

**New Delhi, India, April 16, 2019:** Global Alliance for Mass Entrepreneurship (GAME) and Facebook today announced a partnership that will ignite mass entrepreneurship across India. The objective of this partnership is to ramp up job creation and to further empower entrepreneurs, in line with Facebook's commitment to train 5 million people with digital and entrepreneurial skills by 2021.

GAME and its partners will assist small entrepreneurs build their businesses using digital platforms to aggregate demand, market products and acquire customers. The initiative will promote entrepreneurship among youth and enable entrepreneurs to collaborate, learn and succeed. This process of learning can be better enhanced using multiple platforms including Facebook and Instagram.

GAME and Facebook will kick-start their engagement with a project empowering local communities of rural entrepreneurs - using digital and physical modes, a landscape review and identification of solutions for women entrepreneurs and a grand prize challenge for innovative models that spur new business creation. Phase one to be rolled out this year will cover 10 states across the country including Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Jammu and Kashmir, and Maharashtra among others.

The partnership will cut across all five pathways that GAME has identified as integral to catalysing Mass Entrepreneurship in the country. It will provide means towards making mass entrepreneurship aspirational, nurturing entrepreneurial mind sets early, converting job seekers to entrepreneurs, helping single and micro-entrepreneurs grow and enabling women to start and succeed as mass entrepreneurs.

*“Imagine the power of a platform that can bring together communities of artisan clusters, agri-entrepreneurs or homepreneurs in the thousands to learn, collaborate and succeed- the possibilities are boundless. That potential to transform the world for small entrepreneurs is what excites us most, about our partnership with Facebook,”* said **Ravi Venkatesan, Founder, GAME and ex- Chairman of Microsoft India and Bank of Baroda..**

Commenting on this partnership, **Ankhi Das, Public Policy Director, Facebook - India, South & Central Asia** says, *“We believe that when you give women and youth the skills and technology to improve their lives, we can equip them to unlock economic and social value for themselves and their communities. Our partnership with GAME seeks to create these models and implementations in priority states.”*

Women's economic empowerment is an important cornerstone for both GAME and Facebook. Women are currently only 23% of internet users and 6% of mass entrepreneurs in India. The partnership aims to significantly improve women's participation in the workforce through entrepreneurship, by increasing internet usage and leveraging its potential to connect and empower. Initial research and pilots will focus on women homemakers and those with mobility challenges.