

Proposal: Master student to work on agriculture (permaculture) in India

Fields to work on:

Together with our gardener Nilu Murmu the student is invited to work in the tribal area of Birbhum District (West Bengal, India) in selected Santal villages with the aim to introduce permaculture principles in the existing agricultural activities. Aggravating heat in summer season (May/April) combined with insecure rainfalls (from July lasting till September) cause the need to work more and more closely related with nature in a resilient systematic approach. Santal families mainly live from cultivating rice (on own, or leased land, or as daily labourers) – in the homes we have started to grow vegetable gardens to better nourish the children and other family members – 52 percent of children aged 6-36 months are chronically undernourished and 94% suffer from anaemia. The student to join our team may observe and analyse the current way of agricultural activities with the aim to develop and introduce steps to improve the quality of soil (in the kitchen gardens and potentially also rice fields), protect lands from erosion, harvest and store scarce rain water, produce natural pest controls – with trainings on topics as mulching, composting, soil qualities, and further permaculture topics. The overall aim is to improve the quality of the soil, increase yields, and nourish this way these poor tribal families well while protecting biodiversity at the same time.

Cooperating partner:

Shining Eyes

Dr. med. Monika Golembiewski is initiator of this development work, working in India since 1994. The charitable society "*Shining Eyes – medizinische Hilfe für Kinder und sozioökonomische Dorfentwicklung in Indien e.V.*", registered at Germany, guides this development work.

Shining Eyes has built up a Health Care Centre at Bolpur, which provides medical aid free of cost especially for the poor Adivasi children and mothers residing in the rural area of Birbhum District. Related are 12 tribal villages, where health workers have been trained to guide preventive programmes in cooperation with our social worker, with a focus on nutrition and agriculture. Our gardener Nilu Murmu knows the healing plants well and knows to cultivate and prepare them and will be with the student to guide the analytic and practical work.

For more information, visit: www.shiningeyes.de/ www.shiningeyesindia.in

Location of the project:

In the rural area of Birbhum District, West Bengal India – about 12km from Bolpur/Santiniketan.

Housing:

May be provided in the hospital (guest rooms with toilet are available at the roof level) or in a nearby rented room. From Makarampur, Bolpur, it takes 20-30 minutes by bicycle to reach the villages.

Duration of the stay:

Preferably 5-8 weeks – as per the possibilities of the student and host organizations.

Contact for interested students:

Dr. rer. soc. Silvia Golembiewski (silvia.golembiewski@gmail.com)

Vice president Shining Eyes Germany

Impressions – village life and project activities:



Rice cultivation



harvesting



paddy



Kitchen gardens with vegetables



Nilu Murmu, gardener



Healing plant preparation



St. Mary's hospital at Bolpur



Health worker team



Village checkup Dr. Monika Golembiewski



Village life...

