Production by the Masses in Smarter Villages
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Why
-- What problems are we trying to address?
-- What opportunities are we trying to create?

• Approximately half of the world’s population lives in rural villages
• This population contributes very little to the global economy
  – Uneducated and often underemployed
  – Limited access to global human capital markets
• Strong social connections
  – Much stronger than in cities and workplaces
  • Limited need for social technologies
• Information work, especially human computation, can be performed by village workers
  – Requires appropriate simple interfaces and platforms not currently available
  – Collaborative tasks may be better handled by village workers than city workers
• IBM clients can use village workers to cost-effectively complete work
• Production by the masses as opposed to mass production
  – Using technology to create new economic ecosystems
  – Like Gandhi’s spinning wheel: the Yervada charkha

References:
-- S. Kamvar, “Accessibility: Production by the Masses,”
http://farmerandfarmer.org/mastery/production.html

http://dx.doi.org/10.1145/1978942.1979148


References:


Why research?
- What are the challenges involved in pursuing this idea? (technical or business challenges)
- What are the underlying novel ideas? (technical or business novelty) Is the risk high enough for other IBM divisions to not pursue this?

- Open research areas
  - The mathematics underpinning optimal, reliable, accurate, fraud-tolerant human computation
  - Accessible computing
  - The structuring of information work packets to be performed by human computation within an overall production system
  - Utilizing strong social kinship networks in human computation
  - Cloud infrastructure to support mobile devices in harsh conditions

- Technical challenges abound in the financial aspects of implementing and operating a production by the masses platform

- Technical and business challenges in formulating tasks from various industries and various clients in ways that can be supported by human computation