

CHAPTER SIX

6. SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

The present chapter concludes the thesis by providing a summary of all the chapters dealt in the earlier sections followed by the major findings and suggestions that have been drawn in the due course of the research work.

6.1. SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTERS

The thesis entitled *State, NGOS and Tribal Development: A Study in Dooars Region of West Bengal with Special Reference to the Role of the Non-Governmental Organizations since 1991* comprises up of seven core chapters in trying to make an honest assessment of the role of the non-governmental organizations in the development of the scheduled tribes of the area of study. Each chapter has made an attempt to discuss the core sub-topics in detail and thereby has pointed out the major loopholes that had been left untouched by the existing studies on this area. Before concluding the thesis, we have put forward the summary of every chapter in the following order so that it may be of help to the readers to visualize and recapitulate the entire thesis once again.

Chapter One entitled *Introductory Notes* begins with the introduction of the topic and the area of study by providing the conceptual clarifications on the core areas of the research. Development as a multi dimensional subject that has changed its connotations with the changing dimensions from economic growth to qualitative human development contextualizing it with the tribal development in the area of study has been explained in this chapter. We have made an attempt to narrate the meaning of Development and the Right to Development, the Role of the State and the role of the non-governmental organizations in development and not to forget tribal development in the Indian context by highlighting on the importance of participation of the beneficiaries in the process of development.

Chapter Two addresses the conceptualization of development and also tries to assess the role of the non-governmental organizations in a process of development. We begin with the in-depth explanation of the meaning of development from all possible dimensions by providing a clear cut distinction between the terms growth and development, social welfare and development and the right to development. We have made an attempt to draw a brief historical understanding of development along with its changing dimensions. Efforts have also been made to explain the core elements of development such as life sustenance, self

esteem and freedom. In such a situation, the importance of the right to development as a human right cannot be ignored because the vision for development as propounded by the United Nations Organization under the banner of Envision 2030 stands to be of immense help for providing assistance in the achievement of developmental targets. We gradually move on to analyze the emergence of the non-governmental organizations in the process of development and the role played by it in the successful implementation of development. This chapter ends with the understanding of the meaning of development to the scheduled tribe communities of the area of study which shall act as an eye opener for the policy formulators in the formulation and implementation of tribal developmental policies henceforth.

Chapter Three makes an attempt to study the major policies of the government for bringing about development of the scheduled tribes since 1991 onwards. The conceptual clarification between the two major terms of the state and the government trying to decode the term that shall be best fitted to be applied in the due course of the research work has been explained. The fragmentation of the major phases in trying to understand the role of the state in the genesis of tribal studies into the formative, constructive and analytical phases have been pointed out in detail. We have then moved forward by providing the major approaches to tribal development from a historical point of view laying emphasis upon the ideas of eminent scholars such as G. S. Ghurye and Verrier Elwin. The approaches of the state to tribal development during the post independence era on the lines spelled out by Nehru that has been the guiding principles for tribal development till date has been briefly discussed. We have also made an attempt to propose an alternative approach to tribal development. The constitutional safeguards guaranteed to the scheduled tribe population of India have been pointed out. In understanding the policies of the state for the development of the scheduled tribes especially after the year 1991, we have made an attempt to briefly summarize the major governmental policies by studying them under three heads namely since independence till 1990, 1991 onwards and post 2014 era.

Chapter Four makes a modest attempt to situate the tribal problems in the area of study that is the Dooars region. A historical background of the Dooars region has been provided in order to understand the present scenario from the historical, geographical and economic point of view. The six selected areas for conducting the survey has also been pointed out in this chapter along with the reasons behind the selection of these areas. This has helped us problematize the research area in a much better manner. This is followed by an account of the major tribal groups that shall be dealt with in the survey conducted in the Dooars region. The operational

advantages and disadvantages in the context of development has been pointed out in the chapter followed by the area of specialization that such non-governmental organizations portray in the process of development. The chapter concludes by providing an account of some of the non-governmental organizations present in the area.

Chapter Five makes an in detailed analysis of the data collected from the field both from the qualitative and quantitative dimensions in an attempt to situate the role of the non-governmental organizations in the context of tribal development in the study area since 1991. The Dooars region which is a home to many different tribal communities has been categorized into two major groups with distinct economic status, cultural ties and most important of all developmental scale in the ladder of development. The data extracted from six unique geographical locations of Totopara, Mendibari, Buxa, Mechia Busty, Mechpara and Kumargram with one hundred and fifty respondents provides us with an insight of the model of development aspired by the respondents for better development of the scheduled tribes, the role of non-governmental organizations in the empowerment of the beneficiaries and the meaning of development to the scheduled tribe population has been chronologically analyzed by the researcher. The quantitative data has been presented with the help of tables and graphical representations with a consolidated figure followed by individual case studies to highlight on the heterogeneous nature of tribal development. This has been followed by the statistical interpretation of the collected data whereby the Null Hypothesis has been rejected and the Alternative Hypothesis is accepted.

The Sixth Chapter concludes the thesis by providing some of the major findings and useful suggestions along with the overall summary of all the chapters of the present study.

It has been found out that the scheduled tribe communities of India that occupy 8.06% of the total Indian population cannot be wrongly clubbed together as a single homogenous group by formulating homogenous developmental plans and policies for more than seven hundred and fifty different groups of people under the banner of scheduled tribe category. Therefore, this requires for the micro level policy formulations depending upon the level of development which can be best served with the help of Tribal Developmental Boards for each tribal community with complete tribal representation and maximum participation on the lines of participatory approach of the government, the non-governmental organizations and the consolidated voices of the individual tribal communities commonly represented by their individual Tribal Developmental Boards. The role of the non-governmental organizations

must be completely re-examined by a strict monitoring agency with the instrument of punishment and reward at their disposal so that only the honest non-governmental organizations would be allowed to exist in the field and the proxy non-governmental organizations would be completely removed from the area of operation. Most important of all the freedom to choose the best for themselves must be granted to the beneficiaries so that this leads to the formulation of tribal friendly policies in the long run where participation of the people would be to the fullest thereby successfully achieving the target of Envision 2030 as perceived by the United Nations Organization.

From the above made discussions, we believe that the scheduled tribe communities of India has been witnessed to occupy the position of the periphery, serving as a source of natural resources to the mainland center, at the cost of deprivation from their very basic rights over those resources. Development planning has attempted to boost up their empowerment level by emphasizing upon food security, health, employment and income generation, education, social welfare, economic independence and the preservation of their unique cultural identity. “Fifty years of such planning, however, has failed to narrow the gap between the tribals and the rest of the population, and has instead actually reinforced the unequal exchange between the two.” Rath, (2006). The tribal experiences on development over the years have been marked by a wide range of variations depending upon the area of settlement, educational standards and the inclusion in the mainland development process. To generate an analysis using the inductive method of data interpretation taking one tribal area to be the representative of the entire tribal population would be a massive blunder on the part of the policy formulators, the agencies of development, the academicians and the common people. This is because the scheduled tribes differ to a large extent from each other thereby showing dissimilarity, heterogeneity and differences in the level of development from one another. This demands a re-examination of the approaches adopted in the formulation of the development policies for tribal development taking up micro case analysis for which we have already presented the alternative approaches to tribal development in the earlier chapters of the thesis.

In the successive Five Year Plans, the Government of India along with the intelligentsia has laid emphasis upon the role and importance of the non-governmental organizations in the process of building a developed nation. This was highlighted furthermore with the diminishing economic and social activities of the State with the advent of the phase of liberalization, thereby paving the way for the visible emergence of the non-governmental

organizations as an alternative agency in promoting development and social welfare. Due to the structural adjustment policies emphasizing on minimal state, the NGO sector was pushed to the centre stage of the development debate.

In the process of development of the scheduled tribes, the roles of the agencies of development occupy a place of prominence. It has been witnessed that without a strong team of passionate members willing to serve this community to the truest sense of the term, advocating the policies of development would be a grave injustice to the scheduled tribes. The country has seen the changing policies and programmes for tribal development with ever increasing economic investments upon these groups of people in the forms of the Five Year Plans. However, the assessments of these investments have not resulted with the expected outcomes. The reasons behind the half hearted results which can be equated to the failure of the governmental programmes are multiple in numbers, such as corruption, approach of the bureaucrats, ignorance of the beneficiaries, irrelevant policy formulations, lack of participation etc. In such a situation, questions are also raised on the role of the non-governmental organizations in bringing about tribal development of the nation. The constant rise in the number of the NGOs backed by their strong advocacy for the needy often fail to meet the expected results. The notion that the unresponsiveness of the governmental agencies had long time back encouraged the growth of the non-governmental organizations is put to test because if the NGOs as well fail to be responsive, then which is the alternative agency of development that the people can look up to in the hour of need? This leaves us with no other option but to advocate the empowerment of the beneficiaries on a self reliant sustainable model of development where they do not need to depend upon the external intervention for tribal development. At the same time one cannot regard all the non-governmental organizations to be non-functional because there are some NGOs who have been actively participating in the task allotted to them. Specifically, since the area of research tries to delve into the assessment of the role of the developmental non-governmental organizations in the empowerment of the scheduled tribe communities at a micro level, we have tried to review their role in making the beneficiaries self reliant in the process of development. Therefore, we have looked into the functioning of the developmental non-governmental organizations in the process of tribal development and proposed the required changes for the betterment of the prevalent condition so that this study may help the policy formulators in looking into tribal development from the lenses of the scheduled tribe themselves. An analysis of the experiences of the beneficiaries of tribal development on the role of the non-governmental

organizations in the achievement of the targets of development provides us with an insight into the operational aspects of the NGOs thereby clearly pointing out the gap between the promises and the performances of such organizations emphasizing their strengths as well as weaknesses. Although, statistics stand flooded with a handsome number of non-governmental organizations operating in the area, yet the ground reality shows a disheartening picture. In spite of the prevalence of rampant backwardness in the area, 45.6% of the respondents show an immense faith in the government to act as a facilitator of positive change from backwardness to modernization, while only 6.4% of them reflect a faith on the functioning of the non-governmental organizations. With regard to the core question of development, 44.8% of the universe allocates priority to economic wellbeing, 2.4% believe that political awareness and empowerment is important, only 0.8% of them feel the ardent necessity of social equality and liberation. This is because the tribal society does not practice what we may term the Hindu hierarchical structure which is why the people do not feel the necessity of social equality as an element of development. Interestingly, 42.4% of the respondents regard all the above mentioned factors to be an integral part of holistic development while 9.6% of them suggest some other important criteria of development in the form of proper education and alternative sources of livelihood. Ultimately, the major focus of attention is placed on economic betterment because they believe that with the change in the economic strata, the other variables of development will automatically change for betterment. In achieving this target of development as propounded by the scheduled tribes of the region, 60.8% of the beneficiaries believe in participatory approach where participation of the tribals, the non-governmental organizations and the State would be collaborated for better planning and implementation of policy programmes for them. 16% are happy with the prevailing top down approach while 23.2% respondents show aggression in the failure of development policies by proposing a bottom up approach where only the beneficiaries and the government would have a share in the decision making process. This clearly reflects upon the dissatisfactory role played by the non-governmental organizations.

The importance of participation that has been underrated in the approach to tribal development has been highlighted in this research work. In spite of recognizing the importance of people's participation in the development process, the efforts initiated in this direction by the government through institutional innovations have not been successful. The lack of the required degree of political will, lethargy of the bureaucracy, lack of awareness on the part of the target groups about the importance of their participation, the socio-economic

background and dependency culture etc. are some of the reasons for the failure of the tribal development programmes. It has been found out that without the participation of the beneficiaries in the process of policy formulation, implementation and analysis for the betterment of the existing policies, tribal development cannot achieve the desired success. In this context, participation has occupied the centre stage in the discourses of development, decentralization and democratization which are all inter-related for the achievement of development targets. Participation and empowerment has been perceived by Narayan (1991) as means and ends to each other. The participation of people is an integral part for bringing about an orderly growth and development, and that development can only be viewed as sustainable when the participation of people is made the core in the process of development. Therefore, the importance of people friendly approach accompanied by the participation of the beneficiaries is very important in the process of tribal development. This has been supported by the field survey conducted in the Dooars region of North Bengal. They regard such an inclusion of the beneficiaries to be very important because the participation at this level would help the government to formulate apt policies required at the grassroot level because here, the grass roots would have a chance to voice their demands. This would also mean the curbing of the wastage of the economic investments made by the government which would now be used as per the requirement of the beneficiaries alone. Such a measure would indicate a step toward the achievement of the goal of Envision 2030 which largely delves upon the ideas of freedom, choice, human rights and empowerment.

6.2. ANALYZING THE ROLE OF THE NGOS AT A GLOBAL SCALE

The era of globalization has served mankind with some crucially interlinked variables that have been left to face the adversities of the impact of the former in the form of the rising gap between the North and the South on the basis of economic accomplishments, social civilization and political achievements. Amongst them all, addressing the ardent problem of poverty has definitely posed to be the most crucial issue that is left open to the international arena for its serious attention. The economic re-structuring of the 1980's and the 1990's reflects the 'ascents/ descents' nature of the process of development which has been termed by the UNDP, indicating the fact that the existing inequalities have definitely been widened by economic liberalization that added more growth for the strong nations. Between the years 1987 and 1993, the global arena witnessed a rise in both the number of the global poor as well as the global rich classes, provoking Majid Rahnema (1997) to suggest that

‘development could never offer a sustainable option to all the people on the planet, even if it were successfully delivered’. The discourse of development tilted towards how the ‘unsuccessful South’ could be uplifted to the position of the ‘successful North’ hinting towards modernization of the third world on the lines of the first world nations. This completely ignored the question as to what kind of world did the people desire to construct and was forcefully made to think on the lines of imitating the well off developed nations. In such a situation, the contribution of the non-governmental organizations on a global platform was put to question. The backbone of the non-governmental organizations that rests with the funding agencies played a decisive role in the functioning of the NGOs. Michael Edwards (1990) advocates a shift from the paradigm of foreign aid towards cooperation on an international basis working against global poverty and human exploitation. This international cooperation must be rooted in dialogue and must be democratic in nature working strictly against the imposition of any universal model from above.

Due to the adverse effects of the debate on the funding of the non-governmental organizations, the market led globalization era posed serious pressure on such NGOs that tried their level best to avoid breaking apart from the new liberal faith. The acceptance of fund by the non-governmental organizations for carrying out their role in community development, democracy building and global betterment led to an anti-NGO paradigm for which the non-governmental organizations were unable to provide a suitable solution to the restructuring of the global economy. The major criticisms levied against the non-governmental organizations were on the grounds of their lack of accountability, technological weakness and politicized nature alongside their failure to provide the desired outputs from the investments made to them by the funding agencies. It is important to note the fact that irrespective of its sincere dedication and efficiency, the rise in the number of the non-governmental organizations could never provide immediate solutions to the global problem of poverty, social stability and self sufficiency. “While people inside the NGO world still think of themselves as occupying the moral high ground, the reality now is that few people in the South outside the NGO world think of NGOs like this. The word on the street in the South is that NGOs are charlatans raking up large salaries and many air conditioned offices.” Richard Holloway (1999).

Hulme and Edwards (1997) are of the opinion that in order to address the needs of the common people on a large scale, the non-governmental organizations must ‘return to their roots’. They put forward some pertinent questions that may be the reason behind the gap or

the failure of the NGOs in fulfilling their duties. They inquire in the following lines – Could it be that many NGOs are so involved in service delivery that the local level associations they create, empower NGO personnel and leaders but not the poor and disadvantaged? Have the NGOs got so involved in lobbying donors directly that they have neglected their role in creating active citizenries that through more diffuse political process, can demand effective aid policies and other policy changes that will assist the poor in poor countries? Eade and Pearce (2000).

During the 1990's the major focus of attention of the non-governmental organizations was to solve the crisis faced in the international cooperation thereby deciding on the future role of the NGOs in facing the impact of globalization of the economic platform. This demanded the non-governmental organizations to rectify their role as the promoters of social change, cooperation, democratic process, non-violence and human rights as the base in the decision making on the issues of environment, economy and polity. A serious re-thinking on the part of the non-governmental organizations was demanded with regard to their mission, strategies and their mandates instead of behaving as agents in the hands of the foreign aid system. It was felt that the NGOs must aim to gradually replace the foreign aid with the broader agenda of international cooperation seeking alliances on the basis of common goals with other developmental organizations. The 1990's can be regarded to be a decade of South-North NGO partnership whereby the official donors started directly funding the Southern NGOs making them less dependent upon the Northern NGOs.

However, this decade was not free from criticisms. Moore and Stewart (1998) attempted to argue that in the poor countries the NGOs dedicated towards development seriously need to re-establish the confidence of the people in them so as to channelize funds to them through the donor agencies. Four major areas have been pointed out by them as the areas of concern:

- The failure of NGOs to develop accountability within their own countries rather than accountability to wealthy foreign organizations;
- The need for internal reform and mechanisms to institutionalize suspicion within NGOs that are under-going structural growth and thus to regain trust and confidence in the eyes of the public, government and donors;
- The need for NGOs to pre-empt the often intrusive and inappropriate formal, quantitative performance evaluation favoured by donors, by developing quality ratings of their own;

- The need to overcome tendency for small NGOs to compete with each other, by seeking economies of scale through collectively provided services within the NGO sector. Eade and Pearce (2000).

Keeping aside the debate between the NGOs of the North and the South, one must not underrate the question with regard to the utility or relevance of the non-governmental organizations as an agent of change in the global scenario. This can be understood by understanding the strength of the state because in some countries like Afghanistan, the space left due to the breakdown of the state machinery indicated a rise in the role of the non-governmental organizations. Although it may appear that the non-governmental organizations try their level best to occupy the space created due to the absence of effective government institutions, yet it is interesting to find out that such NGOs severely compromise at the end.

Theoretically, many non-governmental organizations aim to stand committed in contributing towards the building of a better world. It is important to understand as to where do the non-governmental organizations decide to locate themselves in the global arena by answering the vital question as to for whom do such organizations work for? Therefore, the question of participation is put forward for debate, where scholars like Lilly Nicholls (1996) propose sustainable human development and people centered development to be helpful in meeting the theoretical structure. Gradually, the gender perspective was incorporated to strengthen the role of non-governmental organizations by scholars like Amina Mama (2006) who put forward the idea that without participatory method, gender activism would not have been possible otherwise. Therefore, a complete reconsideration of theory meeting practicality was proposed in this phase of the NGO discourse. Analyzing practice alone would help in the real assessment about the impact of NGO intervention in the crucial areas that need attention.

Although, there has been a rise in the number, size and sophistication of the third sector of development, i.e. the non-governmental organizations, ironically the impact of such organizations and its role in the field of activity is generally seen to be local and transitory in nature. It has been witnessed that the NGOs find a difficulty in interacting with the economic, social and political wings at the national front thereby confining itself to local issues. Realizing this problem, the non-governmental organizations have started questioning about their role as well as effectiveness in the future years to come and have also started focusing upon the efforts to skill themselves in the ladder of prominence by working on their role in the developmental dynamics. A serious effort was made in a workshop conducted in January

1992 at the University of Manchester to improve their role and impact in the required area by providing the following four guidelines which stand to be as follows-

- Working with and within government structures to influence policy and systems;
- Operational expansion;
- National and international lobbying and advocacy;
- Strengthening organizations of the poor. Edwards and Hulme (2005)

Furthermore, Robert Chambers (1992) propagated other strategies for the improvement and better future of the non-governmental organizations that included legal reforms, training, alliance building and self spreading for self improvement. However, it is to be noted that the ultimate arbiter happens to be the State that is the sole decider of the political strategies on which development is dependent upon thereby providing a framework on the guidelines of which other such organs like the NGOs need to function.

6.3. CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE ROLE OF THE NGOS IN INDIA

The legacy of voluntarism and charity is one of the chief characteristics borne by South Asia where the entire region has witnessed movements advocating for social reforms, freedom, welfare and development of all. 'The history of social organization seem to have largely been influenced by *laissez-faire* movement on the basis of the promulgation of the theory concerning minimization of state intervention, on the one hand, and dissemination of the concern of *volunteerism* on a more planned and organized way on the other.' Ravichandran (2004).

Globalization has had a serious impact on the rise in the number of global civil society and non-governmental organizations working on the lines of social reforms, welfare, betterment and development on a global platform. The primary target of the newly emerging non-governmental organizations was to protect the interests of the disadvantaged sections of mankind, development of the backward areas alongside providing a voice of strength against the exploitation of the weak and the disadvantaged. The vacuum that was left unfulfilled by the state as well as the corporate sectors was gradually filled in by the non-governmental organizations as the third sector in providing relief and developmental activities. India which is a home to approximately 1.2 million NGOs attributes six major factors behind the increase in the rise of this sector - namely curtailment in the role of the state, end of cold war and the

rise of unipolar US block, rise of the democratic set up on a global scale, incentives provided to the NGOs, increase in the donations to the NGOs for the resolution of global problems and the improvement in technology and communications for better services.

In the case of India, the most important reason behind the rise in the number of the non-governmental organization as stated in the Human Development Report of 1993 provided by the United Nations, is because of a change in the focus of attention from the traditional trickled down bureaucratic approach to the people centered participator approach alongside human development to be brought about by economic growth. This was something completely different from that which was witnessed right after the Indian independence era where the role of the government was viewed as the sole facilitator and regulator of development. This tight grasp of the government was loosened in the era of globalization where the Community Based Organizations (CBOs), the voluntary bodies and the non-governmental organizations gradually crept in on the pretext of reducing the pressure of the government by catering to the local needs for a better national development. According to the World Bank Report 2000-2001, 'the NGOs shows the poor people how to make a difference if they organize themselves to defend their rights, to take advantage of market opportunities and protect themselves from risks.' (World Encyclopedia - India).

Different nomenclature are used to denote the non-governmental organizations in India such as the voluntary agencies, not-for-profit organizations, civil society organizations, community based organizations, charitable organizations, third sector organizations etc. Venkataiah (2009). Depending upon the nature of activities that the NGOs undertake, the forms of the non-governmental organizations are decided on the same line such as the advocacy NGOs, networking NGOs, mother NGOs, religious NGOs, national NGOs and international NGOs. Therefore, this makes us understand the significance of the non-governmental organizations as a parallel body alongside the government for imparting developmental goals in the required area of the country.

Massive changes have started taking place in the non-governmental sector with the passage of time for which the non-governmental organizations have been applauded as well as criticized for their behaviour, functioning and role in the developmental dynamics. It is to be understood that the non-governmental organizations which act as an alternative mechanism for providing public service cannot be scrutinized on the same platform because of the variations in their functioning that differentiates one NGO from the other. While some

sections of the people portray their satisfaction with the functioning of the non-governmental organizations, the presence of the other group representing dissatisfaction cannot be underestimated either. Such apprehensions about optimum satisfaction and dissatisfaction on the functioning and role of the non-governmental organizations is actually dependent upon some parameters of judgement such as the quality of services provided by these NGOs, the opinion of the beneficiaries with regard to the services provided to them, the assessment of the growth rate in the service provided, the organizational management of the non-governmental organizations to make it people friendly, and the level of accountability of such NGOs towards the public as well as the government. Banking on these variables, we can see a wide range of both supporters as well as critics of the functioning and the role of the non-governmental organizations at large.

The need of the hour in the changed globalised climate demands the non-governmental organizations to play the role of innovator and facilitator of development by addressing the core questions of inequality, poverty and an overall change in the social structure. This demands for a fresh analysis with new approaches to address the problematic areas of development with the help of effective and vibrant non-governmental organizations. However, in addressing this problem area, Wallace (1997) pointed out that the increased levels of standardization have created an area of concern in the relationship between the developmental policies, the NGOs and the donor agencies. Likewise, 'Many NGOs are allowing the rhetoric of gender to fall them into a sense of achievement, while their own practice – both within their organizations and in their development work – fall far short of achieving real changes in the status and condition of women.' Lewis and Wallace (2003). 'Voices are increasingly being raised that questions the levels of performance and accountability that NGOs have long taken for granted.' Edwards and Hulme (1995). It is felt that the NGOs in order to maintain themselves in the future years as an agency of development, must work hard and live up to the expectations of the beneficiaries as well as the government. This involves an improvement in the structural procedures for accountability to the people for whom they claim to work for and represent so that they may learn from their mistakes and avoid repeating it rather than simply escaping from taking responsibilities of their gesture. Rahnema (1997) believes that in order to maintain their standard of activities, the non-governmental organizations must remain committed to their pre-decided visions and missions by realizing the external environments of the stake holders and the government.

To achieve the targets of a friendly NGO – GO relationship, Krishnan (2017) puts forward multiple approaches classified into two major groups – **bottom-up** approach and **top-down** approach. In the former, emphasis is laid upon community participation, mobilization of grassroots in the local decision making process and an overall importance is granted to the beneficiaries. On the other hand, the **top-down** approach focuses on bargaining and lobbying with the governmental agencies which happen to be the decision making authorities in order to create pressure through advocacy activities as well as the mechanisms of campaign. Panda (2007) is of the opinion that due to its complex data set up, exclusive bottom-up or top-down approaches in the grassroots level are not applied by the non-governmental organizations. Taking this background into consideration, the researcher has proposed an alternative approach for the development of the scheduled tribes in the form of the Structuration approach that could serve as a guideline for both the non-governmental organizations as well as the state for bringing about a sustainable development of the beneficiaries.

For a better understanding of the non-governmental organizations operating in India, it is important for a researcher to look into the statistical strength of the NGOs in the country. The Indian Express in its article dated August 1, 2015, breaks the headline with its statement that there are 31 lakh non-governmental organizations in India which is more than double the number of schools and 250 times the number of government hospitals in the country (indianexpress.com). Gaya Pandey (2008) has put forward some of the important reasons behind the rise in the number of the non-governmental organizations in India which can be stated as follows – i) The financial irregularities and the failure of developmental programmes run by the governmental agencies; ii) Failure on the part of the government to complete the developmental schemes on time alongside the oppression of the beneficiaries by the agents of the government; iii) Loopholes in the selection of the beneficiaries by the governmental agencies and the absence of proper coordination between the public and the government.

However, the official figures show somewhat lesser number of non-governmental organizations operating in India. Dhabi (2003) in his work *Development and Social Transformation* states that according to 2002 report on Human Development, India has more than one million not-profit organizations. Tandon and Srivastava (1949) opine that the surveys of Society for Participation Research in Asia (PRIA) estimated the not-for-profit organizations (NPOs) at 12 lakhs (1.2 million) of which 6, 27,850 (53%) to be working in the rural areas and 5, 54,541 (47%) in the urban areas.

It is believed that 85% of the total numbers of NGOs operating in India have a smaller structure in terms of the payment made to their employees and the manner of operation practiced i.e. voluntarism. The PRIA has stated that 73.4% are working with only 1 paid staff, 13.3% with 2 to 5 paid staff, 4.8% with 6 to 10 paid staff and 8.5% with more than 10 paid staff. (www.indianngos.com).

With regard to the level of employment created by the non-governmental organizations in the country, it is interesting to note the fact that 19.4 million persons are engaged in the NGOs out of which 85% work on voluntary basis. Tandon and Srivastava (1950) are of the opinion that during 1999 to 2000, 2.7 million full time paid employees and 3.4 million full time volunteers were deployed by the NGO sector, marking 82% of the central government employment generation. Interestingly, 26.5% of the NGOs work for religious activities, 20.4% for educational activities, 21.5% for community and social service activities, 18% for sports and cultural activities and 6.6% for health related activities. In India, 51% of the funding resources are generated through self induced methods, 32.4% are granted from the government funds and the private sources provide a total of 16.6% of monetary aid. Apart from these funding agencies, the non-governmental organizations also depend upon the foreign contribution made to them.

Occupying such a mass scale base has made the NGOs a strong pillar for generating development of the nation in the globalised environment. Sashi Ranjan Pandey (1991) has divided the typology of the NGOs into two groups – foreign and national. The NGOs at the national level can be sub-divided into two major categories – institutional sector and the people sector. The business houses, local groups of foreign NGOs and the religious groups constitute the institutional sector while the NGOs under the people based sector are basically service oriented, development oriented and action oriented.

In understanding the role of the non-governmental organizations in development, it is very important for us to take into consideration the view points of different committees and agencies about the functioning of the NGOs. Many important personalities, official committees dealing with development alongside with the Planning Commission have acknowledged the role of the non-governmental organizations in the due course of development. Bhattacharya (2007) states that Esman (1963) was of the opinion that out of the four instruments of nation building, voluntary agencies happened to be one that represented solidarity, interaction and participation of all. The involvement of the voluntary organizations

in the rural development was emphasized by the special committees directly involved in the developmental dynamics such as the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee, the Ashok Mehta Committee and the Committee on Rural Urban Relations. The Balwant Rai Mehta Committee (1957) stated that, “Today in the implementation of the various schemes of community development more and more emphasis is laid on non-governmental agencies and workers on the principle that ultimately peoples’ own local organizations should take over the entire work these agencies, in future, would be drawn into closer cooperation and even collaboration with statutory organizations.” The role of the non-governmental organizations in mobilizing community support for rural development was emphasized by the committee on Rural-Urban Relationships (1966) which stated that “local voluntary organizations can be very helpful in mobilizing popular support and assistance of the people in the activities of local bodies. It is possible to maintain constant and close contact with the people through these organizations would be useful in mobilizing public participation.”

The contribution of the non-governmental organizations in development was expressed in the opinions of Rajkrishna (1987) where he regarded the voluntary agencies to be potentially superior to official agencies on three grounds – i) the NGO workers can be sincerely devoted to the task of working for the poor in a better manner than the government. ii) The rapport between the non-governmental organizations and the rural poor can be much better as compared to that of the governmental staffs. iii) Flexibility in the mode of operation of the non-governmental organizations can act as one of the primary factors that can lead to the better work culture of the non-governmental organizations as compared to the governmental organizations. Deshmukh (1987) stated that, “to elevate the poor and the down trodden to the level of the rest is a challenging task and the government can never do it through the bureaucracy; the goal could be achieved by actively associating voluntary agencies in the development task.” At the same time, he regards the non-governmental organizations to comprise up of selfless souls who live and work in the middle of the poor people because these happen to be the primary characteristics of any non-governmental development agency. Those groups of people or institutions that defend the role of the NGOs regard these organizations to be dedicated and sincere in delving deeper to fight against the odds of exploitation and poverty by helping the beneficiaries develop on sustainable lines. They regard the non-governmental organizations to have made a positive contribution to the public interest by acting as watch dogs and generally combine the two strategies of development at the grass roots and poverty alleviation side by side.

On the other hand, we do have some of the major criticisms levied against the functioning and the role played by the non-governmental organizations in India. The skeptical wing opposed the entrustment of major role to the non-governmental organizations because of their failure to meet the requirements. Scholars like S.K. Dey (1987) and Adisheshaiah (1987) do not appear to be positive about the role of the NGOs in India. Mohit Sen (1987) stated that, “it is wrong and even harmful to rely on voluntary agencies even the implementation of plan projects, especially directed at the poor millions the approach of depending to a greater or lesser extent on voluntary agencies is to take a casual or even careless attitude to the plan and its implementation.” Rajani Kothari (1988) believes that an alliance of the state with the voluntary agencies is somewhat like “the new Zamindar – a new phase of capitalist growth initiated from the North, based on internal colonization.” Roy (2009) is of the opinion that Bandhyopadyaya (1987) and Kabra (1987) have rightly believed the non-governmental organizations to be something of false alternatives. Gaya Pandey (2008) criticizes the role of the non-governmental organizations in India in the following lines – “the evaluation report of CAPART indicates that mushroom growth of NGOs and voluntary organizations has taken place. They are not social workers; rather they are professionals and money minded. They do not want to volunteer services to deprived and underdeveloped people rather they want to grasp government funds in their own pockets in the name of NGOs and voluntary organizations. They have not will of service; rather they have will of money in their pocket. Therefore, negative trend of making money and professionalism behind opening NGOs be discouraged. It also reveals corruption prevalent in granting funds to NGOs. Top politicians and bureaucrats are involved in taking bribes and commission from NGOs for providing funds for development activities.” The dissatisfaction portrayed by Pandey (2008) must not be underrated because the picture at the ground level definitely supports his observation to a very large extent. The strength and weakness of the non-governmental organizations become clear with micro level case studies as that which has been placed by us in the fifth chapter.

6.4. ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF THE NGOS IN TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

An honest assessment of the role of the non-governmental organizations in the development of the scheduled tribes demands an appraisal of the developmental level of the beneficiaries first, followed by the impact of the working of the NGOs in the desired area. Therefore, it is the ardent responsibility of the researcher to present a summary on the tribal development of India in general and that of the study area in particular.

It is a well known fact that tribal development happens to occupy a major area of concern for the state, the social reformers, academicians and the non-governmental organizations right from the initial years of Indian independence. This sensitive zone however, has not met with its desired result but on the contrary scholars like Prasad and Singh (2012) feel that the situation has appeared to be more muddled than before. They question the reasons behind the loopholes of the gap between theory and praxis of achieving the desired target by raising questions on the very definition of development as faulty and the target of development as somewhat erroneous. Therefore, the problem of properly locating and addressing the problems of tribal development in the broader context of India poses to be a serious hindrance in achieving the desired output. One of the biggest mistakes in dealing with the core issue of tribal development in India through the process of planned policies is the clubbing together of more than seven hundred and fifty scheduled tribe communities of the nation as a single homogenous group thereby strongly encroaching upon their unique tribal identity with variations in their socio-cultural and economic patterns of life. Reservation of tribal seats in the educational and vocational arena has been considered to be the ultimate solution of solving the problems of the scheduled tribes of the country. However, this happens to be a serious mistaken assumption because the policy of reservation has been successful enough only to help the already developed scheduled tribes of the country who are well versed in education and economy. Due to the geographical isolation which happens to be one of the chief characteristics of tribal livelihood, the scheduled tribes who are settled in the interiors of the forests and the hills fail to take advantage of the reservation policy designed for them because their standard of literacy, and economic capability fail to qualify them in taking the title of tribal beneficiaries. Ultimately, such policies of the government refute to hold any meaning to the real needy and backward scheduled tribes of the country. Therefore, the assumption that all the scheduled tribes are equally deprived, equally poor and equally disadvantaged would be a mistake on the part of the policy framers because of which the target of tribal development has not been successfully accomplished. One of the primary reasons behind the failure on the part of the developmental agencies to develop the scheduled tribes lies in the failure to understand the real targets of what actually do the government desire to achieve because passing the ball under the banner of development would be abstract as development in itself unfolds layers of meaning such as economic, social, political, human and qualitative or simple growth. Some of the faulty developmental goals designed for the scheduled tribes by the developmental agencies are development induced displacements in the form of land alienation for the construction of roadways, railways, power stations, mines,

mega corporate shopping complexes and large dams. This has led to a misbalanced ecosystem, the worst sufferers of which are the scheduled tribes. Furthermore, unplanned educational patterns have not only disturbed their indigenous knowledge but have also alienated them from their culture and language because the medium of instruction does not match their medium of communication.

India is a home to 10.4 crore scheduled tribe population which constitutes 8.06% of the total population of the country where 89.7% of the scheduled tribes are settled in the rural areas while 10.03% in the urban areas as propagated by Census 2011. Iqbal Ali Khan (2018). These communities are largely settled in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Gujarat. The constitution of India provides special acts for the preservation, promotion and protection of these communities in the country. The major policies of development for the scheduled tribes have been discussed at length in Chapter 3 of the present study. However, in spite of the innumerable policies and programmes designed for the development of the scheduled communities of the country, it is interesting to note that these policies have been addressing the needs of only the elite scheduled tribes who have an access to modernity via education, economic capabilities and social status. The backward tribal masses still continue to remain the same from time immemorial. This aspect of tribal development needs an immediate re-examination.

After having understood the major policies directed towards tribal development in India, an observation that needs a mention is that there are basically two major policies of development. The first is precisely designed and formulated for the well being of the scheduled tribes or the tribal areas alone. The second happens to be the policies for an overall development of the rural areas of India. As a matter of fact, a tribal beneficiary can exercise both the sources of development. Therefore, one cannot lay a blind eye to the idea of grass root development which unfortunately is tilted towards the western model of development. This direct imitation of the western model or for that matter the mainland majority model has had a negative impact upon the self reliant model of development that was once practiced by the self sufficient tribal population, which has now left to be directly or indirectly dependent upon the state or the third agencies of development. In an effort to control the ill effects of the model of development implemented upon the scheduled tribes of the country, special attention must be given to the participatory factor where the participation of the local tribal communities in the decision making process is important.

Participatory approach helps in the widening of choices, expansion of freedom and fulfillment of human rights which happen to be the core elements of Human Development Index, as that propagated by the Vienna Declaration on the Right to Development as a Human Right. Therefore, it must be clearly understood that the freedom of choice i.e. to choose the best for themselves falls under the right to development which in itself is a fundamental Human Right.

The major proposals for the development of the scheduled tribes in India as pointed out by Prasad and Singh (2012) stand to be as follows-

- The tribal development must not be equated with quantitative economic growth alone because it involves qualitative human development on the lines of capacity building, sustainable development and skill enhancement of the beneficiaries in order to empower them by addressing their basic Human Rights.
- A forceful externally induced idea of unemployment has been served by the mainland developmental projects which strictly go against the idea of self reliant model of development of the tribal communities. Due to the forceful imposition of the capitalist market economy on the tribal lifestyle, this has left them unsuitable for the jobs of the modern world thereby leading to scarcity and unemployment at a massive scale.
- The educational system of the mainland citizens must not be forced upon the tribal communities that already have their indigenous mode of educational pattern. The scheduled tribes must be able to secure the freedom of choice to either choose a common degree based educational system or opt for vocational training for a livelihood. Therefore, a re-examination of the educational system must be made immediately.
- The forest laws that portray a colonial mentality of conservation only for the interest of the powerful must be reviewed immediately so that it incorporates the rights of the forest dwelling scheduled tribe communities who are the original protectors of the forest and nature.
- The elite tribal population that have acquired the status of elitism using the benefits provided to them by the government must make it an effort to pay back their community through required services and not simply disassociate themselves from the rest of the tribesmen by looking down upon them as somebody inferior.

- Since the issue of tribal development cannot be brought about by the governmental policies alone, the non-governmental organizations must play a sincere and positive role in the empowerment of the scheduled tribe communities of the nation.
- Politicization of tribal backwardness must be replaced by working of political parties hand in hand for the development of these sections of the people. The tribal elites who are chosen as the representatives of the tribal masses in the form of unions and pressure groups must pledge to remain loyal to the needs of the tribal people and not get acculturated and sold out in the hands of the powerful.

Apart from the above mentioned proposals for tribal development, the researcher believes in addressing the scheduled tribe population using case study methods where each tribal community has a different demand to be fulfilled by the developmental agencies.

An appraisal of tribal development in India that leaves us with unanswered questions must be addressed by both the state as well as the non-governmental organizations to get the best possible results within a short duration of time. The area of work in which maximum effort of the non-governmental organizations is required are plenty in number. However, after having studied the case studies of tribal development in the earlier chapter of the research area i.e. the Dooars region of North Bengal, the role of the non-governmental organizations does not satisfy the queries of the academicians and the policy framers. The researcher however does not intend to blame the non-governmental organizations alone for not reaching the target level of development. As a matter of fact, an empirical study reveals that all the three poles of the developmental triangle – the government, the non-governmental organizations and the beneficiary scheduled tribe themselves have a share of responsibility to be borne. One cannot blame any of the three agents to be solely responsible because as has been observed, development is a multi dimensional process that involves positive change. Having said this, the researcher strongly believes that the role of the non-governmental organizations must be doubled than the rest of the two because they portray themselves as the advocates of welfare and development of the needy sections of the society. Under this background, they are sanctioned a handsome amount of funds with a good faith that they perform their duties honestly. However, the picture in the micro case study of the research area is very much hazy which at the same time may not be the case with all the NGOs at large.

6.5. TOP DOWN/ BOTTOM UP APPROACH: DEVELOPMENT DILEMMA

The developmental approach based on top down model is believed to have been imposed by the agencies of the Western world that provided aid for development to the third world developing countries. The major drawback of this approach is that it fails to provide long term solutions to the serious problems such as poverty in the beneficiary countries. This is because the top down approach implements the policy of betterment or aid designed and developed by the already developed country with the expectation that it will bear the same results in the completely different set up of the developing nations. This simply acts as a relief measure that fails to address the core questions hidden in the roots of the problem based on the needs of the third world citizens but instead forces development from above thereby leading to a complete failure of the system itself. The problems remain unaddressed because there is an absence of a common platform for meeting the needs of the beneficiaries and the developing agencies, thereby creating a dilemma in the developmental arena. It goes to the credit of Daniel Stiles (2011) who made an attempt to discuss the development dilemma at length. He believes that in the Western connotations, economic development generally refers to the transformation of a third world on the lines of the West completely ignoring their socio-economic system and focusing only upon quantitative analysis of economic growth in production and consumption. Generally, the developmental proposals are formulated based on the priorities presented by the recipient government i.e. usually influenced by the will of the donor agency. The outcome of such an approach does not prove to be much of a success because planning a project from above without the involvement of the local participants in itself is questionable because it fails to answer the vital query of development for whom? It also questions the right of exercising the freedom to choose for oneself thereby challenging the notions of the Right to Development as a Human Right. Such a model is incompetent to bring about development of the area because it fails to address the idea of sustainable development on the lines of self reliance and that aid from above cannot be considered to be oriented towards development because it simply disturbs the beneficiaries and further more makes them dependent upon the external power induced from outside.

With regard to the tribal development in India, it is assumed that the developmental policies base their philosophical background to the ideas of Nehru that reads as “to develop the tribals along the lines of their own genius”. With due respect to the philosophical inputs of eminent scholars like Elwin, Ghurye and Nehru, it is seen that the policies for tribal development has always been following a top down model. The participation of the tribal beneficiaries in the

decision making process for themselves is completely left absent. This aspect is probably supported by scholars such as Rumki Basu (2017) who believe that micro level policy formulation in a country like India with its mega population and diversities is not encouraged. However, going by this assumption, the results of the impact of the top down model adopted in tribal development defies such understandings of development. Therefore, time has now come for the scholars to re-examine the approach to tribal development by doing away with the prevalent top down model that has miserably failed to address the real needs of the scheduled tribes in both qualitative and quantitative terms.

If we out-rightly reject the top down approach to tribal development then one must be responsible to answer the question – what is the alternative approach to tribal development? Taking the help of our field survey, we have attempted to get an answer directly from the scheduled tribes themselves. Rejecting the top down approach, the very next model that an outsider may suggest for the scheduled tribes would be the bottom up approach where the decision would be taken first by the scheduled tribes themselves and then later sent for review to the government for rectification. This is what happens when an outsider decides for the beneficiaries.

In sharp contrast to this, the survey report conducted in the Dooars region of North Bengal distinctly shows that **60.8%** of the tribal respondents demand **participatory approach** to tribal development and interestingly only 16% of them show satisfaction to the top down approach. While on the other hand, it is only 23.2% of the scheduled tribes that believe in a bottom up approach. Going by this empirical study, it can be rightly said that the people of the area believe in taking decisions for them under the existing system which can be achieved by mutual cooperation and friendly approach through participation. This is exactly what Prof. Giddens (1986) puts forward in his Structuration theory where mutual cooperation between the structure and the agency is expected to bring about a positive result. Here, participation involves the cooperative relationship of the three poles of the triangle i.e. the scheduled tribes, the State and the non-governmental organizations working hand in hand for the achievement of the desired output of qualitative betterment in the lives of the beneficiaries through empowerment, self reliance and sustainable development.

6.6. THE NEED FOR PARTICIPATION

The participation of the people in the decision making process occupies a place of prominence in the development thinking especially of the developing nations for bringing about result oriented holistic development of the area. Kumar (2002) opines that the agencies of development both at the national as well as international platform have clearly understood that the achievement of sustainable development is not possible without the involvement of people's participation in the process of development. The mere acculturation of the elitist section cannot bring about the desired output but on the other hand the involvement of the beneficiaries for whom the developmental activities are designed for is the core element of a successful developmental approach. "One of the tasks of nation building and development is to bring members of the national community into a network of relationships and institutions which enable them to participate actively in decisions affecting their individual and group welfare." Esman (1966). Scholars like Prasad (2007) believe that the beneficiaries who are expected to benefit from the designed developmental model must have a healthy participation in its formulation and implementation and along with this they must be ready enough to take the responsibility of development on their shoulders so as to make it sustainable. This is because popular participation imbibes a feeling of oneness, equality and belongingness to the people of the area of development thereby enabling a positive and successful decentralization of power structure. The participation of people in the process of development helps in designing such policies which represent the real needs of the beneficiaries on their own terms and conditions, that which is very important in tribal lifestyles where community ownership of property happens to occupy a strategic position.

Barker (1958) believes that in the words of Aristotle, "the end and purpose of the Polis is the good life and the institutions of social life are the means to the end. The end is realized only when the citizens participate in public life and engage on Praxis." Therefore, it can be assumed that for a successful outcome of developmental process, a close collaboration between participation and development stands to be fundamental. "Participation is concerned with the 'why', 'what' and 'how'." Venkataiah (2009). Cohen and Uphoff (1977) provide us with four different typologies of participation for successful development process. These are as follows –

- Participation in decision making.
- Participation in implementation.

- Participation in sharing benefits.
- Participation in monitoring and evaluation.

The tribal development in India demands a serious reevaluation of the developmental approach with participation of the beneficiaries alongside the non-governmental organizations and the State to be the core elements of the developmental policies. The essence of empowerment lies in the participation of the beneficiaries in the decision making process that includes idea generation, formulation and assessment of opinions, selecting their priorities and respecting their choices. After having decided on the choices and priorities of development, participation of the beneficiaries in the implementation of the decided policies and plans prove to be vital. Mishra (2002) is of the opinion that participation in implementation takes place in three different ways – i) Resource mobilization and contribution, ii) Administration and co-ordination efforts and iii) Programme enlisted activities. The role of the non-governmental organizations stands to be demanding with regard to the third point where dedicated surveys towards the beneficiaries are expected from them. The sharing of benefits means the impact of the policies on the beneficiaries due to their participation which can take the form of material benefits, social benefits or personal benefits. Serious monitoring and evaluation of the policy implementation is very crucial in the overall process of development for which both the beneficiaries as well as the State must remain updated with the ongoing process alongside making the third sector of development i.e. the non-governmental organizations accountable to them (State and tribal people) for their activities. Therefore, in achieving this target of participatory development, serious and dedicated efforts must be brought about in the process of conceptualization, planning, implementation, monitoring and management of programmes. Bajpai (1998). To add to it Marsden and Oakly (1982) regard power to be the chief variable that influences decision making, the absence of which leads to the ill being of the poor. Therefore, they regard participation, power and wellbeing to be interlinked. Ultimately, the goal of tribal development is to empower tribal people which in other words means to bring them at power with the rest of the mainstream citizens of the country which the researcher feels is possible only with Participatory Developmental Approach or technically with the application of Structurationist Theory in the policy formulation, implementation and evaluation.

We therefore conclude our study by pointing out the major findings of the research followed by the suggestions in the following order.

6.7. MAJOR FINDINGS & SUGGESTIONS

The due course of the research work has pointed out many different areas that need to be addressed properly in order to have a better understanding of tribal development in India. We can state the major findings of the research in the following order:

- Over the centuries, the scheduled tribes have been subjected to vital disabilities and problems in the form of poverty, mal-nutrition, exploitation, ill treatment, illiteracy and marginalization staying completely deprived from the benefits of national planning, economic growth and social development. It has been noticed that no serious attention was paid by the administrators and policy planners for their empowerment in accordance to the conditions favourable to them, their environment, habitat and resources in order to integrate them with the ongoing development process. The major reason behind such a condition happens to be the faulty and outdated approach that needs immediate re-examination along with maximum participation of the beneficiaries in order to make it sustainable and successful in the long run.
- Although, a majority of the tribal beneficiaries have been struggling against abject poverty, ignorance, hunger and violation of human rights, few of them who are educationally and economically sound have occupied the status of the elites within the scheduled tribe communities. Gradually, the benefits guaranteed by the government have been able to cater only to the needs of the educated scheduled tribe population thereby creating inequality within the same group on the basis of education and socio-economic standards into the tribal elites and the poor tribal masses. Unfortunately, the elites sections have started to disconnect their links from the community thereby creating a huge threat for the future years to address.
- A majority of the scheduled tribe communities of the study area have been a captive of prolonged indebtedness because of the vital problem of addiction to liquor which has forcefully debarred them from dreaming of a better future. This has indirectly led to the loss of self respect, wealth, health and quality of human life, along with the curtailment in their participation in the developmental programmes and has ultimately led to a low perception about the impact of development to them. In such a situation the works of the Christian missionaries stand to be commendable in helping the

people forgo their addiction and gradually tilt towards the development of their quality of lives. However, in doing so, a majority of the scheduled tribes have converted themselves to Christianity thereby cutting on their religious affinities of tribal identity.

- The scheduled tribes of the Dooars region are economically dependent upon two major sources of livelihoods. The Madhesia scheduled tribes are completely dependent upon the tea industry for their survival. The wage structure of the tea plantations which is one hundred and thirty two rupees and a fifty paisa per day are not found to be sufficient enough for running a healthy family. This has led to large scale migration and its adverse impacts on the everyday life of the common people. The Jhumia scheduled tribes, in this regard, are slightly better off because they practice a self reliant model of income generation in the form of weaving, agriculture and the manufacture of bamboo products. Although they can earn a livelihood from weaving, they are not made the masters of their craft. The marketing and fetching of new orders are done by some external agencies which if absent shall mean a complete wastage of their talent. In this regard, the role of the TRIFED is seriously put to question because it is their responsibility to find a reliable market for the products produced by the tribal communities. Therefore, it must be pointed out that the potentials of the scheduled tribes are not being properly utilized thereby hinting towards the necessity of proper human resource management and alternative sources of livelihood for the tribal population in order to cater their needs of economic independence which marks to be the primary element of development.
- The achievement of the targets of tribal development demands strong participation of the tribals in the process of decision making, implementation and assessment of the existing policies for their development. Although, the three tier model of governance in the form of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, have been applied to the rural sector touching upon the tribals of the rural zone, the conceptualization of power distribution in the context of the prevailing patriarchal social structure has failed to give due cognizance to the idea of decentralization especially in the case of the women chieftains. It has been found out that the participation of the tribals is very low because of their low level of awareness, illiteracy, poverty, alcoholism and lack of interest and aspirations. In such a situation, the role of external intervention is very

important to provide proper support and guidance to the otherwise deprived sections of the society.

- The state is believed to be the sole caretaker of the deprived communities of the nation, where, the scheduled tribes of the Dooars region share the same feeling in this regard. A large majority of the respondents believe that the government can do much better in the field of development for the scheduled tribes thereby indicating their firm belief in the existing structure. Therefore, it becomes an ardent responsibility on the part of the government to cater to the needs of the scheduled tribe communities. The government must take special measures to listen to the voice of the beneficiaries in the form of meetings and awareness campaigns at the grassroots level in order to assess the developmental policies and also have firsthand information about the demands of those people for whom the policies of development are actually formulated for.
- The assessment of the role of the non-governmental organizations in the study area provides us with few interesting facts and findings. The respondents seem to be unclear about the meaning of the non-governmental organizations and their role in development. Most of the people appear to be confused about the non-governmental organizations as the agents of the government because of their bureaucratic attitude and their absence in the work area. This demand for strong awareness campaigns on the part of the government to make the people understand the utility of such NGOs along with the access of complaint cells where the people can lodge their dissatisfaction over the functioning of such non-governmental organizations if any. Only then would these organizations perform their duties well by catering to the needs of the people for which they are placed to work.
- Those non-governmental organizations working in the study area in the truest sense of the term are actually very few in number. However, the existence of the proxy NGOs is multiple in numbers which are found in the records but not at the ground reality. This has created a serious dissatisfaction in the operative NGOs because they believe that such proxy NGOs have been the primary reason of bringing about shame to the very institution called the non-governmental organizations. Therefore, the system of punishment and reward must be initiated by the government so that the disloyal proxy NGOs are punished and the hard working NGOs are rewarded. In doing so the

authorities need to make a constant ground level check so that they are not fooled by such proxy NGOs by showing their presence only in the utilization bills and documents.

- It has been found out that the overall result of development is much better in those areas where a close collaboration between the governmental agencies, the non-governmental organizations and the beneficiaries exists. The three poles need to meet at some point in order to make the formulation of developmental policies meaningful to the beneficiaries. This is very important because each organization would be granted a framework to work under and at the same time would make them accountable for the completion of their jobs on time. Therefore, no scope for proxy agencies, lazy beneficiaries and irresponsible bureaucratic wings would be allowed. This would directly cut down on the formulation of irrelevant tribal developmental policies and in turn would control the wastage of economic investments of the government.

- One of the most important findings of the research work is that the projects taken up by the non-governmental organizations in the name of developing the scheduled tribes through the sanctioned funds from the NABARD are actually not properly implemented on the tribals. There is a provision cited by the funding agency that 10% of the beneficiaries can be from the scheduled caste communities while the rest of the 90% of the beneficiaries must belong to the scheduled tribe communities. In choosing the beneficiaries, the non-governmental organizations do not require to produce their tribal identity in the form of the caste certificates. This has given rise to the practice of favouritism in the choosing of the beneficiaries by the NGOs. They are seen to be more considerate towards those people who are close to them. Moreover, although the names of the scheduled tribe beneficiaries are included in the list sent to the funding agencies, it is very sad to know the fact that those beneficiaries whose names have been included in the list are not at all aware about their due share in the project. The NGOs are not serious about the seriousness of this matter. In this regard, I would like to cite an example where one of the members of an NGO, on inquiring about the names of the tribal beneficiaries confidently pointed out the surnames as Sharma, Barman and Roy. Therefore, it can be well imagined how the operation of such projects take place in the area.

- The approach of the local people and the non-governmental organizations towards the scheduled tribes appear to be very much degraded as they look down upon the tribal population as someone belonging to the lowly strata. Interestingly, due to the practice of the Hindu social stratification, the scheduled tribes of the area have been forcefully assumed to belong to the lowest strata. They are often looked upon as the dirty, ignorant, untouchable and angry folks by the neighbouring scheduled caste families and also by the members of the non-governmental organization. In such a situation, the vision of service to mankind of the non-governmental organizations is thoroughly questioned. Moreover, the scheduled tribes being aware about this attitude towards them appear to be angered by such approach keep moving deeper inside the forest cutting all ties with the mainland settlement.
- It has been found out that the Tribal Development Boards have become a major source of help to those tribal communities who have been represented in the development boards. The Bhutia Development Board for example, has been seriously working in the development of the Bhutia tribes of the Buxa region for their upliftment which is a positive development on their part. The people also appear to be very happy with the functioning of such development boards because they believe that the formations of such development boards have encouraged participation of the beneficiaries. Moreover, the members of the development boards are well aware about the problems faced by their communities that are given topmost priority during the hour of providing proper solution.
- The majority scheduled tribes appear to be dissatisfied with the role of the non-governmental organizations in bringing about self reliant model of development of their communities. The presence of proxy non-governmental organizations has made them lose hope in such external interventions comprising up of all non-tribal members. Realizing this, the people of Totopara have successfully launched an all Toto member non-governmental organization in the name of Toto Debo Group which they feel would address their needs with the same zeal and that they do not need to depend upon any external agencies who have failed to understand their genuine problems till date. This in itself marks the first step towards the empowerment of the Toto tribe.

Apart from the above mentioned major findings and suggestions put forward by us, the quantitative and qualitative interpretations point out the fact that much more is left for the majority of developmental non-governmental organizations working in the area to earn the title of the catalyst and the third sector of development. The half-hearted functioning of such non-governmental organizations is well known to all because of which the beneficiaries have started losing their faith in the existence of such organizations as the facilitators of development. The attitude and approach of such non-governmental organizations must be checked because it is now believed that the NGOs have started equating themselves with the bureaucratic structure of governance and thereby have failed to realize the essence of being grassroot friendly. Ultimately, we feel that it is the ardent responsibility of the government to check the functioning of all the non-governmental organizations so that their activities and role can be monitored.