

Institutional Interconnections and Cross-Boundary Cooperation in Inclusive Business

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Institutional Interconnections and Cross-Boundary Cooperation in Inclusive Business: Case Studies from India and Africa

EDITED BY

YOSHITAKA OKADA

Tokyo International University, Japan

And

SUMIRE STANISLAWSKI

Tokyo International University, Japan



United Kingdom – North America – Japan – India – Malaysia – China

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About the Contributors

Samuel Amponsah is an economist with an MA and a PhD from the Graduate School of Economics of Tokyo International University. Samuel is a MEXT Scholar and Associate Professor of World Economy and Statistics at the Institute for International Strategy at Tokyo International University. His research centers on education, poverty, health insurance, labor, and inclusive business issues in Africa. He has consistently presented his research works at international and domestic conferences, including the Allied Social Sciences Association (ASSA) Annual Meeting in the United States of America, the Japan Economic Association Annual Conferences, and the Western Economic Association International Conferences. Some of his research has been published in various refereed journals, including the *Journal of African Development* and *Perspective on Global Development and Technology*. He is the current Board Chair of the African Finance and Economics Association and Associate Editor of the *Journal of African Development*.

Bhaskar Chakrabarti studied social anthropology at Calcutta and Cambridge and received an interdisciplinary PhD from the University of British Columbia, Canada, under supervision of faculty members from Anthropology, Political Science, and Environmental Studies. With a core competency in evaluation of policy and institutional environment toward management for implementation of local government projects, Chakrabarti synthesizes knowledge from various disciplines to foster innovation in people's participation as applied to practical challenges of governance. His work on decentralization titled *Participation at the Crossroads* (Orient Blackswan, 2016) is listed as a featured book on service delivery by the Commonwealth Knowledge Hub. He has published, amongst others, in the *Journal of South Asian Development*, *Economic and Political Weekly*, *Review of Development and Change*, and *Government Information Quarterly*. He has served as Editor-in-Chief of *Decision* (a Springer publishing journal) during 2012–2014 and as Editor of the *Journal of Human Values* (a Sage publishing journal) during 2014–2018.

Shekhar Chaudhuri is a distinguished Indian academic having a degree in Engineering from IIT Kharagpur and a Fellowship in Management from IIM Ahmedabad. He taught at IIM Ahmedabad from 1981 to 2002, and was the Director of IIM Calcutta from 2002 to 2013. He was also the founding Director of the School of Management & Entrepreneurship, Shiv Nadar University; Dean of the Vinod Gupta School of Management, IIT Kharagpur, and was a full-time

visiting professor at the College of Business at the Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, USA, from 1989 to 1991. He has been a Senior Fulbright Fellow at the University of California at Berkeley, and has published his research in reputed national and international journals. He has been a consultant to several organizations including the Government of India and The World Bank, and served as the President of the Association of Indian Management Schools during 2006–2007.

Yoshitaka Okada is Professor of Sociology and Business at the Institute for International Strategy, Tokyo International University, and also Professor Emeritus at Sophia University in Tokyo, with a PhD (Economic Sociology) from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW-Madison) in 1981. His main area of specialization is the socioeconomics of development and innovation, covering such areas as inclusive business and BOP, the national innovation system, and Japan's competitive-cum-cooperative management system. He has been a visiting scholar for research on high-tech industries at UW-Madison in the US, Cambridge and Oxford Universities in England, and the Max-Planck Institute-Cologne in Germany. He has published books, chapters, and journal articles. Book titles include: *Struggles for Survival—Institutional and Organizational Changes in Japan's High-Tech Industries*; *Competitive-cum-Cooperative Interfirm Relations and Dynamics in the Japanese Semiconductor Industry*; and *Japan's Industrial Technology Development—The Role of Cooperative Learning and Institutions* (all from Springer-Verlag).

Partha Sarathi Roy is Associate Professor of Strategy & Entrepreneurship at the School of Management & Entrepreneurship, Shiv Nadar University, Greater Noida, India. A Doctorate in Management from the Institute of Rural Management Anand (IRMA), his research interest lies in the intersecting domain of strategy, innovation, and development. His research work has been published in leading journals like the *Journal of Social Marketing* and the *Australasian Journal of Information Systems*, and he has presented papers in leading peer-reviewed global conferences like Strategic Management Society, Macromarketing Society, and the European Group in Organisation Studies.

Sumire Stanislawski is currently Associate Professor of Marketing at the Institute for International Strategy at Tokyo International University. Her primary research interest is in the area of sustainability in consumption and marketing. Current research topics include: ethical consumption, inclusive business, and marketing ethics. Her research has been published in Japan and overseas, including the *Journal of Marketing & Distribution*, *Japan Marketing Journal*, *Advances in Consumer Research*, and *Asia-Pacific Advances in Consumer Research*.

Preface

Sustainable development of the world is facing increasing difficulties and challenges in solving global social issues. Active participation, cooperation, and creativity of people are indispensable to finding solutions to these issues. Difficulties in alleviating poverty and inequality while maintaining business sustainability through inclusive business (IB) are especially felt over the issues of creatively developing partnerships among companies, other organizations, and the poor. Given the complexity and seriousness of poverty, this research project has taken a challenging approach to search for solutions to these issues by empirically asking: what are successful and failing cases and why are they so? The research framework took a comprehensive approach by relying heavily on empirical findings and by avoiding restrictions inherent to generally conceived notions of IB. This project invited academics with diverse specializations (business, anthropology, sociology, and development) to investigate IB from different perspectives, and selected IB cases conducted by companies and organizations from diverse national origins (the EU, North America, and Japan) including the local (India and Ghana). Sincere appreciation is given to the three core researchers and four partners for participating in this challenging project and struggling together to find solutions to various difficult issues.

Although this book covers seven IB cases, our survey covered 24 projects in total. We are grateful to not only the managers of those seven companies and organizations reported in this book but also those others whose projects are not reported here. We were especially moved by the sincere willingness of some managers to provide valuable information despite the unfavorable outcomes they were facing in their projects. Such information enriched our analyses of the seven cases in this book.

Another important challenge of this project was to interview active participants from the poverty sector so that we could really understand what each IB project meant to them. We also interviewed local partners, who provided different perspectives for us. We would like to express our appreciation to the 29 active participants and 27 local partners involved in the 24 projects, who kindly accepted our interviews. Further analyses of these data will be forthcoming.

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Yoshitaka Okada and Sumire Stanislawski
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