

Status of Employment among Adivasi Youth of South Gujarat (executive summary)

Executive summary:

This assignment was given by IL & FS, a corporate body, as it wanted to know the employment status of youth between 18-35 years and willingness as well as capabilities of tribal youth for meaningful employment. The primary data was covered through survey and focused group discussions during June and July 2008; it covered 1,941 tribal respondents (aged between 19 and 35 years) 15 talukas of 7 districts (Bharuch, Narmada, Surat, Tapi, Valsad, Navasari and Dang) in South Gujarat.

Of total 1941 respondents, belonging to 14 tribes,

- ⇒ 743 from Bharuch & Narmada, mainly belong to Bhil, Chaudhari, Rathava, Tadvi, Valvi, Vasava tribes; 556 from Surat & Tapi, mainly belong to Chaudhari, Dhodiya, Gamit, Vasava tribes; 149 from Valsad, mainly belong to Dhodiya, Gamit, Konkani, Nayak, Rathava, Tadvi tribes; and 493 from Dangs, mainly belong to Bhil, Chaudhari, Dhodiya, Gamit, Konkani, Nayak, Rathava, Varli.
- ⇒ **Asset holding** - More than a two-thirds (70%) reported having cultivable land; about half (47.5%) have domestic cattle; 21% reported having a vehicle and 12% reported ownership of non-cultivable land while 10% reported no asset holding.
- ⇒ **Education** - Half (51%) are 10th standard pass. The ratio decreases with higher studies, i.e. about a fourth (24%) have passed 12th standard; graduates (11%) and post graduates (4%).
- ⇒ **Occupation** – About half 883 (45.5%) are engaged in farming followed by 783 (40.3%) as casual labour; 125 (6.4%) are self-employed and 127 (6%) with jobs. Total 23 are (1.2%) are unemployed.

Graduates, who are living secured life, as their parents are employed and having some asset holding, are not ready to migrate.



Efforts put in and Skills Acquired for Employment:

The very first step educated youth takes is to register themselves at 'Employment Office' run by the government after completion of their study.

Most of the tribals face discrimination in getting the work at different industries in the region. Some youngsters have learnt masonry and brick-making skills and migrate for livelihood. The girls are skilled in stitching, papad-making, handicrafts and are earning while working at home. Some youths do small businesses like collective farming, small shops selling daily households, etc. About 5 % migrate as casual labourers and earn Rs.100-200 per day.

Capabilities for employment:

Almost half of the respondents (44%) are not aware about bio-data and its importance; however, 5% respondents have put their bio-data on internet and more than 10% reported to register their names at Employment Office of the Government.

Development of appropriate outreach strategy:

The key points for providing employment to educated tribal youth are - (i) need of the market, (ii) need of the tribals, (iii) attitudes and behavior of tribals as they have been very shy, introvert and nature-worshippers, (iv) need for infrastructure or other facilities – institutional mechanism - should be considered, and (v) quick assessment of existing government programmes and support also have been taken into consideration before suggesting the following measures / action / activities.

The major needs emerging are –

- (i) **Developing skills** among educated tribal youth, based on market needs by starting multi-skill development / training centres – technical, vocational and entrepreneurial.
- (ii) **Developing industries** like Home-based, Forest-based, fishing, growing Mushroom and Service-based. That's where developing and strengthening link between job-seekers and job-providers is critical.
- (iii) **Necessary financial support** / assistance for starting small scale enterprises by providing easy loans
- (iv) **Providing support to acquire vocational skills**
 - a. **An idea of 'community college' should be explored**, wherein the youth is acquiring skills from the college and the college channelises the talents / skills of tribals to the respective employing agency.
 - b. **Identifying market need** Articulating market needs and identifying areas - sectors - activities for employment and enterprising
 - c. **Through short term workshops and training** – Vocational skills can be provided through short term workshops or training and upgraded with time based training for employment
 - d. **Need for developing institutional mechanism** - This includes multiple pronged strategies, namely, tying up with existing government / NGO run institutions, make members of existing government run programmes like JFM, Bamboo Corporation, Van Mandali, etc.
 - e. **Developing 'Theme Park'**: Tribals are very close to nature and culturally inclined for performing arts, i.e. dance, music and singing. Although these could not be an economic venture on large scale, the creativity and positive energy of tribal youth should be channelized and employed for their betterment and for

promoting their cultural ethos. We can create a theme park based on tribal goods / products, practices and culture which will act as vocational cluster. This will provide additional income opportunities for large numbers of tribal youths if they are positioned to the public as tourist spots.

- (v) **Tie up with the government technical institutes** - The government technical institutes should be given the permission to hold campus interviews by the different companies and recruit the young people directly.