

B. Participatory Rural Appraisal in Umsawli Village:

The Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) was conducted by the Bachelors of Social Work students (IV Semester), Martin Luther Christian University on the 4th November 2010. The Martin Luther Christian University, Department of Social Work conducted a PRA to assess the socio economic condition of Umsawli village. There were 31 Bachelor of Social Work students and 2 faculty members of the Department of Social Work and one project coordinator who were involved in this study.

Methodology:

The exercise was carried out through household surveys and also Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools were used such as Social Mapping, Seasonal Calendar, Venn diagram, Time Line and daily time use Transect walk and wealth ranking.

Objectives:

- To find out the demographics of the village which includes the number of household, members in each household, number of children, number of adolescent, number of adults, main occupation, head of family, etc.,
- To understand about the present socio economic conditions of the village
- To assess the present sanitary facilities and availability of drinking water.

Findings from the survey:

Umsawli is a village which is 20 kilometres from the capital of Meghalaya, Shillong. Mawdiangdiang (3 km away) is the nearest village that connects Umsawli with the outside world. It falls under East Khasi Hills District, Meghalaya. The households are dispersed and are few distance from one another. The whole village belongs to the Kharkongor clan and even the IIM shillong permanent campus also once belongs to the Kharkongor clan. According to the headman who is also one of the first Khasi inhabitants of the village, the village started in the year 1968.

Demographic Data

The village has 24 households with a population of 250. There are 80 numbers of children below 5 years of age and around 100 adolescents present in the village. There is 1 Lower Primary School under Sarva Siksha Abhiyan; there are 80 school going children, 3 college going students and no Government employee in the village.

Seventy Nine percent of the total households were surveyed i.e. out of 24 households in the village; the household surveys could be done in 15 households. The headman clarified that it was the time for processing paddy and therefore many people have gone to the fields.

Religion

The majority of the people in the village are Christians except for a few households

Health

Most of the villagers are healthy and major disease in the village is fever or malaria that affects people during the ploughing season. The nearest health centre is the NEIGRIHMS and the majority of the villagers go there for medical assistance.

Livelihood

The main occupation of the village is agriculture. Paddy and ginger are main crops cultivated by the people. Ginger is the cash crop and is the most profitable as ginger is non-perishable crop, and it has become a major source of income. Paddy is mostly cultivated for self consumption. There are other crops and vegetables that the villagers grow like sweet potatoes, potatoes, pumpkin, yam, corn, tomato, beans, chillies, etc. There are also few households which rear livestock like cows, pigs and hens.

Savings and credit

Almost the whole village do not save in banks and what they earn they spend it on other basic necessities. There are two SHGs under FMA in which the villagers save their earnings within the SHG and the SHG use this savings to provide loan to the villagers.

Labour

The ginger and paddy plantations require a lot of labour for a major part of the year. It creates labour opportunities for the people in the village especially for those who do not have their own plantations. All the labour that is required for cultivation is from the village itself and during post harvest the villagers are involved in daily wage labour. Those who are not involved in cultivation are involved in daily wage labour for the whole year.

Food consumption patterns

Rice is the staple food and the food pattern changes according to the seasons. The vegetables they have along with rice differ according to seasons.

Governance

The Dorbar governs the village. All matters related to the village is addressed by the Dorbar whose head is the Rangbahshnong or Headman. There is a treasurer and a Secretary who is the executive members of the Dorbar and any person who has crossed the age of 18 is eligible for being elected as an office bearer. There is no set criterion for election of the executive members but it depends on the community. The term of office is five years, and meetings are held whenever necessary.

Housing

The pattern of housing in the village is mixed. A majority of 75 percent of households have tin roofed house, and have corrugated iron roofs. 50% of the houses have concrete flooring and 50% have wooden floor. Some houses have concrete walls, some have wooden walls and some have tin walls.

Drinking water facility

The main source of water supply is the ground or the spring water which is located on a private property. All the villagers in the village collect water from that source for all their purposes and

this is through a common understanding. There is no community drinking water facility in the village; the water is not filtered but just boiled before drinking.

Sanitation

The sanitation systems followed by the villagers are not hygienic and majority of them uses the pit sanitation. Only a few household (5 households) uses the septic tank type of sanitation. There is no community toilet present in the village.

Communication:

The main transport facility is a bus transport which comes from Mawdiangdiang and one from the village. The village road is a kuccha road. In terms of telecommunication, land line phone connection of the BSNL. The majority of the people have mobile phones connection and most of the service providers are present there.

Access to Electricity:

Although almost the whole village is electrified, yet from the survey it is found that only 74% of the households are electrified. In terms of electronics and electrical goods, 10 percent of households own a television, 15 percent have a radio, 50 percent have access to mobile phones.

Markets:

The people from the village go to Iewduh for their shopping and it is located in the heart of shillong which is 10-15 km from the village. People sell their produce there and do the shopping there itself.

Access to other Government Schemes:

With regard to the implementation of government schemes in the village, there is the ICDS, NREGA, EMRI 108 Ambulance service, Mid-day meal, SSA and IWDP schemes being implemented.