

Organiser



# Livihoods India

Summit 2023

Campaign for Sustainable Livelihoods of Poor

New Delhi  
January 17-18, 2024



## GROUP OF ADVISORS

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# Programme Schedule

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## DAY 1 : January 17, 2024

9:30 - 10:30 am	Inaugural Session
<b>Welcome Address</b>	Radhika Agashe, Executive Director, ACCESS Development Services
<b>Special Address</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shombi Sharp, UN Resident Coordinator in India</li> <li>• Shaji KV, Chairman, NABARD</li> </ul>
<b>Report Release</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Release of State of India's Livelihood's (SOIL) Report 2023</li> <li>• Highlights of the SOIL Report 2023 Presentation by Editor - Dr Sanjiv Phansalkar, Director, VikasAnvesh Foundation</li> </ul>
<b>Book Release</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Release of 'Springboard for Powering Women - Three Decades of SHG Movement'</li> <li>• Highlights of the Book Presentation by Author - N Srinivasan, Expert, Development Finance and Rural Livelihoods</li> </ul>
<b>Keynote Address</b>	Shailesh Kumar Singh, Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India
10:30 - 11:30 am	Demystifying Women-led Development for India @ 2030
<b>Plenary 1</b>	<p>Investing in empowerment of women and girls has a multiplier effect in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Under India's G-20 Presidency, a significant shift is made from women's development to women-led development. India is already committed to 2030 Agenda and is working towards SDG Goal 5 that calls for achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. While there has been significant progress over the last few decades with continued focus on entrepreneurship, job creation in STEM and green sectors, better financial access, increased leadership opportunities, and improved health outcomes, but we are still not on track to achieving Goal 5 by 2030. A fundamental change is required to see women as agents of change rather than as passive recipients.</p> <p>Drawing from this, the discussion will highlight the significant work being done in this direction, identify key gaps and delve into the strategies that will shape the future of women-led development for India by 2030 and look at ways to unlock the untapped potential as well as economic value of shifting focus to women-led development.</p> <p><b>Moderator</b> Saachi Bhalla, Senior Program Officer, Bill &amp; Melinda Gates Foundation</p>

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	<p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kanta Singh, Deputy Country Representative, UN Women, India</li> <li>• Mercy Epao, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Micro, Small &amp; Medium Enterprises, Government of India</li> <li>• Saloni Malhotra, CEO, Reboot-Wellness</li> </ul>
11:30 – 11:45 am	<b>Networking Break</b>
11:45 am – 12:30 pm	<b>On the Spot with Shiv Agritech – Potential, Reality and Prospects</b>
<b>Fireside Chat 1</b>	<p>Agritech is also viewed as a silver bullet to deal with many challenges facing agriculture and related livelihoods. Over the last few years, several innovations have taken place and hundreds of startups have been set up with a lot of promise. Will the rapidly evolving landscape of agritech translate to unlocking the full potential of the country's agriculture industry? In a freewheeling discussion, the session will explore this transition's effects, barriers to its potential, and what needs to be done to strengthen it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rajeev Chawla, Strategic Advisor &amp; Chief Knowledge Officer, Ministry of Agriculture &amp; Farmers Welfare, Government of India</li> <li>• Hemendra Mathur, Venture Partner, Bharat Innovation Fund &amp; Co-founder, ThinkAg</li> </ul> <p>In conversation with</p> <p>S Sivakumar, Group Head - Agri and IT Businesses, ITC Limited</p>
12:30 – 1:30 pm	<b>Three Decades of SHG Movement - Catalyst for Women's Empowerment?</b>
<b>Plenary 2</b>	<p>Over the last three decades, the Self-Help Group (SHG) programme has come a long way. In their 30-year-run, SHGs have evolved into a formidable force, transforming the landscape of women's empowerment. The SHG movement has made remarkable progress through bringing more women from most deprived households into its fold and built their social capital-integrating skilling, institution building, diversified livelihoods and financial inclusion. From grassroots initiatives to nationwide transformations, SHGs have been instrumental in empowering women economically and socially.</p> <p>The session will dwell into the spirit and resilience of the SHG movement, look at where it intervened and how it changed the ecosystem, the profound impact that SHGs have had on the lives of countless women across regions, discuss the challenges and lessons learnt in the 30 years of its operation, while covering a large number of poor households and paving a path towards women empowerment.</p>

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	<p>The panel will also discuss policy recommendations and the way forward for the future of SHGs and the opportunities that the movement has to offer.</p> <p><b>Moderator</b> Girija Srinivasan, Expert, Development Finance and Rural Livelihoods</p> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr L H Manjunath, Executive Director, Shri Kshethra Dharmasthala Rural Development Project (SKDRDP)</li> <li>• Samik Sundar Das, Senior Rural Development Specialist, The World Bank</li> <li>• Dr Madhu Sharan, President, Hand-in-Hand India</li> <li>• Kusum Balsaraf, General Manager, Mahila Arthik Vikas Mahamandal Ltd. (MAVIM)</li> <li>• Neelesh Dwivedi, General Manager, State Bank of India (SBI)</li> </ul>
1:30 – 2:15 pm	<b>Networking Break</b>
<b>TRACKS &amp; TECHNICAL SESSIONS</b>	
2:15 – 4:55 pm	<b>Track 1: Making Farmer Producer Organizations Sustainable</b>
2:15 – 3:40 pm	<b>Farming Futures - Reimagining Producer Organisations in India</b>
<p><b>Track 1 Session 1</b></p>	<p>As twenty-first century farmers' institutions, Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) have generated substantial enthusiasm, hope, and heightened expectations. FPOs, are being seen as the key institution in improving farmer livelihoods with the Government providing a thrust to forming FPOs through the 10,000 FPO scheme. While initial reports indicate that the targets are being achieved, the sustainability of many FPOs remains a distant goal. What is it that we can learn from detailed cases of FPO management, governance and performance? What does it take for them to overcome their capital and capability constraints?</p> <p>The session on FPO will present insights from a recent book, Farming Futures: Reimagining Producer Organisations in India across different commodities including the lesser studied FPO Federations. The authors and editors, of these cases will inform on the viability of FPOs, the growth of the ecosystem and policy and other challenges in sustaining farmer enterprises. The session will also explore some recent innovations in the FPO space that could pave the way for sustainable growth of FPOs. The session will include CEOs of successful FPOs in dialogue with academics and development professionals to jointly explore pathways for building resilient farmer institutions.</p>

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	<p><b>Release of Farming Futures - Reimagining Producer Organisations in India</b> Reshma Anand, Regional Director for the Ford Foundation Office for India, Nepal and Sri Lanka</p> <p><b>Moderator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr Ajit Kanitkar, Policy Researcher and Visiting Faculty, IIM Udaipur</li> <li>• Prof. C. Shambu Prasad, Professor, IRMA</li> </ul> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yogesh Dwivedi, CEO, Madhya Bharat Consortium of Farmers Producer Company Limited</li> <li>• Dr Tara Nair, Director- Research, Work Fair and Free</li> <li>• Parthasarathy T, CEO, Skillgreen Global</li> <li>• B Sivarani, CEO, Veerapandy Kalanjia Jeevidam Farmer Producer Company</li> </ul>
3:40 – 4:55 pm	Seeding Innovations in Farm Sector
Track 1 Session 2	<p>Feeding the rapidly increasing population amid the climate crisis requires the speed and accuracy that technology provides. New innovations in agriculture have shown us how technology can help us build more sustainable food systems and improve food security. Integration of innovations through smart farming techniques, help prevent crop losses on a large scale, speed up harvest time, and manage farm resources with precision.</p> <p>The session will provide a critical examination of agri-tech's role in reshaping the Indian agriculture sector through delving into the impact of digitalization and technology adoption on agricultural growth.</p> <p><b>Moderator</b> Hemendra Mathur, Venture Partner, Bharat Innovation Fund &amp; Co-founder, ThinkAg</p> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr Dinesh Singh Chauhan, Vice President – Projects and Partnerships, DeHaat</li> <li>• Nitin Puri, Founder, KisaanSay</li> <li>• Vivek Pandey, Chief Technology Officer &amp; Co-Founder, Ecozen</li> <li>• Shubhendu Dash, Vice President &amp; Lead-Farm Sector, ACCESS Development Services</li> </ul>

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2:15 – 4:55 pm	<b>Track 2: Focusing the Future of Farming on Agroecology</b>
2:15 – 3:40 pm	<b>Agroecology based Enterprises - The Route to Scale</b>
<b>Track 2 Session 1</b>	<p>Agroecology is trans-disciplinary science, which is increasingly being promoted to transform existing food systems into sustainable food systems through regenerative use of natural resources in agriculture. The business case for agroecology-based enterprises is fast emerging. As a solution to the trade-off between productivity and sustainability, organisations across sectors are recognising the potential of agroecology and agroecology-based enterprises to deliver many benefits, for nature, climate, health and the economy. While exploring the emerging evidence from across the country, the session will focus on the strategies to scale up agroecology-based enterprises and the policy-level vision required to allow farm businesses to transition to this model. It will also seek to understand the diverse roles that stakeholders need to invest in to support this transition.</p> <p><b>Moderator</b> Elisabeth Steinmayr, Programme Officer, IFAD, India</p> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rajeev Ahal, Director, Natural Resource Management and Agroecology, GIZ India</li> <li>• Siraj Hussain, Advisor, Food Processing &amp; Trustee, World Food Programme (WFP) Trust for India</li> <li>• Nivedita Varshneya, Country Director, Welthungerhilfe India</li> <li>• Dr G V Ramanjaneyulu, Executive Director, Centre for Sustainable Agriculture (CSA)</li> </ul>
3:40 – 4:55 pm	<b>Incentives for Agroecological Transformation in India</b>
<b>Track 2 Session 2</b>	<p>Agroecology stands at the forefront of sustainable agriculture, embodying a holistic approach that not only enhances agricultural productivity but also addresses broader ecological, social, and economic dimensions. The importance of agroecology in shaping resilient livelihoods is underscored by its adherence to principles that harmonise human activities with natural ecosystems. As we navigate the challenges and opportunities within the realm of agroecology, it becomes imperative to recognize and integrate its fundamental principles into our discourse on livelihoods and inclusivity. In this context, the session will engage with key stakeholders in government, civil society and private sector to look at their experiences and successes so far.</p>



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	<p>While introducing scalable products from evidence-based approach, the session will also delve deep into some of the key livelihood sectors with scope for agroecological transformation in order to outline the way forward.</p> <p><b>Moderator</b> Rajeev Ahal, Director, Natural Resource Management and Agroecology, GIZ India</p> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suhela Khan, Country Program Manager, Women’s Economic Empowerment, UN Women, India</li> <li>• Nitin Gupta, Vice President, Olam Agro India Ltd.</li> </ul>
2:15 – 4:55 pm	<p><b>Track 3: Catalyzing Rural Prosperity through Sustainable Water Management</b></p>
2:15 – 2:50 pm	<p><b>Track Introduction and Highlights of Jal Kaushal Research Reports</b> Sabina Dewan, President and Executive Director, JustJobs Network</p> <p><b>Release of Jal Kaushal Research Reports</b> Yugal Kishore Joshi, Advisor, Water and Land Resources and Communications, NITI Aayog</p> <p><b>Keynote Address</b> Yugal Kishore Joshi, Advisor, Water and Land Resources and Communications, NITI Aayog</p> <p><b>Special Address (Video Message)</b> Debashree Mukherjee, Secretary, Department of Water Resources, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India</p>
2:50 – 3:40 pm	<p><b>Decoding the Impact of Jal Jeevan Mission’s &amp; Swachh Bharat Mission’s Role in Empowering Rural Livelihoods</b></p>
<p><b>Track 3 Session 1</b></p>	<p>This panel delves into the transformative impact of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) and Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) on rural livelihoods. Launched in 2019, JJM has made significant strides, covering about two-thirds of rural households with the aim of providing Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs) and ensuring regular supply of quality water. Focusing on service delivery rather than mere infrastructure creation, JJM has shown substantial potential in generating employment across various implementation phases.</p> <p>With an emphasis on decentralized governance and community engagement, these missions are pivotal in generating both direct and indirect employment.</p>

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<p><b>Track 3 Session 1</b></p>	<p>The panel will explore how JJM and SBM are creating new opportunities in water and sanitation service delivery. This significant employment generation spans various roles, from engineers and valve men to pump operators and managerial staff, during the construction phase, and includes watermen, pump/valve operators, supervisors, and watchmen for O&amp;M. The panel will also explore the challenges faced in sustaining these employment opportunities. This panel will not only highlight the transformative role of JJM and SBM in rural employment but also engage in a discussion on innovative operating models across India, focusing on how they contribute to fostering livelihoods.</p> <p><b>Moderator</b> Nidhi Batra, Founder, Sehreeti Development Practices</p> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arun Kumar Kembhavi, Deputy Secretary (JJM-III, DDWS)*</li> <li>• Arpit Sharma, COO, Skill Council for Green Jobs</li> <li>• Yusuf Kabir, WASH Specialist, UNICEF India*</li> <li>• Representative from a Large MVS Operator</li> </ul>
<p>3:40 – 4:55 pm</p>	<p><b>Charting the Future – Sustaining Water and Livelihoods in Rural India</b></p>
<p><b>Track 3 Session 2</b></p>	<p>This panel addresses the critical issue of water availability and security in rural India, particularly in the context of the country’s significant reliance on groundwater. With extraction rates exceeding those of the US and China combined, and about 70% of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) schemes dependent on this resource, the challenge is to sustainably manage these sources to meet the growing aspirations for consistent piped water supply. The discussion will explore the complexities of groundwater management, underscoring the vital role of village institutions in effective water governance. A key focus will be on agriculture, India’s largest consumer of groundwater, and its role in improving water use efficiency. This includes potential skill development in water-efficient agricultural practices, opening new livelihood opportunities for rural communities. Simultaneously, the panel will discuss the strategic role of MGNREGA in bolstering source sustainability, highlighting how it can be leveraged for both employment and skill-building in sustainable water resource management.</p> <p>The panel will explore a diverse range of strategies and innovative models, emphasizing the crucial role of frontline stakeholders in bridging the gap between policy and practical implementation.</p>

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	<p><b>Documentary Screening – Jal Kaushal</b></p> <p><b>Moderator</b> Shilp Verma, Senior Researcher - Water- Energy- Food Policies, International Water Management Institute</p> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ashok S Goel, Commissioner (SPR), Department of Water Resources, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India</li> <li>• Dr. Marcella D’Souza, Director, WOTR Centre for Resilience Studies (W-CReS)</li> <li>• Govardhan R. Kulkarni, Ex Chairman, Mahatma Jyotirao Phule WUA, Ozar, Nashik</li> </ul>
<p>2:15 – 3:40 pm</p>	<p><b>Handicraft-Based Livelihoods in Urban Centres of India: Need for a Paradigm Shift</b></p>
<p><b>Technical Session 1</b></p>	<p>India has an unparalleled rich history and heritage of crafts in the world. As per the handicraft census for the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan, an estimated 6.8 million artisans are employed in the sector. The craft clusters of India are spread across both rural as well urban and peri-urban areas. While being better placed to succeed in the age of digital marketing, the urban craft centres continue to remain largely unorganized, with many challenges. However, with coordinated efforts among all the stakeholders - government, private sector and the civil society, the Indian crafts sector has the potential to touch new heights.</p> <p>In this context, this session attempts to deliberate on some of the important areas of intervention for inculcating entrepreneurship among the urban artisans, such as exploring how we can enable the next generation of artisans to go digital, how we can develop products that the new generation find appealing, the role that technical institutions can play in it and the potential for collaboration among stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Moderator</b> Dr Madhura Dutta, Culture and Development Specialist</p> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amrit Raj, Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Ministry of Textiles, Government of India</li> <li>• Dr Nidhi Pundhir, Vice President, Global CSR, HCL Foundation</li> <li>• Gauri Malik, Founder, Sirohi</li> <li>• Dr Megha Phansalkar, Founder, Tisser</li> </ul>

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3:40 – 4:55 pm	Designing Inclusive Livelihoods for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)
<p><b>Technical Session 2</b></p>	<p>India is home to 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), comprising 2.8 million people dwelling in remote areas across the country. Most of their livelihoods hinge on seasonal migration or forest resources, now jeopardized by climate change and the new forest conservation policies, displacing these communities. The loss of habitats, traditional livelihoods, and discrimination intensify their vulnerability, resulting in malnutrition and poor living conditions. Linguistic barriers and social discrimination compound their marginalization, while limited market access often exposes them to exploitation by middlemen. Lacking productive assets and sustainable sources of income, PVTGs struggle to meet basic consumption needs and are particularly vulnerable to life shocks, keeping them trapped in the vicious cycle of poverty. About 19,000 vulnerable households live in areas with ‘high’ or ‘extreme’ climate vulnerability, further hindering agriculture. PVTG women, in particular, experience even higher levels of discrimination and gender-based violence, exacerbated by caste and gender dynamics.</p> <p>The session will look into the insights and experiences gained from engaging with the PVTGs in varying contexts thus far, and it will delve into envisioning the implementation of the Graduation Approach within the context of PVTGs, emphasizing aspects such as asset transfer, consumption stipend, and intensive handholding support.</p> <p><b>Lead Presentation:</b> Amod Khanna, Consultant</p> <p><b>Moderator</b> Ramesh Velure, India Program Officer, BRAC, International</p> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr Kedar Singh, IAS, CEO, Madhya Pradesh State Rural Livelihoods Mission (MP DAY-SRLM)</li> <li>• Amod Khanna, Consultant</li> <li>• Seema Bhaskaran, Lead - Gender and Social Inclusion, Transform Rural India Foundation (TRIF)</li> <li>• Manas Satpathy, Integrator, PRADAN</li> </ul>

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4:45 – 5:00 pm	Networking Break
5:00 – 5:45 pm	What Should be the Unit of Planning - Are We Going Back to the Drawing Board ?
<b>Fireside Chat 2</b>	<p>In order to improve the performance of areas that are lagging on various development parameters, a number of programmes have been launched across years. The Community Development Block programme was launched in 1952, in an attempt to bring out social and economic transformation in the village life. The new NITI Aayog initiative of identifying ‘Aspirational Blocks,’ aims to improve governance at the block level for 500 blocks, in order to enhance the quality of life of citizens and service delivery in the remotest and less developed blocks of India. Earlier it was ‘Aspirational Districts.’ What forms the ideal unit of community development for bringing out a social and economic transformation in rural areas? Is it the village, the block or the district? The session will discuss identifying the optimal unit of development for more inclusive and equitable growth in India.</p> <p>Amarjeet Sinha, Former Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India</p> <p>In conversation with</p> <p>Arun Maira, Former Member, Planning Commission</p>

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09:30 to 10:40 am	The New Frontier - Building Inclusive Livelihoods for the Urban Poor
<p><b>Plenary 3</b></p>	<p>For several decades after independence, India prioritized eliminating poverty, predominantly with a focus on rural development. However, with the rapid urbanization experienced in recent decades, addressing urban poverty requires a shift from the traditional rural lens. India’s urban population, initially at 17.29 percent in 1951, doubled to 34 percent by 2018 and are projected to triple to 53 percent by 2050. Urban migration, fuelled by the quest for greater economic opportunities, has led to a significant rise in slum dwellings with inadequate access to essential services, posing health risks. Urban poverty is heterogeneous with dramatically differing conditions across sections of cities, presenting unique challenges such as limited safe transport and increased vulnerability to crime. Urban migrants accept the many risks and poor living conditions of slums because it is their only means of tapping into the economic opportunities afforded by urban centers.</p> <p>They differ greatly from their rural counterparts, not only in their capacities and mindsets but also in their relationship to the surrounding environment. Any program that supports this population needs to design interventions keeping this in mind.</p> <p>This plenary session brings together policymakers, experts, and practitioners to discuss inclusive livelihoods and urban poverty alleviation. The conversation will explore the complex needs of the urban poor, integrating interventions for climate and gender concerns, and innovative implementation and funding models.</p> <p><b>Moderator</b> Ajit Ranjan, Program Coordinator India, BRAC</p> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shweta S Banerjee, Country Lead - India, BRAC International</li> <li>• Raman Wadhwa, Director, DAY-NRLM, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India</li> <li>• Samik Sundar Das, Senior Rural Development Specialist, The World Bank</li> <li>• Rashim Bedi, SEWA</li> </ul>

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10:40 – 11:40 am	<b>Road to Sustainable Development Goals – Transformational Role of Corporate Social Responsibility</b>
<b>Fireside Chat 3</b>	<p>India has set itself ambitious targets for the implementation of SDGs by aligning it with the national development agenda. As the nation strives to address complex socio-economic and environmental challenges, CSR emerges as a potent and transformative mechanism for fostering inclusive and sustainable development. This session examines the multifaceted contributions of corporate entities towards achieving the SDGs and their impact on India’s progress towards a more equitable and environmentally sustainable future. It would also delve into the challenges and barriers faced by corporations in effectively contributing to the SDGs and suggest strategies for overcoming these obstacles</p> <p>Dr Manoj Govil, Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India*</p> <p>In conversation with</p> <p>Shankar Venkateswaran, Co-Founder and Managing Partner - Sustainability Integration, ECube Investment Advisors Pvt. Ltd.</p>
11:40 – 11:55 am	<b>Networking Break</b>
11:55 am– 1:05 pm	<b>Leveraging Care Economy Investments to Foster Women’s Economic Empowerment</b>
<b>Technical Session 3</b>	<p>Social and cultural normative expectations place the role of caregivers predominantly on women, spanning both private and public domains. These norms operate across both the private and public spheres. The existing structures of care, predominantly reliant on women as unpaid caregivers, obstructs the path to women’s empowerment, economic justice, gender equality, and sustainable development. Research indicates that unpaid care work, especially in childcare, presents formidable challenges for women, resulting in adverse consequences such as reduced employment participation, earnings, and professional advancement, particularly impacting mothers, as highlighted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2019.</p> <p>The session will underscore the critical importance of the care economy for gender equality, sustainable development, and inclusive economic growth. It will delve into the challenges and opportunities presented by the specific demands and scale of care work, exploring diverse approaches from public policy, private enterprise, and civil society for investing in the care economy.</p>

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	<p>The objective is to stimulate innovative thinking, recognize and value unpaid care, enhance women’s workforce participation, improve access to decent jobs, and consider financing options for care infrastructure.</p> <p><b>Moderator</b> Suhela Khan, Country Program Manager, Women’s Economic Empowerment, UN Women, India</p> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Preetam B Yashvant, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India</li> <li>• Karina Bhasin, Program Manager, Seedstars Global</li> <li>• Priya Anant, Director, Life Circle Health Services Private Limited</li> <li>• Munira Dhabiya, Lead - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Aditya Birla Capital</li> <li>• Rajeev Ranjan, Chief Operating Officer &amp; Chief People Officer, Dharma Life</li> </ul>
<p>11:55 am– 1:05 pm</p>	<p><b>Climate Resilient Water, Sanitation &amp; Hygiene (WASH) for Enabling and Sustaining Livelihoods</b></p>
<p><b>Technical Session 4</b></p>	<p>Water and climate change are deeply interconnected, forming a critical triad with livelihood. The climate crisis is primarily a water crisis, evidently reflected in floods, rising sea levels, wildfires, and droughts. Microfinance, viewed as an anti-poverty vaccine, fosters human development and social cohesion among the deprived sections of society. It goes beyond financial services, significantly impacting sustainable livelihoods, especially for women. Microfinance institutions (MFIs) play a pivotal role in addressing WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) issues, contributing to health, safety, education, diversity, and poverty alleviation. The intersection of ESG compliance and capital raising presents a transformative opportunity for Indian MFIs, aligning with emerging ESG financing trends.</p> <p>The panel discussion aims to explore strategies and initiatives defining the future of livelihood generation in a climate-conscious world. Recognizing that a ‘one size fits all’ solution doesn’t work, the panel will discuss groundbreaking initiatives, from green bonds to fintech solutions, revolutionizing finance access for the underserved. The focus is on how MFIs leverage funding for clean water, sanitation, renewable energy, carbon credits, and resilience promotion in vulnerable communities, contributing to a more sustainable and inclusive world.</p> <p><b>Moderator</b> Rasika Chopra, Manager, MicroSave Consulting</p>



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	<p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bonani Roychoudhury, Managing Director, NABSAMRUDDHI Finance Ltd.</li> <li>• Manoj Gulati, Regional Director, South Asia, Water.org</li> <li>• Prof V. Srinivas Chary, CEO at WASH Innovation Hub &amp; Professor, Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI)</li> <li>• Sadaf Sayeed, CEO, Muthoot Microfin Limited</li> <li>• Dibyajyoti Pattanaik, Director, Annapurna Finance Private Limited</li> </ul>
1:05 – 1:50 pm	<b>Networking Break</b>
1:50 – 3:00 pm	<b>Digital Powering of Farm and Non-farm Entrepreneurship: Progress and Prospects</b>
<p><b>Technical Session 5</b></p>	<p>India’s Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are pivotal to the economy, constituting 30% of the GDP and supporting over 11 crore jobs. Despite challenges like limited growth for micro-enterprises and gender imbalances, there’s a notable surge in female-owned MSMEs, comprising 37.13% of registrations. MSMEs in India grapple with various challenges, including insufficient physical infrastructure, limited access to collateral, and digital readiness issues. Despite these obstacles, technological innovation emerges as a promising solution. Agtech, in particular, has witnessed substantial growth, offering transformative solutions for farmers and contributing to the economic potential of the sector. Technological advancements extend beyond agriculture, impacting non-agricultural entrepreneurship. Startups leverage e-commerce platforms and digital marketing tools for global outreach, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness. Fintech plays a crucial role in transforming financial management for MSMEs, offering alternatives to traditional banking. Looking ahead, closing the digital divide becomes imperative for the success of MSMEs in India. Initiatives like the Digital MSME Scheme aim to bridge the digital divide, but challenges persist.</p> <p>With a focus on the transformative role that digital technology can play in powering farm and non-farm entrepreneurship, the session will look at the issues and challenges encountered in adoption of digital technologies and way forward for technology to aid a sustainable growth across the MSME sector in line with Viksit Bharat @2047.</p> <p><b>Moderator</b> Jayraj Nath, Director and Head of Technology, Grameen Foundation for Social Impact</p>

## DAY 2: January 18, 2024

	<p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Venkat Raman, Ex-MD &amp; CEO of India Post Payments Bank</li> <li>• Dr. Namita Singh, Director of User Research, Digital Green</li> <li>• Surajit Sinha, Director - Agritech, Climate Tech Farmsio</li> <li>• Mahfuz Alam, Project Coordinator, MANDI Initiative, Grameen Foundation for Social Impact</li> <li>• Gitali Thakur, Social Entrepreneur &amp; Founder, Myhelp</li> </ul>
<p>1:50 – 3:00 pm</p>	<p><b>Promoting Women in Leadership for Improving Economic Outcomes</b></p>
<p><b>Technical Session 6</b></p>	<p>The goal of ushering in women-led development requires concerted efforts on multiple fronts. Facilitating and enabling women in leadership positions can cause significant shifts in improving women’s economic outcomes using modern feminist methods. However, the proportion of women in leadership roles is low in India. For example, a report by Dasra found that women’s workforce occupies only 18% of leadership roles in India’s healthcare sector, earning 34% less than their male counterparts. Creating an enabling ecosystem for women to transition into key decision making and leadership roles is critical not only from the point of view of diversity and inclusion but is also necessary for strengthening alternative forms of leadership that are starkly different from traditional approaches. Enabling women leaders in politics, economics, finance, businesses, social sectors and so on, is crucial for institutionalizing gender-responsive mechanisms that cater to the needs of women in all sectors of the economy and facilitates in closing the rigid gender gaps. Women’s leadership has evidence of creating systems that operate to include and facilitate women not only in their productive spheres but adds to it by creating ‘caring’ spaces.</p> <p>This panel aims to contribute to the current discourse on ‘women in leadership’, what it entails, highlight measures that cover organizational strategies, market-based approaches and brings to the fore some of the existing knowledge and best practices from select sectors that accelerate women’s leadership.</p> <p><b>Moderator</b> Sona Mitra, Principal Economist, IWWAGE, LEAD Krea University</p>

## DAY 2: January 18, 2024

	<p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr Yamini Atmavilas, President (Strategy &amp; Research), Udaiti Foundation</li> <li>• Shagun Sabharwal, Director Programs at Co-impact</li> <li>• Nayana Chowdhury, Senior Director - Head of Program I Co-lead, Strategic Partnership and Scale Up, Breakthrough India</li> </ul>
3:00 – 3:20 pm	<b>Networking Break</b>
3:20 – 4:30 pm	<b>Unlocking Entrepreneurship, Creating Jobs at Scale – A Collaborative Platform Approach</b>
<b>Plenary 4</b>	<p>India with a current GDP of \$3.7 trillion is slated to become a \$5 trillion economy by 2025. The major challenge in realizing this vision is to create jobs for its working-age population, mostly below the age of 35. Entrepreneurship supports small businesses to use local inputs to create local jobs, serve the needs of the local community and contribute to the micro, small and medium enterprises ecosystem.</p> <p>In this context, the session will focus on highlighting the opportunity to build large number of entrepreneurs who can be job creators and identifying pathways to capitalize on them. This will be done through examining how we can unlock innovations that enables access to finance, technology, and knowledge in building pathways for a robust local entrepreneurial ecosystem; looking at the changes required in the behaviour of ecosystem actors to create an enabling environment for entrepreneurship and identifying the leverage points to enable scale deep, scale up, and scale out. It will also explore the collaborative action required to achieve impact at scale.</p> <p><b>Moderator</b> Ranu Bhogal, External Co-ordinator, India Platform, la Caixa Foundation &amp; Director, CARM-DAKSH</p> <p><b>Presenter</b> Kanika Verma, Vice President, Development Alternatives Group</p> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Karma Zimpa Bhutia, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India</li> <li>• Kanika Verma, Vice President, Development Alternatives Group</li> <li>• Dipali Sharma, Director, Organisational Effectiveness and Partnership, ActionAid Association India</li> <li>• Anjani Kumar Singh, Senior Programme Officer, Bill &amp; Melinda Gates Foundation</li> <li>• Dr C. Shambu Prasad, Professor, IRMA</li> </ul>

DAY 2: January 18, 2024

4:30 – 5:30 pm	Valedictory Session
	<p><b>Introduction to the Grants for Agroecology Program (GAP) Fund</b>  Vivek Sinha, Senior Project Director, ACCESS Development Services</p> <p><b>Special Address</b>  Ulac Demirag, Country Director and Head of the Multi Country Office in India, IFAD</p> <p><b>Keynote Address</b>  Her Royal Highness the Infanta Doña Cristina of Spain, Director of the International Area at “la Caixa Foundation”</p> <p><b>Presentation Ceremony – Grants for Agroecology Program (GAP) Fund</b>  Her Royal Highness the Infanta Doña Cristina of Spain</p> <p><b>Presentation Ceremony – FPO Impact Awards 2023</b>  Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, Additional Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India</p> <p><b>Valedictory Address</b>  Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, Additional Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India</p> <p><b>Vote of Thanks</b>  Puja Gour, Vice President  ACCESS Development Services</p>

# Associated Event

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Livelihoods India  
*Summit 2023*

**Roundtable on the Operational Challenges for Smallholder Farmers'  
Adoption of Digital Agriculture Solutions  
(A closed door Round Table)  
January 18, 2024**

Agriculture in India is beset with challenges including poor productivity, infrastructure gaps, information asymmetry, climate related uncertainty and farmers' inability to access credit and a wider range of markets. Many technology startups are emerging in the agri sector with a focus on providing solutions to the problems faced. This mirrors a global trend and is also reflective of investments being made by both private sector and national and state governments in India.

World Bank's Global Agriculture and Food (AGF) practice in India has been increasingly stepping up its investments into Digital Agriculture Technologies (DAT), over the last several years with specific focus on suitability for small and marginal farmers. However, despite the promises and opportunities that digital agriculture holds for the sector, experience from the field shows that there are considerable challenges in grounding these solutions, more so when it comes to working with and for small and marginal farmers.

It is imperative that all related stakeholders must come together and work out strategies for technology to become more accessible to farmers. The World Bank is hosting this Roundtable that will convene sectoral stakeholders covering government, private sector and social sector experts and bring them to a common platform, to gain insights on operational challenges and learn from this experience to design appropriate solutions for future investments besides course corrections in ongoing projects, as feasible.

**Exploring the Establishment of a  
Network for Advancing Women  
Entrepreneurship in India  
(A closed door Round Table)  
January 18, 2024**



Women's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship are critical to fostering inclusive growth, economic development, and women's empowerment. However, the need to bridge the gaps in access to market, finance, skilling, and re-skilling opportunities for women and address gender-based constraints is crucial to contributing more significantly to advancing women's labour force participation, enabling them to set up sustainable enterprises, enhancing their capacities, and contributing to the national GDP.

With several efforts made to advance women's entrepreneurship in recent years, this is perhaps a good time to design convergent strategies, track

outcomes at an aggregate level, learn from best practices and evidence-based models, and accelerate efforts to create a thriving ecosystem for women entrepreneurs. Recognizing the pivotal role that civil society organizations, development experts, research and academia play in driving impactful change, it is proposed to set up a network or coalition dedicated to advancing women’s economic empowerment and entrepreneurship in India.

The Roundtable discussion will dwell upon exploring the possibility of setting up a National Network to communicate, collaborate and commit to furthering the efforts to create a conducive and responsive ecosystem for advancing Women’s Entrepreneurship. The roundtable discussion will also be an opportunity for stock taking of individual as well as aggregate institutional efforts being made across the country on promoting women’s entrepreneurship, and recommend strategies that support policy efforts of the government towards women led development.



**Breaking Silos and Collaborating on  
New Evidence for Women’s  
Entrepreneurship  
(A closed door Round Table)  
January 18, 2024**



Though there have been multiple efforts to understand numbers and support systems around women’s enterprises, there is a significant collaborative opportunity to generate together a comprehensive understanding of the numbers and the Indian view on segments of women entrepreneurship(WE), market access models, integration within industry sectors and value chains, current support systems around incubation and acceleration, as well as new and emerging areas propelling WE forward.

The Round Table will be organised to gain insights on what new evidence could cover, tracing progress, and what new and emergent paradigms should be taken stock of, to build a platform for Women’s Enterprises.



The logo features a stylized tree with a brown trunk and a canopy of green and brown leaves. Below the tree, the text "Livelihoods India" is written in a bold, sans-serif font, and "Summit 2023" is written below it in a smaller, italicized sans-serif font.

Livelihoods India  
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# Guest Speakers

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Livelihoods India  
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## Her Royal Highness the Infanta Doña Cristina of Spain

Director of the International Area  
“la Caixa” Foundation

HRH oversees global health, humanitarian aid and development programs in the most vulnerable countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America with over 690 projects in 65 countries implemented to date. Aligned with the SDGs, the goal is to create jobs for women and youth, reduce child mortality and assist the victims of humanitarian emergencies. She is deeply involved, since its creation, with the Work4Progress programme of la Caixa Foundation, which aims to promote innovative solutions for employment in India, Mozambique, Colombia and Peru, promoting the transition from isolated projects to social innovation platforms. HRH is also President of the Board of Trustees of the Barcelona Institute for Global Health and Inter-Agency Coordinator of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture.



## Ulaş Demirag

Country Director and Head of the Multi Country Office in India,  
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

Ulaş Demirag has over 20 years of experience working in the area of rural and agricultural development. His professional expertise includes community-driven development, rural finance, agricultural value chain, private sector development, and natural resources management. He joined IFAD in 2002 and managed the country programmes in Equatorial Guinea and Chad (2006-2007), Guinea (2008-2009) and Ghana (2010 – 2015), Ethiopia, Eritrea and South Sudan (2016-2020) before moving to his current role as Country Director of India and Head of the Multi-Country Office in India. He holds a PhD in Geography from the University of Heidelberg, Germany (2002). His academic background is coupled with extensive experience in leading interdisciplinary research in West Africa, with several publications in the fields of climate change, development economics, centred on agro-pastoral and small-holder farmers’ livelihoods.



## Shombi Sharp

UN Resident Coordinator in India

Shombi Sharp, a national of the United States of America, is the UN Resident Coordinator for India since November 2021. Mr. Sharp has devoted more than 25 years of his career to promoting inclusive and sustainable development internationally, bringing experience he has acquired at the United Nations and externally to this new position.

Within the Organization, he most recently served as United Nations Resident Coordinator in Armenia, after holding several leadership positions at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), where he was Resident Representative in Armenia, Deputy Resident Representative in Georgia, Deputy Country Director in Lebanon, Regional HIV/AIDS Practice Team Leader for UNDP Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States in the Russian Federation, Programme Manager for the Western Balkans in New York and Assistant Resident Representative in the Russian Federation. Prior to joining the United Nations, Mr. Sharp began his career in development with the international non-profit CARE International in Zimbabwe. He is a published author of works in health economics and was a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) “Policy Champion” as well as a nominee for the UNDP Administrator’s Award. Mr. Sharp holds a postgraduate diploma in HIV/AIDS management from the National Medical University of South Africa and Stellenbosch University, in South Africa; a master’s degree in economics from the University of Colorado, in the United States; and a bachelor’s degree in business administration from the University of Kansas, United States. He is fluent in English and Russian.



## Shaji K V

Chairman National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)

Shaji K V assumed charge as Chairman of NABARD on 7th December 2022. Prior to this, he was serving as Deputy Managing Director, NABARD since 21st May 2020 and was instrumental in implementing initiatives like software based supervisory inspection, Data-warehouse, process re-engineering and improvement in the risk management practices besides conceptualising the ambitious scheme of computerising Primary Agriculture Cooperative Societies (PACS). He also steered the crucial Department of Refinance which recorded an all time high business level in FY 2021-22 and the Finance Department of NABARD ensuring efficient use of resources raised from the market and their judicious deployment. Before joining NABARD, he worked in Canara Bank in various capacities for 26 years. As his last assignment, he was at the Corporate Office of Canara Bank, in charge of Strategy, Planning and Business Development during which he successfully handled the project of amalgamation of Syndicate Bank into Canara Bank. He has got extensive Board level experience for about 10 years in various organisations viz., National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), Canara HSBC Life Insurance Company Ltd. and Canara Bank Securities Ltd., besides being the Chairman of Kerala Gramin Bank, the then largest Regional Rural Bank of the country, and also of NABKISAN Finance Ltd., a subsidiary of NABARD.



## Shailesh Kumar Singh

Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India

Shri Shailesh Kumar Singh is an IAS officer of the 1991 batch from Jharkhand cadre. He holds a B.E. (Elect) Degree from IIT Kanpur and Master in Public Administration in International Development from Harvard University, USA. Shri Shailesh Kumar Singh is Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development. In his role as the Secretary to Government of India, Department of Rural Development, Shri Shailesh Kumar Singh works on comprehensive policy making for the Rural Development sector in India which involves formulation, coordination and implementation of programmes that address the development needs of the rural areas, focusing especially on mitigating and eradicating poverty and creating sustainable employment and livelihood opportunities. He has more than 30 years of experience as an Indian Administrative Service Officer having worked in the fields of Small & Medium Enterprises, Steel, Coal, Transport, Urban Development & Rural Development, Industry, Elections, Information Technology, Education, Human Resource Development, General Administration, etc



## Faiz Ahmed Kidwai

Additional Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India

Faiz Ahmed Kidwai is a 1996 batch IAS officer of the Madhya Pradesh cadre is the Additional Secretary in the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. He holds the Additional Charge of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at the National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA). Previously he has held the positions of Principal Secretary, Health; Secretary to the Chief Minister & Secretary & Commissioner, Tourism & MD, Tourism Development Corporation, with the Government of Madhya Pradesh.

# Speakers

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## Rajeev Ahal

Director, Natural Resource Management and Agroecology (NRMAe) Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resource Cluster GIZ India

Rajeev Ahal works in GIZ India as Director, Natural Resource Management and Agroecology in the Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resource Cluster, where he leads bilateral projects on Water Security and Climate Adaptation and Global Projects on 'Sustainable Soil Management'. He coordinates other projects in agroecology, rural development, social protection, sustainable farming systems, market led development approaches (including PPPs), Artificial Intelligence, value chain development, Farmer Producer Organisations etc with various government ministries and state governments. He graduated in engineering and holds a Diploma in Gestalt from International Programme for Organisational and Systems Development. He has over 33 years of experience of working with international agencies, governments, civil society and the private sector in India and African countries. He loves to write when he can and has published fiction and non-fiction works.



## Mahfuz Alam

Project Co-ordinator, Grameen Foundation for Social Impact

Mahfuz Alam is a Project Coordinator with the Grameen Foundation for Social Impact. He has over eight years of experience in agricultural technology, FPO management, agri-based enterprise promotion, and renewable energy projects across rural and urban India. He also holds a Certificate of Participation from Guinness World Records for his contribution to renewable energy. Mahfuz has significantly contributed to strategizing and implementing Ag-tech solutions within the FPO ecosystem. His passion is to build rural agency through entrepreneurship and income generation, especially for women, by investing in her power. Academically, he holds a master's degree in social work and has completed a short-duration course on sustainable rice production from IRRI Philippines. Additionally, he has completed the Management Development Program at IIM Lucknow.



## Reshma Anand

Regional Director for the Ford Foundation Office for India, Nepal and Sri Lanka

Reshma Anand is a business school graduate with more than 20 years of leadership experience in mission-driven nonprofits, social ventures, and philanthropic organisations. She currently heads Hindustan Unilever Foundation, a nonprofit focused on water conservation and governance. Previously, Reshma founded two social ventures including a specialist advisory firm on sustainable social responsibility and an accelerator for agri and artisanal micro-entrepreneurs. Reshma is an economics graduate from the University of Delhi, an MBA from IIM-Bangalore, an Aspen Fellow, and a TED India Fellow.



## Priya Anant

Director, Life Circle Health Services Private Limited

Priya Anant, is the Co-Founder and Chief Customer Officer, at Life Circle Health Services. Life Circle is a digitally enabled home healthcare enterprise focused on the senior population. They provide home healthcare services to seniors in five Indian cities: Hyderabad, Delhi NCR, Pune, Bangalore and Chandigarh. Priya brings to Life Circle her 24+ years in healthcare delivery, research, and policy; mostly focused on the bottom of the pyramid markets. Priya has a Master's in Rural Management from the Institute of Rural Management Anand, a Bachelor in Law. She is an international palliative care fellow, a start-up leadership fellow, and an alumna of the INSEAD Social Entrepreneurship Program. Within Life Circle Priya focuses on Customer and caregiver feedback, quality, training, and partnership building.



## Dr Yamini Atmavilas

President (Strategy & Research), Udaiti Foundation

Yamini Atmavilas is a gender sector & philanthropy leader with a track record of building impactful partnerships in the philanthropic, public and social sectors for advancing gender justice. Yamini is currently President, The Udaiti Foundation that works on women's economic empowerment across entrepreneurship and jobs. Udaiti is part of the portfolio of foundations incubated by Indian philanthropist, Ashish Dhawan. Previously, she led portfolios on Women's Economic Empowerment Programs, What Works Initiatives, and Health Systems Research & Evaluation with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation where she founded an ambitious portfolio of scalable programs for women's collectives, rural livelihoods, and social empowerment, and evidence & think tank initiatives. Yamini has also led the Gender Studies Area at the Administrative Staff College, Hyderabad providing policy research & advisory & capacity on gender policies, gender budgeting and gender data, and monitoring & evaluation initiatives across South Asia. She is widely published on gender, employment, health, education, and economic development. She has a PhD in Women's Studies from Emory University, and lives in Bangalore.



## Kusum Dattatray Balsaraf

General Manager, Mahila Arthik Vikas Mahamandal (MAVIM)

As the General Manager of the Mahila Arthik Vikas Mahamandal (MAVIM), the Women's Development Corporation for the state of Maharashtra, Kusum Balsaraf has dedicated 33 years to public service and women's empowerment. Throughout her tenure, she has shouldered the crucial responsibilities of Human Resource Development, played an instrumental role in establishing the corporation, and provided strategic direction and visionary leadership to multifaceted programs. Her role has encompassed effective liaison with the Government of India, Government of Maharashtra, and various international funding agencies such as IFAD and the World Bank. She has played a pivotal role in devising and implementing the restructuring plan for MAVIM, that aimed at enhancing its efficiency and effectiveness. She has been a driving force behind the development and evolution of the State Women Policy of the Government of Maharashtra. She spearheaded the launch of the Ramai Women Empowerment Program, benefiting 20,000 Self-Help Groups (SHGs). Under her leadership, MAVIM successfully facilitated loans totaling 4000 crore rupees to the community, boasting an impressive 99.5% repayment rate. It stands out as the only government corporation providing doorstep services to grassroots communities. Kusum holds a M.A. in Social Work from TISS Mumbai and B.A. in Psychology from Pune University





## Shweta S Banerjee

Country Lead - India, BRAC International

Shweta S Banerjee has worked on rural livelihoods, digital inclusion, and social protection at the World Bank between 2006 and 2016. During this time she was part of teams that launched India's National Rural Livelihoods Mission, Jeevika in Bihar, and cash transfer support for vulnerable groups in Jharkhand among other projects in South Asia. From 2012 – 2015 she represented CGAP in India on inclusive finance, and led several research and technical support initiatives on direct benefit transfers like one-stop shops for cash transfers in remote districts of Andhra Pradesh. She is currently finishing her PhD as a Vanier Doctoral Scholar at the University of Toronto. Her dissertation presents a historical view of money in South Asia from 1750 – 1947. She has studied Social Anthropology at University of Cambridge, UK, and University of Chicago, and History at Delhi University, India. She enjoys a game of tennis or a walk in the woods to unwind.



## Saachi Bhalla

Senior Program Officer, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Saachi works on the Policy & Strategic Partnerships team at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's India office. She leads the policy team's initiatives focused on Gender Equality and Nutrition and is supporting efforts on strengthening South-South cooperation for progress on the SDGs. Prior to joining the Foundation, Saachi was with Deloitte Consulting where she had been involved in strategic advisory assignments in the space of public health and nutrition. Saachi has also worked at the Centre for Science and Environment on issues related to climate change and equitable development. Saachi holds a Masters in Global Politics from the London School of Economics and Political Science. Her B.A. is in Political Science from Lady Shri Ram College, Delhi University.



## Karina Bhasin

Program and Curriculum Manager of Asia-Pacific Care Accelerator, SAFEEM/Seedstars Global

A Diana Award recipient and now Diana Award Judge, with other national and internal recognition for her work over the years, Karina, is a young, dynamic social entrepreneur and passionate advocate for equality and justice. Her focus lies in creating innovative solutions that promote accessibility, affordability, sustainability, and scalability within an inclusive and fair economy, specifically for women and marginalized communities. Started her entrepreneurial journey at the age of 19, in last 8 years, Karina has successfully built and empowered communities through entrepreneurial models and spearheaded Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policies in various workplaces. Karina has impacted and worked with the of over 20,000 women in 18 states of India, by opening doors to livelihood opportunities and empowering them to thrive in non-traditional sectors. Her pioneering work has introduced groundbreaking business models, initiatives, and campaigns that center around Gender-lens mainstreaming in areas such as Mobility, Skilling, Inclusive Public Spaces, Livelihoods, Asset Ownership, and Entrepreneurship. In addition, Karina has mentored more than 200 women rural entrepreneurs and enabled their entrepreneurship journeys.



## Seema Bhaskaran

Lead - Gender and Social

Seema Bhaskaran adopts a gender transformative approach to processes and programmes. She is engaged in capacity building, developing curriculum, and strengthening institutions to enhance agency of women in rural areas. She has worked on Gender Integration in NRLM, MORD across all states developing gender operational strategies, capacity building of staff and developing institutional mechanisms. Special projects for the comprehensive development of vulnerable communities have been conceptualized and implemented by her. In the role of State Project Director, Mahila Samakhya, MHRD, she led the programme and developed federations, managed Mahila Shikshan Kendras for marginalized children, developed curriculum for gender education of teachers and trained teachers across the state of Kerala. She engaged in developing manual, modules on gender planning and budgeting in the first endeavor in Kerala on engendering decentralization and training panchayats while working with Sakhi and Kerala Institute of Local level Administration. She has research experience in social justice in Centre for Social Studies, Surat. Holding a Doctorate in social sciences, she completed her Masters in Social Work from TISS, Mumbai.



## Ranu Bhogal

External Co-ordinator, India Platform, “la Caixa” Foundation & Director, CARM-DAKSH

Ranu has been working in the development sector for more than three decades. She has extensive experience on issues related to Gender, Natural resource management, Sustainable development with a special focus on rural development. She has several years of hands on field experience of working with Dalit and Tribal communities. She has been involved in Policy analysis and dialogues on issues of rural livelihoods, environment, and forest rights. She has worked with several multilateral and bilateral donors as well as the State and Central Governments. Ranu Holds a Bachelors in Economics from St. Stephen's college, a Masters in Economics from Delhi School of Economics and a Post graduate diploma in Rural management from IRMA (Institute of Rural Management Anand). She is a Hubert Humphrey Fulbright fellow. She was included as one of the 50 women leaders in a study on 'Women's leadership in Development Sector' commissioned by the Rockefeller Foundation. examples of public private partnership where outcomes are achieved through a collaborative approach with all stakeholders.



## Karma Zimpa Bhutia

Joint Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India

Shri Karma Zimpa Bhutia IFoS (Jharkhand 1997) is currently the Joint Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India in 2021 and heads Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETI) that promotes Rural Entrepreneurship by identifying, orienting, skilling, motivating and facilitating rural youth to take up self-employment. Prior to this, he was Deputy Inspector General of Forests (DIGF), Integrated Regional Office (IRO), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), stationed at Chandigarh. Bhutia envisions to stimulate the rural economy by creating a collaborative ecosystem for youth aspirations to actualise and bring an inclusive economic transformation in the days to come.



## Prof V. Srinivas Chary

CEO at WASH Innovation Hub & Professor, Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI)

Professor Srinivas Chary Vedala is the Director at the Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI), a premier institution for India's public policy and capacity development. He is the CEO of the WASH Innovation Hub at ASCI, a platform for promoting climate-resilient WASH innovations. He is a public health engineer and planner with over two decades of experience in water and environmental sanitation (WASH) services. He led over 250 studies related to urban development, climate resilience, water and sanitation. He serves on various Inter-Ministerial and Department level Committees on WASH in schools, urban environmental sanitation, SWM, and urban development. He is a member of the High-level Committee on urban transformation, the national committee on urban water management and sanitation, circular economy, and chairperson of the Amrut Start-up Water Challenge, constituted by the GOI. He supported the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, by independently appraising city development plans, reforms implementation and smart city proposals. He was a committee member of the GOI's Reinventing the Toilet programme and the national FSSM Alliance. He co-instituted the National Urban Water Awards programme with the Government of India to establish norms and accelerate performance improvement in municipal water and sanitation in India. He has received the Water for Life UN-Water Best Practices Award (4<sup>th</sup> edition) for his successful advocacy. He has also been conferred the Ashoka Fellowship for his innovations in the WASH sector.



## Dr Dinesh Singh Chauhan

Vice President – Projects and Partnerships, DeHaat

Dr Dinesh Singh Chauhan Currently serving as the Vice President – New Initiatives at DeHaat™, one of India's fastest-growing agtech startups, Dr. Chauhan is instrumental in spearheading innovative solutions for the farming community. DeHaat™ stands out as a pioneer in providing end-to-end services and solutions to farmers across India. With headquarters in Gurgaon, India, DeHaat™ offers farmers a comprehensive range of services, including supply chain management, agricultural inputs, expert advice on crops, pests, soil, and seeds, both online and through their on-ground DeHaat outlets.



## Rasika Chopra

Manager, MicroSave Consulting

Rasika Chopra is a Manager in MSC's Government and Social Impact domain in India. She has more than ten years of experience as a researcher and consultant, majorly working on projects in the urban sector in India, including central finance commission grant support, value capture finance public policy, municipal finance, and WASH. Within WASH, she has recently worked on a number of engagements with both government agencies and the private sector on facilitating uptake of WASH innovations among local governments, research and training material on facilitating access to finance for WASH entities, design and development of micro-loan products for WASH products for low-income households, and developing the urban memorandum for 15th Finance Commission for determining outlay of urban sector financing requirements, among others.



## Nayana Chowdhury

Senior Director - Head of Program | Co-lead, Strategic Partnership and Scale Up, Breakthrough India

Nayana is a highly accomplished development sector professional who currently holds the position of heading the Programs at Breakthrough. In addition to that, she also co-leads the Strategic Partnership & Scale Up efforts of the organisation. She has a Master's in Social Work from University of Delhi and with over two decades of experience, Nayana has worked with various grassroots organisations as well as national and international grant-making organisations such as Tata Trusts and IKEA Foundation. Nayana's expertise lies in program planning and strategising within a rights-based framework, aiming to achieve sustainable results. She firmly believes in rights-based approaches and is dedicated to including the most marginalised individuals and communities. Nayana is a passionate gender rights worker and her primary focus has been women's rights, and her work within the most marginalised communities is a testament to her commitment. At Breakthrough, Nayana leads programs in five states of India, namely the National Capital, Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand. Additionally, she plays a significant role in co-leading Gender Transformative Education programs in partnership with the Punjab and Odisha Governments. With her extensive experience and dedication, Nayana is making a valuable contribution to Breakthrough and the development sector as a whole.



## Samik Sundar Das

Senior Rural Development Specialist, The World Bank

Samik Sundar Das is a Senior Rural Development Specialist with The World Bank. He has more than two decades of experience working in CDD, rural livelihoods and enterprise promotion projects in Asia and Africa. He has contributed extensively towards the preparation and implementation of large-scale rural development programs. His current passion is to rejuvenate the intrinsic entrepreneurial zeal of women entrepreneurs and catalyze business ecosystem development for women-led enterprises. Academically, he has obtained two Masters related to Development Studies from India and USA.



## Shubhendu Dash

Vice President & Lead-Farm Sector, ACCESS Development Services

Shubhendu comes with 22 years of experience out of which, he has spent almost 16 years in agri value chain development, organic agriculture development, FPO ecosystem development and promoting value addition in agri/ horti and allied commodities. He has to his credit multiple successful FPO models. He has worked with almost 150 FPOs and has experience of implementing large scale agriculture value chain development projects across multiple states. Shubhendu has led the teams for prestigious FPO/agri value chain development projects under SFAC; NABARD; NAFED RKVY; CSS 10000 FPO Program; World Bank supported Rajasthan Agribusiness Competitiveness Project; BMGF and Department of Agriculture (Odisha) supported MANDI project; BMGF, Department of Agriculture & Mission Shakti Odisha supported AMAZE Project. Another area of his core strength is facilitating access to markets for small-holder farmers. Shubhendu also has good international exposure. He has promoted organic agriculture techniques in Malaysia with support from Malaysia Biotechnology Corporation and in Saudi Arabia in coordination with GTZ and Saudi Agriculture Department. He is B.Sc in life sciences and MBA in Marketing and has a PG Diploma in Data Science from IIIT, Bangalore. He holds a certification from International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) Philippines on “Pro-poor value chain and actor empowerment”.



## Sabina Dewan

Founder and Executive Director, JustJobs Network

Sabina Dewan is Founder and Executive Director of the JustJobs Network, which she co-founded with John Podesta in 2013. She is also a Senior Visiting Fellow at the Center for Policy Research in India, and a Non-Resident Fellow at the Carsey School of Public Policy at the University of New Hampshire. Before this, Ms.

Dewan served as a Senior Fellow and Director for International Economic Policy at the Center for American Progress in Washington DC. Ms. Dewan's vast experience includes working with institutions including the World Bank, the International Labour Organization, and the European Commission, as well as grassroots organizations in Sierra Leone, India and Western Samoa. Ms. Dewan serves on several global and local committees. She is one of six advisors to the Swedish Prime Minister's Global Deal initiative. She serves as a member of the Global Challenges Foundation's Climate Governance Commission. She is a member of the Confederation of Indian Industry's National Committee on Skills and Livelihoods; Niti Aayog's advisory committee for 'Vision 2035', and at the grassroots level, she is part of the Anganwadi Monitoring Committee for the Kalkaji jurisdiction. Ms. Dewan has appeared in several international media outlets, including The Wall Street Journal, Financial Times, US News and World Report, CNN, BBC, Al-Jazeera, TimesNow and NDTV.



## Munira Dhabiya

Lead - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Aditya Birla Capital

Munira Dabhiya is a passionate Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) professional. Over the last 13 years, she has won various hats in managing Global HR and Global DEI and is currently leading DEI at Aditya Birla Capital. She speaks on range of topics related to DEI focusing on women empowerment and growth in the corporate sector. She is a certified mentor, a behavioural trainer and PCMM level 5 assessor. Academically, she's got MBA from UK and DEI Management from Harvard University.



## Marcella D'Souza

Director, Watershed Organisation Trust (WOTR), Centre for Resilience Studies (W-CReS)

Marcella D'Souza is the Director of the WOTR Centre for Resilience Studies (W-CReS) and former Executive Director of Watershed Organisation Trust (WOTR), India.

As Executive Director, Marcella initiated the “Climate Change Adaptation in Semi-arid Regions” which today follows the Ecosystem-based-Adaptation approach to Sustainable Development. This includes community driven sustainable land and ecosystem management, water stewardship, climate resilient agriculture with locale specific crop weather advisories and green livelihoods. To upscale, methodologies to assess vulnerability, enhance resilience and build adaptive capacities for Ecosystem-based-Adaptation are developed. The WOTR Centre for Resilience Studies (W-CReS) provides inter-disciplinary evidence that links science to practice for programmatic design and policy advocacy. ([www.wotr.org](http://www.wotr.org))



## Dr Madhura Dutta

Culture and Development Specialist

Madhura Dutta, PhD is a development sector professional, researcher, and writer with more than two decades of national and international experience in culture-based sustainable development programs.





## Yogesh K. Dwivedi

CEO, Madhya Bharat Consortium of Farmers Producer Company Limited

Yogesh K. Dwivedi is a Professor of Digital Marketing and Innovation, Founding Director of the Emerging Markets Research Centre (EMaRC) and Co-Director of Research at the School of Management, Swansea University, Wales, UK. Professor Dwivedi is also currently leading the International Journal of Information Management as its Editor-in-Chief. Professor Dwivedi completed his Ph.D. and M.Sc. in Information Systems at Brunel University London (UK), an M.Sc. in Plant Genetic Resources at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (New Delhi, India) and his B.Sc. (with Botany, Zoology and Chemistry) at the University of Allahabad (Prayagraj, India). Professor Dwivedi has successfully supervised more than 20 doctoral students to completion and has examined more than 70 doctoral theses at various institutions from Australia, India, Malaysia, Mauritius, Pakistan, the Netherlands and the UK. In recognition of his efforts to provide supportive, stimulating and inspirational supervision, Professor Dwivedi was selected as one of the five finalists for the “2017 Outstanding Research Supervisor of the Year” Award as part of the prestigious annual Times Higher Education Awards. This nomination was a tremendous achievement and deservedly apt, given Professor Dwivedi’s commitment to support scholars at all stages of their careers.



## Mercy Epao

Joint Secretary, Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, Government of India

Prior to her current posting, Mercy served Government of India in various capacities across the Ministries/ Departments for the past 25 years. Some of her important postings inter alia are Ministries of Finance, Housing & Urban Affairs and Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) in various capacities. During her service, she handled different subjects viz. Agriculture and Allied Sector in DoNER, externally aided projects for the NER, Pay related matters, Cadre review of All India Service (AIS), HR and Administration etc the MSME sector through capacity building, technological up gradation amongst others. National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC), National Institute of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (NiMSME), Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDI) are the organizations under her charge. Besides, the media cell under her gives wide coverage to the benefits/schemes of the Ministry. Her passion is to see women and weaker / marginalized section entrepreneurs to attain knowledge for gainful entrepreneurship leading to social upliftment and economic empowerment. She holds additional charge of CMD, Director (Planning & Marketing) and Director (Finance) of NSIC. In addition, she also looks after coordination of various subjects such as Vision India @2047, Toy Manufacturers Hub, Swachhta Campaign and Director in few Autonomous Bodies



## Manoj Gulati

Regional Director, South Asia, Water.org

Manoj Gulati has 28 years of experience in IT, supply chain management and development sector in both India and USA. He has previously served with Sight Life as Senior Director, SE Asia and Country Director, India. Prior to this Manoj was associated with international advisory firm Gartner Inc.

Manoj is Member of Steering Committee, India Sanitation Coalition- FICCI, New Delhi, and Chair for Credit Financing Taskforce. He pursued his MBA from The Fuqua School of Management, Duke University.



## Nitin Gupta

Vice President, Rice and Grains South Asia, Olam Agro

Nitin Gupta is currently a Vice President Rice and Grains South Asia at Olam Agro India Ltd, bringing experience from previous roles at Macro Dairy Ventures Ltd, Reliance Retail, Dabur India Limited and ITC Limited. Nitin Gupta holds a 1998 - 2000 PGDBM in Logistics, Materials, and Supply Chain Management . With a

robust skill set that includes team management, retail, MIS, inventory management, distributed team management and more,he contributes valuable insights to the industry.



## Siraj Hussain

Advisor, Food Processing &  
Trustee, World Food Programme (WFP) Trust for India

Siraj Hussain is currently a Senior Visiting Fellow at Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER). He joined the Indian Administrative Service in 1979 and has served the Government of Uttar Pradesh in various capacities including District Magistrate, Managing Director, State Industrial Development Corporation, Registrar of Cooperative Societies, and Secretary to Chief Minister. In the Government of India, he has worked as Joint Secretary, Department of Food and Public Distribution and Chairman and Managing Director of Food Corporation of India (FCI). He was posted as Union Secretary in the Ministries of Food Processing Industries and Agriculture. Several schemes of the first Modi government were formulated under his supervision as Secretary, Agriculture. He has authored several research papers on agriculture and rural economy and his columns have been published in several newspapers and online portals.



## Dr Ajit Kanitkar

Policy Researcher and Visiting Faculty, IIM Udaipur

Dr. Kanitkar is a visiting faculty at Indian Institute of Management (IM) at Udaipur, India. With a career spanning decades of work in the development sector, he was a senior advisor and researcher at VikasAnvesh Foundation, Pune. He has also served as the programme officer at Ford Foundation and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, both in New Delhi, and a faculty member at IRMA. He is associated with many civil society organisations across the country. His co-edited book in 2019, *Farming Futures: Emerging Social Enterprises in India (2019)*, is a unique collection of 15 contemporary case studies documenting in detail social enterprises in agriculture. In 2021, he co-edited *Sowing Impact: Agri Entrepreneurs in India Stories of Innovation, Hope & Resilience*.



## Suhela Khan

Country Program Manager, Women's Economic Empowerment, UN Women, India

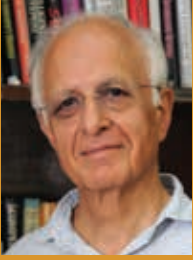
Suhela is the Country Programme Manager for Second Chance Education and Vocational Learning Programme at UN Women in India. She has an extensive experience in management of large-scale transformational programmes on women's economic empowerment. She works to integrate feminist principles and strategies in programmes enabling women to recognize and challenge gender-based discrimination as a pre-requisite to advance their economic rights. Her expertise lies in the areas of programme development, implementation, monitoring, measuring impact and partnership building. She has worked extensively with Central and State Governments, private sector as well as civil society organizations. She is a Ford Fellow and holds a Master's degree in Public Policy from the University of Michigan.



## Amod Khanna

Consultant

Amod Khanna, Business Economist by training, has worked in the civil society development space for more than three decades. Leading projects on issues of Governance, Rights of the Child, Livelihoods, Climate Change he has and made difference in the lives of vulnerable communities in difficult geo-cultural terrains across multiple states. He strengthens civil society by developing their strategic pathways on these issues with a focus on inter-sectionalities of gender, caste, access, and expressed needs of the communities. Amod believes in learning from communities and incorporating it in knowledge generation through qualitative research, participatory evaluations, process documentation and capacity building.



## Arun Maira

Former Member, Planning Commission

Arun Maira has an unusual combination of experience as a hands-on leader, a consultant to leaders, and a thought-leader on subjects of leadership and institution transformation, in the private, public, and social sectors. He has written several books on institutional transformation. They include: A Billion

Fireflies: Critical Conversations to Shape a New Post-pandemic World; Transforming Systems: Why the World needs a New Ethical Toolkit and Listening for Well-Being: Conversations with People Not Like Us. Arun was a Member of India's Planning Commission from 2009-14, prior to which he was Chairman of the Boston Consulting Group India, and previously had worked with the Tata Group in India and abroad for 25 years.



## Saloni Malhotra

Co-Founder, Reboot-Wellness

Saloni, former Vice President at Paytm, India's leading mobile payments company, is a dynamic professional drawn to uncharted territories. She led AGNii at Invest India, accelerating innovation. An entrepreneur, she invested in Reboot-Wellness and DesiCrew Solutions, a socially motivated BPO. Saloni,

an engineer from Pune University, pursued management at Judge School of Business, Cambridge, and a social innovation program at Lund University, Sweden. A part of esteemed global communities, she holds fellowships with Ananta Aspen Centre, Aspen Global Leadership Network, and Aspire Circle. On Goonj's board and IIT Mandi's Catalyst, Saloni intertwines business acumen with social impact, embodying her commitment to transformative leadership. In 150 words, Saloni emerges as a multifaceted professional, seamlessly blending corporate leadership, entrepreneurship, education, and social responsibility.



## Gauri Malik

Founder, Sirohi

Gauri (Gopal) Malik is a Finance & Economics graduate from UK's Warwick Business School. She began her career as an investment banker at Deutsche Bank, after which she founded the Skilled Samaritan Foundation (SSF) in early 2012. Sirohi is the trademarked brand of SSF; a sustainable luxury brand that fuses modern design with traditional craft to handcraft home and lifestyle products. The brand provides employment to village housewives and uses sustainable materials to develop their products. Her vision is to build a micro-entrepreneurship platform to provide tech-based design support and market access to women skilled in crafts and build Sirohi as a global home and lifestyle brand. The end objective of this is gainful employment and financial independence for women who have limited or no income opportunities so they too can lead a life of dignity and respect. She is a multi-award winner for her work at the grass roots level and has been awarded the UN Women Generation Equality Award, British Council's UK Alumni Award, Face of Meta's Fuel of India campaign 2021, Ficci-Flo Uttar Pradesh; where her enterprise has been funded under the SFURTI scheme of the Ministry of Handicrafts and Textiles and has worked with large retail partners including WeWork, Facebook, Uniqlo to create income opportunities for thousands of women from Western Uttar Pradesh.



## Dr L. H. Manjunath

Executive Director, Shri Kshethra Dharmasthala Rural Development Project (SKDRDP)

Dr L. H. Manjunath, a veterinary in profession is an experienced development activist having exposed himself to banking, animal husbandry activities, women empowerment, enterprise creation and micro finance. He is associated with Shri Kshethra Dharmasthala Rural Development Project (R.) over the last two decades as its Chief. He has developed several models, having promoted Shri Dharmasthala Siri Gramodyoga, SHG bank linkage, application of BC/BF circular for SHG credit linkage. Currently he manages one of the biggest micro finance operations under the SHG BC/BF bank linkage model. SKDRDP currently caters to the credit need of 5.5 million families. Dr. Manjunath is involved in transforming the livelihood activities of SHG members into micro enterprises by providing the necessary capacity building support and adequate finance. Besides, Dr. Manjunath is engaged in mentoring likeminded institutions for promoting micro enterprises.



## Hemendra Mathur

Venture Partner with Bharat Innovation Fund &  
Co-founder of ThinkAg

Hemendra has over 27 years of experience in venture capital, private equity, management consulting and investment banking. Hemendra in his career has invested in several early stage agritech and mid-sized companies in the agricultural supply chain.

He is an investor, board member and adviser in many food and agritech start-ups. He is currently working as Venture Partner with Bharat Innovation Fund –investing in early stage deep-tech start-ups across sectors. Hemendra is the co-founder of ThinkAg – a platform for accelerating the adoption of innovations in agriculture space. He is the Chairman of FICCI Task Force on Agri Start-ups. He is also an advisor to a few Foundations, Multilaterals, Corporates and Funds with interest in investing the tech startups in India. He has authored many papers on the subject and speaks regularly at conferences pertaining to food and agribusiness sector as well as start-up ecosystem. He is a management graduate from IIM (Ahmedabad) and Agricultural Engineer from Rajasthan Agricultural University.



## Sona Mitra

Principal Economist  
IWWAGE, LEAD Krea University

Sona Mitra has been working in the area of women and development for the last one and a half decades. She has looked extensively into the causalities of low work participation rates of women in India within a political economy framework and has studied in great detail the gender gaps in the existing labour-force surveys. She has also been an independent consultant with UN agencies working on women's empowerment and has been a technical adviser to studies conducted by the Action-Aid, UN Women (India), ICRW amongst others.



## Debashree Mukherjee, IAS

Secretary, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti

Debashree Mukherjee, was previously serving as the Special Secretary, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation. Prior to that Ms. Mukherjee has served as the Joint Secretary at the Prime Minister's Office. She has also served as the Chief Managing Director (CMD) of Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC), and the CEO of Delhi Jal Board and Secretary of Social Welfare and Children and Women's Development, Government of Delhi. She is an IAS officer of the Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram and Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre from the 1991-batch. Debashree Mukherjee holds an MA in Linguistics and English from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and an MSc in Water and Environmental Management from Loughborough University.



## Dr Tara Nair

Director- Research, Work Fair and Free

Dr Tara Nair is the director of research at the Work Fair and Free Foundation headquartered at Bangalore. She completed her MPhil (Applied Eco-nomics) and PhD (Economics) from the Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, affiliated to the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.

She was previously part of the faculty at the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India, MICA (formerly Mudra Institute of Communications, Ahmedabad), and IRMA and has also headed research at Friends of Women's World Banking, India. Her current research mainly concerns policy and institutional aspects of micro and inclusive finance, social economy of small-scale fisheries, and feminist approaches to development.





## Jayraj Nath

Director and Head of Technology, Grameen Foundation For Social Impact

Jayraj Nath is the Director and Head of Technology with Grameen India. He is a dynamic and competent professional with 23+ years of experience, capable of handling a wide range of software products/projects and consistently producing top-quality work as per global software standards. His current interest is into creating solutions of resilience for low-income communities keeping human centric design approach at the center. Passionate about using technology and data to innovate, make smarter decisions, grow businesses and improve lives. Currently engaged in helping agribusiness adopt the right tech. Advocating innovative technologies in Agriculture viz. Blockchain, AI, ML, AR/VR, etc. considering digitization models with better transparency and traceability-like features.



## Yugal Joshi

Adviser, Water & Land Resources, Communication and LiFE, NITI Aayog

A native of Uttarakhand, Yugal Joshi graduated from Kumaon University, Harcourt Butler Technology University, Kanpur, IIT Delhi, Delhi University and NUS, Singapore. Shri Yugal Joshi has been IG/ Gati Shakti in Railways, Director Swachh Bharat Mission, and Director Jal Jeevan Mission. Currently he is Adviser, Water & Land resources, Communication and LiFE in NITI Aayog. For his outstanding contribution in Railways, Shri Joshi was awarded with National Award. He is also a recipient of Prime Minister's Award for outstanding contribution in public administration and also Indian Police Medal for his services in Jal Jeevan Mission.

In addition to many scholastic papers in International Journals, Yugal Joshi has written 7 books. These are: Singapore Water Story ( translated in 5 languages), Creating Shared Values, Ram: the Soul of Time, Women Warriors in Indian History, Boons and Curses: the legend of mythological mother, Phnom Penh Water Story (Hindi translation) and recently his first novel in Hindi, Agnikaal has been published by Penguin.



## Dibyajyoti Pattanaik

Director, Annapurna Finance Private Limited

Dibyajyoti Pattanaik brings over 18 years of experience in microfinance, micro-enterprise development, and development sector consulting. After completing his Post Graduation Diploma from the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), Ahmedabad, he pursued a management program in microfinance from the Boulder Institute of Microfinance, Turin, Italy. Additionally, Mr. Pattanaik attended a leadership program in inclusive finance at Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts. With a versatile educational background, his lifelong aspiration has been to serve society, contribute to the welfare of the needy, and address issues related to financial literacy and inclusion. Mr. Pattanaik garnered experience in both public and development sectors. Currently, he serves as the Director of Annapurna Finance and holds the position of President at OSAFII (Odisha Association of Financial Inclusion). Furthermore, he is a board member of MFIN (Microfinance Institutions Network) and has played a significant role in establishing Annapurna as one of the leading institutions in India. Under his guidance, the organization has earned numerous accolades and recognition nationwide. His steadfast beliefs and dedication have led Annapurna to receive awards such as the Best Data Quality MFI Consumer Award, 1st Ela Ben Memorial Award for the Best Gender-Friendly MFI, Best Organisations for Women, Best Brands Award, among others. In acknowledgment of his leadership, Mr. Pattanaik was honored as a Top 100 People's Manager by the Great Manager Institute and Forbes India. Additionally, he was recognized as India's Top Mind at the Indian Brand and Leadership Conclave 2022, organized by The Brand Story.



## Dr Sanjiv J Phansalkar

Director, VikasAnvesh Foundation

After completing his PhD from IIM Ahmedabad, Sanjiv Phansalkar taught at IRMA till 1994. He led the IWMI Tata Water Policy Program during 2005-07 and then program team at the Tata Trusts from 2007 till 2017. Currently, he heads a Development Research Centre named VikasAnvesh Foundation. He has published 10 books and over 30 research papers and articles.



## Dr Megha Phansalkar

Founder, Tisser

Dr Megha Phansalkar is an Urban Regional Planner with an experience of 20 years in the development sector. She is a social entrepreneur and founder @ Tisser supporting rural artisans across 18 states, thus helping thousands of artisan families earn livelihood through enterprise model.

Tisser support end to end value chain from creating producer groups, making unique products for urban consumers. She was elected to the Steering Committee, Geneva for three years to represent South Asia in WSSCC (Water Supply Sanitation Collaborative Council, Geneva), a body with UNOPS. Dr Phansalkar is a gold medalist graduate and she is trained as a Doctorate in System Design for Resource Planning and Management under a National fellowship. She has a Masters in Planning from the Center for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT), Ahmedabad Masters in Geography and also a Master's in Business Administration.



## Dr C. Shambu Prasad

Professor, Institute of Rural Management Anand (IRMA)

Dr. Prasad is a Professor in the Strategic Management and Social Sciences area at the Institute of Rural Management Anand (IRMA). He founded ISEED (Incubator for Social Enterprises and Entrepreneurs for Development) at IRMA that works on rural, social and collective enterprises. His expertise is in science and innovation policy (social innovation in particular) and his education has been multidisciplinary with a basic training in mechanical engineering, a Masters in Industrial Management with specialisation in science policy (both at IIT Madras) and a doctorate in science, technology and society studies from IIT Delhi. He has been a member of a Sub Group on Upscaling Innovative Technologies in agriculture for the 12th Five Year Plan and was a member of the expert group of Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) to recommend guidelines for Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs). He has co-authored and edited a two-volume series on Farming Futures on agri-based social enterprises and a forthcoming volume of 15 cases on Farmer Producer Organisations.



## Dr Nidhi Pundhir

Vice President, Global CSR HCL Foundation

Dr. Nidhi Pundhir- is an international humanitarian services and socio-economic-environmental development specialist. She leads the global CSR agenda for HCLTech and heads HCLFoundation, which is the CSR arm of HCLTech, in India. Dr. Pundhir has strategized as well as executed impactful programmatic frameworks that are aligned to the global Sustainable Development Goals, for the most disadvantaged and isolated communities, including environmental targets. In her current role, Nidhi has envisioned HCLTech's flagship Global CSR Policy which pioneers around 10 commandments of CSR. She has built the HCLFoundation's vision, mission, and strategy to the next level, ensuring high quality programme delivery, that brings about meaningful difference on ground. With more than 25 years of experience in actualizing Human Rights and Environmental action at national and international levels, some of the key portfolios she has held were with SOS Children's Villages as Director Programme Development, Asia, and at Plan International's International Headquarters as Global Advisor on Child Protection in Development. Dr. Pundhir holds a doctorate in Public Health Management, with her thesis on "Right to Health During First 1000 Days of Life for Children Living in Slums", from IIHMR University, Jaipur and M.Phil. in Health Systems Management from BITS, Pilani.



## Nitin Puri

Founder, KisaanSay

Nitin Puri is Founder of KisaanSay, a marketing company that offers consumers a range of food products coming directly from farmer enterprises across India. Nitin has a 25 year background in the food & agribusiness sector. He has worked with ITC, Reliance Retail, Aditya Birla Group, MCX, Innoterra, Farmart & Yes Bank, handling various senior national level assignments in commodities, food retail, FMCG, derivatives markets, supply chain, marketplaces and agri banking. At KisaanSay, he is currently involved in his personal & professional passion to enable consumers to get access to a range of select food products and to enable farmers in rural India to get better market access to distribution channels for packaged food products, through a marketing company that distributes products through mainstream physical & digital retail formats. Nitin completed his B.Tech. in Mechanical Engineering from NIT Kurukshetra, followed by MBA in Rural Management from Institute of Rural Management, Anand and an Advance Management Programme in Agribusiness Management from Cornell University, New York.



## J. Venkat Raman

Ex-MD & CEO of India Post Payments Bank

Venkat Raman is a distinguished Banking Professional with an illustrious 25-year career, showcasing expertise in Rural & Inclusive Banking and Digital Banking. Expertise in leading and managing projects, ensuring the seamless integration of Digital Financial Products & Services. His passion lies in pioneering

Technology-led Banking solutions that redefine the financial landscape. Proven track record of successfully leading and managing projects focused on Digital Financial Products & Services translating into credible Business growth. As the former MD & CEO of India Post Payment Bank, orchestrated a transformative journey, strategically leveraging the extensive legacy Postal Network. Through innovative initiatives, he not only steered the bank towards profitability but also positioned it as a unique player in the competitive financial sector operating in underserved Rural Markets. Instrumental in the profitable transformation of India Post Payment Bank, utilizing the vast reach of the traditional Postal Network. He is a visionary leader with a proven ability to navigate the dynamic landscape of the banking industry.



## Dr G. V. Ramanjaneyulu

Executive Director, Centre for Sustainable Agriculture (CSA)

Dr Ramanjaneyulu is the Executive Director at the Centre for Sustainable Agriculture (CSA). He is the Executive Director at Krishna Sudha Academy for Agroecology. He is also the Expert Director, Sahaja Aharam Producer Company. Dr Ramoo is working with more than 50,000 farmers in AP, Telangana,

Maharashtra in establishing ecologically and economically sustainable agriculture models. He has promoted 60 Farmer Producer Organisations in AP and Telangana. CSA is acting as Resource Support Agency for further 150 FPOs in AP and Telangana. The organic/natural farmers are linked to market directly under the brand name 'Sahaja Aharam'. He is supporting the programs of state and central governments in Andhra Pradesh in promoting natural farming, Viz. Society for Elimination of Poverty, Telangana, with State Livelihoods Missions in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh in building the capacities of the staff and organisation involved in the program. CSA is largest PGS certifying agency in the country with 60,000 farmers and 2.6 lakh acres and 115 villages converted to fully organic in AP and Chhattisgarh. Krishna Sudha Academy for Agroecology regularly organises Trainings and hand holding support and mentoring to farmers and startups. He holds a Ph.D. in Agriculture from Indian Agricultural Research Institute BSc (Ag) and MSc (Ag) from Andhra Pradesh Agricultural University.



## Ajit Ranjan

Program Coordinator India, BRAC

Ajit Ranjan has worked for over 20 years on large-scale government programs to support millions of rural people across the state of Bihar, India. He brings a rich experience in designing and anchoring the women's empowerment projects of the World Bank, USAID, and Government agencies. Ajit has led the state-wide implementation of the evidence-informed scale-up of the graduation approach in Bihar, known as Satat Jeevikoparjan Yojana. He has helped the successful implementation and policy formulation of the graduation approach aimed at improving the life of the ultra-poor residing in both Rural and Urban areas of Bihar, India. He is presently the Program Coordinator, India for BRAC International, founded in Bangladesh in 1972 that partners with over 100 million people living with inequality and poverty to create opportunities to realize human potential. BRAC is an award-winning international non-governmental development organization, with the vision of a world free from all forms of exploitation and discrimination, where everyone has the opportunity to realize their potential.



## Rajeev Ranjan

Chief Operating Officer & Chief People Officer, Dharma Life

With over 22 years of extensive experience, Rajeev brings a wealth of knowledge to the Summit. Eleven of those years have been dedicated to India's rural development sector, focusing on areas such as women's livelihoods, climate change, clean energy, health, nutrition, and hygiene, as well as digital learning access for women and children. He is passionate about fostering sustainable livelihoods for rural women, emphasizing skilling and capacity building. His previous roles span business and HR consulting, eLearning, and the media sector. Currently, he holds the position of Chief Operating Officer at Dharma Life, where he continues to contribute to impactful initiatives.



## Bonani Roychoudhury

Managing Director, NABSAMRUDDHI Finance Ltd.

Roychoudhury commenced her career with NABARD in the year 1992 and her three-decade-long career has been marked by diverse and extensive pan India experience within the organization. Her professional proficiency encompasses the realm of institutional finance, with a pronounced emphasis on areas such as Green and wellness finance, WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) financing, infrastructure project financing, microfinance, and the critical sphere of financial inclusion. Moreover, she has been actively involved in the development and enhancement of rural financial institutions, thus contributing significantly to the financial landscape of rural India. In her preceding capacity, Ms. Roychoudhury served as the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Nabsamruddhi Finance Limited for an accomplished three-year term, where she made significant contributions to the organization's operations and strategic direction while championing the WASH financing cause of the organisation. She has assumed the position of Managing Director of Nabsamruddhi in September 2023. Ms. Bonani Roychoudhury holds a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree in Finance from ICFAI University, complemented by a Master of Arts (MA) in Economics from the University of Guwahati. She is also a Certified Associate of the Indian Institute of Banking and Finance (IIBF).



## Shagun Sabharwal

Director Programs, Asia at Co-impact

Shagun Sabharwal is Asia Programs Director at Co-impact where she leads Co-impact's program strategy and grant making in Asia. Shagun is a social policy and development leader with demonstrated experience building partnerships for achieving the use of evidence in policy and supporting programs for gender equality. Shagun is deeply passionate about creating a world full of opportunities that enable leadership of women and girls. Shagun brings wide-ranging and deep experience of programmatic work across Asia, and has led large teams and complex partnerships, involving collaborations between nonprofits, government departments and knowledge and learning partners. Over the years she has led a portfolio of projects to support governments to scale evidence-based solutions and strengthen implementations systems using monitoring and evaluation, built institutions and teams, and developed and executed strategies for advancing women's leadership in health. Shagun was previously the South Asia and Monitoring, evaluation and learning Director at WomenLift Health. She has a doctorate in Public Health from Harvard University.



## Manas Kumar Satpathy

Integrator, PRADAN

Manas Kumar Satpathy, with over three decades of service in PRADAN, brings unique expertise to the discourse on inclusive livelihoods in India. Serving as PRADAN's CEO from 2012 to 2017, he has been instrumental in shaping its sustainable development strategies. He led its research and advocacy efforts during 2017-22 and currently at the helm of the Centre of Excellence on Climate Action, he leads efforts to bolster practitioners' capabilities in addressing climate change's impact on rural communities. In addition to his professional roles, he actively contributes as a board member for various non-profit organizations. His academic qualifications include an M Tech in Water Resources Development and Management from IIT, Kharagpur, and a B Tech in Civil Engineering from NIT, Rourkela. Manas is a seasoned professional in integrated natural resource management, offering a nuanced perspective on fostering resilience and prosperity among the marginalized. His commitment to empowering the rural poor makes his insights invaluable for advancing inclusive livelihoods.



## Sadaf Sayeed

CEO, Muthoot Microfin Limited

Sadaf Sayeed is the founding CEO of Muthoot Microfin Ltd. since the start of the business in 2010. Mr Sayeed has led Muthoot Microfin Ltd to become the one of the largest NBFC-MFIs in the country, managing Rs 10,800+ crore AUM, catering to 3.1 million rural households having 13,000+ employees and 1340 branches across 18 states. (Figures as of Sept 2023) Sadaf has 2 decades of experience in Banking and Financial service industry. He has worked with various financial services organisations in leadership role such as Spandana Sphoorty Financial Limited, Indiabulls Financial Services, Satin Credit Care Ltd, HDFC Bank and GE Money. Sadaf has hands on experience in policy making, credit administration, operations and Risk management with expertise in retail lending business and core competence in unsecured small and large loans. Mr Sadaf Sayeed is a B.com (H) Graduate from Delhi University and holds an MBA degree in Finance and Marketing from Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University. Sadaf is one of the founding members of Kerala Association of Microfinance Institutions (KAMFI). Sadaf has been a part of various Industry level committees such as committee for Credit Bureau, Consultative group formed by SIDBI for MSME Udhmi Mitra registration integration with Microfinance Borrowers. He is presently one of the Governing Board Members of Sa-Dhan (Microfinance SRO).





## Dr Madhu Sharan

President, Hand in Hand India

Dr Madhu Sharan is a Livelihoods and Gender Specialist with over three decades of work experience in academia and development sector in facilitating women's inclusion and participation in the rural economy. As President of a leading, international NGO, Hand in Hand India, she oversees projects related to livelihoods promotion, financial inclusion, women empowerment and community development. Additionally, she has worked as a Consultant with multilateral organizations including ADB, GIZ, and DFID for monitoring and evaluating projects related to gender and development. Dr Sharan is a Sociologist, having completed her graduation from Delhi University and her post-graduation, M Phil and PhD from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.



## Dipali Sharma

Director, Organisational Effectiveness and Partnership  
ActionAid Association India

Dipali Sharma is a development worker with a career spanning over 25 years in the social sector. In her role as the Director of Organisational Effectiveness, she has played a pivotal role in shaping and advancing various critical organizational processes.

She has been instrumental in the development and review of organizational strategies, ensuring that ActionAid Association India remains at the forefront of effective and impactful initiatives. Her expertise extends to areas such as organizational development (OD), culture reviews, and gender and diversity audits, highlighting her comprehensive approach to fostering a holistic and inclusive work environment. Leading and guiding programmes and partnership processes, Dipali has been a driving force behind the success of initiatives at ActionAid Association India. Her responsibilities encompass program reviews, appraisals, monitoring, impact assessments, and evaluations, showcasing her proficiency in ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of projects. Through her strategic vision and hands-on approach, Dipali has contributed significantly to the positive impact and growth of ActionAid Association India in the social sector.



## Anjani Kumar Singh

Senior Programme Officer, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Anjani Kumar Singh is Senior Program Officer and leading the Gender and community platforms investments of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in India and works very closely with the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) and several State Rural Livelihoods Missions and other development institutions.

He has more than 20 years of experience in designing and operationalizing large-scale rural development programs in the areas of community institution building. Before joining the foundation, Anjani worked with the World Bank for National Rural Livelihoods Project and was providing strategic implementation support to the States of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar among others. Anjani was also the integral member of various World Bank task teams managing women's economic empowerment projects in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Nigeria, Nepal, Sri-Lanka, Cambodia etc. Before joining the World Bank, Anjani has worked with NRLM. Anjani has 360-degree experience in the development sector starting with grass-roots action projects with civil society organisations (e.g. PRADAN, AKRSP (I); SRIJAN etc) as well as with the National and State Governments (Govt. of Bihar and MoRD); International Consulting firms (e.g. EURO PRAXIS, Barcelona and GRM International, UK); and multi-lateral donor agencies like the World Bank. Anjani is a graduate of Columbia University, School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), NY, USA and has studied at Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai and Rajendra Agricultural University, Pusa, India.



## Kanta Singh

Deputy Country Representative, UN Women, India

Kanta has over 25 years of experience in the management of pro-women development programmes. Kanta has worked with national and international organisations to promote women in formal economy, sports and politics. Kanta's last assignment was with UNDP where she spent 9 years.

Currently, Kanta is the Deputy Representative with UN Women India. She is a former national level Volleyball Player. Kanta is a Chevening Gurukul Fellow from University of Oxford.



## Dr Namita Singh

Director of User Research, Digital Green

Dr Namita Singh is an International Development sector professional and research scholar with over 16 years of experience in participatory technologies, social development and gender. She currently the Director of User Experience at Digital Green, and is working at the intersection of gender, climate and emerging technologies for farming communities. She has done her PhD in Participatory Technologies from the Open University, UK and has a Master of Arts in Social Work from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India. She is a published author with several peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and guides.



## Dr Kedar Sigh

CEO, Madhya Pradesh State Rural Livelihoods Mission

Dr. Kedar Singh is a 2012 batch IAS officer, who hails from Bhind, Mandhya Pradesh. He did his Masters in Economics and PhD in Economics from Jiwaji University Gwalior. He started his career in 1996. Prior to joining the Indian Administrative Services, he has served in different positions in the state of Madhya Pradesh, such as SDM of Morena, Sheopur, Harda, Guna and Ujjain districts; Asstt. Municipal Commissioner of Indore Municipal Corporation, Chief General Manager of M.P Electricity Board and Asstt. Director of the Mandi Board. After becoming an IAS Officer in 2012, his journey in the area of Rural Development started. He headed different programmes such as CEO of Zila Panchayat, Rajgarh, Dy. Secretary Food, Controller - Weights & Measures and Dy. Secretary Panchayat & Rural Dev. Later he headed following many divisions of Panchayat & Rural Dev Department, GoMP such as Mission Director - Swachh Bharat Mission, Director Watershed Mission, PMKSY, Director - PM Awas Yojna and Director - Rurban Mission. Presently he is heading four programmes of Department of Panchayat & Rural Development including as CEO, MPSRLM, Director, Panchayati Raj, MD, Bhopal Haat, Director, PM Awas Yojna & PM Janman and Director, Rural Employment. He has been appointed as the fourth CEO of MPSRLM on 1<sup>st</sup> Dec. 2023.



## Amarjeet Sinha

Former Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development,  
Government of India

Amarjeet Sinha is an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) Officer of Bihar Cadre of 1983 batch. He has over 35 years of experience and his last office held was the Secretary, Department of Rural Development, Govt of India. Mr. Sinha was appointed as the special advisor to the Prime Minister in February 2020 to oversee projects related to the social sector. He has had the unique distinction of having played a major role in designing Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (national mission for school education) and the National Rural Health Mission. Among the notable schemes and flagship programmes which are currently being steered by Sh. Sinha are MGNREGA, PMAY(Gramin), PMGSY, Rurban Mission, National Rural Livelihoods Mission, Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (youth employment scheme), to name a few. Shri Sinha has published seven books and a large number of articles in publications such as Lancet, Economic and Political Weekly, Economic Times, The Hindu, The Business Standard, The Hindustan Times, etc. His latest book is “An India for Everyone – A Path to Inclusive Development”. A student of St. Stephen’s College, he has topped the Delhi University, and is a recipient of the National Talent Scholarship, the Rhodes Scholarship and the Oxford Cambridge Society of India Scholarship.



## Surajit Sinha

Director- Agritech/Climate Tech Farmsio

Surajit Sinha has more than 19 years of diversified experience in digital agriculture, and Agtech product development. He has ideated and implemented challenging ICT-based solutions in the agriculture value chain, financial and market linkages, and enterprise communication. He has worked on traceability solutions in agriculture and aquaculture and is currently working on sustainability and climate change monitoring and risk mitigation decision tools using AI/ML, and remote sensing. Surajit has implemented projects in more than 15 countries worldwide in Asia and Africa. Currently, he is associated with Farmsio as Director – Agritech. He is the recipient of the National Award from H.E. The President of India in Dec 2014 for developing a new cost-effective product for manufacturing aimed at improving the lives of persons with disabilities. He was also awarded the best paper at the “International Seminar on Rural Development in Asia Pacific Region” Technical Session – XI: Rural Infrastructure.



## S. Sivakumar

Group Head - Agri and IT Businesses, ITC Limited

S. Sivakumar is the Group Head of Agri and IT Businesses of ITC Limited, India and a Member of its Corporate Management Committee. He also oversees the Company's Social Investments and Sustainability initiatives. Sivakumar is well known as the architect of ITC e-Choupal, the pioneering farmer empowerment initiative that benefits over 4 million small farmers through customized agri-extension and market linkage services, while providing a unique source of competitive advantage to ITC's packaged foods business. ITC e-Choupal evolved continuously, with the current Digital-Economy-Ready Version 4.0 - titled ITCMAARS - expands the outreach further and offers a plug & play flexibility to the IT-enabled startups working on innovative solutions for rural Indians. Sivakumar served on the Board of NABARD, the Private Sector Committee of CGIAR, and UN Global Compact's Core Advisory Group that developed Sustainable Agriculture Business Principles, among other organisations. He is the topper of the class of 1983 from IRMA.



## B. Sivarani

CEO, Veerapandy Kalanjia Jeevidam Farmer Producer Company

B. Sivarani brings over 30 years of dedicated service to the development sector. Her journey commenced as a Technical Agricultural Consultant and saw her progress through pivotal roles, including Programme Coordinator at SEVA and Conservation Core Volunteer at WWF India. Notably, from 1996 to 2019, she served as the Programme Leader at DHAN Foundation. Since March 2019, Sivarani has held the influential position of Chairperson at ACE Foundation, where her advisory role extends to 45 trusts and 28 Farmer Producer Organizations. Simultaneously, she serves as the Chief Executive Officer of Veerapandy Kalanjia Jeevidam Producer Company Limited, overseeing the company's daily operations and financial management. Sivarani's impact goes beyond administrative roles; she has been a driving force behind numerous achievements. Notable among them is her contribution to the promotion of 45 women federations, benefiting a substantial number of families. Additionally, her efforts have extended to supporting disabled individuals, facilitating loans for poverty alleviation, and earning recognition with awards such as Womens Creativity in Rural Life (2023) and Women Achiever (2023). Her commitment to sustainable agriculture and community well-being is further exemplified by accolades from prestigious institutions like NABARD and personal recognition from the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. Sivarani's multifaceted contributions underscore her dedication to making a lasting impact on the lives of individuals and communities.



## Girija Srinivasan

Expert, Development Finance and Rural Livelihoods

Girija Srinivasan had been a development banker for more than decade and then turned to build a successful international consulting practice in the areas of livelihoods and rural finance. She has been involved in design, supervision and evaluation of strategy and implementation of several unique development projects. She has accompanied rural institutions in their growth process in India and abroad. Her areas of interest are rural livelihoods, rural banking, financial inclusion and community-based organisations of women and farmers. Her experience spreads over almost all the states in India, South, South East and Middle-east Asia, and east and north Africa. She has authored the India Social Performance Report in Microfinance from 2012 to 2014, besides editing the report in 2011. She has co-authored, with N. Srinivasan, the State of India's Livelihoods report for the years 2015, 2016 and 2017. She has also authored individually and jointly other books, carried out pioneering studies in SHG bank linkage programme. She is involved in the industry bodies dealing with microfinance and rural livelihoods. She serves as a consultant and advisor to IFAD, GIZ, Frankfurt School of Management and other institutions. She serves on the Boards of FWWB, CMF and Grameen Foundation for Social Impact.



## N Srinivasan

Expert, Development Finance and Rural Livelihoods

N Srinivasan had been a central banker and development banker for 30 years (in Reserve Bank of India and NABARD). He is a student of economics, with development economics as a special interest. After three decades of career as a development banker, over the last ten years as an independent consultant, he has been involved in design, supervision and evaluation of policy, strategy and implementation of several development finance and rural livelihood initiatives and building institutions in India and abroad. His areas of interest are vulnerable and rural livelihoods, development banking, financial inclusion and social entrepreneurship. As an international development finance and livelihoods expert, he serves as a consultant and advisor to World Bank, IFAD, GIZ, KFW, NABARD, SIDBI, Microsave and other institutions. He has authored the Microfinance-India State of the Sector Reports for four years which are regarded as reference material in the sector. He has jointly authored, with Girija Srinivasan, the State of India's Livelihoods report for the years 2015, 2016 and 2017 besides contributing to many other books as joint author. He currently serves as an Independent Director on the Board of a Small Finance Bank, three other companies and trusts. He also advises industry associations and apex institutions.



## Elisabeth Steinmayr

Programme Officer

International Fund for Agricultural Development  
(IFAD) India

Elisabeth brings nearly a decade of expertise in rural development, agricultural value chains, food security, natural resource management, and gender. In recent years, she has directed her work towards East and South Asia, and previously worked at the World Bank, specializing in integrated landscape management in the Lower Mekong Region. Elisabeth also has valuable experience in fragile and conflict situations, with an emphasis on long-term solutions and local refugee integration during her tenure as a Programme Officer for East and Southern Africa at an international NGO. She holds a Master's in Human Development and Food Security from the University Roma Tre and a Bachelor's in Political Science from the University of Vienna.



## Parthasarathy T

CEO, Skillgreen Global

A Rural Management Professional, alumnus of IRMA. Since 2019, Partha Sarthy is CEO of Skillgreen Global Pvt Limited, a social enterprise, offering need based consultancy and capacity building services to organizations, working with farmer producer organizations and rural entrepreneurs in nearly 15 states across the country. With an experience of around 16 years in rural livelihoods, which included state head (Livelihoods) of Maharashtra State Rural Livelihoods Mission and Green College programme at Welthungerhilfe, he began his rural management career working with artisanal fishworkers in Tamilnadu and later in Kutch coast. His work is also published as a case study in Sitaram Rao Case Study Compendium in 2010. He is co-author of two Farming Futures publications - the first one on social enterprises and latest one on Farmer Producer Organizations.



## Gitali Thakur

Social Entrepreneur & Founder, Myhelp

Gitali Thakur is a social entrepreneur and founder of Myhelp and Maitri Social Enterprise Group. Myhelp is a technology enabled platform to seek and hire trained and verified caregivers for home. Myhelp helps home based caregivers earn a dignified and sustainable livelihoods while servicing the requirements of urban

Indian families looking for skilled and reliable care at home. Gitali has over 20 years of experience in livelihood promotion and microfinance with institutions like BASIX, FWWB and MicroSave. Gitali also has a few published papers on livelihood issues including a Resource Book on livelihood Promotion. Gitali is an Economics Graduate from Cotton College, Guwahati, Assam and has completed a one year certificate course on “Special Management Programme” from Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta. She has recently completed Goldman Sachs 10K Women Entrepreneurship programme from IIM-Bangalore Gitali was also a speaker at the India Today Youth Rock Summit held in Guwahati in 2017.



## Nivedita Varshneya

Country Director, Welthungerhilfe India

Nivedita Varshneya is the Country Director of Welthungerhilfe in India since 2015. She has about twenty eight years of work experience in the development sector with the Ministry of Rural Development, national level CSOs and CSRs on issues related to food security and sovereignty, sustainable agriculture, ecological

value chains, forestry and natural resource management. Since more than 55 years Welthungerhilfe has been supporting CSOs in India on projects related to sustainable agriculture and environment, nutrition, sustainable livelihoods, water sanitation and hygiene, strengthening civil society and improved governance. Nivedita has a master's degree in forest management from the Indian Institute of Forest Management and has received several scholarships for studies abroad, including British Chevening scholarship, UNEP scholarship for TU Dresden and NUFFIC scholarship for Wageningen University.





## Ramesh Veluru

India Program Officer, BRAC International

Ramesh Veluru works as a Program Officer at BRAC International supporting Inclusive Livelihoods work in India. Ramesh leads livelihood ecosystem approaches at BRAC International's India operations and supporting programs. Before joining the BRAC, Ramesh was leading the Powering Livelihoods', a multi-million initiative to transform India's rural economy with clean energy solutions at the Council on Energy, Environment and Water in India. Previously, he worked at the World Bank as a consultant with Agricultura Global Practice of the South Asian Region, extending operational support and guidance to the Government of Bihar in implementing rural livelihood projects. Ramesh has more than 10 years of experience working at various government, multilateral donor organizations and policy think tanks in the spheres of inclusive growth, sustainable livelihoods, farm value chain development, clean energy for rural livelihoods, enterprise promotion, and women empowerment. He led the design and implementation of varied large-scale interventions in the rural livelihoods ecosystem. He graduated from the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), United Kingdom with a Masters in Governance, Development, and Public Policy on the prestigious Chevening Scholarship. I also have a master's degree in Rural Management from Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar (XIMB), India.



## Shankar Venkateswaran

Co-Founder and Managing Partner - Sustainability Integration, ECube Investment Advisors Pvt. Ltd.

Shankar Venkateswaran- is a part of the founding team of ECube Investment Advisors that is setting up a fund to invest in publicly listed companies and help them improve their sustainability/ESG performance. He also advises companies and NGOs on matters relating to corporate sustainability and sustainable development. His last full-time position was as the chief of Tata Sustainability Group (TSG) which was tasked with providing guidance, thought leadership and support on sustainability and corporate responsibility matters of the \$ 100 billion Tata group of companies. He joined the Tata group after working with the UK-based think-tank and consultants, SustainAbility, and the global firm of management consultants, PriceWaterhouseCoopers,. Prior to this, he spent around 15 years with the international NGO, ActionAid and the American India Foundation. While at ActionAid, he also set up Partners in Change, a non-profit that pioneered corporate sustainability and CSR advisory services in India. Shankar spent the initial 12 years of his career in the consulting firm, A F Ferguson & Co. (now Deloitte). He has held board positions with several non-profits in India and overseas. He was a part of a two-member panel that drafted the National Guidelines for Responsible Business Conduct, released by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs in March 2019. He is also a member of a committee that is developing the Business Responsibility Report aligned with these guidelines. Shankar is an engineer and an MBA.



## Kanika Verma

Vice President, Development Alternatives Group

Kanika leads their Green and Inclusive Entrepreneurship vertical. She is deeply committed to driving social innovation and systemic change. Her passion lies in ‘building bridges’ from grassroots work to global discourse on inclusive innovation, entrepreneurship and the future of work. Kanika is also part of the Schwab Foundation working group for building the social economy in India. In her current role, she spearheads a social innovation platform (action and learning) to boost job growth for women and youth in India. Kanika also leads initiatives geared towards energy transition of rural micro-enterprises driven by women collectives. Additionally, she is a co-founder of Systems Play, a collaborative platform dedicated to nurturing experimentation and learning among system innovators. Kanika is currently pursuing an M.Phil., specializing in Inclusive Innovation, at the University of Cape Town. She led a financial investment firm in the U.S.A. for seven years prior to joining Development Alternatives Group in 2011 to pursue her ambition of being a social entrepreneur.



## Shilp Verma

International Water Management Institute (IWMI)  
Deputy Country Representative – India

Senior Researcher, Water-Energy-Food Policies Shilp Verma has more than 20 years of experience in the water, energy and rural livelihoods domain. He studied Economics at the University of Delhi and did his masters in Rural Management from the Institute of Rural Management, Anand (IRMA). In 2001, Shilp joined the IWMI-Tata Water Policy Program and in 2005, Shilp was awarded an IWMI fellowship to study Water Resources Management at IHE, Delft. Between 2009 and 2019, Shilp worked as a Consulting Researcher with several national and international organizations and in 2019, Shilp joined IWMI as an internationally recruited scientist working on water-energy-food policies out of IWMI’s office in Anand, Gujarat. In his current role as Senior Researcher and Deputy Country Representative – India, Shilp provides leadership to influence policy aimed at sustainable resource management and economic growth in South Asia. He leads several IWMI initiatives in Asia and Africa and is widely acknowledged as a ‘thought leader’ in the water-energy-food domain.



## Dr Preetam B Yashvant

Joint Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India

Dr. Preetam B Yashvant, an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer from the 2003 batch of Rajasthan Cadre, currently serves as the Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD). Prior to this position, he held various positions in Rajasthan over a career spanning 19 years in the State, notably as State GST Commissioner, MD Rajasthan Urban Infrastructure Development Project and MD State Health Mission. Within the ministry, he oversees an array of flagship initiatives by the Government of India under the Mission Shakti scheme for enhancing women's safety, security, and empowerment including the One Stop Centres, BBBP, Women Help line & Palna or Crèches scheme. He is also responsible for administering key women related legislations, International Cooperation, Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) under the flagship PM Matru Vandana Yojana.



## Sabina Dewan

Founder and Executive Director, JustJobs Network

Sabina Dewan is Founder and Executive Director of the JustJobs Network, which she co-founded with John Podesta in 2013. She is also a Senior Visiting Fellow at the Center for Policy Research in India, and a Non-Resident Fellow at the Carsey School of Public Policy at the University of New Hampshire. Before this, Ms. Dewan served as a Senior Fellow and Director for International Economic Policy at the Center for American Progress in Washington DC. Dewan's vast experience includes working with institutions including the World Bank, the International Labour Organization, and the European Commission, as well as grassroots organizations in Sierra Leone, India and Western Samoa. Ms. Dewan serves on several global and local committees. She is one of six advisors to the Swedish Prime Minister's Global Deal initiative. She serves as a member of the Global Challenges Foundation's Climate Governance Commission. She is a member of the Confederation of Indian Industry's National Committee on Skills and Livelihoods; Niti Aayog's advisory committee for 'Vision 2035', and at the grassroots level, she is part of the Anganwadi Monitoring Committee for the Kalkaji jurisdiction. Dewan has appeared in several international media outlets, including The Wall Street Journal, Financial Times, US News and World Report, CNN, BBC, Al-Jazeera, TimesNow and NDTV.



## Nidhi Batra

Founder, Sehreeti Development Practices Foundation

Nidhi Batra is a development practitioner with over 17 years of experience and is trained as an architect and environmental urban designer. She holds a postgraduate environmental law diploma and is pursuing a Ph.D. in Urban Commons. She engages in policy, planning, and community-led sustainable development.

She is the Founder of Sehreeti Developmental Practices Foundation, a collaborative practice that works on ‘connecting people to their environs’, through design and planning, advocacy, research, and skills and training. She regularly consults on ‘strategy, impact, and skill development’ in various organizations and was engaged in the Jal Kaushal Study of JustJobs Network and Arghyam as research lead. Nidhi has also been consulting The World Bank since 2012 and is presently engaged as a Skills Specialist for projects in India and Maldives. She was earlier Head of International Collaboration and New Initiatives at the National Skill Development Corporation, a PPP organization under ambit of Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), India. She is the Regional Head for Placemaking India, an affiliate of PlacemakingX advocating inclusive and vibrant public places. She is a WomenLead India Fellow, a Vital Voices and Reliance Foundation fellowship. She is a visiting faculty in architectural colleges across India.



## Rajeev Chawla

Strategic Advisor and Chief Knowledge Officer  
Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Government of India

Rajeev Chawla, an esteemed civil servant (IAS'87 Karnataka), currently serving as the Chief Knowledge Officer at the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, holds a rich legacy of 35 years of civil services experience. His objective is clear: to contribute to nation-building using technology and his extensive expertise. Chawla has received numerous accolades for his exceptional contributions, including the First Prime Minister Award for excellence in Civil Service (2006) for the Bhoomi project and the Prime Minister Award for Project Seva Sindhu (2021-22). He is also a recipient of the UN Public Service Award 2006, Commonwealth Innovation Award 2002, Distinguished Alumnus Award (2007) from IIT Kanpur, CSI award for best e-governance state (2005-06), and recognition in Forbes' "Guardians of the Flame" bureaucrats list in 2012. His other noteworthy projects include Kutumba, the Social Registry of Karnataka, a dynamic self-updating registry for citizens; Fruits, a comprehensive database of farmers in Karnataka; E-Sahamati, a digital consent framework based on the DEPA framework of NITI Ayog; a GIS/GPS mobile-based crop survey capturing 15 million agriculture plots in Karnataka; Samrakshane, an online crop insurance portal; and Bhoomi, a project spanning 14 years, connecting 200 lakh land records of 70 lakh farmers, now a national model extensively documented by Princeton University and the Woodrow Wilson School.

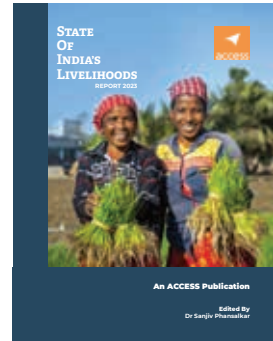
# Associated Publications



## ASSOCIATED PUBLICATIONS

### State of India's Livelihoods (SOIL) Report

The State of India's Livelihoods (SOIL) Report is an annual publication that aims to collate emerging trends in the livelihoods sector. For the last 15 years, ACCESS has continued to publish this one-of-a-kind document that aggregates the experiences and challenges of the sector, analyses case studies, and reports on the progress of both government and privately run programs.



Given the diversity and complexity of the livelihoods landscape, a single edition of the SOIL Report can never be complete. While some core themes are continued from the previous reports to provide stability to the structure, interesting new themes have also been added to bring knowledge to the sector. The continuing coverage includes an overview of the emerging agenda for livelihoods promotion and policy and programme measures taken by the government in the last year while trying to understand the nature and impact of their implementation. Another chapter on private sector engagement in livelihoods promotion, the reports looks back at a decade of formalized CSR and the learnings from it for the next decade. Building on the understanding and insights of past SOIL Reports, a chapter on Farmer Producer Organisation highlights a few key challenges of growth versus sustainability. Another important theme that has continued from the last year's report is a detailed assessment of the ultra-poor graduation approach. With a focus on the key issues around women's economic empowerment, one chapter looks at the challenges and opportunities facing women in the world of work, particularly entrepreneurs. Under new coverage, a chapter looks at the developments in Indian carbon markets, with a focus on an enabling ecosystem that can engage smallholder farmers in carbon offset projects. Another topical coverage includes livelihoods challenges of people living in floodplain areas.

The report is authored by multiple experts in the sector and researchers engaged in the livelihoods landscape.

### Scaling Up Women's Enterprises Incubating Upscaling Empowering...

The Livelihoods India Case Study Competition is a pioneering initiative that brings together the collective intellect of the sector and assimilates innovative solutions, breakthroughs, good experiences and best practices that help in learning from diverse sector experience and impact poverty reduction. Instituted in 2009 by ACCESS, the competition is a tool to identify and collate models and practices that have significantly contributed to the livelihoods promotion of those living in poverty. The theme for Livelihoods India Case Study Competition 2023 was Scaling Up Women's Enterprises – Incubating and Empowering. The compendium covers 10 best case entries to the competition from across the country that showcase evidence of sustainable impact to the lives and livelihoods of vulnerable communities.



## Springboard for Powering Women- Three Decades of SHG Movement

In their thirty-year-old journey, Self-help Groups have developed into a formidable force, transforming the landscape of women's empowerment. Launched as a pilot by NABARD to link 500 SHGs with formal bank credit, the SHG movement evolved into the World's largest poverty alleviation programme led by the government. The leadership provided by National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM), along with unwavering support by the Voluntary Sector and the community led to a massive scaling up of the SHG movement.



'Springboard for Powering Women' is more than just history; it's a celebration of women's strength, courage, and success. The poor women of this country took hold of nebulous thought processes that believed in the strength of women in groups and their natural inclination to bond for mutual benefit, converting it into a mega movement in financial and social inclusion. The outcomes – financial, social, economic, and developmental – are overwhelming. The book showcases the resilience and tenacity of women who, through SHGs, have not only found financial independence but have also become architects of change in their communities. As we journey through three decades of progress, the book inspires readers to believe in the enduring force of collective empowerment and the profound impact it can have on society.

The logo features a stylized tree with a brown trunk and a canopy of green and brown leaves. Below the tree, the text "Livelihoods India" is written in a serif font, and "Summit 2023" is written below it in a smaller, italicized serif font.

Livelihoods India  
*Summit 2023*



# Sponsors and Partners



## CORE SPONSOR

### Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. In developing countries, it focuses on improving people's health and giving them the chance to lift themselves out of hunger and extreme poverty. In the United States, it seeks to ensure that all people—especially those with the fewest resources—have access to the opportunities they need to succeed in school and life.



### BRAC International

BRAC International was launched in 2002 with a mission to empower people and communities in situations of poverty, illiteracy, disease, and social injustice. Our approach is grounded in the conviction that people living in vulnerable situations can be agents of change if they are empowered with the tools, skills, and hope they need to change their lives. We design and support proven, scalable solutions that equip people with the assistance and confidence they need to achieve their potential. BRAC's institutional expertise on successfully implemented programmes is applied across 16 countries in Africa and Asia to deliver solutions that work on multiple fronts to achieve real change, at scale.



### "la Caixa" Foundation and W4P

"la Caixa" Foundation is a Spanish organization based in Barcelona, that was created almost 120 years ago with the aim of funding and supporting activities of social, educational, cultural and scientific nature. The entity's structure includes ownership of Spain's leading financial holding company, CriteriaCaixa, which works on a daily basis to maintain and increase the assets generated by the Foundation over more than a century.



The mission of the Foundation is to provide equal opportunities and to build a better society in Spain and Portugal. And since 1997 it also works on international cooperation programs focused on promoting global health, education, humanitarian action, training and capacity building to help strengthen the management of civil society organizations and job creation programs.

The Work4Progress program of la Caixa Foundation promotes quality employment for women and youth in rural areas of India, Mozambique, Peru and Colombia. To achieve that goal, the program utilizes a social innovation approach based on prototyping high-impact solutions that are identified in spaces for co-creation and collaborative learning. W4P wants to move beyond traditional approaches limited to isolated projects into social innovation platforms of action and learning, formed by civil society organizations, universities, private sector and public stakeholders. Those platforms seek to interconnect organizations and actions through shared objectives, methodologies and systems of evaluation, with a view to achieving systemic impact. Since 2017, the program has created more than 18.000 companies and 38.000 jobs.

## TRACK PARTNER

### Arghyam

Arghyam is a public charitable foundation headquartered in Bengaluru, established in 2005 with an endowment from Rohini Nilekani. With a vision of “Safe, sustainable water for all”, Arghyam focuses on enabling water security at scale by strengthening the ecosystem through science and community participation. Its strategic direction involves co-creating and deploying digital public goods and infrastructure to accelerate progress towards water security for communities across the country in partnership with Government and civil society organizations. Over the past 18 years, Arghyam has collaborated with various civil society organizations to explore community-based water management solutions across India. Key areas of intervention include Participatory Groundwater Management (PGWM) and springshed management, alongside initiatives like seeding Water Quality Networks to address fluoride and arsenic issues. These efforts have significantly influenced government programs and policy focus on groundwater management and water quality, emphasizing participatory approaches.



In 2018, Arghyam pivoted its strategy from being a donor to an enabler and knowledge partner, shifting its mission to catalyze and strengthen large-scale, government-led water security programs. Emerging from Arghyam’s understanding of the diverse challenges in the water sector and the urgency to act at scale, this transition marked a move from individual project grants to fostering partnerships for water security at scale. Arghyam now operates on three core principles: fostering community-led approaches, designing for scale, and generating trusted data.

## TECHNICAL PARTNERS

### GIZ

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is a federal enterprise with worldwide operations. We support the German Government in international cooperation for sustainable development. The current thematic areas of GIZ in India are - Energy, Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity, Sustainable Urban Development, and Sustainable Economic Development. We work to shape a future worth living around the world. This is GIZ's vision and long-term goal. The Government of India has launched numerous important initiatives to address the country's economic, environmental, and social challenges, and GIZ is contributing to some of the most significant ones. For example, it supports key initiatives such as Smart Cities, Clean India, and Skill India. GIZ, in close cooperation with Indian partners, devises tailor-made, jointly developed solutions to meet local needs and achieve sustainable and inclusive development.



### HCL FOUNDATION

HCL Foundation (HCLF) was established in 2011 as the CSR arm of HCLTech. It is a not for-profit organization, that strives to contribute towards national and international development goals, bringing about lasting positive impact in the lives of people, through long term sustainable programs. The foundation aims to alleviate poverty and achieve inclusive growth and development. Active community engagement ensures optimal long-term gains and upward accountability. HCL Foundation works through Life Cycle Based, Integrated Community Development Approach with thematic focus on Education, Health, Skill Development & Livelihood, Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction & Response. Child protective strategies, inclusion and gender transformative approaches remain central in all initiatives of HCL Foundation, thus ensuring comprehensive development. Presently HCL Foundation is implementing four flagship programs, namely HCL Samuday & HCL Grant – Rural Development programs; HCL Uday & Clean Noida – Urban Development programs and 4 special initiatives - Power of One, Sports for Change HCL Foundation Academy and My E-Haat.



### NABSAMRUDDHI Finance Limited

NABSAMRUDDHI Finance Limited, a subsidiary of NABARD, primarily serves as a B2B finance NBFC, providing financial services through capital to the non-agricultural sector which includes MSME, Microfinance, Housing, Vehicle loans, etc. with an emphasis on ESG. The company has strategically chosen to focus on three segments: Green & Wellness finance, Fabrics & Textiles and the Handicrafts value chain.



These segments not only align with NABARD’s mandate but also resonate with National and Global priorities. Collectively, they cater to more than half of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Among these, WASH, a sub-segment under Green & Wellness Finance, has emerged as its flagship product under which, more than Rs. 300 crore of finance has been provided to 30 FI partners covering over 60,000 ultimate borrowers. NABSAMRUDDHI supports WASH lending through a diversified suite of products and has also launched a Climate Ready WASH Funding program on a pilot mode in climate vulnerable areas leveraging concessional refinance from NABARD and technical collaboration with knowledge partners such as Water.org, Sa-dhan, FINISH Mondial, Wash Innovation Hub of ASCI, Toilet Board Coalition, Climate Policy Initiative, among others, to take forward its mission of sustainable finance.

Over the last 6 years, the company has been able to reach out to more than 2 lakh ultimate beneficiaries in 25 states and 5 Union Territories through NBFCs, NBFC-MFIs, HFCs and other institutional clients. These financial interventions have contributed to livelihood enhancement for the end borrowers through improved quality of life, increase in annual household income, reduction in total GHG emission, & consequently, higher savings, improved health and hygiene resulting in higher productivity, reduced health cost, gender equity & empowerment and improved access to education. NABSAMRUDDHI is committed towards sustainability of the planet and it’s people and also plays a catalytic role in promoting Climate Action through WASH funding, policy advocacy, knowledge sharing and collaboration.

## HAND IN HAND INDIA

Hand in Hand India (HiH India) is a public charitable trust working to alleviate rural poverty through job creation, livelihood promotion, and integrated community development. Registered in 2002, the organization works in areas of women empowerment, skill development, microfinance, livelihoods, child labour elimination, education, health, and the environment. Having started its operations on a humble scale in the Kancheepuram district of Tamil Nadu in 2002, HIH India has now expanded its work across 18 States and 2 Union Territories of India, and its ‘Job Creation’ model has been replicated in 7 countries across the globe through its partners. Until October 2022, HiH India has mobilized over 2.9 million women living at the bottom of the pyramid into 277,076 SHGs and created 5 million jobs in the rural and semi-urban areas of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Pondicherry, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Odisha, West Bengal, Kerala, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Bihar, Jharkhand, Puducherry and Andaman, and Nicobar. With a dedicated team and a shared vision, the organization is steadily moving towards achieving its mission of creating 10 million jobs by 2025. Committed to creating sustainable businesses for poverty alleviation, HiH India inaugurated its Academy for Social Entrepreneurship in February 2016. The mission of the Academy is to provide integrated practical and theoretical knowledge to create social entrepreneurs and build sustainable businesses that address social priorities.



## Grameen Foundation for Social Impact

Grameen Foundation is a pioneer and a global leader in the social impact space. Grameen uses the power of digital technology to connect low-income and excluded communities to sources of information, markets, capital and skilling opportunities. In the last 12 years since getting established, Grameen Foundation India has worked in over twelve states, and directly impacted over 1.5 million low income people through its programs and initiatives in Innovative Digital Finance, Women’s Economic Empowerment, Agriculture based Livelihoods, and health and nutrition.



## LEAD KREA UNIVERSITY

Institute for What Works to Advance Gender Equality (IWWAGE) aims to build and deepen evidence around the low participation of women in the economy - caused by low asset base, poor access to public services, restrictive gender norms, and the burden of unpaid work - in order to find solutions to inform gender transformative changes and policy reforms. IWWAGE is an initiative of LEAD, an action-oriented research centre of IFMR Society (a not for profit society registered under the Societies Act). It attempts to shift the evidence base from “How” to “What Works” to improve women’s participation in economic activities by addressing barriers to women’s work, facilitating women’s access to decent work and economic resources, and enhancing women’s agency by leveraging the transformative potential of women’s empowerment collectives.



## UN Women

UN Women works in India to make the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals a reality for women and girls and stands behind women’s equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on the following strategic priorities:



1. Women lead, participate in, and benefit equally from governance systems, and live free from all forms of gender-based violence;
2. Women have income security, decent work, and economic autonomy, and marginalized women and young women have access to, participate in and achieve quality learning, entrepreneurship and employment; and
3. All women and girls benefit from the implementation of a comprehensive and dynamic set of norms, policies and standards that promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

UN Women’s Office in India, based in New Delhi, works with the Government of India, other UN agencies, civil society, the private sector and influencers to achieve India’s strategic priorities for women’s advancement. Our programmes focus on upholding women’s human rights and providing opportunities for women and girls to live up to their full potential.

## IRMA

IRMA is a pioneering institution that has trained professional managers to lead rural organisations in multiple domains since 1979. Beginning with managing cooperatives these domains has expanded since to include managing natural resources or ecosystems, incubating and managing social enterprises and non-profit organisations, managing public policies and systems like the National Rural Livelihood Missions and evaluations of several international, national, state and philanthropic agencies over the years. These efforts and insights have been enhanced through generating newer knowledge through national workshops, policy dialogues, training manuals and action research. Recent work includes co-creating knowledge on Farmer Producer Organisations and Managing Sustainable Transitions. Apart from its flagship courses on rural management (that includes a Fellow and an Executive Program) with its 4000 alumni leading several organisations, IRMA develop human resources with management knowledge and competencies through its uniquely designed Management Development Programs.



## ITC

ITC's CSR is focused on generating livelihoods & environment capital. Its philosophy & policy revolves around recognizing that business enterprises are economic organs of society and draw on societal resources, it is ITC's belief that a company's performance must be measured by its Triple Bottom Line contribution to building economic, social and environmental capital towards enhancing societal sustainability.



The CSR engagement is focused on two of its key stakeholder groups:

- Rural communities across India where ITC has agri-business operations, a large majority of whom are small and marginal farmers.
- Communities residing in the vicinity of ITC's units - mainly rural, but also in semi-rural and urban locations.

This Strategy has led to the development of a 2-horizon strategy - Interventions directed towards making current livelihood sources - primarily agriculture and allied activities - more productive, profitable and sustainable, i.e. ITC's e-Choupal initiative and programmes for Watershed Development, Afforestation, Sustainable Agriculture, Livestock Development and Women's Economic Empowerment. Secondly, interventions which are aimed at creating capabilities for tomorrow by assisting communities to put in place vital socio-economic infrastructure and equipping them to take advantage of emerging economic opportunities, i.e. ITC's programmes for supporting Primary Education, Skilling & Vocational Training, Health & Sanitation and Solid Waste Management.

The core objective of ITC's CSR initiatives is to secure the livelihoods of these marginalised communities not just for today but also for the future. Creating Highly Collaborative Multi-stakeholder Partnerships is a key element in ITC's model. In most initiatives, ITC works in close collaboration with NGOs and target communities. NGO's are Project Implementation Agencies, interacting directly and extensively with target communities who have the final say in major decisions - ensuring that the interventions are suited to their needs and thus have the best chance of sustained success in the long run.

## Knowledge Partner

### Rabo Foundation

Established in 1974, Rabo Foundation is the social fund of Rabobank focused on helping people become self-reliant. Aligned with the ‘Growing a better world together’ agenda, Rabo Foundation’s interventions are along two primary themes: Access to Finance and Supporting Small Producers. Rabo Foundation seeks to support small-holder farmers’ aggregate in to cooperative producer organizations and strengthens them to make them operationally and financially sustainable. This helps generate sustainable livelihoods for farmers so as to increase their income levels. Rabo Foundation is focused on strengthening the upstream value chains(closer to the farmer) and reduces the length of the chain, connecting different stakeholders. Rabo Foundation works across 21 countries across Asia, Africa and Latin America, other than the Netherlands. Interventions in these areas are done through instruments such as grant support for capacity building and technical assistance, credit guarantees and soft loans. Rabo Foundation’s interventions have positively impacted the livelihoods of millions of small-holder farmers worldwide through 400 projects in 2021 with a project allocation of EUR 40.7million



### India Water Portal

India Water Portal, a flagship initiative by Arghyam, serves as an open platform dedicated to sharing knowledge and fostering communities around water and related issues in India. Boasting over 12,000 contributors and an extensive article base of more than 26,000, the Portal has garnered a readership of over 8 million. It stands as a valuable archive, offering a wide array of resources including working papers, reports, data, articles, news, events, and opportunities. The platform is not just an information repository but also a space for sharing experiences and solutions, engaging with water experts, and learning about sustainable water management practices across India.



Originally inspired by the National Knowledge Commission’s 2005 proposal for knowledge portals, India Water Portal has since evolved to become a leading source of information on water, sanitation, agriculture, environment, climate change, biodiversity, and other related areas. It aims to raise mass awareness about the scale and severity of water issues in India and to draw policy attention to emerging water trends. Available in both English and Hindi, the Portal continues to grow in the spirit of openness and sharing, contributing significantly to the discourse on water and environmental sustainability in India.

### Village Square

Village Square is passionate about telling the story of rural India – the good, the tough and the vibrant stories and insights of village life. We want young urban India to connect with villages, bridge the divide and tap into the shared humanity that unites us all.





## About the Organiser

ACCESS is a national support organisation with focus on incubating innovations for sustainable livelihoods of the poor. Established in March 2006 with support from DFID, ACCESS was set up as a professional new generation agency to contribute to and support poverty reduction in India. ACCESS is structured uniquely to work at all levels of the value chain – implementing programmes on the ground, working with Civil Society Organizations, Government Departments, Corporate Sector and Multilateral / Bilateral agencies to improve and enhance their programme implementation and also undertaking a few national initiatives.

For sustainable impact, ACCESS pursues a 3-tier approach to strengthen and support the livelihoods sector and implements several dynamic initiatives at all levels.

At Tier I, ACCESS has gained significant credibility for incubating innovations in livelihoods promotion that has helped in transitioning the economic lot of the poor from subsistence to sustainable levels. ACCESS implements about 34 programmes across 10 states, with the core strategy of organizing the primary producers and integrating them into inclusive value chains. ACCESS implements programmes in both the farm and non-farm sectors and works in both rural and urban areas with a focus on women's economic empowerment.

As a part of its Tier II portfolio, ACCESS builds capacity of capacity builders, strengthening civil society capacities, supports government programmes, and undertakes studies, among others.

At the national level, as a part of its Tier III work ACCESS annually organises the Livelihoods India Summit and Global Inclusive Finance Summit and brings out annual reports and publications in the respective sectors. ACCESS also organises policy/ thematic retreats and Round Tables to help catalyse issues and for making key recommendations to policy makers.



ACCESS Development Services

The logo features a stylized tree with a brown trunk and a canopy of green and brown leaves.

Livelihoods India  
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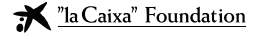


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## CORE SPONSOR



Work4Progress



## KNOWLEDGE PARTNER



## TECHNICAL PARTNERS



HCLFoundation



BILL & MELINDA GATES foundation



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