

## Second Place

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# Grameen Intel Social Business: Technology Solutions at the Base of the Pyramid

## Introduction

Kazi Huque<sup>i</sup> closed his laptop as the plane began its descent into Dhaka, Bangladesh. He was reviewing his quarterly report to Intel's management, in which he requested more software engineers and a larger development budget. Huque was preparing to present a similar report to Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus, which explained how the additional requested resources would help meet the pressing needs of the poor in Bangladesh. Reporting to these dissimilar entities was not uncommon for Huque; in fact, Huque, who grew up in Bangladesh, was CEO of Grameen Intel Social Business, a joint venture (JV) between Yunus's Grameen Trust and Intel Corporation (Intel). In the final moments of the flight, Huque reflected on the personal journey that had brought him here, the successes and challenges of Grameen Intel's mission, and the future steps that he would share with Yunus.

The social business JV was not only an unprecedented and unique business unit for Intel, but also a new direction for Huque. He had moved away from the traditional corporate management track and had opted instead to create both financial and social value for his employer by heading onto a far more entrepreneurial path. Huque was proud of the achievements and the progress made so far. Yet despite making significant advances with Grameen Intel, Huque needed to forge new, unproven methods to reach future financial and impact goals. Conceiving and justifying new markets for Grameen Intel had to be done with great care.

Five years earlier, with a significant amount of persuading at Intel and a personal vision of making a social impact, Huque gathered a team of software developers and ethnographers to create new information technology products that addressed social challenges in the developing world. Grameen Intel then swiftly developed new social business solutions for poor farmers, pregnant mothers, and young children in Bangladesh. These included a mobile app that used soil testing data to recommend seeds and fertilizer for increased yields, another app for healthcare workers to track prenatal visits, vaccinations, and healthcare, and a tool for students to learn to read and write on mobile devices.



i Kazi Huque's last name is pronounced "Huck."



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