

Mindtree.org partners with Vrutti, Industree Foundation and the Disha project to Empower 1.3 lakh farmers across Six Indian states

Professional services and Technology interventions from the Mindtree.org platform to move 1.3 lakh farmers and artisans in 6 states up the value chain

Bangalore – February 27, 2018 – Mindtree.org, the social inclusion platform of Mindtree Ltd, announced that it is working with the Disha project (a partnership between India Development Foundation and United Nations Development Programme, supported by IKEA Foundation), Vrutti and Industree Foundation to empower 1.3 lakh farmers and artisans across six Indian states, through various technology-led interventions. The project aims at significantly improving producer incomes by ensuring a larger share of the price paid by end consumers through the establishment of fair-trade market linkage channels.

The project will support and enable farmers & artisans to run effective marketing campaigns, pursue brand building, manage sourcing from suppliers, and operate their own “direct to customer” sales channels. Three food brands were announced during the inauguration: Hills & Valleys, Rivers & Plains and Sun & Soil, representing the ecological source of various food items. As a part of the project, Mindtree.org will offer technology solutions including cloud-based ERP, and advanced analytics free of cost for farmers to enable field operations, capacity building, supply chain management and market linkage.

“Typically, farmers get less than 14 - 20% of the revenue share of what the end customer pays. The Mindtree.org platform seeks to change this entire model thereby creating opportunities for such producers to significantly increase their income by 3 – 6 times,” said **Prashant Mehra, Head of Mindtree.org**.

Mindtree.org and its partners have been successfully piloting this project across 3 districts of Karnataka – Ramanagara, Gulbarga and Chikkaballapura. It currently benefits over 18,000 women farmers and artisans based out of Karnataka, who are producers of over 150 organic food and handicraft items.

Commenting on the launch, Vrutti CEO and Co-founder, Raghunathan said “In a constantly changing scenario with multiple opportunities and new challenges emerging, it is important to continuously support smallholders in ensuring the best for them from every opportunity. Building an ecosystem that combines strengths of ‘government-private-community’ to ensure integrated solutions and sustainability of benefits is critical. An effective ‘human-digital platform’ that is viable, scalable and affordable for stakeholders is necessary to enable this”

“Industree Foundation works to move creative producers up the value chain, connecting them with customers of food, fashion, and home goods. This enables them to create authentic, traceable, and high-quality products for leading Indian and global brands. Transitioning producers

from the informal to the formal economy builds employment opportunities and generates inclusive growth across the country,” said Neelam Chhiber, Managing Trustee of Industree Foundation.

The Disha project believes women can be the most important catalysts for change in their children’s lives. By empowering women through information, skills and livelihoods, we can improve children’s health, education and futures—and that’s why this innovative collaboration is significant.

About Mindtree.org

Mindtree.org makes digital technology and professional services accessible to millions working in India’s informal sector. The platform works with government agencies, social partners, impact investors and citizen groups to create inclusive eco-systems. These consist of vibrant marketplaces, networked communities, scalable micro-businesses and social security. The digital platform of Mindtree.org offers a host of solutions in the domains of Education, Skilling, Livelihood and Community Engagement. These solutions come together to create integrated and scalable socio-economic transformations. To know more about the platform, log onto [Mindtree.org](https://www.mindtree.org)

About the Disha project:

Disha, a partnership between the India Development Foundation and United Nations Development Programme, supported by IKEA Foundation, seeks to improve the lives of one million Indian women by helping them learn marketable skills and connect to income opportunities. The project aims to enable women to become economically self-sufficient so that they, their families and future generations can have better opportunities in life.

About UNDP:

On the ground in about 170 countries and territories, UNDP works to eradicate poverty while protecting the planet. We help countries develop strong policies, skills, partnerships and institutions so they can sustain their progress. UNDP has worked in India since 1951 in almost all areas of human development, from democratic governance to poverty eradication, to sustainable energy and environmental management. UNDP’s programmes are aligned with national priorities and are reviewed and adjusted annually.

About Vrutti:

Vrutti is a Centre for Sustainable Livelihoods, building wealth and resilience of small producers and vulnerable communities through transformative livelihood solutions, since 2002. Vrutti strongly believes in collaborative Impact and building ecosystem solutions that address the needs of people in a holistic way. Through its ‘3Fold Model’ Vrutti has impacted over 120,000 smallholder farmers, established 90-odd Producer Companies and continues to support them. Vrutti also supports over 130,000 people who are marginalised and vulnerable to HIV, over 500 micro small and medium enterprises, and about 40,000 marine fisherfolk. Vrutti also supports many organisations in the livelihoods sector in strengthening their strategies and capacities in

impacting and scaling interventions. Vrutti has been member and co-creators of networks and contributes to the policy level both at state and national levels. Vrutti has partnered with Mindtree in co-creating IGotCrops as an effective digital platform to augment 3Fold Model and with Social Venture Partners to leverage expertise in business modelling and scale thinking. More about Vrutti at <http://www.vrutti.org>.

About Industree Foundation

Industree Foundation builds sustainable livelihoods in the farm and creative manufacturing sectors. Industree's comprehensive approach helps producers assess their traditional skill base, organise themselves into production units, develop products that appeal to modern markets, and create the market demand required for sustainable businesses. This approach has tripled the incomes of producers in farm and off-farm occupations by integrating them into the formal economy, ensuring that producers, especially women, can access increased and regular incomes, decent and equitable working conditions, and social security benefits. Industree Foundation has reached 30,000 producers across India and Africa, through collaborative efforts with organisations, businesses, and government partners committed to building inclusive growth.

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