

# Barefoot **wireless** stories of Proto village

Regional Partner



**Name:** Srina

**Age:** 25 years

**Occupation:** SHG Animator also known as 'SHG Leader' (managing 30 SHGs)

Srina is a Self Help Group (SHG) Animator, managing 30 SHGs and each SHG comprises of 10-15 members. Out of this, 20% are males and 80% of them are women. Being an SHG leader, she not only manages the funds provided by the government to the SHG members but also helps them to open bank accounts and manage accounting and other financial services, including Kisan loan and insurance policies. There are 14 SHG groups in her mandal (block).

Srina attended the Barefoot Wireless Training (BWE) under Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) from 17 – 20 October to take internet connectivity to her village. In 2015, she had attended Digital Literacy training conducted by DEF which further motivated her to participate in the BWE training. She wants to enhance her skills through this training for tracking accounts and use internet for the purpose of their SHG groups.



**Name:** K Narayan Swamy

**Age:** 26

**Education:** 10th class

**Village:** Pathimulai (80 km from ProtoVillage)

**Occupation:** Driver

Narayan Swamy belongs to a lower middle-class family whose parents are daily-wage labourers. Narayan participated at the Community Information Resource Centre's (CIRC) Digital Literacy training two years ago, which inspired him to become a member of ProtoVillage. Initially he did not have any interest in computer and networking, but after attending the Digital Literacy and BWE training programme he saw how internet connectivity can be extended to his village. The knowledge that he gained from CIRC's Digital Literacy training has helped him to understand and learn more about the wireless network.

Narayan wants to use the network for self-employment and extend the internet connection to not just his village but also in to surrounding villages. He wants to learn more about the wireless training and then support the ProtoVillage network.



**Name:** Govardhan

**Age:** 24 years

**Education:** B.Com dropout

**Village:** Vattichinamayi (3 kilometers from ProtoVillage)

**Occupation:** Protomember

Govardhan hails from a silk-farming family. He studied till B. Com – II year in computer science but dropped out in the last year as he wanted to start earning a living. He heard about ProtoVillage from his friend and then met with a Protomember, Imithiyaz. He liked the concept of ProtoVillage and its sustainable living, but could not understand what 'sustainable' means. When he joined the initiative, he was very excited about using 3D technology, digital network and the concept of organic farming and eco-friendly resources to build homes.

He started enjoying the concept of plantation and community living. In ProtoVillage, he learnt about seven values – 1) self-learning education; 2) eco-friendly shelter; 3) quality food and water conversation; 4) making your own clothes 5) self-entrepreneurship and community building 6) trading between villages 7) disaster management.

Govardhan was also a member of DEF's Digital Literacy training and got an opportunity to take a laptop to his home. This gave him an opportunity to impart computer skills to fellow community members.

When he heard about BWE training, he had many questions in mind. The training helped him to understand how internet comes to villages and why commercial providers are coming to rural areas. Prior to this, he saw an Airtel service provider setting up the network in his village and got a brief idea about the network.

He suggested that the training needs to have more success stories and the training curriculum should be made available in local languages. According to him the training requires a more hands-on session, animated videos for better understanding and images and text in local languages.

As a part of future planning, he would like to conduct training sessions with fellow Proto members and manage the network by himself. He would like to extend the network in neighbouring villages and use it for e-commerce purposes. He wants to create his own network that helps ProtoVillage in strengthening its seven pillars.

**Name:** Asha

**Age:** 27 years

**Education:** 10th class

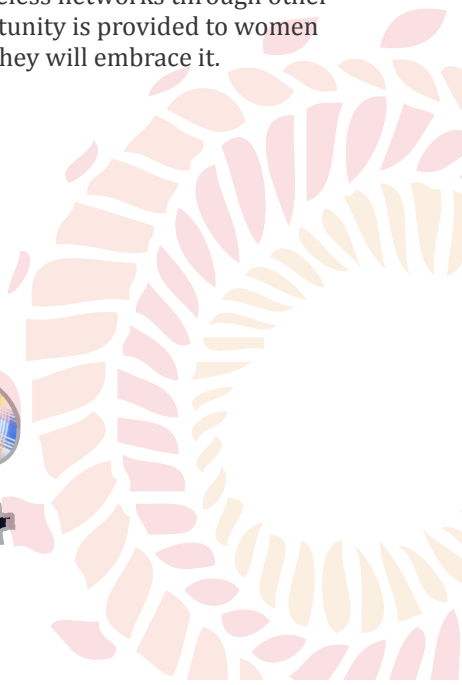
**Village:** Tumulkuntha (4 kms from ProtoVillage)

**Occupation:** Working in organic farming of ProtoVillage

Asha belongs to a family of daily wage labourers. Due to financial problems she could not study further and worked in a garment factory. After getting married she came to ProtoVillage as a labourer in the 'tree land'. Gradually, Kalyan, the founder of ProtoVillage, recognised her team work capability and communication skills which led her to become a member of ProtoVillage.

Once she got to know about BWE training, her interest to know about computer and internet increased and she joined the training programme. She climbed the tower on the third day of the training programme itself. Initially, she had a fear of falling however, she took inspiration from watching other girls do the task and this motivated her to overcome her inhibitions and fears.

She learnt about the collection of GPS coordinates, what are wireless devices and wanted to teach other community networks about computer and internet. She wants to learn computer and continue learning wireless networks through other ProtoVillage members. She feels that if equal opportunity is provided to women then they will not have a fear of technology, in fact they will embrace it.





**Name:** Mohan

**Age:** 24 years

**Education:** ITI

**Village:** Tekulodu (2 kms from Provillage)

Mohan belongs to a huge family of farmers. He came to ProtoVillage as a labourer during the construction of the village. After seeing the culture there, he stayed back in the village and started contributing in honeycomb paper work. Mohan heard about this training from a ProtoVillage member. He was selected for BWE training as he has the basic skills of using a computer. On the first day he had problem in understanding the training, but gradually started enjoying it. As a part of continuation of the training, he would like to take the initiative in other parts of the villages to the students and connect the neighbourhood villages.

