

# Annual Activity Report

April 2008 – March 2011

By

**Digital Empowerment Foundation**

**E m p o w e r i n g P e o p l e**



**T h e E d g e o f I n f o r m a t i o n**

**through**

information, knowledge, research, investigation, activism, evangelism,  
consultancy, auditing, outreach, humane talk

## **ABOUT DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT FOUNDATION (DEF)**

Digital Empowerment Foundation, a Delhi based not-for-profit organization, registered under Societies Act XXI of 1860 in 2002, working at grassroots of India to create economic and commercial viability using means of Information, Communication and Technology (ICT).

Since its inception in December 2002, Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) has engaged itself into number of activities while pursuing its mission and objectives of ICT delivery and promotion in India. One of its focus areas of intervention had been development, promotion, spread and usage of content for grassroots use and consumption.

## **ACTIVITY PROGRAMMES 2008 - 2011**

Following are some of the major activities of Digital Empowerment Foundation in the year 2008 – 2011:

### **Digital Panchayat Programme ([www.epanchayat.in](http://www.epanchayat.in))**

Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) initiated the project in 2008 in order empower the bottom-most governance unit of the governance body and also empower rural and grassroot level communities by utilizing the power of ICT tools and digital media, found it necessary to tap panchayats and equip them with ICT and Internet tools to create a virtual presence and identity. At an initial stage, DEF covered 100 panchayats of Kolhapur district in the state of Maharashtra. The objective of this project is to set an example to the government in bringing transparency and accountability at village level besides building capacity for ICT.



After a successful implementation of 100 panchayats in Maharashtra, DEF took the project at a national level and currently implementing the project in 500 panchayats, covering 15 states (including Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Jharkhand, Assam, Meghalaya, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, J&K, and Maharashtra) of the country.

## eNGO ([www.engo.in](http://www.engo.in))

DEF along with National Internet Exchange of India (NiXi), Dept. of IT initiated a project eNGO to provide web presence in various local languages to increase their visibility and presence across globe and help NGOs reach out to its maximum stakeholders beyond its immediate community. The eNGO programme facilitates and enhances grassroots organization in daily activities through medium of web portal service for communication & outreach, fund raising, partnerships & direct linking with institutions, human resource support, giving voice to local issues, information exchange platform and most of all showcasing their local content for global outreach & networking.



Currently, DEF is implementing the national pilot project with a support from NiXi in 500 NGOs. Under this programme, DEF provided web enabled platform in domain name .IN and a cost effective webpage with customized service package. DEF also provided training & capacity building NGO resource persons in IT skills & management on multimedia tools to maintain their sites. This year, DEF has also moved a step forward and now it is promoting .NGO domain name with a support from .ORG (Public Interest Registry) that will help NGOs of the country to be recognized by their own names.

## Digital Knowledge Centre (DKC)

Digital Knowledge Centre is a joint initiative of DEF and National Internet Exchange of India (Dept. of IT, Govt. of India). DKC project is a national repository system of best digital content for development interventions in audio-visual texts and images format as many intervening areas as feasible. It is digital reference platforms for best ICT content replication, deployment - and act as a knowledge, research, governance, digital library to share and spread knowledge between networking communities. These ICT applications, case studies and reports include in areas of Community Broadcasting, e-Business, e-Culture & Entertainment, e-Education, e-Enterprise & Livelihood, e-Government, e-Health, e-Learning, e-Localization, e-

News, e-Science & Environment, m-Content and any other content applications having development impact.

DKC aims at sustaining an environment of ICT applications carrying information to reach billions of populations who could use the knowledge for inclusive growth and building community strength. Under this project, DEF will create 150-200 audio visual documents representing ICT applications, best practices from India and South Asian countries. Currently DEF has created 50 audio-visual documentaries.

### **eMSME (<http://emsme.in>)**

DEF initiated national level project, called eMSME programme with a support from the National Internet Exchange of India (NiXi) in order to enable the smallest sector of enterprises by providing them web-enabled presence and platform. The INR 2.61 Crore project created an opportunity to earn global networking base and to be visible at national and global markets for outreach and to reap economy.

This programme offers a web platform powered by internet along with in any vernacular language or in English, along with unique domain .in and value personalized email addition. The eMSME websites are easy to maintain, operate and upload as many information as required.

### **Green Prakriya Project (<http://greenp.engo.in/>)**

Green Prakriya is a DEF's Initiative to create a multi-stakeholder eco-web that would act as a compendium of Green ICT knowledge base for practitioners, policy advocates, policy makers, researchers, professionals, students and the masses. It is an integration of all efforts towards the attainment of the goal of Green India and practicing optimal utilization of the given natural resources as envisaged the Prime Minister's National Action Plan for the Climate Change.

With a regard to build an eco-web resources, currently DEF is working along with Association for Progressive Communications (APC) on Indian ICT for Environment Mapping Study.

### **World Summit Award (WSA)**

DEF was national organizer of the World Summit Award 2009 Grand Jury, hosted in India by DIT, Govt. of India. WSYA is the global contest for online or mobile initiatives to raise awareness and help resolve the most pressing global issues.

The Summit, '21st Century India through Digital Content' was organized as one of India's Largest Digital Technology and Digital Content Summit with 35 nations representatives attending the day long Summit along with key stakeholders from

India and South Asia representing public, private and civil society organisations. The day long Summit concluded with key valuable outcomes.

### **South Asia Internet for Development**

DEF organized the daylong International Programme, entitled “Towards an Enabling Internet Access Environment”, supported by the Internet Society (ISOC) on September 2009 in New Delhi. ISOC is a global Internet for Development Agency based in Washington.

The conference, part of the Internet Society's INET series of regional conferences, was focused on “An Enabling Internet Access Environment in South Asia with a critical focus on Inclusive Development through the Internet”.

The Conference discussed on issues in creating and sustaining an enabling Internet access, environment, including Internet for development through accessibility, inclusion and growth, multi-stakeholder participation, online content and local languages, and strategies to ensure the continued growth and evolution of the User Centric Internet through appropriate and consultative policy action.

INET Delhi 2009 culminated in a panel discussion deliberating the next steps required to further escalate Internet outreach in the region to fulfill socio-economic development objectives.

**Chanderi Weavers ICT Resource Centre (CWICTRC) ---**  
(<http://chanderiyaan.net>)

DEF ideated a cluster based project in Chanderi in order to empower weaver’s community of the region by facilitating them with various ICT services, including skill development and capacity building training. The project initiated with a support from the Department of Information Technology, Govt. of India.

DEF has ideated this programme and currently implementing it in Chanderi in Madhya Pradesh province in India. This resource



centre is facilitating various ICT services to local weaving community including skill

development and capacity building training. DEF conceptualized the project in collaboration with Media Lab Asia. This project is now also supported by Department of Information Technology, Govt. of India.

The objective of the Chanderi Weavers ICT Resource Centre (CWICTRC) is to provide technical education to the textile weavers of Chanderi. It endeavors to provide alternative options of livelihood through ICT based empowerment. This initiative, collectively called 'Chanderiyaan' aims at fostering community based development and empowerment through the Chanderi Integrated ICT for Development Program (CIIDP). It has enabled multi-pronged integrated digital development of Chanderi by creating a digital ecosystem of the town. The program is all embracing, incorporating Social entrepreneurship, Healthcare, Education and Tourism and integrating it with the socio - economic and historical fabric of Chanderi.

### **Wireless for Communities (WforC) --** **(<http://wforc.in>)**

Aligning with its mission to create an order of economic and knowledge empowerment of the people living at the edge of information and economy through the use of ICT and Digital Media, DEF initiated a project called, 'Wireless for Communities' with a support from the Internet Society (ISOC). The project aims to provide a holistic, community-empowered approach to connecting rural communities to the Internet. The motivation for the W4C project by ISOC and DEF is twofold. One is to totally democratize the availability of connectivity and enable access to information at the will of citizens outside urban centres - and remote rural areas in particular; second is to address the lack of content, product and services originating from rural areas which affects the economy from percolating to the bottom of the pyramid.



Through this project, DEF trained local communities to operate wireless technology and deployment of the same for rural connections linking to Internet. The project will aim at three components

- Training the trainers for technological knowhow
- Deployed wireless technology across rural post
- An open forum to discuss best practices, lessons learnt, to educate on issues from both a technical and policy perspective

DEF, currently, has successfully deployed the wireless mesh networks at Chanderi (Madhya Pradesh) and Sonapur (Assam) and provided training programmes to the community.

### **Tura Internet & Services Centre (TISC)**

TISC is an initiative of DEF with a support from National Internet Exchange of India and Member of Parliament of Tura district to enable a multi-pronged integrated development of TURA with support of Information Communication Technology tools including Internet, Mobile, Wireless and Digital Media to help the local Youth, Women and People to seek and exploit education, livelihood, vocation, and linkages to the economic opportunities. This is an effort to contribute to already running development and growth programmes and complement the roles played by stakeholders. It is visioned that such an institutional programme can work towards a sustainable model and could mean a lot to the people in terms of inclusive development and empowerment.

The project will enable local communities with educational programmes, skill development & entrepreneurship, promotion of cultural and natural tourism, women empowerment, and livelihood opportunities with support of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) and non-ICTs.

### **Community Information Resource Centres (CIRCS)**

DEF is an integral key member of Intel India project, World Ahead Program. Through this programme, DEF is supported by Intel India to set up ICT enabled Community Information Resource Centres. Currently, the project is being run in Ranchi, Jharkhand and the next in Rajasthan.

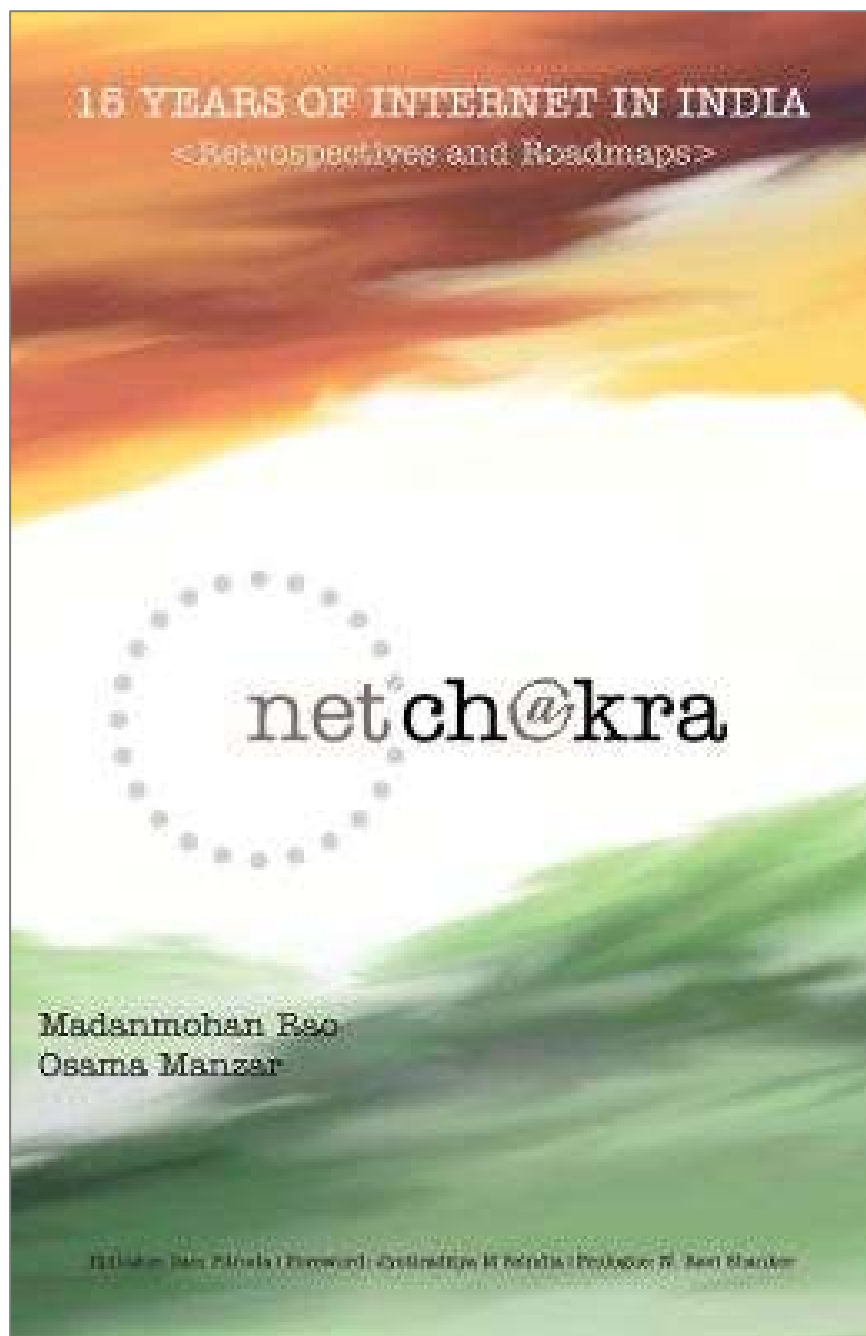
### **GISWatch**

DEF has been part of the Global Information Society Watch (GISWatch), a space for collaborative monitoring of implementation of international (and national) commitments made by governments towards the creation of an inclusive information society.

DEF has published its report at GISWatch last year, and now currently been participating again in GISWatch through its report, focused on 'The Internet, human rights and social resistance'.

### **ICTD Publication - NetCh@kra**

DEF published the book, NetCh@kra '15 Years of Internet in India', recognizing the potential of India as one of the largest Internet markets in the world and has a unique mix of digital excellence along with digital divide. The book has been published with a support from the National Exchange of India (NiXi) and VeriSign.



## **Internet Governance Forum**

DEF has also been effectively organized various workshops at IGF; the first was organized at IGF Hyderabad on “Low Cost Sustainability Access” along with the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IMAI) on December 2008. The principal objective of the workshop was to provide a focused platform for a multi-stakeholder interactive meet on key areas of accessibility and involve participants from different sectors to discuss and put on table the recommendations. The workshop undertook

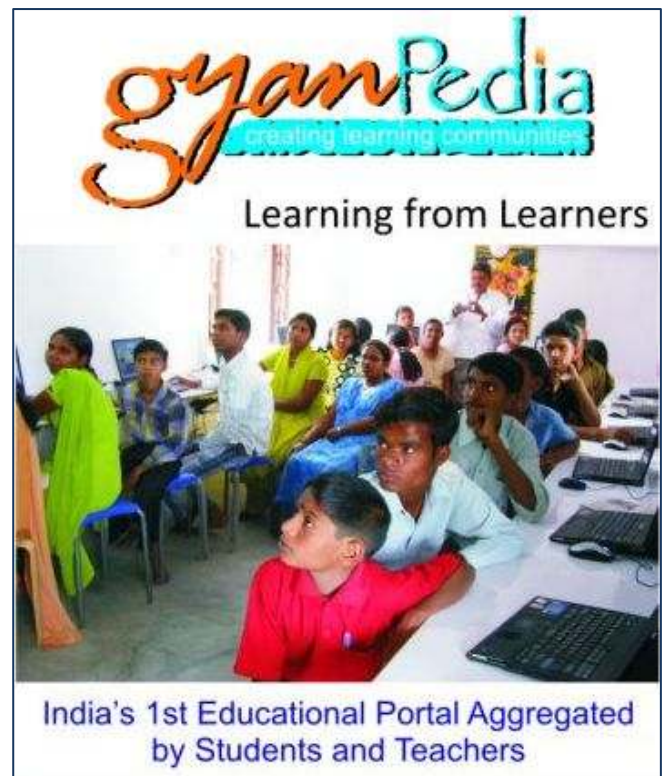
the responsibility of “low cost and sustainable access” to the rural poor, focusing on “connectivity”, “devices”, “content”, “services”, “commerce” and “business”, and “policy” and “regulatory” matters.

The Workshop was designed into an output oriented exercise to find solutions to key aspects of Internet Governance related with low cost and sustainable access. The workshop, which was attended by more than 60 people, was presided by Mr. R. Chandrasekhar, Special Secretary, Dept of IT, GoI and moderated by Mr. Osama Manzar, Founder & Director, Digital Empowerment Foundation.

### **GyanPedia (<http://www.gyanpedia.in/>)**

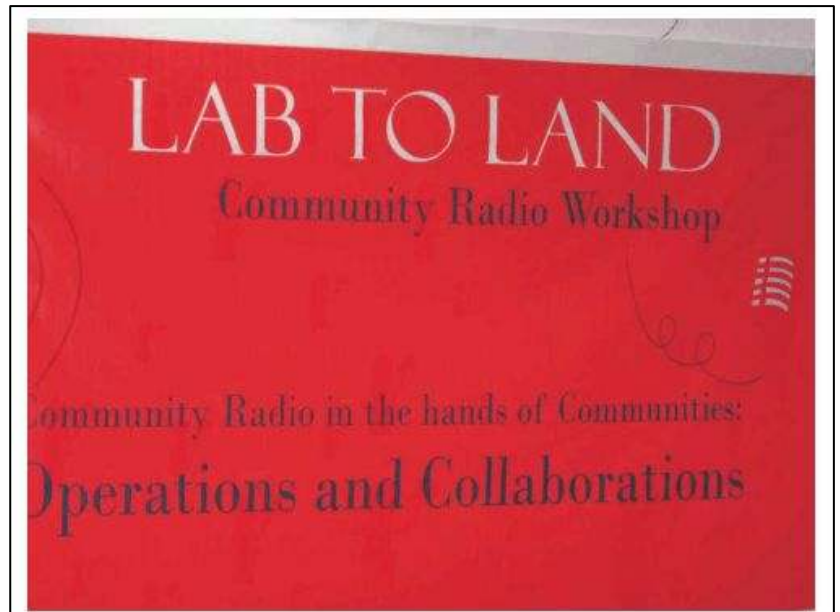
GyanPedia is an initiative of DEF with whole hearted support from Media Lab Asia, to create a comprehensive, multilingual, dynamic virtual platform for country wide content exchange program for the learning community – children as well as teachers. This is an online digital content repository platform truly generated children and teachers of rural government schools across India.

The project will facilitate learning and sharing, and thereby boost e-learning and e education processes. The project contributed towards India’s emerging a knowledge society and preserve the local knowledge as well. It provided free access to online knowledge portal and educational platform. It is an interactive mode of education which provides basic computer education training and certification for students and teachers as well. It also works as an online educational digital content library and a medium for easy access to educational information and resource agencies for the Schools. It promotes the joy of creativity among children, provides a platform for child’s expression, and facilitates interaction of the child with world around.



## **Community Radio Programme,**

Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) along with Media Lab Asia envisaged the concept of establishing community radio, content development and technology facilitation for SEWA, Ahmedabad and Barefoot College Campus in Rajasthan. DEF supported by providing training, capacity building, content training, and development, monitoring and evaluation programmes. The objective of this initiative is not only organizing the Workshops but also assisting the Organizations in getting relevant technology support along with partial financial assistance.



Participants in the Workshop were Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), women members of the Self-Help Groups, doing multifarious activities focusing on socio-economic empowerment of women.

For this workshop, DEF prepared a small booklet on Community Radio in the hands of Communities, along with a CD containing the online module of UNESCO; softcopy of the booklet on 'Community Radio: Programme Production and Packaging' and the presentations made during the Workshop for circulation to the participants which was released by Ashish Garg, GeSci, who was present during the inaugural session.

## **iREP (Rural Entrepreneurship)**

This project was initiated by DEF with support from, ILFS ETS and in association with Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. iREP is an innovative approach towards rural entrepreneurship programme under which rural youths with entrepreneurial capacities are being trained with a certified course developed in association with IIM Ahmedabad.

The larger objective is to train potential social entrepreneurs in rural and semi-urban India to start commercial ventures using ICT like info kiosk centres. This iREP program is aimed at developing the requisite skills and approach towards such technology based social business initiatives. The program areas include risk taking,

liaisoning and networking, communication strength, business plan parameters and so on. The program components include training, hand holding, consultancy, post-venture guidance and support, market linkages, networking support and so on.

### **Hyderabad First**

DEF undertook a full-fledged survey and assessment of Hyderabad First Project from Greater Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad. This project was an e-Governance based services delivery mechanism. This project was one of the unique ICT based service delivery mechanism of governance services to the citizens in and around Hyderabad city. Through the project the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GMCH) is attempting to provide services like online payment of taxes, bills, grievance redressal, and issuance of certificates and so on. DEF had undertaken the comprehensive survey and submitted its report to the GMCH in July, 2007.

### **Harvard Business School - India School Fund Project**


Like Hyderabad First Project, DEF undertook a survey and assessment of India School Fund (ISF) programme of HBS in Mathura District of Uttar Pradesh. This programme created talent markets around clusters of schools through leading teaching content and practices, community programs, and incentive systems which promote entrepreneurship and core-skills development such as enhancement of technical skills, soft skills and life skills.

### **Neerjaal ([www.neerjaal.org](http://www.neerjaal.org))**

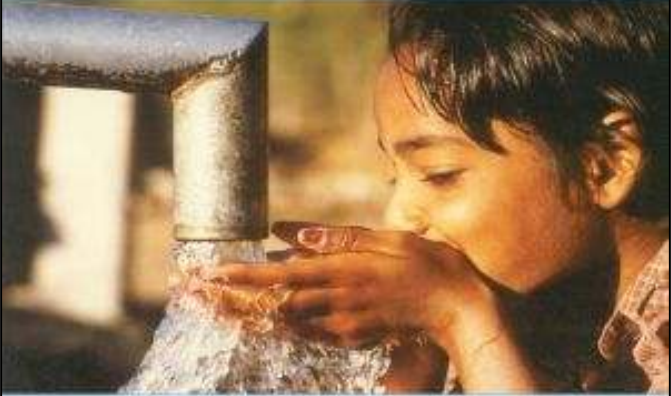
The concept of Neerjaal was originally conceived by the Global Rainwater Harvesting Collective (GRWHC), Barefoot College in Tilonia Rajasthan. GRWHC, under its flagship activities of Barefoot College, has been collecting and managing information regarding various linkages of Water in the desert of Rajasthan, especially in and around Tilonia village near Kishangarh. DEF joined GRWHC's Neerjaal project and took it at a national level by developing the entire concept to implement at the national level, where the water sources, water bodies, water consumption, water usage, water harvesting, and water shortages and needs could be mapped and put on an interactive platform.

The long term vision of Neerjaal is to allow each and every villagers and villages to put their water data on the public domain, and gradually with as the help of people and universal contribution, we gather widespread data related to water in India. The project uses the following resources to address this issue:

- Use of ICT tools especially PCs and Intranet allowed local communities to keep record of amount of water available from each of the water resource base in target communities; Keeping record of water quality testing; Recording the maintenance required in ground water management and listing out activity priorities in the management process.
- Providing information to the users about the demand-supply chain of water resources and how much the water demand is being met from various water resource bases.
- Facilitating in water resource management and planning through usage of available data.
- Creating a web-based platform with user-generated content on availability and quality of water resources available in users' local areas; Ready-to-use online reports for water resource management administrators, action agencies and users at large



Let's Create all Drinking Water information at [www.neerjaal.org](http://www.neerjaal.org)



**"INTEGRATED DRINKING WATER & SANITATION SYSTEM"**  
to collect primary data through village women

**KNOW YOUR WATER**  
[www.neerjaal.org](http://www.neerjaal.org)

### **The Tribal Women as the Change Agent**

The TWCA project is ideated and implemented by Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) and Media Lab Asia. The project is about identifying select groups of tribal women in select locations in India and undertake development interventions in areas of health, education and livelihood generation using ICT tools. The identified women would mantle the role of Master trainers who in turn would train village women in basics of life and livelihood using various ICT tools. The project aims to empower these women to look towards better and improved ways of life powered by ICT.

- Capacitated and trained tribal women in vital areas of education, health and livelihood;
- Undertook awareness drive and campaign among target tribal communities in these key areas;

- Provided exposure to chosen tribal communities especially women on why and how of ICT tools and applications to address key information and content needs to address day-to-day problems
- Provided day-to-day solutions in addressing educational, health and livelihood needs through training and skill enhancement programmes using ICT tools and mediums.
- Trained 100 tribal women as master trainers who worked as change agents to provide training and skill development lessons to further women within the identified tribal communities;
- A notable change in education, health and livelihood matters through these 100 agents and through them hundreds of other women who will be the actual change agents within their communities.

## **Awards**

### **mBillionth Award ([www.mbillionth.in](http://www.mbillionth.in))**

In 2010, DEF launched the first edition of the mBillionth International Summit to felicitate innovative mobile applications and innovations in India and South Asia. The objective is to bring together mobile technology experts, practitioners, business leaders and stakeholders of the region onto one platform, through keynote addresses, paper presentations, thematic workshops and exhibitions. In short, the event provides an excellent opportunity for participants to interact with a wide and diverse development community.

mBillionth 2010 Award honored ground-breaking applications, services, innovators, etc., in arena of mobile technology that connects and helps rural masses to be connected with the world.



# MANTHAN AWARD 2010 @ A GLANCE



## MANTHAN AWARD SOUTH ASIA 2010



WE CONGRATULATE ALL THE WINNERS!

### The Manthan Award Digital Inclusion for Development South Asia 2010

#### AGRICULTURE & LIVELIHOOD: 02

- >>> RIME Direct, INDIA
- >>> Transparent Targeted Public Distribution System, INDIA
- >>> e-9949, INDIA

#### BUSINESS & ENTERPRISE: 03

- >>> Tofayy Tori, BANGLADESH
- >>> mame.com.bd, BANGLADESH
- >>> Nepal Wireless, NEPAL

#### CULTURE & HERITAGE: 02

- >>> Apovy, INDIA
- >>> Punjab Digital Library, INDIA

#### EDUCATION: 03

- >>> Implementation of Computerized Learning in 244 Schools in Bihar under REP, INDIA
- >>> School Report Card under OISE, INDIA
- >>> Duniya, INDIA

#### ENTERTAINMENT: 02

- >>> ASA, SRI LANKA
- >>> Speel Studios, INDIA

#### ENVIRONMENT: 03

- >>> Cell Phone based Early Warning Dissemination, BANGLADESH
- >>> Ship-breaking in Bangladesh, BANGLADESH
- >>> Digital Green Project, INDIA

#### GOVERNANCE: 03

- >>> Sri Lanka GovSME Portal, SRI LANKA
- >>> Aishvay, INDIA
- >>> AutoDCR (Automat Building Plan Scrutiny System), INDIA

#### EARNING: 03

- >>> N-UST (National Library and Information Service Infrastructure for Scholarly Content), INDIA
- >>> www.gangajurooz.com, INDIA
- >>> MNCS Digital Schools, INDIA

#### EDUCATION: 03

- >>> Project eMaths, INDIA
- >>> eVidyaSangam, SRI LANKA
- >>> eDySangam.com, SRI LANKA

#### HEALTH: 02

- >>> Tripura Vision Centre, INDIA
- >>> PathWorriors, INDIA

#### NEWS & MEDIA: 03

- >>> Neuron Newsrroom Management System, PAKISTAN
- >>> Village Voice, INDIA
- >>> Aala Oorana, SRI LANKA

#### INCLUSION: 03

- >>> Affordable Indigenous Assistive Technologies for People with Disabilities, INDIA
- >>> FING Technology Solutions, INDIA
- >>> Ability, INDIA

#### TRAVEL & TOURISM: 02

- >>> AWASTAR (Any Time Any Where Advance Reservation System), INDIA
- >>> SULA Probus GPS Navigator, SRI LANKA

#### COMMUNITY BROADCASTING: 02

- >>> Adult Education Through Radio, INDIA
- >>> Radio Arve Community Radio, INDIA

#### ADULT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: 01

- >>> Duniya, INDIA

#### AWARDS DESTINATIONS: 02

- >>> Women About Videoblogging for Empowerment (WAVE), INDIA
- >>> Digital Care Procurement System (e-Purjo), BANGLADESH
- >>> Save The Baby Girl, INDIA

For more details, please log on [www.manthanaward.org](http://www.manthanaward.org)

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