



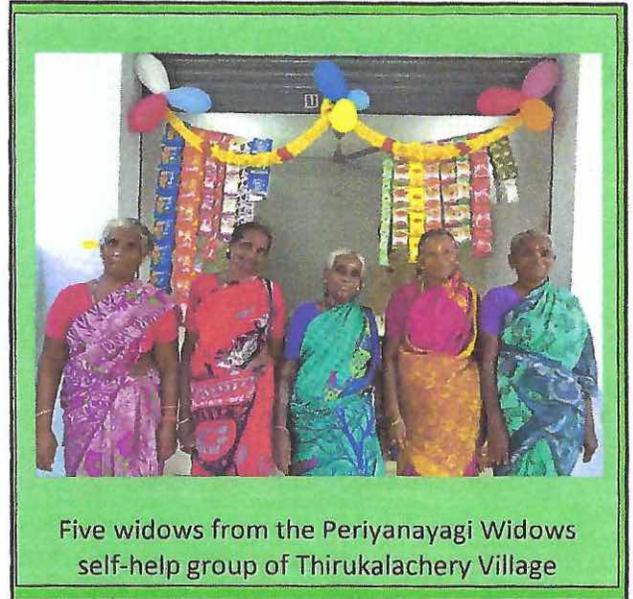
## Friends of Kalangarai

*Our Mission: To raise awareness and support for women of Kalangarai to realize their abilities and worth to sustain their livelihoods.*

December 2022

### **Establishing New Asset-Building Enterprises**

Several years ago, five widows from one of Kalangarai's self-help groups used a loan of Rs.35,000 (US\$424) from Kalangarai to establish a successful collective farming enterprise. After repaying the whole amount of the loan and earning a profit shared among themselves, the women came forward with a plan to establish a grocery shop and lease 4 acres of land for farming including a village fish pond. Since agriculture and fishing are only seasonal work, the grocery shop would add to their assets during the off-season. Another loan from Kalangarai has helped to advance their dream of a grocery shop by buying groceries, building shelves, and other renovations. **These empowered women are a shining example to other rural, illiterate, low-caste, elderly widows who are striving every day to attain their rights to sustainable livelihoods and self-dignity.**



Five widows from the Periyamayagi Widows self-help group of Thirukalachery Village

### **Developing the First State Social Welfare Board for Widowed and Vulnerable Women**

After more than 10 years of advocacy on the part of Kalangarai and the Widows Federation (of which Kalangarai is the coordinating body), the state of Tamil Nadu has created a Widows Welfare Board that will focus on widows and vulnerable women, defined as those who identify as tribal, invalid, or physically challenged. This board is composed of Indian government officials such as the Secretary of the Social Welfare Department, a Parliament member, a member of the Tamil Nadu State legislative assembly, directors of the state welfare boards, other departments and an NGO representative who is working for widows. The board will meet 3-4 times per year and is budgeted Rs. 100 million (US\$1.2M) to support the welfare of women and Rs. 6.1 million (USD\$73k) for administration. This is remarkable, as Tamil Nadu is the first state in India to have a Widows Welfare Board, and there is funding to support its activities.

### **October Wine Event Fundraiser**

We were beyond delighted with the turn out of supporters at the Wine Tasting...many of whom had not known much about us until the event. It was a stunning fall afternoon with soft jazz, delicious wines and very tasty charcuterie. The sense of community with a purpose of support for those who need the help was electric. We look forward to more events to include as many ongoing supporters as well as newcomers. We thank you all from the bottom of our hearts.



### **Gift of Warli Paintings**

Friends of Kalangarai received a gift of 13 Warli paintings from board member, Professor Gokul Mandayam. Warli painting is a type of traditional folk-art style of painting by the tribal people from the area of Maharashtra (outside of Mumbai). The Warli tribe has carried on this practice of painting as far back as 2500-3000 BCE. The paintings use a set of basic geometric shapes: circle, triangle and square to symbolize elements of the physical environment, animals, and people. Each painting tells a story of village life, e.g., special occasions, weddings, or harvests.

Friends of Kalangarai is looking for a venue to exhibit these paintings. Please contact us ([kalangari.friends@gmail.com](mailto:kalangari.friends@gmail.com)) with any ideas of places to host an exhibit.

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warli\\_painting](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warli_painting)

### **Welcome New Board Member: Professor Praveen Kumar**

The Board is excited to welcome Dr. Praveen Kumar who is an assistant professor at the School of Social Work, Boston College. Dr. Kumar's research and teaching aligns with the mission of Friends of Kalangarai. His research intersects the two areas of the physical environment and development with the focus on poor communities in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Examples of his research projects include the adoption and sustained use of cleaner cooking fuels in rural India and the impact of dissemination of solar lamps on the well-being of poor households in India.

### **Interested in working in Women and Development?**

There are many different ways to contribute to the mission of Friends of Kalangarai: helping with a fund-raising event, joining the board of directors, assisting with marketing, grant writing, or accounting, to name a few. We also offer internships to students in social work, non-profit management, or other related professions. Contact Karen at [kalangarai.friends@gmail.com](mailto:kalangarai.friends@gmail.com) for more information on the many opportunities.

*Friends of Kalangarai is a U.S.A. non-profit that supports the programs of Kalangarai through fund-raising, education, and research. We are a 501(c)3 charitable organization.*

*To learn more about the programs and/or make a donation, visit*

*[www.kalangarai-india.org](http://www.kalangarai-india.org)*

*For questions/comments, email: [kalangarai.friends@gmail.com](mailto:kalangarai.friends@gmail.com)*



Gokul Mandayam, Deepa Bhalerao, and a student.

### **Board of Directors**

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