



## A Fistful of Rice: My Unexpected Quest to End Poverty Through Profitability

By Vikram Akula



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Around the globe, poverty has held too many people in its grip for too long. While microfinance - small loans to impoverished individuals - initially attracted attention in the press, it didn't achieve the scale, scope, and profitability necessary to substantially combat poverty. All that changed with Vikram Akula's creation of SKS Microfinance.

In this highly personal narrative, A Fistful of Rice, Akula reveals how he pieced together the best of both philanthropy and (to his surprise) capitalism to help millions of India's poor transition from paupers to customers to business owners.

As thoughtful as Barack Obama's personal journey in Dreams from My Father, as harrowing as Paul Farmer's battle against infectious disease in Mountains Beyond Mountains, and as gripping as Greg Mortensen's fight for education in Three Cups of Tea, Akula's story shows how traditional business principles can be brought to bear on global problems in new ways.

A Fistful of Rice offers not only inspiration but also lessons for anyone seeking to transform tenacity, creativity, and innovation into potent tools for fighting even the most seemingly intractable human burdens.

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#### Review

“... heartfelt manifest...This thoughtful book presents a rare melding of genuine compassion with a businessman's commitment to efficiency and growth...intriguing and...insightful” – Publisher’s Weekly

An “engaging account...” – Fast Company

“This absorbing book tells the story of how Vikram Akula turned an idealistic vision into a thriving business that today serves millions of poor women in India. I have witnessed firsthand how SKS Microfinance has had an amazing impact in India compared to other poverty-reduction programs.” – Vinod Khosla, Cofounder, Sun Microsystems, and Principal, Khosla Ventures

“...an inspiring autobiographical story of an American of Indian origin who went to India to help the rural poor...” – Foreign Affairs

#### About the Author

Vikram Akula is the founder and chair of SKS Microfinance. In 2006, Time magazine named him one of the world's 100 most influential people. He has received several awards, including the World Economic Young Global Leader (2008), the Schwab Social Entrepreneur of the Year in India (2006), and the Ernst & Young Start-Up Entrepreneur of the Year in India (2006). He has been profiled in media ranging from CNN to the front page of the Wall Street Journal.

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