



HAPPY NEW YEAR !!



Radha with her twin bundles of joy

Radha was worried. She was just 7 months into her pregnancy when the pains started. "This is going to be bad" she told her husband Mayilsamy, the scan says we have twins, which itself is complicated and now there are premature pains. The doctors in Tribal Hospital tried hard to stop the pains, but could not stop Nature's will. The twins were born 30 weeks old and weighed just 900 gms. "You will have to go to a good center if you have to save the babies", said Tha. Without money, and with little hope of saving them, they preferred to stay back. "Do what you can, the rest is upto God" was their choice. The babies were cared for 3 weeks at the Tribal Hospital. With one to one care, and Grace, they are 2 healthy babies now. Mayilsamy didn't have to bother about the costs and this expert care is now available at their doorstep under the TNHSP Government supported scheme.

Tribal Hospital has steadily been advancing in the quality of care given. Donations from friends have brought in many of the facilities available only at Salem [100km] away. This will soon include an gastroscope and new lab equipment, donated by Cognizant Foundation which will help in better patient care. This year we saw more than 27000 out patients. In-patients too have increased by 20% with the increased repertoire of major surgeries.

Up in the Kalrayan Hills, the Health Auxiliaries are now training to remove sutures and also take the BP. This means that all operated cases can have their sutures removed at their homes, and hypertensive patients can have their BP monitored locally. This BCF and AID supported program helps bring these skills to these remote villages, for whom public transport is still so far off.

Health Auxiliaries in the Kalrayans learn to take BP



Kullan [name changed] was often violent and unmanageable at home. He had a family history of mental illness and his wife and relatives found it difficult to

manage him at home. The nearest psychiatric care is in Salem, and getting him there in this condition was difficult.

The new Mental Health program supported by the Tata Trust helped to bring Dr. Anna Thariyan from CMC Vellore, who now trains our doctors and nurses in diagnosis and care of mental illness. This is followed up by Dr. Seetha every month. Kullan is now back to normal and helps in the farming work, much to the joy of his family.



Prenatal exercises for women in the field reduce difficult deliveries

The project also helps to train community health auxiliaries, which we restarted after a hiatus to rethink our new community

health strategy. We will soon be also starting the field clinics in the Sittilingi valley. This is combined with the Old Age Health insurance which Helpage now supports. This would mean that the 450 odd senior citizens will now get their care in the village itself, as this is a well utilized scheme.

Kasi, Mythili and Mala travelled far to realize their dream of becoming a 'nurse'. The BSS training program for Dip. Practical Nursing [DPN] is now ably managed by Prema. This will help these 3 tribal girls from the Jawadhi Hills [it takes 8 hours of bus travel to reach here], to go back after 2 years to help the CMC-Vellore field project there. The new paramedical training programs aim to give tribal girls a fair chance to enter the health care field. Health training has been our key strategy to ensure a healthy community and so 2 days of the week are kept exclusively for training women, young and old, in health.



Palanimuthu bought a local breed cow

Palanimuthu and 5 other organic farmers are the first to benefit from the 'Reviving Traditional Cattle' program. The cow is the cornerstone to any organic farmer and they have been provided soft loans to purchase them. SOFA [Sittilingi Organic Farmers Assn] has had a very good year, financially as well as in the increasing number of small farmers who are joining. Material inputs like cowshed floors, vermicompost tanks, biofertilisers supported by AID along with soft loans catalyze this movement. The rains have failed this year, but we are expecting that the organic farmers using traditional seeds and methods may not be as hard hit as the rest.

The new tailoring unit started with the help of AIICA aims at bringing gradually all Porgai production into the valley itself. This needs skill training and material inputs, some of which we manage. New designs and products have managed to keep sales alive, but the road forward is still long and difficult. The enthusiasm of the artisans and the quality of products keep us going. Skillshare supports this and the organic farming program.

The THI family grieves the death of Deivanai, one of our talented Health Workers, whom we lost to unfortunate circumstances. We are happy to have Ravi and Prema join back the Sittilingi family. Ravi, finished his PG in Rural Surgery and Prema is a highly qualified Nurse trainer. Along with Randal and Nikhil, this makes us 5 doctors, unimaginable a few years earlier. Murugan has left for another job but our core team still remains the same, which is THI's strength. The medical elective program has started again and we had students from diverse countries. We have also bought some more land to expand our future activities

This year brings many challenges. Building a new ward and a larger Operation Theatre is vital to accommodate the increasing number of patients. The Kalrayan work too needs a boost. The Technology Initiative has now matured to become independent from March with just a little support from THI.

All this was only possible with **YOUR** support which we cherish. Friends of Sittilingi [FOS] and our Donor Partners are the pillars hold us up.

Wishing that the New Year brings you much happiness and peace

Team THI

Design workshop in progress for Porgai artisans



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