

## **Voices From the Forest**

All across India, non-timber forest produce (NTFP), spell a critical source of income for indigeneus people and forest-dwelling communities, who are among the poorest of the poor. Not only do the NTFPs play a crucial role in the livelihood of these people, but from a key incentive to conserving the forest of India. Moreover NTFPs are woven in with the social and cultural fabric of the communities living in India.

Communities are working hand in hand with grassroot non-government groups, traders, and government to address the challenges posed by low productivity, lack of tecnology, irrational NTFP law, and wide-scale contract based extraction. Over the years of hard work, inroads are being made. Community-based conservation, management, value addition, and marketing of NTFPs are being successfully practiced. Honey, mahua, resin, amla, sal leaf, and the thousands of other NTFP species will continue to flourish and play its role in the lives of communities today and in the future.