

Note - Visit to Hanoi, Vietnam
Asia and the Pacific Incubator Conference (AAPIC)
October 3-6 , 2007

The Information for Development Program (infoDev) organized a four days conference in Hanoi to discuss upon the role of business incubation in fostering innovations and entrepreneurship in Asia and the Pacific. The theme was to acknowledge the diversity of incubation in the region ranging from high technology incubation to grassroots social incubation. InfoDev is a global grant program managed by the World Bank to promote innovative projects on the use of information and communication technologies for economic and social development. Its three core areas of action are Access for All, Mainstreaming, and innovation & entrepreneurship.

About 150 experts from various countries participated in the conference and shared their experience about business incubation.

Mr Rajeev Singhal CIM, GIAN-N and Mr Sandeep Sharma, CIO(a) and NC-IT, NIF participated in the conference on behalf of SRISTI and shared their experiences and examples about the incubation of grassroots innovations in India. The interaction took place with other participants at different levels with the emphasis of developing outlets in their countries for the ready technologies available with us. Among the other participants from India were Dr. H.K. Mittal, Director, NSTDEB, DST, GoI, Mr. R.M.P. Jawahar, Executive Director, TREC - STEP, TN, Mrs. Poyini Bhatt, Chief Administrative Officer, Society for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, IIT Mumbai and Mrs. Deepanwita Chattopadhyay, CEO, ICICI Knowledge Park, Hyderabad.

The major focus of the conference was Business incubation which is our final phase of activity and majority of the delegates were interested in this portion. The videos & description of the grassroots innovations presented during the conference and also in between attracted many people who carried the information CDs to get back with specific requirement. Discussions took place with participants from the Pacific and they showed interest in having joint workshops on incubation and also in finding market place for some ready technologies in their region.

A meeting was held at the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI), Malaysia with Mr. Sharullail Mohamad, Assistant Director and his colleague and briefed them about the organization, activities and shared some examples of grassroots innovations. Literature about the innovations was given to them with the request to explore the possibility of diffusing the selected technologies through their network and linkages. Similar meeting and discussion took place with National Institute for Science Technology Policy and Strategy Studies (NISTPASS), Ministry of Science Technology and Environment at Hanoi, Vietnam. Dr. Mia Ha, President NISTPASS, Dr. Bach Tan Sinh, Acting Director, Dept. of SPS and Mr. Tang The Cuong, Director Administration showed interest in having a joint workshop at Hanoi to share our incubation experiences. *Follow-ups may be made with both these departments and also with the participants from the Pacific who may prove helpful in taking this mission forward in their region. The contact details of these people are enclosed.*

Ms. Valerie D'Costa, Program Manager of infoDev, Mr. John Fahy, Sr. Advisor Vocational Education and Training Education Thematic Group, Australian Agency for International Development, Mr. Julian Webb, Consultant, infoDev, and Ms. Heidi Humala took special interest in understanding our activities and processes and appreciated the Honey Bee Philosophy and the way network visits villages to identify the innovations and share common man's knowledge with common man.

Mr. Kamram Niazi, Financial Analyst, Agribusiness Support Fund, Pakistan, Mr. Shyam Prasad Giri, Federation of Nepal Cottage and Small Industries, Mr. Roshan Kumar Seebaluck, Team Leader/ Regional Business Incubation Expert, IBM (Belgium/ Integra and Mr. Fayaz Hudah, Program Manager, Information and Communication Technology Agency of Sri Lanka also discussed upon our innovations and showed interest in finding a place for selected ones in their region.

The presentation and discussions that took place about SRISTI, HBN, NIF and GIANS generated curiosity among the participants to know more about our work and the grassroots innovations. Also the meetings that took place after the conference showed signs of international linkages that may be strengthened with further follow-ups and some joint initiatives. One of the ways could be inviting innovative work of the grassroots from these regions and have a special category of international innovations in NIF's current or forthcoming campaign. This may also help in having joint incubation activities in these regions.

Presentations made by various participants during the conference are compiled separately and are enclosed with this note along with the program details and related information. The contact details of all the participants and organizers are also enclosed. A DVD containing the information about the organizations and some case studies is also enclosed.

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