

# YES, I WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A FRIEND OF SITILINGI

Please accept my gift of .....  
(your donation receives exemption u/s 80G of the IT Act)

- [ ] Rs 5,000 could run Tribal Hospital for one day
- [ ] Rs 3,000 could help a farmer enhance organic techniques
- [ ] Rs 1000 could help the Porgai group build up purchasing capital
- [ ] Rs..... to be used for the Corpus Fund
- [ ] Rs..... for any purpose you think fit

Please make cheques/drafts payable to "Tribal Health Initiative", payable at SBI, Kotapatty, or ICICI, Salem. **Electronic transfer to ICICI Bank** [IFSCNo.ICIC0006119, account 611901076914 or **SBI**, Kotapatty [IFSC No.SBIN0006244 account no.. 11689302723] Cheque/ DD details .....

My Name:  
My Address:  
  
  
  
  
  
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Please send this form with your donation to:  
**TRIBAL HEALTH INITIATIVE**  
Sittilingi, Dharmapuri District, Tamil Nadu  
India - 636 906,  
Tribal Health Initiative is a registered Public Charitable Trust No. 147/92 (Dindigul, TN). It is registered under Sections 12A and 80G of the IT Act and registered under FCRA to accept foreign donations.

*"It is better to light a candle than curse the darkness". I understood the full meaning of this after seeing the work here.*  
Shri Muthukumaraswamy IAS, Secretary for Tribal Affairs, Govt of Tamil Nadu

We would like you to visit us. For a detailed map please look up our website - [www.tribalhealth.org](http://www.tribalhealth.org)

### NEW FRONTIERS:

**TRIBAL TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE [TTI]:** Perceiving that steady livelihoods play a large part in the access to health THI has just started the TTI. Here tribal youth will have a course in multiple skills like welding, plumbing, carpentry, masonry etc.. This will help local free enterprise, so that they can set up shops in their villages or make themselves more valuable, should they choose to go to the city.

**KALRAYAN HILLS PROJECT:** Over the last 3 years , with better road access, we have noticed that a large number of tribal patients come from the nearby Kalrayan Hills. These hills are home to about 40,000 tribals who live in about 200 hamlets. Many of the villages do not have access to public transport and the health conditions are appalling. We have just started a health project there and an Out Patient facility. We plan to replicate our successful community health model which we have done in the valley. The key is that the most of the planning and implementation is being done by our tribal Staff themselves [95% of our Staff are local tribal youth], pursuing our aim of 'helping tribals heal themselves'

*"They are quietly improving the lives of thousands of neglected tribals"*  
says the cover feature, September 2001  
**Readers Digest**

- ☞ Pregnant mothers coming in for checkups have increased from 11% to 90 %
- ☞ Infant deaths have come down from 147 per1000 to 20 per1000
- ☞ No mothers now die in childbirth
- ☞ Proportion of malnourished children has come down by 70%
- ☞ About 80 farmers have formed an organic farming co-operative.
- ☞ Craft groups have revived Lambadi embroidery



*Tribal Hospital uses many environmental friendly concepts like stabilised mud blocks for buildings, solar lighting, biogas from hospital waste and reusing many things*

The **Tribal Health Initiative** is a registered Public Charitable Trust established in the small village of Sittilingi in Dharmapuri District, Tamil Nadu.

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## TRIBAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

*helping tribals heal themselves.....*

*Tribal  
Hospital*



*Community  
Health*



*Organic  
Farming*



*Reviving  
Craft*

When Drs. Regi and Lalitha first arrived in Sittilingi, one out of five babies died before their first birthdays, and it was all too common for women to die in childbirth. The nearest hospital was 48 kilometres away and to find one with surgical facilities meant a journey of over 100 kilometres. The area was remote and badly served by public transport. Few buses ran but simply getting to a bus could involve a walk across fields lasting several hours. Now, with a fully-functioning hospital, a model community health program, and many other programs, the **Tribal Health Initiative [THI]** has truly improved the lives of the many thousands living in the region.



*Tribal hospital is now 24 bedded with all primary care facilities. Health Workers manage most cases*

**TRIBAL HOSPITAL:** The hospital offers a wide-range of facilities, enabling the tribals to seek medical care closer to home. The hospital does more than 350 surgeries yearly and tubectomy sterilisations are done free of charge. The hospital also sees about 18000 out-patients every year and has about 1200 inpatient admissions yearly. As we acquire new equipment, we have been able to expand the services available in Sittilingi. Our current services include x-rays, ultrasounds, rapid HIV testing, a modern laboratory, labor room, emergency facilities, inpatient and outpatient care, and an operating theatre.

**COMMUNITY HEALTH:** For a few years now, there have been Health Auxiliaries in all 21 of the surrounding villages in the Sittilingi Valley. These women were selected by their villages to take on this role, and underwent intensive training on the **THI** campus. The Health Auxiliaries provide essential care in places where it is difficult for patients to travel to a health clinic regularly. They are with mothers as they give birth, recognize and treat simple ailments, and promote proper nutrition. Most importantly, they pay home visits to sick patients, and when the circumstances require it, they send patients to the hospital for more intensive care. Weekly field clinics by the health team augment their work. All of our field services are provided free of charge, including the distribution of basic medicines. The hospital also has two ambulances, which it dispatches for emergencies.

*Health Auxiliaries simplify health practices*



**TRIBAL FARMING INITIATIVE [TFI];** When the farmers of the Sittilingi valley and the surrounding hills started struggling, **THI** recognized a need. Thus, the **TFI** was born directly out of the community's requests for support with their primary source of income. Starting in 2004, **TFI** has formed Farmers Groups in the villages who look at soil and water conservation and the use of organic fertilisers and pesticides in an attempt to encourage tribal

farmers go back to their roots for a more peaceful co-existence with Nature. Experts visit to help and the farmers visit other organic farms to learn. There are about 150 farmers who are now growing organic crops and have formed a co-operative. Women groups now process about 25 products, which is sold under the name '**SVAD**' in various cities in South India. The process for getting organic certification is going on.

*email: [svad@tribalhealth.org](mailto:svad@tribalhealth.org)*



*Farmers learn from experts in field classrooms*

**TRIBAL CRAFT INITIATIVE [TCI]:** Lambadi Embroidery was a dying art, before **TCI** came along to save it. Only two women of the Lambadi tribe in this area still knew how to create the stitches and beautiful patterns that had been an essential aspect of their culture for generations.

With **THI's** facilitation, there are now more than 35 women earning a living by participating in this program. The women get fair wages, and can work from home instead of having to go out into the fields, allowing them flexibility for taking care of other household duties. They take great pride in keeping alive a tradition and earning their own income, giving them choices they never had before. The products embroidered by these women are sold under the name **Porgai**, meaning "pride," in the Lambadi dialect.

*email: [porgai@tribalhealth.org](mailto:porgai@tribalhealth.org)*

#### **HOW YOU CAN HELP ...**

**THI** receives very little Government support. Much of our hospital equipment has been donated or paid for with donations sent by well-wishers.

People receiving treatment at Sittilingi are charged a fee for services but these are heavily subsidised, particularly for tribal patients, the balance being met by donations from the general public.

This panel is a tear-of donation form which you can use to make a **gift** of your choice to us.

#### **FRIENDS OF SITTILINGI (FOS)**

From small beginnings, our network of supporters has grown over the years. Everybody who helps us by sending a donation or supporting our work is a being a friend to the patients who so badly need our help. So we call our network of supporters quite simply "**Friends of Sittilingi!**".

Friends receive our newsletter and annual report during the year. It keeps them in touch with what we are doing and serves as a constant reminder that without their support we would not be able to achieve as much as we do.

If you would be interested in becoming a **Friend of Sittilingi**, simply send a donation, of whatever you can afford. We will send you a receipt acknowledging your kind gift and ensure that you are kept up to date with latest developments in Sittilingi.



*Lambadi women have revived a dying tradition*