

Developing an Implementation and Result Measurement Framework for Agri-Entrepreneurship Model

According to the 2015-2016 agricultural census, 86 percent of the landholdings belong to small and marginal farmers in India. Yet, their contribution accounts for less than 47 percent of the cropping area. This, coupled with the issue of rural unemployment, has become a significant concern for the Agri-Entrepreneurship (AE) model. A new network for exchange between agribusiness companies and 'pre-commercial' smallholders, situating rural youth as the key interlocutors, was initiated to combat the same.

Syngenta Foundation and Tata Trusts created AE Growth Foundation (AEGF) to accelerate farmers' access to technology, information, and credit while creating sustainable livelihoods for young rural entrepreneurs. This access is further aimed at increasing profitability (income, yield), resilience (capacity, adaptability), and mitigation (environmental efficiency). Furthermore, the Agri-Entrepreneurship program focused on food security and gender inclusivity within its operational ambit.

Sambodhi was engaged in this project to develop a system that produces high-quality evidential analysis indicative of sustainability metrics, program learning, and future-forward strategy. The overall goal of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan was to garner evidence of AE Model interventions' progress towards meeting envisaged outcomes, highlight the strategies and approaches that have worked, and funnel these insights into crafting a feed-forward strategy for the AE Model.

The proposed engagement included:

- defining a clear theory of change to outline the program's scope,
- creating a result measurement framework by validating the existing M&E and Digital Tools process, for which Sambodhi proposed a sequential two-phased framework: comprehension and application, and
- developing Best Practice of phone-based interviews for the on-ground network.

The comprehension phase formed the study's foundation. This phase helped us understand the following:

- Key gaps in existing Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) frameworks
- Key gaps in existing MEL capacities of AE Model stakeholders

The Application phase drew itself from the information comprehended in the preceding phase and involved action. It involved the development of a revised Theory of Constraints (ToC), a results framework, and a detailed handover of the revised MEL systems.