Adivasi communities traditionally depended on the forest for all their nutritional needs. They subsisted mainly on fruits, vegetables, tubers, fish, small game as well as the occasional crop they grew, predominantly coarse grains.

However, as time passed and the nature of, as well as their access to, forests changed, their diet started becoming deficient. Certain tribes, such as Paniyas, forced into bonded labour saw a paradigm shift in their dietary practices due to their dependence on their exploiters for their sustenance needs. This deficiency
started manifesting in the form of rampant malnutrition, among adults and children alike, underweight babies as well as high maternal mortality. Another consequence was increased susceptibility to Tuberculosis among the Adivasis.

We have taken a multi pronged approach to this issue with ASHWINI, our sister concern spearheading all medical interventions. ACCORD, on its part has initiated a programme – “Aroghya Krishi” or “Gardens for Health” which focuses on supporting families with seeds and know how in order to develop a kitchen garden that can supplement their dietary needs.

Care has been taken to identify vegetables and greens that are traditionally used and hence suitable for the local climate. We have had a good response for the programme with more than 1000 families participating enthusiastically last year.

This year, we have already begun the process. Seeds distributed include red and green spinach, pumpkin, bottle gourd, ash gourd, brinjals, chilli and more. Many villages have also saved up seeds from last year’s harvest and shared with each other, a way of life that comes naturally to Adivasis.

The way ahead must include greater focus on promoting tubers, many of which are now on the verge of being lost from local culinary practise. Keeping in view this, as well as the need for greater understanding, an exposure visit has been planned for the area team members who are directly implementing this project.
ABOUT US

ACCORD – Action for Community Organisation, Rehabilitation and Development

REGISTRATION DETAILS

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REACH US

ACCORD
P.O Box 20, Thottamoola Road
Gudalur 643212, The Nilgiris District
Tamil Nadu, India
Email: accordgudalur@gmail.com
Tel: + 91-4262-261506, 261562
Fax: + 91-4262-261504

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