

# HOLISTIC COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

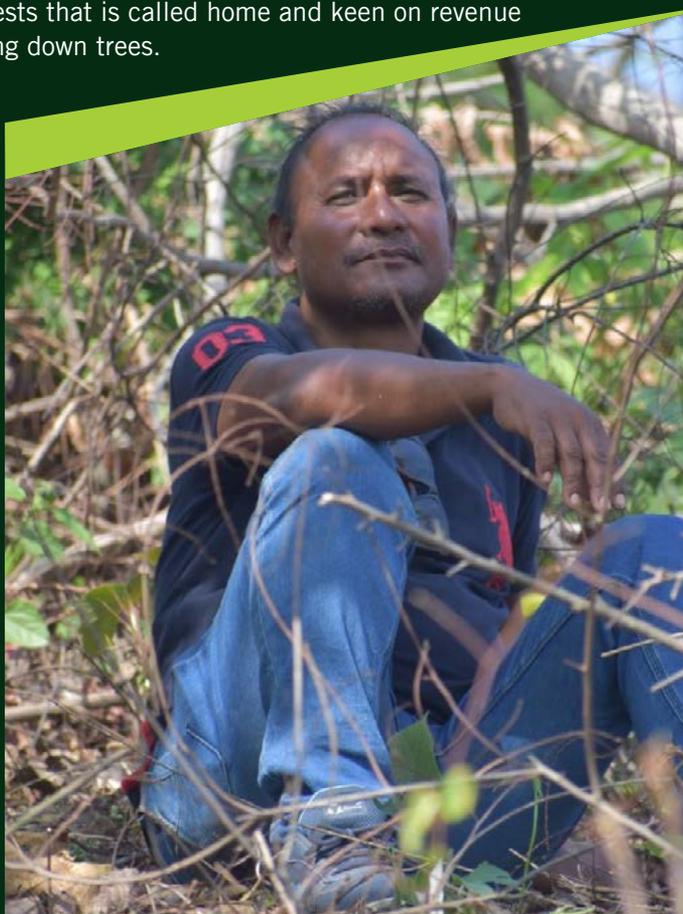
## COMMUNITY CASE STUDIES

### Case Study I: Dimbeshwar Brahma

Having been associated with Agriculture and Forestry for a huge span of his life now, Dimbeshwar Brahma has attained extensive knowledge over several crops and numerous cultivating techniques. Being associated with the Forest Department for a few years, he has attained a vast knowledge on use of plants, herbs and trees endemic to the forest. A member of MASK, he has also worked on projects on Asiatic Elephants leading to a decline in human-elephant conflicts. Hailing from a rural area close to forest he has witnessed the grave consequences of deforestation.

After having worked with the community people on the RuFu® programmes, that has led to plantation of over 4 lakh trees, in the Balipara Reserve Forest area for two years, he is confident on the idea of restoring the forests that is called home and keen on revenue generation from it in future without chopping down trees.

“I started working with my community on the Rural Futures programme in the Balipara Reserve Forest early last year and what drove me was the idea of restoring the forests that we call home and the idea that we would be able to generate future revenue from it without chopping down trees. We've seen the grave effects of deforestation in our area – reduced rainfall, reduced fertility of our soils and an increase in human-elephant conflict. The Rural Futures programme has not only planted over 4 lakh trees in our forest area but has also immediately increased our annual incomes by 40-50%; In my case, over 50%. We look forward to continuing this work to restore our forests and are glad about this avenue of being able to mix forestry and farming for revenue – our communities have also started growing a lot of our indigenous medicinal crops again and the benefits of this are many”



## Case Study II: Senai Mili and Maheshwar Mili

The agroforestry model under Balipara Foundation's RuFu® programme integrates trees on farms and agricultural landscapes, diversifying and sustaining production for increased social, economic and environmental benefits for our indigenous communities at all levels.

Senai Mili and Maheshwar Mili from Baligaon Green village, Sonitpur district are entrepreneurs who have implemented the agroforestry model on their land. The model has helped them earn livelihoods with a profound ecological impact addressing soil, health, water sequestration, income and biodiversity revival all in one go.

"We have begun planting and nurturing papaya, turmeric, ginger and many other plants in our homestead, and this model is helping us earn revenue by selling in the market and the village. Agroforestry has helped increase resilience of farming systems in the village and has supported us to open homestay doors for tourists from all over the world. We serve the tourists vegetables and food from our agroforestry land, and make ethnic Mishing delicacies. This entire model has helped us add value to environment securities, and has been providing us better economic returns"



## Case Study III: Dusila Mili

In Baligaon Miri village, women entrepreneurs have set up mushroom incubation units as a way for food security and securing livelihoods.

Dusila Mili, an entrepreneur of Baligaon Miri Village (Baligaon RuFu® lab) with her local women's group, has been working tirelessly with Balipara Foundation's agroforestry based livelihood program, cultivating mushrooms and further integrating their livelihood opportunities into a holistic, eco-friendly market based solution. Not only she has been benefitted financially, to sustain her family needs, but she has also been successful in driving the local groups of her village towards conservation and cultivation of mushrooms.

"It's profitable to do mushroom cultivation. My household expenses are fulfilled by it and additionally, I can save some time and money as well. The procedure also offers mitigation co-benefits, as the mushroom farming uses rice straw waste, which would otherwise be burned and cause noxious smoke and greenhouse gases. The leftover from the mushroom cultivation can also be used as bio-fertilizer and thereby helps in replenishing soil and reducing both the amount of chemical fertilizer needed and the costs and pollution from excess chemicals in the soil."

Dusila now earns up to Rs 10-15K per month through mushroom farming and cultivation. The mushroom farming she is engaged with also includes and employs as many as ten locals in one unit.

