

## ROLE OF TRIBAL WOMEN FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN MAHARASHTRA

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### Abstract:

Women play a significant and crucial role for the progress of rural households, local and national economies and overall sustainable development. Tribal women are the backbone of sustainable livelihoods and provide food security for their families. They contribute and support the economy extensively in different ways by supporting household activities. This paper covers role of tribal women to sustainable economy, social system and ecology. The paper indicated how women in tribal areas can be positioned to play an important role in promoting practices for their overall sustainable development. The researchers concluded that given positive effect made by tribal women plays a key role in promoting sustainable practices in the tribal belt which contributes to the local and national economy.

**Keywords:** Sustainable development, Tribal women, Maharashtra, Women empowerment.

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### Introduction:

Women make significant contributions every day from bringing an income to her household as an employed wage earner, to creating jobs as an entrepreneur, to taking care of her family and elders. However, a woman farmer, for instance, may not be able to make her crops thrive like a man can because she doesn't have the same access to seeds, credit, technology and extension services. She is very unlikely to own her land—only 20 per cent of landowners globally are women (Mishra and Tripath, 2018). If she hopes to someday inherit family property, the law may deprive her of an equal share, or social convention may simply favor her male relatives. The extent of empowerment of women in the national hierarchy is determined largely by the three factors – her economic, social and political identity and their weightage. Women's empowerment involves the building up of society. It's the process of upliftment of the economic, social, and political status of women. The status of women in the society was traditionally underprivileged. Tribal women contributed half of the tribal community in the world. The role of women is significant and crucial for the progress of rural households, local and national economies and overall sustainable development. Tribal women are the backbone of sustainable livelihoods and provide food security for their families (Naveen, Parida, and Panda, 2023).

### Sustainable Development Goals (SDGc):

The United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as the agreed framework for international development (Fig-1). There are 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) combined package of global objectives that the world should achieve by 2030. (The United Nations, 2015).



Empowerment of women is the process of guarding them against all forms of violence. The challenge, at present, is to be able to recognize and understand the priorities and anxieties of the tribal communities. Because of economic modernization through construction of big power projects, opening of mines and construction of large dams is leading to displacement and impoverishment of tribal. Tribal people are becoming alien in their own area.

**Tribal Women in Maharashtra State:**

Maharashtra has the second largest tribal population in the country. They mainly reside in the forest ranges of Sahyadri, Satpura and Gondwana having forty-seven tribal groups scheduled by government of India. The tribes in Maharashtra are diverse and have their own distinct cultures, languages, and traditions. Some of the major tribal communities in Maharashtra include Bhil, Gond, Warli, Koli, Kolam, and others. The separate ethnic situation of the tribal groups is their identity. They subsist largely on agriculture. Agriculture output not being sufficient they depend on bonded or cheap wage labour and the forest timber to see them through the year until the next harvest. In such a situation of deprivation it is imperative for the women to share the burden of eking out of living. If one assesses the amount of labor that women put into agriculture and allied tasks in their own their homes. Few activities regarding-

**Women Development:**

There has been an increased emphasis on women’s participation in the program. The major activities taken up are promotion of SHGs, income generation activities, drudgery reduction along with awareness generation about

reproductive health and development aspects. The income generating activities included fruit and forest plant nurseries, vegetable cultivation, produce collection, papad making, vermi composting etc. In order to reduce drudgery of women, three major activities are taken up in the field. They are smokeless stoves, use of bearings in the traditional grinding stones and pedal thresher for paddy (eGyanKosh, 2023).

#### **Health Program:**

Some of the basic problems faced by the tribal families are related to malnutrition, illness and inaccessibility to health care. Community health program focuses on mother and child health care (MCH) as well as primary and preventive health care. The participants are educated on sanitation and hygiene. The local youth, especially women, called Village Health Guides (VHG) are trained in diagnosis and treatment of common illness and serious cases are referred to appropriate facilities.

Soil conservation measures: Programs such as bunding, tree platforms, the combination of these two and trench-cum-bund based on field level requirements have been introduced from the first year. The participants are paid for the soil conservation and plantation work done by them in their fields (Kakade, et.al, 2002).

The Programs for women's development, in the state concentrate on broad areas – Education and training, Health, Nutrition and family welfare and employment and Economic development. Yet there is not much data or analysis available on the present status of tribal women. (Bardhan, 1985)

#### **Suggestive Strategy:**

The role of tribal women is important but their socio-economic development is poor. More needs to be done. The problems of tribal women and tribals common Strategy to strengthen and empower tribal women are:

- Increase the literacy in tribal women. Low literacy especially tribal girls and high dropout rates at elementary and higher levels are area concern. Focus on girl's education, inclusive of context- specific traditional and innovative interventions. Launch special and sustained education initiatives in low female literacy tribal pockets.
- To prevent teacher absenteeism in tribal areas, give preference to local and tribal teachers from local Panchayats, and place the teaching non-teaching staff primary schools under the control.
- To provides technical skills of tiny and small-scale industry. Empowerment trough this medium can possible.
- Provide proper health services to tribal women.
- Increase awareness of education among tribal women.
- Increase the representatives in political and decision making.
- Increase the share of property distribution.
- Need to proper implementation policy of various Govt.scheme of tribal women.

#### **Conclusion:**

Role of women in tribal communities is substantial and crucial. In tribal community the place of the women is very lower compare with another community. Since independence Govt.took many Welfare and development programmes for improving the condition of tribal women, but impact of that progamme is very low In present economic development the condition of tribal women become very pathetic, so there is need to empowering

socially, educationally and politically for the sustainable development of tribal women in Maharashtra. There is need for having critical look at all ongoing tribal development programs. The areas of concern will have to go beyond the conception and implementation of development programs and projects to focus on getting sustained long-term benefits from investment.

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