

ANNUAL REPORT

Financial Year
2005-06



DRISHTEE FOUNDATION

Communicating ICT & Development

Introduction

Drishtee Foundation, a Not-for-Profit Organization, is engaged in the activities of Research and Promotion of ICTs (Information and Communication Technology) in rural India for socio-economic development of the region and bridging the digital divide. It facilitates communication link between ICT and its users (through ICT Kiosks or information centres) for their sustainable livelihood and development. The organization plays a catalytic role in enhancing the reach and results for economic and social benefits to rural community through the ICT networks, mainly through **Research** – to increase the viability component and through **Promotions** – to step up the sustainability factor. It has successfully completed several projects on ICTs for rural community that has benefited the local administration as-well-as the millions of villagers living in the remote villages.

Vision

Drishtee Foundation, established in Feb 2003, with its vision '**Communicating ICT for Development**' is one of the very few organizations in India who are working for bridging the gap between the ICTs and the rural communities.

Drishtee Foundation carries out **project based research** for both 'Drishtee' (its implementing partner) and Other Partners (Central & State Governments, Govt. Undertakings, NGOs, Corporate, Social sector, etc.) for need analysis, demand estimation, baseline, impact assessment, benchmarking and other viability studies focused on maximizing and chanelizing the benefits of ICT driven implementations for the rural community.

DF also works on project basis for **promotions and community sensitization**, through 'Operation Chetna', to bridge the gap between ICT centres and the end-users. This also includes **awareness drives and capacity building** programs run among villagers to enable them to absorb the concept of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) and also get ready to exploit its potential.

The programmes and activities of Drishtee Foundation ultimately are aimed to create a long-term, dynamic and multifaceted relationship between the end-users and the service providers through the network of Kiosks, (for Drishtee – the Kiosks are called as 'Drishtee Soochnalaya' or 'Drishtee Centre'), thus stepping up the 'sustainability factor'.

Mission

'To Understand, Promote and Synergize the ICTs for socio-economic development of rural community'.

Mandate for the Foundation Activities:

- Drishtee Foundation to act as a catalyst for the setting up of ICT centers through survey activities and Need Assessment.
- Drishtee Foundation to operate in the areas where ICT centers are located.
- Not to establish its' own ICT centers in the rural areas.

- DF could take up consultancy activity for carrying out Need Assessment Surveys and Viability Assessment on a professional basis.
- To promote the usage of ICT applications for the social and economic development of the villagers.
- The area of operation of DF to be the areas covered under the Panchayati Raj Institutions.
- Drishtee Foundation to promote the network of the ICT and to extend the learning of Drishtee to other ICT projects worldwide.
- DF to assist in the development of content and application to be deployed in ICTs.

Governing Body and Founder Members

1. President - Mrs. Mamta Mishra
2. Vice- President - Mr. Manish Kumar
3. General Secretary - Mrs. Swapna Mishra
4. Secretary - Mrs. Chandan,
5. Treasurer - Mr. Shailesh K. Thakur
6. Member – Mr. Satyan Mishra
7. Member - Nitin Gachhayat
8. Member - Mrs. Meenu Mishra

Core Activities

Our activities follow three basic concepts of forward and backward linking in the ICT Implementation Cycle, i.e. through Need Assessment; Promotions and Research or Understanding to bring the two ends closer.

1. Operation *Chetna* (Promotion)

ICT centers provide services for rural development, thus realizing the ICT potential for the same. But, first of all, these centers have been addressing the issues in a piecemeal manner and secondly, the last mile is ought to be the costliest mile in the initial phase of any implementation. Then, the lack of training and moreover, the practical complexity involved in delivery mechanism of services limit direct promotions through the conventional word-of-mouth rural publicity. Therefore the rural ICT centers have not been putting adequate efforts in positioning their services.

Drishtee Foundation's Operation Chetna provides the continuous link in the ICT Implementation cycle bridging the gap between the ICT centers and the end-users. The process of implementation starts with "Operation Chetna" or awareness and continues as an ongoing cycle till our activities complete a full circle with it as the last step.

Operation Chetna is sensitizing government, agencies, organizations, corporates and other sectors of users or implementers for the use of ICT for development and growth.

The activities like EDP, Entrepreneurship Development Programme; Promotions and Capacity Building of the Kiosk Owners for various services and promotional abilities make an integral part of Operation Chetna.

2. Operation *Khoj* (Survey)

The ICT entry point in the rural regions sets in with an assessment of the needs of the rural folk and the available resources. Drishtee Foundation conducts Surveys in the District level, Block level, Panchayats level and Village level with the local administration's support for reaching out to the rural community. The process of surveying itself acts as a tool for creating awareness and initiates the ICT implementation Cycle in a passive way.

Operation Khoj not only aims at building a statistical information database but also at reaching to an understanding of the requirement of villagers and readiness of government, service providers and channels to deliver services through ICT.

The Activity can be actually taken as a catalyst for establishment of ICT centers in the villages, as it communicates about the future viability, suitability and flow of the services. It paves the way for setting up a platform for rural networking and marketing services, enabling e-governance, education and health services.

3. Operation *Samajh* (Research)

Once the ICT services are implemented, an immediate need arises for fixing the benchmarks on direct and indirect socio-economic indicators for future Impact Assessments. Drishtee Foundation again bridges this not-for-immediate-profit gap by conducting focused baseline surveys at specified ICT locations.

The follow up is done through the Impact Assessment Survey to complete the understanding circle. This survey is conducted at the same location after a certain time period, so that the results can be mapped against the baseline survey done earlier. The nature of ICT projects is such that the direct indicators can show changes within 6 months of the ICT kiosk setup. This would be recorded and understood in a more analytical manner, if baseline survey is done before implementation.

Thus, the Research operations professionally designed and conducted under Operation Samajh are effective tools to communicate the Impacts of ICT implementation to the Network Orchestrators for better future prospects of growth through ICT.

Sahyog programme

Sahyog, means 'Co-operation' in Hindi. Through the *Sahyog* Programme, Drishtee Foundation aims to evolve a value driven multi-stakeholder model of ICT implementation by developing functional will and cooperation among the

stakeholders. Rural ICT efforts universally face challenges and constraints from all the critical quarters. *Sahyog* programme is an effort to find different stakeholders with suitable strengths in order to meet the challenges of finances, policy, procedures and other constraints in their own specific ways.

Key partners in the Sahyog Programme include Drishtee Foundation – Facilitator of Cooperation, Drishtee Dot Com Ltd – Network Orchestrator or ICT Implementing Agency, NGOs – Locally active NGOs for Entrepreneur Identification or Direct Participation in ICT with community involvement, Development Agencies – for funds and directional motivation, Corporate – for investments and finances; and Village Community – for participation as users. From financial contribution to operational activities every stakeholder has a chance to prove its sincere involvement towards the success of the programme.

Sahyog gives an opportunity for

- Setting up multi-stakeholder revenue models of ICT Centers
- Capacity Building through the professionally designed EDPs (Entrepreneurship Development Programmes)
- Multilevel promotional programmes communicating the services of ICT to the communities through Operation *Chetna*
- Enlargement of self employment goal with self sustainable ICT centers
- Enhancing accessibility of wide range of developmental avenues related with ICTs

The programme was initiated with tele-calling and promoting of the idea to the NGOs nationwide. This brought in many NGOs and also the energy to cooperate for the participative investments to grow together.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is the decision-making and implementation process that guides all company activities in the protection and promotion of international human rights, labour and environmental standards and compliance with legal requirements within its operations and in its relations to the societies and communities where it operates. CSR involves a commitment to contribute to the economic, environmental and social sustainability of communities through the on-going engagement of stakeholders, the active participation of communities impacted by company activities and the public reporting of company policies and performance in the economic, environmental and social arenas.

Projects

Drishtee Foundation is mainly into:

- **Survey** – DF starts with a Needs Assessment survey where it identifies the need to establish an ICT kiosk in a particular Gram Panchayat (i.e area administered by a village committee). The survey is administered on local villagers, administrative authorities, etc. to gauge the readiness of that area

for setting up of ICT kiosks. It also carries out Impact Assessment Surveys to understand the impact after project implementation.

- **Organizing community Gatherings** – After the viability of an area is judged, DF gets into action by organizing community meetings to sensitize the area about the benefits of ICT and the delivery of services through a kiosk.
- **Identification of an entrepreneur** – In the above-mentioned meetings, DF also encourages entrepreneurs (youth, women and unemployed) to come forward and set up a kiosk in their Gram Panchayat. The entrepreneur is selected after going through a round of selection procedures (psychometric tests, interview and group discussion).
- **Training & Capacity building** – The entrepreneur who is selected is given training on (a) usage of computers (b) services offered (c) entrepreneurship development. This is a 19 day programme where the selected candidate is mentored on the required skills to run his own business (ICT kiosk).
- **Refresher training** – These training capsules are provided from time to time to upgrade the entrepreneur's knowledge on new services being rolled out and also to test the entrepreneur on how he is running his business.
- **Promotional programmes:** As a part of the hand holding exercise, DF carries out promotional programmes which help the kiosk operator to establish his/her initiative in the community. This is done by promoting the kiosk services in the village and also sensitizing the population on the benefits of using an ICT kiosk.

Research & Survey Activities

The survey and research activities undertaken by Drishtee Foundation in social development, benefiting the Service Providers, End-Users and Network Orchestrates, can be broadly categorized as per the study objectives into -

- **Need Assessment**
- **Demand Estimation**
- **Benchmarking**
- **Viability Studies**
- **Impact Assessment.**

The objectives of ICT research are manifolds:

- To assess the need, demand, basic status or impact of the various parameters depending on the status of ICT implementations in the area,
- To ensure the viability of the ICT Centers and enhance the sustainability by sensitization through Surveys and Community contact programs,
- To encourage community participation by involvement of various stakeholders in the Research efforts,
- To widen and strengthen the reach of various corporate and government organization in the ICT network through an extended control on facts and data,
- To understand the readiness of government, service providers and channels to deliver services through ICT,

- To analyze and understand the key factors concerning effective implementations of ICT Applications (by service providers) in identified geographical region and rural areas, etc.

Project Details

Project Name	: Village Computing Project – Village Information Service Provider (VISP)
Project Objective	: To pilot a revenue-sustainable ICT model
Target Groups	: Micro credit Self Help Group beneficiaries, mostly women
Project Location	: Trichy (Tamil Nadu) in India
Project Worth	: USD 120,000
Partners	: Grameen Foundation US, Activists for Social Alternatives (ASA)
Roles And Responsibilities	: Project Consulting, Software Support and Knowledge Transfer
Project Duration	: 3 years
Progress Till Now	: 20 ICT centers operational

For each survey/research project a detailed Project Activity Plan/Schedule, Research Methodology (including Questionnaire Design) and Quality Checks, suitable for the purpose, is defined that meets the project objectives. A strong project monitoring and control system is in place to complete the project in time with quality deliverables.

Also where required, on-line application software for data-entry and data-processing purpose is developed and put in place, so that the survey data can be received instantly at our head-office (for analysis) from remote locations of field survey.

Research & Survey Project Briefs

Drishtee Foundation has carried out several survey and research works for different clients, both domestic (including Govt. and Corporate) and international, over the past three years. Mentioned below are the briefs of some of our important research/survey projects.

1) ICT Segmentation of 2488 Panchayats of Assam for ICT Initiatives

The research project work (through field survey) on “ICT Segmentation of Panchayats in Assam” was taken up by Drishtee Foundation for the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Department of IT (DIT), during April – August 2005, for studying the viability of setting-up of ICT based Common Services Centers (CSC) or ICT Kiosks in 2488 Gram Panchayats (GPs) of Assam, based on our well researched ‘ICT Segmentation Model’ that considers all key factors/variables on socio-economic and sustainability issues grouped under the heads- (1) Rural Dynamics, (2) Rural Economics and (3) Rural Infrastructure.

The above project work needed a detail survey and analysis on all the 2488 nos. Gram Panchayats (GPs) in Assam for the purpose of segmenting the GPs into four broad segments like Unsustainable, Sustainable, Viable and Profitable, after a consideration of demand and revenue generation potential for ICT initiatives and also the viability of setting up of such Common Service Centres (CSCs) in the region, including equitable ICT growth in the rural areas to help bridge the Digital Divide.

The study report, containing a complete list of segmented GPs along with a suggestive list of GPs (suitable for establishing CSCs in the first phase) with possible service delivery package, has helped the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Department of IT and the Government of Assam to take decisions in supporting implementation of ICT enabled CSCs in the panchayats of Assam.

2) Prospects of Info-Services in Indian Villages, using Telephone Media

A survey project work was undertaken by Drishtee Foundation for World Talk, a UK based social organization, on a pilot scale in rural areas of three districts of India, during January-February 2005, to assess the Potentiality and Prospects of disseminating Information and Services to villagers through Telephone Media or using Voice Mail Box on various Government Schemes, Health Services, Agriculture activities, Rural Employment, Development Programmes, Classifieds, Employment etc.- the services (locally relevant and in local languages) that villagers need for their daily lives and if provided will help improve their living conditions and reduce their traveling cost and time to Govt. Offices for the same.

The districts selected for the study were Mallapuram in Kerala (south India), Madhubani in Bihar (east India), and Sirsa in Haryana (north India); geographically located in three different regions of India, having different culture, language, literacy rate, but all having the urge to avail relevant information and services from Govt. departments for improving their living standard.

The survey findings on 'World Talk Project' revealed that there is high potentiality for such new means of info-services in Indian villages as the rural people find it useful. Most of the respondents (around 95%) liked the process of getting information on their preferred services via telephone at their door steps and willing to pay, provided the relevant information is Correct, Complete, and Available on time. The infrastructure for providing such services was found available in villages.

3) Rural E-Commerce & Rural E-Health in Indian Villages, using Tablet PC

A study was taken up for Microsoft Corporation (Technology Partner of Drishtee Foundation) with an aim to explore the usage of Tablet PC at village kiosk level for Rural e-Commerce and Rural e-Health initiatives in rural India, as-well-as to develop a sustainable and scalable business model for each application, i.e. a re-engineered Product Supply-Chain and Management process (connecting rural artisans and markets) that empowers rural artisans to earn better for their sustained livelihood, while for other part an on-line distance medical diagnosis and consultancy from reputed specialized hospitals/doctors to rural and poor people living in villages that brings effective health care at their door-steps at reduced cost and improve their well-being.

The districts covered for the above study purpose for both the applications were Madhubani (Bihar), Sonitpur (Assam) and Bareilly (UP) that are famous for its art-

crafts like, Mithila Painting, Wood & Cane Crafts and Zari-Zardosi respectively; these districts have also the presence of rural ICT Kiosks (of Drishtee's) that serves the rural people as information and services provider.

The survey findings revealed a potential demand and acceptability of such ICT Applications among rural artisans and in general for rural community, their willingness to avail these services at reasonable charges, through their village information kiosks (an inter-mediatory in the chain), for their sustained livelihood and well being.

As a result of this study, 'Drishtee' has developed an e-Commerce Portal 'Drishtee Haat', connecting rural artisans to customers through the portal and village kiosk, acting as an intermediary in the supply chain process. The Rural e-Health model has also been developed for implementation.

4) Penetration of ICT in Rural India - A Survey Conducted By Drishtee Foundation in Partnership With Microsoft

The Rural ICT Kiosks (ICT based Information & Services Centers) deployed by 'Drishtee' in rural areas through its 'village entrepreneurship model' has given rural community an opportunity to use ICTs for accessing knowledge, sharing information and acquiring skills. Their popularity soon had to expand both in kiosks numbers and in services deliverables – made it evident that ICTs had the potential to expand from one panchayat to other and stretched out in rural India. Kiosks services expanded and got built within verticals like e-governance, education, health, agriculture, commerce and entertainment that benefits the rural community and accelerate socio-economic development in the region.

This research on 'Penetration of ICTs in Rural India' primarily aimed at understanding and assessing the Impact of deployed rural kiosks on the villagers and kiosk operators (local entrepreneur) and its sustainability, apart from gauging the footfall, villagers' awareness level on kiosk services, customers satisfaction on various attributes and most useful services in the bouquet, as-well-as understanding kiosks operator's background, profitability from kiosk operations and its relations to various factors, their satisfaction level, problems/issues on services/support, and also their future expansion plan.

The research work was planned over a period of 2 years, covering 6 districts with 25 kiosks from each district and based on detailed survey on target groups (kiosk operators and kiosk customers/villagers) by taking up 3 districts per quarter, i.e. each set of 3 districts were covered for impact assessment after every six months. The districts covered were Sonitpur, Golaghat, Lakhimpur (all 3 from Assam), Sirsa (Haryana), Bareilly (U.P.) and Madhubani (Bihar). The survey methodology included sampling plan, administering the questionnaire(s) designed for the target groups and to analyze the data collected towards the study objective.

This research project has not only provided the analysis on impact and insights on those kiosks and their customers for initiating preventive/corrective measures, where needed, but also has helped the implementing partner on improving its kiosk-sustainability model, and thus benefiting villagers and kiosk operators (village entrepreneurs) on sustained livelihood.

5) Open Knowledge Network

'Open Knowledge Network' (OKN) is an ICT based project, operated and managed by by Drishtee Foundation in collaboration with OWSA (One World South Asia), aims at setting-up and running OKN Content Management Hubs with Access Points (rural kiosks) deep in the villages of rural India to collect, edit and share local knowledge (contents) among local people in local language by networking among local knowledge workers; and disseminate OKN Content through electronic and print media in rural areas. Thus OKN enhances communication opportunities, using ICTs, for rural people at the grassroots level and facilitates social and economic empowerment of rural communities.

To achieve the above a Need Assessment Survey was conducted by Drishtee Foundation to understand the relationship between people and Kiosk, Content/information that is required by the community, the sustainability options and the on effectiveness of above service in the target community. The outcome of the study has helped the organizations to effectively deploy the OKN Hubs (at district level) and Access Points (at village level) in 2 districts, Madhubani (Bihar) and Sirsa & Fatehabad (Haryana), and also manage the OKN Contents generation and dissemination, using ICT, on a sustainable basis.

For wide dissemination of knowledge/contents among rural community, Drishtee Foundation has brought out a monthly magazine "DrishteeKon" for knowledge sharing and creating awareness towards diverse issues related to health, development opportunities, education, women empowerment, ICTs and their beneficial uses. Soon an electronic media publication named "e-Zine" will be released to cater the need of NRI and Urban population on contents/information on rural areas, where they have their roots and like to understand more.

6) Need/Demand Assessment Survey for setting up e-Gov Centres and Rural ICT Kiosks in Districts

In an effort to leverage ICTs and provide citizens (urban and rural) the e-gov. services and other services/information that benefits them, Drishtee Foundation had carried out need assessment surveys in various districts to assess the viability of setting up of following service centres –

- (i) **Single-Window e-Gov. Centres** at District/Tehsil level to provide timely and hassle-free G2C Services to citizens, using ICT and customized application software.
- (ii) **Rural ICT Kiosks** or Service Delivery Centres at the Panchayat/village level to provide both govt. and commercial services to rural community.

The need/demand assessment survey primarily aimed at understanding and assessing the (1) Services in demand and their delivery mechanism to citizens; (2) Current status and problems faced in availing it by citizens; (3) Service Provider Readiness on ICT services; (4) Channel Readiness to provide it; and (5) Customer Expectations & Market Gaps, apart from understanding the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of surveyed area.

These need/demand assessment surveys for setting up such service-centre were carried out for district authority (for e-Gov. Centres) and other implementing Partner like IFC and Drishtee (for rural ICT Kiosks). Based on the study findings and analysis, study reports were prepared and submitted that helped the client(s) to take informed decision. In most of the cases, actions initiated by implementing

partner(s) to set up such ICT Service Centres for citizens have sustained their operation as envisaged through the study.

PROJECT LOCATION: Bhojpur, Ranchi and Deogarh (Bihar & Jharkhand states), Sonitpur, Morigaon, Nalbari, Lakhimpur, Kamrup, Sivasagar, Golaghat, Nagaon, (Assam), Kapurthala (Punjab), Udaipur and Dangarpur (Rajasthan),

7) Baseline and Impact Assessment Survey on Rural ICT Kiosks

Baseline Surveys followed by Impact Assessment Surveys on Rural ICT Kiosks were also carried out by Drishtee Foundation at gram-panchayat level in various districts.

The baseline survey primarily aimed at identifying the suitable parameters and assessing the kiosks in terms of its acceptability, kiosk-services demand, kiosk performance and problems related to kiosk business and services promotions against the back-drop of the socio-economic characteristics of their GPs and community needs. Impact Assessment surveys were carried out on the same GPs and their kiosks, after a gap of around 6 months, to understand and assess the impact of deployed rural kiosks on villagers and how well it met their expectation as-well-as on kiosk's sustainability issues; apart from gauging the footfall at kiosks, customers satisfaction level, problems/issues on services/support and their expansion plan.

Such surveys were carried out for our implementing partner Drishtee and IFC for their rural kiosks. These studies helped the clients to plan and initiate timely corrective action for improvement and strengthening the kiosks sustainability model that benefits the rural community.

Road Ahead: The Survey report would be a key resource for decision makers at various levels. This serves as an initial phase of ICT implementation and acts as a catalyst for the process.

8) Lifelines India:

BT British Telecom Group is one of Europe's leading providers of telecommunications services. It includes local, national and international telecommunications services, higher-value broadband and internet products and services, and IT solutions.

Lifelines India Project has its origins in the recently launched BT's Digital Inclusion Initiative, which is a part of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative of British Telecom (BT). One World South Asia (OWSA) is implementing this project and during the course of initial planning phase, Cisco Inc. also has joined the project consortium as the third partner.

Launched in August 2004, Lifelines India project builds on OneWorld's Open Knowledge Network (OKN) initiative, which focuses on the creation and exchange of local content in local languages across the South. Based on the principles of OKN, BT, OWSA and Cisco have come together to harness the power of voice as the primary means of information dissemination to provide - Connectivity, Content and Capability. The project would provide voice-based Question and Answer services to rural communities in India. OWSA would

implement this project in three areas of North India and initially cover questions related to agriculture. Eventually, other areas would also be covered. To pilot the project in the first year, OWSA has identified Drishtee and few other implementing agencies for North India in hundreds of villages in the districts of Sirsa in Haryana and Madhubani in Bihar. While local community members in each of these locations would facilitate the farmers to take advantage of the services offered by the project, experts and information gatekeepers at the Drishtee Kiosks would offer information services to the farmers through their support networks. The tools developed for Lifelines India project would enable service delivery through email, fax, voice and data channels. Cisco, Mahindra & Mahindra and British Telecom Limited are the technology implementation partners for the project.

Publications of drishtee foundation

1. ***Drishtee***kon – A Hindi Monthly magazine has been published by Drishtee Foundation which is the first of its kind in India. This magazine holds the local content contributed by the local communities and supported by the Drishtee Kiosk Owners and is circulated to the rural readers through the Drishtee Kiosks.
2. ***Jharokha*** – An Online Monthly newsletter of Drishtee Foundation and Drishtee, which gives the snapshots of the activities and projects being taken up by the Drishtee Foundation specifically aligned with the Vision of Drishtee Foundation -

Financial Summary – for detail – refer to Annexure

Total income	-	Rs. 24990976.12
Total Expenditure	-	Rs. 24341671.24
Excess of Income	-	Rs. 649304.88
Over expenditure		

Bankers of Drishtee Foundation:

1. HDFC Bank Ltd., Near Mata Ka Mandir, New Friends Colony, New Delhi
2. HDFC Bank Ltd., Ansal Fortune Arcade, K-Block, Sector-18, NOIDA-201301 (U.P.)

Auditors:

M/s KTS & Associates, Chartered Accountants
I-34A, 1st floor, Lajpat Nagar-II, New Delhi- 110 024

President

General Secretary

Treasurer