

Is Your Coffee from Chintapalle?



Vishkhapatnam Coffee Cluster is one of the clusters which employs more than 500 coffee producers from 127 villages with tribal communities of over 46,000 members and links them with traders who procure coffee in bulk at fair prices. On most days, the residents of Chintapalle village in Visakhapatnam can be found in their coffee fields: patches of red surrounded by forests. The fields give off a fairy tale like energy where people humming and picking fruits. But during the lockdown period, there is of course silence in the fields. As the traders no longer procuring, the coffee producers forced to sell their beans at cheap prices at the local market. Without enough scope of income and insufficient supply of ration by the government, the families were finding it hard to make both ends meet.

V.C Aliveni leads a civil society organisation in the area working to strengthen the coffee cluster. Since the lockdown, she has been distributing food kits to the tribal communities as the government has not been able to reach. She shares, “with every passing day the misery of the tribal communities was increasing, and they were finding it hard to even manage a single day’s meal. With a team of 30 members, we decided to distribute food kits.” Each kit includes 10 kgs of rice, 2 kgs of daal, 500 gm of chilli powder, 250 gm turmeric powder, 1 kg sugar, oil, and 4 soaps. Her team has distributed more than hundred kits and they are planning to extend their reach to more communities. Tribal communities and daily wage labourers are the worst affected by the pandemic. Changemakers like Aliveni are the rays of hope in this tough time, but such efforts are few. Those that exist unable to reach everyone.