

BIG BET
INITIATIVE

IDEA CATALOGUE



BIG BETS MATCH-UP MEETING
EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL OF DISTRIBUTED
BUSINESS MODELS TO MEET THE
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Dalberg

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February 23, 2017

Morning session	09:00-12:30
Afternoon session	01:30-04:30
Reception	04:30-06:00

Venue

Observer Research Foundation
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A catalogue with inspirational ideas

This catalogue presents impactful and inspirational ideas and initiatives that have been identified leading up to the Big Bets Match-Up Meeting in New Delhi on February 23, 2017. The puzzle of this Big Bets Match-Up Meeting meeting is to discover the potential of distributed business models within four key development sectors: water and sanitation, energy, creative manufacturing, and health.

Many people struggle to access water, sanitation services, adequate nutrition, and health care. For India to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it will require a new economic architecture that delivers inclusive employment and prosperity along with meaningful work to its young and growing workforce. India's private sector has highly concentrated forms of production and service delivery, which cause inequitable and environmentally unsustainable growth. Moreover, a new wave of automation is disrupting the potential of large factory models of industrialization to create jobs at scale.

In this idea catalogue, you will find 13 impactful ideas, initiatives and solutions that all attempt to address existing shortfalls or gaps in selected sectors. The catalogue presents short and concise descriptions and is intended to serve as a backdrop to the ideation and co-creation sessions at the meeting in Delhi.

During the meeting, entrepreneurs, intrapreneurs, investors, philanthropists, NGOs, companies and experts will work to lay the foundation for new powerful coalitions and co-create on improving ideas for the benefit of the SDG-agenda. By presenting insightful ideas, focusing on local issues related to distributed business models, and by engaging stakeholders that do not regularly (if ever) meet, the aspiration is to gather bright minds and resources in transforming ideas to implementable, scalable and economically viable solutions.

The Big Bet Initiative, Dalberg, Rockefeller Foundation, Ek Step Foundation and Observer Research Foundation look forward to welcoming all participants in Delhi on February 23.

How ideas were selected

The ideas in this catalogue are gathered through an inclusive process with inputs from a variety of actors who work within the innovation, entrepreneurial and/or development space. Based on a gross list of around 80 progressive ideas those featured here have been carefully shortlisted based on their potential to help achievement of the SDGs and their ability to scale. The following presentations of ideas are based on in-depth interviews with the entrepreneurs behind them. We thank them all for their willingness to openly their share ideas, visions and challenges.



WATER AND SANITATION

- 1 DRINKWELL**
MAKING THE WATER CRISIS AN
ENTREPRENEURIAL VENTURE
- 2 GARV TOILETS**
INNOVATING INDESTRUCTABLE
AND TECH-BASED TOILETS
- 3 NEXTDROP**
CREATING A BUSINESS ON
WATER LOST IN THE SOIL
- 4 SVADHA**
ORGANIZING A RURAL
SANITATION ECO-SYSTEM



**THE WORLD
NEEDS
BIG BETS**



MAKING THE WATER CRISIS AN ENTREPRENEURIAL VENTURE

DRINKWELL USES AN INNOVATIVE MICRO-FINANCE MODEL TO PURIFY CONTAMINATED GROUNDWATER INTO CLEAN DRINKING WATER



WHAT BIG BET ARE THEY MAKING?

Drinkwell is transforming the world's water crisis into entrepreneurial opportunities by using a micro-franchise model to provide clean drinking water in areas with contaminated groundwater. Drinkwell transforms existing arsenic and fluoride-affected tube wells by leveraging a resin technology that purifies water through removal of arsenic, fluoride, iron and bacteria. Subsequently, Drinkwell ensures water quality through routine testing and takes care of all maintenance, while decentralizing day-to-day operation and branding to entrepreneurs/NGOs. Drinkwell's network of entrepreneurs/NGOs generates income by selling purified drinking water in their local communities. The technology behind Drinkwell is well-tested and supplies nearly 200,000 villagers with safe water in South Asia.



WHAT CHALLENGE IS THE BIG BET SOLVING?

Ensuring safe drinking water is a major problem in India. Use of deep tube wells for water supply ensures access to water but exposes users to arsenic and/or fluoride poisoning. Arsenic - a colorless, odorless, naturally occurring metal - is found in dangerously high amounts within the groundwater in South Asia. Exposure to fluoride can result in fluorosis, a disease that results in mottling of teeth, stunted childhood development, and weak joints and bones. Exposure to arsenic can have health consequences, including arsenicosis, an incurable cancer-causing disease. The World Health Organization reports that the arsenic water crisis, affecting over 200 million people across 70 countries, is the largest mass poisoning in human history.

200
MILLION PEOPLE IN
THE WORLD IS
AFFECTED BY THE
ARSENIC WATER
CRISIS



HOW IS THE BIG BET INNOVATIVE?

Drinkwell provides a profitable business model for entrepreneurs to supply safe drinking water by providing them advanced cleaning technology. Drinkwell's patented technology is more cost- and resource-effective than best practice reverse osmosis methods. At the same time, it produces less waste. Drinkwell enables NGOs to capitalize on their social capital by providing safe drinking water that both improves health outcomes and generates sustainable revenue streams to finance other activities, such as provision of free sanitation. The next step is to improve identification of potential sites by creating a heat map showing arsenic levels, population density, and political interest.



WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

Drinkwell's team supports 71 entrepreneurs delivering safe water to over 41,000 individuals across India and Bangladesh (~\$1.5 million) in arsenic and fluoride tenders, including the largest arsenic/iron piped water system in the world at 190,000 m³/hr in West Bengal. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has opted to implement Drinkwell's technology that recovers 99% of input water over reverse osmosis systems that waste 50% of input water. Drinkwell is looking to expand further in India and Bangladesh.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO SCALE?

Drinkwell's business model could be implemented in all arsenic, fluoride, and iron-affected areas. The bottlenecks to scale are prolonged delays in site selection due to processing time for water quality reports and identification of areas with capable entrepreneurs and NGOs.

FINANCE

To scale their impact, Drinkwell is currently raising a \$500,000 pre-Series A convertible note round (\$375,000 raised) that would enable scale-up of a resin manufacturing facility, increase reserve inventory to enable faster delivery to existing customers, opening of additional sales offices, and hiring of operational staff to meet demand.

PARTNERSHIPS

To effectively manage decentral units, Drinkwell hopes to partner with NGOs that can leverage infrastructure and human capital, and with firms with a track record on public tenders. Further, Drinkwell wants to partner with organizations addressing the arsenic/fluoride issue to help with identification of appropriate sites and prospective entrepreneurs.

CAPACITY

Drinkwell needs to further communicate the success of their pilots, increase awareness of their product, and present the business opportunity to potential entrepreneurs. Further, they lack affordable asset financing facilities for rural entrepreneurs who are eager to operate a Drinkwell System but lack upfront capital.





INNOVATING INDESTRUCTIBLE AND TECH-BASED TOILETS

GARV TOILETS HAS DEVELOPED SUSTAINABLE AND INDESTRUCTIBLE SANITATION FACILITIES THAT CAN BE REMOTELY MONITORED



WHAT BIG BET ARE THEY MAKING?

Garv Toilets promotes sustainable solutions to sanitation through innovative toilet design and use of technology to track pertinent data. The company uses stainless steel for the construction of public toilets that are vandal-proof, rust-proof and easy to clean. Thus, while the initial capital costs are higher using steel instead of traditional materials (e.g. ceramic or cement), the listed benefits entail significant savings on operating expenditures in the long run, longer shelf-life and increased sanitation due to ease of cleaning. Garv Toilets currently offers six models catering to different user needs, such as "Toilets for her" and toilets equipped with bio-digesters. All models use solar panels to power LED lights, sensors and exhaust fans, while additional smart technology can provide real-time data on usage parameters, remotely monitor malfunctioning and automatically activate cleaning procedures (e.g. of floor and WC).



WHAT CHALLENGE IS THE BIG BET SOLVING?

Defecation in the open and its adverse health effects is a significant problem in India, due to the lack of access to proper sanitation facilities. This especially affects women. Garv Toilets attempts to solve this pressing issue by constructing public toilets in areas of great need, such as urban slum areas, market places, etc. The toilets are free to use and thus available for all citizens.



HOW IS THE BIG BET INNOVATIVE?

In addition to direct projects with sponsoring organizations, corporations and the like, Garv Toilets establishes long-term Public Private Partnerships with municipalities, offering full-package solutions with procurement, installation, operation and maintenance. Additional revenue is envisioned through advertising rights and business partnerships. The smart technology enables analysis of hygiene behavior and health data, with tracking of e.g. soap dispensers and toilet flushes. The strength of the approach lies especially in its sustainability and cost effectiveness over the long run. Also, the bio-toilets are well suited for areas without sewage coverage.



WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

After a year developing the product, Garv Toilets was launched in January 2016 and to date has installed a total of 198 toilets spread across Pune, Faridabad, Ujjain and Thimphu (Bhutan) with 20,000 unit uses per day. Garv Toilets currently has 17 full-time employees and is planning on expanding within India, as well as to neighboring countries and Africa. Garv Toilets signed its first agreement for construction of toilets in the capital of Bhutan in the fall, and will begin construction of toilets in Ghana in April as part of a Dutch-financed pilot project. With these contracts, Garv Toilets expects to reach 90,000 unit users by mid-2017. 95% of the toilets do not currently have smart technology, as partners do not currently recognize the added value received from the extra installation cost.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO SCALE?

Garv Toilets needs to increase awareness of their sustainable solutions to attract further projects. To generate additional revenue, Garv Toilets considers testing mobile-money pay-per-use and exploring further opportunities in the waste management sector.

FINANCE

Garv Toilets estimates that USD 300,000 is needed for 2017 to satisfy working capital requirements and to build a strong sales team necessary to speed up finalization of government contracts, which currently takes between 8-12 months - much longer than the rest of the processes in the business model.

PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships that understand the government's eco-system and with advocacy experience, since the largest constraint for expansion is the waiting time for finalization of contracts. Garv Toilets is also interested in partners that wish to fund installation and provide expertise in supply chain and marketing domains.

CAPACITY

In addition to well-trained sales people, the geographic expansion requires increased capital holdings and management of a subsequently larger supply chain. Garv Toilets thus needs human resources that can help manage the outsourced procurement of material as well as increased marketing efforts.





CREATING A BUSINESS ON WATER LOST IN THE SOIL

NEXTDROP IS INVESTIGATING AN AMBITIOUS IDEA. THEY WANT TO IDENTIFY AND FIX LEAKAGES IN WATER PIPES - AND EARN MONEY WHILE DOING IT



WHAT BIG BET ARE THEY MAKING?

NextDrop is developing a technology that increases efficiency of water distribution in India. By applying smart-meters to water pipes, NextDrop will be able to pinpoint water leakages and measure the scale of the leak. NextDrop hopes to create a viable business while improving access to water in India. Practically, NextDrop will operate as leak-identifier and fixer. NextDrop will charge the Indian public sector for the alternative cost of the water that would have been lost if they did not fix the leak. In this way, NextDrop lives off the extra income the Indian government is billing for the water that is distributed to the consumer instead of getting lost in the soil.



WHAT CHALLENGE IS THE BIG BET SOLVING?

According to NextDrop, India is currently losing at least 40% of their water supply, primarily due to leakages. This is estimated to around a billion dollars annually in water loss. The root of the problem is massive leakages caused by fluctuations in the water supply from the waterworks, which terrorizes the distribution system and causes distribution break-downs.

40%
OF ALL WATER
IN INDIA IS LOST
IN THE SOIL



HOW IS THE BIG BET INNOVATIVE?

NextDrop's business model is innovative by building on a win-win model that builds on profits from resources currently lost. NextDrop believes that the Indian government will also collect more revenue in general, because the current insecurity of water supply makes consumers buy their water from private corporations. The technology component is in the process of development, but if it works it will ease the identification and fixing of leakages.



WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

NextDrop's idea is still in the development phase, and they are currently figuring out if the project is technically feasible. However, they expect to have clarity on the technological possibilities in late February 2017. Currently, they are finalizing a contract with the Indian government on a different project in which they have linked valvemmen, engineers and consumers through an SMS-chain, sharing information about opening and closing of valves.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO SCALE?

To succeed, NextDrop is dependent on identifying someone willing to pay for the service. This would ideally be a branch of the public sector already in charge of the majority of the water distribution, but NextDrop is also exploring alternatives with corporates in the field.

FINANCE

NextDrop is looking for investments to develop and test the technology. Based on initial estimations, they are seeking around 1 million dollars. They need the capital up-front to hire tech-developers and initiate pilots. They are open to both equity-based and philanthropic funding.

PARTNERSHIPS

NextDrop is currently looking for partners who can help them develop the technical details of an innovative business model based on alternative costs from leakages.

CAPACITY

If NextDrop's idea is progressing as expected, NextDrop will significantly need quality hires, especially engineers and product developers.





Svadha
www.svadha.com

ORGANIZING A RURAL SANITATION ECO-SYSTEM

SVADHA EMPOWERS, HELP AND TRAIN ENTREPRENEURS TO CREATE A BUSINESS AROUND SELLING TOILET PRODUCTS TO THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITIES



WHAT BIG BET ARE THEY MAKING?

Svadha wants to ensure that households in India have their own toilet, instead of relying on community toilets or open defecation. Svadha provides quality and affordable sanitation for end-consumers by creating a sanitation eco-system with locally trained entrepreneurs. Svadha's main product is a complete package of the elements needed to construct a toilet. The products include bio-toilets with waste processing, toilet insurance and customizable packages of hygiene products. Furthermore, Svadha offers different services to entrepreneurs and consumers, such as masonry, community training, business development and consulting support.



WHAT CHALLENGE IS THE BIG BET SOLVING?

Lack of access to proper sanitation facilities is a major problem in India, with around half the population defecating in the open. According to Svadha, one of the main constraints in improving the conditions is the disorganized sanitation market faced by customers, as local sanitation shops typically have a limited and unreliable offering of sanitation materials. Customers thus face high prices and time costs in dealing with numerous distribution points. This poses a threat to women and girls forced to utilize unsafe sanitation facilities, which also negatively affect school attendance for millions of girls.

Krishna Mishra, Co-founder
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3.2%
OF INDIA'S
POPULATION USE
PUBLIC
TOILETS



HOW IS THE BIG BET INNOVATIVE?

Svadha addresses the full sanitation eco-system, providing one-stop solutions for entrepreneurs seeking business opportunities and customers seeking sanitation services. Svadha negotiates directly with manufacturers, ensuring affordable and quality products. An important element of the business model is free delivery to entrepreneurs, eliminating 'last-mile penalty', facilitating service access to remote communities and alleviating capital investment requirements (as entrepreneurs can buy small shipments instead of excessive bulk). The value proposition thus revolves around convenience for entrepreneurs, and Svadha benefits from the entrepreneurs' knowledge of demand in their community. End-consumers benefit through reliable access to quality products.



WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

Founded in mid-2014, after a series of pilots starting in 2012, Svadha currently has more than 280 entrepreneurs, reaching a total of approximately 100,000 end-consumers with sanitation solutions. Svadha covers 70% percent of districts in Odisha, and hopes to work with 900+ entrepreneurs in three years. They have recently expanded to Bihar and are planning on expanding to Andhra Pradesh next. They also work with NGOs, CSR foundations, and multinational corporations, who look for a capable partner with last-mile experience in WASH to coordinate project management, conduct market research projects, or provide consulting.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO SCALE?

Svadha has found 4 key drivers which will facilitate future scale: i) streamlining operations through ICT, ii) adequate marketing capacity to create 'pull' to Svadha's brand, iii) expanding product and service options to serve entrepreneurs and end-consumers even better, and iv) recruiting HR talent.

FINANCE

Svadha estimates they need USD 1 million over the next three years for carrying out geographical expansion, integrating software for supply chain management, improving product and service options through R&D, and developing marketing and communication strategies.

PARTNERSHIPS

Svadha wants to raise awareness of the benefits of improved sanitation through collective action, and is seeking collaboration with marketing experts, as well as government or nonprofit engagement in aspects that lack business profitability. They also want to expand the Board of Advisors and initiate partnerships around product development.

CAPACITY

Scaling is limited by capital in the near term, but the company hopes to further diversify its portfolio through offering more products and services and improving their software solutions (supply chain management) for entrepreneurs. This requires human resources in terms of skilled professionals and innovative minds.

SDGS
ADDRESSED
BY INITIATIVE





ENERGY

- 1 GLOBAL HIMALAYAN EXPEDITION**
USING TOURISM TO LIGHT UP REMOTE VILLAGES
- 2 LYTYFY**
FACILITATING CROWDLENDING TO OFF-GRID SOLAR ENERGY
- 3 ESSMART**
TAKING LIFE-IMPROVING TECHNOLOGIES THE LAST-MILE





USING TOURISM TO LIGHT UP REMOTE VILLAGES

GLOBAL HIMALAYAN EXPEDITION IMPROVES THE LIFE OF SOME OF THE MOST ELEVATED VILLAGES IN THE WORLD BY OFFERING TOURS AND HOMESTAYS



WHAT BIG BET ARE THEY MAKING?

Global Himalayan Expedition (GHE) leverages tourism to improve livelihoods through education, access to power and light, as well as revenue-generating activities. GHE leverages tourism and solar power to bring sustainable energy, digital education, wireless connectivity and livelihood creation to remote villages in Ladakh, one of the most elevated and coldest inhabited regions of the world. Specifically, GHE organizes leadership expeditions to and homestays in these remote locations, where participants, as part of their trip, contribute with funding and help set up micro-grids running on solar power. The region has ideal conditions for solar panels, with abundant sunlight due to the altitude, and clean and thin air.



WHAT CHALLENGE IS THE BIG BET SOLVING?

According to GHE, Over 100,000 villages in India remain in the dark, relying on unsustainable and polluting kerosene lamps and diesel generators. The people living in these villages live below the poverty line and can only sustain their basic livelihood from the crops they grow and animals they rear. The remoteness and harsh terrain makes connection to the country's conventional power lines unfeasible. Government agencies have electrified some villages and distributed solar chargeable lights, but the provision is insufficient for aspirational electrical loads and proper coverage. The lack of access to reliable light and power poses both safety concerns and hinders economic development.



HOW IS THE BIG BET INNOVATIVE?

The micro-grid solution used is based on Direct Current (DC) technology, an efficient design for decentralized power generation. The model is self-sustaining as the micro-grids are community-owned with the villagers paying monthly rental charges to finance maintenance and scalability. Thus, once tourists have provided initial funding and support in setting up the system, it can operate more or less independently. The grids' contributions are three-fold; i) sustainable solar power and energy-efficient lights; ii) access to internet technology and digital education; iii) income generation through promoting village homestays and marketing of local village products.



WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

Since GHE began its pilot model of solar energy micro-grids in 2014, it has electrified 25 villages and organized 15 homestays in the region of Ladakh, impacting more than 15,000 villagers. GHE currently has 8 full-time employees, and employs 35-40 contract staff to run expeditions, village surveys and install solar grids. GHE is also promoting digital literacy and access to knowledge, and introducing low-power computers, energy-efficient LED monitors and satellite connection for internet access. Recently, GHE has started Mountain Homestays, an initiative that enables the electrified villages to generate income from tourism and local products.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO SCALE?

GHE aims to electrify a total of 50 villages in 2017. GHE is also interested in expanding the model to other mountainous nations with similar architecture and energy challenges. Partnerships are already established in Nepal and Peru, but they believe to have a demand to set up operations across 20 countries. There is also still a lot of potential in Ladakh and surrounding regions in India.

FINANCE

Scaling is constrained by insufficient funding. They are open to various funding models except equity and debt funding. Currently, GHE is working on establishing the homestays as a self-reliant business model and identifying further revenue-generating activities. If they are to set up operations across 20 countries, GHE estimates a need of around 8-9 mil. USD.

PARTNERSHIPS

To expand the model, GHE is looking to establish partnerships with relevant partners in other countries to apply the model elsewhere or to export their indigenously developed microgrid products to other communities around the world.

CAPACITY

It is crucial for GHE to electrify additional villages as this is the core component of the business model and allows for additional activities. Thus, GHE needs to attract more participants through marketing efforts and increased logistical capacity, while still considering the negative consequences of increased tourism in the area (both culturally and environmentally).





FACILITATING CROWDLENDING TO OFF-GRID SOLAR ENERGY

LYTYFY HAS DEVELOPED AN ONLINE PLATFORM ENABLING SOCIAL INVESTORS TO INVEST IN FIXED SOLAR INSTALLMENTS TO RURAL CUSTOMERS



WHAT BIG BET ARE THEY MAKING?

Lytyfy combats energy poverty by ensuring finance to install affordable off-grid solar home lighting systems. Lytyfy has identified two major bottlenecks in provision of energy services in rural areas: lack of end-user financing and lack of a customer support mechanism. Lytyfy facilitates crowd lending from social investors to invest in fixed solar installments to rural customers. The installation of the technology is bundled with initial training and maintenance. Lytyfy assesses borrowers' repayment capability through a due diligence test, and subsequently matches social investors with projects on their online platform, where investors can track progress. They rely on revenues from interest on the loans and a margin off the products.



WHAT CHALLENGE IS THE BIG BET SOLVING?

Access to energy is a major problem in rural areas of India, where the lower-middle income segments lack liquid assets to finance the high initial fixed costs for installation of off-grid energy solutions. Many households thus rely on unsustainable sources of lighting, such as kerosene and lanterns, which also pose health risks to users.



HOW IS THE BIG BET INNOVATIVE?

The crowd lending model serves to validate demand while building communities of support. Lytyfy aims at connecting social investors directly with borrowers willing to adopt solar technology or clean energy projects in rural areas. In this way, the model provides a valuable service to households not reached by public service distribution, while generating profit for the firm. Lytyfy recruits field staff from and engages with local communities in order to be as responsive as possible to customers' needs, and to create local employment and empowerment.



WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

Lytyfy currently operates in Bihar with 8 full-time employees. Since starting operations in 2016, Lytyfy has successfully completed 2 pilot projects, raising almost half a million Rupees in financing for 150 end-users. By the end of 2017, Lytyfy aims to have installed 3000 lighting systems. The long-term goal is to reach 10 million beneficiaries in 5-6 years.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO SCALE?

The social investment platform has some inherent limitations to finance projects of larger scale. Lytyfy needs to raise awareness of their initiative and its benefits among potential investors to attract more funding. Additionally, Lytyfy is especially interested in learning from businesses that have gone through scaling process.

FINANCE

Lytyfy is looking for a sustainable flow of funds for loans. Either through social investors or through agreements with banks/MFIs.

PARTNERSHIPS

Lytyfy is exploring partnerships with banks and financial institutions to broaden their credit capacity. At the same time, Lytyfy is exploring collaborations with knowledge institutions and universities to analyze customer needs, repayment behavior and results.

CAPACITY

Low levels of social investments, poor ground level efficiency, lack of trained personnel and low capacity to analyze customer needs are some of the most important capacity constraints currently limiting scale and increase distribution of services.





TAKING LIFE-IMPROVING TECHNOLOGIES THE LAST-MILE

ESSMART BRIDGES THE DISTRIBUTION GAP IN INDIA BY BEING A ONE-STOP SHOP MODEL FOR MANUFACTURERS AND RETAILERS



WHAT BIG BET ARE THEY MAKING?

Essmart gives rural customers access to life-improving technologies by linking producers and end-users through local retail stores. Essmart is a last-mile distribution company for a catalogue of innovative, durable, socially impactful products, such as solar home lighting and fuel-efficient cooking appliances. Essmart's Sales Executives drive on routes into villages and build relationships with existing local retail stores. Sales Executives offer three vital services to the shops and their end customers: education about life-improving products through demonstrations; physical distribution of products to the shops; and facilitation of after-sales service, which gives customers the confidence they need to adopt an otherwise new and unfamiliar product. Essmart's model benefits all links in the supply chain, as end-users gain access to low-cost technologies as well as information on sustainable product use, shop owners get reliable product deliveries and earn margins on items sold, and manufacturers gain access to the market. Essmart also offers consultancy services for product developers (market research and feedback on pricing, etc.).



WHAT CHALLENGE IS THE BIG BET SOLVING?

A large variety of life-improving products have been developed, but are not obtaining their potential benefit due to lack of usage. The purchases of rural households are constrained by the supply in local retail stores, which in turn is limited by the retail owners' connection to product developers. Essmart fills this gap in the supply chain by offering a catalogue of quality products in the local retail stores.

7%
OF SALES VALUES IN
INDIA IS LOST
DUE TO POWER
OUTAGES



HOW IS THE BIG BET INNOVATIVE?

Essmarts bridges the distribution gap by leveraging existing infrastructure in the value chain. The business model relies on established trust-based relationships between local retail stores and their consumers to deliver life-improving products to end-consumers. The one-stop shop model for manufacturers and retailers, enables that one can buy in bulk from the former and distributing it on demand to the latter. By being a single point of contact, this model provides a flow of information from customers to producers, facilitating continuous improvement of products. Essmart also incentivizes retailers by offering higher margins than on other goods, and uses live demonstrations to illustrate the benefits of the products.



WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

Since starting operations in October 2012, Essmart has established 6 distribution centers in the region of Tamil Nadu. In addition to a facility manager and office administrator, each center has 4 sales executives covering a 60-kilometer radius. The 42 employees service 1,100 retail shops, of which 350 are classified as "active" (purchased in the last 60 days), offering over 100 different types of products, with total sales to date reaching 27,000 products. Essmart has developed their own app-based logistics management system that addresses the constraints in rural areas (e.g. lack of data connection). Within the next quarter, Essmart is establishing two new distribution centers in Karnataka and plans to expand to two additional southern states by the end of 2018, conditional on obtaining the necessary funding.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO SCALE?

Essmart is looking for funding to undertake both geographic expansion and increase the number of products offered. It is assessed that increasing operations and buying in bulk will enable the company to benefit from economies of scale and thus allow them to reach a break-even point over time.

FINANCE

Essmarts estimates that USD 1 million is needed to carry out their planned expansion to cover India's Southern states. Setting up distribution centers is capital intensive, with expenses covering storage space, hiring and teaching sales executives, cost of marketing and liquidity for buying products to be distributed.

PARTNERSHIPS

Essmart always looks for partnerships on new products, and is exploring the potential for sharing storage facilities and training of employees. Essmart also wants to help other distribution companies manage their supply chain with their logistics system, which is continuously being developed.

CAPACITY

Essmart identifies bulk buying as the biggest capacity constraint for expansion. Through marketing, Essmart has managed to attract and train the necessary human resources, but further efforts are needed for geographical expansion. The option of offering service delivery is also a potential field.





CREATIVE MANUFACTURING

- 1** **THREADS OF FREEDOM**
REINTEGRATING TRAFFICKING
VICTIMS THROUGH FASHION
- 2** **THE INITIATIVE**
EMPOWERING TRADITIONAL
CRAFTSWOMEN
- 3** **CRAFTISAN**
ORGANIZING FRAGMENTED
PRODUCERS





REINTEGRATING TRAFFICKING VICTIMS THROUGH FASHION

THREADS OF FREEDOM IS A HYBRID-NON-PROFIT SOCIAL ENTERPRISE WORKING TO REHABILITATE AND RE-INTEGRATE VICTIMS OF SEX-TRAFFICKING



WHAT BIG BET ARE THEY MAKING?

Threads of Freedom (ToF) rehabilitates and empowers sex trafficking victims by providing employment, medical care and counselling. ToF is a hybrid-non-profit social enterprise working to rehabilitate and reintegrate victims of sex trafficking and those at high risk of becoming victims. ToF works closely with the government, garment manufactures, fashion brands, and rescue centers to identify and rescue victims and provide jobs. The individuals are hired within the garment and apparel manufacturing sector, on equal terms with other employees, giving them job security and specialization. As part of the program, ToF offers accommodation, counseling, food, medical care, confidentiality, and training.



WHAT CHALLENGE IS THE BIG BET SOLVING?

Trafficking of women is a major problem in India with an estimated 18 million people living in slavery according to the 2016 Global Slavery Index. Victims of trafficking are marginalized and stigmatized, and often lack confidence and skills to reintegrate into society. Often they are spurned by their families and judged by the labor market, making it extremely difficult to start a new life. ToF provides jobs to enable stigmatized women to sustain themselves.



HOW IS THE BIG BET INNOVATIVE?

ToF is built on creative partnerships by utilizing a creative win-win-win mechanism: Orders received from fashion brands are placed with partner factories as incentive to hire more trafficking victims. In this way, ToF's candidates get jobs, manufacturers get orders, and fashion brands gain a positive narrative around how their products are helping survivors of trafficking.



WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

ToF is currently facilitating employment to 45 survivors in the Bangalore area, and is currently starting its operation in Mumbai with an expected initial batch of 90 candidates. Moreover, they are assessing the potential of expanding to major cities across India, including Delhi, Kolkata, and Hyderabad, and to cities like Dhakka and Pnom Phen with high incidence of trafficking.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO SCALE?

ToF is currently at the proof of concept stage. In their own assessment, they could serve a much larger group of beneficiaries both in India and in a range of large developing countries.

FINANCE

For the national and international expansion, a funding gap of between 3,000,000 - 4,000,000 rupees is estimated. ToF insists on their status as social enterprise and is therefore looking for investments not only driven by financial returns.

PARTNERSHIPS

ToF is looking for strong partnerships throughout the entire chain of operation. ToF are especially looking for fashion brands willing to be a part of the initiative.

CAPACITY

To grow as intended in Mumbai and Delhi, ToF needs to employ sufficient operational and counselling personnel. Moreover, capabilities to handle bureaucratic requirements when working with government rescue homes is a core resource need.





EMPOWERING TRADITIONAL CRAFTSWOMEN

THE INITIATIVE IS OFFERING FLEXIBLE WORKING CONDITIONS TO TRADITIONAL CRAFTSWOMEN AND CONNECT THEM TO NEW MARKETS



WHAT BIG BET ARE THEY MAKING?

The Initiative sustains handcrafting practices while empowering an underprivileged group with a sustainable income and increased personal independence. The Initiative is a social enterprise founded in 2013 to provide sustainable livelihoods to low-income craftswomen. The Initiative currently trains and employs women to make handcrafted Godhadis, which are blankets native to the Maharashtra-area. Sewing machines are provided to their employees if needed, allowing the women to work conveniently from their homes. The employees are paid per piece produced with no fixed rental costs, and are given the freedom to decide how much time they commit to work. The Initiative gives the craftswomen design guidelines that leave plenty of room for individual creativity.



WHAT CHALLENGE IS THE BIG BET SOLVING?

Craftswomen are usually tied to their homes due to housekeeping responsibilities. Traditional values and practices reinforce this tendency by deterring some women from opening bank accounts and using mobile phones. This combination makes it more difficult for the women to possess jobs outside the home.



HOW IS THE BIG BET INNOVATIVE?

The Initiative introduces a flexible business model that focuses on the craftswomen's life and needs. The women are able to balance work hours with other responsibilities, obtaining a much-needed balance in their everyday lives. By reducing the gap between craftswomen and markets, The Initiative welcomes a largely underutilized group to the labor market, and empowers their personal independence by providing them a job they can perform from home.



WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

The Initiative currently employs 13 women around Mumbai/Pune in the Maharashtra-region. The Initiative previously employed 39 women, but was faced with a variety of operational issues – e.g. attracting sufficient orders to guarantee the craftswomen a sustainable income. Consequently, The Initiative decided to downscale to focus their efforts on ensuring a sustainable income for those in most need. They have received financial support and advice from UnLtd India in 2013 and were a part of Techno-serve's accelerator-program for business support in 2015.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO SCALE?

The Initiative estimates, within the current operational setup, to be able to employ 150-200 craftswomen in Mumbai. However, the potential is deemed to be much higher with millions of artisans in India. The hope is to scale gradually and sustainably.

FINANCE

The Initiative is not looking for investments, but needs assistance setting up an operational system that preserves product quality and improves the lives of the beneficiaries. They look for business angels that take the craftswomen's lives seriously and understand the need to provide sufficient work for them.

PARTNERSHIPS

The Initiative is collecting data on the employees, but is unsure how to use it in the right way, and is therefore looking for partners in that space. They also want to establish a progressive advisory board of people with an interest in the holistic health of the organization.

CAPACITY

The Initiative is currently looking for a good coordinator to take lead on the operational and logistical challenges that arise when working with beneficiaries that aren't easily accessible – neither physically nor technologically.





ORGANIZING FRAGMENTED PRODUCERS

CRAFTISAN® DEMOCRATIZES THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES BY LINKING PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS ONLINE



WHAT BIG BET ARE THEY MAKING?

CRAFTISAN® is a mission driven social enterprise that operates an ethical online, curated art and craft platform, enabling market linkages between producers and buyers, eliminating middle layers and ensuring product authenticity and source transparency. CRAFTISAN® links producers and consumers through an online commercial platform where all content is curated and presented together with a background story. CRAFTISAN® uses technology to aggregate previously fragmented producers in a repeatable and scalable manner, thereby equalizing opportunities for producers and democratizing the informal creative and cultural industry through direct market access.



WHAT CHALLENGE IS THE BIG BET SOLVING?

CRAFTISAN® eases access to markets for local producers, stimulating local growth and employment while increasing the producers' independence of centralized corporations with dubious labor conditions. Handlooms and Handicrafts employ an estimated 11 million people in India's second largest employment sector, namely the creative and cultural industry. On one side, the producers lack access to buyers and rely on many middle layers with each taking a cut of the price, resulting in rock-bottom prices for producers. On the other side, consumers have difficulty judging the quality and authenticity of handmade artisanal products due to lack of transparency in the market.



HOW IS THE BIG BET INNOVATIVE?

CRAFTISAN®'s business model is innovative due to its transparent, democratized and inclusive approach to simplify and streamline market linkages. In contrast to existing retail and e-commerce focusing on just the product, CRAFTISAN® provides a content-rich, immersive exchange experience for the consumer in celebrating and promoting the philosophy of handwork. For the producer, CRAFTISAN® provides a full-service solution, including branding, story and content writing, social media outreach and digital marketing.



WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

Launched in 2013, CRAFTISAN® has expanded considerably. Currently, the online platform features partnerships with 64 NGOs, Self-Help Groups, Craft Clusters and 170 individual artisans and master craftspeople. The online platform showcases 103 different art and craft forms from 87 different regions, impacting more than 300,000 livelihoods. CRAFTISAN® employs 12 people, who carry out product mapping and run the online platform and operations. To date, CRAFTISAN® has self-financed its operations and has also received funding for specific project interventions (e.g. special application of its technology platform, financial inclusion, and capacity building).

WHAT IS NEEDED TO SCALE?

CRAFTISAN® identifies two paths for the future; i) focusing on continued aggregation and organization of a fragmented supply chain; ii) enabling producers contemporize traditional products and creating a global ethical fashion label. CRAFTISAN® believes that is possible to scale to other regions and countries with traditional handicrafts. With the right infusion of capital to fund growth, economies of scale will secure a break-even point in a 3-5 year timeframe.

FINANCE	PARTNERSHIPS	CAPACITY
Capital from social venture funds, foundations, trusts, philanthropists or individuals interested in bringing about social and economic development at the BOP.	B2B partnerships (retail brands and museum stores that serve segments of purveyors with affinity to and appreciation of ethically sourced handmade products); supply side partnerships (producers and groups with increased touch points in the value chain) and; government partnerships (to create and foster an enabling environment and ecosystem).	Human resources to carry out product mapping with focus on design, curation, and quality, write culturally relevant website content, manage marketing strategy, and continued technology development.



HEALTH

- 1 FORUS HEALTH**
ERADICATING BLINDNESS WITH COMFORTABLE DEVICES
- 2 IKURE**
CLOUD-COMPUTING BRINGS HEALTH CARE TO RURAL INDIA
- 3 MERA DOCTORS**
USING APPS TO CREATE A HEALTHCARE ECO-SYSTEM



**THE WORLD
NEEDS
BIG BETS**



ERADICATING BLINDNESS WITH COMFORTABLE DEVICES

FORUS HEALTH HAS DEVELOPED ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY THAT CAN BE USED WITH MINIMAL TRAINING ALLOWING FOR DEPLOYMENT IN RURAL AREAS.



WHAT BIG BET ARE THEY MAKING?

Forus Health eradicates preventable blindness by increasing access and affordability of eye screening using advanced technology. Forus Health has developed their own product line of eye screening devices which are considerably cheaper than existing technology, increasing affordability. The devices are also portable, compact and can be operated by a minimally trained technician, allowing deployment in remote areas. The first product, called 3Nethra, can pre-screen five ophthalmic diseases in just 5 minutes, which collectively contribute to nearly 90% of blindness in India. The Forus team takes care of all steps in the process, including Research and Development, manufacturing, installation and sales abroad.



WHAT CHALLENGE IS THE BIG BET SOLVING?

Delivery of healthcare is a serious challenge in India. Low doctor-to-patient ratio, illiteracy and poor infrastructure constrain public service delivery. According to Forus Health, 15 million of the world's 40 million blind people live in India, which is mainly due to limited access to eye care facilities, high cost of treatment and lack of awareness. An even higher number of people are visually impaired. 80% of cases are avoidable.



HOW IS THE BIG BET INNOVATIVE?

Forus Health's business model revolutionizes healthcare delivery by leveraging cloud storage, telemedicine and data center facilities to democratize screenings. Imaging centers, run by the Government or entrepreneurs, purchase packages of eye screenings on a subscription basis that they offer to end-users, charging a patient fee per report. The cloud run telemedicine platform facilitates remote diagnosis by reviewers (ophthalmologists), who also receive a fee per report. This low-cost solution thus addresses the constraints posed by infrastructure and limited qualified professionals through technology and online solutions.



WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

Founded in 2010, Bangalore based Forus Health today employs 120 people. In 2012-2013, they raised USD 13 million from Asian Healthcare Fund and the venture capital funds Accel Partners and IDG Ventures. Starting with a product idea, Forus Health has now developed five products, the latest being a device preventing blindness in prematurely-born babies. The company has sold over 1,400 products in 26 countries, performing more than 2 million eye screenings around the world. They are beginning to launch a few products on the global market. The remaining products are undergoing regulatory certification and are to date only available in India. The subscription based business model is only implemented in India.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO SCALE?

Forus Health is currently expanding both product lines and scaling the geographical reach of their business model. Considering the scale of visual impairment worldwide, the potential for scaling is significant.

FINANCE

To scale, Forus Health estimates that another USD 12-15 million in equity from both impact investors and commercial businesses are needed. Furthermore, as their business model relies on cost-recovery over a long-time period (typically 12 months), access to low-cost debt is desired.

PARTNERSHIPS

Collaboration with NGO, CSOs, governments and networks of entrepreneurs wishing to operate the devices on subscription basis, and perhaps offer the service free-of-cost to the poorest patients.

CAPACITY

Raising awareness of eye-diseases in the population is necessary for increased impact. Further, analysis and studies of beneficiary behavior could identify potential areas for improvements. The availability of reviewers is a possible constraint as the number of screenings increases.





CLOUD-COMPUTING BRINGS HEALTH CARE TO RURAL INDIA

IKURE HAS DEVELOPED AN ONLINE COLLABORATION PLATFORM THAT CAN BE USED BY HEALTH WORKERS IN FIELD TO SHARE VITALS OF PATIENTS WITH DOCTORS



WHAT BIG BET ARE THEY MAKING?

iKure utilizes cloud-computing to bring affordable primary health care and prevention services to underserved areas in India. iKure is based on the medical collaboration platform, WHIMS, a smart phone-driven technology, which increases the efficiency of health work in rural areas. WHIMS can be used in areas without access to internet or electricity by health workers in the fields, to capture and share vitals of patients with doctors. Practically, iKure is operating through a hub-and-spoke clinic set up. They employ local health workers, who support doctors' treatment by visiting patients in between consultations, equipped with WHIMS and devices to provide monitoring and diagnostic services at the patient's door step. Patients usually get free initial check-up availed through digitized health cards, and pay 1/3 of the market price for actual treatment.



WHAT CHALLENGE IS THE BIG BET SOLVING?

iKure was a reaction to a lack of functional technology that could be applied in rural areas and thus enable quick treatment and consultation in their areas. The vast majority of the population in India lives in rural areas, and do not have access to adequate health care. A challenge that will be hard for India to solve with the regular health system alone.



HOW IS THE BIG BET INNOVATIVE?

The technology enables health workers to work in the interface between patients and beneficiaries. iKure's technology intervention both improves the magnitude and quality of health services. It collects data primarily shared with doctors to support health screening and early detection of diseases. This data is also used to develop new services and innovative activities such as a car health service, an impact investment framework, a mother-child framework developed in cooperation with U-M, partnership with MIT on predictive healthcare models for 2025, and a partnership with University of Oxford on development of a microscopic camera scanning for oral cancer through biometric mapping.



WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

iKure is currently working in rural areas, serving 3,5 million people across 1,700 villages in six states. They have 55 people on their payroll, including doctors and tech-developers, and 170 health workers on the ground, working primarily on a volunteer basis, but receive donations from beneficiaries. These people work out of 45 spokes clinics and 3 hubs. iKure has a sustainable business model and has already attracted funding, but are currently searching for equity based funding and angel investments. iKure has partnerships with multilateral institutions and top-class universities and have been acknowledged by a number of important stakeholders, most notably the President of India.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO SCALE?

In 5 years, iKure plans to serve 10 million people in eight states. iKure believes that the technology can be scaled to almost any developing country and is currently on a pilot with the World Bank and IFC in Africa to test the market.

FINANCE

iKure is currently raising funds to build a sufficient team to scale their expansion. They specifically need support to a required ground mobilization of important stakeholders.

PARTNERSHIPS

Since iKure is working in rural areas and is very dependent on volunteers and local doctors, they need help by local partners in the initial, comprehensive mobilization and outreach phase.

CAPACITY

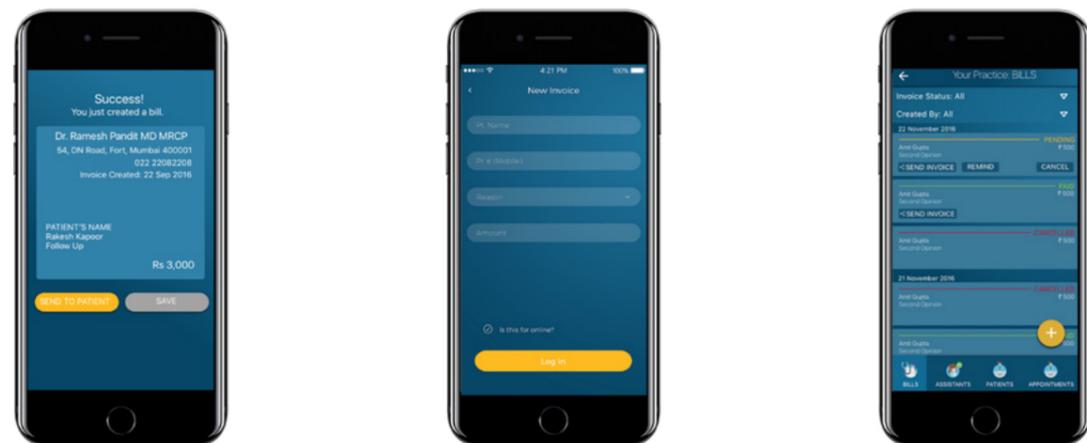
iKure has partnerships with a range of top-level institutions on a variety of projects, and is currently mostly in need of partnerships that can help mobilize funding.





USING APPS TO CREATE A HEALTHCARE ECO-SYSTEM

MHEALTH VENTURES INDIA HAS DEVELOPED A DIGITAL PAYMENT SYSTEM FOR DOCTORS WITH THE POTENTIAL OF INCREASING ACCESS AND QUALITY OF HEALTH CARE IN INDIA



WHAT BIG BET ARE THEY MAKING?

mHealth Ventures India (MVI) is creating an eco-system that can increase access and quality of health care services in India. MVI started facilitating telemedicine services by connecting doctors with patients via phone, and through the MeraDoctor app using a chat function since 2013. Through technology interventions, MVI is expanding their efforts trying to develop an eco-system that can move the needle on health care services in India. As a first step, they have developed the digital payment service Paycillin, in which certified and verified doctors via an app can issue bills to patients who can choose every digital payment method available in India, including loans. Doctors can use this software for all their clinic billing and data needs. Through Paycillin, MVI aims at having patients' health data available for doctors in a cloud, which will improve mutual learning and increase the quality of health services.



WHAT CHALLENGE IS THE BIG BET SOLVING?

The private sector is the dominant provider of healthcare services in India given the low public spending on healthcare. The private system is fragmented and patients usually pay out of pocket in cash. According to MVI, India lacks public health insurances that operate at scale, and private insurance companies have a very low penetration rate. With around 80 percent of India's doctors serving only 28 percent of its population and almost 99% of outpatient clinics in India not actively using technology in everyday practice (with exceptions as directory listings), digitizing clinics and embedding tech in the daily workflows of doctors opens a massive opportunity to improve quality, access and cost of care in India.

80%
OF THE DOCTORS IN
INDIA SERVE ONLY
28% OF THE
POPULATION



HOW IS THE BIG BET INNOVATIVE?

MVI believes in a digital transformation in the health sector that is currently complex and fragmented. Their approach involves working with doctors and patients bottom up to build a digital platform that uses technology to improve access and care. There are three aspects to this innovation: i) digitizing payments in clinic adds a very useful technology layer to the doctors' daily workflow, while it also builds up data on the practice; ii) getting a critical mass of doctors on-board will allow doctors to innovate around new service delivery and insurance models; and iii) a patient database that can improve the quality of health services both by giving insights into previous treatments and being a learning platform for doctors.



WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

After setting up a virtual hospital that served over 400,000 patients across all states in India, MVI decided to focus on getting local doctors on-board to enable better care and referral flows. They have built a clinic payment and billing solution that has been positively received by doctors. Over 15,000 doctors have signed up for the software and they are in the process of refining the tool and growing the base. By using the payment system, they now aim at creating a digital platform, where patients, doctors, labs, insurance companies and pharmacies can interact and offer/seek services.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO SCALE?

MVI aspires to scale the existing portfolio until it reaches a sufficient size to be a reasonable investment. They have received funding in multiple rounds, including from SIDA, but hope to be ready for the next round in 4-5 months. Their estimated scaling potential is to somewhere between 700,000 - 800,000 doctors and medical practices.

FINANCE

Capital is a constraint to scale, and MVI estimates that they will be looking for around 3.5-5.5 million USD of equity funding in the next round.

PARTNERSHIPS

To create a complete eco-system, MVI wants to work with big players in healthcare like insurance companies and national and local government. Partnerships with insurers will help MVI create new offerings for patients on their network, while working with government will allow MVI to perform tasks as e-prescriptions.

CAPACITY

MVI will need to strengthen their technology and software development team in order to scale. This expansion is primarily constrained by lack of sufficient funding.

