



Into the valleys of Dunda

A PERSONAL SEARCH

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Introduction

Live-In-Labs program was one of the bigger challenges I have ever faced. This is a real life challenge where we can't afford to make mistakes as it may affect the life of other people. So it was in a way a hard challenge to accept. But with the guidance and help provided by the Amrita math it was fairly easier to face the challenges. The village visit was an eye opener for me and has helped me evolve into a better human being. There in the villages I could identify and relate to certain problems being faced by the villagers. Through my interpretation and perception I have proposed certain solutions. It is a great personal and practical experience to gain.

Problems Identification

I as a member of a small group was involved in research of hygiene and disaster relief. I could see the village of Dunda was fairly developed. But due to little ignorance and non-care attitude the village was riddled with certain basic issues that could be easily solved with the help of the villagers.

Health and Hygiene

1. People were not living in great poverty and hence were able to eat healthy. And also the presence of Primary Health Centre also takes care of other health problems. But still I noticed the children were a little on the downside of Body Mass Index. The average BMI in the adolescent kids were about 14. Also Ms. Ursula Luciano who was staying in the Math through Amritaserve was teaching children about personal hygiene and was doing a fairly great job of it.
2. Toilets were being built but many of them are unused. Public toilets are not properly maintained. But new toilets are being built and awareness in on the increase.
3. Most houses in the village follows open drain system which causes foul smell in the locality and also serves as breeding ground for mosquitoes.

Other income methods

Apart from that I was able to assist in the identification of other income methods for the villagers. What I learned from that are that there is prerogative for this kind taken by progressive thinking people in the villages.

1. We found that there are some people have started doing terrace farming but not in large scale.
2. Other than vegetables some also grow banana trees and sugar cane for their own purposes. They also do sell these in small scale during season time.
3. We also observed that one set of people near Dunda market do fishing for their own use. When they get more fish they do sell fish in Darsha a small town 2km away from Dunda.
4. We visited Dunda market to know what is the main business there mostly we found around 8 tea stalls ,5 vegetable shops ,3 sweet stalls and some small stationeries. People from Dunda village (esp., male) most of them work or own these shops.

These are the income for villagers other than agriculture

Disaster Management

We met site engineer of relief works Mr. Ramjee during his break. He was explaining us about the restoration works being carried out where landslides were prominent. Here cement bases are laid out and large stones are arranged uniformly on those bases. These stones are held together by wire nets which will prevent landslides in the future and allow the flood water to pass through without disrupting the soil. He also said the construction works are delayed because of lack of labor problem.

Emergency bridge was constructed by the army, which is being used by the villagers.

Danda Majaf Motor Road, a World bank project of 4.6 kilometers at a cost of 3.4 crore rupees is being constructed with the estimated completion date being 9/09/2016.

My Observations

1. Army personnel are greatly admired by school going kids. They express their wishes as to become soldiers and police personnel.
2. Men are idling away their time drinking and gambling.
3. Men here are mostly lazy.
4. They don't have long term education plans, and thus education hasn't improved with the men folk.

Suggestions

“we can provide ‘weight machines’ to all the schools”
Children can check their weights every now and then. In this way if some kids are malnourished there will be a competitive edge and that will help us in achieving the nutrition target in kids.

1. We can use their admiration towards army through this scheme. They will work out to develop their fitness and thus might stop being lazy and might hate idling away their time.
2. By doing this we can bring them nearer towards achieving their dreams. They will go beyond school education and might try to achieve professional standards.

Other suggestions

1. Yearly science exhibitions to be conducted.
2. Yearly celebrations to be conducted to celebrate highly successful women who have braved many difficulties. This should be grand because we are creating role models which must definitely influence the folks towards women's education and upliftment.
3. This will also reduce alcohol consumption, because they are focused and have self-control.

My Perception about the problems in the village

I think the main problem in the village is laziness of the menfolk. Easier income, liquor addiction and lack of ambition can be termed as root causes for the laziness. I think the change must be brought forth from the younger generation who are not yet corrupted by those practices. This can be achieved

by teaching them to dream and work towards a higher purpose. By engaging the younger generation the elders can also be shown about the goodness of these practices.

Conclusion

This is a great experience where I will be able to implement all my acquired knowledge. This will act as a prototype in developing rural and underdeveloped India which results in achieving a non-poor nation status. I am happy to serve and to have applied my knowledge and work for this wonderful project.