



## A Challenge is a Learning

*Rivers, ponds, lakes and streams - they all have different names, but they all contain water. Just as religions do - they all contain truths. - Muhammad Ali*

India's agricultural economy is dependent on small and marginal farmers. Human beings rely heavily on natural resources like soil and water. But these resources are fast depleting due to unsustainable use. To strengthen farmers' confidence in the rural sector, MANUVIKASA is proactively working towards reducing poverty and promoting the economic development of the farming community in the water resources sector.

In some cases, the local community is involved in misuse of the scheme for their benefit. This is one of the best examples of a case study that is an eye-opener for other farmers and stakeholders.

MANUVIKASA is largely working on lake rejuvenation and lake development sector in Uttara kannada, Haveri and Shivamogga districts.

Balageri Lake of Malagunda village, Hangal taluk, Haveri District

With the help of Grama Panchyat, MANUVIKASA conducted Grama sabha Meetings and convinced the village community regarding the importance of rejuvenation of the local lake. One of the main conditions was that MANUVIKASA would take care of lake rejuvenation, whereas the silt and waste soil should be taken by the farmers' community, depending on their needs. Accordingly, systematic documentation and obtaining approval by the local authority was also completed. Terms and conductions were also discussed. After the acceptance by the farmers' community to this, lake development work began.

The total area of the lake is 9 acres. Initial days of lake rejuvenation went on smoothly. After a few days, MANUVIKASA got a reality check - the farmers in the village informed MANUVIKASA that one of the farmers from the community was trying to misuse of the aim



of the project. This farmer was trying to encroach on the nearby dry lakebed which belonged to

their government. This divided the community into two, with the two groups throwing allegations at each other. This dented the reputation of MANUVIKASA in the social sector.

To set things right, MANUVIKASA got into action and tried to convince the farmers to accept ground reality. But the farmers did not pay heed to MANUVIKASA's reasoning and totally rejected the argument put forth by them. As a next step, MANUVIKASA decided to approach the local government authorities like Tashildar and City Survey department. The Survey department conducted a proper survey of the land in a transparent manner and said that the lakebed was Government land. As a result of the efforts put in by MANUVIKASA, as well as those of Government officials, they were finally able to convince the farmer. With the help of MANUVIKASA the farmer agrees to vacate the encroached government land.

In this manner, MANUVIKASA demonstrated the integrity and commitment of the social development sector and believes that a challenge is also a learning opportunity, as well as an opportunity for knowledge-sharing.

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