

Manpower Potential, Employment Status and Forest Based Livelihood Opportunities among Tribal Communities of Jharkhand, India

M.A. Islam^{1*}, R. Rai² and S.M.S. Quli³

^{1*}*Faculty of Forestry, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir, Wadura, Sopore 193 201, Jammu and Kashmir, India*

²*Tropical Forest Research Institute (ICFRE), P.O. - R.F.R.C., Jabalpur 482 021, Madhya Pradesh, India*

³*Faculty of Forestry, Birsa Agricultural University, Kanke, Ranchi 834 006, Jharkhand, India*

KEYWORDS Livelihood. Tribe. Occupation. Poverty. Forestry. Reformation

ABSTRACT The study sought to investigate the manpower potential, employment status and forest based livelihood opportunities among tribal communities (*Munda, Oraon and Lohara*) of Bundu block in Ranchi district of Jharkhand state. The study is based on both secondary sources and primary field survey viz. personal interviews of the respondents through a well-structured pre-tested interview schedule, personal observations of the interviewer and participatory rural appraisal tools, that is, semi-structure interview and focus group discussion carried out in the sample villages using multi-stage random sampling technique. The study revealed that out of the 3738 labour force, 54.95 percent belonged to work force and rest (45.05%) is unemployed. A considerable percentage (41.46%) of households was having three workers engaged as family labour (62.19%) for 201-300 mandays per annum (71.95%). Nearly half (48.17%) of the households were having one migrant or day-outer member who travels a distance upto 50 km (72.56%) for a period upto 4 months (50.61%) for earning their livelihoods. The alleviation of unemployment and under-employment problems of the tribal people needs diversification of non-traditional and economically viable employment opportunities. The forest based livelihood interventions namely, agroforestry, energy plantation, pasture development, timber plantation, *tasar* (*Antherea mylitta*) silk rearing, lac cultivation, bamboo planting, fruit farming and value addition in *sal* (*Shorea robusta*) leaf plate and cup making are the best options having potential to generate employment opportunities of 108792.50 mandays per annum and an income of Rupees (Rs.) 327.77 lakhs per annum for the tribal people. Hence, the interventions envisaged needs to be implemented efficiently for all-round development of the tribal people and ecological stability in the study area.