



NTFP  EP

INDIA

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

ANNUAL REPORT

A woman with dark hair tied in a bun, wearing a vibrant red and yellow sari, is shown in a forest setting. She is leaning over a dense thicket of dry, brownish branches and green leaves, carefully selecting and harvesting non-timber forest products. The background reveals a lush, green forest with tall trees and a misty, hilly landscape under a soft, overcast sky. The overall scene conveys a sense of traditional forest management and sustainable livelihoods.

NON-TIMBER FOREST PRODUCTS NETWORKING FORUM, INDIA 2019-20



INTRODUCTION

As in other years, the NTFP Networking Forum India has been working with indigenous peoples and non-timber forest products in 9 states through its various partner organizations based in these states. For the period mentioned above, a little over 4.5 months, much has been achieved, considering the effects of the pandemic that broke out in early 2020 and steadily affected the communities the network engages with, naturally impacting our work across the region. However most partners, apart from helping out the communities affected by Covid-19 in whatever way they could (rations, masks, sanitizers, helping with the market) also managed to do a formidable amount of their usual work.

The most affected area of work was a livelihood, both for the communities as well as the network partners. Storage of harvested NTFPs was a problem; transporting value-added goods was not possible; outlets were closed; and people just did not have the cash flow to buy products that were not of utmost necessity. Importantly, the network began communicating with its members about the kind of local effects that the pandemic had had, the responses from the communities they worked with as well as the network partners, and put together a strategy for the future. It charted out the kinds of alliances that it may need to build to function with less dependence on certain government and other linkages which failed altogether.

Below is a state-wise narration of how the network functioned.

MAHARASHTRA

Much of the work in the state was done by Gramin Samassya Mukti Trust and Navi Umed in the districts of Vidarbha and Yavatmal.

Conservation: Adivasi gram sabhas of 20 villages participated in a large plantation programme; have developed nurseries of useful NTFP species; kitchen gardens established; 10 gram sabhas setting up an NTFP seed bank. Participated in 33 crore plantation campaign in Yavatmal district, with plans to protect the area from fire in the summer months.

Have revised the conservation and management plan developed and executed 6-7 years ago; this was done with the help of FES and a workshop held in Jalka village; checked for positive regeneration in mid-February through transect walks

Livelihood: focused on mahua (11 villages), fishery (3 villages), honey (6 villages); MNREGA employing 225 people; 1000 kitchen gardens in 50 villages to improve nutritional status; community farming among 25 families of the Kolam adivasi people. Honey collecting went on during the season, sold to traders; bamboo craft earned Rs 25,000/-. About 298 bamboo craftsmen are there in the area, attempt to link them to the Khadi Industries Scheme. Due to the lockdown, much craft (baskets, etc.) could not be sold as expected. 80 quintals of mahua were collected and sold this season. Established a small oil production unit. 14 farmers

from 3 villages have got together to produce organic compost; more not possible due to the pandemic. Women's groups in 3 villages have been trained in pappad-making as a means of livelihood (23 women participated). Khandi-coal making has also been done and 12 quintals of coal were produced for sale.

Advocacy: for better CFR management plans; to include gram sabha in the MNREGA planning; to push for TDC's role in NTFP purchase as it is the main means of livelihood for the adivasi; pushing for a CFR management Committee for 500 approved CFRs with the district collector.

Covid-19: distributed homeopathic 16,000 tablets to improve immunity among adivasi people; also distributed 4500 masks and 4500 dry ration kits in Yavatmal; in Vidarbha food packs, masks, gloves, sanitizers, soap, etc., was distributed to 100 families.

Health/Nutrition: Nursery of medicinal and fruit plants established. A festival of wild foods and their documentation was also done in this period. Vaids were invited to conduct a training programme about herbs and their uses.

Youth: formation of youth groups in 6 villages and discussing options to prevent migration to nearby cities. Linking them for trade (honey, bamboo craft) to the Khadi Village Industries has proved useful; the Kajipod village youth earned Rs 3,76,000/ for their honey.





TAMIL NADU & KERALA

In these states, Keystone Foundation has been active in several areas of advocacy, livelihoods, and conservation. In particular, CFR and IFR claims submitted in 6 areas and in around 60 villages; dealing with delays at the TN level, the FRC/FMC committees not being assertive have been the main obstacles.

Health/Nutrition: 214 kitchen gardens in have been established Nilambur; 12 community health workers have been engaged in villages with women's health, also with Anganwadi workers; 4 village food festivals have been held to improve awareness about foods and their nutritive values.

Livelihood: large scale agroforestry and NTFP procurement (honey, coffee, millets, and amla) have happened in the season but there have been problems with fund flow, and loans have been applied for. Transport between Karnataka and TN not operational due to lockdown has been

an ongoing problem. The marketing of (168580) hill brooms in nearby villages and towns through MACs.

Conservation: There are 11 acres under restoration where 21743 native plants have been planted; 25,000 plants raised in nurseries; springs and wetlands restoration work ongoing; training on sustainable harvesting of NTFPs, especially honey, were conducted.



ANDHRA PRADESH & TELANGANA

The two partners working in these states are Kovel Foundation and Velugu Association.

Health and nutrition: Work with traditional community health healers (a certificate programme conducted) has been ongoing and continued through this period; initiatives were also taken by working on nutritive recipes for adivasi communities, sensitizing village communities about the value of such foods

Conservation: Biodiversity Block Development by raising NTFP/medicinal plants and planting in farmers lands.

Livelihoods: Assessing the credit requirement of households in one village to make a long-term plan for their work area; to find out the various livelihood options available for the people they work with towards future planning and implementation; organized and participated in a stakeholders meeting for gums and resin



collectors in Vishakapatnam, where various issues from prices to regeneration of gum-trees were discussed; working on a certification process for medicinal plants from the Quality Control of India (QCI).

Advocacy: Campaigned for awareness about FRA and 458 individual claims filed in 13 villages; 1 CFR title achieved and 2 villages have filed for Habitat claims. Also petitioned district authorities for an additional 50 days of employment for IFR title holders under the MNREGA scheme which has come through for 2019-20.

CHHATTISGARH



In Chhattisgarh, the Legal Environmental Action Forum work mainly in the Bastar district.

Conservation: Discussed in monthly meetings the plan of planting 30,000 plants in 5 panchayats; the total amount of plants at present was 1.7 lakhs of 43 native species; all work concerning nurseries ongoing (seed collecting bag-filling, seed-bed preparation) and fencing of the 10-acre nursery-garden in Sandh karmari village).

Livelihood: mahua flowers collected and stored in the cold-storage was retrieved and handed over to the women's SHG for further use/sale.

Advocacy: fighting a case for the protection of the sacred grove (Maulikot) against the forest department.

KARNATAKA

Our network partner Prakruti has been instrumental in the activities carried out in the state.

Advocacy: organized 8 honey festivals in 4 talukas to create awareness, educate the youth about honey and its potential as a livelihood, to improve pollination; began a study on palm oil to find out more about the ecology of the palm and the problems it may cause when in large plantations.



ODISHA

In this state, the two partners within the network have been the Regional Centre for Development Cooperation and Gram Swaraj.

Advocacy: Meetings have been conducted with FRA networking committees and the Odisha Jangal Manch to revive the latter and to expedite the process of CFR claims and the formulation of conservation and management plans; these meetings were held in 3 districts through the work planned concerned 11 districts. The main issues to be dealt with by the OJM were as follows: a. Supreme Court order on eviction of tribals from forest land whose IFRs have been rejected, b. CAMPA plantations in IFR, CFR land, and monitoring of CAMPA activities, c. CR/CFR recognition, d. Forest villages conversion to Revenue villages and e. Transit permit for KL and Bamboo. In the Simlipal district of the 420 villages where Gram Swaraj is working, 10 villages have submitted their CFR claims; management plans are being prepared in other villages. Among the PVTGs, work is ongoing to secure habitat claims for several PVTG groups (Mankhadia, Khadia, and Lodha communities) under the FRA.

Livelihood: Linking of village SHGs to Trifed and the Van Dhan Scheme for procuring and storing NTFPs; a go-down for storage has been built and inaugurated in Kalahandi district. Now the business plan has been prepared, and an assessment is being done to ask for working

capital for the procurement of raw materials, processing, and marketing of the available products.

Of the 26 villages that got their CFR rights only 6 villages are trading their kendu leaves in the open market; the rest have not been able to assert their rights. RCDC is helping them in this area as well as trying to get back unclaimed bonuses. Other activities of RCDC included institution building (at the village level), meaning CFR Management committee, FRC, etc., to clarify their aims, objectives, and future action plans. Bi-monthly meetings of gram sabha collectives were also held.

Conservation: A Biodiversity Festival (December 2019), showcasing plants and animals, wild foods, and their recipes were held; both children and elders participated, and it was part education, part culture; story-telling, and good practices of forest management. The People's Forestry School, for transfer of forest-related knowledge between generations, is now functional in Bhagirathpur village.



RAJASTHAN

The network partners working in this state are Samarthak Samiti and Sewa Mandir. Their activities are described below.

Livelihoods: Have managed to bring a Van Dhan Kendra to Kotra Block to benefit 300 NTFP collectors; TRIBES India has agreed to support the value-addition work (working capital, equipment, training). It was decided not to participate in the kendu patta auction this season. A meeting was organized with the collector to complain about the harassment to honey collectors by the forest department; this was finally resolved. Organized the participation of SHGs members at the Milan Mela, Kotra, where they were provided a stall for the sale of their products including herbal Gulal, Honey, Jamun Sirka, Jamun Ark, etc. New products using honey with various dry fruits have been explored. Herbal gulal, using locally found flowers is also a new product. Meetings to find out about ayurvedic preparations have been attended. Exploring through community meetings the NTFP potential (both availability and marketing in 4 villages; seeds of various forest tree species were also collected and sold to the forest department for Rs 11,500/-; 2600 kgs

of mahua was collected and sold at Rs 78,000. In 10 villages need seeds, jamun fruit, and seeds were also collected and marketed locally.

Health/Nutrition: A booklet on local forest foods was produced; seeds of fruit and other plants that can be planted at farm boundaries have been distributed.

Conservation: Afforestation programmes have been ongoing in 5 Blocks of Udaipur district and 2 Blocks of Rajasmand district. A target plan of 72,000 plants are to be planted. A 1000 plants were planted in a common pasture land; simultaneously, a stone boundary wall and bio-fencing has also been completed. Selected 15 new plantation sites of 200 ha and preparations ongoing (pit-digging, boundary wall, etc.).

Advocacy: 8 villages have been given CFR titles. Work ongoing with the CFR Management Committees towards making management and conservation plans, mapping the areas, etc. Detailed plans for conservation and protection have been prepared for 4 villages. Liaising with concerned officials for pending CFR claims in 50 villages is ongoing.



NTFP - EP NETWORKING FORUM

(A Company Licensed under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013)

CIN : U85300TZ2019NPL033006

Registered Office : No. 41/111C, Groves Hill Road, Kotagiri, The Nilgiris - 643 217, Tamilnadu, India

Statement of Income and Expenditure

	PARTICULARS	Note No.	for the period ended 31st March 2020 (from 19.11.2019 to 31.03.2020)
I.	Revenue		
	Yearly Members Subscription Fee Receipts		-
	Voluntary Contribution receipts		-
II.	Other Income		-
III.	Total Revenue (I + II)		-
IV.	Expenses:		
	Utilisation on Project Activities		-
	Administration and Other Expenses		-
	Audit Fee		17,700
	Depreciation and Amortization Expense		-
	Total Expenses		17,700
V.	Surplus / (Deficit) for the period		(17,700)
VI.	Exceptional Items		-
VII.	Surplus / (Deficit) before Extraordinary Items and Tax (V - VI)		(17,700)
VIII.	Extraordinary Items		-
IX.	Surplus / (Deficit) Before Tax (VII- VIII)		(17,700)
X.	Tax Expense:		
	(1) Current Tax		-
	(2) Deferred Tax		-
XI.	Surplus / (Deficit) for the period carried to Balance Sheet		(17,700)

Balance Sheet

PARTICULARS	Note No.	as at 31st March 2020
Equity and Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
(a) Short-Term Provisions		56,640
(b) Other Current Liabilities		-
		56,640
Assets		
Non Current Assets		
(a) Other Non-current Assets		56,640
		56,640





Directors

Madhu Ramnath

Snehlata Nath

Pandurang Ganapati Hegde

Auditors

STATUTORY AUDITOR

Srivatsan & Gita, Coimbatore

COMPLIANCE AUDITOR

SAS Partners, Chennai

Member/Partner Organisations

Gram Swaraj, Odisha

Gramin Samassya Mukti Trust, Maharashtra

Keystone Foundation, Tamil Nadu

Kovel Foundation, Andhra Pradesh

Legal Environmental Action Forum, Chhattisgarh

Lok Panchayat, Maharashtra

Navi Ummed Social Organisation, Maharashtra

Prakruti, Karnataka

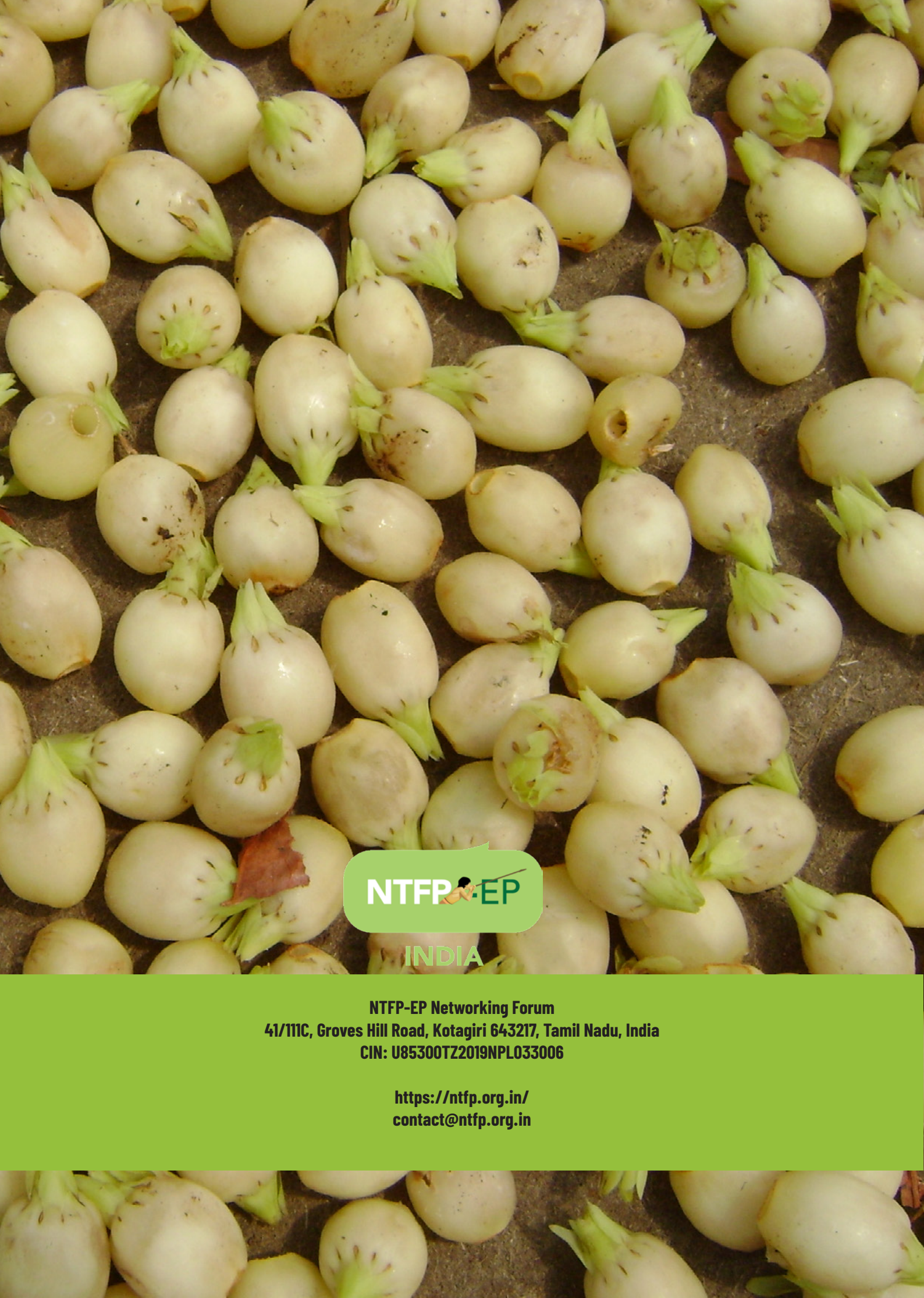
PRERAK, Chhattisgarh

Rajasthan Van Upaj Sangraha Avam Prashodhak Samarthak Samiti, Rajasthan

Regional Centre for Development Cooperation, Odisha

Sewa Mandir, Rajasthan

Velugu Association, Andhra Pradesh



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