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MAKING A DIRECT CONTRIBUTION

Making a direct contribution to society in Bangladesh

The socioeconomic impact of Synesis IT, a leading software developer and IT-enabled service provider in Bangladesh

Shohorab Ahmed Chowdhury, Managing Director, Synesis IT

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The story began in 2001, when three visionary students at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology – Shohorab Ahmed Chowdhury, Rupayan Chowdhury and Md Rezaul Karim – shared their passion and interest in developing an information technology (IT) business in Bangladesh. Shohorab graduated in 2001 and dedicated himself to enriching his career by acquiring technological knowledge and business acumen by working on large-scale information and communications technology projects both in Bangladesh and abroad. During this time, the students stayed in touch and continued to dream about forming a software company that would one day become a globally respected organization and showcase Bangladesh as a knowledge base in the wider world.

Five years later, when Rupayan and Reza graduated, the three reunited and started the journey that would turn their dream into reality. In September 2006, they formed Synesis IT, with a vision of building a globally respected IT company based on quality, best practices, sound employment processes, social commitment and profitability. Initially, the company concentrated on the domestic market. It has since completed more than 30 diverse e-government projects, expanded its services to provide a nationwide medical call centre, and introduced two successful commercial Internet portals, one for the real estate market, the other in the domain of procurement. The company has also developed a comprehensive enterprise resource planning system for the apparel industry and a cost-effective call centre solution for the services sector.

Synesis IT started its journey with seven people and has grown to employ more than 130 professionals. It is a leading software developer and IT-enabled service provider in Bangladesh, but the most important thing about Synesis IT is that all the projects and services it delivers make a direct contribution to society and have a socioeconomic impact in Bangladesh. For example:

- **Healthlink789** is a nationwide medical call centre staffed by specially trained, registered medical doctors. It provides a 24/7 answer service on health issues to more than 25 million people across the country.
- **RehabHousing.com** is the largest property portal in Bangladesh and the first to offer an online market for both real estate buyers and sellers.
- **TenderBazar.com** is the largest procurement portal in Bangladesh and enables buyers and suppliers to exchange procurement information online. To date, it is used by more than 6,000 business organizations.
- **Union Parishad Help Line** is the Bangladesh government's largest call centre. It is funded by the World Bank and covers more than 4,000 Union Parishads – small, rural administrative and local government offices – across the country, providing information to Union Parishad chairmen, members and citizens.
- **WASALink** is a call centre that receives water-related complaints from dwellers in Dhaka, a city of 7 million people, and notifies officials of issues that must be resolved. It is playing a vital role in improving the service delivery of DWASA, the Dhaka water supply authority.
- **EMIS** is an education-management information portal that collects education information from more than 30,000 education institutes across Bangladesh. It helps education policymakers make timely decisions that have a positive impact on education. In 2012, EMIS won the Best Performing Project Award from the Asian Development Bank.

On the basis of projects such as these, Synesis IT has developed a good reputation and is a well-respected company in the domestic market. It is the only company in Bangladesh where engineers and doctors work together, and its commitment to gender equality has led to women making up 40% of its employees.

Over the past three years, Synesis IT has been showcasing its local success stories in overseas markets, particularly in Europe where it is assisted by the Netherlands Trust Fund II (NTF II) programme, a partnership between ITC and CBI, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and funding body of the programme. NTF II has helped

Synesis IT build capacity and market exposure to the extent that it has a foothold in both the Netherlands and Germany. While Synesis IT has developed significantly since its formation, its founders continue on the journey they hope will contribute to Bangladesh becoming a knowledge base fit to serve the world.

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