Wrapping Up 2010

As we stand at the fag-end of the year 2010, taking stock of our performance during the year, is sure to help all the stakeholders in the Common Services Centers (CSC) scheme in handling the challenges that the new year has in store for us.

As on November 2010, the total CSCs rolled out were 86,521, across 30 states and Union Territories. This is, perhaps, a time to give credit to States – Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Assam—that took a lead in enabling G2C services. According to the Online monitoring Tool (OMT) which monitored the uptime performance of the CSCs, Kerala and Karnataka recorded 100% for a 365 days period. In terms of rollout, Tripura beat all expectations as it finished much before the deadline set for the State.

There was good news on the front of making financial inclusion services available through the CSC network as Reserve Bank of India granted permission to Banks to engage Companies registered under the Indian Companies Act, 1956 as BCs (Business Correspondents). Accordingly, the SCAs started turning into BCs, and accomplishing the task of rolling out financial inclusion services by engaging the Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLE) as Sub-Agents. MP and J&K moved faster than the rest as far as enabling financial inclusion services was concerned. In terms of making e-District services available, UP and Assam made good progress.

When the CSC scheme was initiated, an important objective that was spelt out was the intention of empowering rural entrepreneurs. Through the monthly editions of the CSC Newsletters, we narrated to our reader plenty of VLE success tales that impacted the Scheme, positively. Also during the year, CSC awareness weeks were organized across India to further sensitize and educate stakeholders, specifically from the citizen and VLE communities.

Overall, there was good progress made on implementation of the CSC scheme. Throughout the year, some issues around internet connectivity, power, geographical terrain, among others pointing fingers at the viability of the Centers kept the entire team on the tenterhooks. While there certainly is a room for improving performance as we go forward what is also important is to retaining the citizen-centric character of the CSC scheme in 2011 as well.

Wish all readers a very happy and prosperous 2011.
CSC Implementation Status

Snippets from the CSC ecosystem...

- Rajasthan State Roadways Transport Corporation has signed a State Level Agreement for sale of roadways tickets to citizens through the CSC.
- Uttar Pradesh state government signed an Masters Service Agreement with Vayam Technologies for setting up CSCs in Agra, Bareilly and Faizabad zone of the state.
- DOEACC is presently conducting VLE training on CCC course in various States.
- Forty three Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLE) in Assam were issued Stamp Vending license for delivery of service through CSCs.
- A fresh Request For Proposal (RFP) for Bhagalpur and Darbhanga divisions of Bihar is underway.
- Haryana has opened financial bids for the selection of SCA in the state.
- The State Bank of India has agreed to start financial inclusion through the CSCs by appointing UTL as its business correspondent in Jharkhand.
- AISECT has been awarded the Hoshangabad Division in Madhya Pradesh for the implementation of 257 CSCs, after the termination of the earlier Service Center Agency (SCA).
- Kerela successfully conducted the state wide training on online Submission of ration card. The district level Masters training program to implement Aadhar or UIDAI project was also completed.
- Reliance has started Business Correspondent Operations at Narsinghpur District with Central Bank of India in Madhya Pradesh. Currently, pilot testing has started at 10 CSC locations.
Creating Brand Rajasthan

It is important for the Common Services Centers (CSC) to sustain themselves. This sustainability depends on some key factors among which, working on branding strategies for CSCs is vital. This is not only going to help bring a host of stakeholders together on the same platform, but will also increase number of footfalls in the CSCs.

Keeping this perspective at the backdrop, and realizing the potential CSCs have in empowering the rural India, Government of Rajasthan celebrated CSC week from November 16-24, 2010. Various district level workshops cum training program were organized. Some of the key areas covered were: Jodhpur, Jaipur, Udaipur, and Bikaner amongst others.

Involvement of various State Departments during this week requires a special mention. Each workshop was inaugurated by participating Line Department Heads. The idea was to make Heads of the Line Department understand the Scheme and their role as a key stakeholder.

The CSC week was successful in its intention of taking commitments from various Line Departments on adding more services, like electricity/ water/ telephone Bill collection in the rural areas through CSC network. Similar activities were taken up at the district and Panchayat levels too. This was done in presence of District e-Governance Societies’ officials and district level officials of Line Departments.

During the month, the state had also initiated a Revenue Campaign from November 10-December 31, 2010, according to which, the CSC scheme will be promoted in rural areas.

The CSC project in Rajasthan is being implemented by the State Government in partnership with two Service Centre Agencies (SCA), namely CMS Computers and Zoom Developers. The work order was placed in February 2009 and March 2009, respectively. Rajasthan has a target of rolling out 6626 CSCs, out of which 1787 have been rolled out, as November 30, 2010.

Various G2C services at your doorstep...

- Online bus ticketing of RSRTC
- Payment of various dues/fee of Municipal corporation/fee of Rajasthan Housing Board, Payment of electricity & water bills
- Access to Land & Revenue Records (ROR)
- Application for revaluation of marks in Board of Secondary Education
- Application for ration card, caste certificate, bona fide residence certificate, birth & death certificates.
Key SCA Partner: AISECT

All India Society for Electronics & Computer Technology (AISECT), is an I.T. training and services network company, with a spread of over 6,500 multipurpose information technology centres across India. Essentially, the AISECT centers are engaged in training and awareness creation programs on information services – for the student and government community.

AISECT, is a leading Service Center Agency of the central India, and is responsible for setting up 2916 CSCs in Madhya Pradesh and 1487 CSCs in Chhattisgarh. Recently, AISECT has also been selected as the SCA in some districts of Punjab including Gurdaspur and Hoshiyarpur. A target rollout of 585 has been set. Among critical services that AISECT offers, financial inclusion is significant. Initially, the company started as a business facilitator (with SBI) in the CSC districts; however it later upgraded its association by turning into a business correspondent. The first pilot of kiosk Banking was conducted at Baheriya Gadgad panchayat of Sagar district.

As an SCA, AISECT regularly organizes camps for the VLEs to generate awareness about new services launched for them. AISECT developed comprehensive training curriculum in stages T1 – T6 for gradual induction & capacity building of its VLEs. Till date, 150 training sessions at have been conducted at AISECT’s head & district level offices. The AISECT website on CSCs in MP www.aisectcsc.com recently linked 145 govt. websites to provide information on Govt. departments, State boards, Commissions, Universities, corporations and public enterprises.

G2C & B2C Services enabled so far...

Core: MP Online (G2C), AISECT Courses (Educational), photocopy, digital photography, audio video titling, DTP work, Internet & Email.
Auxiliary: SBI BF & BC (Financial Inclusion Products), Life & General Insurance products (LIC, SBI Life, United India Insurance, Star Health), IRCTC booking, telecom Booking, Premium Payments etc.

VLE Name: Ratnesh K Jain
Location: Imlai
Block: Damoh
Monthly income: Rs. 12000/-

Ratnesh K Jain, a B.Sc. (Hons) was not enjoying himself working as a grain agent in his family business. He heard about an opportunity to open his own CSC. By enabling the delivery of information and services through his CSC in Damoh, not only did he get a chance to serve his community but also earn a name. He feels content that villagers are happy with the services his kiosk offers and how they save their time and monetary resources. His CSC services include: MP Online, Suvidhaa Online, mobile recharge among others.

VLE Name: Mandbe Sahu
Location: Chandera
Block: Jatara
Monthly income: Rs. 10000/-

Mandbe Sahu’s CSC is running at the biggest panchayat of the Sagar Division in MP. Before opening her CSC, Mandbe worked as a computer operator, at a meager amount of Rs 2000. Her CSC has given her a chance to offer critical G2C services, which are useful for the villagers. She feels, that while a Block manager had inspired her to start a CSC, her decision has paid back well. Mandbe offers Aisect-IGNOU Education program, MP Online services, typing, photocopy, photography, Tata Sky recharge etc.
Akshaya: Adding value to people’s lives

With eight years of successful services’ delivery, Akshaya has today completely transformed into “One Stop Shop” for all G2C Services. Akshaya has been successful in not only understanding the need of the stakeholders but, also at customizing the implementation of the project according to the needs of the common man.

Recently, among many feats achieved, registration of 19 lakh BPL families under Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme was another task which is being successfully drawn to its completion by Akshaya. An initiative by Kerala Government, it was done with the objective to ensure better medical treatment to all citizens (under Govt. of India’s Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana in the State). To implement this, the state Government had constituted a nodal agency called Comprehensive Health Insurance Agency of Kerala - Chiak. Chiak was envisaged to bring 35 lakh families under the insurance scheme. Even though Chiak is in its first phase, it has already registered 17 lakh families. Another six is expected to be taken under the insurance scheme to complete the project. Akshaya with its deep penetration into the remotest areas of the state, is helping the project reach a fine conclusion.

VLE name: Bhagwat Nagnurwar
District: Nanded
Taluka/Village: Umri/Umri
State: Maharashtra
Qualification: B.A.
Average Monthly Income: Rs. 5,500/-

“CSC is a great revolution in common man’s life. The villagers are showing a lot of respect towards me, as I am a VLE of this CSC and offer various services provided by SCA. I also started getting good income from this CSC.”

Services available at Nanded CSC: All mobile PIN & eRecharge, all DTH Recharge, Booking Railway, booking bus ticket; sale of IDEA Sim cards; sale of TATA Sky & DTH.

VLE name: Sachin M Patrakar
District: Hingoli
Taluka/ Village: Vasamat/ Vasamat (Karkhana Road).
Qualification: B.com appeared.
Average Monthly Income: Rs. 3,000/-

“The Villagers are very happy as they are able to get all the services from a single CSC. And I also started generating income.”

Services available at Hingoli CSC: Mobile eRecharge, all DTH Recharge, booking railway Ticket, booking bus ticket, sale of IDEA Sim Cards, sale of TATA Sky, DTH, jobex, sale of GODREJ Chotukool, LIC Premium Payment, DTH Recharge.
Success Stories

VLE name: Afroj Banu
Block/Village: Talera/Talera
District: Bundi
Profit generated: Rs. 7000

Afroj banu faced perils of unemployment as soon as she finished her studies in 2006. She wasn’t convinced to do a regular job. One day she came across an advertisement inviting local entrepreneurs to set up a CSC in the district. She was happy, that her dream of becoming an entrepreneur is now going to find an outlet. Later when she cleared all formalities of becoming a VLE, it indeed was a turning point in Afroj’s life.

Despite some initial difficulties, Afroj picked up the entrepreneurial concept very well and dedicated her time to help her community. She was selected as a successful entrepreneur by the district administration and awarded on the Republic Day, 2010, for her venture. At present, the villagers in her locality come regularly to the CSC and avail services that are offered. Afroj also gives advice to other VLEs, on the problems they face and motivates them to work hard to achieve success in their respective projects. Afroj CSC caters to a population of around 10,000 people.

Services available at Talera CSC: DTP work, photography, internet browsing, railway ticketing, LIC Services, mobile-recharging, utility bills payment etc.

VLE name: Sinam Jagdish
Village: Meitei Langol,
District: Imphal (west)
State: Manipur

Sinam Jagdish a qualified BE had a dream to be an entrepreneur. When CSC project was launched in Manipur, he jumped on to the opportunity, that would also allow him to serve his village in Meitei Langol, Imphal west district. Through his CSC, Sinam also imparts basic computer education. His CSC caters to a population of about 3500 to 4000 people. His CSC has truly become a one stop shop percolating the benefits of information technology down to the intended recipients.

Services available at Talera CSC: DTP work, Photoshop, Xerox, CD burning booking air ticketing, recharge for mobile phones, flexi recharge, dish tv recharge, PAN services, making examination results available for CBSE and COHSEM.

VLE name: Dinesh Gupta,
District: Upper Shimla,
Block/Village: Rampur/ Dhar Gaura,
Panchayat population: 3000
No. of transactions: 4,95,082

Dinesh Gupta is among those few rural entrepreneurs who truly realized the potential of CSCs in empowering his village. He was one of the first VLEs to set up a center in upper Shimla. Since then he has been involved in all the awareness campaigns, encouraging people to set-up the centers in their concerned Panchayats. Today, he is one of the most active VLEs of his block. He provides the available services online as well as offline.

Services available at Dhar Gaura: Insurance (online policy), telecom recharges, Pan card applications, etc.
Meghalaya celebrated its CSC Diwas from November 15-27, 2010

Images from an ideal CSC created at the Indian International Trade Fair, from Nov 14-27
During a sensitization program, VLEs in Manipur’s Chandel District are taught varied ways of income generation by adopting newer services.

Getting back to basics, DOEACC Meghalaya trains VLEs on use of computers during a three day program from Nov 25-28, 2010

Large number of villagers paid a visit to the CSC Awareness Camps held in Assam, from November 19-27, 2010 to sensitize locals about the various services available at their nearest CSC center.
Joint secretary, Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Communications and I.T., Mr. Shankar Aggarwal in an interview to m-Gov highlighted the value in integrating mobile applications with the CSC network, and the challenges therein. Extracts from the interview...

Q: Do you see the potential of mobile applications integrated with the CSCs so that the reach and services bouquet of CSCs can be enhanced further?

Shankar Aggarwal: There is no doubt about that.

Q: Would you like to comment briefly on the challenges on moving towards mobile government in India?

Shankar Aggarwal: First and foremost is capacity. We need to create a mechanism that enhances the possibility of mobile based delivery. One of the key pre-requisite for this is back end automation. Mobile phones or CSCs are largely the front end delivery channels. So unless the back end is completely automated, it is not possible to fully leverage the potential of mobile devices or CSCs in delivering the services to citizens at their door step. The back-end automation has to be completed by the concerned departments. This requires the mind set change as well as the process reengineering. Unless we achieve this, we will be lagging behind in being able to fully benefit from the mobile and new media technologies for delivery of services.

Q: During our discussion with various telecom players, academic institutes and mobile application providers, most of them indicated that the potential of using mobiles as delivery channel under NeGP is immense and they would like to work with DIT and GOI on developing innovative applications if DIT leads the initiative. What message would you like to convey to them?

Shankar Aggarwal: I would like to convey to them that we are now geared up and taking concrete steps to include mobile governance as one of the key agendas under NeGP. We have not done much in the past on mobile governance, but now we are ready. I would like to invite all the stakeholders to join hands with us and we will be happy to utilize this immense opportunity in a coordinated manner in consultation with all the stakeholder groups including academic institutions, Telecom Players, Application Developers and civil society.

(Read full text on - http://www.mgovworld.org).

After a clean sweep in the Bihar elections, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar in an interview to a leading newspaper, reaffirmed his commitment towards delivering public services in the state through the Vasudha Kendras...

“We are also planning to take the help of information technology later. We feel that people should not have to visit government offices for these simple things. The government is establishing common service centres, known as Vasudha Kendras, in every panchayat. These will be equipped with computers and internet connections. People will be able to drop their applications at these centres. They will be able to view the status of their applications on the internet. This can be implemented at a later stage. But right now, we want to ensure that the common man gets the services of civil servants. Our main aim is to ensure that the common man has minimum possible interaction with government officials for getting his work done.” (Read full text on—http://www.business-standard.com/india/news/qa-nitish-kumar-chief-minister-bihar/417162/)