13 years
94 innovators
Rs 59 million seed funding
Rs 864 million investments raised
34 Fellows, 10 mentors
3 summits, 21 events, 2,000 attendees
## ABOUT VILLGRO

Villgro Innovations Foundation is India’s oldest and foremost social enterprise incubators. Villgro incubates early-stage, innovation-based for-profit enterprises that impact the lives of India’s poor.

## MISSION

Our mission is to enable innovations to have an enduring impact on the lives of the poor, by incubating for-profit businesses with a commitment to social impact.

## VISION

If the poor have remained poor, then clearly what has been attempted in the past has not worked. That is where innovation becomes important. At Villgro, we envision that once a model is established to transform innovative ideas into reality, a virtuous cycle will set in naturally, encouraging further innovation and wealth creation in rural areas.

We envision a thriving eco-system that inspires, recognizes, nurtures and transforms innovation and enterprises that have an impact on lives.

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Incubating innovation based, early stage, for-profit enterprises to impact the poor

Our services have been designed around the major issues being faced by early-stage social-enterprises today funding, talent, advisory, and service providers.

UNCONVENTION

Established in 2009, Unconvention is a platform that offers a combination of initiatives focussed on inspiring, discovering and nurturing social enterprises that have the potential for high impact on the lives of the poor in India.

A. Unconvention|L

Unconvention|L (or Unconvention Local) is a series of conferences organized across the country in Tier 2/3 cities, with the aim of unearthing and nurturing social entrepreneurs, and growing the social enterprise movement deeper in India. Each event had social entrepreneurs share the inspiring stories of their journey, offered opportunities for networking and, occasionally, included a Pitch session where entrepreneurs would pitch their for-profit social impact business ideas to a panel of experts for constructive feedback and guidance.

B. Sankalp Unconvention Summit 2014

Intellecap and Villgro collaborated to host the Sankalp Unconvention Summit 2014, Asia’s largest Social Enterprise platform. Born out of a strategic partnership forged between the the two companies in 2012, the Summit integrates global knowledge, investment and dialogue to build inclusive ecosystems and pro-poor business models.

Sankalp Unconvention 2014 focused on building a global dialogue on inclusive development. The aim was to drive outcome-oriented engagement that would shape global discourse on inclusive development.

VILLGRO FELLOWSHIP

The Villgro Fellowship aims to create a talent pool of professionals who have the commitment, leadership and operational skills to contribute to social entrepreneurship in India by filling the critical talent gap within Villgro’s portfolio enterprises. Villgro Fellows are placed with a social enterprise for one year where they support the entrepreneur in key functions that need addressing. In turn, Villgro Fellows are exposed to a start-up working environment that introduces them to the social enterprise ecosystem.

ENTREPRENEUR-IN-RESIDENCE

Villgro piloted Entrepreneur-in-Residence (EIR), a 12 month in-residence programme aimed at enabling first-time entrepreneurs convert their innovative ideas into successful social enterprises. In its first year, entrepreneurs were provided funding, training and development, mentorship and office space for the duration of the year.

SEED

SEED (Social Entrepreneur and Enterprise Development) is an 8-month intensive programme designed to help early-stage entrepreneurs sharpen their business models and raise their first round of funding. Key features of this programme include in-residence learning sessions, on-ground field work, development of investment plan, review and revision of business plans, preparation of financial models and investor pitch.

INCUBATION

The Incubation and Investment programme provides early-stage enterprises with funding and mentoring, required to commercialise their inventions and start up and grow. Targeting enterprises that have demonstrated basic viability and customer interest, the incubation and investment programme provides capital of between $50,000 and $100,000 in a mix of grant funding and equity. In addition, ‘incubatees’ also get the services of an experienced entrepreneur-mentor, talent through a Villgro Fellow, and access to Villgro’s network of service providers.

These companies typically spend 18-36 months with Villgro, during which period they use the capital to commercialise inventions, hire employees, invest in sales and marketing, and grow. By the end of that period, most enterprises have been able raise their next round of larger venture funding, and are considered to have exited the Villgro portfolio.
INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAMMES

ENERGY ENTREPRENEURSHIP INCUBATION PROJECT

The Villgro Energy Entrepreneurship Incubation Program (EEIP), supported by the Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation, aims to develop a cadre of well-trained micro-entrepreneurs who are technically and financially equipped, and willing to invest in rural energy access. The entrepreneurs were trained in service delivery and maintenance of clean energy systems at the grassroots level, thereby furthering energy access between private-sector technology providers and rural customers.

ANDE INDIA CHAPTER

The Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs is a global network of over 140 organisations that work to propel entrepreneurship in the developing world.

Villgro anchors ANDE's India chapter. The chapter's mission is to create a network of intermediaries that invest in and support innovative small and growing social businesses to accelerate the creation and growth of lasting impact. The chapter's steering committee currently includes Dalberg Global Development Advisors, Acumen Fund, Grassroots Business Fund and TechnoServe amongst others. Villgro anchors the ANDE India Chapter.

EDUPRENEUR QUEST

Villgro partnered with Central Square Foundation to organise the second edition of Edupreneur Quest, a business plan competition for education-focused social enterprises. This is India's first educational business plan competition and was open to anybody operating in India with an idea or business which is less than two years old.

ARThA VENTURE CHALLENGE

Villgro was chosen to be a Development Manager to provide/arrange matched funding and close gaps in the business models for 7 companies who won the Artha Venture Challenge. Villgro was successful in helping 6 of these companies to raise matched investments.

RESEARCH

Villgro is drawing on research and experience to build a knowledge base for policymakers, social entrepreneurs, and others seeking to contribute to sustainable, inclusive development. The Knowledge Management programme works at the intersection of innovation, entrepreneurship and the rural poor, and aims to systematically capture the lessons that we and the entrepreneurs we work with have learned from experience. It disseminates learning and research to stakeholders in the fields of innovation and social enterprise through research papers, case studies, videos and articles.

ANDE INDIA CHAPTER

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**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR**

**PRE-PRODUCT**
- 23 enterprises currently in incubation portfolio
- Rs 32 million funding offered
- Villgro exited from Uniphore and Promethean Power
- Unconvention|L events organized in 15 cities with nearly 1000 attendees, 26 partners and 40 speakers. Around 400 entrepreneurs discovered
- Villgro chosen to be a Development Manager for 7 companies who won the Artha Venture Challenge. 6 of these raise matched investments
- Two 2013 Villgro Fellows joined Villgro and an incubatee company. Sixth cohort of Villgro Fellowship started with seven fellows
- 15 research papers on ‘Talent Infusion’ and ‘Social Innovation’ commissioned through a competitive research call. Voices of Experience videos on the two subjects completed and hosted on the Villgro website
- Re-design of SEED to a mentoring panel based programme. A component of seed funding was introduced to enable entrepreneurs to pilot changes in their business models

**SEED**
- Follow on investments of Rs 352 million raised by incubatees
- Launched Entrepreneur-in-Residence, a 12-month programme for ‘idea-stage’ entrepreneurs
- Monthly Speaker Series launched in 5 cities to engage potential social entrepreneurs
- Villgro partnered with Central Square Foundation to organise Edupreneur Quest, a business plan competition for education enterprises
- Villgro collaborating with Uniphore Software Systems to develop a tool for interacting with people using automated speech processing.
- Other research on mapping regional social enterprise eco-systems, anticipating future opportunities for social entrepreneurs in healthcare

**PRE-REVENUE**
- Villgro awarded contract to manage INVENT program of the UK Government’s DFID. Will incubate up to 200 enterprises in the 8 Low-Income states of India over 5 years
- Donor funding of Rs 104 million raised. Two new donors added

**PRE-SCALE**
- 5 lakhs
  - Individual Mentoring
  - Curriculum
- 10 lakhs for lean experiments
  - Panel & Individual Mentoring
  - Curriculum
- 50 lakhs
  - Individual Mentoring
  - Fellows

**INVESTMENTS**

Integrated the various incubation programmes to offer better value to innovators and entrepreneurs seeking incubation support.
UNCONVENTION
Unconvention|L (or Unconvention Local) is a region-centric social enterprise event designed to inspire social entrepreneurs, and provide them knowledge and networking opportunities. This year, Unconvention|L was conducted in 15 cities (mostly Tier2/3 cities) with nearly 1,000 attendees, over 20 partners and around 40 speakers.

A Pitch session was added to the programme where entrepreneurs with for-profit social impact business ideas could pitch their concept before a panel of experts to gain constructive feedback and guidance.

**Bhubaneswar**
Attendees: 65
Speakers: Srikumar Misra- Milk Mantra, Umesh Sachdev- Uniphore, Sabarinath C.- Skillveri
Partners: Institute of Technical Education & Research (ITER)
Venue: Institute of Technical Education and Research

**Chennai**
Attendees: 86
Speakers: Umesh Sachdev- Uniphore, Dr. P. Srinivasan- Jeevan Stem Cell & Blood Bank, Dr. K. Tiruvengada Krishnan- Aravind Eye Care, Raghunath- RTBI
Partners: C- Tides (IITM), RTBI, TiE Chennai
Venue: Media Resource Center, Central Library, IIT Madras

**Patna**
Attendees: 68
Speakers: Vivek Pandey- Ecozen Solutions, Manoj Sinha- Husk Power Systems
Partners: Chandragupt Institute of Management, Bihar Innovation Forum
Venue: Chandragupt Institute of Management

**Pune**
Attendees: 20
Partners: Venture Center, NCL
Venue: Entrepreneurship Development Center

**Jaipur**
Attendees: 67
Speakers: Ayesha Chaudhary- Windmill Health, Rustam Sengupta- BOOND
Partners: Startup Oasis, NEN
Venue: Startup Oasis
Ahmedabad
Attendees: 33
Speakers: Rajendra Joshi- SAATH, Rajesh Shah- SAVE & SABRAS, Neil Patel- Awaaz De
Partners: CIIE, IIM Ahmedabad
Venue: J. Mehta Auditorium

Kolkata
Attendees: 68
Partners: IIM Calcutta, Tata Social Enterprise Challenge
Venue: Indian Institute of Management

Delhi
Attendees: 34
Speakers: P.R Ganapathy- Villgro
Partners: Livelihoods Summit 2013, Access Livelihoods
Venue: Hotel Le Meridien

Lucnow
Attendees: 29
Speakers: Naveen Krishna- SMV Wheels, Dhirendra Pratap Singh- Azadi Inc, Vishwajeet Kumar- Community Empowerment Lab
Partners: IIM Lucknow
Venue: Indian Institute of Management

Hyderabad
Attendees: 68
Speakers: Sudesh Menon- WaterLife Pvt. Ltd., Yogesh Patil, Biosense
Partners: ISB Hyderabad, Idiya, Unitltd Hyderabad
Venue: Khemkha Auditorium, Indian School of Business

Bengaluru
Attendees: 133
Speakers: Svati Bhogle- Sustaintech, Vishal Talreja- Dream A Dream, Sameer Segal- Artoo
Partners: Headstart Startup Saturday
Venue: Sunriver Café, Yahoo Software Development India Pvt. Ltd.

Bhopal
Attendees: 67
Speakers: Shubranshu Choudhary- CGNet Swara, Vijaya Pastala- Under the Mango Tree
Partners: Indian Institute of Forest Management
Venue: Room no. 119, Indian Institute of Forest Management

Guwahati
Attendees: 69
Speakers: Abdur Mukit Bin Rouf- Fuzion Crafts, Hasina Kharbhbih- Impulse Social Enterprises, Pranjal Baruah- Mushroom Development Foundation
Partners: Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship
Venue: Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship

Chandigarh
Attendees: 55
Partners: ISB Mohali
Venue: Indian School of Business, Knowledge City

Thiruvananthapuram
Attendees: 87
Speakers: Alexei Levene- Innovation Experience, Saloni Malhotra- Desicrew, Abhishek Sen- Biosense
Partners: Technopark TBI, Innovation Experience, GHTC
Venue: Centre for Development of Advanced Computing, Technopark campus

HIGHLIGHTS
- 15 cities
- 40 speakers
- 26 partners
- 458 ideas/enterprises identified
- 950+ attendees

“It was a great opportunity to be a part of Unconvention|L and pitch Social Cops. What I took away from the event was that there are so many people across the world who want to come together and solve the biggest problems humanity is facing today. Two years ago, it was an event like this that inspired me to become a social entrepreneur.”

Prukalpa Sankar, Co-fo under of Social Cops

“ It was amazing. We found a good network of people that could help ex-pand our businesses in the future. We are quite far from other cities with entrepreneurship activities, so this is a great initiative to make Chandi-garh a hotspot for entrepreneurship.”

Satyam Malhotra, Founder of Technology Innovation Foundation
Unconvention|Speaker Series is a local hub for social entrepreneurship that supports innovative entrepreneurs who are creating businesses with social impact. Each city’s Speaker Series also serves as a source for ideas and entrepreneurs who could be eligible for Villgro’s incubation programme.

Each monthly event presents the stories of experienced entrepreneurs, shares knowledge from experts, and creates networking opportunities. The events are currently being held in Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Lucknow, Patna, Pune.
Villgro collaborated with Intellecap to present the Sankalp Unconvention Summit 2014, Asia’s largest Social Enterprise platform. Born out of a strategic partnership forged between the two companies in 2012, the summit integrates global knowledge, investment and dialogue to build inclusive ecosystems and pro-poor business models. Sankalp Unconvention 2014 focused on building a global dialogue on inclusive development. The aim was to drive outcome-oriented engagement that would shape global discourse on inclusive development. As part of the Summit, Villgro curated sessions:

a. Incubating Social Enterprise: New Stakeholders, New Strategies
   Moderator: P.R. Ganapathy, COO, Villgro Innovations Foundation
   Speakers: Harsha Angeri, Sr. GM & Lead – Strategy & Business Development, Bosch
             Nirankar Saxena, Senior Director, FICCI
             Pamela Roussos, Director of Strategic Alliances, Global Social Benefit Institute
             Rema Subramanian, Founding Partner, Ankur Capital

b. Local Networks, National Impact: Building Social Enterprise Ecosystems Across India
   Moderator: Abigail Sarmac, Program Officer, The Lemelson Foundation
   Speakers: Lina Sonne, Lead – Social Innovation, Okapi Research
             Mukesh Sharma, Chief Investment Officer, Villgro Innovations Foundation
             Rajiv Kumar Singh, Deputy Collector & Incharge - Innovations, Jeevika (BRLPS)

The Summit had over 20 sessions and was attended by over 1,000 delegates, including investors and entrepreneurs, and 422 organisations including Unilever, Google and Bosch. Keynote speeches were delivered by Dr Aravind of Aravind Eye Care, Sir Ronald Cohen of the G8 Social Impact Investment Taskforce and Dr Devi Shetty of Narayana Health.
The Sankalp Unconvention Entrepreneur Scholarships were instituted to encourage high-potential, early-stage social entrepreneurs to attend the annual Sankalp Unconvention Summit. The Scholarships are an initiative to encourage growing for-profit social enterprises to join in the dialogue and get hands-on learning from the diverse sessions, making the summit more inclusive.

Scholarship winners are entitled to a free all-access pass to the Summit. Winners travelling from outside Mumbai will receive an additional monetary support of Rs 10,000 towards expenses incurred for travel and stay.

In 2014, we received 159 applications from which 69 high-potential entrepreneurs – 32 at the idea stage and 37 at the startup stage – were selected to attend the Summit 2014 held in Mumbai on April 9-10-11.

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The Villgro Fellowship aims to create a pipeline of professionals who have the social commitment, leadership and operational skills to contribute to the development of villages in India through principles of social entrepreneurship while filling a critical talent gap within Villgro’s portfolio enterprises.

The Villgro Fellowship sought applications through a combination of online tools such as newsletters, websites, social media channels and ads, and referrals through paid partnerships with headhunters as well as other mutual collaborations.

75 applications were received for Villgro Fellowship; following application review, telephonic interviews with portfolio companies, personal interviews with Villgro staff, reference checks and personality tests, seven professional joined the Fellowship.

**VILLGRO FELLOWS 2013-14**

**Nachiket Kulkarni**

Nachiket has a Bachelor degree in Electrical & Electronics Engineering and a Master degree in Industrial Management from Clemson University, South Carolina, USA. He worked at Intel Corporation in California as a Business Operations Analyst. He was also involved with volunteering initiatives at Association for India’s Development (AID) and International Rescue Committee (IRC), which helped him in his transition into the world of Economic Development and Public Policy. Nachiket is a social impact fellow with Villgro’s Knowledge Management programme.

**Achievements:**

Nachiket identified and proposed an Impact M&E framework for Villgro and conducted quantitative data collection and trending for Villgro-Okapi research on social enterprise ecosystems in 9 tier 2 cities. He also researched socio-economic impact of early screening for Type2 Diabetes in India and drafted a first revision of the case study.

**Next Steps:**

- Develop strategic expertise in merging social impact and business analytics for driving organizational change through exposure in due diligence processes, portfolio management and software tools.
- Understand and research business models of social enterprises working on urban inclusion.
- Be aware of policy implications and initiatives in the impact investment landscape.

**Nitin Lahoti**

Nitin had been running a family-owned business in agricultural commodities with a distribution network of over 70 villages in Rajasthan. He later acquired an MBA in Marketing from Edith Cowan University, Bangalore. Having grown up in rural areas, he always felt the stark difference between rural and urban amenities, which he hoped to address some day. In the capacity of a Villgro Fellow, he has been working with Mumbai-based Under the Mango Tree as a Value Chain Manager.

**Achievements:**

Nitin developed a framework for honey procurement from the farm-gate through the Mumbai office to retail stores. He successfully developed a supply-chain model which is being implemented in field locations across all the states. Additionally, he handled the purchase of all input supplies, acted as a single point of contact for vendors, found new vendors for all different input supplies and implemented a new process for warehouse operations which resulted in better productivity.

**Next Steps:**

- Brush-up and gain new skills by continuing in challenging roles in startups for next 2-3 years
- Become a social entrepreneur

**Punit Manek**

Punit came to Villgro with experience in delivery services, client solutions and customer service. He has acquired leadership experience in delivery services (operations management) and has worked for various service supply chains and customer service processes. A few clients that he worked for include Juniper Networks, Directv and The Warranty Group. As Villgro’s Fellow, he joined Uniphore in Chennai.

**Achievements:**

As part of product development, Punit designed a new product called Last Mile360 for Uniphore, researched on the African continent and identified high potential countries, assisted the CEO in establishing a new line of business and assisted in business development efforts.

**Next Steps:**

- Explore entrepreneurial ideas in the skill development space and leverage acquired experiences and exposure as a Villgro Fellow and start-up company.
- Work with innovators building solutions for the BoP market.
Rachana Iyer
Rachana completed her Bachelor's in Business Administration and Master's degree in Social Work with a specialization in Disability Studies and Action. She has worked with NGOs in India and in the UAE in sectors of women empowerment, agriculture, information and communication technologies and disability. She has been working at Villgro, with the SEED programme.

Achievements:
Rachana successfully supported the organizing of SEED workshops for cohort 2013-14, initiated a Mentor Open House concept for high quality prospective social entrepreneurs, and worked to restructure the SEED programme incorporating feedback from the cohort, aligning with Villgro’s goals and mandate, and after studying a variety of various business models in the social enterprise sector.

Next steps:
- Work in near future with social innovators.
- Give ideas for social impact life from the learnings during the Fellowship

Wilfred Njagi
Wilfred worked in the tech start-up sector in Jordan and Kenya for almost two years. His passion for Impact Business start-ups came while he was pitching a traffic crowd-sourcing app idea in Jordan. It occurred to him that the app could be used for many other community initiatives like reporting on health and sanitation issues, environmental degradation, weather, etc. He came to Villgro looking for an opportunity to gain hands-on experience in his new career path as a social entrepreneur. Currently, Wilfred is working with Villgro’s Scale initiative.

Achievements:
Wilfred conducted anecosystem study of about 5 African countries to identify if there was a fit for Villgro services in these countries, which later narrowed down to Kenya for sourcing potential replication partners. He conducted interviews, did a field visit and organized a small workshop in Nairobi.

Next Steps:
- Help the team in Kenya to establish a Villgro office and facilitate with knowledge transfer between Villgro India and Villgro Kenya.
- Initiate a second pilot in another country in Africa.
- Provide a basic orientation to the incoming fellows from South East Asia who will be doing a similar assignment at Villgro.

Aryan Kenchin
Aryan was born in Madurai and currently resides in Mumbai. He has a CA from Mumbai and CFA from Virginia State, USA. Aryan has acquired experience in consultation for several Multi-national companies. He has also led the corporate social responsibility initiatives of the reputed PriceWaterHouse Coopers India Foundation. Soon realising that he wanted to do something more impactful, he decided on learning more about social entrepreneurship and impact investments. Aryan worked with Villgro’s Incubation team and completed his fellowship in April 2014.

Ruchi Malhotra
Ruchi completed her P.G. Diploma in Management Studies (Finance) and worked as an investment analyst with AIG Investments and JP Morgan Chase. Having worked in pharmaceutical and healthcare sectors through her past engagements with a biotech start-up and a medical second opinion portal, Ruchi developed key strategic skills in this area. Her real tryst with the development sector came from her assignment with Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI), where she helped develop a concept paper for devising the malnutrition strategy in India.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:
A key element of the fellowship programme is leadership development. Of the 12 months, two months are spent learning from social entrepreneurs, experts and peers, and through readings and field visits. The leadership development programme has four key components:

Induction which includes classroom sessions about Villgro and the social enterprise sector as well as field trips to various enterprises.

Capacity Building with in-class sessions and workshops by sector experts; the opportunity to attend Sankalp Unconvention Summit and Villgro events, and a Fellows' blog to share experiences. There were two leadership development workshops:

Workshop 1
January 20-24
Skill session with Prof. LS Ganesh, IIT Madras
Inspiration session: Chatwallahs of India team
Skill session: Business Strategy with Prof. Sankaran Raghunathan, Dean, National Management School
Reflection session 1: Moral Imagination
Reflection session 2: Experience Sharing
Leadership session with Mustafa Moochchala
Knowledge session with Vijay Anand, Entrepreneur and Founder, The Startup Centre
Sharing My Passion: Fellow presentation on passion project
Leadership session with Kannan L, Founder, Fractal Foundation
Location: Villgro, Chennai

Workshop 2
April 7-11
Discussion on Agri–businesses in India with CEO of Under The Mango Tree Vijaya Pastala Interactive session with Avanti Fellows Co–Founder Krishna Ramkumar
Session on waste management solutions with Jayanth N, Co–founder, Sampurn Earth Interactive session with Smarinita Shetty, Director, Dasra on innovations in non–profits
Participation in three–day Sankalp Unconvention Forum 2014
Location: Mumbai

Mentoring and guidance from experts and advisors within Villgro's network.

Off-boarding with presentations and discussions to synthesise learnings and explore further career opportunities.

HIGHLIGHTS:
- Seven fellows
- Sixth cohort of fellowship
- Two Leadership Development Workshops in January and April 2014.
- Fellows attended Sankalp Unconvention Summit 2014
Punit Manek
“I wasn’t aware of the term social entrepreneurship, but the first month of induction at Villgro was very informative. You get to learn different functions in the business and you get to meet young entrepreneurs. Villgro gives you access to a lot of academia, researches and businesses. In the future, I aspire to become a social entrepreneur myself.”

Rachana Iyer
“I wanted to get exposure in the social enterprise sector because a lot of people were saying that this is the most sustainable way of development. The Villgro Fellowship provided a good mix of classroom sessions with leaders and field visits for on-ground learning. Being a Villgro Fellow opens up many opportunities, that may not have been possible otherwise.”
Villgro's incubation programmes work with early-stage innovation-based for-profit social enterprises primarily in the sectors of health, education, energy and agri-business. The incubation offerings have been divided into three programmes that provide enterprises combinations of services depending on the stage of the enterprise.

Villgro has engaged with 47 entrepreneur-based innovations since 2007.

Number of Enterprises by Sector (Cumulative)

- Agriculture: 11
- Health and Sanitation: 9
- Energy and Environment: 8
- Education: 7
- Other (ICT, Livelihood): 8
- Other (Financial Inclusion): 3
- Other (Housing): 1

Number of Enterprises by Status in Portfolio

- Active: 23
- Alumni: 3
- Graduating: 21

* Villgro has engaged with 94 enterprises in various capacities from 2001 onwards. From 2001 to 2007, Villgro supported 47 other grassroots and academic or research based innovations, and from 2007, Villgro engaged with entrepreneur-based innovative enterprises.

Geographic Presence of Villgro Enterprises (Cumulative)

White: No Presence
Lighter Shades: 1-6 enterprises operate in these states
Darker Shades: 7-11 enterprises operate in these states

Map not to Scale
Villgro piloted Entrepreneur-in-Residence (EIR), a 12 month in-residence programme aimed at enabling first-time entrepreneurs to convert their innovative ideas into successful social enterprises. Entrepreneurs were provided funding, training and development, mentorship and office space for the duration of the year.

Entrepreneurs in the programme received:
- Financial support in the form of a monthly stipend, funding for market research, and funding for R&D and prototyping.
- Business support including, but not limited to, research into customer insights, customer segmentation, designing and conducting lean experiments, building a business model.
- Mentorship from a Villgro lead mentor and an experienced entrepreneur.

In January 2014, we commenced a marketing campaign to recruit entrepreneurs into the second cohort of the EIR programme. The initial screening and selection process commenced in March 2014.
Koushik Yanamandram, SustainEarth
Innovation: Low-cost biogas plants for household use in rural communities
Social Impact: The enterprise innovatively addresses issues of livelihood and clean energy in rural India, with a pilot in South India and potential to scale across the country. With almost 1.5 lakh dairy animals in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, animal waste will be converted into clean biogas fuel using a portable, easy to install and use system.
Villgro Impact: Villgro has worked with SustainEarth as they conducted research into the problem of energy access in the country, narrowed their target customer segments and designed and implemented 2 pilots in South India.

B Ganesh, SkillTrain
Innovation: Vocational training for rural youth through a combination of mobile-based training modules, certification, practical training and placement
Social Impact: This enterprise will benefit rural unemployed youth and school drop-outs. It enables vocational training, certification, skilled employment and self-employment for the learners. It aims to bridge the gap between the 15 million youth who drop out of schools each year and the projected need for nearly 150 million skilled employees in India by 2020.
Villgro Impact: Villgro has engaged with SkillTrain to provide strategic support, build a business model, identify revenue streams and supported the enterprise as they conducted pilots in a Tier-2 city in Central India.

Min Ameen, Amrut Dhara
Innovation: Low-cost, quality assured drinking water at public places
Social Impact: AmrutDhara will function in tier 1 and 2 cities across India. It aims to reduce the use of bottled water by installing vending machines, from where people can fill water into their own reusable bottles. This will not only provide a low-cost water source but will also considerably reduce plastic waste generated from packaged water bottles.
Villgro Impact: Villgro has worked extensively with amrutDhara to help define their target customer segments and value proposition to the customers, design lean experiments and distill information to develop relevant business milestones.

Sagar Laygude, Lifecatalyst Technologies
Innovation: Low-cost blood glucose monitoring device
Social Impact: This enterprise is targeted to individuals, households and governmental organizations with an aim to impact the national rural population. It provides a blood glucose measuring device which can be used anytime and anywhere, so that diabetes patients can check their blood sugar regularly. Only 32 million of 63 million diabetes patients are diagnosed in India and only 0.3% of patients use self glucose monitoring devices. The enterprise aims to reduce this stark gap in figures.
Villgro Impact: Villgro supported LifeCatalyst as they gathered customer insights, defined the customer segment and develop a business model.

Mervin Rosario, Ignus
Innovation: Technology platform to provide high-quality coaching classes to smaller towns in India
Social Impact: Ignus will begin its operations from South India. At present, people need to migrate to Tier I or II towns to pursue post-secondary education. The aim is to identify and hone talent in non-tier 1 cities by removing barriers in availability of quality education through technology and pedagogical innovations. The enterprise aims to make quality education accessible throughout India.
Villgro Impact: Villgro has worked with Ignus through the process of gathering customer insights, refining the customer segment, identifying expert networks and pivoting from a technology model to an integrated model using technology and classroom facilitation.
R. Sankar, RD Engineering Accessories

Innovation: Alternative to batteries used in solar power systems using compressed air technology

Social Impact: Renewable energy generation costs have reduced drastically in India but replacement cost of battery bank is still high. This and other associated problems have hampered the growth of solar power as an energy source in India. Therefore, a low-cost system which uses compressed air energy will make electricity available to the consumer as and when needed.

Villgro Impact: Villgro has provided mentorship to RD Engineering and support in prototyping, identifying a co-founder and refining the customer segmentation.

Adithya Pasupuleti, One Billion Initiative

Realizing that many innovative student projects are shelved in colleges and universities, the innovation is to create real-life applications for these student projects. The impact area, in the first year, will be healthcare and drinking water problems in rural areas.

Villgro exited from One Billion Initiative in 2013.

Mervin Rosario, Ignus

“The EIR program has guided Ignus to avoid the common mistakes that a startup would do. Without the guidance to do customer research and now the prototyping, we would have got the wrong product out and it would have resulted wasting a lot of time, energy and more importantly money.”

Minhaj Ameen

“Villgro has been critical in helping us think though the customer proposition and refine it. They asked the tough questions necessary at our stage of enterprise development. They guided us through the lean experiments which have been very useful. Furthermore the support network of the mentors has been very beneficial.”

HIGHLIGHTS:
- Target self-identified entrepreneurs through organizations like The Indus Entrepreneurs and IIT-M entrepreneurship cell
- Combined induction of EIRs and Villgro Fellows to create deeper understanding and cross-collaboration.
- One of the companies reported first revenues
- LifeCatalyst attended World Economic Forum in Davos
- SustainEarth and RD Engineering advanced to Round 2 of Millennium Alliance Awards
- SkillTrain won the Manthan Award for IT

SEED

SEED (Social Entrepreneur and Enterprise Development) is an 8-month intensive programme designed to take early-stage entrepreneurs back to the drawing board, sharpen their business models and ultimately help them raise their first round of funding. Key features of this programme include in-residence learning sessions, on-ground field work, development of investment plan, review and revision of business plans, preparation of financial models and investor pitch.

Following a three-step selection process consisting of review of around 100 applications, telephonic interviews and personal interviews with the SEED Selection Panel, seven enterprises were selected of which six participated in the programme.
Sabarinath C, Skillveri Training Solutions  
**Innovation:** Using technology-based tools and simulators, Skillveri provides skill development in fields such as welding. Its aim is to expand and develop a suite of simulators.  
**Social Impact:** Skillveri provides a simple, intuitive, and gamified simulation for training welders. Potentially millions of unemployed rural youth are poised to gain from this low-cost, highly scalable welding simulator, which will make them highly employment-ready in welding. The number of people impacted by this innovation is 4 times that of a traditional classroom batch. Skillveri has begun building out multi-national sales by partnering with a distributor who helps identify leads.  
**Villgro Impact:** Villgro has worked closely with Skillveri as they created experiments in sales to test various customer segments and pricing structures. The Villgro mentor guided the enterprise towards refining its product pricing strategy and focusing its business development activities on select customer segments. The Villgro mentor assigned to Skillveri also went on to join the Board of Directors of the company.

Dhirendra Pratap Singh and Ameet Mehta, Azadi  
**Innovation:** To create an alternate retail channel led solely by rural women who are trained in entrepreneurship. Further, to remove barriers to product access in rural areas and provision of sustainable community profit opportunities. The products sold at these retail chains satisfy women's needs and wants.  
**Social Impact:** As many as 30% girls drop out of school as they begin menstruating. Since women do not work while they menstruate, they lose approximately about 15 percent of their annual income. Therefore, the aim is to provide economic models to rural women which simultaneously reduce the stigma attached to menstruation. Azadi not only provides girls and women with knowledge and materials to manage menstruation, but it also mitigates financial, social, and functional challenges that they face.  
**Villgro Impact:** Azadi had raised seed funding before starting the program and was building a profitable female entrepreneur-led distribution channel centred on sanitary napkins. After finding that women were primarily buying other women-centric products such as cosmetics and not the sanitary napkins - the motivation for building the channel - the team made the difficult decision to shut down its distribution channel because it was not supporting the mission of the organization. Azadi then made the strategic decision to focus its energy on its NGO operations which they believe will produce better outcomes in health and education for menstruation hygiene management. Villgro mentored them actively through this process.

Ketan Deshpande, Students FUEL  
**Innovation:** In 2007, FUEL was conceived and implemented to help high school students learn about educational opportunities. FUEL utilizes a comprehensive and creditable database of opportunities to counsel students about further education.  
**Social Impact:** 5 lakh high-school students have been counseled in the past 4 years. Ketan’s work in this field earned him an Ashoka fellowship and he is a Level 3 investee of UnLtd India. His aim is to take FUEL to 1 crore Indian students and is presently working with Indian policymakers and parliamentarians to make that possible. Due to this innovation no student will be deprived of opportunity due to lack of awareness of education opportunities.  
**Villgro Impact:** Students Fuel, who had relied on grants thus far, crafted three possible revenue strategies to test. They found significant traction working with government officials and schools, and have signed a multi-year contract to work with students in West India.

Ayush Bansal, Medhavi Foundation  
**Innovation:** To run on a self-sustaining model by providing free career counseling, career assessment, planning, mentoring, and awareness to students from low-income families and providing a paid online career counseling programme to students from high income families.  
**Social Impact:** The aim is to help students make correct career decisions before enrolling for any post-high school programme so that dropout rates (estimated at 31% in 2010) are reduced. Better career choices lead to better job satisfaction and higher human resource output. It also leads to larger economic growth, thereby benefiting not only individuals and families but also industries and economy.  
**Villgro Impact:** Medhavi created experiments around testing the career assessment component of their product, the one-on-one counselling component and the price parents would pay for each piece. Medhavi strengthened the management team and was also a finalist for CNBC Masterpreneur Season 1.

Hasina Kharbhih, Impulse Social Enterprises  
**Innovation:** To empower artisans in North-East India by connecting them with national and international buyers. Impulse Social Enterprises (ISE) does this by creating profitable contracts with corporate houses willing to buy products for an agreed period of time.  
**Social Impact:** ISE assures market for artisans’ products for a given period of time. It connects local artisans with large corporate houses which pay the best price for the products. ISE also helps the artisans become independent entrepreneurs and acquire professional dignity. In this process, ISE also reduces migration of artisans into metros and cities of India.  
**Villgro Impact:** Impulse created a plan to gain deeper insights on branding the artisan products to upper income consumers and to create sales channels other than CSR. Following limited engagement, Villgro exited the company in 2013.

Anupam Shrivastav, Icon Communications  
**Innovation:** A low-cost rural newspaper with a network of rural reporters who write on subjects of interest to farmers and other rural readers. Distribution is achieved by utilizing existing and established dairy co-operative networks.  
**Social Impact:** Farmers are benefitted by the latest updates on technology, self-employment, government schemes, and more. Pilots have been implemented in a 1000 villages across 4 states in the past 20 years. The aim is to turn this initiative into a replicable business model throughout India.  
**Villgro Impact:** Icon planned to test a scaling model, wanted to determine how to engage advertisers on the rural newspapers and how to engage market research firms as a potential revenue source. But they made little progress on venture and lean experiments, and Villgro exited in 2013.
SEED is designed around the goals of:

**Rigorous selection process:** Finding strong social entrepreneurs, with high potential products/services that have the potential to be financially sustainable, scalable and socially impactful, where the business model needed to be re-worked and re-designed. The entrepreneurs are chosen by our selection panel which includes seed stage investors and SEED mentors, in addition to Villgro staff.

**Close involvement of seed investors:** We aimed for our investment partners (social seed investors in India) to refer quality applicants, choose the cohort out of the group of finalists, be in touch during the programme, and possibly invest in the enterprises after the programme finished.

**High-touch mentoring:** Each enterprise had a high-quality mentor to interact with for two hours per week for 8 months. The mentors were also expected to attend all 3 in-residence sessions held in Chennai.

**World-class curriculum:** Pushing the cohort to brainstorm and iterate on their business model, organizational and financial strategy, and pitch, emerging transformed and stronger from the programme. Experts from different fields were brought in to run the various sessions.

**Workshop 1: October 7 to 11, 2013**
- Business Model Canvas by PR Ganapathy, COO, Villgro
- Design thinking in action
- Customer Insights as the Core of Innovation by Jim Ratcliffe, D-Rev
- Learn by example – business model case studies
- Brainstorming on radical alternative business models
- Quick and dirty prototyping by Divya Viswanathan, IDEO
- Your leap of faith by Samarjit Ghosh, Intuit
- Designing lean experiments
- Mentor co-working sessions
- Business model presentations

**Workshop 2: January 28 to 31, 2014**
- The economics of a unit by PR Ganapathy, Villgro COO
- Financial strategy for your organisation by Aina Gaur, Head of Finance, Villgro
- Social impact strategy by Taylor Downs and Charles Hobbs, Vera Solutions; Jessica Seddon, Head of Knowledge Management, Villgro
- Leading with a vision by Sudha Cannan, Center for Creative Leadership
- Deepening your customer insights by John Lovitt, GSBI mentor
- Case study: Scale and rural branding by Nitin Gachhayat, Dristhee
- Branding your venture by Smita Rajgopal, Smitten
- Putting the people together by Mustafa Moochhala

**HIGHLIGHTS:**
- Six enterprises selected
- Avani and Knids Green went through SEED as members of the AVC cohort and have been approved for funding from Villgro.
- This year Villgro introduced a pay-back scheme to the SEED program, where enterprises pay Villgro INR 300,000 if they raise their first round of capital within 9 months of graduating from the SEED programme.
- Three companies reported earned revenues
Targeting enterprises that have demonstrated basic viability and customer interest, the incubation and investment programme provides capital of between $50,000 and $100,000 in a mix of grant funding and equity. In addition, ‘incubatees’ also get the services of an experienced entrepreneur-mentor, talent through a Villgro Fellow, and access to Villgro’s network of service providers.

These companies typically spend 18-36 months with Villgro, during which period they use the capital to commercialise inventions, hire employees, invest in sales and marketing, and grow. By the end of that period, most enterprises have been able raise their next round of larger venture funding, and are considered to have exited the Villgro portfolio. Companies are included in the incubation portfolio after a rigorous six-step process that goes from application review, telephonic discussion and field visits to reviews by the Internal Investment Committee and Investment Committee, and the drafting of an incubation Plan, following which the Incubation Agreement is signed with the company.

Villgro’s incubation programme is designed around two key needs of early-stage entrepreneurs- Funding and Mentoring.

**FUNDING**
Villgro provides early-stage social enterprises that pass through its due diligence process with essential seed funding, designed to bridge the gap between the period covered by their personal finances and the point at which they are able to access commercial funding.

Villgro’s funding is disbursed over the course of the incubation period in a manner that is linked with the enterprise achieving specific milestones and adhering to an incubation plan co-developed by Villgro and the entrepreneur.

**MENTORING**
Villgro’s mentors have either led business themselves or led distinct units within much larger businesses. They have sector-specific competence that allows them to make real-world connections with stakeholders, including investors, manufacturers and supply chains. The mentors are able to bring industry’s best practices to the attention of the entrepreneurs while engaging in course correction of strategic plans.

Our incubation services also seek to supplement these core needs with:

**TALENT**
through the placement of qualified, educated, mid-career professionals through the Villgro fellowship programme.

**NETWORKING**
via global and local platforms that connect entrepreneurs to the different stakeholders in the social entrepreneurship ecosystem.

During the year, Villgro selected 3 new enterprises – Ecozen, Onebreath and Artoo – to the portfolio. Villgro also exited from Promethean and Uniphore as they had gone on to raise follow-on funding and had outgrown the need for incubation support.
Biosense Technologies: www.biosense.in

**Innovation:**

ToucHb, a hand-held needle-free battery operated device that enables screening for anaemia and simplifies monitoring of treatment on a regular basis.

uChek, a semi-automated urinalysis system, that has a smartphone app that processes and monitors urine analysis using conventional dipsticks.

SuChek, an affordable glucometer, that estimates the value of glucose in your blood accurately.

**Social Impact:**

Every year nearly 1 million pregnant women and children under the age of 5 die, directly or indirectly, due to anaemia. A major root cause why anaemia goes untreated is the lack of infrastructure to diagnose it in the last mile. ToucHb, with its low user-skill requirements and high levels of accuracy makes anemia screening and diagnosis easier and more efficient.

In remote rural communities, where there is often insufficient facilities for medical testing and not enough doctors, uChek’s technology can comprehensively improve access to basic diagnosis and monitoring. Instead of expensive and non-mobile lab machines, one affordable smartphone with the uChek app can check for up to 25 medical conditions, and help to manage managing diabetes, pregnancy, kidney, liver, bladder problems and urinary infections. A large population in the country neglects the importance of tracking blood sugar levels because the cost per test prohibits adoption. Affordable and easy-to-use, SuChek addresses the rising trend of diabetes in India.

**Villgro Impact:**

Villgro engaged with the company from the first prototype of ToucHb, including support to conduct lean experiments and develop a robust business model. The Villgro mentor helped the company through three funding rounds, including investor due diligence and negotiations, apart from consulting on strategic and tactical decisions such as creating migration strategies, developing business strategy and financial plans, identifying gaps and challenges to scale and sustainability, and more.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Commercial launch of 2 products – ToucHb and uChek
- Completed work on 3rd product undergoing trials – SuChek
- Won grants from Wellcome trust, Grand Challenges Canada and ICMR

Biosense Technologies: www.biosense.in

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Innovation:
A bee keeping solution for farmers that improves earnings though better crop yields and through the sale of single origin honey.

Social Innovation:
Four out of the five foods that we normally eat - fruits, vegetables, oil-seeds and pulses – depend on pollination by bees for their reproduction. Indiscriminate usage of pesticides over decades has decreased bee population resulting in reduction in pollination percentage and yield.

UTMT encourages farmers to undertake bee-keeping, provides them access to indigenous bee species and helps farmers sell the high-quality single origin honey that they collect from the bees. Using natural bee-driven pollination methods, UTMT has boosted farm by upto 20% in some cases. Also, the single origin honey produced by the bees is collected from farmer cooperatives and packaged for direct sale to customers, meaning more revenue streams are added for the rural farmers.

Villgro Impact:
Villgro’s mentor has served as a sounding board for the management team in areas of strategy & Business model refinement. The Villgro team supported UTMT in refining its financial plan and connected the company to financial institutions to access debt capital. A Villgro Fellow at UTMT is working towards setting up procurement channels for honey.

HIGHLIGHTS:
- Distribution of UTMT’s products was launched in the city of Pune
- UTMT exported for the first time to foreign countries like Dubai and Hong Kong
Sustaintech: www.sustaintech.in

Innovation:
The PYRO line of eco-friendly, fuel-efficient, smokeless and commercial cooking stoves are upto 50% more efficient than conventional stoves and are healthier for cooks as well as patrons.

Social Innovation:
Food and beverage vendors as well as households in rural areas extensively use firewood in inefficient stoves for cooking and heating. Such stoves have both high fuel costs and alarming health consequences. Poorly designed stoves contribute significantly to indoor air pollution which has a direct correlation with respiratory illnesses. Sustaintech’s range of cooking stoves are designed in such a way that they last longer, use fuel efficiently, produce less smoke and are more comfortable to use.

Villgro Impact:
Villgro supported Sustaintech with a Villgro Fellow and a mentor who served as a sounding board for the management team. The Villgro Fellow was able to streamline financial reporting and metrics, create a budgeting and monitoring system, a financial model that helped the company raise the next tranche of funding. The Villgro Fellow also supported efforts to obtain carbon financing. The Villgro mentor advised the company on marketing and sales strategies, hiring of senior resources, expansion plans and fundraising.

HIGHLIGHTS:
• Expanded into two additional districts
• Won 2013 SEED Award in the Low Carbon category, presented by UNEP, UNDP and IUCN
• Total employees are 27
• Launched two new stoves

Sustaintech: www.sustaintech.in
Windmill Health: www.windmill-health.com

Innovation:
NeoBreathe, an integrated neonatal resuscitation device that is easy to use and designed to be suitable for field conditions. This device will help frontline health workers to resuscitate newborns effectively.

Social Impact:
6 million children across the globe suffer from birth asphyxia each year. While 40% of all deaths under the age of five years occur in the first month, 23% of these are because of birth asphyxia, and up to 86% of these deaths are preventable by basic resuscitation. The founders realized that primary healthcare workers found resuscitation too complicated to perform and referred babies with asphyxia to bigger hospitals, resulting in loss of time and often live. This made them come up with NeoBreathe, an easy to use device aimed at neonatal resuscitation, which reduces training requirement, empowers workers and widens the safety net for newborns.

Villgro Impact:
Villgro supported Windmill Health with a mentor who served as a sounding board for the management team in areas of strategy and business model refinement. A Villgro Fellow supported Windmill Health in product development through interactions and feedback from various customer segments. The Villgro incubation team connected the company with potential design and legal partners.

HIGHLIGHTS:
• Won the Grand Challenges Explorations (GCE) Initiative supported by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
• Windmill Health is one of the winners of the U.S.-India Science & Technology Endowment Fund awards for the year 2013.
Artoo: www.artoo.in

Innovation:
Artoo has developed an Android and Cloud based platform that allows financial institutions to take all field processes online and track their business with real-time input.

Social Impact:
Globally, 2.5 billion people do not have an account at a formal financial institution. Organizations that serve this population typically operate through a field agent model that provides financial services at the customers’ doorstep. A big disadvantage though, is that information is either lost or lethargic moving between the field and office.

Artoo’s platform allows financial institutions to take all field processes online and track their business with real-time input. Each task performed by the field agent is presented to the user as a mobile application on an Android device, while the backend staff can view the data real-time through a web interface and act accordingly.

Artoo’s innovation has improved productivity of financial institutions by 51%, reduced loan processing time by 43% and reduced customer acquisition costs by 45%. All this, while substantially reducing heavy reliance of financial institutions on paperwork. Through its partner organizations Artoo serves 7.2 million end customers pan-India.

Villgro Impact:
Apart from providing the company seed funding, Villgro has a mentor working with Artoo, who helps the management team make decisions on tactical and strategic issues, from sales process and strategy, hiring, pricing, marketing strategies, geographic expansion and employee stock options.

HIGHLIGHTS:
• Added new customers in the MFI segment and also in other segments such as Healthcare, Insurance, Low-cost housing finance, etc.
• Winner of Manthan Award South Asia 2013
• Signed up 3 MFIs, including one in the north to expand their presence
**Ecozen Solutions**: [www.ecozensolutions.com](http://www.ecozensolutions.com)

**Innovation:**
Ecozen Solutions, a renewable energy company, has developed a solar micro cold storage system for use in agriculture and rural communities.

**Social Impact:**
In developing counties, where many villages have inadequate power to run such storage systems, a significant percentage of perishable items are ruined.

Despite being the second largest horticulture producer in the world, India cannot meet domestic demands of fruits, vegetables and other edibles as over 35% of produce worth Rs 13,300 Cr is wasted annually due to inadequate infrastructure for storage. Another field impacted by poor storage infrastructure is medicine and vaccines which also require optimum temperatures for a long shelf life.

Ecozen Solutions, with an affiliate called Ecofrost Technologies, has developed a solar based micro cold storage system to address this issue. The company also provides solar-based water pumping solutions for drinking and irrigation.

**Villgro Impact:**
Villgro supported Ecozen with a mentor who served as a sounding board for the management team in areas of strategy & Business model refinement and advised the company in hiring key resources. Villgro Incubation team supported the company in identifying partners and sealing key partnerships in business development and marketing.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**
- Inducted into the incubation portfolio in 2013-14
- Ecofrost Technologies, a subsidiary of Ecozen Solutions received investment and incubation support from Technology Incubation and Entrepreneurship Training Society (TIETS), Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur

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**OneBreath**: [www.onebreathventilators.in](http://www.onebreathventilators.in)

**Innovation:**
One Breath’s portable ventilator provides the functionality and performance of current market leaders, enhances reliability and ease of use, and markedly reduces overall cost.

**Social Impact:**
Respiratory illness is a leading cause of hospitalisation and death in developing nations. Each year thousands of patients die because of lack of early access to mechanical ventilation. Based on the current ratio, India’s shortage of bed-to-ventilator is over 1 million devices. New machines cost over $20,000 (Rs.12, 00,000 approx.) and are often too complex and fragile for use in harsh rural environments.

OneBreath, a medical device company, is developing an innovative low-cost mechanical ventilator to improve acute ICU care for patients across poor communities. With its low-cost and portable device, OneBreath aims to make ventilators accessible in Tier-II and Tier-III town and district hospitals. The device provides the functionality and performance of current market leaders and has ease of use. It incorporates features that make it usable by clinicians and para-clinicians in low-resource healthcare environments, thus creating greater access for millions of lives that are afflicted by acute respiratory disorders.

**Villgro Impact:**
Villgro provided seed funding for product development and testing

**HIGHLIGHTS:**
- Product certification and refinement is well underway
- Has raised follow-on equity investment from VenturEast Tenet Fund
- Angel investors like Rajiv Kuchhal and BVR Mohan Reddy have also backed the company
Villgro Innovations Marketing (P) Ltd

Sustainable agricultural inputs have been proved to be superior inputs in terms of agricultural net income to farmers and not more farmers are putting their farms under these inputs. Recognising the trend, Villgro Innovations Marketing (P) Ltd (VIMPL) is developing its business model further to create synergetic distribution and advisory channels to reach more farmers with targeted education & advisory.

VIMPL is also recruiting traditional dealers along with Village-Level Entrepreneurs (VLE) to reach out to a greater number of farmers. VLEs are being provided with multimedia advisory contents on their tablets to be more effective educators. VIMPL is also creating a distinct brand and will start selling all products under that new brand to for easy identification of superior products and scaling it to newer areas.

HIGHLIGHTS
- Two new warehouses
- Cumulative number of innovations screened – 1250 (50 in 2013-14)
- Products field tested in field – 25
- New products marketed – 5
- Number of customers – 5000
- Raised a fresh round funding from existing and new angel investors and Unitus Seed Fund

Villgro was chosen to be a Development Manager to provide/arrange matched funding and close gaps in the business models for 7 companies who won the Artha Venture Challenge. Villgro was successful in assisting 6 of these companies to raise matched investments.

Villgro partnered with Central Square Foundation to organise the second edition of Edupreneur Quest, a business plan competition for education-focused social enterprises. This is India’s first educational business plan competition and was open to anybody operating in India with an idea or business which is less than two years old, following a 4-month application process in which the ‘edupreneurs’ received mentoring and attended workshops to strengthen their business models.

Education Quest, a day-long public event, was held on February 22, 2014 at Shishuvan School in Mumbai where 10 finalist teams pitched to a panel of 5 judges. The winners were EdVenture in the for-profit new venture category, Khel Planet in the for-profit existing venture category, Thousand Smiles in the non-profit new venture category, and Reap Benefit in the non-profit existing venture category.
The Villgro Energy Entrepreneurship Incubation Project (EEIP) aims to build a cadre of micro entrepreneurs who are technically and financially equipped, and willing to invest in rural energy access. These entrepreneurs service the rural consumers’ need for energy products, thereby plugging the organized energy gap and increasing energy access.

In the inception year of the EEIP programme, about 175 potential entrepreneurs were identified and trained in 6 batches, with support from private sector technology providers like Husk Power Systems, SELCO-Bihar, Minda NextGen Tech; Government run entrepreneurial centres like IED, MSME; MFI’s like Saija Finance and other Govt. entities like Prime Minister’s Rural Development (PMRD) Fellows placed with the District Administration and BRLPS. 4 site visits were also organized for interested 1st level trainees, for awareness training, to sites of existing entrepreneurs.

Out of the 30 entrepreneurs who initially expressed interest 13 entrepreneurs finally opted to set up energy enterprises upto Mar 31, 2014. Of these, 9 were individuals and 4 village organizations (3 of BRLPS and 1 of the Women’s SHG Federation). Another 10 entrepreneurs who were trained at the initial level, showed interest but did not take the final decision of joining. Of these, 5 were individuals and 5 village organizations.

Villgro had conducted workshops/trainings on entrepreneurship and technical skill and on-the-job training was provided with technology partners. Investments were raised by the entrepreneurs and customer acquisition was initiated in full steam by the micro-entrepreneurs.
**ARTHA VENTURE CHALLENGE**

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**Arogya Finance:**
www.arogyafinance.com  
**Innovation:**
Arogya Finance lends money to those who don’t have healthcare insurance or can’t afford to pay for individual’s or family’s healthcare expenses.  
**Social Impact:**
To enable maximum reach and benefit, Arogya has developed a proprietary approach, which allows lending to those who are outside of the formal financial system and lack formal salary proof or collateral. To date, Arogya has lent $589K (over Rs. 3.5 Core) to 272 patients, and the results have been phenomenal. The repayment rate stands at 99% and, over this entire time period, only one borrower has defaulted, about which Arogya was able to take action and collect in full.

**Edubridge Learning Pvt. Ltd.:**
www.edubridgeindia.com  
**Innovation:**
To bridge the skill gap between the unemployed rural youth and the skill requirements of corporations, Edubridge provides vocational and job skills related training to unemployed youth in rural and semi-urban areas through skill development centres. The training programs are backed by 100% full time Job Guarantee with reputed firms.  
**Social Impact:**
Edubridge operates with one skill development centre at the district headquarter level supplemented by youth who are mobilized across different talukas within a district and through a makeshift training camp for a brief. Additionally, a field marketing team goes house to house to create awareness about the programs, thus providing services right down to the village level. All these services are provided at the lowest cost in the industry.

**Next Drop:**
www.nextdrop.org  
**Innovation:**
Throughout Asia, Africa and South America families, on a daily basis, worry about the time when supplies of water, power and cooking gas will be provided. NextDrop answers these questions, starting with the water sector in India. NextDrop notifies urban residents 30-60 minutes before water arrives in their taps and provides a variety of resource distribution and management tools to water utilities, thereby providing preventive analytics at less than 50% the cost.  
**Social Impact:**
NextDrop currently charges a low monthly subscription fee (10-50 INR/month) to residents who receive water alerts, and charges the utility a monthly management contract fee. NextDrop’s competitive advantage lies in the two-way communication channel with customers where customer feedback becomes a means to validate information that is relayed back to the utility for increased efficiency in system operation.

**Sanchayan Suraksha Solutions Pvt. Ltd.:**
www.sanchayansuraksha.com  
**Innovation:**
Sanchayan Suraksha is a complete financial inclusion model for low income families to achieve financial security through a Network of Sanchayan Suraksha Points (SSPs).  
**Social Impact:**
It is targeted to low-income customers earning less than $500 p.m. (Rs. 30,000 approx) such as those working in factories, sweatshops, restaurants, migrants, rickshaw-drivers, auto-drivers, etc. Sanchayan Suraksha offers door-to-door service, ease of access, convenience, affordability and membership (which allows one service across Network of SSP touch-points) method to reach customers. SSPs outlets are in partnership with factories, retailers, chemists, grocers, mobile shops, small shops and individuals in their homes/offices. Sanchayan Suraksha enters into a 50-50 Joint Venture with these individuals and businesses to share revenue from commissions and thus reach the dense target customer groups.

**Tamul Plates Marketing Private Limited:**
www.tpmc.co.in  
**Innovation:**
TPMPL is an initiative to generate livelihood in rural North East India by producing and marketing eco friendly areca nut sheaths. The areca nut palm is one of the important commercial crops of North-East India, yet the sheath attached to the leaf is considered as waste. TPMPL is jointly promoted by the areca nut leaf plate producers of Assam with the objective of generating employment for thousands of rural youth.  
**Social Impact:**
The company vision is to become an INR 1000 million (USD 16mn) rural green enterprise. The consumer market segments for the sheaths include small parties in rich families of big cities, marriages in upper class families, premium fast food joints, institutions like temples, industrial canteens etc and events, conferences, workshops, etc. Customers are reached via wholesalers and organized retail like Spencer’s in East, North, and West & North East India. Additionally, machines are sold directly or via government schemes and NGOs to communities residing in areca nut plantation areas of North East India.

**Avani Bio Energy:**
www.avani-kumaon.org  
**Innovation:**
Avani harnesses the destructive energy in pine needles to meet rural needs for electricity, cooking charcoal and employment.  
**Social Innovation:**
A 9KW power pilot project was started by Avani, which generates power from pine needles. This caters to the textile processing energy needs of EarthCraft, an artisans’ co-operative spawned by Avani which has till date employed 900 people and impacting more than 4500 lives.

**Knids Green Pvt. Ltd.:**
www.knidsgreen.in  
**Innovation:**
KnidsGreen is working towards streamlining and organizing the vegetable supply chain through gainful opportunities for all the stakeholders. The core product of KGPL is providing the convenience to all stakeholders through different products and processes such as Samridhidhi Grameen Kendra for the procurement of vegetables from small growers.  
**Social Impact:**
These centers are managed by the lead farmers; thereby provide an assurance to them for a market for their produce along with advanced mechanisms for price discovery.
Villgro, with support from the International Development Research Centre, worked with a broad network of scholars and social entrepreneurs to catalyse two collections of case studies and more than 60 short videos on social enterprise in India last year.

The first collection, on Talent Infusion, focused on social enterprises’ strategies for locating, attracting, and retaining human capital. The second, on Social Innovation, examined the various ways in which knowledge about social need and capacity to generate innovative responses come together in the social enterprise ecosystem. Both sets of papers are available on the Villgro website and several authors have gone on to present papers at prestigious international and Indian conferences.

Villgro, in collaboration with Okapi Research, has now initiated a more integrated approach to research that explicitly combines knowledge gained from Villgro staff members’ experience with academic perspectives and methodologies to provide strategic insight for the social enterprise sector in India.

The first project, on Local Social Enterprise Ecosystems, is built around the Unconvention-L programme and it aims to systematically characterize strengths, weaknesses, and variations among local ecosystems for social enterprises. The research included desk research and interviews as well as stakeholder feedback sessions at the Unconvention-L events. The framework paper and a preview of the report’s findings about 9 local social enterprise ecosystems in India are available on the Unconvention-L website and were presented at the Sankalp-Unconvention Summit 2014. The final report will be launched in September 2014 in a joint event with Ananta Aspen ANDE in Delhi. We anticipate expanding this project to cover other regions and go deeper into understanding the local social enterprise ecosystems in coming years.

The second, a futures research project, is looking at opportunities for social entrepreneurs to contribute to healthcare for low-income India on the 5-7 year timeline. Several members of the investment team were involved as authors and researchers as well as report reviewers. In addition to Okapi, Villgro collaborated with the IIT Madras Health Technology Innovation Centre and the Centre for Insurance and Risk Management Design and Research Labs as well as Dhoopa Ventures for inputs on the futures methodology. A draft report for public comment will be available in June 2014 and we expect the final report to be available in September 2014. This sector report was supported by IDRC. We anticipate applying this approach to the other sectors that Villgro works in.
The Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs is a global network of over 140 organisations that work to propel entrepreneurship in the developing world.

The chapter’s mission is to create a network of intermediaries that invest in and support innovative small and growing social businesses to accelerate the creation and growth of lasting impact.

The chapter’s steering committee currently includes Dalberg Global Development Advisors, Acumen Fund, Grassroots Business Fund and Technoserve amongst others. Villgro anchors the ANDE India Chapter. Given the increase in size of ANDE operations in the South Asia region, ANDE decided to upgrade the status of the South Asia chapter and hire a full-time coordinator, whom Villgro helped select and induct. The Villgro COO serves as Chair on the Steering Committee of ANDE India, and we continue to be an active member and contributor to this network.
The Villgro Community consists of social entrepreneurs who take innovations to markets among the poor, the mentors who nurture and help the entrepreneurs to evolve and think through their challenges, donors and investors, who fund and invest to seed and grow the social entrepreneurs, and many other partners who make this journey possible. The Villgro Community Roundtable brings together Villgro’s community once a year to pause, reflect on and learn from dialogue around some key strategic challenges facing the community. The intention is to bring the diversity and collective strength of the community to bear on the challenges and to creatively light the path.

This year the community had a dialogue and discussion on:
CSR notification allows corporates to fund technology business incubators. As the funding opens up, where should these resources be invested in and therefore how can it enable growing this community?
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Vineet Rai
Mr. Rai is the CEO of Aavishkaar India Micro-Venture Fund and has a decade of experience in small business incubation, innovative technologies and the SME sector. Earlier, Mr. Rai was CEO of Gujarat Grassroots Innovations Augmentation Network (GIAN), a business incubation fund.

Rathindra Nath Roy
Mr. Roy is a consultant to international agencies such as the Food and Agricultural Organization, the Department of Foreign International Development (UK) and the International Fund for Agriculture Development. An engineer from IIT-Madras, Mr. Roy has considerable experience in strategic planning for development organisations.

Ashwin Mahalingam
Ashwin is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Civil Engineering at IIT-Madras and has been involved with entrepreneurship and social enterprises for over a decade now. He was involved in setting up the minor stream on Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship at IIT-Madras, and teaches a class on ‘Product Design and Business Models’ for social ventures. He is also on the board of the Center for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship at IIT-Madras, and is a co-founder of Okapi Research and Advisory.

Kannan Lakshminarayan
Mr. Kannan has a track record of successful development and commercialisation of customized solutions in the domain of electro-mechanical engineering, particularly for contexts that are price-sensitive and demand high reliability. He has been a serial entrepreneur, and has founded a number of for-profit and non-profit entities: Sunbeam group of schools, Vortex Engineering, Centroid Design, Fractal Foundation, Microspin Machine Works and Skillveri Training Solutions.

Mustafa Moochala
Mr. Moochala is human resources specialist. He established the operations of PRADAN in Madhya Pradesh, after graduating from IIM-A. He then switched to the for-profit sector and was one of the early team members of Ma Foi, a reputed HR consulting firm based in Chennai. Mustafa brings to Villgro a focus on people and related issues.

Suresh Subramaniam
Over 27 years, Mr. Subramaniam has gained vast experience in auditing and accounting, having worked with several of the big 4 accounting firms in India. He is currently a Senior Partner with the Assurance practice of the Ernst & Young India member firm, SR Batliboi & Co.

VILLGRO DONORS

The Lemelson Foundation celebrates and supports inventors and entrepreneurs strengthening social and economic life. www.lemelson.org

The Foundation supports work around the world to expand opportunities for poor or vulnerable people and to help ensure that globalization’s benefits are more widely shared. www.rockefellerfoundation.org

The IDRC is created by the Parliament of Canada to help developing countries use science and technology to find practical, long-term solutions to the social, economic, and environmental problems they face. www.idrc.ca

RSF Social Finance offers investing, lending and giving services that generate positive social and environmental impact while fostering community and collaboration among participants. Since 1984, RSF has made over $275 million in loans and $100 million in grants to non-profit and for-profit social enterprises in the areas of Food & Agriculture, Education & the Arts, and Ecological Stewardship. www.rsfsocialfinance.org

The Government of India constituted the Technology Development Board (TDB) in September 1996, as per the provisions of the Technology Development Board Act, 1995. The mandate of the TDB is to provide financial assistance to the industrial concerns and other agencies attempting development and commercial application of indigenous technology or adapting imported technology for wider domestic application. www.tdb.gov.in

The Citi Foundation is committed to the economic empowerment and financial inclusion of individuals and families, particularly those in need, in the communities where we work so that they can improve their standard of living. Globally, the Citi Foundation targets its strategic giving to priority focus areas: Microfinance, Enterprise Development, Youth Education and Livelihoods, and Financial Capability and Asset Building. The Citi Foundation works with its partners in Microfinance and Enterprise Development to support environmental programs and innovations. www.citifoundation.com

To promote gainful self-employment amongst the Science and Technology manpower in the country and to setup knowledge based and innovation driven enterprises. www.nstedb.com

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Mr. Roy is a consultant to international agencies such as the Food and Agricultural Organization, the Department of Foreign International Development (UK) and the International Fund for Agriculture Development. An engineer from IIT-Madras, Mr. Roy has considerable experience in strategic planning for development organisations.
Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation works to strengthen the energy security of the country by aiding the design and implementation of policies that encourage energy efficiency and renewable energy. Shakti belongs to an association of technical and policy experts called ClimateWorks Network, and connects the knowledge pool within this network to the policy space in India. www.shaktifoundation.in

The Impact Economy Innovations Fund grant, funded by Omidyar Network and The Rockefeller Foundation, and administered in India by Dasra, aims to build stronger infrastructure for the fast growing impact investing industry in India that can provide scalable and sustainable solutions to help people living in poverty in India. www.dasra.org/impact-economy-innovations-fund-winner.pdf

ALTIS, the Postgraduate School Business & Society of the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore of Milan, is an international research and education centre for the study and promotion of a responsible and competitive business culture. www.altis.unicatt.it
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