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## **Gender Role and Development : A Case of Santhal tribe in Salampather Village of Saraikella-Kharsawan district of Jharkhand**

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### **Abstract**

The present paper aims to expand indigenous women's access to and control over fundamental assets such as land, capital, knowledge and technologies. It would also reflect their decision-making role in community affairs and representation in local institutions. Tribal women have a key role to play in peace brokering and conflict mitigation. This paper highlights the concerns of tribal women and the challenges they face. Based on the Experience of field work, it makes suggestions on how to expand and deepen their role in sustainable development. As most of the tribal communities in India are economically and socially backward and mostly live in forests and hilly terrains isolated from the other elite communities. They have their own way of living and different socio-cultural and eco-geographical settings. Lack of proper education and health facilities, faulty feeding habits, certain irrational belief systems and special tribal chores are likely to aggravate their health and nutritional status. Women still benefit less than men from rural employment and face new challenges due to the current economic and food crisis. The vision is economic and social development and to improve the quality of lives that people lead, to enhance their well being and to provide with opportunities and choices to become productive assets in the society .Tribal women in general enjoy better status in the society then the general caste people because they exercise decisive role in the family (mother work), society (social

work) and economy (other work) in India. However, the ideological devaluation of women's contribution and reorientation of gender and sex have brought about concomitant drastic changes in the status of women and their empowerment in different dimensions of deprivation and exploitation, and imposed restrictions on daily folk-chores of life. In few communities, a definite decline has been observed threatening their very existence. This decline may not be due to low level of fertility but rather high level of mortality and illogical health practices. The success of tribal development is dependent on various factors like improved literacy rate, sustainable socio-economic status, women's empowerment, better health care and other human resource indicators. It is much desirable to make reproductive healthcare accessible and affordable, extending basic amenities, empowering women and enhancing their employment opportunities, and providing the transport and communication facilities. The role of a man and women in society is influenced by a variety of factors. These factors vary with the region, religion, culture, climate, historical beliefs, living principles and experiences, across the globe. Therefore, gender role in society can be defined as the role portrayed by an individual with respect to a combination of factors or any one of them, depending on the living condition. These factors can be categorized as roles based on the classification into male, female or a combination form, and roles based on the physical character and/or sexual and psychological orientation, either as a result of social bonding or self-preferences.

## I

### **Introduction**

The term 'gender' describes the social relations between and characteristics of women and men. It concerns men's and women's participation in the determination of their lives including access to rights, power and control over resources. Gender is understood to mean that 'people are born female and male, but learn to be girls and boys who grow into women and men. They are taught what the appropriate behaviour and attitudes, roles and activities are for them and how they should relate to other people' (Williams, Seedand Mwau 1994). Here it becomes essential to understand sex, gender and role socialization. Sex refers to the physical and biological attributes of men and women. Sex includes the chromosomal, hormonal, and anatomical components of males and females. Gender refers to the social, psychological and cultural attributes of masculinity and femininity, many of which are based on biological distinctions. Gender includes people's self image and expectations for behavior among other things. Gender describes societal

attitudes and behaviors expected of and associated with the two sexes. Gender identity refers to the degree to which an individual sees herself or himself as feminine or masculine based on society's definitions of appropriate gender roles. Generally, sex is considered to be an ascribed status while gender is an achieved status. So what are the examples of gender characteristics? What physical, emotional, or other characteristics are considered "masculine" or "Feminine"? The Social Construction of Gender has wider implication. Gender role is expectations regarding proper behavior, attitudes, and activities of males and females. Gender roles are usually evident in work and in how we react to others. Likewise, gender role socialization is "...a lifelong process whereby people learn the values, attitudes, motivations, and behavior considered appropriate to each sex by their culture". Gender role socialization takes place from earliest childhood through adolescence and throughout all social interactions in which we participate. Here I would like to argue that if you look at around yourself then you will find that 'Proper' behavior is reinforced through rewards while inappropriate behavior is punished. Children modify behavior in order to maximize rewards and minimize sanctions. Children learn proper behavior for girls and boys through parents, the media, peer groups, and other sources of socialization. At an early age, children develop stereotypical conceptions of both genders, and begin to use these conceptions to organize their knowledge and behavior. Why do people react differently to males and females? Possible explanations: Biological differences, Societies expectations. Gender typing: process by which children acquire gender identity, and motives, values, and behaviors considered appropriate in their culture for members of their biological sex. we can categorizing Males and Females: Gender-Role Standards. Gender-role standard: Value, motive, or a class of behavior that is considered more appropriate for members of one sex than the other. Girls are typically encouraged to assume expressive role : being kind, nurturant, cooperative and sensitive. Boys are encouraged to adopt instrumental role: role of providing for the family and protecting it from harm. Achievement and self-reliance more strongly encouraged in young boys. Nurturance, responsibility and obedience more encouraged in young girls. It appears the first goal of civilization is to encourage children to acquire these traits that will enable them to become contributing members of society. A second goal is to "gender type" the child by stressing relationship-oriented attributes for girls and individualistic attributes for boys. People are influenced and formed by their cultural environments. At the same time, they influence and build the cultures around them, changing them as they resist, and reinforcing and

recreating them as they conform.” Our families, our communities and dynamics within our cultures determine what men and women do. Men and women are expected to have certain characteristics, aptitudes and behaviors. We are born into environments in which these gender roles exist. We learn them. Culture is dynamic. Cultures survive by responding to changing realities. Gender roles are also dynamic. They can and do change. Evolving gender roles are integral to the continuing evolution that each culture undergoes to survive. Gender roles shape daily life. So, gender change can affect a lot of people. Gender change are always resisted. Gender change weaves through, and has impact on, the power dynamics within class, caste, race, religion etc. The comfort zone created by an individual’s or a group’s identity may be threatened. Cultures have power structures that favour a ‘status quo’ built on gender bias. But you will be surprised that some individuals have the vision, strength and courage to stop conforming: to do something outside the stereotyped roles of men or women in their local environment. They mobilize allies in their own environments. Some are catalysts for major movements – in the tradition of Gandhi. Now due to awareness gender role has shifted. More men are taking on domestic and child care responsibilities. More women are taking on public and leadership roles.

Men and women fulfill a number of concurrent social roles and social relations that are influenced by other people. Race, ethnicity, age, culture, tradition, religion and an individual’s ‘position’ (wealth, status) also assist to differentiate the experience of being a man or a woman within a particular society. Therefore gender identity and gender roles are the result of learned behaviour and given the right impetus and motivation, can change. The crux of the issue here, is that in developing countries, men’s and women’s gender roles determine their access to, power and control over adequate water supply, sanitation facilities and hygiene. Unchallenged these roles have a number of direct effects on communities, households and individuals, in particular women and children.

## II

Now, let us locate gender in the context of development. The need to consider matters of gender in the provision of water supply and the promotion of sanitation and hygiene. These apprehension do not exist in a vacuum. For many years after the Second World War the dominant role of actors in development was one where the ‘rich’ countries provided infrastructure, capital investments and technical ‘expertise’ to those poorer, ‘developing’ and emergent nations. Activity concentrated on encouraging ‘developing’ countries to embrace the

values of industrialization in the belief that this was a way of addressing poverty. The social side of development was largely ignored. Indeed efforts to acknowledge them resulted in a development culture that viewed people as the passive recipients of aid and 'good change', planned and implemented by 'outsiders' (Cleves Mosse 1997). However, belief in the existence of a development 'blueprint' was to be challenged by the emerging Social roles are defined here as who does what, has what and so on. Roles for women also extend to being a mother, wife, sister, daughter-in-law and so on. Equally men fulfill a number of concurrent roles, husband, father, son, brother. Social relations are defined there as how people relate to each other: their power, degree of self-interest and so on. At this time the principle actors were the World Bank, Northern Governments and United Nations Agencies. Voice of those marginalized community. were supported by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and agencies that championed a new approach focusing on the role and participation of communities, and especially women in the development process. The articulation of a Women's agenda was most notably accelerated during the United Nations Decade for Women and Development (1976-1985) and the contributions of the UN's conferences on women - Mexico 1975, Copenhagen 1980, Nairobi 1985 and Beijing 1995. The Decade's early themes of equality, development and peace signalled the way for international debate that encompassed the broad spectrum of development issues. Over the Decade, women were able to influence and exchange ideas, a process that assisted consensus building. These dialogues recognised the different perspectives held by each, their interests and areas of central concern while also establishing common ground, the basis for partnership. The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (UN CEDAW), which entered into force in 1981, reaffirmed the UN Charter's fundamental faith in 'the dignity and worth of the human person and in equal rights of men and women' (CEDAW1981). CEDAW proved to be a major step forward in fostering debate and setting international standards of gender equality. It is against this background that gender gained prominence in the development arena.

In the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, within development policies and programmes, women were only viewed as mothers and housewives... their economic activities and contributions were ignored and not valued. Development theorists and planners saw men as the agents and actors of development. Men were seen to be the breadwinners of their families. Women were invisible.

The Feminist Movements in various parts of the world (in both developing and developed countries) advocated for the elimination of all kinds of gender discrimination. In the North lobbied for change in the legal and administrative structures to ensure that women would be better integrated into economic systems. The Feminist Movements in various parts of the world (in both developing and developed countries) advocated for the elimination of all kinds of gender discrimination. Women in the North lobbied for change in the legal and administrative structures to ensure that women would be better integrated into economic systems. The UN Decade for Women (1975 – 1985: themes of these conferences were Equality, Development and Peace). These conferences have provided a space where women around the world to discuss about issues that specifically affect women in the world. In these conferences, women from developing countries have challenged the western feminist global sisterhood ideology (that all women share and experience similar oppressions and marginalization, not taking into account cultural and other factors). Women from the South have also criticized the hegemonic vision of the western feminist agenda and the way Third World women are constructed and represented by northern feminist scholars.

Since gender became a development issue two major 'streams of theory and practice' have existed; 'women-in-development' (WID) and 'gender-and-development' (GAD) ( Guijt and Kaul Shah 1998:35). Just as gender roles differ from society to society different values are ascribed to what determines the division of labour between men and women. Typically, women in low income countries undertake a 'triple role' in society, that is reproductive, productive and community roles). Because women and men have different roles and exercise different levels of control and power over resources they often have different needs. How work is valued in any given context affects the way women and men determine priorities when it comes to planning a project and likewise their capacity to participate in it. Analysis of the interests of women and men in the development process has evolved into the notion of 'practical' and 'strategic' needs (Moser 1989). Practical gender needs (PGNs) are linked to the 'condition' of women's lives, their immediate environment, workload and responsibilities that exist in the society of which they are part. Practical in nature, they are often linked directly to inadequacies in living conditions such as inadequate access and availability of drinking water. Meeting PGNs is relatively straightforward but their existence alone is unlikely to change (and in fact may worsen) the inequalities that exist relative to the condition. Strategic gender needs (SGNs) refer to

improvements in women's disadvantaged 'position' in society relative to men in terms of labour, power and control. SGNs are not as readily identifiable as PGNs and vary according to particular contexts (Moser 1993:39). For example, this village lacks proper water facility. In water scarce situations where there are competing demands for water use, women's efforts to protect this resource for drinking may be undermined in favour of other uses usually determined by men. Strategic needs cannot be met by 'outsiders', rather the men and women concerned have to address SGNs themselves, typically through collective action, increased self-confidence, consciousness-raising and strengthening women's and community based organisations (CBOs) (Ebba Augustin, GTZ 1995). Practical and strategic gender needs cannot be neatly separated. Longwe (Smyth and Mukhopadhyay 1999:20) maintains that every practical intervention has an effect on 'strategic' areas of life (power relations and control), whether it is intended or not. An extension of this is the concept of 'redistributive' potential (Young 1987, cited March, Smyth and Mukhopadhyay 1999:20) that considers how practical needs can be met in a way that assists women in challenging gender inequalities in relation to the need, thus contributing to women's empowerment.

### III

In the early 1980's in an attempt to meet the demands of the women's movement and the Decade for Women, donors and NGOs rapidly adopted the women in development (WID) approach. In light of the criticism levelled at past donor policies WID appeared to provide a manageable 'add-on' solution to the issue of women being 'left out' of development. This approach views women in isolation, making resources more directly available to them as a means facilitating their involvement. The underlying rationale being that development activity would proceed better if women were integrated into the process and thus as an untapped resource able to provide an economic contribution to development (Moser 1995:3). Rather than challenging male bias WID operates within the environment where it prevails and so largely ignores the real problem of women's unequal position to men. WID does not represent a monolith of thought, and five policy approaches are further classified. These approaches differ in terms of the roles recognised and the type of gender need that is met. Outlined in Table 2 these are: Welfare, Equity, Anti-poverty, Efficiency and Empowerment (Moser 1998 and Buvinic 1983, 1986).



Gender and development (GAD) offers an alternative and potentially more powerful position shifting away from the WID approach and the marginalization of women-only programmes. GAD starts from the premise that women have always participated in development but from an unequal and unacknowledged position. What constrain women are the social structures that favour male domination and female subordination (Guijt and Kaul Shah 1998:35). In adopting a GAD perspective the motivation for intervention is to work toward equity and respect for the human rights of all people (Williams, Seed and Mwau 1994:7). Inequalities are addressed through an understanding of the roles of men and women in relation to situation specific development goals, for example water supply. GAD theory asserts that women improve their position relative to men in ways that will benefit the whole community. GAD seeks to ensure that all decisions concerning development be reached through the local, equitable participation of women and men in the development process. GAD asserts that gender is a cross-sectoral and social concern. Its approaches and principles underpin typical water and sanitation development objectives related to efficiency, effectiveness and equity. Gender Issues in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene are of great concern.

#### IV

Now let me locate Gender through the prism of tribes. Usually tribal society are egalitarian. Both men and women work together in their landholdings. Since santhalese are agriculturalist so they much of their time working in the field. But alas! Nature palyed a devastating role. Drought like situation change the role type of both santhalese men and women. Development goals typically address issues of access to and the availability of adequate and safe supply and services, poverty alleviation and health and well being Development goals in water and sanitation converge with gender issues because women play a central role in the provision, management and safeguarding of water-related resources and facilities. The whole community, women, men and children experience the negative effects of inadequate supply and service through poor health, nutrition and the emotional and physical devastation of recurrent water and waste related disease. However, 'participation of women alongside men in planning, design, maintenance and management has brought distinct benefits to the functioning and use of (water) systems and created more equal chances for training and functions of women and men' (van Wijk-Sijbesma 1998). Approaching water, sanitation and hygiene from a gender and development perspective is crucial to ensure balanced control of the resource and facilities in order to facilitate 'successful



'conjugal life. It is also critical to understand that different groups of women and different groups of men favour different behaviours and practices that can exacerbate the exclusion of some in favour of others. Women and girl children in particular face severe and detrimental problems of personal safety, hygiene, privacy and health in relation to the use of latrines, at home and school and traditional places for excreta disposal, for example defecation fields. And santhalese are no longer exception to it. A particular problem is related to the fact that women often have to wait until darkness to defecate and pass urine. This has a number of detrimental effects including security in terms of fear of rape and harassment and health in terms of diet and the risks of infections that may effect future fertility. Equally invasive are issues of privacy and personal hygiene related to menstruation, washing and bathing. In the age of globalization where we are marching ahead towards economic power and setting a new yardstick for urbanites by dumping resources. There are remote and largely inaccessible village like salampather where whole women's of the village rush towards ponds for bathing and other day to day activities in the open sky. At the schools there are often no facilities for menstruating girls and where toilets exist they are often expected to share facilities with boys. Such problems are compounded where there is also a lack of water for hygiene and sanitation purposes. The distinctive patterns of ideas, beliefs, and norms which characterize the way of life and relations of a society or group within a society culturally determined gender ideologies define rights and responsibilities and what is 'appropriate' behavior for women and men. They also influence access to and control over resources, and participation in decision-making. These gender ideologies often reinforce male power and the idea of women's inferiority. Culture is sometimes interpreted narrowly as 'custom' or 'tradition', and assumed to be natural and unchangeable. Despite these assumptions, culture is fluid and enduring. Dominant cultures reinforce the position of those with economic, political and social power, and therefore tend to reinforce male power. Globalization also has implications for the diffusion of culture, particularly of western culture. As long as they live in the village they usually dressed up traditional dresses but their movement to market or fair are market by modern outfits. Here I would like to argue that the defence of 'culture' and 'tradition' is often used by men to justify practices that constrain women's life chances and outcomes. Interventions to challenge power imbalances proposed by local women's organisations or NGOs are often denied legitimacy, or where an international agency is involved, denounced as 'western' interference or 'cultural imperialism'. Many within the international development

community also remain resistant to goals of gender equity because they perceive these as interfering with the most intimate domain in society. Some women have themselves defended ideas of 'culture' and 'tradition' in order to hold on to what little power they have, or as a form of resistance. For example, before the revolution in Iran, women took up the veil to show resistance to the processes of westernisation that the country was experiencing. The Gender Roles framework focuses on describing women's and men's roles and their relative access to and control over resources. It takes the household, rather than the breadth of institutions, as the unit of analysis and tends to assume that women are a homogeneous category. In contrast, the Social Relations approach seeks to expose the gendered power relations that perpetuate inequities. This analysis moves beyond the household to include the community, market, and state institutions and so involves collecting data at all these levels. It uncovers differences between women, divided by other aspects of social differentiation such as class, race and ethnicity. The aim is to understand the dynamics of gender relations in different institutional contexts and thereby to identify women's bargaining position and formulate strategies to improve this. It has proved challenging to adopt this approach in operational work. Across the world, women are treated unequally and less value is placed on their lives because of their gender. However, women's access to power and control of resources is central to this discrimination in all institutional spheres, i.e. the household, community, market, and state. Within the household, women and girls can face discrimination in the sharing out of household resources including food, sometimes leading to higher malnutrition and mortality indicators for women. Since the Santhali are patrilineal society so it is quite natural that at most extreme situation, gender discrimination lead to son preference, expressed in the pattern of celebration which they do. Due to persistent drought like women step out to work as a wage labourer and primarily employed in the work sponsored by Narega project. Here situation is not much better. In the labour market, unequal pay, occupational exclusion or segregation into low skill and low paid work limit women's earnings in comparison to those of men. It is not a figment of imagination that women's lack of representation and voice in decision making bodies in the community perpetuates discrimination. Majority of the Santhali young girl fail to promote their further study. This further also affects their decision making ability if they wish to work in the town to ameliorate their condition. Unfortunately all these guidelines comes from the dominant player of the house i.e. male. The law is assumed to be gender-neutral when in fact it may perpetuate gender discrimination, being a

product of a culture with oppressive gender ideologies. Even where constitutional or national legal provisions uphold gender equality principles, religious or other customary laws that privilege men may take precedence in practice. However, the law, when reformed with women's input, can be a potent tool for challenging discrimination, if combined with other strategies, including capacity-building to overcome barriers to claiming rights. The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1979 brought into international focus the rights of women as human rights, including the right to be free from discrimination. Women activists regard this convention as a key tool to support their struggle against discrimination in all spheres, pushing governments towards attaining these internationally recognised minimum standards. Whilst the gender division of labour tends to be seen as natural and immutable, in fact, these ideas and practices are socially constructed. This results in context-specific patterns of who does what by gender and how this is valued. Gender divisions of labour are not necessarily rigidly defined in terms of men's and women's roles, as is sometimes assumed. They are characterised by co-operation in joint activities, as well as by separation. Often, the accepted norm regarding gender divisions varies from the actual practice. However, roles typically designated as female are almost invariably less valued than those designated as male. Women are generally expected to fulfil the reproductive role of bearing and raising children, caring for other family members, and household management tasks, as well as home based production. Men tend to be more associated with productive roles, particularly paid work, and market production. In the labour market, although women's overall participation rates are rising, they tend to be confined to a relatively narrow range of occupations or concentrated in lower grades than men, usually earning less. Historically, women's productive roles have been ignored or under-valued, particularly in the informal sector and subsistence agriculture. This has led to misconceived development projects; for example the services of extension agents and agricultural inputs being targeted at men. Because women's labour is undervalued, it is often assumed by mainstream development policies to be infinitely elastic. For example, policy makers expect that women can take on roles previously fulfilled by public services, such as care for the sick and elderly, when cutbacks are made. The formal documentation and recognition of women's roles and the related time burden is crucial for gender-sensitive development interventions. Recently, international organizations have begun to measure all forms of economic activity by gender. Gender and development policies and programmes can challenge and change

women's socially prescribed roles, in pursuit of gender equity. For example, women have been successfully trained and employed as water technicians or builders in communities where these were jobs previously a male. In light of this, the need of the hour is the broader institutional change if pervasive male advantage was to be challenged. Adding women-specific activities at the margin was no longer seen as sufficient. Most major development organisations and many governments have now embraced 'gender mainstreaming' as a strategy for moving towards gender equality. With a mainstreaming strategy, gender concerns are seen as important to all aspects of development; for all sectors and areas of activity, and a fundamental part of the planning process. Responsibility for the implementation of gender policy is diffused across the organisational structure, rather than concentrated in a small central unit. Such a process of mainstreaming has been seen to take one of two forms. Apart from this the more politically acceptable integrationist approach brings women's and gender concerns into all of the existing policies and programmes, focusing on adapting institutional procedures to achieve this. In both cases, political as well as technical skills are essential to a mainstreaming strategy. Any approach to mainstreaming requires sufficient resources, as well as high-level commitment and authority. A combined strategy can be particularly powerful. Mainstreaming tools include gender training, introducing incentive structures which reward efforts on gender, and the development of gender-specific operational tools such as checklists and guidelines. policy outcomes through a systematic and inclusive process. If gender policy has transformatory goals, then gender planning as a process will necessarily be a political one, involving consultation with and participation of different stakeholders. Whilst gender transformatory policies are increasingly being generated, concerns are focusing on the 'misbehaviour' of such policies, i.e. a tendency to slip in implementation from transformatory objectives to outcomes that fail to challenge existing gender relations. Gender planning procedures need to involve the participation of stakeholders and clear lines of accountability. These gender hierarchies are often accepted as 'natural' but are socially determined relations, culturally based, and are subject to change over time. These are manifested in the range of gendered practices, such as the division of labour and resources, and gendered ideologies, such as ideas of acceptable behaviour for women and men. Analyses which focus on gender relations differ in emphasis from those which take 'gender roles' as a starting point. They give more prominence to the connectedness of men's and women's lives, and to the imbalances of power embedded in male-female relations. They also emphasise the interaction of gender

relations with other hierarchical social relations such as class, caste, ethnicity and race. But whether gender relations act to alleviate, or to exacerbate other social inequalities, depends on the context. Gender relations constitute and are constituted by a range of institutions, such as the family, legal systems or the market. They are a resource which is drawn on daily to reinforce or redefine the rules, norms and practices which govern social institutions. Since historically women have been excluded from many institutional spheres, or their participation circumscribed, they often have less bargaining power to affect change who institutions operate. So, for example, where they are perceived to transgress their accepted roles, women can be physically or sexually abused by male partners with relative impunity. In many cultures, beatings or rape in marriage are considered acceptable in the existing legal framework. Even where, following lobbying of women's groups, rape or violence within marriage is outlawed, women may be reluctant to seek redress because the male dominated judicial system is unsympathetic, or because they fear ostracism. Where women retaliate, they become criminalised themselves. However, change is possible: in a few recent cases, following sustained campaigns, women have been acquitted of 'crimes' against violent partners and new laws have been passed to respond to such attenuating circumstances. Hierarchical gender relations constrain development efforts. For example, rigidities in the gender division of labour limit the effective mobilisation of women's labour to support export production. Poverty reduction efforts are hampered where men use their authority to usurp control over resources targeted at women. Development strategies need to be informed by analysis of gender relations and to support women's own attempts to change the rules and practices which reinforce these gender hierarchies Gender analysis has revealed some evidence of bias against female members of households in the allocation of resources such as income, food, nutrition, health care and education. These patterns are not universal, however, and are also mediated by other factors such as age, and birth order. For instance if I take illustration from Sub-Saharan Africa then, there is little evidence of nutritional bias against girl children in, whereas in Asia this pattern has been widely noted. It has also been shown that resources controlled by women, for example in female-headed households, are distributed differently to resources controlled by men. There is some evidence that women spend a higher percentage of their generally smaller incomes on family consumption and children's welfare. Conventional macro-economics treats the activities performed within the household as non-economic and hence irrelevant. Conventional micro-economists typically sees the household as a consumption

unit and treat it as a 'black-box', assuming gender neutrality. It was the New Household Economics (Gary Becker in the 1960s) that challenged the conventional microeconomic approach and highlighted the importance of production within the household. In this model, all resources are pooled and distributed in an altruistic manner by a benevolent male household head to maximise the welfare of household members. However, gender analysts, particularly feminist anthropologists and economists, have demonstrated that this characterisation of the household is naïve and ignores gender power imbalances and conflict within the household. Feminist models highlighted the fact that resources are not always pooled and stressed the role of bargaining processes within the household in determining access to resources. Gender relations within the household are then seen as characterised by both conflict and co-operation, whereby women tend to have less bargaining power in the struggle over household resources. But because of inequalities in intra-household distribution, household income-based measures of poverty do not correlate neatly with gender-differentiated assessments of well-being. Consequently, poverty reduction strategies that target male household heads, erroneously assume Gender analysis has revealed some evidence of bias against female members of households in the allocation of resources such as income, food, nutrition, health care and education. These patterns are not universal, however, and are also mediated by other factors such as age, and birth order. For example, there is little evidence of nutritional bias against girl children in Sub-Saharan Africa, whereas in South Asia this pattern has been widely noted. It has also been shown that resources controlled by women, for example in female-headed households, are distributed differently to resources controlled by men. There is some evidence that women spend a higher percentage of their generally smaller incomes on family consumption and children's welfare. Conventional macro-economics treats the activities performed within the household as non-economic and hence irrelevant. Conventional micro-economists typically sees the household as a consumption unit and treat it as a 'black-box', assuming gender neutrality. It was the New Household Economics (pioneered by Gary Becker in the 1960s) that challenged the conventional microeconomic approach and highlighted the importance of production within the household. In this model, all resources are pooled and distributed in an altruistic manner by a benevolent male household head to maximise the welfare of household members. However, gender analysts, particularly feminist anthropologists and economists, have demonstrated that this characterisation of the household is naïve and ignores gender power imbalances and conflict

within the household. Feminist models highlighted the fact that resources are not always pooled and stressed the role of bargaining processes within the household in determining access to resources. Gender relations within the household are then seen as characterised by both conflict and co-operation, whereby women tend to have less bargaining power in the struggle over household resources. The division of labour and dynamics within the household are seen also to influence opportunities and outcomes for women outside the home, in employment for example. Certain theorists suggest that women's bargaining position within the household is enhanced when they work outside the home. Other mechanisms for enhancing women's bargaining power in the home include strengthened property rights, and membership of collective organisations. The household has often been used as the basic unit of analysis in, for example, poverty measures. But because of inequalities in intra-household distribution, household income-based measures of poverty do not correlate neatly with gender-differentiated assessments of well-being. Consequently, poverty reduction strategies that target male household heads, erroneously assume according to certain identifiable physical features which are fixed. Women's marginalisation has often been seen as 'natural' and a fact of their biology. However these biological differences cannot explain why women have less access to power and lower status than men. To understand and challenge the cultural value placed on someone's biological sex, and unequal power hierarchies, we need the relational concept of 'gender'. 'Gender': how a person's biology is culturally valued and interpreted into locally accepted ideas of what it is to be a woman or man. 'Gender' and the hierarchical power relations between women and men based on this are socially constructed, and not derived directly from biology. Gender identities and associated expectations of roles and responsibilities are therefore changeable between and within cultures. Gendered power relations permeate social institutions so that gender is never absent. The value of the distinction between the terms 'sex' and 'gender' has been challenged more recently as 'sex' has also been seen to be socially constructed (Baden and Goetz, 1998). Use of the term gender, rather than sex, signals an awareness of the cultural and geographic specificity of gender identities, roles and relations. It also recognises gender inequality as the outcome of social processes, which can be challenged, rather than as a biological given. For this reason, its use can generate considerable opposition, particularly from conservative religious and cultural groups but also in mainstream development institutions. The idea of 'social justice' as the outcome of struggles against social inequalities implies change towards a more 'fair' society. This requires



strategies to redress past injustices, violation of rights or persistent economic and social inequalities. Social movements such as the women's, worker's, and human rights movements, have fought against perceived social injustices from a variety of entry points. Such movements have invariably challenged the ideologies and prejudices that legitimate social inequalities, in order to mobilise people for change. But again there are varying conceptions of 'justice'. The women's movement has been working to ensure that efforts to address injustice, through human rights measures, or economic and social policies, are informed by an understanding of gender inequalities. The disparity between women and men can take many different forms. Indeed, gender disparity is not one homogeneous phenomenon, but a collection of disparate and interlinked problems. In some cases, disparity between women and men directly involves matters of life and death, and takes the brutal form of unusually high mortality rates of women and a consequent preponderance of men in the total population, as opposed to the preponderance of women found in societies with little or no gender bias.

## V

### Critical evaluation

What emerges is that the so-called 'development' has, instead of raising their economic and social status, impacted them adversely in several ways — it ruined their habitats; despoiled them of their resources; deprived them of their traditional rights; and pushed them into a state of serfdom. Far from being the usual socialistic rhetoric against development, views such as these are backed by data culled from a variety of tribal contexts and personal observations made in slums, construction sites, malls and so on. The yawning gap between the rich and the poor comes across sharply and unequivocally. Mining and industrial projects, have snatched away what "little food and security" the local people had. As a consequence, many of them turned sick, got uprooted, or became vagabonds. On the "other side of development" are the clusters of multi-storey buildings, shopping and hotel complexes, proliferation of cars, and the bewildering range of high-end consumables. Who would believe that today's rickshaw-pullers of Jamshedpur were the proud owners of land and cultivators hardly a few years ago? Or, that many of the domestic helps in metropolises are from tribal areas? Among the worst to suffer are women and children. I noticed that there were many cases of non-tribal men cultivating amorous relationship with local women and then leaving them to languish in penury and shame. In numerous villages, one could

find this phenomenon manifested in illegitimate children and unwed mothers. This village is no longer exception to it.

Unable to eke out their livelihood from local resources, men migrate to distant places for work, leaving women behind to take care of the household. As it often turned out, the money they send home is not only abysmally low but also infrequent if not erratic. The study reports that men who returned to villages after a six-month employment as labourers revealed that they were left with a meagre saving of Rs. 2,000, and this went towards clearing the outstanding loans. Before long, the family ran into debt and the misery continued endlessly.

The issues related to tribal children are addressed with great sensitivity. Here are some of the key statistics: Literacy rate for the Scheduled Tribes — 47.1 per cent (2001 Census), compared to the national average of 64.84 per cent; and the drop-out rate at the elementary stage (Standards 1 to 8) – 65.9 per cent, as against 50.8 per cent (2004-05). As for the health indicators, immunisation rates are woefully low, while infant mortality was unacceptably high. Half-starved, they are forced to work as labourers, often in hazardous conditions.

Undoubtedly, several non-governmental organisations are striving to mitigate the appalling conditions in which tribes find themselves. At the same time, it is not as if the tribal people are a passive lot, meekly submitting to whatever came their way. Far from it, there have been instances of their taking proactive steps or launching campaigns for a change. What is noteworthy is that they did not wait for some external agency to take the lead.

Not only should the issues affecting the tribes become central to the national discourse on development, but the voices of those people ought to be heard, and heeded. Now, people's pleas fall on deaf ears and the idea of their participation gets only nominal recognition. My study puts forth, persuasively, the argument that a people-oriented approach alone can bring about social transformation.

To sum up triggers of cultural change and shifting role is bringing about gender change. We are very much hopeful that through gender & development we will be able to promote, inspire, and support development policy and practice, which furthers the goal of equality between women and men. However, without gender analysis, the rights and well-being of the disadvantaged sex,

or disadvantaged sub-groups of males or females, can be neglected. Gender disparities can be deepened. Action based on gender analysis can create openings to help the disadvantaged. This can bring more gender equality within diversity. It can also make development planners and other decision makers to become aware of women's issues.

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