



# DABKAN VILLAGE WITH UNCERTAIN FUTURE: A STUDY OF VILLAGE RELOCATION IN SARISKA TIGER RESERVE OF ALWAR DISTRICT

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## *Abstract*

The Concept of village relocation started in India in early 19<sup>th</sup> century during British period with objective of conservation of forest. The impact of relocation in most of the cases is stressful from both economic as well as cultural point of view. Most of the relocation policies and package in several countries defined on basis of economic factors only, however importance of cultural similarity also equally important for wellbeing of people. This paper provides a case study of a small village Dabkan, in Tehla Range of Sariska Tiger Reserve, Alwar, Rajasthan. The village was planned for relocation in year 2017-2018, but after 4 years, process of relocation still not started in the village. There is brief about community living in Dabkan, their livelihood, their knowledge about Forest and its resources. After NTCA plan of Village Relocation in Sariska Tiger reserve in 2007-08, basic development activities like electricity, drinking water, medical facilities, construction of pucca house completely stopped in the village by Forest Department. People living in the village have uncertainty about their future. Through this research paper, we have attempted to understand the issues and problems related to the people living in Dabkan village, their concern about relocation package and suggested suitable measures for coexistence of human and wildlife.

**Keywords:** Relocation, Dabkan village, Livelihood, NTCA, Sariska Tiger Reserve, Wildlife

## INTRODUCTION

Protected areas have traditionally known as the backbone of the forest conservation management strategies in the world. The objective of protected areas to conserve biodiversity that provides homeland and protection to endangered and threatened wildlife from hunting and poaching along with similarly important for conserving sites of natural, cultural and economical importance like carbon stock, mountains and rainforest. Protected areas network covered almost 15.4% of worlds land and 3.4% of the ocean area globally.

Protected areas have come to limelight due to threat of human induced global warming and it is necessary to understand the consumption of natural resources because of their natural and ecological values.

The meaning of **relocation** is to locate again: establish or lay out in a new place. The main purpose of relocation is to reduce human-wildlife conflict, reintroduce tigers and conserve natural resources. ‘The challenge is not to preserve (or restore) ‘the wild’, but peoples’ relationships with the wild .The future of conservation will turn on the extent to which a strong individual connection to nature and natural processes is maintained.’ (Adams 2004: 235–236).

State of Rajasthan has three Tiger Reserves under project Tiger .These are as follows:

\*Sariska Tiger Reserve

\*Ranthambore Tiger Reserve

\*Mukundara Hills Tiger Reserve

Out of the three tiger reserves Ranthambore Tiger Reserve has maximum population of male and female tigers. The Bengal Tiger (*panthera tigris tigris* ) is native tiger species of the India. Tigers are referred to as umbrella species plays significant role in balancing the ecological process and food chain. Tigers are at the top of the food chain play vital role in ecosystem. In the last 12 years tiger population has increased by 115% (As per Tigers in India Report).State of Rajasthan stands 9<sup>th</sup> position for numbers of tigers. The forest department is mulling to develop more habitat through relocation of villages from the parks and Reserves for big cats.

Sariska of Alwar Rajasthan declared as Tiger Reserve in 1978. In year 2004 while the country was in shock to know that tigers are completely disappeared from Sariska mainly due to hunting by local Bawaria, a tiger task force was setup to handle the issue and provide plan for reintroduction of tiger into Sariska.

Under section 38 V of Wildlife Protection Act 1972, on Dec 28, 2007, Governor of Rajasthan declared area of core or Critical Tiger Habitats in Sariska Tiger Reserve. Due to this Dabkan a small village lies in Rajgarh Tehsil of Sariska Tiger Reserve become part of Critical Tiger Habitat.

Fate of people of Dabkan change while National Tiger Conservation Authority made detail plan for relocation of villages from Sariska Tiger Reserve and Dabkan was considered under the plan for relocation in 2017-18. Dabkan is surrounded by Rajgarh Tehsil towards East, and 65 km from District headquarter Alwar in South. (Location Map of Dabkan Village)

Some important cases of displacements from National parks and Sanctuaries which are arranged state wide with their available information below. All case studies were resulted due to human -wildlife conflict.

Nagarjunsagar -Srisailam Sanctuary and Tiger Reserve

Pakhui -Nameri Sanctuary/National Park/Tiger reserve

Asola Sanctuary in Delhi

Gir National Park, Gujrat:

Bandipur National park /Tiger reserve,

Bhadra Sanctuary and Tiger reserve,

Kudermukh National Park

RAJIV Gandhi National Park

Bandhavgarh National Park

Bori-Satpura-Pachmarhi National Park

Kanha National Park

Ranthambore National Park

## OBJECTIVE

The key objective of this study to understand the livelihood of Dabkan village, issues faced by villagers in Sariska Tiger Reserve and people understanding about relocation and its implication. Study also reveals relocation policies & packages and analyzes the possibilities of Human-wildlife coexistence.

## METHODOLOGY

Study focused on villages surrounding Sariska National Park in Alwar, Rajasthan. This study tends to focus on rehabilitation process of those villages which are proposed to relocate outside from the park. Maximum knowledge has to be gained on current contextual realities and issues that are affecting the communities and Tiger Habitat. These contextual realities had to be covered from all the sample villages.

Data for this study has been obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Techniques used for collecting primary data are

1. Observation
2. 2. In-depthInterviews
3. Household Questionnaire
4. Focus group discussion
5. Secondary Data Collection

The historical and cultural information collected from Books, Journals, research articles, census reports, district gazette, reports of National Tiger Conservation Authority and Forest Department Govt. of Rajasthan.

## REVIEW OF GOVT. POLICIES RELATED TO RELOCATION

### 1. Scheme for Tribals

In the year 1989-90 Central Government launched a scheme focusing Tribals. The main objective of the scheme is rehabilitation of Tribals, relocated from protected areas under relocation plan. Under the scheme every male of 18-year age, considered a single family and entitled for a compensatory package of 1 lac Rs for relocation. This package includes

	Cost (in Rs)
Land development (2 hectares)	36,000
Building materials per family	36,000
Transport of household goods per family	1,000
Community facilities computed per family	9,000
Wood lot and fuel reserves per family	8,000
Pasture and fodder plantation per family	8,000
Cash incentives for shifting	1,000
Miscellaneous activities	1,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,00,000</b>

### Strength & Weakness of the Scheme

The key strength of the scheme was to provide land for each adult male with considering their existing economic status. However, no consideration about prior livelihood and livestock resources of each family. Relocation package focused on agro based economy for rehabilitee without providing proper knowledge about agriculture since most of the tribals depend on livestock for livelihood.

### 2. National Rehabilitation Policy 2006

Considering slow development and several other issues in relocation, new policy formulated for rehabilitation. This policy focused to minimize relocation and promote least displacement alternatives. There are two options provided in the package for relocation of people from Tiger Reserve

1. A compensation package of 10 Lac Rs/family

2. In Option 2, land provided on other place for agriculture and for construction of house. This package includes

(a)	Agriculture land procurement (2 hectare) and development	35% of the total package
(b)	Settlement of rights	30% of the total package
(c)	Homestead land and house construction	20% of the total package
(d)	Incentive	5% of the total package
(e)	Community facilities commuted by the family (access road, irrigation, drinking water, sanitation, electricity, tele-communication, community center, religious places of worship, burial/cremation ground)	10% of the total package

Main limitations of the policy were that it did not ensure people's participation. Under the scheme there was provision of 2 Ha land for each adult family, however in reality the land provided for relocation was not 2 Ha.

### 3.Land Acquisition Act of 2013

Land Acquisition Act passed by Indian Parliament in 2013. After a wait of more than one century this act comes into existence. First Act about land acquisition came into 1894. This act describes about rules for land acquisition. Detail planning for rehabilitation of people who relocated or displaced from one place to another provided under Land Acquisition Act. As per Act, It is compulsory to take prior consent of the people to be relocated for private or public projects.

### 4. The Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Bill, 2013

The main objective of this Act to conserve wild animals, birds and plant, management of wild life habitats, and control on trade or commerce linked to wild life.

### Amendment in Compensation Package

As per letter FNO. 15-3/2008-NTCA (Vol.III) Pt. dated 8<sup>th</sup> April 2021 of Deputy Inspector General (NTCA) Relocation package under option 1 Revised from 10 Lac per family to 15 Lac per family.

### Study Area

#### DABKAN VILLAGE

The study village Dabkan lies between 27° 15' 30" N & 76° 22' 10" E. Dabkan is surrounded by Mandlawas in North West, Rajor in North and Tehla in east and Koti Rampura and Talab in south west. Dabkan Village, located in Rajgarh Tehsil\_of Alwar district in the state Rajasthan in India. Total geographical area of Dabkan

village is 3 km<sup>2</sup> · 1.72 square kilometer (57%) of the total village's area is covered by forest. Dabkan village comes under buffer zone of Sariska Tiger Reserve (STR). As per Phase wise Relocation Plan, Relocation of Dabkan was planned in 2017-18. Population density of the village is 131 persons per km<sup>2</sup>. Nearest town of the village is Rajgarh and distance from Dabkan village to Rajgarh is 30 km.

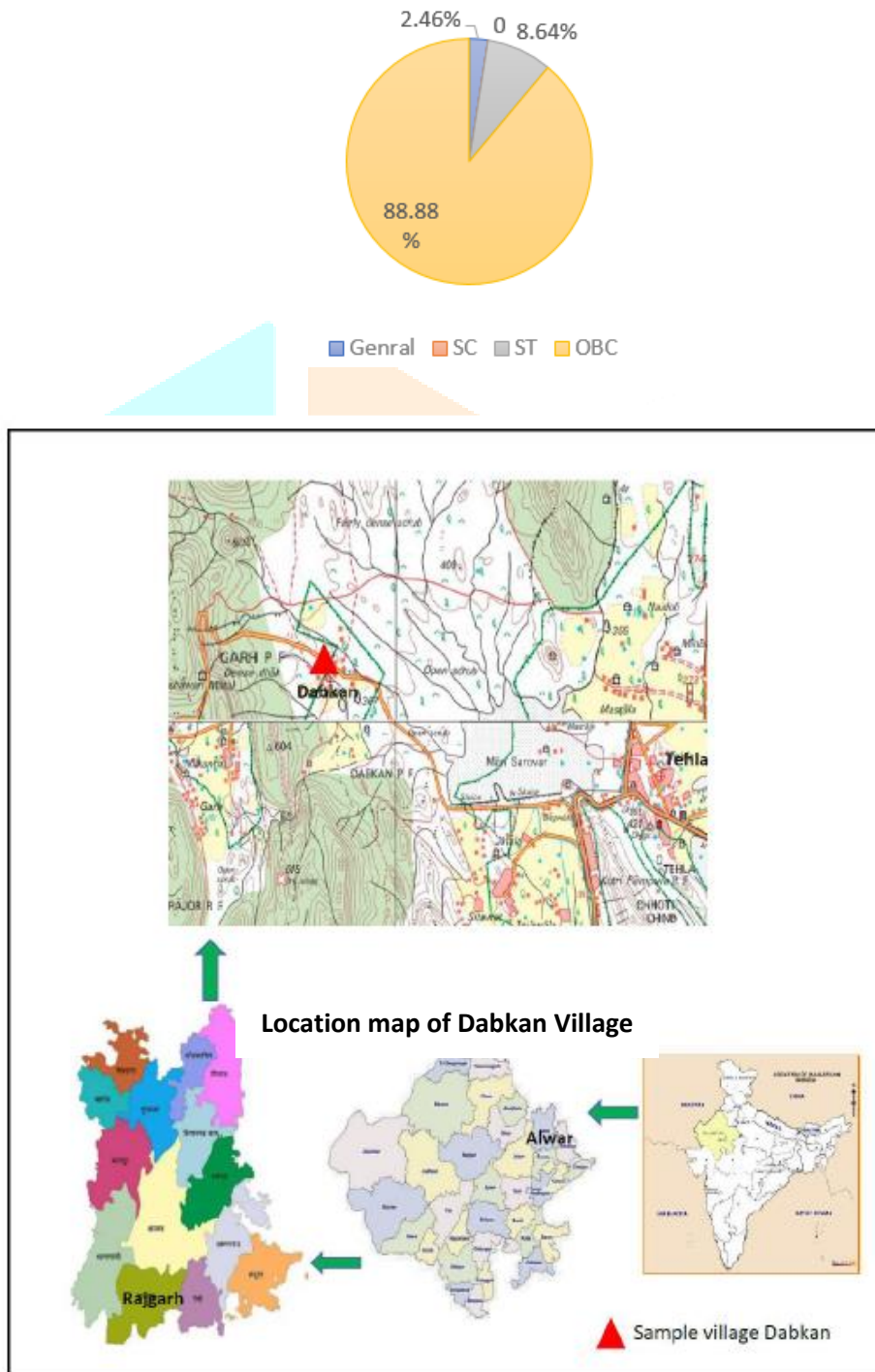


Figure 11: Location Map of Dabkan Village

## COMMUNITIES

Dabkan village is mainly dominated by Gujjar Community, People of Meena and Rajput community also present

### Communities in Dabkan

#### Livestock

Category	Nos.
Cow	27
Buffalo	284
Goat	542

## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

As per Census data of 2011, Dabkan has total population of 396 peoples, out of which females were 177 while male population were 219. Female constitute 44.70% and males constitute 55.30% of the total population. The population density of the village is 131.13 person per square kilometer. There are also 35 scheduled tribes (Meena community) Out of which 18 are females and 17 are males. The village has 68 children in the age group of 0-6 years. The % of child population is 17.17%. Out of which 36 are boys and 32 are girls. There are about 81 houses in this village.

During our survey in the village in 2021 we found total population of the village 419 with total 81 households.

Category	Cencuse-2011	Household Survey
No. of 81 Households	81	81
Total Population	396	419
Male	219	
Female	177	

<b>0-6 Age Group</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Literacy Rate</b>	<b>Male (53%), Female (22%)</b>
<b>Caste</b>	
<b>General</b>	<b>Rajputs</b>
<b>OBC</b>	<b>Gujjar</b>
<b>SC</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>ST</b>	<b>Meena</b>

### HOUSE PATTERN

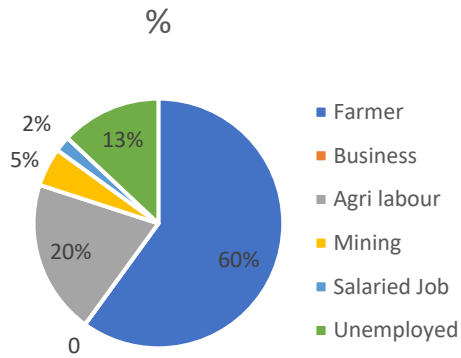
The houses are usually made up of timber and bamboo poles. The walls of the houses are used as partitions were covered with mud. In Dabkan village, electricity is not available. Toilets are present in some households but prefer to go outside either to forest or agriculture field. As per findings in the Dabkan village, there was lack of basic amenities like drinking water, Electricity, Roads, Dispensaries and Wi-fi connection.

### EDUCATION

<b>Education</b>	
<b>Upto Class 5</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>12-May</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>Graduation</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>178</b>
<b>Literacy Rate</b>	<b>42.48%</b>



## Primary Occupation



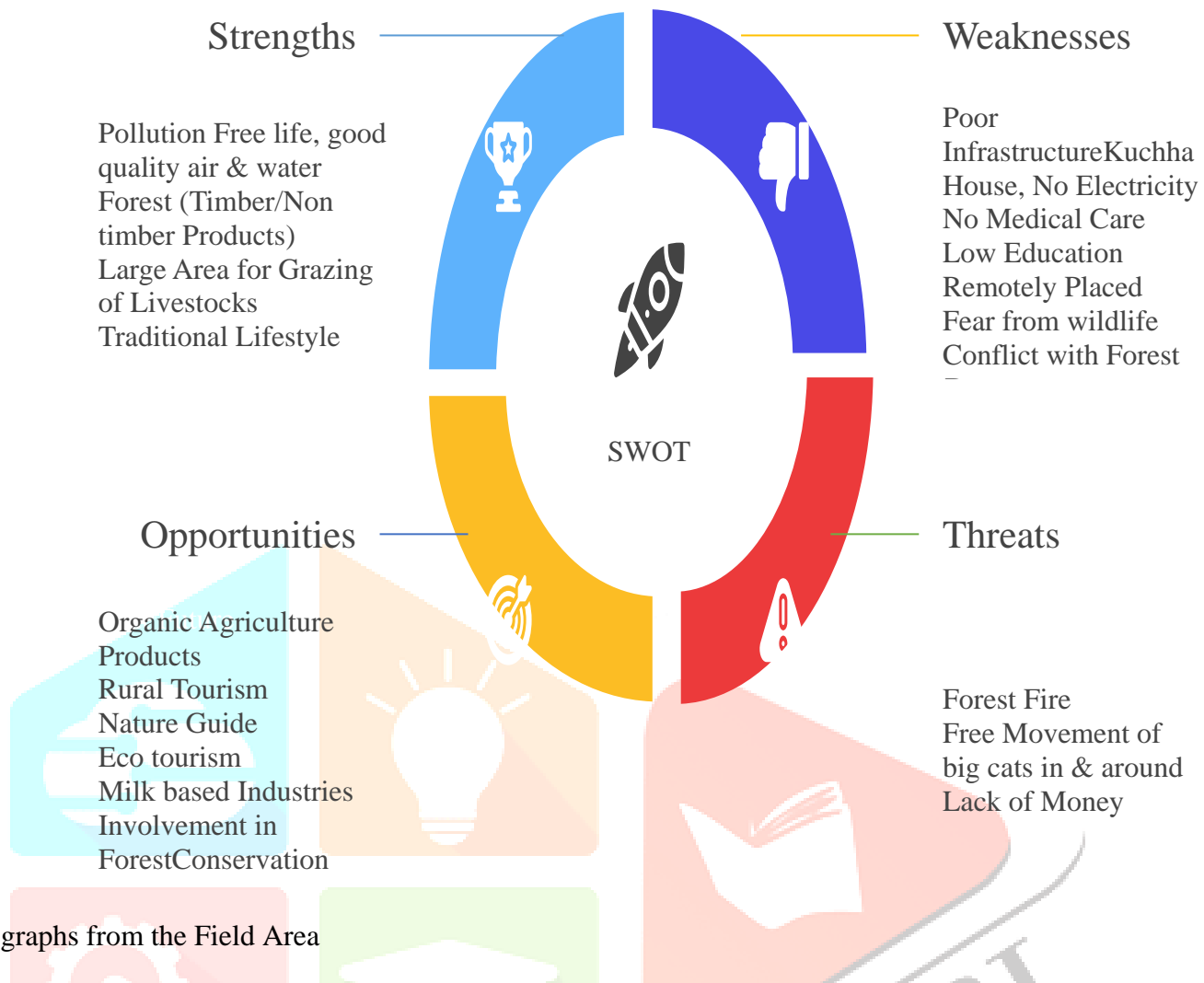
## LIVELIHOOD

People living in Dabkan depended on multiple employments. As per findings of the study in village Dabkan agriculture is quite intensive due to some water harvesting units. Dabkan villagers are mainly depended on the forest for their livelihood. They collected fuel wood, timber, bamboo, leaves, grasses, fruits and vegetables from the forest. *Anogeissus pendula* (dhok) and *Apludamutica* (grass) *Butea* (leaves) collected for fodder of their livestock. Villagers collect dry fodder biomass for fuel wood from forest to cook food. Most of the villagers have their livestock and land while some of the villagers have only land or livestock. Some people are now the occupation in mining, animal husbandry and as a wage labour. But Salaried jobs in Rajasthan police, Group D services in Railways under reservation of Meena tribes. On basis of household survey, we categorized main occupation of villagers of Dabkan into Six categories.

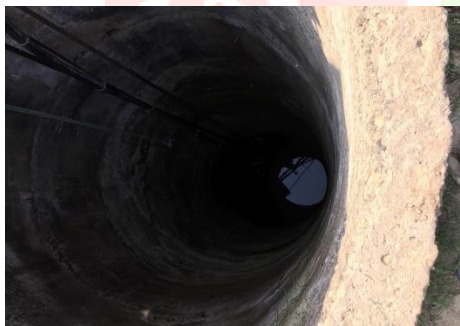
## Major Challenges for People of Dabkan

1. Uncertainty about future
2. Absence of resource based infrastructure facilities in general
3. Restriction from Forest Department
4. Limited opportunities for alternative livelihood– lack of skills, information, resources and techniques
5. Small per capita land holdings, less productivity absence of marketable surplus, Age old techniques of farming and absence of diversification
6. Ban on mining, challenging land scape: Hilly terrain, undulating topography, remote and scattered hamlets

After analyzing Govt Policies, village survey and discussion with villagers on coexistence with wildlife, a SWOT analysis made for village Dabkan.



Photographs from the Field Area



Well, Source for Drinking & Farming



Livestock



Fuel wood Stock



Household Survey

## DISCUSSION

Joint families are predominant and nuclear family was rare in number. Elderly parents were found to living with his children and sometimes with their daughter -in -laws. Father of the family considered as head of the family sharing common kitchen .All families were patriarchal in nature. Females normally busy in full day with households chores and nurturing the children. Gujjar is main communities in Village. Other than Gujjar, 3 families of Rajput and 6 families of Meena also present. Most of the families rely on Solar Power for power. 5-6 families rely completely on kerosene for lighting. All families received Gas Cylinder under Pradhanmantri Ujjavala Yojna in 2018-19.

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In Dabkan agriculture is quite intensive due to some water harvesting units. Wheat, Mustard, Maze, Oat, and Gram and jwar are main crops in the area. Male are responsible for animal grazing and selling of milk. Rundh is major grazing area where villagers graze their livestock such as bufflows, goat and cows. Most of the villagers have their livestock and land while some of the villagers have only land or livestock. Villagers are involve in selling of livestock also.

Few villagers were not able to exploit this potential for cultivation due to lack of proper agriculture inputs this results people are now forced to take up the occupation in mining, house construction etc. Important decision concerning the village is taken by majority of the villagers based on common consensus.

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