



TRIBAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

NEWSLETTER - 2013

HAPPY NEW YEAR !!

The flamboyant colours of the shamiana seemed to reflect the colour and gaiety of the Sunday crowd. The new SOFA pickup brought the women group members, all carrying large pots of cooked food for the **'Millet Food Fest'**.

THI for a long time has recognized the need for increasing awareness regarding millets and their advantages in view of the rapidly deteriorating food habits among the residents of the Sittilingi Valley. The atmosphere was festive with the happy voices of the 400 strong audience and the shouts of children resounding across the playground. There were speeches, songs and dance - and most of all the delicious dishes which followed after it. This festival was to reinforce the fact that there is so much hidden talent and recipes in the valley that could make millets a preferred food for all and to celebrate its diversity.



*The new OT building coming up
donated by FOS [Friends of Sittilingi]*

The **Tribal Hospital** work is steadily increasing. The TNHSP scheme offering free care for the tribals thrive – this year 1046 benefitted for a total of Rs 44,33,385/-. The surgical workload too has increased with us doing about 600 surgeries of which more than 300 were major surgeries. Our Out Patients too crossed 29,000 and we had 335 deliveries. Cognizant Foundation helped in upgrading our Laboratory with state of the art equipment. They also helped us with a gastroscope and we have started endoscopy too. We also have a new in house incinerator, built according to WHO

specifications, for scientific biological waste disposal. This falls in line with THI's endeavor to provide top quality care to the tribals of 4 districts who access this hospital.

Health Worker training under Prema's leadership is gaining popularity. We have 7 new students from the Kalrayans and Sittilingi Valley. In the previous batch, all passed in flying colours. We also have started the certified training in Pharmacy and Laboratory.



Outreach work in the Sittilingi valley has started with zest - we now see mainly the elderly citizens and deliver health care at their doorstep. This has brought an increase in medicine compliance for mainly the chronic diseases like hypertension.

In the **Kalrayans**, there is a slight change in direction of the community health work. The TN Govts' outreach work has improved vastly, especially with regular antenatal checks and hospital deliveries. The team feels that we should shift our focus to areas which the Govt right now does not concentrate on. Thus we are planning a school health program and have already got consent from the concerned authorities.

For the **organic farmers of Sittilingi** it was an exciting year. Other than gaining confidence, they also made a good turnover of more than Rs 24 lakhs. Seeing these gains, enrollment for 100 more farmers is going on. The farmers negotiated a loan from NABARD for growing vegetables in the valley and also bought a new Mahindra Bolero pickup for quick transport. The traditional cattle project also is seeing good promise and so they have now got into a project for poultry, growing turkeys for consumption and sale. Four of the women farmers groups got loans of Rs 5 lakhs each from

the Government for entrepreneurship activities.

For **Porgai**, 2013 was a 'training' year. Lots of trainings for value building – tailoring, garment design workshops, product development etc. went all through the year.

We celebrated '**Hospital Day**' for the first time in 20 years. The evening was filled with song and dance and was followed by the usual 'biryani dinner! The senior Staff took a trip down memory lane and recounted the adversities they faced when they started 20 years back from a small mud and thatch hut and a team of just 4. This was followed by a team building 4 day workshop by Sr. Claire, where she helped us to find our weaknesses and strengths for our future dreams.



The Sittilingi group is now into millet biscuit making – all ingredients are organically grown in the valley itself.

We warmly **welcome** Dr. Pravin who joined recently. So have Ramraj [med records], Punitha [nurse] and Naveen who is part of the modernization of the lab. Durai has joined our community development work and Govindraj, as building supervisor. We bid farewell to Lalitha and Govindan, who were the mainstay for our Lab for a long time. Dr. Randall's perseverance got him a post graduate seat in PGI, Chandigarh.

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

TEAM THI

Tribal Health Initiative, Sittilingi
Dharmapuri, TN 636906 Ph : +91 9585799061

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