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TRIBAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT  
GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH

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TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT:

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

- A RAPID APPRAISAL -

TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES

AND

TRIBAL CULTURAL RESEARCH  
& TRAINING INSTITUTE

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background

The Tribal Welfare Department (TWD) of Andhra Pradesh (AP), initiated the Andhra Pradesh Tribal Development Project (APTDP) in order to assist various tribal communities who were at a subsistence level of economy.

The project commenced in the year 1991 and is directed at the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) areas of Seethampeta, Parvathipuram, Paderu and Rampachodavaram, covering 63,370 families.

The Project is assisted by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Rome, and is co-financed by the Government of Netherlands. The total project outlay is Rs. 779.74 millions, with the IFAD and the Government of Netherlands contributing Rs. 459.64 millions. The contribution of the Government of Netherlands is in terms of grant, whereas the contribution of IFAD is in terms of loan.

The project is intended to be completed within a 7 year time-frame, i.e. by 31st March, 1998.

At the end of two years after the start of the project, the Tribal Welfare Department (TWD) felt the need to assess the impact of the APTDP, with reference to women's participation in the programmes.

The TWD of Andhra Pradesh therefore invited Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) to undertake a joint study with Tribal Cultural Research & Training Institute (TCR&TI), to study the extent of women's participation in the programmes under APTDP.

#### 1.2 Scope

The study assessed the aspect of women's participation in APTDP, in the four ITDAs of Seethampeta, Parvathipuram, Paderu and Rampachodavaram.

### 1.3 Terms of Reference

The following are the terms of reference for the study:

- a) To study the extent of women's participation
- b) To highlight any special problems of women with respect to implementation of the project.
- c) To discuss other income generating activities of women
- d) To study the functioning of women's Thrift and Credit Groups (Podupu sangams)

Environmental Impact needs to be assessed over a longer period of time. Therefore it has not been taken up as part of this study.

### 1.4 Structure of the Report

Apart from this introductory chapter, there are four other chapters in this report. Their contents are briefly mentioned here.

Chapter 2 specifies the Approach and Method adopted by the consultants in this study.

Chapter 3 gives a brief sketch of the tribal population of AP, the objectives of APTDP, various programmes formulated under APTDP for achieving these objectives, and the envisaged role of women in these programmes.

Chapter 4 outlines the findings of the study team pertaining to women's participation.

Chapter 5 puts forth the conclusions of this rapid appraisal study.



## CHAPTER 2

### APPROACH AND METHOD

#### 2.1 Approach

Participatory approach has been used taking the time frame specified for the study into consideration.

Although the thrust of the study is on women's development and participation in tribal economy, problems of women in tribal areas in general are also kept in view.

#### 2.2 Method

The method adopted for conducting this study consisted of data collection, participatory rural appraisal and analysis of observations.

##### 2.2.1 Data Collection

The data pertaining to the study was collected mainly through secondary sources. A literature survey was conducted covering reports, government documents and other publications related to the issues of women in tribal economy. Appraisal reports of previous years, Working papers of the APTDP, Profile of AP tribal women provided the necessary insight for the study.

##### 2.2.2 Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)

In accordance with the objectives of the study, members of TCS and TCR&TI visited 20 villages coming under the 4 ITDAs. Annexure 1 contains a list of the villages visited.

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) technique was adopted to interact with the local tribals and elicit responses from them.

To facilitate interaction with tribal women, the study team consisted of one female member and the team was also accompanied by the Community Development Coordinators.

The team held discussions with Project Officers and the Sectoral Officers of ITDAs. The process of organising and managing women's groups has been understood from these discussions.

### 2.2.3 Analysis

The objectives of the APTDP were prioritised using the technique of Interpretive Structural Modelling (ISM). This resulted in a hierarchy of objectives through which APTDP can achieve its ultimate purpose.

Observations made during field visits were analysed to identify areas for further improvement of the programmes.

## CHAPTER 3

### APTDP : WOMEN'S ROLE

#### 3.1 A Glimpse of Tribal Population in AP

A study of the tribal population of Andhra Pradesh, which constitutes approximately 6.3 % of the total population of the state, reveals that this section continues to lag behind in every sphere of development.

Not only does it suffer from extreme poverty, but also from poor health, poor education and mal-nutrition. It is characterised by :

- high infant and maternal mortality rates
- low life expectancy
- low nutritional levels
- high fertility

Most of the members of the tribal communities are engaged in 'podu' or shifting cultivation and the food produced is not sufficient to feed all members of their families.

The annual average household income is Rs. 3350/- which is much below the official poverty level of Rs. 6400/-. The average household expenditure, being much higher, the community is forced into indebtedness. (Source: IFAD Appraisal Report of May 1991)

Nutritional levels are low, leading to lowered body resistance and high susceptibility to diseases and infection. They are constantly plagued by epidemics and lack of medical infrastructure. The inaccessibility of their habitats adds to their plight.

Educational status is also poor with female literacy at 3.4 % and male literacy at 12 % (Appraisal report of IFAD-May'91).

The school drop-out rates are high, as the need to earn a living assumes greater importance than the need for education.



### 3.2 Objectives of APTDP

The main aim of the APTDP is to enable the development of the tribal community, without eroding their traditional culture and values.

In order to achieve tribal development, the following objectives have been outlined by the APTDP.

1. To ensure household food security among the tribals.
2. To improve the health status of the tribal communities and increase their awareness of hygiene and sanitation.
3. To increase their literacy levels and make them aware of the need for education.
4. To consolidate their help in building up community assets and to create a stake in these assets for the tribal communities.
5. To protect and safeguard the environment by controlling soil-erosion and loss of green cover.

These broad level objectives are further broken down into lower level objectives. A diagrammatic depiction of the objectives structure prioritised through Interpretive Structural Modelling (ISM) is provided in Fig. 3.1.

These objectives of the APTDP cannot be achieved without the participation of the tribal women and the tribal community.

### 3.3 Programmes Under APTDP

In order to achieve its objectives, the project is divided into various programmes. These programmes are:

#### a) Community & Women's Development

Establishment of grain banks and thrift societies, awareness generation and training women on health, nutrition and management of household finances and training and support to women in agriculture, horticulture and other income generating activities.

#### b) Natural Resources Development

Soil and water conservation, small scale irrigation, horticulture and arable crops development and provision

of equipment and material and training for adoption of modern agricultural practices.

c) Health

Establishment of health centres, training to doctors and medical staff, provision of technical assistance and creation of awareness regarding medical facilities and sanitation.

d) Education

Provision of adequate educational materials as well as training to teachers and scholarships and recognition awards to students

e) Marketing & Credit Support

Provision of credit, margin money and grants for on-farm non-crop investments and strengthening of the Girijan Cooperative Corporation.

f) Project Management Support

Provision of necessary training to project staff, monitoring and evaluation of the project and ensuring effectiveness of operations.

### 3.4 Role of Women in Tribal Life

Studies have revealed that women play a major role in every aspect of tribal life.

They play an active role in producing and collecting food and fire-wood from forest and fields, carrying water from wells or streams and in maintaining family food security in a deteriorating environment.

However, they generally play no part in village decision making, although they have a major influence in household affairs.

Women, in addition to their domestic and child care duties, constitute a major part of the labour force in agriculture and also in non-agricultural activities. The ratio of men to women labour force is 31 : 69. This figure is substantiated in the Table 3.1 Annexure 2 which has been obtained from the appraisal report of IFAD.

### 3.5 Envisaged Role of Women

The APTDP aims at making the tribal communities recognise the central role played by women in the family economy.

It aims at making women more enterprising and self-reliant by vesting on them the responsibility of running grain-banks and thrift & credit societies.

The participation of women in the planning processes and the community development, health and education components of the programme would seek to draw women into the public life of the village.

It would help to draw them out of the house-hold and encourage them to take an active part in all aspects of tribal economy. This would help to improve their education, health and nutrition.

Further, the introduction of labour saving devices, water supply improvement and management, and grain banks would all have a positive impact on the economic and social status of women.

It is through the participation of women, that the APTDP aims at controlling indebtedness, liquor consumption and other factors having a negative impact on the tribal economy.

#### 3.5.1 Thrift & Credit Societies

Girijans' income is seasonal in nature. During summer tribals do not find any income generating activities. During emergencies, festivals and other such occasions Girijans approach local money-lenders (Shahukars) for their monetary needs paying an interest rate of 75 to 100% per year. Such borrowing coupled with low productivity rates in agriculture force Girijans into permanent indebtedness and later to vicious poverty cycle.

To break this process, women are encouraged to form themselves into groups for saving money. These groups are termed as Thrift & Credit Societies. Each Society elects a President and a Secretary. After one year, a matching grant equaling double the amount saved by the society is provided by IFAD.

In the second year, the amount equaling the total savings in

that year is contributed to the Society. Any member can take loan from the Society in emergencies at an interest rate decided by the Society.

There are some variations among the ITDAs in the matching grants contributed.

These Societies formed, are encouraged to take up income generating activities and community development work.

### 3.5.2 Grain Banks

Under this scheme, Girijans can pool their harvest produce at a rate decided by the group, in the grain bank. IFAD provides a matching grant to the group, in kind. The members can take loans from the bank and repay it in convenient installments during the next harvest period. Women are expected to participate actively in managing these grain banks. Table 3.2 in Annexure 2 reflects the proposed number of grain banks to be formed during the project period.



# CHAPTER 4

TO ENSURE ALL-ROUND DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRIBAL COMMUNITY  
WITHOUT ERODING TRADITIONAL CULTURE AND VALUES

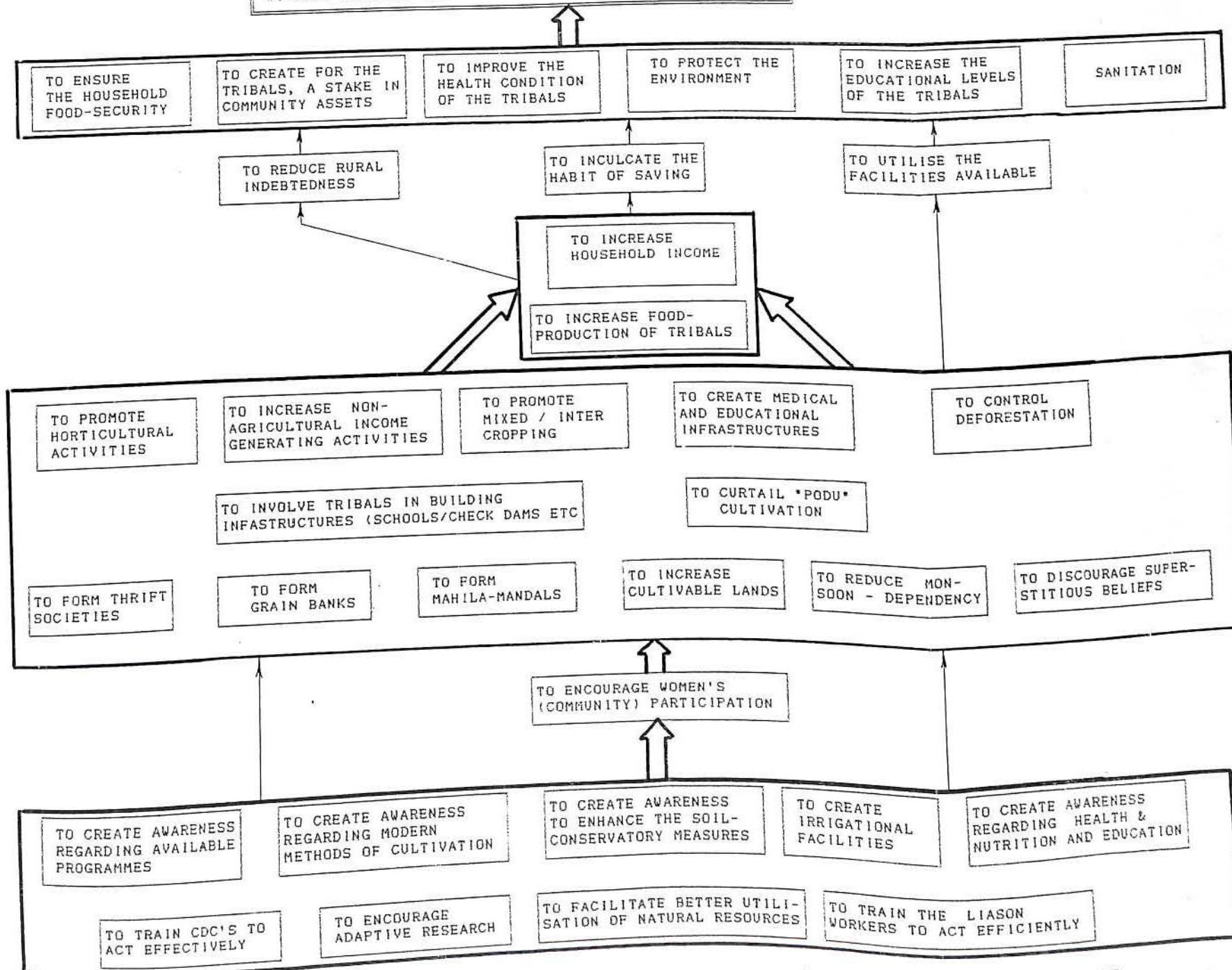


Fig. 3.1 POLICY VISION FOR APTDP  
(Obtained through Interpretive Structural Modelling)



## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

This chapter presents a rapid appraisal of tribal women's involvement in APTDP. Conscious effort has been made to avoid personal bias, urban bias, spatial bias and project bias in this appraisal exercise.

A critical review of the target vs. achievements in formation of women's thrift and credit groups is attempted. Further, field observations are presented to constitute a balanced commentary.

#### 4.1 Thrift & Credit Societies: Target Exceeded

APTDP has been conceived with an intention to build people's institutions at the village level with women playing a central role.

Targets in an operating environment are set to encourage the implementors of a programme to vigorously pursue the activities proposed for them. But achievement of the targets should not be the only priority of the functionaries. It is to be understood that in groups which are traditionally averse to risk and live close to the vicissitudes of nature, change is a slow and gradual process. Therefore, apart from programme targets themselves, one has to look into the detailed working of a programme and its impact on the target group.

The following table provides the achievements of the four ITDAs in forming thrift and credit societies by the end of second year of the Project.

Table 4.1  
Formation of Thrift Societies during 1991-1993

ITDA	Thrift Societies	
	Target	Achieved
Seethampeta	84	120
Parvathipuram	63	102
Paderu	200	269
Rampachodavaram	63	90
Total	410	581

As the above table suggests, the number of women's groups organised are far beyond the targets set. Though this is a laudable achievement, the quality of the groups formed is to be tested for their effective role in the overall development of their village.

It is also important to examine whether these achievements are target driven or purpose driven.

Interaction with officials in the field tends to suggest that there has been a strong motivation to meet and exceed the targets. In the drive for meeting targets, it appears that the quality and performance of groups have received a lower priority.

Only two years have elapsed since the project has started. A mid-term correction at this stage is important to bring about a 'purpose driven' environment.

#### 4.2 Ritualistic Participation

Active dialogue among the Society members helps them in chalking out future course of action both at the community and the individual level. Such a dialogue initiation and maintenance should be the prime focus of the implementing authorities after the groups are organised. Perceptible gains have not been made in this aspect. As one woman respondent said,

"They all listen very 'nicely' to whatever the coordinator says, nod their heads; but tomorrow all this will be forgotten."

Similarly it is also important to note an observation of a Community Development Coordinator:

"I come to the village, talk so much to them, but they do not speak at all."

For Girijan women, articulating their opinion to outsiders (such as Coordinators and other professionals) is a difficult process. Unless a long relationship of trust is created their problems will not be communicated to outsiders.

Similarly, unless the leader is acceptable to the group, members may not participate freely in discussions.

#### 4.3 Informal Management of Money

The utilisation of the funds collected from savings, matching grants, and provision for income generating activities is left entirely to the communities. In such a system, the guidance of the Community Development Coordinators or other professionals in technical, financial and marketing matters is essential.

Similarly, attempts should also be made to ensure that only privileged members among the group members do not enjoy the benefits of this collective effort. There are instances where the village liaison worker has taken money from the group's funds without the knowledge of the members.

It is very important to build community management systems in the functioning of these groups and facilitate smooth running of these groups.

#### 4.4 Few 'Innovators'

An important indicator of participation is the actual number of women who participate. Though there are no clear-cut statistics available, it is noted from our discussions that the members constitute only 20 to 40 percent of the women population.

The reasons for some women not participating in the group are:

- a) Experience of earlier schemes such as ICDS
- b) Leader being not acceptable

There are exceptions to this. For example, in villages like Gamparai (Paderu) and Panukuvalasa (Parvathipuram) the participation is excellent and convincing.

In fact, in some of the Societies, e.g., Regulaguda (Seethampeta), members played an active role in the recent Anti-arrack Agitation in keeping their villages liquor free.

#### 4.5 Immediate Needs Neglected

It is very important to identify the needs of the communities in the order of their priority. Such a need assessment should be a result of a one-to-one dialogue with the communities. The needs identified over a project area should be the target activities for the implementing authorities.

Girijans can easily identify their immediate needs. They would be willing to participate in activities aimed at



meeting these needs.

However, during the field visits it is observed that activities which are popular elsewhere (other ITDAs or other villages) have been given more importance than the immediate priorities of the communities. For example, in Thatiwada (Rampachodavaram) a community Anganwadi centre is being built up but the need for a small farm pond has gone unnoticed.

Also as an example, in village Panukuvalasa (Parvathipuram), a community centre has been constructed with the active participation of women. But the need for proper cleaning of the drainage canal amidst the village with the collective participation of the villagers has been neglected.

There is a reason to believe that in a rush to implement programmes the actual need assessment and organisation of collective effort of the people in solving their immediate problems are finding no importance.

#### 4.6 Obstacles to Capability Development

Some of the income generating activities that are available to the Girijan women are:

- a) MFP Collection
- b) Agricultural labour
- c) Work in construction (short term)

It is conceived that the work taken up under IFAD schemes would largely involve Girijan women and men. The work includes, inter alia:

- a) Soil Conservation
- b) Check dam construction

Only in pockets of Seethampeta, Paderu and Parvathipuram ITDAs have the women groups actively participated in carrying out technical activities under the project. However, it has been found that the village development committees and Podupu Sanghams (Thrift Societies) in all other places have not been involved in these activities due to technical and financial reasons. The reasons mentioned for non-involvement are:

- a) Lack of financial capabilities and
- b) Lack of technical capabilities among the Girijans.

But the main principle behind these activities is that these Girijans should be involved in these activities by training them in technical aspects and by providing them necessary financial assistance.

The implications of such non-involvement are:

- a) These community assets will not be ably managed by the community
- b) Increased dependency on outside help.

Development of various capabilities must be the ultimate desirable outcome of any development programme.

#### 4.7 Practical Hurdles before Women

Girijan women, even today, spend most of their time in collecting fire-wood and in agricultural operations. But, formation of Thrift Societies, and savings and credit operations involve recurring visits to nearby areas where banks are situated. This means loss of working days.

There are also instances where men in the households resist the women's initiative in taking up community activities.

The programmes cannot succeed unless these hurdles before women are consciously taken into account and innovative ways of surmounting these hurdles are devised.

#### 4.8 Reducing Role of Shahukars

With the formation of the thrift and credit groups, the dependence of Girijans on Shahukars (local moneylenders) has reduced. Discussions with women revealed that they are not approaching the Shahukars anymore for their festival and emergency needs.

This is an appreciable trend. But it is of paramount importance that this trend is sustained. The vicious cycle of poverty and indebtedness should be broken by creating facilitating atmosphere for additional income generation and encouraging saving habits.

It is also important to ensure that these Shahukars do not affect the operation of programmes by intervening at the market place where the absence of remunerative price will severely affect the income accruals to Girijans.



## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

Several billions of dollars have been spent for poverty alleviation programmes worldwide, with the rural men as the prime focus of development programmes. Research suggests that this has resulted in inefficient utilisation of resources and has led to no appreciable improvement in rural poverty alleviation.

Only in the recent past, after understanding the role played by women in the rural household economy as well as community development activities, emphasis is made on involving women in all development activities.

APTDP, which has always focused its attention on tribal women, is beginning to yield results now. This Rapid Appraisal, at the end of two years of its commencement, has identified a number of areas where further improvement is desirable to make the results sustainable and permanent.

#### 5.1 Areas for Improvement

Five specific areas for improvement are outlined below:

##### 5.1.1 Need Assessment

Assessment of actual and immediate needs of a community provide a good starting point for generating enthusiasm and participation. It must be borne in mind that different communities can have different immediate needs. Therefore, instead of trying to replicate specific activities across villages, the emphasis should be on developing need-based activities for different villages.

##### 5.1.2 'Purpose Driven' Approach

Many a programme has failed due to excessive emphasis on physical targets. APTDP too seems to show early symptoms of such a disorder. Now is the time to check this and instill among functionaries a healthy 'purpose driven' outlook.

### 5.1.3 Better Management of Money

Training and professional assistance in book-keeping and financial discipline is a strongly felt need. This should be addressed soon before financial mismanagement emerges as a major problem.

### 5.1.4 Innovation in Operations

Tribal women are burdened with numerous household and other responsibilities. It would be futile to expect them to devote much time to community activities. Therefore, innovative ways of working should be evolved so as to ensure smooth operation of programmes while not imposing further burdens on women.

### 5.1.5 Capacity Development

Any development effort must ultimately result in Capability and Confidence. APTDP needs to be continuously examined on this front. Current practices suggest a lack of such an awareness among functionaries.

## 5.2 Directions for Future

Policy vision for APTDP as depicted in Fig. 3.1 identifies the route through which the ultimate mission of 'ensuring all round development of tribal communities without eroding their traditional culture and values' can be accomplished.

On this route, the activities leading to increased awareness on desired ends and means constitute the necessary first step towards achieving greater participation, which is a key strategy for the Project. planners and implementors of the Project have to recognise this aspect as critical.

Only when women's participation is derived from a sound footing of developmental awareness, programme activities would generate sustainable results. It has been found that in Seethampeta, Paderu and Parvathipuram ITDAs the women groups have actively participated in carrying out even technical activities under the programme. The causes and the 'mechanism' of such active participation must be identified. This should provide insight and direction for planners and implementors.

Awareness of the need to protect the environment by reducing felling of trees is prevalent among women. These women therefore feel the need for tiled, well ventilated houses in the place of thatched houses. Encouraging this kind of

awareness by well formulated programmes and activities is desirable.

'To increase house-hold income and food production by tribals' is almost a mini-mission for the Project. On this hinges the achievement of overall Project objectives

Fig. 3.1 is like a blue-print of action for programme implementors. This can be used from time to time to take stock of the status of the Project and effect strategic changes to fulfill the ultimate mission.

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LIST OF VILLAGES VISITED

- 1) ITDA- SEETHAMMAPET  
Regulaguda  
Boinnaguda  
Jagua  
Bejjannaguda
- 2) ITDA- PARVATHIPURAM  
Kothavalasa  
Panukuvalasa  
Gogadavalasa  
Chinnachipirivalasa  
Ammavalasa
- 3) ITDA- PADERU  
Hukumpeta  
Gamparai  
Mangabanda  
Sirsapalli
- 4) ITDA- RAMPACHODAVARAM  
Maddirathigudem  
Thatiwada  
Choppagunta  
Mangampadu  
Bachuluru



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Boinnaguda  
Jagua  
Bejjannaguda
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Kothavalasa  
Panukuvalasa  
Gogadavalasa  
Chinnachipirivalasa  
Ammavalasa
- 3) ITDA- PADERU  
Hukumpeta  
Gamparai  
Mangabanda  
Sirsapalli
- 4) ITDA- RAMPACHODAVARAM  
Maddirathigudem  
Thatiwada  
Choppagunta  
Mangampadu  
Bachuluru

Table 3.1

## Annual Labour Requirement by Sex (mandays)

	1991-92	1992-93*	1993-94*
Total Mandays spent for Plantation	123	123	203
Male	40	40	61
Female	82	82	142

\* Projected by IFAD ( Working paper 9, Appraisal Report )

Table 3.2

## PROPOSED NO. OF THRIFT SOCIETIES TO BE FORMED DURING 1991-97

ITDA	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Seethampeta	0 (0)	0 (25)	3	6	8	9	9
Parvathipuram	0 (0)	0 (102)	2	5	6	14	14
Paderu	0 (0)	0 (10)	6	14	20	44	44
Rampachodavaram	0 (17)	0 (24)	2	5	6	7	7

Figures given in ( ) are the actuals achieved during the year 1991 and 1992.

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