



A study on socio-economic benefits derived by poor rural producers from bamboo value chain up-gradation in Tripura north-east India

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ABSTRACT

The present paper is the result of research study on value chain up-gradation in bamboo sector development in Tripura Northeast India and its implication on socio-economic development. The value chain up-gradation is an approach is very much relevance for poverty reduction, gender and environment in traditional as well as no-traditional sector in particularly bamboo. It helps to develop and upgrade the various nodes in the value chain and direct impact could be found in socio-economic development of rural poor and small producer groups. The policy makers, rural development professionals and related stakeholders could also find a better way of planning to give space to integrate the poor producers in market. The private investors, entrepreneurs could also get a business enabling environment to scale-up the sector to get an opportunity to link with domestic and international market.

INTRODUCTION

Bamboo- a word that conjures up different images in the mind; images of construction material, furniture, handicrafts, basket ware, matting, paper, food, fodder and fuel wood. No wonder then, that this resource has been variously called “the poor man’s timber”, “the cardle-to-coffin timber”, “green gold” and “ steel of the nature” In Asia, the history of bamboo is so inextricably interwoven with human history that one could describe a bamboo civilization in the continent. Globally, 2.5 billion people- almost half the world population- are estimated to use bamboo in one form or other (Rao and Sastry, 1996). It is an important commodity in the cash economy.

Bamboo is a tree like, woody grass with some 1250 species in 75 genera with sizes ranging from miniature to giant culms over 60 meter and is the world’s strongest growing woody plant capable of providing ecological economic and livelihood

security to the people. India has the largest Bamboo forest in the world. Next to China, India has the richest bamboo genetic resources in 136 species, including 11 exotic species out of which 58 species belonging to 10 genera are found in the North Eastern Region (Planning Commission Government of India April 2003, <http://planningcommission.nic.in>).

Tripura is one of the eight states of Northeast India, which is not only the smallest state of the region but also the third smallest state in the country. The Bamboo resource is spread over about 2397 km² in the state of Tripura forming about 23 per cent area of the state.

Bamboo plays an important role in generation of employment and development of rural economy of Tripura. It is estimated that around 6.1 million mandays is generated per annum by way of management, harvesting and utilization of bamboo. Around 1.49 lakhs rural poor artisans are engaged in the state in value addition of bamboo, producing annual sale