

SCHOOL EDUCATION OF SCHEDULED TRIBES IN INDIA

Vishal D. Pajankar and Pranali P.¹

Abstract

The scheduled tribes constitute a sizeable, but backward section of the population in India. Educational backwardness of the scheduled tribes is one of the social concerns in the country. They lag behind the rest of the population in the country in the matter of literacy attainment. Non-enrolment in school and drop out from school without completing education are serious issues of the schooling of tribal children in the country. Another issue is the gender inequality in the schooling of tribal children. There has been steady improvement in the schooling of tribal children during the last two decades. Despite this positive trend and the special programmes for tribal education provided by the government, scheduled tribes continue to be backward in education. Many more special programmes and strategies are required to deal with the educational problems of the scheduled tribes.

Scheduled Tribes

The term scheduled tribes, as per article 366 (25)² of the Constitution of India, refers to 'such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under article 342 to be scheduled tribes.' These are communities that are notified

by the President of India for inclusion in the list of the scheduled tribes under article 342³ of the Constitution. No other definition of tribe is given by the Constitution. Traditionally these communities have been referred to as *adivasi*, *vanvasi*, tribe or tribal. There are more than five hundred scheduled tribe communities living in different parts of the country. They have their own cultural traits including the language they speak for communication within the respective community. The scheduled tribes are not part of the traditional Hindu caste structure in India. They are comparable to groups known as the 'indigenous' or 'native people' in other parts of the world. Mishra defines the scheduled tribes as the people who claim themselves as indigenous to the soil; generally inhabit forest and hilly regions; largely pursue a subsistence level economy; have great regard for the traditional religious and cultural practices; believe in common ancestry and have strong group ties (Jha and Jhingran 2002).

The population of the scheduled tribes in India is 84.3 million as per census 2001 and accounts for 8.2 per cent of the total population of the country. There are 16 million scheduled tribe children as per 2001 census, out of the total child population of about 193 million in the age group of 6-14 years in the country. The population of scheduled tribes live in about 15 per cent of the country's geographical area that is mainly forest, hilly, undulating and inaccessible, but rich in natural resources. The areas inhabited predominantly by tribal communities are declared as 'scheduled areas' by the government for special consideration and development plans. The tribal population in India is quite unevenly distributed in the country. Some parts of the country have high tribal concentration while in other areas the tribal communities form only a small portion of the total population. There is hardly any tribal community in states like Punjab and Haryana, and the union territories of Delhi and Chandigarh. There is great variation in the style of living and level of development of the different tribal communities in India. There are tribal groups, which are still at the food gathering stage or pursue primitive forms of agriculture or practise shifting cultivation. Then there are others that have taken to education and non-agricultural occupations, and participate in the life of the mainstream society in India.

Vishal D. Pajankar, Department of Educational Survey and Data Processing, National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi – 110016. Email: vdp1234@rediffmail.com, vishal1819@gmail.com
Pranali P., Post-graduate Student, Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University, Nagpur – 440 010. Email: pranali2205@gmail.com

Table 1**Total and Scheduled Tribe Population in India (1961–2001):
Decadal Variation and Sex Ratio**

Census Year	Decadal Variation		Sex Ratio	
	Total Population	Scheduled Tribes	Total Population	Scheduled Tribes
1961	—	—	941	981
1971	24.80	27.21	930	1036
1981	24.66	35.81	934	983
1991	23.85	31.24	927	972
2001	21.54	24.45	933	976

Source: Census of India 2001

The population of the scheduled tribes has been growing at a faster rate than the general population in India over the last five decades. All the last four census enumerations recorded a higher rate of growth in the tribal population in India (Table 1). While the rate of growth was 27.21 and 24.80 per cent for the tribal and general population respectively in 1971, the growth rate was 24.45 for the tribal population and 21.54 for the general population in 2001. Another interesting observation is that while there has been consistent decrease in the growth rate of the general population, growth rate has been fluctuating in the case of the tribal population in India. Tribal population in India grew by 27.11 per cent during 1961-71 and by as high as 35.81 per cent in the subsequent decade. In the next two decades the growth rate showed a downward trend. It was a bit sharp during 1991-2001 – growth rate of tribal population dropping from 35.81 in 1991 to 24.45 in 2001. Higher growth rate of the tribal population probably reflects the relative backwardness of the tribal communities in India.

Another interesting observation about the tribal population in India is that sex ratio (the number of females per 1000 males in the population) has consistently been higher for the tribal population compared to the general population during the last five census decades (Table 1). In 1961 sex ratio was 941 and 981 for the general and tribal population respectively. In 1971 sex ratio was as high as 1036 for the tribal population while it was only 930 for the general population. In the last census (2001) sex ratio in the tribal

population was 976, which is higher than the general population's sex ratio of 933. Thus on the whole the sex ratio of the tribal population shows better situation in the matter gender equality. However, it may be noted that tribal population too has shown a downward trend in the matter of sex ratio during the last three census enumerations.

Education of Scheduled Tribes

One of the challenges faced by India since the independence is the mainstreaming of the socially excluded groups like the scheduled tribes. These social groups have been victims of multiple forms of oppression and deprivation. The backwardness of the scheduled tribes in India has several dimensions – ecological, economic and educational. The Constitution of India provides for a comprehensive framework for the socio-economic development of the scheduled tribes and for preventing their exploitation by the other groups in the country. A detailed and comprehensive review of the tribal problem was taken on the eve of the Fifth Five Year Plan and the tribal sub-plan strategy took note of the fact that an integrated approach to the tribal problems was necessary in terms of their geographic and demographic concentration.

An important programme of tribal uplift launched by the government of India has been that of education, because education is considered as an important means of reducing poverty, improving agriculture and living conditions of the people. Education has been accepted as a basic right in itself. It is a powerful means for individuals to improve personnel endowments, build capacity, overcome constraints, make critical choices and not be a mere object of exploitation by powerful social forces. Denial of this basic education to these social groups is an outright denial of citizenship in the democratic form of governance of the country (Yadav 2007).

Under article 46⁴ of the Constitution of India improving the educational situation of the scheduled tribes is a special responsibility of the central and state governments. The governments, therefore, are having various schemes for the promotion of tribal education. Generally, the schemes provide school building, teachers, free studentships, free textbooks, free boarding and lodging facilities, and midday meals. Some primary and secondary schools have been opened in the tribal areas.

Despite the special educational schemes and the efforts made during the last six decades after the independence for the development of the tribal people, the scheduled tribes have continued to remain backward in access to and pursuit of education. They lag behind the general population in educational achievement. As per 2001 census the literacy rate among the scheduled tribes is 47.10 and female literacy rate of the tribal population as low as 34.76 (Table 2). In comparison the literacy rate of the total population

Table 2
Literacy Rate of Scheduled Tribe Population
By Sex and Urban/Rural Areas

Census Year	Areas	Male	Female	Total
1961	Rural	13.37	02.90	08.16
	Urban	30.43	13.45	22.41
	Total	13.83	03.16	08.53
1971	Rural	16.92	04.36	10.68
	Urban	37.09	19.64	28.84
	Total	17.63	04.85	11.30
1981	Rural	22.94	06.81	14.92
	Urban	47.60	27.32	37.93
	Total	24.52	08.04	16.35
1991	Rural	38.45	16.02	27.38
	Urban	66.56	45.66	56.60
	Total	40.65	18.19	29.60
2001	Rural	57.39	32.44	45.02
	Urban	77.77	59.87	69.09
	Total	59.17	34.76	47.10

Source: Government of India 2007

in the country is 64.80 and the female literacy 53.70 (Census of India 2001). However, it may be noted with some level of gratification that the literacy rate of the tribal population has consistently improved during the last five decades. Literacy rate of tribal population, which is 47.10 as per 2001 census, was as low as 8.53 in 1961 and 29.60 in 1991.

There is conspicuous gender inequality in the tribal literacy rate (Table 2). As per 2001 census data female literacy rate is 34.76 compared to the male literacy rate of 59.17. But a positive trend regarding gender and literacy is that there has been notable improvement in the literacy rate of the females. Female literacy rose from 3.16 in 1961 to 34.76 in 2001.

Within the tribal population there is great disparity in the literacy rate of the rural and urban areas (Table 2). In the year 1961, literacy rate of the rural population was 8.16 per cent, whereas in the case of the urban population the rate was 22.41 per cent. Literacy rate was as low as 2.90 in the case of rural females in the tribal population of 1961. Although the literacy rate rose substantially in 2001, the rural-urban difference continues to exist. According to the 2001 census, rural literacy rate among the tribal population is 45.02 per cent, whereas it is 69.09 per cent for the urban areas.

School Enrolment of Scheduled Tribes

Two aspects are considered in discussing school enrolment – the number of children enrolled and the gross enrolment ratio (GER). The first is the absolute number of students enrolled in a given class or stage (viz., primary, upper primary, secondary and higher secondary level) of school education, regardless of the age of the students (Singh and Raju 2006). GER refers to the enrolment in a class or stage of schooling as percentage of the total children of the respective age group in the population.

Data on the enrolment of the scheduled tribe students during the period of 1991-2004 (Table 3) show that the number of students increased from 8033000 in 1991 to 13736000 at the primary stage, from 1794000 to 4171000 at the upper primary stage, and from 843000 to 2085000 at the secondary and higher secondary stage during the period of 1991-2004. The increase in enrolment during this period has been by 70.99 per cent, 132.50 per cent and 147.33 per cent in primary, upper primary and secondary/higher secondary stages of school education respectively. The pattern of increase

Table 3

**Enrolment of Scheduled Tribe Students in School
During 1991-2004 (Figures in '000')**

Year	Primary (Class I – V)			Upper Primary (Class VI – VIII)			Secondary/ Higher Secondary (Class IX – XII)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1991	4951	3082	8033	1214	580	1794	590	253	843
1992	5032	3333	8365	1336	693	2029	610	272	882
1993	5154	3441	8595	1424	770	2194	682	315	997
1994	5454	3605	9059	1377	871	2248	779	350	1129
1995	5589	3826	9415	1448	837	2285	763	359	1122
1996	5896	4057	9953	1508	894	2402	790	385	1175
1997	6141	4311	10452	1643	996	2639	823	417	1240
1998	6225	4452	10677	1698	1026	2724	909	464	1373
1999	6139	4511	10650	1804	1101	2905	918	504	1422
2000	6330	4665	10995	1879	1205	3084	955	535	1490
2001	6691	5040	11731	2054	1306	3360	1079	622	1701
2002	6422	5408	11830	1930	1320	3250	1105	678	1783
2003	6776	5741	12517	2136	1526	3662	1222	729	1951
2004*	7367	6369	13736	2395	1776	4171	1290	795	2085

*Provisional

Source: Government of India 2007

in school enrolment of the scheduled tribes during the period of 1991-2004 indicates not only larger enrolment but also greater retention of the scheduled tribe students at the higher stages of schooling. This is a positive trend as far as education of the scheduled tribes is concerned.

Gross Enrolment Ratio

The measure of GER is the percentage of the children of the relevant age group enrolled in school. The data on the GER of tribal children in school (Table 4) too show that there has been good progress in the matter of

enrolment of the scheduled tribe students in schools. In 1991-92 the GER of tribal children was 104.7 at the primary school, 41.0 at the upper primary level and 81.6 at the elementary level. In the year 2004-05 it rose to 121.9 and 67.0 at the primary and upper primary levels of schooling respectively. The GER above 100 indicates the presence of largely over-aged (and rarely under-aged) children in respective stage of schooling. Late enrolment in school and stagnation generally account for the presence of over-aged children in school. Presence of over-aged children, therefore, is in some way an indication of the relative educational backwardness of the tribal population.

Table 4

**Gross Enrolment Ratio of Scheduled Tribe Students
(1991-92 – 2004-05)**

Year	Primary (Class I – V)			Upper Primary (Class VI – VIII)			Elementary (Class I – VIII)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1991-92	125.6	82.6	104.7	54.1	27.3	41.0	99.7	62.5	81.6
1992-93	126.7	88.6	108.2	58.5	32.0	45.6	101.8	68.0	85.4
1993-94	123.9	88.8	107.0	60.2	34.9	48.0	100.8	69.3	85.6
1994-95	112.3	76.2	93.6	54.5	36.4	45.7	103.2	72.6	88.5
1995-96	115.0	80.2	96.9	57.3	35.0	46.5	105.7	75.1	90.9
1996-97	108.1	74.3	91.2	63.5	40.2	52.3	87.6	61.3	74.8
1997-98	105.9	77.4	91.4	67.7	43.4	54.9	85.1	62.4	73.9
1998-99	112.0	81.0	97.0	68.0	43.0	55.0	98.0	69.0	83.7
1999-00*	112.7	82.7	97.7	70.8	44.8	58.0	99.3	70.9	85.2
2000-01*	116.9	85.5	101.1	72.5	47.7	60.2	102.5	73.5	88.0
2001-02*	106.9	85.1	96.3	82.1	57.3	70.3	99.8	77.3	88.9
2002-03*	104.8	92.3	98.7	55.0	40.8	48.2	86.7	73.9	80.5
2003-04*	94.7	87.8	91.4	84.0	66.6	75.8	90.6	81.1	86.1
2004-05*	128.1	115.5	121.9	73.9	59.5	67.0	108.5	95.8	102.4

* Provisional

Source: Government of India 2007

Gender Inequality

The unequal participation of females in education as compared to their male counterparts has been one of the striking inequalities that can be seen in education (Yadav 2007). Gender inequality is visible in the schooling of the tribal children at the different stages (Table 5). However, the situation has been improving over the years, in so far as the difference in the percentage of boys and girls in school education is gradually decreasing. During 1991-2004 enrolment of the scheduled tribe girls increased from 3082000 to 6369000 at the primary stage, from 580000 to 1776000 at the upper primary stage and from 253000 to 795000 at the secondary/higher secondary stage.

Table 5

School Enrolment of Scheduled Tribes during (1991-2004): Percentage of Boys and Girls

Year	Primary (Class I – V)			Upper Primary (Class VI – VIII)			Secondary/ Higher Secondary (Class IX – XII)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1991	61.63 (4951)	38.37 (3082)	100.00 (8033)	67.67 (1214)	32.33 (580)	100.00 (1794)	69.99 (590)	30.01 (253)	100.00 (843)
2004*	53.63 (7367)	46.37 (6369)	100.00 (13736)	57.42 (2395)	42.58 (1776)	100.00 (4171)	61.87 (1290)	38.13 (795)	100.00 (2085)

* Provisional

Figures in parentheses show the enrolment in thousand.

Source: Government of India 2007

While in 1991 girls constituted 38.37, 32.33 and 30.01 per cent of the students in the three levels of schooling (primary, upper primary and secondary/higher secondary), in 2004 the respective figures rose to 46.37, 42.58 and 38.13. In other words, the relative growth in school enrolment has been higher for girls than for boys. This is again another positive trend towards social development in the case of the scheduled tribes.

Another index to measure gender equality in schooling is the number of girls per 100 boys enrolled in school. Data in this matter (Table 6) show

that, although gender disparity in the schooling of tribal children still exists, there has been substantial improvement in narrowing down the gap between boys and girls in school enrolment during the last five decades. In 1950-51 the number of girls was 39, 18 and 16 for 100 boys in the primary, upper primary and secondary/higher secondary stages of school education respectively. In 2004-05 the corresponding figures were 88, 80 and 71 at the three stages of schooling respectively. This again indicates a steady positive trend towards gender equality in the schooling of tribal children.

Table 6

Number of Girls per Hundred Boys Enrolled in School: 1950-51 to 2004-05

Year	Primary (Class I – V)	Upper Primary (Class VI – VIII)	Secondary/ Higher Secondary (Class IX – XII)
1950-51	39	18	16
1960-61	48	32	23
1970-71	60	41	35
1980-81	63	49	44
1990-91	71	58	50
2000-01	78	69	63
2004-05*	88	80	71

*Provisional

Source: Government of India 2007

Gender parity index (GPI) is yet another measure of gender equality in education. GPI is the ratio of girls' GER to boys' GER at a given level of education. When the GPI shows a value of ONE at a level of education, opportunities for and access to education are available equally to both girls and boys at that level of education.

Two observations may be made on the data on GPI presented in table 7. First, the GPI is much higher at the primary level of school education than at the upper primary level. This is the situation in the case of the data in both 1991-92 and 2004-05. In 1991-92 the GPI was 0.65 and 0.50 at the primary and upper primary stage respectively, while it was 0.90 and 0.81 at

Table 7**Gender Parity Index of Scheduled Tribes at School Education:
In 1991-92 and 2004-05**

Year	Primary (Class I – V)	Upper Primary (Class VI – VIII)	Primary and Upper Primary (Class I – VIII)
1990-91	0.65	0.50	0.60
2004-05*	0.90	0.81	0.88

* Provisional

Source: Government of India 2007

the respective stages of schooling for 2004-05. This finding probably indicates a higher rate of drop out among the girls after the primary stage of education compared to the boys. The second observation is that there has been a definite rise in the GPI from 1991-92 to 2004-05 at both the levels of school education. The increase has been from 0.65 to 0.90 at the level of primary school and from 0.50 to .081 at the upper primary stage of school education. If both the primary and upper primary stages of education are taken together the rise in the GPI has been from 0.60 in 1991-92 to 0.88 in 2004-05. The finding is yet another indication of the positive trend towards gender equality in the case of the scheduled tribes, although inequality still persists.

Drop Out Ratio

A school drop out is a student who leaves school before the completion of the school stage or at some intermediate or non-terminal point of a given stage of school education (Singh and Raju 2006). Thus the term 'drop out' may mean (i) one who has discontinued education before completing the last stage of education for which he/she was enrolled or (ii) one who has discontinued education before attaining a specific stage in education (like primary or secondary stage of schooling).

High drop out rate in school education is attributed to poor socio-economic situation of the family. This is particularly true in the case of girls as poor families with limited resources would rather invest money in their

sons' education and engage the girls in tasks such as domestic chores. Although primary education is technically free, there are costs other than fees (such as for books and other learning materials, and dress) that impose financial burden on low income families. Reasons for drop out from school, other than poverty, include inaccessibility of school, inadequate school infrastructure and low emphasis on education.

Table 8**Drop Out Rate of Scheduled Tribe Students:
1990-91 and 2004-05**

Year	Classes I-V			Classes I-VIII			Classes I-X		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1990-91	60.3	66.1	62.5	75.7	82.2	78.6	83.3	87.7	85.0
2004-05*	42.6	42.0	42.3	65.0	67.1	65.9	77.8	80.7	79.0

*Provisional

Source: Government of India 2007

The data on drop out among the scheduled tribe school students (Table 8) show that majority of them do not complete school education. If one takes class X as the terminal point of schooling only a minority of the scheduled tribe students complete schooling. As one can see from the data for the year 2004-05 just 21 per cent of the students enrolled in class I completed class X. When one considers primary education as the terminal point, 42.3 per cent of the students enrolled in class I drop out by the end of the primary stage (or class V), and 65.9 per cent by the end of the upper primary stage (class VIII).

If one considers classes V, VIII and X as distinct terminal stages of school education, the rate of drop out is highest at the primary stage, at the end of which 42.3 per cent of students enrolled in class I drop out. By the end of class VIII another 22.6 per cent of them drop out and at the third stage (class X) yet another 13.1 per cent drop out.

Another observation on the data on drop out rate of the scheduled tribe students is on the gender disparity. As can be expected, drop out rate

on the whole is higher among the girls. But the difference is not alarmingly higher. At the primary stage of schooling it is more or less the same as per the data of 2004-05 – 42.6 for boys and 42.0 for girls (marginally lower for girls). At the upper primary stage the drop out rate is 65.0 and 67.1 for boys and girls respectively. Gender difference in the drop out rate is similar at the secondary stage too – 77.8 for boys and 80.7 for girls. Thus the data here indicate that the problem of drop out is equally serious for both boys and girls.

Comparison between the data of 1990-91 and 2004-05 (i.e. a gap of 15 years) shows that the situation is changing for the better. While the drop out rate in 1990-91 was 62.5, 78.6 and 85.0 at the end of the primary (class V), upper primary (class VIII) and secondary (class X) stages respectively, the corresponding figures for the year 2004-05 were 42.3, 65.9 and 79.0. The improvement is applicable equally to boys and girls. The trend is positive, but in absolute terms the rate of drop is still high to be of concern. One may attribute this positive trend to the educational initiatives taken by the government and non-government agencies involved in the education of the scheduled tribes, in particular the special government schemes and programmes, such as scholarships, free-ships, special grants, mid-day meal, hostel facilities etc.

Conclusion

Scheduled tribes constitute 8.2 per cent of the population in India. But in terms of absolute number they form a sizeable section – 84.3 million. By this very fact any issue about them would be a social concern of the country as whole. Although tribal population has a better record in the matter sex ratio compared to the general population in India, they remain backward in many regards. One of the areas of social concern in regard to the scheduled tribes is that of education. They continue to be lagging behind the rest of the population in the matter of access to education and educational pursuit. Enrolment of tribal children in primary education has yet to reach the desired level. There is the additional problem of drop out among those who manage to enter the school. There is also the issue of gender disparity in the education of the scheduled tribes.

There are several programmes of intervention for the educational development of the tribal population. However, the facilities provided under

the various schemes do not seem to be adequate to cater to the special needs of tribal education. As a result many of the tribal children do not get the opportunity to attend the school. There have to be different plans, programmes and strategies to reach education to every nook and corner of the tribal areas in order to ensure that every tribal child is enrolled in school and regularly attends the classes. The programmes of education have to be expanded to cover every tribal village with at least a primary school. The school and its infrastructure in tribal areas should be good enough to attract the tribal children and activities in the school should be interesting and suiting to the learning capabilities of the tribal children so as to retain them in the school until they complete the schooling. If careful attention and planning are done in the provision of school infrastructure facilities and the teaching-learning processes within the school, enrolment and retention of tribal children in school will become a habit among the tribal population.

Notes

1. The authors are very thankful to the Editor of the Rajagiri Journal of Social Development and the honourable referees for the comments and valuable suggestions which helped us improve the quality of the paper.
2. Article 366: '(25)“Scheduled Tribes” means such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this Constitution' (Government of India 2008).
3. Article 342: '(1) The President [may with respect to any State [or Union territory], and where it is a State, after consultation with the Governor thereof,] by public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities which shall for the purposes of this Constitution be deemed to be Scheduled Tribes in relation to that State [or Union territory, as the case may be]. (2) Parliament may by law include in or exclude from the list of Scheduled Tribes specified in a notification issued under clause (1) any tribe or tribal community or part of or group within any tribe or tribal community, but save as aforesaid a notification issued under the said clause shall not be varied by any subsequent notification' (Government of India 2008).

4. Article 46: 'The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation' (Government of India 2008).

References

Census of India, 2001, "India at a Glance – Statistics on Demographic and Socio-Economic Characteristics," <http://www.censusindia.gov.in> (sited in December 2008)

Government of India, 2007, *Selected Education Statistics 2004-2005*, New Delhi, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Higher Education, Statistics Division

Government of India, 2008, "The Constitution of India", Ministry of Law and Justice, <http://lawmin.nic.in/coi/coiason29july08.pdf> (sited in December 2008)

Jha, J. and D. Jhingran, 2002, *Elementary Education for the Poorest and Other Deprived Groups: The Real Challenge of Universalisation*, New Delhi, Centre for Policy Research

Singh, V. P. and B. M. K. Raju, 2006, *Manual on Statistics and Indicators of School Education*, New Delhi, National Council of Educational Research and Training

Yadav, M., 2007, *Empowerment and Upliftment of ST Girls through Action Research, Training Programme Material*, New Delhi, National Council of Educational Research and Training

Rajagiri Journal of Social Development
Volume 4, Number 2, December 2008

MALANADU: EFFORTS IN SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Thomas Mattamundayil

Malanadu is a combined venture of four development organisations viz. the Malanadu Development Society, the Malanadu Milk Producers' Society, the Malanadu Farmers' Society and the Malanadu Tea Farmers' Society. All of them are registered as social service societies under the Travancore Cochin Literary, Scientific and Charitable Societies Act, 1955. All of them share the same vision and mission and are engaged in sustainable development of rural community. But they have their specific objectives, areas of operation and activities in pursuit of their objectives.

MALANADU DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY

Malanadu Development Society (MDS) is the first development organisation which was registered as a social service society under the Travancore Cochin Literary, Scientific and Charitable Societies Act, 1955 in the year 1977 (Registration No. K 201/1977). The society has been working for the integral development of the poor and marginalized people in the civil districts of Kottayam, Pathanamthitta and Idukki in the state of Kerala, India. It is one of the social work organisations working under the diocese of Kanjirapally, Kerala. For the last 31 years, the MDS has offered itself in organising the rural poor to work for sustainable development of the entire community. It has devoted quite a good time to learn the development needs, problems and opportunities of the target community. The programmes of the organisation are mainly focused on the remote, underdeveloped villages in the above said districts. The interventions of the organisation in various realms of the poor inhabitants in the operational area have a well defined and articulated purpose to help them achieve a pattern of development, which is sustainable and self-contained. All the interventions of the MDS are

Thomas Mattamundayil, Secretary, Malanadu Development Society, Parathode, Kanjirapally – 686 512, Kerala. Email: mds.org@rediffmail.com