

Nokia Siemens Networks Village Connection

An estimated 2 billion people live in approximately 2 million villages in emerging markets globally. While many of these villages are in need for basic telephony – to call a doctor for instance - the majority do not have access to these services. And, while providing mobile connections can be a viable option for governments or operators into these communities, there is also the challenge of cost as consumers have an average disposable income for communications of 2 to 3 U.S. dollars per month

Now there is a solution to help these rural residents achieve connectivity. Nokia has developed a partnership-based approach to reduce the total cost of owning a mobile phone to about 3 dollars per month. The program, called Wireless Village, offers an extremely cost-effective opportunity for all parties involved -- a local entrepreneur, a micro-finance entity and an operator.

Wireless Village is a relatively simple concept. A local entrepreneur works with a regional operator and a micro finance entity to acquire a network Access Point which supports up to 70 Nokia handsets. The Access Point can be set up without trained network personnel within a very short amount of time.

The local entrepreneur then acquires subscribers and, working jointly with an operator, can offer a variety of service options to meet the needs of customers including flat rate for local calls, pre-paid and post-paid services, depending on what is agreed upon by the operator and entrepreneur. The entrepreneur also provides local product support, billing and invoicing to all subscribers.

The outcome is a hugely positive situation for all parties. Otherwise unconnected villages now have access to mobile services; with the support of a micro-financing partner, a local entrepreneur has a viable business; and the regional operator can extend its network coverage without prohibitive roll-out costs.

The Wireless Village concept is currently being piloted in India. Nokia hopes to roll out the program in select emerging markets in 2007.

Network in a nutshell:

A regional Access Center can support up to 200 local Access Points which in turn can support up to 70 handsets each. Thus one Access Center can provide mobile service for up to 14,000 subscribers.

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