We had elaborated in detail about the interventions made by Kudumbashree in the tribal predominant areas of Attappady in yesterday’s article (Making an Impact-73). The details about 'Bridge School', which was launched as a new initiative in educational sector was explained in ‘Making an Impact-13’. ‘Bridge Course’ is yet another innovative idea being implemented by Kudumbashree Mission in tribal hamlets of Attappady.

Bridge Course is the supplementary educational programme implemented in the tribal hamlets of ATTAPPADY as a part of Attappady Special Project (Attappady Comprehensive Tribal Development and Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group Development Project). During the initial phase of the programme,
while framing the educational interventions for the tribal children, it came to our attention that there are students who are unable to read or write confidently even after reaching class 10th. This was four years ago when we started our special project. We realised that this is a primary factor for increase in the dropout of the students as this lack of confidence created disinterest towards education among the children. 'Bridge Course' was launched as a solution to this issue and make opportunity for the children to learn to read, write and grasp basic mathematics after school hours (as a tuition) from childhood itself.

Educated youth from the hamlets were identified and were appointed as teachers for 'Bridge Course' in their respective hamlets. Every teacher act as a guardian to each children as parents may not have time to give support in education to their children. 'Bridge Course' also aims to make the students embrace social education and good habits along with their education. So, priority is being given for food, hygiene, education, co-operation, self knowledge etc. in our 'Bridge Courses'. The time spent by children during 'Bridge Course' classes (Some time in the morning and 2 hours in the evening) help them learn the basics of value education. During the holidays, the teachers spend their full time with the children. By sharing stories, songs, games, various camps and sharing knowledge about their traditions, the 'Bridge Course' is progressing providing support to children and it's bringing lot of interest in education to tribal children.

As of now, 1600 students are studying in the 100 'Bridge Course' Centres (Centres are either public halls in each hamlet or any houses in the hamlet; and there is no special building for this). The 100 Bridge Course teachers are training each student personally and are helping them revise the school lessons with dedication. They are also trying to motivate the children identify their inherent talents and provide lead to them giving right guidance. I wish to give credits to the passion of our teachers and team for the success of this innovative project. Recently, the District Institute of Education and Training of Palakkad (DIET) had carried out a study and had reported that 'Bridge Course' is a very fruitful intervention in educational sector.