Outcome Report On Webinar

Topic: Social Work with Tribes and Indigenous Perspectives for Social Development

Organized By: MSW Department, Indian Institute of Social Welfare and Business Management (IISWBM)

Date: 2 November 2026

Resource Person: Prof. (Dr.) Bipin Kishor Jojo, Dean, School of Social Work and Professor, Centre for Social Justice and Governance, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai.

The MSW Department of the Indian Institute of Social Welfare and Business Management organised a Webinar on "Social Work with Tribes and Indigenous Perspectives for Social Development" on 2 November 2026.

Prof. (Dr.) Sudeepa Banerjee welcomed Prof. (Dr.) Bipin Kishor Jojo, who conducted the interactive session and shared his insights on indigenous worldviews, knowledge systems and the implications of development approaches for tribal communities.

The session began with an exploration of the different elements of indigenous worldviews and how indigenous communities are perceived through dominant perspectives which are also mostly Western by nature. The deliberation highlighted the importance of understanding indigenous knowledge systems, particularly their oral traditions, experiential and holistic knowledge, and the traditional transfer of responsibilities and obligations across generations. The relationship between power, medicine, knowledge and community practices in shaping indigenous ways of life was also discussed.

Further, the discussion focused on the historical processes of imperialism and colonisation and their role in undermining and modification of indigenous knowledge systems. It was critically examined how Western researchers and intellectuals have often claimed to understand indigenous communities through limited interactions and external interpretations, without adequately recognising their lived experiences and perspectives.

Also, the notions of modernity, development and well-being were described, encouraging participants to critically examine the understanding of development.

The session also highlighted the distinctive characteristics of indigenous knowledge, including its personal, experiential and holistic nature, its connection with perception and integrity, and its significance in understanding communities within their own social and cultural contexts.

The presentation was followed by an interactive question-and-answer session, during which students raised important questions concerning the practical challenges of tribal social work. One question explored how social workers can integrate dominant development objectives with indigenous perspectives while ensuring meaningful community participation. Another focused on the impact of growing technological advancement and development projects on tribal communities, particularly in relation to displacement, disruption of traditional livelihoods and the challenges faced by indigenous populations. The discussion provided an opportunity to reflect on the need for culturally sensitive, participatory and rights-based approaches to tribal development. It reinforced the importance of recognising indigenous communities as active participants in shaping their own development rather than merely as beneficiaries of external interventions.

The webinar concluded with a note of gratitude to Prof. (Dr.) Bipin Kishor Jojo by Dr. Ushnish Guha for his valuable insights and to the faculty members, staff at MSW Office for technical support and participants for their involvement.



