

## TELEPHONES ARE ABOUT TOGETHERNESS

The first telephone in the world was useless. It was the second phone that made the first of any use at all. The third one made the first two more useful. The fourth one made them even more so. And so on. The more phones that are connected to each other, the more useful all phones become. This is some thing that is very peculiar about phone from all other products. For a usual product, the more it becomes available, the less people appreciate it. In the case of phones, the more they are available, the more useful they become, and more people appreciate it.



Because more phones make all phones more useful, there is usually no fixed market size for phones. This is especially so when a very tiny percentage of people have phones as it is the case in Bangladesh. When only a few people have phones, phones are not that useful because they enable users only to reach the same few people. But when the number of phones increases, they all consequently become more useful and more are inclined to acquire phones. Take the case of a person who has five relatives. When none of his relatives have phones, he would not consider obtaining one. After all, he could not call any of his loved ones. But when four of his relatives have phones, he will be very eager to attain one for himself. Thus when market grows, it grows even more.

In short phones are somewhat unique. More phones make all phones more useful. More phones lead to even

more phones.

There are very interesting implications of these thoughts. Unless a telephone infrastructure is built to a

saturating point—a point Bangladesh is unlikely to reach in the near future—the establishment of a new telephone operator is good for old operators. For instance, GrameenPhone has added 40,000 subscribers in Bangladesh, and 20,000 of these are connected to T&T. These 20,000 GrameenPhone subscribers have been very beneficial to T&T subscribers. T&T subscribers can call an additional 20,000 people. Without GrameenPhone, that would not have been possible. That is, GrameenPhone has benefited not only GrameenPhone subscribers, but T&T subscribers as well. It has not subtracted anything from T&T subscribers, but only added to their possibilities. Furthermore, T&T's revenues went up due to GrameenPhone. That is, T&T gets paid for calls that come from T&T into GrameenPhone and all the calls that go from GrameenPhone to T&T. And T&T makes more revenues by simply connecting to

GrameenPhone. The same, of course, applies to GrameenPhone as well which greatly benefits from its connections to T&T. Through such connection between GrameenPhone and T&T, every one wins: customers make calls, T&T phones become more useful, GrameenPhone succeeds in providing a good service and the Government makes more money.

The same principle applies to any pair of operators. GrameenPhone benefits from the existence of other operators, just as other operators benefit from GrameenPhone.

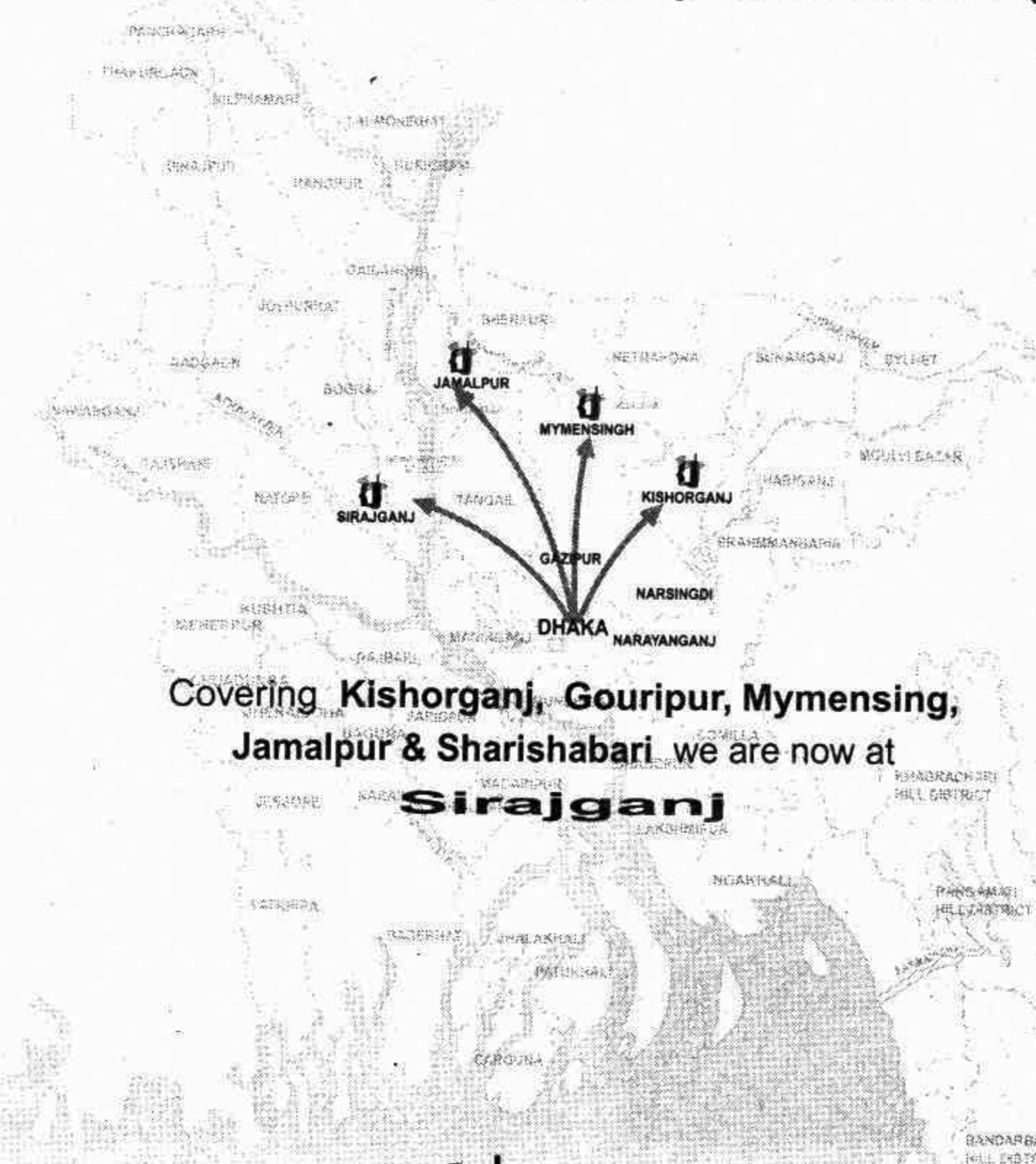
This is why, GrameenPhone connected to Sheba Telecom which became operational more than a year after GrameenPhone did. When Sheba requested an interconnection, GrameenPhone rushed to do so. Even though GrameenPhone was an earlier established company, GrameenPhone subscribers benefited from Sheba's presence. GrameenPhone subscribers could now reach the Sheba subscribers.

People want telephones because they want to be able to reach each other. Telephones help them be together. To help people get together, telephone companies also have to work together. Telephones are about togetherness.

by Trond Moe,  
Managing Director,  
GrameenPhone Limited

## Going North Bengal After covering South

Our Network is continuously expanding towards North Bengal



Covering Kishorganj, Gouripur, Mymensingh, Jamalpur & Sharishabari we are now at

**GrameenPhone**  
In the hands of people

It's a little world...  
(and sustainable too)

• Grameen Telecom offers an excellent telecommunication service through GrameenPhone's GSM Network.

• Get your mobile connection  
Come to our Sales Center. Choose from several brands & models. Get guaranteed service, instant connection to GP Network (Dealer of GrameenPhone).

• Village phone  
Does not matter where you are. Call to the village or call from the village - anywhere in the world.

• Get your phone repaired  
We are authorized service center for Nokia mobile phone. Your Nokia mobile phone is not working? Don't worry! Rush to Grameen Telecom's repair centre.

For details

- Sales Center - 1: 319 First Floor, Sheet, Hatirjheel, Dhaka, Mobile: 017 524628, 017 538154
- Sales Center - 2: 3 Novali Road, Narsingdi, Dhaka, Mobile: 017 538152
- Sales Center - 3: Grameen Bank Bhawan, Mirpur-2, Dhaka, Tel: 017527763 (ext. 1252) Mobile: 017 538151
- Sales Center - 4: Shop # 29, Kutilal Center (ground floor), Sector 3, Ultura, Dhaka, Mobile: 017 538156
- Sales Center - 5: 156 B.B. Road, Sylhet Plaza (1st floor), Narsingdi, Mobile: 017 524027
- Service Center: Grameen Bank Bhawan, Mirpur-2, Dhaka, Mobile: 017 536968

**GRAMEEN TELECOM**  
Dedicated to growth of telecommunication technology in Bangladesh



## HOW IS LAILY BEGUM NOW?

Although I don't have a grown-up son, the phone has turned out to be useful like such a son.

Question: What do you mean by "a phone being useful like such a son"? Would you please explain?

Laily Begum: If I had a grown-up son, he would have worked and helped me financially. Perhaps he would have gone abroad and sent money home. The phone is producing money for my family just like that. As a result, people respect me now. I have recently torn down my old dwelling and have started constructing a new brick house. If I had not had the phone, I would not have dared to start something this big.

Question: Tell us about the situation during this past flood. How far did the flood water rise? What were the damages? How did the phone business go?

Laily Begum: The flood water entered my house. For a month, I stayed at my brother-in-law's place. I lost an entire crop of vegetables. The water-level forced us to shut down the tea shop. My phone business went down because people found it difficult to come here and use the phone. But the few that came produced my only income during the flood.

Question: What work do you do other than retailing telephone services?

Laily Begum: I have been sharecropping with boro paddy involving about three acres of land. We also have this shop, selling tea and biscuits. Finally, on the road next to my house, I am building two stores to be rented out.

Question: What have you done with your earnings from the mobile?

Laily Begum: It is hard to separate that from my other activities. After the flood, I started building a brick house and tearing down my old hut. I am also building two new stores to rent out and invested some money into the boro paddy. For a while, I have not taken out any new loans as my cash needs are being met from the money I made from selling a cow and the income from this mobile.

On the second anniversary of the birth of Village Phone, we spoke to Laily Begum.

Question: How long have you had your phone?

Laily Begum: Two years.

Question: Please tell us about your experience with the mobile phone?

Laily Begum: The phone has been of great use to me.

**SIEMENS**

**Felicitations**

to Grameen Phone  
on stepping into its third year  
of successful operation.

**GrameenPhone + SIEMENS**  
Partners in modern communication.

Siemens Bangladesh Ltd.

Ericsson celebrates,  
as GrameenPhone turns 2 today.



Make yourself heard.

We, at Ericsson, feel proud to be associated with GrameenPhone, a major mobile service provider in Bangladesh, on their 2nd anniversary. We have been associated with GrameenPhone from the start, providing technology and services. We are confident that this relationship will grow stronger in the years to come.

**ERICSSON**