We would like to share with you all the good things that happened this year. But before that –

**WISHING YOU ALL A WONDERFUL YEAR AHEAD.**

**Modernizing our services......**

The hospital was busy as ever. With the new TNHSP scheme and free treatment for tribals, we are seeing tribal patients even from villages far away. Being at the junction of four districts, the news has spread and there is very good utilization of the facilities. The normal deliveries have however dropped because of the scheme where the Government pays a substantial amount for anyone who delivers in the Primary Health Center. We are now more of a referral center for all the complications from there. Several new equipment has come in to help us give better care. The World Bank has donated us intravenous infusion pumps, pulse oximeters and maternal Dopplers. ATMA [American Tamil Medical Assn] has donated us a maternal and fetal monitor to help us make deliveries safer. Our FOS [Friends of Sittilingi] in Salem through the Lodge Montford once again came forward to donate the latest ultrasound scan machine with Doppler facilities. They also helped us revamp our whole power supply by donating large batteries and an inverter so that now the whole hospital can run on solar power – even the Xray! The IMA [Indian Medical Assn] in Athur gave us the costly suture materials for operations. We have an oxygen concentrator donated too, so that we never run out of this precious gas. Our clinical laboratory is now in a quality assessment program with CMC, Vellore. We have started a new batch of 5 Health Worker trainees.

**Rethinking priorities.....**

We are in a crucial stage with our community health program. We started off in an era where villages were inaccessible, the Government system never worked, people had very little knowledge about basic health practices and a soaring infant mortality. All these have changed over the years, mostly our team’s work and partly that the Government now has really started giving a good look at health care. But there are new threats to health with the increasing migration and the world at their feet through TV’s in every hut. To restructure our work, we have paused our Health Auxiliary and field clinic programs in the Sittilingi valley. The team is giving shape to a more community development model where health is but part of a larger plan for the future of the community.

**Getting down to basics**

The Kalrayan Hills program is surging ahead, though we had some set backs. Training got over by March, but of the 25 health Auxiliaries who started, we have only 14 left. Drop outs were due to many reasons – inability to grasp what is taught, roads getting washed away and so accessibility cut off and the proverbial migration due to poverty. But the field clinics in the 13 villages are going on like clockwork and have a very good attendance of expecting mothers and small children.
At Porgai, we do not have very good news. With some exhibitions falling through, our window for sales became much less, though our artisans are getting faster and better. We have newer patterns and designs, but are yet to find good retailers. Those of you who have contacts with fashion or retail – do try and help out.

The new project we are thinking of is the ‘Reviving traditional cattle ’ project. Ask any organic farmer whether he wants a milk cow or a traditional cow – zap comes the answer “naattu maadu, ayya” (traditional cow, sir). This is because even though the milk yield is less, the quality of the dung and urine far surpasses that of the cross-bred cows. This is what is most important for the organic farmer. Right now we are supported by the FOS [Friends of Sittilingi] and have collected money for one group which we will be giving soon.

U pwardly mobile – organically...

SOFAs, the farmers co-operative is now being expanded, with 50 more farmers joining. We are just a small step from complete certification. This has attracted much more farmers, as this year we were able to sell even the last gram of turmeric in bulk, to good buyers, who paid them a much better price than the market. As for SVAD, the demand is more than the supply, and because of the small team we are not able to expand, either the range of our organic products nor the quantity we could have sold. We are close to the Rs. 20 lakh mark in sales. 4 trainings were held as well as an exposure visit. Some have started using the cono weeder. Power sprays were given to 2 groups.

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P icking up steam....

On the engineering front, work has started earnestly. The local villagers are bringing in their repair work and a lot of manufacturing for the hospital is also being done. The team has expanded to 5 persons now. and they are keeping busy. We are planning to make and sell steel furniture soon.

A ccolades for the team...

Luck favored our team again. 2011 saw us get quite a few awards – THI got the Swami Vivekananda award (we were inspired by him and so it was a special honor) given by the Ramakrishna Mutt, New Delhi. Regi and Lalitha were selected as one of the ‘Real Heroes’ by CNN-IBN (a short show was on TV) for this year and Gandhigram honored us with the Dr. Tharian award for community development. Lalitha was also included in the Planning Commission Steering Committee for Health at the Center.

Thank you all for trusting us and being with us. Friends of Sittilingi and the Donor Partners are the pillars which support our endeavor. May the New Year bring fun and joy to and your dear ones.

Team THI

Connect to us online too...
Talk to us through office@tribalhealth.org
Update yourself at www.tribalhealth.org
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