



BE! FUND THE BUSINESS OF CREATING HEROES

Radhakrishna, 22 years
Kolar, Karnataka (Rural)



Radhakrishna knew the biggest problem where he lived was that farmers could not get to market. The middlemen did not come here and it was too expensive for the farmers to hire people to harvest crops from their fields. RK heard about the Be! Fund on TV and called us with his simple idea: "I want to buy a secondhand truck to take 1,000 farmers to market." Radhakrishna learned how to drive, made it through the selection process and he has been operating his business for six months. RK has made a return out of profits and has helped 50 farmers get to market, raised the village economy and become a local role model. Next, RK wants to start a seed bank because farmers have to travel 20km away to buy seeds.

Radhakrishna's Farm transport Business

Muniraju, 28 years
Bangalore, Karnataka (Rural)



Muniraju's Plastic Recycling Business

While he was working delivering parcels for FEDEX, Muniraju noticed that the world was littered with plastic. He did more research and realised that no one was recycling plastic within 20 square kilometres of where he lived: it was a business opportunity to clean up his community and generate a sustainable business. He applied for a space to begin and was given a factory under an entrepreneurship scheme of the Government of Karnataka. But as the space was not in his name, he could not get the bank loan he needed to begin. So when Muniraju heard the Be! Radio series, he called us. Muniraju has started a plastic bottle recycling business where he makes the bottles into reusable plastic chips. He has recycled 20 tons of plastic waste in the first quarter, collected waste from 200 households, and 10 bars, restaurants and hospitals. Muniraju's business employs seven people, five of whom are women who were earlier unemployed - they use their income to send their children to school and pay for their healthcare. Muniraju has made his first repayment from profits and his story has been covered in Mint.



Rajesh lives in Bangalore and he noticed that his city was fast becoming gray, rather than green: all of the new buildings are built on what was once green grass, trees, fields. Rajesh knows he can't beat the buildings, so he decided to plant farms on their roofs. He has set up five urban farms that give his customers rooftop gardens and organic vegetables that halve their monthly vegetable purchases in the market. As rain-water harvesting has become mandatory in the city - Rajesh is also designing two new farms with in-built rain-water harvesting systems.

Shankar's Garment Business

Shankar, 29 years

Bangalore, Karnataka(Urban)

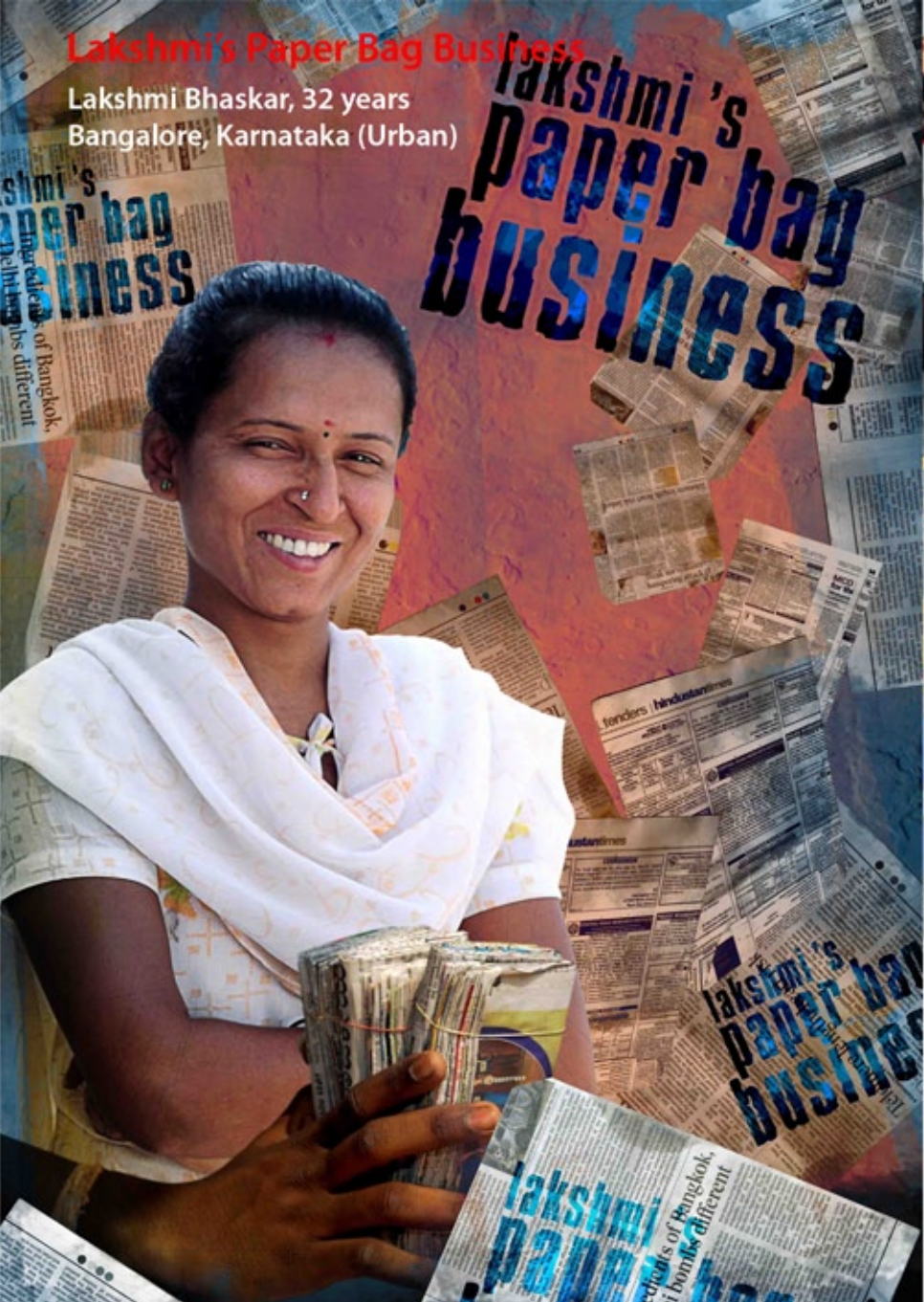
Shankar's DESIGN WORKS



Shankar has always worked in the garment business making clothes for export, but he always felt discriminated against because of his disability: he and his colleagues who were also disabled, were paid on average 50% less than the other employees. Shankar felt if they could just have an accessible factory, they could produce just as much and be paid the same rate. Shankar heard about Be! Fund on TV, he made it through the selection process and today has his own business making clothes, in a factory space he designed himself, a space accessible to all. Shankar has four employees who are disabled and he pays them the correct salary. Shankar is earning good margins and is set to make his first repayment.

Lakshmi's Paper Bag Business

Lakshmi Bhaskar, 32 years
Bangalore, Karnataka (Urban)



Lakshmi had been making paper bags from recycled newspaper for six years when the Government of Karnataka imposed a ban on plastic bags and suddenly the demand for her bags increased. Lakshmi's husband is a driver and heard about Be! Fund on the radio, he told her she must apply. Lakshmi made it through the selection process and received an investment to scale-up her business to meet the increased demand. She has created jobs for 10 women from the nearby slum and the good news is that production from the first month has substituted 35,000 non-biodegradable plastic bags.



Jayanthi's Candle Business
Jayanthi, 35 years
Bangalore, Karnataka (Urban)



Jayanthi lives in a resettled slum colony where women travel far to work - most of them are housemaids, but then again, many women remain unemployed because its too far to travel to work, there's no transport and there are no jobs locally. At the same time Jayanthi's slum faces frequent power cuts - and so there is no light, which means it's hard to work at night or for children to study. Jayanthi has started a candle business to fill the energy gap and create jobs for women, she has created three jobs for women so far and plans to create more. She also recycles burned out candle wax from churches to make new candles. Jayanthi has sold 4,000 candles in her community in two months, her candles are priced at 25-50% less than the market price of RS 2-4 for each candle.

ARCHANA'S GREEN-WARES

BE!FUND

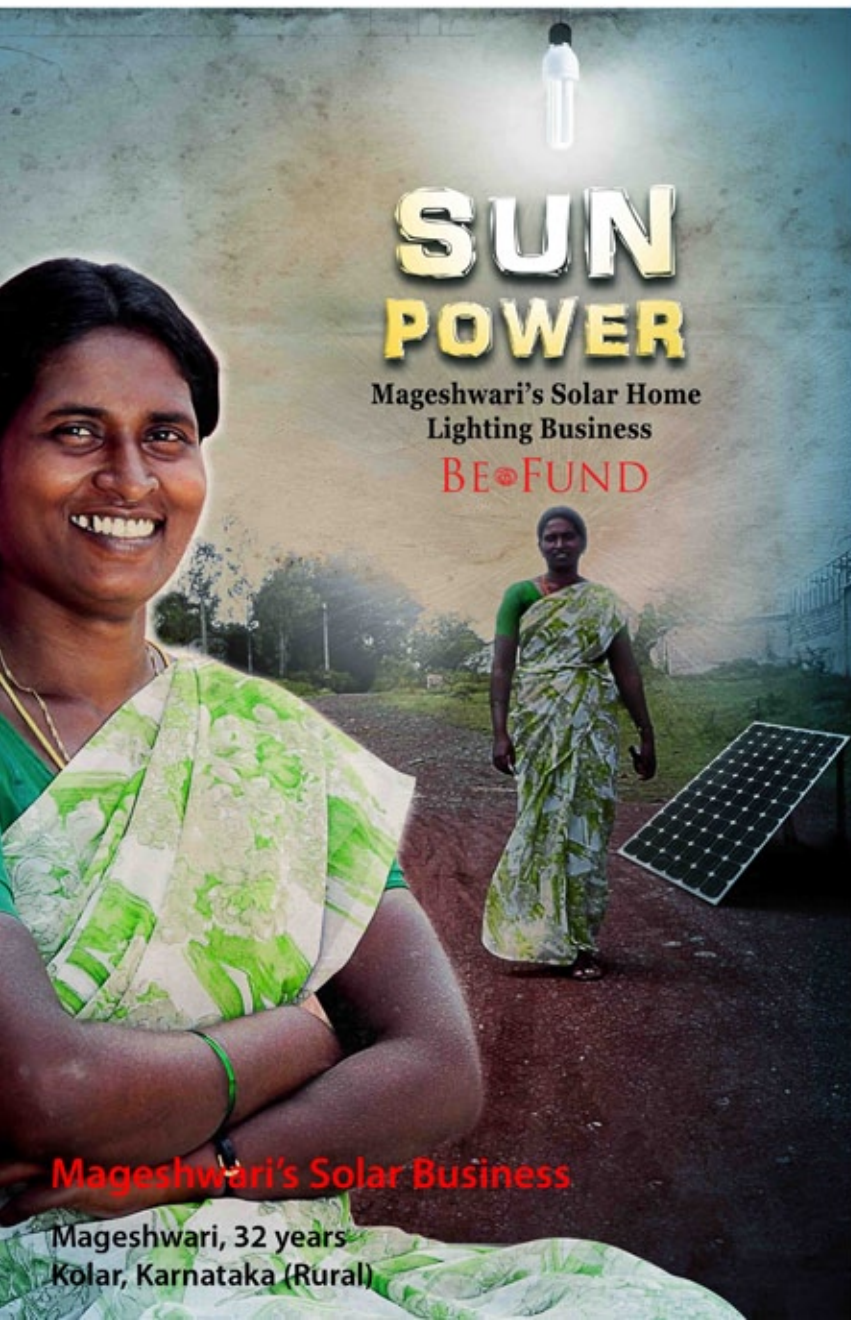


Archana, 30 years
Sirsi, Karnataka (Rural)

Archana's Recycling Business



Archana lives in a village in Sirsi, Karnataka famous for Areca nut trees. In Archana's village, women only work part of the year and they are not paid the market rate for the work they do in the fields. At the same time, there are lots of Areca nut trees, but their giant leaves were just left to rot. Archana started a business to recycle waste Areca leaves into plates and bowls, these bio-degradable products replace plastic plates that are often used at weddings and in every day use. There is also a large export market to France and the USA. In this small village of 14 households where there were no other opportunities for women, Archana has created four jobs for women. 20 small Areca farmers have also benefitted from this business - as she pays them for the leaves and in the first two months she has sold 35,000 plates and bowls. Archana is on target for Be! Fund making an exit in 12 months.



SUN POWER

Mageshwari's Solar Home
Lighting Business
BE•FUND

Mageshwari's Solar Business

Mageshwari, 32 years
Kolar, Karnataka (Rural)

er chil
ere is
of Kol
ing sol
as sold
s, and
ained



Mageshwari wanted her children and all the children in her village to be able to study at night, but there is limited power supply in the abandoned mines of Kolar Gold Fields where she lives. Mageshwari started making solar switches to allow households to have light on or off of the grid - when they were off of the grid four CFL bulbs and a charger would light four rooms for four hours. Mageshwari learned how to make the switches from her husband - but he has a job in the city - so Mageshwari was always been making them in a small way where she lived. She saw the Be! Fund movie and called us - it was time to expand, she already had more orders than she could fulfill, she wanted to hire more people, create more jobs, have more impact. In one month, Mageshwari has sold 37 solar sets from inverters, UPS and lanterns to reading lamps in her village. She has also trained and employs two women in her business and is making a profit.



Deepika Dubey, 25 years
Basti, Uttar Pradesh (Rural)

Deepika's Garment Business



Deepika lives in a remote village in Uttar Pradesh, a traditional community where women are not allowed to go out to work. Deepika, who used to work as a relationship manager in a bank in Mumbai, was disturbed by the status of women and lack of work opportunities in her village. Deepika saw the Be! Movies on STAR UTSAV and called us. She's decided to start a garment unit to create six jobs for women, once they are employed, she believes because of their new income, their status at home will be improved. While the business is not innovative, there is a huge demand for shirts in the town 12km away - as strangely, most shirts are still sourced from Delhi, over 200km away. Deepika has talked to local shops - they like the idea that they will be able to get more shirts, faster, and in styles they like. Deepika is also creating four jobs for men.



Manoj Negi, 29 years
Rudraprayag, Uttarakhand (Rural)

Manoj's Eco-tourism-Business



Manoj lives in the Himalayas, in the state of Uttarakhand - and while the location is beautiful, there is no work for young people. Young men here either work as labor or migrate to the cities. Manoj also moved to Delhi and he knows first hand that life is not brilliant in the city. He learned a lot in Delhi, talked to a lot of travel agents and tour operators - he decided to move home to see if he could make his camping site work. Manoj wants to start an eco-tourism resort near Chopta - his resort will create permanent jobs for four young men to begin with. Five to ten men will be seasonally employed every year. The resort will use solar panels and recycle its waste. Local artisans will also set up a stall at the resort - and Manoj has been leased the land from his local panchayat at RS 4,000/year. Manoj says people who are not from here get loans to bring in their tourism businesses, he tried to get a loan but because the land is not in his name, he could not get it. He's excited to begin this summer and already has tourists committed to come stay.



Damayanthi's Health Centre Business

Gowramma, 28 years
Bangalore, Karnataka (Urban)



Damayanthi is a nurse, she's ANM and FNA qualified. Damayanthi first called us when she was living in a slum in Bangalore - she'd heard the radio show and had an idea of a business she wanted to start, there were no healthcare facilities where she lived, so she wanted to start a doctor and hospital referral centre. Suddenly, she received news that she was being moved to another slum by the Slum Development Authorities, so she thought her business was no longer needed. Then, four months later in her new community, she found that it was. Now there were 10,000 people without healthcare, an open sewer and polluted ground water which meant that children were getting sick. Damayanthi knew she could help them. Damayanthi wants to set up a nursing and referral centre. The Slum board has agreed to provide her space in the community centre - once she has the necessary health clearances, she's excited to begin.

Gowamma's Nutritional Supplement Business



Gowamma, 28 years
Bangalore, Karnataka (Urban)



Gowamma's husband has HIV and so she knows how important it is to keep your immune system healthy. There's a nutritional supplement of grains available in the market - but it's too expensive for people from low-income groups. Gowamma learned how to make a similar supplement and will provide it at one third of the cost to 800 people every month, she will employ one HIV positive woman in her business. Gowamma's nutritional supplement would also work for children who are malnourished and she is working on expanding to other markets.



Kavitha's Roti Business



Kavitha lives in a village in the Koppal district of Karnataka, she belongs to a lower caste (Dalit) community. This area has a large population belonging to backward castes - and women often resort to prostitution. Kavitha wants to create job opportunities for women by starting a business making Jowar Rotis (a staple bread). She will create six jobs for women, all of whom are currently unemployed, and are from a marginalized Dalit or Devdasi community. Jowar rotis are in high demand in her area and she's already talked to a lot of restaurants about supplying them - many of these restaurants are owned by high caste business people and if Kavitha is successful, she may change the caste dynamics of doing business in her community.

Kavitha, 25 years
Kopal, Karnataka (Rural)



Kiran's Tractor Utilities Business

Kiran, 23 years
Chikkaballapura, Karnatka (Rural)



Kiran lives in a village in Karnataka where more than 80% of the farmers have small land holdings, they do not own farm equipment such as a thresher, tractor plough or tube well lifter and manual labor is also scarce, as most people have gone to the city in search of work. Currently farmers rely on the town centre for all facilities that is 12km away. Kiran's family lost their land last year in a family dispute - but they do have a broken tractor. Kiran wants to fix the tractor and buy the thresher, and pump lifter, and help farmers where he lives. Kiran will help 800 farmers whose pumps break down at least twice a year, and they won't have to go to the town to get their pumps fixed or thresh their crops. Kiran's pump-lifting service will ensure uninterrupted water supply for irrigation. Kiran will be setting an example for other young people in farming communities - there are opportunities, you just have to see them.



Krishnaveni's Biogas Business

Krishnaveni, 27 years
Bangalore, Karnataka (Urban)



Krishnaveni is from Sumangali Sevashrama slum in Bangalore. When she was in school she learned about biogas in her textbook - ever since then she wanted to see if she could make it work. But biogas was a rural fuel, rather than an urban enterprise. Still, as Krishnaveni grew older she became more and more concerned by the waste in her slum. She thought there must be a way to make biogas work in an urban area and so she did her research. She went house to house to see if people would give her their kitchen waste, she made a deal with an NGO where she can set up her wet-waste to biogas conversion units and most importantly, she found the unit that would work from a local professor. Krishnaveni's first unit will be set up for a NGO and it will recycle 50 Kg of wet waste from 50 households and the NGO canteen, she will produce 6 Kg biogas and 50 Kg of slurry every day which will be used by farmers in the fields - and once she proves one system works, she wants to set biogas plants up for businesses across Bangalore.



Mallaiah's Rural Laboratory Business

Mallaiah, 32 years
Chikkaballapura, Karnataka (Rural)



Mallaiah is a qualified lab technician and works in a hospital in Chikkaballapur district in Karnataka. Patients from as far as 25 Km away visit their laboratory due to the lack of facilities in rural areas. Mallaiah knew this was a problem - you won't get a test if you have to travel 25km. What if he were to set up a business right in the middle of where people needed it the most? Mallaiah wants to open a rural pathological laboratory that will provide access to medical testing facilities to residents of 10 villages and benefit 15,000 people.