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NEW FORM OF HAND-TO-MOUTH CULTURE: A DISCOURSE FROM THE CHENCHU LIVELIHOODS

The relationship between man and his environment is as old as man's birth on earth. Man's intimate and inevitable dependency on his environment has taught him to respect it, and has also taught him to try and achieve a balance between his resources from the environment and his needs. In the past resources were plenty, but now, because of an increase in population and an increase in people's needs there is a disturbance in the ecological balance, and the most affected are the resource poor persons. Hence, what is needed is to bring about a balance between economic prosperity with ecological security. In this connection a new direction was evolved in the field of anthropology, which is increasingly concerned with such urgent matters that relate to human beings as a whole.

The forest and forest resources were earlier enjoyed and controlled by forest dwellers/tribals, whereas now it is largely controlled by the state. It is not unlikely that the forest policy of the government can be influenced by the powerful industrial and commercial interests and often at the cost of poor tribals (Mahanti 1994: 85). Thus current trends in both ecology and anthropology suggest that the macro-ecosystem level may not be appropriate for dealing with questions of human impact and resource management except in a very broad and unspecific way. Resource management is a site-specific task in which social, political, legal, and historical dimensions are at least as important as environmental ones (Moran 1984: 19-20).

It is a fact that the dependence on forest produce is of much greater magnitude, particularly among forest dwellers/tribals residing adjacent to forest areas. Tribals, being aware of the importance of forest to their lives, developed norms and conventions, guarded by myths and folklore, which on one hand restrict the destruction of forests and on the other, protect and promote the forest and forest resources by maintaining the eco-system as a divine abode and something sacred. Thus in the past they have enjoyed forest resources without any restrictions, i.e., when they were having free access to utilize the resources as their customary rights. Their free access to forest was

severely affected after the forest laws were introduced and implemented in the tribal areas in India, including in Andhra Pradesh. As a result of these laws, the 'natives' or tribals have lost their rights over the forest and resources, slowly the practice of indigenous knowledge of preserving forest also started to disappear, as they feel that the forests are not their own any more.

Besides, the government laws and Acts indirectly encouraged the non-tribals to enter and interfere in the forest resource utilization. It has also become a threat to the tribals' survival as well as a threat to forest resources. In the same way, modern developmental activities, using forest resources for industrial purposes, also have become a threat to the forests as they concentrate mostly on economic profits, rather than the socio-cultural and ecological aspects.

There are some studies, which reveal the failure of modern developmental programmes that were implemented ignoring the indigenous knowledge, and implemented against the tenets of tribal cultural domain. It was felt by Saifi Basin that, "Modern industrial agriculture can be considered to reflect short-term fitted adaptations in response to surrounding conditions, economical, societal and ecological, part of these adaptations cannot be sustained in the long run because of resource depletion and environmental degradation" (1997: 26). It is important to note that there is an adverse affect of this on the livelihoods of the poor tribals. It is noted by Nadkarni that, "The relationship between poverty, environment and development is quite complex and not amenable to easy generalization, and we cannot take it for granted that all economic development alleviates poverty. It is possible for 'development projects' to be capable of setting up the rate of growth of Gross National Product (GNP) and yet deprive the poor of employment and even of access to their natural resource environment. Additionally, development projects may be environmentally destructive" (2000: 1184-87).

Development at the cost of environment can only be a short-term one. In the long term it can become anti-development and can go on only at the cost of enormous human sufferings, increased poverty and oppression. Therefore, a balanced and sustainable development requires an understanding environmental process (Agarwal and Dube 2002: 1).

As observed by Tracey Brieger and Ali Sauer (2000: 3795) in case of Gujarat, the local people oppose the government afforestation scheme by giving slogan 'jungal jungal dubadta – rupa thanin kay karta' (you are submerging forests, what's the point of planting trees?). It questions the logic in deforesting by submerging in Narmada Valley in the name of development and then attempting to reforest to make up for the lost jungle. The failures that arose out of modern developmental programmes are not only limited to that particular programme exclusively, but, ultimately, they adversely affect the environment, forest and, finally, the quality of life of people.

The modernization programmes failed as they neglected the local knowledge and tradition. Local knowledge and tradition is often regarded as opposed to modernization and an obstacle to the process of development. The failure of decades of development made the people concerned to look toward anthropologists who have intensively dealt with environmental problems and highlighted the potentiality of indigenous environmental knowledge, and gross-root participation in environment management. It is rightly observed by Misra that, "Although there is inevitable skepticism in complete acceptance of the local environmental knowledge as alternative adaptive strategies, there is not even an iota of doubt that this knowledge has a sustainable value that has passed the test of time" (2001: 11). Thus, anthropologists have been suggesting the need of injecting the indigenous knowledge in the strategic treatment of human problems such as ecological, economic, and socio-cultural, which eventually achieves the stage of human sustainability.

Thus, there is a need to understand the socio-ecological dynamics of an ethnic community and to adopt cautious steps for the protection of ethnic groups and managing the sustainability of natural environment as advocated by many scholars. So the strategic approach for resettlement and development has to take into account the basic characteristics of local areas. Many of the tribal areas are remote, forested, hilly or sloppy and the natural resource endowment is vastly different from that of the other areas.

Though the government is striving to develop the position of tribals through several measures, the benefits are not reaching them properly. The failure of these programmes is attributable to defective planning, conceptualization and implementation. However, these programmes, aimed at tribal development, have both positive and negative implications on the livelihoods and resources of the indigenous population. But still, there is a need to consider the sustainable nature of the development programmes and their harmony with the local socio-cultural fabric.

In view of the above, there is a need to look into the livelihoods, resources, traditional practices and development as interrelated and interdependent aspects. This sort of viewing helps us to understand sustainability of different developmental efforts among the tribal communities in general and among the rehabilitated tribal in particular. In this regard, it is proposed to study the primitive tribal group 'Chenchu', whom the government had displaced from the forest on the name of rehabilitation and development under the process of implementation of Wild Life Act (1972) and Forest Conservation Act (1980).

It is pertinent to note that what Fürer Haimendorf observed in 1940s holds true even today. According to him, "It may suffice to say that, during recent years Chenchu's environment has begun to change and that the future alone will show how far the Chenchu will be successful in adapting himself to

the new conditions without relinquishing altogether his traditional style of life” (1943: 16).

Significance of the Study

Chenchu used to eke out their lives by hunting the animals and collecting fruits, tubers, honey, etc., when the resources were abundant and when they enjoyed complete rights over forests and its resources. However, slowly the situation changed and the forest resources became very scarce and the access was also restricted by the government. In view of the changing environmental conditions, such as degradation of forests, depletion of resources, lack of access to the existing resources, etc., the present study on Chenchus food culture gains its significance. It attempts to understand the sustainability of different developmental efforts and their impact on the livelihoods of the Chenchus.

The population of Chenchu is 49,232, forms 0.98 per cent of the total tribal population of the State of Andhra Pradesh as per 2001 census (TCR & TI, 2008). They are concentrated in Prakasam, Guntur, Mahaboobnagar, Kurnool, Nalgonda and Ranga Reddy districts of Andhra Pradesh. The study village “Chenchugudem” is located in the Nallamalai hills and in the foothills of Amrabad upper plateau of Mahaboobnagar district. It is a small tribal village consisting of 68 Chenchu households, under Laxmipalli Panchayat of Balmoor mandal.

Methodology and Data Collection

The present study is a micro level study and it laid emphasis on qualitative data gathered through anthropological techniques such as observation (both participant and non-participant), case studies, interviews—structured and informal interviews, key-informant interviews and group discussions, etc., along with secondary data collected from various sources. Fieldwork was undertaken during September and October, 2003.

Traditional Livelihoods of Chenchu

The Chenchu have traditionally inhabited the forest tracts of the Nallamalai hills. Historically they were accorded special rights within the forest, including the establishment of exclusive forest enclosures and the granting of rights of cultivation within the forest. After independence, the Government took over all the land in Andhra Pradesh and, in 1970, enacted legislation to confer title rights to tribals over the land they cultivated and to delineate boundaries between the villages and the Reserve Forest. With the Forest Conservation Act of 1980, however, most areas inhabited by the Chenchu became part of the Reserve Forest. Since no immediate rehabilitation measures were taken, the Chenchu gradually lost their sources of livelihood,

and some began to cultivate unproductive areas next to the forests (www.enrap.org.in/Completed.asp?linkid=97).

Thus, in 1970s, the government has displaced some of the Chenchu inhabitants from the small hamlets in midst of the forest and nearby forest like Ramgiri Banda, Rampuram, Gudibanda, Bhagavantharao Bavi, Jagannadhapuram, Saipet, etc., and rehabilitated at the new place and named it as “Chenchugudem”. The Chenchus were given permission by the government to clear the forest to make agricultural lands for practicing settled agriculture in this new settlement. The villagers said that, the government officials told them not to go to the forest then onwards and put restrictions on food gathering, hunting, fuel collection, etc., as the forest came under the Wild Life Act and declared as reserve forest, the restrictions became stricter. Government sanctioned them ‘pattas’ (title deeds) for 3 acres of land to each family after 2 years of rehabilitating for practicing agriculture. One elementary school was started in the year 1974 by I.T.D.A providing free education, food, clothing, soap, oil, etc., to the Chenchu children in the Girijan Ashrama Patasala.

Changing Livelihood Patterns among Chenchu

New patterns of livelihood are emerging among the Chenchu in place of their traditional livelihood patterns. The diversification in the livelihoods of Chenchu from their traditional hunting and food gathering to food production activities made them lose their customary rights over the forest resources. While the tribals were denied access to forest resources, the non-tribal gained easy access to exploit wood and timber of forest. Their irrational commercial activities caused depletion of the forest and forest resources.

The villagers trace the reasons for the depletion of forests and other resources that caused changes in their livelihood patterns. According to the villagers, the Forest Department has given them permission to cut the forest trees to the private contractors / timber merchants and sold them the forest wood. They say that, “we have worked day and night as daily labour (*coolis*) for cutting the trees for the ‘shavukars’ (merchants) who got the contract and permission from the government to take out the forest wood. They used to give us ‘sara’ (Liquor) and ‘battam’ (Rice) as our labour payment. Larger amount of timber and wood of valuable trees of ‘Teku’, ‘Jittega’, ‘Nalla Maddi’, ‘Yegi’, etc, were transported by them. Thus we have lost our resource due to the government policies, and even due to our ignorance, which the ‘shavukars’ have encashed. We were cheated by offering ‘sara’ (local liquor), our habitual weakness. We were not aware that our future was at stake. Otherwise, we would have opposed the cutting of our forest which provides us valuable resources and livelihood. As result of that now we are facing many problems in leading our lives, where as earlier we used to get fruits, animal and bird species from the forest to eat”.

Nimmala Chinnamma (aged about 100 years) says that, in the past, the villagers used to stay in the forest in groups to safeguard the resources for our community's use and we felt that the forest is ours. In addition to this, the villagers used to follow the instructions and norms put forth by the '*Peddamanchi*' (village elder) of the village not to destroy the forest resources. But this kind of behaviour is not found these days due to the introduction of modern (statutory) Panchayat system and due to the interaction with non-tribal outsiders.

The local Chenchu express that these days they are not in a position to get anything from the forest to feed their stomachs. They say that some 10-15 years back, they used to get sufficient food material from the forest such as different animal species like, '*Udumulu*', '*Udatalu*', '*Kundellu*', '*Duppulu*', '*Adavipandulu*', etc., and some other bird species also. But now a days, the animals and birds are vanishing due to the depletion of the trees in the forest. The rain fall has also come down due to the forest depletion which resulted in shortage of water resources and finally it became a threat to the survival of the animals. They further say that, whenever the thick forest was there, then there were plenty of tubers and roots and even the size of them was also very big. One tuber could easily feed their family a complete day. But now a days they are not available that much even though they dig 3 to 4 feet deep they get only very thin sized tubers. These tubers are not that much tasty like the earlier tubers and also their size is small because of scanty rainfall.

One of the older respondents mentioned that, "we used to live by depending on forest completely. Earlier we used to get plenty of minor forest produces like honey, gum, firewood, etc., along with hunted animals and food gatherings, to sell in the market. We used to spend very less time and effort to get these resources 10-15 years back. If we worked daily six hours, at the end of the week we were able to get three kg gum worth of Rs. 200-300, honey worth of Rs. 200, and firewood worth of Rs.100. But during the last 5-10 years even if we worked for more than six hours, we were not in a position to get even half of the quantity/amount compared to earlier situation. Since last 5 years, we are not getting any food material or minor forest produces from the forest. So we have completely stopped going to the forest and started depending on labour works only, which we did not do 15-20 years ago. Ten years back we started going for labour outside the village for four to six months in a year, but since last five years we are depending on migration labour completely".

After introduction of agriculture in this village, bore wells and tube wells were dug for the purpose of cultivation of commercial crops, which consume more water. The overutilisation of water sources and shortage of rainfall led to low water yields from this drinking water bore wells as well as tube wells in the agricultural lands, which clearly indicates fast depleting ground water resources. Now, out of six bore wells four bore wells in this

village have gone dry. Similarly, five tube wells in the agricultural lands also have dried up.

The drastic changes in the availability and accessibility of the resources have caused the Chenchu to look for new forms of livelihood. As depletion is taking place, from the stage of “plentiful resource” they have moved to the “lack of resource” stage. So, inevitably their livelihoods have turned to different fields like migration, agriculture, agricultural and wage labour, etc. Due to the depletion of resources, the food gathering activity and M.F.P. collection has drastically come down during the past twenty years as a result the Chenchu have taken to new types of livelihood activities.

Table 1 shows the changing livelihood patterns of the Chenchu. If we observe the trend of dependents on hunting, food gathering and M.F.P. collection as their main occupation, we notice a negligible number (4%) of families pursuing this sort of livelihood. Now a days, majority (34%) of Chenchus have been resorting to migration in search of their livelihood. More than half (56%) of the people are taking up either migration or wage labour as their livelihood whereas about quarter (26%) of the people are only practicing agriculture as their main occupation. There were hardly anyone earlier, who used to go for outside works and migration works as the main occupation, but now it has substantially increased and depending on wage labour also has increased considerably.

The above discussion clearly brought out the changing livelihood patterns of the Chenchu and their vulnerable conditions of living as a result of loss of earlier livelihood because of loss of customary rights over forest resources and lack of certainty about the sustainability of the present patterns of livelihood. While they have adopted new livelihood patterns such as migration, agriculture, and wage labour as major sources of living, they have also adapted some subsidiary occupations to augment their earnings. Some of the families which go on seasonal migration, they practice agriculture, MFP collection, food gathering and hunting, wage labour, fishing, etc., as subsidiary occupations (Table 2). They return to the village during monsoon period and go on migration for a couple of months during summer, etc.

It is clear from the above that due to the Forest Acts, depletion of resources, etc., the Chenchu have lost their traditional livelihoods and are forced to take up new livelihood patterns. The efforts of the government though helped some of the Chenchu families most of them have less sustainable livelihoods. It has made them to be hunter-gatherers of work, in a different sense in seeking livelihood.

Impact of Developmental Programs on Chenchu Livelihoods

An attempt is made in this study to discuss the process of development and welfare programmes that are being implemented by the government for

the Chenchu of Chenchugudem village and their response towards these developmental programs and to see how they are coping up with the changing conditions.

The Chenchus are one of the most Primitive Tribal Groups (P.T.G) and in an effort to bring them into the developmental stream the government has taken up many welfare programs. For the effective development of Chenchus, I.T.D.A (Integrated Tribal Developmental Agency), Srisailam, is working for the Chenchu living in Kurnool, Prakasam, Guntur, Mahbubnagar, Nalgonda and Rangareddy districts. I.T.D.A., takes up developmental activities mainly in the area of housing schemes, agriculture and minor-irrigation, drinking water, animal husbandry and vocational training. In Chenchugudem also, many developmental programmes were taken up by I.T.D.A., which includes agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, drinking water, housing and education.

Agricultural Development

As already mentioned, government made efforts for the development of agriculture in this village. Pattas (record of rights) for three acres of agricultural land were given to each household by the government. After this, I.T.D.A. took the responsibility for implementation of agricultural development programmes and dug borewells and provided electric motors, ploughs, bullocks, and agricultural implements like sickle, spade, etc., along with high-yielding varieties of seeds to improve production in this village.

ITDA supplied agricultural implements and plough bullocks. Initially, the villagers practiced agriculture with these implements using plough bullocks. However, within a few years many of them stopped agricultural activities. The reason as stated by some was that they could not carry out cultivation as their cattle were eaten away by wild animals in the forest, while some others informed that the bullocks supplied by ITDA were old ones and died within a couple of years. But some informants mentioned that the bullocks, carts, electric motors and borewells supplied by the government were sold to the outsiders and non-tribals at cheaper rates to meet personal expenses by some and some others sold them for drinking liquor. This was because they were not accustomed to agriculture and were reluctant to pursue it as it involved hard work and does not yield immediate returns.

In the village there are around 10 Chenchu families, which have utilised these facilities well and became good cultivators. Their children were educated and became government employees. These families further developed their agricultural activities after becoming their family members as permanent job holders. It is observed in the village that these families are cultivating not only in their own lands but also in the leased-in lands taken from the villagers, and sometimes even from the outsiders from the surrounding villages. This

could become possible why because these people had worked as the agriculture labour at non-tribal fields of plain areas in the past and they have shifted to this new rehabilitated colony as government has provided lands to them and got succeeded in agricultural activities.

Horticulture Development

Under the horticulture development programme, the government took up 'Mango Plantation' in this village and 120 mango saplings were distributed for each family in the year 1990 for planting in 2 acres. Under IFAD programme, mango plants were supplied to them to re-plant in the same fields where the plants that were planted earlier had died. Mango plants were distributed in this village in the year 1996 for 34 members, in the year 2002 for 14 and again in 2003 for 20 members. As maintenance charge for each family they have been given Rs.60/- per month up to five years to grow the plants.

Though more than 50 households of this village took active part in mango plantation in their agricultural fields, only 35 households have mango trees at present. Among them also many have lost their plants and having very few trees, below 20. In fact, among all the households, only a few have almost all plants surviving, 100-120 plants per acre (Table 3).

According to the villagers, there are many reasons for the loss of trees. One of the important causes is because of their negligence in maintaining and also abuse of the money given by government for their personal purposes and mostly on liquor. Apart from this, lack of proper water facilities also affected the survival rate of the mango plants. Though the government provided bores and motor facilities, five bores were given to 18 members in five groups. In some cases, they quarreled among themselves and sold them up. Some of the villagers say that their lands were rocky and sandy which are not suitable for cultivation and growing different kinds of plants. They also stated that after planting mango trees, they have lost the scope to cultivate other crops in their agricultural fields, and because of this they started going for migration works for their livelihood purposes. Further due to their continuous absence from the village, they are even lost their mango trees as there is no proper maintenance.

However some of the villagers are taking very good care of their mango trees as well as crops. They are also cultivating other crops like castor, cotton, etc., in the same land where the mango tree are there by using hybrid seeds, which will grow up to certain level and do not harm the mango plants. Thus the mango plantation programme initiated by the government has given inspiration to some of them.

Role of G.C.C. and Forest Department

G.C.C. (Girijan Co-operative Corporation) markets were started by the government for the Chenchu to sell their M.F.P/NTFP collections. With

this provision Chenchu of Chenchugudem were getting economic benefits by selling gum, soap nut, tamarind, nuxvomica, chillaginjal, madangadda, etc. But now a days the non-tribals are coming freely to the forest and extracting these resources, causing further depletion. This kind of non-tribal activities are affecting the livelihood of Chenchus. As a result of these factors, Chenchu of this village resorted to labour works and migration to various places in search of livelihoods. Social disorder has set in among the Chenchu of this village as a consequence of modern livelihood activities, migration works, influence of outsiders, impact of statutory Panchayat system, etc.

Forest department is taking some measures for preserving the forest and other natural resource. It is taking up the eco-developmental activities such as afforestation programmes, construction of check dams, etc. The Chenchus of this village are getting some work from the eco-development activities taken up jointly by the Forest Department and Eco-Development Committee of Chenchugudem.

New Form of Hand-to-Mouth Culture among the Chenchu Livelihoods

Though some improvement is taking place in the livelihood patterns of Chenchu of Chenchugudem due to the developmental initiatives undertaken by the government, still Chenchu are struggling to survive and choosing the alternative options.

During the last 10-15 years, migrations from this village were increasing due to the failure of agriculture and horticultural works and also because of depletion of forest resources that affected their food security, including M.F.P collections. Thus migration has become major part of earning their livelihood. This has now become a trend among many Chenchu families in order to eke out a living. Twenty three families now resort to seasonal migration for their livelihood and for twenty one households seasonal migrations became subsidiary economic activity. Thus 44 households, that are more than half (65%) of the households in the village, are depending on the emigrational labour works either completely or partially for their livelihood. Those who depend fully on migration for their livelihood go to outside places like Mumbai, Karnataka and to other towns or cities in Andhra Pradesh for 9 months in a year. They are hired and transported by the labour contractors. Both wife and husband are paid Rs.9000/- and meals for the period of these 9 months by the labour contractors who engage them. Though they get less payment, they are opting to this kind of work as there is no work or life feeding sources to them in their village. Private labour contractors use this kind of helpless situation of the Chenchu and exploit their labour.

Fear of change of source of livelihood leads to 'occupational disruptions'. This may lead to low to high degree of 'occupational redundancy'. This loss, even if substituted by the new ways managing earning the livelihood, often

leads to a state of mental stress. Loss of agricultural land to the landowners, though given 'economic compensation' and also new occupational opportunities under various 'rehabilitation programmes' by the Government could not fulfill the psychological loss such as, social status enjoyed through 'feudalistic culture', the village leadership leading to psychological satisfaction. All these sources of satisfaction of needs usually get blocked by the relocation process in the new environment (Narayan 2002: 71).

The introduction of agriculture brought many changes in the division of labour between men and women. Women feel that their work load has increased and became burdensome as they now have to carry on the works like transplanting, weeding, harvesting and carrying their produce to home or sometime to the markets. Apart from these works they have to look after household works like cooking, fetching water, washing clothes, bringing firewood, etc. Compared to earlier days, now a days bringing firewood takes long time as they have to walk long distances. The reason for this the villagers say is due to the depletion of forests, which is taking place because of carting of forest resources, including wood, by the non-tribals. Women complain that it is becoming tough for them to prepare even two square meals that include rice and curries, because of lack of work to earn livelihood. They say that this kind of situations happens because of their poverty combined with their husbands' bad habit of drinking liquor. The Chenchu men say that getting of food grains and other provisions has become difficult due to uncertainty of agricultural activity with successive drought, etc., and lack of availability of productive work. They feel that agricultural activities have become burdensome as they require a lot of investment, which they can't afford. Hence, they are keeping their lands fallow.

The Chenchu men and women say that because of all these difficulties in the new form of farm based livelihoods, they are prone towards migration, where they will be provided contracted wages and meal by the labour contractors. These Chenchu say that this kind of life is reflecting their earlier hunting and food gathering life style, the kind of 'hand-to-mouth' culture of economic life or economic culture as also described by Fürer Haimendorf (1943:58). In this new livelihood, as in the past, they need not procure different provisions, utensils, vegetables, etc., and need not strain for preparing a meal as they do not need to cook food. Because of these reasons they mostly prefer this kind of migration works for earning their livelihood though they get very less amount for their work.

Thus these kinds of "examples of people adopting or not adopting new, non-traditional livelihood strategies illustrate that people negotiate change not only according to economic factors, but also according to the cultural and social meanings and consequences that new livelihood strategies have" (Cahn, 2006: 53). In this context it is important to note that, though government has introduced the agriculture and horticulture programmes for the development

of Chenchu, there were no full-length steps to prepare them mentally to set their lives into this kind of economic activities which are not part of their earlier lives or their economic culture of past. The government has not taken adequate care to properly guide as well as monitor their livelihoods and well being.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The present study concentrated on the ecological aspects, mostly on forest and other resources in relation to the livelihoods of rehabilitated Chenchu and their sustainability. Though there are some failures in the developmental programmes being implemented by the government, it can be said that there is some improvement in the lives of Chenchu compared to their past living pattern. However, there are some of issues which should be taken up on an urgent basis to bring an overall development and also maintain the ecological balance in the Chenchu areas.

The villagers urge that the government should provide different opportunities and favourable work ambience at the local level. The Chenchu tribal people further suggest that it would be very expedient and profitable if the government provides them the opportunities to run the apiculture as it is the occupation which resembles their own traditional kind of livelihood patterns. Government has to impose and implement strictly the forest laws and make sincere efforts to prevent exploitation of forest resources by the non-tribals in order to maintain the eco-balance which helps the Chenchu to carry on their livelihood activities such as collection of MFPs / NTFPs.

There is need to give more demonstrations and training programmes on cultivation of crops, etc., to the Chenchu. Efforts should be made to change their mindsets and impress upon them that they can lead a comfortable life if they adapt to the new livelihood patterns which can be more sustainable and rewarding. There is need to conduct audio-visual programmes showing live examples of people of their own tribal groups who are developed and also about various successful programmes. There is need to demonstrate different kinds of eco-friendly methods in agricultural activities for the conservation of land, water, etc. Villagers feel that government has to take up rapid aforestation activities and should plant useful tree species like gum trees, tamarind, *sikai*, *usiri*, mango, etc. This will help them in M.F.P. collections and to their economic well being. The provision of collecting these products should be given to the local tribal people and the non-tribal outsiders should be strictly forbidden from exploiting these resources. There should be strict control on the private contractors who are taking the Chenchu to the emigrational works and exploiting their labour.

Thus the government has to take initiative in providing different work opportunities at the local level. There should not be common rehabilitation

package to all and those should be taken up according to the peoples' choices, experiences, traditional and cultural concerns, etc. Further the rehabilitation activity should not be closed simply by providing land or money, there should be follow up mechanisms, continuous monitoring, providing the support networks and human skills years together if needed decades together. This can prevent the outmigration and assist them in carving out better future for themselves with more sustainable livelihoods so that they can come out of the present distress and uncertain livelihoods.

However the recent NREGS (National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme) works that are being provided by the government is helping Chenchu to get the works at local as well as to get the returns immediately within two weeks or a month and these works made them to settle at home place without going migrations to out places in search of livelihoods. Finally, it can be hoped that the sustainable development will take place among the Chenchu with the combined efforts of Government, N.G.Os, intellectuals and other social activists in the very near future.

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Table 1
Main Occupations of Chenchus

Sl. No.	Occupation	No. of Households	% of Households
1	Migration	23	34
2	Agriculture	18	26
3	Wage labour	15	22
4	Service	9	13
5	MFP/Food gathering & Hunting	3	4
	Total	68	100

Table 2
Subsidiary Occupations of Chenchus

Sl. No.	Occupation	No. of Households*	% of Households
1	Agriculture	28	41
2	MFP collection	26	38
3	Food gathering & Hunting	23	34
4	Wage labour	22	32
5	Migration	21	31
6	Fishing	13	19
7	Mat preparation	4	6

*Multiple responses

Table 3
Survival of Mango Trees Planted by Households

Mango trees survived out of 120	No. of Households	% of Households
Below 20	12	34
20-50	9	26
50-100	8	23
100-120	6	17
Total	35	100

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