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Will the Pilots ever fly? “Scaling up and Commercialising ICT-Agriculture models”

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Grameen Intel Social Business Ltd.

An Intel Capital Portfolio Company

- “ Funded by Intel Capital and Grameen Trust
- “ A BoP focused Social business : Impact, Sustainable approach & Scalability - prime considerations
- “ Developing appropriate easy to use software
- “ Bottom-up Biz model : Social micro-entrepreneur led, community focus.



Vision: digital solutions for the world's social problems



What are we doing in Agriculture?

Via ICT, Bringing the **entire agriculture ecosystem players (inputs, advisers, markets, finance..)** and their modular offerings together to **the farmer's village**: in a single window, convenient, cost-effective, transparent manner so as to improve productivity, mitigate risks and enrich the farmer.

This improved livelihood results in spurring achievement of other unfulfilled basic aspirations eg. food, education, health, water, energy, clothing, transport!

Socio Economic Growth: Creation of Entrepreneurial activity, Local Job Opportunities

Qualitative Impact: Improved Quality of Life, Localised Decision making, Self Reliance, Dignity, Increased pride, Local Community Empowerment & Participation!

“Rural Inclusion” of the “First mile” –BoP farmer becoming a key contributing stakeholder in society-at-large...with potential of doing away with the subsidy regime!

Targets rural poverty alleviation and food security (UN MDG 1)

Successful so far, Exploring replication



ICT-Agro Pilots

- “ There are innumerable pilots, several % successful ones+
 - . They may have shown social impact and trend towards sustainability
- “ How can these be scaled or replicated in a scalable way.
- “ What are the factors: both enablers and blocks
- “ How can these be overcome?



Challenges for scaling

Significant impediments that need to be sorted out for the benefits to reach macro-socio-economic proportions.

- “ Active involvement of agro ecosystem players (value chain dynamics)
- “ Biz model issues (eg. franchising models , employee-run vs entrepreneur run, subsidy vs for-profit/PPP,)
- “ Functional Literacy: IT & basic biz literacy at grass roots,
- “ Community mobilization & active participation crucial to the long term sustainability of any such bottom-up initiative.
- “ The Tech bottlenecks such as availability of rural connectivity, power
- “ Systemic empowerment related to funding (micro funding for VLEs, farmers, social biz fund /exchange) & Advocacy

Each challenge -an opportunity for players to target, overcome
• Huge benefits• .involves risks, but has significant rewards



Challenges: Ecosystem

- “ Agriculture stakeholders operating in disconnected mode
- “ Farmer pop large, fragmented, illiterate, poor & bereft of choice
- “ Non-transparence in chain=> last mile imbalances: Need to empower the powerless to break the stranglehold of the powerful!
- “ ICT apps can help bridge gaps, bring transparency, cost-effectiveness and enable a robust value chain, with a value for value exchange ensuring that all stakeholders are involved & engaged to deliver and benefit
- “ Next key issues are biz model, funding & people related: village operator & community empowerment/engagement/acceptance

Need to bring remote stakeholders together to holistically address last mile unmet needs



Challenges: Biz model & Value Chain

- “ Dedicated to Agro/livelihoods vs Shared services (eg CSC)
- “ Own vs Franchise operations vs Govt Run/Subsidized (?)
- “ Profit Maximizing Biz vs Social Biz
- “ Franchising model seems only way to scale
 - . R & R should be very clear,
 - . Clear and fair : gives & gets
 - . Programs to address community participation
- “ Operator should have local strengths, credibility and have social dev focus => profit only being the route to sustainability
- “ Value chain participation is key
 - . Continual Value exchange & monitoring of this essential
 - . As strong as the weakest link!

Focus on social impact, community ownership
And credibility & pull will happen



First Mile skills: The right+village entrepreneur

Necessary Qualities

- “ Local person
- “ Understands the domain
- “ Acceptable to community
- “ Previous experience, esp if failed - useful.
- “ Somewhat literate
- “ A risk taker (min. investment capacity)
- “ Biz acumen & motivation
- “ Desires to learn the best of the community through formal & informal resources
- “ Customer focus
- “ Relationship skills

Capacity Augmentation

- “ Drilling in biz skills
- “ Business & Financial Literacy
- “ Customer management
- “ Community & Group Mobilization
- “ Public speaking
- “ ICT usage skills
- “ Domain skills update

Rural Entrepreneur / Job creation

Market Size Huge- eg. = No of villages 600k in India

Opportunity for Appropriate Training



Community Ownership

- “ Organize community workshops, initially
 - Involve various (remote) stakeholders to present their value
 - Explain the problems, the solution approach, to gain the buy in
- “ Initial customer success KEY
 - speedy expansion via Viral marketing
- “ For better coordination : divide community into smaller geographical groups
- “ Have the groups elect the leader to represent the community issues
- “ Take the views of group reps before making key decisions- such as pricing, new products, services, grievance redressal etc
- “ Loyalty system & dividends based on patronage
- “ Constant communication with Groups/communities
- “ A sense of biz alignment with community needs, CoOwnership
- “ Empowered Community . controlling their own destiny!

⇒ **Fundamental to Sustainability**
⇒ **Community self reliance.**

Once income is augmented, Community Trust is built, and Opportunity to address Other Unmet needs
Huge engines of Entrepreneurship, Local Community Growth, Employment=> Self Reliance!



Technical Issues

- “ Connectivity Infra in rural areas found wanting
 - . Energize USO Fund out of dormancy?
 - . Push TELCOs for enabling rural data connectivity
 - . Lower cost connectivity options (eg LD WiFi)
- “ ICT Literacyõ a challenge and an opportunity
- “ Vocational literacyõ ICT can be huge game changer
- “ IT Rural Support
- “ Power (less of an issue due to battery backup)



Financial /Institutional Impetus

- “ Advocacy with Financial Regulators, Dev agencies & Grass-roots dev finance
- “ PPP - Facilitation with govt and pvt agencies on ecosystem energization
- “ Platform to showcase impact to Policy makers/Peoples reps (eg MPs/MLAs)
 - . Devise easy mechanisms to explore pilot & scaling options in each constituency
 - . Blueprint the process for reps to take forward (MP funds, NGO specs, Purchase facilitation etc)
- “ Co-participation in pilot initiatives to explore, expand and scale
 - “ Facilitation of seed funding for first scaleups
 - “ Fund Action Research, Assessment, Adaptations
 - “ Blueprints of sustainable financial products to aid farmers
 - “ Replicate and scale massively
- “ Involvement in Rural Entrepreneur Capacity Building & Community Collectives Empowerment



ICT is a great enabler!
And scaling is surely possible,

But!

It takes far more than just ICT!

Do we have the allround will to tackle &
Enable GrassRoots Transformation!



Backup



For Scaling/replicating to maximize impact:

What Grameen-Intel, Intel & partners have:

“Good opportunity to demonstrate & showcase how IT can help enable achieve MDGs

“Implementation Experience & Methodologies (social engineering- groups, sustainable businesses, social entrepreneurship)

“ICT4D Solutions

“Global Brand & reach

“Can collaborate globally to build required visibility to help scale the fruits of ICT4D impact

