

Gardens of Nutrition and Health

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Based on intensive work by [Living Farms](#) Change two train routes from Hyderabad to Muniguda station and you come to the southern part of Odisha in India. Cotton is grown extensively, dominating large areas along with eucalyptus tree plantations, engaging rural human resource through labour. Amidst growing cotton and rice, many households have their own nutrition gardens which is substantially kept away from urea and other chemical inputs, while letting the soils live and generate. Here! in these gardens lies a possibility of a polychromatic diversity of nutrition and taste.

NURTURING THE SPIRAL GARDEN

A spiral garden has been designed and planted by Pitamber Sabar. An area of 42 decimal within which this spirally designed garden provides for the family of Pitamber. Ripplet of small to large circles of vegetables, lentils, leafy vegetables with the outermost circle of fruit trees are grown in the spiral garden. Pumpkin, chillies, lady finger, cucumber, ridge gourd, lentils, bitter melon, turmeric, tomatoes, potatoes, date palm, blackberry, guava, mango, custard apple, tubers, bamboo, corn and cowpea is the diversity Pitamber nurtures.

Pitamber Sabar's wife Harabati Sabar on the right with Raibata Sabar on the left

GIRLS MAKING SENSE OF ADOLESCENCE

At Chandiliguda, Odisha, young girls are educated and have become educators learning from the didi at the Anganwadi center. They vividly speak about the intergenerational nutrition channel and the malnutrition cycle .

Nirmala, Geeta and Roshini speak in the video. Hear the young educators taking about adolescence.

A villages with 18 households, a population of 83, this Dombh community thrives of seasonal vegetables that is grown by the men and women. The women of the village gathered and spoke about the food diversity brought in place with the help of Living Farms.

THRIVING GARDENS OF THE DOMBH COMMUNITY

Madnavati Hilal, prepared her nutrition garden in March, 2017. Before the nutrition garden the family would buy there vegetables from the local market. Now, they buy dried fish, fish and prawns from the market. Pumpkin, snake gourd, ridge gourd, beans, bottle gourd, lady fingers, and leafy vegetables are grown within the nutrition garden.

YOUNG MOTHERS AND THEIR CHALLENGES

The lives of young women in the village of Asurpada hasn't been easy. With young infants and children, they attend to the household while most of their husbands work at a bauxite plant at Lanjhigarh. The women work as agricultural labours in the summer months. They also involve in collection of wood and its selling as alternate sources of income. Living Farms works in these villages and focuses on awareness around health and nutrition, malnutrition cycle, and sanitation.

KSINGPUR, PANDARA PORA

With 63 households in the village of Pandara Pora, the food security is met through nutritional gardens and forest produce. The women speak about a variety of tubers found in different seasons in the forests. A special mention was 'pathara Kondha' (stone tuber) which is found under stones in the forest. The vegetable garden on the other hand provide a rich source of nutrients through leafy vegetables and many other vegetables.

ANCIENT CONSCIOUSNESS AND ACTION

"We do not have cotton or eucalyptus, and thus our unity is intact. We have never used chemical or any external inputs in our fields. Our seed diversity is preserved and cultivated, though we did loose some seeds like red maze in the years but we have tried and revived the lost seeds" Paggi Mambalaka speaks to Bijoy Patro at Tado, Ksinghpur. Listen and meander through Sunamai Mambalaka's field. She has over 40 varieties of crops on her hill.

SAHIB KUNDIKA, A MIXED CROPPING MASTER

Sahib, on his steep and rocky hill, grows a diversity that is a living tale of his knowledge and heritage. He explains how in mixed cropping, its an interconnected and inter-dependent act of nature and human intervention playing harmoniously.

HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS IN THE VILLAGE OF RASICOLA

The Kondh adivasi society is one of a kind. It will leave you with answers and questions that simplify life when one tries to understand. Complexly different from urban communities, the kondh are dignified in their own practice and lifestyle. And in the same way hardships are dealt with strength and unity. Here is an example of the resilience and pride they carry forward. After the forest department approached the community with saplings of eucalyptus tree, they refuse to even plant one by saying they would now plant heirloom trees like tamarind, mahua, mango and jackfruit.

KASIPUR, SOUTHERN ODHISA

[The community at Kasipur gathers and voices out along with Living Farms staff engage in vital dialogs. "There are toilet but no water, to source drinking water also become a problem as there are no pipes installed. We still go to the stream down hill and fetch water. This is how we keep going, carrying 16 to 20 litres of water in every collection", voices Gautami Behra. The Asha meeting and training programs by Living Farms has made it easier for the community to put things into practice. The astonishing fact is that the nutrition and fruit gardens are well attended to. The gardens live and produce here at Kasipur. A variety that will only inspire and put one to understand the value of land and its importance. Many families had there men employed in labour work within India, many returned to the richness they left behind, which is where they farms vegetable, grow fruits, and highly medicinal plants and flowers.](#)

KONDH ADIVASI OF MUSRIPADARA

"We farm and live. And we do not know how much we earn." - Tulsa Majhi FOOTNOTE: The photo-story has been possible with the support of Living Farms, Odhisa. With senior journalist Bijoy Patro and constant support from Living farms' staff, the photo study work is accomplished.

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