

Study of Availability, Present Market Structure and Value addition options of Non-Timber Forest Products in Katni, Madhya Pradesh

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The following aspects were analysed in the study

- NTFP market structure at Katni
- Important NTFP availability and traded (Trade Volume) in the study area
- Marketing channels and pricing mechanisms of NTFP in the study area
- Suggest alternative marketing system and pricing system for betterment of NTFP collectors

The Katni NTFP market is one of the major NTFP trade centres of central India. Out of large number of NTFPs available and traded in Katni, for the purpose of the study five important NTFPs have been taken, these are *Emblica officinalis* (Aonla), *Terminalia chebula* (Harra), *Buchnanania lanzan* (Achar) *Swertia chirayta* (chirayta), and *Aegle marmelos* (bel gooda).

Various stakeholders involved in the trade of NTFPs in Katni were interviewed (collectors, village level traders, traders in Katni market, and NTFP processors).

Various channels were found to be operating in NTFP trade in Katni comprising of the 2-3 levels of traders/middlemen. The middleman does provide service and adds value to the channel in terms of supply aggregation, assortment, storage, risk for price fluctuations etc. The collectors, who are at the lowest level of the channel get very less share of the consumer price. Even the state supported (MP MFP Federation) NTFP collection, processing and marketing initiative under Vindhya Herbal Brand does not assure high percentage of consumer price to the rural collectors. Though this channel adds value and quality assurance to the consumers.

The low price earned by the collectors lead to unsustainable harvesting practices and may thus be detrimental to the long-term resource availability.

To address the problems of low prices earned by collectors and unsustainable harvesting, it is suggested that the Vindhya Herbal model may be further strengthened in terms professional competence, scaling up of operations, brand building exercise and higher returns to the collectors. This is to be further supported by a well carved out strategy to augment the NTFP resource availability on sustainable basis and should include awareness & capacity building for sustainable management practices.