

## Livelihoods of landless tribal based on local agriculture and forests in east Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh

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**Abstract:** Mostly tribal in East Godavari district are landless poor and their livelihoods mainly depend upon income from wage labour at small and big farmer's land during peak agricultural seasons or on the nearby forests. These tribal prefer to travel by cycle to sell the fuel wood and wood charcoal in the nearby markets. On an average each cyclist carries around 100 – 150 kg fuel wood or 120 – 150 kg (4 – 5 gunny bags, each weight 25 – 30 kg) of wood charcoal and travels around 35 – 40 km to reach the market from their village. Therefore, on an average individual cyclist travels nearly 70 – 80 km in every alternate day by cycle to earn Rs. 250 – 375 from fuel wood and Rs. 360 – 450 from wood charcoal selling. The main markets of fuel wood and charcoal are Jagampeta for Sudhikonda, Mallisala villages. Rajahmundry for Kotahpalli, Indukurepeta and Seetapalli villages of Devipetnam Mandal and Egokavaram, Omangi of Pratipadu Mandals is Kakinada market for charcoal. Livelihoods of around 300 such different tribal and few backward class families are mainly dependent upon the income from such type of businesses. The major casts/ tribes engaged in such type of enterprises are Dhora, Reddy, Konda Reddy, Valmeeka, Kapu and Settibalija in the main mandals viz. Rampa Chodavaram, Gangavaram, Devipetnam, Pratipadu and Sankavaram of East Godavari District of India. There is routine of daily 35 – 40 cycle each with 100 – 150 kg of fuel wood and 125 – 150 cyclist with or 4-5 bags (120-150kg) of charcoal are reaching to these different markets and going back to their home with handful income to meet the basic requirement of their and their family members.

**Key words:**

### Introduction

India is basically an agricultural country, livelihoods of more than 70% of its population is based on the agricultural practices as well as on agriculture based enterprises / industries at various levels. Although with the increasing land under agricultural practices the nearby forest cover is greatly threatened which is resulting in depriving the land under forest cover. However various efforts are being made by the Govt. / Non Government Organisations towards maintaining the existing forest covers as well as to generate the alternative resources to meet the increasing demand of forest produces for maintaining optimum forest covers. The Forest Department of Andhra Pradesh adopted the participatory approaches to involve the rural communities in protecting the forests through developing Vana Samrakshana Samithies (VSS) to provide equal accessibility to the Timber and Non Timber Forests Produces by the peoples and of the peoples (Vasudeva Rao D., Chakrapani C., 1997). In Andhra Pradesh 6,726 VSS were formed out of which 419 exist in East Godavari district itself.

Even through there are some landless communities in the remote villages, whose livelihoods either depends on the income from wage labour on the big and small farmer's land or on the nearby forests. They get the employment as wage labourer for nearly 45 – 60 days in a year during pre and post cultivation practices like ploughing, harvesting and threshing etc. Whereas

remaining period of the year they have to be dependent on collecting and marketing either Non Wood Forest Produces (NWFP) like tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*), adda leaf (*Bauhinia vahlii*), gum karaya (*Sterculia urens*), soap nuts (*Sapindus emarginatus*) wild brooms etc. (Tewari, 1989). as well as procurement and marketing of fuel wood / charcoal (Ravi R. Pragada, 1993) to meet the basic requirement of their and their family member's need. This practice is very common in **agency areas** (Forest Area allotted to Tribal for cultivation purposes, but they cannot sell this land others) in almost all the district of the Andhra Pradesh State.

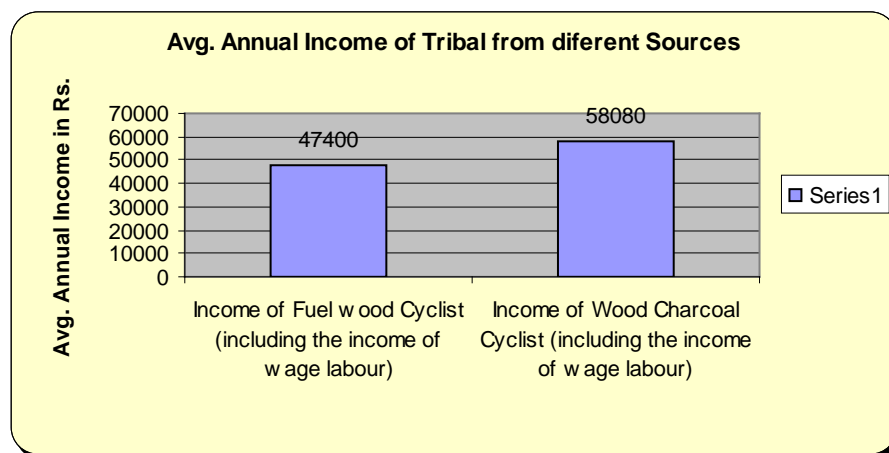
### Materials and Methods

**Study Area and Methodology:** This study is conducted in the Seetapalli and Indukuripeta villages of Rampachodavaram **Mandal** (Changed name of Tehsil controlled by Mandal Revenue Officer) of East Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh. And the data is collected through interaction with the tribals / non tribals engaged in procurement of fuel-wood and wood charcoal while they are on the way to and interviewing the broker / businessmen involved in this type of trades. **Sources of Income:** East Godavari district is resources rich district having very good vegetative cover with various species constituting multiple story forest with rich biodiversity in the hills as well as multiple agricultural crops like paddy, cotton, chilly, tobacco in

plains and foothills. In horticulture mango, banana, cashew, coconut, custard apple, citrus, guava, papaya, pine apple and pomegranate are the main sources of income for small, medium and large farmers. These crops, fruits orchards generates number of employments for weaker section of different categories of poors and source of income for landlords as well as many more landless wage labourer during peak seasons of sowing, pre and post harvesting periods etc. Whereas there are some of the communities which are deprived of optimum land holding and they have to either depends upon the wage labour on big or small farmer's lands or on nearby forests for sustaining their livelihoods through collection of fallen woods for fuel woods and charcoal making. This study is conducted to highlight the livelihoods of such landless / marginal tribal farmers which either depends upon the income from wages as well as nearby forests for fuelwood and wood charcoal making in East Godavari district. The easiest and convenient mode of travel/ transportation preferred by these tribals is cycle to sell the fuel wood and wood charcoal in the nearby markets.

On an average each cyclist carries around 100 – 150 kg fuel wood or 120 – 150 kg (4 – 5 gunny bags, each

weight 25 – 30 kg) of wood charcoal and travels around 35 – 40 km to reach the market from his village. Average individual cyclist travels nearly 70 – 80 km in every alternate day by cycle to earn Rs. 250 – 375 from fuel wood and Rs. 360 – 450 from wood charcoal selling. The main markets of fuel wood and charcoal are Jagampeta for Sudhikonda, Mallisala villages. Rajahmundry for Kotahpalli, Indukurepeta and Seetapalli villages of Devipetnam Mandal, Egokavaram, Omangi of Pratipadu Mandals is Kakinada market for the charcoal. Livelihoods of around 500 such tribal / non tribal families are mainly dependent upon the income from such type of businesses. The major casts/ tribes involved in such type of enterprises are Dhora, Reddy, Konda Reddy, Valmeeka, Kapu and Settibalija in the main mandals viz. Rampa Chodavaram, Gangavaram, Devipetnam, Pratipadu and Sankavaram of East Godavari District. There is routine of daily 35 – 40 cyclist each with 100 – 150 kg of fuel wood and 70 - 80 cyclist with or 4-5 bags (120-150kg) of charcoal are daily coming to these different markets and going back their home with handful income to meet the basic requirement of their and their family members.



**Graph showing the different sources of Income**

Each cyclist makes around 2-3 trips in a week, 08-12 trips in a month and 96 – 144 in a year. Rest of 18 – 22 days of a month he and his family members are engaged in the procurement of fuel-wood / charcoal and other social functions. On the basis of his trips a

fuel wood cyclist (A+B) earns Rs. 31200 – 63600 (Avg. Rs. 47400/-) and a wood charcoal cyclist (A+C) earns Rs. 41760 – 74400 (Avg. Rs.54080/-) in a year

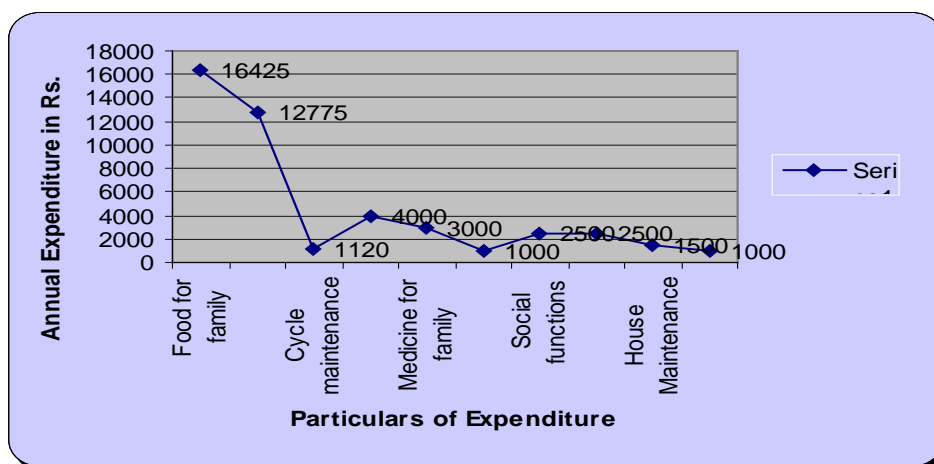
which includes his income from wage labour on other farmer’s land.

**Table 1 Average Annual Income of Tribal family from different sources:**

S. No.	Sources of Income	No. of family members engaged (No.)	Rate (Rs.)	Income Per day (Rs.)	For No. of days in a year	Range of Annual income (Rs.)	Average Annual Income (Rs.)
A.	Income from Agriculture wage labour	2	80/day	160	45 - 60	7200 – 9600	8400
B.	Income from Selling of Fuel-wood	1	250/ Qt.	250 – 375	96 -144	24000 – 54000	39000
C.	Income from selling of Wood Charcoal	1	300/ Qt.	360 – 450		34560 – 64800	49680

**Expenditure:** In general the lifestyle of tribals are so simple, houses were Katcha made up of the mud walls with roof of Palmeera tree leaves (Tardhi patta leaves) which are locally available. In a small such house a family 4 – 5 members including parents and children were living in harmonious manner. Whereas as now a day their life standards are also improving day by day,

there children are studying in the schools, some are also attending the college. Their average annual expenditure for food is Rs. 16,425/, personal average annual expenditure (tea, cigrate, beedi etc.) Rs.12775/- ; on cloth avg. annual expenditure is Rs. 4000/-, Rs. 3000 on medicine, Rs. 1000/- on education, Rs. 5000/-



**Graph showing the annual expenditure of Tribal Family**

On social & ritual functions, Rs. 1500/- for house maintenance and approximately Rs. 1000/- miscellaneous for traveling and relative houses or to

meet some incidental expenditures etc. which he has to meet either from income of wage labour on big and

small farmer's land or through income of selling of fuel wood or wood char coal.

**Table 2 Average annual expenditure of a Tribal family:**

S. No.	Expenditure Particulars	Per day Expenditure (Rs.)	For No. of days in a year	Annual Expenditure Range (Rs.)	Average Annual Income (Rs.)
A.	Food for family members	40 – 50	365	14600 – 18250	16425
B.	Personal Expenses (Food, tea, cigrate/ beedi)	30 – 40	365	10950 – 14600	12775
C.	Cycle maintenance expenses, other incidental expenses	05 – 10	128 – 160	0640 – 1600	1120
D.	Cloth for family members		For whole year	4000	4000
E.	Medicine for family		For whole year	3000	3000
F.	Education of children		For whole year	1000	1000
G.	Social functions		For whole year	2000	2500
H.	Ritual functions		For whole year	2000	2000
I.	House maintenance expenses		For whole year	1000	1500
J.	Miscellaneous		For whole year	1000	1000

They shall be properly engaged with such enterprises which shall not effect the environment as well as vegetative cover. The intervention which enhance their income generating capacity shall be promoted amongst poor forest dwellers and help them to come out of poverty trap.

They may be engaged in development programs and 'right to work' (under National Rural employment Guarantee Scheme of Indian Govt. which assures 100 days of work to each household.

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