

CHAPTER SEVEN
TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMMES

7.1 INTRODUCTION OF TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

ANALYSIS :

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in West Bengal roughly constitute 27.68% of the State population. The bulk of the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes population are agricultural labourers or having minicule holdings, or bargadars or other types of insecure tenants. They not only suffer from the oppression of economic exploitation, but are also object of odd social discriminations. They own meagre assets and are caught up in a vicious circle in which they are dependent upon their exploiters for their stamenance and are largely denied opportunities to develop the capability of allowing an independent livelihood.

Although about 27.68% of the State population comprise of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, their proportion among the pretty group is much larger and they represent the lowest degrees. In fact, bulk of the poorest section of the population are from Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes communities.

Notwithstanding the extremely adverse situation, the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes contribute significantly to the sustenance and growth of the production systems of the country and the nations economy. In this agriculture-based economy the largest single group amongst agricultural labourers in the country are Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes - Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes women, in fact, constitute 72% of all women agricultural labourers in the country; foot-wear and leather products are mostly the contribution of the Scheduled

Castes, they have a considerable share in the finishing activities of the country. Over and above they are the people who keep the rest of the society clean. In a nutshell, they constitute in the main, the bed-rock on which our society and economic rest. Rarely has any section of a nation contributed so much for so long in return for so little.

In spite of the constitutional directives and a number of legislative and executive measures taken by the Government, the conditions of the Scheduled Castes did not improve much during the period prior to the Sixth Five-Year Plan. The strategy of development of Scheduled Castes was, however, given a workable shape from the beginning of the Sixth Plan Period which was also adhered to the intensified during the Seventh Five-Year Plan, was combination of three important instruments viz. 1) The Special Component Plan of the State and Central Ministers; 2) The Special Central Assistance to Special Component Plan of States, and 3) The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Development and Finance Corporation. In accordance with the guidelines issued by the Government of India, Scheduled Castes Development Corporations have been set up in all States. Such Corporations in the States were envisaged to interface between Scheduled Castes entrepreneurs and financial institutions in respect of bankable schemes of economic development. The main function of these Corporation was mobilisation of institutional credit for economic development of Scheduled Castes entrepreneurs by functioning as a catalysts, promoters and guarantors. These Corporations were designed to help

the Scheduled Caste people living below the poverty line in two ways - first, in encouraging the financial institutions, particularly, the commercial banks to give out on a sufficiently large scale to assist the Scheduled Castes and secondly, by making schemes more viable for Scheduled Caste entrepreneurs.

Against the above background the West Bengal Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Development and Finance Corporation was created by Government under West Bengal Act, XXXIX of 1976 read with Act XLV of 1980. The Act initially restricted the activities of the Corporation among the Scheduled Caste population. Subsequently through amendment in the year 1980, the Scheduled Tribes population of the State were brought within the preview of its activities. The objective of the Corporation may be defined as the task to undertake economic welfare of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes families through Agricultural, Industrial, Commercial and other income generating activities to enable such families to cross the poverty line permanently. To achieve this purpose, the Corporation provides margin money loan assistance to the target group entrepreneurs on individual or in group for promoting income generation and or self employment schemes in all spheres of activities like Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fishery, Cottage and Small Industry, Trade and Business etc. The Corporation acts as a catalytic agent for the economic development of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes families living before the poverty line by arranging subsidy from Scheduled Castes and Tribes Welfare

Department and other Departments/Agencies of the Government of West Bengal and by providing margin money from its own fund so as to attract Bank loan for income generating self-employment schemes.

The role of the margin money loan given by the Corporation is primarily to attract institutional finance as much as possible to the target group of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes who would otherwise have been considered not creditworthy according to the norms of the financial institutions under the normal circumstances.

The quantum of margin money loan is restricted to 20% of the project cost subject to a maximum of Rs.2,400/- only in an individual case in respect of Scheduled Castes beneficiaries. The quantum of margin money is also restricted to 20% of the total project cost subject to a maximum of Rs.2,400/- only in any individual case in case of Scheduled Tribes beneficiaries. Margin money being a soft loan carries 4% rate of interest.

It is noteworthy that the West Bengal experiment to strive for the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes from the same platform has a few parallels in the country.

Poverty Line :

The poverty line, it may be stated, constitute the most important factor for formulating different schemes, for targetted group of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes people. Initially, families having annual income not more than Rs.3,500/- in rural areas. and Rs.4,300/- in urban areas were the yard-sticks for

determining poverty line. Subsequently, the income criterion of determining poverty line has since been revised by the Planning Commission. The poverty line used in the 7th Plan is an annual household income of Rs.6,400/- in rural areas and Rs.7,300/- in the urban areas. 75% of this i.e. Rs.4,800/- in rural areas and Rs.5,500/- in urban areas have been taken as the out-offline for determining the target group people among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. However, the families having an annual income from Rs.3,501/- to Rs.4,800/- in rural areas and Rs.4,301/- to Rs.5,500/- in urban areas may be taken up first for assistance. Of late, in order to improve qualitative changes in formulating different bankable schemes for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes people, people belonging to income bracket twice and poverty line have been taken into consideration in availing of the benefits of schemes under NSFDC.

Tie-up Arrangements :

The endeavour of the Corporation veers round convergence of available institutional finance on one hand and the Governmental subsidy available under TSP and SCP and from other sources for the implementation of family-oriented income-generating schemes for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. In order to effectively involve the financial institutions in the programme, a tie-up arrangement was evolved and implemented vide Order No.1042-TW/MC, dated 28.9.81 which enunciates and modalities of tie-up arrangement. Such tie-up arrangement has also been worked out with other Departments like Rural Development and

Fisheries Department of the Government. Through this arrangement, the margin money fund of the Corporation has been successfully invested to attract steady flow of institutional finance as well as Governmental subsidy for ensuring listing benefit to the target group people. The tie-up arrangement worked out with the participating Commercial Banks through the West Bengal State Level Bankers' Committee lays down that bank branches will accept proposals of family-oriented economic schemes sponsored by the Corporation with the help of Panchayet bodies and other agencies and sanction and schemes and send requisition for margin money to the district branches of the Corporation and for subsidy to the subsidy administering authority. Such margin money and subsidy fund after observance of necessary formalities is remitted to the Bank for disbursement of the entire loan money to the beneficiary family from the single window. The system has obviated the necessity on the part of a beneficiary family to approach different agencies for different components of its project cost. Instead, he gets all the components of the project cost from a single agency. The agreement also provides for post-financing follow up actions and recovery of margin money loan by Bank Branches in West Bengal on behalf of the Corporation.

During 1981-82 the activities of the Corporation were further strengthened with the establishment of its district branches in all districts of the State. Within the framework of the guidelines formulated by the Corporation, district branches with the District Magistrate as Chairman were empowered to process and finance schemes in the districts.

Short Term Loan :

During 1980-81 a new dimension was added to the programme of the Corporation through short-term financing in croploan to the assignees of vested land and share-croppers. The programme aims at enabling the vested land assignees, share-croppers and marginal farmers to derive maximum benefit from their cultivation by optimum utilisation of the small holdings during the rabi season also. The margin money assistance under the short-term lending programme was kept interest-free with a view to giving a fillup to the programme through motivation of the beneficiaries by giving them some additional benefit albeit limited. It may be mentioned here that after the programme gained sufficient momentum, the margin money loan was delinked from the short-term loan from 1984-85 and the resultant gap was bridged with the help of enhanced institutional finance.

7.2 WEST BENGAL TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATIVE CORPORATION LTD. A PROFILE OF THE 8TH FIVE YEAR PLAN INCLUDING THE ANNUAL PLAN FOR 1990-91 OF WEST BENGAL TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATIVE CORPORATION :

An attempt has been made to involve the LAMPS in the preparation of the Annual Plan and the 8th Five Year Plan for the first time, LAMPS are advised to take i.e. exercised by involving not only the members of the Board but at the same time by involving the Panchayat members also. This process has helped in reflecting the aspirations and priorities of the LAMPS members.

The plan of the West Bengal Tribal Development Co-operative Corporation Ltd., is prepared in two parts. The first

part indicates the yearwise consolidated programme while the second part indicates the programme of West Bengal Tribal Development Co-operative Corporation Ltd., which is again have a bearing on the plans of the individual LAMPS the state.

The achievement during the 7th Plan (which will expire within next 3 months) has been more or less as per our programme. The achievement will, however, fall short in respect of A) Organisation of LAMPS, B) Construction of Godown, C) Construction of Twin Quarters and semi pucca Godown, D) Family Benefit Scheme or short and Medium Term Loan for agricultural spheres. The reason for apprehended short-fall is briefly clarified here under :

A) Organisation of LAMPS : As against the Target of 130 achievement is expected upto 110. The reasons for short fall may be attributed that all the vacant areas earmarked for the organisation of LAMPS had either been covered or in the process thereof. The remaining LAMPS which is a large-drawn time consuming process. Negotiation are continuing with the management of the concerned LAMPS which is required to be split for setting up of new LAMPS during the 1st year of the 8th Five Year Plan.

B) Construction of Godown : The programme suffered much since the LAMPS find it very difficult to procure suitable LAND at a responsible price. The LAMPS under West Bengal Tribal Development Co-operative Corporation are in constant touch with the concern and District Administration and Panchayat authorities for this purpose.

C) Construction of Twin Quarters and Semi Pucca Godowns : The programme also depends on the availability of the LAND. Due to non-availability of LAND no substantial headway could be made during the 7th Plan.

D) Family Benefit Scheme : This scheme which envisages direct employment to the Tribal members is gaining popularity. The loan component under this scheme is provided by West Bengal Tribal Development Co-operative Corporation Ltd., which subsidy component by the State Government. So the success of the scheme is entirely dependent of the amount of subsidy available for the purpose. For instance for the year 1988-89 as against per proposal for 34 lacs we have received a sanction of Rs.9.76 lacs. However, during the 8th Plan it is expanded that a total amount of Rs.206.40 for 11640 members would be sanctioned.

E) S.T. and M.T.Loan for agricultural spheres : Due to default by the Tribal members most of the LAMPS have lost eligibility in obtaining fresh finance from District Central Co-operative Bank/ Nationalised Banks for their seasonal agricultural operation and allied purpose. Unless the old loan of these defaulter Tribal members who could not repay due to circumstances beyond their control is liquidated the Agriculture for the Tribal members would continue to suffer. It was as such proposed in our Annual plan for 1989-90 that the Scheduled Castes and Tribes Welfare provides a subsidy of Rs.5.00 lakhs for the purpose of liquidation of all old debts of the bonafide defaulters but no sanction was received. As such it has been proposed that the

State Government grants such subsidy for the purpose during the 8th Plan period.

Revised 8th Five Year Plan 1992-97 in respect of LAMPS and West Bengal Tribal Development Corporation Ltd. (Physical and Financial).

Eighth Five Year Plan 1992-97 in respect of LAMPS and West Bengal Tribal Development Co-operative Corporation Ltd., has provided

1. Organisation of Lamps physical for 60 lakhs and Financial 45 lakhs.
2. Financial Assistance to Lamps.
 - a) Managerial subsidy Financial 612 lakhs
 - b) Subsidy for Branch Rents Physical 89 lakhs Financial 2.64 lakhs
 - c) Subsidy for allowing sitting fees to Tribal Directors Financial 9.69 lakhs
 - d) Assistance for Rental charge for the office/godown of the lamps physical 235 lakhs Financial 5.64 lakhs.
 - e) Assistance for purchase of Furniture and Fixture physical 70 lakhs Financial 1050 lakhs.
 - f) Assistance for construction of 100 M.T.Storage Godown under N.C.D.C. scheme physical 60 lakhs Financial 210 lakhs
 - g) Assistance for construction of Semi Pucca Godown physical 56 lakhs Financial 56 lakhs
 - h) Assistance for construction of special type Godown for storing and processing of Kandu leaves physical 27 lakhs Financial 121 lakhs.
 - i) Construction of Quarter for the staff of Lamps and W.B.T.D.C.C.Ltd., physical 50 lakhs Financial 50 lakhs.
 - j) Universal membership for Tribal people share capital assistance for involvement of members of LAMPS physical 147 lakhs Financial 93.50 lakhs
 - k) State Share capital contribution and additional State Share Capital contribution of share capital base of LAMPS physical 60 lakhs Financial

60 lakhs. West Bengal Tribal Development Co-operative Corporation Ltd., for the implementation of different schemes has provided.

- 1) Collection and processing of minor forest produce physical 240 lakhs Financial 2040 lakhs.
- 2) Subsidy for Royalty for Kendu leaves and sal seeds Financial 44 lakhs.
- 3) Provision for consumption loan to Tribal members of LAMPS Financial 104 lakhs.
- 4) Medium Term Finance for the Tribal members through the LAMPS physical 17500 lakhs Financial 350 lakhs.
- 5) Implementation of special type Family Benefit and Income Generation Scheme of Khadi and Village Industries Corporation physical 1105 lakhs Financial 99.45 lakhs.
- 6) Setting up of small shop and medium sized shopees by Tribal members of the LAMPS : (a) Small shop physical 4950 lakhs Financial 99 lakhs. (b) Medium sized shop physical 1970 lakhs Financial 98.50 lakhs.
- 7) Other Employment Schemes : (a) Rickshaw/Rickshaw Van physical 1620 lakhs Financial 32.4 lakhs. (b) Carpentry/Black Smith/Cyclery Repairing Shop physical 2160 lakhs Financial 108 lakhs. (c) Babli Rope making/Bamboo/Cane Basket/Furniture making physical 3500 lakhs Financial 140 lakhs.
- 8) Provision for clean credit accommodation and M.T. Loans for Forest Felling and Industrial processing

Units physical 100 lakhs Financial 705 lakhs.

9) M.T. Scheme for Agricultural Development physical 100 lakhs Financial 100 lakhs.

10) Supply of consumer Goods by W.B.T.D.C.C.Ltd., Financial 1000 lakhs.

11) Construction of own Godowns of W.B.T.D.C.C.Ltd., physical 3 Units Financial 18 lakhs.

12) Risk Fund Contribution : (a) Risk Fund for M.F.P. Business Financial 230 lakhs. (b) Risk Fund for other Types of loan issued to LAMPS by W.B.T.D.C.C.Ltd., Financial 50 lakhs.

13) Liquidation of old debts of Tribal members Financial 35 lakhs.

14) Subsidy for interest on overdue cash credit for M.F.P. operation for exemption of LAMPS for payment of interest Financial 15 lakhs.

15) Interest subsidy for the Tribal Loanee members of LAMPS Financial 5 lakhs.

16) Organisation of Tribal women's wing physical 189 lakhs Financial 47.25 lakhs.

17) Training and Education : (a) Ordinary members Education Physical 900.00 lakhs members Financial 9 lakhs. (b) Leadership Development Training courses physical 1500 Directors, Financial 3.45 lakhs. (c) S.T. specialised Training Camp for Employees of LAMPS physical 15 seminars, Financial 2.73 lakhs. (d) Train-

ing in Accountancy physical 10 weeks course Financial 3 lakhs. (e) Training Co-operative and Allied Law physical 10 courses Financial 3 lakhs.

18) Workshop Accountancy physical 10 workshop Financial 0.70 lakhs.

19) Women's leadership course physical 15 courses Financial 3 lakhs.

20) Training of key personnel of W.B.T.D.C.C.Ltd., Financial 4 lakhs.

21) Managerial subsidy of staff of W.B.T.D.C.C.Ltd., Financial 230 lakhs.

22) State share capital contribution to W.B.T.D.C.C.Ltd., for various economic Development Programme, Financial 150 lakhs.

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3. Tribal sub-Plan 8th Five Year Plan 1990-95 and Action Plan 1991-92. The Department of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Development and Finance Corporation Government of West Bengal.