



# **WILDLIFE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND ISSUES OF REHABILITATION: A CASE STUDY OF TADOBA-ANDHARI TIGER RESERVE.**

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## **Abstract:**

Wildlife tourism has emerged as a significant global industry, promoting economic growth and conservation awareness while posing challenges to ecological sustainability and animal welfare. The growth of wildlife tourism is driven by increasing demand for authentic nature-based experiences, supported by policies promoting protected areas and eco-tourism initiatives. However, unregulated tourism can lead to habitat degradation, wildlife stress, and disruption of natural behaviours. Rehabilitation efforts aim to mitigate these impacts by restoring habitats, rescuing and reintegrating displaced or injured animals, and promoting sustainable practices. Key challenges include inadequate funding, lack of standardized protocols, and conflicts between tourism revenue and conservation priorities. Effective wildlife tourism development requires a balanced approach integrating robust rehabilitation frameworks, stakeholder collaboration, and community engagement to ensure long-term ecological integrity and ethical tourism practices. Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve also facing some issues regarding rehabilitation of 6 villages relocated from core zone. Rehabilitation efforts, such as the relocation of villages, aim to create inviolate spaces for wildlife but often face resistance due to socio-economic impacts on displaced communities, including loss of livelihoods and cultural practices. This case study examines TATR's wildlife tourism development, its contributions to conservation and local economies, and the complex issues surrounding rehabilitation,

highlighting the need for sustainable practices that harmonize ecological preservation with community well-being.

**Keywords:** Wildlife tourism development, Rehabilitation, Sustainable Practices, Conservation

## **Introduction:**

Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve (TATR), located in Maharashtra's Chandrapur district, is one of India's premier tiger reserves, celebrated for its thriving Bengal tiger population and rich biodiversity. Spanning 1127.17 square kilometres, TATR, established in 1955 as a national park and later merged with the Andhari Wildlife Sanctuary in 1995, both Tadoba National Park and Andhari Wildlife Sanctuary were declared as Core or Critical Tiger Habitat. Then after on 5/5/2010 1101.77 sq. km. area was declared a buffer zone around Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve. It covers a total of 79 villages.<sup>1</sup> TATR has become a focal point for wildlife tourism in India, attracting visitors with its lush tropical dry deciduous forests, diverse fauna, and scenic landscapes, including Tadoba Lake and the Andhari River. The reserve's tourism sector has flourished, driven by jeep safaris, guided nature walks, and innovative proposals like the world's first ropeway safari, aimed at enhancing visitor experiences while minimizing ecological impact. This growth has positioned TATR as a model for eco-tourism, with over 80 tigers in the core area and 200 in the larger landscape, supported by robust

<sup>1</sup> Tiger Conservation Plan, Vol. I (core) by Field Director, Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve, Chandrapur

conservation efforts and community involvement initiatives such as homestays and local guide training.

However, the rapid development of wildlife tourism in TATR raises significant challenges, particularly concerning the rehabilitation of local communities and wildlife. The presence of human settlements, including six villages within the core zone, has led to human-wildlife conflicts, habitat disturbance, and restrictions on local access to forest resources like tendu and mahua. Rehabilitation efforts, such as the relocation of villages like Navegaon, aim to create inviolate spaces for wildlife but often face resistance due to socio-economic impacts on displaced communities, including loss of livelihoods and cultural practices, as seen with the banned Gond adivasijatra at Tadoba Lake. These efforts are further complicated by inadequate funding, lack of standardized protocols, and the need to balance tourism revenue with conservation priorities.

#### Research Methodology:

Primary and secondary data are used for this research. Secondary data is collected from the office of the Field Director of Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve and forest department. To study the impact of wildlife tourism on social and

economic life of the families from affected villages, the study was conducted by interviewing some of the relocated villagers from the core zone. Some graphs are used to represent data collected during the interview.

#### Geographical Location of Study Area:

The Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve is located in the eastern district of Chandrapur in Maharashtra. 20° 4' 53" North to 20° 25' 51" North Latitude and 79° 13' 13" East to 79° 33' 34" East Longitude. The Reserve will be extended to 1727.17 sq.km. is spread across the area. This includes 625.40 sq. km. of core zone and 1101.77 as the buffer zone.

#### Results and Discussion:

The Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve received administrative recognition in 1995 through the merger of Tadoba National Park and Andhari Wildlife Sanctuary. At that time, the villages of Kolsa, Botezari, Palasgaon, Rantatalodhi, Jamani, and Navegaon (Ramdegi) were located within the 509.27 sq km protected area of Andhari Wildlife Sanctuary. For the safety of the villagers and the protection of wildlife, it was necessary to relocate these villages outside the protected forest.

**Table 1: Details of Villages completed Rehabilitation process**

Sr. No.	Name of the Village	Total number of families			Agrarian Families	Non-Agrarian Families	Total Population
		Tribal	Other	Total			
1	Jamani	134	62	196	166	30	500
2	Kolsa	189	17	206	160	46	550
3	Botezari	89	18	107	84	23	250
4	Rantatalodhi	134	2	136	98	38	350
5	Navegaon	-	197	197	188	9	400
6	Palasgaon	116	34	150	110	40	400
	<b>Total</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>806</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>2450</b>

(Source: data collected by Researcher.)

As mentioned above, the process of rehabilitation of a total of 992 families (662 tribal and 330 non-tribal) in 6 villages began in the year 2000. The Sub-Divisional Officer, Warora passed the first order on 5/8/2000 regarding the rehabilitation of three villages namely Kolsa, Botezari, Palasgaon.

**Table 2: Alternative rehabilitation sites and costs in Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve**

Sr. No.	Name of the Village	Total number of families	Rehabilitation sites	Rehabilitation costs (in lakhs)
1	Jamani	150	Reserve Forest Land survey no. 524, 550 hector at Tolewahi in Mul Tahshil.	336.18
2	Kolsa	206		
3	Botezari	107		
4	Rantalodhi	136	Forest Land survey no. 186, 180 hector in Sawali Range	125.50
5	Navegaon	197	Forest Land survey no. 29, 250 hector in Chimur Tahshil	162.30
6	Palasgaon	196	Forest Land survey no. 42, 250 hector at Dabalapurrih in Chimur Tahshil	162.22
	<b>Total</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>1230 Hector</b>	<b>786.20</b>

( Source: data collected by Researcher from various Government Resolution.)

The central government agreed to provide each family with a compensation of one lakh rupees and to build houses in a new place and provide land for farming. But the citizens of Palasgaon refused to move to forest block number 524, so the process of rehabilitation of 313 families in Botezari and Kolsa was started. The work on the houses of 79 families in Botezari and 152 families in Kolsa was completed. After the relocation of 79 families to Botezari, 49 families in Kolsa moved to a new place. However, the remaining 130 families in Kolsa refused to move to the resettlement site. Later, families from 30 of these villages shifted to forest block 524. Recently, relocated 70 families are in Kolsa and 54 families in Doni. The process of their rehabilitation is completed. The rehabilitation process in Jamni and Navegaon (Ramdegi) started from January 2012 as per the new rehabilitation policy of the central government. According to this new policy, the subsidy amount of one lakh rupees per family was increased from one lakh to ten lakh rupees.

Due to the good package of the new central government, 222 families from Dhamani and 240 families from Navegaon were resettled in forest block number 42 and forest block number 29 respectively by July 2014. The issue of resettlement of the remaining 124 families from Kolsa, 150 families from Palasgaon and 136 families from Ranatalodhi is still pending (as of December 2019). As the villagers are adamant about the questions regarding the proposed location, compensation amount, employment guarantee, etc. being given by the Forest Department, the resettlement of the citizens here has become a big challenge for the Forest Department.

To find out why some families are not ready for rehabilitation that time despite the government's policy of providing permanent houses, agricultural land, and Rs 10 lakh compensation to each child above the age of 18 in the family, questionnaires and face-to-face interviews were conducted with 62 selected families from three resettled villages.

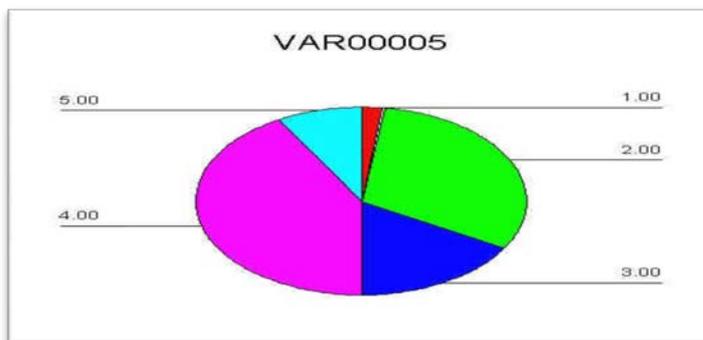
**Table3: How satisfied are you with the land you have received, the house you have built, and the civic and social facilities you have received in the village (such as roads, drinking water, temples, vihars, etc.)?**

Sr. No.	Opinion of Villegers	Number of Interviewer	Percentage
1	Most satisfied	1	2.1
2	satisfied	20	31.3
3	Averagely satisfied	10	16.7
4	Dissatisfied	26	41.7
5	Most Dissatisfied	5	8.3
	Total	62	100.00

(Source: data collected by Researcher.)

How satisfied are the citizens of the villages where the rehabilitation of the villages in the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve was done, regarding the public and civic amenities, the quality of the land received in return, and the

condition of the houses constructed? When we inquire about this, it is noticed that the rehabilitated citizens are not completely satisfied with the facilities provided



**Table 4: Are you satisfied with the financial compensation received as per the rehabilitation policy?**

Sr. No.	Opinion of Villagers	Number of Interviewer	Percentage
1	Very less compensation	27	43.8
2	less compensation	7	10.4
3	Satisfactory	18	29.2
4	Good Compensation	9	14.6
5	Very Good Compensation	1	2.0
	एकूण	62	100.0

(Source: data collected by Researcher.)

While providing financial compensation as per the rehabilitation policy, citizens rehabilitated before 2012 received only one to two lakh rupees per family. Whereas, after 2012, every young person who has completed 18 years of age in a family rehabilitated has been given a compensation of ten lakh rupees each. Due to this, people who were rehabilitated before are seen to be dissatisfied with the financial compensation they received. Whereas citizens rehabilitated after 2012 are seen to be satisfied with the financial compensation they received. The resettled people feel that the taluka place and district headquarters are closer to the resettled places than their previous villages. Also, health and educational facilities are within easy reach. Do you feel that coming to the resettled village has benefited them? When asked, 62.5% of the people said yes, while 29.2% said no, and 8.3% said they could not say anything. Schools, health facilities, and taluka and district headquarters were definitely far from their previous places. Communication facilities were not available. However, the young citizens of the resettled villages express the feeling that there are ways and means to

reach all these facilities from the resettled places.

5.4 percent of the people have been resettled voluntarily and there has been no coercion by the government agencies. This is the opinion recorded. However, 14.6 percent of the citizens did not want to migrate. But they have expressed the opinion that we were forced to migrate. he most important and pressing issue for families who have migrated from the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve is employment. To find out what families who have left their original place and original occupation with the expectation that their employment problems will be solved when they migrate feel about the current situation, we asked, "Do you think that the project has not benefited the people who have migrated from the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve? Do you think that the jobs in the project, hotel guides and other occupations have not accommodated the migrated families?" 60.4% of the people said that the project has not benefited them at all. They feel that their employment problems have not been solved. While 39.4% of the people said that the project

has benefited them and employment is being provided in some places.

### **Conclusion and Suggestion:**

The above information has come to light after going to the rehabilitated village of TadobaAndhari Tiger Reserve and conducting interviews. The Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve management has been successful in rehabilitating the citizens by giving the reasons of wildlife protection and forest conservation as well as tourism development. The promises made to the citizens of the rehabilitated village while rehabilitating have not been fulfilled 100%. Also, land has been given for cultivation, but due to the damage caused to crops by wildlife, the citizens cannot generate a large source of income from that agriculture. The people of the rehabilitated village have a big problem of employment. Also, due to the gap in the financial benefits received from the two phases of rehabilitation, the government has done injustice to the people who were rehabilitated first. They believe that this is the case. According to the rehabilitation policy adopted after 2012, 123 youths from Botezari and Kolsa villages were expected to get Rs 10 lakh for each youth of each family who has completed 18 years of age. However, they have not received that amount yet. The employment generated through tourism is being accessed by the youth of the nearby villages in the buffer zone. However, considering the location of the resettled village, the government agencies and the Tiger Reserve Management should make efforts to provide the youth of the resettled village with proper training and various employment opportunities generated through tourism.

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