

Ministry of Tourism, Government of India
Central Nodal Agency Rural Tourism and Rural Homestay

Case Study on Nationally Recognised Best Tourism Village, 2023
Village - Madla, Madhya Pradesh, Gold Category

1. Village Details

Madla has a population of 2553, female population of 1,158, and male population is 1,395 according to the latest census. The total geographical area of the village is 478.44 hectares. The literacy rate of the Madla village is 68.27% out of which 78.94% are males and 55.50% are females.

Madla village is administrated by a sarpanch and comes under Panna assembly constituency and Khajuraho parliamentary constituency. Panna is the nearest town to Madla for all major economic activities, which is approx. 20 km away.

2. Challenge

Madla is located around 25 km from the UNESCO World Heritage site of Khajuraho and just 10 km away from the Pandava Falls and Caves which is near the Panna National Park. Although the village is located in close vicinity to world-famous tourist attractions, the direct benefit to the local community from tourism was limited. There were minimum employment avenues for locals in the local tourism economy.

3. Tourism Assets

Madla is nestled among the natural scenic beauty with one of the cleanest rivers, Ken River, mountains and forest within just one km of the area, Madla is a rare village in India to have all three natural geography features. The village is part of the Bundelkhand cultural zone that offers its unique Bundelkhandi tradition and customs. Madla is surrounded by exotic wildlife, undulating hills and forest cover. The village is connected to various heritage, environmental and religious sites like UNESCO World Heritage Site Khajuraho Temples along with Pandav Falls and Caves, Raneh Falls and Diamond Mines.

4. Development Approach

i. Whole of Government Approach

The development of Madla as a tourism village is the result of the convergence of the various government departments including the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, Rural Development Department Government of Madhya Pradesh and Rural Development Department Government of India, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India.

The focus of the interventions has been on the six main components:

- Local Excursion
- Convenient Stay,
- Art & Craft,
- Local Cuisine,
- Folk Songs and Dance,
- Skilling

ii. **Involvement of the Community in Business Development**

Madla promotes community development at every stage of tourism activity, it provides a platform for the locals to present their art and help in preserving the cultural assets. The establishment of rural homestays provided employment opportunities to the local community. Capacity building of the Local youth as guides for arranging Eco-walks, nature walks, etc. Fishermen are trained to provide boat rides and fishing experiences to the tourists in Ken River. Women are also involved in the business development of the village and also provided with capacity-building training, women groups take part in different development activities like running homestays and making different handicrafts.

iii. **Private and Public Coordination and Multi-Stakeholder participation**

The rural tourism project is being implemented in coordination with various government departments of the Government of Madhya Pradesh, under the direction of the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board. The Bundeli Culture (Project Support Organization) works in coordination with the government to promote tourism and provide a platform to create financial assistance, economic stability, and social equality for the villagers. Project Clean Destination is being run with funding from Coca-Cola Foundation under CSR and SAAHAS (NGO) as an implementing partner. *Pashoon Pakshi* is the Technical Support Organization for this Project.

iv. **Environmental Sustainability**

Measures are being taken such as an e-vehicle, solar energy, minimum use of single-use plastic, plantation, promotion of organic farming, and use of grey water in kitchen garden. Involvement of the local community in preserving and maintaining the balance of flora and fauna. Certain measures have been taken to curb climate change issues like conservation of soil through natural farming techniques and organic farming products are used in preparing meals and the leftovers are used as manure and proper management of solid & liquid waste.

v. **Social Inclusion**

Social inclusion has been a key consideration from the beginning of the development. The Village Tourism Committee was formed democratically with equal participation of men and women. Those who can contribute to setting up the homestay are homestay beneficiaries. Others who can't construct homestays get training to offer other tourism experiences such as art, craft, souvenirs, guiding, and other activities irrespective of gender and caste. The homestays operated by women provide a sense of safety to solo women travellers & families.

4. Key Strategic Interventions to Develop Rural Tourism

i. Formation of Village Tourism Committee

The Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board (MPTB) has established a village tourism committee that is responsible for ensuring the implementation of policies at the community level as well as working on monitoring the progress of Rural Tourism in the village.

ii. Developing Rural Homestays

MPTB identified local Project Support Organizations (PSO) for the on-ground operations involved in promoting and developing Rural Tourism products in the village. The identified PSOs conducted the primary survey to develop Rural Tourism products such as Rural Homestays, Souvenirs, Cultural Experiences, etc.

iii. Establishment of Community Hall in the village

The Community Hall of the panchayat was developed to be used for multiple purposes such as conducting meeting of the village tourism committee, workshop to make souvenirs, and shop to sell them.

iv. Responsible Souvenirs Project

One of the major initiatives taken to strengthen community involvement is the Responsible Souvenir project. The project aims to diversify the local economy through art & craft development and support to local artisans, particularly involving women and youth of the community. It is planned to enhance the training for the improvisation in the size, colour, and design of the products, along with this packaging and marketing support will be given to make destinations eco-friendly.

5. Impact of Rural Tourism Development in Madla

i. Economic Impact

Madla promotes community involvement at every stage of tourism activity, it has developed a holistic framework for the economic sustainability of the

community. The rural homestays established under rural tourism promotion, have provided economic stability to the local communities, and have proven a good source of income for them, the tourists with a comfortable stay also get an experience of social interaction with the communities and create a special bond with them by learning the tribal customs and traditions, and help the locals to involve in the cultural exchange activities. Local youths are trained as a guide for arranging eco walks, fisherman is trained to take the guest on boat ride and fishing in Ken River

ii. Development of local enterprises

The pivotal tourism enterprise of the Madla village is the Homestays of the village. With homestays, the village also showcases its cultural side to tourists. The Budelkhandi performing art like songs and dance are performed in front of the tourist and local food are served to the tourists. Different local activities are also performed by the tourists.

iii. Promotion and Conservation of cultural resource

The region has its own rich culture and tradition. The steps were taken to put efforts in preserving these culture and traditions. Cultural programs are organized in the evening, where the local artists showcase their art to the tourists. The local artists sing songs glorifying the folklore of erstwhile king of the Chandela and Bundela Dynasty and in the devotion of Lord Ram and Lord Krishna. These folklores and songs are enjoyed by the tourists amidst the bonfire on the chilly winter night while being served with traditional Bundeli cuisines.

6. Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals

Madla Village adapted the core values of the responsible tourism mission that is focused on “Sustainable Tourism” and “Responsible Tourism”. Presently the village is working on these principles and motivating its cluster villages to do the same, some of the principles include:

- Inclusive and sustainable economic growth
- Social inclusiveness, employment, and poverty reduction
- Resource efficiency, environmental protection, and climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- Respect for cultural values, diversity, and heritage.
- Mutual understanding, peace and security

