



DISCUSSION PAPER – 2009, SEPTEMBER

THEORY OF CHANGE - IMPACT ASSESSMENT



Intellectual Property of Sarvodaya – Fusion, Sri Lanka.

Discussion Paper:

THEORY OF CHANGE – IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Fusion has completed its second budgetary year of operation (from 2008 April – March 2009). This report intends to provide a summary of social impact, that has been generated over the period.

BACKGROUND

Fusion builds upon a 10 year long evolving ICT4D engagement of Sarvodaya, rooted to 1997. It has been set up as a separate specialized program, yet operational under Sarvodaya mother organization, in April 2007. Thus program staff (excluding Finance and Personal functions) was operational with grater independence from other Sarvodaya programs. This document reports the last year operations (from April 2008 – March, 2009).

Fusion affiliated web links>>>

Fusion>>> www.fusion.lk

Telecentre family>>> www.tcf.lk

FarmerNet>>> www.farmer.lk

Telecentre helpdesk>> <http://www.tcfhelp.tcf.lk/>

ICT Education services> <http://www.ictes.tcf.lk/>



SUSTAINABLE IMPACT:

Economic sustainability has been in the top of Fusion's agenda, since inception. The founding thinking was to build sustainable social enterprise, where social needs are met while organization managed its economic stability as a Non-profit enterprise.

In other words to continue institutional mission with minimum outside donor dependence for its institutional sustenance.

SOCIAL MISSION

The vision>>> 'Fusion – of ICT with nature, culture, spirituality and development, is founded on the wholistic vision of Sarvodaya movement. In terms of spirituality, it tries to foster *non-violence, peace & loving kindness*; and promotes *Dana, (sharing)* in its entire practice. In terms of 'development' – Fusion seeks 'e-empowerment of poor communities' that is to foster the realization of Sarvodaya mission – society of 'no-affluent no-poverty'!

Mission of Fusion is 'eEmpowerment of poor communities' where eEmpowerment is envisioned as:

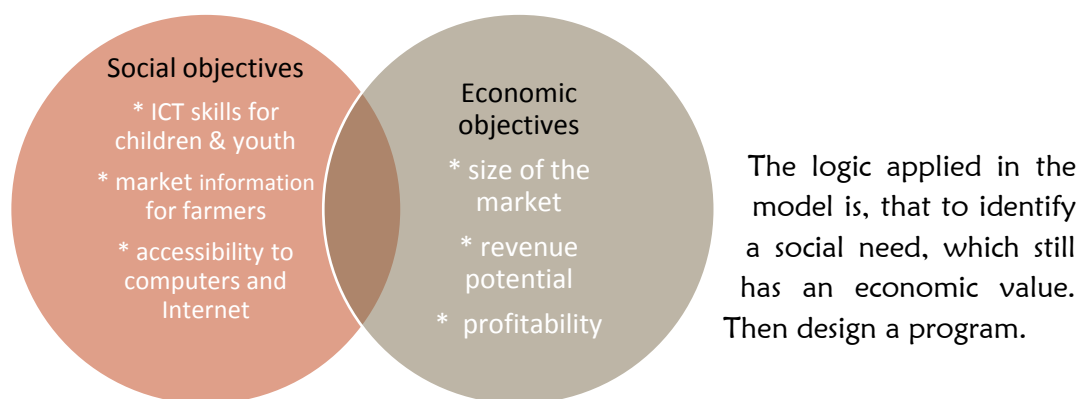
1. Improvement of computer literacy & ICT skills
2. Promoting information access by rural communities using ICTs (computer, internet & mobile phones)
3. Supporting rural ICT accessibility (via telecentres, VICs and mobile applications)

Key Target community groups are children, youth and farmers (including women), at national scale.

(Note: Application of Mobile phone has been a new addition to the Fusion's ICT technology pool).

PROGRAM STRATEGY

Keeping Sustainable Impact at the heart, Fusion's overall program strategy grounded in double bottom line approach; that is to meet dual goals of 'social objectives' and 'economic objectives'. Social objectives serves the community needs. Economic objectives means the ability to establish a reasonable financial return. (i.e. to maintain sound economic sustenance)



PROGRAMS:

Fusion carried out following key program activities (table 1) during the reporting period:

Table 1: Major program activities carried out by Fusion

Name	Program	Status
VIC	Village Information Centre program	Ongoing
FTC	Fusion telecentres (6 telecentres centrally managed in 6 districts)	Ongoing
Telecentre Family	Capacity building and networking of country wide telecentres (including Nenasala)	Ongoing (due to end in 2009 Nov)
Telecentre help desk	Online and mobile help desk service for telecentres	Ongoing
ICTES	ICT Education services (ICT Book and ICT Examinations)	Ongoing
FarmerNet	Mobile and internet based market place for farmers	Commenced June 2009
Foster Friend	Scholarship program for village children & youth	Commence May 2009
Agri-clinic	Pest & disease information provision to farmers	Ended 2008 Dec?

IMPACT ASSESSMENT; 'THEORY OF CHANGE'

Impact assesement has been a major focus area during last few months. Three prong strategy had been identified; 1. Define 'theory of change' 2. Define indicators to assess the change 3. Set up system to gather data for assesement. During the reporting

period, we have made significant progress on steps 1 & 2, but step 3 is only at very early stages (work in progress).

Theory of change:

e-empowerment is a journey that the beneficiary (individual or a community) may travel through – commencing from first time exposure to ICTs, and consequently, to become qualified user to apply ICTs with confidence. The journey happens through progressive stages. And those stages (indicators) are not essentially sequential.

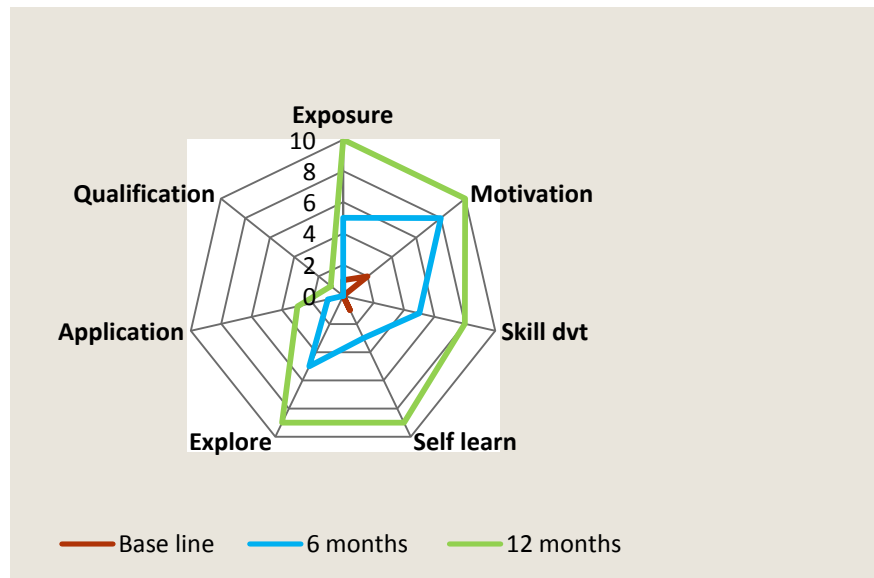
Indicators are expected to assess the ‘distance travelled’ in this journey.

Table 2: Indicators to assess the ‘distance travelled’>>

Exposure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •first time exposure to computers, and familiarization with ICTs (seeing & touching)
Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •generate interest to learn, interact and develop ICT skills
Skill development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •with the assistance of trained staff, develop computer skills
Self learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •further self learning (added skills) without assistance (or with limited assistance)
Exploration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •exploring beyond basic computer skills to internet, email, web development, data base development, social networking, teaching to others etc.
Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • systematic application of computers/ internet for self or others benefit (teaching, data base development for village work, volunteering).
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •sit for standard exams, acquiring certificates.

Thus Fusions’ impact on an individual (child or youth) would be facilitating a particular individual (or community) through a journey of ‘Exposure’ to ‘Qualifications’. In case of a rural adult it might end up at ‘Application’. So does with a village community.

Figure 1: Mock example - impact on an Individual over 12 months



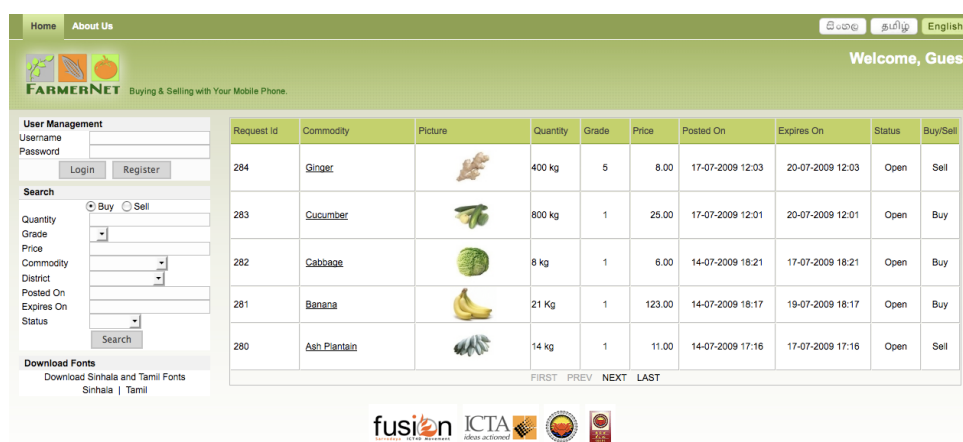
Identified drawback>> The impact assesments presented in this report are only a partial application of above work-in-progress model. Fusion recognizes the importance of improving & mastering this process in upcoming months and years, in order to improve the calrity and accountability of presentation.

As indicated in following table, current programs, by design, had supported various stages of the e-empowerment process. Nevertheless, Fusion, at this stage, recognizes the imbalances of proportionate engagement and resource allocations of each program.

Table 3: Illustration of outcomes & target groups that are expected by the Fusion's programs

Intended outcome	Target group	
	Children & youth	Farmer
Exposure	VIC, FTC	VIC , FTC (agriclinic)
Motivation	VIC, FTC, Awareness & Training programs??	FarmerNet
Skill development	Foster Friend, FTC, Nenasala, TCF Helpdesk, ICTES	FarmerNet (helpdesk)
Self learning	FTC, Nenasala, ICTES	FarmerNet
Exploration	Sarvodaya Village + VIC (integration), TC, DEL, Nenasala	FarmerNet
Application	Sarvodaya village + VIC (integration), Foster Friend,	FarmerNet
Qualifications	ICTES	

Template of the Virtual market place – FarmerNet (www.farmer.lk) of Fusion



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 Price:
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Request Id	Commodity	Picture	Quantity	Grade	Price	Posted On	Expires On	Status	Buy/Sell
284	Ginger		400 kg	5	8.00	17-07-2009 12:03	20-07-2009 12:03	Open	Sell
283	Cucumber		800 kg	1	25.00	17-07-2009 12:01	20-07-2009 12:01	Open	Buy
282	Cabbage		8 kg	1	6.00	14-07-2009 18:21	17-07-2009 18:21	Open	Buy
281	Banana		21 Kg	1	123.00	14-07-2009 18:17	19-07-2009 18:17	Open	Buy
280	Ash Plantain		14 kg	1	11.00	14-07-2009 17:16	17-07-2009 17:16	Open	Sell

FIRST PREV NEXT LAST

fusion ICTA

THE SOCIAL IMPACT – ‘VALUE CREATION AT THE BOTTOM’

SOCIAL IMPACT ON A VILLAGE COMMUNITY

Following case study illustrates impact on the village community as per indicators developed.

Village name Divurumgama, at Badulla
Nearest town Keppatipola (2.5km)
Population 2092 (Male- 962, Female- 1130)
Youths – 817, Adults – 677, Children - 598

Exposure

In 2005, village community initiated the VIC during a village *shramadana* camp.

Motivation

Specialist training on collecting, organizing, filing and maintaining information material were given to two village youth by telecentre staff of Badulla Sarvodaya District Centre (about 20km away).

Skill development

Subsequent visits by the telecentre coordinator helped to add more skills to the VIC team. In 2006, VIC received a laptop donated by Sarvodaya-Fusion that had triggered community enthusiasm to interact with computers.

Self learning

Youth members started composing a village hand-book gathering information related to special interests. There were 6 handbooks produced by early 2009.

Exploration

Shramadana Society purchased another Computer recently, that enables VIC to assist Society's development activities, especially to compile project information in relation to micro-finance deliveries by Sarvodaya Economic Enterprise Development Services (SEEDS). Also, VIC carries out basic computer training to village youth.

Application

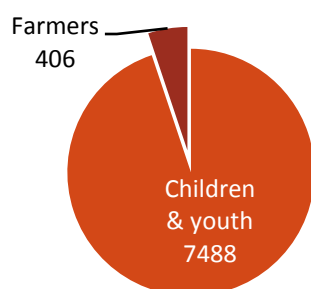
In a typical day, about 5 people visit the centre to access basic information that may be travel, banking or education related, or to enquire the appointment for a medical specialist at the town, or to access a birth-certification application form for newly born child.

SOCIAL IMPACT AT INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Following table (table 4) illustrates the collective outcome of the Fusion programs at individual level during the (extended) period from April 2008 – July 2009. *(Please note: current data gathering systems are not geared to adapt above mentioned Indicator based impact analysis model at individual level. Thus data are presented to provide a broader quantitative picture).*

Table 4: Collective outcome of Fusion programs at individual level

212,479	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposure to ICTs & access to information through VICs, Fusion telecentres,
743	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill development at Fusion telecentres
3223	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to computers and internet at Fusion telecentres
5018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help desk support to telecentre operators in 10 districts
191	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualification through ICTES exams held at 10 districts via 10 telecentres



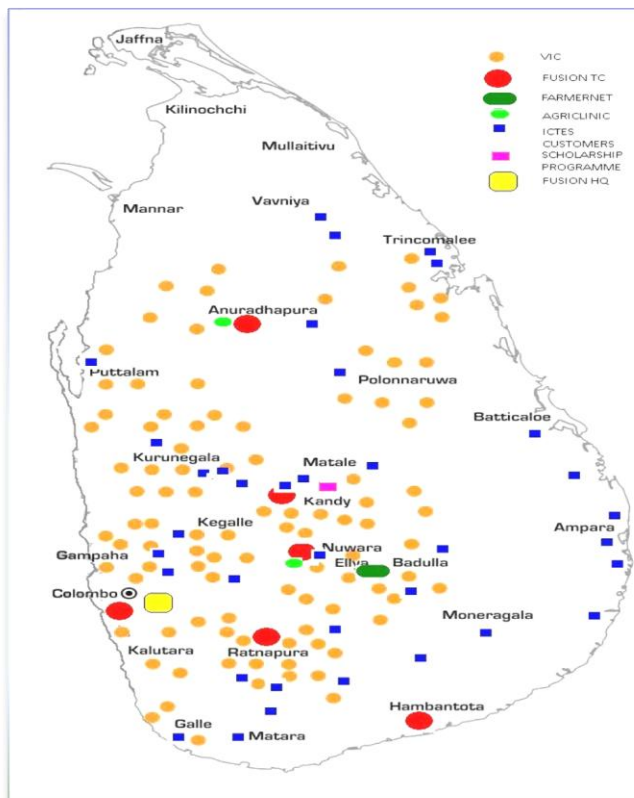
(Indirect outcomes – eg benefited via Nenasala, that had been indirectly impacted, are not accounted)

Participants for the programs were dominated by children and youth comparing to adults. However this is only indicative as some of the data (eg at village level participation) are not

available (in terms of age and gender) to carry out an accurate detail analysis.

IMPACT DISTRIBUTION ACROSS THE COUNTRY

The map illustrates the distribution of the programs outcomes around the country. Fusion has worked in every district, except North & East sector. However, there are limited activities (VICs and ICTES) impacted to some extent to the communities in Amapara and Kanthale districts.



Identified draw back>> Fusion did not have a sound program that may appropriately fit into the special needs of the conflict affected communities in North & East sector. Currently, Fusion is engaged in fact finding stage to design an appropriate program.

IMPACT ON TELECENTRES (INCLUDING NENASALA)

Telecentres are the rural windows to provide ICT access to target communities. Thus capacity building and sustainability of telecentres are integral to Fusion's mission. Fusion carry out capacity building programs, training programs, peer networking, helpdesk services, to over 453 telecentre operators located in 20 districts.

Impact of such programs are depicted below:

Figure 2: Impact on country wide telecentres

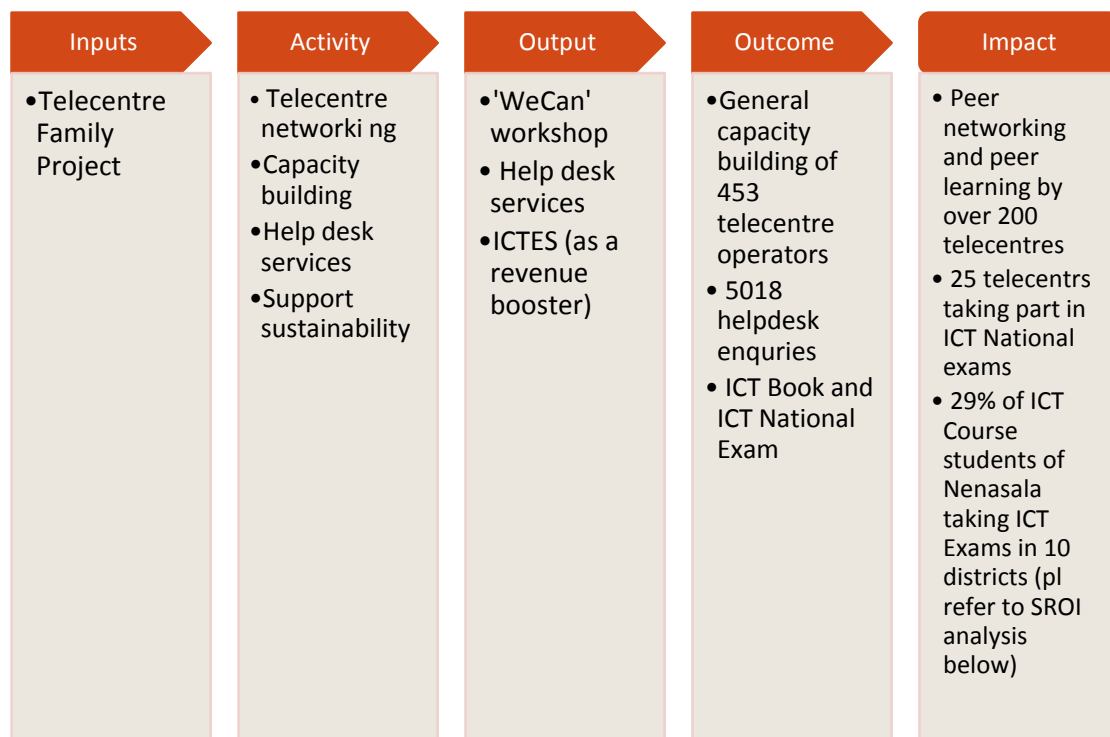
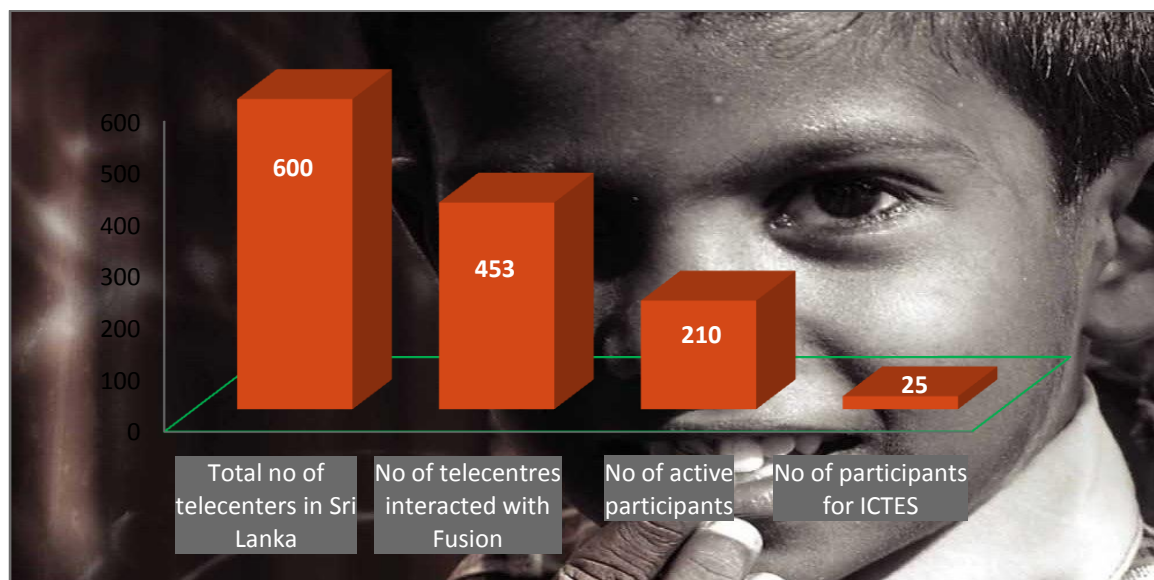


Figure 3: Impact map of telecentre participation with Fusion



LEVERAGING SARVODAYA DEVELOPMENT IMPACT – ‘ZERO COST’ APPROACH

VIC program serves the communities’ information needs, while setting the first step – ‘exposure’ – of village community into the e-empowerment journey. By design, program is expected to leverage from the resources and capacities developed within the community by other Sarvodaya programs (including SEEDS).

This has been the – ‘zero cost’ strategy - developed by Fusion to minimize the village dependence on Fusions’ core funding. Following table illustrates the outcomes of ‘Zero Cost’ model.

In average, Fusion spends about 6,600Rs per village, that generates outcomes worth of 36,000Rs. over 5 year period. Fusion impacted upon 121 villages in 17 Districts, through Sarvodaya network.

Figure 4: Impact of Zero Cost VIC strategy in terms of leveraging village resources



Number of people accessed information through overall VIC network - 205,700

Average number of visitors / VIC / Week - 25

Total number of VICs 121

Number of VICs reached
telecentre level - 21

Number of VICs closed
down 51

Number of Districts - 17

Identified drawback>> despite VIC program being one of the key programs, Fusion failed to generate sufficient donor funding to provide required thrust. Thus program happened to depend on zero budgetting. Existing facilitation and monitoring is not satisfactory. Currently a major program – ‘Foster Friend’ - has been in early stages of development with close collaboration of Sarvodaya-UK.

SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT (OF DONOR FUNDS)

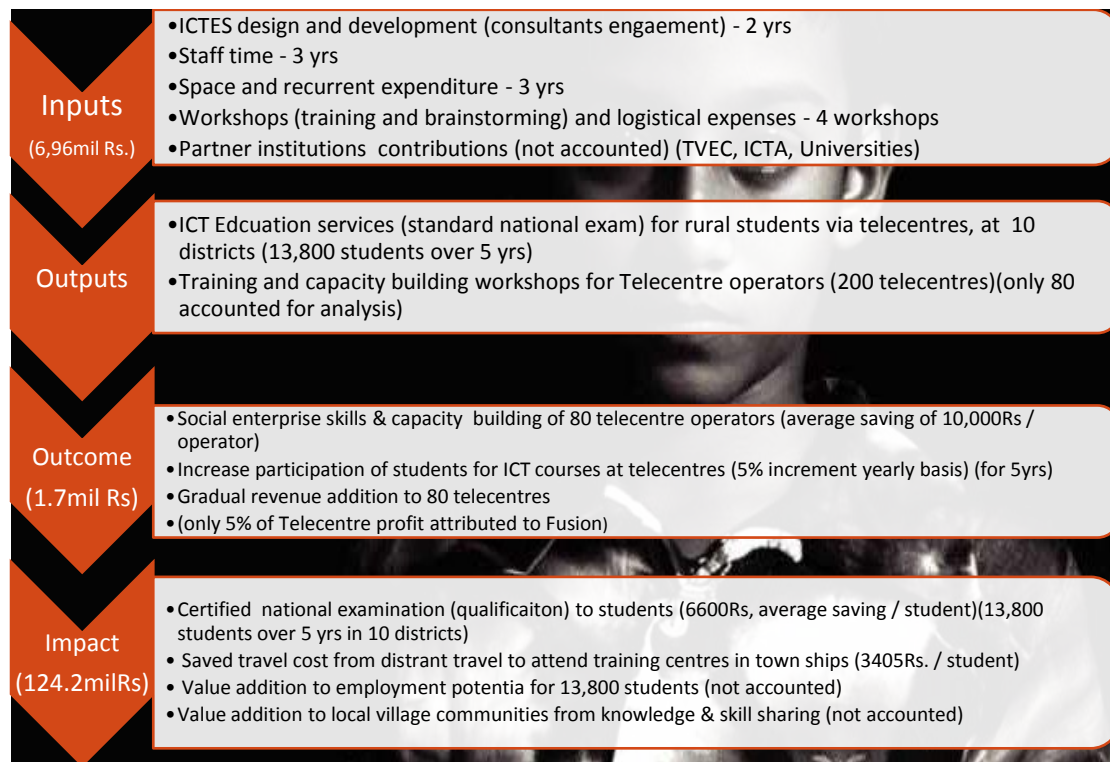
SROI analysis has been carried out on a specific activity – ICTES (Exams).

SROI - Social Return on Investment indicates Social return in financial terms, against the financial inputs, (including voluntary contributions & donor funds).

Context of ICTES exams: ICT Education Services (ICTES), is a certified national examination carried out by Fusion, utilizing telecentres (nenasala) in 10 districts. Exams are carried out with the partnership of TVEC, ICTA and resource pool of University of Moratuwa.

First exam conducted in July 2009, after 3 yr long design and development process, that involved the close guidance of NESST - Social Enterprise consultants. Overall process was funded by telecentre.org of IDRC.

Figure 5: Impact map for SROI analysis



Assumptions:

1. Examination will continue over 5 yr period
2. Out of Telecentre's profit gain, only 5% attributed to Fusion's inputs.
2. Some impacts are not been accounted as data not available: eg. Job earning after certification, additional income to the exam coordinators and other affiliated staff, secondary impact on families and village communities.

Calculated SROI value for ICTES exams was 13 (at the 10% discount rate) and 10 (at 20% discount rate).

That implies, for every 100 Rs invested in ICTES exams (by donors), Fusion generates about 1300 worth of Social Impact at Telecentres and rural Community in 10 districts, over 5 year period.

Identified drawback>> Current analysis is Fusion's sustained effort over last 2 years to develop appropriate SROI analytical model. Though current model is sufficiently grounded on standard methods, it recognizes the importance of getting an independent audit about the analysis.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Acknowledge with gratitude for resource / expert contributions of partner institutions telecentre.org, IDRC, Unesco- Appeal, ICTA, Sarvodaya-UK.

Progress of the Social Enterprise operations has been an integral part of this document. To access the details, please communicate to Dr Harsha Liyanage.

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