



## Gender, caste and growth assessment in India

### Challenge

Women in many countries don't tend to contribute to, or benefit from, economic growth to the same extent as men. It is recognised that if this situation is to change, gender relations have to be accounted for in growth policy and practice.

In India, where caste and other social groupings are significant, it seems that women belonging to certain social groups will experience different opportunities and benefits from those belonging to others. In 2006 the India country office of the UK Department for International Development (DFID) needed to achieve and demonstrate greater impact on women in their development programmes. To do this effectively they needed to identify and assess the effect on growth of gender discriminatory practices, such as legal and administrative barriers preventing women from different caste and social groups from contributing to the economy.

### Solution

DFID commissioned the Overseas Development Group (ODG), the consulting arm of the University's School of Development Studies, together with a gender specialist and an economist from the University's School of Development Studies to lead a team collaborating with several India-based colleagues.

John McDonagh, Chief Executive of ODG said "the research was very applied, involving literature reviews, method development and consultations with key stakeholders in India including Government, civil society organisations and women and men from different social groupings. In addition to this the research was complemented by a statistical review and analysis using data from census surveys."

To conclude the project three Indian states were identified within which to carry out small scale surveys to understand the ways in which laws governing labour, trade and asset markets for men and women are attributable to social and cultural norms and values – and thereby affect women's role in the 'market place'.

ODG's reputation for flexible and accurate research has enabled DFID to provide solutions that are helping to make a change to people's lives.