

Update - July 2019



Fellowship Siddamma

- ASHA supported projects since 2004 & ASHA fellow since 2015
- 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 lifelong social worker & activist  
Who works for the  
**Upliftment of the Irula Tribes**

## Who are IRULAS?

- Irula scheduled caste tribe of over 25,000 spread across Tamil Nadu and Kerala
- Primary occupation include catching snakes & rats, fishing and as laborers
- Mostly unrecognized by the Indian government & Panchayats
- Heavily affected by 2004 Tsunami, recent floods, exploitative labor laws and landlords
- Endemic child labor & domestic alcohol abuse



## Organic Farm (June)

- Recognized by Aval Vikatan for efforts in organic farming
- Picture shows preparing land for Paddy farming with help from other farmers
- Frequent visitors to the farm for organic farming training. 10 of 120 farmers have opted to get into organic farming seriously.
- Training in Soil bio diversity



## Inter Caste Marriage

- First inter-caste marriage between Irula and upper caste in all of Siddamma's career with the irulas.
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## **Cuddalore District**

- Completed flood rehabilitation/move in Cuddalore
- Large village created by Siddamma
- About 3,000 families moved to Khillie district
- Women leaders standing in upcoming panchayat elections

## **Kanchipuram District**

- 85 villages and 2,000 children
- Families of migrant workers who frequently move for occupation
- 2,000 children dropping out/not going to school since families are on the move
- Previously, Asha Star had helped form a school
- Siddamma indicated interest in wanting to form a similar school where the kids could stay in the school and continue to learn when parents are on the move

# Irula Survey

- The Tribal Commissioner in Delhi had requested that a survey be conducted with information about the number of families, kids and the number of people who have pattas. This survey report was submitted to the Commissioner in early 2019. It was found that the budget allocated for the Irulas was not being properly utilized by the ST Director.
- The Commissioner talked with the Tribal Director in Tamil Nadu to ensure he was not being the bottleneck for the funds
- The Tribal Director has now issued free loans for buying goats/animals and for housing to 300 families

# Budget Proposal

- Budget Proposal: Disburse Rs. 25,000 per month/Rs. 3 lakhs for Aug 1, 2019 through July 31, 2020