

# Exchange of Information for sustainable rural livelihood – the Pallitathya Programme

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Presented by

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Midway to MDGs: Accelerating Progress through ICTs

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# Introduction

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- Pallitathya is a action research programme aiming at addressing the following key research questions:
  - What are the specific end-user information requirements by the rural poor of Bangladesh? What are the existing sources of information and their effectiveness?
  - What form of digital content will satisfy those information requirements?
  - What ICT-based delivery channels are most appropriate and cost-effective to make the digital contents available to the end-users?
  - What would be the most effective role of the infomediary to make the content accessible to the end users?
  - What impact are these information having on the lives of end-users?

# Intervention Milestones

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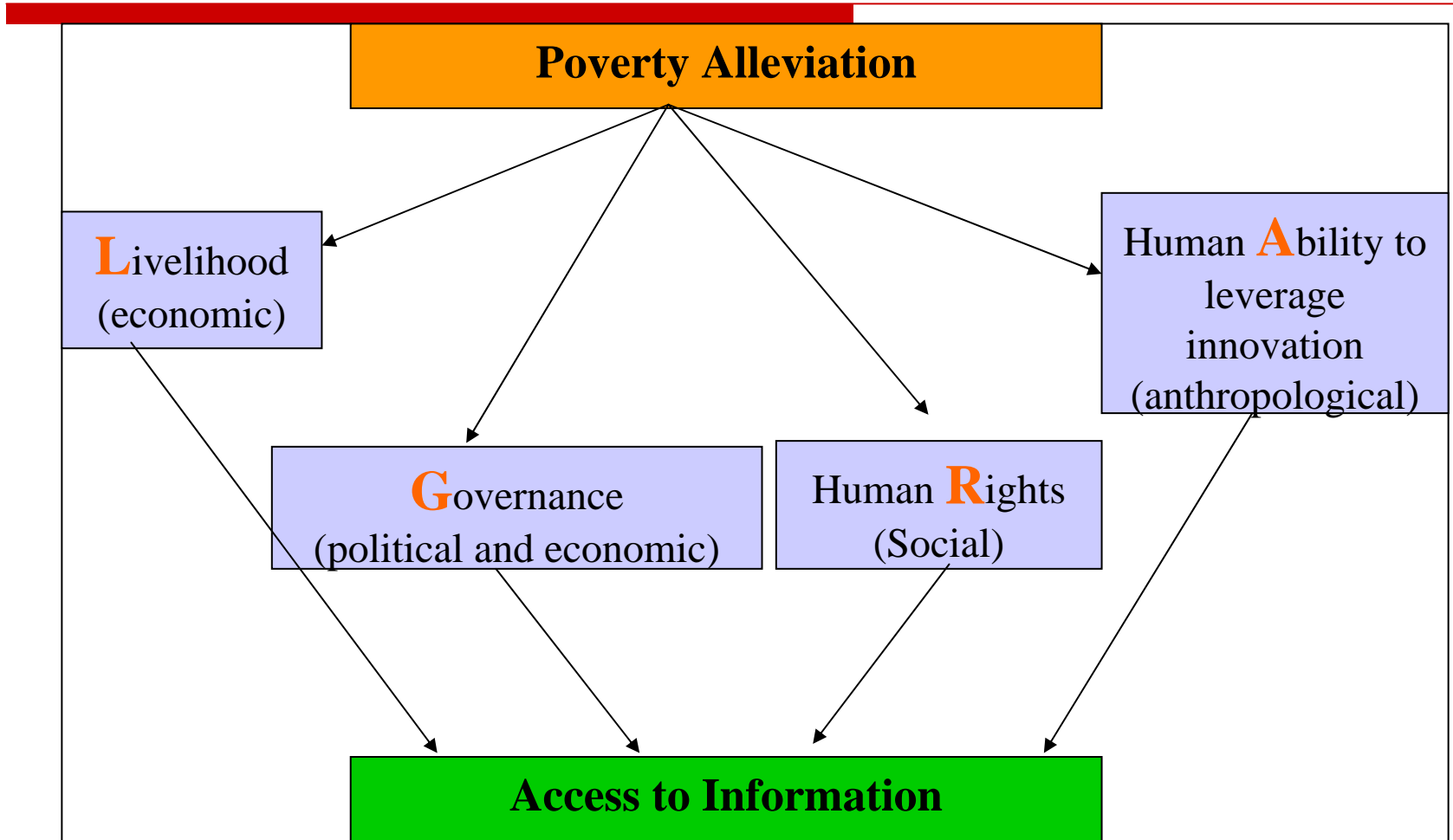
- D.Net's intervention milestones to achieve the above mentioned research questions:
  - **2003-2004:** Research on understanding the information need of the rural people especially the disadvantaged
  - **2004 – 2006:** Testing the model titled “Pallitathya Help Line” an attempt to make the information accessible through mobile lady
  - **2005-2006:** Build compendium of Bangla Language livelihood content base called JEEON-IKB ([www.jeeon.com](http://www.jeeon.com))
  - **2006 – 2007:** Ground test of the Pallitathya Model ([www.pallitathya.org](http://www.pallitathya.org))
  - **2006-2007:** Attempts to replicate the model (broader Telecentre model) across the country
    - Preparing to launch **Mission 2011:** by 2011 every villagers will get access to information
    - Mobile **social entrepreneurs** (NGOs) to host the idea

# Research to identify information demand

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- D.Net conducted the research for about a year in five (5) villages of Bangladesh. Distinct features of the research are:
  - Use of participatory tools and techniques especially PRA to understand the information need of the rural community especially
    - Farmer
    - Local entrepreneur
    - Women
    - Children
    - Local service provider
    - Ethnic minority groups
  - The research team comprise researchers from both urban graduates and rural youth which add huge value in-terms of accessing villagers as well as get deeper into their need
  - The outcome was a list of areas where access to information was meant crucial for livelihood improvement

# LGRA Model: 4 Areas Where Access to Information Matters



# The model testing of Pallitathya Help Line: using handy technology to access to information

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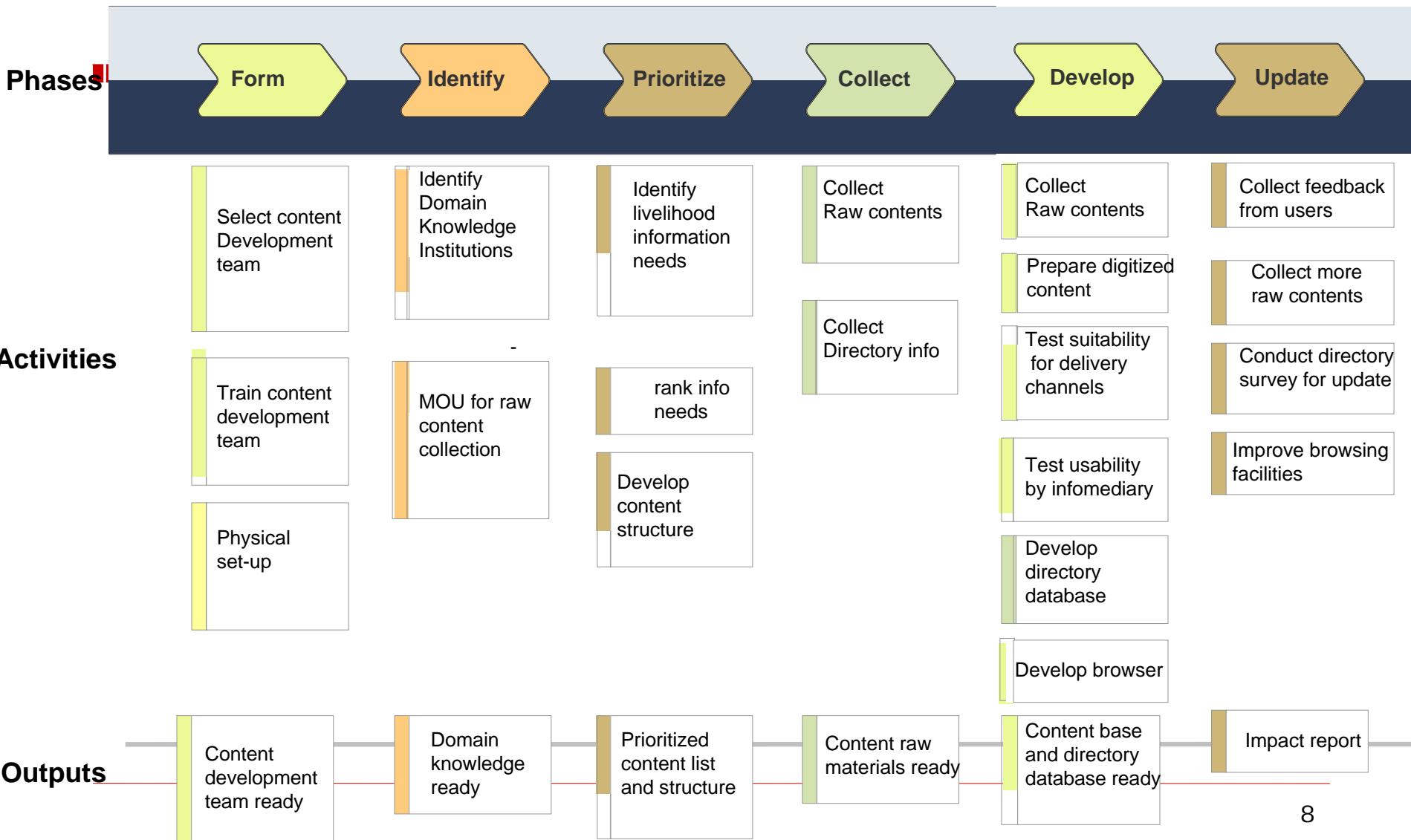
- The Pallitathya Help Line model was to assess
  - Handy technology like mobile phone to access to information
  - Deploy the concept of mobile lady as a social entrepreneur
  - Test the feasibility of a expert's help desk
- Under this model a mobile lady equipped with a mobile phone moves around the villages to assist villagers call to a help desk where a groups of experts are answering the calls.
- This project bags the global gender and ICT award 2005
- The mobile phone is now replacing with SmartPhone where mobile lady can move villages with a bundle of services including information in the PDA.

# Developing local language content

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- D.Net deployed a team with subject matter experts for content development
- A group of domain organizations partnered with D.Net for content development
- D.Net launched nine (9) thematic CDs which are:
  - Agriculture
  - Health
  - Law and human right
  - Education
  - Non-farm economic activity
  - Disaster Management
  - Appropriate Technology
  - Rural Employment and
  - Directory of service providers
- D.Net is now working with JOOMLA to make this content available online at [www.jeeon.com](http://www.jeeon.com)

# The content development methodology



# Ground Testing of the Pallitathya Model

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- D.Net launched 4 Pallitathya Kendra (Information Centre) in 2005
- 4 locations are:
  - Local people's organization
  - Local government authority
  - Local NGO
  - Consortium of local NGO, local government, college
- All four centre were launched in September to November 2005
- Human Resource
- Infomediary from the community
  - 1 Centre manager
  - 2 Infomediary (1 male and 1 female)
  - 1 Mobile lady
- Capacity building of the infomediary

# Ground Testing of the Pallitathya Model

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## □ **Establishment of Communication Infrastructure**

- Physical set-up
  - One-two rooms
  - Table
  - Chair
  - Bench
  - Display board
- Equipment
  - Computer
  - Printer
  - Mobile phone
  - Internet connection
  - UPS (Small)
  - UPS (Long back-up)
  - Pen Drive
  - Scanner
  - Weight Machine
  - Bi-cycle
  - Digital camera
  - Soil test equipments

# Services of the Pallitathya Kendra

## JEEON-IKB: Digital offline livelihood content in Bangla language

- Oral
- Printed

Villagers browsing livelihood content  
with the help of Infomediary



# Services of the Pallitathya Kendra

## Mobile phone based Helpline

- ☛ Mobile to Mobile (Instant)
- ☛ Mobile to Mobile (3 days)
- ☛ Mobile to Letter/Email (7 days)
- ☛ Letter/Email to Letter/Email (20 days)

Expert responding villagers queries from Help Desk

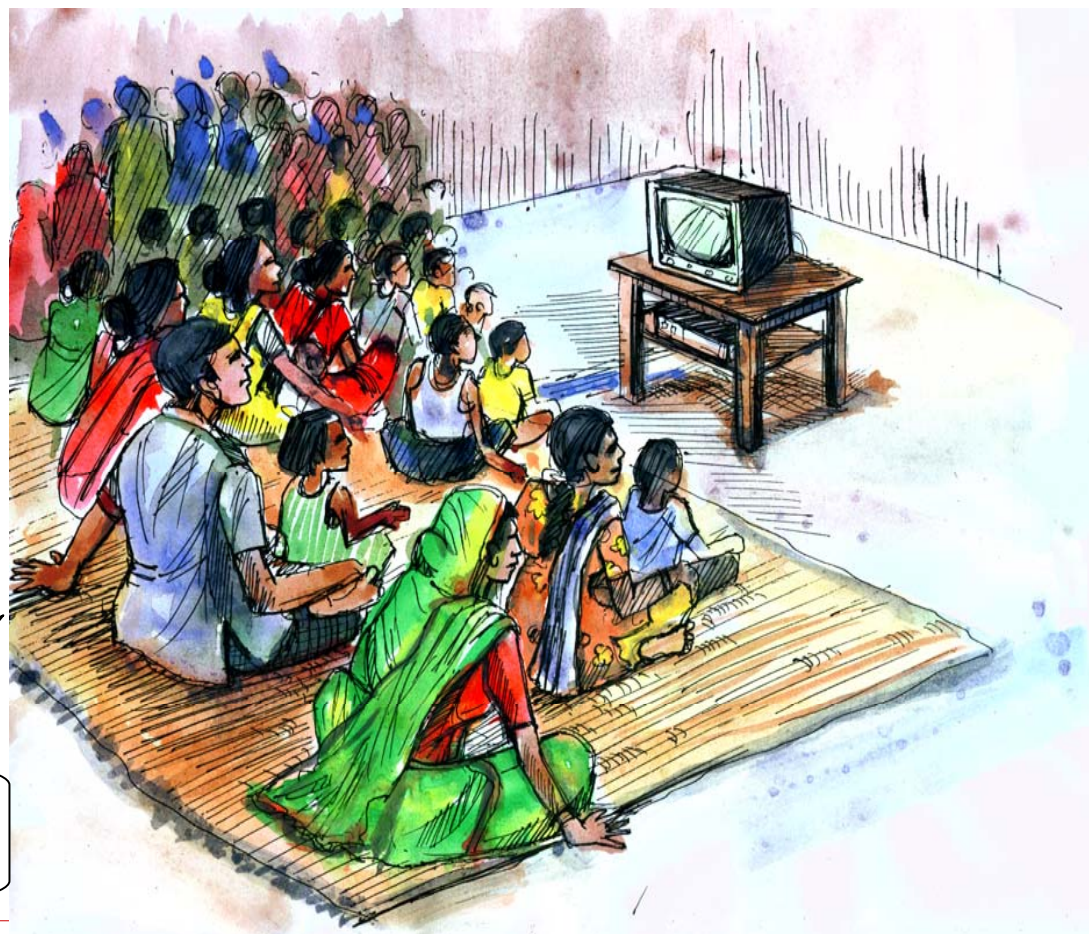


Mobile Infomediary helping the villagers for asking livelihood queries to the Help Desk

# Services of the Pallitathya Kendra

## Video documentary

- ☞ Education cartoon for children
- ☞ Livelihood related video for general people



Villagers watching video documentary  
for livelihood information

# Services of the Pallitathya Kendra

## Types of ancillary services

- ☛ Soil test
- ☛ Water pH test
- ☛ Photography
- ☛ Height and weight measurement
- ☛ Composing and printing
- ☛ CV writing
- ☛ Commercial mobile phone
- ☛ Admission form
- ☛ DV application
- ☛ Nebulizer rental
- ☛ Blood pressure measurement
- ☛ Government forms
- ☛ Use of internet

Infomediary is testing soil quality, then provide necessary information from content database



# Implementation Strategy

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- Two-prong strategy
  - No exclusion policy
    - Everybody in the community is included
    - In cases villages unable to visit the centre like women, handicap etc. infomediary visits them
  - No refusal policy
    - Nobody is refused once come to the centre with a problem
    - Infomediary first try to get a result searching content database
    - In information is not available they call or write to the help desk
    - Even help desk experts unable to respond they consult with experts and respond later

# Implementation Strategy

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- **Multi-stakeholder partnership**
  - Partnership for content development
    - Government and non-government livelihood research organizations
    - Individual livelihood experts
  - Connectivity partnership
    - Private sector internet connectivity provider like grameen phone
  - Local level implementation partners
    - Local NGO, local government authority

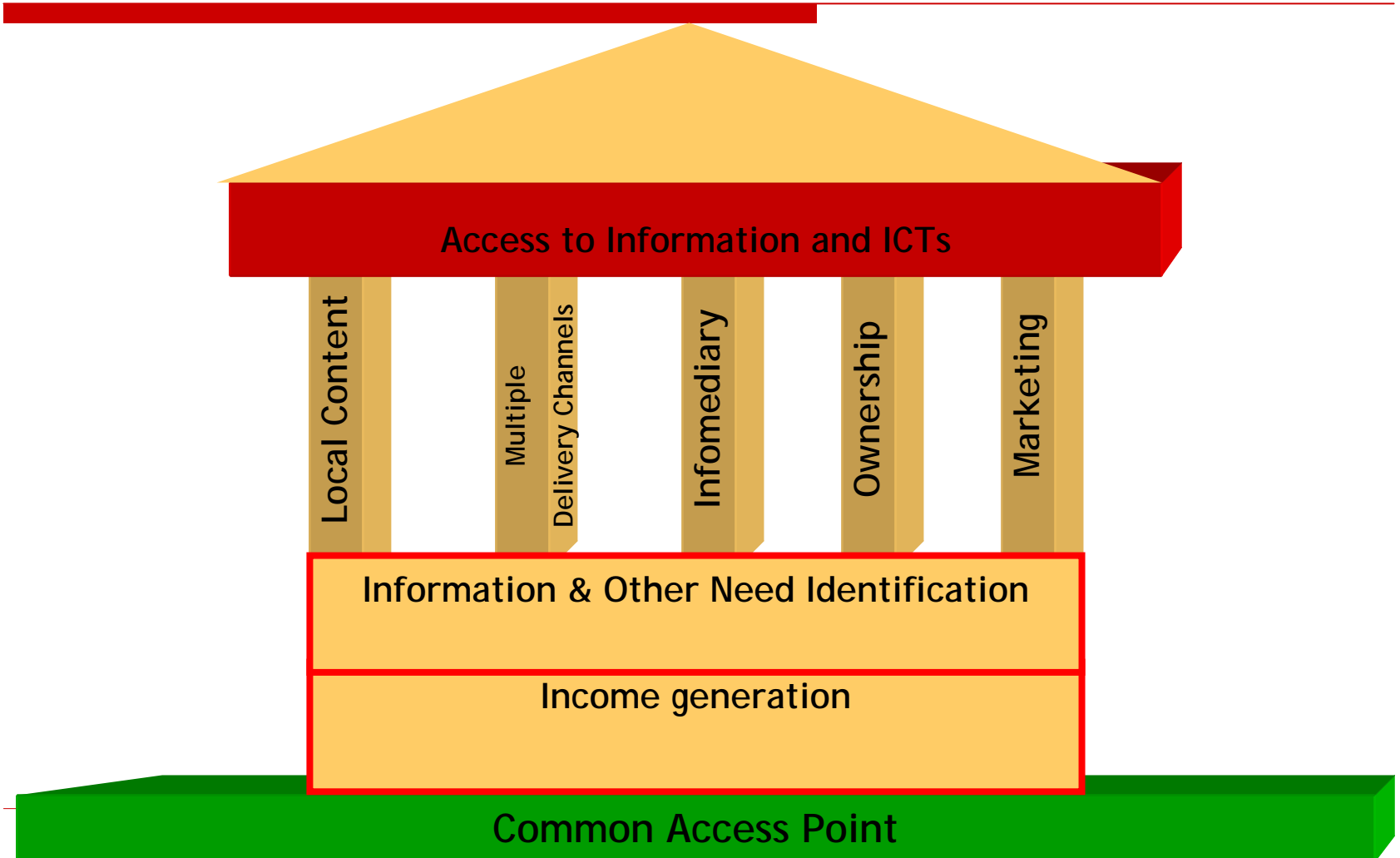
# Statistics of the services (4 centre)

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<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Status</b>
Total service recipients	12,163
Information service	6,378 (52%)
Ancillary services	5,785 (48%)
Male : Female	59:41
Daily average service recipient	10

# The Pallitathya Model

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# Emergence of Bangladesh Telecentre Network

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- Bangladesh Telecentre Network emerged with the vision to achieve mission 2011
  - The 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our independence
  - Over 40,000 telecentre across the county
- Multi-stakeholder platform
- Working for
  - Creating awareness and promotion of telecentre movement
  - Provide support to telecentre practitioners
  - Mobilize resources for Telecentre
  - Thematic task forces for advocacy

## Mobile social entrepreneurs (NGOs) to host the idea

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- D.Net has mobilized more than 50 NGOs in hosting the model across the country
- The Manusher Jonno Foundation, a donor consortium working with human right issues, has come up for supporting this endeavour with the vision to ensure access to information for achieving right to information agenda

# Yet to research

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- Infrastructure: Electricity
- Local content vs. “locally-relevant” content
  - Indigenously generated content
  - Locally needed content
  - Building instructional capacity for content development
- Complementary services: what to include and what not to include
- Sustainability: Donor driven vs. Business Model Driven vs. Hybrid
  - Hybrid should be explored
- Social sustainability VS business model
- Reducing Cost and Increasing Revenue:
  - Technology Innovation (PDA, Laptop, Solar power)
- Need for a systematic national approach “MISSION 2011”

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THANK YOU