

# Tiger Widows Organisation

## Annual Report

### May 2016-April 2017



[www.tigerwidows.org](http://www.tigerwidows.org)

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#### **Working in Sundarbans Community, West Bengal, India**

##### **Background Setting**

Sundarbans is located about 10 hours journey south of Kolkata by car, train, boat, rickshaw and bicycle! It is a beautiful place with active fishing communities. There are many islands in Sundarbans, the boundaries of which are protected by sea walls which are constructed of locally made bricks and mud. The local communities survive mainly on fishing and agriculture. There are grain banks for emergencies in times where the sea breaches the sea walls due to storms in the Bay of Bengal. The Bengal Tigers live in the nearby mangrove forest swamp areas. Many family members are forced to go to dangerous forest areas in search of food, firewood and other resources. Sinead Fox visited the area in 2001 and saw first hand the poverty trap in which many of the families exist. Joining Self-Help Groups can lead to a better life for many of these families and we are delighted to be involved to facilitate the relief of poverty.

## **Our Vision**

Our vision is to facilitate these communities to ease off their reliance on fishing and entering the dangerous mangrove forest areas. We *target* the poorest of the poor in Sundarbans and include them in our projects for Self-Help-Groups, micro-finance savings, training and skills enhancement and family start-up income-generating development.

## **Membership**

We are a voluntary non-for-profit organisation, based in Ireland. We raise funds in Ireland and invest it in the communities of Sundarbans. We have three Directors who carry out fundraising activities in Ireland.

## **In India**

Our local partner organisation Digambarpur Angikar carry out all the projects in Sundarbans. We are delighted with their progress over the years and we encourage them to continue their great work in Sundarbans which includes children's projects, education and nutrition, health and sanitation, women's empowerment and anti-trafficking awareness. Visit their website to find out more: [www.angikar.org](http://www.angikar.org)

## **Legal Status**

We are a Registered Charity in Ireland No. 20053161 and our Revenue No. is 15425. We report annually to the Irish Charities Regulator.

## **Goals**

We aim to support and facilitate the community of Sundarbans through the formation of Women's Self-Help-Groups. We achieve this through micro-finance linkages, training and funding for family start-up income-generating projects.

## **Verification**

There are many groups working as non-governmental organisations in Kolkata and the region. We verify the work of our partner Digambarpur Angikar annually through the links and people that we know. They visit the project areas on our behalf and validate the work and the accounts/ spending of our resources locally.

## Activities in the reporting period 2016-2017

### Report on achievement of the project during 2016-17 from our local partner Digambarpur Angikar



Funds transferred from Tiger Widows Organisation Ireland to Digambarpur Angikar India

€3850 = Rs.281255

#### **Self-Help Group Formation meetings**

The oriented tribal women have been mobilised and promoted into 20 self help groups. All members are provided with information materials, how to run the groups, selection of group leaders, thrift savings within the groups, opening of bank account etc. 28 trained members get bank loans through the self help groups.

#### **Seed money for goatery and piggery**

200 trained tribal women have been provided with seed money for purchasing goats and pigs at subsidised rate from the block.

#### **Women's Empowerment: Capacity building of various village institutions**

Tribal women are not aware of panchayati raj institutions and its function, self help group and its purpose and function. So capacity building training of 300 tribal women and tiger widows have been organised and make them sensitised about the village institutions. This

has imbibed the target women groups with thinking ability equipping with information and knowledge and all participants unanimously decided to take part in the panchayati raj system and form self help groups of their own.

### **Capacity building**

As per local government rule there is provision for contesting panchayat election at least 30% women. The elected tribal women and men in panchayats have little concept to run panchayat office as most of them are not qualified to run such office. Leaders of mainstream community took this opportunity and guide the elected tribal men and women in wrong direction. So we have organised the capacity building training of 40 elected tribal women and women leaders on the functioning of panchayati raj institution and their role.

### **Coordination meeting with block GP Level**

Tribal women leaders are to meet with block and GP officials for their needs. The traditional tribal culture of isolation make them more vulnerable and oppressed. So coordination meetings with officials of block and GPs have been organised involving tribal women leaders for strengthening project initiatives.