**Boost Women's Livelihood Collectives for Equality**

**SUMMARY:** The project plans to assist 200 women mushroom growers in six villages in Tamulpur and Nagrijuli blocks of Baksa districtin Assam. The villages are Pakhribari, NatunHaoli, Montangapar, Kalipur, Ulubari and Ahuzarguri. Baksa district shares an international border with Bhutan which is about 5 kms away from the above mentioned villages. The project aims in providing the women mushroom growers a platform towards sustainable development though economic benefit. The target women belong to Bodo, Nepali, Rabha and Adivasi communities. FST firmly believes that women are central to the smooth management of a household and they best know how to meet the needs of the families. Hence with this initiative we focus to enable them with livelihood securities by enhancing their skills and resources.

**GOAL:**

* Families have additional income source from mushroom cultivation.
* Assist the women in value addition such as packaging, drying, mushroom pickle making etc.
* Help them in linking with market for better price.

**CHALLENGES:**

* There is huge crisis in skill based trainings and technical backlogs in the area which results in poor storage of mushroom and its production process and also it adversely affects the processing of mushroom items.
* The women mushroom growers face difficulties in building market linkages outside their areas due to poor transport and communication facilities.
* Since most of the women are economically poor they are unable to invest an excessive amount of monetary support from their end in mushroom production.

**SOLUTION:**

* So far FST has helped in developing the mushroom cultivation skill of 100 women and another 100 women got skill training recently. Individual approach has limitation like less production, lesser bargaining skill.
* Forming a women producer group will help in meeting the demand of the buyers and better negotiation.
* Mushroom cultivation is an established activity amongst many women of the villages. These women farmers are scattered in many villages. Women play a crucial role in the cultivation process of mushroom as the activity is being done at homesteads of the households.

**LONG TERM IMPACT:**

• 200 women to cultivate mushroom in an improved manner

• 200 families will have additional sources of earning

• Increase of family income per month by Rs.3000/- per 100 mushroom cylinders for each household.