

Research Highlights: 2013-14

Village Adoption Studies – Kotisondpur and Musapura Villages, Dhar District, Madhya Pradesh

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1. Introduction:

National Institute of Rural Development has undertaken Village Adoption Programme in few backward villages spread across the country. The main objectives of this Action Research is to facilitate the development process keeping in view of the needs of villagers and effective implementation of various development programmes in co-ordination with the local administration, CBOs, NGOs and also take up some innovative initiatives. The criteria for selection of village is to identify backward village which is small in size with less than 1000 population and which should fall under BRGF district. The village should be either ST hamlet or having more percentage of SC/ST population which was one of the criteria for selection of the village.

2. Study Area:

The following criteria were used for selecting the villages:

- Village is in BRGF district
- Cent percent Tribal village
- Population less than 1000
- Agriculture is the major livelihood
- Interior & Backward village
- Limited access to Governmental programmes and Infrastructure

Thus accordingly, Kotisondpur village of Nalchha Block and Musapura village of Tirla block in Dhar District, Madhya Pradesh were selected for the village adoption programme.

Profile of the Villages:

Musapura is a Gram Panchayat in Tirla block of the Dhar district in Madhya Pradesh. The GP has five villages. Musapura village is cent percent ST village and all the villagers belong to a tribe called 'Bilala'. The total number of households is 90. The total population of the village is 567 and among them male population account for 299 and female population account for 268. In the village 149 members are literates accounting for 52 per cent. Among them 106 (36 per cent) are men and 43 (16 per cent) are the women. Joint family system exists in the village and such family system acts as social security to the widows, who are 10 in number. There are 7 disabled people in the village and out them 4 got the government benefit like calipers. There is one primary school and one Anganwadi centre in the village.

Kotisonpur is a small Gram Panchayat in Nalchha block of the Dhar district in Madhya Pradesh. The GP has three villages. Kotisonpur village is cent percent ST village and all the villagers belong to a tribe called 'Bhils'. The total number of households is 164. The total population of the village is 797 and among them male population account for 396 and female population account for 401. Joint family system exists in the village. There is one primary school in the village and one Anganwadi centre where 40 children attend to it. Children go to Nalcha, the block headquarter, for studying secondary and high school. Village people give due importance for education as there are 25 girls in the hostels doing their education and many studied 12th standard and five of the villagers have done their graduation and another two have done post-graduation. There is no sub- centre in the village and PHC is in Nalcha. The immunization is done on every third Tuesday by ANM. Agriculture, Agriculture Labour, dairy(10 HH), Goatry, Poultry, vegetable cultivation, Collection of Custard apple and Mahuwa are major source of livelihood. Average land holding is one to five bighas. There is one tank and few open wells for irrigation. Seasonal migration is observed in the village. There are six hand pumps in the village and fluoride content is found to be very high. There are 10 SHGs and of them 5 are old and another five are new.

3. Methodology:

The methodology followed included:

- **Base Line survey** : To start with a base line survey was conducted in order to assess the demographic and socio-economic profile of the villages.
- **Community mobilization** : By gathering and undertaking meetings with different sections of the villagers like women, children, youth, farmers, leaders and resource persons of the village, rapport was built up and opportunities for taking up different interventions were analysed and peoples participation was ensured.
- **PRA exercises**: Through PRA exercises like Transect walk, Social Mapping, Venn diagram, Resource mapping, Seasonality mapping etc, an understanding about the community and their need assessment was done.
- **Stakeholder workshops**: One workshop exclusively by the government officials of different departments at the block level under the chairmanship of CEO, ZP and the District Magistrate & Collector was held to discuss the needs of the village and chalk out the future action plan.
- Another Workshop was held with the stakeholders like NABARD, KVK, R-SETI, line departments, NGOs (CARD, VASUDHA) and villagers to converge the developmental action plans of different organizations/departments.
- **Capacity Building and Exposure Visits**: As per the requirements of the villagers, different capacity building programmes were planned in association with different stakeholders like NABARD, R-SETI, NGOs etc. An exposure cum training programme is planned to RTP, NIRD.

4. Interventions Made:

In the process of working with the community under the Village Adoption Programme, the following interventions were taken up:

a) Initiatives in the school

- School in Musapura village was in dilapidated condition. But good number of children were attending the school and there was a demand from the community to have better building for the school.
- Then we met the concerned officials (Collector, CEO, Janpath , SSA officials) and found out about the status of the school building. After the interaction, it was known that school building was already sanctioned under SSA programme, but because of a villager occupying the Gram Panchayat land, the school building construction could not be taken forward.
- Thus a Gram Sabha was conducted and discussed the land issue where the concerned villager agreed to move away from the land after the harvesting season. Accordingly, the Gram Sabha resolution was sent to the Education dept and the Panchayat Secretary has taken up the responsibility of the sanction of new building through SSA.

b) Initiatives in Anganwadi

- It was observed that malnourishment among the children in the Musapura village was quite high (22 Boys/ 24 Girls- Mildly Malnourished) & (7 Boys & 4 Girls – Severely Malnourished) .
- There was a provision of joining the severely malnourished children into the NRC (nutrition centres) in Dhar. But the parents were not understanding the importance of NRCs and were unwilling to send the children to NRCs. Along with Anganwadi worker, we could convince all the parents of the severely malnourished children to send their children to NRCs.

c) Nutrition intervention

- Conducted Nutrition programme meant for malnourished children in the age group of 0-5 years & their mothers for 12 days in association with CARD(an NGO). In this Programme, awareness meetings for all the 12 days about hygiene and healthy cooking were conducted on different issues. A Common Kitchen was set up, where, the mothers of the malnourished children were involved in the preparation of the nutritious meals with locally available materials and had eaten the meal along with the children. This continued for 12 days with different recipes every day.

d) SHG Interventions

- Reactivated two SHG's that were defunct with the help of Aajeevika and also formed new SHGs.

e) Interventions with Vasudha

- Water testing was done in association with Vasudha(an NGO) and High Fluoride content was found and so initiated steps to set up an RO plant. Conducted awareness meetings for adolescent girls on personal hygiene.

f) Intervention through R-SETI

- Motivated 10 youth members to attend the training on Dairy provided by R-SETI
- Motivated another 5 youth who are 10th passed to attend the training on Cell phone repairing

g) WADI Programme

- Under the WADI programme of NABARD, Horticulture & Kitchen Gardens were taken up following the soil & water conservation techniques. Training was given to the farmers on Intercropping, Weeding, Nutrient Management, Mulching techniques, Recycling of farm waste to produce manure etc. and it was also ensured that the farmers follow these management techniques. Motivated 10 farmers to take up the WADI programme.

h) Interventions With KVK

- Selected 10 members from SHGs and sent them to Soya bean food processing training through KVK at Soya Training Institute at Bhopal.
- Identified a landless family for demonstrative Kadaknath Poultry Unit and provided financial help in setting up the unit.
- Identified 5 farmers for demonstrative Vermi-compost pits and facilitated the construction of the pits through Aajeevika.

i) UDAAN Programme

- In association with Child Fund India, identified 2 adolescent girls who have passed 12th standard for the scheme of scholarships (Rs.15,000/- per annum).

j) Solar Intervention

- Discussed with the villagers & identified 12 points where the solar street lights can be installed and accordingly a committee involving the villagers was formed for the installation and maintenance of street lights.
- Through RTP, NIRD would be providing training and financial support for setting up the solar street lights.

5. Innovative Approaches / Experiences:

The experience under the village adoption programme, taught us that, community needs should be the fulcrum of planning and implementation of any developmental programme. In only such cases community will come forward to participate and own the programme/activity. Although several line departments have their own programmes for the development of the village, convergence of these activities is rarely seen. Any facilitator has to bring all these various departments under the convergence mode, for successful developmental initiatives. Involvement of NGOs and CBOs at the local level is crucial for the development of the village.

6. **Conclusion:**

The above study is a continuous process. It will take 2 to 3 years for the village to become a model village and to embark on the developmental path.