

EVALUATION REPORT ON INTEGRATED TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

1. The Study

The Scheduled Tribes belonging to over 250 tribes had their own distinct socio-cultural and ecological milieu. Since independence several Five Year Plans have made efforts for gradual socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes but they still remain the weakest sections of the society. In view of this, the detailed programme was started and implemented since the Fifth Five Year Plan with specific objectives of reducing poverty, improving educational status and eliminating exploitation of the tribal families.

At the instance of Ministry of Welfare, the Programme Evaluation Organisation undertook the evaluation study of ITDP to assess the effectiveness, performance of Planning and monitoring and the impact of the programme on the well being of the Scheduled Tribes.

2. Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study were the following:

- i) to assess the development of infrastructure facilities like rural roads, drinking water supply, minor irrigation, electricity, village market, schools, Post Office, banks, etc.
- ii) to examine the effectiveness of the existing administrative, financial and monitoring arrangements,
- iii) To find out the role and contribution of voluntary organisations, etc., and
- iv) to identify constraints and suggest remedial measures to achieve the objectives of Tribal sub-plan strategy.

3. Sample Size/Criteria for Sample Selection

Seven States namely, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa and Rajasthan which represented the highest tribal population were selected for the study. Accordingly 10 ITDPs were selected, one each randomly from the selected States and one additional ITDP from each of the three States where percentage of population was very high. Two

blocks from each of the selected ITDPs were selected randomly. From each of the selected block, three villages were selected. 16 households were selected from each of the selected village.

In all 7 States, 10 ITDPs, 20 blocks, 60 villages and 960 households were selected for the study.

4. Reference Period

The reference period for the study was 1995-96.

5. Main Findings

1. In all the States, the administrative set-up existed more or less the same as per central guidelines. However, the system of decentralised planning, implementation and monitoring was not adhered to as per guidelines in most of the States.
2. The delivery system of the programme was not effective. A large number of tribal farmers were found to be using irrigation water, HYV seeds, fertilisers and other inputs from private sources, even though a significant proportion of TSP fund was being spent on free delivery of such inputs.
3. It was found that the access to primary schools was good, but most of the schools were lacking teaching staff.
4. In most of the States, the medical facilities were not available upto the mark. About 78 percent of the sample villages had no PHC within a distance of 5 kms. The position was very bad due to non-availability of sufficient staff and absence of doctors etc.
5. A large majority of the tribals were feeling that their life style was now good with respect to the possession of productive and utility assets, and access to food, clothing, transport facilities, electricity and schools, compared to the ten years ago.
6. The states were required to allocate State Plan funds to TSP atleast in proportion to the percentage of tribal population in a State. It was found that Bihar and Orissa had been allocating plan funds to TSP in excess of this limit while other States were allocating much less to TSP. The states were in general not adhering to the allocative principle as recommended by the Working Group of the Eighth Plan.
7. It was found that the tribals in the CTB were practising settled cultivation and a large proportion of them were using irrigation, fertilisers, HYV seeds, etc.

8. Land alienation was still a serious problem, though in a number of cases land had been restored. Land acquisition for development projects and mortgaging for credit from private sources were widely prevalent.
9. The training programme for ITDP officers was not being regularly organised.
10. There was no uniformity in providing special allowance to ITDP officers.

6. Major Suggestions

1. The ITDP project officers should be assigned a key role in planning, administration and implementation of tribal development programmes and empowered with magisterial powers as recommended by the Working Groups of the Eighth Five Year Plan and Ninth Five Year Plans.
2. As regards the execution of tribal development schemes, the officers of the line Department should report to the ITDP Officers, as in Maharashtra.
3. Since the Socio-Economic profiles of the tribals vary across States, each state must make an assessment of the deprivation of tribals in all the areas of social concern and adopt an appropriate principle for allocation of TSP funds across various sectors.
4. In order to improve access to public education and medical facilities, the quality of social infrastructure needs drastic improvement. The Schools need quality teachers, teaching materials and health centres comprising of number of doctors, para medical staff and other facilities etc. Sufficient TSP funds need to be allocated for this purpose in almost all the states.
5. The active participation of the tribals is very essential for the implementation of the tribal development programme effectively.
6. Some criteria regarding the staff strength at the ITDP level need to be evolved keeping in view their key role in plan implementation and monitoring.
7. It is imperative that dedicated officers who are fully trained should be posted in ITDP areas. Moreover, special incentives need to be given to encourage them for working in these areas.