

## About The Women's Tribunal Against Poverty

The Women's Tribunal against Poverty was one of four initiatives organized in Peru, Egypt, North America & India to draw the attention of policy makers worldwide to women's priorities and their integral role in any effort to end Poverty & Exclusion.

Held on the occasion of the World Day for the Eradication of Poverty (Oct 17), the Women's Tribunal against Poverty emerged as a powerful experience which brought together over 400 women from across 20 states representing the most disadvantaged communities - Dalits, Denotified & Nomadic Tribes, Adivasis, Forest Dwellers, Muslim Minorities, Women with Disabilities & Single Women.

The Women's Tribunal was made remarkable by the involvement of a distinguished panel of Jurists representing the spectrum of social movements, trade unions, academia, national networks and grassroots movements from across the country.

The Women's Tribunal was also successful in obtaining a meeting on the same date with the President of India, Pratibha Patil, who is the first woman to hold this position in the country.

The International Women's Day this year (March 8, 2008) is an opportune time for us to consolidate the recommendations that emerged from the Women's Tribunal and thereby reinforce the key demands for women in the governance agenda, and reach the same to policy makers and governance institutions at the local, national and global levels.

### Organised by :

Action India • Action Aid • AIDMAM • BMMA • CADAM • CARE • CBGA • CHSJ • CDSA • CWLR • EIDHR • Ekta Parishad • ICRW • OWSA • NAWO • Oxfam • PWESCR • SANGAT • The Hunger Project • TPMS • Wada Na Todo Abhiyan

### In collaboration with :

The Feminist Taskforce (Global Call to Action Against Poverty)

### For further information :

Full Report : [www.wadanatodo.net/reports](http://www.wadanatodo.net/reports)

Film (6minutes) : [www.wadanatodo.net/videogallery](http://www.wadanatodo.net/videogallery)



# THE WOMEN'S CHARTER AGAINST POVERTY



## WOMEN'S CHARTER AGAINST POVERTY

We represent the voices of women who are on the margins of society.

We are the Dalit, Adivasis, Muslim Minorities, Nomadic Tribes, Differently Abled and Single Women who are excluded and discriminated by society and within our own communities, thus bearing double-treble burdens.

We have come together to speak out for the large majority of women in India from the north, north-east to south, west and central parts of the country.

Today, we take courage from each other to shed our historical burden. We extend our hands to reach for our rights and raise our voices in unison to demand:

### Identity, Inclusion & Participation

- Women must have an independent legal identity on all government records, including as equal / single head of household.
- The reservation of 1/3<sup>rd</sup> seats for women must be implemented in the Parliament and State Legislatures.
- Women belonging to Nomadic & Denotified Tribes and Differently Abled Women are traditionally left out of the purview of government records and programs. They should be recognized and mainstreamed at all levels.
- Laws to ensure women's equal cultural, economic and political participation must be enacted and should supersede customary laws that marginalise and exploit women.
- The government is bound to protect and provide immediate relief to families and communities who live in situations of conflict and / or are vulnerable to violence and persecution due to social and political prejudice. Immediate punitive action should be taken against officials who promote or fail to act against such violations.

## Land, Livelihood & Access to Public Services

- Land is critical to addressing poverty. Specific measures must be taken to enable and ensure ownership of cultivable land and property by women. Mechanisms for fast track redress and protection of women who are forced to give up their land and property must be put into place.
- Every woman has a right to livelihood with dignity. Special efforts must be taken to ensure that credit and livelihood programs reach women from the most marginalized sections. Caste based occupations, such as manual scavenging, must be barred and the persons engaged in such occupations must be rehabilitated on priority basis.
- All policies, programs and resources earmarked for development must have a special component for women and marginalized communities.
- Women's Social Audits must be separately organized by the government to record and evaluate their experiences and integrate their priorities in these policies, programs and resources.
- Quality Education and Health services must be accessible, legally enforceable and provided free of cost to marginalized communities. Long term investment in public infrastructure for health and education is a must to enable every woman to avail of these rights.
- Displacement and forced evictions related to development, SEZ and urbanisation must stop immediately. Relocation & Rehabilitation plans must be finalized with the informed and written consent of all sections of the community, particularly women and children.

8 March 2008, India