

EDITORIAL:

As we close 2023, there are many reasons to be grateful, and many reasons to be optimistic about the New Year.

This is a special issue of the Buddha Times to chronicle some of the recent progress made.

Recruitment of 4th cohort (2023-25) of Buddha Fellows is well underway.

Our applications have swelled, as have enterprise categories, geographical spread, and diversity. We provide a synopsis of the work in progress in the recruitment process, as also look back at the journey and impact delivered thus far.

We are also readying to play a part in addressing our Hon'ble Prime Minister's commitment to **galvanize 2 crore lakhpati didis**. Our Buddha Fellows will not only help create micro-entrepreneurs among didis to partner in their enterprises but will also undertake their mentorship. In that respect, a program to equip them to learn more about the nuts and bolts of entrepreneurship will be undertaken under The Buddha Institute banner.

Last but not least, our drive for **finance generation** has taken wing. Friends from our US chapter have helped us realize \$ 250,000 in contributions, to kickstart this year's programs. Much more needs to happen on this critical aspect, and we need our stakeholders from every corner to come forward to add momentum and oxygen to the campaign.

Wishing you the very best for 2024!

Shruti Singh

Editor, The Buddha Times

THE ONWARD MARCH TOWARDS POVERTY ALLEVIATION

Buddha Institute has partnered with Selco Foundation for solarizing processing units of Buddha Fellows B. Srinivas and Satendra Lilhare on millets and Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) in A.P. and Chhattisgarh respectively.

Under partnership with Rajeevika, the Government of Rajasthan, Buddha Fellows Rakesh Gupta and Rajesh Oza are helping tribal women establish NTFP processing units in Rajsamand and building their capacity to run such units themselves. 55 tribal women have undergone exposure visits to the NTFP processing unit in Udaipur. Women leaders of Karauli's Cluster Level Federation have visited Buddha Fellow Satyam Bhandari's cold pressed mustard oil unit in Hindaun City. Now, more and more women are coming forward to participate in business development activities and not just become receivers of some charity.

ALLEVIATE POVERTY AT SCALE

By 2030



Uplift 25M
marginalized people
(1/7th of India's Poor)



Create
100,000 Jobs

Infuse \$1 Billion
into rural economy every year



Develop
50% women
entrepreneurs

Through
Building and Scaling
1000 Sustainable
Development
Enterprises



ONE YEAR IMPACT OF 2022-24 COHORT

Buddha
Fellows
14

People
Uplifted
125,000

Jobs
Created
130

Average Annual
Income
\$ 4000

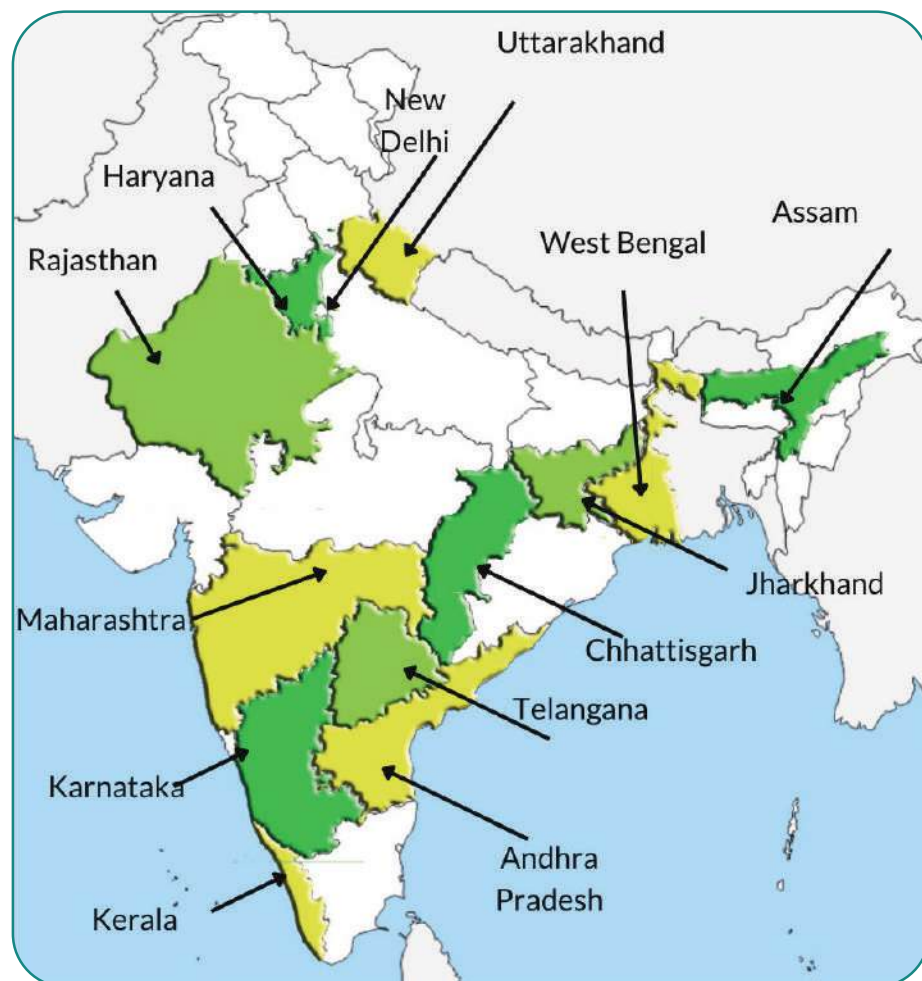
Buddha Institute identifies and nurtures entrepreneurs who add value for greater good towards a progressive, inclusive India and the world.

PROGRESS ON THE NEW RECRUITMENT OF 2023-25 COHORT

Finding genuine and dedicated entrepreneurs for Buddha Fellowship was the focus of the last few months. 117 good applications were received from 13 different states across different sectors and it was encouraging to see that 40% were women candidates. A brief summary of the selection process and candidate profiles:

GEOGRAPHICAL SPREAD

13 Selected Enterprises States



RECRUITMENT PIPELINE

Outreach
513

Applications
117

In-person interviews
47

Field Verification
35

SECTORS OF FOCUS

- Farm produce aggregation and processing
- Forest produce aggregation and processing
- Drudgery reduction for women
- Upskilling for employment
- Climate action

STAGE OF ENTERPRISE



BUDDHA FELLOWS TO TRAIN LAKHPATI DIDIS

A sample of three enterprises from the prospective 2023-25 entrepreneur cohort who will provide a fillip to training lakhpati didis in different sectors of the economy to produce products ranging from forest produce, to agricultural and fruit produce, to sustainable construction material.



Forest Post

Non Timber
Forest Produce

KERALA



Manju Vasudevan

ABOUT

A brand that brings together sustainably harvested forest produce, value added and handmade by 3 different indigenous communities from Kerala.



PRODUCTS

- Beeswax personal care
- Traditional hair care
- Wild edibles processed into pickles, preserves, sun-dried candies
- Bamboo craft including Kannadi Paaya (GI tagged)



FINANCIALS

- Turnover 2022-2023: INR 31 lakhs
- Turnover 2023-24 (till date): INR 30 lakhs
- Equity Raised: INR 0
- Debt: INR 0



IMPACT

- 75+ tribal women from 12 forest villages engaged in production & value addition
- 30-40% increase of annual income



SNI Innovations

Agriculture &
Fruit Processing

RAJASTHAN, J&K,
MADHYA PRADESH,
UTTAR PRADESH,
MAHARASHTRA



Sudhanshu Gupta

ABOUT

- On-farm, decentralized Aseptic Processing of ripened fruit
- Working with FPOs to convert ripened fruit into pulp
- Pulp is sold to juicers
- Has 2 patents



PRODUCTS

- Decentralized Aseptic processing unit
- Fruit pulp



FINANCIALS

- Turnover 2022-2023: INR 1.34 crores
- Turnover 2023-24 (till date): INR 1.94 crores
- Equity Raised: INR 2 crores
- Debt: INR 0



IMPACT

- Processed more than 500,000kg of fruits which would have been waste.
- Impacted more than 2000 farmers by procurement
- Created 100+ direct and 120+ indirect jobs in rural India.



Rau Ecostone (Paving +)

Climate
Change

WEST BENGAL



Sheikh Ziaur

ABOUT

Manufacturing Sustainable Construction Materials using Unsegregated Waste Plastic



PRODUCTS

- Paving blocks made of upcycled plastics



FINANCIALS

- Turnover 2022-2023: INR 1.34 crores
- Turnover 2023-24 (till date): INR 2 crores
- Equity Raised: INR 0 crores
- Debt: INR 40 Lakhs through Bank CGTMSE scheme



IMPACT

- 150 Metric tonnes of waste upcycled
- Providing 100+ recyclers employment

GRATITUDE

Our Partners: Helping Achieve Scale

MOU with
Government of India



FOUNDATIONS AND CSR SUPPORT
Axis Bank, Bajaj, Co-Impact, and Ford



INDIVIDUAL DONORS

We are also grateful to individual donors like Ashish Gupta, Jugnu Jain and Parag Thatte who have been a constant support to The Buddha Institute to run its Buddha Fellowship Program every year.



Ashish Gupta



Jugnu Jain



Parag Thatte



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FUNDS NEEDED: A SHOUT-OUT FOR HELP



The Buddha Institute provides seed capital and mentoring to Buddha Fellows and it takes a team of 4-5 people to build an eco-system and partnerships for making Buddha Fellows succeed. At the rate of investing \$30,000 per Buddha Fellow, we must mobilize \$1 million immediately in order to support 35 Buddha Fellows next year, out of which we have raised \$600,000.

We request all stakeholders to support us in raising funds.



Buddha Institute is an initiative of E2F and SRIJAN

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