Annexure 48

From a Small Beginning

National Alliance for Mission 2007: Every Village a Knowledge Centre

Mobilising the Power of Partnership

To a Mass Movement

Jamsetji Tata National Virtual Academy for Rural Prosperity

M S Swaminathan Research Foundation

National Alliance for Mission 2007: Every Village a Knowledge Centre

Mobilising the Power of Partnership

Jamsetji Tata National Virtual Academy
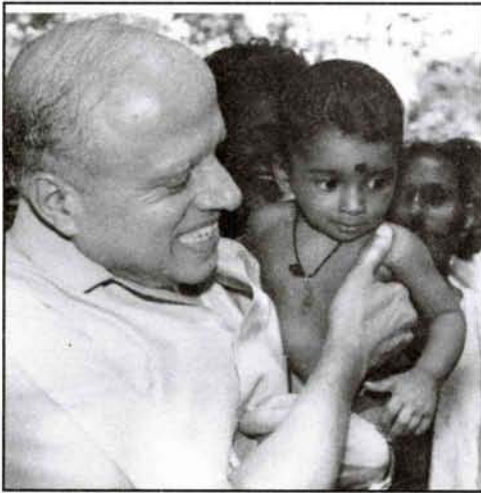*for Rural Prosperity*

M S Swaminathan Research Foundation

M S Swaminathan Research Foundation

PREFACE

Mahakavi Subramania Bharathi stressed in a poem that nutrition and education are like two legs of a human being. Both are important for an active and productive life. Even after several decades of our independence, nearly 25% of our population have inadequate nutrition and nearly 30% are also illiterate. Illiteracy is higher among women. Thanks to modern Information and Communication Technologies, we can launch a Learning Revolution in Rural India through the establishment of Village Knowledge Centres involving the integrated use of the internet, cable TV, radio and the vernacular press. The internet-radio combination is particularly powerful for reaching the unreached and voicing the voiceless in rural India.

MSSRF with support from Tata Trusts has established the Jamsetji Tata National Virtual Academy for Rural Prosperity. The Academy in association with alliance partners will identify a million grassroots knowledge workers who will be enlisted as Fellows of the Academy. They will be the torch bearers of the Knowledge Revolution in our 600,000 villages. The Knowledge Centres will be set up and managed by ICT Self-help Groups comprising both women and men. This will ensure the demand-driven nature of the information provided. Obviously the goal of taking the benefits of ICT to every village in the country can be accomplished only by providing a platform for partnership among the numerous agencies and individuals who are currently working in different parts of the country in setting up information kiosks and other methods of empowering rural women and men with the technologies associated with the digital age. In several parts of the country farm families are facing deep distress due to meterological, marketing, institutional and social factors. We should therefore do everything possible to empower them with relevant and timely information on weather, management, marketing and entitlements. Education and health for all are the other major goals of the Academy.

This publication summarises the various events which led to a small programme initiated with support from IDRC and CIDA seven years ago becoming a mass movement now. The National Alliance for Mission 2007 : Every Village a Knowledge Centre is a coalition of all concerned in bridging the digital, technological, economic and gender divides in rural India. This is the most effective way of giving meaning and content to the plea of the Prime Minister of India, Dr Manmohan Singh that we should lose no further time in extending a new deal to rural India.

M S Swaminathan

From **a Small Beginning to a Mass Movement**. That is the story of the National Alliance for Mission 2007, a Mission for mobilising the power of Infomation and Communication Technologies (ICT) for meeting basic human needs. It is the story of a dream that will come true during this decade. The dream is to extend the knowledge revolution to the more than 600,000 villages of India for improving lives and livelihoods on an environmentally sustainable and socially equitable basis.

The Small Beginning

The seed was sown in 1997 when the M S Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) embarked upon a programme that would use access to information as the key to holistic rural development. A few months later, in early 1998, the Information Village Research Project was established with financial support from International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada. Initially, MSSRF set up information centers; later to be rechristened Knowledge Centres, in three villages near Pondicherry. As there was no prior experience (nor any model to follow), the progress was slow and faltering. Indeed, a few of the early centres housed in individuals' homes had to be closed down, as the benefits were not reaching all members of the community, especially people belonging to the Dalit community. Social inclusion, reaching the unreached and voicing the voiceless are articles of faith in the MSSRF - IDRC ICT programme. Both the MSSRF staff and the volunteers from the local communities learnt from such experience and helped expand the network to 12 villages in the next few years. This pioneering project was followed by several other ICT-enabled information delivery projects (often referred to as 'info-kiosk' projects) in different parts of India.

Information needs vary from village to village; for example, villagers in a fishing village are keen to get accurate forecasts of wave heights and location of fish shoals, whereas people in an interior village may look for help in dealing with sugarcane rot. There are also gender differences in information needs. The women need more information on health related issues from women doctors. That is why it is important to provide timely locale-specific information and in the

Facts: 670,000 route km of fiber has been deployed across the country

BSNL alone has reached **30,000 of its 35,000** exchanges with fiber

There is a possible **capacity of up to 20 Gbps** at each of these 30,000 locations

Using wireless, satellite and other technologies, these **30,000 exchange locations can be leveraged as hubs** for distributing broadband connectivity to all the surrounding villages

-Mr Pradip Baijal
Chairman, TRAI
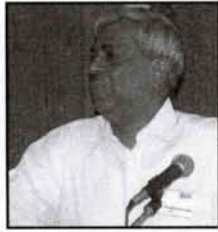
local language. And the information provided should be authentic and useful in the immediate context. Which is why knowledge centre staff work closely with partner organisations such as agricultural universities, *Krishi Vigyan Kendras* (KVK), human and animal health institutions, research laboratories and field stations and marketing organisations

This MSSRF-IDRC project was designed as a test bed for research into how information and communication technologies could be used in rural development. Numerical coverage was to come next. Under this project, MSSRF scientists have tried a variety of communication technologies for transferring (and disseminating) information (voice, data, image, etc.) between the knowledge centres. These include Internet, VHF two-way radio, spread spectrum, WorldSpace Radio, satellite communication using C and Ku bands and low-cost wireless (208.11) technology.

Although the project continues to experiment with a range of technologies, it is essentially a people-centred project, firmly focusing on people and their contexts. From the very inception, connectivity and content were given concurrent attention. The work in each village commences with social scientists/ social workers getting to know the people and making a thorough study of their needs and current level of familiarity with sources of information and the technological means to gather the needed information. Rural families need both dynamic and generic information. The project is bottom up and recognises the local people's right to know from the very beginning.

Fostering a sense of local ownership has been an important feature of this programme. For MSSRF to move into a village and help set up a knowledge centre, the village community has to provide a room in a building which has easy access and provide volunteers as well as pay for electricity and upkeep of the centre. The village volunteers are trained in the operation of computers and maintenance of the communication equipment as well as to gather and input information (market prices, weather information, health care, water conservation and management, etc.).

Appropriately-timed Initiative

"Every Village a Knowledge Centre is an initiative appropriately timed because of its emphasis on over-all development of all the villages as proposed in the new government's Common Minimum Programme (CMP). The reports of the six Task Forces will provide inputs for policymaking and make this concept a reality. The Ministry will take an initiative to induct ICT for all the major works identified by these Task Forces......the cost of taking connectivity to the villages is an area that the Ministry has been focusing on including the price of devices and networking equipment. In every budget, there are concessions on this subject..."

- Mr K K Jaswal, Secretary,
Ministry of Communications and Information Technology
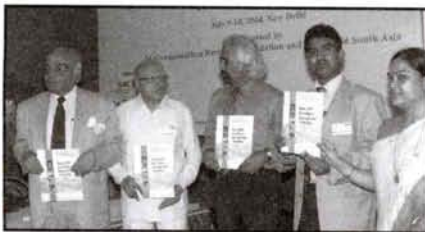
While access to relevant information may be key to development, mere provision of information is not enough. Information is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for empowerment. Information has to be linked to the means of using the information. For example, if older people are empowered with knowledge relating to cataract, they should know where the cataract eye surgery can be performed at low or no cost (in Pondicherry, the Aravind Eye Hospital kindly provides this facility).

Also, we cannot ignore ICTs anymore. Indeed, developing and least developed countries have paid a heavy price for failing to adopt the technologies of the Industrial Revolution in good time. They were hence colonized by technology-rich countries. If we fail to take advantage of the new ICTs, the consequences could be even worse. But left to itself ICT will only exacerbate the existing differences such as the rural-urban divide. We should learn to use ICTs for bridging gender, social, economic and technological divides. The project should be built on the foundation of gender and social equity.

The challenge is in adopting a holistic information access-enabled development strategy and using ICT as a cross-cutting instrument in different aspects of the strategy. This is precisely what MSSRF is aiming. While the Knowledge Centre is at the core of the ICT for Rural Development movement – somewhat similar to the village temple (or the well) where people gather not only to pray (or fetch water) but also to socialize, chat, exchange notes and relax as a community - we build around it several other initiatives and programmes, such as self-help groups, skill building, micro-credit, micro-enterprises, markets, literacy and education, agriculture, health, governance, and entitlements, in each one of which information plays an important role. Poverty will persist so long as a large proportion of the rural pouplation is engaged only in unskilled work. ICT should be used to bring about a paradigm shift from unskilled to skilled work and from routine on-farm to value-added non-farm activities.

" Mission 2007 is not just a great vision but is essential if we want India to shine truly. Let me assure you that the IT industry is behind you all. NASSCOM wants to leverage the power of IT in education, IT literacy, empowerment and creating knowledge basic to increasing income generation of the people. We do not intend to become implementer by ourselves. We want to be a body that harnesses all the talent available, creates roadmaps and encourages our members to implement them. I assure you all of our full support for the Mission 2007."

- Mr Saurabh Srivastava, Founding Trustee
NASSCOM Foundation

Having used and successfully experimented with ICTs in a dozen villages in Pondicherry, MSSRF took the concept of Rural Knowledge Centres to other regions and established such centres in villages where the J R D Tata Ecotechnology Centre of MSSRF was already working with the local communities. Independent evaluation has shown that the ICT-enabled knowledge centre can indeed make a difference in the day to day life and well-being of rural children, women and men. The project received several international awards like the Stockholm Challenge Award and the Motorola Dispatch Solution Gold Award.

Other initiatives

While the IDRC – Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) supported MSSRF initiatives were developing and getting national and international attention, several other initiatives (in the genre of info kiosks) sprung up in different parts of the country. Not all of them followed the same model. Some were government supported, and others adopted a business model (users pay) right from the beginning. At least two of them were established by large industrial houses, essentially to reach out to clients and supply them with products useful to them (ITC's e-chaupal and Hindustan Lever's iShakthi). n-Logue, an IT company largely promoting the technologies developed by IIT, Chennai, has a franchise model, wherein they provide an info kiosk (PC with Internet and videoconferencing facility, scanner, photocopier, etc.) at a low cost and train the kiosk owner, and the owner provides different services and tries to earn a reasonable income.

India probably has the largest number of info kiosk initiatives and there are many reports on these initiatives in both the electronic and the print media. Unfortunately, these are yet to spread in rural India.

Interest in ICT for development and in particular info kiosks is growing around the world. There is also worldwide interest in using ICT to accelerate progress in achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals. **Taking the benefits of ICT to every village in India is an idea whose time has come.**

Civil Society at the Helm

"This workshop is a milestone because it is, for the first time, being led by the civil society organizations. Mr. Jaswal's mention that the outcome of this workshop will; be given attention by the CIT ministry is like a great morale booster for all of us. "

- Dr Basheerhamad Shadrach, Director, OneWorld South Asia

In order to give concrete shape to the idea of "Every Village a Knowledge Centre", the following national consultations were held:

In August 2003, a National Virtual Academy for Food Security and Rural Prosperity was established with financial support from the Tata Social Welfare Trust.

A Policy Makers Workshop was organized in October 2003 to discuss MSSRFs' experience gained during the six years of taking ICT - enabled information provision to resource poor families. The workshop participants came up with recommendations for policy makers in general (for India and the world) which focuses on locally relevant content, community media, gender inclusion, financial sustainability, job-led economic growth and political commitment. It is at this workshop that Prof. M S Swaminathan articulated the need for National Alliance.

The first Steering Committee meeting of the MSSRF–Tata National Virtual Academy for Food Security and Rural Prosperity was held on February 21, 2004. In this meeting, it was decided that the NVA should help to launch an Every Village a Knowledge Centre Movement in collaboration with IGNOU, the 11 State Open Universities and other appropriate Government and non-Government organisations. **We can easily cover the 600,000 villages of our country by 15 August 2007 by generating synergy between different technologies, particularly between the Internet and the Community Radio and symbiosis among all institutions engaged in the field of technological and skill empowerment of the poor.**

The following eight Millennium Development Goals for reducing poverty and meeting basic human needs were adopted by world leaders at the Millennium Summit in September 2000. The goals are :

1. *To Reduce by half the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015*
2. *Achieve universal primary education by 2015*
3. *Make progress towards gender equality and empowering women by eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2015*
4. *Reduce infant and child mortality rates by two-thirds by 2015*
5. *Reduce maternal mortality ratio by three quarters by 2015*
6. *Halt & begin to reverse the spread of HIV AIDS, malaria and other major diseases*
7. *Implement national strategies for sustainable development by 2005, so as to reverse the loss of environmental resources by 2015*
8. *Develop a global partnership, with targets for aid, trade and debt relief.*

On May 19-20, 2004, on the occassion of the death centenary of Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata, MSSRF–Tata National Virtual Academy for Food Security and Rural Prosperity held a National Consultation on forming a National Alliance for Agenda 2007: "Every Village a Knowledge Centre". Agenda 2007 is designed as an offering of the S & T and Academic community, Civil Society organizations, Private and Public Sector Industry, Financial Institutions, International Partners and Mass Media to the Nation on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of India's independence on 15 August, 2007.

The Mass Movement

Armed with the recommendations of these consultations, the MSSRF-Tata National Virtual Academy for Food Security and Rural Prosperity organised, in collaboration with OneWorld South Asia, a larger consultation with key persons in government, corporate sector, academia and civil society organisations. The two-day workshop was held on 9 and 10 July 2004 at the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences, New Delhi. The workshop was addressed among others by Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister of State (Independent Charge): Science & Technology and Ocean Development; Dr Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, Government of India; Dr Sam Pitroda, Chairman, WorldTel Limited; Dr R Chidambaram, Principal Scientific Adviser to Government of India; Prof. V S Ramamurthy, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology; Shri K K Jaswal, Secretary, Ministry of Information Technology; Mr Pradip Baijal, Chairman, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI); Dr D P S Seth, Member (Technical), Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI); Dr N Vijayaditya, Director General, National Informatics Centre and Dr V S Hedge, ISRO. The following were the major outcome of the National Consultation:

- Mission 2007 was finalized to take the benefits of ICT to every village in India by 15 August 2007, which marks the 60th anniversary of India's independence.

- The Mission will be implemented on the principle of social inclusion, social relevance and gender equality. Transaction costs will be kept low and a sense of ownership will be created by fostering the growth of an ICT-SHG movement.

- The National Alliance for Mission 2007 representing a coalition of the concerned, will facilitate and accelerate the spread of the rural knowledge centre movement and will function, like the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), without a formal legal structure.

- The Alliance will have informal organisational structures at the national, state, district and local levels that will plan and implement the objectives of Mission 2007. The aim is to provide a platform for symbiotic partnership at each level.

- A Secretariat will be formed to facilitate and service the partners and other stakeholders. The Secretariat will convene periodic meetings and facilitate decision taking by the General Body and provide support services to the Steering Committee and the experts groups that will work towards achieving Mission 2007.

- The constitution of a Steering Coomittee for Mission 2007 comprising governmental and civil society organisations and the media, private sector, professionals and academia, was completed by 31 July 2004. This Committee will serve its term from 1 August 2004 until 15 August 2007. Organisations that are represented on the Steering Committee include: the Union Planning Commission, the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, ISRO, NASSCOM, IGNOU, TRAI, NIC, AIR, NAAS, ICAR, Development Alternatives, IIT-Chennai, One World South Asia, ITC, ICRISAT and IDRC.

- Five Task Forces were organized to assist the National Alliance and its Steering Committee. They will deal with the following topics:

  1.   Connectivity & Space Applications

"Government believes that if in the next five years can make positive difference in the prosperity of rural population, and also possibly create effective demand for sustaining 7-8 percent growth rate, then the government would have done a great job."

- Kapil Sibal
Minister of State
Department of Science and Technology

2. Content in local languages and Application

3. Public Policy and Investment

4. Management of Knowledge Centres – ICT SHGs
   (Organisation, Management, Evaluation,
   Monitoring and Training, Capacity Building and
   Election of NVA Fellows)

5. Resources (Human, Infrastructure and Financial)

- A complimentary structure to that of the national level structure
  will be formed at the state and district levels.

- At the village level, on the basis of local dynamics a committee
  will be formed in consultation with the Gram Sabha for managing
  knowledge centres. This Committee will help to organise training,
  building capacity, peer-to-peer learning among the knowledge
  workers and the local entrepreneurs. These may be *Panchayats*,
  self-help groups, common interest groups, human networks and
  community-based organizations.

- Alliance partners would help to connect 25,000 unconnected
  villages during 2004. Mission 2007 would undertake to facilitate
  this process and pool in resources from various sources to achieve
  this goal.

- There are numerous ICT tools - Internet, Cable TV, Radio,
  Cellphone, English Language and Vernacular Press. The National
  Alliance doesn't believe in the absolute superiority of any
  particular tool, Rather in using an appropriate mix of these tools
  that would benefit the people the most.

"Technology transfer is very important. The leading R and D institutions should improve the processes keeping in the mind the affordability of the technology by the rural industries. The Rural Technology and Information Group, a mechanism to transfer the technology from the higher-level institutions to those downstream, would have to take a more critical role in this context. Rapid conversion of technology to useful products is still a problem. Therefore, there is a need for continuing basic researches and applied researches on critical technology, societal requirements and creating processes for low cost seamless adoption of the same among the downstream players. Research and development would require to be effectively linked with delivery mechanisms. The success of the Green Revolution is also attributed to such effective linkages. For the Mission 2007 and the knowledge revolution, the need is far greater. Thus delivery would be key in achieving Mission 2007 and the Department of Space, Government of India can provide the much needed connectivity for delivery to the unreached. There is some convergence between Media Lab Asia (MLA) and National alliance as far as connectivity issues are concerned and possibly MLA can take some pilot projects for the connectivity issues. "

- Dr R Chidambaram
Principal Scientific Advisor, Government of India

The National Alliance, formalised at the July 2004, New Delhi consultation will help to amalgamate the work of individual stakeholders in *reaching the unreached* and *voicing the voiceless*. It started with some 40 members, but the alliance is already 100-member strong with representatives from government, civil society, academia, media, national and international corporate sector and bilateral donors.

The time is ripe for ushering in the knowledge revolution in rural India. We are blessed with political and intellectual infrastructure, vibrant media and a flourishing democracy going up to the village level. The government is focussing its attention on rural India. The Telecom Regulatory Authority is now building strategies for accelerating the growth of telecom infrastructure and for bringing down the costs of communication. Many national institutions-IGNOU, NIC and State Open Universities-are keen to reach out to rural masses. State Governments are deeply interested in harnessing ICT for sustainable development. ISRO is launching a satellite specifically dedicated to education as well as the Village Resource Centre Programme.

Organisation and Management of Village Knowledge Centres: ICT Self Help Groups (SHGs) will be promoted to organize and manage these Knowledge Centres. NABARD may provide loan to the level of Rs 1 lakh per Knowledge Centre (includes the cost of the computer, uninterrupted power supply {UPS}, modem, CD writer, web camera, printer, scanner, copier, fax, furniture, electricity, Internet, etc). Mission 2007 envisages creation of a cadre of one million grassroots level Fellows - the torchbearers of knowledge revolution in India. This will include physically disabled persons.

In addition to connectivity and access issues, which are critical but for which technological solutions are gradually emerging, another most crucial aspect of this mission is content. People need both generic to locale specific knowledge and dynamic information - on education, health, weather (including monsoon management strategy), water resources, agriculture and government schemes. A consortium of

"Dear Countrymen, from the National Common Minimum Programme, I have identified seven priority sectors for focused attention. These are agriculture, water, education, health care, employment, urban renewal and infrastructure. These Seven Sectors (saat sutra) are the pillars of the development bridge we must cross to ensure higher economic growth and more equitable social and economic development."

Dr Manmohan Singh
Hon'ble Prime Minister of India
Indipendence Day Address, August 15, 2004

content providers should build location and language specific knowledge base. There is also a need for capacity building for content provisioning, as well as to build a framework for learning-by-doing by the practitioners. In addition, satellite technologies will be a useful tool for several remote applications - telemedicine, remote sensing, distance education etc. Gender mainstreaming of content; assured and remunerative market-linking of producers and purchasers; outsourcing of work from towns to villages; ICT-SHGs at low transaction cost; organising financial, technical and infrastructure resources; and training and capacity building are other key aspects that the Mission will concentrate on.

Mission 2007 will also engage with the Central and State Governments in demystifying technology, clarifying policy, deregulating community media, such as community radio, reducing transaction costs and unleashing the creativity of rural women and men. Appropriate public policies will facilitate a paradigm shift from *pilot projects* to a *national* movement. There is an urgent need for a new policy with appropriate 'dos' and 'don'ts'. NABARD will have to play a catalytic role in introducing new schemes rural knowledge centres. Further there is to a need to undertake cost-benefit analysis and to document best practices and success stories

There are numerous ongoing rural ICT projects in different parts of the country. The time has come to promote synergy and convergence among all on-going efforts. **The strengths of the individual partners of the National Alliance may vary but their collective strength is considerable.** It is this collective strength that Mission 2007: Every Village a Knowledge Centre strives to mobilize. This should be our offering to the 60th anniversary of India's tryst with destiny, so movingly articulated by Jawaharlal Nehru on the midnight of August 14-15, 1947.

Digital bridges
Connect all of India to a common keyboard

The Problem
A far country. This describes 76,000 of the 6.38 lakh villages cut off from the national grid. They have no information on the weather and are open to exploitation by middlemen. As a result, producers of perishables get only 20 per cent of what consumers pay.

The Way out
Democratise IT. Follow the M S Swaminathan Foundation imitative in Pondicherry where every day, fisherman log on to the Internet for wave patterns and location of fish. It has reduced the accident rate and boosted the catch.

-India Today
Independence day special 23 August 2004

"Through satellite transmissions, content can be easily pushed onto the server, data additions would be simpler and services from the government could be generated and relayed to its end-users. Mission 2007 is a vehicle in which ISRO can piggyback and in the process bring the benefits of space directly to the grassroot level."

- Dr V S Hegde
Deputy Director (Applications), EOS, ISRO

Steering Committee

|		
Chair	:	Prof. M S Swaminathan, *Chairman National Commision on Farmers*
Secretary General	:	Ms Sukanya Rath, *Executive Director NASSCOM Foundation*
Secretaries	:	Dr Basheerhamad Shadrach, *Director OneWorld South Asia*
		Prof. Subbiah Arunachalam, *MSSRF*
		Mr S Senthilkumaran, *MSSRF*

Members

Mr Brijeshwar Singh, Director General, All India radio

Dr R Chidambaram, Principal Scientific Adviser to Government of India

Dr William R Dar, DG, ICRISAT

Mr Y C Deveshwar, Chairman, ITC Limited

Dr H P Dikshit, Vice-Chancellor, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)

Dr Frank Tulus, ICT Officer, IDRC

Dr Geeta Mehta, Convenor, Friends of MSSRF, Tokyo

Mr K K Jaswal, Secretary, Ministry of Information Technology, Government of India

Mr Kiran Karnik, President, National Associaton of Software and Service Companies

Mr G Madhavan Nair, Chairman, ISRO

Ms Namrata Bali, General Secretary, SEWA

Mr A K Purwar, Chairman, State Bank of India

Science-based Sustainable Development

The State Bank of India is now intimately involved as a partner with the M.S. Swaminathan Foundation in each of the village project...some of the projects were dairies as before, but now they have also set-up small production of bio-control agents, bringing them both health and economic benefits. And the women had started training other women from other villages. Here was a perfect example of the type of science-based franchise for sustainable development...

- Prof. Bruce Alberts
National Academy of Science
USA
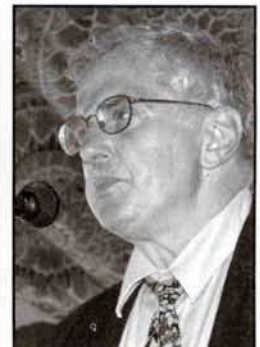
Ms Poonam Muttreja, Country Director, MacArthur Foundation

Mr Pradip Baijal, Chairman, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)

Mr M V Rajasekharan, Minister of State in the Ministry of Planning

Mr N Ram, Editor-in-Chief, The Hindu

Mr S Ramadorai, The Chief Executive Officer, TCS

Prof. V S Ramamurthy, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology
    Ministry of Science and Technology

Ms Ranjana Kumar, Chairperson, NABARD

Mr Ratan N. Tata, Group Chairman, TATA Sons

Mr Ravi Venkatesan, Chairman, Microsoft India

Mr Sadanand Sule, Director, Laguna International

Dr Sam Pitroda, Chairman, WorldTel Limited

Mr K S Sarma, Chief Executive Officer, Prasar Bharati

Dr D P S Seth, Member (Technical), Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)

Prof. Surabhi Banerjee, Vice-Chancellor, Netaji Subhas Open University

Dr M Velayutham, Executive Director, MSSRF

Dr N Vijayaditya, Director General, National Informatics Centre

"Everything else

can wait,

but not agriculture."

- Jawaharlal Nehru
1947

Task Forces

Connectivity & Space Applications

Convenor	Prof. Ashok Jhunjhunwala, Professor, IIT- Madras
Co-convenor	Dr V S Hegde, Deputy Director (Application), EOS, ISRO
	Dr M V Pitke, Director, Axes Technologies (I) Pvt. Ltd.

Content and Application

Convenor	Dr S Nagarajan, Director, Indian Agricultural Research Institute
Co-convenor	Dr Dileep Ranjekar, Executive Director, Azim Premji Foundation

Public Policy and Investment

Convenor	Mr M V Rajashekharan, Minister of State for Planning and Member in charge of ICT, Planning Commission
Co-convenor	Mr K K Jaswal, Secretary, Ministry of Information Technology
	Dr D P S Seth, Member (Technical), TRAI

Management of Knowledge Centres – ICT SHGs (Organisation, Management, Evaluation, Monitoring and Training, Capacity Building and Election of NVA Fellows)

Convenor	Dr Ashok Khosla, President, Development Alternatives
Co-convenor	Ms Namrata Bali, General Secretary, SEWA
	Nominee of Chairperson, NABARD

Resources

Convenor	Mr Kiran Karnik, President, National Associaton of Software and Service Companies
Co-convenor	Mr S Ramadorai, The Chief Executive Officer, TCS
	Ms Poonam Muttreja, Country Director, McArthur Foundation
	Mr Ravi Venkatesan, Chairman, Microsoft India
	Dr Meenakshi Gopinath, Sri Ram College

"The challenge lies in making this programme operate through low cost investment product and management , through providing new opportunities for entreprenuers and through providing total solutions that have worldwide impact. "

Dr Madhukar Vishwanath Pitke - Director
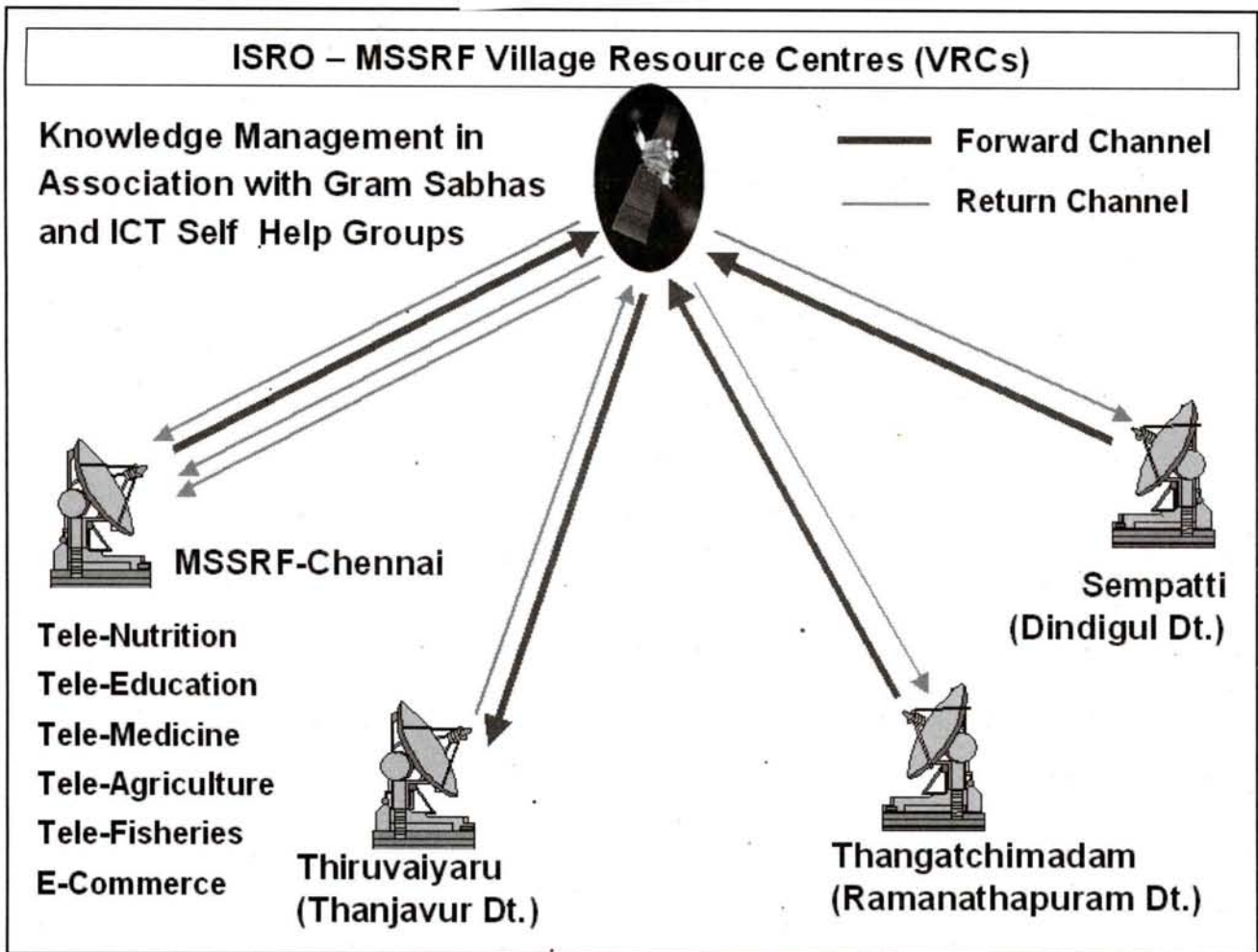*Axes Technologies*

Alliance Partners

- All India Radio
- American India Foundation (AIF)
- Aravind Eye Hospital
- Axes Technologies (I) Pvt. Ltd.
- Azim Premji Foundation
- Bellanet
- Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL)
- Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
- Centre for Environment Education
- Centre for Spatial Database Management and Solutions
- CHiPS (IT Agency of Chhattisgarh Govt.)
- Commissiorate of Agriculture, Govt. of Maharashtra
- Consumer Online Foundation
- Coral Telecom Ltd
- Current Option & Future Trends (P) Ltd.
- Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University (BRAOU)
- Datamation Foundation Charitable Trust
- Department of Food and Public Distribution
- Department of Information Technology
- Development Alternatives
- Department for International Development (DFID), India
- Dhirubhai Ambani Institute of Information and Communication Technology
- Digital Empowerment Foundation
- Digital Partners
- EID Parry (I) Ltd.
- Friends of M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, Tokyo
- Gerster Consulting
- Global Internet Policy Initiative (GIPI India)
- Hewlett-Packard Labs India
- IBM Business Consulting Services, Canada
- International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)
- Infrastructure Development Finance Corporation (IDFC)
- International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada

- Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management, Kerala (IIITM-K)
- INDEV British Council Division
- Indian Agricultural Research Institute
- Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute
- Indian Council of Agricultural Research
- Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)
- Indian Institute of Technology – Chennai
- Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)
- Indian Society of Agribusiness Professionals
- Indian Space Research Organisation
- ITC Limited
- Kerala Agriculture University
- M S Swaminathan Research Foundation
- McArthur Foundation
- Madras Institute of Development Studies
- Maharashtra Virtual University for Agrarian Prosperity
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Media Lab Asia
- Microsoft Corporation (India) Pvt. Ltd
- Ministry of Agriculture, New Delhi
- Ministry of Communication and Information Technology
- Ministry of Science and Technology
- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)
- Nand Educational Foundation for Rural Development (NEFORD)
- National Associaton of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) Foundation
- National Informatics Centre (NIC)
- National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management
- Netaji Subhas Open University (NSOU)
- n-Logue Communications
- North Eastern Space Applications Centre
- OneWorld International
- OneWorld South Asia
- Panos Institute
- PlaNet Finance

- Planing Commission (GOI)
- Postal Services Board
- School of Information Management and Systems, University of California
- Self-Employed Women Association (SEWA)
- Shree Associates
- Sir Dorabji Tata Trust
- Social Empowerment, Sarvodaya Sri Lanka
- Tamil Nadu Agricultural University
- Tata Consultancy Services
- TARAHaat
- Telecommunication and Computer Information System (TCIS)
- Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)
- Telecommunications & Computer Information Systems
- The World Bank
- United Nation Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- University of California Berkeley
- US Agency for International Development (USAID), India
- World Food Programme (WFP), India
- World Links
- WorldTel Limited
- Xansa India

ISRO – MSSRF Village Resource Centres (VRCs)

Knowledge Management in Association with Gram Sabhas and ICT Self Help Groups

— Forward Channel
— Return Channel

MSSRF-Chennai

Tele-Nutrition
Tele-Education
Tele-Medicine
Tele-Agriculture
Tele-Fisheries
E-Commerce

Thiruvaiyaru (Thanjavur Dt.)

Sempatti (Dindigul Dt.)

Thangatchimadam (Ramanathapuram Dt.)

The ISRO-MSSRF Village Resource Centre Programme will be launched in September 2004 at Thiruvaiyaru in the Thanjavur District of Tamil Nadu. Thiruvaiyaru is etched in the minds of all Indians because of its association with Saint Thyagaraja, the great composer of divine music in the carnatic style. Thiruvaiyaru is in the Thanjavur District of Tamil Nadu, where due to paucity of Cauvery water and depletion of the aquifer, farmers are struggling to develop alternative cropping systems. This programme will mark the beginning of the Space Age for rural well-being. It will help to reach every rural household with location, need, gender, livelihood and time specific knowledge (i.e. value added information). It will handle both dynamic and generic information. The programme will concentrate on helping rural women, men and children to meet their basic needs in nutrition, health, drinking and irrigation water, education and vocation. The programme will cover both farm and fisher families and will be based on the motto: **"food, water, health, literacy and work for all and for ever."**

Mission 2007: Every Village a Knowledge Centre

Dedicated to the memory of Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata
on the occassion of his death centenary

'I will always remember Jamsetji...as a man who helped a nation believe in itself.'

— Azim Premji
Chairman, WIPRO

'Jamsetji changed India's industrial and economic character. He was a visionary far ahead of his time.'

— N.R.Narayana Murthy
Chairman of the Board and Chief Mentor, INFOSYS

The time is now. The mission: a brighter future, connected to the world of opportunities and growth, for 600,000+ Indian villages.

The National Alliance for Achieving a Rural Knowledge Revolution was formed on May 19, 2004. The date was chosen since it represented the death centenary of Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata who showed that seemingly impossible tasks could be achieved through vision, determination and dedicated work.

To instil the sprit of innovation and determination to succeed, the National Virtual Academy is being redesignated as **Jamsetji Tata National Virtual Academy for Rural Prosperity (NVA).**