

Update - 2021 September



Fellowship Siddamma

- 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



Kari Siddamma

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

Kari Siddamma

Geographical Spread

Tamil Nadu
Andhra Pradesh
Karnataka

Active Period

ASHA since 04
Over 30 years

People Serving

Irula Tribe

Women &
Children

Farmers

Laborers

Bigger Causes

Labor Rights

Women
Empowerment

Organic
Awareness

Irula Rights &
Integration

Irula
Empowerment

Need Based Efforts

Tsunami

Cyclones

COVID

Dispute
Resolution

Lifelong pursuit, Selfless, Committed, Overcomes (Personal & Societal) Hardships

Nivar Cyclone - November 2020

- A. Irula homes in low lying areas in cuddalore were flooded. Several union leaders got together to distribute tarpaulin and basic food for temporary relief.



COVID 19 Disaster Relief

- A. Support provided by ASHA Austin in two separate disbursals.
- B. **1st disbursal** - Rs 3,61,900 for 1034 families
- C. **2nd disbursal** - Rs 4 Lakh for 1,000 families



Irula Meeting in Pondicherry

- A. **August 2021: Sarpam Sangam Inaugurated under Pondicherry Trade Union.** Sarpam members now be able to represent the Irulas and their issues.

Irula-Rights and Integration

- A. **Chengelpet District** - Sanctioned to build 41 permanent homes. Many homes in this area are constantly flooded. The homes will be built on a raised level to prevent this from happening. Construction to begin in 2021.
- B. **Remote Irula Village** - Sirunai in Uthukottai: Siddamma contacted an organization named “Inner Wheel” which provided relief for 26 Irula families - set up small shops (fancy stores) for some of the families to work/start a business there.
- C. **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) and housing for the community members.



Irula-Rights and Integration

- A. **Bonded Laborers** : 800 Families released from bonded labor were rehabilitated on a piece of land. False allegations by the locals against Irulas. Sarpam leaders provided relevant documentation to the Local Police and District Collector. The locals have been warned by the police to not create trouble
- B. Also the people in this area have brought up several issues in a recent meeting with Siddamma, the primary one being education. Students have not been going to local govt schools due to lockdown and are lagging behind in curriculum. Siddamma is talking with Shanti from the ASHA Seattle chapter to build a small tuition center for this village.



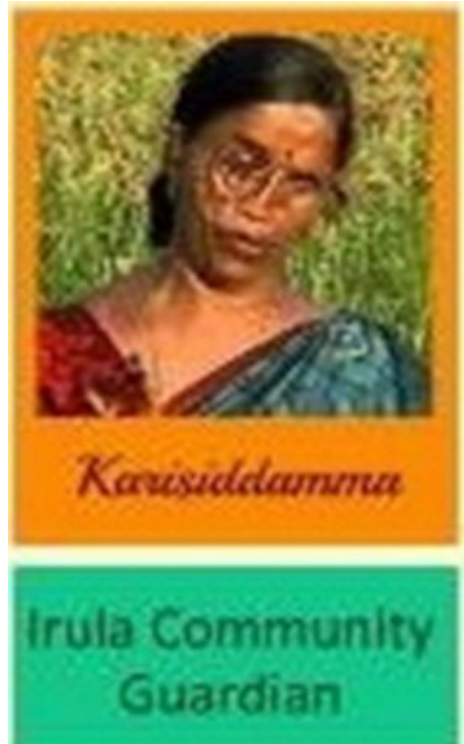
Resource Center/Farm

- A. **COVID** - Could not grow too many crops due to the lack of availability of workers
- B. **Cyclone** - A lot of trees have been uprooted at the farm due to heavy rains and cyclone. Cow shed and vermi-compost shed were destroyed.
- C. Spent Rs 2 Lakhs in repairs
- D. Managed to introduced traditional variety of rice named Black Gowni and Mapillai Samba. Seeds distributed to local farmers.



Inspiring Women Achiever Award 2020

A. Awarded Woman Achiever Award for her work with the Irulas in March 2021.



Irula Community
Guardian

Future Plans

- A. Group Housing - Goal is to train the Irula women to become masons to build their own homes and in the process build better homes for the community
- B. Increase allocation of funds from Rs 3 Lakhs to 6 Lakhs for a 300 square foot house
- C. Sarpam leaders will be working with the local education board to make sure kids go back to school
- D. Schools close to some of the Irula villages to be run part time with the provision of food
- E. Education stipends are only provided to 10 and 12th graders. Proposing that stipend be provided to younger age kids to prevent child labor.
- F. New schemes for farmers - Govt to procure rice from farmers without any middleman.

Need/Issues

- A. Siddamma's car is 15 plus years old and cannot be driven anymore. She is currently without a car and finding it hard to travel to local villages. She requested ASHA for help to purchase a new car.
- B. A brand new Jeep costs anywhere from 10 - 12 lakhs. Sowmya is seeking help (for the car) from other Chapters (Seattle and Detroit) that work with Siddamma indirectly. **Waiting to hear from ASHA Seattle.**

Fellowship Disbursal (2021 - 2022)

- For the time period of Apr 2021 through March 2022, we will disburse Rupees 4,20,000.

Time to VOTE

- Quorum
Yes - 6
Abstain - 0

