

Project Update: February 2011

Information was collected by participant observation, non-structured and semi-structured interviews. Mushrooms were sold in dried form and occasionally in fresh form. About 80% of the mushrooms sold were harvested from the wild based on availability. Cultivation was done only by some common initiative groups and non-governmental organizations. Women represented 90% of sellers with diverse origins and they also sell other non-timber forest product. We noted the commercialization of *Pleurotus ostraetus* (as food), *Auricularia auricular* (as food and as medicine), *Termitomyces* spp. (as food in traditional meals and as medicine), *Daldinia concentric* (use in treating scars) and *Pleurotus tuberregium* (which is used as food in thickening soup was also highly prized by traditional healers and the natives because they use it in ethno-medicine in treating poisoning of the leg and to prevent children from being initiated from maremaids). The study revealed that mushroom gathering is an important economic activity whose sustenance was threatened by the erosion of biodiversity.