

Chenchu Empowerment Programme

The role of Nallamala hills in the economy of A.P. :

The Eastern Ghats in A.P. are spread over northeast districts from Srikakulam to West Godavari and in south west Nallamala and Seshachalam hills. While northern parts of the ghats are having rich soil profile and receive highest rainfall – the south west is in rainshadow area – under going agricultural drought and shortage in

drinking water.

The Nallamala hills in the south west part of Eastern Ghats cover eleven thousand Sq. K.Ms. are in the midst of the state and catchment to the Nalgonda, Guntur, Prakasam, Kurnool, Cuddapha and Mahaboobnagar districts. Nagarjuna Sagar multipurpose project, Srisailem hydel power projects etc. are in this catchment area. In view of the important role of the forests in these Nallamala catchment in sustaining the economy i.e.; sustained water flows & ground water recharge, fodder for cattle, timber for the farmers, govt. has declared most of the Nallamala as wild life Sanctuary in 1984 and further steps are taken under 'Project Tiger' programme to conserve the wildlife in these uplands. The sanctuary is biggest in extent (3,500 kms) in the whole continent of Asia.

Chenchus are the aboriginal tribes spread over these hills. They are hunter-gatherers and now the govt. wants to 'develop' them as farmers but with little success. These hills having several famous temples attract pilgrims not only from the state, also from the adjacent Karnataka and Maharashtra states. Chenchus used to make a living as field guides helping the pilgrims walking through the hills. With the development of ghat roads the services of Chenchus are no longer needed. Moreover forests which used to provide food & shelter for Chenchus are declining.

In his book '*Tribes of India struggle for survival*' published in 1982, the famous Anthropologist Administrator Prof. Haimendorf observes.

Inroads to in the Chenchu habitat:

'All the innovations resulting from the commercial exploitation of forests had come so rapidly that the Chenchus had no time to adjust mentally and materially to the new conditions. They felt baffled and helpless when watching the ever-increasing inroads into the forests, which they had always considered their undisputed domain.'

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'For the Chenchus, the destruction of bamboo in their habitat will be catastrophic. They depend on bamboo not only for the construction of their huts and for making many of their utensils, but above all for

Destruction of Chenchu employment resources in forest - The bamboo felling:

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the manufacture of baskets and mats, which they traditionally sell or barter for agricultural, produce. It is no exaggeration to say that the depletion of the stocks of bamboo in the forests of the Amrabad Plateau would make the area virtually uninhabitable for its original denizens. The fact that the prospect of such a development is by no means a figment of the imagination is demonstrated by the fate of other forest dwellers of Andhra Pradesh, whose life has been totally disrupted by a forest policy unmindful of the rights and needs of tribal populations.'

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The changing food habits – marketing of forest products for purchasing outside commodities:

'The Chenchus are now no longer concentrating on the gathering of wild plants for consumption, but gather marketable commodities and take them to Girijan depots, where they are paid for in cash. With that cash they then buy grain for their daily consumption.'

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'Even the poorest peasant, rooted in the traditions of an agricultural society, makes every effort to provide for a replacement of the plough cattle so vital for his economic survival. The Chenchu, used to the hand-to-mouth existence of the food gatherer and hunter, has no such innate care for the morrow, and any scheme aiming at a transformation of his economy would have to extend over a very long period during which sympathetic guidance would have to nurture the growth of a sense of economic realism.'

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Necessity to follow up the efforts with human touch:

Colonization of Chenchu habitat by Banjara – the devastating effects:

'Already in 1940 a number of Chenchus owned buffaloes which they used for milking The Chenchus' semi-nomadic life-style would be compatible with the development of pastoral pursuits. However, contact with cattle brought into the forest area by Banjara grazers resulted in epidemics of foot-and-mouth disease, which wiped out most of the buffaloes in the possession of Chenchus. Hence in 1977 the Chenchus of the upper plateau owned fewer cattle than the previous generation had possessed.'

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'The overall literacy rate for all the tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh was 5.34 percent in 1971, and had risen to 8.62 percent by 1978. The system of ashram schools providing boarding facilities for tribal children extends to all the districts containing tribal populations, including Mahabubnagar and Kurnool, where school education is provided even to the children of the semi-nomadic Chenchus.'

The education – a vast network of residential schools:

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Educated are neither equipped to help the community in getting the benefits guaranteed by the state: Distributed by Government

'It remains to be seen whether those Chenchus who have spent several years in boarding schools will be able to readjust to the forest life of their parents. If they have lost the skill of gathering marketable forest produce or have developed wants which cannot be met from the income Chenchus derive from the sale of such produce, education may be a mixed blessing except for those young people who obtain jobs outside their traditional habitat.'

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'Chenchu elite does not identify with their illiterate fellow tribesmen and are not inclined to act as their spokesmen or to provide any kind of leadership. Like many other educated tribesmen, they are more interested in as close as possible assimilation to the caste Hindus with whom they have to work in their employment. Even should any of them have political ambitions, the Chenchu communities, whose loyalty and support they could probably gain, are too small in numbers to provide sufficient votes even in local elections.'

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'In the old days all the Chenchus of the small settlement of Srisaïlam were feasted at the four main temple festivals, i.e., Shivaratri, Sankranti, Ugadi, and Khumbam, but since 1977 this happens only at Sankranti. On the other hand, a few Chenchus are now employed in the temple and paid cash wages.'

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Alienation leads to depression addiction and ill health. Domestic violence against women & children

As a result of his alienation, Chenchus became very dejected, gloomy and became vulnerable for addiction of country liquor. Their health condition deteriorated and susceptible to TB and malnutrition. Such situations lead to increasing domestic violence wife beating and chaos in the family life.

The later developments:

In 1990 Ministry of Environment and Forest of Govt. of India (MoEF) framed following guidelines to resolve the conflicts between tribals and forests.

- I. Encroachments of forestlands – a Review Thereof and Measures of Containment.

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The growing economy of pilgrim tourism – Chenchus losing their involvement:

Govt. of India efforts to resolve tribal – forest & wildlife conflicts – not implemented:

- II. Review of disputed claims over forestlands, arising out of forest settlement.
- III. Disputes regarding pattas/leases/grants involving forest land – settlement thereof
- IV. Elimination of intermediaries and payment of minimum wages to the laborers on forest works
- V. Conversion of forest villages into revenue villages and settlement of other old habitations
- VI. Payment of compensation for loss of life and property due to predation/depredation by wild animals.
- VII. Involvement of Village Communities and Voluntary Agencies for Regeneration of Degraded Forest Lands.(JFM)
- VIII. Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Association of Scheduled Tribes and Rural poor in Afforestation of Degraded Forests.

No Chenchu was included in the state board of wild life:

Wildlife Protection Act 1972 mandates constitution of State wildlife advisory board in which at least three tribals should be represented. Honorary wildlife wardens should be appointed in each district. Till date this board has remained ornamental and never seriously discussed the matters relating to conflicts between wildlife and tribals. To implement the above eight guidelines so far no institutional mechanism was evolved. As a result copies of these guidelines remained in the cupboards of forest department. Tribal Welfare Department was sidelined and voiceless in these matters. No institutional arrangements made to monitor the conflict resolution between tribals, forests and wildlife. The tribal welfare department officer is not involved in fixing the forest wages. There is no single Chenchu representative in the wild life advisory board. Now sakti is a member of the reconstituted board of wildlife. So far no meeting of the board was held.

"Settlement of rights (protected area) in the (PA) has been very slow despite the states being repeatedly reminded of this by the Central Government. In over 85% of the sanctuaries and 60% of the national parks, the exercise of determining the rights had till recently not been completed (MoEF), 1998-a). This process has recently received a boost due to a Supreme Court Order of 1997, asking state governments to finish the settlement process within one year. Unfortunately, due to lack of any detailed guidelines on how and under what prerequisites this process should be carried on, and the haste with which it is now underway, it is considerably increasing hostility and alienation. Pas themselves are threatened by this and by district authorities who would much rather delete / denotify parts of Pas than face the headache of settlement". P.65

- Roshni Kutty and Ashish Kothari (2201), *Protected Areas in India – A profile, Kalpavriksh.*

Settlement of rights in the sanctuary did not

Exclusive ITDA for Chenchus; The Headquarters shifted from Hyderabad to Srisaïlam in 1988:

Govt. established exclusively ITDA (Integrated Tribal Development Agency) for Chenchus with headquarters in Sri Saïlam in 1988. But the

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presence of ITDA did not have any impact except facilitating distribution of funds from Hyderabad to Sri Sailam and some educated Chenchus got employment. The Chenchu population started declining. Starvation deaths became regular events. In 1994 the govt. of India has to intervene and convened a committee under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary to check the starvation death among Chenchus by improving the delivery system of govt. to reach Chenchus.

The committee first met in Oct'94 and identified the problems basically being faced in the Chenchu area:-

1. Isolation and inaccessibility
2. Pre-agriculture stage of economy characterized by hunting and gathering
3. Large scale and wide spread illiteracy
4. Primitive methods of exploitation of natural resources
5. Poor and unhygienic living conditions
6. High incidence of morbidity and mortality
7. Introduction of Tiger Sanctuary and imposition of restrictions
8. Abysmal Poverty
9. Scarcity of drinking water
10. High incidence of illicit liquor consumption
11. Child marriages
12. Lack of basic infrastructural facilities

In the State level meeting held in Sep'1996. CS inquired whether the over all production in terms of quantity of the gum purchased from tribes is increasing or decreasing. Commissioner Tribal Welfare informed that there are indications that the quantity of gum collected by the tribes is declining and the Department of Tribal Welfare has been requesting the Forest Department to take up massive plantation of Gum Karaya trees in the forest area. Special Secretary (Forest) agreed to issue instructions but mentioned that it takes twenty years for the Gum Karayas trees to start yielding.

Permitting Basic Amenities to Chenchus in Reserve Forests:

CS inquired whether Forest Department is having any difficulty in adhering to certain decisions taken in the meeting with the Prl. Secretary to Government, EFS & T, on 06-01-1996 regarding permitting certain minimum basic amenities in the Chenchu settlements within the Reserve Forest area. CS has advised the Spl. Secretary, Forest to communicate necessary instructions to field officers particularly Forest Range Officers, and insist on their adherence without creating problems to the tribes.

The facilities demanded by Chenchus shall make him a part of consumer society and such livelihood and growing demands shall threaten the survival of sanctuary. This is the argument of forest official.

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GoI directed the State government to convene a state level committee having Chief Secretary (CS) as Chairperson was convened to check the starvation death among Chenchus.

In the year 1994 AP Forestry Project with the aid of World Bank was launched. The Projects identified some of the issues:

1. Delays in the settlement of land use rights with in the PA(protected area)
2. Inadequate consideration of socio-economic needs of communities living in and around PA.
3. Improved management in protected areas.
4. Implementation of Eco-development activities in and around protected areas.
5. Strengthening of AP Forest Department.
6. Improved conservation ethics.
7. Support of research training and extension in bio-diversity conservation.

Even the educated Chenchus do not know the details and no information is available in Telugu for their benefit.

The consultants engaged in 1998 observed that:

Protection arrangements in PT Srisailam are suffering on two accounts. Many areas are not visited due to alleged presence of extremists. Dual control system, where protection functions are with the territorial divisions and EDC welfare measures are administered by PT functionaries, is not a conducive environ for proper management of forest and people. Unrestricted movement of outside cattle in very large number is a serious threat to viability of the PA. Some positive gains of EDC formation are however, worth recounting. Sale of timber in "Jatra" festivals have been controlled to a large extent due to joint effort of EDC members and FD staff. Goat population has been reduced in almost all the EDCs as a quid pro quo for individual beneficiary schemes.

Recommendation for improving performance of VSS are applicable *mutatis mutandis* for the EDCs. Additionally the following measures are needed.

- i. Dual control of PA s is to be done away with urgently so that synergy of the two roles of enforcer and benefactor is assigned to one person.
- ii. Eco development strategies revolve around the twin objectives of reducing impact of people on PA and that of the PA on the people. Every forum must be utilized to deliberate on the activities to achieve these goals, devising monitoring mechanisms to see that the activities are being performed and deciding who will monitor. Such

"Certain products and income from the PA can be shared with EDC members without compromising sections 29 and 35(6) of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972".

But Forest Department felt that unless and until Wildlife Protection Act-72 is revised, the products can not be shared with the communities. So the World Bank while renewing the loan for CFM (Community Forest Management) did not accept to support the EDCs.

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forums are the GB, MC and the micro plan. Eco-development is not rural development and the EDC must be made aware of the distinction very clearly.

- iii. Certain products and income from the PA can be shared with EDC members without compromising sections 29 and 35(6) of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. Management should deliberate on the issue in participatory forums involving a cross section of FD staff of the wildlife wing of all ranks and MC members to identify these products and permit their collection by issue of an amendment to the EDC resolution.'

Source: Evaluation of JFM & Eco-development programmes in Andhra Pradesh, Final Report November, 1998, and OM CONSULTANTS (INDIA) PVT.LTD. BANGALORE

IFAD (International Funds for Agricultural Development) provided funds since 1995 to 2002 for agricultural development and improve the efficiency of GCC (Girijana Co-operative Corporation). World Bank provided funds for Eco-development in NSTR (Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve). Such efforts have little impact. It is frequently reported in the press that in this ITDA funds are misused or wasted for inappropriate programmes.

For felling of trees in natural forest the permission of MoEF GOI is compulsory. Supreme Court in 1996 directed the state govt. to stop felling wherever such permission was not obtained. The state govt. stopped felling particularly bamboo in the NSTR. Bamboo is renewable resource, which should be felled for every 3 to 6 years. To keep the health of growing stock. The state govt. with out explaining this situation to the GOI stopped felling and there by Chenchus are not getting wage labour. In the year 2001 Forest Department announced felling of bamboo, SAKTI printed posters on wage rates and distributed the same through out the area. But the department did not take up the felling. For the last 6 years tribals are not getting this age-old employment of bamboo felling. Beedi leaf collection was also stopped. It is reported in the current Down to Earth that honey collection was stopped in the BR hills wild life elephant sanctuary in Karnataka.

Stopping the felling of bamboo, beedi leaf misinterpreting the court ruling:

Nallamala became the strong hold of people war naxalites:

The growing unrest and alienation among Chenchus, strategic location of Nallamala in A.P. paved way for extremists to convert this area as their shelter zone. The police vigilance increased and they started harassing Chenchus to guide them to catch naxalites and implicate

Chenchus in criminal cases alleging that they are giving shelter to naxalites and providing food to them. The government departments are not taking up works on the pretext of threat from naxals. As a result tribals are loosing employment and resource development.

In the year 2000 SAKTI started working in the area to empower Chenchus. With the support of ITDA took up hand pump repair-training program for 60 Chenchu youth for one month. That programme helped to develop intimate contacts with Chenchu youth. During the extensive discussions, SAKTI noticed that Chenchus are voting for parliament and legislative assembly elections but not for the Panchayats since independence. The govt. floated one state level committee of Chenchus, established VTDA's and forest department promoted EDCs (Eco-Development Committee) to channelize their funds but could not get Chenchus enrolled as voters. SAKTI brought this inconsistency to the notice of authorities, officials are sympathetic, but did not take any concrete action. SAKTI taken up the matter to the court and obtained a direction to launch a drive to enroll Chenchus as voters. Sri Purushotham our colleague mobilized both ITDA and revenue department and state election commissioner taken lot of interest and motivated the District Collector of Kurnool and Prakasam Districts. The revenue team walked for five days into the deep forests and enrolled Chenchus. In the following elections Chenchus elected their own people as Sarpanchs, ZPTC & MPTC members. This identity gave them a tremendous moral boost. Purushotham is helping the Chenchus coming to the ITDA office and field Directors, Officer of NSTR and SAKTI office has emerged as contacting and facilitating point for the Chenchus of 5 districts.

Intervention of SAKTI since 1998

The self conflicting actions of the forest department:

On the one hand the forest departments describes the Chenchus as ecofriendly people but favors enterprising Banjaras and join hands with other communities violating the laws of sanctuary and also depriving the Chenchus. For example! Palutla in Prakasam District was a village with Chenchus majority. But over a period of time both Chenchus and Banjaras became equal in number and Banjaras taken over the land of Chenchus and grown as a dominant group. In stead of supporting Chenchus the Eco development plan of NSTR suggests that better the Chenchus opt for voluntary rehabilitation outside the sanctuary since Banjaras taken over their lands. An EDC with Banjara members was formed in that village. Chenchus forced the forest department to form a separate EDC for them. In recent elections the Panchayat elected Chenchu as a Surpanch.

In Mahaboobnagar District, the Rasool tank in an extent 500 acres in the Balmoor mandal of erstwhile Achampet taluk is in the scheduled area. It is part of NSTR and no commercial fishing activity should be allowed.

Rasool tank was restored to Chenchus:

Chenchus since generations were fishing for their own consumption. In 1974 forest department succumbed to the pressure of minister of fisheries and allowed fish trade of fishermen societies chasing away the tribals. In the clashes some Chenchus died. As soon as SAKTI noticed this outright violation of Chenchus traditional rights, alerted the Commissioner of Tribal Welfare who in turn wrote to the District Collector to evict the communities other than tribals. But the District Collector

did not take any action. SAKTI supported Chenchus to obtain an order from High Court to restrain fishermen from entering into the tank.

Human rights violation:

One Chenchu forest guard Tokala Basavaiah and his entire family were harassed by police of Achampet on the allegation of feeding the naxalites. For days together they were beaten. With great difficulty, the family members were released. He was regularly thrashed by police. SAKTI helped his family for filing a habeas corpus petition. Next day he was produced in court, obtained bail, returned home, resumed duty. Such interventions gave a confidence to the community.

Unless every village and its hamlet are notified in the gazette, the survey department doesn't take up the preparation of cadastral maps. Unless cadastral maps are prepared record of rights can not come into force. SAKTI came to know that forest department was sitting over the proposals of converting certain villages in side the sanctuary boundary into revenue villages. Again SAKTI supported the villagers to obtain orders to dispose the same with in three months. The Commissioner land administration, responding to the contempt petition, submitted to the court that the issue will be resolved soon after the 'delimitation' process is over. Still the Commissioner did not respond to another prayer for notifying some of the villages as revenue villages.

Villages are not notified in the Gazette stalling the enforcement of land transfer regulation

Emerging tourism economy – opportunities to engage the educated Chenchus and the community:

Since two years the Tourism Department encouraging pilgrim tourism and ecotourism in these forest but Chenchus are used as daily labourers. The department is not confident that Chenchu can handle the flow of tourists provide the logistic support and entertain as field guides and emerge as entrepreneurs in conducting the business.

For the last six months Chenchus are organizing to tap the benefits of this tourism opportunities and coming forward to educate themselves keep their habitats clean and hygienic so that a visitor doesn't hesitate to stay there. All over the world local communities are involved in tourism industry. This is an opportunity for them to interact with outsiders convince them about their talents as born foresters and keep their surroundings clean healthy and aesthetic check their liquor consumption. Tribal welfare department invited Sakti to conduct training for Chenchus as tourist guides for a period of two months. The course starts in this month.

There are opportunities and threats in involving Chenchus in this tourism activity. The opportunities are; he can become enterprising, articulate – but they can surrender to any extent, lose his self respect and social values. Panchayat Raj institutions in scheduled area are empowered to deal with regulatory and development functions. These institutions may auction these facilities and tribal can remain a binami/proxy. In educating tribals, mainstream institutions such as wildlife institute of India

and wild life interested groups, download their knowledge & findings – their taxonomy system. For them to promote the Chenchu identity through his intimate knowledge is secondary. Tourism and conservation, if possible, with out tribals is first priority. They are not equipped to understand the subtleties of tribal knowledge. Wherever the indigenous people are made partners in the management of these natural habitats – their Knowledge and management systems are given priority. In many places these communities proved that the understanding and estimates of international agencies are wrong. But a tribal can question these external knowledge systems only after having an idea about it. Sivarama Krishna has done his Ph.D. on Tribal Knowledge Systems of A.P. (including Chenchu). For the last one year SAKTI is encouraging Chenchus to write about their geography, calendar, livelihood cycle, knowledge of wild life. A material of 500 pages gathered. This material further enriched during the tourism course shall be published with the names of Chenchu authors. Further this knowledge along with external knowledge systems should be popularized in the Tribal Residential schools. The teachers should be motivated to internalize the perceptions of both Chenchus & external knowledge. The growing Chenchu students should become capable of projecting their identity, history and the role they can play in the emerging situation of conservation, tourism economy. Such skills empower him to assert to conserve his habitat secure livelihood & sustenance.

'Only four percent people live in ten percent area of the hilly terrain all over the world; but they decide the destinies of 40 cent living in the foot hills. This should never be forgotten. This means that the planning and development of tourism infrastructure its subsequent operations and its marketing should focus on environmental social and cultural and economic sustainability criteria.'

- Yojana, August 2002.

The opportunity of tourism is confined to few places. But Chenchus are spread over nearly 1200 habitations all over the five districts. Physically to touch all these habitations is impossible to any non govt. organisation. A training programme can be conducted with state level Chenchu committee members, VTDA (Village Tribal Development Agency), EDC (Eco Development Committees) presidents and other tribal youth in understanding the principles of governance. Expecting change in the styles and function of govt. machinery is a distant dream. Chenchu should know how best he can plan and meet the situation utilise the opportunities on hand.

The conflicts with Banjaras:

Chenchus are threatened by the enterprising and advancing Banjaras in certain pockets/villages. Since generations these are engaged for graying cattle in Nallamala forest. In the process they started marketing the forest products gathered by Chenchus and now are strong enough in 1/3 area of the sanctuary.

Narasimha, the lion man god had taken Chenchu Lakshmi to Vaikuntha, his celestial abode. He invited all the gods' friends etc., for a feast. Chenchu

It is wise to conclude with a folk tale of Chenchus.

Lakshmi learnt that none of her relatives Chenchus were invited. In spite of Narasimha's persuasion that Chenchus may be called separately; Chenchu Lakshmi insisted. The Chenchus were invited. The feast started. Narasimha released a squirrel, Chenchu left the feast chasing it. Chenchu Lakshmi felt sad to the fate of tribes, who left the sumptuous feast for a squirrel. Narasimha consoled her that Chenchu tribe will get or other something to eat although the year. They need not starve. The message of this lesson is relevant. Chenchu at any cost should protect the habitat for his sustenance. Does the status of sanctuary helps and takes him into confidence in protecting his habitat.

Chenchus used to allow the village folk and their cattle free excess into the forest areas accepting gifts as per the customary practice. Now Chenchu should pick up courage to check such unlimited access and smuggling and poaching and such consciousness and leadership should be nurtured by the authorities. A forest protected intact atleast for few years shall feed the Chenchu for a generation.

SAKTI gained sufficient experience in empowering tribal communities to handle their affairs. In this project also SAKTI wants to work with CBOs. Not only it allows the community to be capable, it helps continuity of the programme since area is disturbed due to police naxal clashes. Already it supported CBOs to fight for restoration of Rasool tank and conversion forest villages in to revenue villages etc. Some CBOs started on their own initiatives such as Chenchu Seva Samithi of Mahaboobnagar District also will be involved in the capacity building programme to be taken up.

Issues Identified for long term capacity building:

1. Food rights – identification of eligible beneficiaries. Sending representations to Revenue Officials contacting Supreme Court commissioner.
2. Trainings in understanding the agenda and budget presented to state committee on Chenchu development.
3. Training in locating forest boundaries notifications wise (1932) administrative jurisdictions wise, compartment / beat / section / Range etc.
4. Knowing the rights and concession conferred in each notification.
5. Recording the developments afterwards.
6. Provisions of wild life protection act 1972.
7. The concept and practice: documenting various instances of misusing the power vested upon forest officials under wild life act.
8. The Supreme Court direction in 1997 to settle the rights of forest dwellers in the wild life sanctuaries.
9. Collecting the experiences of settlement in other sanctuaries.

10. Preparing the community for a hard bargain during settlement

- if it, when it takes place

11. Land rights – their enforcement both in scheduled areas of Mahaboobnagar – nonscheduled areas of other districts 1. Relating the cadastral map 2. Understanding record of rights 3. Efforts to undo the unlawful rights endowed upon the ineligible people and securing the rights for their possession.

12. Trainings in sustainable tapping of forest resources; 1. Gum tapping 2. Extraction of rock bee honey with out distributing the brood etc., value addition to the minor forest produce. Checking the exploitation in the market places by installing balances for the producers. Organizing them to bargain for a better price.

13. Confidence building

Strategies to successfully confront the vested interests.

Legal aid.

14. Training and revision courses. Livelihood options as tourist guides. Traditional healers. Value addition in mfp and marketing.

15. Regular review of different Government programmes and working out opportunities available.

Annexure-I

CHENCHU GUEMS / VILLAGE MANDAL-WISE AND DISTRICT-WISE

Sl.No.	District	Mandals covered	Chenchu gudems covered	Population of Chenchus (1981 census)	Estimated 1994 Chenchu population
01.	Mahaboobnagar	10	111	5,979	7,775
02.	Prakasam	07	72	5,606	7,291
03.	Kurnool	12	33	3,814	4,961
04.	Guntur	03	46	5,407	7,032
05.	Nalgonda	05	17	780	1,015
06.	Rangareddy	07	33	1,691	2,200
Total:		44	312	23,277	30,274

Literacy Rate of S.Ts:

1. Literacy rate of Scheduled Tribes at country level 16%.
2. Literacy rate of Scheduled Tribes in Andhra Pradesh 7.8% - 1981 Census.
3. Literacy rate of Chenchus 6.5% - 1981 Census.

Recent survey of GCC enumerated:

Sl.No.	Girijan cooperative multi purpose society	Gum pickers	Honey hunters	Myrabolam collectors	Nuxvomica collectors
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Nandyal	433	73	65	176
2	Mannanoor Trees possessed	525 32,735	32	49	Soapnuts: 245
3	P.Dornala Trees possessed	625 3,530	42		

Pungam seed collectors	Mohwased collectors	Tanikayalu collectors	Maredugaddalu collectors	Seeded tamarind pickers	Naramamidi Bark collectors
7	8	9	10	11	12
43	136	25	42	8	58
	56		115	138	284

Gum trees possessed:

		Previously	Currently
1.	Nandyal	45,750	21,803
2.	Mannanoor	-	32,735
3.	Dornala	-	3,530

Education among Chenchus:

As there are 3,836 students in boarding schools of tribal welfare department. 1,168 students in 4 residential schools (one for girls) one plus two college with 80 students, 98 student are in 'best' available schools apart from 5,500 children in primary schools. This excellent human resource can be converted as knowledgeable partners in Eco-tourist industry and sanctuary management.

Out of 107 seats only 40 seats filled by Chenchus in A.P. Residential school Srisailam (1999-2000)

Health Status:

Infant mortality rate is 80/1000 average in general where as in Chenchus it is 215 /1000 and the MMR 4 for 1000 live births is national level where as in Chenchus it is 7/1000.

Malaria is 41.23%

TB patients identified basing on symptoms identified:

The high incidence TB and the STD (sexually Transmitted Diseases) will increase cases of AIDS. Due to draught the Chenchus are migrating to plains in search of employment .This will lead to increase of AIDS. Moreover the health problems of women especially gynec cases are not treated due lack of health facilities, availability of gynecologist.

The TB dropout cases are increasing due to remoteness of the area, lack of hospitals or health centers and lack of motivation among govt. health staff and lack of awareness among Chenchus about the disease.

S.No.	District	No. of identified TB Cases
01.	Mahabubnagar	440
02.	Kurnool	320
03.	Prakasam	739
04.	Guntur	332
Total		1,831

All suspected TB cases will be sent for treatment to DTC (District Tuberculosis center.)Health Education and regular monitoring will be done.

AIDS - suspected cases will be identified and sent for ELISA test.

The HIV positive cases will be sent for treatment centres in Districts.

Counseling will be given to the HIV positive persons and family members.

Awareness camps will be conducted among villages regarding prevention and spread of disease.