

with alcohol. She said that alcoholism, illicit trade, and the unwillingness to stay in Strait Island had destroyed the very basis of their community life.

One of the issues that emerged from the conversation with Lecho, Prof. Pandya and Shri Awaradi was that it was important to look into ways in which the community could be revived with the help of women like Lecho who could be encouraged to undertake economic activities like horticulture on a cooperative basis and generate revenues for both household and community needs. It was observed that a programme of self-reliance pioneered by women with the help of the Andaman Nicobar Administration could become an incentive for men to stay back in Strait Islands and contribute to their economic and community life.

CONCLUSIONS

While there was overall consensus on the need to develop a deeper understanding of gender issues within the PVTGS it was widely accepted that certain immediate actions be initiated to address the two major problems that emerged from Tirrur and Strait Islands. The workshop ended by taking the view that proposals to undertake a multi-team research project at Tirrur to relate the complex interrelationship between the changing structures of a hunter-gatherer economy of the Jarawas and the new gender equations it has generated would have to be formalized and presented at the next ANTRI RAB and then sent for approval to the Honorable LG. The second proposal for a project for economic self-reliance under the leadership of women at Strait Island will also be worked out in consultation with Lecho and other members of her community along with ANTRI, AAJVS and other relevant government agencies. These two projects could mark new beginnings in developing a more holistic, gender sensitive tribal welfare policy for the PVTGs of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.