

Global Giving report/May 2026

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This is a report of work done in villages of indigenous peoples in Bastar district, Chhattisgarh: Kakalgur and Sandh Karmari. The idea was to have exchanges between the people of the villages, especially the women and the youth, to improve their knowledge about forest foods. This included growing some of the foods in selected plots for the youth to learn about their native food and medicinal plants; the plots were (and will) be maintained by them and more species added as and when new plants are found.



View of the plots in Sandh Karmari village (above and below)

The plot chosen in Sandh Karmari is a 13 acre area given by the people of the village to our organisation LEAF about 15 years ago to set up a nursery and conservation space. This place was

then quite barren and over the years planted with native tree species and protected. It is in this place where the food plants have been planted – mainly tubers – by the women of both the villages.

In Kakalgur the area chosen is in the outskirts of the village. The space was fenced and, in the empty patches between the native forest trees, various food and medicinal plants have been planted. About 50 species are now hosted in the space.



Kakalgur village plots also showing the stone guards



Plants in Kakalgur plot anti-clockwise: *Chewandi* (*Dioscorea* sp.); *Dillenia pentaphylla*; *Chlorophytum tuberosum*; *Andrographis paniculatus*; *Phyllanthus niruri*; *Chitongi* (*Dioscorea* sp.)

Over the past months meetings have been held between the village communities and plants exchanged for planting in their respective villages to increase the diversity of their plots. Alongside the discussions held helped in sharpening identification of the plants, harvest methods, cooking and storage techniques. Most important was that the youth in these communities showed much interest in learning about their traditional food plants. In the plots the stones have been cleared to form protective guards around some of the important plant species. This also marks them out for easy spotting. This work was done collectively by the women and the youth of the village.

The ongoing work now with the plots and the communities is to continue the exchanges, have regular food festivals and discussions to increase their overall knowledge about food plants and conservation as a whole. Another activity that has happened is that at least 7 of the women in the core groups in the villages have their own kitchen gardens where they are growing some of the tubers and greens for household consumption.

बस्तर वन्य खाद्य



Xylia xylocarpa (tangan siyudi)
दुरवा - नांगोरी
गोंडी - कडपाडर
हल्बी - टांगन सिचाडी
हिंदी -



Portulaca oleracea (chaudikuchha)
दुरवा - चुडी कुझा
गोंडी - पुपुल कुनीर
हल्बी - लीहनी भाजी
हिंदी - बाल भाजी



Ficus semicordata (fruit)
दुरवा - बार्ता
गोंडी - मुंज
हल्बी - पडेय पाक
हिंदी - भूरे गूलर



Dioscorea oppositifolia (kidinjikurda)
दुरवा - किडीजी कुरडा
गोंडी - क्रिम माटी
हल्बी - तरनरिया कांदा
हिंदी - भूरे गूलर

लीफ बस्तर  प्रेरक राजिम गरियाबंद

बस्तर वन्य खाद्य



Dioscorea pentaphylla (daddakurda)
दुरवा - डाडा कुरडा
गोंडी - पद माटी
हल्बी - बरहा कांदा / मोरन्दा कांदा
हिंदी -



Dioscorea daemona (kuliakurda)
दुरवा - कुलिय कुरडा
गोंडी - कोटा माटी
हल्बी - कुलिया कांदा
हिंदी -



Dillenia pentagyna (musiri)
दुरवा - मुसरी
गोंडी - मिचाम
हल्बी - मीची (ओबली)
हिंदी -



Cordia dichotoma (bual)
दुरवा - मावा कुझा (बुआर भाजी)
गोंडी - बोहड़
हल्बी - बुआल भाजी
हिंदी - बोहार भाजी

लीफ बस्तर  प्रेरक राजिम गरियाबंद

Educational posters were prepared, displaying a select number of wild forest foods; the foods are named in Hindi as well as the local indigenous languages Durwa, Halbi and Gondi. These posters were distributed in the local primary and secondary schools and the teachers have agreed to include the information provided into their curriculum. At present there are 4 posters in the set, 2 of which are shown above.

A meeting was organised in the Sandh Karmari village where women's groups as well as other people participated. This was a meeting to recapitulate the events regarding wild forest foods that had occurred through the past year. After the formal meeting, where a lot of young people were present, there were visits to two forest sites and a sacred grove, sites where these foods are found and conserved. Some photographs of the meeting are self-explanatory.





