

# **Unveiling the fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid: Learning and Insights from Middle Market Companies in an Emerging market**

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## **Abstract**

It is universally acknowledged that no long term economic agenda for an emerging market economy such as India can be viable or feasible without including in its fold sectors that affect the bottom of the pyramid. One example of this sector is Agriculture – the home to about 70% of the population and 60% of the nation's workforce. The challenge lies in obtaining and sustaining high rates of economic growth with equity over several years in order to convert the world's largest pool of economically disadvantaged people to viable consumers, thereby translating any development into economic freedom.

The fight to save the environment has turned into a battle between corporations and governments, between corporations and consumer activists, and in some instances between consumer activists and the government. Some experts (policy and environmental) suggests that organizing and educating consumers will enable them to force businesses to take the sustainable path. However, while legislation and education are both necessary, they are not sufficient to solve the problem either quickly or completely.

In this paper we focus on middle market companies in India that have aligned commercial and social goals to generate wealth by developing sustainable business and communities in several backward regions of India. We document how these middle market companies have tapped the fortune at the bottom of the pyramid, lifted communities above the line of poverty and have demonstrated the "India Rising" story. All these companies have viewed compliance as an opportunity, made their value chains sustainable and found innovative business models to deliver and capture value at the bottom of the pyramid.