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

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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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