Press Release

Nokia to develop 500 digitally integrated smart villages

- Pilot in Nuh district, Haryana inaugurated by Ambassador of Finland

16 May 2018

Delhi-NCR, India – Nokia today announced its Smartpur project that aims to develop 500 digitally integrated and sustainable villages across India in line with government’s vision of Digital India. In phase 1 of the project, a pilot has been rolled out in Haryana and Tamil Nadu with Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) as the implementation partner to develop 10 such villages in each state. The pilot in Tain village, Nuh district, Haryana was inaugurated today by Ambassador of Finland, Ms. Nina Vaskunlahti.

According to the International Telecom Union ICT Facts and Figures, 20% of households in developed countries and as many as 66% of households in developing countries do not have internet access, leaving almost 4 billion people from developing countries offline. * Nearly a billion of these unconnected people live in India, and mostly in rural India. As a telecommunications technology leader, Nokia is committed to improving people’s lives through connectivity. With the Smartpur project, Nokia with implementation partner Digital Empowerment Foundation aims to create a sustainable ecosystem in villages where community members can leverage digital tools to bring efficiency in daily lives, transparency in governance, economic prosperity for households and ease of access to various government services and information. The project will work under the five key areas of development – health, education, livelihood, governance and finance – to build a holistic, digitally integrated village.

In phase 1 of the project, 20 villages will be digitally integrated in Haryana and Tamil Nadu in a hub and spoke model. Tain village in Nuh district Haryana and Asoor in Kanchipuram district, Tamil Nadu will serve as hub which will host a digital center with telecom connectivity to provide ICT-enabled, primary services across each of the 5 pillars to rural community. The spoke centers will further extend these services to 9 other villages from each hub. In phase 2, the project will be scaled-up to up to another 80 villages across various states. Subsequently, it will be extended to another 400 villages over a period of 5 years.

Sanjay Malik, head of India for Nokia, said, “At Nokia, we believe connecting the unconnected opens up opportunities in many areas and has tremendous potential to enable socio-economic empowerment of individual as well as communities. Globally, Nokia works with governments, NGOs, our customers and vendors to drive access for all. The Smartpur initiative is our contribution to delivering the benefits of broadband infrastructure and services to the ‘telecom-dark’ areas and support the government’s vision of Digital India for a more inclusive growth.”

Ms. Nina Vaskunlahti, Ambassador of Finland, said, “India is on the brink of a phenomenal digital journey which can only be successful if it is all inclusive. Smartpur project is a significant step in that direction which will integrate these villages and rural communities, providing digital tools and internet connectivity for social and economic impact that truly makes a village smart and fosters a digitally inclusive society.”

Osama Manzar, Founder-Director, Osama Manzar, said, “Smartpur is a model concept that has been conceptualised in a manner that challenges and redefines the existing idea of smart

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villages. We believe that the mere availability of digital tools and Internet connectivity alone does not make a village smart; instead, it is the integration and optimum utilisation of these resources for social, ecological and economic impact that truly makes a smart village.”

About Nokia
We create the technology to connect the world. Powered by the research and innovation of Nokia Bell Labs, we serve communications service providers, governments, large enterprises and consumers, with the industry’s most complete, end-to-end portfolio of products, services and licensing.

We adhere to the highest ethical business standards as we create technology with social purpose, quality and integrity. Nokia is enabling the infrastructure for 5G and the Internet of Things to transform the human experience. nokia.com

About Digital Empowerment Foundation
Established in 2002, Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) aims to connect unreached and underserved communities of India in an effort to bring them out of digital darkness and equip them with access to information.

With the belief ‘Inform, Communicate and Empower,’ DEF finds sustainable digital interventions to overcome information poverty in rural and remote locations of India, and empower communities with digital literacy, digital tools and last mile connectivity. In the last 15 years, DEF has marked its presence in more than 345 locations in 100 districts of 22 Indian states, empowering communities with digital literacy, digital tools and last mile access.

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