Chapter II

Definitions of the Concepts and Review of Literature
CHAPTER II

DEFINITIONS OF THE CONCEPTS AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS

Aged Persons

The term 'aged persons' in the present study refers to persons aged 60 or above living in the tribal hamlets of the three revenue villages in the Pachamalai Hills. It includes both male and female elderly persons.

Tribal Community

The term 'tribal community' in the present research study refers to the 'Malayalee' tribe living in the 49 hamlets of the three revenue villages namely Thenpuranadu (Uppiliyapuram Panchayat Union), Vannadu and Kombai (Thuraiyur Panchayat Union).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Tribals and Forest Economy

The tribals of India have been engaging themselves into two main economic pursuits i.e., agriculture and forestry. About 90 per cent of the tribal population depends on cultivation, whether settled or shifting, either directly as peasant-cultivators or indirectly as farm labourers.
In 1987, Fernandes and Menon showed in "Tribal Women and Forest Economy: Deforestation, Exploitation and Status Change" that a tribal housewife puts in on an average 14 hours of active work a day. On account of deforestation, she has to walk 3-4 hours to fetch water for the family. On the other hand, men work for 10-11 hours a day. The work load is heavier for women (as well as for men) in the peak MFP (minor forest produce) months (March - April) and in the harvesting season (November - January). With increasing pressure of degradation of natural resources (like soil and forest) and their diminution (like water), life has been growing harder demanding more and more physical exertion. They have been cultivating annual crops like paddy, coarse grains like ragi, maize, oilseeds like niger, mustard, and pulses.

While practising mainly the primary sector (agriculture) on acquisition of education skill, and training, the tribals made their way into secondary sector i.e., industry or tertiary sector i.e., services. In 1983, Ramachandra Guha assessed that 75 per cent of MFP items were collected from the five States of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa, and Andhra Pradesh where 65 per cent of the total scheduled tribe population of India lived. They include fodder and grasses, raw materials like bamboo, canes and Bhabbar (sabai) grass for artisan - based activities of the poor, leaves, gums, waxes, dyes and resins, trees yielding seeds for oil-extraction, lac and tassar, medicinal plants and herbs, foods like fruits, flowers, nuts, seeds, honey etc.

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2 Ibid., p.47
The commercial exploitation of tribals, in exchange transactions, market operations etc., is important, since they are not well-versed even in simple arithmetic, let alone in accounts. Tribal commodities are purchased at dirt cheap rates and huge profit made on them by middlemen. All government efforts to shield them from exploitation through interventionalist strategies like establishment of fair price purchase and sale shops, LAMPS (Large-sized Multipurpose Co-operative Society), PACS (Primary Agricultural Co-operative Society), Tribal Development Corporations, Forest Development Corporations etc., have borne little fruits owing either to lack of understanding of tribal affairs by government officials manning them or plain bad intents. Certain State governments have entrusted procurement of minor forest produce items from tribals, which really means from tribal women, at rates dictated by these organisations. The original intention seems to protect tribal women from the middlemen. Inequalities in the distribution of income are not only between nations but within nations and even within the different regions of the nations. Inequalities are also common in between rural and urban areas and hill and plain areas. Therefore, this problem may be seen at the inter-regional and intra-regional scales. Although the widening income gap is sometimes accepted as an essential feature for the economic growth of a particular region, but in the long run, it eventually paves a way for mass poverty and therefore, it has been a matter of debate among economists at international, national and regional levels since the later half of the 20th century.

Simon Kuznets (1955) has presented evidence showing that income inequalities widened in the early phase of the today's developed countries, a trend which was
reversed after higher levels of per capita income were achieved. A study by Ira Adelman and Morris (1973) provided comparative data on the income shares of the poorest (60 per cent), middle (20 per cent) and the upper class (5 per cent) during the period 1957-68 and analysed the effects of thirty five economic, social and political variables on income distribution. In the Indian context Iyangar and Barhmananda (1987) found that during the 1950s the average Gini Lorenz ratio for both urban and rural areas were higher than that of the subsequent decades.

Sources of Inequality

There are so many socio-economic factors responsible for inequality. They are (a) Income differentials within different occupations (b) Inequality within occupation and sectors (c) Migration of educated people from rural to urban areas.

Poverty has many diabolical dimensions: illiteracy, poor health, rising infant and maternal mortality rates, poor enrolment in schools, high dropouts, large-sized families, child labour, exploitation of women labour, exploitation of tribals, unemployment and under-employment and the unstoppable exodus from the villages to the cities and the proliferation of slums in the cities.

Today the definition of poverty is not just confined to people's access to food or their capacity to buy the minimum food to stay alive. The 'poverty index' accommodates an expanded definition of poverty that includes in addition to food, other basic needs such as shelter, clothing, safe water, sanitation, electricity, education and health care. By defining poverty on the basis of only food intake, absolute poverty measured by the
contours of growing hunger encompassing those whose income is less than the level required to purchase a minimum calorie intake is only the tip of the iceberg. There are millions of Indians who are not able to meet basic needs such as shelter, clothing, safe drinking water, sanitation, electricity, education, health care and these deprived people are today an integral part of the ‘poor’ in India. And their number is ever on the increase with a rising population. The people who have satisfied the basic calorie intake but who are unable to secure other basic needs may be said to be living in “relative poverty”.

Levels of Poverty Among Scheduled Castes and Tribes

The poverty line for the year 1973-74 as suggested by the Planning Commission is indicated by the consumption of Rs.49.09 per capita per month as the basic estimate of poverty line. This poverty line has been updated by the consumer price index for agricultural labourers at Rs.2444 per person per year in 1994. The poverty ratios at the National and State levels are summarized in table 2.1.

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3 General Knowledge Encyclopaedia, We lack the will to fight poverty, Competition Success Review, 2001, p.113.
Table 2.1

POVERTY RATIOS AT THE NATIONAL AND STATE LEVELS

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<td>1.</td>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>17.35</td>
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<td>5.35</td>
<td>2.44</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>26.46</td>
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<td>27.46</td>
<td>14.08</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<td>17.07</td>
<td>9.05</td>
<td>3.94</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Haryana</td>
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<td>10.16</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>2.58</td>
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<td>6.</td>
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<td>14.02</td>
<td>7.34</td>
<td>3.14</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>30.72</td>
<td>17.86</td>
<td>8.68</td>
<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>21.22</td>
<td>11.35</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>1.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
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<td>21.97</td>
<td>12.75</td>
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<td>Orissa</td>
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<td>10.76</td>
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<td>13.</td>
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<td>20.31</td>
<td>10.85</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>1.52</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>30.73</td>
<td>18.11</td>
<td>8.96</td>
<td>3.59</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>32.52</td>
<td>31.91</td>
<td>12.88</td>
<td>6.92</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>West Bengal</td>
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<td>13.54</td>
<td>6.26</td>
<td>2.86</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>All India</td>
<td>29.18</td>
<td>17.98</td>
<td>9.53</td>
<td>4.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Fahimmuddin (1983) in his article, “Indebtedness among Tribals” analyses the extent of indebtedness in the Khalima block of national district of U.P. According to the study the extent of indebtedness among the tribals is 60%. The average debt per household in Rs.3595.13. Indebtedness is the most prevalent among the landless households who depend only on non-governmental sources for their borrowing. He points out the following reasons for the high indebtedness among landless agricultural...
labour: (1) low wages and (2) large number of unemployed days in a year. The study found that agricultural and consumption purposes were the causes for borrowing. The indebtedness of the households is inversely related to the size of land holding while the flow of credit is positively related to farm size. Consequently, the majority of the households of the landless agricultural labourers, marginers and small farmers are under debt. The result showed that the institutional agencies have changed the character of the rural credit marked even in the tribal economy. But the revamped institutional facilities have not made considerable headway in the process of meeting the credit requirements of the rural poor. Major benefits have gone to medium and large farmers. The lack of assets along with unproductive uses, also prevent the poor to obtain loan from institutional agencies.

Mahalingam (1988) in his article, "Malayali Tribals of Tamil Nadu" points out that the literacy rate among the tribals of all the hills in Tamil Nadu is about 20%. He opines that indebtedness, ill health, malnutrition, exploitation by outsider are the basic reasons for the economic backwardness of the malayali tribals in the State. The author concludes the article by saying that inspite of different measures taken by the governments after independence, the social and economic conditions of the general lot of these tribals are most discouraging and pitiable.

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Das (1986) in his article prints out plight of the tribals in the following manner:

Tribals are exploited by the traders and deprived of their share of profit by the white collar consumers. With the increasing tempo of modern economic activities the area of exploitation has also broadened. In spite of several in-roads of modern technology and industry the mode of agriculture in tribal villages has remained primitive.

Mathew Areeparempei (1991) describes the exploitation of the tribals in Chotonagpur. The adivasis who are by and large illiterate, live in isolation and have very little outside contact. Their only contact with the outside world is at the market place where the mahajan match their meager produce at throw away prices and make exorbitant profits out of their work; or with petty block officials who harass them for a chicken or a cup of rice-bearl or with the forest contractors and marwadi owners who make them slog at starvation wages. In such a situation of utter neglect and perpetual starvation, disease, superstitions and bondage of old and new kinds plague their lives.

He then explains how much the tribal belt in Bihar contributes to the State revenue and how less is spent on tribal areas for their development. The tribal area in Bihar provide 72% of the entire revenue of the State, but the plan allocation for the rural areas is hardly 20% and most of it dried up in the pipe line.

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While describing the material issues of tribal people, Kancha Ilaiah (1990) says that after laying down the perspective for development and critically evaluating systemic processes, the report goes on to analyse the specific issues under two headings (1) command over resources and (2) displacement. The question of command over resources is discussed in detail by including the principles and laws that govern the SCs and STs. The attitudes of the State towards tribal community and forests, the methods adopted by the State to reserve forests for public purposes, the attitude of the State towards peoples habitation, wildlife sanctuaries and their effects on tribal people, the attitude of the State agencies towards destruction of natural resources, the attitude towards the water resources and the path of justice that needs to be followed with regard to tribals etc. are also discussed.

The issues discussed under displacement include different forms of displacement, transfer of land property and exchange value, compensation for the process of land acquisition, displacement in tribal areas, human rights of the tribal society, internal colonialism etc. Some of these questions are discussed in relation to the Narmadha valley dams.  

Role of Governmental and Non-Governmental Programmes

Pandey and Guglani (1985) in their paper “Helping the tribal farmers” explained the following. An appraisal of disbursement of agricultural loans to tribal and non-tribal
farmers of Ratu Block in Ranchi district of Bihar showed that adequate demand for credit was not forthcoming from tribal farmers. The author felt that effort was required to be made by extension agencies to promote tribal farmers to take to new agricultural technology and thereby increase their demand for credit.

The nationalisation of 14 major commercial banks in 1969 and another 6 commercial banks in 1980 has given a new dimension to the disbursement of loans to tribal and non-tribal farmers. This study has also indicated that the flow of institutional finance has shown an increasing trend to help both the tribal and non-tribal farmers. Rather some of the financial institutions have advanced more loan to non-tribal farmers than the tribal farmers. This may be due to the fact that demand for credit is not outcoming from the tribal farmers. In such a case an effort is needed by the extension agencies to make the tribals to take to new technology of agriculture and thereby increase their demand for credit and raise their level of farm incomes. Such a step can help to lift the tribal farmers from the mass of poverty and destitution and bring them into the mainstream of national development.¹⁰

Chitrasesenpasayat (1994), in his article "Tribal and Social Forestry Programme" says that under external assistance of Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) massive social foresting programmes have been taken up in Orissa since 1983. The project has achieved a coverage of 790 sq.km. of plantation and 228 sq.km of rehabilitation in the degraded forests and distribution of Rs.176.78 lakh worth seedlings

with an investment of Rs.84.77 crores up to 1992-93. Forest protection committees have been set up with people’s participation for the protection and conservation of the forests. According to the report on the activities of the Forest and Environment Department in 1992-93 the reforest coverage of Orissa was 57.183 sq.km. with vegetation coverage of 27.349 sq.km. In order to check the destruction of the forests, felling of trees has been banned in Orissa since November 1992 and large scale plantation programmes have been undertaken for restoration of degraded forest land and maintenance of ecological balance. However the success of the programme depends largely on the active involvement and participation of the common people and tribals in particular. But there are several hindrances like mass illiteracy, poverty, ignorance, conservation, exploitation by outsiders and the like which prevent tribals from participating actively in most of the developmental programmes of social forestry.

Although economic and material progress is taking place, there is visible increase in poverty among tribals in particular. A large number of tribals are below the poverty line. They are simple, ignorant and more over, possess a spirit of contentment. Facilities like education, drinking water, transport and communication, industrial credit, etc., are not available in tribals areas. The tribals do not get remunerative price for their products of social forestry like fruit, fuel, food grains, fodder, honey, silk, cocoons, etc., due to the absence of an organised marketing system. Processing of their products, most likely generates higher income but unfortunately the processing work is rarely performed in the tribal villages. Intermediaries often take undue advantage of this situation and exploit it in the pursuit of high profit. They purchase items from tribals at low prices, and tribals hardly get any incentive.
From the economic point of view, social forestry may be a gainful programme to raise the economic standard of tribals. But higher consumption rampant among them adversely affects their socio-economic life. On account of their habit, they take loans from private money lenders at an exorbitant rate of interest which ultimately trap them in the vicious circle of poverty. Now a days liquor consumption among tribals is merely a tradition but also the result of frustration developed among tribals. Frustration may be due to lack of infrastructure, inadequate institutional credit and support, exploitation by outsiders and intermediaries, harassment by government staff and institution, lack of market facilities, etc. The tribal feel helpless to solve these which directly or indirectly affect the social forestry programme.

While pointing out the planning strategy for tribal development Patel, (1987) says that, in almost all states tribals are a distinct category of people. Though Madhya Pradesh is a State which can boast of multi-dimensional socio-economic development, yet it has primitive people who constitute a sizeable proportion of its population.

Despite three decades of planned development in the country, there can possibly be no two opinions about the fact that the tribals, with whatever definition they are identified have remained backward. With political independence dawned the era of planned development and these isolated people could also catch the attention of the politicians and the Government. However, it was only in the 1980s that a definite proportion of plan allocation was earmarked for tribal welfare. This gave a visible spurt to developmental activities in these areas for the benefit of the locals.

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Patel rightly feels that "one way-out for many of our villages from their present unsatisfactory position is to link them individually or by groups to intermediate towns with a purpose of providing fresh economic strength to these settlement and at the same time arresting the blind drift to metropolitan centres or centres of economic expansion".

Weekly markets and annual fairs have traditionally been important institutions all over the country since time immemorial. The author has utilised these in his present work for formulating a growth model based on current theories of regional planning including the central place theory, the theory of spatial diffusion and the growth of pole theory.

The practicality of the strategy put forward by the author deserves a test where from the weakness will come up and solutions, if any can be attempted. The number of market centres needed to provide structural feeding base for larger markets for the farming population and to permit sound economic development of the villages of Mandla, will depend on its geographical, agronomic and climatological factors as well as population density, communication system and other support services available.

Social backwardness is indicative of the failure of planning and resource exploitation and mobilisation but the study does not touch the cultural backwardness of the isolated, poor and neglected tribals.\footnote{Patel, M.L., Planning Strategy for Tribal Development, Indian Journal of Agricultural Economics, Vol. 42(1), 1987, pp.120-123.}
Synghal (1984) in the article, "Integrated Tribal Development Project" analyses the impact of the tribal development programmes before the fifth plan and observe that tribals have not been able to take advantage of these programmes. As a result, they continue to languish in ignorance and poverty, worse still, as their comparative isolation has broken down after the discovery of precious minerals and the requirements of forest produce, outsiders have flocked to tribal areas and exploited their ignorance. A review of this state of affairs in the early seventies revealed that these areas required special attention. It was felt that these areas should be demarcated geographically on the basis of common characteristic problems, designed as "sub-plan areas" and an exclusive sub-plan prepared for each area, to be incorporated in to the State plan. For the formation and implementation of sub-plan, each area would have an ITDP headed by a project officer. For his area, the project officer of the integrated tribal development project is expected to integrated the development efforts of all departments in the sub-plan. On the basis of the work already done in the area and on the project officer's perception of the priorities for development, gaps in the development process would be identified. To bridge these gaps, schemes from all concerned departments would be drawn up and integrated in the sub-plan which the project officer would prepare. This plan is then sent to the Government Department of Tribal Welfare which would then allocate funds to the various departments for the work to be carried out in the area in question. Since all gaps cannot be simultaneously filled and since different schemes have different time-span it was expected that the integrated tribal development project would have both, annual as well as 5 yearly sub-plans for the project area. Also, since the budgetary resources of Government are limited, the project officer would have an
indication of the financial limits of his plan, subject, of course, to Government curtailing any schemes on its own discretion.  

The Indian Social Institute along with eight other voluntary organizations conducted a study on “Forest Environment and Forest Dwellers Economy in Orissa” in 1953 and 1984. Deforestation is a serious problem known to every one, and the authors try to analyse the causes of deforestation. As a result, they plan to arrive at a new and tribal friendly forest policy. The task is well set with a double objective of participatory as well as scientific approach to the problem.

The first important position that the authors take is in regard to the causes of deforestation. They consider pressure of population only a small part of the whole situation. To them the main cause is the exploitative and anti-people (tribals and other poor) stance of development.

They consider indebtedness and land alienation as deeper reasons behind this. The authors consider commercialisation and exploitative connivance between middlemen and government agencies as another cause leading to massive deforestation.

While the arguments are built up in favour of the tribals, a haggling issue remains in the back-up of the entire length of the book. It pertains to the philosophy of development.

Time and again, the authors raise their voice against serving the needs of industry. At time it reaches a shrill crescendo naturally, the arguments are raised against the paper industry; but we need a paper industry even to publish such an important book which one may very much like to recline in "... lovely, dark and deep woods" one may miss a tree for wood if industrial and commercial interest are looked down upon with contempt. Basically, the conflicts of development can be best resolved by building into the system a proper distributive justice.

The book is, however, a very useful addition to the literature on tribal-forest relationship. It documents trees and other botanical species by their uses and value. It surveys the tribal situation in the context of development process which, very truly, is apathetic and at times antipathetic to the requirements of the tribal development.\(^4\)

A newspaper article points out that 40 per cent of allocation made for the development of tribal region in Bihar under tribal sub-plan for the year 1986-87 was to be surrendered as the authorities failed to utilise the provision. Till January of 1987 only 40 per cent of the total allocation of Rs.91.5 crores for acute drinking water facilities to hundreds of villages was made available, but the expenditure on this account in the 1986-87 was only Rs.3 crores against the allocation of Rs.7.5 crores.\(^5\)

While discussing incentives for the tribals Chitrasen Pusayat (1994) suggests that, it is necessary to free tribals from the clutches of intermediaries so that the various


objectives of social forestry programme can be obtained in a balanced way. Stress would be laid on the setting-up of processing units in the tribal belts providing adequate marketing networks for their products. Various non-governmental organizations may actively associate themselves in this field. They must assume an active responsibility in ensuring that the tribals are not exploited. Thus the production, consumption and utilization process can be improved, remunerative livelihood through social forestry programmes of the tribals can be secured and additional employment and income generating activities can be created. Government has to provide the degraded forest land and wasteland to each landless tribal household. Reportedly the Government has provided each tribal family with two hectares of such land in West Bengal. There is need to ensure right quantity of water through Tribe-irrigation, manure, weeding, etc., in modern method. It would also be necessary to build reservoirs to ensure availability of water throughout the year. There is a need to identify suitable watersheds to be covered under the scheme. In the process of identification and selection of such watersheds, Gram panchayats or other village level bodies should be consulted and involved actively.

Synghal (1984), for the improvement of tribal sub-plan strategy suggests that there should be one development agency in a well defined project area. This agency can be headed by a project administration whose office should be aware of all that is going on in the area, all that is proposed, and the different benefits, from whatever source, that are available for the people of that area. The schemes of State government.

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departments as well as those of the Central government should be placed with the agency for implementation.\textsuperscript{17}

According to Shankaraiah and Ghanshayam Das (1985) in their article “PDS in a village” explained the following ideas. The prevalence of wide spread poverty inflation and market imperfections has necessitated the system of economic contracts in India. First control order commenced in India with promulgation of Defence of India Rules (under the Defence of India Act) on September 3, 1939 after the outbreak of the Second World War. This order related to control of essential supplies. Thus, Government of India’s food policy has been interventionist. State intervention relating to the production, trade and distribution of food grains was accepted as a necessity because of chronic food shortages which were the result of war and famine conditions. After independence also government had to intervene in the distribution of food and essential commodities as a welfare measure and also with an intention of checking inflation and market imperfections. State intervention in the distribution of food and essential commodities has been justified on the following. Firstly, the country is poor, indeed is probably the poorest among the communities of nations. Secondly the growth of economy has been slow and unsatisfactory and the small gains of development seem to be monopolised by the upper and middle sections and poor section more or less untouched by the process of development; Thirdly it is justified due to wide disparities in regional availability of food grains; and finally, due to the exploitative, and anti-social activities of private trade.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{17} Synghal, S., Op.Cit., p.8.  
According to Qamar Ahsan (1987) in his article "Tribal Development strategy Needs Rethinking" proposed the following suggestions. The issue of tribal development has been a subject of great concern for the policy makers in India. The problems of development both social and economic involve complex issues in formulation, implementation and evaluation of plan for development of tribal regions. The social and economic infrastructures created during the last thirty six years of planning have no doubt, gone a long way in ameliorating the conditions of living in the tribal areas but still majority of the population in these areas have not been fully benefited by the concerned efforts made by the government at different levels. It has often been alleged that the benefits of the development programmes have mainly been shared by the affluent non-tribal population of the area and the misery of the tribal population has actually increased. The poverty of the tribal population has also been influenced by changes in geo-ecological balance, their age-old social customs and exploitation by the local money lenders and the landlords.

The constraints faced by the tribal development programmes are presenting extra-ordinary challenges to the policy makers and the administrators alike. This naturally requires some rethinking in the context of the above discussion. The strategy and the administrative set up must be redesigned in the light of past experiences. The first step in this regard would obviously to analyse how efficient were the different approaches in the past and the barriers and determinants in these approaches. The simple answer to these questions would be evaluation of administrative functions in the areas under STDF. This would allow the project administration to grow as central
agency in the field. Secondly, the project officer must be selected from relatively senior level of the bureaucratic hierarchy so that he can wield some influence over the block on sub-divisional administrative set-up. He must be closely associated with appraisal and monitoring of the progress of the projects in his area.\(^\text{19}\)