



Village Awareness Programme

**Kanha Tiger Reserve
April 2017**

Team:

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Village Awareness Programme Kanha Tiger Reserve, April 2017

The programme

Last Wilderness Foundation in association with the Kanha Tiger Reserve Forest Department conducted the first leg of the Village Awareness programme in the buffer zone of the tiger reserve which was focussed to address the Baiga community. The programme was initiated from 1st – 4th April and covered 4 villages located in close proximity of the park.

The idea behind the programme was to meet with the local communities residing in the villages and to have a dialogue with them about the importance of conservation and what they can do in their capacity to protect it. To this effect, they were shown a movie called 'The Truth about Tigers' which labels in details the threats to tigers and the measures required to protect it. The screening was followed by a presentation about Kanha and how imperative it is to safeguard this landscape for the sake of their own survival.

The villages covered were Behra Khar (Bandha Tola), Batwar, Mowala and Khaapa and saw participation of about 80 people from each village.



Pic 1: All smiles waiting for the movie to begin



Pic 2: Movie screening in progress

Understanding challenges

Apart from discussing conservation issues another aim of the meeting was to understand the challenges faced by the villagers and to derive solutions to those challenges. The meeting was met with enthusiasm and proved to be an interactive one.



Pic 3: Discussion regarding challenges faced by the villagers



Pic 4: Discussion with regard to the importance of Kanha



Pic 5: Rapt audience during the discussion



Pic 6: A bit of internal discussion amongst the elders of the village



Pic 7: A young student helps us operate the presentation

Conclusion

It is imperative to have a dialogue with the villagers on a more frequent basis in order to understand other challenges faced by the villagers especially in villages that are sensitive or have history of conflict. Touch points should also be maintained to check on the implementation of the solutions as discussed during the meeting.



Pic 8: Regular communication and maintaining touch points with the villagers is the way forward