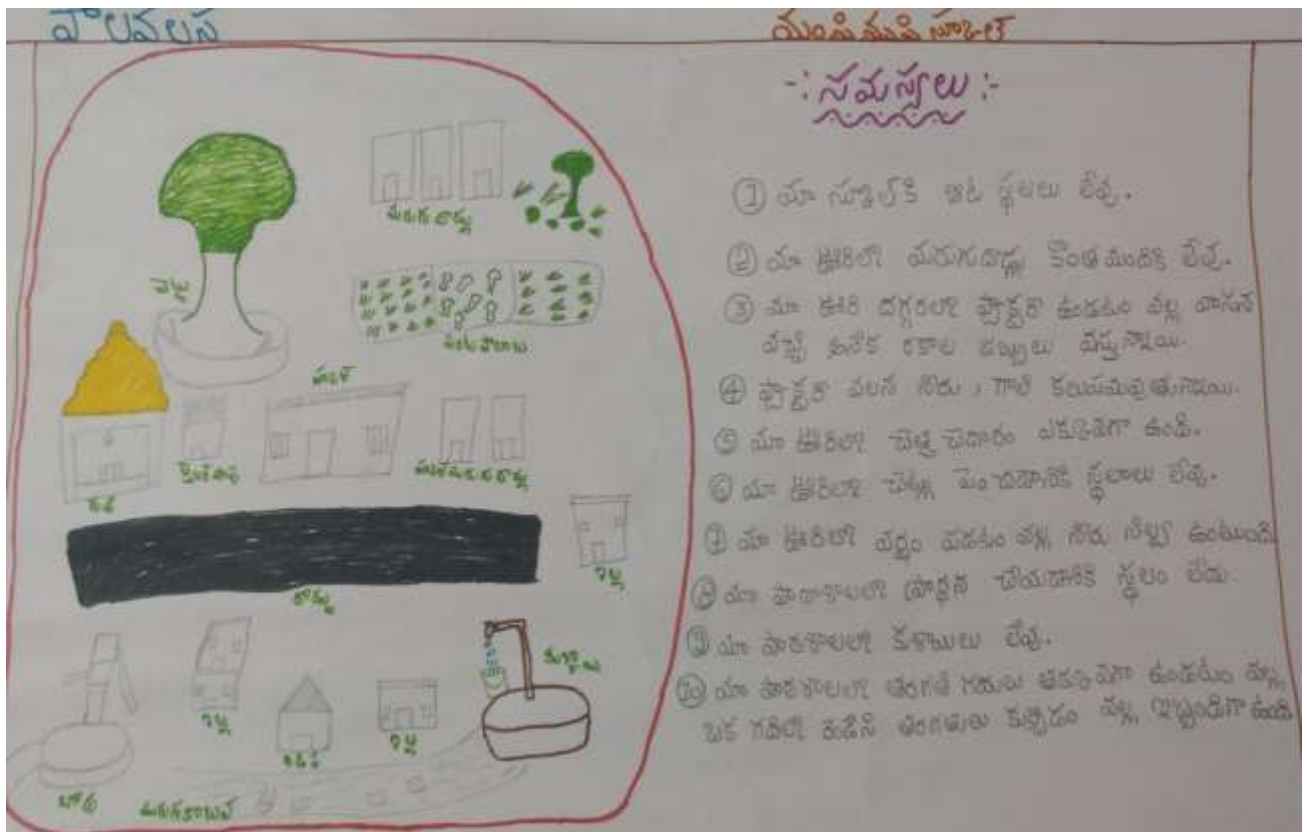

Note*: *The Mandal envisioning exercise emphasised upon sanitation in terms of both open defecation/toilets and general waste management and water accessibility with quality of water. The public transport system was another concern. People demanded cement/ concrete roads and an efficient public transport system.*

ANNEXURE 1: BASELINE DATA ASSESSMENT

A baseline data assessment was generated for the Mandal to assess and understand the process as well as the outcomes of 'Building a Child-Friendly Smart Anandapuram Mandal'. This provides a reference point for future processes to improve the Mandal. In this way, the baseline assessment collected secondary data from Mandal officials to compile and analyse. This included information such as infrastructure, number of malnourished children, buildings available, livelihoods, and much more. This secondary analysis was combined with the primary, qualitative data collection, compilation, and analysis. This primary data was collected through a participatory approach. This qualitative data collection involved observing indicators in terms of quality of service provided, availability of infrastructure, and self-identified areas of need in communities. This also involved community members prioritising the areas that need most attention. The participatory methods used in the exercise were focus group discussions, transect walks, community mapping, and interviews with key community members.

Community mapping mapping excersice done by school children from Palavalasa, Anandapuram.

BASELINE DATA ASSESSMENT: ANALYSIS

Using the combined secondary and primary data, a holistic understanding of the baseline and areas of need in the Mandal emerged. A profile was generated for each of the 26 *gram panchayats* and the top prioritised area in each *gram panchayat* were clubbed to understand the top areas of need identified in the Mandal as a whole. Analysis involved grouping together themed areas of need as well as analysing the differences between *gram panchayats*. For instance how many *gram panchayats* were identifying similar issues as a commonality across the Mandal and which were identifying issues unique to their context. This also allowed for learnings from some *gram panchayats* about best or worst practices for other *gram panchayats* in the same Mandal. Based upon the 20 indicators outlined earlier in this document (**Table 2.2**) for 'Smart' development, major themes at the Mandal level are water, sanitation, health, education, livelihood, agriculture and forest, and social development. These Mandal level findings are key for realising the vision of the Mandal.

Briefing on field-level findings for District and Mandal officials as well as the people's representatives.

Water

Access to good quality water is essential for a Mandal to become 'Smart' as well as for the health and development of all community members. In particular, lack of good quality water can cause sickness and disease, especially among children. There are a total of 990 drinking water hand pumps in the Mandal; and on an average, each

Mandal has 40 hand pumps. All schools in the Mandal have safe drinking water facilities within the school premises, which is a positive factor for all students. The Mandal has 42 tanks in the 13 *gram panchayats* for which the data is available. In the 16 *gram panchayats* of which the data is available, only 4% of households have drinking water connections in their house, this is a very low figure. An estimated 65% of the Mandal had access to water, because of not enough taps and hand pumps, creating the risk of unsafe drinking water and inaccessible sources for quality water. From primary data collection with community members it emerged that an aspect of water was identified as a priority area of need in the eight *gram panchayats* of Mutcherla, Pekeru, Vellanki, Gandigundam, Mukundapuram, Gidijala, Pandalapaka, and LV Palem.

Thirty per cent of the Mandal has prioritised water issues in their top three areas of need. Out of these, issues of lack of individual household taps and water connections was an identified prioritised need in Mutcherla, Pekeru, Vellanki, Mukundapuram and LV Palem. In terms of quality of water, the *gram panchayats* of Mutcherla (both access and quality), Gandigundam, Gidijala, and Pandalapaka identified prioritised issues with the poor quality of drinking water available. Household connections of water are described by local officials as being difficult to achieve due to water capacity of the water tanks, therefore, this may need to be implemented along with increased number of water tanks. As a Mandal, about 30% of the *gram panchayats* prioritised water as their top area of need, while the remaining 70% did not. By addressing the issues of both access and quality in 30% of the Mandal, 100% saturation can be met.

Women from Boni Gram Pnchayat taking water..

Open Defecation

Open defecation is linked to many health and sanitation issues. Open defecation in Anandapuram Mandal is practiced in every *gram panchayat* except for Boni, Peddipalem, and Vemulavasa, which have been declared 'Open Defecation Free'. From the secondary data available on 22 *gram panchayats* in the Mandal, about 45.5% of the toilets were constructed under the Swaccha Bharat mission across the Mandal. There is great variation among the *gram panchayats* since some *gram panchayats* such as Boni, Vemulavasa, Ghambheeram and Kanaman indicate constructing either 100% or very close and other *gram panchayats* such as Mukundapuram (0.02%), Mutcherla (10%), and Sontyam (11%) indicate very low numbers. In the Mandal, it was found that many community members identified open defecation practices and lack of toilets as being an issue. In 12 out of the 26 *gram panchayats* open defecation and toilets was identified as the first area of priority (BD Palem, BP Kallalu, Kusulawada, Mutcherla, Sontyam, Vellanki, Anandapuram, Gidijala, Gambheeram, LV Palem, Thurlavada, and Gottipalli) and an additional five identified open defecation and toilets in their top three areas of prioritisation (Chandaka, Pekeru, Gandigundam, Pandalapaka, Kanaman). Although schools had toilets, which was a positive factor, the only AWC with a toilet was in the hamlet of Peddipalem—no other AWCs had toilets, which is a major problem for children, pregnant women, and other users of the centre. Children and high school students identified a need for additional toilets as well as awareness in the Mandal to address the issue of open defecation.

Liquid and Solid Waste Management

Community members identified both liquid and solid waste management as being areas of need in the Mandal. Improper liquid waste management was identified by 90% of the Mandal as being a major cause of sanitation and health issues. The average amount of drainage in a *gram panchayat* in the Mandal is 15 km. Nineteen *gram panchayats* identified drainage as being one of the top priorities (BD Palem, BP Kallalu, Chandaka, Kusulawada, Peddipalem, Pekeru, Sontyam, Anandapura, Gandigundam, Mamadilova, Mukundapuram, Gidijala, Gambheeram, Ramavarum, Pandalapaka, Kanaman, Palvalasa, Thurlavada and Gottipalli). Out of these 18, nine placed drainage (sometimes along with open defecation and/or roads) as being their topmost prioritised area of need (Chandaka, Peddipalem, Anandapuram, Mamdilova, Mukundapuram, Gidijala, Gambheeram, Pandalapaka, and Palavalasa). An important aspect of liquid waste management is the interconnected issues of concrete cement roads and drainage. This is found across the Mandal, because wherever cement concrete roads are needed in hamlets, drainage is also needed alongside the cement concrete roads. In nine *gram panchayats* the issue of drainage was mentioned as being interconnected with the issue of cement concrete roads (BD Palem, Peddipalem, Sontyam, Mamadilova, Mukundapuram, Gidijala, Ramavarum, Pandalapaka, and Kanaman). Interconnected with liquid waste management, solid waste management has also been identified as an area of need in 75-80% the Mandal. In many *gram panchayats* the community identified a lack of dustbins, lack of dump yards, functional collections, and awareness around solid waste management, leading to unsanitary conditions in the Mandal. General sanitation was identified among the top three areas of priority in the *gram panchayats* of Kanaman, LV Palem (specifically dustbins), Palavalasa (specifically in the Eguvapalavalasa

hamlet) and Gottipalli.

When the sites were visited, it was observed that garbage and other waste such as cattle dung were commonly littered on the roads of about 75% of the hamlets—within these hamlets, about 35-45% of the grounds were littered with waste and/or dung. Additionally, solid waste is often disposed off into the drainage system, which causes stagnation of the liquid waste. High school children as well as younger children in the Mandal identified sanitation issues as being linked to liquid and solid waste as needing to be addressed by the Mandal. Children made the connections between lack of proper liquid and solid waste management and health issues. Youth and children want to see this changed for the Mandal to become a healthy and safe environment for them to grow and develop in.

Health

The key areas of concern regarding health in the Mandal were maternal/child health linked to AWCs and access to health services.

Positively, the maternal mortality rate and infant mortality rate are both zero, with 100% institutional deliveries across the Mandal. A main concern regarding children's health is malnourishment. Secondary data on children in the Mandal indicates that there are a total of 4,623 children between the ages of 0-6 years in the Mandal, with 2,398 boys and 2,225 girls. It is reported that there are 1,109 malnourished children in the Mandal, indicating that 24% of the children between the ages 0-6 years are malnourished. This is a fairly high statistic and indicates that more nutrition is needed for children as well as education and awareness through resources such as local AWCs to support mothers in ensuring proper nutrition.

Secondary data indicates that there are a total of 70 AWCs in the Mandal, and on an average each *gram panchayat* has 2-3 AWCs. About 48% of them function out of rented space, 24% from own buildings and some function from schools, while others lack any buildings altogether. About 75% of the *gram panchayats* either reported issues with the existing AWCs or the lack of AWCs in their villages. Some of these infrastructure issues involved leakages in roofs and walls, missing plaster, and damaged or non-maintained buildings. Another issue in some hamlets was the lack of any AWC nearby and the nearest centres being too far for parents to take their children to; and therefore, additional AWCs are needed. Based upon primary and secondary data, there is a need for more investment in Anganwadi infrastructure and facilities as well as increased food quality and resources for mothers and young children.

Community members identified access to healthcare services as an area of need in the Mandal. There are currently 10 sub-centres and one PHC in the Mandal and about 50-60% of community members described travelling long, challenging distances to gain access to health services. Many of the more isolated hamlets, for instance the hamlets outside the main village of Kusulawada, expressed concerns because the ANMs do not come regularly due to the lack of connectivity in terms of transportation, distances and roads.

Education

Education is a key aspect for the development of a 'smart' and 'child-friendly' Mandal for children as well as adults, which will help raise the standard of living for all in the long-term. The main findings of the data analysis indicate the main areas of need to be school infrastructure, transportation, school dropout percentage, and lesser strength of government schools.

The Mandal has a total of 83 schools across 26 *gram panchayats*. On an average, each Mandal has 3-4 schools; but in absolute terms, some *gram panchayats* have five schools and some have only one school depending on the population or other facilities. Under the Sakshara Bharat Programme, which aims to achieve an 80% adult literacy rate, the Mandal has 5,983 non-literate adults enrolled under the scheme, based on the data available. On an average, every *gram panchayat* has 373 non-literate adults enrolled in the programme. There are a total of 6,643 students enrolled in the 26 *gram panchayats* of the Mandal. Of these, 46% of the students are boys and the remaining 54% are girls.

In terms of school infrastructure, many schools face issues of lack of proper infrastructure as well as deterioration of their existing infrastructure. Compound walls were described by children and teachers as being needed for safety and for keeping school grounds clean. Only about 15% of schools have compound walls, while the remaining 85% do not. Positively, almost all schools have toilets and available water, although many schools lacking proper electricity connections and need necessary furniture such as desks and chairs. School building infrastructure in terms of leaking walls and roofs is also an issue in some schools, such as Anandapura, BP Kallalu, Vellanki (leaking in MPP Vellanki 2), BD Palem, Chandaka, and Gidijala (not Dibbadipalem). The need for additional classrooms was identified in Anandapuram, Ramavaram High School, Pandalapaka, Gidijala (ZPH school), Mutcherla (main

village school needs two more classrooms), as many students are crowded into small classroom spaces.

Transportation is an issue across the Mandal in terms of lack of mass public transport (bus services) as well as the quality of roads. This was identified specifically as a need in about 75% of the *gram panchayats*. High school student emphasised transportation as a major barrier for travelling between their high school and their hamlets. This was identified as a reason for some students dropping out. Apart from the daily wastage of time and energy in reaching distant schools, it also pointed towards safety issues for girls travelling long distances between their homes and their schools.

The lesser strength of government schools is another issue at the Mandal level. About 60% of the children in the Mandal attend private schools, which weakens public schools. In addition, many of the children miss out on holistic aspects of Government schools such as health check-ups from ANMs. The decreased enrolment in government schools is a major problem.

Most of the school dropouts in the Mandal happen to be girls. Very few girls study beyond the 10th standard. This is an issue in Anandapuram, Vellanki, Mamdilova, Gandigundam and Sontyam. The reasons given were primarily those involving the inability to afford school fees, child marriage and transportation. In Mutcherla, only 10% of girls continue after the 10th standard, particularly because of transportation issues.

School students from Palavalasa Gram Pannchayat took part in community mapping excersice

Livelihoods

Livelihood is key for having access to the basic necessities and an enjoyable standard of living. The main livelihood areas of need in the Mandal involve Self-Help Groups (SHGs), additional livelihood options, and additional skill development opportunities. The main sources of income in the Mandal are daily wage labour and agricultural work. Many people in the Mandal also rely on other income sources, such as pensions. The Mandal has 1,125 SHGs, with 13,834 members, which is almost 23% of the population of Anandapuram. There has been a record of 1,428 linkages of SHGs with one or more types of finance—0% bank linkage, Shree Nidhi linkage, scholarships or any other linkages. There are a total of 5,859 residents availing pensions in the Mandal from OAP, widow, PHC, toddy tappers, weavers, and Abhayastam categories. This means that approximately 10% of the population avails pension facilities. Under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, there is a total of 9,948 job card holders in the Mandal. An estimated 90% of the population in the Mandal aspiring for job cards have been given job cards, yet in the Anandapuram Gram Panchayat, a need for additional job cards was voiced. There are 9,453 job seekers and 1,026 families who have completed 100 days of employment under MNREGA. There are 668 SSS groups under MNREGA.

Tailoring training session for women from the Boni Gram Panchayat

The collected data indicates that about 23% of the population of the Mandal participates in SHGs, and on average each *gram panchayat* has about 47 SHGs. There are active women's SHGs in the Mandal, yet difficulties were voiced, such as loans not being sufficient for women. By strengthening current SHGs and using them as a platform for capacity building, more community members will be able to generate sustainable livelihoods for themselves.

Additional livelihood options are a need in the Mandal. On an average, in each *gram panchayat* there are about 420 job seekers under MNREGA. According to the community, although many members participate in the 100 days' work programme, the days are not enough and for the remainder of the year there is no livelihood option available. The average wage in the Mandal is only INR 131 under the MNREGA, which is very little for a family to sustain itself. In addition, the community voiced a need for further skill development, particularly for women and youth.

Agriculture and Forest

In terms of green coverage, the Mandal has a good amount of trees in all the *gram panchayats*. Agriculture provides a large part of the livelihood options for residents of the Mandal, yet a common trend is that a lot of land has been sold, and hence farmers no longer have land to farm on. Therefore, more investment in agriculture and increased support for sustainabe farming options are needed. For soil health cards, only about 10% of the land has been tested and given soil health cards.

Social Development

Along with infrastructure and other areas of development, social development is an important aspect of the holistic improvement of a Mandal. Key areas identified by data and community discussions include cement concrete roads, homes for all, electricity and streetlights, Mee-Seva Centres and Internet/telecom connectivity, transportation, child marriages, grievance redressal systems, *gram sabhas*, safety of women and girls, and alcoholism.

Cement concrete roads are a prioritised need in the Mandal with more roads needing to be laid out and current roads needing repairs. Roads were identified as a need in about 85% either in quality or quantity in the Mandal. Roads have been prioritised as a top area of need in 12 *gram panchayats*—viz, Anandapuram, BD Palem, Boni (only for the hamlet of Raminenipeta), BP Kallalu, Kolavanipalem, Peddipalem,

Mukundapuram, Gidijala, Ramavarum, Pandalapaka, and Gottipalli. Concrete cement roads are linked to issues of transportation and connectivity as well as drainage, since most roads should ideally be built with proper drainage, but many are not in the Mandal. On an average, each *gram panchayat* has 16 cement concrete roads, yet due to the spread of many hamlets, connectivity through roads remains a problem.

The collection of primary data found that although only specific families needed houses, and it was not as widespread a problem as issues of open defecation for instance, yet it is an urgent issue for those needing housing. Specifically, housing was prioritised as the top three areas of need in Pekeru and Peddipalem for those in the SC Colony of the main village. Anandapuram identified lack of space as being a major problem for housing; with 20 currently sanctioned yet another 100 needed. The Vellanki Gram Panchayat also identified housing as an area of need.

About 40% of the *gram panchayats* need additional streetlights. Additional streetlights are important for the overall safety and ease of movement at night; particular for girls. Many high school students shared that it is very dangerous for girls to move about when there are not any streetlights in their communities. In Gambheeram, it was the second prioritised area of need. The average number of streetlights in Anandapuram Mandal is 180, and the average count per kilometre is 13. Out of 13,779 households in the Mandal, there are 13,887 household electricity connections. This means that in some *gram panchayats* there are some households with more than one electrical connections and therefore the *gram panchayat* has over 100% connections. However, the data may also indicate that there is an inequality with some houses having multiple connections and some without any.

In terms of transportation, an estimated 75% of the *gram panchayats* described needing quality government transport. Due to the large geographical spread of the Mandal, community members often find it difficult to travel throughout the Mandal as well as travel outside the Mandal in a safe and affordable manner. As previously described, transportation is necessary in terms of education, healthcare, livelihoods and much more in the Mandal.

Child marriages are found to be occurring in the Mandal, and is linked to issues of girls dropping out of school as well as safety and limitations of future options such as livelihood or careers. Girl-child marriages were the third priority in BD Palem. The

discussions revealed that child marriages occur in at least 85% of the Mandal; although it may be more prevalent and not disclosed due to the sensitivity of the topic in additional *gram panchayats*. This was described by girl-students from the high schools of the Mandal.

Overall, although there is not exact data available there is a significant need for Mee-Seva centres and internet centres in the Mandal. In more isolated hamlets such as Mutcherla and Ramavaram, there is a huge challenge of lack of mobile telecom signal, which is a problem for connectivity. There is a lack of formal mechanisms for grievance redressal systems in the Mandal. Yet many residents use informal mechanisms such as approaching the *sarpanch* when there are issues.

In every *gram panchayat* the statutory *gram sabhas* are held, yet overall only about 20% participation occurs. Many residents work as daily wage labourers, and taking a day off to attend the *gram sabhas* would mean losing a day's wages for many. Issues of transportation were also identified.

Alcoholism was identified as an issue in about 85% of the *gram panchayats*, particularly by women. This is also linked to the issue of safety of women and girls. Many girls and women face harassment in the Mandal, which is linked to issues such as transportation, education, open defecation and more.
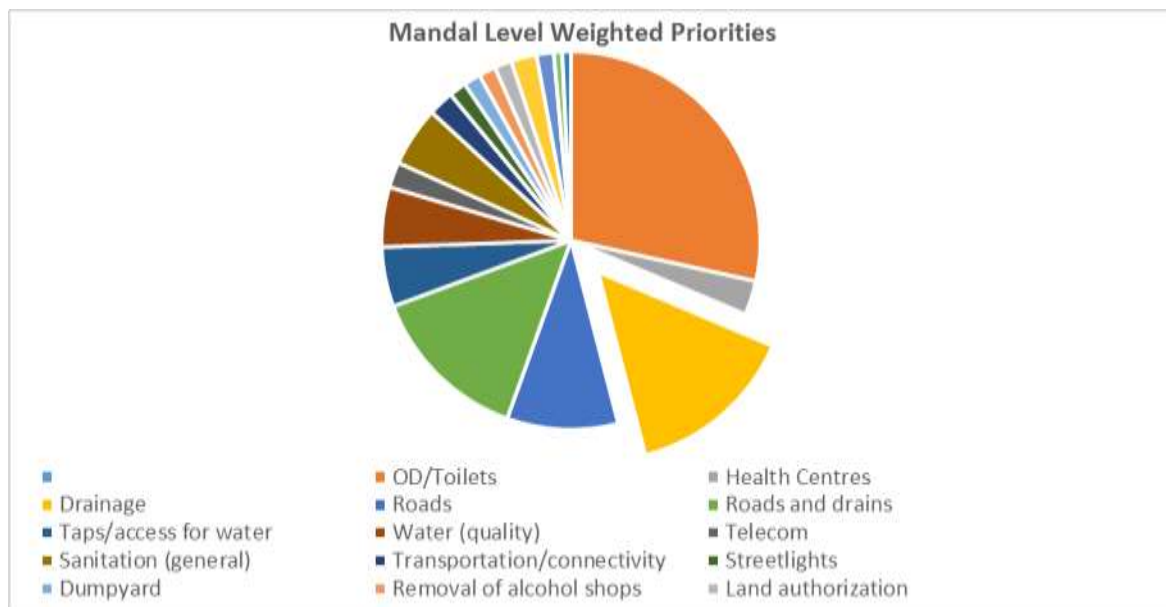
Key Findings of Baseline Analysis

Using a weighted calculation, the pie chart shared below (**Figure 1**) depicts the Mandal level prioritised areas of need by the community. The weighted calculation assigned three points to first priorities in each *gram panchayat*, two points to second priorities, and one point to each third priority. Each area of need was then totaled with the number of points earned, as shown in the pie chart (**Figure 1**) below.

The main areas of need that the Mandal should focus on are as follows:

- Open defecation and toilets (39 points)
- Drainages (20 points)
- Drainage *and* roads (19 points)
- Roads (4 points)
- Water availability/accessibility (7 points)
- Water quality (7 points)
- Sanitation (general) (7 points)
- Transportation, telecom and AWCs (3 points)
- Removal of alcohol shops, streetlights, dump-yard, land authorisation, girl-child marriages (2 points each)
- Houses, school infrastructure (1 point each)

Figure 1- Mandal Level Weighted Priorities

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