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Carbon Clear Showcase Project: TIST India, Tamil Nadu

Since 1999, The International Small Group & Tree Planting Program (TIST) has helped Small Groups of subsistence farmers in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and India to reverse the devastating effects of deforestation, drought and famine. TIST provides a communication and administrative structure that addresses education, health (including HIV/AIDS) and nutrition needs for its members.

Carbon Clear supports TIST's activities in India as we believe that they meet our guidelines for efficiency, additionality and long-term benefit to society. We particularly like the TIST approach because it works on a holistic socio-economic level, with greenhouse gas credits seen as an enabler for other social benefits, rather than an end in itself. Since 2002 the Small Groups organised and funded by TIST have planted over 500,000 trees in India alone.

Shakthi Small Group joined TIST in Tamil Nadu in June 2003 with four male and four female members. With the farming and Small Group management training that they have received from TIST, their Group has since planted 1,051 trees in their two to three acres of land. These include 340 neem, 531 teak and 37 drumstick trees, as well as various sapota, pala, mango and guava trees.



The trees that Small Groups plant often have a wide variety of nutritional, medicinal and agricultural uses. For example the seeds of the drumstick trees (*moringa oleifera*) contain a potent antibiotic and fungicide effective against particular skin-infecting bacteria. The flowers provide a cold remedy. The gum is used for asthma and the oil for scurvy and as an

excellent cooking or lubricating oil. The roots and bark are used for inflammation, cardiac and circulatory problems. Its leaves are edible and a good source of protein, vitamins A, B and C, calcium, iron, and amino acids. The bark fibre is used to make small ropes and mats, the wood is used as a blue dye, the leaves make an excellent fertilizer and a suspension of the ground seed can be used to clarify water.

Shakthi Small Group has invested their entire last tree planting income in erecting fences to protect their tree groves from cattle, overhauling their bore-hole well motor and improving the quality of their soil, to help create a more sustainable farming environment.

Prior to joining TIST, the members of **Sindhukavi Small Group** of Chitoor village found that the barren land and low rainfall failed to support even quick growing crops. Since joining TIST in April 2004, the group has planted nearly 15,000 trees and received enough in tree payments to feed themselves as well as invest in other income creating activities. Mr. Sundaram, for example, has used his TIST money as capital for a small business in household electrical repairs.

Through TIST Mr. Sundaram and other members have transformed their land, crop yields, food security, income and standard of living. Through this programme they have climbed the first rung of the ladder out of poverty.



Transforming the landscape: The photos represent the situation before and after TIST planting in fields near Chitoor village.