

Boond shinning lights in rural India

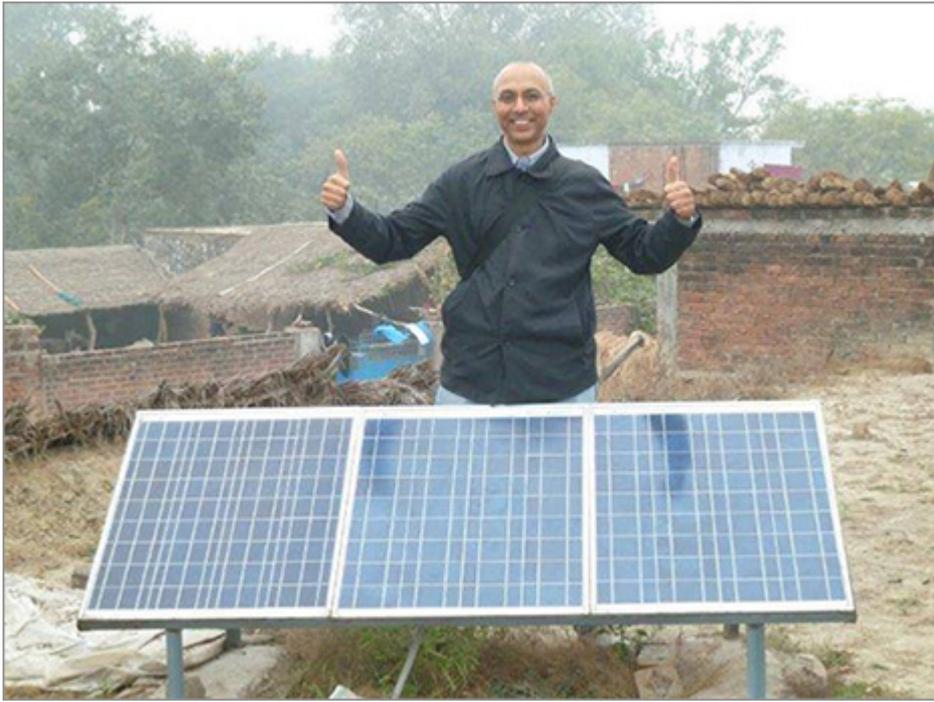


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India like many of its developing country counterparts who find it difficult to provide electricity to all its people the ones who acutely feel this are villages, especially during the summer season which are synonymous with power cuts. Meet the organization which offers affordable electricity to all.

Boond Engineering & Development Pvt. Ltd. was Founded by Rustam Sengupta, Boond, he is a social enterprise that promotes alternative energy across Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and other northern states.

Since 2010 Boond has been providing light, clean water, pest control and hygiene to the poor living in remote areas of India and creating rural entrepreneurs and distribution channels for products like solar lamps, solar home systems, water filters, efficient cook-stoves.

Boond's mission is to provide people living in remote rural areas with similar opportunities of wellbeing and economic development as people living in other parts of the world. They believe that this is possible by providing these communities with access to productivity-enhancing goods and services through better distribution channels, innovative financial schemes and robust after-sales service.

Rustam researches on sustainable social enterprise design and implements his work first hand on the field. He is an expert on designing and data analysis for products and services for the BoP and has also been consulting for numerous universities and institutions on market entry and emerging market economics.

One of their success story is the Para village of Unnao district in Uttar Pradesh, about 25 poor families of farming community with incomes less than Rs 5000 a month, use pre-paid cards to power their homes, just like one uses pre-paid cards to upload balance in one's cell phone. The solution is designed to provide power to ultra-poor families who are not able to pay the panel cost or standalone solar home lighting system. They draw energy from apico-grid system. Members of the 25 poor families do it through Boond, which sells customized solar energy products to the rural poor. Boond, has installed one KW solar powered pico-grid system at the Para village.

This system serves about 25 households. Each household has a dynamic energy meter or control and customers select either pre-paid or postpaid arrangements. In case of pre-paid, users linked to the grid are required to purchase a recharge card to buy 'wattage'.

The user can buy power in a prepaid manner and get his meter activated for the number of wattage as required.

Customers need to go to a nearby charging station of Boond to buy the pre paid cards. This allows them to buy energy as per their requirement and at the same time, they control the number of hours that they can use the system. Every recharge card has a special secret code that implies the wattage they require. Boond has installed 11 such apico-grids as on May 2014 influencing the lives of 275 families in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

This system reduces villagers' dependency on kerosene and provides them clean, easily affordable energy. Boond has targeted to scale up such grid system to 50 by end of this year.

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