



Many technologies make it out of the lab and into production, but fail to be accepted by the rural poor for whom they were intended. We are very happy to partner with SELCO Labs who have experience in bridging that last mile and in supporting the critical feedback process that needs to be incorporated into the design of products for the Bottom Of The Pyramid.

### **SELCO Labs:**

#### **Improving Life for the Rural Poor by Developing Rural Technologies, Decentralized Clean Energy and Entrepreneurs**

##### **The Challenge: Innovating for Rural Areas**

There is a critical need for technological innovation targeting India's rural areas which includes people living in remote locations with incomes below \$4/day. While significant research efforts focus on development of technologies that improve quality of life, such as better agriculture methods and clean energy, few of these advancements successfully traverse the "last mile" of dissemination into markets serving the rural poor. *SELCO Incubation Lab seeks to bridge this "last mile" implementation gap.*

##### **Main Objectives of SELCO Incubation Lab**

- To develop affordable technological innovations and next-generation improvements for products and energy technologies that enhance livelihood of, or quality of life for, low-income rural customers.
- To incubate entrepreneurs who are technologically inclined and are interested in creating small enterprises at various scales for their innovations, independently owned but with guidance from SELCO's lab.
- To provide performance testing and consumer research services to third parties who have developed products for rural areas but lack the means, networks, or field presence for effective dissemination.

## **Our Approach**



The Incubation Lab's approach leverages the existing strengths of SELCO\*, its parent organization. Specific strategies include:

- Location of the lab in the village of Ujire (southern Karnataka) enables the lab to develop products within the rural context intended for use. The highly visited nearby Dharmasthala temple can be a product demonstration site.
- Electrical and Mechanical Lab Facilities are shared with the SDM Institute of Technology which houses the lab. The lab collaborates with the university in many ways, such as hosting university students to help with technical projects, thus supporting the lab while developing students' skills.
- Cross-fertilization of expertise with SELCO's Energy Service Centers is accomplished via a rotational program that brings the most experienced SELCO technicians onsite. This allows the lab to draw new product ideas from the field, while sharing new products for dissemination.
- Partnerships with local NGOs enable the Incubation Lab to draw from the large networks of low-income rural consumers for new product demos.

## **Serving Your Needs**

Consider working with SELCO Incubation Lab if you are:

- A company or organization with an innovation for the rural poor. The lab can help further develop your product, through iterations of consumer market research and product prototyping. Alternately, the lab can perform testing to evaluate and document the performance of your product in the context of the rural poor.
- A rural entrepreneur, or interested in starting a small enterprise in a rural area. We offer technical and business support to help you develop and launch products for your independent enterprise.
- A potential employee. We continue to look for talented individuals with a technical or business background, who are adaptive and willing to push up their sleeves and get their hands dirty for this pivotal and exciting work.