



Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy

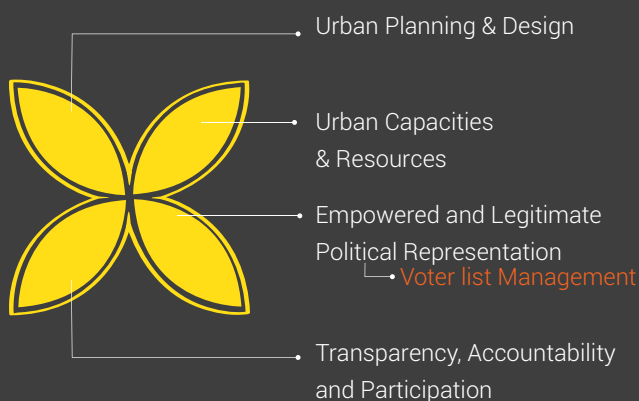
VOTER LIST MANAGEMENT

THE STATE OF BOOTH LEVEL OFFICERS (BLOs) IN BANGALORE; A LOOK AT WHAT'S GOING RIGHT & WHAT'S NOT

November 2016



With an objective of improving quality of life in India's urban centres, Janaagraha believes in addressing the root-cause of existing issues instead of the symptoms through its city-systems framework. This framework consist of four inter-related dimensions critical to the running of world-class cities.



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Janaagraha's Work On Voter List Management

Founded in 2001 as a platform for citizen participation in urban India, the Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy today works with citizens on catalysing active citizenship and with governments to institute reforms to urban governance. Its mission is to transform quality of life in India's cities and towns.

Janaagraha has been involved in efforts to rid urban voter lists of their errors for over a decade. In this time we have led successful grassroots programs to encourage registration on the voter list, such as 'Jaago Re!' in partnership with Tata Tea. We have also worked closely with the Election Commission of India (ECI), through a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Karnataka which resulted in the creation of a voter-list maintenance process manual, called Proper URban Electoral Lists (PURE), to be implemented across all assembly constituencies in Bangalore. Janaagraha has also undertaken a series of research studies designed to quantify errors on voter lists and examine the causes for such errors across urban centres in India.

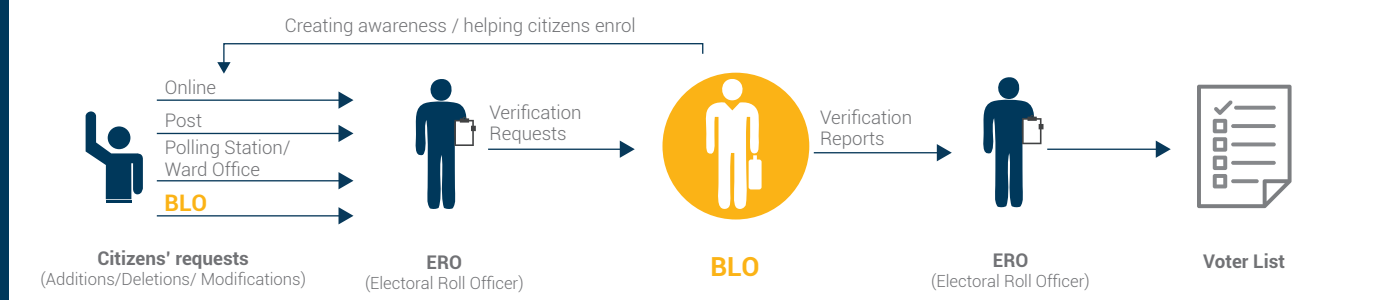
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Executive Summary : Bangalore's Booth Level Officers

India's voter lists are riddled with errors. There is evidence to believe that voter list errors are more profound in urban India, primarily due to rapid urbanization and a resultant increase in citizen mobility. And while there is evidence of the issues that exist on urban voter lists, more remains to be understood about the layers within VLM in India that lead to such issues. One such layer, is of functionaries known as Booth Level Officers or BLOs. BLOs are one of the most crucial layers in the entire Voter List Management machinery in India. They are the ECI's foot-soldiers, in charge of all on-ground verification of voter claims and requests of the Polling Part (PP) they are allotted. In addition to this, the functions they perform for the maintenance of voter lists also makes them one of the largest sources of data on the electorate.

- BLOs are govt., semi-govt. or retired govt. personnel ideally in charge of 1 PP each and are supposed to be resident in the PP they are in charge of.
- The ECI is required to provide BLOs with adequate training and materials that helps them perform their duties efficiently.
- BLOs are required to conduct exercises such as door to door visits in order to keep the voter list of their PP clean and accurate.

The BLO - a vital part of the voter list machinery ensuring citizen requests are accurately reflected on the voter list



This study, on BLOs in Bangalore intended to understand better this layer of VLM and explore how issues within BLO functioning may be contributing to the errors seen on urban voter lists. Conducted in three phases involving both qualitative and quantitative interviews, the key findings of this study are outlined below.

1

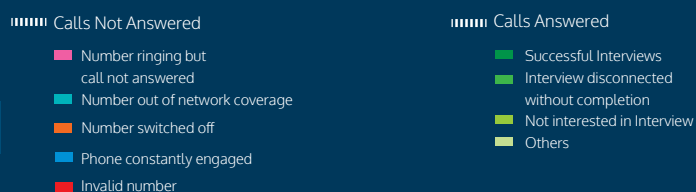
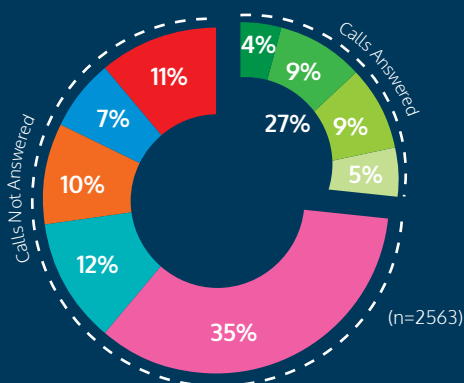
How easy is it to contact BLOs?

Citizens may need to contact the BLO of their PP if they wish to get enrolled on to their PP's voter list or wish to change or correct some of their details mentioned on the list. **However, contacting their BLO may not be very easy.**

Total PPs in the 11 ACs that were a subject of this study	BLO information available for	No information available for
3077 PPs	2996* PPs	81 PPs

**these 2996 PPs share among them, 2751 unique BLO names (the rest are duplications)*

When called, of 2563 BLO numbers attempted, only 27% were answered after 3 attempts. 11% of all numbers were invalid



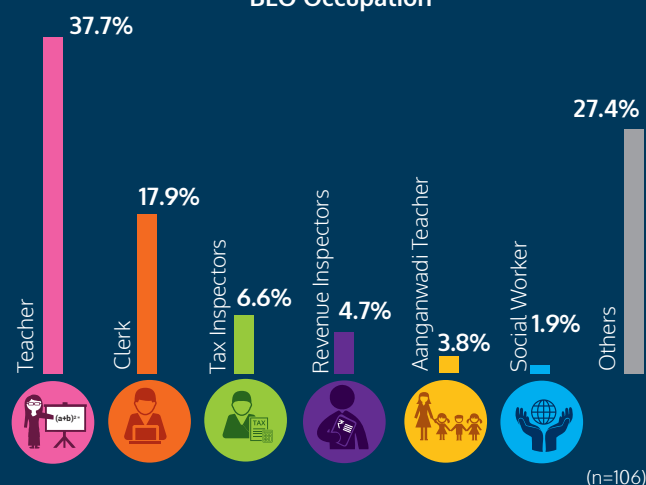
2

Who are Bangalore's BLOs?

A majority are 'Teachers', an occupational class that, as per the ECI's guidelines, should be avoided while appointing BLOs given the crucial nature of their work and the fact that they are overworked. **Some are private sector employees, a category that is not supposed to be made BLOs at all.**

58% of interviewed BLOs were Female and 42%, Male. Two thirds of all BLOs interviewed were between 30 and 59 years old and a large proportion, 43%, of all BLOs said that they had been one for 7 years or more.

BLO Occupation



How long have these BLOs been serving as one

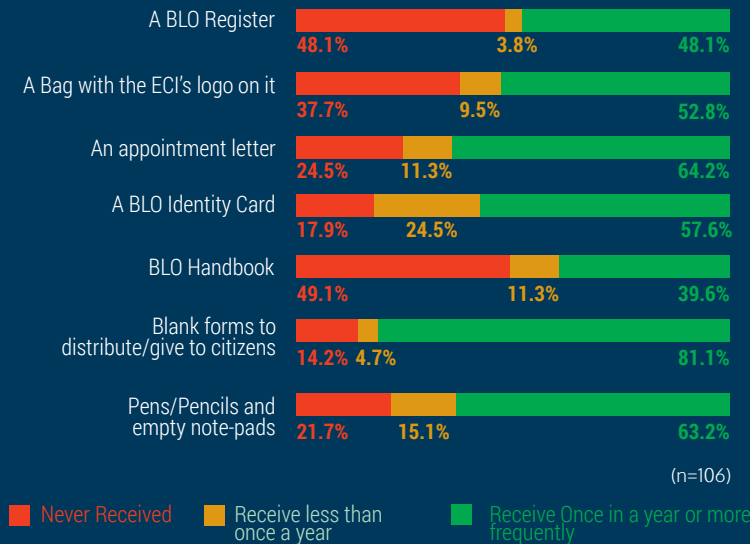


What is the kind of support/training that they receive from the ECI to perform their duties efficiently?

To help BLOs perform their duties efficiently and accurately, ECI guidelines state that they be provided with a 'BLO Kit' and be trained adequately. **Lack of adequate materials and low frequency of trainings, found in the study, can adversely affect a BLO's ability to perform their duties.**

Frequency of Receipt of Materials in the BLO kit

A large proportion of BLOs reported that they had never received some of these materials. **18% of BLOs reported that they had never received a BLO ID card, 25% an appointment letter, 48% a BLO register and 49% a BLO handbook.**



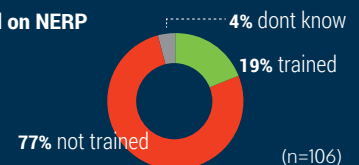
BLO Training:

While a large majority of BLOs reported being satisfied with their training, **47% claimed to have received training less than once a year.**



National Electoral Roll Purification 2016 (NERP)

Have BLOs been trained on NERP as claimed by the ECI ?

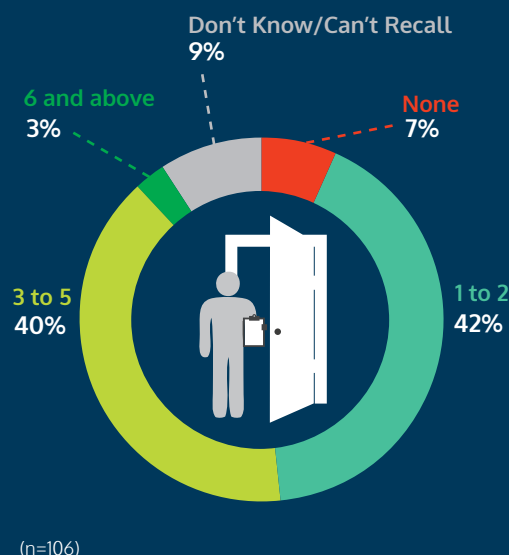


How do Bangalore's BLOs go about doing their job?

BLOs do not perform their duties as mentioned in ECI guidelines; this feeds into inaccuracies in voter lists.

7% of all BLOs interviewed (n=106) said that they conducted no door to door visits, during which they are required to perform critical functions to ensure lists remain clean. On average, BLOs perform only 4 out of the 6 crucial functions they are required to perform in a year; none perform all 6.

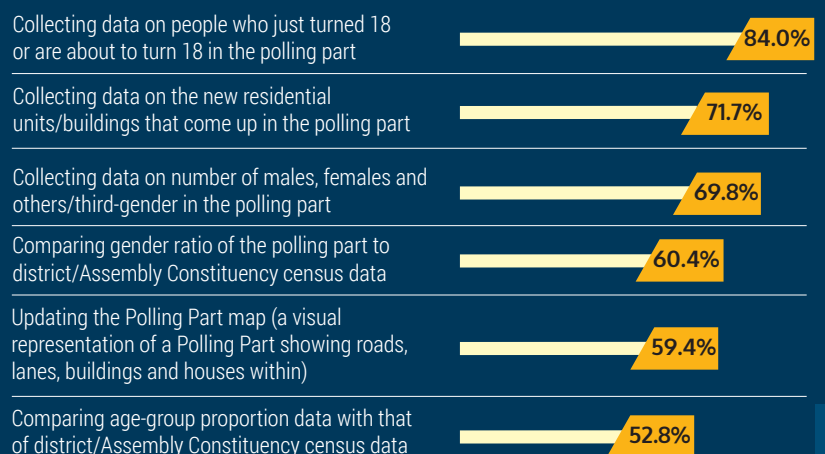
Number of door to door visits conducted (in a year)



Total no of days on which BLOs conduct door to door visits each year



Proportion of BLOs performing each critical function annually

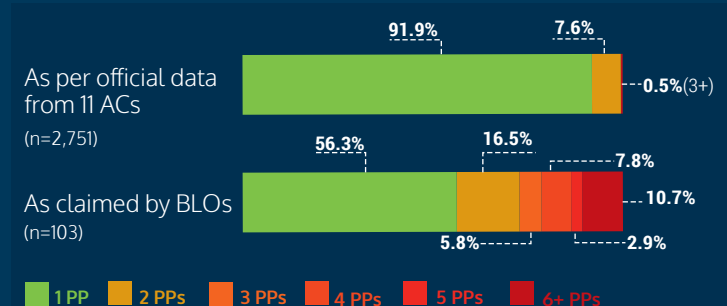


Average number of tasks performed (out of 6) = 4

The long duration of time it takes BLOs to get to their PP, not having ID cards or proper house numbering in their PPs adversely affects BLO performance.

The number of PPs a BLO is in charge of and the time it takes them to reach their allotted PPs has a direct bearing on the quality of a BLO's work. **27% of BLOs interviewed claimed to be in charge of 3 or more PPs while official data showed that less than 0.5% were in charge of 3 or more PPs.** 16% of BLOs reported that it takes them more than 45 minutes to reach their PP.

No of PPs served by BLOs



The time it takes to reach their allotted PPs



Not having a BLO identity card, poor on-ground address infrastructure and a lack of citizen cooperation were cited by BLOs as the three most important issues that affect their work adversely.

Most important issues in executing work on-ground	Proportion of BLOs
A lack of a valid BLO Identity Card (ID)	20.8%
A lack of proper house numbering in the polling part	20.8%
A lack of cooperation from the people/citizens in the polling part	13.2%
The time it takes to reach the Polling Part area	5.7%
Your concerns on safety and security while in the polling part	5.7%
A lack of motivation and support from seniors/superiors	5.7%
Frequent changing of the polling parts allotted to you	2.8%
A lack of proper road/lane signage in the polling part	2.8%
A lack of supervision from seniors	2.8%
Concentration of work in just a few months i.e. uneven spread of work over a year	1.9%
A lack of blank forms to be handed to the citizens	1.9%
A lack of a proper Poling Part (PP) map or 'Nazari Naksha'	0.9%

(n=106)

BLOs are often not given recognition, paid their honorarium or paid in full; this affects their satisfaction levels and in turn, how well they do their job.

78% of BLOs stated that they were either satisfied or extremely satisfied. 18% said that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 4%, that they were dissatisfied or extremely dissatisfied.

16% of BLOs felt they are not adequately recognized by their superiors for the hard work they put in.

Honorariums

Only 63% of BLOs reported receiving an honorarium every year as ordered by ECI. Of the 37% who did not:

Frequency of receipt of honorarium for BLOs who reported receiving it less than once a year:

Less than once in 4 years	10.7%
Once in 4 years to less than once in 3	14.3%
Once in 3 years to less than once in 2	28.6%
Once in 2 years to less than once a year	46.4%

(n=28)

Amount Received Last

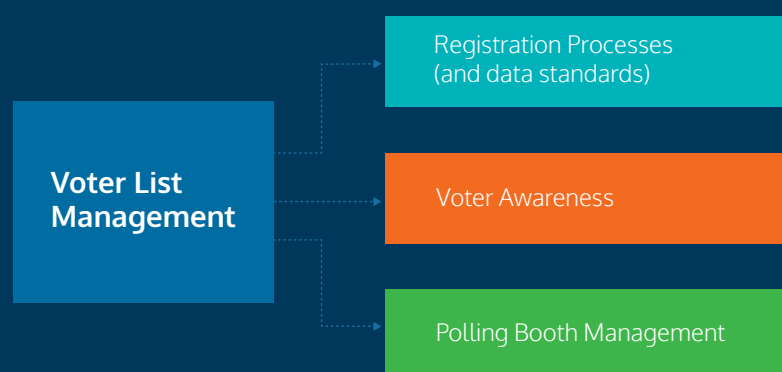
49% of BLOs reported receiving less than INR 4000 the last time they were given their honorarium



(n=84)

Addressing issues systemically

There are three principal systems underlying the VLM machinery in India. Together, these three help a citizen take their journey to the voting booth:



The BLO layer of functioning is core to the first two systems and any issues in it is bound to adversely affect the overall efficiency and accuracy of the VLM machinery.

The questions shown in the executive summary help highlight that issues exist at each stage, right from BLO appointment and PP allocation explored in question one to the payment of BLO honorariums, explored in the last question. These issues fall across both 1) Registration Processes (and data standards) and 2) Voter Awareness:

VLM System	Key Issue(s) in BLO functioning Identified that affects the VLM System
Registration Processes (& data standards)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recruitment/Appointment of adequate numbers of BLOs is not being done and as a result multiple PPs are being allocated to one BLO (or there is no allocation), in violation of the ECI's guidelines 2. Despite the ECI's guidelines suggesting 'Teachers' be left out as much as possible from being appointed as BLOs, a majority in Bangalore are teachers 3. Materials required by BLOs to perform their duties, such as IDs and BLO registers are not being adequately provided to them 4. BLOs do not perform all crucial functions required of them to maintain clean voter lists, especially 'Health Analysis' and updating Polling Part (PP) Maps 5. BLOs have to bear the brunt of the anger of citizens arising out of back-end data entry errors, on which they have limited or no control 6. BLO Honorariums are either not paid, not paid on time or not paid in full 7. Issues around the recognition of their work and honorarium appears to affect their motivation levels negatively
Registration Processes (& data standards) + Plus Voter Awareness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. The frequency with which BLOs are being trained is quite low 9. BLOs spend a large amount of time outside their regular work hours to maintain voter lists. This affects not just their role as a BLO, but also potentially their full time jobs 10. Several BLOs are allocated PPs far away from both their residence and office making access, and therefore performing their duties, difficult 11. A lack of a BLO ID card, cooperation from citizens and house numbering affects adversely their work most.

These issues plaguing BLOs and therefore VLM in Bangalore, need to be addressed in order to make the existing system perform to its potential. Towards both these ends, technology offers solutions. Creating smart technology enabled workflows for BLOs involving hand held devices for servicing voter requests, GIS mapping of PP boundaries, improved MIS systems for performance management etc. can help improve the BLO system greatly. Additionally, technology driven reforms such as Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) and Database Linkages that can help identify voter movement can also help the system in reducing BLO workload by targeting their intervention better.



Methodology :

This study was conducted in three phases:

- 1) Desktop Research Phase : Analysing BLO information available on the CEO, Karnataka's website from 11 ACs in the city
- 2) Qualitative Interview Phase : 10 Qualitative Depth Interviews from BLOs across 7 ACs in the city
- 3) Quantitative Telephonic Interview Phase : 106 Computer Aided Telephonic Interviews with BLOs across 10 ACs in the city

Each phase was designed to feed into the next one. Data from desktop research phase was used to sample BLOs to interview in the qualitative stage and themes that emerged from these interviews fed into the creation of a telephonic survey instrument.



2. Introduction

Clean voter lists are considered a prerequisite to free and fair elections. However, it is a well-known fact that India's voter lists are riddled with errors such as the presence of deceased citizens, duplications, citizens who do not reside in their listed address anymore and a myriad of others. Moreover, several eligible citizens are also missing from the list. There is evidence to believe that voter list errors are more profound in urban India, primarily due to rapid urbanization and a resultant increase in citizen mobility. India currently has 400 million citizens living in urban centres, a number which will rise to 800 million or half the population by 2050. With this transition, the stress on existing voter list management (VLM) systems will only increase and unless this challenge is addressed, will make ensuring clean voter lists immensely difficult.

An earlier study conducted by Janaagraha in Delhi in 2015 showed that as many as 21% of citizens listed on the voter list no longer resided at their registered addresses and that 28% of eligible citizens found to be missing from the voter list of their polling part claimed to be registered elsewhere in the city. Similar attempts, at assessing the quality of voter lists were made thereafter, first in the city of Patna and then, Bangalore. To highlight potential deletions on the list (i.e. citizens on the voter list who do not reside at the given address/do not exist), a field survey attempted to verify citizens listed on the voter lists. However, in both Patna and Bangalore, this work was ceased because nearly half of sampled addresses from the lists, in both centres, could not be located on ground and thus, verification of citizens was not possible. Addresses could not be found due to poor on-ground address infrastructure such as road and lane signage as well as house numbers, an effect of poor quality PP Maps and unplanned rapid urbanisation.

Addressing the VLM challenge requires efforts to be directed at strengthening systems that underlie VLM in India. **And while there is evidence of the issues that exist on urban voter lists, more remains to be understood about the layers within VLM in India that lead to such issues. One such layer, is of functionaries known as Booth Level Officers or BLOs.** They are one of the most crucial layers in the VLM machinery being the only point of on-ground verification of all voter requests and claims as well as the largest source of data on the Indian electorate.

BLOs were introduced as a layer into the VLM machinery in India post 2006. This was done after a successful experiment in the state of West Bengal by the Election Commission of India (ECI), the constitutional authority in charge of the conduct of elections and thereby voter lists. This led them to believe that introducing a layer of ground based personnel for voter list maintenance throughout the year would work better than having them only for select months in a year, which was how the ECI operated then. Today, BLOs are the layer closest to the citizen and in essence, the face of the ECI.

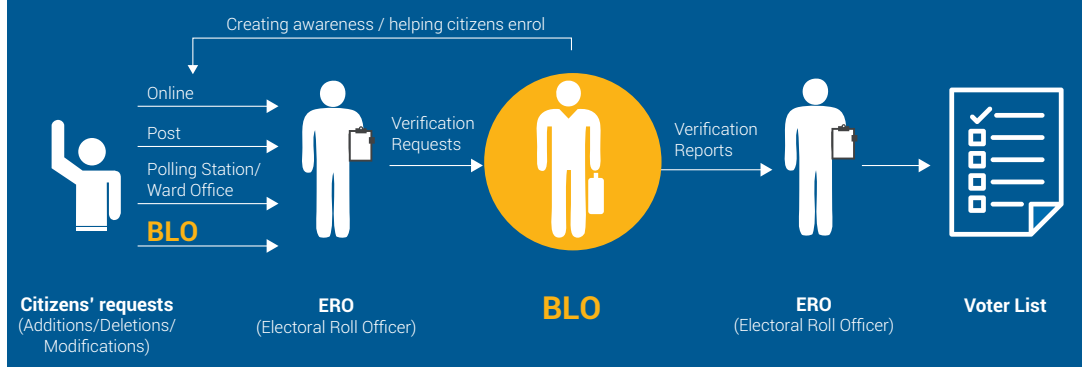
- BLOs are government/semi-government or retired government personnel who are given charge of the maintenance of voter lists of a Polling Part (PP), an area comprising roughly 1400 voters in an urban centre.
- This means that a large majority of BLOs hold two responsibilities, one which is their regular full time job and the other, which is maintaining the voter list of their allotted Polling Part.
- Each BLO is, ideally, given charge of the maintenance of the voter list of one PP in recognition of the fact that handling two or more can affect their ability to perform their BLO duties efficiently. For their services, BLOs are to be given an honorarium by the ECI.
- BLOs are also supposed to be registered as a voter in their allotted PP, indicating that they are residents of that area and hence, will be in a better position to service the area's citizens.
- All BLOs are supposed to be provided training and given relevant materials frequently by the ECI to help them perform the duties of a BLO. Such material contains basics such as ID cards and an appointment letter through to a 'BLO Register' a tool essential to collect data on the citizens in a PP.
- Once allotted a PP, BLOs are required to conduct exercises such as door to door household visits, awareness creation drives and voter verification drives/visits.
- During these exercises, with help of the training and materials they receive, BLOs are required to perform 6 critical functions, which are: collecting data on citizens who are about to turn 18, on new residential buildings/units that come up in their PP, collecting data on age and gender, comparing gender and age cohort ratios of their PP to with district census data, on those who are dead or with errors in their details and update their PP map.

1 HPEC report on Urban Infrastructure 2011 by ICRIER - <http://icrier.org/pdf/FinalReport-hpec.pdf>

2 United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2014). World Urbanization - Prospects: The 2014 Revision, Highlights (ST/ESA/SER.A/352)

3 Delhi report - <http://www.janaagraha.org/files/publications/Quality-of-Lists-Delhi-2015-MainReport.pdf>

The BLO - a vital part of the voter list machinery ensuring citizen requests are accurately reflected on the voter list



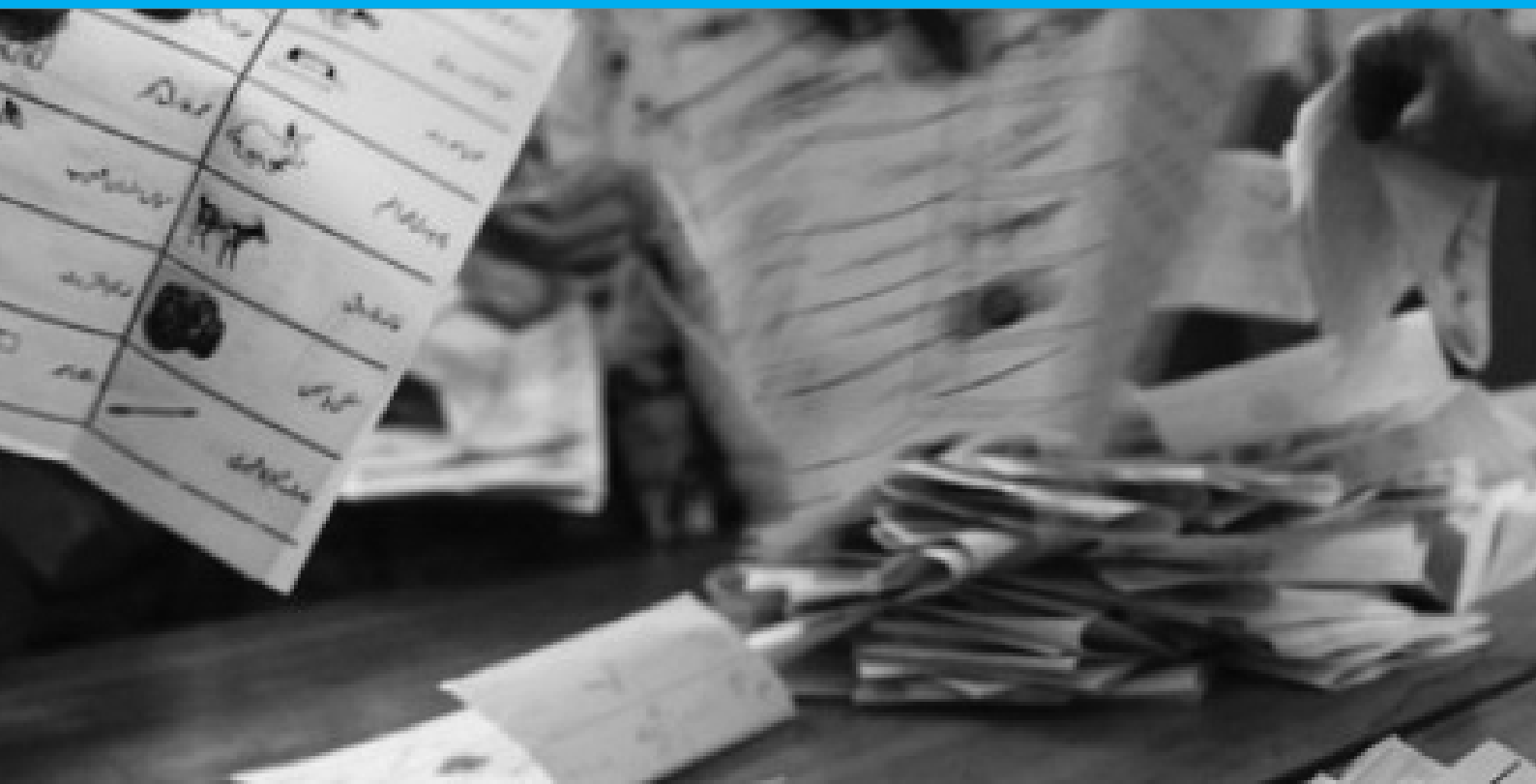
These functions and exercises that BLOs perform are what feed largely into the creation and maintenance of voter lists. However, the ability of BLOs to do so depends not only on the training and support provided, but a host of other factors external to their control and the control of the ECI, such as issues of access to certain areas, difficulty in finding households because of poor address infrastructure, cooperation received from citizens etc.

Evidence suggests that such issues may vary and be further complicated by migration levels in ACs, which may be higher in those located at the periphery as most urban centres tend to grow outward, as well as the nature of the full time occupation of BLOs. Another factor that may contribute to differences in how BLOs operate in inner and outer ACs is of poor address infrastructure. Efforts to measure quality of voter lists in Patna and Bangalore, as stated earlier, failed mostly due to bad road/lane signage and missing house numbers. This was an issue found to be more prominent in outer ACs in these centers. This suggested that unplanned growth, which usually happens at the periphery can lead to such issues and may adversely affect the ability of BLOs to work efficiently. An investigation into the working of BLOs with particular focus on address infrastructure, was conducted in Patna which strengthened the suggestion that AC spread can affect the functioning of BLOs in different ways.

Higher migration rates and general citizen mobility within urban centres means a higher number of citizen requests for additions, deletions or changes to the voter list and therefore, more effort in voter list maintenance. Similarly, the full time occupation of BLOs and the time and effort such occupations demand also affect the overall ability to perform BLO duties efficiently. It is well known that 'Teachers', an occupation class that the ECI instructs be left out as BLOs as best as possible, are often instructed for not just performing the duties of a BLO but also by the government for conducting census and other National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) surveys, making them an overall stressed asset.

Given this background on BLOs and a general lack of information around this layer within VLM, it is worthwhile exploring the issues they face in executing their duties and examine how aspects such as migration and their occupation affect their ability to do so in different urban centres. It must be said that the ECI does recognize the need to do more to ensure clean voter lists which reflects in their continued efforts at innovation, one of which is the BLO system itself which was introduced in 2007 with the aim of improving the quality of voter lists. Another step in that direction has been the launch of National Electoral Roll Purification 2016 (NERP) program in July 2016, which aims to improve the health of electoral rolls and optimize polling station locations, on which the ECI has indicated that all BLOs have been trained. However, since the introduction of BLOs, any comprehensive evaluation on their functioning has not been conducted.

The overall objective of this study is to try and understand better, the BLO layer in Bangalore and identify areas in their functioning that can be strengthened in order to help address challenges to urban voter list management.





3. Methodology

This study was conducted in three phases:

Desktop research phase:

This stage looked at BLO details published online and basic analysis was conducted on information available (the number of BLOs servicing more than 1 PP, their occupation and errors in details). This information also fed into sampling for the next two phases.

Qualitative Interview phase:

Qualitative interviews were then conducted with randomly selected BLOs across the city of Bangalore in order to – 1) develop a nuanced understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a BLO and how they go about fulfilling their duties and 2) serve as a base to develop a structured quantitative interview to be conducted with a larger set of BLOs across Bangalore in the third stage.

Quantitative telephonic Interview phase:

At this stage, Computer Aided Telephonic Interviews (CATIs) were conducted with a 106 BLOs spread across Bangalore.

Each phase was designed to feed into the next one. Data from desktop research phase was used to sample BLOs to interview in the qualitative stage and themes that emerged from these interviews fed into the creation of a telephonic survey instrument.

3.1 Sampling

Bangalore City, the area administered by the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP – Municipal Corporation), is home to about 8.4 million people (2011 census). The area that BBMP administers includes a total of 27 Assembly Constituencies (ACs). For this study, samples were drawn from these 27 ACs stratified by location and levels of migration. For further details on the 27 ACs within Bangalore, refer to the appendix, section 9.1.

3.1.1 Sampling for the Desktop Research Phase

For this phase, BLO records of 10 ACs selected on geographic spread and migration were looked at. These 10 ACs out of 27 in Bangalore, were chosen using stratified random sampling keeping in mind proportional representation of 'inner' and 'outer' ACs as well as those classified as 'high migration' (HM) and 'others' (OTH). Definitions used of these parameters were as follows:

Inner/Outer ACs – ACs that fell within or those where the majority of the AC fell within a 10KM radius from the centre of the city were classified as 'Inner' ACs. Those ACs whose boundaries were on the extremities of the city and those who were mostly or wholly outside a 10KM radius from the centre were classified as 'Outer' ACs. Out of the 27 ACs in Bangalore, 19 were classified as Inner ACs and the remaining 8 as Outer.

High Migration (HM)/Others (OTH) ACs – ACs whose decadal population growth rate, as calculated using census 2001 and 2011 data, exceeded the Inner/Outer AC bucket average were classified as 'HM' within each bucket. Those who grew less than the average were classified as 'Others'. Migration was considered a major contributor to population growth rate and this assumption formed the basis for using decadal population growth rate as an indicator of migration. Within the 19 Inner ACs, 9 were classified using this method as HM and the rest, OTH. Within the 9 Outer ACs, 4 were classified as HM and the rest, OTH.

Table 1 shows the ACs selected for this phase.

Table 1: ACs selected for the desktop research phase (type and PPs within)

AC_No	AC_Name	PC_Name	Total PPs	Inner/Peripheral	HM/OTH
171	Padmanabhanagar	Bangalore South	238	Inner	HM
175	Bommanahalli	Bangalore South	313	Inner	HM
161	C.V.Ramannagar	Bangalore Central	230	Inner	HM
169	Chikpet	Bangalore South	223	Inner	OTH
168	Chamrajpet	Bangalore Central	218	Inner	OTH
162	Shivajinagar	Bangalore Central	180	Inner	OTH
174	Mahadevpura	Bangalore Central	399	Outer	HM
152	Bytarayanapura	Bangalore North	353	Outer	HM
154	Rajarajeswarinagar	Bangalore Rural	348	Outer	OTH
151	K.R.Puram	Bangalore North	385	Outer	OTH

3.1.2 Sampling for the Qualitative Interview Phase

A total of 13 BLOs across Bangalore were to be interviewed for this stage. Samples were drawn from 6 ACs out of the 10 that were selected for the desktop research phase (3 inner and 3 outer ACs; & within these, three HM and three OTH) and also from an additional AC, Shantinagar, added purposively. Further details on how these ACs were selected are given below.

It was first decided that interviews would be conducted in 5 out of the 10 ACs chosen for the desktop research phase. Therefore, 3 ACs were drawn from the bucket of Inner ACs and 2 from that of Outer ACs so that the ratio of Inner to Outer AC stays the same as in the desktop research phase. ACs from within these two buckets were chosen randomly keeping in mind the proportion of 'HM' and 'OTH' ACs within. After this process of selecting 5 ACs of which 3 were Inner and 2 Outer was completed, it was decided that an additional Outer AC would be added to the list to enhance our understanding of issues in outer ACs. This AC was sampled randomly from the list of Outer ACs from the desktop research phase. Finally, the team added another Inner AC, Shantinagar, purposively since Janaagraha has extensive on-ground experience of VLM in this AC and wanted to leverage it to understand issues around BLOs better. This took the total number of ACs to 7, as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: ACs where qualitative interviews were to be conducted (type and PPs within)

AC_No	AC_Name	PC_Name	Total PPs within	Inner/Peripheral	HM/OTH
171	Padmanabhanagar	Bangalore South	238	Inner	HM
175	Bommanahalli	Bangalore South	313	Inner	HM
169	Chikpet	Bangalore South	223	Inner	OTH
163	Shantinagar	Bangalore South	190	Inner	OTH
174	Mahadevpura	Bangalore Central	399	Outer	HM
154	Rajarajeswarinagar	Bangalore Rural	348	Outer	OTH
151	K.R.Puram	Bangalore North	385	Outer	OTH
152	Bytarayanapura	Bangalore North	353	Outer	HM
154	Rajarajeswarinagar	Bangalore Rural	348	Outer	OTH
151	K.R.Puram	Bangalore North	385	Outer	OTH

Samples were drawn for 7 BLO interviews in Inner ACs and for 6 in Outer ACs. This distribution was selected so that a wider view of those working in outer ACs could be taken given the hypothesis that more issues are present in outer ACs because of higher rates of migration. This also reflects in the fact that decadal population growth rates in outer ACs are higher compared with Inner ACs. BLOs within each AC were sampled keeping in mind their occupation/designation in their full time jobs. This was done to examine another hypothesis that there may be differences in aspects such as knowledge, motivation, operation etc. based on the education and skill level of BLOs which is reflected to a significant degree by their designation. Additionally, as mentioned in the introduction, certain occupational classes such as 'Teachers' are also given other responsibilities by the government such as conducting the census and other sample surveys and therefore, such sampling would also allow for investigating how this affects the ability of BLOs to perform their duties efficiently. Once classified on the basis of occupation, BLOs within each AC were drawn through random number generation and all efforts were made to represent major occupation classes as best as possible given the low sample size (13). Five such sets were created to account for refusals, dropouts and any other factor that rendered an interview unsuccessful.

3.1.3 Sampling for the Telephonic Interview phase

A total of 100 telephonic interviews were to be conducted across all 10 ACs selected for the first phase i.e. desktop research. Ten BLOs were randomly selected from within each of the 10 ACs, keeping in mind adequate representation of their occupation within each AC. Within each AC, five such sets of 10 BLOs each were sampled to be used in case the required number of interviews could not be achieved using the first set.

3.2 Execution

Project execution is broken down for each phase below.

3.2.1 The Desktop research phase

Janaagraha analysed data on BLOs published by office of the CEO, Karnataka. This data can be obtained from the link: http://ceokarnataka.kar.nic.in/blolist_2015/Dist_List.aspx. Once PDFs were obtained, we converted this data into Excel and looked at aspects such as:

- Nature and type of information on BLOs available
- Designation/Occupation of BLOs
- Errors/issues, if any, in the information published (such as incomplete telephone numbers, missing names, duplications etc.)

3.2.2 The Interview phase

Face-to-face interviews with 13 BLOs across 7 ACs were conducted in Kannada between 13/06/2016 and 05/07/2016 using sets of sampled BLOs as described in section 2.1.2. Execution was as described below:

- BLOs were called using sampled sets of BLO contacts and requested for face-to-face interviews. Appointments were booked with BLOs on call unless the date provided exceeded 4 weeks from the date of asking for the appointment. In such cases, Interviewers moved on to the next BLO contact.
- In cases where the number was not answered but was ringing, two more attempts were made before moving on to the next BLO contact. For cases such as 'wrong-number', where the number was invalid/switched-off, the interviewer moved to the next BLO contact without further attempts. However, these were to be tried on another day provided the required number of interviews had not been reached using other BLO contacts.
- There were five sampled sets; if the required number of interviews were not achieved using the first set, the interviewer moved on to the second one. Although 5 such sets were created initially, the remaining BLO contacts in each AC were put in a 6th set to be used in case the first 5 sets were used up.
- All interviews were recorded, transcribed and translated into English. If any shortcomings in the audio recordings rendered an interview unsuccessful, another one to replace it was conducted.
- A bulk of the BLO interviews were conducted by a freelance researcher specializing in conducting Depth Interviews (DIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and well versed in Kannada, Hindi and English. Some were conducted by an associate researcher from Janaagraha's Research & Insights (R&I) team. Translation and transcription of recorded interviews was done by an agency based out of Hyderabad, India, called Crescendo Communications.

3.2.3 The Telephonic Interview phase

A total of 106 BLO interviews were conducted between 16/08/2016 and 30/08/2016 using a Computer Aided Telephonic Interview (CATI) questionnaire.

- To achieve a 100 successful BLO interviews, as was planned, interviewers called phone numbers from sets of sampled BLO contacts within each AC (sampled sets did not include contacts of those interviewed in the qualitative interview stage).
- If a call was answered by the concerned BLO, interviewers followed a set procedure, as per the instrument and administered the survey at either the same time or took an appointment for a later date and time (not exceeding two weeks from the time the appointment was taken). If a call was not answered or if a survey with the concerned BLO was unsuccessful, interviewers proceeded to call the next BLO from the set of sampled numbers.
- A reminder of the appointment was given via telephone at least once and at least a day in advance of the scheduled appointment. In case the BLO intended to reschedule to another date, the next appointment was not to exceed one week from the time it was taken; if it did, that interview/contact was considered 'unsuccessful' and the interviewer moved to the next sampled BLOs.
- All responses given by BLOs to the interviewer were recorded real-time on to the Computer Aided Telephonic Interview (CATI) program.

These interviews were executed by Hansa Research, a marketing and social research agency. All interviews were conducted in either Kannada, English or Hindi. The Hansa CATI team was trained by a senior researcher from Janaagraha at a two day workshop which included context setting, training interviews and mock calls. Thereafter, Janaagraha monitored quality and progress of the interviews routinely.

3.3 Quality Control Procedures

To ensure highest quality standards, QC procedures were put in place for each phase of the study as outlined below.

1. **Desktop Research Phase** - Since all BLO information was converted from PDFs to MS Excel file type, a total of 100 rows of information were randomly checked to ensure accuracy of conversion
2. **Qualitative Research Phase**
 - a. All qualitative depth interviews were audio recorded and such recordings were obtained from the interviewer once every 2 days. Any issues detected were fed back to the interviewer for subsequent correction.
 - b. A Janaagraha researcher attended 3 out of the 8 interviews conducted by the freelancer hired for this phase.
3. **Telephonic Interview Phase**
 - a. Data on interviews was obtained every 3 days from commencement of interviews and any issues noticed were fed back to the agency for course correction.
 - b. Apart from the agency's own in house QC procedures which mandated 30% back checks and 5% supervisor scrutiny, Janaagraha contacted 10 BLOs as a part of its own checks.
 - c. Janaagraha included a 'mystery BLO' contact (actually the number of an R&I researcher) in the contact database to check how interviews were being conducted, the output of which was fed back to the agency for course correction.

3.4 The Interview Instruments

Two out of the three phases in this study involved conducting interviews. The Qualitative Interview phase was based on gathering information using a structured pen-and-paper instrument while the telephonic interview phase used a structured CATI instrument with only closed ended questions. As described in section 2 earlier, information collected in the qualitative interview phase, in addition to helping us develop a nuanced understanding of the role of a BLO, was also to help develop the CATI instrument for the telephonic stage.

Therefore, both instruments were more or less similar in terms of the broad information areas they captured:

4. Knowledge of BLOs on their roles and responsibilities (mostly in the qualitative instrument)
5. General work procedures BLOs followed/practiced
6. The support BLOs receive from the ECI in terms of materials and training
7. Issues BLOs face with discharging their duties effectively and
8. Overall motivation and their suggestions on improvements required as well as the overall satisfaction of BLOs (suggestions only in the qualitative instrument)

All instruments used for this study have been given in section 9.2 in the Appendix.





4. Findings From The Desktop Research Phase

◀ FINDINGS FROM THE DESKTOP RESEARCH PHASE

For this stage, BLO information from a total of 11 ACs, as against the 10 decided ones given in section 2.1.1, was looked at. This was done as information for the additional AC, Shantinagar, added purposively for the Qualitative Interview Phase had to be mined to sample BLOs from within for interviews.

Table 3 shows the total number of PPs within each of these ACs and the number of PPs for which BLO information is available. Both pieces of information were obtained from the website of the office of the CEO, Karnataka.

Table 3: Number of PPs in ACs vs the number of PPs for which BLO information is available

AC Number	AC Name	Total PPs within	PPs for which information is available	PPs for which no BLO information is given
151	K.R Puram	385	385	0
152	Byatarayanapura	353	343	10
154	Rajarajeswarinagar	348	348	0
161	C.V. Raman Nagar	230	230	0
162	Shivaji Nagar	180	179	1
163	Shanthinagar	190	119	71
168	Chamrajpet	218	218	0
169	Chickpet	223	223	0
171	Padmanabha nagar	238	238	0
174	Mahavapura	399	399	0
175	Bommanahalli	313	314	-1 (two BLOs for PP no. 1)
	ALL ACs	3077	2996	81

As per the ECI's guidelines, BLO information for all PPs have to be provided on the website of the CEOs of all states and UTs. This information is to include the names, designations, contact numbers, and addresses of all BLOs. But as is evident from Table 3, BLO information for only 2996 PPs out of a total of 3077 PPs was available on the website of the CEO, Karnataka.

The ECI's guidelines also state that each BLO should be allotted one PP and in cases of shortfalls, some may be allotted two but in no case should any BLO be allotted three or more PPs. Analysing information obtained found that these 2996 PPs were being serviced by 2751 BLOs, 92% of whom were listed against only 1 PP each, 7.6% against two and the rest (16 BLOs) against 3 or more different PPs.

Table 4 shows the spread of designations of these 2751 BLOs. A majority of BLOs (37%) were found to be teachers, an occupational class the ECI suggests be exempted from these duties as far as possible so as not to have an adverse effect on students' education. Booth Level Officers are, by the Election Commission of India's guidelines, supposed to be drawn from among a limited pool of serving government officials, officials of semi-government organisations and retired government officials. However, the study found several cases where BLOs were mentioned in occupational classes or types that can be considered external to this pool. In the BLO data that was mined from the Karnataka CEO's website for these 11 ACs, 44 BLOs had their designation mentioned as 'Social Worker'. Apart from this, there were Students, Private School Teachers and even Janaagraha employees on the BLO list for Bangalore. Table 4, on the next page, also shows that 726 BLOs had no designation mentioned against their names.

Table 4: Designations held by BLOs from the 11 ACs that were a part of this study

S. No	Occupation Class	Proportion
1	Teacher	37.3%
2	Clerk	21.4%
3	Tax Inspectors	9.8%
4	Revenue Inspectors	5.8%
5	Aanganwadi Teacher	4.9%
6	Social Worker	2.2%
7	Others	18.6%
	No Data*	n=726
	n	2751

*Occupation data was not available for the ACs 175 and 151 as well as for some BLOs within the other ACs included in this phase.

While looking at BLO contact numbers, it was found that the 2751 BLOs for whom some or the other information was given shared among them, 2184 phone numbers. Some numbers provided were of landline phones and therefore, could be office board phone numbers and so, shared among some BLOs. However, there were several cell-phone numbers that appeared more than once with 275 appearing twice or more times against different BLOs. It was also found that 77 BLOs had no phone number mentioned against their names.





5. Findings From The Qualitative Interview Phase

5.1 Sample Composition

A total of 13 BLO interviews across 7 Assembly Constituencies were to be conducted in this phase. However, only 10 successful interviews were achieved between 13/06/2016 and 05/07/2016 due to survey drop outs. Table 5 presents the number of planned interviews versus achieved by ACs.

Table 5: Sample Composition

AC Number	AC Name	AC Type (spread & migration)	Planned	Achieved
171	Padmanabhnagar	Inner-HM	2	1
175	Bommanahalli	Inner-HM	2	2
169	Chickpet	Inner-OTH	1	1
163	Shantinagar	Inner-OTH	2	2
174	Mahadevpura	Outer-HM	2	1
154	Rajarajeshwarinagar	Outer-OTH	2	2
151	K.R. Puram	Outer-OTH	2	1

As is evident in Table 5 the target number of interviews was achieved in all ACs except in Padmanabhanagar, Mahadevpura and KR Puram. Seven interviews were to be conducted in Inner ACs, and six in outer but since only one interview was achieved in Padmanabhanagar, which is an Inner AC, and one less was achieved in the Outer AC of Mahadevapura, the achieved spread stands at six for Inner and four for Outer.

Of the ten respondents with whom these interviews were conducted, six were females and four, males. Four BLOs had full time jobs as 'Teachers' ranging from Primary Teachers to Tailoring Teachers. The other six included a Revenue Inspector, a BBMP Helper, a Technical Operator, an Aanganwadi Worker, a Tax Inspector and a Land Surveyor. A majority of these respondents, seven, reported that they had been BLOs for over four years.

5.2 Findings From The Interviews

The main objectives of conducting these qualitative interviews were:

1. To develop a nuanced understanding of how BLOs perform their duties and the issues they face while doing so, as well as
2. To identify broad themes to serve as a base for the development of a quantitative structured instrument to be administered to a larger set of BLOs.

The key themes that emerged from the analysis of the information generated using this phase are outlined below:

1. BLO HONORARIUM/PAYMENT

A major concern voiced by all BLOs interviewed was of intermittent or no receipt of payment/honorarium for the services they rendered.

When asked, whether they had received any honorarium, one BLO said **"We have never received it from past 5 years. Not even single rupee they have paid us, still they have not paid the amount for the voter list that we did."** Another BLO said, **"When we ask them strictly, then that time they pay us about Rs. 300 or 500. They sign themselves and take the money for themselves. There is no record for that."**

It also appeared that as a result of this issue, BLOs may see this role, in its entirety or in parts, as voluntary. Managing the voter list is an enormous task involving several processes that are tedious and time consuming and is an additional responsibility for BLOs over and above their full-time jobs. This issue appeared to be a key demotivating factor and therefore, may reflect in the quality of their work and in turn, the quality of the voter list itself.

2. SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE ECI TO BLOS

All BLOs are supposed to be provided with a 'BLO kit' comprising materials or items they need to perform their duties effectively. These include a BLO identity card, an appointment letter, a BLO handbook, a BLO register, blank forms and stationary, all provided in a bag with the ECI's logo on it. An absence of some of the above-mentioned items can act as impediments to BLOs in successfully discharging their duties. For example, access to a household for a BLO may get restricted if he/she doesn't have a valid BLO identity card.

When asked about the BLO kit, one BLO said, **"I don't know anything about that kit."** And another replied by saying **"No sir, we make it by hand and use. We haven't even got a pen or pencil."**

Another key support function that the ECI provides to BLOs is training. This is essential in making sure that BLOs perform well. Findings showed that overall, BLOs appreciated training sessions and felt that these were useful. However, one BLO indicated issues with the quality of such trainings by saying **"when they have emergency they will call, when they get pressure they will tell do that do this that's all"**, referring perhaps to her seniors in the ECI's hierarchy. Findings also indicated that the frequency of these trainings was very low with some stating that they had been trained only once throughout their career as a BLO.

3. CITIZEN-BLO INTERACTIONS

BLOs have to interact with citizens frequently in order to service their requests or to create awareness on aspects around electoral participation. Therefore, to ensure quality of voter lists, cooperation from citizens is important. From these interviews it was found that while conducting door to door surveys, BLOs are sometimes not received cordially by citizens and at times questions are raised on their credibility. One BLO said **“one day corporation people came and started shouting saying ‘Who is that idiot fellow rascal’, you know those rich people how they talk”**.

This lack of citizen cooperation appears to discourage BLOs and makes it difficult for them to do their duties. Additionally, since in the entire VLM hierarchy, only BLOs engage and interact with citizens, they often have to bear the brunt of errors that originate at back-end operations such as data entry. One BLO, on asking about the issues they face highlighted this aspect by saying **“Most of the time they would have mentioned fathers name as husband name, and they come and shout saying ‘Am I her husband’ these kind of issues we get and that time we have to make them calm and show us our report and explain them that it is just printing mistake and send them back.”**

4. ISSUES WITH BACK-END DATA ENTRY

As was just described, BLOs are held answerable to any errors in voter details by citizens. BLOs felt that such errors are often the mistake of data entry operators who do not enter it accurately into the Electoral Roll Management System (ERMS) software. One of the BLOs stated that **“During entry, In place of husband’s name they enter father’s name and vice versa. Male female is interchanged.”**

During household visits by BLOs, citizens quite often respond in their regional language and the BLOs felt that data entry operators make mistakes during real-time translation which permeates into the voter lists. Door to door surveys conducted by BLOs entail a significant amount of time and effort and if the information gathered by them is not updated properly, a lot of the efforts may be in vain.

5. DISTANCE AND TRAVELING TIME TO POLLING PARTS

Another issue highlighted during the interviews has to do with inefficient allocation of PPs and the resulting time and distance BLOs have to travel to reach their allotted PPs. Though most BLOs stated that their allotted PPs were not located very far, a few did express concerns. One BLO said **“They will allocate areas closer to our working place, if they allocate near our house we will do it easily. From my house I will have to take four buses to reach that place”**. One BLO said that their polling part was 15 KMs from their office and 25 KMs from their residence.

Since BLOs have other full time jobs and some of them are allotted more than one Polling Part, this issue appears to be a concern for some of them and may adversely affect their ability to perform their duties.

6. THE POLLING PART MAP OR 'NAZARI NAKSHA'

The polling part map which is also known as the "Nazari Naksha" helps BLOs identify individual households in their PPs. From the qualitative interviews, it was found that maintaining and updating the polling part map, a part of the BLO's job, was not considered important by a few BLOs. When respondents were asked if they update the polling part map regularly, one of the respondents said , **"Because I am continuously doing the same area so no need of combing the map when we did the first time we require a map, since I am regularly doing map is not required"**. Another BLO replied by saying that **"We will not do that, we are busy with our own work. They give the form only after 2 to 3 months if we do it in April and May and this year also they called me to do but I refused saying that I am not interested to do any charity work"**. This, clubbed with other observations from BLOs shows that they may consider creation of maps as not crucial to their working. One BLO even considered it to be the revenue department's job. However, as stated earlier, all BLOs are mandated by the ECI to update and maintain this map as it is considered an important tool to increase their efficiency and therefore, the cleanliness of voter lists.

There are several other observations that arose from analysing the responses of BLOs but most of them span across, and often were a combination of, the themes mentioned above. Once arrived upon, these themes were used to guide creation of the CATI instrument that was administered to a larger set of BLOs across Bangalore.





6. CATI & Overall Findings

OVERALL FINDINGS

This section will begin by describing sample composition for the CATI phase. It will be followed by sections answering a series of questions that can help us understand better, Bangalore's BLOs and their functioning using findings from both the CATI phase and the Qualitative Interview Phase. It is important to note that details about the BLOs to contextualise the research is imperative to the research itself, e.g. attempts to contact BLOs to undertake the research is insightful into the ease with which it is (or is not) possible to contact a BLO full stop. Thus providing some insight into the ease with which citizens may be able to contact their respective BLO to request VLM services.

6.1 CATI Sample Composition

A total of 100 CATIs were to be conducted spread equally across the 10 ACs selected for this study. Within these 10 ACs, that were selected looking at both geographic spread and migration rates, achieved interviews had to reflect a BLO occupation spread that resembled the overall AC. Table 6 below shows the number of interviews planned in each AC versus achieved and Table 7, the occupation spread that was planned versus achieved.

Table 6: Spread of achieved versus planned interviews by AC

AC_No	AC_Name	Interviews Planned	Interviews Achieved
171	Padmanabhanagar	10	12
175	Bommanahalli	10	10
161	C.V.Ramannagar	10	10
169	Chikpet	10	11
168	Chamrajpet	10	10
162	Shivajinagar	10	10
174	Mahadevpura	10	10
152	Bytarayanapura	10	10
154	Rajarajeswarinagar	10	12
151	K.R.Puram	10	11
	n	100	106

Table 7: Spread of achieved versus planned interviews by BLO Occupation Class

S. No	Occupation Class	Interviews Planned	Interviews Achieved	Deviation
1	Teacher*	35	44	+9
2	Clerk	18	19	+1
3	Tax Inspectors	7	7	0
4	Revenue Inspectors	3	5	2
5	Social Worker	3	2	-1
6	Others	34	29	-5
	n	100	106	+6

*The 'Teacher' occupation class here also includes 'Aanganwadi Teachers'.

(For the calculation of planned interviews, occupation data was not available for the ACs 175 and 151 as well as for some BLOs within the other ACs included in this phase. These numbers are based on whatever data was available)

As can be seen from Table 6, a total of 106 interviews were achieved meeting the target of having a minimum of 10 in each AC. Table 7 shows that the number of interviews achieved within each occupational class were more or less as planned except for the occupational classes 'Teacher' and 'Others'. Of the 106 BLOs with whom interviews were conducted, 58% were female and 42%, male.

Table 8 below shows the age spread of these BLOs. As can be seen, two thirds of all BLOs interviewed were between 30 and 59 years old. Table 9 shows how long the interviewed BLOs said they had been one for.

Table 8: Age spread of BLOs Interviewed

Age Group	%
18-24	1.9%
25-29	12.5%
30-39	27.9%
40-49	39.4%
50-59	16.3%
60-69	1.9%
n*	104

Table 9: How long have they been BLOs

Duration in Years	%
1 to 2 years	14.2%
3 to 4 years	16.0%
5 to 6 years	26.4%
7-8 years	10.4%
9 + years	30.2%
Couldn't recall	2.8%
(n)	106

*Two BLOs chose not to answer this question

6.2 About Booth Level Officers (BLOs)

Booth Level Officers or BLOs are one of the most crucial layers in the entire Voter List Management machinery in India. They are the ECI's foot-soldiers, in charge of all on-ground verification of voter claims and requests of the PP(s) they are allotted. In addition to this, the functions they perform for the maintenance of voter lists also makes them one of the largest sources of data on the electorate.

- BLOs are govt., semi-govt. or retired govt. personnel ideally in charge of 1 PP each and are supposed to be a resident at the PP they are in charge of.
- The ECI is required to provide BLOs with adequate training and materials that helps them perform their duties efficiently.
- BLOs are required to conduct exercises such as door to door visits in order to keep the voter list of their PP clean and accurate.
- They are also required to perform 6 critical functions, some of which they can do during the updation exercises they conduct, to collect important data on voters and service their area's voters.

Further details on BLOs have been given in section 2, introduction. The next sections in this report will paint a picture around a sample of these BLOs in Bangalore, the work they do, the issues they face and how motivated they feel.

6.3 Who are Bangalore's BLOs?

Bangalore's BLOs

As stated in section 6.1, of the 106 BLOs who were interviewed, 58% were female and 42%, male. Two thirds of all BLOs interviewed were between 30 and 59 years old (Table 8) and a large proportion, 43%, of all BLOs said that they had been one for 7 years or more (Table 9).

Table 10 below shows the spread of occupation classes of the 106 BLOs interviewed in the CATI phase. A majority of the BLOs were Teachers (38%). The second biggest occupation class was that of Clerks (18%) followed by Tax Inspectors (7%), Revenue Inspectors (5%) and Aanganwadi Teachers (4%). The next biggest class, surprisingly, is that of 'Social Workers', one which does not appear to be a class mentioned in the ECI's guidelines on people eligible to be BLOs. These proportions also mirror closely, the designation proportion data for all 11 ACs (10 from desktop research phase and Shantinagar AC, chosen purposively for the qualitative interview phase) as given in section 4 and reinforce the indication that several BLOs are not government, semi-government or retired government personnel.

Table 10: Spread of Occupation Classes of BLOs interviewed in the CATI phase

S. No	Occupation Class	Proportion
1	Teacher	37.7%
2	Clerk	17.9%
3	Tax Inspectors	6.6%
4	Revenue Inspectors	4.7%
5	Aanganwadi Teacher	3.8%
6	Social Worker	1.9%
7	Others	27.4%
	n	106

Contacting BLOs

A total of a 106 CATI interviews were conducted with BLOs. These BLOs were contacted on phone using a database of 2474 unique BLOs from the 10 ACs which were a part of this study found to have non erroneous telephone numbers during the desktop research phase. To achieve 106 successful interviews, a total of 2563 BLO contacts were dialled between 16/08/2016 and 30/08/2016. Table 11 shows a break-up of the phone calls made and the responses received.

Table 11: Break-up of the attempts* made to contact sampled BLOs

Status of attempts	Numbers
Call Answered	684
Successful Interviews	106
Interview disconnected without completion	229
Not interested in Interview	220
Others	129
Number ringing but call not answered	889
Number out of network coverage	295
Number switched off	245
Phone constantly engaged (3 successive attempts)	171
Invalid number	279
TOTAL	2563

*all numbers using which BLOs were not reached were attempted three times, at different times of the day to optimise probability of contacting them

6.4 What is the kind of support/training that they receive from the eci to perform their duties efficiently?

To help BLOs perform their duties efficiently and accurately, the ECI guidelines state that they be provided with a 'BLO Kit' and be trained adequately.

The BLO Kit

A BLO Kit is supposed to be made up of 7 elements as shown in Table 12 below. The table also shows that out of the BLOs interviewed, 48% claimed that they had never received a BLO Register, material crucial for collecting information to be sent to the ERO, such as voter detail modifications and number of eligible citizens not on the list at the time etc. that helps EROs guide corrective action. Therefore, not receiving the register has the potential to seriously affect their output. Of the ones who did report receiving the register, more than 90% reported that they receive it at least once a year or more, in line with the ECI's guidelines.

Table 12: Materials provided in the BLO Kit and the reported frequency at which BLOs receive each

(n = 106)	Never Received	Out of those who have received this	Receive less than once a year	Receive Once in a year	Receive Twice in a year	Receive Thrice or more a year
A BLO Register	48.1%		7.3%	49.1%	30.9%	12.7%
A Bag with the Election Commission of India's logo on it	37.7%		15.2%	50.0%	24.2%	10.6%
An appointment letter	24.5%		15.0%	57.5%	16.3%	11.3%
A BLO Identity Card	17.9%		29.9%	50.6%	13.8%	5.7%
A Booth Level Officer Handbook	49.1%		22.2%	51.9%	16.7%	9.3%
Blank forms to distribute/give to citizens	14.2%		5.5%	40.7%	27.5%	26.4%
Pens/Pencils and empty note-pads	21.7%		19.3%	50.6%	18.1%	12.0%

A BLO identity card can help BLOs interact with citizens more confidently, allay privacy fears and gain access to areas generally difficult to get into such as apartment complexes, gated communities and educational institutions. This issue was also highlighted in the qualitative interview phase where it was clear that BLOs felt that BLO-citizen interaction would benefit from such a document. However, 18% of the BLOs interviewed in the CATI phase reported never getting a BLO identity card.

A surprising finding is that 14% of BLOs reported never getting any blank forms that they could give to citizens. It is not clear how these BLOs help citizens who ask for forms but it is likely that they source these themselves and use photocopying to generate more. When talking about forms during the qualitative interview stage, one BLO stated **"They would have given it at once and we have to do some adjustments if there is any shortage."** The BLO, when asked of shortages said **"Sometimes it has happened and at time we have got it Xeroxed also"**

Of the BLOs who reported receiving blank forms in the CATI phase, 45% claimed to receive them only once a year or less frequently. Unless these BLOs photocopy the forms, such low frequency can affect the ability of BLOs to gather service requests from citizens.

Table 12 also shows that almost half of the BLOs interviewed (49%) reported that they had never received a BLO handbook, a document that BLOs can go to in case of any doubts around their roles and responsibilities. It is also particularly useful given that BLO training sessions are not very frequent, as detailed in the next sub section below.

BLO Training

At BLO training sessions, these part-time functionaries of the ECI are taught how they are supposed to go about fulfilling their duties efficiently. Training sessions are important not only from the point of view of induction of new BLOs but also from that of enhancing the learning of existing ones and keeping them motivated and up to date with new developments and challenges.

Close to half (47%) of the BLOs who answered the question on how often they received training (n = 94), said that they were trained less than once a year. Almost a fifth said this was less than once in two years. Even though, as one BLO remarked during the qualitative phase, a large number of the functions that a BLO performs are repetitive, such low frequency of training can be a demotivating factor and affect performance. This may also be especially so since these training sessions are also one of the very few touch points of BLOs with higher ECI layers such as the ERO, with mentoring, for example, being virtually absent as could be inferred from the qualitative interviews.

Three BLOs reported that they had never received training, all of whom claimed to have been BLOs for three years or more. Of the rest, 70% reported that they had received training in the last 1.5 years. While the frequency of BLO trainings is important, its quality, reflected in part by how satisfied BLOs are from such trainings, is of equal importance.

Of all BLOs who reported having undergone training, 95% said that they were either satisfied or extremely satisfied with 40% saying they were extremely satisfied. These BLOs were shown seven statements on the quality of BLO trainings and asked to select the ones behind their satisfaction.

Table 13 given below gives these statements, the percentage of people who stated that these were applicable reasons as well as the most important reason for their satisfaction.

Reasons	All that apply	Most important
The instructions given to us on what to do and how to do it were clear	91.8%	32.7%
Delivery mechanism i.e. how they taught the course/training content/level of interaction etc. was good	84.7%	23.5%
Knowledge and involvement of the trainer was adequate	80.6%	9.2%
Content of the training i.e. quality and relevance of the course/ training material was good	79.6%	17.3%
Duration of the course was adequate	71.4%	3.1%
Questions/concerns were addressed adequately	69.4%	6.1%
Distance of the training venue from home/office was not too much/large	53.1%	8.2%
N	98	98

More than 90% of the BLOs asked this question said that getting 'clear instructions' was one of the reasons behind their satisfaction. Around 80% or more also stated delivery mechanism, knowledge and involvement of the trainer and the training content as reasons. Getting clear instructions was also selected by most as the most important factor behind their satisfaction. Delivery mechanism was the second most selected 'most important' reason and content, third.

Another question asked in the CATI, on account of the ECI launching a new initiative called National Electoral Roll Purification Program 2016 (NERP) in July 2016, was whether BLOs had received any training specific to it. Of all 94 BLOs who claimed to have attended at least one training, only 19% reported that they had received training on NERP. Seventy seven percent said they hadn't and 4% were unsure if they had. However, the ECI's press release dated 20th July 2016 announcing the launch of this program claimed that all BLOs had already been trained on NERP 2016.

That most BLOs are satisfied with their training was also evident in the qualitative interview phase where most said that such trainings were useful and on asking for any improvements they would like, had no inputs to provide. However, what remains to be seen is how such trainings and the materials provided to BLOs reflect on the work that they are supposed to. Without attributing any causality, this will be elaborated upon to an extent in the next section.

6.5 How do Bangalore's BLOs go about doing their job?

A crucial part of any BLO's job is conducting door to door household visits. This is what allows for a comprehensive check of the voter list of a PP. Such exercises, which are to be done in a manner that covers a PP in entirety, allow BLOs to identify omissions, deletions as well as errors in voter details. This also helps in updating PP maps or 'Nazari Naksha'. The frequency with which these exercises are supposed to be conducted vary as such decisions are often communicated to BLOs by EROs. EROs can also ask BLOs to initiate such exercises whenever they deem fit or whenever they are instructed by higher-ups in the ECI's ladder.

Table 14 shows the number of door to door visits BLOs claimed they conducted each year by AC type. About 7% of all BLOs interviewed in the CATI phase (106) said that they conducted no such visits. This number was 10% for the BLOs who were from Inner ACs and only 2% for those in outer. The bulk, more than 80% claimed to be conducting between 1 and 5 such visits each year. Among BLOs from outer ACs, 49% claimed they conducted between 1 and 2 visits per year, 12% more than the proportion of BLOs from Inner ACs who claimed this. The proportion of BLOs who claimed to do between 3 and 5 visits a year was 48% in Inner ACs, 20% higher than this proportion in Outer ACs. At 16%, the proportion of BLOs who didn't know/couldn't recall the number of visits they did each year in Inner ACs was much higher than this proportion in Inner ACs (5%)

Table 14: Number of D2D visits conducted each year by AC Type (spread)

Number of D2D visits per year	All ACs	Inner ACs	Outer ACs
None	7%	10%	2%
1 to 2	42%	37%	49%
3 to 5	40%	48%	28%
6 and above	3%	2%	5%
Don't Know/Can't Recall	9%	5%	16%
n	106	63	43

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Covering a PP in its entirety while collecting a whole gamut of information from citizens within can take a large amount of time. As shown in Table 15 below, 51% of all BLOs claimed that each such exercise takes between 10 and 19 days for them to execute. It is important to note that when referring to 'number of days' this implies the number of days on which BLOs conduct this exercise, mostly outside their full time work hours and not an 8 hour BLO-workday. This number went up to 57% in Outer ACs but the proportion who reported taking between 20 and 29 days in Outer ACs, at 17%, was 8% lower than that in Inner ACs.

Data is analysed throughout the report with respect to the occupation class of teachers since they are known to be stressed resources sharing responsibilities such as collecting census data or working for other such government projects as and when demanded over and above their regular teaching jobs. As can be seen in Table 15, a higher proportion of teachers, 26%, reported taking between 20 and 29 days to finish one door to door exercise compared with all BLO occupation classes i.e. all BLOs in the sample, where this proportion was 21%.

Table 15: Time taken by BLOs to conduct each door to door exercise by AC Type (spread) and by Occupational Class, Teacher

Time taken for each D2D exercise	ALL ACs	Inner ACs	Outer ACs	Teachers
Less than 10 days	21%	23%	19%	18%
10 days or more but less than 20 days	51%	46%	57%	47%
20 days or more but less than 30 days	21%	25%	17%	26%
1 month or more but less than 1 month 15 days	5%	5%	5%	5%
1 month 15 days or more but less than 2 months	2%	2%	2%	3%
2 months or more but less than 2 months 15 days	0%	0%	0%	0%
n	99	57	42	38

A combined reading of the number of door to door exercises conducted annually and the time each visit takes gives us insights into the total time that BLOs spend each year on this exercise overall. Table 16 below shows that about 40% of BLOs to whom this question applied spent between 15 and 30 days a year on this exercise. Overall, 45% appear to be spending between 45 and 150 days a year doing so, an enormous amount of time considering they have full time jobs. While the majority do spend such time outside of working hours, it is possible that because of this demanding schedule of door to door visits, some of them devote their regular work time to performing the role of BLOs. This could potentially affect both their regular and BLO jobs adversely.

Table 16: Total number of days spent by BLOs to conduct door to door exercises* by AC Type (spread)

	ALL	Inner	Outer
5 to 10 days a year	11.2%	9.3%	14.3%
15 to 30 days a year	40.4%	40.7%	40.0%
45 to 60 days a year	19.1%	16.7%	22.9%
75 to 150 days a year	25.8%	29.6%	20.0%
More than 150 days a year	3.4%	3.7%	2.9%
n	89	54	35

*the number of days are computed using claimed frequency of the exercise and the claimed range of time it takes to do so. To arrive at a figure, mid points of the ranges from the latter were used. The ranges given here are not continuous as there are no figures in between the ranges given using this calculation

Most BLOs spoken with at the qualitative phase who elaborated on door to door exercises indicated that they took a month or more to finish such exercises. It is possible that the time taken for D2D visits as indicated by data from the CATI is somewhat understated as on telephone, BLOs may not have adequately thought of all factors that come into play during such an exercise.

Critical Functions to be performed by BLOs

As mentioned in the Introduction, BLOs are mandated by the ECI to perform 6 crucial data-oriented functions over and above maintenance of the voter list that directly affect the quality of voter lists in their PP.

1. Collect data on people who just turned 18 or are about to turn 18 in the PP
2. Collect data on new residential units/buildings that come up in the polling part
3. Collect data on number of males, females and others/third-gender in the polling part
4. Compare gender ratio of the polling part to district/Assembly Constituency census data
5. Update the Polling Part map (a visual representation of a Polling Part showing roads, lanes, buildings and houses within) and
6. Compare age-group proportion data with that of district/Assembly Constituency census data.

Some of them may be performed while conducting door to door visits and some, whilst conducting other drives such as awareness creation and targeted on-ground verifications. The frequency with which BLOs have to perform each of these 6 functions in a year vary according to the requirements of their EROs but overall, such functions have to be performed at least once a year. Understandably, some are to be performed with a higher frequency, such as collecting data on gender and age groups compared with updating the PP map, depending on the nature of the function.

Table 17 given on the next page lists these functions and the proportion of BLOs who claimed performing these each year/annually. It shows that on average, no BLO interviewed in the CATI phase reported doing all 6 in an average work year. The average number of tasks performed among all 106 BLOs stood at 4. The task performed most was on collecting data on people who just turned 18 or were about to turn 18, at 84% reporting doing so. In Outer ACs, 7% more BLOs reported doing this. This finding fits nicely with anecdotal evidence that suggests enrolment on the voter list is a higher priority than maintenance of the list once created. It also suggests a link between higher migrations seen in Outer ACs and increased efforts to enrol new voters in such areas. In fact, a reading of all 6 functions shows that compared to all ACs, more BLOs from Outer ACs perform each. A similar pattern can be observed among the occupation class, teachers, especially in updating PP maps i.e. teachers reported performing more tasks annually when compared with other occupational classes. Overall, collecting data on new residential buildings that come up in the PP and on gender were the second (72%) and third (70%) most commonly reported annual crucial functions undertaken.

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Table 17: Crucial functions performed by BLOs annually by AC Type (spread) and by Occupational Class, Teacher

Crucial functions a BLO is supposed to perform	ALL	Inner	Outer	Teacher
Collecting data on people who just turned 18 or are about to turn 18 in the polling part	84.0%	79.4%	90.7%	90.0%
Collecting data on the new residential units/buildings that come up in the polling part	71.7%	66.7%	79.1%	77.5%
Collecting data on number of males, females and others/third-gender in the polling part	69.8%	69.8%	69.8%	72.5%
Comparing gender ratio of the polling part to district/Assembly Constituency census data	60.4%	50.8%	74.4%	65.0%
Updating the Polling Part map (a visual representation of a Polling Part showing roads, lanes, buildings and houses within)	59.4%	58.7%	60.5%	77.5%
Comparing age-group proportion data with that of district/Assembly Constituency census data	52.8%	52.4%	53.5%	57.5%
N	106	63	43	40
Average number of tasks performed (out of 6)	4.0	3.8	4.3	4.4

From Table 17, it can also be seen that 'Updating the Polling Part map (a visual representation of a Polling Part showing roads, lanes, buildings and houses within)' and 'Comparing age-group proportion data with that of district/Assembly Constituency census data' are functions performed annually by the least number of BLOs at 59% and 53% respectively. The ordering of proportions fits well with the priority area for the ECI i.e. increasing enrolment, and also with the fact that some activities need to be performed with a higher frequency, such as collecting gender and age data on the citizenry.

The finding on PP map also ties in with findings from the qualitative phase suggesting that some BLOs may not consider updating PP maps as an important part of their job. However, in the CATI, when BLOs were asked of the importance of PP Maps in helping them with their jobs, 80% said it was very important. Perhaps it is felt that though the map is essential to do BLO work, updation of the same is just not required as frequently as changes/additions to residences are infrequent.

Findings from the qualitative phase appear to be consistent with CATI data on 'Comparing age-group proportion data with that of district/Assembly Constituency census data' which only 53% reported doing in any work year. BLOs, in the qualitative phase, when asked whether they conducted a 'Health Analysis' of their voter list, which is the umbrella of functions under which this particular one lies, simply said they didn't do any such analysis or did not know that they had to compare stats.

6.6 What are the kind of difficulties BLOs face while doing their job?

The functions mentioned in the section 6.5 are what BLOs are mandated to perform in order to keep the voter lists of their PP clean and updated. Most of these functions are carried out either during the door to door visits, awareness creation drives, targeted verification drives or any other on-ground exercises they conduct as and when instructed. However, in carrying their duties out, BLOs often face a myriad of issues.

The number of PPs a BLO serves

ECI guidelines state that one BLO be ideally given charge of only one PP i.e. an area of roughly 1200 to 1400 voters in an urban centre. This is because servicing voters of multiple PPs can affect their efficiency adversely and the ECI recognizes this. The more PPs a BLO handles, the more the time and effort they have to spend.

A look at data available online for all 11 ACs that were a subject in this study revealed that a total of 2751 BLOs service the 3006 PPs that are within these ACs. Table 18 shows that 92% of these 2751 BLOs are in charge of only 1 PP in accordance with guidelines. Only 8% are in charge of 2 or more out of which 4 BLOs (0.2% of all) are in charge of 4 or more PPs.

Table 18: BLOs in all 11 ACs and the number of PPs allotted to them

No. of PPs per BLO	Information from all 11 ACs
1	91.9%
2	7.6%
3	0.4%
4	0.1%
5	0.04%
n	2751

However, data given on websites is often dated and inaccurate and to get a better picture, BLOs interviewed in the CATI phase were asked if they were in charge of more than one PP and if so, how many. Table 19 shows their responses to these questions.

Table 19: BLOs and the number of PPs allotted to them from the CATI phase

No. of PPs per BLO	All ACs	Inner ACs	Outer ACs	Teachers
1 PP	56.3%	55.7%	57.1%	50.0%
2 PPs	16.5%	14.8%	19.0%	18.4%
3 PPs	5.8%	4.9%	7.1%	5.3%
4 PPs	7.8%	9.8%	4.8%	10.5%
5 PPs	2.9%	4.9%	0.0%	5.3%
6+ PPs	10.7%	9.8%	11.9%	10.5%
n	103	61	42	38

As can be seen from Table 19 above, 44% of the BLOs who answered this question claimed to be in charge of more than 1 PP, significantly more than what official 11AC data available online showed. The proportion of BLOs servicing 3 or more PPs in Inner ACs is higher by 6% compared to Outer ACs.

The time it takes to reach their allotted PPs

The number of PPs that a BLO serves has an inverse relationship with their ability to service voters adequately. Since a bulk of BLO work has to be executed while in the PPs they are in charge of, the time it takes BLOs to reach their PP is an equally crucial aspect and shares the same inverse relationship with servicing voters.

This is also one of the reasons why the ECI guidelines mandate that BLOs be drawn only from a pool of government, retired government or semi government personnel registered in that particular polling part, meaning that they reside there. However, as shown in Table 20 below, 32% of the BLOs interviewed in the CATI exercise said that they were not registered at any of the PPs they were in charge of. For inner ACs, this proportion stood at 41%.

Table 20: BLOs registered as a voter in any of the PPs they are in charge of

Are you registered as a voter in any of the PPs you're in charge of	ALL	Inner	Outer
Yes	67.9%	58.7%	81.4%
No	32.1%	41.3%	18.6%
n	106	63	43

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This may be so as at times, BLOs get allotted PPs closer to their workplace and from anecdotal evidence, they request to be allotted to such PPs. Anecdotal evidence also suggests that this is particularly true for Teachers and Aanganwadi workers as these occupational classes are known to be familiar with the citizens around their workplace and may hence be in a better position to play the role of a BLO.

BLOs were asked what the average journey time to their PP would be. For those who were allotted more than one PP, they were asked to report this for the one it takes the least amount of time to get to. This question was asked twice, once with respect to their home and second, their office. Table 21 shows the minimum average time indicated by BLOs from their home or office to their PP. It can be seen that 76% reported that it takes them 30 minutes or less one way to get to their PP. More than 10% reported that the minimum time it takes them from either home or office to their PP is an hour or more one way out of which 7% said it takes more than an hour and a half. Both these proportions were higher for BLOs from Inner ACs and the only BLOs who said that it takes them more than 1.5 hours were from Inner ACs.

Table 21: Minimum time it takes BLOs to reach their PP (from home or office one way)

	ALL	Inner	Outer
Less than 10 minutes	31.1%	23.8%	41.9%
10 to 20 minutes	29.2%	27.0%	32.6%
21 to 30 minutes	16.0%	20.6%	9.3%
31 to 45 minutes	7.5%	7.9%	7.0%
More than 45 minutes but less than 1 hour	5.7%	4.8%	7.0%
1 hour to 1.5 hours	3.8%	4.8%	2.3%
More than 1.5 hours	6.6%	11.1%	0.0%
n	106	63	43

A closer look at the data revealed that a higher proportion of 'Clerks' reported taking longer to get to their PPs compared with 'Teachers' which fits in with anecdotal evidence that teachers being allotted PPs closer to their workplace. Similarly, within the occupational class 'Aanganwadi Teachers', all BLOs reported taking 20 minutes or less. However, findings on 'Clerks' and 'Aanganwadi Teachers' have to be read with caution due to their low sample sizes (19 and 4 respectively).

Other issues around their on-ground work

Apart from the number of PPs a BLO services and the time it takes them to get to their PPs, findings from the qualitative phase suggested that there are several other factors that affect a BLO's functioning adversely. Some have been touched upon in the previous section, such as availability of materials, from the point of view of supply. However, to get an understanding on whether such issues and others are considered detrimental by BLOs, during the CATI phase they were read a series of issues, developed using findings from qualitative findings, and asked which affected them adversely.

Table 22 shows the statements BLOs were shown and their responses when asked which of these affected them adversely.

Issues	ALL ACs	Inner	Outer	Teacher	Males	Females
A lack of proper house numbering in the polling part	60.4%	57.1%	65.1%	60.0%	57.8%	62.3%
A lack of a valid BLO Identity Card (ID)	40.6%	34.9%	48.8%	35.0%	37.8%	42.6%
A lack of cooperation from the people/ citizens in the polling part	39.6%	34.9%	46.5%	47.5%	37.8%	41.0%
Your concerns on safety and security while in the polling part	35.8%	38.1%	32.6%	37.5%	40.0%	32.8%

Issues	ALL ACs	Inner	Outer	Teacher	Males	Females
Concentration of work in just a few months i.e. uneven spread of work over a year	30.2%	30.2%	30.2%	22.5%	26.7%	32.8%
Issues with access to certain household/ areas within the polling part	24.5%	31.7%	14.0%	22.5%	22.2%	26.2%
A lack of proper road/lane signage in the polling part	24.5%	22.2%	27.9%	17.5%	22.2%	26.2%
Frequent changing of the polling parts allotted to you	23.6%	23.8%	23.3%	20.0%	22.2%	24.6%
A lack of a proper Poling Part (PP) map or 'Nazari Naksha'	22.6%	22.2%	23.3%	27.5%	26.7%	19.7%
The time it takes to reach the Polling Part area	21.7%	23.8%	18.6%	30.0%	15.6%	26.2%
A lack of motivation and support from seniors/superiors	20.8%	22.2%	18.6%	30.0%	22.2%	19.7%
A lack of blank forms to be handed to the citizens	17.9%	15.9%	20.9%	15.0%	20.0%	16.4%
A lack of supervision from seniors	17.9%	20.6%	14.0%	12.5%	22.2%	14.8%
NONE	15.1%	19.0%	9.3%	15.0%	15.6%	14.8%
N	106	63	43	40	45	61

As can be seen in Table 22, 60% of the 106 BLOs interviewed stated that a lack of proper house numbering in their polling part affects their ability to work efficiently. However, only 25% said that a lack of road/lane signage affects them and only 23%, lack of a PP map. This finding, that only 23% consider a lack of PP maps as detrimental to their ability to work does not fit intuitively with the fact that 80% BLOs said that a PP map is 'very important' in 'helping them do their work as a BLO'. This could mean that while they think a PP map does aid them in their duties, they may have found out ways to work without it relying only on their ground knowledge given that 85% of BLOs claimed to have been one for 5 or more years.

Around 40% of BLOs said that not having a BLO ID card and a lack of citizen cooperation, two issues that may be linked closely with each other as IDs tend to help with access, were reasons affecting them adversely. This could also be linked to the finding that 36% of BLOs cited concerns on safety and security as a factor. During the qualitative phase, a few BLOs had voiced their concern in a manner that seemed to link a lack of credibility with the harassment they faced from citizens. One BLO even said **"People don't talk politely. When we told security guard that we are from BLO office, he let dogs free"**. From these qualitative surveys, it also appeared that when BLOs talked about citizen cooperation, they also took into account how citizens react on seeing issues regarding their details or requests on the voter list, most of which BLOs claimed had to do with back end systems, particularly data-entry. Relatedly, the CATI phase saw them being asked whether they agree or disagree with the statement 'Data entry mistakes by data entry operators are a major source of voter list errors such as incorrect names, age and address'. Of all BLOs (106), 54% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement while 34% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. The proportion of BLOs who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement in Outer ACs was much higher, at 44% compared with the proportion in Inner ACs which stood at only 23%. Ten percent of all BLOs neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. This proportion, among BLOs of Outer ACs was 21% compared with only 3% among BLOs on Inner ACs.

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From table 22, it can be seen that 30% of all BLOs said that "Concentration of work in just a few months i.e. uneven spread of work over a year" affected them adversely. Only 21% of BLOs said that the time it takes to reach their PP affects them. This may be explained by the fact that 77% of BLOs reported taking 30 minutes or less to reach their PP. Only 21% and 18% respectively reported that 'a lack of motivation and support from seniors/superiors' and 'a lack of supervision from seniors' affects their ability to work adversely. Surprisingly, 15% of BLOs reported that none of these issues affected them adversely with this proportion being much higher, 19%, within Inner ACs.

A look at Table 23 below shows that at 21% each, "A lack of a valid BLO Identity Card (ID)" and "A lack of proper house numbering in the polling part" were reasons stated by most BLOs as the issue that affects them most. Lack of a BLO ID card was cited by 30% of BLOs from Outer ACs compared with just 14% in Inner. Among BLOs from all ACs, "A lack of cooperation from the people/citizens in the polling part" was cited by 13.2% as the issue that affects them most.

Table 23: Most important issue that affects BLOs adversely by AC Type (spread), Occupation Class 'Teacher' and gender

Issues	ALL ACs	Inner	Outer	Teacher	Males	Females
A lack of a valid BLO Identity Card (ID)	20.8%	14.3%	30.2%	17.5%	17.8%	23.0%
A lack of proper house numbering in the polling part	20.8%	22.2%	18.6%	15.0%	22.2%	19.7%
A lack of cooperation from the people/citizens in the polling part	13.2%	11.1%	16.3%	15.0%	13.3%	13.1%
The time it takes to reach the Polling Part area	5.7%	7.9%	2.3%	7.5%	4.4%	6.6%
Your concerns on safety and security while in the polling part	5.7%	9.5%	0.0%	7.5%	4.4%	6.6%
A lack of motivation and support from seniors/superiors	5.7%	3.2%	9.3%	10.0%	11.1%	1.6%
Frequent changing of the polling parts allotted to you	2.8%	1.6%	4.7%	2.5%	0.0%	4.9%
A lack of proper road/lane signage in the polling part	2.8%	3.2%	2.3%	2.5%	2.2%	3.3%
A lack of supervision from seniors	2.8%	3.2%	2.3%	2.5%	2.2%	3.3%
Concentration of work in just a few months i.e. uneven spread of work over a year	1.9%	3.2%	0.0%	2.5%	2.2%	1.6%
A lack of blank forms to be handed to the citizens	1.9%	0.0%	4.7%	2.5%	2.2%	1.6%
A lack of a proper Poling Part (PP) map or 'Nazari Naksha'	0.9%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%	0.0%
Issues with access to certain household/areas within the polling part	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
NONE	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
N	106	63	43	40	45	61

Overall, it appears that not having a valid BLO ID card, issues with house numbering and a lack of cooperation from citizens is what affects BLOs most. These findings from the CATI align closely with findings from the qualitative phase where BLOs often spoke of issues with their work as a combination of credibility issues and citizen cooperation. These factors not only affect their ability to function efficiently, but also their satisfaction levels which can in turn, lead to non-performance.

6.7 How satisfied are Bangalore's BLOs about their job (and how, according to them, can things be improved)?

When asked how satisfied they were, taking into consideration everything around their role as a BLO, 78% stated that they were either satisfied or extremely satisfied. 18% said that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 4% that they were dissatisfied or extremely dissatisfied.

Findings from the qualitative interviews suggested that lack of recognition made BLOs feel less motivated to execute their duties. In the CATI, BLOs were also asked if they feel their hard work is recognised by their superiors/seniors. Sixty seven percent of all 106 BLOs either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement while 16% disagreed or strongly disagreed. 17% neither agreed nor disagreed. In Outer ACs, this proportion, of BLOs who were neutral, was much higher at 30%.

They were also asked if they agreed or disagreed with the statement 'Supervisors provide support and motivation to BLOs whenever required'. To this, of all BLOs in the CATI phase, 79% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. A look at those who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement revealed that this proportion among BLOs of inner ACs, at 16%, was much higher than in outer ACs (9%).

Another factor linked very closely with overall BLO satisfaction and motivation, as found in the qualitative phase, was regarding the 'honorarium/payment' they are supposed to receive for their work. This honorarium ranges from INR 4000 to INR 6000 per annum, depending on the ECI's revision, for the 1st PP that a BLO is in charge of and for each additional one, is INR 750 per annum.

Eleven percent of all 106 BLOs interviewed in the CATI phase said that they had never received any honorarium for the services they rendered as a BLO. This proportion was much higher in Outer ACs, at 19%.

Eighty nine percent of all BLOs reported that they had received some payment for their services. Only 63% reported receiving it every year as ordered by ECI. In Inner ACs, this proportion stood at 70% and in Outer ACs, much lower at 51%. Thirty seven percent of all BLOs reported that they received it intermittently. Out of these 37% BLOs who reported receiving honorariums less than once a year, 35% of BLOs from Outer ACs reported receiving it less than once in 3 years. However, this data within Inner and Outer ACs should be read with caution because of low sample base for this question. Table 24 below shows a detailed break up of claimed frequency of receipt of honorarium by BLOs who reported receiving it less than once a year.

OVERALL FINDINGS

Table 24: Claimed frequency of receipt of honorarium by BLOs who reported receiving it less than once a year (data to be read with caution due to low sample size)

	ALL	Inner	Outer
Less than once in 4 years	10.7%	7.1%	14.3%
Once in 4 years to less than once in 3	14.3%	7.1%	21.4%
Once in 3 years to less than once in 2	28.6%	35.7%	21.4%
Once in 2 years to less than once a year	46.4%	50.0%	42.9%
n	28	14	14

Out of the 106 BLOs interviewed in the CATI phase, the 94 who reported receiving an honorarium were asked of the amount they received last. As per the ECI's mandate 2015 onwards, BLOs are supposed to receive INR 5000 for the first PP they service and INR 750 for each additional PP. This amount, for the first PP was INR 3000 between the years 2011 and 2014. 10 BLOs stated that they did not remember the amount received last. Table 25 shows the responses of the other 84 who did recall the amount they received last by AC type and the occupation class Teacher.

Table 25: Honorarium amount received last by AC Type (spread) and the occupation class, Teacher

	ALL	Inner	Outer	Teacher
Less than INR 1000	11.9%	16.4%	3.4%	6.5%
INR 1000 to 1999	13.1%	18.2%	3.4%	22.6%
INR 2000 to 2999	1.2%	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%
INR 3000 to 3999	22.6%	23.6%	20.7%	12.9%
INR 4000 to 4999	27.4%	21.8%	37.9%	35.5%
INR 5000 to 5999	19.0%	12.7%	31.0%	16.1%
INR 6000 +	4.8%	5.5%	3.4%	6.5%
n*	84	55	29	31

*out of the 94 BLOs who claimed to have received honorarium, 10 could not recall the amount received last

Out of the rest, as can be seen in table 25, 26% of all BLOs reported that they had received less than INR 3000. In Inner ACs, the proportion who had received less than INR 3000 was 36% and in Outer, only 7%. Reading all data on honorarium suggests that while BLOs from Inner ACs receive honorariums more frequently when compared with those from outer ACs, they receive amounts much lower than that mandated by the ECI.

On enquiring when they had received this last amount, 30% of Inner AC BLOs and a markedly higher 73% of Outer AC BLOs said they had received this within the last one year. 27% of BLOs from Inner ACs reported getting it 2 years or later while this proportion in Outer ACs was much lower at just 6%.

Improvements in their working, as suggested by BLOs – Qualitative Phase

To understand how BLOs think their jobs can be made easier or can be improved, during the qualitative interview phase, they were asked for suggestions. Overall, the areas that most BLOs talked about when asked for suggestions mirrored closely the issues they had stated but articulation of the suggestion often ended up being an articulation of the issue itself.

Almost all BLOs indicated that they would appreciate improvements regarding their payment. A few BLOs spoke of alternate ways of giving money on time through cheques and online transfers. Said one BLO **“Nowadays all payments are made online, so they can pay us directly online”**.

Back end data entry was another area where some made suggestions. One BLO said that they should sit along with operators to make sure there are no issues in entry. Most just said that operators should work better in order to ensure there are no errors arising out of this process.

Apart from these suggestions, voiced by a majority of those interviewed, there were some others that had to do with the PP map. BLOs felt that these should be updated properly, with one stating that **“There will be new building which will be getting constructed and there are vacant sites and in a building there are 5 to 6 floors and sometimes the area would have got extended, they have to add the extended areas. Those things have to be done”**.

The study had also tried to make an effort to understand if BLOs felt that technology can help with their work and how they thought it could by asking them so. While some of them said that the use of computers could help them, most just stated that it could help but did not elaborate further.





7. Summary Of Findings

Booth Level Officers, or BLOs, were introduced as a layer into the Voter List Management machinery in India post 2006. This was done after a successful experiment in the state of West Bengal led the ECI to believe that introducing a layer of ground based personnel for voter list maintenance throughout the year would work better than having them only for select months in a year, which was how the ECI operated then. Today, BLOs are the layer closest to the citizen and in essence, the face of the ECI. Each BLO is in charge of maintenance of the voter list of, ideally, one Polling Part (PP), an area comprising up to 1400 voters in an urban centre. Since their introduction, it is believed that the quality of voter lists has become better and these foot soldiers have been acknowledged by the ECI as one of the key forces behind this improvement.

However, India's rapid urbanization poses a challenge to the quality of our voter lists, particularly urban voter lists. It is estimated that by 2050, over 50% of India will be residing in urban centres meaning that by then, 400 million more citizens will be a part of our cities and towns. There is reason to believe that India's rapid urbanization and resultant citizen mobility is putting an inordinate amount of stress on existing VLM systems and as a result, urban voter lists are riddled with errors. With urbanization only set to increase, there is an urgent need to improve the systems underlying VLM, a crucial part of which is the BLO style of functioning.

This study in Bangalore, the findings of which have been summarised below, was undertaken in an effort to understand better this layer of VLM and identify areas in the functioning of BLOs that need strengthening. It was executed in phases which included 10 qualitative depth interviews and 106 Computer Aided Telephonic Interviews (CATIs) with BLOs across Bangalore using stratified random sampling.

1. Who are Bangalore's BLOs?

From information available on the website of the CEO, Karnataka, there are a total of 3077 Polling Parts in the 11 ACs that were a part of this study. Out of these, BLO information of 3021 PPs was available inside downloadable PDF files. Post cleaning, information for 3006 PPs was obtained out of which 10 PPs, all in AC number 163 had no BLO information available. It was found that the rest, 2996 PPs, are being serviced by only 2751 BLOs. 92% of these BLOs were found to be in charge of only 1 PP as stated in the ECI's guidelines but 8% were in charge of two or more PPs. A look at the detailed BLO information provided on the website for these 11 ACs showed that designation and occupation information for two ACs, Bommanahalli and KR Puram, was not available, in violation of ECI guidelines that mandate that such information be made available to citizens. A total of 727 BLO designations were missing.

The majority of all BLOs interviewed in the CATI phase were female (58%) and two thirds, between 30 and 59 years old. Forty three percent of all BLOs, a layer introduced at the end of 2006, interviewed in the CATI phase said they have been one for 7 years or more. A majority of the BLOs from the 11 ACs that were a subject of this study were Teachers (37%). The second biggest occupation class was that of Clerks (21%) followed by Tax Inspectors (10%), Revenue Inspectors (6%) and Aanganwadi Teachers (5%). Some Students, Private School Teachers and even Janaagraha employees were found on the list of BLOs in Bangalore obtained from the website of the CEO, Karnataka; this is in violation of the ECI guidelines mandating that only govt., semi govt., and retired govt. personnel be hired as BLOs.

2. What is the kind of support/training that they receive from the ECI to perform their duties efficiently?

To help BLOs perform their duties efficiently and accurately, ECI guidelines state that they be provided with a 'BLO Kit' and be trained adequately. However, a large proportion of BLOs reported that they had never received some of these materials that can help them do their job. 18% reported that they had never received a BLO ID card, 25% an appointment letter, 48% a BLO register and 48%, the BLO handbook. An absence of any of these documents/materials has the potential to become a major impediment to BLOs carrying out their duties.

During the qualitative phase, while most BLOs reported being satisfied with the trainings that they received, a few issues with quality were raised. Data from the CATI showed that most BLOs were indeed satisfied (95%) and most felt that quality was also good. However, it also showed that the frequency of trainings was quite low. A little under 47% of all BLOs reported that they received trainings less than once a year and more than 51% reported that the last time they had received any training was more than a year ago.

3. How do Bangalore's BLOs go about doing their job?

A crucial part of any BLO's job is conducting door to door household visits. This is what allows for a comprehensive check of the voter list of a PP. Such exercises, which are to be done in a manner that covers a PP in entirety, allow BLOs to identify omissions, deletions as well as errors in voter details and an important tool used in such exercises is the PP map or the 'Nazari Naksha'.

However, 7% of all BLOs interviewed in the CATI phase (106) said that they conducted no such door to door household visits. This number was 10% for the BLOs who were from Inner ACs and only 2% for those in Outer ACs. A majority of all BLOs did report conducting such visits anywhere between 1 and 5 such exercises in a year and, 45% appeared to be spending between 45 and 150 days a year doing so, an enormous amount of time and effort considering they would have been performing the duties required by their full time jobs on these days as well. While the majority may be spending such time outside of working hours, it is possible that because of this demanding schedule of door to door visits, some of them devote their regular work time to performing the role of BLOs. This could potentially affect both their regular and BLO jobs adversely, especially for teachers. Moreover, findings from the qualitative phase suggest that this proportion, of BLOs who spend between 45 and 150 days, could be higher than shown by CATI data.

BLOs are mandated by the ECI to perform certain crucial functions that directly affect the quality of voter lists in their PP at least once a year. Some of them may be performed while conducting door to door visits and some, whilst conducting other drives such as awareness creation and targeted on-ground verifications. However, findings from both qualitative interviews and the CATI suggested that no BLO performed all functions required of them annually. Most, in the qualitative phase, were not aware of what is called 'health analysis', a function crucial in measuring the completeness and quality of a voter list. In the CATI, only 53% reported comparing age cohort proportions to census data and only 60% reported comparing their PP's gender ratio with census data, two parts of conducting a health analysis.

Overall, it can be said that most BLOs, despite claiming to find trainings satisfactory and useful, were found to be not performing critical functions, some of which are also used to inform strategic action by higher layers in the ECI.

4. What are the kind of difficulties these BLOs face while doing their job?

Issues around receipt of material and training can affect a BLO's performance adversely. However, they also face other challenges, sometimes linked with material and training, that can compound their difficulties. The number of PPs a BLO is in charge of and the time it takes them to reach their allotted PPs are two of those. Findings from the telephonic interviews showed that 44% of BLOs are in charge of more than 1 PP, significantly higher than the 8% suggested by a reading of the data available online. More BLOs from Outer ACs appeared to be servicing 3 or more PPs as well. This goes against the ECI's guideline of having one BLO for one PP which recognises that a single BLO may find it difficult to work efficiently if in charge of such a large volume of voters.

These guidelines also mandate that BLOs should be selected from among those residing and therefore registered on the voter list at the PP for which they will be given charge of. This follows from the assumption that those residing in the PP they are in charge of will know its citizens better and they will be more accessible to its citizens. However, 32% of the BLOs interviewed in the telephonic interview phase said they were not registered as a voter in the PP they were in charge of. Moreover, more than 10% of BLOs interviewed reported that it takes them an hour or more to get to their allotted PP out of which 7% said it takes more than an hour and a half, something that can affect their ability to service their PPs significantly.

To get an understanding on whether issues around receipt of material and training are considered detrimental by BLOs, they were read a series of issues and asked, in the CATI phase, which ones affected them adversely. Overall, it appeared that not having a valid BLO ID card, issues with on-ground house numbering and a lack of cooperation from citizens is what affects BLOs most. These findings from the CATI align closely with findings from the qualitative phase where BLOs often spoke of issues with their work as a combination of credibility issues and citizen cooperation. These factors not only affect their ability to function efficiently, but also their satisfaction levels which can in turn, lead to non-performance.

5. How satisfied are Bangalore's BLOs about their role (and how, according to them, can things be improved)?

When asked how satisfied they were, taking into consideration everything around their role as a BLO, 78% stated that they were either satisfied or extremely satisfied. 18% said that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 4% that they were dissatisfied or extremely dissatisfied. However, a look at factors aligned closely with satisfaction as well as motivation revealed that this satisfaction may have more to do with the satisfaction they get by performing the role of a BLO and helping citizens rather than with how the VLM machinery supports and treats them.

A key factor that appeared to affect the motivation of BLOs, apart from issues faced while performing their job, was the honorarium BLOs are supposed to be paid. This honorarium ranges from INR 3000 between 2011 and 2014 to INR 5000 in 2015 and 2016 for the 1st PP that a BLO is in charge of. For each additional one, it remains at around INR 750 per annum. However, a significant proportion of all 106 BLOs interviewed in the CATI phase, 11%, said that they had never received any honorarium for the services they rendered as a BLO. This proportion was much higher in Outer ACs, at 19%. Only 55% reported receiving it every year as ordered by ECI. Additionally, among the ones who claimed having received honorariums, 26% said that they had received less than INR 3000 with 25% of this receiving less than INR 2000, an amount substantially less than the ECI mandated amount.





8. Discussion

Booth level officers are government, semi government or retired government personnel who, besides holding full time jobs in the former cases, also perform functions required of them to maintain voter lists and are one of the most crucial layers in the entire VLM machinery in India. They are the single point of on-ground verification of voter claims and requests and are also one of the largest sources of data on the electorate. Given this, any issue in their functioning is likely to have a direct impact on the quality of voter lists. To understand better their functioning, the findings of this study have been presented as answers to 5 key questions framed around BLOs and their work and it is evident that challenges lie at every part of the BLO system as it exists today.

1. Who are Bangalore's BLOs?
2. What is the kind of support/training that they receive from the ECI to perform their duties efficiently?
3. How do they go about doing their job (BLO work)?
4. What are the kind of difficulties they face while doing their job?
5. How satisfied are Bangalore's BLOs about their role (and how, according to them, can things be improved)?

These questions have helped highlight that issues exist at each stage, right from BLO appointment and PP allocation explored in question 1 to payment of BLO honorariums, explored in question 5. The study also suggested that issues exist at back-end data entry into the ERMS and these add not only to the errors on the voter list, but also to the challenges BLOs face on ground while performing their duties. Table 26 given below highlights the main issues plaguing the BLO system in Bangalore that need to be addressed in order to make the existing system perform to its potential.

Table 26: Key Issues in the BLO system in Bangalore

Question/Lens	Key Issue(s) Identified
Who are Bangalore's BLOs?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recruitment/Appointment of adequate numbers of BLOs is not being done and as a result multiple PPs are being allocated to one BLO (or there is no allocation), in violation of the ECI's guidelines 2. Despite the ECI's guidelines suggesting 'Teachers' be left out as much as possible from being appointed as BLOs, a majority in Bangalore are teachers
What is the kind of support/training that they receive from the ECI to perform their duties efficiently	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Materials required by BLOs to perform their duties, such as IDs and BLO registers are not being adequately provided to them 4. The frequency with which BLOs are being trained is quite low
How do they go about doing their job (BLO work)?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. BLOs spend a large amount of time outside their regular work hours to maintain voter lists. This affects not just their role as a BLO, but also potentially their full time jobs 6. BLOs do not perform all crucial functions required of them to maintain clean voter lists, especially 'Health Analysis' and updating Polling Part (PP) Maps
What are the kind of difficulties they face while doing their job?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Several BLOs are allocated PPs far away from both their residence and office making access, and therefore performing their duties, difficult 8. BLOs have to bear the brunt of the anger of citizens arising out of back-end data entry errors, on which they have limited or no control 9. A lack of a BLO ID card, cooperation from citizens and house numbering affects adversely their work most.
How satisfied are Bangalore's BLOs about their role (and how, according to them, can things be improved)?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. BLO Honorariums are either not paid, not paid on time or not paid in full 11. Issues around the recognition of their work and honorarium appears to affect their motivation levels negatively

These issues, given in Table 26, are also linked to each other in multiple ways. For example, inadequate provision of materials such as BLO ID cards creates difficulties for them while interacting with citizens. Not receiving or receiving honorariums which are not satisfactory leads to low motivation levels and contributes to not just poor execution of BLO work but also difficulties in appointing adequate number BLOs. This is likely why several private sector personnel in Bangalore have been tasked with the job of a BLO in clear violation of the ECI's guidelines. To address these issues, some clear steps have to be taken spanning each level of the BLO style of functioning as well as at the back-end VLM system. The low hanging fruits include:

1. Creating an honorarium payment system that is timely, transparent and efficient
2. Increase frequency of BLO trainings and create BLO assessment modules to evaluate their knowledge levels regularly
3. Provide all required BLO materials to them on time and on demand using a centralised disbursement system that allows for shipment tracking
4. Allocate PPs efficiently to optimise BLO availability and the time it takes to reach allotted PPs
5. Improving back-end data entry software to minimize operator errors

These steps can go a long way in ensuring that the BLO system, in its current form with strong guidelines, works efficiently. However, evidence from this study also suggests that changes in the existing BLO system itself are needed to improve overall voter list management. These changes include redefining BLO work processes such as moving the execution of 'health analysis' to higher layers within VLM to reduce the overall work burden on BLOs as well as exploring allowing BLOs time for list maintenance within their regular working hours during fixed periods in a year. All these need to be explored actively and systemic reforms initiated.

Addressing Issues Systemically

There are three broad systemic reform areas to be addressed within Voter List Management in India:

1. Voter Registration and Data Standards
2. Voter Awareness and
3. Polling Booth Management

These three are what help a citizen complete their journey to the polling booth and exercise their right to vote and the BLO system is crucial to these, especially the first two. Improving it will result in benefits to both registration and data standards as well as awareness. **But improving the BLO style of functioning involves primarily two steps mentioned in part earlier, 1) ensuring adherence to the already strong guidelines prescribed by the ECI and 2) redefining work flows to reduce the burden on BLOs and improve the quality of their output. Towards both these ends, technology offers solutions. Creating smart technology enabled workflows for BLOs involving hand held devices for servicing voter requests, GIS mapping of PP boundaries, improved MIS systems for performance management etc. can help improve the BLO system greatly. Additionally, technology driven reforms such as Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) and Database Linkages that can help identify voter movement can also help the system in reducing BLO workload by targeting their intervention better.**

The ECI is known across the globe as one of the most innovative Electoral Management Boards (EMB). However, the BLO system, brought in to keep voter lists clean given the size and spread of the Indian electorate, has not seen enough technology based reform. It is time the ECI initiate reforms to the BLO style of functioning along the lines mentioned above to ensure that, in the face of rapid urbanization and increasing migration, urban voter lists remain clean. The findings of this study can inform the beginnings of such an endeavour.





9. Appendices

9.1 Classification of Bangalore's ACs (inner/peripheral and migration type)

S. No.	AC No	AC Name	Inner/Peripheral	Migration Type	2001 Pop (census)	2011 Pop (census)	DECADAL GROWTH	DECADAL CAGR
1	159	Pulakeshinagar	Inner	O	221549	261438	18.0%	1.7%
2	156	Mahalakshmi Layout	Inner	H	238967	339150	41.9%	3.6%
3	160	Sarvagnanagar	Inner	H	266283	375445	41.0%	3.5%
4	158	Hebbal	Inner	H	216977	282765	30.3%	2.7%
5	157	Malleshwaram	Inner	O	240889	243642	1.1%	0.1%
6	162	Shivajinagar	Inner	O	219480	211726	-3.5%	-0.4%
7	161	C.V.Ramannagar	Inner	H	232651	300770	29.3%	2.6%
8	164	Gandhinagar	Inner	O	245074	248389	1.4%	0.1%
9	165	Rajajinagar	Inner	O	225627	232429	3.0%	0.3%
10	166	Govindarjnagara	Inner	H	222124	305725	37.6%	3.2%
11	163	Shanthinagar	Inner	O	243408	252031	3.5%	0.3%
12	167	Vijayanagar	Inner	H	253499	324375	28.0%	2.5%
13	168	Chamajpet	Inner	O	224892	237460	5.6%	0.5%
14	169	Chikpet	Inner	O	242264	234327	-3.3%	-0.3%
15	170	Basavanagudi	Inner	O	212308	243251	14.6%	1.4%
16	172	B.T.M Layout	Inner	H	252301	318678	26.3%	2.4%
17	171	Padmanabhanagar	Inner	H	228620	306353	34.0%	3.0%
18	173	Jayanagar	Inner	O	206755	229088	10.8%	1.0%
19	175	Bommanahalli	Inner	H	190861	436802	128.9%	8.6%
20	152	Bytarayanapura	Outer	H	164472	374299	127.6%	8.6%
21	150	Yelahanka	Outer	O	91294	171500	87.9%	6.5%
22	174	Mahadevpura	Outer	H	179838	431976	140.2%	9.2%
23	155	Dasarahalli	Outer	O	225995	445604	97.2%	7.0%
24	151	K.R.Puram	Outer	O	243050	447015	83.9%	6.3%
25	154	Rajarajeswarinagar	Outer	O	264596	432857	63.6%	5.0%
26	153	Yeshwanthpur	Outer	H	108530	284476	162.1%	10.1%
27	176	Bangalore South	Outer	H	180851	472104	161.0%	10.1%

9.2 The qualitative depth interview instrument

Interview guide – BLO interviews Bangalore

[Recording of BLO's details as given in the list]

AC Number	
PP Number	
BLO Name	
BLO Contact	
Interview Date	

[Interviewer to say the below:]

Hello! I am _____ **(MENTION YOUR NAME)**
from Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy, a Bangalore based non-profit that works on transforming quality of life in India's towns and cities. Founded in December 2001, today it works with citizens on catalysing active citizenship in neighbourhoods and with governments to institute reforms to city-systems (generally referred to as urban governance). We regularly conduct studies among citizens and functionaries of the government on various subjects and services. Currently, we are undertaking a study across Bangalore on the role of Booth Level Officers in Voter List Management to identify areas in their working that can be strengthened. In this regard, we would like to request for some of your valuable time. Can you please spare some time? Thank you.

Please be assured that all information given by you will be kept strictly confidential. The responses collected will be added together with the responses of several other BLOs across Bangalore before presenting the findings. Under no circumstance will personal and individual information be disclosed to any private or government authority. Also, this is only a study to strengthen voter list management across India and not a test and therefore, there are no wrong or right answers. We encourage you to be as honest and elaborate as possible while taking part in this survey.

Will you be interested in being a part of this survey?

[Getting written consent and recording of interview start time] – Doc to be prepared

Interview Start Time _____ and End Time _____
 _____ (in HR:MIN PM/AM format)

Main interview guide (mix of closed and open ended questions)

Q1. Since how long have you been a BLO, for any Polling Part in any Assembly Constituency?

(Int. instruction - tick in table below Q2)

Q2. Since how long have you been a BLO for Poling Part number XX in Assembly Constituency XXX?

(Int. instruction - tick in table below; interviewer to note that time period mentioned for Q2 cannot exceed that for Q1. In case it does, ask respondent if they are sure by pointing out what they said in Q2)

Time	Q2	Q3
0-6 months	1	1
6 months to 11 months	2	2
1 year to 1 year and 11 months	3	3
2 years to 3 years and 11 months	4	4
4 years to 4 years and 11 months	5	5
5 years to 5 years and 11 months	6	6
6 years or more	7	7

Q3. Are you currently a BLO of more than one polling part? If you are or if you have been, can you tell us for how many polling parts were you/are you a BLO for?

Q4.

- Can you tell us a bit about the geographical size of the area where you are the BLO? If you are currently a BLO of more than one area, please tell us about polling part number XX. (int. instruction – interviewer to replace 'XX' with the PP number that they have been given as the PP this particular BLO is in charge of; explain geographical size to the respondent as 'the total area covered by their PP')
- Can you tell us the approximate number of people residing in the polling part of which you are a BLO?

Q5.

- Can you elaborate on the nature of people staying in your area in terms of migration i.e. a bit about how many people have stayed there for years and how many have recently moved? Similarly, how many people keep moving in and out of the polling part on average in a year?
- Have you ever received an official letter of appointment/appointment order from the Election Commission of India or the Chief Electoral Officer, Karnataka's office enlisting you as a BLO of polling part number XX?

SECTION HEADER – Knowledge on Roles and Responsibilities of A BLO

Section description: Interviewer to say - This next set of questions will be about your activities as a BLO.

Q6.

- When and how many times have you been involved in revisions, of any kind, to the voter list of your polling part?? (Int. instruction – probe.)
- When and how many times have you worked on summary revisions to the voter list of your polling part? (Int. instruction – if the BLO appears to not know what a summary revision is, tell him that 'a summary revision is usually conducted once in a year, and the existing voter list is published, inviting claims and objections. There is no house to house enumeration and after disposing off of claims and objections, the final voter list is published'.)
- When and how many times have you carried out/been a part of intensive revisions to the voter list of your polling part? (Int. instruction – if the BLO appears to not know what an intensive revision is, tell him that 'an intensive revision is usually conducted once in 8-10 years, and voter lists of all PPs are created from scratch/start after discarding the existing list'.)

Q7. There are several forms available for citizens to use in case they want their name entered into the list or their details changed etc. Can you tell us what form XXXX (Int. instruction – read out names of forms from the list below) is used for? (Int. instruction – question to be asked for each of the forms mentioned in the table below and answer written in space provided next to the form's name)

Form name	Purpose of the form as stated
1) Form-6	
2) Form-7	
3) Form-8	
4) Form-8A	
5) Form-6A	
6) Form-17	
7) Form-18	
8) Form-19	

Q8.

- When accepting forms from citizens, what type of proof/supporting documents do you ask for from citizens?
- Please tell us which documents you accept as AGE PROOF? (int. instruction – probe by asking 'any other document?'. DO NOT READ OUT THE OPTIONS GIVEN BELOW. Based on the answer, tick where ever applicable in the grid below. In case the answer includes a document not given in the list below, write it next to 'OtherX' and put a tick next to it)

S. No	Document	TICK for Q8
1	Birth certificate from Municipality/Registrar of birth and death	1
2	Birth certificate from school	2
3	10th class marksheet	3
4	PAN Card	4
5	Aadhar card	5
6	Driving License	6
7	Affidavit of age proof	7
8	Other1	8
9	Other2	9
10	Other3	10

- c. Do you check the authenticity of these documents submitted as proof of age? If so, how do you do so? (int. instruction – probe)
- d. What do you do/ask for in case none of these AGE PROOF documents you think are acceptable are available with the applicant?

Q9.

- a. Please tell us the type of documents that you accept as ADDRESS PROOF. (int. instruction – probe by asking 'any other document?'. Based on the answer, tick wherever applicable in the grid below. In case the answer includes a document not given in the list below, write it next to 'OtherX' and put a tick next to it)

S. No	Document	TICK for Q9.1
1	Birth certificate from Municipality/Registrar of birth and death	1
2	Birth certificate from school	2
3	10th class marksheet	3
4	PAN Card	4
5	Aadhar card	5
6	Driving License	6
7	Affidavit of address proof	7
8	Other1_____	8
9	Other2_____	9
10	Other3_____	10

- b. Do you check the authenticity of these documents submitted as proof of address? If so, how do you do so? (int. instruction – probe)
- c. What do you do/ask for in case none of these ADDRESS PROOF documents you think are acceptable are available with the applicant?

Q10.

- a. Have you ever received a 'BLO Kit' from your ERO, the CEO or any of your superiors? (int. instruction – explain to the respondent that this is a kit which contains materials that help BLOs perform their duties effectively)

Option	Code	Instruction
Yes	1	Skip to Q10.3
No	2	Go to the next question - Q10.2 and then Skip to Q11.1

- b. You said you haven't ever received a 'BLO Kit'. Can you tell us if you have received any materials/ collaterals from your superiors that are supposed to help you perform your duties? If so, what all did you get? (int. instruction – Wait for the respondent to answer and record in the grid below. Once the respondent stops answering, read out all options below not ticked and asked if they receive it as a part of these materials)

Item	Code
Received nothing/None	0
Voter List/Electoral roll of their PP	1
BLO register	2
BLO ID card	3
BLO Handbook	4
Blank forms (6, 6A, 7, 8, and 8A)	5

Item	Code
Error reports of the voter list/electoral roll of their PP	6
Other item1 - _____ (write)	7
Other item2 - _____ (write)	8

(int. instruction – after asking Q10.2, skip to Q11.1)

- c. I will now read out names of a few items. Please listen to these and tell us which of these are present/ usually present in the BLO kit you receive. (int. instruction – Read out all options given in the table below Q 10.4 one by one and tick under column 'Code', all options to which the respondent says 'yes')
- d. Is there any other item, apart from the ones I just read out, that you usually get in your BLO Kit? (int. instruction – if the respondent says 'Yes', ask them to name the item and record it in the grid below in 'other itemX'. If the respondent says 'No' or cannot recall even after probing, move to the next question)

Item	Code
Voter List/Electoral roll of their PP	1
BLO register	2
BLO ID card	3
BLO Handbook	4
Blank forms (6, 6A, 7, 8, and 8A)	5
Error reports of the voter list/electoral roll of their PP	6

- e. Are there any other resources, such as the ones I mentioned above, that you receive or that you use to help perform your role as a BLO? If yes, can you please tell us what it is/these are and who you get it from? (int. instructions – probe and make sure that if the answer to the first question is 'yes', they answer what it is and who they get it from)

Item	Code
Other item1 - _____ _ (write)	1
Other item2 - _____ (write)	2
Other item3 - _____ (write)	3

Q11.

- a. We would like to now ask you about the information you collect about your polling part. Do you collect information on____ (int. instruction – Read out statements one by one and for each that the respondent says 'Yes' to, tick in the column labelled 'Code'.)

PARTS OF BLO REGISTER	Code
correction for existing entries/citizens listed household wise	1
birth date, telephone number and mail id of citizens etc.	2
newly developed areas, apartments that have come up etc.	3
eligible voters who are not in the roll yet	4
household-wise population and gender ratio	5

- b. How often do you submit this information in a year and to whom do you submit it to?

Q12.

- a. I will now read out a list of categories and would like you to tell me how you identify whether an entry, meaning an enrolled citizen, falls under that category or type. (int. instruction – read out all categories given in the table below one by one and allow the respondent to answer. Record their answers in the table next to the category asked)

Category	Record answer here	
Shifted		1
Repeated		2
Missing		3
Expired		4
Disqualified		5

- b. Can you also tell us when, in a year, do you go about checking entries i.e. enrolled citizens of whether they fall into any of the categories I just mentioned ? (int. instruction – probe by saying ‘for e.g., when do you confirm whether a citizen has shifted or not, whether they are alive or not etc.; ask the respondent to mention all possible times when they do this)

Q13.

- a. Can you tell us when the latest ‘Nazariya Naksha’ of your polling part was made and who made it? (int. instruction – If the respondent does not know what it is, explain that it is a map showing the boundaries of the polling part and the houses/buildings inside it and is printed on the second page of a polling part’s voter list)
- b. Is the ‘Nazariya Naksha’ of your polling part hand-made or made using computers?
(int. instruction – if the respondent says that they have made the ‘Nazariya Naksha’ in Q13.1, go to the next question Q14.1. If the respondent says they have not, skip to Q14.2)

Q14.

- a. You told us that you made the latest ‘Nazariya Naksha’ of your polling part. Please take us through all steps in how you did this, starting from how you cover your polling part to how you allot house numbers in detail. (Int. instruction – probe)
- b. Can you tell us how you record house numbers and what you do in case new houses come up in your polling part? (int. instruction – probe by asking, who allots these house numbers and what do you do in case there is none?)

- Q15. You said you haven’t made the ‘Nazariya Naksha’ of your PP or updated it. Can you tell us why you haven’t done so? (int. instruction – probe by asking ‘is it because you weren’t instructed to do so or because it is not your responsibility’)

SECTION HEADER – General Work Procedures Followed/Practiced

Section description: Interviewer to say – The next section will ask questions on how you carry out your routine functions as a BLO.

Q16.

- a. How many times in a year, on average, do you conduct door-to-door visits in your polling part?
- b. When do you conduct this exercise i.e. door to door visits, and on whose instruction?

Q17.

- a. While conducting door-to-door visits, how exactly do you go about covering your polling part?
- b. How long does it take for you to conduct one such exercise i.e. door to door visits covering your entire polling part? (Int. instruction - probe)

Q18. Can you tell us in detail, the activities you undertake or everything you do while conducting such drives? (Int. instruction - probe)

Q19.

- a. What are the activities that you undertake specifically to increase voter awareness i.e. encourage enrolment on the voter list, encouraging people to turn out for voting etc.? (Int. instruction - probe)
- b. How often in a year do you work on increasing voter awareness i.e. encouraging enrolment on the voter list, encouraging people to turn out for voting etc.?

Q20.

- a. When citizens hand over forms to you, do you check for its completeness and whether the information provided on the forms is correct? (int. instruction – if the respondent says that they do check for this, ask Q20.2. If not, skip to Q 20.3)
- b. How do you check the completeness and correctness of the information entered? Is there any procedure you follow to ensure that all required information is filled and is also filled in the way it is supposed to be? (Int. instruction – probe; make sure the BLO answers both aspects i.e. 'completeness of forms' and 'correctness of data entered in it')
- c. When citizens hand over forms to you for adding their name on to the voter list, do you check if they are already present on the voter list somewhere else? If yes, how do you verify this and if not, why? (int. instruction – probe)

Q21.

- a. Have you ever conducted or do you ever conduct a 'Health Analysis' of your polling part's voter list? To make the question clear, a 'Health Analysis' of the voter list involves looking at aspects like the gender ratio of your polling part versus the census, looking at the elector to population ratio etc. (int. instruction – if the respondent says that they do or that they have, ask Q21.2. If not, skip to Q 23)
- b. Can you tell us about how you conduct a 'Health Analysis' of your polling part's voter list? We would like you to state in detail, everything you do while conducting this health analysis? (Int. instruction – probe by asking, 'is there anything else you look at?')
- c. When was the last time you conducted a 'Health Analysis' of your polling part's voter list? How often do you do this?

Q22. Who do you submit this analysis to and how often do you submit it?

SECTION HEADER – Issues with discharging duties effectively

Section description: Interviewer to say – In this section, we would like to ask you about the issues you face while performing your duties as a BLO.

Q23. How clean do you think the voter list in your PP is? By clean, I mean how many errors such as absent, shifted, dead and disqualified have not been captured or accounted for on your PP's voter list? (Int. instruction – explain to the respondent that you mean to ask how many citizens who are dead/shifted/disqualified etc. still remain on the list and how many eligible 18+ citizens are missing from it – probe)

Q24. What are some of the biggest reasons behind these errors? Please explain in as much details as possible. (Int. instruction – probe)

Q25. What is the biggest challenge you face in updating voter lists and making sure that they remain clean and accurate? (Int. instruction – probe)

Q26.

- a. How far is the allotted polling part from your office?
- b. How far is the allotted polling part from your residence?
- c. Do you face any difficulties in reaching your polling part for any verification or voter awareness drives? (Int. instruction – probe)

Q27.

- a. How often have you received training on the roles and responsibilities as a BLO ever since you became one?
- b. Can you tell us, in detail, of what was taught in those sessions? (Int. instruction – probe)
- c. Do you think those sessions were useful? If so, can you elaborate why? (Int. instruction – probe)

Q28.

- a. Do you ever face a shortage of forms to give to citizens when they approach you?
- b. How often do you get empty forms that can be given to citizens from your higher ups in a year?
- c. Is there any place where you station yourself/sit at any time of the year so that citizens may approach you with forms and help? (int. instruction – ask question 28.4 only if the respondent says yes to this question. Otherwise, skip to Q29.1)
- d. If yes, where do you sit for this purpose? How far is this place from the polling part for which you are a BLO? (int. instruction – probe)
- e. How often in a year do you sit there?

Q29.

- a. How often in a year do you get updated materials such as updated voter lists, EPIC, BLO register etc. of your polling part from your seniors?
- b. Who gives these to you?

Q30. How is BLO performance measured by seniors? What happens in case a BLO performs well and in case he or she is not able to perform their duties effectively? (Int. instruction – probe)

Q31. What do you feel about the role BLAs and other organizations play in helping you update and clean voter lists? Have you faced any interference from BLAs, NGOs and Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) while performing your duties as a BLO? If yes, can you please detail out the kind of interference you have faced/faced? (Int. instruction – probe)

Q32. Are there any issues that you face from citizens while fulfilling your duties? Can you tell us a bit about how citizens treat you when they interact with you (as a BLO)? (Int. instruction - probe)

Q33. In your experience as a BLO, have you ever come across or heard of practices that can be called wrong and illegal? (int. instruction – reassure the respondent of confidentiality by stating that ‘we will not be disclosing any individual information, so please speak openly. Probe by asking ‘have you heard of booth capturing, bogus voting/impersonation of voter etc.’)

Q34.

a. What are the various sources from where you get complete/filled up forms? By sources, I mean those such as citizens, RWAs etc. (Int. instruction – probe | tick all sources mentioned by the BLO in the grid below)

Source	Tick
Concerned citizens – citizens who need services	1
Family members of concerned citizens	2
Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs)	3
Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)	4
Booth Level Agents	5
Representatives/Members of political parties	6
Others1 (write) _____	7
Others2 (write) _____	8

b. Is there any difference in the quality of forms you receive from the concerned citizen compared to the ones you receive from their family members? By quality I mean aspects such as completeness of fields, correctness of information such as address etc. (Int. instruction - probe)

(int instruction – ask Q34.3 ONLY if 3/4/5/6/7/8 are coded in Q34.1, else go to Q35)

c. Is there any difference in the quality of forms you receive from the concerned citizen compared to the ones you receive from NGOs/RWAs and BLAs? By quality I mean aspects such as completeness of fields, correctness of information such as address etc. (Int. instruction - probe)

SECTION HEADER – Overall Satisfaction with their role as BLO

Section description: Interviewer to say – In this section, we would like to know how you feel about being a BLO and about the responsibilities that come with it. We would also like to know about the overall good and bad things that come with being a BLO.

Q35. Now, we want you to think about your role as a BLO and everything around it. Keeping all this in mind, how happy are you about being a BLO?

Very happy	1
Somewhat happy	2
Neither happy nor unhappy	3
Somewhat unhappy	4
Very unhappy	5

Q36.

a. Were you given the responsibility of a BLO or did you volunteer to become a BLO?

Asked to become BLO/Given role	1	Skip to Q37
Volunteered	2	Go to the next question – Q36.2

- b. You said that you volunteered to become a BLO. Can you tell us why you volunteered/what motivated you to become so? (Int. instruction - probe)

Q37. What are the overall positives of being a BLO? Please elaborate as much as you can about what you feel good about in this role? (Int. instruction - probe)

Q38. We would now like you to elaborate on the overall negatives about being a BLO. Please elaborate as much as you can on the bad things about being a BLO. (Int. instruction - probe)

Q39. Do the responsibilities you hold as a BLO affect your regular/full-time job or vice versa? If yes, can you explain how? (Int. instruction - probe)

SECTION HEADER – Suggestions on improvements

Section description: Interviewer to say – We would now like to hear a few suggestions on how your work can be made easier and more efficient. We would also like to know what would motivate you further.

Q40. Overall, what changes would you like to see happen in your work systems/processes that will motivate you further? (Int. instruction - probe)

Q41.

- a. How can processes such as door-to-door visits and verification checks be improved to become faster/more efficient? (Int. instruction - probe)
- b. Can you give us any ideas on how we can improve these processes, such as door-to-door visits and verification checks, using technology? (Int. instruction - probe)

Q42. How can the quality of 'Nazariya Naksha' be improved? (Int. instruction - probe)

Q43.

- a. Have you ever received an honorarium/fees for the work you do as a BLO? (Int. instruction – If the respondent says 'YES', go to the next question i.e. Q43.2. If the respondent says 'NO', skip to Q44)
- b. If yes, who did you get this payment from and how often do you get it?
- c. How much is the honorarium/fee that you receive/received for your work as a BLO and is it adequate?
- d. Are there any issues with payments and if so, how can this be improved? (Int. instruction - probe)

Q44. What is your opinion on Data Entry Operators i.e. the people at the back-end who are responsible for entering information from forms on to the computer to update records? Is there anything in their functioning that you think needs improvement? If yes, what areas need improvement?

Q45.

- a. Do you use technology or any technology tools to make your work easier? If yes, what do you, or other BLOs use and how can it be made better.
- b. Are there any other suggestions that you'd like to give in areas like training, receiving forms, getting advice from seniors etc.? (Int. instruction - probe)

SECTION HEADER – BLO information check

Section description: Interviewer to say – We have with us, some details of you given by the Chief Electoral Officer's website so that citizens may easily get in touch with you. Kindly go through the same and tell us if these details are correct. Wherever they are not, kindly tell us what should be in its place. We would like to assure you that these details will not be shared with anyone or be used for any other purpose but for this research.

However, should you wish to get your information updated online if it is not correct, we can send your correct information to the CEO, Karnataka. Would you like us to send correct information to the CEO, Karnataka?

Option	Code
Yes, send correct information to the CEO	1
No, do not send corrected information to the CEO	2

(Int. instruction – Now, start reading out correct info – put a tick where provided information is correct and wherever not, use the blank space provided to write correct info)

[BLO Details]

Detail	Correct (tick if yes and cross if no - √/X)	Corrected Detail
AC No:		
PP No:		
Name:		
Contact:		
Designation/Occupation:		
Office Address:		NO CORRECTED DETAILS REQUIRED
Home Address:		

9.3 The computer aided telephonic interview (CATI) instrument

CATI Instrument – BLO interviews Bangalore

[Interviewer Instruction – Record BLO's details as given in the list in the CATI program/screen]

[CATI Instruction – First screen to display rows as shown below where the interviewer can enter data; use predictive text to reduce data entry errors using the contact list sent by JCCD. CATI should also automatically record interview date and time.]

AC Number	
PP Number	
BLO Name	
BLO Contact	
Interview Date	

[CATI Instruction – Show the Interviewer options to enter the parameters – 1) AC Number, then 2) PP Number and then BLO details as per the contact sheet. Another option is of automating this i.e. once the interviewer selects an AC, a list of select PPs appears and once the interviewer selects this, details of the chosen BLO appear on screen. The interviewer then dials this number]

[CATI Instruction – On the same page, show the Interviewer Instruction given below and following text on screen.]

[Interviewer Instruction – read out the paragraph given below to the respondent:]

Hello! I am_____ (MENTION YOUR NAME) from Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy, a Bangalore based non-profit that works on transforming quality of life in India's towns and cities. Founded in December 2001, today it works with citizens on catalysing active citizenship in neighbourhoods and with governments to institute reforms to city-systems (generally referred to as urban governance). We regularly conduct studies among citizens and functionaries of the government on various subjects and services. Currently, we are undertaking a study across Bangalore on the role of Booth Level Officers in Voter List Management to identify areas in their working that can be strengthened. In this regard, we would like to request for some of your valuable time. Can you please spare some time? Thank you.

Please be assured that all information given by you will be kept strictly confidential. The responses collected will be added together with the responses of several other BLOs across Bangalore before presenting the findings. Under no circumstance will personal and individual information be disclosed to any private or government authority. Also, this is only a study to strengthen voter list management across India and not a test and therefore, there are no wrong or right answers. We encourage you to be as honest and elaborate as possible while taking part in this survey.

Q1.

a. Will you be interested in being a part of this survey?

Option	Code	Instructions
Yes, I am interested in being a part of this survey	1	Move to Q1
Yes, I am interested but not now, maybe later	2	Move to QB
No, I am not interested in being a part of this study	3	Move to QA2

b. Are you a Booth Level Officer of any polling part/parts?

Option	Code	Instructions
Yes, I am	1	[CATI Instruction – screen to read “Thank the respondent for the time they spent & end interview”] – END INTERVIEW
Yes, I am interested but not now, maybe later	2	Move to QB
No, I am not interested in being a part of this study	3	Move to QA2

Q2.Can you provide us with a suitable time and date, within the next 7 days, when we can call and conduct this interview?

Option	Code	Instructions
Yes	1	Record appointment date & time
No, I am not interested in giving a slot within the next 7 days/will not have time in the next 7 days	2	Move to QA2.

MAIN INTERVIEW

Q1.Are you a Booth Level Officer of Polling Part number XX?

[CATI Instruction – show PP number as per selection]

[Interviewer Instruction – Read out the Polling Part number given in the contact sheet/call list]

Option	Code	Instructions
Yes	1	Go to the next question
No	2	Go to the next question

Q2. Are you a Booth Level Officer of any other Polling Part/Polling part (as well)?

Option	Code	Instructions
Yes	1	Go to the next question
No	2	Skip to Q4
Don't know/Can't say	3	Go to the next question

[CATI Instruction – if the interview has coded '2' in Q1 and either '2' or '3' in Q2, END INTERVIEW and display - "Thank the respondent for the time they spent & end interview" on screen}. In case '2' is coded in Q1 and '1' in Q2, proceed to Q3]

Q3. In all, how many Polling Parts are you a Booth Level Officer of?

Select exact number from the drop-down given here	CATI to give a drop-down from 1 to 19	Instructions
Don't know/Can't say	99	Go to the next question

Q4. For how long have you been performing the duties of a Booth Level Officer? Please give us this answer in years.

Select exact duration here	CATI to give a drop-down from 1 year to 20 years	Instructions
Don't know/Can't say	99	Go to the next question

Materials/Support Received

Q5.

- a. A I will now read out names of a few documents/items. In case you do not understand any name from the ones I am about to read out, please feel free to ask for a repeat or for more details on the document. Can you tell me which one of these you have ever received in your career as a BLO? [Interviewer Instruction – read out the list of documents/items, one by one to the respondent and mark only the ones which the respondent has ever received]

Document/Item	(CATI - Multiple coding)
Q5.1 A BLO Register	1
Q5.2 A Bag with the Election Commission of India's logo on it	2
Q5.3 An appointment letter	3
Q5.4 A BLO Identity Card	4
Q5.5 A Booth Level Officer Handbook	5
Q5.6 Blank forms to distribute/give to citizens (6, 6A, 7 8 and 8A)	6
Q5.7 Pens/Pencils and empty note-pads	7

- b. I will now read out names of the documents/items that you have ever received. How often in a year do you receive these documents/items on an average? For example, if you've been working as a BLO for 2 years and you've received these materials 4 times over the course of your employment, then your answer would be twice per year on an average.

[CATI Instruction – Only show those documents/items for which the respondent has said yes in Q5A]

[Interviewer Instruction – read out the scale, as shown as column headers in the grid on screen, to the respondent before reading out the name of the first document.]

Document/Item (single coding across columns)	I Haven't Ever received this	Less than once a year on average	Receive Once in 1 year on average	Receive Twice in 1 year on average	Receive Thrice or more in 1 year on average
Q5.1 A BLO Register	0	1	2	3	4
Q5.2 A Bag with the Election Commission of India's logo on it	0	1	2	3	4
Q5.3 An appointment letter	0	1	2	3	4
Q5.4 A BLO Identity Card	0	1	2	3	4
Q5.5 A Booth Level Officer Handbook	0	1	2	3	4
Q5.6 Blank forms to distribute/give to citizens (6, 6A, 7 8 and 8A)	0	1	2	3	4
Q5.7 Pens/Pencils and empty note-pads	0	1	2	3	4

Q6. How many times, since you became a Booth Level Officer, have you been trained on the roles and responsibilities of the job?

Select exact number from the drop-down given here →	CATI to give a drop-down from 0 to 19
Don't know/Can't say	99

[CATI Instruction – if the interviewer selects '0' from the drop-down, SKIP TO Q9.1]

Q7. When was the last time you attended such a training session? Please listen to the options that I will now read out and answer accordingly.

Option	Code (single coding)
Less than 1 month ago	1
1 month to 2 months ago	2
More than two months but less than 6 months ago	3
6 months to 1 year ago	4
More than 1 year but less than 1.5 years ago	5
1.5 years or more but less than 2 years ago	6
2 years or more but less than 2.5 years ago	7
2.5 years or more but less than 3 years ago	8
3 years or more but less than 4 years ago	9
4 years or more but less than 5 years ago	10
5 years or more ago	11
Don't know/Can't say	12

Q8.

a. How satisfied are you with the overall quality of these trainings you receive/the training you received?

Extremely dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Neither Dissatisfied Nor Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied
1	2	3	4	5
Go to Q8.2.1			Skip to Q8.3.1	

b. 1.) Which of the following aspects about these trainings, which I will now read out, are reasons behind your dissatisfaction? I will read the options out one by one and would like you to tell me which ones apply. [CATI Instruction – rotate statements randomly] [Interviewer Instruction – read out all options one by one to the respondent]

b. 2.) Which one is the most important reason? [Interviewer Instruction – read out all options one by one to the respondent]

Option	Q8.2.1 Code – (CATI-Multiple coding)	Q8.2.2 Code – Most Imp. (CATI-Single coding)
Content of the training i.e. quality and relevance of the course/training material was not good	1	1
Delivery mechanism i.e. how they taught the course/training content/level of interaction etc. was not good	2	2
Distance of the training venue from home/office was large	3	3
Duration of the course was not adequate i.e. was too long	4	4
Duration of the course was not adequate i.e. was too short	5	5
Questions/concerns were not addressed adequately	6	6
Knowledge and involvement of the trainer was not adequate	7	7
The instructions given to us on what to do as a BLO and how to do it were not clear	8	8
Others (Specify _____)	99	99

[CATI Instruction – Skip to Q9.1]

c. 1.) Which of the following aspects about these trainings, which I will now read out, are reasons behind your satisfaction? I will read the options out one by one and would like you to tell me which ones apply. [Interviewer Instruction – read out all options one by one to the respondent] [CATI Instruction – rotate statements randomly]

c. 2.) Which one is the most important reason? [Interviewer Instruction – read out all options one by one to the respondent]

Option	Q8.3.1 Code- Multiple	Q8.3.2 Code – Most Imp.
Content of the training i.e. quality and relevance of the course/ training material was good	1	1
Delivery mechanism i.e. how they taught the course/training content/level of interaction etc. was good	2	2
Distance of the training venue from home/office was not too much/large	3	3
Duration of the course was adequate	4	4
Questions/concerns were addressed adequately	5	5
Knowledge and involvement of the trainer was adequate	6	6
The instructions given to us on what to do and how to do it were clear	7	7
Others (Specify _____)	99	99

- d. Have you been trained on the ECI's National Electoral Role Purification (NERP) program which was launched in July 2016?

Option	Code (single coding)
Yes	1
No	2
I'm not sure	3

Work procedures (& ease of access to PPs & citizen interaction)

Q9.Are you registered as a voter in the Polling Part/any of the Polling Parts of which you are a BLO?

Option	Code
Yes	1
No	2

- a. How much time does it take for you to get to the polling part/parts you're allotted from your OFFICE one way? Please listen to the options I read out and tell me which one applies. While answering this question, please do so keeping in mind the mode of transport you use most often to get to the polling part/parts. Also, if you are in charge of more than one Polling Part, answer for the polling part it takes longest to reach from your office.
- b. How much time does it take for you to get to the polling part/parts you're allotted from your HOME one way? Please listen to the options I read out and tell me which one applies. While answering this question, please do so keeping in mind the mode of transport you use most often to get to the polling part/parts. Also, if you are in charge of more than one Polling Part, answer for the polling part it takes longest to reach from your home. [CATI Instruction – display appropriate columns from the grid shown below for questions 9.1 and 9.2 and allow respondent to tick only ONE in each column]

Option	Q9.1 – Time from Office	Q9.2 – Time from Home
Less than 10 minutes	1	1
10 to 20 minutes	2	2
21 to 30 minutes	3	3
31 to 45 minutes	4	4
More than 45 minutes but <1 hour	5	5
1hr to 1.5 hours	6	6
More than 1.5 hours	7	7

- c. 1.) I will now read out a list of statements around the work you do in your polling part. Listen to each one carefully and tell me which ones you think affect adversely/negatively, your ability to perform your roles and responsibilities as a BLO. [CATI Instruction – rotate statements randomly] [Interviewer Instruction – read out all options one by one to the respondent]

- c. 2.) Which one is THE MOST adverse reason? [Interviewer Instruction – read out all options one by one to the respondent]

Option	9.3.1. Any that applies (multiple coding)	9.3.2. Most important/adverse (single coding)
The time it takes to reach the Polling Part area	1	1
Issues with access to certain household/areas within the polling part	2	2
A lack of cooperation from the people/citizens in the polling part	3	3
Frequent changing of the polling parts allotted to you	4	4
A lack of a valid BLO Identity Card (ID)	5	5
Your concerns on safety and security while in the polling part	6	6
A lack of proper house numbering in the polling part	7	7
A lack of proper road/lane signage in the polling part	8	8
Concentration of work in just a few months i.e. uneven spread of work over a year	9	9
A lack of motivation and support from seniors/superiors	10	10
A lack of a proper Poling Part (PP) map or 'Nazariya Naksha'	11	11
A lack of blank forms to be handed to the citizens	12	12
A lack of supervision from seniors	13	13

- Q10. In a year, on average, how many times do you conduct door to door visits in your polling part? By door to door visits, I mean going to each household in your polling part and covering the area in entirety.

Select exact number from the drop-down given here →	CATI to give a drop-down from 0 to 19
Don't know/Can't say	99

[CATI Instruction – if the interviewer selects '0' from the drop-down, SKIP TO Q12]

- Q11. How much time, on average, does it take you to conduct one such door to door visit exercise, covering each household in one polling part? Please tell us the time it takes in 'number of days'. Also, if you are in charge of more than one Polling Part, answer for the polling part it takes longest for you to reach.

Option	Code (single coding)
Less than 10 days	1
10 days or more but less than 20 days	2
20 days or more but less than 30 days	3
1 month or more but less than 1 month 15 days	4
1 month 15 days or more but less than 2 months	5
2 months or more but less than 2 months 15 days	6
2 months 15 days or more but less than 3 months	7
3 months or more	8

Q12.

- a. will now read out a few activities. Please tell me which of these you undertake in an average work-year? [CATI Instruction – rotate statements randomly]

Option	Code (multiple coding)
Collecting data on number of males, females and others/third-gender in the polling part	1
Collecting data on people who just turned 18 or are about to turn 18 in the polling part	2
Collecting data on the new residential units/buildings that come up in the polling part	3
Comparing gender ratio of the polling part to district/Assembly Constituency census data	4
Comparing age-group proportion data with that of district/Assembly Constituency census data	5
Updating the Polling Part map (a visual representation of a Polling Part showing roads, lanes, buildings and houses within)	6

Q13. How important is the role of the Polling Part map in helping you do your work as a Booth Level Officer? [Interviewer Instruction – read out all options one by one to the respondent]

Option	Code (single coding)
Very important	1
Somewhat important	2
Not at all important	3
Don't Know/Can't Say	4

Overall Satisfaction and Back-end processes

Q14. Now, thinking about the entire set of roles and responsibilities you fulfil as a Booth Level Officer, the support that you get and the all work processes around being a BLO, how satisfied are you with this role? [Interviewer Instruction – read out all options one by one to the respondent]

Extremely dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Dissatisfied Nor Satisfied	Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

Q15. I would now be reading out a few statements. Please listen to each one carefully and tell us how strongly you agree or disagree with these. [CATI Instruction – rotate statements randomly]

Option	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree Nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The materials that you receive from seniors/superiors, such as the updated voter list and BLO register, are of good quality	1	2	3	4	5
Data entry mistakes by data entry operators are a major source of voter list errors such as incorrect names, age and address	1	2	3	4	5
Supervisors provide support and motivation to BLOs whenever required	1	2	3	4	5
BLOs are recognized for their hard work by their superiors/seniors	1	2	3	4	5

Honorarium

Q16. Have you ever received an honorarium/received payment for your services as a Booth Level Officer?

Option	Code	Instruction
Yes	1	Go to Q17
No, I haven't	2	Skip to QD1
Don't know/Can't say	3	Skip to QD1

Q17.

a. Have you received this honorarium/payment for each of the years you have been a BLO?

Option	Code	Instruction
Yes	1	Skip to Q18
No, I haven't	2	Go to Q17.2
Don't know/Can't say	3	Go to Q17.2

b. How many times, since you were appointed as a Booth Level Officer have you received this honorarium/payment?

Select exact number here →	CAT1 to give options in a drop-down – 1 to 19
Don't know/Can't say	99

Q18. What was the amount you received last?

Record exact number here	_____
Don't know/Can't say	99

Q19. How long ago did you receive this amount, the one you received last?

Option	Code (single coding)
Less than 1 month ago	1
1 month to 2 months ago	2
More than two months but less than 6 months ago	3
6 months to 1 year ago	4
More than 1 year but less than 1.5 years ago	5
1.5 years or more but less than 2 years ago	6
2 years or more but less than 2.5 years ago	7
2.5 years or more but less than 3 years ago	8
3 years or more but less than 4 years ago	9
4 years or more but less than 5 years ago	10
5 years or more ago	11
Don't know/Can't say	12

Demographics – Age/Gender/Education/Occupation/Household Income

Q1. What is your age?

Select exact age here →	CAT1 to give options from 18-100_____
Do not want to disclose	(tick)999

Q2. What is your Gender?

Option	Code
Male	1
Female	2
Third Gender	3
Do not want to disclose	4

Q3. What is your educational qualification?

Q4. What is your occupation/work?

[Interviewer instruction: Please refer to the occupational categories given for QD4 mentioned in SEC Grid. In case the respondent's answer doesn't fall in the occupational categories mentioned in QD4, please select "None of the above" to go to the next screen and then choose accordingly. For example, if respondent says that his designation/occupational category is Anganwadi worker, then there is no option for Anganwadi Worker in the Occupation category list mentioned in the SEC Grid for QD4. In such case, click on the last option which is "None of the above" to go to the next screen and then choose accordingly. If still not clear go back to the SEC Grid, read out the options to the respondent once again and choose accordingly.

[CATI Instruction: Drop down menu should be created for the occupational categories given in Table CATI -1, which is given to you as a separate document. Link these categories with the QD4 categories mentioned against them in the table. For example, if the interviewer clicks Anganwadi worker in the drop down menu, then it should record the QD4 category code mentioned against it, which is "2" (skilled worker)

SEC GRID OCCUPATION (QD4)		Illiterate 1	School: upto 4 years	School: 5-9 years	SSC/ HSC	Some college but not graduate	Gradu- ate/ Post graduate general	Graduate / Post graduate profes- sional
1. Unskilled Worker		E2	E2	E1	D	D	D	D
2. Skilled worker		E2	E1	D	C	C	B2	B2
3. Petty trader		E2	D	D	C	C	B2	B2
4. Shop owner		D	D	C	B2	B1	A2	A2
Businessmen/ Indus- trialists with no. of employees								
5. None		D	C	B2	B1	A2	A2	A1
6. 1-9		C	B2	B2	B1	A2	A1	A1
7. 10+		B1	B1	A2	A2	A1	A1	A1
8. Self-employed Professional		D	D	D	B2	B1	A2	A1
9. Clerical / Salesman		D	D	D	C	B2	B1	B1
10. Supervisory level		D	D	C	C	B2	B1	A2
11. Officers/Execu- tives- Junior		C	C	C	B2	B1	A2	A2
12. Officers/Execu- tives middle / senior		B1	B1	B1	B1	A2	A1	A1
13. Retired/Not work- ing anymore								

[CATI Instruction – display the below grid on screen for interviewers to use to record respondent response. Record SEC based on interviewer selection]

Q5. Are you the chief wage earner/highest earning member in your household?

Option	Code	Instruction
Yes	1	Skip to QD8
No	2	Go to QD6
Do not want to disclose	3	Skip to QD8

Q6. What is the educational qualification of the chief wage earner in your household?

Q7. What is your occupation/work of the chief wage earner in your household?

[CATI INSTRUCTION - INSERT SEC GRID AS ABOVE FOR QD6 & QD7 minus option '13 – Retired/Not working anymore in 'occupation list']

Q8. What is the average annual income of your household?

Option	Code (single coding)
Less than Rs 1 Lakh	1
Rs 1 Lakh to less than Rs 1.5 Lakhs	2
Rs 1.5 Lakhs to less than Rs 2 Lakhs	3
Rs 2 Lakhs to less than Rs 2.5 Lakhs	4
Rs 2.5 Lakhs to less than Rs 3 Lakhs	5
Rs 3 Lakhs to less than Rs 4 Lakhs	6
Rs 4 Lakhs to less than Rs 5 Lakhs	7
Rs 5 Lakhs to less than Rs 6 Lakhs	8
Rs 6 Lakhs to less than Rs 8 Lakhs	9
Rs 8 Lakhs to less than Rs 10 Lakhs	10
More than Rs 10 Lakhs	11
Don't know/Can't say	12





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