

Executive Summary

Introduction

Out of total 55,673 square kilometer geographical area of HP, about 23,655 square kilometer area falls in Scheduled V area, which constitutes 42.49 percent of the total area of the state. The total population living in the Scheduled Area is 173,661 of which 123,585 are tribals which constitute nearly 71.16 percent of the total population living in this area. As per the Socio Economic Caste Census of 2011, tribals of HP are better off among Scheduled Tribe (ST) households in the rural areas of India. Nearly 21.37 percent ST rural households have an income of more than Rs 10,000 per month and as many as 42.76 percent tribal households own irrigated agricultural land. Among salaried government jobs too, HP tribals are ahead of other states with 23.72 percent such households with at least one member in a government job.

However, owing to their presence in remote and geographically challenging areas (Lahaul, Spiti, Kinnaur and Chamba districts) their access to public services is very low, which reflects in the poor health and education infrastructure in tribal areas as well as low human development attainments. The average landholding size in tribal areas is around 1.16 hectares but over the years the cropping intensity of these farms has fallen from 136 to 124 percent due to water scarcity, low availability of irrigation facilities and low returns. The official list of scheduled tribes in Himachal Pradesh includes a) Gaddis, b) Gujjars, c) Kinnara or Kinnauras, d) Lahaulas and e) Pangwalas apart from some other smaller tribes groups like Bhot/Bodh, Beda, Jad/Lamba/ Khampa, and Swangla. The Himachal tribes generally have their abode in the upper and middle level of the hills. It is believed that most of the tribal groups of HP migrated from plains and adjoining areas from time to time.

The ST population is quite dominant in Lahul & Spiti and Kinnaur – two rural districts of the state, where they contribute to 81% and 58% of the total population of the districts respectively. In 2011 the overall literacy rate in these areas was about 82% with male literacy rate of 89% and female literacy rate 75%. Literacy percentage among Scheduled Tribes has increased from 65.5% in 2001 to 73.64% in 2011; the male literacy rate was 83.17% while female literacy rate stood at only 64.20% in 2011, well below the state average and far less than that of their male counterparts. Poor road connectivity in predominantly tribal areas, primarily owing to difficult and challenging topography creates geographical isolation, restricts access to basic public goods and services, markets and creates high dependence on natural resources for livelihoods.

The Project Development Objective (PDO) of the Forests for Prosperity Project is to improve forest management and communities' access to markets in selected watersheds in Himachal Pradesh. Short- to medium-term outcomes captured by the PDO are expected to contribute to improved water flow and sediment regulation in the targeted watersheds in the long term.

The project will have the following PDO indicators:

- PDO indicator #1: Selected forest land managed in accordance with site-specific management plans (ha)
- PDO indicator #2: Productive alliances operational according to a business

- plan (number); target of 50 percent with women-only groups
- PDO indicator #3: Share of target beneficiaries with rating ‘Satisfied’ or above on process and impact of project interventions (percentage, disaggregated by gender)

This Tribal Development Framework for this project is informed by an extensive literature review, discussions with project stakeholders as well as community consultations in predominantly tribal areas of the state (Kinnaur district)

Constitutional, Legal and Institutional Safeguards

The Constitution of India has made the provisions for Scheduled Tribes in the country considering the challenges faced by them and lack of access to development facilities in the geographic regions where they reside. The main safeguards include promotion of educational and economic interests and their protection from injustices and all forms of exploitation. The constitutional safeguards related to tribals are a) Article 14, related to equal rights and opportunities, b) Article 15, prohibits discrimination on grounds of sex, religion, race, caste etc., c) Article 15 (4), makes special provisions for the STs, d) Article 16 (3), empowers states to make special provisions for reservation in appointments or posts in favour of STs, e) Article 46, to promote with special care educational and economic interests of STs, protection from social injustice and exploitation, f) Article 275 (I), grant-in-aid for promoting the targeted welfare of STs, g) Article 330, 332, 335, related to the reservation of seats for STs in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies and h) Article 339, 340, related to Control of the Union over the Welfare of STs and powers to investigations thereof.

Some important Acts which ensure Social Safeguards of the STs is "Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, HP Panchayat Raj Act, 1994, Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act, The National Forest Policy 1988, etc. Some of the acts that recognize and protect tribal interests vis-à-vis forests are a) The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, and b) The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes: (Prevention of Atrocities) Rules, 1995. There are several protective and anti-exploitative measures against Land Alienation, Money lending, debt relief and Bonded Labour, etc. In additions to these the Himachal Pradesh Tenancy and Land Reform Act, 1972 has put an end to all forms of tenancy on tribal lands except under certain conditions. Through these provisions the constitution also creates a separate institutional set-up (Integrated Tribal Development Projects- ITDPs) and parallel budgetary arrangements (Tribal Sub-Plan-TSP) for ensuring availability of adequate finances (in proportion to the tribal population) and dedicated cadres for implementing certain programs for tribal development and providing oversight/monitoring of schemes and programs implemented by other departments.

Scheduled Areas under Fifth Schedule of Constitution

In order to protect the interests of the Scheduled tribes, the provision of “Fifth Schedule” is enshrined in the Constitution under article 244 (2) which identifies certain areas with predominant tribal population that require special protection and measures for conserving their population and culture and provides administrative arrangement and consent of the Gram Sabha to implement development programs in these areas. These notified areas in HP are 3 Schedule V Districts (Fully &Partly covered), 2 Schedule V

Districts (Fully covered) (Lahaul & Spiti, and Kinnaur), 1 Schedule V District (Partly covered) (Chamba), 7 Blocks in Schedule V area, 151 Gram Panchayats in Schedule V areas and 806 Revenue Villages in Schedule V areas. The Kinnaur and Lahaul-Spiti districts, in their entirety, and Pangi and Bharmour (now tehsil Bharmour and sub-tehsil Holi) Sub-Divisions of Chamba district constitute the Scheduled Areas in the State.

State Strategy for Tribal Development

Coupled with tribal areas, 100% of ST population was covered under Sub-Plan treatment. For equitable flow of funds to the 5 ITDPs, the State has evolved an objective formula for distribution of funds based on a weightage of 40% to population, 20% to area under Schedule V and 40% to relative economic backwardness for each ITDP. Based on this formula, the share of each ITDP is a) Kinnaur-30%, Lahaul-18%, Spiti-16%, Pangi-17% and Bharmour-19%.

Department of Tribal Development works for the social and economic upliftment of Scheduled Tribes of the state. There are several schemes of Scheduled Tribes Development Department which include a) Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub- Plan, b) Grants in Aid under Article 275 (1), c) Skill Development for Tribal Communities, d) Vocational Training in Tribal Areas (VTC), e) Mechanism for Marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) through Minimum Support Price (MSP) and Development of Value Chain for MFP, f) Institutional Support for Development and Marketing of Tribal Products / Produce and g) Support through Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED) for skill development and marketing of tribal artifacts/ MFPs. The major function of the department is to promote and protect rights of tribal communities, implement programs for educational and economic development, prepare tribal sub- plan of the state, act as the channelising agency for these funds, coordinate and monitor use of funds by various line departments in tribal areas and implement works in the ITDPs.

The Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribe Development Corporation works for the economic empowerment of the tribal communities by identifying opportunities for self-employment and income generation for tribals, extending skill upgradation, institutional and marketing support for them to enter those vocations or improve them and most importantly provide concessional finance for viable income generation schemes through SCAs and other schemes.

The Forest Department also has several programs that contribute to tribal development. Tribal communities participate in raising plantations on forest land and have the right to collect fuel and fodder from the plantations so raised. The local communities, including tribal, have the right to extract NTFP and also receive timber from the government owned forests periodically. However, these forests have come under heavy pressure for meeting the demand of timber for the ever - increasing population. The transhumant as well as sedentary communities in these areas rear large herds of animal population for meeting their requirement of wool, meat, etc. and have enjoyed traditional access to the forests and government owned pastures. Some of these pastures and forests are also visited seasonally by the migratory grazers or transhumants.

Tribal Development Framework and Implementation

Several issues have emerged from the assessment and consultations. The major suggestions of communities residing in the tribal areas were related to 1) greater information need regarding forest management, rights and entitlements of communities, 2) opportunities for engaging in forestry operations like raising of nurseries, development of plantation sites, to supplement incomes, 3) greater benefits from the forests in the form of timber distribution, 4) inclusion of community preference / choice of species in plantations or when planning silvicultural operations in an area. Other issues to be addressed under the TDF are a) Infrastructure needs, b) Produce Storage/ Processing / Marketing related, c) Employment Opportunities related and d) Grazing Issues.

The proposed components under the TDF are a) Awareness Generation, b) developing a tribal Socio-Economic Baseline, c) conducting Social assessment of sub-projects, d) complying with principles of Inclusion and Representation, e) Training and Capacity building, f) Convergence with other relevant schemes, g) assistance in implementation of the TDF and h) Monitoring the implementation of TDF.

The implementation responsibility for the TDF will be in sync with the overall implementation strategy of the project, with the Social Safeguards Specialist and Gender and Social Development Specialist being responsible for its implementation under the overall guidance provided by Chief Project Director (CPD). In the field, the Community Facilitators deployed at the beat level (approx. 38) will be responsible for mobilizing the community for organizing consultations, creating awareness about the project and likely interventions, seeking Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) of tribal communities on proposed project activities, for understanding and documenting the community needs / priorities, and supporting preparation and implementation of the TDF. In addition, an external consultant will be hired (for a period of 2 years) for preparation of the Tribal Development Plan with support from the community facilitators and the field offices located in the forest divisions and ranges. The budget provision for implementing the TDF is Rs. 1.8 Crores.