Kari Siddamma
A Highly Regarded Lifelong Social worker & Activist
Dedicated to Upliftment of the Irula Tribe & Unorganized labor And Promotion of Organic Farming

- ASHA supported projects since 2004 & ASHA fellow since 2005
- Created co-operatives, social programs & advocacy programs
- Works tirelessly to raise awareness about bonded labor
- Has freed 1000s of marginalized bonded laborers from rice mills & generational slavery since 2004
- Provides education to children, women & farmers through Bharathi Trust (Since 1990)
- Awarded Trafficking in Persons Hero-2006
Unorganized Labor Upliftment

A. **March 2020:** Director of Tamil Nadu medical and rural health services, for inviting to attend one day panel discussion on occupational health and safety of unorganized women workers. Discussed several issues that bonded laborers have - night blindness, bent back, liver issue. Currently conducting a survey of the health issues that rise as a result of the Irulas working condition

B. **Feb 2020:** Siddamma and Krishnammal Jagannathan addressing issues around Working women and land rights
Organic Farming

A. **March 2020**: Women’s day award recognized for efforts in Organic farming

B. **February 2020**: Local women farmers planting Jasmine rice at the organic farm

C. **February 2020**: Calf drinking from her Mother for the first time

D. **January 2020**: Educating the next Gen-R K pettai government school students on a field trip—Excited and Eager to learn the organic ways of farming
Organic Farming

A. **Aug 2019**: Rice plantation

B. **July 2019**: Approached by Surya’s foundation to see if they can help support any of the organic training that she conducts. Has not heard anything from them thereafter.
Irula-Rights and Integration

A. April 2020: COVID-19 - Siddamma distributing grains to the irulas in Keelapoongudi: Many of these people are not eligible to receive the compensation given by the government since they don’t have ration cards.
Irula-Rights and Integration

A. **Feb 2020**: Success of a Sarpam women leader- Ayyamma from paloor irula villages in Chengalpet district. 6 years of dedication and training resulting in basic rights and a permanent land (patta) for the community members.

B. **January 2020**: Siddamma was invited by irulas in Kadambattur village in Thiruvallur district. 30 families living in the space for ten families. Even though there's government land it is occupied by landlords and they don't want to provide dwelling land to these irulas. The live without electricity in darkness with no basic amenities.

C. **January 2020**: 32 Irula families live on a piece of agricultural land (Thamarai kuppam) for generations. They live here and use this land for cultivation of various crops. Recently, the govt proposed to bring high voltage power lines/towers on this piece of land. The Irulas were asked to stop cultivation and leave. Siddamma with other Sarpam leaders talked with the electricity board and have been able to stall this process.
A. Dec 2019: Irulas Leadership Meeting: Discussed joblessness. Also met with the tribal director and identified a piece of govt land to settle 200 Irula families in the area.

B. Nov 2019: The common complaint from the Irulas during my site visit was space. They were living in tiny one room houses with grandparents, parents, siblings and their family. Siddamma mentioned that she was able to obtain additional piece of land for families (from one of the 3 villages I visited as part of my site visit in Dec 2018).
Fellowship Disbursal (2020 - 2021)

- On March 23, 2020, I (Fellowship Steward) proposed increasing Siddamma’s monthly honorarium from Rs 25,000 to Rs 35,000. There were 6 “yes” votes

- For the time period of Apr 2020 thru Mar 2021, we will disburse Rupees 4,20,000.