OWNING OUR CHANGE

A CASE STUDY ON A DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTION AMONG TRIBAL GROUPS IN SOUTH INDIA

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TEED TRUST'S VISION:

»A SOCIETY THAT PROVIDES EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIVELI- HOOD AND DIGNITY **FOR ALL MARGIN- ALISED TRIBAL COMMUNITIES.«**

» SOCIAL DEVELOP-
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Foreword
by the Swedish Mission Council

IMAGINE SOMEONE looking back on the past ten years of her life and realising that she has made a journey of self-discovery and empowerment, and now finds herself in a much better place. Now imagine that your actions helped to facilitate this journey.

Social development work is made up of dreams of a better future and actions aimed to make those dreams come true. Development organisations are constantly looking for ways to enhance the strategic effectiveness of their work and to interact with local communities. This is a story about one such organisaion: The Tribal Educational and Environmental Development Trust (TEED). Together with vulnerable tribal groups in South India, TEED has participated in an extraordinary journey of social change. The journey has not always been smooth—like any trip through new terrain, it has encountered detours and roadblocks—but on the way both TEED and the tribal groups they have worked with have gained important insights into the process of change.

SMC visited TEED in 2010 and was struck by the stories of change told both by members of the communities that TEED had worked with and by TEED staff. We felt that the story of TEED could inspire others and serve as documentation of one of the many small development organisations that strive to make a difference. It is a story about owning your own change; about organising, leadership, rights, relationship-building and legitimacy.

This case study has been written up at SMC's request by Charles Câmara, a social anthropologist working for Caritas Sweden. Charles Câmara has been involved in TEED's work from its inception, and has documented the process throughout.

Caritas Sweden and the Swedish Organisation for Individual Relief/Individuell Människohjälp (SOIR/IM) have a long-standing relationship with TEED, and the work has also been supported by the Swedish government (Sida), through the Swedish Mission Council (SMC).

1. Introduction

This booklet is directed especially to development workers and change agents who are thinking about strategies, theories of change, and understandings of a rights-based approach to development, and who are looking for ideas and examples to learn from. It is the story of an Indian development organisation, The Tribal Educational and Environmental Development Trust (TEED), based in a rural setting in South India. Through their work, TEED and the tribal groups they work with have seen major changes emerging as the tribals are empowered collectively and individually.

Some questions to be asked in the context of social development interventions include the following: What is development, and how does change happen? Whose development counts?—in other words, how do you balance power and ensure that the voices of those with little power are also heard? How does a development organisation gain legitimacy and trust in a community? What can a development organisation do to successfully support a process of change and empowerment in a community? The story of TEED reflects these issues.

I present TEED's work as a case study rather than a manual. One advantage of a case study is that it can provide us with rich descriptions of a single case and often can reveal meaningful information about a situation. A case study about a change intervention offers us opportunities to understand how things worked in the field as the events unfolded over time. These practical experiences are useful for organisations working in the field as well as for partner organisations supporting the work from a distance. The case study draws on data compiled through short-term field work by the author, written reports, and discussions and interviews held from 1996 to 2011 with community members and with TEED's staff, board members, and founders.

What has changed for the tribals?

The tribals that TEED has worked with are of the opinion that their lives are considerably better today compared to ten years ago. Their lives and social situation are improving, they are able to exert greater control over their material and intellectual resources, and they are becoming skilled at acquiring new resources to further pursue their development. The following are some of the most important results achieved to date:

- Awareness of their rights and greater access to power.
- Self-confidence and self-respect.
- Children and youths have access to education and technical skills trainings.
- Tribal groups have set up their own organisational units and have the skills needed to manage them.
- Income has increased, as has spatial mobility.
- Tribals have acquired land rights and land titles.
- Self-help groups (SHG) have been organised, and savings have increased.

To achieve these changes, TEED conducted a number of activities that yielded positive results. These particular activities were based on objectives formulated jointly by TEED and the tribals, as well as on the change approach applied by TEED. The tribal groups and TEED decided that their primary goal would be the comprehensive empowerment and development of the tribal groups.

TEED's intervention in brief

Know your rights

Prior to TEED's intervention, the tribal groups of North Kanara had very limited awareness of their own human rights. For example, since the early 1980s, they knew that the state had imposed restrictions on the use of forest land for housing and for agriculture. But the tribals lacked access to these acts and legal documents, and knew even less about how to use them to protect the land they have inhabited and cultivated for generations. They were aware neither of the legal rights their tribal membership entitled them to, nor of the government schemes that were available to them through central government and state support. They did not know that their children, like all other children in India, had the right to education.

TEED initiated its relationship with the tribal groups through face-to-face interaction with tribals of all categories: women, youths, children, men, and traditional leaders. TEED mobilised the tribals and organised training camps and workshops to raise awareness about the rights they were entitled to and how to avail themselves of them, as well as their duties, such as protecting the forest and natural environment. This spurred on a gradual process of change as tribals became more aware of their rights and responsibilities and learned how to approach local authorities and tap into the various development programs and resources available to them.

Dignity and confidence

At the beginning of TEED's intervention most of the tribals had low self-esteem, which may have been due in part to their past experiences with being the objects of condescending attitudes and behaviours by non-tribal groups, especially the upper castes. Thus, to the extent possible, most tribals restricted their sphere of interaction to their own community. Women were restricted and suppressed by their men from their own communities, as well as by men from other communities, and were relegated to an inferior position in tribal society. The girl-child was given very little consideration. Both to improve the tribal's self-esteem and to improve the position of women, TEED conducted a number of counselling sessions to discuss and assess the importance of equality between women and men. The trainings con-

ducted by TEED were practical: they included orientation trainings on how to interact with non-tribal groups, upper-castes, and state officials, and on how to deliver speeches in public. In addition, individual and group counselling was offered to encourage tribals to come forward and overcome their shyness. TEED helped tribal women to organise themselves into SHGs and provided necessary resources, such as trainings on group dynamics, book-keeping, and management of revolving funds. Youths were also given counselling to strengthen their self-esteem and to encourage them to carry on with higher studies or acquire a new technical skill that would give them access to paid employment.

Outline of the study

Chapter 2 gives an overview of the tribal situation in India, especially in the North Kanara district. Chapter 3 introduces TEED Trust as a civil society organisation and relates how and why TEED was founded and how the organisation established relationships which served as the foundation for their future work with various tribal groups. Chapter 4 describes TEED's approach and methods, and how these evolved through close interaction with tribals that led to an understanding both of the challenges tribal groups faced and of ways in which these challenges could be dealt with. Chapter 5 presents views on development in the tribal community. The concluding chapter 6 outlines key lessons learned. Appendix 1 is a glossary of some of the acronyms and terms employed, Appendix 2 provides a reflection on the concepts of development, empowerment, and the rights-based approach, and Appendix 3 provides further information about the relationship between TEED and the two Swedish organisations, Caritas and SOIR/IM.

2. The Tribal Groups of India

This chapter gives an overview of the tribal situation in India, and particularly in the North Kanara district, where TEED works.

Tribes in India

India is a federal republic with 28 states and 6 union territories, with an estimated population of 1.2 billion (2011). Each state has its own elected parliament and government. The union territories are governed by the central government. The population is officially and unofficially classified into numerous ethnic and religious groups, tribes, classes, and castes. Although the caste system was officially outlawed by the Constitution of India in 1950, it still lingers in the everyday life of Indians, particularly in the rural areas (Haviland 2005). Caste in India is a socially stratified system and is constituted of four caste groups, plus a category of people referred to as "Harijans", or casteless. People belonging to the four castes look down upon the Harijans, and in past times referred to them with the derogatory epithet "untouchables". The Harijans object to this labelling and refer to themselves as "dalits", which means "the oppressed people" (HRW 2001).

The tribals who are at the centre of this case study are not included in any of the abovementioned categories. Officially, the tribal groups are called the "Adivasis", which means "the indigenous people of India." It is estimated that 70 to 90 million people, approximately eight percent of the population, are classified as tribals (Census of India 2011). Some Indian states with large tribal populations are classified by the government as tribal districts, which means the tribals are eligible for economic and educational assistance, land ownership rights, scheduled seats in local political bodies, and other concessions—at least in theory. In reality, the Scheduled Tribes encounter numerous obstacles, imposed especially by local officials and the upper castes, to actually obtaining these concessions and

tapping into the government schemes allocated to them. The tribes recognised by the Indian Constitution and entitled to special central government and state government support are called "Scheduled Tribes" (Das Basu 2002). However, tribals living in other parts of India are not provided special funds or concessions for development interventions, and not all tribes are officially recognised. The homeland of the tribals who are the protagonists of this case study—North Kanara, in the state of Karnataka—is not recognised by the government as a tribal district.

Though Karnataka is making rapid progress in social, economic, scientific, and other spheres, especially in the state capital, Bangalore, with its hi-tech enterprises and manufacturing industries, the rural and forest-dwelling tribal communities have not had much opportunity to benefit from the state's progress. Development interventions carried out by the Karnataka state government are not reaching these tribal groups. Many public institutions, such as educational and health care centres, are geographically distant from the tribal settlements, with the result that tribal groups have negligible access. A common denominator among all the tribes is that they rely on what the forest provides them for their shelter and sustenance, but that reliance has now been reduced, mostly due to restrictions imposed by the state. As a result, tribals must supplement their income through daily wage labour for upper caste groups, who are the primary landowners and businessmen.

Challenges facing the tribals
North Kanara has a population of 1.3 million people, of which approximately 300,000 are classified as tribals. For the purposes of civic administration, the district is divided into eleven *talukas* (municipalities), and comprises of 1,280 villages. Of the eleven trib-

al groups in North Kanara, only two—the Bedara Valmiki and the Siddi—are Scheduled Tribes.

The following common traits can be observed among the six tribes TEED is working with, though some are now beginning to change:
- Land ownership is almost nil, even among the two tribes that are classified as Scheduled Tribes.
- Being classified as a Scheduled Tribe has not immediately led to concessions and support from the state.
- The tribes are considerably dependent on upper castes to earn cash.
- Severe state restrictions on the tribal communities' use of the forest and its products have considerably reduced their ability to maintain their traditional lifestyle.
- Few tribals are literate, and very few tribal youths pursue higher education.
- Traditionally, elderly men play important roles in the village life, but they have limited knowledge about economic and political matters beyond the village.
- Traditional occupations are losing ground as new occupations are introduced.
- Women's position within the community is inferior to that of men.
- Child marriage is common, and girls are generally not educated.
- Political awareness and participation is very low.

There are several powerful actors operating in North Kanara district who in one way or another exert influence on the tribal population and TEED:
- the local officials in several district departments; most importantly, the forest department
- political parties and their proprietary or affiliated social welfare organisations
- faith-based organisations, especially Christian and Hindu NGOs
- secular NGOs
- the press
- the upper castes and businessmen

Some of these actors, such as the local Catholic Church and the upper castes, have been in the area for decades, whereas other actors, such as the local press and the state-based businessmen, are newcomers. Often most of these actors have dominated the tribal groups socially, economically, and politically. For example the upper castes have used tribals as a source of cheap labour, while the secular and religious political parties have used them as a sources of votes. The Catholic Church and its institutions have provided religious services to Catholics while offering education for tribals from all denominations and faiths. The authorities have been operating in the area since the time of British colonisation in India two centuries ago, but most of the time they have neglected the tribal peoples' needs and rights, often viewing them as intruders in the forest rather than inhabitants of it.

This was the socio-economic and political situation TEED found when it started its relationship with the tribal groups of North Kanara. The tribals were in dire need of improving their situation in all respects.

Information about the tribes TEED works with

The Gowli

ORIGIN: Migrants from the neighbouring state of Maharashtra and Goa.

POPULATION: 15,000 in Yellapur and Mundgod *talukas*.

LIVELIHOOD: Rearing cows and buffalos, selling buffalo milk, agriculture. Sale of the milk and dairy products has been reduced due to competition from commercially packaged products imported from other parts of Karnataka. To earn additional income, they work as daily wage labourers for upper castes and for the forest department.

POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT: Only a few men were involved in local Panchayat as distant participants during assembly meetings. Their political awareness is low, and only a small number among them, mostly men, vote in elections.

EDUCATION: Only one person out of ten is literate. Little more than a dozen individuals among them have reached graduation.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE: Patriarchal system, in which the men, especially elderly men, have an important role to play in settling family matters and out-of-village matters. Women have very little say within or outside the Gowli community. Until recently, child marriage was common, resulting in early pregnancies and girls remaining uneducated.

RELIGION: Popular Hinduism, while at the same time venerating forest-dwelling spirits.

LANGUAGE: Marathi (which is the main language spoken in Maharashtra), Konkani (which is the main language spoken in Goa), and Kannada (which is the main language spoken Karnataka).

The Kare Vokkal Gowda

ORIGIN: One of the few indigenous groups inhabiting North Kanara.

POPULATION: 3,500 distributed among 48 settlements in Yellapur and Mundgod *talukas*.

LIVELIHOOD: Animal husbandry, but shifting to small-scale agriculture due to forest regulations and restrictions. 80% use encroached land. Most rely on other sources of income to make a living, such as collecting herbal leaves, wild berries, nuts, and honey, and making and selling bamboo baskets.

POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT: A few of the men are involved in local political decision-making bodies, such as the Panchayat, but they have no say in the matters that affect their lives. Their knowledge of politics is very low.

However, some women from this community have taken interest in local politics and attempted with some success to participate in Panchayat meetings.

EDUCATION: Literacy rate is less than 25%; only a few individuals have graduated from college.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE: The elderly men form the community's leadership, and the leaders exert strong influence on the day-to-day matters of village life. Compared to other tribes in North Kanara, women have more freedom. Widows are allowed to re-marry, and divorce is accepted.

RELIGION: Animism, which includes beliefs in spirits dwelling in the forest and beside rivers, mixed with elements from popular Hinduism.

LANGUAGE: Kannada.

The Kulwadi Marati

ORIGIN: Migrant community from the neighbouring states of Maharashtra and Goa.

POPULATION: 4,450 distributed among 41 settlements in Yellapur and Mundgod *talukas*.

LIVELIHOOD: Cultivating rice paddies and *ragi* in small plots in the interior forest. However, since this is not enough to subsist on, they also work as day labourers for the upper castes. In recent years many youths have migrated to the nearby towns and are working as unskilled labourers.

POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT: About a dozen men have been involved in local Panchayat, but had no real role to play.

EDUCATION: Literacy less than 20%. Some youths have attended college, but not all of them have completed their degrees.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE: Men hold high positions in their community and act as leaders. Women remain mostly within the house and the village; tradition does not permit them to move freely in the area. Child marriage was earlier a common practice but has now been reduced, giving girls better chances to get an education.

RELIGION: Mainstream Hinduism, especially worship of the popular Indian deity Ganesha. They also venerate the spirits of their ancestors and some of their animals.

LANGUAGE: Konkani mixed with Marathi and Kannada.

The Kunbi

ORIGIN: Migrants from the neighbouring state of Goa, where they are one of the indigenous tribes. They lost their position during the 450 years of Portuguese rule in Goa and became a marginal and oppressed community.

POPULATION: 4,200 living in 32 settlements in Yellapur and Mundgod *talukas*.

LIVELIHOOD: Cultivating rice paddies on small plots, and vegetables and bananas in their backyards. They also collect non-timber forest products such as herbal leaves, berries, and wild honey, and practice various kinds of handicrafts such as basket-making. They regularly work as day labourers for the upper castes to supplement their income.

POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT: Knowledge about politics and political matters is very low. Few have attended local Panchayat meetings and even fewer understand how this system functions.

EDUCATION: Literacy 15%. Very few have completed a college education.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE: Traditional leaders play a major role in settling community matters and exert considerable influence over the Kunbi community.

RELIGION: The Kunbies practice animism, which includes belief in forest-dwelling spirits, mixed with elements from popular Hinduism as well as popular Christianity (a remnant from their origin in Goa). They have strong affection for their ancestors and venerate their souls through various rituals and ceremonies.

LANGUAGE: Konkani mixed with Marathi spoken amongst themselves; Kannada spoken with non-Kunbi people.

The Bedar Valmiki - Scheduled Tribe

ORIGIN: Migrated from Maharashtra two centuries ago.

POPULATION: 6,000 in 28 settlements in Yellapur and Mundgod *talukas*.

LIVELIHOOD: Cultivating rice paddies on small plots, and sweet potatoes and vegetables in their backyards. They supplement these crops by collecting wild berries and nuts in the forest and working as day labourers for the upper castes in the area. In early times they also hunted small animals, but this activity has been reduced due to restrictions imposed by the authorities.

POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT: As a Scheduled Tribe, they are allocated a certain number of seats in local decision-making bodies, but only a few among them have involved themselves in local Panchayat or similar political institutions. Due to lack of knowledge, they have not been able to take advantage of their status as a Scheduled Tribe. Generally their knowledge of politics is very limited.

EDUCATION: Literacy 25%. Very few have graduated from college.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE: Some of the women, so called Basavis, have a special religious function in the temples, which entails some influence on the community's religious life. The women enjoy some freedom to move in the area. Divorce and widow marriage are not common but accepted.

RELIGION: Traditional Hinduism; they especially worship the deity Shiva. Claim to have their origin in the popular Indian saint Valmiki, which gives them an important role in regional religious festivals.

LANGUAGE: Marathi and Kannada.

The Siddi – Scheduled Tribe

ORIGIN: Descendants of Africans who since the 15th century were brought to India by the Arabs, the Portuguese, and the British as slaves and soldiers.

POPULATION: 8,000 in 121 settlements in Yellapur and Mundgod *talukas*.

LIVELIHOOD: Cultivating rice paddies, *ragi*, bananas, and tubers. A few work for the local forest department, and some also work in the private sector. A good number of both men and women work for the upper castes, mostly doing manual labour.

POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT: Due to their status as a Scheduled Tribe, they are allocated a certain number of seats, depending on the size of the constituency, in local Panchayats. Both men and women have used these opportunities to participate in Panchayat meetings, but they are often pushed aside by the other members. Generally, political knowledge is low. Compared to other listed tribes in Karnataka, the Siddis have to some extent been able to tap into the support and schemes offered by state and local authorities. One may attribute this mild success to their earlier acquired knowledge, orientation trainings, and continued advocacy supported by their organisation, "the Siddi Development Society".

EDUCATION: Literacy 50%. About one hundred of them have graduated from college.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE: Traditional male leaders play an important role in the settlements. Women have less influence, but have the freedom to move beyond village boundaries. Generally, the women take active part in social life and the senior women are solicited for their opinions in village matters.

RELIGION: Ancestor veneration and belief in various forest-dwelling spirits; also mainstream Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism.

LANGUAGE: Depending on which religion they adhere to, they speak different languages, such as Konkani, Marathi, Kannada, and Urdu.

3. TEED Trust – facilitating change

This chapter describes the emergence of TEED Trust, its vision and mission, and the values that guided its approach to development work among the tribal groups of North Kanara. The chapter begins with a discussion of the founder of TEED, as his vision and values had considerable influence on how TEED evolved from a rather small, service-delivering organisation into a development organisation attempting to apply a rights-based approach in its interventions.

Finding the foundations of TEED

TEED was founded in the year 1999 by Mr. Shivappa Poojary. He hailed from a poor rural village setting, and his Hindu family belonged to one of the lower sub-castes, or jatis, in the area. In spite of financial difficulties, Poojary completed a Master's degree in social work (MSW) from a reputed Catholic University College in Mangalore.

After completing his theoretical studies he came in contact with the Jesuits in Bangalore and befriended some of the priests. The Jesuits is a male religious order within the global Catholic Church. Poojary absorbed the values that guide the Jesuits' work with marginalised communities—values based on the fundamental belief each individual is an image of God. For the Jesuits, this entails that assistance should be extended to any person regardless of religion or ethnicity; giving preference to the poorest members of society; guiding the vulnerable to stand on their own feet for their own development; assisting the oppressed to improve their self-identity; and assisting the marginalised to take part in the political decision-making bodies at various levels of society. The Jesuits regard education as one of the most important strategies to change situations of poverty. By gaining awareness of the factors influencing a problematic situation and by acquiring relevant resources, the individual, and the community, is able to take action to change the situation for the

better. As well as internalising these Jesuit values, Poojary was also a keen adherent of the views on society and values as articulated by Gandhi and his followers.

In early 1980s, one group among the Jesuits was working with a tribal community in North Kanara, namely, the Siddis. Poojary took a keen interest in the Jesuits' work among the Siddis and decided to do his training in the Jesuit-managed project in North Kanara. After completing the training, he was appointed chief coordinator of the Siddi project.

The Siddis were scattered throughout various parts of the district, mainly residing in dense forest areas. At the time Poojary began working with them, the Siddis lived separately in their own settlements, other tribal groups, such as the Gowlis and Kunbies, resided nearby. By visiting the scattered Siddi settlements, Poojary acquired a thorough understanding of the lives of the Siddis and of the other tribal groups of North Kanara, and established good rapport with them. As the Siddi project began achieving many positive results, leaders from the other tribes often approached Poojary asking to be included in the project so they, too, could benefit from it. That was not possible, but Poojary kept their request in mind. He noted that in spite of differences in culture, religion, and level of integration in society, the various tribal groups experienced common challenges, such as being looked down upon by other castes and jatis, lacking awareness about their rights, and having no ownership of their agricultural land.

Poojary continued to work in the Siddi project until its close in 1997. His wife, Mohini, shared his vision. She had a college degree in commerce and worked in the Siddi project as an accountant for some time. By working in this project and visiting the various villages in the forest areas of North Kanara, she too gradually acquired an

in-depth knowledge of the social situation among the Siddis and the other tribes.

After the Siddi project ended, the other tribal groups in North Kanara approached the Poojaries to assist them with their community improvement efforts. The tribals could not offer them a salary, nor even a place to stay, and they had no funds whatsoever. And yet they wanted the Poojaries to stay with them and assist them with their development. During the first two years, the Poojaries worked with these tribes as volunteers. Given the lack of funds for salaries or development activities, they spent most of the time visiting numerous villages and offering the people counselling on various matters. During these two years, the Poojaries acquired detailed knowledge of the tribal communities and the obstacles they faced to improving their lives. They personally came to know hundreds of families and most of the leaders from the tribal population of North Kanara. In addition, they became acquainted with members of the upper castes and officials at various departments and levels; they also befriended the press and came to know several local politicians from different political parties. Within a short period, the Poojaries became well known in the area for their work among the tribals.

They decided to form an organisation (NGO) in order to systematically assist the tribes with their empowerment and development. Together with a group of experienced and professional development workers from other parts of Karnataka, they drafted bylaws and formed a board of trustees. The board appointed Shivappa Poojary as the managing trustee, in practice the executive of TEED Trust, which was based in Yellapur. The other board members were based in Mangalore and elsewhere in India. The board members were also experienced social and development workers who worked with tribal communities in other parts of Karnataka. They too were generally familiar with the problems the tribal population in Karnataka was facing. The experience and knowledge of the TEED board members and the Poojaries indirectly contributed to shaping TEED, its vision, and its mission.

TEED's vision and mission

TEED's vision, as developed by the board and the Poojaries, is the following:

"A society that provides equal opportunities for livelihood and dignity for all marginalised tribal communities."

The Poojaries believed TEED's mission should be to assist the tribes in restoring their dignity and to equip them with knowledge and skills in order to empower them to take charge of their own change processes, and this was expressed the Trust's mission statement:

"TEED believes that the only service to be done for the tribal people is to assist them with education and to develop their social and economic skills by further improving their capacities, especially their leadership, by promoting and supporting grassroots organisational structures for sustainable development."

Based upon TEED's vision and mission, the Poojaries, with TEED's board members, outlined a number of objectives that would contribute to attaining TEED's overall goal: namely, to empower the tribes to carry out processes of change in the directions they themselves defined. The following objectives were outlined:

- To bring mutual co-operation and understanding among different tribal/forest-dependent tribal communities of North Kanara District, in order to achieve collective involvement to solve the common problems of their survival and sustenance.
- Developing their cultural potentialities for positive social change and a strengthened identity.
- Implementing development programmes with special reference to education, health, environmental protection, women's and children's welfare, skills development, forming co-operatives, human-resource improvements, and establishing cottage industries.
- Striving to protect the tribals' human rights, and advocating for positive state policies and programmes.
- Developing a sense of community ownership among the tribal

population by building effective leadership, tribal organisational units, and networks.

- Offering effective counselling and crisis intervention for destitute and vulnerable families from all tribal communities.

These objectives provided concrete directions to TEED's management and staff about the kind of programmes and activities TEED would undertake in order to achieve its overall goal and mission. At first sight, one might get the impression that TEED formulated its vision, mission, and objectives independently from the tribal groups' own views and aspirations, but this is not the case. Before TEED was officially registered with the authorities as an NGO, the Poojaries consulted with representatives of the tribal population to formulate the content of TEED's bylaws and objectives. The consultations took place over a period of six months, and included interaction with individuals and small groups from different tribes and of different ages, religions, and genders. Thus, various sections of the tribal population were directly involved in the process of forming the TEED Trust, and as a result, it's not uncommon to hear tribals in Yellapur and Mundgod make statements to the effect of "TEED is our organisation, not the Poojaries'." Even on some occasions when other organisations and individuals in North Kanara were defaming TEED—for example, for being a Christian organisation "in disguise" that allegedly is converting the tribals to Christianity—thousands of tribals came forward to support TEED's management and staff and assure the accusers that no proselytisation was taking place.

Conclusion

The point to be emphasised here is that before TEED was founded, the Poojaries had already acquired sufficient understanding about the tribals' lives, their culture, and the challenges they faced. They also had learned much about how state officials at various levels and society in North Kanara, especially the upper castes, treated the tribals. This knowledge and understanding was of utmost importance for TEED's work and approach during the subsequent years. One could even suggest that an important part of TEED's success was due to its close, intimate relation with the tribal population. From the start,

TEED's management and the Poojaries have regarded TEED not as an organisation that is supposed to do something *for* the tribes, but rather as organisation that works *with* the tribals. They have always regarded TEED's role as facilitating the change process, temporarily acting as a guide or resource in helping the tribes to discern their own path to becoming empowered and pursuing their own change process.

TEED also developed a partnership with Caritas Sweden, which opened doors for TEED for fruitful dialogues on strategy and approach with people with other perspectives and experiences; it also opened doors for funding opportunities. More information about this partnership can be found in Appendix 3.

4. How TEED's approach emerged

TEED may not have had an explicit change strategy when they started out, but with its vision and mission along with its staff, TEED embodies a certain set of values, views, and approaches that are articulated in its ongoing interaction with the tribal communities. In this chapter I will explore how TEED and the tribals together developed an integrated change strategy. We will see how the values of participation and perseverance and an approach focusing on accompaniment and learning guided their work and led them to design an integrated approach to social development.

Initial stages: Identifying problems and discerning solutions

Since 1999, TEED had visited and interacted with all the eleven tribes of North Kanara and had acquired a general knowledge about their situation. During these early years of its existence TEED's resources were limited, and its activities consisted mainly of offering counselling and generally encouraging the few active leaders to get involved in uplifting their communities. In 2002, TEED's Swedish partner, Caritas Sweden, provided assistance enabling TEED to work more closely with the tribals than they had done previously.

In order to find out more about the tribals' current situation, TEED conducted a simple survey. The survey was limited to two *talukas*, Yellapur and Mundgod, and limited its focus on six tribes. A simple power analysis was conducted to identify local power-holders and how their actions impacted the tribals' potential for improving their lives. They also analysed problems within the tribal communities as well as problems external to them. The analyses were facilitated by TEED, and carried out over a period of several months, during which women, youth, men, elders, and traditional leaders took part in the discussions. These joint reflections had two purposes. One was to raise awareness: the participants increased their knowledge and understanding of the kinds of problems they faced; the sourc-

es of these problems (internal/external); different aspects of the problems (economic, social, political); and what could be done to overcome them. The other purpose was to directly involve the population in planning the intervention.

The results of the survey were discussed among TEED's staff and members of the tribal communities. The survey identified many problems faced by the tribals, including lack of educational facilities, high illiteracy, and lack of health services. Three problems were jointly identified as the most serious:

LOCAL LEADERSHIP. The tribes lacked relevant leadership that could guide their communities in an appropriate way to interact with authorities and other actors in society in order to assert their rights as citizens and as members of the tribal population.

LACK OF UNITY. There was significant disunity within individual tribes and among the different tribes. Considerable time and resources were wasted on internal quarrels and animosity.

GOVERNMENT REGISTRATION. Four out of six tribes were not included in the central government's list as Scheduled Tribes, which meant they were not qualified to receive government assistance, and lacked ownership of their residential and agricultural land.

TEED and the representatives from the six tribes agreed that in order to change the situation in a sustainable way these three problems needed to be addressed. The theory of change that emerged was based on the assumption that strong leadership and unity within each tribe and between these six tribes would create greater potential for the leaders to negotiate with the authorities for concessions and give them greater access to political decision-making bodies.

Reviewing and learning

During the following two years, 2003 and 2004, Caritas Sweden supported TEED's efforts to develop leadership and mobilise the adult members of the six tribes. The intervention was fairly successful. During the two years, hundreds of community sensitising trainings, workshops, meetings, and counselling sessions took place, involving all the villages of the six tribes. The project achieved its objectives of initiating the formation of skilled leaders that had the support of their communities, mobilising the tribal population for action, and creating an atmosphere of trust among the members of the six tribes. At the end of the project's second year, an internal review was conducted to assess the project's achievements and define a path forward.

The internal review indicated that a foundation had been laid, but that the tribals required further assistance in order to move ahead with the development process. The review showed that the leadership was still rather weak, and that the emerging unity within each tribe and among the tribes was perceived to be fragile. In addition, several other issues needed to be dealt with in order to develop the communities. All this made further external assistance for several more years necessary. A new and more comprehensive survey was conducted to update the information about the current situation among the six tribes, offering details concerning the material, economic, social, educational, and political situation. The questionnaire was jointly developed by TEED and the tribals, represented by traditional leaders, newly trained non-traditional leaders (men and women), youths (boys and girls), women, men and elderly persons (men and women).

Finding the objectives

TEED used the data and analysis from the internal review and the subsequent survey to apply to Caritas Sweden for a three-year comprehensive programme support grant. Based upon their own analysis, TEED and the representatives outlined the intervention's main goal and the objectives to be attained within the three-year programme period. The proposal included indicators to measure changes, means of verification, and an overall risk analysis. The programme proposal stated that

"The main development goal of this intervention is to ensure socio-economic-, health-, and educational security for six tribal communities in Yellapur and Mundgod taluka *through their own Tribal Grassroots Associations (TGA) and through their networks. This is an integrated tribal empowerment programme that addresses various self-defined needs of the population belonging to the poorest tribal sections of North Kanara."*

The proposal briefly qualifies the content of the main goal, namely that

"the intervention will directly redress the problems of the tribals through theirown efforts in the given situation, through their individual and collective participation"

The proposals also say that the TGAs will be encouraged to ensure that the poorest among the poor families will benefit to the maximum in all spheres of development. In addition, it is the task of the TGAs to integrate and unite different tribal communities for common benefit, and to strengthen networks for collective bargaining. In the process tribal communities will learn to work along with their own elected leaders and to create opportunities to groom new leaders.

In order to attain the main goal, the proposal outlined the following six objectives:

LOCAL ORGANIZING to strengthen the six tribal peoples' grassroots organisaions at the *taluka* level. With this strengthened capacity, the TGAs would be able to manage future endeavours on their own. It would be the responsibility of the TGAs to form and empower the SHGs, whereas TEED would guide, monitor, and supervise the overall process.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT. Achieve economic empowerment through income generation activities as well as skills-training programmes for youths.

AWARENESS OF POLITICAL RIGHTS AND DUTIES. Empower the target groups socially and politically by providing education and awareness of political rights and duties.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION. Encourage political participation of tribals by training them to run for election in local governing bodies and enabling them to participate in local decision-making processes.

ADVOCACY. Create a forum for advocacy to assert their right to forestland and forest products, request the allocation of government resources for tribal welfare, and seek the inclusion of tribal groups in the Scheduled Tribes list.

TEED'S INTERNAL ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT. Transform TEED into a professional development resource organisation possessing specialised skills and knowledge in working with tribal peoples and their issues of concern.

To achieve this, TEED's strategy was to offer support to meet the tribals' urgent needs, while at the same time training them to take responsibility for proceeding with their own development. The second part of the strategy involved an attempt to form, promote, and strengthen the people's organisational structures at various levels. The strategy also included attempts to create, at the *taluka* level, leading bodies or organisations within each tribal group that would take responsibility for pursuing their own development agendas. TEED's role in this process would be, initially, to provide necessary inputs for the formation and growth of tribal individuals and groups, and subsequently, to form, strengthen, and assist in the institutionalisation of these structures so that moving into the future they would be sustainable entities under the supervision of the tribals themselves.

The sixth objective focused on the internal development of TEED itself, as a rather newly formed NGO attempting to establish itself in North Kanara with the ambition of becoming a professional development NGO in the very near future. During the entire programme period, TEED spent considerable time and resources on internal capacity building. This was done by regularly training the staff, building a database on the target groups, systematically processing data, and documenting the on-going work. It also included improving the organisation's office management and financial management

skills. But in spite of these efforts, TEED's management and board were aware that the organisation's current capacity and skills were limited and required further improvements to the staff's technical, financial management, and administrative skills, as well as improvements to the office infrastructure. These shortcomings were outlined in their proposal, indicating a high degree of self-awareness among TEED's management and board.

Implementation and results

The joint problem analysis and formulation of the objectives and main goal of the change process had created a framework that now had to be translated into action. An integrated approach was developed that included addressing immediate needs as well as building social and organisational capacity for the future. The approach included:

- Awareness-raising activities
- Formation of leadership, SHGs and Tribal Grassroots Associations (TGA)
- Lobbying and advocacy activities and capacity-building
- Technical skills-training for youth
- Higher education for youth
- Income-generating activities for women
- Health improvement activities

Awareness-raising activities

During the first intervention phase (2002 to 2003), TEED had spent a considerable amount of time and resources to mobilise the tribal population to raise their awareness of their situation and a certain level of awareness had been attained. However, there was a need to create a more in-depth understanding of their current condition and about what could be done to improve it. A critical awareness was necessary among the tribals. To achieve this, TEED conducted numerous community awareness-raising meetings, orientation camps, trainings, and counselling for individuals and small groups. The method outlined by the Brazilian educationalist Paulo Freire was applied, though in a modified form suited to the needs of tribals in North Kanara (Freire 1970). This involved face-to-face interaction

between TEED's staff and the target groups; listening to their problems; discussing the origins or root-causes of the problems and how they could be solved; and to some extent identifying the intellectual and material resources the target groups possessed, as well as other resources they might need in the future to solve their problems. These interactions took place over an extended period of time, and the same sessions were repeated many times, which enabled both parties to acquire sufficient understanding of each other. The method yielded positive results, especially in raising the tribals' awareness about their situation, its root-causes, and possible strategies for addressing them. Although these sessions were mainly conducted during the first year of the intervention, a number of sessions were repeated in modified form during subsequent years.

The awareness created about the tribals' own situation as individuals and as members of a village and a tribe laid the foundation to prepare and conduct all other programme activities.

Forming leaders, SHGs, and Tribal Grassroots Associations

The six tribes lacked the leadership and unity among themselves (and among their own organisations at various levels) that could assist them in their process of development. TEED conducted a number of trainings to equip traditional and non-traditional leaders, especially women, with knowledge about how to mobilise and lead their communities and interact with state officials and other members of society. TEED also conducted numerous trainings and workshops on how to form and institutionalise SHGs for women and district-based associations that represent each of the tribal groups. A tangible output of these activities was that 160 women and 190 men, mostly non-traditional leaders, were trained in leadership and community organising. These trained leaders were instrumental in forming and establishing SHGs, Tribal Grassroots Associations (TGA), and a Tribal People's Joint Action Forum (TPJAF).

The TGA secretary offered various kinds of assistance to the tribals, such as filling out forms, assisting with the paperwork needed to apply for a bank loan, interacting with local authorities, offering advice on various domestic matters, etc. The concerned tribal groups feel that the TGA belongs to them and they are proud of it, although

many members sometimes feel that the TGA secretaries could extend better assistance to them.

Advocacy activities and advocacy capacity building

Through ongoing discussions, TEED and the tribal leadership arrived at a common conclusion: that in order to acquire land rights from the central government and seats in local political decision-making bodies, the tribals must influence and lobby the state. As a consequence, TEED conducted many trainings and workshops for the tribal leaders (men and women) about how to interact with local officials and politicians; how to prepare and conduct a campaign; how to mobilise the tribals for various advocacy meetings, etc. TEED also trained the leaders to form and establish their associations—one for each of the six tribes—as well as to form a network constituted of all six tribes. Through these units and continuous trainings, the tribal leaders and associations were able to involve themselves in various advocacy activities. A tangible result from these activities was that the tribal leaders (mostly men) within their tribal network attended a number of meetings at the regional and national levels to join hands with other national tribal networks in India. This resulted in a jointly managed lobbying campaign directed towards the central government to enact a law that entitles approximately 70 to 90 million tribals in India to own their land, which they have cultivated and resided on for generations. The "Tribal and other Forest Dwellers Bill 2006" was signed into law in January 2007.

Technical skills for youth

Counselling and trainings were conducted for youths to encourage them to take an interest in their self-development and in acquiring vocational skills beyond their traditional occupations in agriculture and animal husbandry. Young women were provided the opportunity to receive training in professional tailoring, and young men, to be trained in masonry, carpentry, and lorry driving. In addition, boys and girls learned how to commercially run small poultry farms. After completing their technical education, 60% of them are now employed in private businesses and are earning double the salary they earned before acquiring these skills. However, among the

girls trained in tailoring, only 25% are employed in private businesses, but almost all the others are stitching their own and their families' clothes, thus saving on costs they would have incurred for purchasing new clothes over the years.

Higher education for youth

TEED had realised that the tribal people, especially children and youth, needed education in order to broaden their mindset and worldview and be integrated into the rest of society. Restricted living in forest settlements did not expose the youths to what was going on beyond North Kanara. By acquiring an educational degree and an occupational skill, the tribal youth would be in a better position to take advantage of the job opportunities existing in society. In addition, the educated tribals would be in a better position to negotiate with state authorities at various levels in order to tap into the opportunities and concessions offered by the state.

Few among the tribal youth were encouraged by their parents to pursue higher studies (college), and the psychological barrier constrained the youth against even thinking about following such a path to advance themselves. In response, TEED conducted regular counselling sessions for young people. The counselling and financial support, as well as practical assistance from TEED with enrolling youths in educational institutions, created a positive understanding and desire among the tribal young people to pursue higher studies. Almost 75% of the youth that were enrolled for higher education (college, IT, nursing, engineering, law) completed their education successfully.

Income-generating activities

Prior to TEED's involvement with the tribal population, only a small percentage of tribal women were allowed, by their traditions, to work in public places, such as selling vegetables in the local markets. At most, these women were allowed to work as domestic servants in the upper castes houses. Few women had an income of their own, and so they were completely dependent on the cash provided by their husbands. There were only a few loosely organised SHGs among these women. Through interactions with the tribal women,

TEED became aware of their needs and desires to get together with other women to interact, share common problems, and generate income of their own. In response to this demand, TEED conducted a number of trainings to mobilise the women and form SHGs. After the SHGs were formed and the women had saved up money for an agreed period of time, they became eligible to borrow funds to initiate their own income-generating businesses. The women also received sponsorships for visiting well-managed SHGs in other parts of Karnataka in order to learn from their peers and then apply their newly acquired knowledge in their own context. 80 out of 100 SHGs led by women are now sufficiently trained and eligible to borrow from TEED's funds for income-generating enterprises. With their savings as collateral, the women have been able to take out loans from TEED as well as from commercial banks to pursue various types of income-generating enterprises. 20 SHGs are for men and led by men. These men also practice thrift and have received loans to start income-generating activities. A few of the SHGs have also managed to borrow money from commercial banks, especially to develop agricultural plots.

Health improvement activities

As a majority of the tribal population lives in forest areas, they have to walk long distances to access the few public and private health clinics existing in Yellapur and Mundgod towns. It's common with minor infections that are not treated at an early stage to unnecessarily develop into serious diseases. Therefore, to meet the basic health-related needs among the tribals, TEED conducted many workshops and trained more than 100 interested youth and adults as voluntary "health workers." Special trainings were conducted to deal with illness and diseases that are common in the area, such as snake bites and rashes. A dozen paramedics were employed to regularly visit the villages to conduct medical camps during which invited medical specialists examined the patients and distributed medicines. Traditional birth attendants were given training in "modern" birth attending practices, which meant that pregnant women were able to receive improved pre-natal and post-natal assistance.

Discovering changes in relationships

The activities described above were all planned parts of the intervention, and results were expected in each area of work. But there were also results that are not easily measured, but may be of equal importance for the tribals. These include the following:

IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH THE OFFICIALS AND POLITICIANS at various levels (village, *taluka*, district, and state level). Prior to this intervention, the tribals felt that they were looked down upon, and many times discriminated against, by politicians and officials. Through counselling, trainings, and awareness-raising activities, the tribals have strengthened their self-confidence and are more assertive, knowledgeable, and skilful at reclaiming their rights, and as a result, they are getting more respect from officials and politicians.

IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH THE UPPER CASTES. Prior to the intervention, the tribals felt that the upper castes were deceiving them economically and dominating them politically. Through the intervention, which included acquiring an understanding of one's situation and how to deal with it, the tribals feel empowered to confidently interact with the upper castes.

IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH COMMERCIAL AND STATE-OWNED BANKS. Prior to the intervention, very few tribals were given bank loans. The tribals were not regarded as reliable people capable of paying back the loans. Furthermore, few tribal men and even fewer tribal women had the courage to apply for bank loans even given the opportunity. The trainings provided by TEED on how to interact with bank officials, how to fill out the bank forms, estimate their assets, etc., have provided a major moral boost for the tribals. Today, considerable numbers of tribals have opened bank accounts and are borrowing money for various purposes. This has generated more cash flow both for the banks and for the tribals, but more importantly it has created a new atmosphere of trust between the tribals and the bank officials. As one tribal leader put it: "The bank manager no longer looks upon us as good-for-nothings, but rather as customers from whom they can earn money."

It is important that the activities described above emerged through continuous discussions between TEED and the tribals. From the very beginning of this intervention, TEED made a point of insisting that all activities must be agreed to by the tribals, and that the tribals should be directly involved with planning, organising, implementing, and assessing the outputs of the activities. Therefore, planning meetings and completion meetings were jointly conducted by TEED and tribals. This approach emerged as a very important factor in establishing trust and accountability between TEED and tribals. For example, when a major activity did not yield the expected results, the situation could be discussed frankly during the post-completion meeting. This contributed to developing a "learning organisation" attitude within TEED as well as among the tribal associations. For TEED, this aspect of interaction was essential, as the goal was to assist the tribals in taking full responsibility for their own empowerment in the near future. Attaining such a goal requires that the tribal leaders are able to analyse, plan, implement, and review endeavours on their own. By taking a learning approach, the tribal associations and SHGs have begun to develop routines that are laying the foundation for sustainable organisational and institutional structures.

Concluding remarks
– The tribals negotiating development with TEED

After a few months of intense interaction between TEED staff and various categories of people from all six tribes, it was clear to TEED that the tribals wanted quick returns. At the same time, the tribals did not want to be dependent on TEED, or for that matter, on any other external agency, nor on the state, for improving their lives. The tribals wanted funds to repair their houses, consume better food, pay their children's school fees, buy better clothes, drill new bore-wells, repair the village roads, have their own health clinic, have their own pre-primary school, etc. They wanted the upper castes to pay proper daily wages and stop discriminating against them. They required the state to grant them ownership rights to their agricultural and housing land, and to allow them immediate use of the forest and its produce, given that they are the rightful inhabitants of the area. Women

wanted access to bank loans and cash to start their own businesses. Youths demanded access to higher education and wanted to acquire technical skills that would enable them to obtain employment in the Indian society.

TEED regarded these demands as legitimate, as the tribals require all these things to live lives of dignity, as per their own requests and definition. However, TEED made it clear to the tribals that the organisation did not have sufficient resources, especially not financial resources, to meet all these demands. Even if funds were available, TEED posed the question, would it be acceptable to the tribals for TEED to offer all these material goods and funds to the people as a charitable gift? The answer from the tribals was No. Although the tribals desperately needed the material goods immediately, they also saw that charitable gifts from outside were not what they sought after. The tribals did not want charity, but support to move forward in their own development and at their own pace. They needed TEED to facilitate this process, to accompany them, guide them, and share knowledge and skills with them which they did not currently possess. The tribals were aware that they did not know much about important developments in Indian society, and aware that these external changes were affecting their lives. They wanted to learn about what was taking place, how to influence Indian society, and how to gain concessions from the state and society. The tribals also accepted that improvements in their society should be sustainable, and that they themselves should be empowered with knowledge and skills to be the owners of their own development after the end of the present programme intervention. TEED's role would be to facilitate this process.

TEED accepted this role as facilitator. Both parties accepted that in order to move forward, at a pace not too fast and not too slow, the intervention would require strategies of various kinds to meet the immediate needs of the people as well as their long-term aspirations. For TEED, figuring out how to facilitate meeting the tribals' immediate needs while at the same time maintaining the tribals' enthusiasm for their long-term goals became a challenge. As the strategy emerged, TEED integrated what is regarded as service delivery, or needs-based approach, with a more rights-based approach. See Appendix 2 for a discussion on these concepts.

Even though improvements have taken place as a result of this intervention and many individuals have benefitted from it, not everyone experiences and assesses these improvements in the same way. In the following chapter we will describe some of the views on development held by women, youth, and men, respectively.

5. Views on development and change

Planning and implementing a social development project includes continuous conversation and negotiation among the parties involved about what good development is and how it can be achieved. Our views on development are influenced by our identities, our life experiences, the people we listen to, and the information we have access to—our beliefs, values, and assumptions.

A change process brings to the surface that there may be different views on development, and also tend to bring out anxieties related to change (even to changes that are desired). An important part of implementing a social development intervention is trying to understand and manage these anxieties. Changes can be material and non-material; some changes concern individuals, whereas others concern a group or entire tribe; some change processes are aimed to improve the overall tribal population in the targeted area. The changes that have taken place during TEED's intervention are much appreciated among the six tribal groups. At the same time there are also concerns about unforeseen and unwanted consequences that might appear in the future. The tribals are starting to realise that they can take advantage of the various possibilities offered by the state and society, but they are also concerned about what might happen to their traditional culture, modes of subsistence, and way of life amidst such rapid changes.

Change – as seen by the tribal women

The most obvious changes that have taken place in this intervention are among the tribal women. These changes are both material and non-material, and concern individual women as well as women as a social category. Prior to the intervention, tribal women were assigned a rather marginal status, or position, within their own community and in the wider North Kanara society. Their movement was mostly limited to village boundaries. They had very little income and cash

of their own. They had a limited say in matters concerning village and society in general. Few of them had ever attended a Panchayat meeting in the village, and only a few had voted during elections. There was little unity among the women within each village, and even less interaction among women from different villages. In many villages the women were subjected to both physical and psychological domestic violence. They were not much exposed to the wider society in North Kanara, not to mention other parts of Karnataka.

When discussing changes with women from different tribes the women agree that it was a blessing to have their own earned cash, their own business enterprises, access to bank loans, and the ability to stand for election in local political decision-making bodies. But the most important change identified by a majority of these women was their improved and strengthened identity as women and as persons. The women say that they now respect themselves as women and human beings, which did not used to be the case. They saw themselves as weak, or even inferior, and many looked down upon themselves. The women saw themselves as being assigned a place at the bottom of the ladder, below their own men as well as below men from other castes. They feel that this has now changed somewhat, and that they are much more respected by their men and also by other men in North Kanara, although there is still a long way to go before there is equality between women and men. Several women described how their newly strengthened identity contributed to their overall experiences of well-being.

The women also pointed out that while much has changed for the better for them, their workload has also increased. Previously, their work was mostly limited to the domestic sphere: doing household chores and working on their family's agricultural plot. Now, a tribal woman's weeks are full of various meetings at SHGs and women's network, cultivating her own kitchen garden, perhaps taking care

of her own poultry, attending public meetings, perhaps being elected as a *taluka* (municipal) council member and attending meetings, dealing with concerns of the village people, etc. Surely, the workload has increased for many women due to these new assignments. But at the same time, the women say that it is these various assignments that have given them opportunities to increase the frequency of their movements outside their village and thereby increased their opportunities to get to know new people and acquire new knowledge and information about the world. Their lives have improved materially and socially, but the most important change they identify is the way they look upon themselves as women and as individual persons, with a strong sense of their abilities and self-identification as active agents of change.

Change – as seen by the tribal men

The men belonging to different tribes identified three changes that have taken place during the last few years as contributing to their overall development. First, they appreciate the leadership training that has enabled them to strengthen their capabilities as leaders. With these newly acquired skills, they have been able to lead their villages in a better way and interact confidently with other members of North Kanara society and local authorities. Most of these trained young and middle-aged men did not have positions as traditional leaders, as these positions were held by elderly men. The training had opened up new avenues for non-traditional leaders to take on new responsibilities. These leaders' newly acquired skills and knowledge also allowed some of them to get involved in local political decision-making bodies, something they previously had neither the sufficient knowledge nor the confidence needed to participate in.

Secondly, the tribal men, both young and old, were generally content with the formation of a tribal network, Tribal People's Joint Action Forum (TPJAF), and were pleased that through it (in collaboration with many other national NGOs) they were able to influence the central and state governments to enact the law that entitles them to land ownership, a major, longstanding issue for the tribals. Traditionally, among the tribal people of North Kanara, the men are the landowners. Men are the ones who inherit the land according

to traditional practices. It is also the men who are allowed to receive commercial bank loans to improve their agricultural plots and their houses—at least in theory. In practice, commercial banks issued loans to tribal men in only a few cases.

Thirdly, many men regard the establishment of the six Tribal Grassroots Associations (TGA) as a major boost for their collective identity as tribals. Prior to TEED's intervention, the tribal population was scattered and divided. They lacked a common agenda for jointly addressing issues that affected them; they also did not have tribe-based associations that could pursue the agendas of individual tribes. TEED facilitated the mobilisation, organisation, and registration of the TGAs with the local authorities as per civil laws in India. Today, each TGA has its own legally registered office, either in Yellapur or in Mundgod. These offices function as meeting places for men, women, and youth when they visit the towns. An educated secretary from the same tribe manages each office.

Contested change

Change means that social categories are questioned and contested. Power within the tribal communities is shifting: between women and men, between traditional leaders and new leaders, between parents and youth. This puts a strain on the change process, causing both fear and pain.

Men and women have different views on change

TEED's work among the tribals has had a strong focus on improving the situation of tribal women. What do the men think about these improvements that are taking place among the women? Are they happy about it, or do they feel jealous that the women in some cases are doing financially better than the men?

Generally, most men regard the improvements that have taken place as a blessing, regardless of whether these improvements took place due to the women's efforts or otherwise. The men are aware that most of the income generated through the businesses started by women is benefitting the entire family. The men note that cash is now available to repair the house, the children's school uniforms are purchased, and food is regularly on the table. In most families the

men have contributed equally towards these improvements through their own daily wage labour, with or without TEED's intervention. The men are also content that the women's health has improved and that the women are respected by other men in the community.

But at the same time, the tribal men feel threatened by the assertiveness of the women. The women are coming up. They have their own income and cash in hand and are no longer dependent on men the way they used to be. Women circulate outside the village, sometimes alone, often together with other women. In former times this was not a common sight; if a woman left the village at all, she was accompanied by her husband, son, or brother. With these recent changes, some men feel that the women are violating cultural norms and deviating from proper customs that define how a woman should behave in public.

What do women think could be the reasons for these changes? Most of the women attribute these changes to the assistance and support they have received from TEED's on-going intervention. During the last five years, a number of tribal women have undergone orientation training in leadership. Many of them have become bold and are challenging the men, for example, at home with domestic chores, or during public village meetings. The men find this behaviour offensive and disrespectful towards them; they feel that the women are no longer respecting them as men with authority within the gender relationship. The women, in contrast, do not regard this behaviour as offensive or as a challenge to male authority; rather, they feel they are merely contributing to the overall improvement of their family and village. The women are aware that in former times this was a male privilege, but at the same time they say they also have the right to speak and make their opinions known to the others, including their own husbands.

During the last few years, the women have participated in various trainings and thereby increased their understanding, for example, of local politics. A few of them have stood for local election and been elected to political positions in the Panchayat. This means they have public authority not only among the tribals, but also over non-tribal communities in the Panchayat. Many male tribal men find this problematic. On one hand, they are content that their women are

elected to powerful position and can assert some power over other communities; however, they do not want the women to have decision-making authority over *them*. These tribal men have in some cases become jealous because they themselves do not hold any public positions outside their tribal community, thus putting them in a position politically inferior to that of the women. Unfortunately, a few men have tried to "solve" this problematic situation by imposing their views on their wives who have been elected to office in attempts to push their own agendas. In other words, a man may accept that his wife is holding a public office, but only if she is willing to push his agenda forward. Most men do not object that financial and non-financial support is given to the women, but they wish that they too would be given at least equal amounts of support.

Parents and youth – traditional life style is challenged

The tribal youths who have been exposed to education and training outside of their village setting —still a minority—are in the process of finding their place in society, whether in tribal or urban areas. They have been brought up with traditional values and norms, while at the same time they are acquiring and accepting urban Indian views on development and modernity. At stake is their identity as young men and women. Being young and going through adolescence is itself a difficult phase; simultaneously being exposed to a different culture adds to the challenge. However, most of the youth who took part in our discussion did not regard it as a major problem for them, especially not the boys. For these young people, the exposure and the newly acquired education or skills opened up new avenues for them to live a different life than their parents, and made it possible for them to work in professions other than agriculture or day-labour for the upper castes—occupations many young people regard as backward.

The exposed youths' parents hold ambiguous views about the fact that their children are embracing new lifestyles alien to them. The parents affirm their positive opinion of the fact that their youth are exposed to certain new cultures and habits, thus broadening their outlook, and are acquiring new professions, which allows them to earn a living. The parents are aware that the possibilities to live on

traditional agricultural practices are becoming more limited each year, due to severe restrictions from the state. At the same time, the parents note that their children are moving away, both physically and culturally, from their native places and traditions. The parents, as carriers and caretakers of tribal cultural practices, feel sad that their traditional way of living may slowly be fading away, even if only a small percentage of the youth are being exposed to the outside world—and of course not all youths completely embrace the new cultures and lifestyles. But this is a situation the youth and the parents must face and deal with accordingly.

**Traditional leaders and new leaders
– loss of power and gaining power**

A common opinion held by a majority of male leaders—both traditional leaders and young, newly trained ones—is that the changes have generally benefitted all categories of tribals, but especially the women. Nevertheless, even though these material and social changes have contributed to improving the tribals' lives, there is a sense of loss taking place experienced by some traditional leaders, namely loss of their power and authority over the younger men, and to some extent over the women. The traditional leaders do believe that life is better today comparing to a decade ago. Their material situation has improved and they have more knowledge, or at least awareness, of various topics which may be of benefit to them as they further pursue their process of change. But at the same time, the traditional leaders feel that their own position and roles as leaders are no longer respected and acknowledged as they used to be. They experience these changes in various situations. For example, they are no longer asked for their opinions when TGAs are organising a rally in Yellapur town. Or, when the women's network celebrates women's day on 8th March in Mundgod town, they no longer are invited as chief guests. Instead other senior women, such as teachers and officials, mostly non-tribal, are invited as chief guests. In earlier times, when quarrels took place in a settlement, the traditional leader was requested to intervene. Now, the chairperson of the women's SHG is asked to intervene, often invited by the other women in the village, and this is normally also accepted by younger men. Before, when a

visitor entered the village, he first approached the traditional leader. Now, the visitor may ask for the TGA secretary and only for the sake of politeness pay a courtesy visit to the traditional leader.

The traditional leaders are aware that they are not really able to cope with all the external changes taking place in the North Kanara society—that requires a specialised kind of knowledge on certain topics, e.g., specific knowledge about laws on land ownership and how to interpret these laws. New laws and policies introduced by the state are difficult to understand, especially when one is illiterate. These changes are better handled by young men and women, who are becoming fluent in understanding what is taking place in society, and who have acquired modern education that facilitates their understanding of the changing society. An example is a young tribal man who completed a university degree in Law and who is now working in a public law firm. His specialised knowledge is now useful for the whole tribal population in North Kanara.

The traditional leaders appreciate the changes, because they can note improvements in their own lives and in the tribal community. There is a general material improvement taking place, and many community members are also benefiting from enhanced understanding and involvement in political matters. But the traditional leaders also experience a personal loss of intra-tribal political power and authority. They sense that the more young men and women become knowledgeable in public matters, matters that are beyond the tribal community but that influence the tribal's lives, the fewer roles they are able to play as traditional leaders and authorities. Even though the traditional leaders would like to have a bigger role to play in the changing society, they know that they no longer have the skills and capacity to cope with it. Reluctantly, the traditional leaders are beginning to accept that their roles and influence in their community have diminished considerably, and that power is slipping from their hands.

In other words, the traditional leaders today view themselves and other senior members of their community with mixed emotions. The overall Indian society is changing and they observe that their own tribal society is also changing. At least regarding tribal society, most of the leaders agree that the changes are for the better. But

most of these positive changes are due to actions taken by the younger generation, not by themselves, the senior generation. They see the changes as good, but they are sad that they are not the main actors pushing for these changes, as they once were.

Mrs Nagavaa Prasappa Valmaki's story

Mrs. Nagavaa Prasappa Valmaki is a middle-aged woman, and the proud owner of eight goats. Three years ago she and her family lived in dire poverty in Indoor village in North Kanara district. She belongs to the Bedar Valmiki tribal community. Before joining a SHG, Nagavaa had a tough time making ends meet. She and her husband struggled to provide for their six children. The cash she and her husband earned through irregular labour for the upper castes was not sufficient to meet the family's basic needs. Their agricultural plot was too small to yield sufficient crops to sustain the entire family. As a consequence of their poverty, their eldest child dropped out from school and began to work as a daily wage labourer to support the family. Her other children also did not attend school or nurseries. Nagaava was frustrated and did not know what to do, as she really wanted her children to be educated and have sufficient food.

There were other women in Nagaava's village living in similar condition of poverty. With assistance from TEED, 14 women from her village joined hands and formed a SHG. TEED provided them with orientation trainings about how to conduct group meetings, practice thrift, and record their savings in bank books, etc. During the first six months they regularly met and saved a small amount, which they used to lend out among themselves. Nagaava and the other women were given further trainings and counselling by TEED on how to deal with domestic problems, on importance of children's education, and about how to start small income- generating businesses. They were also given awareness training on their legal rights and information about public development benefits available to them through the local authorities.

After a year's training the women had increased their knowledge on various matters that concerned them and had improved their management skills. Their SHGs were now eligible to receive grants from TEED to start individual businesses, and they used the loans to start several small enterprises such as small shops and poultry and dairy businesses. The following year, the women repaid the loans to TEED. After a year, almost half of their enterprises were somewhat financially successful, thereby generating some profit. Nagaava used her loan to buy a kid goat. She took good care of it, raised it well, and eventually sold it at a substantial profit. Then she used the profit to repay the loan and was given a bigger loan to buy

two more kid goats. The same procedure was repeated during this second phase. In addition, she also used a small part of the first profit to buy a new set of household dishes and to repair the roof. Today Nagaava is the proud owner of eight goats, worth what she used earn during an entire year's hard labour for the upper castes.

During the five years Nagaava has been involved with the SHG, she has changed from being a shy, impoverished person with little assets of her own, to becoming a bold woman, with lots of self-confidence and a mind skilled at business. TEED has provided her special training that enables her to train other women. She knows how to work within the SHG and how to assist other women. Nagaava has also been trained in leadership and women's rights. Her SHG has joined the tribal women's federation, and she actively takes part in many of their activities, such as advocacy campaigns. TEED facilitates these campaigns, but it is women like Nagaava who organise and conduct the activities and take responsibility to ensure positive results are obtained. In addition, thanks to awareness-raising, these women are now boldly advocating for their rights and demanding to be part of society's decision-making process. Nagaava and her colleagues in the SHG no longer look upon themselves as victims, but rather as active members of their communities who are contributing to improving their own and their families' lives.

Names have been changed in order to protect the identity of individuals.

6. Conclusions and lessons learned

In this concluding chapter, I focus on two points that change agents may be inspired to consider when involving themselves with people for their long-term empowerment. First, I offer reflections on some "success factors" that facilitated the building of a productive relationship between TEED and the tribal community that generated positive results for both parties. Second, I offer some critical reflections on what kind of factors might be involved in either facilitating or impeding the tribals, i.e. the concerned beneficiaries of the intervention, from taking full responsibility for sustaining their own change process.

Success factors
Integrating service delivery with a rights-based approach
Empowering a community means strengthening its members and its institutions so that they might become powerful agents of change, able to increase the community's ability and resources to achieve desired goals. This can be done by stimulating the community to acquire or enhance its own capacity through awareness-raising, counselling, workshops, etc. From the very beginning of TEED's engagement with the tribals, the organisation emphasised the need to strengthen the tribals' individual and institutional capacities. Even though the initial approach applied by TEED was a "needs-based-approach" that delivered services and goods to the tribals, the organisation gradually introduced a supplementary "rights-based-approach", which aimed to gradually transform the tribals' mind-set. Prior to TEED's involvement, most of the tribals considered themselves as victims, and were beset by an inferiority complex. TEED encouraged the tribals to strengthen their identities and become their own agents of change by acquiring the necessary means to developing themselves, as per their goals.

The overall approach that emerged at TEED by working with

the tribals was a result of integrating the best elements from both approaches. A success factor was that TEED met the immediate needs of the tribals by delivering service and goods, while at the same time inviting them to join the more cumbersome process of empowerment. This entailed TEED's refusal to "develop" the tribes. Instead, TEED made it clear to the tribals that it would only stimulate, encourage, facilitate, and guide the tribals in regards to how they can develop through their own efforts and through learning how to claim their rights as Indian citizens; in addition to attracting funds for the intervention. TEED acted as a "midwife," and this was gradually accepted by the tribals because of the seeds of mutual respect and understanding that were cultivated between them.

Other success factors

COMMITMENT. There was a desire and willingness among a good number of members of the tribal population, especially among their—albeit few—leaders, to make efforts to develop themselves; without this desire, self-empowerment becomes very difficult to attain.

TAKING OWNERSHIP. Those persons, leaders and non-leaders, who from onset were more actively involved in the development process, were voluntarily willing to spend time to participate in trainings, etc., and were willing to take responsibility for leading the development process. Thus, from the very beginning, these persons acquired a sense of ownership of the process.

INVESTING TIME. After initial sensitisation and trainings, women became a powerful force in the tribal community, at the forefront of the development process. The women accepted the hardships and the additional workload that resulted from their time-consuming involvement in the SHGs. Without this commitment it is doubtful whether the women and the rest of the tribal community would have reached so far in the empowerment and development process.

CONSISTENCY – QUALITY IN QUANTITY. TEED repeatedly conducted community awareness-raising meetings and individual counsel-

ling to establish rapport and understanding between TEED staff and the tribals; without this understanding, the constructive cooperation that emerged would not have been possible. Numerous trainings and counselling sessions were essential components in this process.

PASSION. TEED had a knowledgeable and passionate founding leader in Mr. Shivappa Poojary. He both had a vision for TEED and the skills relevant to structuring the organisation. A progressive NGO requires a clear vision and a well-managed organisational set-up.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT. TEED had an almost equally knowledgeable and passionate second line staff, especially in Mrs. Mohini Poojary, that could take over and successfully continue with the work after the departure of the founder. This situation existed because TEED's leadership had encouraged the development of second-line staff. The combination of individual passion for the work and organisational routines made it possible for TEED to continue during times of hardships.

GROWING SLOWLY. TEED, as an organisation, developed itself through trial and error, from being a small service-delivering organisation with a very limited budget, to emerging as a development organisation capable of attracting sufficient funds and handling bigger programmes. The gradual scaling up of the organisation's capacity and programmes allowed TEED to move forward at its own pace, and, importantly, to pause once in a while in order to learn from past experiences through self-evaluations, etc. Thus, TEED's attempts to be a "learning organisation" further strengthened its capacity.

SOLID ADMINISTRATION. TEED developed a reliable administrative and financial management system that made it attractive to potential donors. At the same time TEED also made itself accountable to the people it works with, e.g., by informing them about available funds, their sources, and expenditures. Transpar-

ency and accountability were demonstrated through commissioning annual audits conducted by an external chartered auditor, as well as furnishing the accounts and audits to the Indian central government authorities.

USING EXTERNAL RESOURCES WISELY. TEED's management had a good sense of self-understanding about the staffs' capacity—what they can and cannot do. Thus, whenever it was required, TEED invited specialised external resource persons who conducted relevant trainings, enabling staff to have access to up-to-date knowledge on various topics that became useful for their processes of empowerment and development.

RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING. Since its establishment in North Kanara, TEED's leadership made special efforts to build courteous relationships with other actors operating in the area, including those actors which the tribals found were hostile to them, such as some of the upper castes, businessmen, politicians, and state officials. These relationships were invaluable when times were tough, such as when some Hindu politicians and members of upper castes accused TEED of Christian proselytisation, and when the tribal leaders needed to have access to powerful politicians and other power holders. TEED used its contacts to clear the doubts among its accusers, as well as to facilitate the tribals' development processes.

Phasing-out: a matter of courage and planning

The tribal people of North Kanara have experienced many improvements and faced challenges in the development process. Even though many improvements have taken place, the tribals say that there are still many challenges that need to be dealt with: for example, more children must be enrolled in schools, more youths must have access to vocational trainings, more revolving funds are required to scale up small income-generating enterprises, and more advocacy campaigns are required to ensure that all eligible households from the state have acquired land-ownership certificates. In this study I have

focussed on the achievements and how these were attained through TEED's engagement, rather than focussing on the numerous challenges the tribals and TEED continue to face. Nevertheless, in the remaining part of this section I will discuss a challenge that is faced by the tribals, namely that of taking full responsibility for managing and sustaining their own development process.

In chapter 5 I presented some views from members of the tribal community on how they assessed improvements and changes in their communities. One may ask, do the positive views articulated by the tribals suggest that all is well and good? Are the tribals now able to fully take over all the responsibilities now held by TEED and thereby manage the change process on their own? That is to say, have the tribals, especially the leadership, acquired sufficient knowledge and skills to carry on with improving their lives without TEED's or any other external agencies' close involvement?

My discussions with a selection of tribals indicate that some members among them feel that they could now carry on with the change process on their own, without much involvement by external agencies. These persons are of the opinion that they have acquired sufficient knowledge to plan and implement activities, as well as to be accountable to their people and to facilitating/donor agencies (TEED/Caritas Sweden/SOIR-IM). Other persons were not equally enthusiastic or confident enough to accept such responsibility. These persons felt that during the past years of intervention, their material and social situations have improved, as individuals, households, and communities. They also expressed that they have acquired new knowledge about their rights and about how Indian society functions and is organised. But they did not believe that they had acquired sufficient knowledge, confidence, and skills to manage a comprehensive development process. They also felt that they might not have sufficient skills to sustain the created structures such as the SHGs, TGAs etc., nor to take full responsibility for maintaining the revolving fund.

In reaction to the views expressed above, one may ask some pertinent questions:
- When is a target group sufficiently prepared to take full responsibility for a change process?
- What kinds of preparations are required by the target group in order to take on full responsibility?
- How should a development organisation and donor agencies act to phase-out their engagement with a particular target group, for them to take charge over their own change process?

These questions are important for change agents to reflect upon and include in the planning process for a development intervention. TEED had reflected upon this only to a limited extent, and had not really made any concerted efforts to take measurements or to act upon them. Indeed, this could be regarded as an oversight by TEED in that it has not sufficiently trained or encouraged the tribals to take over the ownership responsibility of the whole change process. One can also see it as part of the learning process of a young development organisation to gain experience in how to phase out an intervention, and that TEED now is at a stage where this learning becomes essential.

My reflection above suggests that for the time-being a majority of the tribal people in this programme, especially its leadership, are not in a position to fully take over the responsibility of managing the programme on their own, thus allowing TEED to phase out. Changing this situation requires that tribals holding responsible positions come to term with themselves and among themselves to accept such responsibility. Needless to say, at the moment, two parallel processes should take place: On one hand, TEED should initiate a hand-over training programme for the tribals, especially for those holding responsible positions in various units, such as the SHGs, TGAs, and managers of revolving funds. On the other hand, TEED should simultaneously start preparing itself to phase out from holding the overall administrative responsibility of the intervention. The final evidence demonstrating to what extent this intervention is successful will comprise the extent to which the concerned people,

i.e. the tribal community, are able to sustain their own change process also in the long-term.

A development intervention can be seen as a relationship between a development organisation and the people they wish to work with. It takes both planning and courage to first engage with a community – and for the community to engage with a development organisation – and then to move away from this engagement and phase-out in such a way that a development process can continue to and be sustained by the community itself. But a successful development intervention does require this to happen.

Appendix 1: Glossary

ADIVASI A Sanskrit term used to refer to persons who are regarded as the indigenous people of India, or sometimes regarded as the tribal population. That is, people who lived in India before the Aryan invasion 1500 B.C.

BACKWARD CASTE A caste that is classified by the Indian central government as economically backward and therefore provided funds and special schemes for education and development.

CARITAS SWEDEN Caritas Sweden (CS) is the social arm of the Catholic Church in Sweden. CS works in Sweden and abroad. CS is part of the international Caritas network of 164 national Caritas organisations. The network operates in 200 countries and territories. Caritas works for human rights and human dignity by applying Catholic social teaching. The organisation offers assistance to all regardless of religion, nationality, ethnic background, gender or sexual orientation. Caritas' work is based on faith in the persons' own abilities, so activities are designed to strengthen the individual's participation in society.

CASTE SYSTEM In the Indian Hindu culture, the caste system is based upon the traditional idea of varna, i.e., the four castes: Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra (the Untouchables or Dalits and the tribes are excluded from the caste system). The caste system is a form of social stratification, in which castes are hierarchically organised and separated from each other by rules of ritual purity, which establish each caste as ritually purer than the one below, with the Brahmins being regarded as the most pure. Within each caste there are numerous sub-castes which are called jatis (*Fuller 1992*)

CASTE "A small and named group of persons characterised by endogamy [preferred practice of marrying within defined kin-group], hereditary membership, and a specific style of life which sometimes includes the pursuit by tradition of a particular occupation and is usually associated with a more or less distinct ritual status in a hierarchical system, based on concepts of purity and pollution" (*Béteille 1996).*

EMPOWERMENT It is "the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives" (*Narayan 2005).*

JATI Each caste in the Indian Hindu caste system is constituted of numerous sub-castes which are called jatis. A jati is an endogamous group, tied to a defining occupation, based in a village or group of villages, thus being a smaller unit than a caste group. While the caste provides a set of values, the jati provides its functional organisation and practice. A person, or group of persons, may attempt to improve its rank within the caste hierarchy by adopting the practices of a higher caste, which can result in promotion of its jati within the caste hierarchy, but cannot lead to change of a caste to another caste. (*Srinivas 1996*).

LOWER CASTE   The term is used in everyday life in India to refer to people who are considered as belonging to the lowest caste (Shudra), and who have the lowest social status in society.

NBA   Needs-Based-Approach refers to delivery of goods and services to meet a group's needs and thereby mitigating their situation, often provided by civil society organisations when state agencies are not able or not willing to offer basic social services.

NGO   A Non Government Organisation (NGO) is any public, non-state based, formally constituted and non-commercial organisation or association, of which membership is optional, within a particular society. Examples of NGOs include churches, pressure groups, trade unions, professional associations and leisure associations. Often a NGO is regarded as a grassroots-oriented alternative to the state agencies and commercial associations. The NGOs can play a major role in fostering participation in civil society and promoting democracy.

PANCHAYAT   Formal village level political decision-making unit. The members are selected through elections. A Panchayat is constituted of a group of members of which one among them is selected as a leader called the Sarpanch.

RBA   "A Rights Based Approach to development describes situations not simply in terms of human needs, or developmental requirements, but in terms of society's obligations to respond to the inalienable rights of individuals. It empowers people to demand justice as a right, not as a charity, and gives communities a moral basis from which to claim international assistance when needed" *(United Nations 1998)*.

SCHEME   A common term used to refer to various kinds of financial support, grants, funds, subsidies, and programmes that are made available from the Government to its citizens, especially to disadvantaged groups. A scheme is routed through numerous official agencies at the central, state, and district level.

SCHEDULED CASTE – SD   A caste that is classified by the central government as economically and politically backward, making them eligible for additional funds for education and development, and reserving a certain number of seats in educational institutions and political decision-making bodies at district and state levels.

SHG   Self-help group. Normally a SHG is constituted of 10 to 20 members who regularly meet to discuss common issues that concern them as individuals and issues that concern the village. Often the SHG members practice thrift and pool their savings into a common fund that can be borrowed from by its members particularly in support of income-generating activities.

SIDA   Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. Sida is a government organisation under the Swedish Foreign Ministry that administers part of Sweden's budget for development aid. Through its so called 'frame organisations', which includes SMC, Sida distributes funds to hundreds of NGOs in Sweden for international development cooperation.

SMC   Swedish Mission Council. SMC is an ecumenical organisation whose membership is made up of 36 Swedish Churches and Christian Development organisations. Caritas Sweden and SOIR-IM are members of SMC, through which these two organisations receive funds for international development.

SOIR-IM   Swedish Organisation for Individual Relief/Individuell Människohjälp. An NGO based in Sweden which works for marginalised people all over the world, including in Sweden.

SCHEDULED TRIBE – ST   A tribe that is classified by the central government as economically, socially, and politically backward, making them eligible for additional funds for education and development, and reserving certain seats in state political bodies for them.

TALUKA   Municipal unit

TEED TRUST   Tribals Educational and Environment Development Trust

TGA   Tribal Grassroots Association. A formally organised group of people belonging to the same tribe, residing within a geographically limited area, and with the shared aim of putting forward the agenda of its members and securing their interests in the public arena.

TRIBE   This term usually denotes a social group, or a population, assumed to be largely self-sustaining and socially integrated through ties of kinship and marriage. Members of a tribe may share common customs, rituals, institutions, language, religion, and modes of livelihood that set it apart from other tribes and social groups. Often a tribe is politically integrated under a headman, chief, or another traditional leader.

TRIBAL DISTRICT   A few districts in India are classified by the central government as 'tribal districts', which means they are provided with special funds for education and development, and also allowed certain provisions to enact laws regarding the protection of the interest of the tribes' interests.

UPPER CASTE   The term is used in everyday life in India to refer to people who are considered as belonging to the two highest castes (Brahmin and Kshatriya) and have the highest social status in society.

Appendix 2. Change and development – some analytical reflections

WHAT IS CHANGE? "Change" is normally regarded as a rather neutral term compared to similar terms such as "development", "progress," and "improvement". Change refers to the alteration of a situation from A to B over the course of time; however, it does not indicate whether this alteration is for better or worse. The terms "progress" and "improvement" also refer to alteration of the situation from A to B over the course of time, but hints at a quality difference in this alteration, i.e., improvement of the situation.

The term or concept "development" is more problematic to deal with, as it nowadays is invested with numerous connotations, often with implicit or explicit political and power-related purposes. Development can even be seen as a discourse of power *per se*, because "those who define 'development' try to gain control over others" (Rabo 1992:2). A majority of social scientists are of the opinion that development is not a homogenous concept with one unique definition. On the contrary, the concept is defined in many ways depending on which perspective one adheres to (Grillo & Stirrat 1997). Often development as a concept is used to refer to improved economic change, leaving aside other dimensions of change such as social and political. This change is possible, e.g., within a community, if the members acquire new skills, cultural habits, and norms, often from the Western society and culture, adapt to "modern ways of being," and become integrated with the society in a broad sense. The changes have to take place within the community itself for the members of the community to become "developed". That is to say, this logic says that if the members of the community acquire "modern ways of being" they will then be able to enter the path of becoming developed. This perspective is often referred to as Modernization (Gardner&Lewis 1996).

Another view on development emerged as a reaction to the modernization perspective. This perspective, labelled Structural Dependency, posits that in order to comprehend the problems or obstacles to developing itself that a society or community may identify, one has to view these problems within a wider socio-historical context in which the community is located. The adherents of this perspective assume that even if the members of a community acquire new knowledge, technology, skills, and values and "become modern," they will continue to face problems, because the wider society imposes social, economic, and political obstacles to community members' abilities to overcome their problems. In other words, the problem to develop lies not primarily within the community that aims to develop itself, but rather with the wider society (ibid).

Most development theorists and NGOs today would agree that the problem of development is neither exclusively internal to the community in question, nor exclusively external. They are of the opinion that when working with a community's development process there are problems and ob-

stacles within the community that need to be dealt with, while at the same time general societal and environmental factors external to the community should be taken into consideration as well.

Empowerment

The concept of empowerment has gained popularity and during the last decade has been embraced by politicians, civil society organisations, international and national donor agencies, and poor people themselves. There is a considerable amount of literature that attempts to define the concept in various settings and use it to study various categories of disadvantaged people, e.g. the differently abled (cf. Askheim&Starrin 2007, Trygged 2009). In general, it seems that the empowerment process often refers to increasing self-confidence and developing skills for self-sufficiency among poor, marginalised people, with the aim of reducing, or preferably eliminating, the future need for development intervention among the individuals or groups. Empowerment can be viewed as increasing poor people's freedom of choice and action to shape their own lives. In its broadest sense, empowerment refers to "increasing the self-reliance of poor people" (Dawson 1998:189)

Decades of development interventions at various levels and to various extents have shown that providing health and education services, improved income, housing, etc., has not solved the critical situation among the poor in a durable manner. Something has been missing. When development interventions are not executed in conjunction with the empowerment of the beneficiaries to use and sustain the resources they are provided with in the most effective ways possible, there arises a risk that the intervention will not yield sustainable outputs (Dawson 1998).

The connection between development and empowerment is further elaborated by Narayan in her comprehensive sourcebook on how to measure empowerment. Narayan (2005:5) defines empowerment as "the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives". This definition is applied in order to understand and track changes in the unequal relationships between poor people and the state, markets, or civil society, as well as gender inequalities, even within the household. Power relations between different actors at various levels are also important in this definition. Narayan identifies four key elements that can change power relations between poor people and powerful actors. These elements are: access to information, inclusion and participation, social accountability, and local organisational capacity. By access to information Narayan means that informed people are better equipped to take advantage of opportunities, access services, exercise their rights, and hold state- and non-state officials accountable. In regards to inclusion and participation, she writes that an empowering approach to participation treats poor people as co-producers, with authority and control over resources. By accountability, Narayan means that state officials and politicians must be held to account, making

them answerable for their actions and policies that affect the well-being of the people. Finally, by local organisational capacity, she refers to the ability of people to work together, organise themselves, and mobilise resources to solve problems of common interest. When membership-based groups, such as SHGs and Women's Clubs, federate at higher levels, they can gain voice and representation in policy dialogues and decisions that affect their lives (Narayan 2005:3-13).

A common thread among these selected definitions and views on empowerment is that the poor people themselves are the intervention's focus of attention, and they are supported in taking control over their lives by improving their existing capacities and developing self-confidence in their abilities. It is a matter of respectfully and sensitively nurturing their skills and resources, whatever those might be. The poor and marginalised are viewed as equal partners in the change process, whether this change is called development, empowerment, or something else.

Rights-Based Approach

At least since early 1990s, the rights-based approach (RBA) to development interventions has been used by development cooperation agencies at various levels, from grassroots associations to international agencies such as the UN. The advantage with applying RBA, it has been suggested, is that the development agency could support programmes that incorporate both development and human rights issues in an interdisciplinary manner. It is a matter of opinion whether this incorporation has taken place successfully among the numerous intervening and facilitating organisations.

The RBA aims at strengthening beneficiaries' capacity as well as empowering them. The United Nations (UN) states that "a rights-based approach to development describes situations not simply in terms of human needs, or developmental requirements, but in terms of society's obligations to respond to the inalienable rights of individuals. It empowers people to demand justice as a right, not as a charity, and gives communities a moral basis from which to claim international assistance when needed" (UN 1998). This UN statement emphasise the RBA's relation to development as a right in terms of society's obligation to the poor, and not merely as goodwill or charity extended to the poor.

One important aspect of RBA is helping people to understand their basic rights as human beings. This requires, as a starting point, that the external intervening agency show deep respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and potential of the people it seeks to assist. In addition, the rights approach to development makes explicit efforts to catalyse local grassroots leaders and groups and to strengthen their ability to stand up for their rights and to participate in relevant decision-making processes in order to shape their own lives (Ife 2008, Massaro 2012).

Several development agencies and scholars have attempted to link RBA

with material and non-material poverty. The Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) links RBA with poverty in an interesting way. The institution writes that "RBA is able to recognise poverty as injustice and include marginalisation, discrimination, and exploitation as central causes of poverty...A central dynamic of RBA is thus about identifying root causes of poverty, empowering the rights-holders to claim their rights, and enabling duty-bearers to meet their obligations" (DIHR 2007:9).

To summarise, concepts such as development, empowerment, and rights are defined in numerous ways. A few samples of definitions were offered above. It seems that a common feature of these definitions is that they emphasise the process of improving the lives of poor and marginalised people by involving them and increasing their capacities in various ways. Another common feature emphasises that the people have the right to choose their own path for well-being, and that it is the obligation of the state to assist the poor and secure their rights. A third feature emphasises the need to consider existing resources within the community and the catalytic role external agencies can play to build upon these resources and thereby facilitate the community's change process. Generally, the view held among adherents who wish to apply a RBA in their development and empowerment work is that the poor no longer are to be seen or regarded as objects of intervention, but rather as active subjects, whose rights must be respected and whose participation should be included in the entire intervention process.

In this study I will use these concepts, such as change and development, to refer to alteration of the situation taking place among the tribals in North Kanara—as assessed and described by various groups of tribals themselves and by TEED Trust. The way I use these terms has at least one consequence: I argue that a change process in a development intervention is not a neutral process, but rather a value-oriented one, which is assessed differently by different groups within the tribal population. For example, some women, youth and men, to some extent assess change, and how the outcome of the change benefits them, in different ways. This has some consequences for how they look upon themselves and their role in the intervention process. In addition, I do not use concepts such as development and empowerment as analytical concepts to analyse the changing situation among the tribals. However, whenever I refer to these concepts, they are used in the way that various sectors of the tribal population use them. The tribals use the concepts development and empowerment as tools to describe what is taking place, from their perspective, i.e., to describe a situation that existed, exists at the moment, or is desirable in the future.

Appendix 3. TEED Trust's involvement with Caritas Sweden and SOIR/IM

My involvement with TEED Trust began in the mid-1990s. In the following section I will describe how this involvement took place and what its consequences were.

Since the mid-1990s I had been conducting anthropological research among the Siddis of North Kanara. During these years, until 2002, every year I had spent a couple of months in North Kanara, collecting data for my thesis. Shivappa Poojary introduced me to the Siddis and generally facilitated my stay each time I visited the area. While proceeding with my Siddi research, I came to know some members from other tribal communities, including a few of their leaders. I also came to know a few local officials, journalists, school principals, religious leaders, lawyers, police officers, politicians, and members of the upper castes. These acquaintances helped me to enhance my understanding of the overall situation, not only among the Siddis and other tribal communities, but also about how different actors—individuals, groups and institutions—interact with each other in this area. During these years I came to know the Poojary couple and took a keen interest in their work.

After completing most of my field research in North Kanara in 2002, I returned to Stockholm. I was presented with the opportunity to work as a development officer for programmes in India for Caritas Sweden—the social arm of the Catholic Church in Sweden. I accepted this assignment and was assigned to scale up Caritas Sweden's programmes in Asia in general and India in particular. Equipped with this mandate, I saw the possibility of including TEED Trust as one of the Indian partners.

From the inception of the partnership between TEED and Caritas Sweden, it was agreed that this relationship would be built upon a long-term partnership. The leadership of the organisations were clear that long-term partnership is necessary in order to substantially empower the tribals and facilitate their change process. This also contributed to creating a sense of trust between the tribals and TEED, on one hand, and TEED and Caritas Sweden on the other.

TEED Trust and Caritas Sweden started with a two-year intervention. As I had monitored this project quite closely during this period, I was familiar with the intervention's achievements and challenges. My earlier experiences working in the area and my understanding of the situation and challenges helped me to put the results of the first two-year achievements in proper perspective. I shared these experiences and achievements with Caritas Sweden's leadership and SMC. Both organisations appreciated whatever was achieved within this limited period and with the limited resources provided, and thus gave the green signal to start preparing a new proposal for the next phase of three years.

The new three-year programme, 2005 to 2007, initiated a new phase of change among the tribals. During this period many good results were obtained through the intervention, and were experienced by the tribals and TEED. But there still remained many needs to be addressed. TEED had requested financial support from Caritas Sweden for an additional three years. However, due to various reasons, including lack of funds, it was no longer possible for Caritas Sweden to endorse the third phase of this intervention. I felt the need to look for other donors who could finance this intervention to further support its qualitative improvements among the tribals. I felt it would have been a pity for the momentum gained to decline after these five years intervention. TEED and the tribals were at a very interesting phase of their history and they needed more time and funds to carry on with the process of consolidating the advances they'd had achieved, and to plan for the intervention's sustainability. I agreed with TEED and the tribals and so did Caritas Sweden's leadership. Nevertheless, Caritas Sweden could not arrange for the required funds, so I had to search for other donors.

During 2008, in the final year of Caritas Sweden's support to TEED, I contacted several donor agencies in Sweden and abroad that I thought might be interested in taking over this programme. One of the donors in Sweden that came forward was SOIR-IM. After due assessment, SOIR-IM took over the programme from Caritas Sweden and since then has been financing TEED's programme with the tribals. The journey continues.

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Thanks

In May 2009 the founder of TEED, Mr Shivappa Poojary suddenly died from a severe heart attack. His funeral was attended by more than one thousand people from the tribal population of North Kanara. He has left a legacy of restored dignity for tribals in North Kanara.

Facts and figures

- **NO. OF STAFF AT TEED TRUST:** 10 to 50 persons, depending on availability of funds and needs

- **NO. OF BENEFICIARES:** approximately 40,000 individuals; or 5,200 families

- **NO. OF YOUTH COMPLETED HIGHER SECONDARY, COLLEGE AND VOCATIONAL TRAININGS:** 2250 (60% girls)

- **NO. OF PERSONS TRAINED IN LEADERSHIP:** 350 (45% women)

- **NO. OF SHGS FORMED:** 120 (100 SHGs led by women and 20 SHGs led by men)

- **NO. OF ACTIVE MEMBERS IN SHGS:** 2175 (1950 women and 225 men)

- **NO. OF INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED:** 3200 (90% by women)

- **AMOUNT SAVED THROUGH TRIBALS' OWN SAVING:** 600,000 SEK

- **AMOUNT BORROWED FROM TEED'S REVOLVING FUND AND COMMERCIAL BANKS:** 2,400,000 Sek

- **NO. OF LOANS RETURNED:** 99,9%

- **NO. OF TRIBAL GRASSROOT ASSOCIATIONS FORMED AND REGISTERED:** 6 TGAs

- **NO. OF FEDERATIONS FORMED TO SUPERVISE AND SUSTAIN THE SHGS:** 2 federations

- **MAIN TANGIBLE ACHIEVEMENT:** through networking and advocacy influenced the central government to enact a law that entitle land ownership to millions of tribals in India.

The above figures refer to persons benefitted, groups formed and amounts saved, borrowed and returned during the period 2005 to 2011.
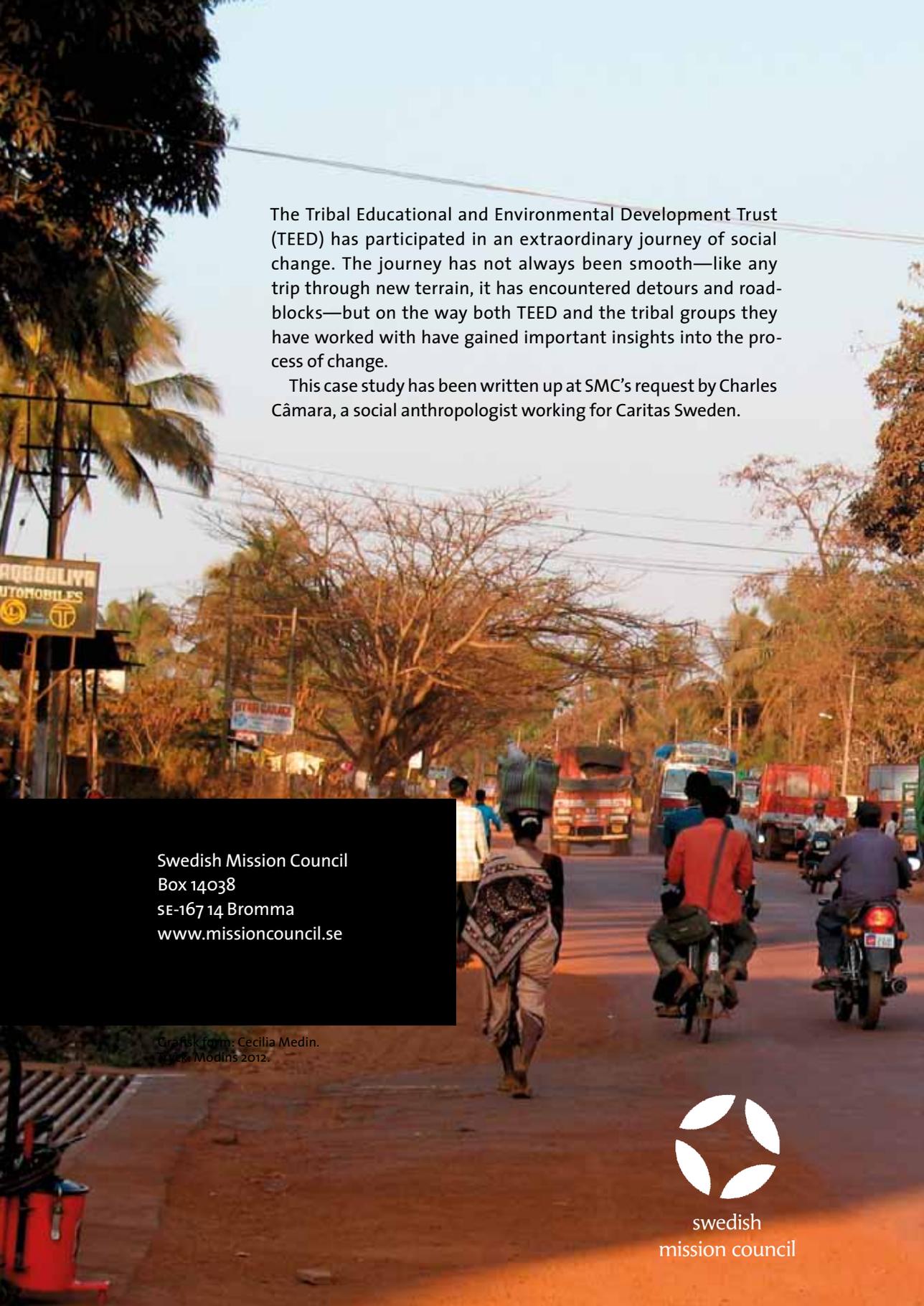
The Tribal Educational and Environmental Development Trust (TEED) has participated in an extraordinary journey of social change. The journey has not always been smooth—like any trip through new terrain, it has encountered detours and road-blocks—but on the way both TEED and the tribal groups they have worked with have gained important insights into the process of change.

This case study has been written up at SMC's request by Charles Câmara, a social anthropologist working for Caritas Sweden.

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