TRIBAL HEALTH INITIATIVE
Sittilingi, Dharmapuri Dist; Tamil Nadu 636 906

ANNUAL REPORT
2008 - 2009

Helping tribals heal themselves

Highlights

√ Infant mortality reduced to 20/1000
√ No mothers dying in childbirth [5th year]
√ Organic farmers society registered
√ Designer inputs for craft
√ More community certificates
√ Community Health work in Kalravan hills
Theerthan and Selvam sat down in the village common with others to explain the new developments. They had just been approached by SIMA [South India Mills Assn.] for the next year’s cotton crop. Both are office bearers of the newly registered SOFA [Sittilingi Organic Farmers Assn.], a registered society of organic farmers from the valley who are now applying for organic certification. They are a group of about 80 farmers from most of the villages in the valley who have now formed a co-operative. Finally after much thought, they agreed to the terms and at the end of the year sold all the organic cotton to SIMA at a premium, making a neat profit and also encouraging other farmers to turn organic. There are 15 farmer groups in the valley who are part of the collective, amongst them are 5 women’s entrepreneur groups, who have machines to value add to the organic produce, which is now sold under the brand name ‘SVAD’.

**Farmers Learn**

Other than forming a society, the farming initiative took confident steps forward. A number of workshops by experienced farmers as well as the Spices Board helped to build up their expertise. The women farmers groups bought new machines for millet processing. This helps the local consumption of millets too, which builds a healthier society. The Dadamapatty group has started making soap and selling locally. A preliminary mapping and survey of all the agricultural lands in the 21 villages was done as a prerequisite for scientific farming practices.

**Big strides in health**

The high point of the year was that we hit the lowest infant mortality ever – **20/1000 live births**, which is comparable to the best indices in India. This was undoubtably the achievement of our Health Auxiliaries and the Health Workers who now fully plan and implement the community health program in the valley. There have been no maternal deaths 5 years in a row now.

The new Out Patient block is of great use for the increasing number of patients. Due to many new projects being taken up, we have had to cut down on our inpatient work including surgeries. One disturbing trend was the increasing number of HIV cases being detected after the start of the new ICTC. More active work is planned on this.

**Effective community health has reduced infant mortality**

Find us on the Web

For recent news check out our blog [www.tribalhealthinitiative.wordpress.com](http://www.tribalhealthinitiative.wordpress.com)

Join the ‘Friends of Sittilingi’ groups in [Googlegroups](http://googlegroups.com) and also in [Facebook](http://facebook.com)
front to tackle this menace. The new batch of Health Worker trainees has completed a year of training and now are actively involved in the hospital work.

**Pushing the frontiers**

After some delay the new Project in the Kalrayan Hills got off to a flying start. This was also due to stable funding from BCF [Business & Community Foundation]. Initial scouting and selection of 30 villages were done. All the villages are part of Villipuram district and most have no bus connections, with tribals often having to walk 10 – 15 km to just get to the bus stop. Health conditions are deplorable, with none of the regular health programs reaching them. We have finished an initial survey of all the villages as well as had initial village meetings to discuss the future.

**Designers contribute**

There has been an increase in interest of villagers in the Porgai groups. An additional Government sponsored training has almost doubled the members. With increased design inputs from two different designers, the number and variety of products have increased. Sadly, we have yet to find good markets for the beautiful goods that the Porgai group is producing. We have made limited sales at Infosys and Mantri group exhibitions, so please contact us if you are interested in purchasing products or have any leads to help us.

*email: porgai@gmail.com*

**New livelihood options**

After many road blocks, NCRI [National Council for Rural Institutes] has agreed to support our efforts to train the tribals in trades that will help them to seek out a better livelihood. IIT, Chennai and many other friends are helping us to make the initial training sheds which will be completed soon.
Some tidbits

We are continuing our efforts for the Community Initiatives and have been able to get more community certificates for the tribal youth. A training building for the Porgai craft group is also being allotted by the Government. Loans for some groups have also been mobilised to help them better their income prospects.

Lalitha has been chosen as ‘Woman of the Year 2008’ by Vanitha, the largest read women’s magazine in the country. The award has a statuette as well a prize of Rs 1 lakh, which was put in our Corpus Fund.

Thank you

A lot of the good work done this year was due to the stable funding support we received from BCF, SKI, AID, TANSACS and FOS [India & UK]. MMKCT subsidises outside referrals and Cognizant Foundation has donated a new X-ray machine and a 4-wheel drive vehicle. We thank them not only for the financial support, but for other crucial inputs at the important times.

If we have been successful so far it is because of your continuing support. Thank you all.

To visit or contact us

TRIBAL HEALTH INITIATIVE
Sittilingi, Dharmapuri dist., Tamil Nadu 636 906
phone:: 04346-299061 / 299025;
email: office@tribalhealth.org; website: www.tribalhealth.org

This partnership between the Government and NGO is the best example of how communities can benefit

Smt. Supriya Sahu IAS; Project Director, TANSACS

Plans for next year

- Start training of Health Auxiliaries in the Kalrayan Hills
- Continue Base Hospital Work
- Increase farmers doing organic farming and inputs for livelihoods
- Find good markets for craft products
- Start Technology Initiative trainings
- More community certificates and respond to community needs

Our vision is that the people of Sittilingi valley and Kalrayan Hills lead a better quality of life

➢ To attain the highest possible level of holistic health.
➢ To enhance their socio-economic status while retaining their pride, self-respect and self-reliance and ensuring their active participation in programs meant for their welfare.
➢ To create an atmosphere highly conducive for the growth and development of local cultures and customs.

Registered Public Charitable Trust
No. 147/92, Dindigul,
Regd u/s 12A & 80G of the IT Act,
Regd under FCRA to accept Foreign Donations

BCF [Business and Community Foundation],
SKI [Skillshare International], AID [Assn. for India Development], FOS [Friends of Sittilingi], NCRI [National Council for Rural Institutes]
TANSACS [Tamil Nadu AIDS Control Society], ICTC [Integrated Counselling and Testing Center], IIT [Indian Institute of Technology], SIMA [South India Mills Assn], MMKCT [Manmohini Kaul Charitable Trust]
Friends of Sittilingi (FOS) are still our most dedicated supporters. We are grateful to the numerous people who help us and look forward to their continuing support. If you are not yet FOS, please join in to help the tribal community here.

What we can use your donation for

Health: For the ‘Distant Healer Fund’ which is used to subsidise patients bills.

Farming: For creating a revolving fund for advance purchase of farmers produce

Craft: For giving training to the Lambadi women.

Corpus: For creating a reserve fund for emergencies

YES, I want to help and be a part of the change in Sittilingi

(please tick)

☑ Rs ............... to improve Health for tribal families.
☑ Rs. ...............for promoting sustainable Farming in Sittilingi.
☑ Rs. ...............for training of Lambadi women in Craft.
☑ Rs.............. for any other purpose you see fit.

I am enclosing cheque/DD no........................... for Rs................drawn on......................

Signed
Address
email
Phone

Cheques/DD may be made in the head ‘TRIBAL HEALTH INITIATIVE’, payable at SBI, Kotapatty or ICICI Bank, Salem

Online donations from India can be made to
ICICI Bank Salem [ a/c no. 611901076914 IFS code ICIC0006119];
State Bank of India [a/c no 11689302723 IFS code SBIN0006244]

All donations benefit from Income tax exemption u/s 80G
INSIDE INFORMATION  As part of Credibility Alliance we follow transparency in work and accounts.

Board of Trustees
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Dr Lalitha Regi
Prof M Ravindran
Dr Sara Bhattacharji
Dr Indru Tupulur
Prof N Kamalamma
Dr Sukanya
Rangamani
Mr A. Arun

International Travel: Dr. Regi travelled to Canada and UK to attend a Global TB conference for Indigenous people. Trip cost was funded wholly by the host organisation.

Highest salary - Rs. 20000 [doctor]
Lowest salary - Rs. 2500 [fresh appointee]

Dr. Regi & Dr. Lalitha draw salaries as doctors in the hospital.

Team THI
2 Doctors                    13 Health Workers
5 Admin staff                  23 Health auxiliaries
3 Community Workers   6 Para-medical staff
1 Community Co-ordinator

Salaries break up

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Financial Details

FINANCIAL DETAILS

BALANCE SHEET

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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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| Hospital Income | 1782745 | 1866731 |
| Interest | 227505 | 225521 |
| Indian sources | 1520359 | 1469071 |
| Others | 44600 | 470022 |
| International sources | 2140451 | 1407493 |
| Shortage of Income over Expenses | 407012 | 269323 |
| Total | 6122672 | 5708160 |

EXpenditure

| Programme expenses | 3894226 | 2746712 |
| Meetings & Travel | 66243 | 40225 |
| Admin expenses | 172825 | 99026 |
| Communication | 45231 | 20913 |
| Hospital expenses | 1264204 | 2025564 |
| Depreciation | 679944 | 719358 |
| Excess of income over expenses | 0 | 56363 |
| Total | 6122672 | 5708160 |