



ASPEN NETWORK
OF DEVELOPMENT
ENTREPRENEURS

INDIA

ANDE Member Showcase September 2021

Featuring highlights from:



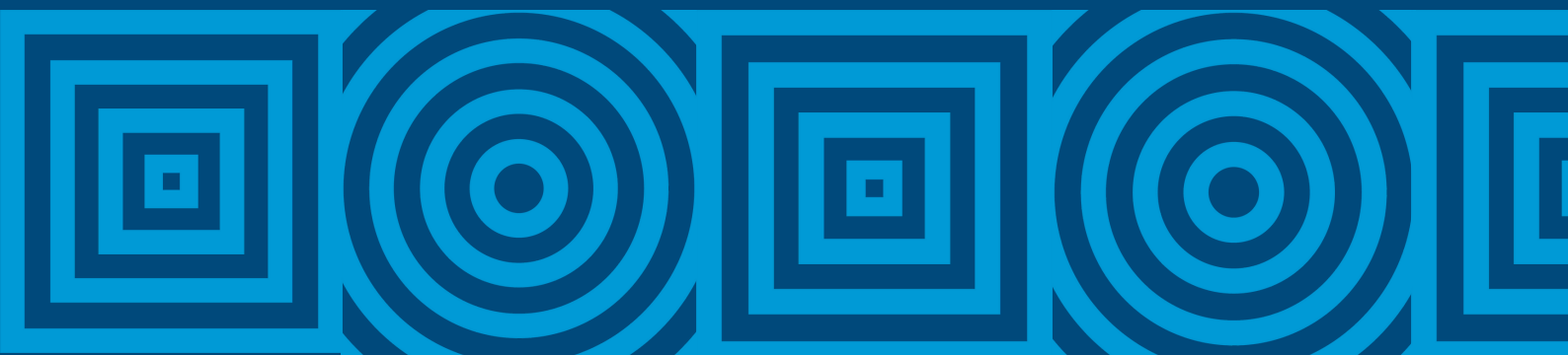
LEAD LEVERAGING EVIDENCE FOR
ACCESS AND DEVELOPMENT
KREA UNIVERSITY



VERA
SOLUTIONS



CLEAN



LEAD at Krea University.

Is an action-oriented research centre of IFMR Society with brand support from Krea University, creates knowledge-for-impact with a mission to solve complex development challenges and enhance socio-economic prosperity.

Their Approach

LEAD collaborates with a wide spectrum of partners from academia, industry, policy and community, to bridge knowledge gaps in micro and small enterprise growth and development, using data analytics and field insights. They design and test innovative solutions and approaches for improving access to finance, markets, technology and skill building and creating an enabling policy and regulatory environment for small and growing enterprises.

What are they working on?

1) Solutions for Transformative Rural Enterprises and Empowerment (STREE)

STREE is a technical assistance program anchored by LEAD, and supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The project aspires to support women-led enterprise development by enabling access to finance, building markets and networks, and generating employment opportunities in rural areas, as part of Government of India's Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM). Under the program, LEAD conducted a survey of over 2,000 women-led rural enterprises, to understand the socio-economic impact of the COVID pandemic and extended lockdowns on their businesses. Data and insights from the survey can be accessed [here](#). This [policy note](#) provides a recovery roadmap for micro and small businesses in Telangana.

2) Evaluation of Government of Tamil Nadu's Covid Assistance Package

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and its adverse impact on various vulnerable sections of society, the Government of Tamil Nadu launched a COVID Assistance Package (CAP) – a rapid response initiative to support the rural economy. The financial support provided by the package has been extended to small scale entrepreneurs, new entrepreneurs/startups, and enterprises in the farm and non-farm sectors. The Tamil Nadu Rural Transformation Project (TNRTP), a World Bank assisted initiative, is the implementing authority for this scheme and TNRTP has commissioned LEAD to conduct an evaluation of the program's impact.



3) Impact of COVID on Microenterprises in India

LEAD and the Global Alliance for Mass Entrepreneurship (GAME) are conducting a panel study to understand how COVID-19 has impacted microbusinesses in India and the coping strategies that they have adopted. This [dashboard](#) features visualisations from a panel dataset of over 2000 microbusinesses, collected over four rounds. Launched in May 2020, the study captures key trends on the impact of the COVID crisis and government-mandated lockdowns on business livelihoods, employment, and the income of small businesses, and their business outlook. Additionally, it captures the economic resilience and market adjustments made by these small businesses to overcome the crisis.

4) Catalyst Atal Incubation Centre

IFMR Society has established Catalyst Atal Incubation Centre in Jaipur under a grant from the NITI Aayog's (Government of India) Atal Innovation Mission. The incubator is supporting startups in the inclusive tech domain who are building digital products and solutions for the last mile, resulting in enhancements to rural/semi-urban livelihoods. As a knowledge partner, LEAD is providing access to real-time, on-ground consumer insights.

Asks:

- Technical advisory/inputs on program design and evaluation of interventions targeted towards micro and small businesses, mentoring support for incubation programs such as Catalyst AIC and exploring joint applications for grant opportunities
- Mapping industry and policy data requirements and knowledge gaps that can inform LEAD's research agenda and future initiatives and enabling access to data and insights from the ecosystem e.g. the Global Accelerator Learning Initiative
- Helping spotlight hiring calls for senior talent to grow our micro and small business team as well as internship/program immersion opportunities for young talent, on an ongoing basis

Offers:

- Collaborate with financial and technical service providers and ecosystem players to test early-stage solutions, and provide rapid insights from the field to inform product/program design and scale-ups
- Share contextual learnings and strategic insights from our micro/small business and financial inclusion portfolios to inform the work of other members and collaborate with them to develop learning outputs
- Convene stakeholder events such as workshops, roundtable discussions, and webinars to catalyse knowledge sharing and identify relevant industry challenges and opportunities for research, evaluation and policy impact



SELCO Foundation

Engages in field-based R&D, as well as evidence and ecosystem building for deployment of sustainable energy solutions that alleviate poverty and enable improvements in household wellbeing, healthcare delivery and livelihoods.

Their Approach

SELCO Foundation focuses on alleviating poverty using sustainable energy solutions as a catalyst, while also helping last mile communities adapt to and mitigate impacts of climate change. The approach includes:

1. Understanding needs of unserved and under-served communities: Systematically identifying diverse needs of communities, understanding and defining the role of sustainability and energy in unserved and underserved communities.
2. High-risk innovation using sustainable solutions: Creating and supporting innovation and sustainable solutions that positively impact wellbeing, healthcare, education and livelihoods.
3. Ecosystem development for long-term sustainability: Fostering ecosystem development in the social sector through holistic thought processes in technology, finance, entrepreneurship and policy.

What are they working on?

1) Innovation

This includes testing, piloting, replication and scale up of energy for livelihood solutions, including a focus on solutions that enable climate change adaptation and mitigation for last mile communities. This also includes development of holistic solutions including technology, appropriate finance and delivery models, skill development and appropriate linkages training. Through this, SELCO foundation has innovated and replicated more than 90 energy for livelihood solutions across agriculture, animal husbandry, textiles and crafts, and micro businesses, thereby impacting more than 400,000 individuals.



To ensure long-term sustainability of these solutions, the organization also seeks to create enabling conditions for local entities to develop, adopt and scale new innovations, including strengthening the financing and skill development ecosystem and supporting the development of conducive, SDG 7 integrated policies.

2) Incubation

The organization focuses on supporting local entrepreneurship on energy and development, through the training and incubation of local clean energy enterprises (across East and North eastern states) and efficient technology enterprises (pan India). The Incubation centre seeks to provide management expertise, intellectual capital, and hand-holding support to enhance the capacity of local enterprises to innovate in the delivery of sustainable energy-driven livelihood solutions (such as efficient solar water pumps, millet and spice processing units, egg incubator, rice mills, sewing machines, looms etc.), to then meet the needs of low income communities across India.

The process includes support on supply chain management, access to finance, business planning installation, sales and servicing expertise based on SELCO India and SELCO Foundation's experience of implementing over 15000+ sustainable energy driven livelihood solutions in India.

Since 2015, more than 50 enterprises have been supported through the incubation effort.

Asks:

- Cross-learning opportunities in similar contexts and regions, specifically to better understand varied approaches to energy and climate-related innovation, financing, skill development and policy
- Linkages with ecosystem stakeholders from nexus sectors such as agriculture, healthcare, other livelihoods, climate action to further explore the opportunities for integration of sustainable energy solutions within these sectors
- Partnerships that can help strengthen the pipeline for local and grassroot-level enterprises working on SDG 7 and SDG 7 nexus issues

Offers:

- Successes and failures, best practices, replicable and scalable solutions and processes (technology, financing, delivery models, capacity building etc.) on energy for livelihoods; SDG 7 nexus programmes
- Processes, tools and resources to develop and operate training and incubation hubs focused on SDG 7 and SDG 7 nexus issues, across geographies.



Clean Energy. Access Network

Is a (non-profit) network of 200+ members across India, committed to supporting, unifying and growing decentralized renewable energy (DRE) companies in India that serve rural and underprivileged communities.

Their Approach

CLEAN focuses on rural and underprivileged communities where reliable, affordable and clean energy plays a unique role in accelerating social, environmental and economic development. CLEAN actively contributes to development and influencing policies for the DRE sector, bridges access to finance for its enterprises, facilitates technology innovations, assists its members in accessing markets and builds capacity of enterprises through trainings.

What are they working on?

1) Policy Engagement

Engaging with the government (central/state) and other regulatory bodies to influence policies that are more conducive to enabling clean energy access for all

2) Access to Finance

Facilitating increase in funding/financing opportunities for CLEAN members, removing barriers, and building the necessary enabling ecosystem of finance, providing legal and technical expertise to members

3) Skill Development and Training

Supporting CLEAN members by addressing critical operational challenges related to their workforce, and enabling them to reach scale through appropriately designed training modules that are compliant to existing systems



4) Technology and Innovation

Facilitating pilot projects, standardization, technology innovation and facilitating technology transfer

5) Knowledge Sharing and Networking

Making information available without barriers to all member and non-member organizations in the sector and facilitating learning and knowledge sharing

6) Access to Market

Supporting members to understand market dynamics in the off-grid sector in India. Exploring different marketing channels members can use to promote their solutions

Asks:

- Partners to facilitate guarantee mechanism for end-user financing
- Social impact networking forums/events providing platforms for CLEAN members to showcase their work and network with relevant stakeholders

Offers:

- A platform to engage with relevant DRE stakeholders
- Robust information channel between practitioners and investors
- Access to the CLEANs dynamic portal, India Renewable Appliances Portal ([I-REAP](#)), which facilitates last mile connectivity of DRE products and technology



Vera Solutions

Is a social enterprise and certified B-corporation providing cloud and mobile solutions that help social sector organizations better track their impact, streamline their operations, and create feedback loops that put data in the hands of those who need it.

Their Approach

Vera Solutions supports grantmakers, social enterprises, and non-profit organizations, strengthening their systems and building their capacity to collect, manage, analyze, and utilize data – whether for impact measurement, project and grant management, community engagement, or CRM.

Vera’s system implementations go through three key phases:

- 1) Discovery and Design: Vera works closely with clients through a series of interactive workshops to identify pain points, document requirements, map new business processes, and design solutions that are both powerful and flexible.
- 2) Configuration and Development: Vera builds the solution leveraging existing tools and technologies like Salesforce, Amp Impact, Taroworks, Titan, PowerBI, and Tableau.
- 3) Rollout and Support: Vera helps the client launch the new solution, providing training and support to build staff capacity not only to use the system but also to manage and adapt it over time.

What are they working on?

1) 2022 Fellowship Cohort

Vera Solutions has its Fellowship program since 2014, with eight cohorts and 84 Fellows coming from 16 countries. Each fellow brings unique expertise and experience, whether in international development, product development, business intelligence, quality assurance, marketing, technology consulting, finance, project management, data management, or business development. Building on an immersive initial month of training, Fellows work with Vera’s diverse global team, dedicated to delivering cutting-edge solutions that help organizations move off antiquated tools and leverage powerful technology that saves them time, money, and headaches.



Amp Impact Gemini Release

Vera's Salesforce-based portfolio management and impact measurement solution, Amp Impact, is set to launch its 15th release ('Gemini') this fall. Amp Impact is a fully integrated solution that serves as a single source of truth for grant makers, international NGOs, impact investors, and accelerators/incubators, allowing organizations to align their impact and organizational goals. Vera's product team continuously works to improve the product based on customer feedback. Recent Amp Impact releases have strengthened the product's features and friendliness for work planning, log-frames, assessments, and data visualization.

Asks:

- Sustainable business initiatives in developing countries in areas where business opportunities and development goals overlap.
- Partnership opportunities to learn and share impact management practices.
- Networking with impact-driven organizations to align on their impact goals.

Offers:

- Cloud based solutions including program management, impact measurement, and CRM solutions.
- Consulting on best practices when managing data on Salesforce.
- End-to-end grant management and reporting and combining program, impact, and operational data using Amp Impact.





Want to connect to the members highlighted here?
Want to showcase your organisation's work?

Contact [Saipriya Salla](#) to be connected to organisations or featured in an upcoming member showcase. ANDE members can also request a feature in our collaboration Showcase, which highlights how ANDE's India chapter is bringing members in India together to collaborate on new projects and initiatives.



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