

Life restored through Livelihood Assistance

Thirty two year old Shanthi is a young widow from Thirumullaivasal village in the Nagapattinam district of India. She lost her husband to AIDs in 2007 and is a person living with HIV/AIDs herself. Since her husband had earned the only income in the family previous to his death, she and her daughter were left without any income. Shanthi moved to her sister's house for help and support.

As is frequently the case, however, she was ostracized by the community and family members due to her HIV status. Stigma and discrimination made Shanthi's life unbearable.

Shanthi characterized her life and prospects for the future to PCI Counselors as devoid of hope. The PCI team began regular visits to Shanthi and her family, offering emotional support and encouragement, helping them to understand the situation of many people living with HIV and to provide them with new, positive perspectives about the possibilities for an improved quality of life and productivity. Counseling and follow up sessions helped Shanthi to relieve her emotional suffering, which increased her confidence and gave her and her daughter comfort.



PCI assessed Shanthi and her household's needs. Based on that assessment, the PCI team facilitated her getting a grant of Rs.10000/- (\$ 40) through the TAHDCO¹ program. She utilized these funds to purchase a milk cow, which created a source of income for Shanthi and her daughter. Within six months Shanthi started earning Rs.1800 /- (\$ 36) per month. Shanthi describes the impact of her ability to earn and contribute a livelihood to her family as life changing, and says she feels more confident and happy to be the head of her household.

"I now live a life for my only daughter and I am very grateful to PCI for uplifting my family by all means, and especially for assisting her to receive a TAHDCO grant", she says.