

CHAPTER FIVE

TRAINING

One of the major reasons why the development programme in the Multipurpose Blocks has failed to adapt itself to local conditions is the lack of adequate training of the staff in an appreciation of tribal life and culture. It is true that the very philosophy of community development recognises the importance of relating its schemes to the needs of the people for whom and with whose association it is prepared. In practice, however, a stereotyped programme has been developed on the basis of the schematic budget. The priorities for each individual village and each individual tribe have not been studied and recognised in terms of the prevailing needs. The content of the development activities has been more or less the same as in non-tribal Blocks. Even those field workers—and they are quite a few—who were aware of the need to individualise the programme were not sensitive enough to the real requirements of tribal life; they did not possess sufficient conviction to oppose the conventional demands of administrative uniformity; they lacked the necessary knowledge of the tribal background, and so could not adjust and relate the development programme to it.

There are three main types of training available to workers in the Multipurpose Blocks : (i) a one-year course in tribal welfare organised by the Tribal Welfare Department of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, which is in addition to a two-years regular course in social work with specialisation in tribal welfare; (ii) a three-months course in tribal life and culture given to the Social Education Organisers at the Social Education Organisers' Training Centre at Ranchi; and (iii) a short one-month orientation course in work amongst tribal people for V.L.Ws conducted by the Tribal Research Institute at Ranchi. Similar short courses are given at the Chhindwara Research Institute and by other State Tribal Welfare Departments.

It is not our intention to evaluate this training programme but simply to record certain observations that we made in the field. The States of Orissa, Bihar and Rajasthan are making use of the training facilities provided at the Tata Institute by sending their District Level Welfare Officers there, but we found only a few such trained officials working at the Block level, although there are Social Education Organisers trained at Ranchi scattered in different Multipurpose Blocks. We observed the curious fact that in some cases the trained S.E.Os were not deputed to the Multipurpose Blocks, but were posted in non-tribal Blocks in the same State. Except in Bihar there are hardly any trained workers working at the village level or in the V.L.W. circles with any orientation training. In view of the fact that very few tribals are as yet employed as V.L.Ws and Extension workers, this means that on the whole the officials of the Multipurpose Blocks have a very limited, if any, orientation to tribal life. It is, as we have already said, due to this gap in the preparation of the minds and attitudes of the workers that the development programme has not succeeded in fulfilling its objective in the Multipurpose Blocks. We would, therefore, underline the need for such orientation before sending any worker to a Multipurpose Block. If such workers are not available or if the training facilities cannot be expanded with the required speed, it would actually be better to stagger the further

programme of opening new Blocks in tribal areas rather than to develop it on a non-effective basis and then try to remedy it at a later stage.

The nature of this special training can be of three types :

(i) Orientation training of Extension workers in tribal affairs for a period of not less than three months. Our experience suggests that a short course of one month is inadequate. Training at this stage should not be too academic or be confined to anthropology and sociology. Its aim should be to make the workers conscious of the different stages in the development of the tribal people and the need to adapt the programme to their degree of receptivity. It should also create a proper understanding of the principles of tribal welfare, and should be related to the practical problems of life, explaining how tribal institutions and customs work in practice. It should, in fact, emphasise the main problems discussed in this Report, parts of which might be included in its syllabus.

(ii) Orientation training for V.L.Ws and other workers in the villages. The same type of training, although at a different level, should be given to the V.L.Ws as well as to Patwaris, Forest Guards and even police working in the villages. The period should be for three months at least and the training should be geared to the practical problems of the tribals with whom the trainees will be dealing.

(iii) Intensive training of one year for P.E.Os and Cultural Officers. As the P.E.O. is the head of the administration of a Multipurpose Block, he should play the major role in giving a tribal base to the development programme, but he will only be able to do this or guide his staff in the right direction if he is adequately trained himself. His training should include the theory and practice of social anthropology, sociology and tribal welfare.

Similarly, as we have suggested in another chapter, the Cultural Officer will have a vital part to play by understanding the social and cultural practices of the tribal people and helping them to relate them effectively to the changing conditions of life without any feeling of unhappiness, and for this he himself will require intensive training. This training can be given to him during a period of one year in addition to the training of the P.E.O. This officer should also have understanding of the various manifestations of tribal culture such as folk-songs, folk-dances and folk-lore.

As we have already said, it is not our intention to go into the details of the training programmes. We suggest that a Committee of experts in tribal welfare and administration should be constituted to examine this important matter. In addition, the services of the existing Research Departments and the Training Centres should be utilised effectively in promoting it. The Social Education Organisers' Training Centre, Ranchi which is at present confined to the training of Social Education Organisers should be extended to all Extension workers and the courses suitably adjusted. What is required is a proper co-ordination of the Research Institutes and the Training Institutes, so that the findings of research can inspire and enrich the training programmes.

Although we have recommended the organisation of orientation courses in tribal life and culture for all Extension workers, we would emphasise that this suggestion is only meant to meet what we hope will be a temporary difficulty—that the general training is not geared to tribal problems. In the final analysis, the 'tribal' training should be an integral part of the regular job training. In fact, all job training should be related to the life of the

people, no matter who they are. It is, therefore, necessary to emphasise that the training programme for all workers in the Multipurpose Blocks should be instituted in the tribal areas themselves—where the necessary atmosphere of tribal life prevails and the content of job training can be geared to tribal requirements. It would be altogether wrong to think of orientation training and job training as two different things. The very training for a given job should be rooted in tribal life, tradition and culture. For example, a V.L.W. will prove ineffectual if he does not know how to gear his agricultural knowledge to the local traditions and practices. It is true that a knowledge of agriculture and how to improve it may be the same both for tribal and non-tribal areas, but its application will have to be in terms of the stage of development of the people, the existing methods of cultivation and the social or religious ideas about it. It is because of the lack of understanding of such ideas and practices that the programme of agriculture has not always been received by the people willingly and adopted enthusiastically. This also applies to other Extension workers. This matter needs serious attention if the programme is to fulfil the objectives of the Community Development movement. The P.E.O., as an administrator and co-ordinator of the programme, requires greater insight in tribal life and culture if he is to succeed in helping and guiding his staff.

To meet this requirement, we suggest that the existing training centres should attend specially to the training of specific functionaries to work in the tribal areas. In other words, these centres should be reserved for workers coming from the tribal areas and who will return to them. With the expansion of the programme of Community Development to cover the whole of rural India, including tribal India, by 1963, there will be an enormous demand for workers, and some of the training centres could be profitably converted for the training of workers in tribal life and culture exclusively. For example, the Orientation Training Centre at Ranchi which is giving training to Block Development Officers for their own job should enlist all the B.D.Os and P.E.Os who are to work in the tribal areas and adjust the training to the requirements of tribal life and culture. Similarly, the training centres in co-operation, industries, panchayat, animal husbandry, agriculture and so on, situated in and around Ranchi may be specially reserved for training these functionaries to work in the tribal areas. In some cases, the States which have large tribal populations may help to work jointly in providing such training. If they are to undertake this new responsibility, the present Training Centres may require : (a) an orientation of the present teaching staff itself in tribal life and culture; (b) some additional staff with advanced knowledge in social anthropology; (c) a research and study wing to develop the training programmes and relate them to tribal requirements. In addition, the existing Tribal Research Institutes will have to help these centres in the initial stage to adjust their programmes to their new responsibilities. This is a comprehensive approach and can only be developed gradually and on a long-term basis, but we must realise that if we mean business and really intend to fulfil the constitutional responsibility of guiding the tribal population through the difficult period of transition and change that now awaits them, we must take the subject of training more seriously, for it has had insufficient attention in the past.

But who will pay for this? It is obviously necessary to make some special provision, if the training programme is to be established on a sound and

permanent footing. The budget of the Multipurpose Blocks cannot spare much for it. Moreover, each Block budget has to be approved by the Block Development Committee or the Block Samiti and it would be difficult to get sanction for a training programme for each Block, and this would create a sense of insecurity and uncertainty among the officials to be trained. The necessary additional provision for training should be made in the Third Five Year Plan under the heads of different Ministries responsible for specific subjects, such as Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Health, Education, Industries, and so on. The Ministry of Community Development and Co-operation should provide funds for the job training of P.E.Os, S.E.Os and Mukhya Sevikas and orientation training for all community development workers. The Ministry of Food and Agriculture should provide the necessary funds for the training of V.L.Ws and Gram Sevikas. The Ministry of Home Affairs should help in establishing Tribal Research Wings at the different training centres.