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Banking tools for rural India a big hit in West

Two technologies, indigenous to India in banking sector, are proving a successful counter to bank frauds in the Western countries.

A United Nations (UN) report released on Monday said the two technological innovations — a voice and finger print navigated automated teller machine and medical help system through satellite based consulting for rural poor — has found resounding success in the West.

“The design of these ATMs was primarily aimed at attracting rural folk in India. But, the international banking companies have found that the machine can help in checking illegal withdrawal of money from ATMs in a big way,” said Sahba Sobhani, lead author of the report, *Creating Values for All: Strategies for Doing Business with the Poor*.

The ATM facilities, developed by ICICI Bank and Citibank, with fingerprint identification and voice-enabled navigation was to attract illiterates in rural India towards private banks.

The UN report pointed out that the innovative use of technology has now helped companies in setting up similar centres in Europe, America and in the poor Africa world. Another Indian initiative that has been mentioned by the report was of Narayana Hrudayalaya, a Bangalore-based organisation. The organisation has started use of satellite to provide medical help to poor in rural parts of India. It has set up tele-health centres, allowing doctors to help the patients living in far-flung areas.

The report also highlighted how the privatisation of water supply system in Tirupur in Tamil Nadu helped the poor to get regular quality tap water. The Bindeshwar Pathak's Sulabh toilets concept has been termed in the report an innovative business model to provide healthy livelihood to 60,000 scavengers in India.

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