

Program Information- Rania Child Development Project, Jharkhand, India

Description of the project area

The project area is situated in Rania Block of Khunti District of Jharkhand State, India. Rania block is a remote and backward area. It is located about 40 KM toward south from the district headquarter called Khunti. This area is surrounded mostly with forests, hills and mountains. The road for communication is zigzag, narrow and some roads are muddy. Especially in rainy season it is very difficult to access some of the villages. This area is tribal dominant area. Most of the people are belongs to Schedule Tribes (ST) namely Munda, Santhali and Ho tribes. The main occupations of the people are agricultural laborer. Majority of people depends on agriculture and wage labour as their livelihood. Others are depending on collection of forest products and rearing domestic animals like cow, goat, ox etc. Public transport services are poor in the target villages for travelling from one place another. People face difficulties for traveling. Opportunities for income are very less and the seasonal migrations are very high. The conditions of children of the area are very poor. Even they are not able to avail their minimum meals in a day. The availability and accessibility of Government facility are in poor condition. There are no schools and early childhood development centers in every village. Dropout rate is very high because of the distance of schools from the village. Even there are no transportation facilities for children to go to school from the villages. Very few children go to school and college by bicycle. During the time of rainy season people face lots of problem.

The climate of this area is very hot during summer and too cold during winter. The people face problem for forest animals like Elephants in the area. Elephants come and damage the agricultural field and crops and houses as well. The houses are constructed by mud wall covered with asbestos, teen sheet and thatched house. Some people live in government provided houses having brick wall and concrete roof in some villages.

Daily life of a family

Rice is one of the stable foods for the people. Crops like millet (Raggi, Marwa, and Wheat) are other common food items eaten by the target community with green chili and salt as side dish throughout the year.

The living style of the people is very simple. Early morning they wake up and finish their morning call. The woman of the family cleans the verandah, front and back wards of their houses and floors of the house. They fetch water from tube wells and nearby streams and put in the vessel in the house. The men use to go agricultural field very early in the morning for work. After returning from the field they take meals and again go to forest for collection of firewood and forest products. Both the women and men use to go for work in the agriculture field and the forest after finishing their morning meal. They return to home from work by 4.00 PM to 5.00 PM. The women cook once again and the men spend time with children and friends in the evening. Sometimes the men use to play Volleyball and cards. By 7.00 to

8.00 PM they have their dinner and go to sleep. The average size of family in this target area is more than five members including the parents. Even there are families with large number.

Daily life of a child

The daily lives of children of these areas are very simple. Illiteracy, dropout, malnutrition rate of the children are very high. Early morning they wake up, finish their daily activities. As there is no availability of breakfast they eat the remaining food of previous night dinner. After they finish their food, mostly boys go to play with their friends and girls stay at home to help their mother. Few children go to school. Both Boys and Girls use to play Hockey and Football. Boys together goes to forest and shoot birds, pluck fruits from the trees, love to climb trees and Jump, goes to ponds and streams and catches the fish and crabs.

Many School going children are getting dropped out after 5th class, because middle school, high school and colleges are not available in the area or nearest places of the target areas.

Boys are given certain task like bringing ration from the nearby shop like cooking oil, rice, soap, salt etc, grazing animals and girls are given task of fetching water, sweeping, bringing firewood and cleaning clothes along with mother. But one common task they do is helping parents in their agriculture field and forest work and taking care of their siblings.

Problems faced by the children (and their families)

The following problems are faced by children and their families:-

- Less availability and accessibility of ECD center, school and irregularity of teachers.
- Long distance of schools and lack of quality education.
- High rate of girl child trafficking.
- Lack of Health Care institutions and the facilities.
- Lack of awareness on child rights and parental care.
- Girl child are not encouraged for higher education.
- Insufficient drinking water.
- Less earning opportunity.
- Incapable of minimum food and nutritional.
- Seasonal migration.
- Unavailability of transportation facility.
- Fear of forest animals like Elephants and Bears.
- Insufficient income to maintain the basic needs.
- Lack of awareness on Government schemes and programmes.

Problems affecting the community

The society is a patriarchal society where the men are the head of the family and predominant. Mostly the decision making power is with the male members of the community. Though the female members work hard and work more than the male, still the whole things depend on male members only. Son is always given more importance than the daughter. The girl child are not encouraged for higher study where as the boys get the opportunities. Parents always think girls are burden for them, so they want them to get married early. The caste feeling and discrimination is significant.

The health care facilities and institutions are in very poor conditions. The health care institution is also situated in faraway places and there is no frequent transportation facility by which the community people are reluctant to Access the health care facility. People rely on local witch doctors and people who treat them with herbs and plants. Use of hygiene pad for women is not practiced. Though there are government agencies and health workers placed in the area still the Anti Natal Care and Post Natal Care is not better. Many children are under nourished and poor health conditions.

There are no such natural calamities found in the area. But the heavy rainfall in the rainy season and high cold in the winter season create problem to the community people in their agricultural work and in the forest work by which the community affected in their economic, agriculture, livestock and daily life.

Program approach to solve those problems for children and the community

As the area is purely remote and backward area and the issues related to the children and community are highly significant, program needs to be implemented. Community Based Organization like Child Development Committee, Child Leadership team, Farmers group, Women Joint Liability Groups and, Youth Groups etc needs to be formed, mobilized and strengthened. So that the CBOs will address the issues by themselves related to child abuse, child rights, parenting skill etc. and they will be able to earn a good income that is sustainable through farmers group and Women Joint Liability. The project will organize different types of awareness and sensitization and training program. The target area children will be facilitated so that they know their rights, responsibilities, and avail developmental schemes and programs from government agencies. Children will be facilitated to improve leadership quality, and train them to practice good character and good habits in the villages. The project will facilitate and organize consultation meetings, training and other activities in collaboration with different stake holders to ensure quality education system and accessibility.

The parents and the community will be empowered so that they will also know the importance of child rights. Different awareness, sensitization and training programmes will be organized for women and adolescent girls to be aware of good health and hygiene practice, Anti Natal Care and Post Natal Care.

The project will also facilitate farmers groups, youth groups and women groups by supporting them in income generation program to increase their family income. They will get linkages with the line departments and get training to learn new agricultural methods and technique and will be facilitated to avail different schemes and programmes which will bring more productivity in the agriculture production. Finally the family will be strong; children will get good education, health care and proper nutritious food. Lastly the CBOs and the community will come to know their roles and responsibilities and they will be changed into responsible and problem solving institutions.