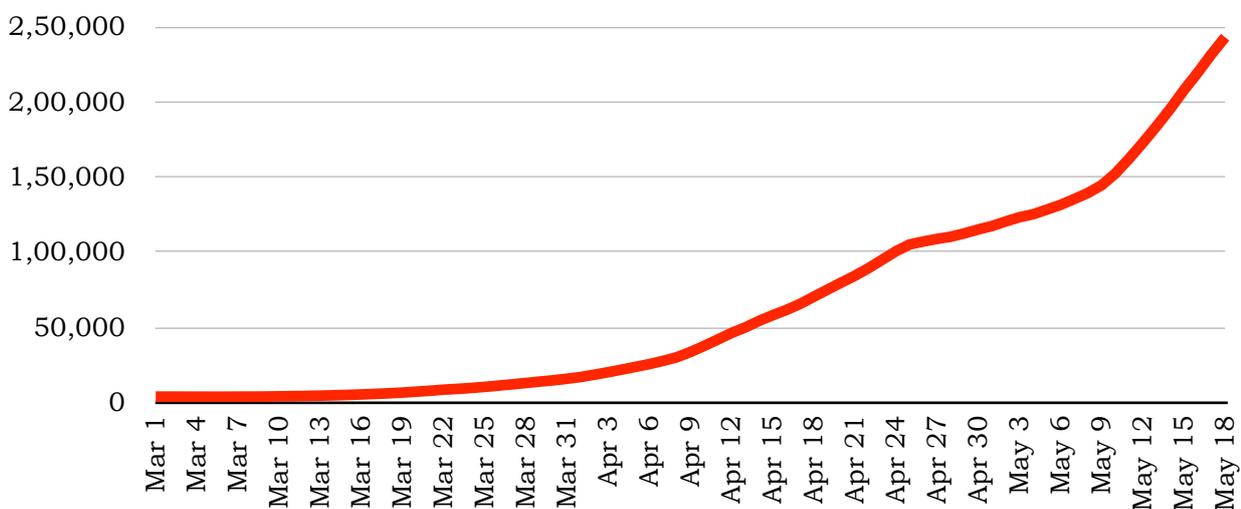


COVID-19 and Thulir

The impact of the first wave of COVID-19 in 2020 was largely on the economic and social front in Sittlingi. People lost their livelihoods due to disruptions through lock-downs, lack of supply chain for their produce, and uncertainty in the economy. The School was closed for most of the year as per Government Orders. There was no clarity until early January 2021 on how and when the schools can be reopened. Just when the Government was allowing schools to reopen, the second wave affected the state.

Impact of Second Wave - Active COVID Cases in TN



This resulted in closure of Thulir and disruptions on the economic front. The Valley (cluster of 25 villages around Sittlingi village) did not witness any deaths during the first wave as well as the second wave till end-April. The valley is also ably supported by Tribal Health Initiative (THI), a 35-bed rural hospital equipped with dedicated doctors and health workers, located in Sittlingi village. The precautions exercised by THI in building awareness about COVID ensured better healthcare in the valley. In the first wave, few were suspected of COVID and quickly isolated and taken care of. Testing was difficult as the nearest testing was the district head quarters in Dharmapuri, located about 80 kms from Sittlingi. After reports of first death in early May, the doctors in THI were quickly alerted and got into action. Since the spread in Second wave is more intense, they have set up care at two levels - Level 1 for mild symptoms and level 2 for moderate symptoms. Thulir is also actively involved in supporting THI in this initiative. All the medical treatment for COVID will be offered free of cost.

As a part of the comprehensive project, Thulir will be taking up the care of patients with mild symptoms. The cost estimates per patient is as follows:

Expenditure Head*	Amount per person (₹)
Lab tests (1000 x 2)	2,000
Medicines	1,000
Oxygen (300/day x 5 days)	1,500
Other expenses - Food, nursing charges, PPE Kits, hygiene kits, Doctor visits, (Rs. 500/day x 5 days)	2,500
Total	7,000

** Given the nature of the pandemic, it is difficult to estimate the amount as well as the nature of expenditure accurately. Any change in the expenditure head would be discussed with the project steward.*

There is also support from the local Government that could be tapped in caring for the patients. Currently, they project to support about 150 patients over the next month or so.

Thulir is planning to support about 54 patients, which require a **budget of ₹378,000.**

Other Plans in the community

The panchayat team under the able leadership of Panchayat President, Ms. Madheswari and her husband, Mr. Manjunathan, (also parents of Student from Thulir) have been on a massive and extensive awareness drive in all the villages the last week.

Since it is clear that the hospital cannot cater to all the affected COVID patients, less serious covid patients are advised to isolate at their homes in the villages and take care. Helplines have been started and the Thulir team is volunteering on the helpline guiding, supporting, and counselling home isolated people more than once a day.

Isolation Centres and Community Kitchens at 3 villages

Most tribal families have one room houses and large joint families. It is impossible for a COVID patient to self-isolate there. The Panchayat has plans to start isolation centres in the villages where fever patients can stay and be

monitored. Food will have to be provided for the affected families. Teachers of Thulir are helping in the liaising work between villagers and authorities.

Other costs

After crossing this storm, there are other areas where the community need to be supported support for eg. in livelihoods, some seed money for starting farming, Decentralised learning centres and dedicated teachers running it etc.