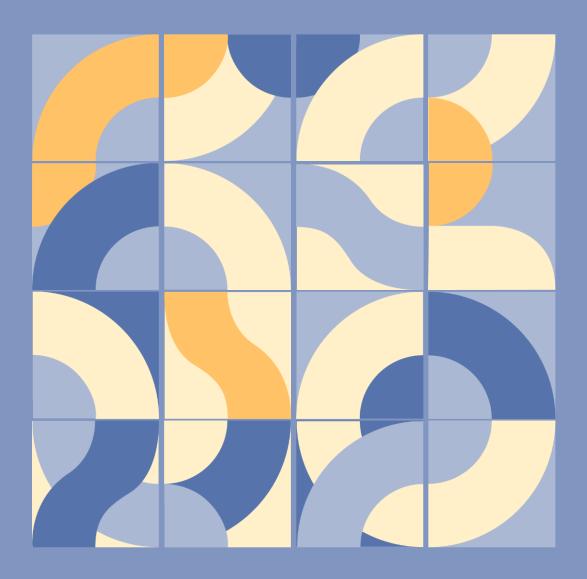
TCS

Report of the Impact Assessment of BridgeIT programme, Development Focus, Bangalore

April 2023





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Acknowledgements 1.

We would like to thank the entrepreneurs who participated in the survey in the course of this assessment, as well as Mr. Thomas Paul of Development Focus for giving us insights into the BridgeIT Programme. We thank the team at TCS for providing us relevant information as required for conduct of this Impact Assessment.

About this report

This report has been prepared for TCS by Nous Consultants towards performing impact assessment for the selected CSR projects. The assessment was carried out by Nous Consultants in April 2023.

Brief Description of Project 3.

Organisation	Development Focus, Bengaluru		
Project Description	Bridge IT aims to bridge access and competency gap between marginalized communities and mainstream society using digital tools BridgeIT acts as an enabler for removing illiteracy among adults, giving children better education and creation of rural e-entrepreneurs, by providing them access and control over IT tools/ Computers.		
Agreement Period	Jan 2020 to Dec 2022 – Three years TCS Financial Support Jan 2022 to Dec 2025 – Self-sustaining mode of project		
Budgeted Amount	Agreement 2 - Rs. 26,900,000		

Note: The project was closed in December 2021 after mutual discussion due to certain challenges on the ground

The process for the impact assessment included:

- Review of Activity Reports
- Phone interview with Director of Development Focus, Mr. Thomas Paul
- Phone interviews with entrepreneurs supported under BridgeIT programme
- Review of qualitative and quantitative changes brought about by the funds provided

The project primarily focused on the enterprise aspect of the intervention. The effects of interventions in education for children and adults were not part of the assessment.

Project Overview 4.

Development Focus was registered as a Trust in 2006, with the mission:

To create relevant opportunities for the most marginalized sections of society, by engaging with and building the capacity of civil society actors, such that it leads to Educated, Egalitarian and **Empowered communities**

Their work is spread across 1225 villages in 23 districts located in five states. They have nine key projects through which they work, focused around children's education, adult literacy and sustainable enterprises and livelihoods. Development Focus also played an active role in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to support communities they worked with.

4.1 BridgeIT programme

The CSR of Tata Consultancy Services conceptualized the BridgeIT project to bridge this digital divide and take these online services to remote rural areas. To achieve this, TCS partnered with Development Focus, an NGO based in Bangalore, which has been implementing these projects since 2017, to train youth from disadvantaged communities to use computers and technology to provide online services to their communities. The project also provides sustainable livelihood to unemployed rural youth.

Bridge IT aims to bridge access and competency gap between marginalized communities and mainstream society using digital tools

BridgeIT acts as an enabler for removing illiteracy among adults, giving children better education and creation of rural e-entrepreneurs, by providing them access and control over IT tools/ Computers

The key objectives of the project are to:

- Provide supplementary academic inputs to primary school children (grade one to five) through Pratham's Computer Aided Learning (CAL) module
- Facilitate digital literacy for middle school children (grade six to eight)
- Improve adult literacy in village communities through TCS Computer Based Functional Literacy (CBFL) software
- Provide, facilitate, improve and groom young men and women from socially and economically disadvantaged communities to be successful rural e-entrepreneurs

4.2 Implementation process

In the programme period under assessment, BridgeIT was implemented by Development Focus in Karnataka and Odisha in partnership with local NGOs.

State	Karnataka	Odisha
Local NGO	Don Bosco Social Services, Devdurga Vimukti Charitable Trust, Pothnal	People's Rural Education Movement, Berhampur
Villages/ Entrepreneurs	Raichur – 16 Yadgir - 16	Gajapati – 16 Rayagada - 16

The villages are selected based on a few parameters including socio-economic conditions, composition of population with a focus on tribal communities, levels of poverty, opportunities for employment for the youth, access to education, communication access and internet facilities.

"The objective was to reach villages and communities which are excluded from development." Mr. Thomas Paul, Director of Development Focus

Once the villages are identified, young men and women are invited to submit their applications. The candidates should have passed 10th standard, and should not be employed elsewhere at the time of application.

A short, written test and a practical participatory exercise was conducted to assess the candidates. The selection of candidates was done by a Livelihoods Committee in each cluster.

Upon selection, all participants were trained for three months on use of the computer and also provided skills for running a business enterprise. Following the training there is constant follow-up with the entrepreneurs for any handholding and support they require.

All entrepreneurs are given equipment to start their business and also a stipend.

For the 2020 cohort, the entrepreneurs received a stipend of Rs.5,000 per month for one year. All entrepreneurs were given a laptop.

4.3 Key outcomes of the Bridge IT programme

Through the Bridge IT programme communities and households in remote, rural areas now have access to online services.

110 educated youth from disadvantaged backgrounds are earning a decent living in their own villages by serving their community.

Some of the key outcomes of the programme are as follows:

- Youth who had no knowledge of using a computer or a printer have now set up Common Service Centres (CSCs) and Common Service Point (CSP) to serve their communities.
- Most of them have successfully set up a shop providing both online and offline services
- Community members are very happy to have various online and offline services made available to them right at their doorstep
- Entrepreneurs and their families have a better quality of life, many of them solely relying on the income earned.
- They provide legal services to people in their villages and act as a link with the legal fraternity to seek justice.
- Some entrepreneurs provide event photography and videography services during weddings, birthdays, and festivals by providing photos, videos, and albums
- Entrepreneurs have gained respect among the community and are seen as knowledge centres in their village – this in spite of being shunned initially as a member of a marginalized or excluded community or as a woman.
- Women entrepreneurs have gained confidence and the ability to support themselves and their families despite the cultural stereotypes. Many of them have put off early marriages
- Entrepreneurs have expanded their business to the extent that some of them are now able to provide jobs to other young people in their communities.
- Entrepreneurs have braved the lockdowns due to the pandemic, floods and storm in Odisha, and social pressure to give up, especially for the women entrepreneurs.

Review of Project Supported 5.

January 2020 to December 2022 – Three years TCS Financial Support January 2022 to December 2025 – Self-sustaining mode of project

Module Name	Clusters	Cluster Location	State	Entrepreneurs
Odisha Module 1	Cluster 1 and Cluster 2	Rayagada District	Odisha	16
Odisha Module 1	Cluster 3 and Cluster 4	Gajapati District	Odisha	16
North Karnataka Module 2	Cluster 1 and Cluster 2	Raichur District	Karnataka	16
North Karnataka Module 2	Cluster 3 and Cluster 4	Yadgir District	Karnataka	16
Total	8	4	2	64

Financial Grant

	Year 2: Year 3: 2,089,000	Year 4: 1,645,000	Year 5: 1,449,000	Total: 26,900,000
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Note: The project was closed in December 2021 after mutual discussion due to certain challenges on the ground.

5.1 2020 - Odisha

Cluster	No. of Entrepreneurs	Total Income	Average Income
Gumma	8	1,344,129	168,016
Female	3	726,979	242,326
Male	5	617,150	123,430
Gunupur	8	3,891,211	486,401
Female	4	1,786,434	446,609
Male	4	2,104,777	526,194
Mohana	8	993,816	124,227
Female	4	192,656	48,164
Male	4	801,160	200,290
Padampur	8	1,411,773	176,472
Female	4	544,376	136,094
Male	4	867,397	216,849
Grand Total	32	7,640,929	238,779

Note: Data is for November 2020 to December 2021

The average monthly income is around Rs.17,000. Entrepreneurs in Gunupur Cluster have highest average income at around Rs.35,000, and there is not much difference between women and men's earnings.

However, in Mohana Cluster, average monthly income is less than Rs.9,000 and for women it is around Rs.3.400.

5.2 Profile of an entrepreneur: Dilip Gamango, Gumma, Odisha

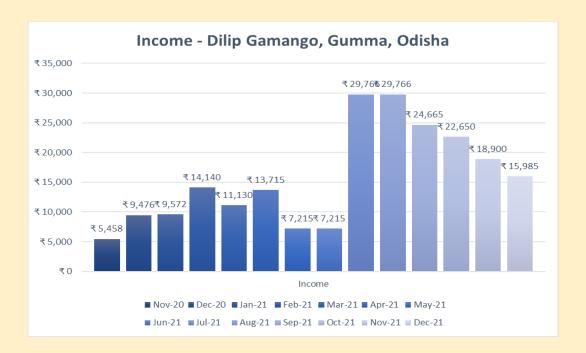
Dilip Gamango is 28 years old. He has completed a Diploma in IT. In 2020 he came to know about the BridgeIT programme from an advertisement in the office of a local organisation. He made an application and was selected.

Dilip had lost his parents in an accident and was wondering what to do next when this opportunity came and changed the course of his life. If he had not joined BridgeIT, he would have migrated for work. He is now married and has a young daughter. He has two brothers who support his business as well.

Initially he received training in Computers and how to run a business. The training was conducted online. He was also given a computer. With the stipend of Rs.12,000 per month that he received, he took out a loan and bought a printer and lamination machine and cutter, photocopy machine and ATM swipe machine. He also got an optic fibre connection for the internet and has bought an inverter since the area has power cuts.

He is now a registered Community Service Centre and mo-Seva Kendra. He provides government services and banking services, as well as booking tickets. The centre is located in a remote area and is highly beneficial to people in the four neighbouring Gram Panchayats. He gets over 200 customers daily. He says with satisfaction, "Today I am economically stable, and my business is growing. I often go to older people's homes, taking services like pension and banking to their doorsteps."

Cluster	Entrepreneur	Total Income	Average Income	Max Income	Min Income
Gumma	Dillip Gamango	219,653	15,690	29,766	5,458



5.3 2020 – Karnataka

Cluster	No. of Entrepreneurs	Total Income	Average Income
Devadurga	8	8,28,108	1,03,514
Female	6	5,84,928	97,488
Male	2	2,43,180	1,21,590
Gabbur	8	9,50,774	1,18,847
Female	4	3,43,206	85,802
Male	4	6,07,568	1,51,892
Wadgera	8	23,33,614	2,91,702
Female	4	13,51,716	3,37,929
Male	4	9,81,898	2,45,475
Yadgir	8	49,01,823	6,12,728
Female	4	9,26,088	2,31,522
Male	4	39,75,735	9,93,934
Grand Total	32	90,14,319	2,81,697

Note: Data is for November 2020 to December 2021

On average monthly income has been around Rs.20,000, however in DEvdurga and Gabbur it is less than Rs.10,000 per month.

Other than Wadgera, income of women is lesser than that of men in all clusters. Earning in Yadgir cluster is the highest, and men have much higher income than women in this cluster.

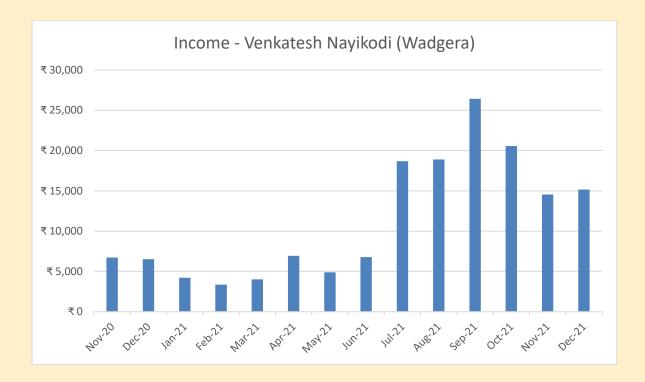
Profile of an entrepreneur: Venkatesh Nayikodi

Venkatesh Nayikodi is from Wadgera in Yadgir District. He is 21 years old. He has completed a bachelor degree in economics and is currently studying B.Ed. He got to know about BridgeIT from the school teacher. He was already familiar with computers and the training he received helped him further. The training in how to run a business has helped him.

He got a computer and a projector from the project, and later invested in purchasing a printer, computer, inverter, camera. In addition to this, he got a stipend of Rs.5,000 for a year. Around 20 to 30 customers from neighbouring villages come to his centre everyday.

He provides all digital services related to government services and banking. This is the only centre in the area and the services are beneficial to all the local people. He would like further training in business to improve his centre.

Entrepreneur	Total	Average	Max	Min
	Income	Income	Income	Income
Venkatesh Nayikodi	157,618	11,258	26,416	3,354



6. Overall assessment

The BridgeIT programme has helped to bring digital services to remote parts of the country. For people living in these places, it has made it easier to access a range of government services and banking facilities. It has also made fulfilment of personal needs such as photography and printing affordable and accessible.

From the available data and interviews with the entrepreneurs it is evident that BridgeIT was a successful intervention in terms of building capacities of entrepreneurs, giving them a secure and sustainable livelihood and income earning source. This is also evidenced in the income data available till December 2021.

There is gender balance in selection of entrepreneurs. The two entrepreneurs who were interviewed (one from Yadgir, Karnataka and one from Gumma, Odisha) gave testimony to the positive impact of the BridgeIT programme in their lives. They have built on the business with support from the BridgeIT programme and developed it according to the local needs.

The capacity building programmes has enhanced their confidence in handling computers, and also developed their entrepreneurial skills.

The linkage with the Community Service Centre programme has been positive for all the entrepreneurs interviewed.



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