



The Wicked Challenge

Is the food we are growing today accessible and affordable for all? The decline of traditional, sovereign living among tribal communities has increased their vulnerability to health and climate challenges by weakening local health systems, dietary diversity, and ecological resilience

BUT

Reviving indigenous knowledge in 21st Century and cyclical health practices of tribal communities offers sustainable, low-cost solutions to strengthen climate resilience, nutrition, and nutritional swaraj (self-reliance).

Sovereignty Practices in relation to sustainable biodiversity, nutrition, and health outcomes

Common agreement

Climate-resilient food systems require crop exchange, seed banking, and cryopreservation.

Stakeholder collaboration is critical, researchers, farmers, communities, and policymakers must work together for Heterogeneity and high yield.

Mainstreaming local varieties and helping in scaling, by creating biodiversity hotspots.

COVID-19 has reinforced the importance of local food systems and self-reliance (swaraj).

Indigenous practices offer invaluable insights for resilient, equitable, and sustainable development. We must listen, learn, and collaborate with Indigenous communities to build a healthier and food-secure future



Speaker
Sanjay Patil
Chief Thematic Programme Executive, BAIF

Nutritional and agricultural security cannot be treated in silos

Monocropping and monovarietal agriculture, driven by technology and markets, have led to the homogenization of our diets

India has over 4 lakh plant species, yet only 30,000 are considered edible with just 200 crops as active

Crop diversity is rapidly declining - 50+ varieties of crops like rice, has shrunken only 6-7

Very little research integrates Indigenous knowledge with formal scientific conservation

Nutritional security is tied to soil health and livelihood security

Need for indigenous wisdom and technological advancement



Speaker
Bhavani RV
Senior Advisor (Food & Nutrition), Coalition for Food and Nutrition Security (CFNS)

Indigenous communities pass down practices that embody sustainable development and living in harmony with nature

Local vegetables, tubers, leafy greens, and even edible weeds are rich in micronutrients

Seed banking and seed exchange at the village level support nutrition and biodiversity

Certain varieties, like salt-tolerant crops found post-tsunami, show promise in climate resilience; Sahiwal, Gir, and Banni buffalo are highly adapted to harsh climates and should be conserved

Sacred groves and traditional healers have historically preserved medicinal plants

Poshan Vatikas (nutri-gardens) should focus on locally grown, nutrient-rich crops



Moderator
Murari Goswami
Development Expert

Best practices to bring the collaborative action needs to be adapted across the country

Potential Solution



Academic focus on Indigenous knowledge



Robust platforms to promote indigenous knowledge



Promoting Heterogeneity in crops, livestock at policy level



Collaborative Action & Knowledge Sharing