



LIVE IN LABS

INDPUR VILLAGE, HIMACHAL PRADESH

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Contents

Introduction.....	2
Problem Identification	2
Agriculture	3
Education.....	3
Waste Management.....	4
Sanitation	4
Course Learning.....	5
Reflection on Perception of the Villagers, Their Life and Their Living Condition	5

Introduction

Indpur is a Village in Indora Tehsil in Kangra District of Himachal Pradesh State, India. Raja Khas (4 KM), Indora (4 KM), Ghandran (4 KM), Kathgarh (5 KM), Palakh (8 KM) are the nearby Villages to Indpur. Pathankot Tehsil towards North, Hajipur Tehsil towards South, Sujanpur Tehsil towards North, and Nurpur Tehsil towards North surround Indpur.

Pathankot, Sujanpur, Mukerian, Dinanagar are the nearby Cities to Indpur.

A glimpse into the village

- There are around 850 households in the village.(60 % SC/ST, 20% Brahmins, 20% Rajputs & Others)
- Gender ratio is 950:1000.
- There are five schools Three primary, one high school and one aided Higher Secondary School
- The nearest Government hospital is located in Indora which is 5km from the village.
 - Total number of beds – 10
 - ECG, X ray, Lab tests, Marti Seva Yojana, Janani Suraksha Yojana are some of the services provided by the hospital.
 - There are 3 doctors, 7 nurses, 1 lab tech, 06 support staff, 3 Pharmacists and one admin staff.
- The major Fruits they grow are Mango, Orange and Guava in which Mango & Orange are grown once in a year and Guava is grown twice years.
- Wheat, Rice, Paddy, Maize are the major crops grown in the village.
- 300 liters of Milk is being imported from outside for daily usage.
- 70% or more households use LPG and the remaining use firewood.

Problem Identification

Although the village is self-sufficient in many areas the following problems were identified during our interactions with the Sarpanch, villagers, authorities, and many others.

The identified problems and solutions to some of these problems are given below

Agriculture

Problems

- Unequal Distribution of Land between the Farmers 20 percent of the people own 80 Percent of the Land.
- Farmers face a huge loss as Pigs stray animals destroy the crops.
- Costs of fertilizers are high due to the presence of middle men.
- Some farmers depend on rain water due to the unavailability of Tube wells.
- The farmers sell the crops at a very low price which is less than 40 percent as compared to the market prices.

Solutions

- Creating boundary walls using thorn bushes or setting up fences.
- Farmer cooperative society can be made so that farmers can buy fertilizers in bulk from the government which would save cost.
- Cooperative societies can be formed to collect, store and sell the farm products at better prices.

Education

Problems

- High rate of dropouts
- Low student turnout
- Less encouragement for students from low income earning parents
- Lack of tables and desks
- Poor infrastructure
- Less resources for library
- Lack of sweepers/cleaners
- No playground
- Tendency to bunk classes after interval among students
- Insufficient lab facilities
- The school teachers are involved in various activities other than teaching such as census, taking a look on the mid-day meals, post office work etc.
- Some teachers have not got their salary from the past years.

Solutions

- Cooperate with Amrita Vidhyalayam teachers and conduct education enhancing program for both teachers and students
- Supply more books to the libraries in these schools by pooling old books collected from our University. There are NGOs we can seek help from like 'Once upon a time' and 'Prana' who exclusively work on setting up libraries in rural schools.

- Collaboration with 'Teach India' and conducting workshops for the students as well as the teachers will help improve the quality of education
- Conduct workshops on the importance of education and making students aware of the career opportunities.
- Make students do exercises like essay writing on their dream career and share information with them about their desired career.
- Set up a savings scheme for the students at school similar to the savings schemes the Indian post offer. These would act like piggy banks for the students which would develop saving mentality in them.

Waste Management

Problems

- Unavailability of dump yards.
- Domestic waste make up major portion of the dumped waste
- No steps by the government taken to get rid of the same.
- There is no municipal corporation for this village which could have been helpful in solving the problem.
- Government has very low interest in building dumping place in the village.

Solutions

- Promotion of small organic compost made using PVC pipes for kitchen waste disposal.
- Creating awareness about recycling of bio degradable waste.
- Setting up *vermicomposts* and using the same for organic farming.

Sanitation

Problems

- Only 40 percent of the villagers have toilets in their houses.
- The government pays only Rs.12500 for building a toilet and that also in one installment, so the villagers first have to build a basic structure. Then they have to send the photos to the block development office. After that the same will be approved which leads to a very long and tedious process.
- Mismatch in the data which is available with the block development office and the Panchayat secretary.
- No proper sewage system
- During rains all the roads gets ruptured during the rains.

Suggestions

- Encouraging the villagers to build toilet.
- Helping them in getting in touch with the govt. officials so that there are no further problems.
- Providing the correct data to the BDO so that they can update their data.

Course Learning

The Live-In-Labs course has been an eye opener and a truly enlightening experience. We learned so much during our interactions with the villagers, we got a glimpse of their culture, traditions, food, lifestyle, etc., which was an entirely new experience to us. The villagers of Indpur treated us with utmost respect and care. This course has not only taught us multiple lessons in various aspects of management, but also enriched us with values for life.

Reflection on Perception of the Villagers, Their Life and Their Living Condition

Before the trip, I expected the village to be a very remote place with no basic amenities and accessibility. The roads to be muddy, surroundings to be unclean and the villagers to be poor and illiterate or with minimal education. But the village turned out to be reasonably developed one with abundant natural resources, pleasant climate, clean surroundings, and villagers lead a peaceful life with minimal crime rate. The villagers of Indpur welcomed and embraced us with an open heart. We were able to spend quality time with both the adults and children of the village. We engaged with the children through team games and with adults through interactive discussions. Our host Master Khuldeepji, provided as a lot of initial information about the village and also provided as with a wonderful place to stay and delicious homely food.

The one thing I learned from the villagers of Indpur is to be happy with what we have and to be one with each other. The villagers are socially knit together. Their life is co-operating and interdependent. They depend on each other for the supply of their daily wants. Their social sense is so strong that the guest of one is considered as the guest of all and our group was treated as with utmost respect. The villagers pass a calm and peaceful life. They lead a simple life and their desires are few. They are satisfied with what they have and never dream of those luxuries and comforts that modern science has provided us with in such ample measure.

The poor quality of education provided to the village students was one of the major drawbacks that I observed in the village. Poor infrastructure, lack of teachers, financial issues etc. were some of the identified problems in this sector and since quality education being one of the basic necessities for a developing society I took education sector as my focus area for this project. Indpur is a village with tremendous potential for development in all sectors and provides as a great opportunity to learn and develop ourselves as well as to serve the society.