

KAMLA FOUNDATION UK

MICRO ENTERPRISE PROJECT – CASE STUDIES

Study 1



Name: Mrs. S. Lakshmi

Age: 32

Status: Married, sick husband

Background: No education.

MEP: Brass Rod Tinkering

I am 32 years of age and come from a very poor family. I married my relative at the age of 25 and we have no children as yet. My husband suffers from poor health so is not able to do any heavy manual labour. Being illiterate, we have had to struggle for our survival. A year ago after becoming a member of the women's Self Help Group (SHG) based in our village of Pillaiyarpatti, I was recommended by a friend to train in the Brass Rod Tinkering trade. These essentially are small sticks with sharp edges used to mend lighted Holy Lamps (Mangal Jyothi) in temples and in the majority of Hindu homes. As we are a temple village, these sticks are sold through local shops.

Initially, I was working under my husband's associate, for a meager wage. Now, with the help of INR 3000 (£40) from Kamla Foundation, UK through Ford Trust, Maruthangudi, I am trading independently and able to earn a comfortable wage of INR 100 to 150 (£1-£2) per day. The grant helped to purchase small tools and raw materials (brass rods from Madurai) in bulk at a reduced rate. During Vinayaka Chaturthi Festival in Pillaiyarpatti, I received many orders from shop owners and supplied on time due to my large stock of brass sticks.

Currently, space is a premium and I do all the business preparations in the small house that we rent. Eventually, I would also like to expand my enterprise and build on the opportunity given to me by Kamla Foundation.

I am very thankful to Kamla Foundation and the Ford Trust who gave me the opportunity to not only support my husband but also make a comfortable living.