

Tribal Area Planning and Development A Case Study of Rajasthan State

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Abstract

Rajasthan has 7.10 lakh Scheduled Tribe (ST) population (12 per cent) as per the 2001 Census, of which nearly 95 percent reside in rural areas. Though the tribal population is scattered throughout the state, a major portion is concentrated in southern part of the state. The major tribes residing in this area are Bhil, Meena, Damor, Patelias, Saharaiyas, and Gharasia. The social assessment commissioned by the SPMU has highlighted the fact that the tribals in the project districts are amongst the poorest and marginalized communities. Thus, deliberate and proactive measures, combined with relevant government programs on tribal development are required, to ensure that benefits actually accrue to them. The Constitution of India makes special provisions for tribal. It lists out predominantly tribal areas in Section 1 of Schedule 244 that are referred to as Scheduled Areas. Similarly Schedule 342 gives state wise list of communities to be designated as Scheduled Tribes. The formal launching of Tribal Sub-Plan for the state of Rajasthan dates back to 5th Five Year Plan. Tribal Area Development Plan (TAD) in the tribal regions of the state has following broad objectives as set in the first five year plans. The overall strategy of this paper is based on the following principle namely Protection of social, economic and cultural interests of tribal communities in their areas and elsewhere in the state. Facilitating informed consultations and broad community support for the project among the tribal communities. Promoting participation and representation of tribal in all community institutions, and their Committee. Financing demand-driven Micro credit & Livelihood Plan and value chain based support for key livelihood activities in the tribal areas. Support to activities/sectors where tribal communities are able to participate effectively, especially relating to land, water, forest and livestock resource to ensure food security and sustainable surplus. Establishing linkage with public resources and legal provisions related to tribal development and welfare.

Key Words: Scheduled Tribe, Marginalized, capacity building, livelihood activities, tribal development and welfare.

Introduction

The state of Rajasthan is the largest state of the Republic of India by area with 3,42,239 sq. kms spread occupying 10.4% of the country's total geographical area. As per the 2001 Census, nearly 56.51 million, that is 5.5% of the nation's total population live in this state. The state is surrounded by Pakistan to the west, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh to the south, Uttar Pradesh to the northeast, and Punjab to the north. The main geographic features - the Thar Desert and the Aravalli range which runs through the state from southwest to north east, almost from one end to the other for more than 850 kms give it certain unique geographical features. On the administration side, the state has 33 districts, 249 blocks with 41,353 villages and the pink city Jaipur serves as the state capital. Poverty and social structure are uniquely intertwined in the state. As per 2002 BPL survey, the state has a population of 15.28% to its total population recorded as those living below poverty line, less than the national average at 26.10. Moreover as per the World Bank's 1997 India Poverty Assessment Report the state's rural poverty was reported as

47.5% as against the national average of 36.7% in the country. Though, regional imbalance in growth and development is significant in the state of Rajasthan. The state has high concentration of poor in the resource-poor regions, largely occupied by the Scheduled Tribes. Among various causes, such regions have lacked severely in productive land, irrigation facilities, industrialization, skills and higher incidences of illiteracy.

1. As per the 2001 census, the Scheduled Tribe (ST) population of Rajasthan State is 7,097,706 constituting 8.4 percent of the total ST population of India. The Scheduled Tribes of the State constitute 12.6 percent of the total population (56,507,188) of the State. It holds 12th position among all States and UTs in respect of the percentage share of ST population to total population. The ST population has registered a growth rate of 29.6 per cent during 1991-2001 which is 1.2 per cent higher than the growth of the total population.
2. The Scheduled Tribes are overwhelmingly rural as 94.6 per cent of them inhabit in rural areas where as 76.6 per cent of the total population of the state live in villages.
3. District wise distribution of tribal population shows that they have their highest concentration in Banswara district (72.3 per cent), followed by 65.1 percent and 47.9 per cent in Dungarpur and Udaipur districts respectively. Nagaur (0.2 per cent) preceded by Bikaner (0.4 per cent) has the lowest share of tribal population in the total population.

Tribal Development: Current Implementation Framework

Legal and Policy Framework for Tribal Communities in Rajasthan

The Constitution of India makes special provisions for tribal. It lists out predominantly tribal areas in Section 1 of Schedule 244 that are referred to as *Scheduled Areas*. Similarly Schedule 342 gives statewide list of communities to be designated as Scheduled Tribes.

Tribal Area Development Department: The Secretary, Tribal Area Development Department, in the state is the overall in charge of the Department. He is assisted by a Dy Secretary, Dy. Director and Accounts Officer at the State Level. But ITDPs are not directly dealt with by Officers at State Level. They are dealt through office of Commissioner, TAD, located at Udaipur, who is assisted by Additional Commissioner and a team of Officers drawn from different disciplines. ITDPs are headed by an Officer of State Civil Services and he is assisted by Dy. District Education Officer, besides subordinate staff.

Designation of Tribal Areas as TSP, MADA and Clusters: Tribal Sub Plan

The formal launching of Tribal Sub-Plan for the state of Rajasthan dates back to 5th Five Year Plan. The State has adopted the approach of TSP for Development of Tribals. Under TSP all the schemes for Tribals are being implemented through following programmes.

1. **Integrated Tribal Development Programme (ITDP)**
2. **Modified Area Development Agency (MADA)**
3. **MADA Cluster Development Programme**
4. **Seharia Primitive Tribe Development**
5. **Scattered Tribal development programme**

TSP in Rajasthan is sponsored by the Centre as well as the State government. The central government, under the TSP, has implemented the Tribal Regional Development Program (TRDP). The TRDP had two

components; (i) Creation of infrastructure like road, forest, irrigation facilities, health and education for tribals; (ii) Generation of livelihood for tribals, which included animal husbandry, agriculture and horticulture and capacity building for self-employment. Schedule V Area- has been constituted with assimilation of 23 tehsils of Five districts of southern Rajasthan with concentration of ST population. 2001 census, the total population of the area is 45.14 lacs of which ST population stands at 30.93 lacs. District Banswara & Dungarpur Districts are completely covered, whereas seven tehsils of Udaipur and 81 & 52 villages of Girva Gokunda tehsils respectively. Pratapgarh, Arnod, Dharivad Blocks of Pratapgarh Districts and Abu road of Sirohi Districts. The Major Tribes which reside in the area are Bhil, Meena, Damor and Gharasia. In pursuance of article 244, the President of India declared the areas of Dungarpur, Banswara, and Pratapgarh as scheduled areas. Later on tribal sub plan area was chalked out of adjoining tehsils where tribal population was more than 50%. Scheduled area in the State extends over the entire districts of Banswara and Dungarpur, six tehsils and 81 villages of Udaipur district, two tehsils of Chittorgarh district and one block of Sirohi district.

- **Modified Area Development Approach- (MADA)**

MADA is constituted of tribal dominated and contiguous villages with a total population of 10000 and above but with a tribal concentration of more than 50 percent in the total population of the villages. Under MADA programme, 44 MADA pockets have been formed in 18 districts, which has 3606 villages. As per 2001 census MADA area has a total population of 28.51 lacs out of which 15.72 lac is ST population. Meena tribe is in majority in this area. The aim of the programme is an integrated development of STs. MADA provides assistance in areas of agriculture, animal husbandry, education, cooperatives, health and employment generation. Under The National Schemes for Financial Development Corporation (NSFCC) STs are given 50 percent subsidy for milch animals, land development, carpet making, and hosiery and fishery programs. There are enabling schemes for the tribals in the BPL category too. BPL schemes for tribals are given to those living in clusters or groups and the schemes included 50 percent subsidy for pump sets, wells, shop keeping, improved agricultural implements and auto-rickshaw. In addition to it, the schemes could cover any provision to improve the livelihood of the tribal people. The distribution of capital assets such as milch animals, auto-rickshaw and other tools for livelihood, as under the former IRDP scheme, have envisaged that the development issues of tribal community are no way different from the rest of the world. It is in total negation of the reality at the grass root level because such programs are envisaged by

the state apparatus whose thought process are governed by their own construction on development paradigms.

- **MADA-Clusters**

MADA Clusters are constituted where the population is 5000 or more or which has 50% ST population. The State has 11 MADA Clusters in eight districts with 161 villages. MADA cluster has a population of 1.04 lac and the ST population is .57 lacs, which is 54.72 %. The districts covered by MADA Cluster programmes are Ajmer, Rajsamand, Jhalawar, Baran, Bharatpur, Bundi, Kota, Sawai Madhopur. The only primitive Tribal group in the state are Sehariyas. Sehariyas reside in two Blocks of Baran District namely Shahbad and Kishanganj. The area of two blocks has been categorised as Sehariya Vikas shetra for development of the sehariya community. II.5 Scattered ST programme Area Apart from Tribal Sub Plan area, MADA, MADA Cluster and Sehariya shetra significant tribal population is scattered in several districts of Rajasthan. 22.91 ST are scattered in 30 Districts of Rajasthan.

- **Tribal Area Development Plan;**

Tribal Area Development Plan (TAD) in the tribal regions of the state has following broad objectives as set in the first five year plan : (i) to narrow the gap between the levels of development in the tribal are and other parts of the state and (ii) to improve the quality of life of the tribal and tribal communities. Though the tribal population is scattered throughout the state, a major portion is concentrated in southern part of the state viz., entire districts of Banswara and Dungarpur, the tehsils of Kherwara, Jhadol, Kotra, Salumber, Sarada, Dhariyawad and 81 villages of Girwa panchayat samiti of Udaipur district, Partapgarh and Arnod tehsils of Chittorgarh district and Abu Road block of Sirohi district.

- **Legal Framework:**

Following widespread cases of atrocities against members of Scheduled Castes and Tribes, the Center has passed Prevention of Atrocities (SC and ST) Act. This Act stipulates stringent punishment to those who commit atrocities against any tribal.

Forest Rights Act1: The law concerns the rights of forest dwelling communities to land and other resources, denied to them over decades. The act is aimed at giving ownership rights over forestland to traditional forest dwellers. As the act came into force much recently in 2007 the effectiveness and impacts of the act could not be seen or felt in any of the districts where the social assessment was carried out. *Gram Sabhas* have been assigned important role in the implementation of the provisions of the Act promulgated by the central government and applicable from December,2006. The *Gram Sabha* would elect Forest Rights Committee who would invite claims on forest land as detailed in sec 3 (1) of the Act. Some of the important rights mentioned are :

1. Right to hold and live in the forest land under individual or common occupation for habitation or self cultivation for livelihood.
2. Community rights.
3. Right of ownership, access to collect, use and dispose of minor forest produce.
4. Rights for conversion of *pattas* or leases or grants on forest land.
5. Conversion of all forest villages into revenue villages.
6. Right to protect, regenerate or conserve or manage any community forests resource which they have been traditionally protecting.
7. Right of access to biodiversity or community right to intellectual property.
8. Right to in-situ rehabilitation including alternative land where scheduled tribes or traditional forest dwellers have been illegally evicted without receiving legal entitlement to rehabilitation prior to 13th day of Dec 2005.

The vesting of forest rights under this Act, with respect to forest land shall be subject to the condition that the scheduled tribes or other traditional forest dwellers had occupied forest land before 13th day of December 2005.

- **The Act grants four types of rights:**

Title rights - i.e. ownership - to land that is being framed by tribals or forest dwellers as on December 13, 2005, subject to a maximum of 4 hectares; ownership is only for land that is actually being cultivated by the concerned family as on that date, meaning that no new lands are granted ;

Use rights - to minor forest produce (also including ownership), to grazing areas, to pastoralist routes, etc.;

Relief and development rights - to rehabilitation in case of illegal eviction or forced displacement and to basic amenities, subject to restrictions for forest protection.

Forest management rights - to protect forests and wildlife.

The implementation status report shows that only around 8000 land deeds have been handed over to the tribals whereas more than 200,000 applications are pending in various district offices of the state. People's participation under the Rajasthan State Forest Policy, 2009 Participatory approach will be the central to forest management in forest as well as non-forest areas.

Following strategies will be made to make it more effective:

1 The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006.

- No forestry development works in forest or non forest areas will be undertaken without people's participation, by creation of Joint Forest Management (JFM) Committee comprising of local people in the State.
- The State Government shall bring out resolution on JFM time to time based on its evolution and experienced gained by highlighting salient features in consultation with all the stake holders and the Department will bring out working guidelines to facilitate uniformity of practices in subordinate offices. Possibility of framing of rules under provision of Act can be explored.
- Joint Forest Management Committee constituted so far can be classified as active, moderately active and less active on the basis of certain pre-determined criteria through periodic monitoring. Those committees are moderately active or less active need to be supported so that they come in the category of active committees.
- Alternative livelihood options of forest dependent communities will be given prime importance through formation of Self-help Groups. Skill development of these groups is needed through constant efforts of capacity building and to encourage them to start micro enterprises for income generation by providing them seed money.
- Joint Forest Management Committee are to be encouraged to develop a corpus fund from the outside in order to maintain physical assets created in their areas including plantations.
- Forest Department should empower women members as well as economic disadvantaged groups.

A brief sketch on important Tribals in Rajasthan

1. The Bhils

The state of Dungarpur, Banswara, Chitorgarh and Maewar (Udaipur) formed a compact tract predominantly inhabited by the Bhil tribes. In ancient times, the rugged and hilly area covered by the erstwhile State of Dungarpur and Banswara was known as Vagad and were ruled by the Bhils and to a smaller extent, by Chauhan and Paramara Rajputs. The Bhils formed bulk of the population in the States of Dungarpur, Banswara and Chittorgarh, though the other cultivating classes such as the Patels and Kunbis, Brahmins, Mahajans and Rajput also lived in the area. The Mewar Hill tracts, inhabited by Bhils and Girassis, was taken under the control of the British Political Superintendent (1828) with his headquarters at Kherwara for exercising control over the Bhil population sprawling the Southern Rajputana States. The

Mewar Bhil crops were raised in Mewar Hill Tract in 1840, under the command of a British Officer with cantonments at Kherawar and Kotra. They were indifferent cultivators and relied to a large extent on forest products, hunting, and cattle but their practice of resorting to plundering for paying bride price (dapa) as well as their habit of drinking liquor and under its influence indulging in fighting among themselves or between one village and another, earned them notoriety as a criminal tribe

during the pre independence period. They lived in unhygienic environment and practiced nonvegetarianism, resorted to black magic for the treatment. They expressed repugnance to the use of vaccination and allopathic medicines.

2. Sahariyas

Kishanganj and Shahababad block concentrated on tribal population. The Sahariya are the traditional forest dwellers. The household are basically nuclear family and major occupation is agriculture labour or other labour. Even the collection of minor forest produce has become difficult for them and therefore they were left with no livelihood. Sahariya, the only primitive tribe of the Rajasthan state, resides in the Shahabad and Kishanganj Panchayat Samiti's of Baran district. They are mostly under privileged group.

The name Sahariya is said to have derived from the Arabian word 'Sehara' or 'wilderness'. The Muslim rulers found them residing in jungle, gave them their present name 'Sahr' which means 'Jungle' and accordingly they came to be called 'Sahariya' meaning residents of jungle. Even in the absence of genuine historical account it may be stated that the Sahariyas have been one of the earliest settlers in Rajasthan. Rajasthan Government has announced this area as a Sahariya region. Sahariya live in infrastructural weak and remote areas, not well connected through road/bridge network even now. Lack of exposure to modern life and historic exploitation by landlords who paid them fewer wage, has left Sahariya extremely primitive and backward. In the last one decade there has been some interest and efforts towards 'Sahariyas' development. After the emergency period, state government has constituted 'Sahariya Innovative Project' whose office is in Shahabad. There are large number of NGO's working for the upliftment of Sahariyas, prominent among them being, ASSEFA, SANKALP, Adim Jati Sangh, Lok Jumbish and DPIP. Most of them have produced successful results in one area or the other. Sahariyas generally reside in separate *basti* in the village which is called *Saharana*. The religious practice by these

tribals is Hinduism and they speak a dialect influenced by Hadoti. The Sahariyas maintained ecological equilibrium with their environment for ages, despite low level of technology. Mostly they were gatherers of minor forest. The main business are gathering and selling of forest wood, Gum, Tendu leaf, Honey, fruits and vegetables. The male of this tribe are uninterested in economic activities. The entire burden of earning is on the shoulders of women on this tribe. Sahariya.s takes seasonal 'Kandmul' fruits and vegetables found in forests. Vegetables leaves of 'Senjna', 'Phang', 'Bichotiya', 'Kanna', 'Bansi', 'Charetha', 'Churangli', 'Barsak', 'Lahaylai', 'Chaurai', 'Totam', 'Chani', 'Bajar', 'Rajan' etc. are very commonly taken by Sahariyas in their foods. Crushed dry 'ber' with salt is also eaten with interest. They are non-vegetarian also. 'Sawa'

is the seeds of the special grass found in the jungle. Sahariyas made delicious foods from the seeds of these grasses. The seeds of the sawa grass are crushed to flour and chapatis are made. The sawa flour is also used to make .kheer, 'Rabri' etc. The sawa seeds flour is a nutritive value which is also used by the urban people in their fast (Upwas). Like fertility, mortality was also higher among tribes in comparison to general population of the state. The table 4 reveals that among the tribes 58 births per 1000 live births do not survive the First month of life, about 37 percent of infants die in between age of one month to 12 months and 95 percent infant die before reaching their first birthday. Child mortality (1.5 years) was calculated to

be 155. The major causes of infant and child mortality in tribes were acute Respiratory infections, fever, diarrhea and anemia. It is suggested that for reduction in mortality specially infant mortality, existing infrastructure of health and medical facilities should be improved and RCH Programme should be popularized more among them through modern and traditional methods of motivation and Communication. Unlike in Rajasthan's southern districts of Banswara, Dungarpur and Udaipur where Bheels and other smaller communities of tribals still continue to brew their traditional liquor out of 'mahuwa' flowers, Sahariyas, drink the Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL).

3. Minas

Originally Meenas were a ruling cast, and were ruler of Matsya, i.e., Rajasthan, but their slow downfall began and was completed when the British government declared them a Criminal Tribe. This very action was taken to support their alliance with Rajput kingdom then in Rajasthan, and Meenas were still in war with Rajputs, carrying out gurilla mode of war and attacks to retain their lost kingdoms. Members of the Meena community are found in the northern part of Rajasthan. Meenas share the Brij and Matsya Area of Rajasthan i.e. Sawai Madhopur, Dausa, Jaipur, Dholpur and Karauli districts in Jaipur and Bharatpur region (also the Bharatpur and Bayana districts) with other communities. In north western part of MP state too Meenas are found. The Meenas, community of Rajasthan, are an agricultural people occupying one of the most fertile regions of the state. The Meena kings were the early rulers of major

parts of Rajasthan including (Jaipur). People from Mina community is associated with farming profession, and most of them are economically good from early period of the settlement.

• Literacy & Educational Level

The Scheduled Tribes of the state have a literacy rate of 44.7 per cent which is lower than the national average (47.1 per cent) in respect of all STs. There has been a significant improvement in the rate of literacy during the decade 1991-2001. The over all literacy rates which was merely 19.4 per cent at 1991 census has increased to 44.7 per cent at 2001, higher by 25.3 percentage points. Male literacy has gone up from 33.3 per cent in 1991 to 62.1 per cent which is higher than that of national average of 59.2 per cent. On the other hand, though the female literacy has increased six times from meagre 4.4 per cent at 1991 to 26.2 per cent at 2001, it is still lower than the national average of 34.8 per cent recorded by all tribal females.

Among the larger groups, Dhanka and Mina have registered literacy rate higher than that recorded by all STs at the national level whereas Damor, Bhil, Seharía and Garasia have lower literacy rate than those of national as well as State averages. The Statement – 2 given below brings out variations in total and female literacy rates among the major tribes.

Literacy Rate

All	S T (India)	ST (State)	Dhanka	Mina	Damor	Bhil	Seharía
Persons	47.1	44.7	61.8	52.2	41.2	35.2	34.2
Females	34.8	26.2	45.9	31.8	23.2	19.1	18.7

Conclusion

This tribal development strategy document is recognition by the state government of the fact that benefits from programmes and schemes intended for the tribal do not reach them automatically. Thus, deliberate, strategic measures and proactive regimes have to combine with relevant programs in order to ensure that benefits actually accrue to the vulnerable sections such as the tribals. The Social assessment commissioned by the SPMU has highlighted the fact that the tribals in the project districts are amongst the poorest and marginalized communities. Further, the assessment has analyzed the special predicament of these communities and possibilities of interventions in their favour within the framework of the project. This document further delineates the broad principles and programmatic intervention with specific activities, institutional arrangement for their implementation, monitoring and budget.

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