



KRISHNA RAO

2010 Reynolds Fellow

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Public & Nonprofit Management & Policy



Krishna Chaitanya Rao is a Chemical engineer with Masters in Public Administration from NYU's Robert F. Wagner School of Public Service. He strongly believes in an enterprise approach for poverty alleviation. His interests are on access to basic amenities such as water, sanitation, electricity, transportation and telecommunication. He wants to develop a global eco-system to provide these services to the poor. Lack of access to infrastructure creates a "poverty trap" situation and hinders the underprivileged households to overcome the poverty barriers and move into higher economic strata.

Krishna has extensive experience in providing small-scale decentralized modern energy solutions (particularly lighting, cooking and electricity) for the poor and has worked extensively in providing other infrastructure solutions in the areas of water, transport, telecommunication, and sanitation to alleviate poverty in Southern India. The majority of his work is focused on poverty alleviation and access to infrastructure for income generation activities.

He was the first employee of S3IDF India (www.s3idf.org), a not-for-profit with the mission of providing infrastructure and related service to the poor in South India. He has been instrumental in its growth and has nurtured more than 50 entrepreneurs. At S3IDF, Krishna has dealt with a wide range of pro-poor infrastructure projects such as electricity distribution management in rural areas, energy-efficient pumpset for irrigation for small holding farmers, hydropower for electrifying remote villages, solar lighting for rural households and small businesses, efficient cook stoves for rural households and slums, potable water for rural households, transportation and telecommunication in rural areas and productive end uses applications (e.g. flour mill, computerized embroidery unit, etc.) for income generation activities.

Apart from S3IDF, he has been involved with other social enterprises like SELCO Solar Light Pvt. Ltd., SEWA Bank and SEWA Mahila Housing Trust. At SELCO, Krishna provided financing and technical solutions for pro-poor solar lighting solutions. He was instrumental in starting an energy efficiency program initiative through an energy auditor approach in slums of Ahmedabad in partnership with SEWA Bank and SEWA Mahila Housing Trust. He was also responsible to identify technology gaps and develop solutions in partnership with technology development institutes so as to improve living and working conditions of slum residents.

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During his master, Krishna interned with BRAC USA, a non-profit working in 10 developing countries. At BRAC USA, he developed business plans for their seed enterprise in Uganda and concept on micro-franchisee energy entrepreneur approach to deliver energy products to rural households. Krishna also worked on a paper on the role of microfinance in agriculture which was published and presented at the micro-credit summit held in Spain in 2011.

As a part of his course work at NYU, Krishna worked with the World Bank to undertake infrastructure needs assessment for 4 cities in Indonesia and analyse the institutional capacity of local planning departments to undertake these feasibility of the identified investments.

Krishna brings extensive technical and practical field expertise for nurturing sustainable infrastructure projects and delivery of financial services to the underprivileged.