Project Outline

Develop a conceptual framework for **Women’s Economic Empowerment** in relation to TCSRD’s female SHGs

The focus of this project is specific however the hope is that the knowledge gained can be related to other TCSRD interventions and other forms of empowerment.
CURRENT SITUATION:

- TCSRD Babrala facilitates over 60 female SHGs
- Women’s Economic Empowerment is integral to the TCSRD SHG model both as an:  
  - Objective (end in itself)
  - Instrument (means for other ends)
- Empowerment as a concept is hard to ground & the processes by which empowerment comes about and by which it might bring further outcomes are difficult to understand
- This reflects a need in TCSRD to relate empowerment to its initiatives

KEY QUESTIONS:

- What is ‘empowerment’?
- How is it possible to attain it?
- How is it possible to monitor its attainment?
Key Objectives

1. Conceptualise Women’s Empowerment, taking account of the multi-dimensional aspects in the social, economic & state spheres to come up with an accepted definition that can be measured and tracked.

2. Identify the pathways to achieving economic empowerment, the barriers faced, and the actors involved, at the local, intermediary & macro levels.

3. Determine the indicators and mechanisms for monitoring progress and impact of economic empowerment at the project and policy level.
"The expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them.“

Kabeer (2001)
2. Identify the pathways to achieving economic empowerment

- Profile the women as economic actors
- Explore how rules/processes in the economic domain are enacted
- Identify both the barriers and enabling factors for economic empowerment

**Primary Research: PRA Exercises**
- Household Level: *Daily activity timeline, Matrix scoring of expenditure*
- Community Level: *Awareness & access chapatti*

**Secondary Research: Literature**
Identify the pathways to achieving economic empowerment

Gendered Production

- Women only activities
- Men only activities
- Leisure time comparison

24/07 BKM

Daily activity timeline
2. Identify the pathways to achieving economic empowerment

Matrix scoring of household expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Land</th>
<th>Animal Husbandry</th>
<th>Daily household expenditure</th>
<th>One-off household expenditure</th>
<th>Female accessories</th>
<th>Marriage Festivals</th>
<th>Medical Education</th>
<th>Total Score</th>
<th>Rank</th>
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<tr>
<td>Importance of Item (in relation to social status)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>6</td>
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</table>

- Consultation process
- Men with ownership
- A need to increase women’s bargaining power
2 Identify the pathways to achieving economic empowerment

Agency affected by:
- Formal structures: e.g. infrastructure & transport
- Informal structures: e.g. social norms
- Ability (real and perceived): e.g. skills/knowledge but also confidence

✓ Awareness & Access Chapatti

- Chapatti
- 29/07 Mehua Sanganj
- Agency affected by:
  - Formal structures: e.g. infrastructure & transport
  - Informal structures: e.g. social norms
  - Ability (real and perceived): e.g. skills/knowledge but also confidence
Identify the pathways to achieving economic empowerment

Empowerment framework outlined in Alsop & Heinsohn (2005) and Alsop et al (2006) breaks factors affecting agency down into:

Assets ➔ equates to my use of ability
Opportunity Structure ➔ equates to my use of formal & informal structures

Empowerment determined by: Opportunity Structure & Assets
Agency influences Empowerment Outcomes

outcomes
influences

Agency

influences

Opportunity Structure & Assets

determined by
### Expected Empowerment Outcomes and Indicators

TCSRSHG *empowerment indicators* summarised using empowerment framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Macro</th>
<th>District or block level (intermediary)</th>
<th>Household or village level (local)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>OS</td>
<td>Opportunity Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State</strong></td>
<td>Justice, Politics</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increased confidence in public-speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Market</strong></td>
<td>Production, Saving/ Loaning &amp; Consumption</td>
<td>Increase in economic skills</td>
<td>Increased capacity of women in managing economic resources beyond the local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase in income-generating skills</td>
<td>Increased capacity of women in IG activities beyond the local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Society</strong></td>
<td>Intra-community, Intra-household</td>
<td>Increase in awareness of opportunities beyond the village</td>
<td>Expansion of women’s capacity for independent movement*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase in social capital</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Willingness to contribute to economic decision making</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Increased capacity of women to manage household economic resources: increased capacity of women to make domestic economic choices*
Indicators & mechanisms for monitoring empowerment

Monitoring Mechanisms

- Development of **Focus Group Discussions** to relate indicators to the beneficiaries' level of empowerment

- **Testing & Refining** of indicators and data collection method:
  - 3 preliminary FGDs

- **Village Case study**
  Village chosen to conduct a final set of FGDs within one village:
  - 3 FGDs with female SHGs
  - FGD with male SHG
  - Interview with TCSRD paid volunteer
Refines indicators and methodology

- e.g. A lack of familiarity with ‘skills’ demanding sensitive discussion design

Indicates degree to which and ways in which empowerment is occurring

- e.g. The most recognisable empowerment outcomes are not directly related to the economic: confidence & social capital.

The empowerment framework acts as a predictive model providing a ‘theory of change’

Reveals potential of how to develop policy & project

- Empowerment as a process relies on the beneficiaries to recognise and utilise their assets

- Economic empowerment outcomes are complex, its process can be traced through increasing bargaining power in the HH and/or increasing routes to extra IG where women have ownership
Recommendations

A model for female-SHG empowerment assessment

- Use both proxies and face validity: FGD & Survey, **model formats submitted**
- Use more than one indicator in a dimension to triangulate data and isolate contradictions
- Repeat at regular intervals in order to objectively measure empowerment as a **process**
- Involve and train **project staff** as fully as possible.
- Empowerment should be validated by the **beneficiaries** through participatory processes
- Maintain links between **monitoring and implementation** so that project & policy are flexible learning systems

- FGD: quarterly w/double aim
- Survey: annual assessment
Recommendations

A model for evidence-based policy analysis and project management

**PROJECT LEVEL MONITORING**

1. Conceptualise empowerment and identify pathways to empowerment
2. Set out initiative’s inputs
3. Set out projected empowerment outcomes
4. Measure effectiveness against indicators
5. Subsequent modification of inputs

**POLICY FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION**

1. Commit to operationalise empowerment across TCSR initiatives
2. Identify the areas for enquiry to understand empowerment processes
3. Establish a transparent set of assumptions predicting interventions’ impacts
4. Monitor empowerment interventions and thereby policy interventions to have the greatest impact
Personal Learning

- Personal
- India
- Community Development
- TATA