Together we change lives

Social Start-up
Fellowship Programme 2018

 Everybody has the capacity to be remarkable...
Alluvial Agro is committed towards the vision of safe and healthy food for all. Our mission is to bring tribal and marginalised farmers into the mainstream economy and provide them with a better livelihood.

We have re-introduced ancient farming techniques with the help of new technology, training farmers in creating their own organic fertilisers, reducing their input cost by up to 60%. We also conduct farm planning and provide them with market linkages, from which they are now able to earn up to 25% more revenue.

Over time, the use of safe fertiliser will increase the quality of food produced. We currently supply the B2B market with a range of 17 organic and naturally-grown products, from pulses to spices.

With these activities, we strive to create impact on the health outcomes of consumers; improve the yield and quality of agricultural land; and improve the livelihood of tribal and marginalised farmers through more employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.

THE STORY: I come from Vidharbha, the most drought-prone area of Maharashtra. Since childhood, I have witnessed the tragic situation of farmers committing suicide because of their distress at not being able to provide financially for their families, earning around $2/day. Alongside this, my father—despite exercising daily and being very fit—suffered a heart attack. It struck a chord that there must be some issue with the food we eat. Investigation showed that the two problems were interconnected.

Because of the excessive use of fertilizer to grow crops, the soil quality has degraded while input costs increase yearly. As a result, the soil became increasingly infertile while diminishing crops’ nutritional value—resulting in many health problems for consumers. Farmers would take higher loans and come under the crippling pressure of debt repayment—using suicide as a way out.

I founded Alluvial Agro to tackle this two-fold problem with an integrated solution: teach sustainable agriculture practices to farmers & produce naturally grown food for the consumer market.

THE ASK: Alluvial Agro aims to raise equity funding of Rs. 60 lakhs, which will be utilised to set up two packaging and grading units; expand back-office team to strengthen operations & marketing; and get international organic certifications for farmers.

THE TEAM

Bhavesh Wankhade, Founder & CEO: Rich experience in the agricultural sector; Master’s in Social Entrepreneurship from Tata Institute of Social Sciences.

Sahil Wankhade, Co-founder & COO: 3rd year engineering student.

Pallavi Kandalkar, Co-founder: IT engineer with diverse work experience.
We are on a mission to impact 1 million lives by 2030. We at TRF engage in building resilient communities through emergency preparedness programmes. Using experiential learning, our workshops cover topics such as first aid, emergency rescue techniques, CPR, evacuation, and many other areas of disaster management.

Our priority focus is enabling youth, aged 13 to 21, to become more resilient, rather than vulnerable, in critical times. We also offer training programmes to hospitals, corporates, residential societies, and security agencies, in addition to schools. We also offer disaster management planning for the creation of safe workplaces and preventing potential crises.

TRF’s goal is that participants can act as first responders and even save lives in the time of crisis. Our learning modules enable them to make quick decisions and build their capacity to handle crisis situations. As a result, we are contributing towards creating sustainable cities (SDG 11) and economic improvement by saving resources through the prevention and mitigation of crises.

THE STORY: In 2005, I met with an accident and injured my spine. I could not move or breathe, and everyone thought I was dead—but, my sister acted as a first responder and saved my life by admitting me into the hospital. After recovery, I registered myself in Civil Defense, and got trained in first aid, firefighting & general disaster management. Another life-defining moment occurred when I was able to save many lives after a train accident—for which I was awarded by the President in 2012.

I discovered that disaster is one area in which people are not adequately sensitised, thus increasing the vulnerability of the population during times of crisis. Globally, 1.3 million die in road accidents yearly; 31 million die due to cardiac arrest & stroke; and 39,000 lives are lost to fire. We can save more than 60% of these lives just by acting as first responders to these crises. This prompted me to start The Resilient Foundation (TRF), a space of compassion in which the community could practice empathy for each other and build the resilience to handle crises that occur in daily life.

THE ASK: We require a grant of Rs. 56,12,000 to conduct disaster management programmes for 100 government schools in Palghar, including research and development of learning curriculum; capacity building of trainers; and impact assessment at the end of intervention.

THE RESILIENT FOUNDATION
A step towards nation building
Bhupendra Mishra

ABOUT THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE
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BUSINESS MODEL & MARKET
- We are mainstreaming disaster management by offering relevant and approachable content to diverse participants. Our learning modules are designed with both rural and urban contexts in mind, and can be further customised to suit community needs. To keep learning alive and further enhance skills, we have established a community centre in Palghar where we provide free training programmes to participants and TRF volunteers so that they can serve effectively when needed.
- Programmes range from one, two, or three-day durations to three-month extensive training, based on need and budget.
- Till date, we have delivered more than 200 training programmes to colleges, corporates, and government institutes, such as the Fire Brigade. We conducted a pilot for 60 secondary school students in 2015 and delivered 15 sessions on disaster management training. After this, one student, Sahil, admitted a road accident victim in hospital, and another, Yogita, saved her community from a potentially disastrous fire.
- In Palghar, Maharashtra, there are approximately 3000 schools, among which 100 schools are interested in conducting safety programmes (for a total of 5000+ students).

THE TEAM
- Bhupendra Mishra, Founder: Certified Disaster Management Instructor; awardee of Indira Gandhi National Award by President of India; Gandhi Fellow and former consultant at Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation, Govt of India.
- Ravi Jaiswal, Co-founder: Development Management from ISDM, MSW from Nirmala Niketan.
We envision a criminal justice system that treats incarcerated youth with empathy & understanding, and we are on a mission to reduce the rate of recidivism. With this in mind, we have developed products & services with the goal of enhancing inmates’ educational competencies, holistically.

The ‘Second Chance Learning Kit’ consists of a specially-created curriculum & learning tools, inspired by real-life incidents of inmates. Our teaching methods are developed to enable them to learn core life and values-based skills, through practical applications about crime and their actions. This will be delivered within a secure and supportive learning environment that encourages inmates to reflect, rethink, and develop the knowledge & skills to handle issues and conflicts in a socially responsible manner. Our aim is to empower inmates to make choices that keep them from committing crimes.

The STORY: It all started with my curiosity to see what was on the other side of the walls of Tihar Jail. Like any other female, I had my own stereotypes and inhibitions about inmates. I started conducting classes for these inmates in an all-male prison, and over time, I began referring to them as ‘my students’.

Through research, we chanced upon 2 key discoveries. One is that 65% of the inmates are school dropouts; the other is that the percentage of repeat crimes (recidivism) amongst persons arrested in Delhi in 2016 was 17.1—a high rate. It was clear that the current system of reform did not satisfy the learning needs of inmates.

Our experience and findings led us to create a contextually-appropriate learning curriculum that emphasises literacy, life and citizenship skills, and social attitude towards crime.

THE ASK: We are looking for investment of Rs. 4,20,000 for creating 600 training kits, to assist in producing 600 trainers who will work with incarcerated youth.

SECOND CHANCE
Reforming the lives of prison inmates
Eleena George

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BUSINESS MODEL & MARKET

- Since the majority of inmates are school dropouts, their interest in any mainstream study material is dismal. The ‘Second Chance Learning Kit’ has been developed with inmates at the centre, and contains a 30-day curriculum with learning material such as comics; flash cards with stories of reformed prisoners; a board game designed to build math skills and learn about ‘consent’; and a Hindi alphabet chart using words common to inmates.

- These kits will be sold to prisons, juvenile homes, state governments, and civil society organisations working on prison reformation. While these will reach existing inmates, we also see a great need for crime prevention by reaching out to high-risk youth. To this end, we see another emerging market in educational institutions situated in communities where the crime rates are significantly high.

- We have recently completed a small-scale pilot for 150 inmates in Tihar Jail with inspiring results. As many of them were involved in creating materials for the products, we noticed a significant improvement in their behaviour and interactions. Few inmates have gained employment within the premises as they had acquired basic literacy skills during the process.

THE TEAM

- Eleena George, Founder: Eleena is a graduate of Delhi University and holds a Masters from Ambedkar University. She finds creative ways to discuss and learn about social issues with peers and students, and has conducted workshops on gender sensitisation with children and youth.

- Tabish Bilal, Mohit Raj & Saanchi Marwaha are part of the core team, along with Anit & Vishal, who are currently inmates that contribute significantly towards content development.
With the vision of healthy & chemical-free food for all, we are on a mission to create an alternate agri value chain by promoting Zero Budget Nature Farming among women-led farmer’s groups. Aikya Organics helps these women farmers in food processing and provides them with a market space in which they can grow, consume, and trade chemical-free food.

As a seed to fork company, our key activities include training farmers in organic methods; organising them into SHGs & installing seed and tool banks; and organising them into Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs). Next, we install processing and packaging units under FPO, owned and operated by the women farmers themselves. Finally, we market and sell a range of 30+ packaged organic products under the ‘Dhaanika’ brand via a B2C model and to bulk buyers nationwide.

To date, we have impacted 6000 lives among our farmers’ networks and aim to impact more than 20,000 in the next 3 years. With 90% of families being small landowners (<2 acres), our interventions have led to a 50-60% decrease in farming input costs; 20-25% higher price realisation on crop sales; and upto 60% price realisation in the agri value chain by value-added activities through the FPO at the village level.

**About the Social Enterprise**

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**Business Model & Market**

- Our agriculture experts train farmers in creating agri inputs using local resources. We also help them to plan their crops based on seasonality, local environment, land availability, and market demand. Further storage, production, processing, and packaging units are set up under FPOs. 100% of the value captured at this stage is returned to farmers through entrepreneurship and job opportunities within these units.

- The distributed structure makes us a capital-light organisation, with no machinery or working capital requirements. The shorter value chain also makes it viable for us to sell organic produce at a very competitive price, e.g. our organic mustard oil is sold at Rs.150/ltr while our closest competitor sells it at Rs. 250/ltr.

- With our current NGO partner Shramik Bharti, we have successfully transitioned 1200 women farmers into organic farming and have installed more than 50 seed banks in 97 villages from 6 districts of UP. Through our 2 registered FPOs, these women farmers are aggregating, processing, and packaging the products in the Dhaanika range.

- Clocking a turnover of Rs. 3350 Cr in 2016, the organic produce market in India is expected to triple by 2020. In the last 6 months, we have observed more than 500% growth in B2B and B2C sales. With our farmer base (4000 by 2021) we are targeting revenues of Rs 50 Cr in the next 5 years.

**The Team**

- **Jitendra Yadav, Founder & CEO:** PGDM from IIM Lucknow; BTech in Computer Science; heads sales, organisational development, strategy & planning, and new product & programme design.

- **Ravindra Dwivedi, Co-founder & COO:** MCom & Master’s in Social Work; 15+ years experience; responsible for community mobilisation, FPOs & production tracking.

- **Rana Singh, Co-founder & Agri Expert:** MSc in Agriculture; 15+ years of sectoral experience; looks after training in organic farming & community development.

**The Ask:** We aim to raise Rs. 50 lakhs through equity/debt financing. We will use this to strengthen back-end operations and B2B/B2C sales teams; and marketing our brand, Dhaanika, in Kanpur & Lucknow.

**Key Facts:**

- **Project Location:** UP
- **Year Founded:** 2018
- **Sector:** Agriculture
- **Legal Structure:** Private Ltd
- **Investment:** Rs 50 lakhs
- **Type(s) of Funds:** Equity; Debt
The main issue with rice straw is that it has no economical or nutritional value due to its high silica content. It can be converted into fuel, but the price fetched often fails to compensate for the high collection and transportation costs.

Kriya Labs has developed a process to convert rice straw into pulp, which can then be turned into high quality and marketable products, such as tableware, paper, cardboard, and bioethanol. Our strategy is to assign a real commercial value to this agro-residue by developing suitable technologies and creating market opportunities for this by-product. Our patented technology uses innovative green solvents to extract the cellulosic pulp and byproducts. The main advantage of our pulping process is that it is economical to operate at a smaller scale, unlike traditional pulping technology which is viable only at large scales.

At present, we are focused on using the pulp produced as a raw material for plastic-free, biodegradable tableware. This is a growing market as the demand for such products is increasing, due to plastic bans and increasing health awareness.

The processing units using our technology can be set up by local entrepreneurs, NGOs, or Government, thereby creating local employment opportunities. A unit capable of producing 2 tons per day is sufficient to tackle the residue generated by 400 acres every harvest season. In addition, the pulp produced has a lower volume as compared to agro-residue, driving down transportation costs. Kriya Labs will then buy back the pulp from these units, channeling them to the tableware manufacturers.

As a result, farmers will increase their revenue from selling this agri-waste, which is an excellent incentive to drive its collection locally and reduce the burning of this potentially valuable resource. By decentralising the process plants, we will be able to efficiently transform the 20 million tons of rice straw Punjab produces every year. The volume of resulting pulp produced is equivalent to the pulp from 4 lakh trees, thereby preserving natural resources. From this, around 2 million pieces of biodegradable tableware can be produced, kicking out the harmful plastic-coated ones that are dumped in landfills.

We are currently incubated at IIT Delhi, and have raised approximately 40 lakhs through grants and soft loans. We have also constructed a demo unit at IIT Delhi through which we are improving our technology and conducting market validation studies.

**THE STORY:** Every year during winter, the National Capital Region of India is no less than a gas chamber. Air quality index can go up to a catastrophic 1000, the equivalent of smoking 50 cigarettes a day. No wonder it leaves citizens with burning eyes and severe respiratory infections.

One of the reasons behind this hazardous situation is due to farmers in Punjab and Haryana burning rice straw in open fields after harvesting. Around 12 million tons of stubble is burnt annually, releasing voluminous amount of ash and gases.

We believe that this agro residue is a valuable resource for our economy, but it is currently being wasted because of no market opportunities and a high cost of collection. Farmers are left with no option but to destroy it by burning—losing out on potential revenue and creating many more health and environmental problems.

**THE TEAM**

- **Ankur Kumar, CEO:** B.Tech in Engineering Physics from IIT Delhi; takes care of external collaborations & investment opportunities.
- **Kanika Prajapat, CTO:** B.Tech. in Textile Technology from IIT Delhi; leads technology & product development.
- **Pracheer Dutta, COO:** B.Tech. in Textile Technology from IIT Delhi; responsible for operations & finance.
Panchkosha is a handcrafted, natural, and earth-friendly body care product line. The word ‘panchkosha’ itself refers to the five elements of nature; likewise, we create all our products using pure, indigenous resources which are responsibly sourced.

Our line, derived from natural and organic ingredients, currently carries cold-pressed soap, shampoo, body butter, lip balm, and hair oil.

Priority emphasis is also placed on packaging these in a biodegradable and environmentally friendly manner.

We aim to inspire people to make a lifestyle change by opting for natural alternatives.

THE STORY: I had always been conscious about living a low-waste lifestyle, but my journey took a turning point when a waste management company refused to take my empty cosmetic packaging for recycling. Curious to know why, I found out that only 12% of the plastic packaging of cosmetics is recycled. This is because of specific shapes and designs of the packaging. The rest ends up in landfills, making up almost half of the trash stored there. On the other hand, 98% of cosmetic, body care products which we get in the market are harmful for our bodies and the environment.

There were few to no options for cosmetics packaged in biodegradable material, so I went a step further and began experimenting with making my own body care products. This marked the birth of Panchkosha, and its natural body care zero-waste product range.

THE ASK: We intend to raise Rs. 20 lakhs via equity/debt financing for R&D, product development; marketing; operations; skill-training of women; and events such as the Sustainable Talk Series.

KEY FACTS:

- Project Location: Chandigarh & Panchkula
- Year Founded: 2018
- Sector: Personal Care, Environment
- Legal Structure: Private Ltd
- Investment: ₹20 lakhs
- Type(s) of Funds: Equity/Debt

ABOUT THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

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BUSINESS MODEL & MARKET

- We aspire to create impact in a variety of ways: better health for consumers by using chemical-free, nourishing body care products; improved livelihood for women and families from employment; and a cleaner and safer earth by reducing plastic waste.
- Our activities include developing natural and earth-friendly body care products by employing women from low-income communities, e.g. SHGs.
- Our product packaging is made from agri-waste such as stubble, coconut shells, and watergrass. In the short term, we also plan to conduct a sustainable lifestyle talk series to increase awareness about sustainable lifestyle.
- Through our pilot, we have conducted significant market research and have served three institutional and 60 individual customers in the past three months.

THE TEAM

- Kashish Aggarwal, Co-founder & CEO: Rich experience in development sector with organisations like Teach For India. Responsible for operations, business development, and marketing.
- Pramila Jindal, Co-founder & Director: M.Sc in Botany from Punjab University with experience of 25+ years in the education sector. Currently handles quality control and product development.
With a goal to enhance farmers’ commercial success and future economic security, I started my enterprise, Vishvaksenah, to provide a comprehensive range of support services to farmers in Bihar. We work with farmers in the flood and drought-affected regions of Bihar by promoting the cultivation of medicinal and aromatic plants, because of these crops’ inherent capacity to deal with floods, droughts, and animal menace. We provide a complete ecosystem to farmers for cultivation of these crops, along with technical, agronomic, marketing, and business training.

We aspire to create impact for farmers—landless, tribal, and those operating at various scales—by increasing their income and enabling them to utilise agricultural wasteland effectively.

THE STORY: I have spent several years of my life in other parts of the country for my university education and corporate jobs. In these states, like Karnataka, Punjab, and Delhi, I witnessed a large number of people from Bihar migrating there for petty jobs & small business opportunities, leaving behind their agriculture land to turn into wasteland.

I was repeatedly told that they were unable to manage the problems of frequent floods, periodic droughts, and persistent attacks by animals. This results in the loss of agriculture produce, reducing the major share of farmers’ incomes. Farmers in Bihar face a lack of access to high-quality agricultural inputs, quality seeds, improved farming techniques & processing capabilities to enable better market outreach. Further, resilience among these farmers is poor due to their lack of awareness of better agricultural practices.

THE ASK: We are seeking investment/debt financing of Rs. 50,50,000 to establish a processing plant; set up a retail store; fund operational expenditure; and conduct research and marketing activities.

VISHVAKSENAH AGRO & DAIRY
Growing with Values

Krishna Gopal Singh

ABOUT THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE
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• We aspire to create impact for farmers—landless, tribal, and those operating at various scales—by increasing their income and enabling them to utilise agricultural wasteland effectively.

BUSINESS MODEL & MARKET
• In every cluster, we are establishing Kisan Haat centres where farmers can access the know-how, agriculture inputs, better seeds, and consulting services. Currently, our Kisan Haat centres help more than 200 farmers and cover over 500 acres of agriculture land in each cluster.
• Kisaan Haat processing plants have been installed with a (distillation unit) capacity to process 1000 kg produce per day. This has enabled the farmers to create an additional income of ₹50,000 per family per annum.
• With the establishment of a processing facility within each cluster, farmers can produce high-end value primary products for the industry.
• We organise the secondary processing of the medicinal and aromatic crops and market the end-product directly to buyers, generating maximum returns for farmers.
• We plan to utilise the surplus generated from our processing facilities towards creating community assets and further enhancing the agricultural production in the cluster.

THE TEAM
• Krishna Gopal Singh, Founder: Master’s in social entrepreneurship; 5+ years experience with grassroots organisations and rural development initiatives.
Our main motto is to effectively use under-utilised resources to create sustainable livelihoods. We at Happy Farm Foundation are working towards the socio-economic development of tribals through Integrated Dairy Farming to produce quality and unadulterated milk and ghee. We aim to increase the revenue of tribal farmers through the proper utilisation of existing animal resources for dairy farming, and for creating alternative employment.

Firstly, we are creating groups of women at the village level and conducting workshops about the benefits of dairy farming, effective dairy practices, and guiding them towards producing milk and ghee, marketing the latter as ‘Happy Farms Ghee’. These activities will create employment for more than 1,00,000 farmers and enable them to earn a monthly income of Rs. 10,000. In the next year, we aim to set up milk collection and vending units in and around the Gadchiroli district.

THE STORY: I struggled with many health problems about 10 years ago, because I had unknowingly been consuming synthetic milk. More than 30 people in my community suffered due to the same problem. We discovered that the milk we were drinking was adulterated with caustic soda, refined oil & urea, just to name a few.

I began researching about the process of dairy farming and the current market scenario of synthetic milk, and found out that milk sellers would adulterate the milk due to low production and to earn extra profits.

However, there are many opportunities to increase milk production naturally, by better cattle management, breed identification, and using existing dairy schemes. I also worked for some time in a tribal belt where there was no dairy industry, despite having a high proportion of cattle. This prompted me to work with them with a goal of more effective utilisation of animal resources, from which they could earn their livelihood.

BUSINESS MODEL & MARKET

There are rich animal resources in communities, and a high demand for milk and milk products in the Indian market. For our pilot, we have purchased an indigenous cow (through crowdfunding) and formed a group of four farmers from one community; while in another we have been collecting ghee from individual farmers. We are able to produce nearly 23 litres of milk per day, sell 11 litres to a hotel for Rs. 43/litre. The remainder we use to prepare ghee, and sell 20 litres per month for Rs. 480/litre.

We have also conducted awareness sessions on dairy farming and milk consumption for four villages covering 67 families. Malnutrition is a problem there, but people do not milk cows for several reasons. Our intervention helped almost 30 parents realise the benefits of consuming milk, and they have started feeding cow and buffalo milk to their children.

In the next phase, we plan to conduct awareness and expert sessions in 30 villages covering more than 5000 farmers; set up ghee processing units to generate employment for more than 200 farmers; and set up milk collection and vending units in Gadchiroli. We expect this project to become self-sustainable in two years’ time.

THE ASK: We require grant or debt funding of Rs. 35 lakhs for setting up ghee processing units and milk collection and vending units; office set-up; marketing and media; and conducting awareness & expert sessions in villages. We are also seeking a mentor with sound experience in the dairy industry.

THE TEAM

- **Pabbathi Deepak Reddy, Founder**: Gandhi fellow who has worked for quality education of tribals in Gadchiroli, Maharashtra; currently working with a Member of Parliament.
- **Nanda Nandan Sarangi, Co-founder**: Bachelor’s in Engineering and Master’s in Economics from Symbiosis International University, Pune; heads Operations and Technology of Happy Farm Foundation.
During our pilot, we understood the major challenges faced by budget schools in Gurugram, Haryana. Most of them were located in rented buildings near urban slums, and lacking in proper facilities and teaching aids. The teachers are also not adequately trained and guided, resulting in students’ poor performance and learning outcomes. We believe that these gaps should urgently be filled by interventions.

To serve this need, we have created a team of young and dynamic individuals to provide a strong and high-quality support system to these schools. Our aims are to help budget schools to better utilise their resources; promote the school social work concept and practice among teachers; and provide on-demand training sessions and workshops with the help of a ‘Learning on Wheels’ mobile van.

THE STORY: Of all children enrolled in Std 5, about half cannot read and write at even a Std 2 level. This is an obvious indication that children’s most basic education needs are not being met at school.

Schools are the lighthouses of society, where knowledge is shared and valued.

Unfortunately, due to lack of resources, many private budget schools in our country find it difficult to provide basic quality education to students. On the other hand, we know that psycho, social, behavioural, and cultural problems among children have significant effects on their learning capacity.

Having these in mind, Swamitra has begun a journey of supporting private budget schools in Delhi NCR.

Swamitra strives to create a fulfilling and enjoyable school environment for students, by providing customised services to schools, on-demand.

We will deploy an Assistant School Project Coordinator to work within the school, home, and community—providing extensive support in implementing experiential, project-based, and blended learning. This Coordinator will conduct needs assessments for schools and utilise testing tools to measure the language, math and EVS competency of students.

Swamitra will also implement a School Social Worker programme, in which teachers are trained in practicing social work within their school, with the aim of supporting children psychologically and socially. Based on key findings, Swamitra will connect the school with specialists, such as behavior therapists and psychologists, to further support students.

As and when they need, schools will also able to avail themselves of the ‘Learning on Wheels’ mobile van to access training, aids such as technology tools, books, teaching/learning materials, and sports items.

We are currently working with the primary section of 25 budget schools in Nathupur, Chakkarpur, and Sarhol districts of Gurugram, reaching a total of more than 3000 children. We charge a nominal amount for services, and an additional cost for tailor-made programs.

THE ASK: Swamitra seeks a grant of Rs. 16 lakhs for establishing operations in 20 schools in Delhi NCR. Funds will also be utilised for expansion, procurement of additional workforce, and creation of digital tools such as a mobile app for data collection.

Pradeep Kumar, Founder & Director of Swamitra: B.Ed, MSW & LLB, has worked on various development projects in education, health, community development, skill development and poverty alleviation, including those supported by UNDP, ITC, American Indian Foundation, MHRD, Directorate of Elementary education and other organisations. Pradeep is the state head of Delhi and Haryana at Pratham Infotech Foundation, which aims to provide e-education for all.
Aatma Prakash endeavours to offer emotional support to every individual in distress with acceptance, respect, and empathy. Our services address the key gaps that contribute to these emotional problems: awareness about mental health; a sufficient number of trained professionals; and timely intervention.

By the end of 2025, we aspire to impact 50,000 adolescents by delivering psychology-based modules and interventions to students in Delhi, Mumbai, and Indore. Within the same period, we aim to produce 2,500 psychology practitioners who are well-equipped to deliver these interventions in need-based communities.

The key activities of Aatma Prakash include a LINK Fellowship for aspiring psychologists; LINK Intervention for students (13-19 years) to help them deal with issues such as stress, anxiety, bullying & addiction; Community Outreach workshops to spread awareness and reduce stigma about mental health; and Community Storytelling focused on enabling empowerment & bonding among individuals in communities.

THE STORY: I truly believe that every life matters. A psychologist myself, I have lost numerous clients to suicide, violence, and abuse. Nearly 50 million people in India people reportedly suffer from common mental disorders such as depression and anxiety. At the stage of adolescence, the figures are even more alarming: one in six suffer from a mental health issue and one in four suffer from depression.

It is a disturbing fact that the rate of mental health workers to handle these issues is as low as 2 per 100,000 population, compared with more than 70 healthcare workers to the same population size in higher-income countries.

Aatma Prakash is an attempt to address both sides of the problem: the need for more psychologists as well as interventions to address the issues of stress, anxiety, and depression.

THE ASK: We aim to raise Rs. 7,15,000 over the next 12 months. Activities will include:
1. Pilot LINK intervention with 20 government schools
2. Training 10 aspiring psychologists through the LINK Fellowship
3. Research & development of the behavioural impact of the programme.

Prarthana Sharma, Founder and Counselling Psychologist: Freelancer Counsellor at TISS- SVE hub, ex-counsellor at IIM, Indore and MSc Counselling psychologist from Christ University, Bangalore.

Mekhala Vadadkar, Organizational Psychologist and Facilitator: Teach for India fellow with experience in psychological testing and assessment; HRDM (Psychology), Christ University, Bangalore.

Advisors: Mr Darpan Mehta (Partner, PwC India); Dr Mansharamani (Psychiatrist); Dr Anshu Deshmukh (School Principal & Psychologist).
FOODSHAALA FOUNDATION

Securing healthy food for all

Raadhika Gupta & Vimal Prabu

ABOUT THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

• Foodshaala is committed to our vision of a food-secure world. Our mission is to enable people from low-income communities to meet their basic food and nutrition requirements. To fulfill this, we serve children studying in private budget schools in urban slums. These schools cater to low-income populations whose children are unable to gain admission in government schools due to their migrant status. As a result, they are unable to access the government’s mid-day meal scheme. Based on our interactions with local people and the results of an ‘eating habits survey’ we conducted with over 100 children, we found that most children are deprived of balanced meals. In addition, they regularly consume junk food because it is more affordable and accessible.

• To address these challenges, we are setting up community kitchens, to provide affordable, nutritious meals. Secondly, we are conducting awareness & behaviour change workshops for parents & children, to lead them towards adopting healthier habits. Thirdly, we are conducting health check-ups for children to monitor their growth & nutrition levels.

BUSINESS MODEL & MARKET

• Our endeavour is to move away from a charity-driven approach and adopt one that empowers people to address their food and nutrition requirements, on their own, in a sustainable manner. For this, we work closely with community members at each stage of our model. We employ local women as kitchen staff to ultimately empower them to run the kitchen setup. We are also engaging students as ‘food champions’ to lead initiatives on raising awareness and changing behaviour in the school and local community, as well as conducting basic health check-ups for other students.

• We are currently implementing our solution in a private budget school in Nathupur village, Gurugram, and have set up a community kitchen employing three women. Based on the analysis from our eating habits survey and consultations with nutritionists, we have prepared weekly menus to meet the nutritional gaps among students. We are currently supplying meals to the children at low cost on both a monthly subscription and daily sale basis. Within one month, we have seen an increase of 200% in the subscription rate and 560% in total daily sales. Based on the high quality and satisfaction with the meals, some teachers have also come forward to sponsor meals for students who are unable to afford even the low prices we offer.

• There are approximately 20 such schools in Nathupur village itself, catering to approximately 10,000 children. An estimated 75 million students attend budget schools across India. In addition, we have also received interest from schools run by non-profit organizations to supply meals to their students.

THE STORY: It is a disturbing reality that, even today, a huge section of the population cannot meet its most basic need: food. Around 800 million people across the globe suffer from hunger, a quarter of who are in India.

Childhood hunger and malnutrition drastically affect a child’s ability to be healthy and perform well in school, which in turn has a vast negative impact on the development of a society. India—one of the fastest growing economies & leading producers of wheat, rice & pulses globally—has the largest number of malnourished children in the world.

Raadhika began Foodshaala with the determination to bring about grassroots-level change to build a hunger and malnutrition-free society. Vimal has volunteered and worked in the field of skill development & agriculture. With a motivation to work towards food security & nutrition, he joined Raadhika as a co-founder of Foodshaala at its pilot stage.

THE TEAM

• Raadhika Gupta, Co-Founder & CEO: Master’s in Law from Harvard and Bachelor’s from NALSAR, Hyderabad. Has worked on development projects with the Indian government and World Bank, in sectors including health, agriculture, education & skill development.

• Vimal Prabu, Co-Founder & Chief Strategic Officer: Master’s in Social Entrepreneurship from RGNIYD, Sripurumbudur and Bachelor’s in Mechanical Engineering from Pondicherry University. Has worked with various social enterprises in sustainable agriculture & skill development.

THE ASK: Foodshaala is seeking a grant of Rs. 19,50,500 to set up two community kitchens. These will employ 10 local women to serve at least 1,000 meals at a time, for the next two years.

Funds will also cover the cost of salaries; training for kitchen staff; periodic workshops; and health mentoring for children.
The AFSF (All For Sports & Fitness) Foundation envisions an ecosystem in which sports are accessible to all. We are currently working towards establishing free sports centres for children from low income families. AFSF Foundation encourages these children to attend daily fitness and training in sports, such as running & volleyball.

We are targeting to set up two well-equipped sports centres across Satara district within the next 12 months, and eventually replicate this for other districts across the country, especially in the semi-urban and rural areas. We will also be partnering with government schools and other organisations to improve standards of their sports facilities and equipment in the medium term.

Under the AFSF Athlete Development Programme, we conduct specialised training and provide funds and sports supplies to children and youth from low income backgrounds who display the talent and determination to pursue a sports discipline.

THE STORY: A 4-time national karate champion myself, I never had the opportunity to pursue my potential as a sportswoman because of family pressure to choose another career. Had I been able to access the right environment, guidance & financial support at that time, I would surely have been able to reach great heights in that discipline.

Still, today, children from low income families lack access to sports facilities, training, and support—depriving them from a key part of their childhood development: physical fitness. Even those who excel in sports are not able to pursue this stream due to lack of funds and family support.

As a country, we are not able to utilise this natural potential, and are losing out on this talent pool. I strongly believe that the whole society stands to benefit if we could make sports available for all; as qualities like focus, respect, camaraderie, acceptance of failure, and resilience can best be developed through sports activities.

THE ASK: AFSF Foundation intends to raise Rs.48,00,000 through grants for setting up & running 2 sports centres; and providing sponsorship within our Athlete Development Programme. We also seek the support of experts who could act as mentors & provide specialised training for our athletes.

ABOUT THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

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BUSINESS MODEL & MARKET

• For our pilot phase, we have enrolled 14 children in our sports centre, which is currently run at the Kalavaniyja College campus at Satara. Once the children attend the 1-hour sports sessions with our coach for four days in a week, they are eligible to enrol in the sports centre. We are currently offering training for running, and are trying to procure equipment such as volleyball net and fitness equipment for the centre.

• We intend to select up to five of the best performing and consistent children for our Athlete Development Programme, within which they will receive expert training and financial support for participating in different tournaments. Currently, we are supporting 2 state-level athletes participating in national tournaments under this programme: Vijay Pawar, a national-level shooter, and Shrikant Kadam, a long-distance runner.

• Within the past year, we have been able to raise up to Rs. 3 lakh from conducting paid marathons to support our Athlete Development Programme and sports centre. However, these activities are resource-intensive, and we have chosen to focus on our core activities in the short and medium term.

THE TEAM

• Rajvi Halgekar, Co-founder & Managing Director: National karate champion and marathon runner; 15+ years in organising numerous sporting and social activities; responsible for sports centres; building partnerships; and operations.

• Umesh Loya, Kausthubh Dani & Ramesh Halgekar, Co-founders: Responsible for fund raising, PR, media and communications.
Wearability’s vision is to fuse adaptivity and inclusivity with mainstream fashion. We believe in caring for others, and translate this into action by knitting together everyday disparities through our innovative designs. Inclusivity through accessibility is our primary motto, and our clothes, just like our vision, are human-centric. We achieve this by designing fashionable, hassle-free, and adaptive apparels for people with special needs—be it those with injuries, disabilities, or the elderly.

Currently, we are working on three products—wheelchair pants, adaptive tops and adaptive undergarments. Our products are easy to use, require minimal assistance, and are fashionable. To give our users this empowering clothing experience, we use fasteners such as magnets, buttons, and Velcro. to give our users a painless and hassle-free clothing experience.

THE STORY: When I was just one year old, I was diagnosed with pseudo-arthrosis of the tibia, requiring years of treatment. Eventually it healed, but I had to wear a bulky leg brace. This restricted me from wearing most of the clothes I wanted to as most garments could not accommodate my needs. I also feared a re-fracture, as most apparels were painful and risky to wear in my condition.

An accidental course in Entrepreneurship led me to think critically about the core of the problem, and compelled me to come up with a solution for others with special needs. With that vision in mind, I began innovating hacks and designs for everyday challenges that people encounter when getting dressed.

WEARABILITY
Bridging inequalities, one stitch at a time
Rhea Pandey

ABOUT THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

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BUSINESS MODEL & MARKET

- India currently has over 1,60,000 wheelchair users. The market for wheelchairs is estimated to be 120,000 units worth USD 15 million, growing at rate of 10% over the last three years. India is expected to become the ‘arthritis capital of the world’ by 2020, making it a promising market for adaptive tops/shirts for arthritis patients. Wheelchair users, people with spinal injuries and osteoarthritis patients can use adaptive undergarments for a pain-free and secure way of dressing.

- In our pilot, we developed adaptive underwear, adaptive shirts, and zipper pants, and refined designs based on recommendations from our sample group. These were tested by our friends and families and we reiterated the designs. With functionality in place, we have entered the phase of mastering the comfort and aesthetic elements. We plan to launch sales in metropolitan cities, offering a range of products that cater to a broad spectrum of disabilities. This will be more cost effective than individual customizations.

THE TEAM

- Rhea Pandey, Founder and CMO: Rhea is in charge of managing communications and public relations, and is responsible for the company’s marketing strategy.

- Bhavna Pandey, Co-founder and Head of Business Development: Bhavna has undertaken many initiatives in the development sector over the past few years, and also has a strong background in sales.

THE ASK: We require approximately Rs. 10 lakhs to hire a full-time designer and interns to prototype and get our initial product offering ready for market.

Financing will also fulfill the sourcing and inventory of high-quality materials and fasteners.
Our mission is to encourage healthy lifestyle changes while enabling economic security for rural communities. Swazen is a combination of two words: Swa (swasthya & swad) and Zen (ultimate satisfaction). Our line of nutritious confectionary items carries jam, jelly, salsa, and candies made from beetroot, karandas, and other local indigenous crops. Crops are responsibly sourced, and processed using a chemical-free production system. By bringing back traditional crops in a tasty form into consumers’ regular diets, Swazen products provide a healthy alternative for reversing nutrition imbalances.

As an organisation, Swazen aims to create livelihood opportunities for rural communities by providing training and enabling the development of agricultural processing skills.

THE STORY: Recently, my mother was diagnosed with a haemoglobin deficiency, caused by a nutritional imbalance. Her doctor prescribed an intake of iron supplements as well as nutritious food, such as beetroot. To my surprise, even though the benefits were well-known, my mother was unwilling to consume the beetroot due to its earthy taste.

Out of curiosity, I did some initial research and found out that 80% of the Indian population has an iron deficiency, according to WHO. But, most people are unaware of the nutritional benefits they get by consuming traditional crops, and often opt for medication to treat their nutritional imbalances.

This inspired me to undertake an initiative to encourage people to add more natural foods to their diet. I developed the Swazen range of innovative food products to provide a new alternative and fuel people’s passion for a healthy lifestyle.

ABOUT THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

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BUSINESS MODEL & MARKET

- Swazen currently generates products through a contract manufacturing model with Morarka Foundation, Jaipur. We aim to set up our own food processing unit within the next one year.
- At present, we sell products through a B2B model using various channels, such as online platforms, store collaborations, exhibition stalls, and direct sales to specific customers, e.g. hostels, hotels, and catering companies.
- After setting up our own plant, we will also expand into the B2C market, which is highly scalable both locally and internationally.
- In the short term, we plan to use our surplus funds to expand operations and serve five more cities in Rajasthan.
- We have received incubation support from Atal Incubation Centre, Banasthali Vidyapith, which provides us seed fund and mentoring.

THE TEAM

- Shalu Nathani, Founder: Shalu is an MBA student of Banasthali Vidyapith. Her responsibilities include product development, marketing and sales, and business development.
- Diksha Saxena, Co-founder: Diksha is also an MBA student from Banasthali Vidyapith, with a Bachelor’s in Computer Applications. She handles production, quality control, and technology.
- Abhishek Pareek, Advisor & Mentor: CEO, Atal Incubation Centre, Banasthali Vidyapith.

THE ASK: We seek to raise Rs. 53,000,00 for establishing a manufacturing unit, conducting research into indigenous crops, product development, training rural communities, and branding and marketing the product line.
Over the next three years, along with our partner organisations, Mapunity and Citizen Matters, we plan to create about 50 changemaker communities in the city of Bengaluru. These communities will tackle civic challenges with practicable and citizen-led solutions, benefiting approximately 25 lakh people.

From 2015 to now, we have organised community events and developed indexing tools, technology data mapping, and a crowd-sourced feedback mechanism—all of which will collectively build the confidence and capacity of communities to solve their own problems.

In 2021, after 3 years of design challenges and 50 documented projects in hand, we will be able to critically reflect and extract key insights on the commonalities, and impact of these change initiatives. This will then enable us to make visible what otherwise may never have been seen, encouraging more communities to empower themselves through changemaking efforts.

THE STORY:
I cannot recall a time when I saw something wrong happening around me and did not take action. I even contested local municipal elections to solve some local civic issues, but discovered that social entrepreneurship provided a more sustainable path. I realised that India is a country with million problems and it needs a million problem solvers; after all, who better to solve civic issues than the citizens themselves?

So, I designed a system to produce ‘public problem solvers’ who would be the change agents in solving civic challenges. That gave birth to Urban Morph, a think tank and lab for urban problem solving through working with communities to transform urban spaces. We aim to empower communities to bring their ideas for collective change into reality.

We plan to build a critical mass that will help us to prove the power of public participation in democracy and transforming urban spaces. ‘Reimagining Neighbourhood’ is our flagship design challenge that would act as a platform for all of Urban Morph’s activities.

THE ASK:
We are seeking investment of Rs. 30 lakhs to conduct design challenges & pilots for the next 3 years, as well as use towards salaries, marketing, venue, documentation, PR, and conducting short events.

ABOUT THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

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BUSINESS MODEL & MARKET

- ‘Reimagining Neighbourhood’ invites citizen groups to identify a problem in their neighbourhood and bring forward potential solutions. Urban Morph, with its partners, will help these communities by providing diagnostic and problem-solving tools and methodologies, e.g. design thinking, and LAMP Index, our proprietary app. We aim to support communities with the skills and network to build a demonstrable pilot of their proposed solution.

- Urban Morph plans to launch this project in Bengaluru because it is the most cosmopolitan city with very active civic groups. In the last three years, through our not-for-profit arm, we have achieved demonstrable progress in addressing civic problems. Through our numerous social initiatives, we have been able to connect with over 40 communities. We have been successful in convincing the government to stop the construction of a steel flyover project, saving close to 2000 trees in the city. We have also been able to initiate committee meetings that enable citizens to meet their elected representatives every month. With a combined push of 40 communities, we have also been able to lobby for the launch of public bicycle sharing in the city of Bengaluru.

THE TEAM


- Sonal Kulkarni, Co-founder: Urban Strategist who has worked in transport planning and advocacy; Master’s in Urban Policy Planning from USC, Los Angeles, and Bachelor’s in Architecture from MSRIT, Bangalore.

- Sathy Sankaran, Co-founder: Tactical urbanist and cycling evangelist; Computer Science graduate and a postgraduate in Public Policy. Sathy is currently designated as ‘Bicycle Mayor of Bengaluru’ by BYCS.
Aspirations can transform the world. Yellow Streets focuses on strengthening emotional intelligence and building aspirations to lead children and young people towards a sustained future.

Using Sports as the medium for change and inculcating critical 21st century skills development in this mixture, Yellow Streets aims at identifying the underserved children located in the streets, shelters and juvenile homes and involves them in an experiential growth process.

We co-create safe and nurturing play spaces for children to use their vigor in sports and experience its benefits, rather than spending their time in deviant and unethical practices. We intend to take these children and young people on an intensive learning journey where they are equipped with the essential skills to lead a healthy, fulfilling, and joyous life.

THE STORY: Ever since I began working with low income communities, I have reflected deeply on the contrasting realities of a privileged lifestyle vs. those on the other side of the spectrum. In the midst of solving community problems, particularly related to children, my focus organically shifted to the skills and potential that each child had inherited or had developed with time.

After working for three years on the ground with street children, I found sports as one of the most engaging activities with exceptional results. Critical life skills such as discipline, teamwork, respect, solidarity & punctuality can be easily learnt and applied through playing sports. But, children who cannot afford the luxury of receiving professional sports coaching are deprived of its life-changing benefits. My team and I had often thought about the realities of these street children, and eventually decided to work with an aim to get them off the streets onto the playing field.

ABOUT THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

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BUSINESS MODEL & MARKET

- Our offering blends the usage of two distinct disciplines: sports and cognitive development, into a productive mix. This combination empowers children in a versatile manner, enhancing their physical, psycho-social and economic competencies and outcomes. Currently we are directly working with 70 street children and 250 juvenile delinquents through a researched and validated module consisting of game training, workshops, and leadership camps to impart key learning skills and instill entrepreneurial competencies. Selected adolescent leaders from this group also head initiatives to closely work with the community and solve grassroots issues.
- We recently formalised a Rugby Club with 70 registered street children and 2 reformed juveniles, of which selected children will be advancing to national qualifiers this year. We have partnered with Rugby India and Delhi Child Protection Unit (a unit of Child Welfare Committee) to support our on-the-ground work.
- By the end of our first pilot we intend to create a pipeline of skilled leaders who are equipped with the skills of sportsmanship, leadership, and entrepreneurial competencies.

THE TEAM

- Yusra Khan, Co-founder & Convener: Social entrepreneur with 4+ years professional experience working with children and youth.
- Saif Ullah Khan, Co-founder & CEO: National level rugby player and Level 2 professional rugby coach.
- Rohan Chandra, Co-founder & Director: Currently interning as an opinion columnist at Millenniumpost, with a background in Science & Management.