

# Testing Innovations in BC Channel

## Insights, Impact, and Challenges

Project team: Rahul Dube

Project Duration: 23rd September 2023 to 31st March 2026

## Project overview

**Brief:** To pilot and test solutions (products, services, and approaches) that have the potential to increase agent viability and effectiveness by going beyond CICO products as a last mile distribution network. This will lead to sustainable, gender-inclusive, and efficient business models.

**The problem it seeks to address and its significance:**

The current BC business and income from it is dominated by CICO and narrow range of financial product. Advent of self-service digital platform are competition to BCs and will challenge the viability of channel. To make BC as viable omnichannel have to test new products and services through BC channel to increase the customer stickiness and income of the BC agent.

The focus of the project on the ecosystem around agents.

Thematic area are

- a) Building trust and confidence – through a Customer-Centricity - Gender-Responsive Business Model in Assisted Mode
- b) Strengthening Distribution- Digital distribution and training
- c) Innovations – Exploring carbon credits, and Telemedicine
- d) Digital Public Infrastructure – ONDC, OCEN (Open Credit Enablement Network) and Account Aggregator (AA)

## Stakeholders and Geographies

- **BCNMs-** Easy Pay, CDOT and Kuberjee
- **Partner-** OCEN, ONDC, CMAI and Protean
- **Geographical areas** – Operational areas of partners in India across all states and districts

# Project Outcomes Achieved

- The project team conducted a research study with 1,862 users to analyze the implications of gender dynamics in the Business Correspondent (BC) channel. The data was analyzed and findings presented to the BC industry during the launch of the gender gap report was during the Global Fintech Festival (GFF) 2024
- The concept of BCNMs as the Digital Enablement Agency (DEA).
- Scoping study for exploring carbon credits through BC channel.

Partners	Innovations
<b>EasyPay</b>	Partnership for ONDC initiatives, onboarding of BCs, Account Aggregator (AA) services, and OCEN implementation.
<b>CDOT (Centre for Development of Training)</b>	Partnership for leveraging ONDC, OCEN, and telemedicine solutions using telecommunication technology.
<b>CMAI (Carbon Markets Association of India)</b>	<p>Knowledge exchange about carbon market development in India for clean cooking activities or reducing GHG equivalent gases</p> <p>Provide Clean cooking technology – Improved Cookstove (ICS)</p> <p>Assist in developing a Carbon credit project via a clean cooking initiative.</p>
<b>ONDC (Open Network for Digital Commerce)</b>	Addressing gaps in ONDC interventions, supporting BCs in expanding digital commerce services.
<b>Protean</b>	Collaboration as a Technology Service Provider (TSP) for ONDC, OCEN, AA (Account Aggregator), and APY (Atal Pension Yojana).
<b>OCEN (Open Credit Enablement Network)</b>	Facilitating credit access and bridging knowledge gaps in financial products and services through BCs.

# Key Learnings and Insights

## Things that worked

- The project team worked closely with the BCNM partner to align strategies with regular operations, enhancing the effectiveness of the partnership.
- The focus on the project documentation and planning with clear timelines and using Gantt chart for monitoring
- Conducted extensive field visits to understand the current status of the BC industry and the scope for innovation that can be fostered under the project.
- Held close discussions with ONDC leadership to align the market orientation of the digital enablement model with the digitization of rural commerce.
- Sent an expression of interest to potential partners for sourcing the partnership in competitive process
- Signing MoU with ONDC for the Digital Enablement Agency (DEA) for the digitization of e-commerce in rural areas and an innovation use case for the BCNMs

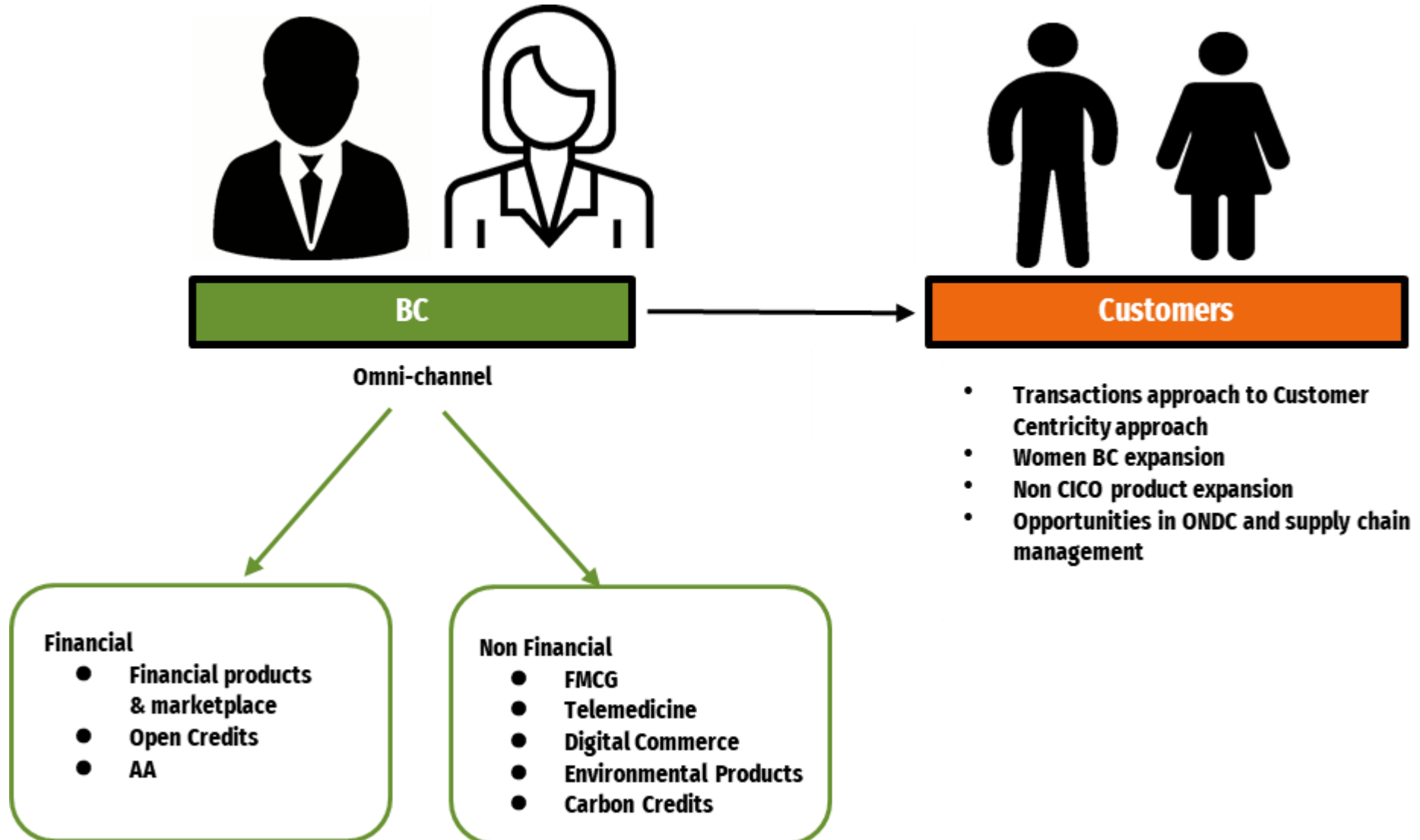
## Challenges

As initiatives such as ONDC, OCEN, and Account Aggregator are relatively new to the market, numerous Service Network Providers (SNPs) and Technology Service Providers (TSPs) are currently engaged in the certification process. This situation is resulting in delays concerning other associated deliverables."

## What could have been done differently?

- Project team should have started engagement with wider range of stakeholders.
- The business case and solution approach for every innovation for the BCNMs.
- Frequent knowledge management and dissemination.

# Opportunities for collaboration



## Team Information (attending IFS 2024)



**Bharati Joshi CEO, Grameen Foundation for Social Impact (GFSI)** : Bharati is a seasoned development sector leader with over 25 years of experience. Prior to joining Grameen, she worked as the CEO and Managing Director at Indian Grameen Services, A Basix Group Company. Her prior experiences includes working at CARE India as a Program Director and other leading social impact organizations. Bharati has engaged in the sector of Livelihoods for most part of her work-life, besides human and institutional capacity enhancement. She is passionate about – learning, designing and implementing high quality programs. Bharati has engaged on the themes of natural resource-based livelihoods, institutional development, enterprise and entrepreneurship development, socioeconomic empowerment of women and adolescent girls, climate change resilience, employability, and life-skills development.



**Rahul Dube, Project Director** : Rahul is a leaders in the fintech and payment industry with work experience of more than three decades across various organizations in Banking, Financial Inclusion, E-Governance Projects, and the service sector. Rahul has been associated with various FinTechs over the last 18 years and has been successfully involved in the rollout & delivery of various fintech and e-governance initiatives of the Govt of India., Specializing on last mile delivery with a special focus on financial Literacy, women empowerment, livelihood enhancement, and DBT delivery. Rahul is alumnus of Institute of Management and Technology (IMT), Ghaziabad specializing in Marketing and International Business and Hotel Management Diploma holder from IHM Pusa.

## Team Information (Other team members)

Name	Role in project	Profile
<b>Pankaj Srivastava</b>	<b>Project Manager</b>	Pankaj Srivastava is a development professional with 21 years of experience in Financial Inclusion, Livelihoods, Agriculture, and Health. He led the Poorest States Inclusive Growth initiative with SIDBI and DFID in Uttar Pradesh for six years. His career spans organizations like Grameen Foundation India, Rajiv Gandhi Charitable Trust, DKT India, and Shramik Bharti Kanpur.
<b>Suparna Dutta</b>	<b>Knowledge Management and Program Communications Manager</b>	Suparna holds a PhD in Public Policy and Administration, a Master of Science in Sustainability Management, a Master of International Affairs in International Energy Security and Development Policy, and a Post Graduate Diploma in Business Management in Marketing Management, from Columbia University, Penn State University, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Birla Institute of Management Technology. She has over 15 years of work experience in academic, research, and program and project management capacities for international and Indian organizations in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.
<b>Project Coordinator</b>	<b>Project Coordinator</b>	Alpana, with a Master's in Sociology from Delhi University, brings 12 years of experience in the development sector. She has worked with CBSE, Child Fund, and the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development under the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Before her role at Grameen Alpana served as a Senior Program Officer with UNHCR for 9 years, focusing on empowering refugees and resilience.
<b>Ijaz Shaikh</b>	<b>MIS &amp; Data Management Officer</b>	Ijaz over 9 years of extensive experience in e-governance projects, technical support, financial inclusion and project management. Holding a Master's degree in Computer Application, Ijaz Mubarak Shaikh possesses a deep understanding of the technical, operational, data analysis and managerial aspects of IT & government projects. He has a proven track record of successfully implementing and managing e-governance initiatives, leveraging his expertise to ensure seamless integration and functionality.
<b>Parmeet kaur</b>	<b>Communications and Outreach Expert</b>	Parmeet Kaur is an accomplished Senior Communication Executive at Grameen Foundation India, possessing a Master's degree in English. With her passion for creative communication, Parmeet excels in crafting captivating content, managing successful marketing campaigns, and fostering engagement on social media platforms.