DRIVERS 4 GROWTH

JULY 2019 ISSUE

ABOUT WORK 4 PROGRESS

The Work 4 Progress (W4P) programme of "la Caixa" Banking Foundation accelerates the creation of meaningful and dignified employment through the creation of platforms for innovation, action and continuous learning. In India, W4P provides enterprise development opportunities for youth and women in two regions – Bundelkhand and Eastern Uttar Pradesh.

W4P adopts a social innovation methodology through which it listens to the community through dialogue, finds answers through co-creation, and then prototypes solutions and shares learnings to eventually create impact at scale.

DIALOGUE

Listen to Multi-Stakeholder Perspectives
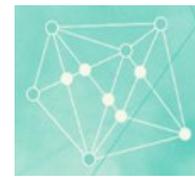
CO-CREATE

Develop Relevant Solutions Collaboratively

PROTOTYPE

Demonstrate Sustainability of Solutions

ACCELERATE

Mainstream Learning for Impact at Scale

W4P innovates and demonstrates systemic solutions to create a culture of entrepreneurship through the following interconnected objectives:

- **Nurture constructive communities** who respond positively to shifts in the new social system and build a resilient economy with quality jobs and social well- being
- **Unleash entrepreneurial energies of individuals** by removing social, intergenerational and gender barriers to build a culture of entrepreneurship
- **Empower small businesses through a robust ecosystem** and enable them to become catalysts for job creation
- **Mainstream enabling mechanisms** for entrepreneurship led job creation through a coalition of micro movements

By 2026, W4P aims to enable a million livelihoods over the next ten years.

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IN THIS ISSUE

Anita Devi, proprietor of a busy general store

PERSPECTIVE BUILDING

The role of Work 4 Progress (W4P) as a platform in building evidence is becoming more visible as it is progressing from its pilot phase. The platform is emphasizing on building bridges through dialogue, co-creating innovative solutions, strengthening existing prototypes and capturing learnings to accelerate action.

In the past few months, dialogue processes have been adapted to understand changes in demand for enterprises as well as track the growth of existing enterprises. The platform is also working on improving existing prototypes such as the youth run information kiosks and developing new prototypes such as the digital platform. The platform envisions its prototypes to be adopted and replicated by its partners as well as the community. W4P is also developing a new learning system that employs ethnographic principles and implements evaluation tools that place the community at the center of the feedback process.

We look forward for such 'Drivers 4 Growth' to evolve the W4P platform and initiate a change in the enterprise development ecosystem.

NURTURING RURAL ENTERPRISES - ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY

Cocreating growth strategies for existing enterprises

Two-thirds of India's population and 70% of its workforce resides in rural areas constituting 46% of national income. Projections by the NITI Aayog, indicate that even as late as 2050, half of India's population will remain rural.

With concerns around sustainable development, there is a pressing need to foster rural economic growth and job creation, to provide dignified standards of living for India's large rural populace. Micro-enterprises play an instrumental role in addressing these complex challenges, creating local employment while building resilience within communities against economic shocks.

Despite their significant role in economy, enterprise development in rural India is limited. With inadequate access points for relevant information and services, individuals often find identifying a pathway to entrepreneurship challenging. Lack of innovation in entrepreneurship ecosystem in rural areas creates a lot of social obstacles like low risk taking capability, perception/mis-conceptions of community regarding enterprises.

With the purpose of accelerating the creation of dignified and meaningful employment opportunities through enterprise development, the Work 4 Progress (W4P) programme of "la Caixa" banking foundation was launched in India in 2017 with Development Alternatives as the nodal agency. W4P creates platforms to enhance rural ecosystem to unleash entrepreneurial energies of individuals to pursue their business aspirations. It also aims to create model enterprises that are sustainable and can be replicated across geographies.

Findings from 1st Phase:

In the first phase of the program, which ended in November 2018, 175 enterprises were set up which supported creating 270 local jobs.

Focus Group Discussion being conducted in the community

Strategy of moving forward

For sustainability, adequate attention needs to be given to planning and strategy for growth. These processes require that the entrepreneurs are active participants and drivers. To take an informed decision, the entrepreneur requires right information and access to resources.

In line of this, the W4P program focuses on enhancing the dialogue processes with existing entrepreneurs to understand their needs and changes on ground. This can be done by analyzing their financial flows, understanding their aspirations, local barriers and enablers and accordingly co-creating business growth strategies. Co-creation of quality control protocols is another method that came up from the learnings of the first phase. Through dialogue with local stakeholders, it was necessitated to improve the various aspects of rural enterprises like product quality, customer satisfaction, process optimization for increased profit margin and sustainability.

In order to ensure the acceleration of existing enterprises, there is also a strong demand for market aggregators (online as well as offline) and new business models like green enterprises (improving resource utilization and resource efficiency), enterprises which caters to basic needs (nutrition, energy, clean water, building materials) of rural population etc. W4P envisions working at meso-level ecosystem by capturing success stories of entrepreneurs and positioning them as change agents.

In order to address the problems in all its complexity at scale, as well maintain an intense focus on capturing latent entrepreneurship opportunities, there is a need for systemic change through collective will. Concerted action is required to first remove barriers that stifle the emergence of micro-enterprises, and second, put them on an accelerated growth trajectory that enables entrepreneurs to turn into job creators of their choice. Through the aforementioned processes, W4P program aims to develop a platform to enable the existing entrepreneurs be the torch bearer of enterprise development and economic growth at local level.

REORIENTATION WORKSHOP

"It is only when we develop diverse enterprises by involving different social groups that we can grow in the next phase of our programme", shared one of the participants at the reorientation workshop organized at TARAgram Orccha (Bundelkhand). The two-day reorientation workshop for implementing partner and local stakeholders was held on 26th and 27th June 2019, focused on reiterating programme principles of dialogue, co-creation, prototype and acceleration, and planning the framework for Phase II. The workshop consisted of various sessions around reiterating W4P India principles for the current phase, developing a shared understanding of Deepening for Impact, forming an integrated learning system and discussing ideas for new and existing prototypes.

The meeting started with an introductory session, followed by a session based on the social innovation methodology to re-empahsise the programme principles. Next, there was a deeper discussion on the programme principles moderated by DA and the implementing partners on the current understanding and the evolution of the programme principles and implementation. Key suggestions from the discussion were around the need to build new tools for more effective and empathetic dialogue with communities and stakeholders. Other suggestions included creating a conducive local ecosystem to enable risk-taking among entrepreneurs and stakeholders.

The next session on Deepening for Impact was designed as an activity where participants divided in groups were asked to explore their understanding of "deepening". This allowed the participants to visualise and share their ideas, and build a cohesive picture for deepening impact for the programme which revolved around enhancing the skills of entrepreneurs and building the ecosystem support services.

The workshop introduced the Development Evaluation Framework, particularly the identification of needs and opportunities to enable the participants to get a sense of the analytical process being set-up for learning and acceleration. Documentation of qualitative changes on the ground were considered primary goals by the participants to open up spaces for exploration of new opportunities and influence policy. The next session was around gaining clarity on the definition of prototypes and their dynamic nature in furthering the micro-enterprise ecosystem. It was understood that prototypes can be considered as platforms or mediums through which an enterprise can be setup. Prototypes should also provide technical assistance to the enterprise. In line with the discussion, the most effective prototypes that came up for W4P are Information kiosks, social good enterprise, coalitions and micro-credit facility.

Day 1 of Reorientation Workshop at TARAgram Orccha

The second day began with a workshop activity on tapping into the latent knowledge of the participants to identify key enterprise ideas and the underlying rationale by taking each of these ideas through the four principle of dialogue, co-creation, prototype and acceleration. Through the highly engaged time bound activity, a few ideas came up around group based enterprises like Framer Production Organisations (FPOs) and construction material enterprises, to name a couple. The workshop activities were interspersed with field visits to initiate interactions with existing and new entrepreneurs.

We gained some interesting insight on the lives and businesses of some entrepreneurs during the first day of our field trip to Kaina village. We met Dhan Kunwar, a middle aged woman who owns a Tent House and Construction Service. She set up her enterprise in May 2018 and employs over 20 residents of her village. Her enterprise caters to villages in a radius of 40 KM - which gives evidence of the quality and easy availability of her services. She is planning on diversifying her services to cater to customised market demand.

Field visit to Kena village during Reorientation Workshop

On Day 2, participants met two entrepreneurs and visited a Gaushala run under the aegis of Taragram. One of the entrepreneurs they met on Day 2, Pratap runs an Online solution shop, he is servicing around 100-150 customers per day. Pratap is also trained in Video mixing and book-keeping skills which he is using to provide support to other entrepreneurs in his area at a small fee. He is further thinking of expanding his business to include an Online Language Speaking course. To summarise, the workshop was a successful platform to re-engage with the stakeholders in the field and re-emphasise programme principles. Through the workshop both the nodal agency, that is DA, and the partners were able to come to a shared understanding of the path that lies ahead in phase II.

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DIGITAL PROTOTYPES- DRIVERS OF CHANGE

An Entrepreneur viewing an online training video

Enterprise development is a process involving entrepreneurs, support service providers, stakeholders from government and non-government agencies and institutions. To accelerate this process, we need engines that can create a convergence between these stakeholders, agencies and entrepreneurs to scale up the output of creating efficient enterprises. One such engine is digital prototypes.

Based on current trends, digital prototypes will become the preferred and dominant business model for small businesses giving them the ability to connect to market, financial and other service providers through an online or mobile channel as an integrated part of their day-to-day activities.
In India about 500 million individuals are daily internet users and there is growing evidence that entrepreneurs are accessing social media and web based services from their mobile phones. The digital prototypes are one step towards creating a technology driven platform leveraging this growth in digital accessibility for micro-enterprise development.In the pilot phase of Work 4 Progress (W4P) India, we tested models such as: i) youth led online information centres   that offer services like access to information on government schemes, filing of entrance forms, applications for Aadhar and PAN card and ii) self-learning apps with beginner to advanced level training modules on entrepreneurship and enterprise development

Based on learnings of W4P pilot phase, we see that the digital prototypes manifest in the realm of entrepreneurship in the form of three distinct but related elements - digital artifacts, digital platforms, and digital infrastructure.

A Digital artifact can be defined as a digital component, application, or media content that is part of a new product (or service) and offers a specific functionality or value to the end-user. For example - The self-employment application developed to impart enterprise development skills to budding entrepreneurs.

Digital platform is defined as a shared, common set of services and architecture that serves to host complementary offerings for entrepreneurs to support their businesses. These comprise facilities like access to information for enterprise setup, access to online capacity building trainings, access to market and technology vendors and finally a Business to Business (B2B) platform for sale of products and services.

Digital infrastructure, In contrast to digital platforms, digital infrastructure is defined as digital technology tools and systems (e.g., cloud computing, data analytics, online communities, social media and 3D printing) that offer communication, collaboration, or computing capabilities to support innovation and entrepreneurship.

Such digital infrastructures will lead to the engagement of a greater number and diverse set of people in all stages of the entrepreneurial process. We believe digital prototypes can mark a new era in entrepreneurship, one in which the traditional ways and forms of pursuing entrepreneurial opportunities are increasingly questioned and refashioned. Gaining a deeper understanding of the underlying issues calls for integrating digital-technology-related concepts and constructs with those in existing entrepreneurship systems.

In conclusion, these prototypes will lead to rapid growth of the entrepreneurial opportunities. Looking at the enormous potential to accelerate and transform the space of micro-entrepreneurship, it is important for program like W4P to drive their prototypes and develop new ones as an integral part of their developmental strategy for a multiplied impact leading to an ideal ecosystem for entrepreneurship. Also on-demand services led by audio and video content are currently at the cusp of inflection point in India. However, the content is scattered and most of the users have to avail the information via multiple portals.

Hence the platform, therefore bridges this divide and will act as a one stop solution for entrepreneurs where they can build their capacities, bridge their information gap, conceptualize their idea and start their business. This platform also provides service providers a focused group of customers, ready to avail their services.

ADDRESSING CHALLENGES ON GROUND THROUGH AN ADAPTIVE LEARNING SYSTEM

Why Developmental Evaluation for W4P?

Social Innovation works with 'wicked' problems of development by establishing novel ways of using current resources, and creating new networks, relationships and systems to develop solutions and bring coherence to a complex world. The complexity implicit in the social innovation systems and solutions, presents challenges with respect to traditional monitoring & evaluation (M&E) systems. Traditional M&E requires identifying barriers and enablers to desired positive change, to achieve the envisioned programme goals. While these are necessary to achieve programmatic outcomes, the goals of the W4P are larger and deeper. These goals are around establishing and embedding an adaptive programme management, cognizant and responsive to significant changes occurring in the system, developing strategies for adaptation.

The system employed in W4P is of Development Evaluation. Developmental evaluation is a process of analysis, dialogue, and reflection which aims to enable the Work 4 Progress platform to understand what the program is accomplishing and what is enabling or impeding the desired change. The process can also be adopted to learn which current strategies work and develop new approaches to adapt changing conditions in the platform. The goal for developmental evaluation is to generate the most useful insights through a realistic and reasonable investment of time, money, and people.

An Integrated Learning System

In the pilot phase of W4P India, the findings from developmental evaluation were expected to collect, analyse and share real-time data and insights from the field for improving the implementation process and for informed and ongoing decision making.

Based on learnings from the previous phase, a new learning system has been adopted for the second phase of W4P India. The system will be anchored by a learning team consisting of three team members who will facilitate strategy planning discussions with the W4P India platform, adaptive program management, collective learning, external good practices and knowledge building.

The new system will guide the process of data collection, analysis, and feedback by employing simple evaluation tools. These evaluation tools have been designed to systematically document findings on key evaluation areas and adopt them for learning and not mechanical application. This design allows the translation of developmental evaluation tools to field activities, and findings into knowledge. The knowledge will then be communicated within the community and integrated back in the dialogue and co-creation processes.

The learning team is also reflecting on the different ways in which the project team is adapting and changing with the shifting demands of the program, as well as through these tools of deep reflection and learning. To begin with, the tools have probed the team to think about their time on the ground, as well as initiated a new way of thinking about the activities on the field.

The challenge that the platform is currently working on is designing the learning system in a manner that the community becomes a central part of its process. The team is exploring the potential of community radios and infotainment sessions for initiating this.

Strengthening Learning

Over the next few months, the integrated learning system will:

Apply evaluation tools as learning tools through facilitated sessions in an open learning environment	Identify needs, opportunities, enablers and barriers based on concrete evidence and analysis of breakthrough learnings from the field, studies or reviews	Focus on documenting narratives that emerge during dialogue sessions and often tend to be overlooked
Employ ethnographic principles for regular, deep feedback from the field, through voice notes, video clippings, pictures, initiating and embedding reflective thinking within the team	In addition to internal program learnings, focus on external learnings and good practices that can be adapted to the India program	

Last week, the W4P India platform conducted an orientation and reflection workshop with partners and team members across program geographies. The purpose of the new learning system was introduced as part of the workshop where participants discussed the evaluation tools and suggested ways for integrating ethnographic sensibility with dialogue tools. The platform is working on embedding the plan for developmental evaluation in the implementation work plan for strengthening the learning component of the W4P India platform.

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HIGHLIGHTS

Dialogue

53 Community meetings and **33 focused group discussions** conducted in **60 villages**

Community Canvas completed for **3 existing villages** for scoping market opportunities

Pipeline built for **202** potential entrepreneurs

Village mapping exercise carried out in **40 villages** for deepening impact

Growth strategies meetings conducted with **36 existing entrepreneurs**

Co-create

9 youth workshops were conducted in **40 villages**

134 enterprises were provided with b**usiness support services** for growth analysis

9 Peer to Peer learning sessions for **14 potential entrepreneurs**

30 entrepreneurs linked to **financial institutions**

Reorientation workshop conducted in **TARAgram Orccha** with implementing partners of both the geographies

Digital self employment app rolled out for **information and feedback** in Eastern Uttar pradesh and Bundelkhand

Prototype

Papaya Nursery inaugurated as a **new line of business** for Newadi FPO

New product line of goumutra (cow urine used for making organic disinfectants) launched

Acceleration

Compendium of stories of change published and shared with W4P partners

Digital self-employment app co-created with the community and Quest Alliance

Implementation of learning tools with W4P India partners

New learning system developed and being tested for W4P India

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Regional Enterprise Development Coalition, Bhadohi

Every year volunteers from "la Caixa" Banking Foundation visit Development Alternatives Headquarters to work on W4P India initiatives. Four volunteers visited varied range of micro-enterprises over the period of two days in Bundelkhand.

Regional Enterprise Development Coalition, Bhadohi

A Regional Enterprise Development Coalition was held in Bhadohi on 18th July, 2019. The coalition members included implementation partners, training institutes, financial institutions, government representatives and W4P India members. The participants engaged in open discussion on enhancing the carpet value chain, emerging self-employment options and mapping existing stakeholders in Bhadohi.

Reorientation Workshop at TARAgram, Orccha

A two-day reorientation workshop for implementing partner and local stakehokders was held on 26th and 27th June 2019 at TARAgram Orccha. It focused on reiterating programme principles, and planning the framework for Phase II.

Regional Enterprise Development Coalition, Mirzapur

A Regional Enterprise Development Coalition was held in Mirzapur in May, 2019. The coalition members included implementation partners, training institutes, financial institutions, government representatives and W4P India members. The participants engaged in open discussion on sharing learnings from the W4P methodology, potential of work in Bhadohi and next steps for engagement with financial institutions.

About "la Caixa" Banking Foundation

The "la Caixa" Banking Foundation from Spain, the third largest foundation in the world, promotes diverse social, economic, cultural and ecological initiatives to foster sustainable development across the world. "la Caixa" has worked for more than 110 years in contributing to the advancement of society and the progress of individuals, with a special emphasis on those who need it most. Its main strategic objective is to provide opportunities and fight inequalities in Africa, Asia, and Latin America through programs that contribute to the achievement of the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

About Development Alternatives

Development Alternatives (DA) is a social enterprise with global presence in the fields of green economic development, social empowerment and environmental management. It Is credited with numerous innovations in clean technology and delivery systems that help create sustainable livelihoods in the developing world. DA focuses on empowering communities through strengthening people's institutions and facilitating their access to basic needs; enabling economic opportunities through skill development for green jobs and enterprise creation; and promoting low carbon pathways for development through natural resource management models and clean technology solutions.