

## Scheduled Tribe Women of Odisha

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Scheduled Tribe women and girls are guaranteed Constitutional rights, as well as, rights under specific laws constituted by Parliament, especially for PESA areas. These are in accordance with the orders of the President of India, issued under paragraph six of the Fifth Schedule. About 44.70% of the area of the State has been notified as the Scheduled Area and comprises the entire seven districts of Mayurbhanj, Koraput, Malkangiri, Rayagada, Nabarangapur, Sundargarh, and Kandhamal.<sup>1</sup>

These areas where the population is located in Odisha, is exposed to a complex socio-political environment. The Scheduled Areas are the mineral belt of the State, targeted for economic development. This has resulted in global capital moving in and displacing the tribal population from their homes<sup>2</sup>. It has meant a delinking it from their age old culture, history and economy<sup>3</sup>.

This poorest part of the regional Indian economy has been affected by the inroads made by an unscrupulous global capital and an uncooperative socio-political structure compelling women to join protest movements in the State. The conflict situation is exacerbated with Maoist activities and an increasing violence affecting women the most. In an effort to protect land, livelihood and culture developed over centuries,

women's role has become very important. However standing up against the State, global capital and an intrusive national culture is not easy when the support system of literacy is missing and the environment is changing too rapidly, making it difficult to understand a new world where they have little space to call their own.

### Demography

9.2% of the country's scheduled tribe population is found in Odisha, which is third highest in the country<sup>4</sup>. The other two States which have a higher tribal population are Madhya Pradesh (14.7%) and Maharashtra (10.1%) (Refer Figure1 & Map1)

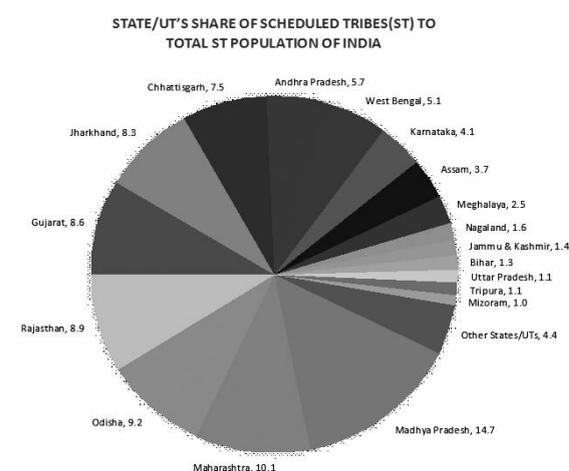
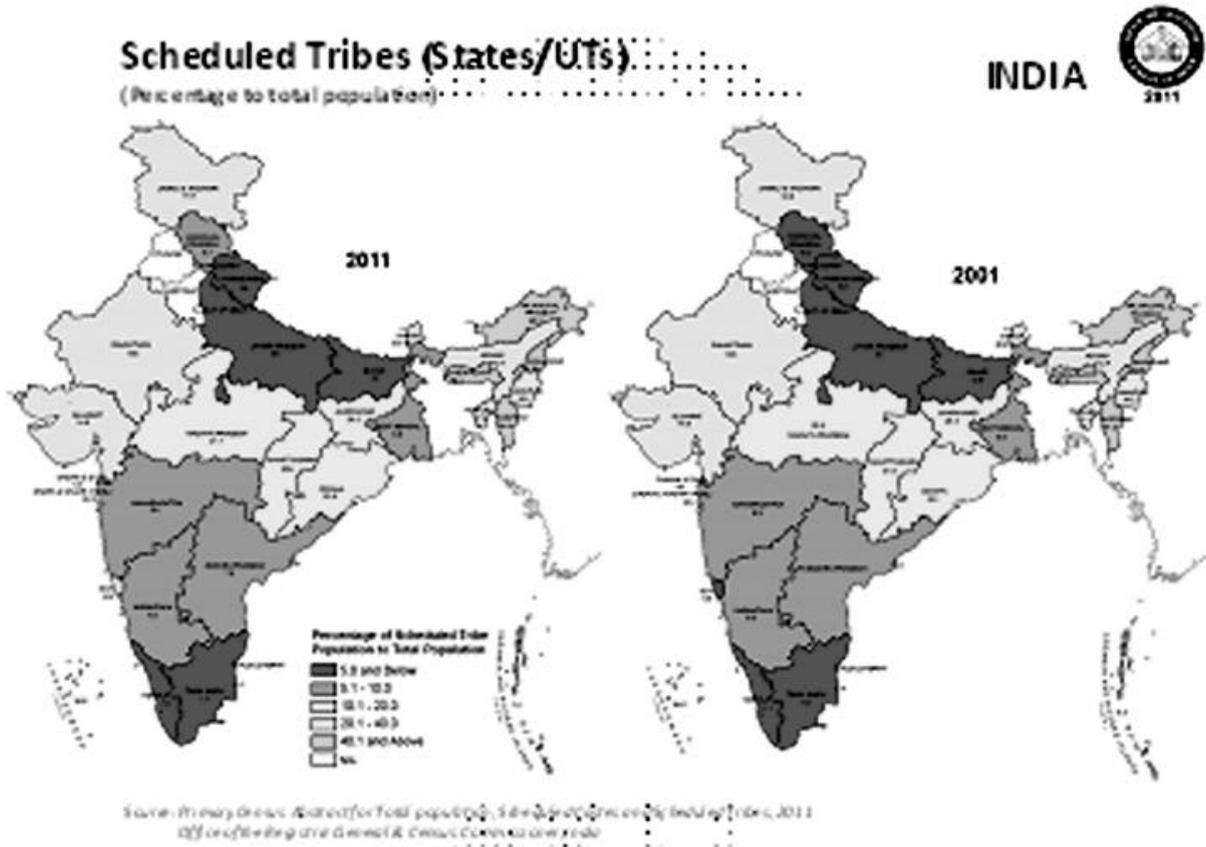


Figure 1: Share of ST population to the total population of India

Source: Primary Census Abstract for Total population, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, 2011

Map1: ST percentage to total population



Source: India. Office of the Registrar General Orissa Data Highlights: The Scheduled Tribes Census of India 2011

The total population of Scheduled Tribe in Odisha is 22.8% as per Census 2011 and has increased marginally from 22.1% in 2001<sup>5</sup>. As per the 2011 census data 22.3% are male and 23.4% female (India. Office of the Registrar General Orissa Data Highlights: The Scheduled Tribes Census of India 2011)<sup>6</sup>.

Though it is generally assumed that tribal women do not face patriarchal pressures like other women in Odisha, the Gender Development Index (GDI) shows that of the seven districts with

majority tribal population only Sundergarh (at 2) and Mayurbhanj (at 6) are high ranking (Odisha Economic Survey, 2011-2012:262)

### Sex Ratio and Equality

The tribal population sex ratio which has risen from 1003 in 2001 to 1029 in 2011. (India. Office of the Registrar General Orissa Data Highlights: The Scheduled Tribes Census of India 2001 & 2011).

The present proportion is better than the overall India sex ratio. (Table 1 & Map 2).

**Table 1: Sex ratio of the Scheduled Tribe population**

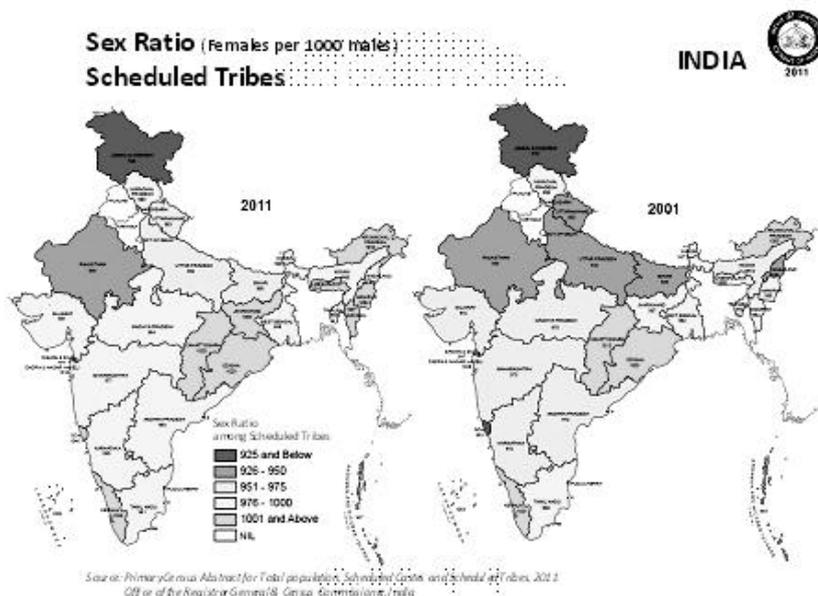
India/State	Sex Ratio 2001			Sex Ratio 2011		
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
India	978	981	944	990	991	980
Odisha	1003	1006	948	1029	1031	991

*Source: Primary Census Abstract for Total population, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, 2011 Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India*

The Child Sex Ratio (0-6 years) at the national level has decreased from 973 in 2001 to 957 in 2011 (Falling 16 points). Child Sex ratio of Odisha though second highest in the country (980) and second to Chhatisgarh (993) has seen a one point decline (979) from 2001.

As the gender disparity in tribal areas is lower the data hints at misuse of technology for sex selection determination and abortions. Thus the introduction of modern technology without

*Map2: Sex ratio of the ST population*



Source: India. Office of the Registrar General Orissa Data Highlights: The Scheduled Tribes Census of India 2011

control measures in place result in the worsening rate of survival of the girl child.

### Literacy

Educational attainment is an important indicator of a country’s level of human development. In India, women’s education came to the forefront in the nineteenth century when in Punjab and Bengal men started to search for educated wives. In Odisha, the establishment of the First Girls High School by Commissioner of Cuttack, Ravenshaw in 1906 and the efforts of Reba Roy and Rani of Khallikote in spreading female education in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century indicate the emerging social awareness on the need for literacy among women. However in the Scheduled Tribe areas, female literacy remained abysmally low. This is not to say that it did not increase, as with state support tribal girls have recently begun to improve academically.

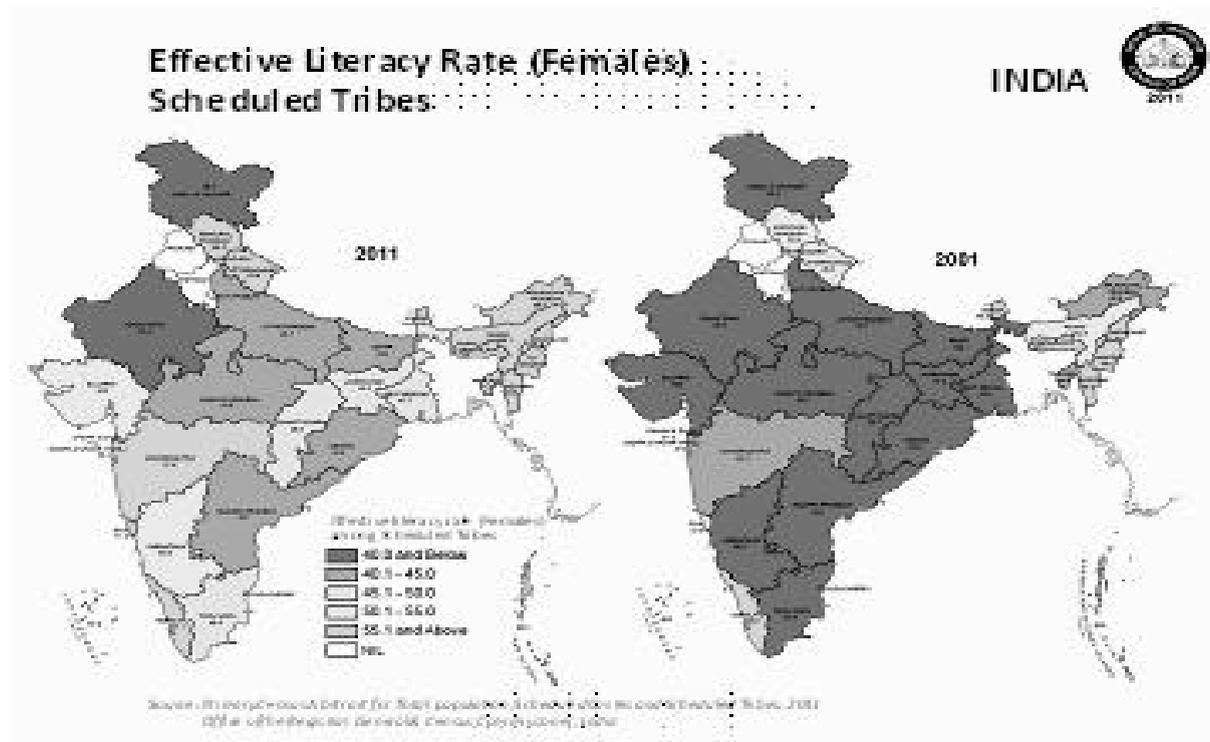
The overall literacy rate of the Schedule

Tribe in Odisha increased from 23.4% in 2001 to 41.2% in 2011. Despite this improvement it remained lower than the national average which stood at 47.1 per cent. (Refer map 3)

Female literacy though it doubled reflects first time in twenty years diversities in enrolment-retention and school-higher education (India. Office of the Registrar General Census,)

2001).

Map 3: Literacy rates of females of ST population



Source: India, Office of the Registrar General Orissa Data Highlights: The Scheduled Tribes Census of India 2011

Though girl’s enrolment has increased, the disparities continue due to high drop out at high school level. The school dropout rate has seen tremendous change at the primary school level where both a steep decline was observed in male and female drop out rate. The dropout rate amongst tribal students has reduced drastically in the last one decade (2000-2012) as below: (Table 2)

Table 2: Drop out trends of ST students

Drop out	Boys	Girls	Total
Primary Level 2000-2001	61.70	66.50	64.10
Primary Level 2011-2012	3.51	2.80	3.10
Upper Primary Level 2000-2001	70.90	77.10	74
Upper Primary Level 2011-2012	3.20	6.31	4.70
High School 2000-2001	79.0	77.0	78.0
High School 2011-2012	65.9	62.7	64.3

Source Odisha, Economic Survey 2012-2013: 320-321

The reasons for girls dropping out of schools have been varied. Major among these is the understanding of the need for education for a girl child by the parents. Her future is linked to marriage and child bearing and gaining of knowledge from a young age to manage both. Another important reason in the eyes of parents is the lack of security of the girl child while traveling to school, or within the school premises. About 27 per cent of the habitations with predominantly scheduled tribe population do not have a primary school within a radius of one kilometer (Sailabala Debi and Mahesh: 19). The distances and low density of population combined makes traveling unsafe and parents are less likely to send girls to school unless safer transportation is provided.

Sexual abuse of young tribal girls is featured in schools regularly by the media. These have been substantiated by the NHRC (Orissa Dairy, 2013)<sup>7</sup>. Unsafe transportation, lack of

security measures and poor infrastructure pose major barriers to young women in continuing education. Lack of female teachers can make female pupils feel less secure in the school environment.

A major reason for school drop out of girls is related to a large extent to lack of toilets in schools. A study of Scheduled Tribe dominated two districts (Koraput and Sundergarh) and two with slightly lower Scheduled Tribe population (Kalahandi and Keonjhar) showed lack of toilets as reason for low attendance of girls. Of the 157 schools surveyed in a study, 63 did not have separate toilets for girls. In Sundergarh no money was sanctioned for girls' toilets. The meager amount sanctioned for this purpose was shocking. In Koraput and Kalahandi (2009-2010) only Rs, 20,000 were sanctioned. In these districts only Rs. 12.80 lakh was required which unfortunately was not sanctioned (CYSD, 2011:21). As per the census, 91.5 tribal households have to go for open defecation.

The turn-around in literacy in recent years is remarkable and an important input has been the entitlements provided by the State. More girls than boys appeared for High Schools exam though 3% fewer girls passed<sup>8</sup>. Scholarships are provided both to boys and girls and to those residing in hostels. The main change maker has been the scholarships provided to young girls (and boys) especially at high school level. This input has contributed to retention and higher pass value.

Odisha has pioneered special type of Residential Educational Institutions for tribal girls. About 3000 hostels have been established, but the current status of the infrastructure created by the department is still not enough to meet the needs. There are Higher Secondary Schools (Science & Commerce), High Schools, Girls High Schools, Ashram Schools, Sevashram Schools

and Educational complex for PVTGs. An announcement has been made for construction of another 1000 new Girls Hostels at a cost of Rs.23000.00 lakhs. (Odisha [http://www.stscodisha.gov.in/pdf/ST\\_Schemes.pdf](http://www.stscodisha.gov.in/pdf/ST_Schemes.pdf)).

Establishment of hostel for ST girls studying in primary schools in the KBK districts was initiated during 2000-01 and 400 hostels have since been established and put to operation<sup>9</sup>. Government of Odisha is also running, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) residential schools with boarding facilities at elementary level for girls belonging predominantly to the SC, ST, OBC and minorities in difficult areas (Odisha SC. ST Department).

Since 2007-2008 an Odisha Model Tribal Educational Society (OMTES) has been set up and entrusted the responsibility management of nineteen educational complexes meant for ST Girls providing accommodation to about 5000 girls. This is besides the 11 Ekalabya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) set up by the programme. This scheme by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs is for strengthening of education among Schedule Tribe (ST Girls') in low literacy districts. The programme aims at establishment of Educational complexes in villages' inhabited by primitive tribal groups (Odisha, OMTES, n.d.). In case of Primitive Tribe Groups of Odisha the scenario is very distressing. Among the Primitive Tribes are the Dongria Kondha's whose sex ratio of 1352 has been higher than the State ratio of 978, but literacy requires special attention<sup>10</sup>. The Dongria Kondhs, number only about 8,000, spread across 120 villages on the Niyamgiri hill region. Till date, only two Dongria Kondh girls have managed to complete school. The first, Kasturi Melaka, did so as recently as in 2010 (Jena, 2014). Literacy among the Dongria Kondh is less than ten per cent, with female literacy at

just three per cent. The situation of this group remains unchanged despite the introduction of schemes by the Government to encourage tribal girls to attend school. These schemes include provision of mid-day meals, bicycles and scholarships. The Dongria Kondh Development Authority (DKDA) manages exclusive schools for this tribe.

At the higher education level, a study of Bhubaneswar revealed that despite the quota reservation (12% for ST) at the University and Technical College level it has never been filled up. It has however been increasing over the years. In the context of results, their performance was lower than general category but near equal to ST boys. The problems have been identified as financial constraints and faculty and peer rudeness. One main reason for their problems in studying in a totally urban environment was the

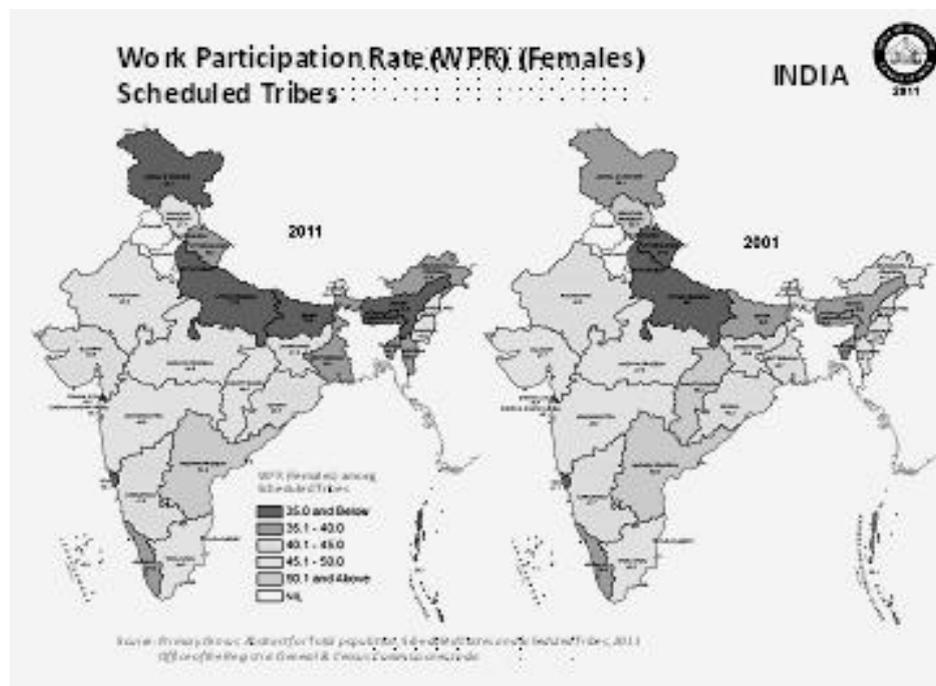
alienation and non-provision of methods of inclusion. Special hostels for Scheduled Tribe have contributed to exclusion from the mainstream. (Mishra, 2011: 232-234).

The critical phase after formal school education is the skill building/ vocational/ technical training aspect. Departments such as Employment and Technical Education and Training (ETET), do have a vital role but there exists gaps. Though a beginning has been made to promote Vocational Guidance Activities in the State by introducing 22 Model career Corners in Women's Colleges and Girl's High Schools in tribal dominated and backward districts it is not sufficient to meet needs required (Government of Odisha Annual Activity Report 2012-2013).

### Work Participation Rate (WPR)

Female work participation is considered as an important indicator of women's participation in economic activities of the State. Women's contribution though not recognized in all spheres of activity is significant. Despite their overall input to the economy they have limited access and control over the resources and productive assets. Wage gaps and discrimination against women in labour markets lower their participation. Women's work participation among

Map 4: Work participation rate



**Source:** India. Office of the Registrar General Orissa Data Highlights: The Scheduled Tribes Census of India 2011

the Scheduled Tribe in India fell marginally from 44.8% in 2001 to 43.5% in 2011. In Odisha FWPR increased from 43.2% in 2001 to 43.9% in 2011. Women's work participation rate does not include the work of managing the house, child care, care of disabled within the home. (Refer map 4)

The economy of Schedule Tribe areas is primarily subsistence oriented and based upon a combination of agriculture, forestry and wage labour.

### **Agriculture and Land**

Women in Odisha have always worked predominantly in the field of agriculture (about sixty per cent). However there has been a structural change in the state's economy. The service sector command 58.28% of the gross state domestic product, Industry's share stands at 24.23% and agriculture at only 17.49% ( Odisha, Economic Survey 2011-2012:v). Agriculture production dependent on rainfall suffered due to severe drought in recent years which caused a negative growth in it as well as its allied sectors during 2011-12 (Odisha, Economic Survey 2012-2013:1). Though the State economy continues to be on a high growth trajectory, the diversification of the economy leading to structural shift from an agriculture based economy to an industry-service-led economy in Odisha has pushed women on the margins.

Subsequent to men starting to leave the agriculture sector for service and industry, women are being increasingly playing non-traditional roles. Tribal woman's role in decision making has extended into new fields of agriculture management. Their role in selection of seeds and their storage has always been important, but today they have to purchase implements, decide on land development and crop patterns and purchase of animals, though consent still lies with male authority

within the household. Despite the key role of farm women in crop husbandry, animal husbandry, fishery, forestry and post harvest activities and kitchen gardening in homestead land, inadequate attention both from scientific and administrative sides is given for the training of farm women (Hans, 1999). Women's participation needs to be acknowledged and meaning-fully incorporated in planning agricultural development. Providing skill training to the farm women in various agricultural operations, access to farm credit and other production inputs and involving them in planning and decision making at all levels can make them assume new roles and facilitate an increased productivity of the farm sector.

Agriculture and income from agricultural activity is linked to control over land. Land is the most productive asset, but evidence suggests that its ownership is heavily skewed in favour of men and large business. While India has legislations and regulations to prevent alienation of tribal land, it has not succeeded in checking it<sup>11</sup>. Ownership and sale of land has become a major socio-political and economic issue and most mineral in the State lies under the tribal lands. To meet the demands of the changing situation new laws have been introduced such as the PESA Act<sup>12</sup>. In the existing legal framework it is mandatory for the competent authority to inform the Gram Panchayat on approvals and all orders of rejection of restoration of land to the tribal. However visits to Gram Sabhas have shown that though women do attend the time provided for discussions is rare and whatever little is available is dominated by the male leadership<sup>13</sup>.

The major livelihood resource for Scheduled Tribe women are produce from forests. Increasing land alienation has created a critical impasse where displacement and migration of tribals from their homes has resulted in incalculable losses ranging from food insecurity to physical

security. Odisha is rich in forest cover and has recorded forest land of about 58,167 sq km. though it is unevenly distributed. The actual forest cover is highest in ST Districts of Kandhamal (68.37%), Rayagada (44.20%), and Sundargarh (41.83%). A new policy on Minor Forest Produce was notified by the Odisha State Forest and Environment Department vide their resolution No.5503/ F&E dt 31 March 2000 in which sixty-eight items had been specified as Minor Forest Produce. The ownership over these MFP items has been transferred to GPs<sup>14</sup>. In spite of the changes in legal structures and with the Gram Sabhas in place, fifty per cent Panchayat members being women, the defacto control over forests still remains with State authorities.

### **Displacement**

A major complicating factor in land ownership in recent years has been policies which encourage change in land use from community to a new market economy. The skewed dualities of development represent a crisis where women especially tribal women lose control over both land and resources and continue to cope with basic needs for survival. In the face of depleting land and potential conflict arising from contestations between communities and the State land is becoming not only a negotiating point but also core reason for conflict. Renegotiating social arrangements is important within their households as they possess equal access by law but in reality little possession.

Large scale mining has become a major threat to women's livelihood in Scheduled areas. Displacement is a gendered process with women's minority status getting subdued further. In a study on gender impact of displacement by Sansristi it was observed that existing intra-household gender disparities become aggravated and increase the burden on women. With loss of

livelihood and natural environment their standard of living plunges (Patel, 2008: 25-26). Violence against women in tribal areas of Odisha has increased due to displacement, as the breakdown of the community and social networks increases women's vulnerabilities.

The land alienation resulting in tribal uprisings is found across the State. Women's involvement in Adivasi uprisings has been documented. The well known revolt by Birsa Munda in 1895 which included both Munda and Oraon tribals included Gaya Munda who physically tackled the Deputy Commissioner. The Chhotanagpur Tenancy Act forbidding transfer of tribal land to non-tribal was a result of this revolt. In recent years the involvement of Adivasi women in the protest at Kashipur and Niyamgiri by the Dongria Kondh's is well known (One World South Asia, 2009; Patel, 2008).

Today much of this protest in tribal dominated districts and Maoist ideology has resulted in extreme violence. Women's participation in Maoist attacks has been noted for a number of years. In 2013, Maoists including women blew up government buildings in Malkangiri (Indian Express, 2013). Earlier in Koraput town police station and armoury attacks in 2004, women were at the forefront. The Nayagarh operation in February 2008 also included women cadre. In 2012 in the abduction of a member of the legislative assembly Jhina Hikkaka, division commander Aruna led the attack. While women have played a crucial role in Maoist operations and organization, they as women in non-state groups have not attained the equality they search for. Budhuni who surrendered complained of sexually abuse and exploitation by senior leaders of the outfit (Sarada Lahangir, 2013).

Loss of livelihood is an indication of displacement, migration and human distress.

Scheduled tribe women in search of work in the last few years have been trafficked for work in different parts of the country. Women migrants especially from tribal areas to urban areas are highly traumatized. A study of migrants from Odisha to Delhi in a study of four states, stated economic exploitation (65%) as well as sexual abuse (33%) as a consequence of migration. In Kolkata all the women interviewed said they were exposed to sexual abuse (Society for Regional Research and Analysis 2010).

Tribal girls from Odisha who were victims of Kandhamal communal riots, were trafficked, tortured, sexually abused and sold in Delhi. A joint rescue drive launched by a civil society group All India Christian Council and Human Rights Law Network (HRLN) resulted in freeing one minor girl but could not trace the other two young women who had been trafficked. Complaints were made in this regard with the Delhi Police but seeing the insensitive attitude of police, HRLN brought this issue to the notice of Delhi High Court by filing a writ petition. The rescued girl narrated the horrific stories of being trafficked, sold, forced to drink alcohol, molested and attempted rape. She further said that she was being employed as a domestic help since January 2010 and was made to work

from dawn till midnight, with two chapattis for the whole day and leftover, if any, for dinner (Human Rights Law Network, 2010).

### Health

Accessing health services has always been a major concern for women from Scheduled Tribe areas due to lack of communication and an intransigent medical system. There is a neglect of females (girls and women) with regard to access to health services, nutrition and education. Low health seeking behavior and social conditioning are manifested in the form of high female infant mortality rates, the practice of gender biased sex selection, sex ratio, high MMR, NMR.

The IMR and Maternal Mortality remains high but the range within the group is differentiated as per geographic region and tribe. Despite an increase in vaccination coverage and reduction in malnutrition, IMR remained high in districts with tribal concentration (Kapoor, 2011:6). In the Scheduled Tribe areas the highest gendered differentiation is between Kandhamal (23) and Rayagada (-9)<sup>15</sup>.

Maternal health indicators for ST women remain lowest amongst the ST, SC and OBC.

**Table 3 : Maternal health indicators**

	ST	SC	OBC	Others
Three or more ante-natal visits	46.0	58.6	66.3	74.4
First ante-natal visit during first trimester	39.9	47.5	46.6	58.8
Given or bought IFA	76.6	85.8	85.6	84.9
Women with post natal checkup	25.5	37.3	42.7	56.5
Currently use contraception	35.2	51.1	52.6	59.4
Location of last birth (health facility)	11.7	30.2	40.6	60.4
Birth assisted by health personnel	17.3	39.1	53.6	66.9

*Source:* Ministry of Health and Family Welfare 2005-2006. National Family Health Survey 3.

Note: all numbers are a percentage of population

## Nutrition

Malnutrition is endemic among tribals in Orissa with 57 per cent of ST children showing signs of long-term malnutrition (stunting or deficit in height-for-age), 28 per cent of severe stunting and 54 per cent of being underweight placing it one of the highest malnutrition region globally (Mehta, 2011:7).<sup>16</sup> Starting from childhood, malnutrition as remains a hindrance to quality of life of both the girl child and the women. According to a National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau (NNMB) report (2000-01), the state of Odisha continues to hold the 2nd highest position for under nutrition among the ten states of India. Among the tribal districts Malkangiri with highest percentage of girls severely malnourished (8.21%) and Nabarangpur with 7.73% remain highest in the State. The rest of the Scheduled Tribe dominated districts also fall in the high malnutrition category ranging from 5.12 to 3.67 (Odisha, ICDS, 2013)<sup>17</sup> Sundergarh 3.67; Raygada 5.12; Kandhmal 3.54; Keonjhar 4.32; Mayurbhanja 4.05. Food security remains a problem and has a critical impact on women's health. Food production among marginal farm households is never sufficient to meet their needs. As most of the Scheduled Tribe area is subjected to drought and there is loss of cultivable land due to mining, industry and other development projects women face food insecurity. One innovative practice to overcome this, was quoted in a HID/ UNICEF Study (Mehta, 2011: 24)

In one ICDS centre in Raigada, Gajapati district for instance, ICDS functionaries had successfully overcome the constraint of unavailability of pulses on account of failure to increase the procurement price fixed by the central government. This had been achieved with a shift to a community-run nutrition programme using minor millets and pulses that were grown and

harvested locally. The proportion of nutrients was specified by the ICDS functionaries who organised women into self-help groups (SHGs) and then imparted them training on how to arrive at an adequate nutrient mix. The programme was therefore not dependent on a centralised supply of grains.

There is wide scale prevalence of Chronic Energy Deficiency (CED) among tribal population in Odisha. Amongst adult men CED was 38.6% as compared to the CED for adult women 46%. A study of four 'primitive tribes', namely, Bondo (16%), Didayi(19%) of Malkangiri, and Juang (25.1%) and Kutia Kondh (26.6%) of Keonjhar have illustrated severe malnutrition . This is also linked to severe anemia among women (Balgir: 169).

## Specific Diseases in Tribal Areas

A major health problem among tribal women is genetic disorders. These included Sickle cell anemia and glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenate (G-6-PD) enzyme Deficiency. These regions are Malaria affected region and the anti-Malarial drugs like primaquine and many other compounds such as phenacetin, furadantin, certain sulphonamides and acetyl salicylic acid (aspirin) can cause hemolytic crisis and, sometimes may even be fatal (Balgir, 170 - 171). There have been no substantial measures taken to meet this critical medical health issue.

## Violence

In Odisha it has been observed that alcoholism, low literacy and poverty are all responsible for violence against women in ST areas. Alcoholism amongst men has affected the family's quality of life as more expenditure on alcohol means an increase in women's work load. Women's frustration and inability to cope with this situation is reflected in her status. Wife battering by

alcoholic men is never reported. The police data collected from these Districts was so low in comparison to the field situation that it was irrelevant for use in analysing the situation. It is obvious that the violence against women is hampering the empowerment process and women's coping capability remained low. The under reporting of crimes is also because some cases are also settled by the community, especially the caste panchayats with the settlement being chiefly economic compensation.

In Odisha the data on crime collected under the National Crime Records Bureau covering 95,91,000,00 tribal population (Odisha) the percentage share of rape as a crime was 9.6%. In case of arrests by police 1043 persons were arrested for rape, 938 charge sheeted and 9.8% were under investigation. The cases of rape disposed by the Courts (conviction) were a meager 4.9% while 16.4% were acquitted. Trial pending was 78.4%. Of the 3855 persons under trial (including those from previous years, 718 cases were completed while 3135 remained

pending. 174 persons were finally convicted (India, National Crime Record Bureau, 2012).

Data illustrates the fact that despite the innumerable principles of gender equality adopted by the State Scheduled Tribe women in Odisha are affected by increasing violence causing concern especially with socio-economic and cultural trends showing disquieting trends. Vulnerability due to violence and sexual abuse among the female population requires the implementation of laws but unfortunately impunity is not an issue paid attention by the administration or judicial structures.

Low female literacy and high female drop out in education, limits women's access to equality which is compounded by high rates of crimes against women in tribal areas of Odisha. The lack of toilets has been a major concern not only under WASH but also sexual violence as women sexually abused when they go out for defecation. Scheduled Tribe households with access to toilet facilities are as below ( Table 4) :-

**Table 4 : ST Households by Availability of Type of Latrine Facility**

<b>Total No. of Households</b>	<b>No. of Households having latrine facilities within the households</b>	<b>No. of Households not having latrine facilities within the premises</b>	<b>Public Latrine</b>	<b>Open</b>	
22,40,142	1,59,708	20,80,434	28,896	20,51,538	Total
R;20,90,443	1,11,734	19,78,709	25,487	1953,222	Rural
U-1,49,699	47,974	1,01,725	3,409	98,316	Urban

Source : India, Census 2011 HH Series Table

## Conclusion

Women's development requires support in educating community; enhancing self esteem and self confidence with proper/ sufficient budgetary provisions. This will ensure that policy is implemented suitably. Whilst universal programmes (mainstreaming) reduce gendered inequality, also in the long run requires the closing of the wide gap by specific targeted actions and a distinct women specific sensitive policy making taking into the needs of the tribal women.

1. No school without toilets policy - ensuring also accessible toilets for disabled.
2. Specific health problems such as Sickle cell anemia and impact of malaria on women has not been paid attention requires the establishing of a large scale programme.
3. Survival and health of women from tribal communities have to be taken up in a mission mode. Audits of maternal death, awareness on adolescent pregnancy linked to early marriage have to be taken up.
4. Representation of tribal women on Committees for fixation of Minimum Support Prices for Minor Forest Produce (MFP) and Management of Community Forest Resources should be ensured.
5. Inclusion of the women in agriculture extension trainings and new production technologies.
6. To create zero tolerance for crimes against women in tribal areas and increase conviction a cell must be set up in the Home Department.
7. Counseling facilities and availability of Protection Officers in every police stations/ Mahila Sishu Desk is required to combat domestic violence.
8. Designated help lines and SMS message designation for women threatened by violence would assist in providing a better quality of life.
9. Develop research and policy so that women's issues are not only highlighted in policy making of Ministries/ Departments such as Women and Child, Health and School Mass/ Higher Education but also Rural Development, Labour, Law, Environment, and Science and Technology.
10. Budget earmarked for research for designing women friendly farm implements is important and requires immediate recognition.
11. Data on technology for sex selection determination and abortions especially in tribal communities.
12. Ensure that State Coordination Committees have 50% representation of women. Establish Women resource centres across the tribal districts to enable women to coordinate education, employment and livelihood facilities.
13. Ensure the provision of support services for Scheduled Tribe women, like child care facilities, including crèches at work places (including NREGA), improved environment to create an enabling environment for women to ensure their full cooperation in social, political and economic life.
14. Emphasis on awareness building among tribal women about policies, programmes, schemes and legislations meant for them by using various print and electronic media.
15. Inclusion of all women in R&R policy for compensation.
16. Formal and informal education opportunities for both in school and out of school girls have

to be broadened in terms of choices, incentives and scholarships. The next step in higher education and/or vocational training has to be dovetailed.

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<sup>1</sup> Besides the States which are Tribal are those where tribal population is large and declared as PESA area R.Udayagiri Tahasil, Gumma & Rayagada Blocks, of Gajapati Soroda Tahasil, excluding Gazalbadi and Gochha Panchayats of Ganjam district, Kuchinda Tahasil of Sambalpur district, Telkoi, Keonjhar, Champua and Barbil Tahasils of Keonjhar district, Th. Rampur and Lanjigarh blocks of Kalahandi district and Nilagiri block of Balasore district.

<sup>2</sup> The word tribal is used instead of Adivasi as this is the word used in official documents.

<sup>3</sup> For references see Economic and Political Weekly, 2014 which has multiple articles on Odisha.

<sup>4</sup> There are sixty-two tribal communities Odisha, Khond is the most populous tribe followed by Gond. The other major tribals living in Odisha are Santal, Kolha, Munda, Saora, Shabar and Bhattada, Bhumij, Bhuiya, Oraon, Paroja and Kisan (India. Scheduled Tribe Census 2011).

<sup>5</sup> The Scheduled Tribe (ST) population of the State of Odisha is 8,145,081. This constitutes 22.1 percent of the total population of the State and 9.7 per cent of the total tribal population of the country. Malkangiri district has the highest proportion of STs (57.4 per cent) followed by Mayurbhanj (56.6 percent), Rayagada (55.8 per cent) and Nabarangapur (55 per cent). Puri district has the lowest by proportion of STs (0.3 per cent) (India. Scheduled Tribe Census 2011).

<sup>6</sup> Though in 2001 the sex ratio of some PTGs are above the state average, Mankidia (937) is found below the state average, still the case of Brihor (939), Lodha (971) and the sex ratio among 0-6 age group of Mankirdia, Lodha and Birhor, Didayi, Bondo, Poraja and Juang is

744, 920, 960, 989 and 1001 respectively (quoted in Nayak, 2011: 204).

<sup>7</sup> Sexual abuse cases were reported in Gadiseiskhal Sevashram where NHRC found the teacher guilty in a similar case; a teacher was suspended in Ramanaguda block. Local media exposed the lackadaisical attitude of the staff of Ekalavya Model Residential school, which is in the vicinity of Rayagada town, in providing low quality food to its inmates (Orissa Diary 2013).

<sup>8</sup> Data of ST and SC Department Schools provided by SC. ST, OBC & Minority Development Department, Govt of Odisha, 2013

<sup>9</sup> ~~KBK or~~ *Kalahandi Balangir Koraput* Region is a region in Odisha, India. The districts of Southern and Western Odisha are regarded as the most backward region.

<sup>10</sup> The sex ratio among Dongria Kondhs is 1,352 females per 1,000 males against the state average of 978 females for 1000 males. Girls are highly valued in economic terms, as they gather forest products and help with household chores, and command a bride price on marriage.

<sup>11</sup> In Odisha the Orissa Regulation No. 2 of 1956 is important and been amended over time.

<sup>12</sup> Most tribal land is supposed to come under the rubric of government land but which has been in practice community land but 'community land and ownership' is used in generic terms. For instance the Dongria Kondhs follow a patrilineal pattern and property passes to the eldest son. Daughters are not entitled a share. The widow is entitled to an equal portion.

<sup>13</sup> Field visits to Koraput and Rayagada before Panchayat elections in 2013 .

<sup>14</sup> Except MFPs growing in Reserve Forests, Sanctuaries and National Parks.

<sup>15</sup> The IMR in four primitive tribes is, namely, Bondo (139.5), Didayi (131.6), Juang (132.4) and in Kutia Kondh (128.7).

<sup>16</sup> A HID/UNICEF study (Mehta, 7) quoting the 2007 World Development Indicators, finds these levels of malnutrition were much higher than in Burundi, Niger or Afghanistan (World Bank 2007). The Global Hunger Index report on Indian states called the situation in Orissa alarming, ranking the state behind Rwanda and Malawi.

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