



livelihoods

today and tomorrow

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‘Sukshetram’

Poor, Vulnerable and Marginalized Groups

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“Overcoming Poverty is not a gesture of Charity. It is an act of Justice. It is Protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life!” – Nelson Mandela

In India, our society is structured based on two criteria; economically and socially. Our society is highly stratified. On the economical front, it is “who owns what” whereas, the social structure decides “who is what”. We have large number of disadvantaged groups, from socio-economic perspective. They are Poor, Marginalized and Vulnerable.

All three groups are deprived of basic necessities such as food, clothing, shelter, rights and entitlements. They are mostly the underprivileged sections of the society. Poor were earlier classified based on income level and food intake capability. The poor are now people who lack access to proper healthcare, education, nutrition and other services. The Vulnerable groups in a population are one, who have some specific characteristics that make them at higher risk of falling and into poverty than others. They are usually prone to risk and uncertainties. The term marginalization describes the actions or tendencies of the human societies, where people who they perceive to undesirable or without function are excluded. These people who are marginalized are from a Group or a community for their protection or integration are known as Marginalized Groups. This discrimination in the society limits opportunities or means of survival for these sections of the society.

Poverty accentuates vulnerability and leads to marginalization, when coupled with social discrimination. Marginalization leads to social isolation and severe erosion of identity. Communities, groups of people and individuals, who are marginalized and socially isolated lose their identity. They are prevented from full social integration and participation. The social structure and hierarchies also discriminate them. The caste, gender and patriarchy are the major factors, which lead to social discrimination. The vulnerable groups are classified on the basis of facing structured discrimination (Women, Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes, minorities, orphans and children, elderly, migrants), people suffering with HIV/AIDS, sexual minorities-third gender (vulnerabilities due to stigma and discrimination).

The common thread that binds the poor, marginalized and vulnerable sections of the society is to have sustainable livelihoods and basic standard of living. They depend on agriculture and natural resources primarily for their livelihoods. Lack of sustainable livelihoods is something which forces them to migrate from one place to another. These sections of the society are involved in multiple livelihoods. Poverty persist because of limited and inequitable access to productive resources such as land, water, improved

inputs, assets and technologies and microfinance, as well as vulnerability to drought and other natural disasters. Low levels of literacy and skills conspire to keep people in the poverty trap, preventing them from claiming their basic rights or from embarking on new activities to income or build assets. Market dominated systems treat human beings as human resources to be developed and exploited to their fullest potential. This new approach

Alarming Facts!

- 276.6 million people are poor in the country (2011 Census). Around 30% of its population living BPL at 224 million.
- Total Households in the Country are 24.47 Crore. Among them rural households are 17.96 crore. Excluded households are nearly 07.96 crore i.e. 39.37% of total rural households. According SECC 2011, data 00.16 crore households (0.92% of rural HH).
- In India, Population under Multidimensional Poverty is 55.3%. (Source: Human Development Index)
- India ranks 131st out of 188 countries on Human Development Index.
- According to Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2017, India has been ranked at 100 out of 119 countries, which falls under serious range categories under GHI severity scale.
- India has highest number of people living below poverty line with 30% of its population under the \$1.90 a day poverty measure.
- 77% of India’s workforce to fall in Vulnerable Employment Category by 2019 (ILO).

created new sets of excluded groups.

- Those who are not educated, skilled, oriented to market economy. Examples- rural laborers, tribals and PVTGs.
- Those who don't produce commodities for market . Examples- subsistence farmers.
- Those who are not involved in paid labor. Examples- the domestic labor of women is unpaid labor.
- Those who can't adapt to ever changing economic conditions shaped by the volatile markets Examples - Artisans.
- Those who are unable to work. Examples– Disabled, Terminally ill, Mentally ill, Elderly.

India has 49.7 %of people practicing agriculture as their livelihood. The labour force participation rate in India is 53.7% and unemployment rate is 3.5%. At present, 80.8% of total workforce is categorized as vulnerable employment. Vulnerability has two sides:

(1) the external side of exposure to shocks, stress and risk; and

(2) the internal side of defencelessness, or a lack of means to cope without damaging loss

Category-wise Assessment and Challenges of Poor, Marginalized and Vulnerable:

The power asymmetry, status asymmetry, wealth asymmetry and knowledge/skill asymmetry causes major impact on such categories of the society. Most poor people, vulnerable and marginalized groups in the society can be described as below:

Small and Marginal Farmers

India has over 85% of the farmers who belong to small and marginal category who own less than 2 hectare of land, out of which marginal farmers who own less than 1 hectare of land constitute 2/3 rd of total farmers (According to agricultural census 2010-11). Only 45% of agricultural land is owned by these 85% farmers. This small size of landholding deprives them of economies of scale. They used to practice subsistence farming, cultivation of pulses, millets, oilseeds, rainfed agriculture and multicropping system. With continuous interventions by the government in the form of green revolution, economic reforms, cropping pattern of these farmers has undergone forced change towards monocropping systems and cash crops like cotton, chillies, Sugarcane etc. This has eroded the food security available during subsistence farming. At the same time, owing to monocropping, the production of rice and wheat increased. This led to glut in the market and price fluctuations. Despite Minimum support Price, small and marginal farmers do not avail it as they have less marketable surplus. This forces them to distress sale of their produce at the farmgate itself. This is aggravated by loans from money lenders and formal institutions which is causing debt trap over a period of time. In the cultivation of cash crops the small and marginal farmers incur heavy cost as they require intense use of costly seeds, depleting water, pesticides and fertilizers. This unabated increase in cost of

Vulnerable/ Marginalized Groups in India

- Women
- Scheduled Caste (SC)
- Scheduled Tribe (ST)
- Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)
- Women headed families
- Orphans and Children
- Internally Displaced Persons
- Elderly persons
- Persons with Disabilities (PwDs),
- Religious/ethnic/linguistic minority groups
- People living in extremist and disaster affected areas
- People living in inaccessible remote and hill terrains
- Survivors of human trafficking
- Erstwhile manual scavengers
- Liberated bonded laborers
- Transgenders (sexual minorities)
- HIV/AIDS+ persons and their families
- Families with one or more persons suffering from chronic illness etc.

production coupled with plateauing of yields and reduction in global agricultural prices, the small and marginal farmers are at the losing end. Reduced incomes from agriculture and increased costs in production, increased social, educational and health spending is forcing suicides especially in the arid and semi arid belt of India. On the other hand, their low produce is not viable for value addition at individual farm level. The poor presence of collectives of small and marginal farmers makes them vulnerable to middle men, market shocks, seed monopolies etc. Though there are cooperatives present in some crops like sugarcane, they are mainly utilised by medium and large farmers. Apart from lack of institutional support, they are highly vulnerable to uncertain increased droughts and cyclones due to global climate change. They are gradually becoming environmental refugees. To improve present status, they have inadequate capacities to improve fertility of soil, long term development of their fields, technological usage, cropping patterns and value addition. The dismal economic condition of small and marginal farmers is forcing them to sell their land and/or migrate to cities. This is visible in the increase in casual labour, increase in demand for MGNREGS work and feminisation of agriculture in villages. Overall their agriculture and lives have become environmentally unsustainable, financially unviable and socially a concern for all of us. Reducing cost of production, improving access to credit, inputs, timely disbursement of information, insurance and ensuring price realization of agriculture produce are some steps which are required urgently.

Elderly

Ageing is an inevitable. In India, the population of the elderly is growing rapidly and is emerging as a serious area of concern for the government and the policy planners. The elderly population is close to 100 million above the age of 60 years which is expected to grow to 173 million by 2026. The elderly form 8% of India's population. Approximately 70% of the elderly live in villages; 50% are poor. The large segment of the elderly, those living alone or with spouse only, and the widowed who are illiterate, poor and particularly those from the SC and ST families. The vulnerability among the elderly is not only due to an increased incidence of illness and disability, but also due to their economic dependency upon their spouses, children and other younger family members. For older Indians, this translates into a life experience characterised by poverty, food insecurity, restricted access to health, financial and social services, and limited options for livelihoods security. The elderly are involved in activities such as Agriculture labourer, traditional healers (ethno medical practitioners), watchmen, self employed by having micro enterprises (temple livelihoods, flower/vegetable vendors, small hotels in rural areas, providing support in rearing of livestock, value addition processing of the produce, MGNREGs, *coolie/hamali* at railway stations. Over 70% not literate, with manual labour being the only source of livelihood for many. Apart from food they wish to have a sustainable livelihoods to meet obligations for festivals, rituals, weddings, and for shelter repair and improvement. Additional needs included: agricultural and livestock investment, education for grandchildren, clothes, business investment. The elders have the right to age with dignity with adequate financial, health and social support.

Transgenders (Third Gender/Sexual Minorities)

People with a gender identity or gender expression, which is different from the sex assigned at birth, are known as “Transgenders”. They live on the periphery of the society and are categorized as one of the Marginalized communities. In India, the estimated population of Third Gender is five lakhs out of which 2/3rd live in rural areas. Most transgenders face discrimination in accessing services such as education, work, healthcare etc in both public and private spheres. Transgenders are ridiculed by society for being different and are victims of violence and abuse. They live in seclusion and follow their own customs. They face legal issues in terms of same sex marriages, sex change, inheritance, child adoption, there is lack of protection from the police and they become easy targets for money extortions and sex work etc., Section 377 is major roadblock in recognizing same sex relationships. As a sexual minority, many medical practitioners have no adequate knowledge about health issues of Transgenders. Thus, they face barriers while accessing healthcare. In many hospital settings, they are admitted in male wards, where they face verbal harassment, denial of medical treatment. They do not have access to legal identity which

results in them not having any social recognition. They are frequently evicted or denied homes, because they are Transgenders, and this often results in homelessness. They earn their living by performing on streets, at ceremonies, begging and even involved in sex trade. Over the years, Transgenders have been humiliated and ostracized. Adding to their woes, many government forms recognize only two genders; Male & Female. Thereby, preventing them from benefitting from many schemes, which are otherwise available to other marginalized communities. Around 40% of Transgender are employed. The third gender lives a life of discrimination, which is often complicated by lack of much needed governmental support and inclusion by the society. Transgenders are not being able to actively participate in political, social, economic and financial sectors. Though in some states the government policies are inclusive to provide job opportunities to them but society in some or the other form are exclude them. This exclusion impacts any efforts by the government to include them. Therefore, they are left with limited options to

The Ministry of Labour, Government of India, has categorized the unorganized labour force under four groups depending on occupation, nature of employment, specially distressed categories and service categories.

1. **Under Terms of Occupation:** Small and marginal farmers, landless agricultural labourers, share croppers, fishermen, those engaged in animal husbandry, beedi rolling, labeling and packing, building and construction workers, leather workers, weavers, artisans, salt workers, workers in brick kilns and stone quarries, workers in saw mills, oil mills, etc. come under this category.
2. **Under Terms of Nature of Employment:** Attached agricultural labourers, bonded labourers, migrant workers, contract and casual labourers come under this category.
3. **Under Terms of Specially Distressed Category:** Toddy tappers, scavengers, carriers of head loads, drivers of animal driven vehicles, loaders and un-loaders come under this category.
4. **Under Terms of Service Category:** Midwives, domestic workers, fishermen and women, barbers, vegetable and fruit vendors, newspaper vendors, etc., belong to this category.

earn a livelihood. The states like Tamil Nadu have come forward to provide reservation to Transgenders. The Transgenders Bill by the Government of India is a small effort to improve the status of Transgenders.

Individuals living with HIV/AIDS

There is a lot of stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) and it is very high and those considered to be at high risk remain entrenched. The main factors which have contributed to India's large HIV-infected population is due to extensive labour migration, low literacy levels in certain rural pockets resulting in lack of awareness, sex trade and also gender disparity. It is estimated that 2.39 million people live with HIV/ AIDS; 86,000 HIV infections and 68,000 AIDS related death. AIDS prevalence rate stood at approximately 0.26%; the 90th highest in the world (2014). 8.82 % of Transgenders form the High risk groups.

The key affected populations continue to face discrimination based on their actual or perceived health status, socio-economic status, age, sex, sexual orientation, race, gender identity, caste or on other grounds. They are also barred from accessing health services or enjoying quality health care. They are a victim of prejudices, social stigma, negative attitudes and abuses from family, peers and by wider community. Tenants, who constantly buy medicines and are ailing, are watched by their house owners or landlords. Poor treatment is faced by individuals in educational and work settings, which is violation of their rights and leads to psychological damage. These individuals are harassed by police. Women belonging to lower economic status, are significantly more likely to experience stigma and discrimination from their husband's family and as well from their friends and neighbors. Children who are HIV positive are thrown out of schools; adults have been sacked, refused homes and adolescents are denied the access to preventive measures, education. In working place too, employers sometimes learn of HIV positive people's health conditions, when medical tests are carried out for insurance.

It becomes a challenge for these individuals to get access to HIV testing, treatment and avail other HIV services. These kind of social isolation and ridicules and discriminatory practices (termination or refusal of employment) are very painful. The isolation that social rejection brings can lead to low self-esteem, depression and even thoughts or acts of suicide. The HIV/AIDS affected people are usually involved in micro enterprises such as making and selling of toys, greeting card, festival based products, employed at grocery stores, railway pantries and are engaged in many other activities for their livelihoods. The possible consequences of HIV-related stigma are a) loss of income and livelihoods; b) loss of marriage and child bearing options; c) poor care within the health sector; d) withdrawal of care giving in the home; e) loss of hope and feelings of worthlessness and loss of reputation. However, few of the state governments have initiated pension schemes for this section of the society. The prevention, care, rehabilitation and impact mitigation initiatives must all be scaled up and integrated for them.

People living in Urban scenarios

People living in slums who strive for their sustainable living in the urban environment and cities are also exposed to the harsh realities of vulnerability and being marginalized. The urban poor lives in slum and are deprived of many resources. The existence of the slums in every major city of India is due to the imbalance in the urban economy. According to 2011 census projection of slum population was 93 million and there were about 1.3 crore urban slum households. It has surged upto 104 million in 2017. They represent the poorest of the urban poor. The major challenges faced by urban poor are Minuscule living areas, poor house planning, natural disasters, social conflicts, social exclusion, lack of safe drinking water, diseases, latrines shared amongst hundreds, a non-existent sewerage systems, defecation on the streets, child marriages and gross negligence of hygiene. Their children are usually malnourished and women are the victims of domestic violence. Their socio economic environment breeds criminal tendencies among them. They are exploited in illegal activities.

They usually take up jobs in the informal sectors to serve their financial needs. They are largely involved in multiple occupations as coolie/daily wage labours (head load bearer labour in markets (hamalis), at railway stations), rickshaw pullers, construction workers, manual scavengers, rag pickers, auto drivers, domestic workers, skilled labours (electricians, plumbers, auto/two wheeler repairing, painters, steel metal work, welding, cable, carpentry, tiles fitting), self employed (vegetable vendor, flower vendor, tea shops owner, leather jackets sellers, Tibetan migrants who sell sweaters), sweepers, maintenance, peons/office assistants in private offices, watchmen/security guards in apartments, building and retail shops. They survive on daily earnings and constantly strive to make their lives better for their family. They are vulnerable as they may lose jobs if the trust is not built with their owners or customers.

Persons with Disabilities:

Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) are the vulnerable communities that get marginalized in the competition for access to assets and markets, having a huge negative impact on their social, emotional and economic well-being. These individuals persons are affected by several disabilities such as seeing, hearing, speech, movement, mental retardation, mental illness, multiple disability and any other disabilities. The types of disabilities have been increased from existing seven to twenty one. As per Census 2011 the PwDs are 2.68 crore and are 2.21% of the total population of the Country. In this competitive race, PwDs are the majority group on the peripheries with no access to human, social and financial capital and having limited or negligible control and access to physical and political capital. PwDs are mostly considered burden. They lack access to basic services such as education, health care, vocational training and employment. They have to battle against centuries of biased assumptions, harmful stereotypes, and irrational fears. The negative fallout of the same hampers their enjoyment and opportunity of economic livelihood.

PwDs face serious barriers in getting job opportunities. The livelihood options in urban areas are employment in the formal sector such as the government sector, private sector, small-scale industries. Nowadays, MGNREGS also have

opportunities for PwDs. There are also opportunities for employment in the informal sector such as with contractors, shops and establishments, and in households. They are usually involved in livelihoods such as BPOs, Xerox shops, petty shops etc. The concept of sheltered employment is a viable option particularly for multiple and severely disabled persons. In addition, there are other available alternatives in enhancing livelihood skills and options for the PwDs. To promote rural livelihoods there is possibility of exploring farm-based employment as farmers, agricultural laborers, cultivators, horticulturists etc. There is also the untapped sector of pisci-culture and animal husbandry. There are other opportunities for employment in the non-farm sector such as cottage industry, trading etc. They are engaged in outsourcing of work on a preferential basis as well as skill development could be

- Women make up 43% of the agricultural labour force in developing countries.
- Approximately 1.3 million SC women are involved in Manual Scavenging.
- Less than 20% of the world’s landholders are women.
- Women make up more than two-thirds of the world’s 796 million illiterate people.
- Approximately 66% of elderly women are fully dependent on others; 32% do not own any assets of their own.
- Source: UN Women, International Dalit Solidarity Network

tied up to enhance employment opportunities for this category. Credit linkages (through microfinance in rural areas) there are various ways of promoting economic development activities and self-employment ventures for the benefit of PwDs. The PwDs face various types of barriers while seeking access to health and health services. The employers also often reluctant to provide accessibility and supportive facilities. Among those who are differently abled women, children and aged are more vulnerable and need attention. They need to be able to learn about and obtain jobs, which they can physically access and work at despite their disability. Bringing about changes to existing infrastructure is a key need to improving access for the physically disabled.

Women

Women are marginalized and disempowered in all societies (barring some tribal societies). According to Census 2011, there are 950 females per 1000 males. Women in our country are subject to patriarchal customs, religious laws, discrimination in inheritance rights suffer abuse and exploitation in the family, society and other institutions. Girl child and women from the marginalized groups are more vulnerable to violence. Women are given importance for their reproductive role in the society. Burden on women has increased due to the vulnerable conditions they live in due to socially, politically, culturally and economically conditions. They have less assets, opportunities, freedom of speech and social positioning in the society than their counterparts. Gender based violence and domestic violence is high among women in general, in spite of this, they are engaged in various livelihoods. Women have consistently and for long proved that they can engage themselves in all livelihoods on par with/better than men. They have more physical stamina and mental endurance than men. In fact women are exclusively sought after in some fields like teaching, tailoring, , counselling, nursing, hospitality, front desk jobs, beauty parlours, textile industry , home based industry, cottage industries, midwives, agriculture labourer, manual scavenging, small enterprises, beedi making, food processing, handicrafts and handlooms, private and government sectors. At the grassroots level women have increasingly come together and proved to be harbingers of positive change and development. The household chores do not come into any reckoning and is not accountable in the GDP of our nation.

Women also tend to attain widowhood at a certain phase in their life. The widows are usually due to patriarchal society are victims of abuses, discrimination and are dependent on their family members. An urgent need is required to create livelihood opportunities for these women. All categories of women in every sector are victims of less wages as compared to their counterparts, have no legal provisions, they are also exploited by engaging in long

working hours, sexual abuses and harassment and usually do not have workplace safety be it in rural or urban scenarios.

Children

Children are the most vulnerable to the situations created by natural disasters, displacements and migration. They are also affected by caste based situations. There are 444 million children under the age of 18 years. This constitutes 37% of the total population in the country according to the 2011 census. Child Morality and Morbidity among children are caused and compounded by poverty, their sex and caste position in society. Early marriage, trafficking, forced prostitutions add to the woes of young girls. Poverty in families, make children vulnerable that it has serious consequences on their nutrition intake, access to healthcare, environment and education. Children are particularly vulnerable to forced and bonded labour. They have been identified as bonded child labour in a number of occupations including agriculture, brick kilns, stone quarries, carpet weaving, bidi (cigarette) rolling, rearing of silk cocoons, production of silk sarees, production of silver jewellery, gem cutting, diamond cutting, fire works, mechanic works, in mining of Mica, in hotels, small grocery shops, manufacture of leather products, in circuses, fisheries, shops and tailoring establishments, and domestic work. These children report of working nearly 12 hours a day. As a result of poor and hazardous working conditions the children suffer health problems and diseases as well as verbal and physical abuse from their employers. In urban areas, the practice of engaging girl children in domestic work has been increasing for the last three to four decades in the country many children are involved in selling tea, snacks, and vegetables etc. in shops, near bus stops, railway stations, busy centres, begging and moving from one place to another, it is particularly more prevalent in urban areas. They never receive the agreed wages, instead often getting just a small portion of the amount agreed upon.

Scheduled Caste (SC) Community

Scheduled Caste (SC) are more than 200 million in India which is about 16.2 % of the population who are helpless and poor (Census 2011). They have very less purchasing power, low literacy rates, poor housing conditions, and low access to resources and entitlements. Social exclusion and structural discrimination against these groups takes place in the form of physical, psychological, emotional and culturally. Physical segregation of their settlements is common in the village forcing them to live in most unhygienic and inhabitable conditions. This affects their health and also impacts the quality of life. For centuries they have been denied social hierarchical system deprived this community of their rights to ownership of assets, education and opportunities related to job and participation in the economy. However, it has reduced gradually with time. They are discriminated in schools, have denial and restrictions of access to public and private services, are victims of caste based slavery, untouchability, prostitution even today.

Scheduled Castes are forced to live on the peripheries of the villages but are depended on them for their livelihood - like clearing carcasses. The SCs are usually involved in the caste based livelihoods such as skilled tannery, manual scavenging, drum beating, for customary rights, small and marginal farmers in agriculture, bonded labourer, salt pan

- The literacy rate of STs have improved from 47.1% in 2001 to 59% in 2011. ST population living below the poverty line in 2011-12 were 45.3% in rural areas and 24.1% in urban areas as compared to 25.7% persons in rural areas and 13.7% persons in urban areas below poverty line for total population.
- Within ST population, some ST communities count each more than 5% population in every State. About 111 communities count each $\geq 5\%$ (of ST population of concerned State / UT). These 111 communities add upto 803.25 lakhs.
- Sex ratio in respect of STs is 990 which is higher than national average of 943.
- STs constitute 8.6 % of the country's population and 11.3 % of the total rural population.

Source: Ministry of Tribal Affairs

workers, wage labourers etc. They are mainly landless with little control over resources such as land, forest and water. This is one of the reasons for their poverty which has resulted in low levels of education, poor health and reduced access to healthcare services. Conditions for bonded agricultural labourers are among the harshest. Manual scavenging, a caste based and hereditary occupation form of slavery reserved exclusively for SCs. They are paid less than minimum wages and are often forced to borrow money from upper-caste neighbours in order to meet their basic necessities. These livelihood options not only impact their health both physically and mentally but also impacts their dignity. Though with government efforts the education and employment the status of SCs has improved because of social resistance they are still marginalized.

Scheduled Tribes

The Scheduled Tribe communities live in various ecological and geo-climatic conditions ranging from plains and forests to hills. The essential traits of these communities are geographical isolation, distinct culture, shy of contact with the community at a large and economically backward. There are over 700 STs spread over different States and Union Territories of the country. STs in India continue to lag behind not because they are poor but they are vulnerable to socio-cultural and political alienation. The issues of involuntary displacement and dissatisfactory resettlement have emerged in the tribal areas. Mega development projects like multipurpose river dams like irrigation dams, under-ground coal mines, mineral based industries in various parts of the country generate benefits for the few relatively better off sections of population while marginalizing and excluding the poorer tribal people. Nearly 60 per cent of these large dams are located in central and western India where most of inhabitants are tribal communities. Lack of sound policy to support consumption credit to tribals has made them dependent on usurious money-lenders resulting in debt-bondage. They have been affected not only in terms of their economic condition but their socio-cultural conditions also early marriage, trafficking and other forms of exploitation are also reportedly high among them. They lack low levels of education, poor health and reduced access to healthcare services.

The STs are majorly dependent on natural resources and practice forest based livelihoods for their survival. Forest and land is very important component for tribal development. It occupies their source of livelihood. They are involved in collection of Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP), practice shifting cultivation, practice traditional healing methods (ethno medicine healers/traditional healers), they provide services as faith healers (astrologers), exchange forest produce for battering items, provide value addition services to the forest produce. The acquisition of land for large industries, mines or special economic zones has given rise to the livelihood insecurity of the poor and less privileged people. Alienation and displacement from their land plays a critical role due to which they tend to lose opportunities of selling in the market. Due to displacement and alienation they get involved in stone cutting, MGNREGS, construction workers, migrant workers, few private jobs. Although they live in isolation in forest areas, they are having harmonious relationship with forests and species. But the development of wildlife sanctuaries and eco-parks devastate their habitat and displace their living. They are forced onto the ever-expanding low paid, insecure, transient and destitute labour market. The capital intensive projects have overpowered the tribal communities wages.

Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)

While some tribal communities have adopted a mainstream way of life, at the other end of the spectrum, there are certain Scheduled Tribes, 75 in number known as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (earlier termed as Primitive Tribal Groups), who are characterised by foraging, hunting, gathering activities; a stagnant or declining population; extremely low literacy; and a subsistence level of economy. The socio-economic conditions of PVTGs are vulnerable due to factors anthropological, genetic, isolation and remoteness of their habitats, lack of accessibility to services and displacement by external interventions such as mining projects and infrastructural development projects etc. PVTGs sometimes suffer from starvation and

death due to starvation. Malnutrition is also very high in PVTGs. The health status of PVTGs is in an awful condition because of multiple factors like poverty, illiteracy, lack of safe drinking water, bad sanitary conditions, difficult terrain, malnutrition, poor maternal and child health services, unavailability of health and nutritional services, superstition and deforestation. The diseases like anemia, upper respiratory problem, malaria; gastro-intestinal disorders like acute diarrhea, Intestinal protozoan; micronutrient deficiency and skin infection are common among PVTGs due to external forced development interventions. The condition of women in PVTGs is more vulnerable even though by and large they have a better standing in their family and society compared with non-tribal communities. At the same time they take a lot of workload by participating both in making a livelihood and household chores. Their health and educational status is very poor compared to their men. They face a high rate of sexual harassment.

PVTGs depend on various livelihoods involving foraging, small game hunting, food gathering, collection of Non Timber Forest Produce (NTFP), backyard poultry, livestock rearing, shifting cultivation and artisan works (clay, bamboo, weaving). Most of their livelihoods depend on the forest. They collect various NTFP items such as honey, gum, amla, bamboo, shrubs, fuel wood, dry leaves, nuts, sprouts, wax, medical plants, roots and tubers. Most of the NTFP items they gather are for consumption and they sell the remaining to middle men. But due to the shrinking forests, environmental changes and new forest conservation policies, their NTFP collection is getting hampered. Because of the lack of awareness about the value of NTFP produce, PVTGs have been exploited by the middle men. These livelihoods sources have been taken away by industrialization interventions, forest conservation policies and wildlife protection Acts. Now, they are being displaced from their habitats and are prevented by the forest officials to practice shifting cultivation, NTFP collection and animal hunting. Their previous livelihoods have become unviable to survive. Due to the displacement they have been involved into agriculture wage labour, forestry labour work, mining etc.

Minorities

The Minorities/Minority communities constitute of Muslims, Christian, Buddhist, Sikhs, Parsi and Jains. As per the religious census data 2011, Muslims constituted 17.22 crore (14.2%) of the Indian Population. The other religions such as Christians were 2.78 crore(2.3%), Sikh 2.08 crore(1.7 %), Buddhist 0.84 crore (0.7 %), Jains 0.45 crore (0.4%). They constantly face issues related to occupational and financial horizons scattered pockets geographically. However due to development interventions and schemes by the government they have been involved into the mainstream economy.

Minorities in India are engaged in every kind of livelihood as the rest of the population. While majority of the minorities live in urban areas, those living in rural areas range from owners of land and livestock, agricultural labourers, weavers etc. In the urban centers minorities are engaged in manufacturing, trading and predominantly in service sector like restaurants, travel agencies, priesthood, hospitals and educational institutions. Earlier, they earned their livelihoods by land farming and farming related works. The largest minority community, Muslims due to limited land ownership, mostly are engaged in non-agricultural occupations. Being self-employed and often in the unorganised sector, they lack any kind of social security. Further, Muslims are traditionally engaged in skilled occupations like weaving, mechanic works, drivers, spinning, artisanship and tailoring. Many are also street vendors (fruit and vegetables). However, some livelihoods are exclusive to certain groups for religious reasons. For instance, halal (permissible animal slaughter in a ritual way called Zibah in Islam) can be taken up by only those practicing Islam faith. Similarly exchange of services between religions traditionally have provided for some livelihoods. In parts of Maharashtra and Rajasthan the Marwadi community traditionally procure new books of accounts from the Muslim communities on Diwal day. The Buddhist are usually involved in religious activities as monks and equally participate in other sectors as well. The Parsi are usually entrepreneurs and are also equally

contribute in service, arts, manufacturing sectors. Religion-based occupation have made an interesting impact in the sphere of livelihoods.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

United Nations define IDPs as “Internally Displaced Persons are people or groups of people who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border.” Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are among the world’s most vulnerable people and they are homeless at home and yet cannot cross borders and seek “outside” help. Given the number of IDPs in our country is problematic, coupled with lack of central monitoring co-coordinating authority, at the same time the political sensitivities at the state level prevent release of the data on the exact and nature of displacement. There is huge variation in estimates of the number of IDPs in India. Jammu and Kashmir is the most affected state in the country. The majority of cases in which people have been forced to flee their homes are consequence of government pursuit and political goals and development objectives. Development induced displacement has overwhelmingly dominated the IDP scenario in India. Many IDPs have been forced to settle in the slums surrounding New Delhi, Kolkata and other metro cities. The IDPs are involved in livelihood activities such as daily wage workers as domestic workers, hotels, cleaners, construction workers. They are also involved in brick kiln industries, mining industries, stone cutting quarries, non farm activities, unskilled labourers, livestock rearing. They get less wages due to which they are impacted on socio-economic conditions.

However, these sections of the society have limited resources for survival and living is about survival of the fittest. Hence, these individuals also tend have interchangeable and cross sectional livelihoods. There is also a significant shift in them migrating to other places due to factors like natural disasters, calamities or due to lack of opportunities. As a consequence of this they may even shift their traditional livelihoods and completely adopt to other livelihoods or jobs. In recent times, the youth from these sections of the society are finding opportunities in the private and government sectors. The significant shift from farm work to non-farm sources of income accelerated the decline in poverty in India. However, the traditional livelihoods are being lost in the process. The unorganized sector, transgenders, widows and other vulnerable groups are still struggling to voice their opinions and have sustainable livelihoods for their survival. There are several government initiatives and schemes which have been launched to provide benefits to these groups. There are many Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and social enterprises been involved in empowering and providing advocacy support for rights and entitlements to poor, marginalized and vulnerable groups. ❖