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INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ENTERPRISES INDIA, NEW DELHI

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For those committed to helping small landholders, the big question has always been how to escape the chronic deprivation and vulnerability that result in the spiral of poverty. How, for instance, does a poor farmer surmount the hurdle of necessary but expensive machinery? Or, how does he access markets that give fair returns? International Development Enterprises, India (IDEI) has tackled the problem head-on with their unique market-based approach that has resulted in thousands of people becoming micro-entrepreneurs and earning an income.

Understanding the difficulties that the rural poor face in unsubsidized markets, IDEI uses basic business principles so that the poor can participate in local markets and begin to earn. IDEI's approach is simple — be innovative, be sustainable, be led by market demands and over and above everything else, believe that profit is for progress.

IDEI has been involved in low-cost sustainable agriculture technologies which increase agricultural productivity and farm incomes while minimizing environmental impact. Their products are designed to be affordable and to meet the requirements of small landholders. For instance, the gravity or man-powered treadle pumps that IDEI invented and popularized are now in use by 500,000 farmers across India.

At the same time the supply chain aspect is also developed — for example, IDEI has worked with manufacturers, distributors, dealers and installers to provide the pumps to farmers and women's self-help groups. They know that without this sort of thorough involvement, individuals will never be able to stand on their own feet and true development will not be possible.

IDEI interventions lead to environmental, economic and social sustainability. Water use efficiency increases by almost 80 percent and farmers become less reliant on agro-chemicals. Increased productivity leads to increased income and the gap between the haves and have-nots decreases.

A grant of Rs 40.00 million was sanctioned in 2006-2007, for five-and-a-half years.

IDEI's hand pump





Farmer using leg pump to draw water for his field



Working in the fields

IDEI's innovative pump helps in lifting water





Vermi culture used by farmers

Market linkage — selling the pump at the local village shop

