



## BREAK OUT SESSION – PROTOTYPE

*Decent work in changing economies?*

**Format: Systems thinking lab**

### Background

The Prototype session was designed as a systems thinking lab to identify solutions for rural entrepreneurs to grow their businesses in the presence of rising automation, globalization and resource constraints. In order to keep the conversation grounded to the reality of entrepreneurs, the participants worked in three groups and each group was managed around a case story of three different rural entrepreneurs.

### Discussions and Observations

The session began with a briefing on systems thinking which provided the base to understanding the ecosystem of entrepreneurs by Dr. Vijay Padaki. The exercise was undertaken for 45 minutes and some of the discussions around the key questions as emerged from the group are shared below



**Key Barriers for Entrepreneurs:** Some of the critical variables that emerged as challenges for the entrepreneurs were related to market management (price point and developing distribution networks in extended markets) and product development (improving quality, design for competitive advantage). In addition to this, some other pain points that emerged from the conversation with entrepreneurs

were related to competition from large traders and consortium of suppliers in the local markets.

**Leverage points for Opportunities:** The customized solutions varied from providing linkages to social entrepreneurs/aggregators for improved connectivity and services, developing incentive systems in supply chains for enhancing marketing, and working on business economics. However, it was interesting to observe that each of the groups looked for solutions in the larger stakeholder and market framework – as against – looking for solutions just within the business model of the entrepreneur or his enterprise. The role of aggregators as input and output services emerged as a clear leverage point for unleashing potential for small micro entrepreneurs in the session. In terms of opportunities, all entrepreneurs and participants highlighted the need to adopt digital and enabling technologies to provide high end services to communities.

**Imperatives for Policy Makers:** A major take away from the session was that most often we look for solutions within the enterprise model but the pressing points are often around, in the market ecosystem. Moving forward, the imperative for policy makers and aggregators has to focus on building a positive ecosystem that creates opportunities and a positive space for lateral institutions that are associated with entrepreneurs – their communities, input providers, market channels among others. For instance, in the case of dairy farmers, the role of milkmen, transport providers needs to be factored in and rules for provision of raw material and procurement need to be improved. For weavers, the ecosystem involves traders, printers, designers and many more. The solutions for individual entrepreneurs can be “one-to-one” but to unleash a positive market system, there is a need to create a positive network of interconnected players in value chains who benefit from and with one another.

### Facilitator

**Dr. Vijay Padaki**, Founder P&P Group

### Entrepreneurs

**Veer Singh Rajpoot**, Vermi-compost Unit

**Prabha Devi**, Managing Director of a Farmer's Producer Organization

**Shyam Surat Yadav**, Weaving Center

### Discussants

**Suryamani Roul**, Deputy Director, TechnoServe

**Manisha Gupta**, Founder, Startup India

**R K Atri**, Founder, Jaivic Bharat

**Rajeev Baruah**, Country Director, Better Cotton Initiative

**Pradeep Bhargava**, Chief Representative India, La Caixa Bank

**Karan Khosla**, Systems Modeler

**Kishan Nanavati**, CEO, Spring Health Water India

**Abdul Rahman Janoo**, Product Manager, Waste Ventures India

**Shashank Kumar**, CEO, farmsnfarmers

**Pulkit Lambah**, Senior Manager, Google, India

**Shubhra Gupta**, Medha

**Rhea Almeida**, Skills Coordinator, SEWA Bharat

**Vijay Raghunath**, General Manager, TARAlife Sustainability Solutions

**Rakesh Khanna**, Chief Advisor and Board Member, Development Alternatives Group