



## General Overview

- **Location:**

Lai Gow is located in the northern district of Udaipur in India.

- **Background:**

Lai is a rural community made up of tribal peoples, known as "Adivasis." Tribal populations throughout India traditionally lived in rural and interior areas, distant from most of the region's populated areas, in turn in isolation from much of society. Within India's caste system they are considered so inferior that they do not even have their own caste.

- **Population:**

There are approximately 700 people in Lai Gow, of which 250 are children.

- **School Enrollment:**

It is very complicated to determine the school enrollment or attendance.

- **Recent Challenges:**

Historically excluded from even entrance into the organization of society, now Adivasi's struggle to keep a pace with modern Indian society and government. Currently rural areas all throughout India are slowly being encroached to access rich natural resources, development projects, and industrialization.

As a result tribal populations are being forced into urban centers and/or deprived of all natural resources and independent governance structures which traditionally ensured their survival. With lack of awareness and education in regards to politics, economic and social mobility, this community struggles to bridge the gap between their past and India's present.



*Lai Gow's children*



*Lai Gow's current school*

## Education

There is one local school in the village of Lai which was established 12 years ago by the community who fundraised for its construction. The school has only two classrooms and provides education only up to third grade. The two classrooms, which all students share, have one blackboard cemented to the wall, a floor made up of loose sand and a broken tin roof. The classrooms have no tables or chairs. In addition to sharing classrooms, students also share one teacher who rotates his time between all classes.

There are both boys and girls enrolled at the local school; however attendance is not always consistent. There are no proper books or pencils for students to use, or can afford to buy. Parents often feel it is waste of time to send their children to such a poor quality school.

To address these challenges Free The Children is building a new spacious educational facilities and providing the community with the required learning material and school supplies.

## Alternative Income

Lai is surrounded by dry arid lands full of sloping hills and red dirt roads. The only time the land is suitable for harvesting is in the rainy season, during which time locals commonly grow corn and wheat. These crops are usually grown for local consumption and not for sale to the outside market, since there is very little available for harvesting to earn an income through such means.

In turn, most locals have no choice but to search for employment outside the village. Many go to the city of Udaipur to take up a variety of odd jobs, such as factory work, to earn an income.

## Health, Water and Sanitation

Access to health care and clean water is essential to ensure the health of children and the entire community. Unfortunately, most community members do not have access to a clean water system or proper sanitation facilities. Unfortunately, there are no medical facilities within the community. The closest health centre is in the city of Udaipur.



*Young girls from Lai must walk for hours to carry water back to their homes.*