

## Original Research Article

### Assessment of the Potential of Non-Timber Forest Products NTFPs in Livelihoods' Sustenance of the Flood Proximate Communities of the Indus Basin, Pakistan

#### ABSTRACT

~~Flood proximate~~Flood-proximate communities are the most ~~effected~~affected from the destructions caused by floods occurring almost every year in Pakistan. The people in these areas, due to frequent natural calamities, usually have poor economic conditions. These communities mainly relying on conventional income-generating strategies i.e. (agriculture, fishing, daily wages etc.). But due to natural disasters, these methods end up yielding the least profit, thus different means of ~~income-inducing~~income-inducing strategies are needed to explore for the community's sustainable growth. The current study focuses on the potential of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) in the region of D I Khan in supporting the livelihoods of the inhabitants. The research utilized a mixed method approach (blend of quantitative and qualitative) through a semi-structured questionnaire aiming to assess the livelihood sustenance of flood proximate communities through NTFPs. A total of 150 respondents were randomly selected from 05 administration units, tehsils. The results revealed that communities in non-flooded areas ("NF") used collecting NTFPs mostly for cConstruction material whereas those in flooded areas ("F") used it for construction as well as utensil making (F:41%; NF:39%;  $P < 0.05$ ;  $\chi^2$ : 0.812). Both groups were involved in harvesting and using shrubs such as *S. munja*, *T. latifolia*, *N. ritchiana*, *S. sesban* and *T. dioca* and trees—such as *E. camadulensis*, *V. nilotica*, and *D. sissoo* for firewood and cottage industry. Both groups were significantly different in meeting their livelihood needs such as their income source and meeting household expenses efficiently (F: 48%; NF: 100%;  $P < 0.01$ ;  $\chi^2$ : 12.03). The present study concludes that the NTFPs sector in ~~flood proximate~~flood proximate areas has been neglected as a profitable income strategy for sustainable livelihood of the poor in this region.

**Keywords:** NTFPs, Flood proximate communities, Livelihood, Thatching material, Marketing channels, construction, cottage

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