

Abstract Submission for ILC 2013

Socio-economic

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LONG TERM IMPACT OF SOCIO ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO IMPROVE THE LIVELIHOOD OF PERSONS AFFECTED BY LEPROSY IN INDIA

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Preferred Presentation Method: Oral or Eposter

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Introduction: Persons affected by leprosy with disability face socio economic barriers mainly due to stigma and discrimination within their families, community and work place. Socio economic assistance could help them to improve their livelihood options and raise their status in the community. Damien Foundation has initiated its socio economic rehabilitation program in India in the year 2007. The support was provided in the form of livestock like cow or goats and self employment assistance. The aim of this study is to assess the long term impact of the socio economic assistance in improving the livelihood of the affected people.

Methods: Damien Foundation India has conducted a cross sectional survey using a semi structured interview schedule to study the socio-demographic profile of the beneficiaries, impact of the socio economic support and access to government entitlements. Beneficiaries supported in the year 2008, 2009 and 2010 were interviewed by the field staff. In case of absence of beneficiary, family members were interviewed. The support provided is considered to have long term added value if it is utilized by the beneficiary or family members currently for generating income or the support provided is sold and invested in to another activity. The support provided is considered to have no long term added value if the support provided is completely sold or all the livestock has died. The data was entered and analyzed using Epi Info™ 7.

Results: We have contacted 315 beneficiaries supported in 2008-10. Among them 266 (84.4%) persons are available for the interview, 37 (11.7%) died and remaining migrated or not traceable. The mean age of the beneficiaries is 52 years and 81% of them are above 40 years. Support was provided to 121 (38%) women. Around 55% of beneficiaries are from socially deprived groups. Majority of them are illiterate (71%), has own house (89.5%) and do not own land (69%). Around 10% of beneficiaries are living in leprosy colonies. Around 50% of the beneficiaries receive disability or old age or widow pension from government. Beneficiaries were supported with live stock like cow/buffalo (20.5%), goat/sheep (48%) and other self employment (31%). Among those received livestock 10% has died. The program has long term added value among 71% of the beneficiaries in improving their livelihood option. The support provided in the form of goats and beneficiaries from leprosy colony was found to be significantly associated with poor outcomes.

Conclusion: The program has long term added value to improve the livelihood options of persons affected by leprosy.