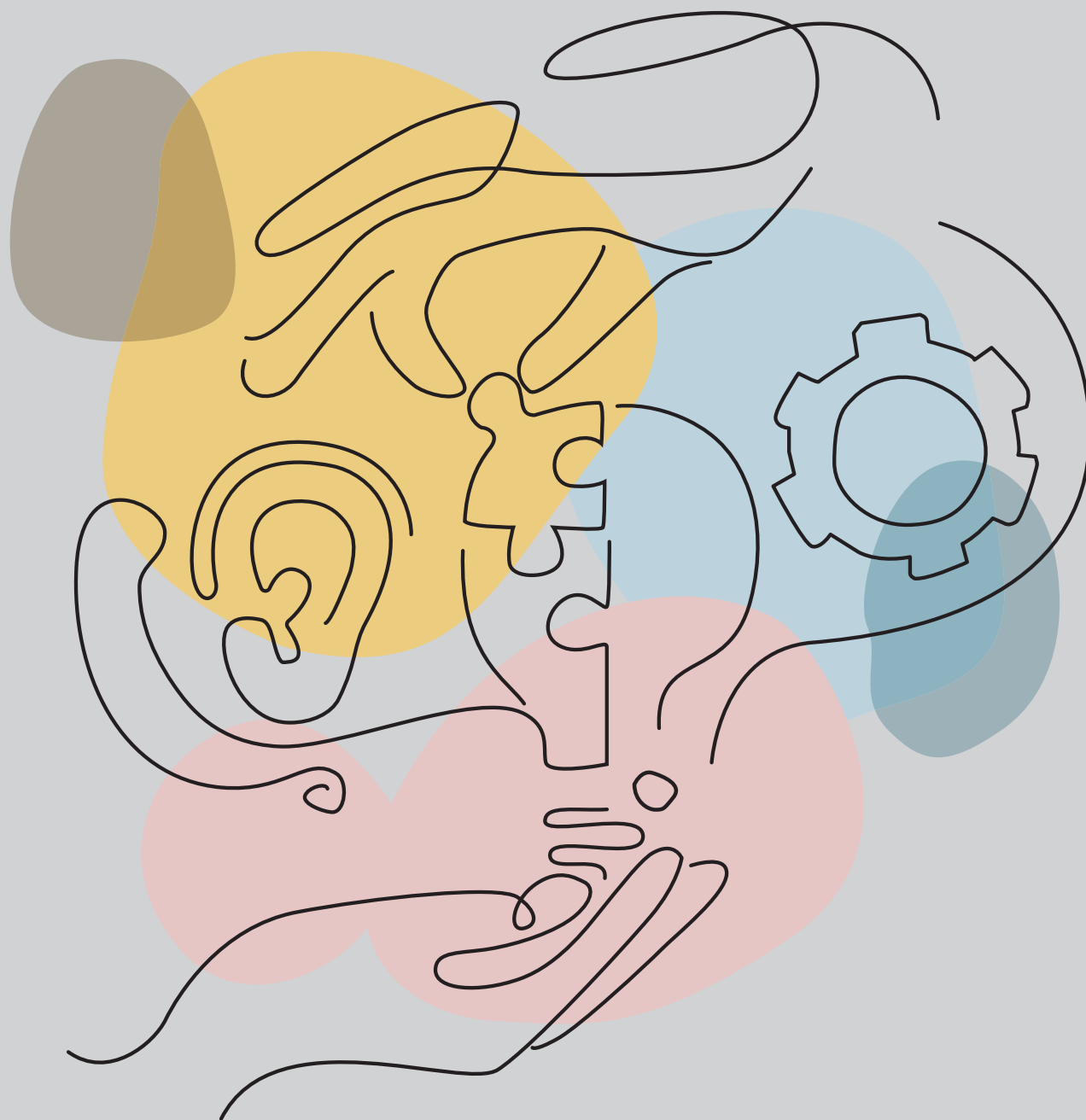Work4Progress

FINDING
Why

The What, How and Do It Yourself of
Social Innovation Led Entrepreneurship and Job Creation

Development Alternatives

"la Caixa" Foundation

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"Social Innovation requires team members to go through 'individual and collective transformation' in order to disrupt typical organisational structures and inter-organisational processes of collaboration, whether at the level of action on ground or meso-level influence of a district level entrepreneurship ecosystem"

-Shrashtant Patara
CEO, Development Alternatives

SOCIAL INNOVATION FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP-LED JOB CREATION

Work4Progress (W4P) promotes 'Sam-Udyam' or inclusive entrepreneurship to create new employment opportunities that are inclusive in nature and systemic by design. Social innovation is at the core of the W4P approach that brings advanced tools and methodologies for key processes of listening, co-creating, prototyping, and accelerating. The starting point and an ongoing principle is deep listening, which lays a solid foundation for community-centeredness, innovation, and social change.

Social innovation uses current resources, creates new networks, relationships and systems that untangle complexities associated with entrepreneurship-led job creation. Most of the entrepreneurship sector in underserved areas are stuck in vicious cycles of subsistence-level activities, and new pathways are necessary to address the growing aspirations of communities, especially youth and women. Through the processes and tools of social innovation, these aspirations and knowledge can be unearthed through listening, harnessed through prototyping innovative solutions and then spread through collective action.

Deploying social innovation to transform entrepreneurship practice from a traditional subsistence approach to an innovative, interconnected one, require reflective practice. Through reflection, we consistently find answers to the question **'WHY'.**

WHY SOCIAL INNOVATION?

HOW WE IMPLEMENT IT?

WHAT CAN BE THE IMPACT ON
YOUR SYSTEM?

In asking and answering these questions, individuals and their organisations transform along with the communities of practice. Principles at the intersection of social innovation and design thinking guide the internal and external transformation process.

In **Finding WHY** we will dig deeper into the **WHY** of **Community Listening, Prototyping for Innovation, Accelerating through Collective Action.**

BACKGROUND

In finding WHY, we will dig deeper into the WHY of the Community Listening, Prototyping for Innovation, and

Accelerating through Collective Action.

Each toolkit starts with an introductory section, followed by a WHY and HOW section on the subject. Moving on, it contains several tools that help in initiating and deepening listening, prototyping and collaborative action, respectively. These tools build upon each other and should ideally be used iteratively and in conjunction with the others. To make the tools more comprehensive, the tools contain steps that can be followed to get a better understanding in terms of usability of the tool. Each tool has been also been exemplified through a section on tool in practice followed by ground stories and interactive Do It Yourself templates, that can be used while deploying the tool.

The toolkits are interconnected and inform each other, with the core being listening. By listening to communities and contexts, we gain insights for prototyping for entrepreneurship. And, based on the innovations we prototype with communities and stakeholders, we enable conversations, partnerships, and collaborations to collectively accelerate the impact. These processes are iterative, continuous, and non-linear, and the essence of our work and the toolkit series.

We have revitalised our connections with the community by listening to co-design relevant solutions that can strengthen entrepreneurial ecosystems and networks of collaboration in our geographies. We hope the series can inform your efforts and assist you in finding your reasons 'WHY'. Together then, we can unleash entrepreneurial energies and build robust ecosystems that can invigorate local economies by addressing aspirations and driving innovation.

"Inclusive entrepreneurship is a phenomenon that is characterised by a systemic change that enables under-represented groups such as the youth and women to access entrepreneurship opportunities, thereby leading to social inclusion, quality employment, and sustainable economic growth."

- Kanika Verma
Associate Vice President
*Development Alternatives Group*

PROTOTYPING
FOR INNOVATION

The Prototyping for Innovation toolkit highlights the use-cases of the rich data generated through community listening to co-create solutions. In prototyping and testing co-created solutions in local systems, we understand the working of the ecosystem better and strengthen it to support entrepreneurship.
Prototyping leads to the identification of leverage points and generation of flows of information, capital, and resources.

COMMUNITY
LISTENING

In the community listening toolkit, we will focus on the importance of listening deeply to communities, to recognise needs, opportunities, challenges and interdependencies within the local entrepreneurial system. We will outline crucial ways in which listening guides inquiry, co-creation and adaptation of practice, especially in complex interventions like entrepreneurship. Specifically, we outline the principles, tools and methods that can provide a framework to the richness of conversations and interactions on the ground. These include virtual ethnography, Day in the Life of, community chat groups and community canvas exercises.
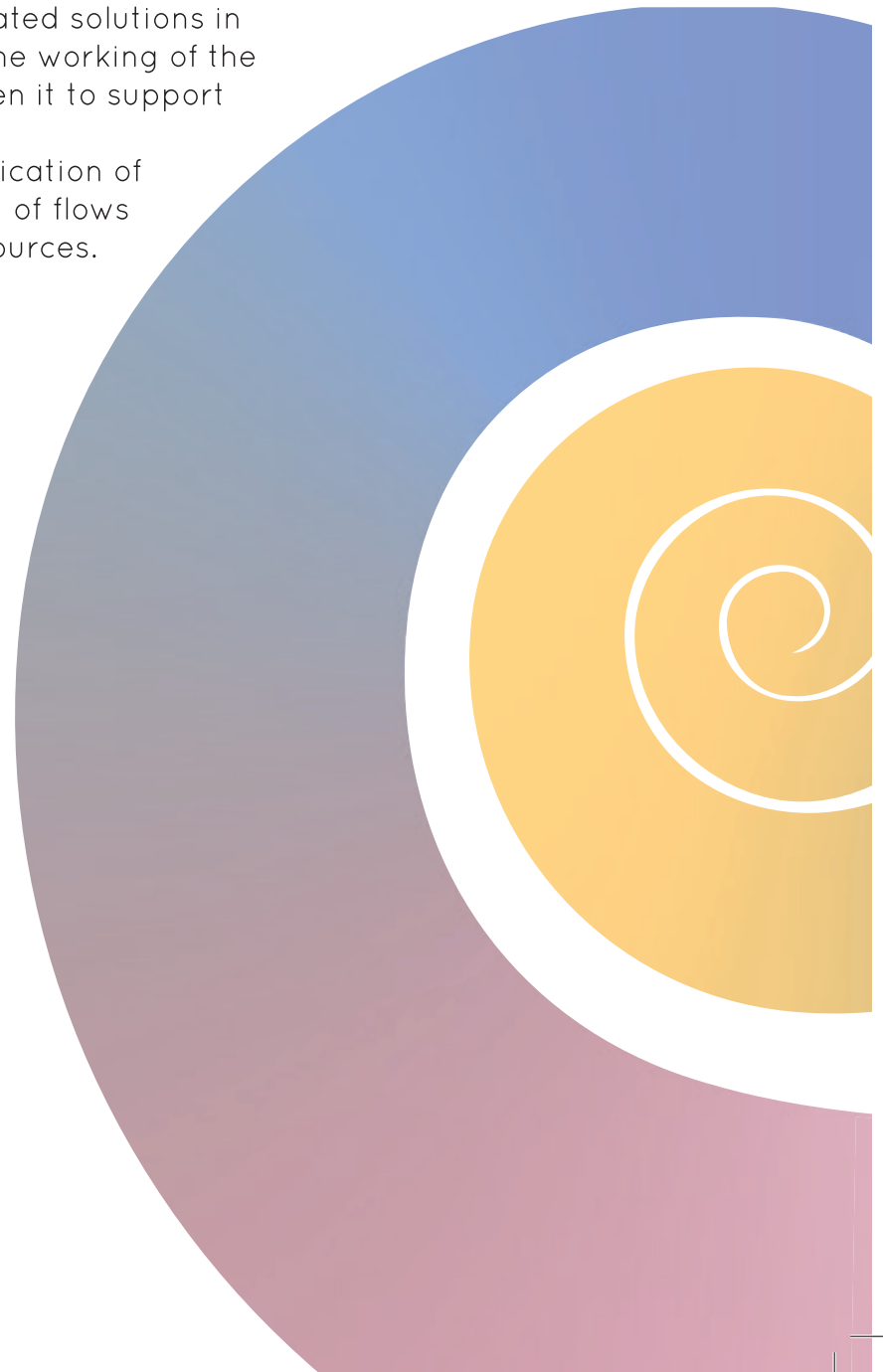
ACCELERATING THROUGH
COLLECTIVE ACTION

The next step spiralling from innovations and deeper connections of listening and prototyping is driving collective action. The toolkit summarises the importance of collective action in strengthening relationships within the local ecosystem and up-taking solutions that can become the norm. Collective action between communities, entrepreneurs, stakeholders and practitioners transforms local ecosystems for innovation and inclusion. The toolkit outlines tools like Coalitions, Cluster-based entrepreneurship..

Work4Progress

COMMUNITY
LISTENING

Development Alternatives

"la Caixa" Foundation

LISTENING

In this part we outline the principles and processes of deep listening. We refer to the values, elements and tools essential to gain a holistic understanding of local narratives around entrepreneurship. This includes needs, aspirations and challenges in communities, especially existing and aspiring entrepreneurs. To uncover local dynamics through listening we use real-time and virtual tools that enable maintenance of connections with communities and entrepreneurs.

We believe deep listening is central for designing relevant solutions for job creation through entrepreneurship. The practice ensures inclusion of the voices of communities to co-create solutions.

In this section we will understand

- Why is listening important for promoting entrepreneurship in underserved areas?
- What insights are unearthed that can inform co-creation and prototyping of solutions?
- How can we listen to communities and entrepreneurs effectively?

Who is this writing for?

This toolkit is for those who work with communities and are taking on the role of researchers.

The nature of the team

The team should be a mix of those who work directly with the community, those who manage the community workers as well as the overall programme managers, those who would like to use deep listening to co-create and unearth solutions, and those who manage the entire action research project.

WHY DO WE LISTEN?

Initiatives for job creation and enterprise development have largely followed a top-down model with little reference to ground realities especially in rural communities. Listening is therefore the first crucial step in designing solutions with communities based on social innovation.

As social innovators for entrepreneurship-led development, we start by unlearning what we already know about the community to deeply understand complexities for addressing unemployment in rural communities. We adopt methods of human centered design and social innovation for listening deeply to the communities we work with – immersing ourselves in their everyday lives and understanding their local narratives and culture. These methods in our work have unearthed insights on local contexts. For example, through our listening exercises we have understood ambiguous cultural norms around entrepreneurship such as role models of success are often local and not national level celebrities. We have also gained perspectives on individual aspirations, community resources and ecosystem barriers for cultivating a culture of entrepreneurship. Designing solutions based on these insights have relevance and resonance at local scales.

For deep listening, we need to switch between observing and interpreting, to recognize shifts in the local system for entrepreneurship like a strengthened network or greater acceptance of entrepreneurship as a career path for youth. Most recently in response to the COVID-19 crisis, we went back to our core principles and tools for listening to identify possibilities for new connections and opportunities, furthering local entrepreneurial systems. Along with our network of partners across India, we conducted virtual listening sessions with communities strengthening our connections with entrepreneurs and stakeholders, to adapt to the crisis and build resilience.

> **"Har ek ki suno, aur har ek sai seekho kyunki har koi sab kuch nahi jaanta lekin har ek kuch na kuch jaroor jaanta hai"**
>
> **~ Pooja Kushwaha**
> an aspiring writer from Mirzapur,
> Uttar Pradesh

Deep Listening helps with -

- Understand social and cultural norms around employment

- Identify needs, opportunities and challenges

- Build connections with community members and other relevant stakeholders

- Uncover existing and emerging narratives on entrepreneurship

- Gain insights to design prototypes and solutions with communities

THREE LEVELS OF DEEP LISTENING

Listening to the words and the story: This implies listening to the story - or stories of the individual. The story may come out smoothly and logically, or it may come out in pieces full of tangents. It is the job of the interviewer to put all these together into one coherent narrative and then check with the respondent whether understanding of what has been said is correct.

Listening to the feelings behind the words and the story: There are times when words only do not fully convey what the person intends to say. If there is anger in the respondent's voice when recalling his/her experiences, it means something entirely different from when the respondent's voice reveals affection for an experience.

Listening to the underlying beliefs: This is the most difficult part of deep listening. Yet, we may argue that this is the most critical element of deep listening. This is an area where the interviewer gets to understand what the respondent truly believes about himself or herself, the enterprise he or she is engaged in, and what he or she believes about the world around her or him.

Dos in Listening:

- Pay full attention to the respondent

- Put off the mobile

- Turn your body towards the speaker

- Look at the respondent

- Ensure that there are no disturbances

- Be interested

After 3-5 minutes, paraphrase what you have heard and checked with the respondent whether you have understood. Also, check for underlying feelings and beliefs as and when you think you have understood them
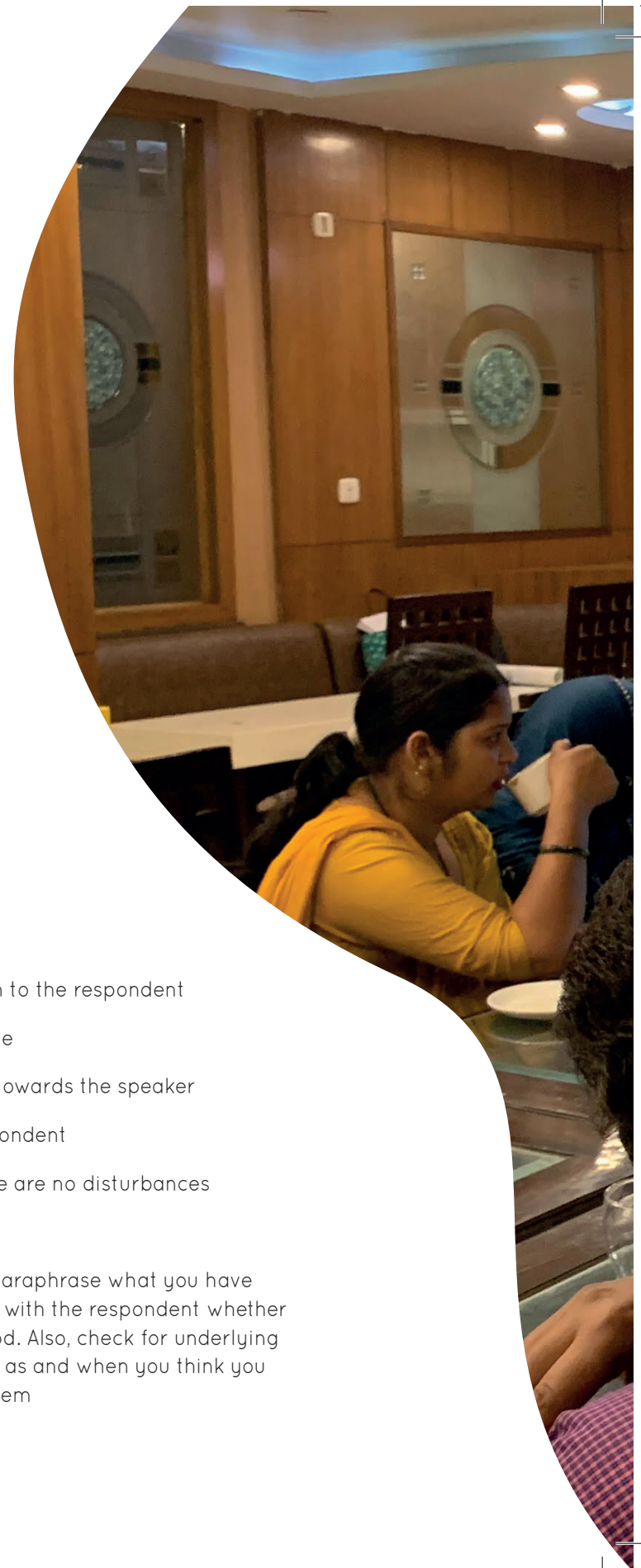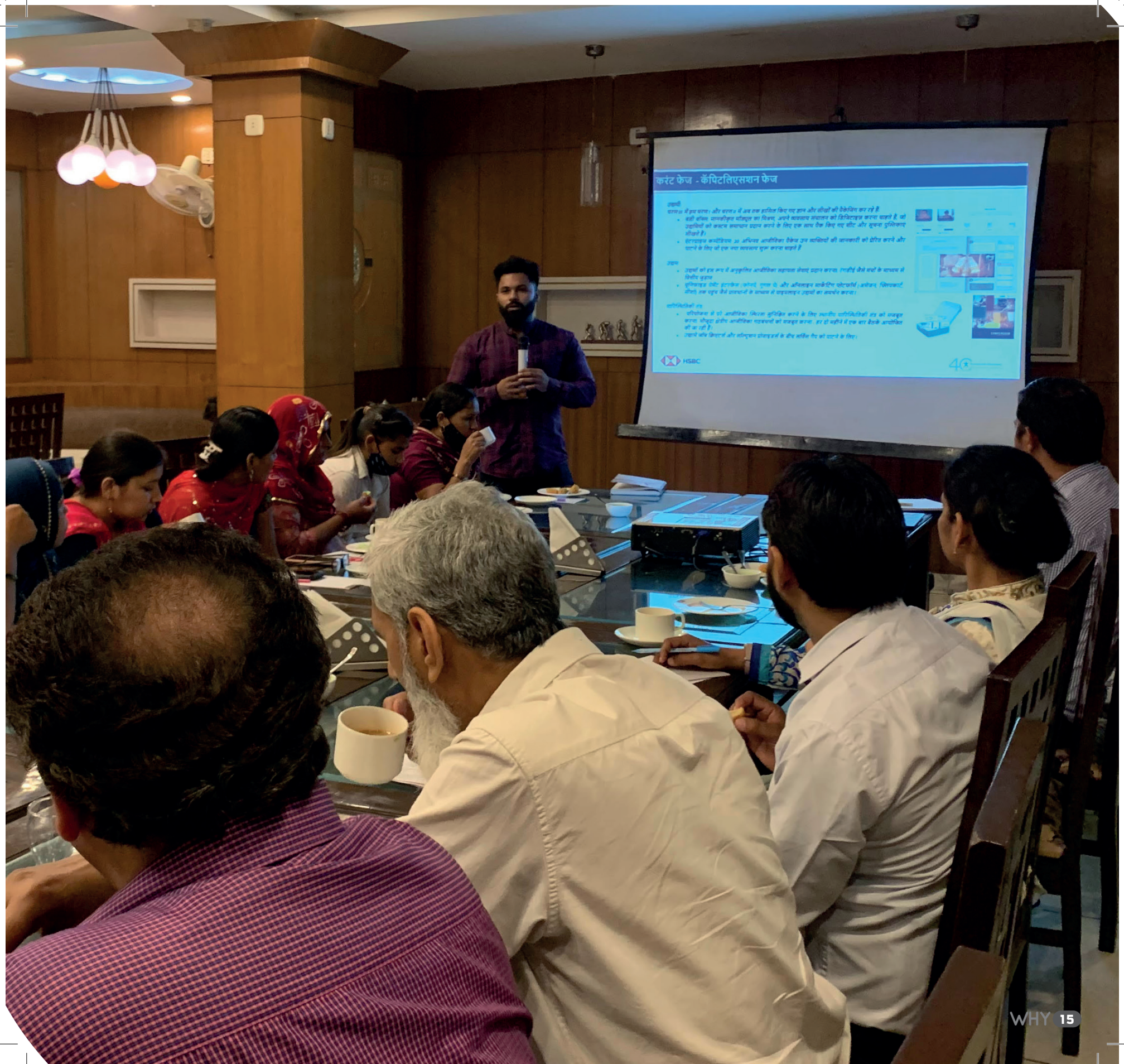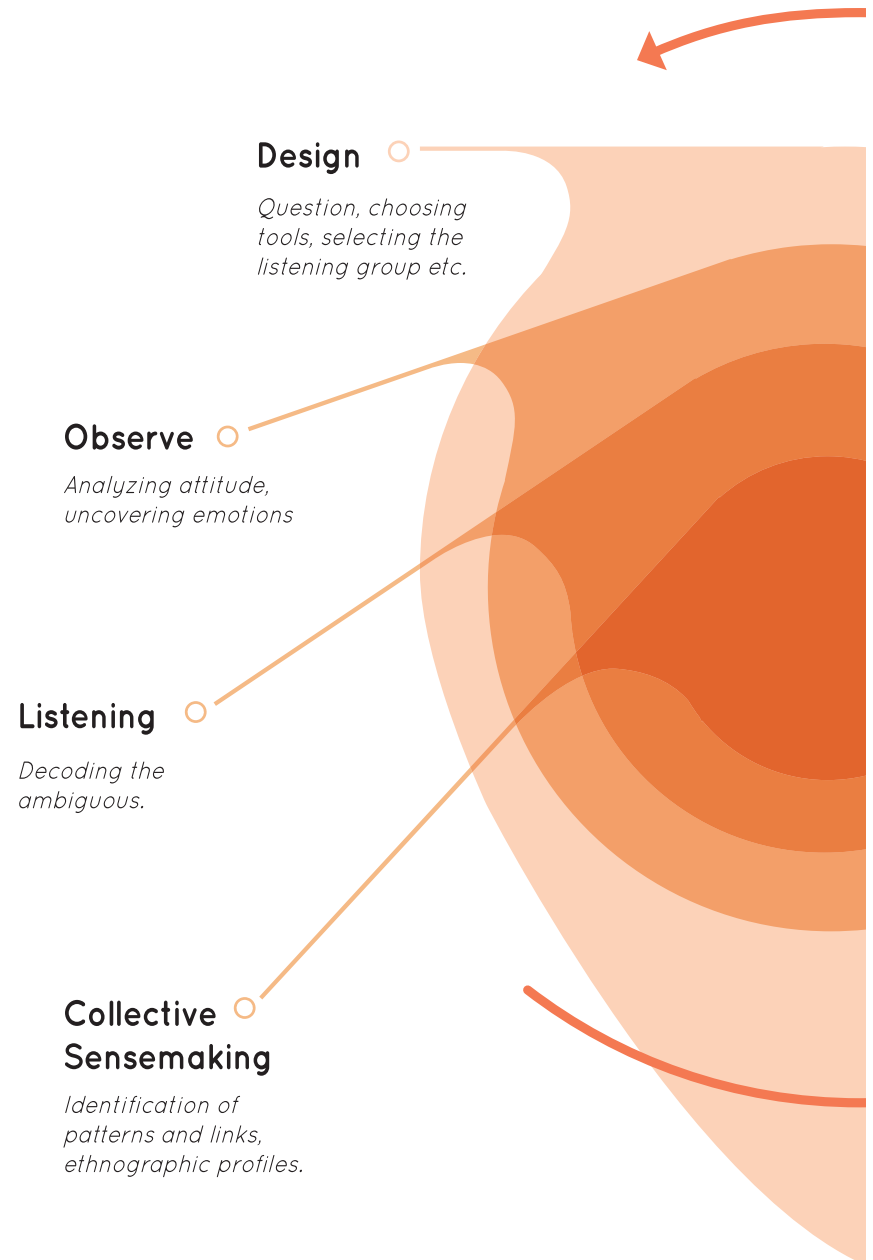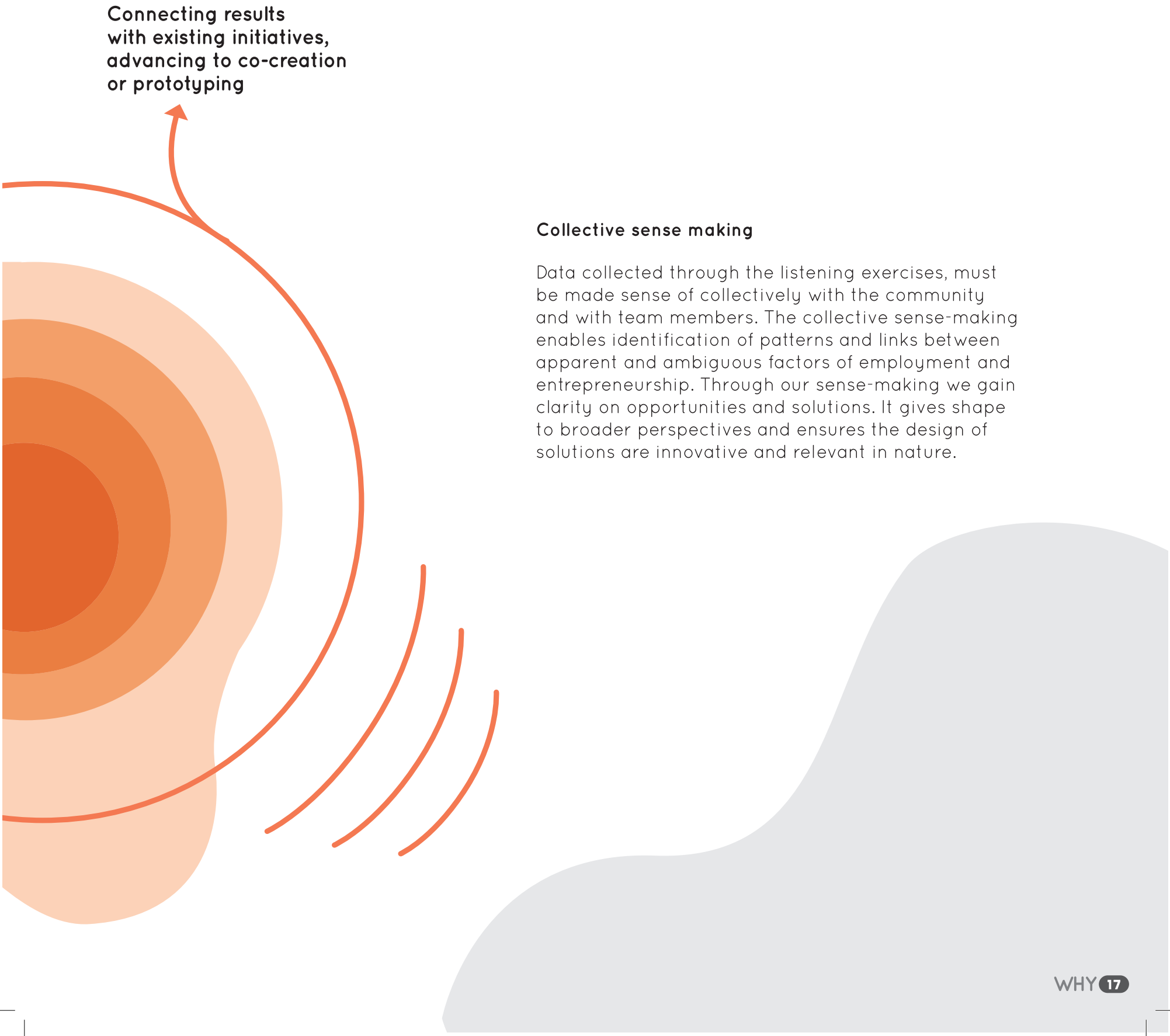
HOW **TO LISTEN?**

Observe and Listen

Though a continuous process, this is the starting point of deep listening where we interplay between roles of a listener and observer. Deep listening is not just about documenting/registering the apparent but also decoding the ambiguous. For example, women entrepreneurs face different challenges while running an enterprise. While some might be visible like lack of access to market and finance, there might be social complexities that affect their enterprise like community's opinion on women entrepreneurs; issues of mobility and ownership of assets. Some of these complexities are well-known, however in the process of listening we can uncover individual notions of women entrepreneurs, on how they perceive these social restrictions.

> **Listening becomes so natural that we often confuse it with hearing and become blasé about the process. Effective listening leads to a deeper understanding and you are likely to develop stronger and more meaningful relationships with people.**
>
> **~ Sunil Jain**
> Member of Regional
> Entrepreneurship Coalition

Design
Question, choosing tools, selecting the listening group etc.

Observe
Analyzing attitude, uncovering emotions

Listening
Decoding the ambiguous.

Collective Sensemaking
Identification of patterns and links, ethnographic profiles.

**Connecting results
with existing initiatives,
advancing to co-creation
or prototyping**

Collective sense making

Data collected through the listening exercises, must
be made sense of collectively with the community
and with team members. The collective sense-making
enables identification of patterns and links between
apparent and ambiguous factors of employment and
entrepreneurship. Through our sense-making we gain
clarity on opportunities and solutions. It gives shape
to broader perspectives and ensures the design of
solutions are innovative and relevant in nature.

Collective sensemaking help us gain insights on

- **Framing fundamental questions to give shape to our research and solution design.** For example, while engaging with communities during the COVID19 pandemic, we realized the expanded scope for the E-Rickshaw enterprise prototype to address basic needs fulfilment in their local areas. In the absence of other transportation facilities, the E-rickshaws proved to be a cost-effective service for individuals, farmers and local administrative staff. Our women e-rickshaw entrepreneurs contacted the local administrative officers and provided them transport services during the crisis. They also collaborated with general stores units to provide door to door essential items in their villages. Going forward, we see the E-rickshaw as important for system change at the local level, instead of only as easy and eco-friendly transportation.

- **Answering questions, we may have about directions to take to promote entrepreneurship.** While engaging with hundreds of entrepreneurs, service providers and different stakeholders of the entrepreneurial ecosystem during the lockdown, we realized that emergent sector opportunities like digitally enhanced common service centers (CSCs) called information kiosks were able to adapt and build resilience in the local economy. Entrepreneurs were able to form local linkages for providing diverse services to their customers. Our Information Kiosks connected with local general stores; vegetable vendors, to function them as a one-stop centers for local needs. This grew the sense for promoting innovative and inclusive entrepreneurship in underserved areas, and the potential it holds for creating shifts

- **Build a collective understanding of local dynamics to inform our work.** Usually different team members hold information without being able to share it with others. During social distancing, this issue is aggravated. Common dashboards for sense-making and regular meetings to discuss different learnings is an iterative exercise to keep bringing everyone back to a shared vision, building a shared reality

RADHA AHIRVAR

leading member of the Locally Owned Community Operated (LOCO) water supply model in Madore, Bundelkhand.

Radha is a shy woman who is barely heard in front of village elders and male members. But when it comes to the LOCO models, she is assertive in her opinions. Being responsible for running the LOCO model, she was invited to speak at a national level event. Radha fearlessly shared how the set-up of a water system has improved the lives of women and children in the village. Motivating other women to take charge of change, she shares

" I never used to go out, but today I am here to represent my village and my story. Even though my education is basic, entrepreneurship has given me the power to express my issues and work towards fighting social discrimination. "

Next up, there are listening tools that have been effective to us to stay connected with communities and other stakeholders. Each tool helps - deepen our insights and understanding of the
LOCAL CONTEXT, AND EMBEDDING INTERVENTIONS

TOOL 1

VIRTUAL ETHNOGRAPHY

Virtual ethnography applies the principles of ethnography like immersion, holistic understanding - focusing on relations among activities and native point of view to virtual modes of communication. Virtual ethnography helps in:

- **Uncovering and analyzing** relevant attitudes and emotions of communities
- Enabling methodological discussions that enables listener to give a more **concrete meaning to analysis**
- **Cover wide** ground remotely

STEPS

1 **Identify 'people'** that is the individuals we will listen to. It is useful to have a diverse set of people as it not only helps in getting variety of responses but also validates issues that have arisen from different conversations. It is important to consider each actor in the entrepreneurial ecosystem as an important person and thus include everyone from the micro, meso and macro level

2 A virtual ethnography session is a conversation and not an interview; hence it is important to **prepare a frame for our questions** that guides the conversation on mutual concerns

3 **Decide recording tools,** we can use different tools like audio recorder, field notes, and photographs to record our listening process. It is vital to ask for permission while you are recording your interaction

4 **Conduct the session,** try to conduct your sessions with people you are designing for. Put them at ease first by asking more general questions before getting specific. Ask open-ended questions instead of yes-or-no questions to get the conversation going. Audio recording your session will be useful for sense making later

5 **Sense making of findings** Qualitative data acquired Virtual Ethnography exercise is recorded on an MIS and cross checked with other quantitative data points. An entrepreneur from a virtual session might express an increase in the income, however the enterprise tracker* measuring his/her data might not be reflecting the same. Similarly, a potential women entrepreneur might have high potential of setting up a particular enterprise and thus considered as a low potential entrepreneur, on the contrary through ethnographic interaction we may find out that it's her family that's the roadblock which could be resolved by speaking with them.

TIME

15-20 minutes per session

QUESTIONS

Semi-structured

RECORDING TOOLS

Audio recording, notes and MIS

Virtual Ethnography in Practice

During the nation-wide lockdown, we continued to maintain a personal connect with entrepreneurs and communities by adopting principles of virtual ethnography – being patient in listening and maintaining continuous dialogue. We went back to principles like empathy and immersion – that are important tenets of our work, to understand the new contexts in which the entrepreneurs were functioning (or not), and the emergent needs in communities during crises.

The demands of social distancing that forced us apart from the field, required us to employ and adapt through the use of digital technologies and new means of communication, with the communities and each other. We focussed on using the tools available to us – such as phone and video calls, WhatsApp groups, contact with field coordinators to remain connected with entrepreneurs and communities. The use of calls and chat groups unearthed new insights and essential information of ground realities during the nationwide lockdown. We identified **needs** such as access to essential goods and services, access to the accurate information, and financial and market linkages of enterprises; **challenges** like operational barriers pertaining to closed markets, rising social discrimination and uncertainty among entrepreneurs; and **opportunities** such as those in the digital space.

To share findings across our network to inform program strategy to be more responsive, we are implementing simple tools such as a centralized interview recording sheet and chat groups with communities. These enable connections between members of the entire network, building its strength and cohesiveness, elements most needed during a crisis.

Good Practice:

- While conducting the session, teams of 2-3 diverse team members (gender, specialization) is useful to obtain different interpretations of the conversations and observations.

- Don't start with a solution in mind. - Build rapport by asking about the person's day, how they are and empathizing with them

- Plan enough time before and after your interactions to reflect, catch your breath, gather your thoughts, and record any quick observations.

ETHNOGRAPHY RESEARCH JOURNAL

TEMPLATE FOR FIELD NOTES

WHO ARE YOU LISTENING TO?

NAME:

DETAILS: ☐ ENTREPRENEUR ☐ FIELD STAFF ☐ PARTNERS

GENDER:

DATE:

TIME:

HOUR:

PLACE:

MEDIUM OF ENGAGEMENT:

Area of discussion?

Key observations

Challenges faced

Next Steps

Summary

ETHNOGRAPHY RESEARCH JOURNAL

TEMPLATE FOR SENSE MAKING

DATE:

TIME:

HOUR:

PLACE:

MEDIUM OF ENGAGEMENT:

MAIN POINTS FROM DISCUSSION:

NEXT STEPS
∨

KEY WORDS:

CONNECTIONS TO OTHER DATA:

CONCLUDION POINTS:

Main Ideas

Needs / Opportunities

Challenges

Any other observation

Follow up / Further work

OPEN DIALOGUE FOR SOLIDARITY

> *Aao faisala karte aaj hi, kya bhed hai aur kya nahi; poochein ye sabko abhi, ek hi toh hai zindagi*

~ Pooja Khushwaha
('Kya Galat Kya Sahi')

A group of young girls are sitting in a circle in a well-lit room somewhere in Mirzapur city, discussing their dreams and aspirations with sparkle in their eyes. One amongst them, Pooja, aspires to be a writer. Actually, a few like Pooja have (re)discovered their love for writing, and are dabbling in poetry, prose and opinion pieces on social issues. Local publications like Jansatta and Aj Hindi Daily are encouraging their interests and talents and have carried a few of their pieces. You can read Pooja's article on the rise of domestic violence where she engages with data from the National Commission for Women highlighting a 47% increase during the lockdown. Or the disconnect Sadiya highlights between the University Grants Commission and University of Allahabad's policies on the current and graduating batch of university students. While writing unleashes their creative potential, the girls aspire for more; for greater freedom to take decisions to fulfil their dreams and define their destiny themselves.

IKIGAI THROUGH OPEN DIALOGUE

To drive inclusion and innovation in livelihood opportunities for women and enable a cultural shift in their engagement with economic opportunities through entrepreneurship, Development Alternatives (DA) initiated the **Work 4 Progress Technology Challenge** in 2019. Servelots-Janastu (henceforth Janastu) and Medha Learning Foundation emerged as the challenge winners for their technology expertise and innovative implementation approach to create virtual co-working spaces for young women in Eastern UP.

The two organisations subsequently combined their vision and co-created processes to design a virtual platform where women between the ages of 18-25 years can learn and share ideas, skills and talent within a network. With the help of an electronic device called 'Webinar Pi', audio-visual communication from groups of young women in different villages are now being recorded, synchronised, annotated and shared among themselves and their communities. It is envisioned that the process of sharing will initiate peer discussions that can enable the young girls to overcome challenges to join the mainstream economy.

In order to develop and deploy such a tool, the team has adopted a 'modified Ikigai' exercise based on the Japanese concept to find purpose in life. The three kinds of sessions: Meri Pehchaan (my identity), Mere Sapne (my dreams) and Mera Gameplan (my plan) enable them to discover what they were good at and what they loved doing. In the nine dialogue sessions (both physical and virtual) since February 2020, young girls have often expressed their need and desire to be articulate in their communication. The listening sessions reveal that the girls hope to develop abilities in three key areas: being able to pitch their "hunar" (skills) while clearly positioning their strengths; working on their strengths without being limited by societal expectations or the assumptions attached with being a girl; and "knowing the computer" to teach, write and help their families and communities with technology and digitally enabled work.

CAPTURING THE SOUND OF UNISON

Deep listening during such sessions has helped the team modify their approach and the technology in real-time. Initially, the modules aimed to help the girls develop an entrepreneurial outlook were solely focused on finance and marketing. However, after these listening sessions, the activities were redesigned to focus on aspirational needs like computing, communicating in English, and basic market demand assessments. This adaptive approach helped evolve the planned co-creation activities. For instance, when girls expressed an interest in computer related jobs, an exposure session was conducted to discuss the basics of internet, smartphones and computing.

These listening sessions were also crucial to tailor the technology to local needs. Since infrastructure in villages was not suitable to physically install an internet exchange, the team developed a cloud-based data sharing approach. When the groups of girls spoke in unison during discussions, the team realised that a single camera was not the ideal technology to capture videos. A motion camera with large focal length was installed, which now attempts to capture the richness of the conversations among the women.

"

Inspired by the initial success of the technology challenge, DA is now delving deeper into discovering these hidden narratives by developing build a global listening platform for the youth "

~ **Positive Sparks**

WINDOWS THAT LIBERATE DREAMS

The Technology Challenge was launched with a vision to deploy technology to help women "walk into a world beyond their village" (Shrashtant Patara). In the months since it was launched, co-created and now tested on ground, the early sparks of realisation of the vision are becoming visible – young women like Pooja and Sadiya are beginning to take small steps outside their villages. New narratives are being encouraged for young women around career trajectories through the technology driven solidarity platforms that can build agency and achieve economic empowerment. Such conversations are enabling DA to navigate multiple realities of the lives of young women to discover their hidden voices as individuals and as a community. Unearthing of these narratives through deep listening, however, is a continuous process; discoveries that will only grow as listening processes are accentuated with the use of technology.

The intervention of the challenge does not seek to use the newest technology in the market to 'tap' entrepreneurial energies. Instead, it facilitates a deepening of inner strength and social cohesion in communities with a focus on dialogue through empathy. For our collective vision of creating a grassroots movement rooted in equity and sensitivity, it will be essential to create spaces that are "safe" and "welcoming" enough for unrestricted dialogue among women. Technology can be disruptive but through listening it can also support the spread of empathy and solidarity. It can enable many like Pooja to self-actualize their potential and create the change they wish to see.

TOOL 2

DAY IN THE LIFE OF

Day in the life of is a type of ethnographic study to observe an individual as he performs his day- to day activities. As a deep listening tool, it allows us to delve into the daily life of our participant of interest – such as an entrepreneur or a stakeholder. It is a human centered approach where the researcher assumes the role of an observer or "a fly on the wall" as the subject goes about his/her day. This tool helps the researcher understand things that are otherwise invisible in more formal research settings and lets us observe the behaviors of our subject first-hand as opposed to depending on other sources to understand it.

Day in the Life of helps in identification of:

- Identifying the **regular but important things** of the life of an individual such as how the entrepreneur interacts with their families, customers and the community

- Provides **insights into the needs, behavior and goals** of the individual to understand the smaller shifts or changes coming in the life of the entrepreneur and his family

- Give **concrete meaning to other analysis** that is more conceptual or 'declarative,' such as quantitative facts on entrepreneurship

regular but important things

needs, behavior and goals

concrete meaning to other analysis

QUESTIONS

Semi-structured or Unstructured

RECORDING TOOLS

Recording template, audio recorder, photographs
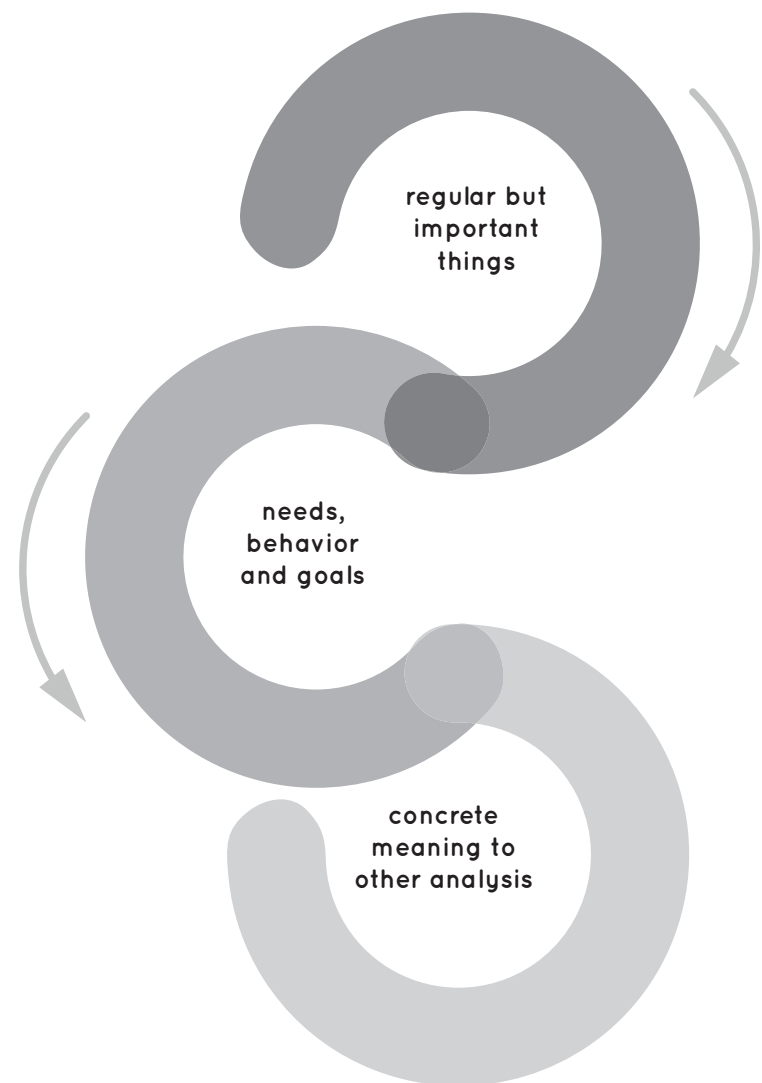
STEPS

1 Pick your person: Person here is with whom we will conduct a Day in the Life of exercise. This can be budding or existing entrepreneurs; field staff; support service providers and even the program team. Selection can be on the basis of current work, gender, age, enterprise type, geography and age of enterprise to bring in diversity

2 Take their consent: Before starting with the exercise it is important to take the consent of the people involved. We are going to record and note some very personal aspects of a person's life and their willingness is important. This will help in building trust with people and gaining meaningful insights about their day-to-day life

3 Frame some basic themes which we want to touch upon during our exercise. A preliminary interaction with the person might help us in coming up with themes around what they feel; what they do and how they do it

4 Deciding the recording tools, you can use different tools like audio recorder, field notes, and photographs to record your listening process

5 Conduct the exercise and play it by ear. It becomes important to cause minimum disruption to the participant's daily activities. Our presence must not act as a barrier to their day to day functioning.

6 Sense making of findings Data acquired from the exercise can help in giving meaning to other quantitative data points about the community member. Eg: In spending the day with an entrepreneur we recognize their challenges of market connectivity. Through the exercise, it might come up that his family has only one motorbike which is used by the entrepreneur's father for commuting and hence the entrepreneur is unable to sell his products in the market.

Good Practice:

- Identifying key personality traits of the person

- Adding descriptions and texture to the person, such as their surroundings, family life, workspace to orient the reader better

- The day of the observant can be divided into time frames described in detail

DAY IN THE LIFE OF TEMPLATE

DATE:

TIME (1 DAY OR MORE):

WHOM ARE YOU OBESERVING?

☐ ENTREPRENEUR   ☐ FIELD STAFF   ☐ PARTNERS

	EARLY MORNING	LATE MORNING	AFTERNOON	EVENING	NIGHT
Where is the person right now?					
Who all are around him?					
What is the person doing?					
How is he feeling?					
Actions or main priorities?					
How is he interacting with other people around him?					

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS:
CHALLENGE/OPPORTUNITIES/NEXT STEPS

A DAY WITH THE MOTORBIKE RIDER IN MIRZAPUR

The Early Morning Route

It is 4 a.m. in the morning, and the smoke from a little hut in Dhannipatti, Mirzapur, diffuses into the foggy dawn. The little splinter of light is coming from Pragya Devi's house, where her youngest daughter, Victoria, is awake, dutifully making chai (tea). As the smoke gets thicker, a cloudy screen envelope the home. Pragya Devi, her husband and three children begin their day at the crack of dawn. At 8 a.m., everyone is ready and loading up into a rickshaw for a 'fun day' as the children get off from school early for vaccination. Sunny ji, Pragya Devi's husband, and the kids place themselves at the back, and Pragya Devi takes the driver's seat. They set off to drop the children to school.

It is 11:30 a.m. Pragya Devi walks through narrow paths towards her rustic home. What she describes as a humble abode comprises an attractive open space with a wild forest for a backyard. In the open space, you will find a seared cook stove, a rocky wooden bed and

a carpet with personal belongings scattered all over. Creepers and mango trees serve as a clothing line, and as the sunlight gets harsher and fills the room with warmth, her children come back from school. Two of her five children are in a boarding school, and two others just got vaccinated, but are running wild in their house, being goaded by their mother to take a bath. The youngest one

> " I first got enchanted with riding bikes at sixteen, after I topped in an exam. "

is just fourteen months old, and is currently getting the royal treatment of a hot oil massage by his mother. It is an age-old tradition that is believed to strengthen the baby's bones and improve sleep patterns. As the smell of coconut oil meanders in the house, Pragya Devi shares the details of her 'morning route' that she just got back from.

Every morning, after dropping her children along with a few other children from her village to school, Pragya Devi heads to the main market area to start the 'morning route' of her e-rickshaw business. She usually charges fifteen rupees for one drop-off per person if the distance is within three kilometers.

If business is good in the first half of the day, she instantly buys vegetables for the family, but one constant on her daily rounds is a packet of freshly roasted groundnuts that she loves munching while driving around. Pragya Devi is a good Christian, and a great mother. However, her passion for automobiles is what describes her the best. While this passion for women in her community is rare, it is revolutionary to see a married woman clad in a sari and a vermilion mark on her head, riding an e-rickshaw transporting men, women and children around the patriarchal area of Mirzapur.

Pragya Devi says, "I first got enchanted with riding bikes at sixteen, after I topped in an exam." Her father was an academic man, and upon hearing the good news, he let Pragya Devi have her first bicycle. Riding this, gave her a sense of independence she never had, and had always dreamt of. Amidst all the story telling, she tells us that when she was married she starved two days every week to save up for a second hand motorcycle! And after several months of possibly unhealthy and unbreakable stubbornness, she got a motorcycle. Chotu, her son, shares that children in school come up to him saying, "Wow! Your mother is the one who rides the motorcycle." And both the school-going children (Chotu and Victorya) are content and proud of this identity. On some days, they are willing to wake up half an hour early, so that Pragya Devi is able to drop them off on the bike or the e-rickshaw to school.

The Sixteen-Year-Old Bike Pragya Devi says, "During my first few rounds on the e-rickshaw, I got different reactions. Probably because it is strange for a woman to ride an e-rickshaw." From women being astonished when they first see her, to women feeling proud of her - Pragya Devi has observed her community come to terms with this 'shock' in their environment. On one such rounds, a young girl, who is currently a nurse, exclaimed, "If she can do it, we can do it." Pragya Devi carries the message for women empowerment with her wherever she goes, creating a positive domino effect. Sunnyji is a plumber and his job is project based, which gives him time to help Pragya Devi run her enterprise. Along with other women and his children, he also makes sure that the baby gets the attention he needs. What's most interesting in the day spent with Pragya Devi is the manner in which traditional and modern customs blend together and create a beautiful life. The juxtaposition of the traditional cook stove and the

> " During my first few rounds on the e-rickshaw, I got different reactions. Probably because it is strange for a woman to ride an e-rickshaw. "

bike, or the traditional baby massages and the e-rickshaw, is jarring, but at the same time, in the words of Sunny ji, "[They] can't imagine life another way." As Pragya Devi comes back home after her evening rounds, the kids sense the vehicle approaching from a kilometre away and come running to take a short joyride in the e-rickshaw.

Pragya Devi co-created the idea of turning her love for motorcycles into an enterprise, in July 2018. She accumulated start-up capital from her savings and a loan from a credit facility for purchasing an e-rickshaw. The e-rickshaw was inaugurated by Chotu on 14 November 2018, which is celebrated as Children's Day in India. With a new source of income, Pragya Devi is providing a better quality of life for her family. The very first thing she did was, install an electric connection in her house. Before this, she used to walk three kilometers to charge her phone and vehicle, at her maternal home. It has been five months since Pragya Devi became an e-rickshaw entrepreneur and change agent in her community. She has ignited a spark in many other young girls to follow their dreams, no matter how unconventional they may be. She is no short of a local celebrity, and has been awarded the "Women Empowerment Award" by the district officials, for becoming the first woman e-rickshaw rider in Mirzapur. She has been covered by the local media channels, and has also made an appearance on the national television after a popular news channel - Aaj Tak did a feature on her. The unprecedented lockdown imposed by the Indian government to curb the spread of COVID19 left Pragya in confusion. Just before the lockdown, Pragya was deciding to expand her enterprise by purchasing another erickshaw and employing a woman to drive, she even started giving training sessions to other women erickshaw aspirants. Pragya took some time off and kept her savings for any emergencies and applied for a travel pass to ride in the neighboring 3-5 villages. Once approved by the local administration, Pragya restarted her enterprise to provide commuting services to villagers.

TOOL 3

VIRTUAL COMMUNITY CHAT GROUP

With increasing mobile usage in rural areas, virtual community groups through platforms like WhatsApp/Facebook and Instagram can help staying in real-time touch with the communities. It helps in facilitating learnings and linkages within the communities, enhance engagement between different stakeholders, and identifying barriers and enablers in the local entrepreneurial system through discussions.

STEPS TO START A VIRTUAL CHAT GROUP

1 Identifying members from the community and the local ecosystem that can be part of the group

2 Deriving on the purpose and objective of the group through dialogue with the identified members

3 Preparing a list of guidelines to streamline conversations on the group

4 Starting the group

TIME

On Going

LISTENING FORMAT

Open-ended or semi-structured

PEOPLE

Entrepreneurs, stakeholders, program team members

RECORDING TOOLS

Videos, photographs and text shared by group members

RUNNING A VIRTUAL CHAT GROUP

1 Develop a set of context specific topics and interests through other listening exercises, that can be adapted periodically to suit interests of group members, encourage new learnings and identify new peer groups

2 Share activities across geographies on the group – to build awareness and perspectives

3 Capture conversations and learnings to understand narratives, adding to the other listening activities

4 Identify influencers and conversationalists to grow the diversity of group members and to take leadership of the conversation in the group over time

5 Sense-making to drive new conversations on the group

COMMUNITY CHAT GROUPS IN PRACTICE

The COVID19 pandemic has taught us all about the importance of staying connected, building networks and relationships and together creating solutions to fight back. With more and more people confined to their homes, resulting in reduced face-to-face interaction, virtual communication is being used more than ever before. Since the start of the lockdown we utilized our Virtual Chat group platform on WhatsApp to keep in touch with the community:

Started as a chat group to capture real-time feedback from the community and specifically the entrepreneurs, udyaME (our chat group, in English 'I am an entrepreneur') now has over 60 members including entrepreneurs, support service providers, field coordinators and program teams from 80 villages. During the lockdown, members of the chat groups stared engaging and interacting more - sharing information on government regulations, relief funds and inspirational stories.

Through the group peer2peer inspiration emerged between members from different geographies. For example - Gulshan Bind, an entrepreneur from Mirzapur shared that he needs a supply of over 20 masks for his shop and Manoj, a tailoring unit owner from the same area responded immediately by sending pictures of a few samples. They placed the order on the group and have been in touch since.

Moving forward, such a tool will not only enable real-time learning and communication with the community but also help in forming local peer to peer linkages between entrepreneurs, service providers and other stakeholders. It will also enhance cross geography learning and lead to holistic development in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Community Chat Group, gains insights from entrepreneur's perspectives for improving W4P processes and solutions. It also facilitates networks between entrepreneurs across geographies and sectors. Ever since the lockdown, the chat group has grown into an active platform through building cross geography Peer 2 Peer learning networks, building relevant connections for market linkages, and sharing relevant information on market and finance.

Improve design of Solutions

JOIN OUR WHATSAPP GROUP

Peer 2 Peer Learning

Feedback from the community

**Linking with other prototypes**

W4P PROTOTYPE

Community Chat Group, gains insights from entrepreneur's perspectives for improving W4P processes and solutions. It also facilitates networks between entrepreneurs across geographies and sectors. The chat group is growing into an active platform for sharing learning on W4P activities.

ACTIVITY FOR A VIRTUAL CHAT GROUP
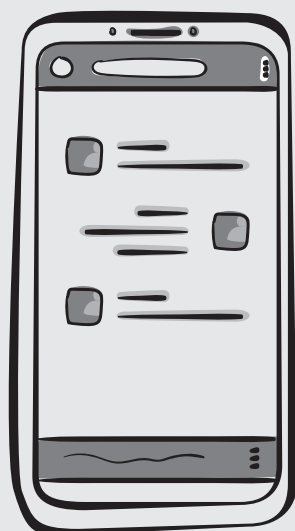
- **Introductory sessions through video or photo messages**
  - We can start with our introduction, telling your name and the work we do
  - Tag another person on the group
  - To be continued till all members are introduced

  Visual messages will help in better interaction and recognition among the group members.

- **Games and interactive sessions for increasing engagement on the group**
  - Ask people to "share photo of one thing that they are close to and also state why",
  - Share and ask for information on relevant days like World MSME Day/ Environment Day
  - Encourage members to share their thoughts on entrepreneurial issues
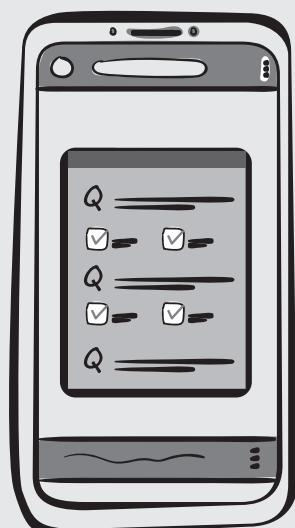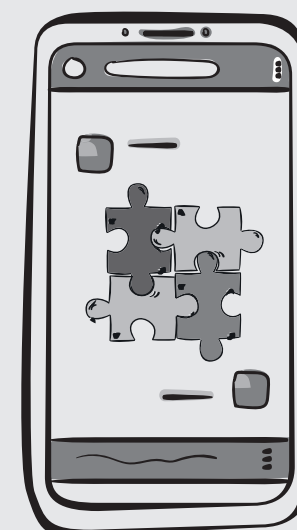
- **Polls and Questions**
  - Polls and questions related to any latest issue. For instance, "Among Market/ Finance/Information, what is the one thing that has majorly impacted your enterprise during COVID19"or "What are some enterprise opportunities emerging in your area?".
  - These questions or polls can give us relevant information regarding emerging challenges and opportunities in our entrepreneurial space and also leverage points that can be explored to support

CONNECTING AND LEARNING
THROUGH VIRTUAL PLATFORMS

On 10th April 2020, the streets of Orchha remain empty, with ancient buildings shadowing the small market place and the open fields around it. A month ago, you would spot Narendra Kushwaha, a tailoring unit entrepreneur hanging out with his buddies at their favourite 'chai spot', which is now closed, just like his enterprise. Even during lockdown, Narendra continues to stay true to his 'pehchaan' – his spirit of entrepreneurship, by making quality and affordable masks for the members of his community.

Saroj Yadav, a field coordinator from Mirzapur has been working on enterprise development projects since the past two years, a known figure in her village of Sinharkala, she is an active community member, with her home being a 'safe space' for women to mingle.

Both Saroj and Narendra are active members of a common virtual chat group called udyaME. Inspiration through the group crossed geographical and social barrier when on 10th April, 2020 Through Saorj learned of Narendra's initiative of making cloth masks in his village in Bundelkhand. Saroj tapped into local needs for masks in her village, and pulled out her dusty sewing machine, to make homemade masks with old cotton cloth.

Started as a small initiative to provide for the needs of local communities, both Narendra and Saroj are now known members of the chat group and keep sharing relevant information relating to entrepreneurship. On one hand, Saroj is back on the field to service her entrepreneurs, Narendra has started a new travel servicing enterprise and is also forming Peer 2 Peer linkages with new entrepreneurs to support them in their enterprise set-up.

TOOL 4

COMMUNITY CANVAS GAME

Community Canvas is an interactive social game which provides a framework to helps in:

- Deep understanding of the shared narratives and experiences of the communities
- Resource and Village Mapping with the community members
- Identifying potential entrepreneurial opportunities and challenges of the community

The game has 3 sections: Identity, Experience, and Structure:

Identity: These are in-tangible points that through the game we gain insights on. We get a clear sense of who they are, why they exist and what they stand for. It gives dual perspective on the community's purpose and the identity of its members.

Experience: In the second part of the game we explore the community from the perspective of the members: what actually happens in the community and how does it translate its purpose into activities that create tangible value for the members? Shared experiences, rituals and traditions are individual and recurring experiences that have a strong symbolic impact on members.

Structure: The third part of the Canvas focuses on the operational elements of a community. Information around existing and emerging leadership; how are decisions made in a community; what channels does the community use to communicate and gather; livelihood opportunities and resources available; and how does the community manage these

TIME
40 Minutes

LISTENING FORMAT
Open-ended or semi-structured

PEOPLE
Community members including men, women and youth

MATERIAL REQUIRED
Chart paper, Pen, Ball, Shape cutouts, Audio player

STEPS

1 **Prepare a chart with relevant questions**
A single game session is of about 30 minutes, so as to keep the participants engaged and entertained. Questions here can be around all three sections mentioned above: Identity, Experience, and Structure. Eg: What are some qualities of your village?; Where do you see yourself and your village in next five years; who are some of the leaders of the village?; What are some challenges your village is currently facing? What are some key community festivals celebrated?; Are there any entrepreneurial opportunities?. There can be around 15 questions to cover all three aspects and keep the session interesting for the participants. Once prepared, these questions are made into small chits and kept in a bowl.

2 **Layout your chart and start the game**
Through pre-engagement tools like door to door interaction and speaker announcements, about 15 participants should be selected for the game. These participants have to then sit in a circle and pass a ball while music is being played in the background. When the music stops, the person holding the ball has to take out a chit and answer the question

3 **Collecting answers**
Step 2 is continued till we are able to find answers to all our questions. The answers are pasted on a large charter paper and is shown to the community to give them an overview of their village. Here other members can also add if something is missing and helps us in gaining a holistic perspective of the village and its resources

△ *Women participating in community canvas game in Aari village*

PLAYING THE COMMUNITY CANVAS GAME

Considering the game's potential in initiating dialogue with the community, it was first introduced as an engagement tool under the Kaun Banega Business Leader (Who will become the business leader?) competition in 2017. As part of the competition, it was run in over 20 villages of Bundelkhand and since then has been used to gain perspectives about different communities and their functioning.

It has helped us in giving baseline information about our villages and is also something that sticks in the mind of the participants. Radha, an entrepreneur from Madore shares, "I still remember that ball and music game I played a few years back. It helped us in knowing more about our village and also gave the women a platform to express their views and opinions".

Similarly the game, also helps the community in identifying latent entrepreneurial opportunities that can be exploited to start a business and bring changes in the rural economy.

TEMPLATE FOR COMMUNITY CANVAS GAME

RITUALS
AND
TRADITIONS

RESOURCES

OPPORTUNITIES
AND
CHALLENGES

VALUES

GOVERNANCE

RULES

IDENTITY

EVENTS

ROLES
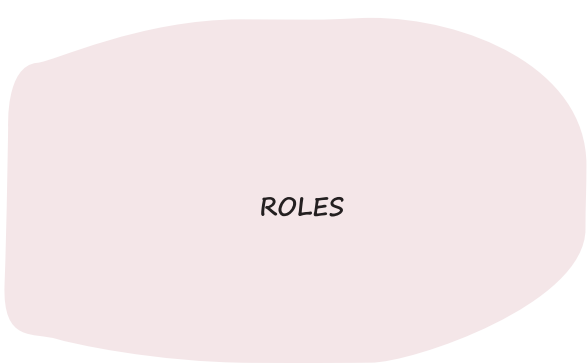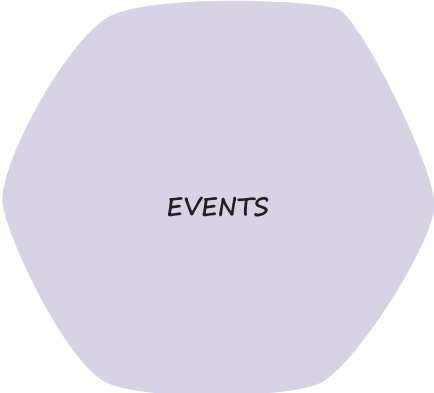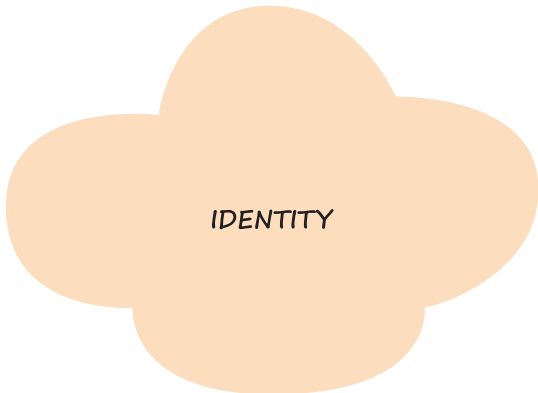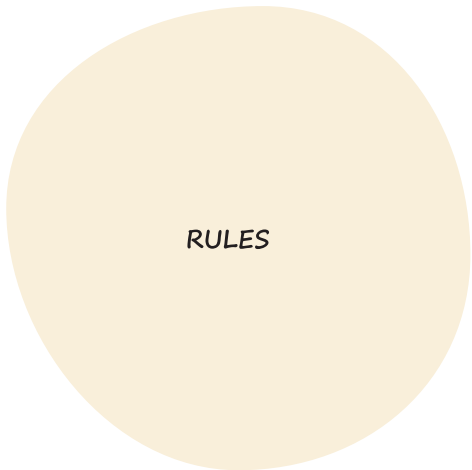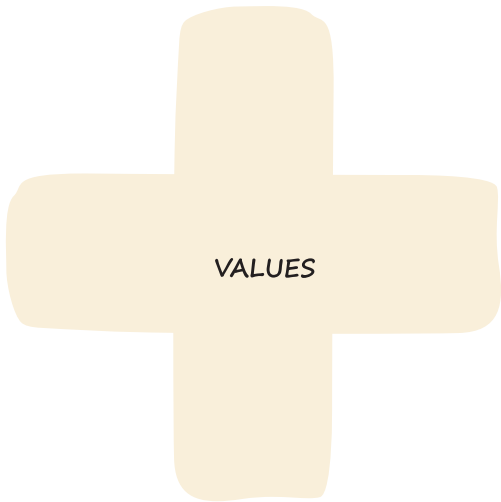
DELIVERING SMILES IN MADORE

Susceptible to frequent droughts, the Bundelkhand region experiences acute water stress. The scarcity of drinking water has significant health ramifications - causing problems like dehydration, diarrhoea and poor sanitation - and therefore, continues to be a major cause for limiting socio-economic development. With daytime temperature hovering above forty degrees during March to August, water tanks and wells dry up.

Madore, a village near the Orchha town in Bundelkhand, comprises three hamlets, one of which is the Ahirwar hamlet - home to thirty nine families with poultry farms and a lot of cattle. Situated on a hilly terrain, the problem of water shortage in Madore tends to be more acute than the rest of Bundelkhand, owing to the lack of appropriate infrastructure to carry water to a high altitude. Women have to walk three miles to collect water.In June 2018, the residents of the Ahirwar community started participating in various co-creation sessions and exposure visits. During one of the sessions, they played the community canvas game and shared the never ending prolonged water crisis in their community. They had, in the recent past, also witnessed the benefits of the 'LOCO safe water supply enterprise' that their neighbouring community from the Adivasi hamlet had accrued. Women members of the group shared that this can be seen as an opportunity and even they can install a LOCO model to solve the health and social issues attached to lack of access to clean drinking water.

The model was feasible - safe water was drawn from a water source by a solar powered motor, and then carried by a pipeline to a deep water tank. A pipeline was then installed, and community standpost taps were connected for use by three households per standpost. The model utilised solar powered systems as erratic power supply and high costs of fuel made the operations unreliable and unviable. The model was based on a technology that conserved nature, which is something the residents of Madore have always valued.

Over the course of five co-creation meetings and working sessions, the men, women and youth of the Ahirwar community pooled in resources for setting up a COCO safe

water supply enterprise in their area. In order to ensure the buy-in and ownership from the community, each household agreed to contribute one thousand rupees to create a common pool of funds for construction. This financed the construction cost of one water tank, while the community also pooled in sweat equity for the construction of the water supply system. They connected with technology providers to install solar panels, pump, and plumbing infrastructure. In order to ensure the maintenance of the system, it was agreed that a maintenance fee of fifty rupees per month would be collected from each household. The Ahirwar hamlet made their water tank stronger by constructing it using cement instead of plastic, as done by the Adivasi hamlet.

In August 2018, the Ahirwar hamlet formed a village water committee comprising fourteen men and women to ensure the fair operation and utilisation of the system. The committee appointed Akhilesh, Mala and Radha as the operators and treasurers.

> " We are so glad that we do not have to wake up early every day and spend three hours walking miles to fetch water. "

Radha and Mala also represent the interests of all women in the community, considering most still follow the purdah (veil) system and refrain from speaking up.

In October 2018, the Ahirwar hamlet inaugurated the COCO safe water supply enterprise, and won the attention of local media. The enterprise is delivering smiles to forty families especially women and children. Parvati and her daughter share, "We are so glad that we do not have to wake up early every day and spend three hours walking miles to fetch water."

The committee meets monthly and takes collective decisions on allocation of the maintenance fund. The hamlet has contributed in covering the costs for four families who could not afford to make contributions to the system — setting an example of a true community. They plan on utilising contributions from the monthly fees for not only maintaining the model, but also upgrading to other social goods for the community on a similar pay-per-use basis.

Picture your house in a zone with just one tap with impure water five miles from your house. How would this change your daily routine? You would probably wake up at 4:30 a.m. and spend four hours fetching water before getting ready for work. Now, picture being a farmer in the same situation. This shortage would affect your morning routine and income. By bringing the basic service of safe water to the doorstep of every house in Madore, COCO is estimated to save a total of hundred and twenty hours per month for every resident, particularly for women who are usually in charge of fetching water. With a more reliable source of water, women can invest their time in productive activities, enhancing income from occupations like agriculture and poultry farming. Safe drinking water also ensures good health and sanitation, which in turn implies less spending on healthcare.

COCO is based on the principles of initiating community-led action, creating a sense of community ownership of services and accountability. Together, these principles make it a sustainable and scalable model for equitable distribution of basic services and benefits. This story reinforces the power of information networks and decentralized models, and the way in which these can be replicated to make the transition to vibrant and self-sustaining economies.

LOCAL REALTIES TO GLOBAL CONCEPTS

Positive Sparks –
giving value to the collective voices of youth

Young people feel that they are being excluded from discussions and associated decision making that impacts their lives. The problem is not exclusive to any one particular country but is a global phenomenon that needs to be addressed to enable young people to be heard and create transformative social and economic change required to solve "wicked" issues and adapt to the future of work.

With The Bytes Project we are developing 'Positive Sparks' – a listening tool that gathers narratives of young people across global communities through deep listening and sense-making. This platform will offer a technological solution that will re-connect young people and decision makers to fully understand the complexities of the future of work.

By enabling young people to be more resilient, agile and adaptable to future 21st century work and employment opportunities, the tool is envisioned to create positive in-direct socio-economic outcomes.

WORK 4 PROGRESS

The Work 4 Progress (W4P) India program is creating a growing body of evidence on social innovation led job creation in underserved regions. Read about human stories of change, social innovation tools and the potential of a community-centred design approach in creating transformative change at **www.devalt.org**

- JOBS WE WANT

- JOBS WE CREATE, THE POWER OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- BETWEEN THE LINES, STORIES OF CHANGE

- NEW APPROACHES FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP - DRIVEN BY INNOVATION, COLLABORATION AND COMMUNITY-LED ACTION

- MINI TOOLKIT ON PLATFORMS FOR LEARNING

- MINI TOOLKIT ON COLLABORATIONS FOR ECOSYSTEM BUILDING

- MINI TOOLKIT ON WOMEN-LED ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- MINI TOOLKIT ON UNLOCKING FINANCE

WATCH SHORT MOVIES AND LISTEN TO VOICES FROM THE GROUND AT THE
DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES YOUTUBE CHANNEL

- 'JOBS WE WANT' FILM

- MICRO MOVEMENTS OF CHANGE PART 1

- MICRO MOVEMENTS OF CHANGE PART 2

- MICRO MOVEMENTS OF CHANGE PART 3

JOIN OUR ONLINE COMMUNITIES

Systems Play

A collaborative focused in the global south which is dedicated to building a community of praxis that innovates responses to intractable social-ecological challenges. Join **www.systemsplay.com** to view engaging super mini courses, learn with a coach and connect with systems innovators in the global south.

Jobs We Want

You can still join Jobs We Want 2019, and gain insights from foundations, think tanks, academia, international organisations and private companies on different factors that are shaping entrepreneurship today. Join over 200 stakeholders in making development programs more interconnected at **www.jobswewant.org**

Work 4 Progress Global

Work 4 Progress creates decent livelihoods through social innovation platforms in three countries – India, Mozambique, and Peru. Visit **www.obrasociallacaixa.org** to access modules on listening and co-creation, and learn more about lessons from W4P's experience in the global South.

Jobs We Make

#JobsWeMake believes in the power of entrepreneurship in creating dignified jobs and resilient communities. Join the movement and share your stories and perspectives on entrepreneurship. Follow **JobsWeMake** on **Medium** and **Instagram**.

FUTURE OF LISTENING

ROLE OF INCLUSIVE TECHNOLOGY

Advancements in areas of Internet and Communication Technology (ICT) has transformed lives in both urban and rural areas of the Indian economy. However, technology can be a double edged sword. Disruptive effects of technologies have been seen in past, excluding weaker sections of the society.

Women, especially young girls from rural areas remain at the rare end of the technological advancements. Brave Spaces, a co-working place is an enabling platform for young women to build solidarity, and unleash their entrepreneurial aspirations. Inter-connecting these spaces for exchange of voices, ideas and resources will help to accelerate the entrepreneurial culture within the communities.

We believe in the role of digital technologies to establish such bridges between community and beyond. Its ability to form and nurture organic linkages across different levels of system can enable deep listening within communities. Hence, digital technology can serve as a window to world of new-age opportunities for young aspiring entrepreneurs.

With the principles of open source, bottom-up and human-centric design, Development Alternatives with support from Medha Learning Foundation co-created a virtual brave space platform using AsPi (Aspiration Pi) technology which is innovated by Janastu.

△ *Young girls sharing their aspirations over virtual platform*

OBJECTIVES

Unearth innate aspirations and strength of youth and women who face intergenerational and socio-economic pressures by listening to their voices captured over an ICT platform. Connect aspirations of youth and women to new-age entrepreneurial opportunities through sense-making of recorded voices.

Accelerate local entrepreneurship by sharing captured voices with a wider network of aspiring entrepreneurs and stakeholders in the enterprise ecosystem.

METHOD

1 Capture Voices

2 Annotate Voices

3 Sharing of curated voices

4 Sense-making of voices

5 Tracking behaviour change & shifts in narratives

Connecting to entrepreneurial opportunities

To know more, click here. : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBsgwLw--j4
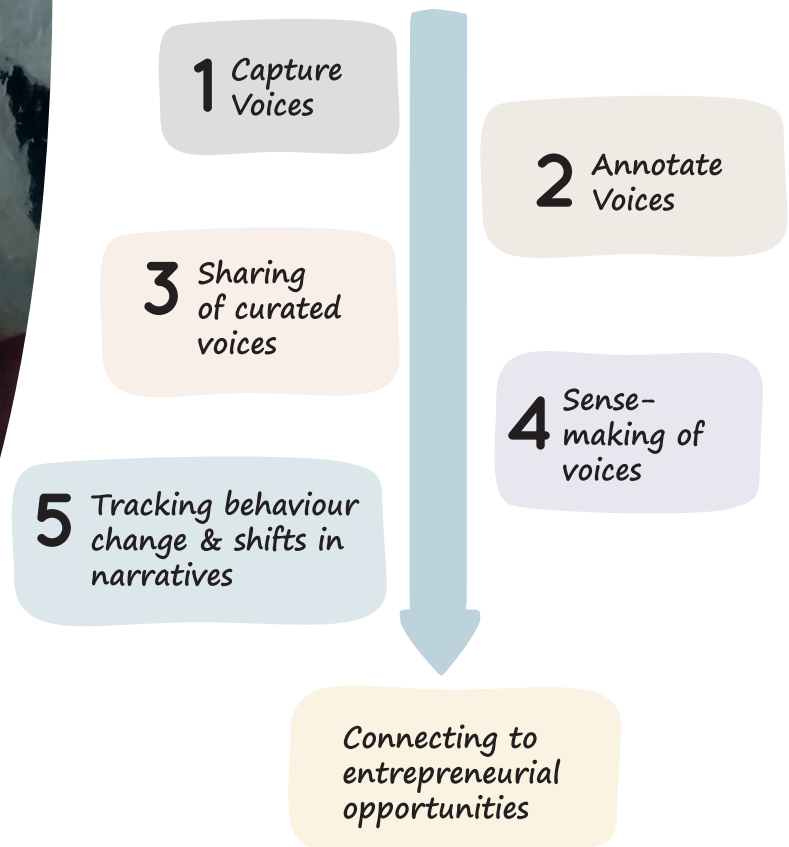
FREQUENTLY
ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. In the case of a complex society such as India, where listening can be an unending exercise?

A. In India, we have concentrated the listening on better understanding the need and challenges of vulnerable communities in rural areas and we have also made an effort better to understand the perceptions of decision-makers and private companies.

Q. How is deep listening different from the dialogue?

A. Deep listening is not a linear process; it uses specific tools to unearth deeper values, perceptions, and aspirations.

Q. Isn't listening an exercise requiring high investment?

A. Yes, listening requires high investment in terms of time and resources, however, it swiftly reaches the inflection point.

Q. Can listening be customised?

A. Yes, listening can be customised according to the persona and geographical context - tools such as Brave Spaces for women and Youth Forum for youth.

Q. Who is the listener? How are people listening? Can they listen to what others are hearing/interpreting?

A. In this case, we are the listeners (as a programme) and we are listening to the whole system (citizens, organisations, business, and government). The key is the collective interpretation of the information and the real-time connection with co-creation and prototyping.

Q. How can we systematically document/ record the process of listing with various communities/ individuals so that the process can be analysed for co-creating?

A. At the moment, we are recording conversations, filming, and producing various materials, but incorporating a digital layer is crucial for the future.
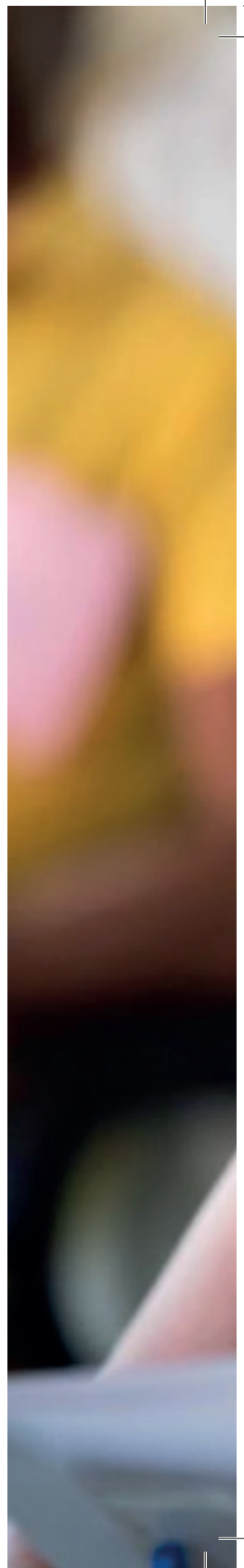
Work4Progress

PROTOTYPING
FOR INNOVATION

Development Alternatives
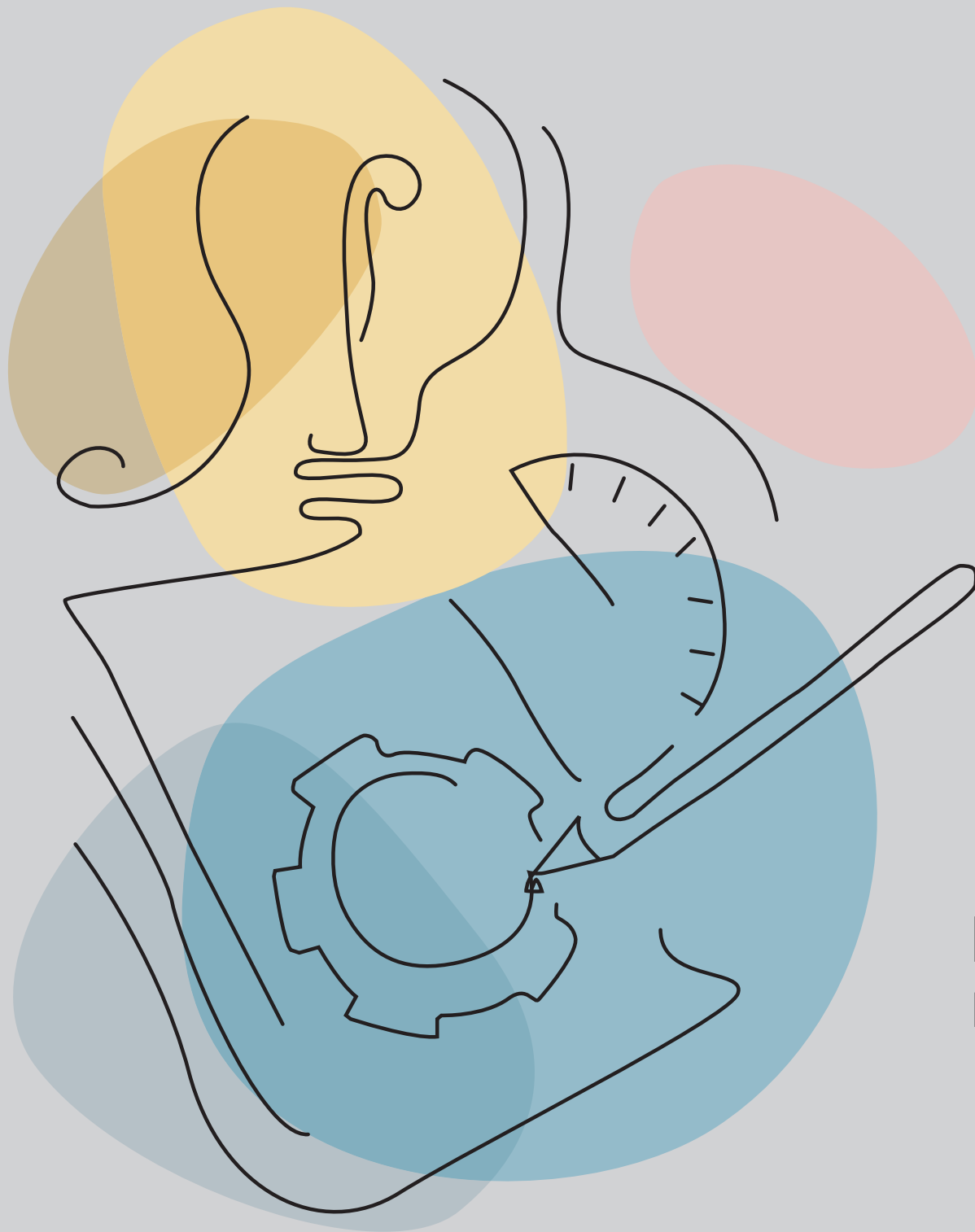
"la Caixa" Foundation

PROTOTYPING FOR INNOVATION

This toolkit outlines the process of co-designing innovative prototypes of relevant solutions for unleashing inclusive entrepreneurship. These prototypes tested for their viability with the end users (communities) can lead to shifts in the local system through facilitation of connections of new innovations with existing solutions. The prototypes as they grow, respond to the changing needs of entrepreneurship in the local economy, contributing to job creation over time.

These prototypes make small yet significant shifts at three levels, helping achieve key goals and creating systemic changes.

- **Enterprise Prototypes:** These prototypes emerge as innovative enterprise models due to individuals seizing opportunities within the local ecosystem.

- **Social Good Prototypes:** These prototypes serve communities where they are set up and deliver social value by breaking gender, caste and other barriers to create systemic change.

- **Systemic Prototypes:** Prototypes emerging from this process exist more at an institutional level, leveraging the power of collaboration.

In this section we will understand

- What are prototypes and why do we need them?

- How to prototype solutions for enterprise development?

- What are the tools which can help us prototype?

Who is this writing for?

This toolkit is for development practitioners, social entrepreneurs, businesses, social innovators and action researchers who create solutions for challenges that are dynamic and difficult to identify.

The nature of the team

The team can be a mix of those who work directly with the community, those who manage the community workers (but have prior experience working with the community), and overall program managers.

WHY DO WE PROTOTYPE?

The prototyping process develops solutions that are based on locally determined needs and opportunities, address barriers, build on enablers, and create a robust ecosystem of support for entrepreneurship. The challenges and opportunities are addressed through co-developing business models or a new platform at a systemic leverage point. The prototypes affect change at multiple levels through positive shifts.

Leverage Points: These are places within a complex system (a corporation, an economy, a living body, a city, an ecosystem) where a small shift in one thing can produce big changes in everything. (Donella Meadows)

Unleashing Entrepreneurial Energies with Enterprise Prototypes
Prototyping as a process has the potential to uncover and **unleash entrepreneurial energies** that may be active and even sometimes dormant in communities. Both practitioners and entrepreneurs can deeply understand the barriers and opportunities to which they have to adapt. Through this adaptation to new challenges by accessing services in the ecosystem or even co-designing solutions, entrepreneurial energies are unleashed within the communities.

Nurturing Constructive Communities with Social Good Prototype
At a more micro-level, this understanding gathered through dialogue and deep listening helps in **nurturing constructive communities** and developing community-driven solutions with decentralised ownership. Constructive communities respond to new opportunities through prototypes that are already established or through building new prototype models. This collective agency and autonomy, unlocked through prototyping, enables them to become co-designers of more innovative solutions. Such solutions take the form of **social good enterprises** which directly serve communities where they are set up and help understand identities and break existing myths and malpractices in the communities.

Building a Robust Ecosystem with Systemic Prototypes
Prototypes emerging from this process are known as **systemic prototypes**, and they exist more at an institutional level, leveraging the power of collaboration. They utilise a **shared infrastructure** and leverage points to enable the flow of information, credit, knowledge and cross-sharing of resources. They contribute to introducing innovations in the ecosystem, responding to needs, opportunities and barriers in the system, and facilitating shifts in existing mindsets and norms. At a meso level, such prototypes take the form of regional and national platforms for facilitating convergent action and creating a **robust ecosystem** in the long run.

PROTOTYPES THAT EMPOWER COMMUNITIES AT DIFFERENT LEVELS

	Enterprise Prototypes	Social Good Prototypes	Systemic Prototypes
Unleashing Entrepreneurial Energies	Multi-Layered Farming Sanitary Napkin Retail	ASPi	KBBL
Nurturing Constructive Communities	Ice Cream Manufacturing e-Rickshaw	Locally Owned Collectively Operated Safe Water Supply	e-Rickshaw
Building Robust Ecosystem	Information Kiosk	Micro Credit Facility Information Kiosk	udyaME Regional Coalition
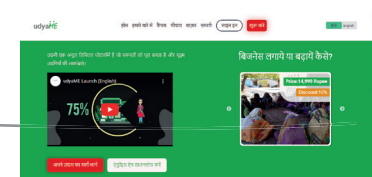
HOW TO PROTOTYPE?

Principles for prototyping

Before we engage in prototyping, we must keep in mind a few principles for 'Prototyping' that guide and help give structure to the process. While keeping entrepreneurs at the core of the process and listening to their thoughts and experiences helps build stronger prototypes, the vision should be clear of how the prototype would bring shifts in the system. An early sign of the viability of solutions is the ownership and use of the solutions by community members. Development practitioners should also be prepared to identify and act on crises, creating prototypes that disrupt old processes and emerge as a strong source of hope. In the diagram below, we capture these key principles of prototyping.

The entire process which we highlight below is co-creative and, for multiplication at the micro, and meso level, can:

• Shift systems through 'leverage points'

• Leverage collective intelligence of multi-stakeholders

• Develop interconnected and non-linear solutions

" Places within a complex system where a small shift in one thing can produce big changes in everything "

~ Donella Meadows

Do's in Prototyping

• Pay interest to what the respondents have to say and have full attention towards them

• Ensure that there are no disturbances when people are sharing

• After 3-5 minutes, paraphrase what you have heard and check with the respondents whether you have understood

• Also, check for underlying feelings and beliefs as and when you think you have understood them

From the prototype's need and potential to the desired outcomes – every aspect of the design is co-created with the relevant stakeholders and contextualised based on the barriers, needs and leverage points. For a prototype to respond to the real needs and aspirations of the people and context it is situated in, an iterative loop of design, build, test, and feedback helps strengthen the prototype every day.

DESIGN support systems which uncover and unleash entrepreneurial energies. This may involve co-ideating business plans through storyboards or role-play sessions to help individuals visualise running their enterprise. For stakeholders, such human-centric design sessions help root the prototyping process in the day-to-day challenges they face.

BUILD robust enterprise models or an enabling systemic prototype that organically inspires more enterprises to be set up in the surrounding areas. Using physical objects or materials that either represent functionality or help emulate a real object helps individuals make the process tangible, with a 'hands-on' approach to prototyping.

TEST the enterprise prototypes built in their ability to create jobs and add value to the local economies and the systemic prototypes to disrupt existing processes in the ecosystem.

FEEDBACK can not only help us make sense of the prototype's process and impact but can also learn and create knowledge to pilot, mainstream and scale the prototypes co-created. Feedback is generated at each level and helps in redesigning and informing the process.

DESIGN

BUILD

TEST

FEEDBACK
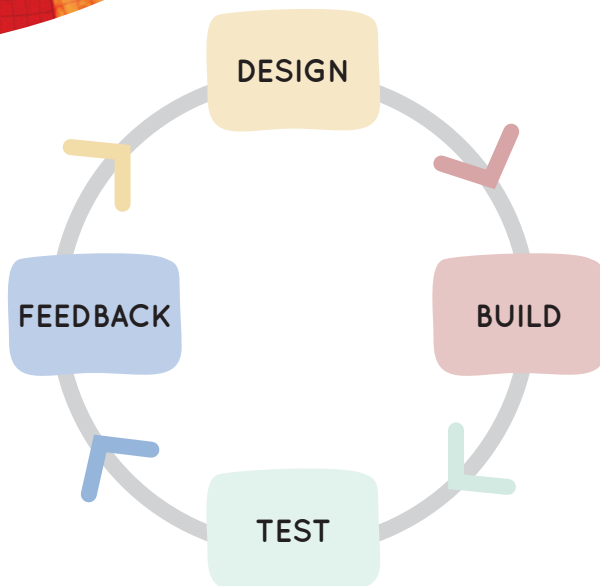
GOOD PRACTICES

- The prototyping process should be anchored within listening to the community and deep dialogue with stakeholders for empathy-based sensemaking of existing narratives and unearth the 'why' for the prototype

- Experimenting and testing via iterative pilots with communities can enable the prototype to evolve in response to changes in the local ecosystem – and strengthens the ownership the community has over the prototypes.

- Discovering 'leverage points' can improve understanding of the needs and barriers to entrepreneurship and existing opportunities in the system in the form of actors or solutions that can strengthen the prototype/solution

△ *Pragya Devi posing with the "Women Empowerment Award" by the district officials for becoming the first woman e-rickshaw rider in Mirzapur.*

Pragya Devi

Pragya Devi co-created the idea of turning her love for motorcycles into an enterprise. The e-rickshaw was inaugurated by Chotu (her son) on 14 November 2018, celebrated as Children's Day in India. She provides safer mobility for many school-going children, especially girl students. She has ignited a spark in many other young girls to follow their dreams, no matter how unconventional they may be. During the Covid lockdown, she would provide mobility to essential workers and deliver necessities.

She is no short of a local celebrity and has been covered by media channels and made an appearance on national television after Aaj Tak, did a feature on her. Since then, she has inspired many to follow in her footsteps.

Next up, there are prototyping tools that have been effective for co-creating with communities and stakeholders. Each tool helps to deepen our understanding of the LOCAL CONTEXT AND EMBEDS INTERVENTIONS.
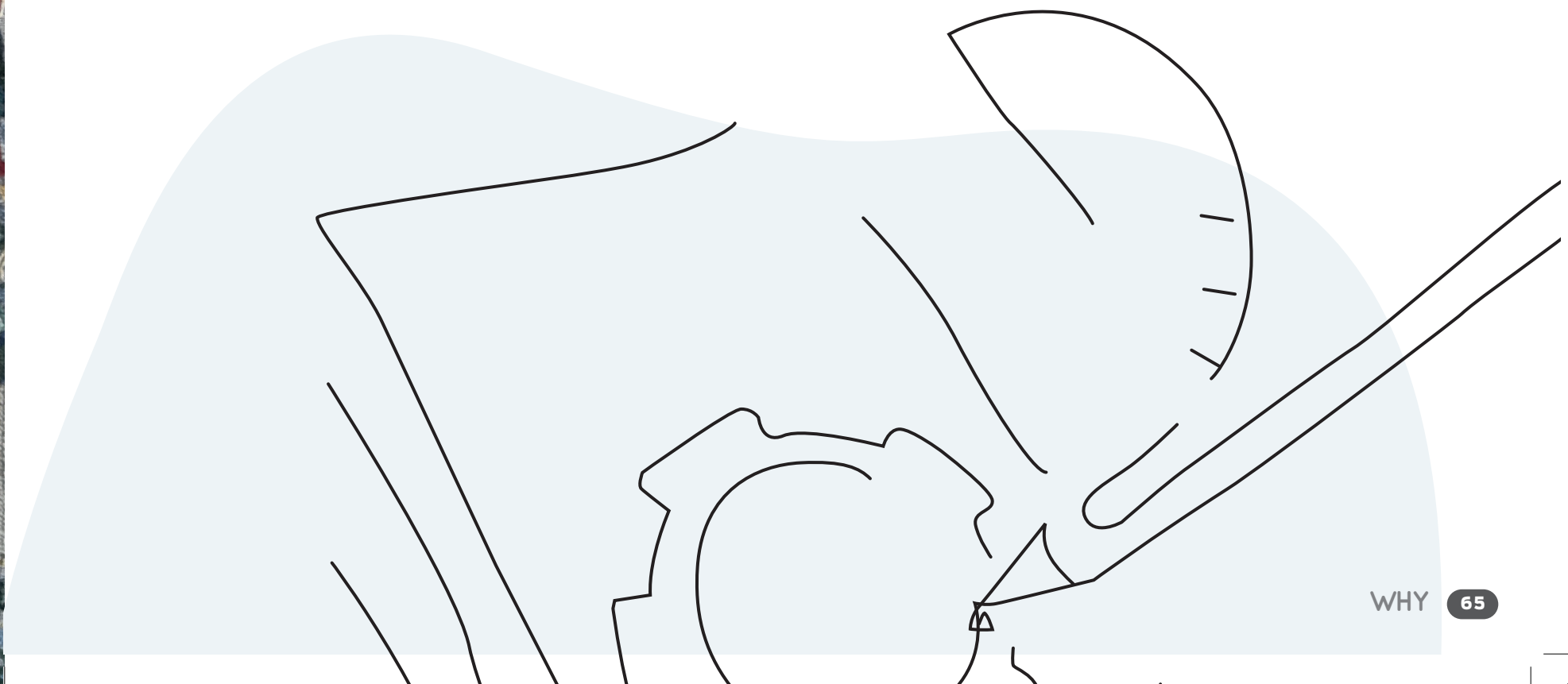
TOOL 1

KAUN BANEGA BUSINESS LEADER

Kaun Banega Business Leader is an entrepreneurship promotion campaign to initiate the process of co-creation and prototyping with the community. The campaign is based on a reality competition format where innovative enterprises are encouraged by giving a platform to marginalized communities to present their business ideas. Kaun Banega Business Leader helps in –

- Raising awareness and inspiring individuals through group activities around entrepreneurship
- Building confidence in their capabilities and talents
- Focusing the energies of the participants by being a platform for the community to showcase their business ideas

STEPS

1 Narrowcasting to identify potential entrepreneurs. This is done through community canvas (refer listening toolkit **tool 4**) and street plays at the village level. Interested individuals are then registered for the competition.

2 The top applicants are shortlisted on the basis of the innovation in their business model, their influence and skills in marketing, developing business networks, the potential for job creation, and the social value of the proposed business (assessed through a series of meetings or calls)

3 The top applicants then participate in business plan co-creation workshops, which strengthens their clarity and understanding of business concepts

4 These contenders then pitch their ideas to a jury displaying their business acumen and understanding of their own enterprise.

TIME

Two months

TOOLS

Street Plays (Nukkad Natak), Shortlisting tool and Expert Jury

RECORDING TOOLS

MS Excel, Application Form

△ *Nukkad natak (street play) highlighting pressing issues on unemployment and the opportunities presented through KBBL*

Good Practice:

- The campaign should be advertised and marketed beforehand for increased visibility and to generate maximum applications.

- While conducting the ground activity, teams of two-three diverse team members (gender, specialization) are needed to break the ice.

- Tools should be tailored to the community's knowledge and understanding. Complicating part of the process should be avoided, and simple and local language should be used.

Tool in Practice

The competition was launched on 12th February 2020 in Bundelkhand with street plays, radio, community canvas games, and one-to-one interaction with the communities to build awareness. More than 1600 forms from women and youth were submitted of which the Top 200 applicants then indulged in telephonic interviews with the team to assess their applications based on clarity of business idea, knowledge of the existing market and financial institutions, willingness and passion for running an enterprise and jobs created or social value of the business. The interviews sorted a list of the top 25 applicants, with clarity in their ideas; zeal to start an enterprise and most importantly, understanding of the social value of their enterprise.

As part of the final screening process, the top 25 applicants participated in a business idea co-creation workshop where they first participated in a virtual ILO-certified Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) training at TARAgram Orchha and then presented their ideas to a jury panel of six members. The three-day workshop helped the applicants in enhancing their business acumen and map out a plan that would sustain the current market and economic conditions.

Of the 25 applicants, the jury identified five applicants namely Kajal Parihar, Balaram Kushwaha, Suman Devi, Abhijeet Parmar, and Jitendra Ahirwar as winners based on innovation, social viability, and financial feasibility in their proposed enterprise models such as women-led E-rickshaw, information kiosk, vermicompost amongst others. All participants were awarded certificates and mementoes for participating in KBBL.

KAUN BANEGA BUSINESS LEADER?

REGISTRATION FORM

LOCATION:

DATE:

NAME:

GENDER:

AGE:

ADDRESS:

PHONE / MOBILE:

E-MAIL:

EDUCATION:

<u>CURRENT INFORMATION</u>

- WHAT IS YOUR MAIN SOURCE OF LIVELIHOOD?
  - ☐ FARMING
  - ☐ JOB
  - ☐ SHOP
  - ☐ OTHER
- DO YOU LIKE TO WORK
  - ☐ YES
  - ☐ NO

  IF NOT WHY_____

- DO YOU SHARE YOUR HOUSEHOLD RESPONSIBILITIES WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR FAMILY?
  - ☐ YES
  - ☐ NO

  IF NOT WHY_____

- HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT OF SETTING UP YOUR OWN VENTURE/ BUSINESS/ ENTERPRISE?

  _____

1. Do you feel that you have the skill or dexterity to do any of your work? If yes then which one?

☐ Yes _____

☐ No

2. Do you know any businessman/entrepreneur near you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

KAUN BANEGA BUSINESS LEADER?

REGISTRATION FORM

3. Do you have any business experience? If yes then what?

☐ Yes _____

☐ No

4. Do you think you can become a good businessman/entrepreneur /business leader? If yes, then tell us why?

☐ Yes _____

☐ No

5. Tell us about your business idea/business plan.	Industry/Business Type	Product/service	Target Customer and Sales System
☐ Individual	_____	_____	_____
☐ Collective	_____	_____	_____

Place of establishment_____ Any other information_____

6. How many people do you think this business can employ? _____

7. What sources of finance do you have for starting a business? _____

8. Do you know where to get finance for business? _____

9. What will you do if you win this contest _____

KAUN BANEGA BUSINESS LEADER?

STREET PLAY SCRIPT

SCENE 1
⌄

The purpose of this scene is to introduce the people and the issue. There should be at least two main characters: one who is having trouble deciding on a vocation or business, and the other who once had a similar problem in the past but has now become a successful entrepreneur.

START BY CALLOUT

An open call for people of the community to come together and promote awareness of the issue (usually in form of a music)

SCENE 2
⌄

Cut to the past

The main character describes how they struggled to establish the business, how they took part in the KBBL when it first began in their community, and how that helped them setup the business.

SCENE 3
⌄

After hearing the narrative, the person inquires further about KBBL

What is it, what are the benefits, and how can individuals like him/her access it?

SCENE 4
⌄

The street play group announces the village's KBBL opening and registration information.

KAUN BANEGA BUSINESS LEADER?

DETAILS TO BE RECORDED FROM THE REGISTRATION FORM

CLUSTER	S.NO.	NAME	GENDER	AGE	PHONE NO	VILLAGE	TYPE OF ENTERPRISES	
(district or zones, where KBBL is being launched)		Record the name of the entrepreneur here	Male/female/ others/prefer not to say	Record the age of entrepreneur here	Record the phone number of entrepreneur here	Name of the specific site within the defined cluster	Record the sector and type of enterprise entrepreneur is willing to setup	
CLUSTER 1	1							
	2							
	3							
	4							
	5							
	6							
	7							
	8							
	9							
	10							
CLUSTER 2	11							
	12							
	13							
	14							
	15							
	16							
	17							
	18							
	19							
	20							

KAUN BANEGA BUSINESS LEADER?

DETAILS TO BE RECORDED FROM THE REGISTRATION FORM

TIME	TEAM	DISCUSSION POINT	REMARKS	TRAINING
Record the time of call here	Name the team members on evalusation call	Based on call rrecall of KBBL, record the understanding of business and resources, expectations from the proram if any	Note whether or not the person is selcted for next round and reason for the same Color code Green if Yes Red if No	Which level of training is required and whether or not they are willing to join the training if shortlisted

KAUN BANEGA BUSINESS LEADER?

SCORING CARD

NAME OF APPLICANT: BUSINESS IDEA:

VILLAGE:

CRITERIA MARKS	MAX 5 POINTS EACH	MARKS OBTAINED
Clarity of Business Idea		
Innovation or Novelty in business model/process		
Influence and connectivity in marketing and business networks		
Willingness and passion to undertake the proposed activity		
Communication skills and ability to become a leader		
Jobs Created or Social Value of Business		
Social Support		
Financial Situation		
Technical Knowledge(according to her/his business)		
Risk taking ability		

Comments: Suggestions to improve business idea:

TOOL 2

BRAVE SPACES & COMIC BOOK WORKSHOP

Brave Spaces empower women and their communities to talk, share, learn and grow to create a self-sustaining platform that builds solidarity. Brave spaces have been conceptualised as brave spaces where women can realise the freedom of expression and their voices, thereby unleashing and uncovering the real pow(her) of women, enabling them to reach their highest potential.

An activity commonly carried out in Brave Spaces is a Comic Book Workshop. It is a participatory design-based co-creation methodology where women are engaged in designing their journey towards livelihood development which enables development practitioners to design interventions for women

STEPS

1 A common and easily accessible location needs to be identified, and the participants are invited to attend

2 Once everyone has congregated at the agreed-upon time, the moderators introduce the game to the group and explain what needs to be done

3 Through the group exercises, the participants open up, share their experiences and thoughts, and empathise with one another

4 Once everyone has shared their thoughts, the moderators should lead a discussion on the learnings from the previous session and analyse what has been shared and what more can be done going forth

TIME

4-5 hours

QUESTIONS

Semi-Structured Activity

RECORDING TOOLS

Physical sheets, MS Excel

◁ **Ravi Sen, 36, Saree Retail entrepreneur, rides her scooty on the streets of Punawalikala village in Jhansi, selling a wide range of bright, embellished sarees for her dedicated customers. Cheerful Ravi can be seen in action from nine in the morning till about two in the afternoon when her children are at school. On the special request of her customers, she also caters to occasions and works till late in the evening. Ravi is a breath of fresh air for many women in her community by leading the brave space to acknowledge their own and claim it with pride!**

Tool in Practice

Addressing issues around social needs and aspirations, the concept of the brave space was developed for women in Bundelkhand and Eastern Uttar Pradesh as a special platform to bring together women in a common space and enable them to learn more about themselves so that they can realize their potential.

Through games, discussion and conversation, the space – any common meeting spot for women in a village – can become a site to foster empowerment. Because of patriarchal norms, women often face challenges like not being included in decision-making or being unable to choose their paths. Through group activities and conversation, brave spaces aim to address some of these deep-rooted belief systems.

As part of the program, sessions with gender experts and the team were conducted to understand women's perspectives on work and life. Visual tools such as 'comic-book workshop', in which women create their life journey, have been adopted as part of these platforms for tackling deep-rooted biases inherent in socio-cultural norms and to ensure maximum participation since the group of women comprised both literates and illiterates.

Women from both geographies voiced their need for new economic opportunities or some path through which their lives could be transformed and improved. While the demands were not specific in Eastern Uttar Pradesh, the women in Bundelkhand said that their ideal village would include a computer training centre for women and a tuition centre for subjects like math. In both geographies, women reported low participation in Gram Sabhas as a forum for airing concerns and grievances.

Good Practice:

- Respect each other's opinions, and no one should make comments or remarks on what others are sharing. Even the moderators should reserve their judgements and limit their biases.

- Discussing sensitive issues may prompt disclosure - if personal issues are discussed, participants are asked to keep all information within the group and not discuss it with anyone else

- Keep in mind that at this stage, many individuals may not feel comfortable expressing themselves in front of a group. If this is the case, gently encourage participation by asking quieter participants if they have anything to add, but do not force them to contribute if they appear uncomfortable.

EMPOWERING WOMEN IN VILLAGE BHOJLA

Prabha's eyes light up as she talks excitedly about sewing, dressmaking and training services that she offers at her tailoring enterprise. "I am the owner of Vaishnavi Silai (Tailoring) Centre. It is named after my daughter."

Prabha lives in village Bhojla in Bundelkhand with her husband and is a mother to two young children. Having learned sewing and dressmaking as a young girl, Prabha always dreamed of starting a tailoring enterprise where other women from her village would come and work with her. On expressing ambitions to start an enterprise, Prabha and her husband were forced to move out of their ancestral home, by her orthodox mother-in-law. Prabha shares, "The day my mother-in-law asked us to leave, I was not sad, only angry. Finding an affordable place to rent was difficult, but I think getting disapproving glares from people in my village made me more certain about going against their norms."

Prabha got support from Asha, one of her friends who had confided in her about wanting to set up a salon. Prabha finally launched 'Vaishnavi Silai (Tailoring) Centre' in June 2018, and soon after, Asha started her salon next door. Sitting next to Prabha, Asha shares, "She [Prabha] is like a sister to me. Her strength made me come forward and share my dream out loud." While Prabha would provide tailoring services, Asha would provide salon services. A fire had lit another fire, and this was only the beginning – one by one, more women started coming forward.

This change brought the women closer, and together they created a support system – for solidarity and sharing of resources, information and ideas. A support system through which they could aspire to become what they wanted and not what the community wanted them to be.

The women entrepreneurs of Bhojla have created a hub of enterprises servicing the huge wedding market in

△ *Prabha Devi at her tailoring enterprise*

> **I am the owner of Vaishnavi Silai (Tailoring) Centre. It is named after my daughter.**

the area. Together, they are supporting women from more villages to challenge patriarchal norms that hold them back from stepping out, working in non-traditional businesses, learning business skills, and accessing finances.

Inspired by the strength of a solidarity platform for women, 'brave spaces for women' have been created across 30 villages in India. These spaces are bringing women together – to raise their voices, express their aspirations, and advance their learning about themselves.

COMIC WORKSHOP

The comic workshop is a participatory design-based co-creation tool to engage women to chart their journey towards livelihood development. It is an engaging exercise that enables participants to channelise emotions through caricature drawing. This time-taking exercise varies from 4-5 hours depending upon the group, size, and facilitation.

You can use a few simple steps to conduct this –

1. **Start by introducing yourself and telling them the objective of the session**

   Quick tip: When you introduce yourself, try to share it as a story (your journey of life so far)

   On the issue of objective, bring a more realistic angle than a subjective one – today we would like to understand your story, your aspirations and skills but will try to make it interactive.

2. **Icebreaking (have an activity which not only acts as an icebreaker but also will activate the dialogue)**

   Divide the participants into groups of two and ask them to take 5 mins to know each other better (do emphasise that they should extract as much information from one another as they can). At the end of 5mins, the pairs are then asked to introduce each other.

   Usually, people forget to ask about minor details like maternal hometown, name of children, and favourite food, so when they start introducing themselves as a moderator you should probe questions on such aspects. Based on what has been missed, tell them how we often see the things at the surface and forget the core, and relate with how these impact work on the ground.

   Now give them another 2 mins to re-intervene and introduce each other, this time as if telling their story.

3. **Tell your story**

   Now that the participants have shared about each other, it's time to share their own stories, not verbally but through caricatures, dialogue, and think boxes.

   To represent the story, provide the audience with the following tools –
   1. Briefing on designing caricatures
   2. A pen (black marker preferably)
   3. A4 sheet of paper (to be folded into four compartments, as we do in SWOT)

Briefing guidelines on caricatures

Before the participants go onto the main exercise, give them 5-10mins of briefing on how to draw the figures and dialogue boxes (samples below).

COMIC WORKSHOP

WORKSHEET

EACH OF THE PARTICIPANTS IS NOW REQUIRED TO TELL THEIR STORY USING THE FORMAT PROVIDED BELOW

Compartment 1

should tell the story of their childhood, their name, where they were born, how many siblings etc.

Compartment 2

should tell about their education/marriage/children

(Good and the bad both)

Compartment 3

is the box of transition where they inform what was that one change that motivated them to choose entrepreneurship as a potential option as a source of livelihood and income

Compartment 4

is how they now foresee their future (for their own, their

enterprise and for their family as well)

COMIC WORKSHOP

WORKSHEET

ADD DETAILS BELOW

Compartment 1

Compartment 2

Compartment 3

Compartment 4

Recommended: Only with potential entrepreneurs aged between 18–35 should participate.

COMIC WORKSHOP

Now paste all the stories on the wall and ask participants to come and share their stories. (Usually, you will see a pattern where individuals can dwell on their childhood skills and realise the hidden talents they have forgotten about, at times, your participants will get emotional thinking of childhood to share your stories at that point and be empathetic)

4. SWOT analysis

Once done with the storytelling process, it's time to bring the participants back onto the practical side of the exercise and inline the prospect shared by the participants, ask them to do a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis of themselves, to help them analyze if the idea is viable.

Strength	Weakness
Opportunities	Threats

Once completed, depending upon whether the idea is feasible or not, ask the participants to peruse the idea or rethink.

At the end of the session, have a short discussion on the concept of entrepreneurship and share the story of an existing entrepreneur (preferably a local one, your partners can help you with it); this will help them relate back. Also, give them time to ask questions if they have any and finally, close by thanking all the participants for taking out the time.

TOOL 3

SELF GOVERNANCE MODULE

The Governance Module strives to empower grassroots implementers and decision-makers with social innovation tools for enhancing community participation in enterprise development in their respective working areas and for better decision-making processes at the meso-level. This tool is designed to build the enterprise development capacities of local representatives and meso-level stakeholders. It begins with the discovery of the self and identifying local issues and resources in the vicinity, identification of local leaders, and finally, a visioning exercise of the village.

STEPS

1 Introduction of the participants and the training objectives: The moderator and the training assistant introduce themselves and inform the purpose and agenda of the meeting

2 Pre-evaluation of participants: The participants are given a baseline survey form. After filling out the forms, they can also be encouraged to introduce themselves with one line on their expectations from session

3 Finding the leader: The game will break the monotony of the process and generate insights on leadership and identifying the right candidate from the community among the participants

4 Visioning exercise for the village: The exercise will give the output in terms of the plan of action based on their experience and context. The team will be divided into groups with their panchayat members and go on with the process

5 Presentation of village plan: After the visioning exercise, the team will incorporate it with their respective village plan on enterprise development

6 Post-evaluation: In this session, participants are again given the post-evaluation form for the assessment of any change in knowledge level

TIME

4 hours

PEOPLE

Panchayat representatives, NRLM Block level managers, field coordinators, Field level officers of Govt. institutions and financial institutions

MATERIALS

Flipchart, poster, sticky notes, moderation sheets (of various colours), pens, sketch pens, notepad

Empowering Panchayat Raj Institution's plan entrepreneurship at the grassroots level

The success of rural entrepreneurship depends on a nurturing ecosystem that supports the entrepreneurs. Through listening exercises in the Bundelkhand and Mirzapur districts of Uttar Pradesh, Development Alternatives (DA) team came across the need to activate the existing Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRI) to create the required support systems in villages.

In line with the social innovation approach, DA initiated a co-creation workshop in Bundelkhand, which included a range of stakeholders, including SAMARTHAN in Policy and Action (SIPA), experts from Atal Institutions of Governance and Public Policy, gender experts, policy experts, local Government officials of Niwadi and panchayat leaders from 10 villages.

The 1-day co-creation session in 2018 explored the range of gaps in the PRI system, such as lack of awareness of public schemes, lack of empathy for entrepreneurs, especially women and youth, and a dearth of infrastructure to facilitate/promote rural entrepreneurship. The stakeholders also explored opportunities for PRIs to play a vital role in accelerating inclusive micro-enterprise development. These opportunities included public procurement systems for locally produced materials, essential infrastructure to promote women-led entrepreneurship and community-level events to encourage local entrepreneurship.

Based on the workshop, the team from SIPA and DA worked together to develop a capacity-building module for the PRI, which included tools to empower PRIs to map not only local entrepreneurship potential but also develop enterprise development plans for their locality. This module was prototyped to enable PRIs to support local enterprises and take ownership of local economic development. The module was piloted in the village of Ladpura in the Niwadi district of Madhya Pradesh.

The Gram Pradhan of Ladpura took part in the Governance Module during its first pilot in Bundelkhand. Quick to realise the opportunity it presented, he approached the organisers in hosting this event in his native village. Gram Pradhan saw the module's potential and believed in the opportunity it created for the youth. This led to the Yuva Chaupal, a village-level platform to work towards solutions for unemployment.

△ *Pilot capacity building workshop for the self-governance module in Ladpura Village in Madhya Pradesh*

Good Practice:

- Invites should be shared a week in advance, and regular follow-ups are needed

- Each exercise should adhere to strict timelines and should extend beyond its prescribed duration.

SELF GOVERNANCE MODULE
PRE-TEST

NAME:

AGE:

CONTACT NUMBER:

YEARS OF WORKING:

PANCHAYAT :

POST IN GRAM SABHA :

NAME OF YOUR
PANCHAYAT MEMBERS :

SECTION 1

Opportunity

1. Status of enterprise development in their area

2. Natural resources/ resources available

3. Capacity or scope of people living in their geography to opt for entrepreneurship

4. Inclusivity and equity: how much is the participation of Women, differently-abled, and other disadvantaged groups in entrepreneurship and businesses?

5. According to you, what all job opportunities are there in your village?

SECTION 2

1. How much do you rate your Gram Panchayat, Panchayat members in your work constituency

2. Who do you think can be considered an entrepreneur

3. What is entrepreneurship?

4. To start a business, what is the most important resource? arrange the following

5. Difference between a shopkeeper and an entrepreneur?

6. Who do you think can be a business person/ entrepreneur?

7. How much do you rate your panchayat in terms of the scope of entrepreneurship development

8. Do you know any government initiative which supports entrepreneurship?

9. Do you think a gram panchayat can support entrepreneurship in the villages?

10. What are the different sectors people are involved in for livelihood in your village?

VILLAGE PLAN

S.NO.	CURRENT STATUS	WHAT DO THEY HAVE?	WHAT CAN BE DONE?
1			
2			

FUTURE OF PROTOTYPING

To solve complex challenges and transform our world towards sustainable development, a departure from traditional project-based efforts to social innovation methodologies, which work to influence linkages and interconnections within the system to reach their intended communities.

Interconnections within the system help in strengthening existing prototypes and building future-forward larger enterprises while also enhancing 'wholesome' listening. Interconnections between constructive communities and a robust ecosystem in tandem with the entrepreneurs can further unleash energies. These interconnections will encourage regenerative, organically driven narratives among youth and women that can challenge socio-economic barriers and link needs and aspirations with support services.
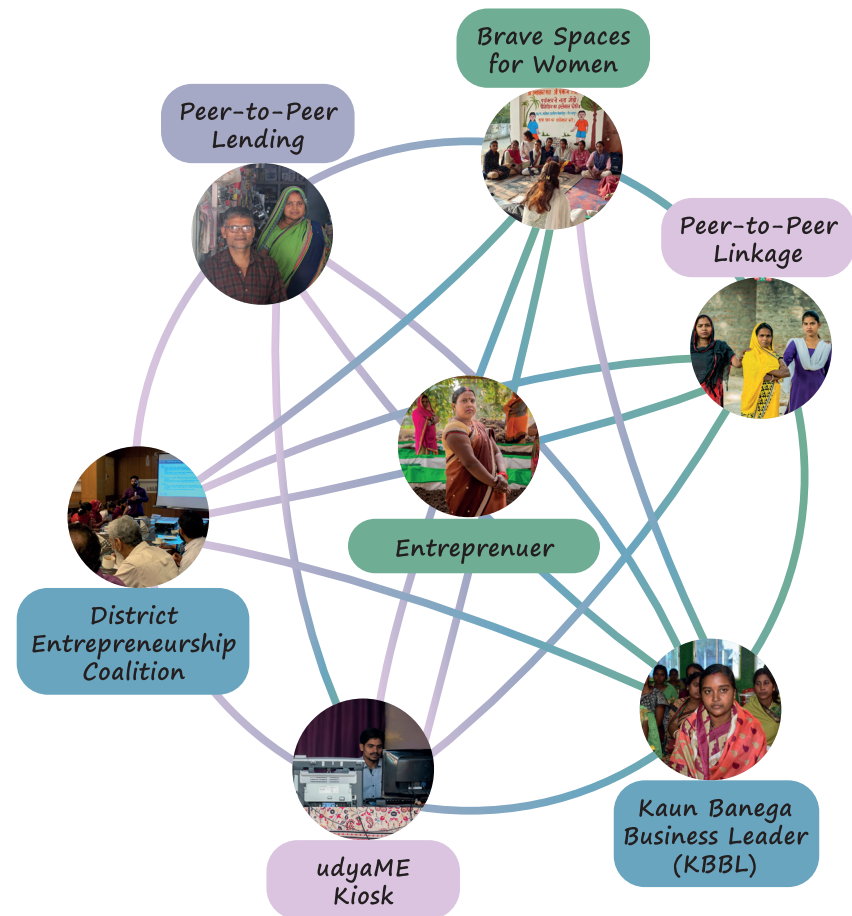
△ *Interconnections established between different prototypes lead to accelerated setup and support for enterprises. An example of this is how peer lending has accelerated financial support to enterprises as it connected with the regional enterprise coalition*

Prototypes embedded in their communities

Interconnections within Prototypes established

Forging interconnections with larger ecosystem

Interconnections between Prototypes and public infrastructure

Prototyping strengthened with increased ownership from communities
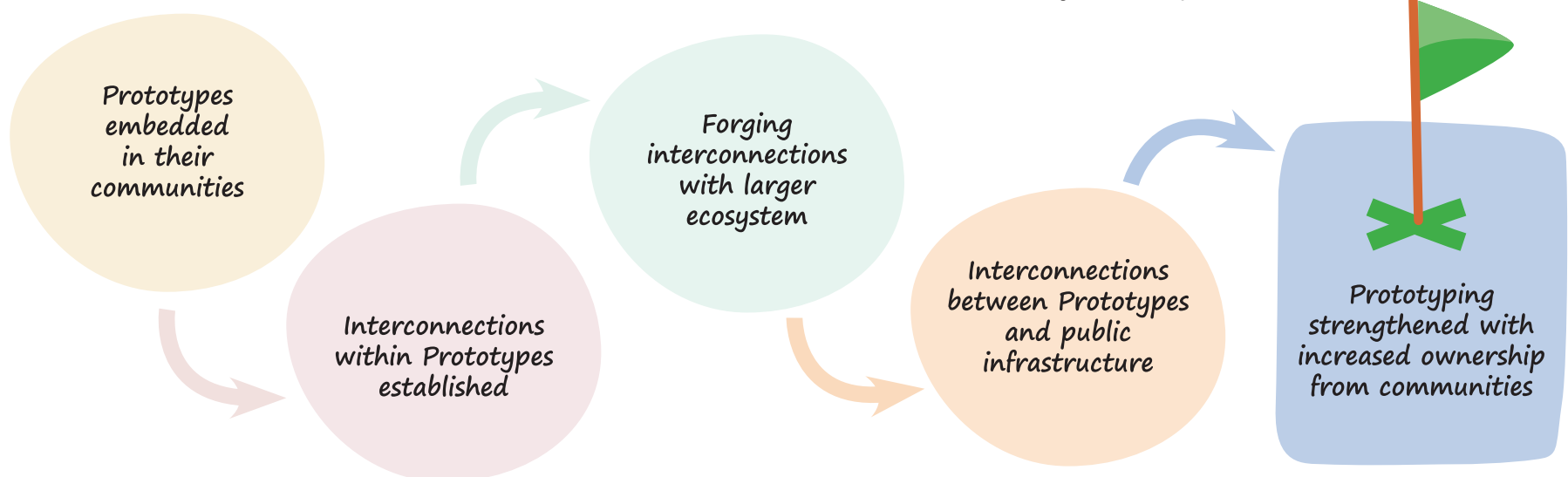
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Who do we prototype with?

A. For inclusive entrepreneurs, diverse voices representative from varied age, gender, caste, and socioeconomic status who are willing to be entrepreneurs themselves

Q. Can the same tools be used in prototyping in different contexts?

A. Yes and no. The same tools can be used in prototyping with different members of society but certain modifications need to be made. The need for the modifications emerge on their own if the underlying process for prototyping is followed.

Q. Where should there be more ownership of the prototypes?

A. The prototyping process should be anchored within the community for whom the solutions are being co-created.

Q. Who are the stakeholders to be kept in mind while prototyping?

A. The most important stakeholder is the community itself. In addition to them, it is important to map the local ecosystem to uncover local actors in terms of government agencies, civil society organisations, educational institutions, and private enterprises.

Work4Progress

COLLABORATIVE
ACTION

COLLABORATIVE ACTION

In this toolkit, we share the principles of collaborative action, that in combination, with listening and prototyping, can initiate shifts in the local entrepreneurial ecosystems. We outline the values, principles, and tools for collaborative action. These include effective coordination, leveraging resources, and deepening solidarity, which is possible when various stakeholders exchange ideas, combine resources, and share expertise. We believe that collaborative action for entrepreneurship-led job creation can build an enabling ecosystem supportive of innovations, local aspirations and that can also drive economic development.

In this section we will understand

- Why collaborative action is necessary to support a culture of entrepreneurship at the grassroots.

- How we can collaborate effectively.

- Approaches of collaborative action in the practical implementation of enterprise development.

Who is this writing for?

This toolkit is for practitioners and change makers who work towards enabling systemic shifts in the ecosystem for a multiplicative and a sustained impact.

The nature of the team

The team can be a mix of development sector workers engaging directly with the communities and local stakeholders, and programme managers who are involved in developing strategies that bridge gaps in the local ecosystem, connect institutions and policies working in silos, and forge collaborations among key actors.

WHY DO WE COLLABORATE?

Entrepreneurship is considered a critical intervention to address problems like unemployment and inequality. There are several schemes and programmes at state and national level promoting entrepreneurship, however, the traditional top down approach, lack of comprehensive policies, and implementation plans are barriers for existing and aspiring entrepreneurs. Local stakeholders play an important role to support entrepreneurship, however, their efforts are often isolated and siloed, resulting in the community failing to leverage synergies and resources effectively.

A listening exercise1 conducted by Development Alternatives in 2017 in the regions of Bundelkhand and eastern Uttar Pradesh gave insights from the ground of the challenges to entrepreneurship that exist for both the entrepreneurs as well as the stakeholders. The rural entrepreneurs lack awareness of the resources that are available locally, and if entrepreneurs are aware of the schemes, accessibility is the impending challenge. On the other hand, stakeholders are also not able to provide solutions that can mitigate the roadblocks in entrepreneurship. Furthermore, listening exercises with stakeholders apprised that financial and training

> **If we want to make the Indian economy more inclusive, we will have to think and act in fundamentally different ways; committing ourselves to possibilities such as those presented by the idea of SAM-UDYAM: entrepreneurship that is both inclusive and equitable.**

institutes are unable to identify entrepreneurs to support. However, it was revealed that after gaining initial success, entrepreneurs show considerable interest in innovating and exploring new ideas.

The cooperation and sharing of resources are characteristics of collaboration, leading to a natural condition for improved efficiency, emergence of solidarity, trust and reciprocity. Such collective action towards a specific goal becomes crucial in building an emergent ecosystem across micro, meso and macro levels. An emergent ecosystem is one that builds a conducive social and economic environment to enable millions of aspiring individuals to take up entrepreneurship opportunities.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, when there was a nationwide lockdown and restrictions, collaboration at the local level led to innovations at the systemic level to tap into new opportunities and meet needs. The micro-scale financial institutions eased loan repayment restrictions, common service centres (CSCs) working as udyaME kiosks provide access to government schemes and entrepreneurship-related information for local entrepreneurs, virtual meetings between stakeholders enabled them to stay in touch with initiatives on the ground. Each of these instances reflects examples of collaboration during a crisis that helped strengthen local resilience.

Collaborative Action is a logical aspect of entrepreneurship at the grassroots and therefore, requires an open innovation approach that encourages social transformation. We believe that Collaborative Action has the power to enable change and build networks at different

1Jobs We Create, 2017 https://www.devalt.org/images/L2_ProjectPdfs/JobsWeCreate_2019.pdf?Oid=266

levels for a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem. This initiates from a micro level where we facilitate exchange of required information and support entrepreneurs in rural and peri-urban areas. At the meso-level, we facilitate interconnections among various actors of the ecosystem, providing enterprise support services at the district level. At the macro-level, we facilitate cross learning between agencies, peers, leaders, and change makers to retain shared objectives and influence policy action at state and national levels.

Collaborative Action is the key to unlocking collective wisdom and maximising the value of shared resources that, alone or in isolation, are unable to initiate systemic shifts towards a culture of entrepreneurship.

Collaborative action helps in:

- Efficient coordination and problem solving
- Leveraging new opportunities and scaling innovations
- Deepening solidarity

COMMON PURPOSE, GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS

RESOURCE SHARING

ACCOUNTABILITY

CLEAR COMMUNICATION AND DIALOGUE

ACTIVE LOCALLY-LED FACILITATION AND CO-CREATION

Efficient Coordination for Problem Solving

Collaborative Action for Entrepreneurship-led Livelihoods

Leveraging Opportunities and scaling Innovations

Deepen Solidarity through open dialogue and co-creation
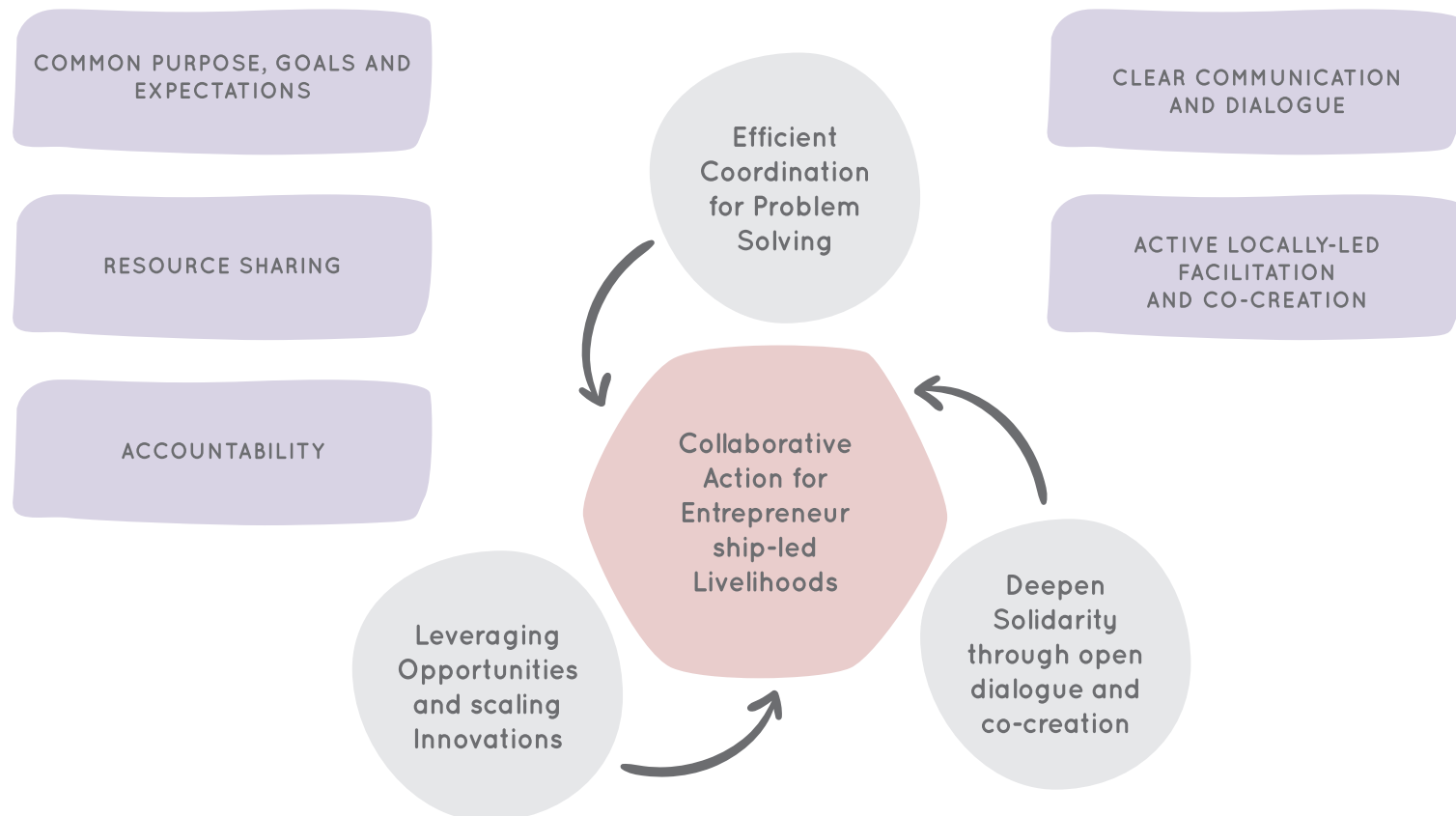
Collaborative Action is the key unlocking collective wisdom and maximising the value of shared resources that alone or in isolation are unable to initiate systemic shifts towards a culture of entrepreneurship.

HOW DO WE COLLABORATE?

There are numerous examples of innovative solutions in the entrepreneurial space, however, the success of these models remains contextual and isolated as they are usually applied based on transactional relations, where engagement ends when projects or programmes do. There is a need to turn this uni-dimensional process into a relational collaboration seen through the lens of the network.

A network lens leads to a recognition of available resources at the local and meso-level scale, and combines them to create an efficient synergy in supporting entrepreneurship and innovation. It also taps into the open innovation approach, which is based on the premise that both internal and external resources and ideas are critical in bringing practical solutions to address the growing and complex needs on the ground. Seen through a network lens, a Micro Finance Institution, for instance, would become a part of a local ecosystem where it collaborates with informational services providers, training institutions and community-based lending institutions to encourage more participation and circulation of credit at the local scale.

COLLABORATION CAN HAPPEN THROUGH

CONTINUOUS DIALOGUE For any collaborative process, the first step begins with open dialogue. Dialogue between partners, stakeholders and community. At present, significant disconnect is often seen between communities, stakeholders and policy makers which structurally prevents entrepreneurs from accessing available opportunities and resources. Initiating dialogue between local stakeholders and the community members enables building of common narratives, exploration of new opportunities, sharing of resources to support entrepreneurs, and better problem-solving. To initiate the dialogue, facilitators must first identify local stakeholders and available resources - map and match them to co-create and prototype solutions.

FACILITATION OF CO-CREATION AND PROTOTYPING Listening must happen in the form of a two-way dialogue between collaborators and the community as well as collaborators and the stakeholders to drop hard assumptions and old ways of working. This leads to co-creation of processes that recognise the gaps that plagued entrepreneurship at grassroots in terms of access to information, credit, and other services. Facilitation of co-creation also enables identification of missing links in the system, new opportunities of co-working and creation of joint strategies to move forward together. Similarly, collaboration also helps in prototyping solutions. Prototyping results in entrepreneurship that is resilient, and an ecosystem that is more responsive to the needs and challenges of an entrepreneur.[2]

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ADAPTIVE LEARNING With each new intervention and interaction in local systems, small-scale changes or micro-shifts are initiated. Macro-level factors, too, are constantly changing, like the case of pandemic, and policy responses in terms of lockdown, and new regulations. It is important to detect emerging trends, new resources, and changes in behaviour and policy. To learn and adapt to the changing circumstances, it is important that the processes of dialogue, co-creation and prototyping take place simultaneously. The process of adaptive learning enables simultaneous experimentations and realigning of operations with better design solutions, thereby scaling and deepening the impact.

[2]*Refer to How to prototype section in the Prototyping Toolkit for more details*

GOOD PRACTICES

- For effective collaboration, it is imperative to develop an optimistic, energetic, and open mindset both personally and as a team.

- As the focus is on entrepreneurship development, always keep entrepreneurs at the centre of all collaborative actions.

- Encourage collaboration across departments - The best ideas may be generated when various goals, personality types, and skill sets are combined.

- Adopt an open-door policy that encourages regular and flexible communication between the various organisational layers.

" Partnership between Rang De and Development Alternatives[3] has enabled local credit ecosystem for entrepreneurs in accessing timely loans at affordable rates. These innovations, built largely through solidarity among stakeholders, have been successful in creating impact at micro and meso levels by changing by laws of Micro-Finance Institutions and Banks in the form of either decreasing time to access loans, interest rates or both. "

[3]Development Aternatives led Work4Progress programme partnered with Rang De in 2021 to provide easy access to affordable credit to micro-entrepreneurs across villages of India. To know more about the Rang De platform, click here.

THE PATH OF POSSIBILITIES!

Mr Sadab Ansari a resident of Imambara, Mirzapur is a carpet weaver, it is also an ancestral practice for Sadab's family and a skill he acquired from his father. Understanding the scarcity of jobs, Sadab joined his family business. It was a 5 member-led business with limited product variety. Back in 2018, Sadab was introduced to the Development Alternatives-led Work4Progress programme during the door-to-door visit. He became a regular member at the District Entrepreneurship Coalition (DEC) wherein he met varied stakeholders that enabled him to expand his business and enhance his knowledge of the market opportunity, which was a huge hindrance to his business. Through the networking from REC, he received one month of training on carpet weaving by NABARD.

At a time when Sadab's business had just started to take flight, a pandemic hit, leaving Sadab discouraged. The DA team constantly supported and motivated him to ensure his business was not compromised. To upgrade his business, Sadab started selling at fairs through support from NABARD and District Industries Centre, ultimately leading to the visibility of his doormats, carpets, and wall hangings in fairs of Orissa, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, and Uttar Pradesh. Sadab now employs 12 individuals at his carpet weaving centre. After having established a national presence with an annual turnover in lakhs, Sadab is now setting his sights for international markets.

△ Sadab Ansari, 32, Carpet Manufacturing, Mirzapur, Uttar Pradesh

◁ Taramani, owner of a plastic box manufacturing unit, voicing his opinion in the District Entrepreneurship Coalition, Mirzapur in 2018

To know more about Taramani's entrepreneurial journey, click here.

PRINCIPLES OF COLLABORATIVE ACTION

Activate Networks
to identify partners for leveraging existing resources

Remove Barriers
to reduce transaction costs of collaboration among diverse partners

Bring Together Partners
to trigger shift in the ecosystem

Build Shared Values
to construct collective narratives that influence decision making

Human-Centered Design
to pick up signals from the ground and incorporate them into plans

Co-Create Innovations
to realign operations with better design solutions

Speed Up Learning
to detect emerging trends and continued experimentations
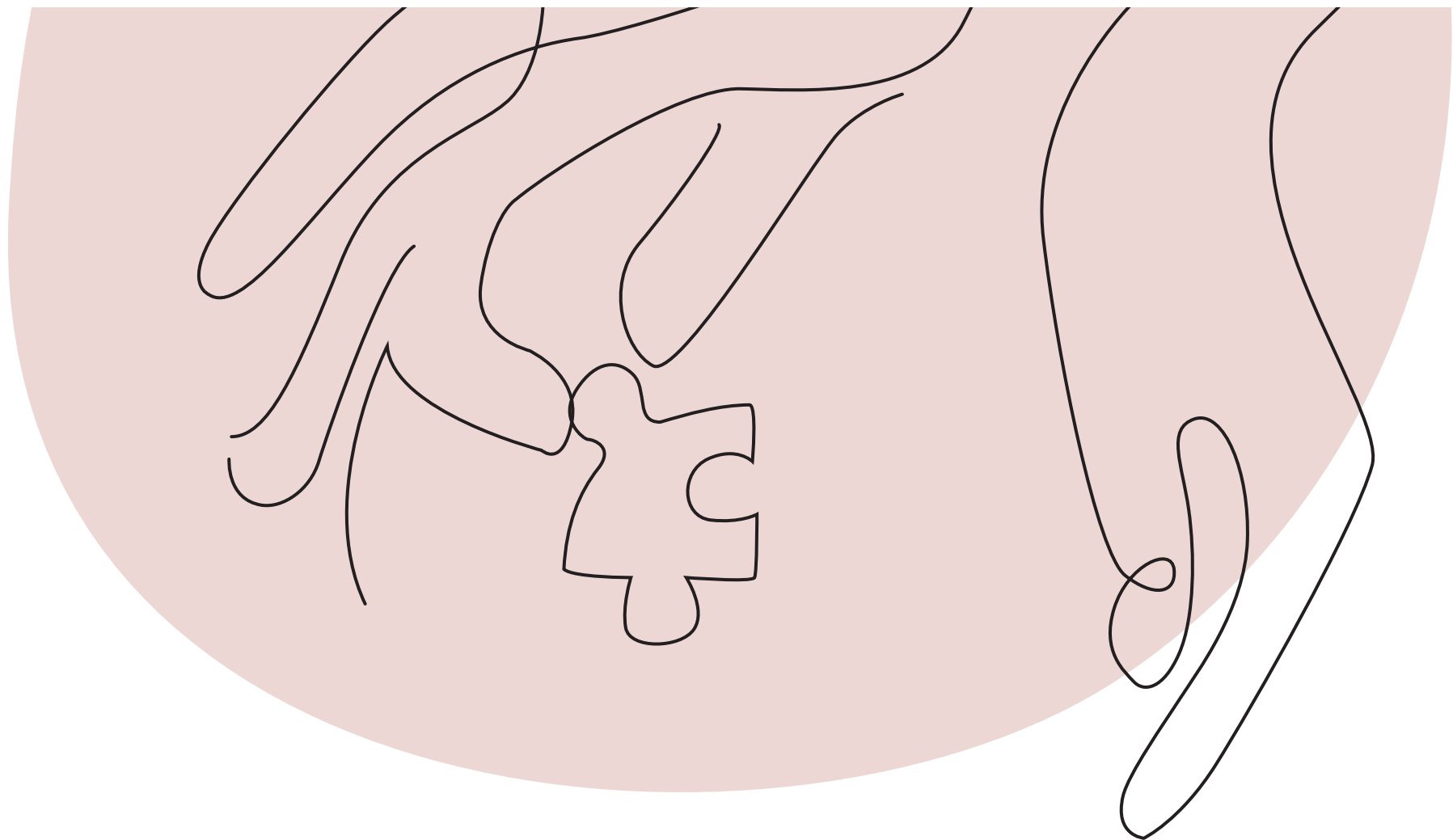
Next up, we share some of our tools that have been helpful in initiating and deepening collaborative action within our work. These tools build upon each other and should ideally be used iteratively and in conjunction with the others.

TOOL 1

SYSTEM MAPPING

The first step to unlock collaborative action within an entrepreneurial ecosystem is to understand the system itself. System mapping is an effective tool to build perspective and start understanding local resources, flows, and complexities at the district level. It helps us and relevant system actors to:

- **Outline components of a local system** such as actors, resources, and processes, thereby assessing own strength, and systemic boundaries. Also, mark the nodal point of entrepreneurship at different levels.

- **Recognise the interconnections and interdependencies** among components by mapping workflow relationships, to sense collective role in the system and identify leverage points.

- **Understand needs, opportunities, barriers, and enablers** in the local system to direct a new course of action for multiplicative impact.

STEPS

1 **Defining Boundaries** helps create a frame to begin the system mapping process. This might involve a geographical limit and focuses on local entrepreneurship processes.

2 **Identifying local stakeholders and actors** like Government agencies, local CSOs, training and financial institutions etc. who are associated with the livelihood generation processes in the local area.

3 **Understand the structure of the system** through the data collected on the stakeholders in the system (such as government agencies, financial and training institutions, academia etc), relevant for understanding the interconnections and flows between different actors.

4 **Identify leverage points and course of action** based on the understanding of the structure of the system, can help in deciding the pinpointing of the intervention. For instance, capacities of local aspiring entrepreneurs can be linked to existing training institutes.

5 **Capturing shifts and understanding the system** to identify where action is still needed, and efficacy of any intervention. This allows facilitators to recognize new opportunities, thereby leading to a robust ecosystem.

TIME

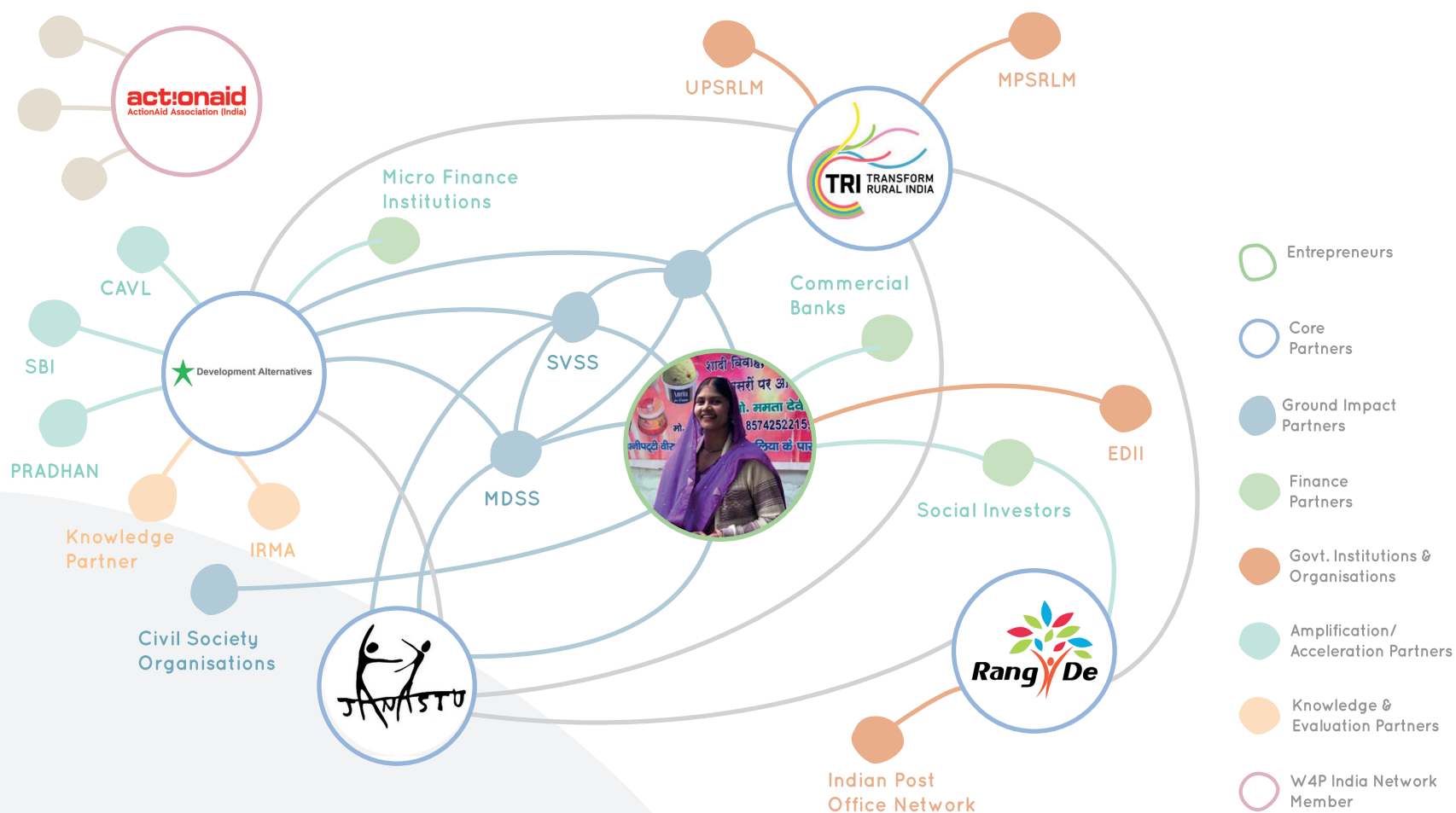2 to 3 days

STRUCTURE

Workshop

MATERIAL REQUIRED

Physical
- » Flip charts
- » Post-its
- » Markers
- » Boards

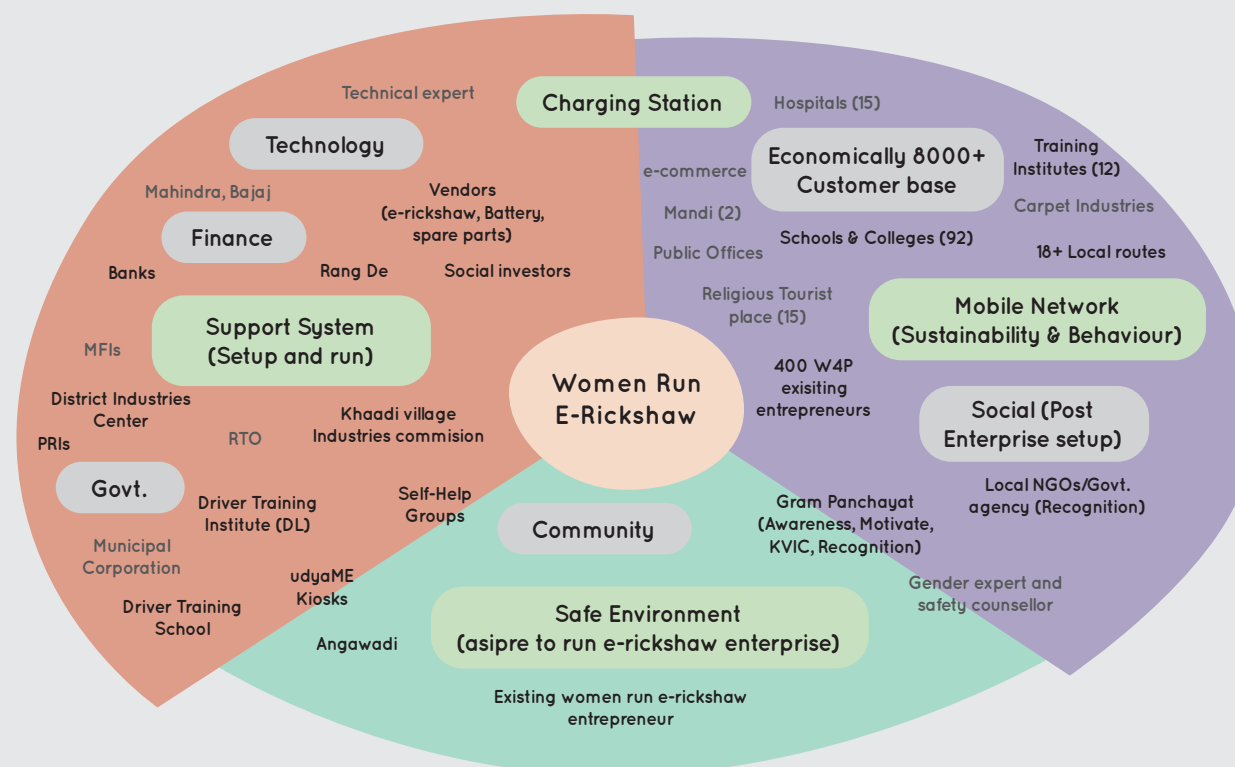**Virtual**
- » Access to Zoom
- » Jamboard
- » Presentations

Good Practice:

- Begin with a purpose in mind. Without a purpose for system mapping, the exercise will lose its direction and focus.

- The team involved in system mapping must include individuals with diverse skill sets and should have relevant and sufficient experience working in the field of entrepreneurship.

- Bring in as many voices and perspectives in understanding the structure of the system as the process of understanding unlocks collaboration itself.

- While defining boundaries is essential to understanding the local system, keep in mind the wider system at the macro or meso level. Actors and processes in the local system are directly and indirectly affected by the wider system. Moreover, there are consistent flows between the wider system and the system you are mapping, which needs to be taken into account.

System Map for gauging potential of accelerating women-led e-Rickshaws in Eastern Uttar Pradesh

Technical expert

Charging Station

Hospitals (15)

Technology

Economically 8000+ Customer base

Training Institutes (12)

Mahindra, Bajaj

e-commerce

Vendors (e-rickshaw, Battery, spare parts)

Carpet Industries

Finance

Mandi (2)

Schools & Colleges (92)

18+ Local routes

Public Offices

Banks

Rang De

Social investors

Religious Tourist place (15)

Mobile Network (Sustainability & Behaviour)

MFIs

Support System (Setup and run)

Women Run E-Rickshaw

400 W4P exisiting entrepreneurs

District Industries Center

Khaadi village Industries commision

Social (Post Enterprise setup)

PRIs

RTO

Local NGOs/Govt. agency (Recognition)

Govt.

Driver Training Institute (DL)

Self-Help Groups

Community

Gram Panchayat (Awareness, Motivate, KVIC, Recognition)

Municipal Corporation

udyaME Kiosks

Gender expert and safety counsellor

Driver Training School

Angawadi

Safe Environment (asipre to run e-rickshaw enterprise)

Existing women run e-rickshaw entrepreneur

Tool in Practice

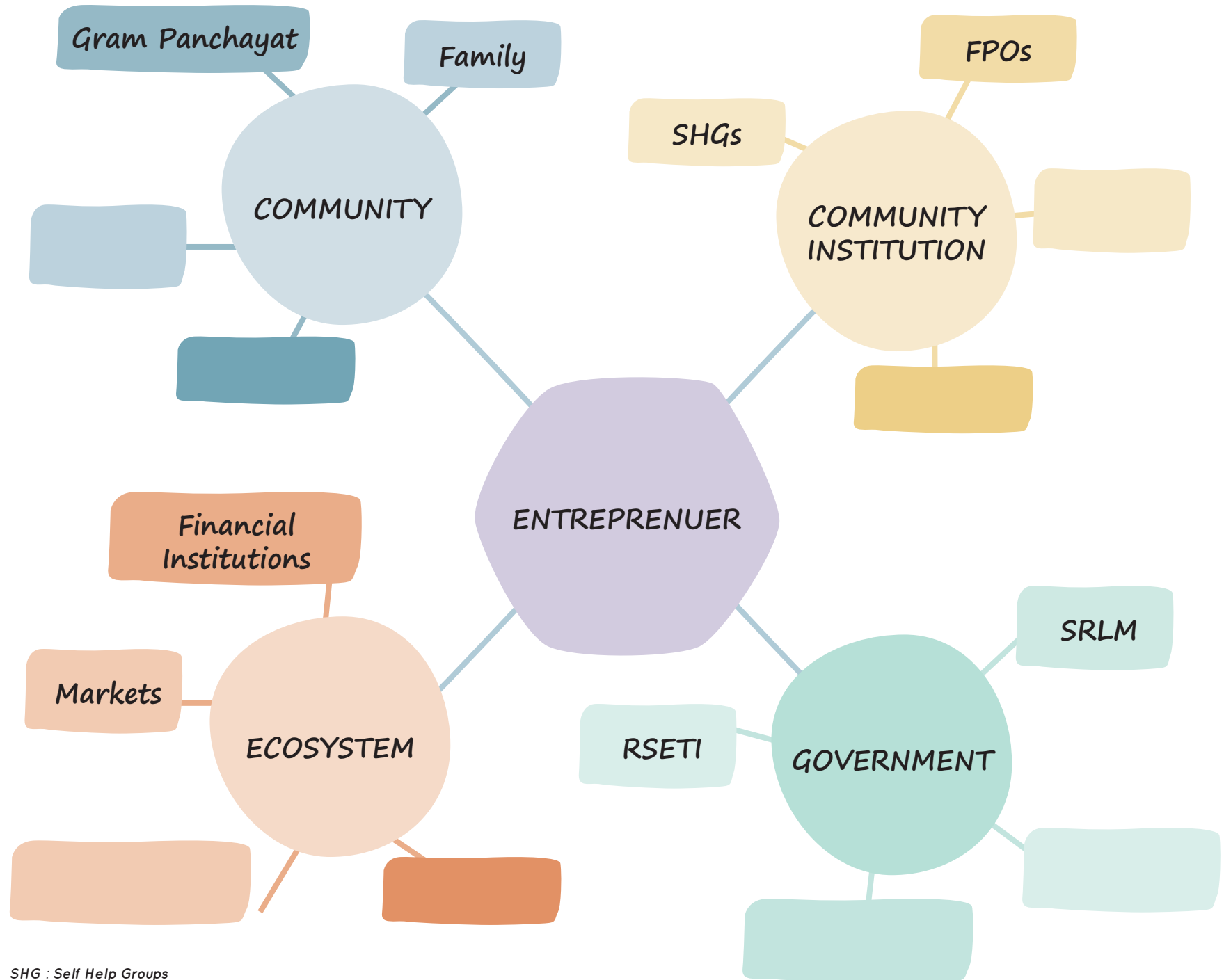**System Mapping for accelerating Women-led e-Rickshaws in Uttar Pradesh**

Strong transportation network is a significant factor for economic growth. To enable local women to lead the solution for safe - last mile mobility in rural areas, an inclusive enterprise of women led e-rickshaw was prototyped. In order to accelerate the adoption of this prototype across Mirzapur and Bhadohi blocks of east Uttar Pradesh, System Mapping Tool was applied.

Mapping of the system started with a primary assessment survey followed by secondary research. Based on the purpose, the mapping was classified into three components of -

1) safe environment for women to unleash their entrepreneurial energies

2) activated ecosystem for setting up and supporting e-rickshaw enterprises

3) mobility network for sustainability of safe mobility model and mainstreaming behaviour change towards women-led e-rickshaws

Under each component, stakeholders were identified. Listening exercises were conducted to understand the local contexts for enablers, barriers, needs and opportunities. The dialogue sessions were also complemented by building district level co-creation platforms, where stakeholders in the enterprise development and livelihood generation sector came together to facilitate enterprise development. Both the dialogue and co-creation processes have helped in the system mapping for promoting women-led e-rickshaws, understanding the system dynamics and entry points. The behaviour and linkages between multiple actors, enablers and opportunities were captured and mapped as represented in the figure. System mapping is a prerequisite for holistic solutions to systemic problems through collaboration.

TEMPLATE FOR SYSTEM MAPPING

Gram Panchayat

Family

COMMUNITY

SHGs

FPOs

COMMUNITY INSTITUTION

ENTREPRENUER

Financial Institutions

Markets

ECOSYSTEM

RSETI

SRLM

GOVERNMENT

SHG : Self Help Groups
FPOs: Farmer Producer Organisation
SRLM: State Rural Livelihood Missions
RSETI: Rural Self Employment Training Institute

TOOL 2

COLLECTIVE LEARNING FOR ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

"Complex challenges need simple structures" - Work4Progress, India

Challenges pertaining to rural entrepreneurship are complex and shifting. The dynamism of the ecosystem with each new intervention or interaction changes the relationship between nodes in the system. This alters the channels for flow of resources, often in a non-inclusive manner.

The aim is to create a system that can adjust and respond to emergent changes without excluding any stakeholder of the system. To build and nourish a strong relationship within nodes of the system, an interconnected process of dialogue, co-creation and prototyping is needed between all the stakeholders. This process is called "collective learning".

Collective learning process driven by ethnographic principles of continuous empathetic listening to capture feedback and lived experiences of community, entrepreneurs, stakeholders of the system and the implementation team. It helps the entire network of collaborators and policy influencers to simultaneously experiment, analyse, and reflect to realign operations with better design solutions, thereby maintaining ownership of stakeholders in scaling and deepening the impact.

Characteristics of collective learning are:

- Continuous, embedded within the processes of action
- Purpose-driven, specific for a particular action backed by data
- Dynamic, recognising drivers and influences at micro, meso and macro levels
- Enables exploration of new solutions, validation and valuation of existing once

Similar to most other types of evaluations, collective learning has planning, action and evaluation components. However, it seeks to look beneath the surface of each narrative, to validate the truth or valuation of multiple versions of truth, and draw learning and mitigating measures collectively for building new knowledge. Hence, collective learning happens simultaneously throughout the action.

Method of learning for conventional projects

PLAN

ACT

EVALUATE

Good Practice:

- Outline the purpose for the learning in line with the needs of the project, partners (collaborators), and stakeholders of the system.

- The team involved in collective learning must be open to different kinds of opinions, truths, and inferences, without preconceived notion of logic.

- Quick feedback and report must be ensured by the learning team even if the entire picture for an issue or action is hidden.

Method for collective learning

STEPS

1 Determining the right approach helps create a frame to begin the adaptive learning process. It defines the purpose and areas for learning. It may be influenced by the types of stakeholders who are to be evaluated, or different systems (micro, meso & macro) that are part of purpose.

2 Getting the organisation ready to carry out learning as well as to provide action insights. It begins by embedding a separate learning team within each cooperating organisations with implementation team. Further, this involves building of a co-working space, regular joint sharing and sense-making exercises, and reporting.

3 Find good questions that would determine the true value and purpose of an action. This involves co-creating quantitative part (indicators) and qualitative aspects (research questions) for shared value, and discovery of patterns by all participating organisations.

4 Joint Reflection Session that would collectively determine the needs, opportunities, barriers and enables of a system This would also include framing of an action plan for implementing major shifts on ground and at policy level with mitigation strategy.

TIME

Continues - regular

STRUCTURE

Small Focus Groups

MATERIAL REQUIRED

Physical
- » Flip charts
- » Post-its
- » Markers
- » Boards

Virtual
- » Access to Zoom
- » Jamboard
- » Presentations

Collective learning between partners of Work4Progress India, DA Platform

Tool-1: Collective Learning Matrix

The process of collective learning is applied in the Development Alternatives (DA) led Work4Progress India Platform, which has RangDe.org, Transform Rural India Foundation (TRIF), Janastu as partners. Each partner is working in multiple geographies, communities and organisation of the ecosystem. Hence, building processes at micro, meso and macro levels for creating-strengthening relationships and analysing how relationships affect the project and vice-versa is paramount.

Collective learning follows a continuous cycle of collecting feedback on actions from each stakeholder in the system. The feedback in terms of needs, opportunities, barriers and enablers is collected, aligned to the shared values or outcomes of the project and made sense by a dedicated learning team from each partner organisation. Sense-making involves understanding exchange of tangible[4] and intangible[5] resources and their relationship as well as their effect in the system for creation of value.

Every 3-months, learning from the feedback is shared within the entire network over a joint reflection session. The joint reflection is organised in workshop mode, at a mutually decided place wherein each partner identifies at least one relationship in each of the project outcome areas and brainstorms evaluation questions of relationships around -

- meaning and values

- resource flows

- building a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem

- external factors and business environment

These evaluation questions help individuals and organisations to define the most significant changes in project, and in relationship, and future possibilities for collaborative action.

[4]*Tangible resources are physical resources such as infrastructure, equipment, credit, grant, knowledge etc. that the community, entrepreneurs and stakeholders exchange.*

[5]*Intangible resources are non-physical resources such as intellectual properties, value system, goodwill, beliefs, and skills of human resources within the organisation.*

TEMPLATE FOR INDICATOR MATRIX

NEEDS ENABLERS	BARRIERS	OPPORTUNITIES

RELATIONSHIPS OF MEANING AND VALUES	RELATIONSHIPS AROUND RESOURCE FLOWS	RELATIONSHIPS FOR BUILDING A ROBUST ECOSYSTEM	RELATIONSHIPS AROUND EXTERNAL FACTORS

MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

FUTURE POSSIBILITIES

TOOL 3

DISTRICT ENTREPRENEURSHIP COALITION

District Entrepreneurship Coalition (DEC) is a non-hierarchical platform at the meso-level (district or zonal level) where entrepreneurs and stakeholders, working on enterprise and livelihood development, take ownership and co-create solutions collaboratively to build a robust entrepreneurship ecosystem in the region.

The objective of the coalitions is to bring various stakeholders together and establish linkages amongst each other to strengthen a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem in the field. It aims to channelise and optimise the efforts and resources of multiple stakeholders including the entrepreneurs towards the common goal of job creation through enterprise development.

The key stakeholders include entrepreneurs and representatives from government agencies such as District Industries Centre, National Rural Livelihood Mission, Agriculture Department, Department of Veterinary Services, Department of Horticulture, Department of Fisheries etc.; financial institutes like National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), banks, Microfinance institutions (MFIs) etc.; market aggregators, training institutes like Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETI), universities etc.

District Entrepreneurship Coalition ▷
being conducted connecting
enterprise support service providers
and aspiring entrepreneurs

STEPS

1 **Stakeholder mapping and mobilization** to identify proactive stakeholders.

2 **One on one dialogue** with the stakeholders on a regular basis and identification of a point person.

3 **Dialogue sessions** to finalize the structure, roles and responsibilities, as well as the vision and framework of the coalition platform, that is, to define the collective goals of all the stakeholders.

4 **Regular co-creation sessions** (preferably once in two months) with all the stakeholders and discussion on the challenges faced and resolution of those challenges.

5 **Establishing linkages** between entrepreneurs and stakeholders in terms of finance and training and to support their ongoing programs to strengthen the ecosystem.

6 **Periodic review** of the collaborative process and collective decision on steering the collaboration.

Coalition in Practice:

The coalition meeting follows a standard protocol that starts with the introduction of coalition members, who then share success stories. The major focus of the coalition is on discussing the agenda points in which entrepreneurs and stakeholders share challenges faced and entrepreneurship related schemes and information. Towards the end, key action points are summarised. The minutes from the meeting are also shared within 48 hours of the coalition. Platforms such as coalition have emerged as a useful tool in the field of entrepreneurship development that brings convergence in the otherwise siloed efforts of different actors working in promoting entrepreneurship, along with bridging the gap between entrepreneurs and support providers.

The nationwide lockdown posed a major hindrance in conducting coalitions physically. To remain connected with the entrepreneurs and coalition members, the need to transition towards virtual coalitions emerged. The focus was diverted on using digital tools such as video calls and WhatsApp groups to remain connected with entrepreneurs and other stakeholders. It took some time for communities to adapt to the evolving online culture, but once confident in using technology such as Zoom and Google Meet, coalition meetings started regaining their essence. The virtual nature of coalition meetings enabled larger participation rate from communities and other stakeholders working in the entrepreneurial space as attending coalition was just one click away. As the restrictions were lifted, the coalition was conducted in hybrid mode, taking place both virtually and physically.

TIME

1.5 to 2 hours

STRUCTURE

Once in 2 months in every district/block

MATERIAL REQUIRED

Physical
» Flip charts
» Post-its
» Markers
» Boards

Virtual
» Access to Zoom
» Jamboard
» Presentations

SUCCESS STORY OF MIRZAPUR COALITION

Coalition in Mirzapur district started as an informal learning space for sharing of knowledge between different stakeholders in the local entrepreneurial ecosystem back in 2017. As part of the Work4Progress India programme, Development Alternatives (DA) along with its partner organisations Manviya Drishtikon Seva Samiti (MDSS) and Swami Vivekanand Shiksha Samiti (SVSS) played a role of neutral facilitator. We brought representatives from government agencies, financial and training institutions, NGOs, market associations and technology vendors in the district to talk to one another on supporting enterprise growth in Mirzapur. Entrepreneurs were also made part of the coalitions to directly voice their opinions and issues. The notion to directly address the challenges of entrepreneurs enabled exchange of information and resources between the stakeholders.

For instance, to support set up and growth of enterprises that were part of the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) programme, multiple private Micro Financial Institutions (MFI's) and local Banks provide timely credit support.

Today, the Mirzapur Coalition is a Model Coalition, organised, and managed by local stakeholders to effectively share resources and facilitate cross-learning. Coalitions are organised every two months in Mirzapur. Coalitions are being replicated by DA in Bhadohi, Bundelkhand, Bankati, and Bahraich regions to create robust local ecosystems for entrepreneurship in these blocks.

Good Practice:

- Include stakeholders from varied sectors such as marketing, academics, training, government and civil society organisations

- In the first few coalition meetings, role setting should be completed so that each participant is aware of their role in the coalition.

- Ensure a relational collaboration, as opposed to transactional one, among stakeholders and entrepreneurs for efficient resource convergence and cross-learning

"
Peolple have started taking ownership; ownership of their enterprises and also ownership of the coalition platform. Coalitions have now emerged as a platform that not only solves challenges in entrepreneurship development through convergence of resources but also a collective space for knowledge and information sharing "

~ Sunil Jain, Government Representative and a Mirzapur Coalition Member

Surendra Kushwaha

Never looking back!

This is a brief from Surendra Kushwaha's journey as an entrepreneur and member of the coalition in Niwari:

> **The past three years of my life have been full of challenges, but they also taught me to believe in the fact that efforts and honest intentions in the right direction takes you a long way**

△ **Surendra Kushwaha, 36, Information Kiosk and a Mini ATM, Niwari, Madhya Pradesh**

Surendra Kushwaha, is a 36-year-old entrepreneur from Kachhipur village in Niwari district. Post his graduation in Computers in 2004, Surendra was employed as an accountant in Mahindra and was on a salary of INR 13,500 per month in Raipur.

He continued working till 2012 when he lost his job and had to return to Niwari. He then joined a private firm in Tarichar. He worked as a computer operator at a minimum salary of INR 5000 till 2016. With a desire to be self-employed, he decided to start his own enterprise in 2018.

With all his savings, he bought a shop on the roads in Tarichar village of Niwari district. With a vision to take care of his own community members, he set up a udyaME Kiosk and a Mini ATM, enabling access to online registrations, form filling, aadhar card, applying Kisan credit card, pan card, etc.
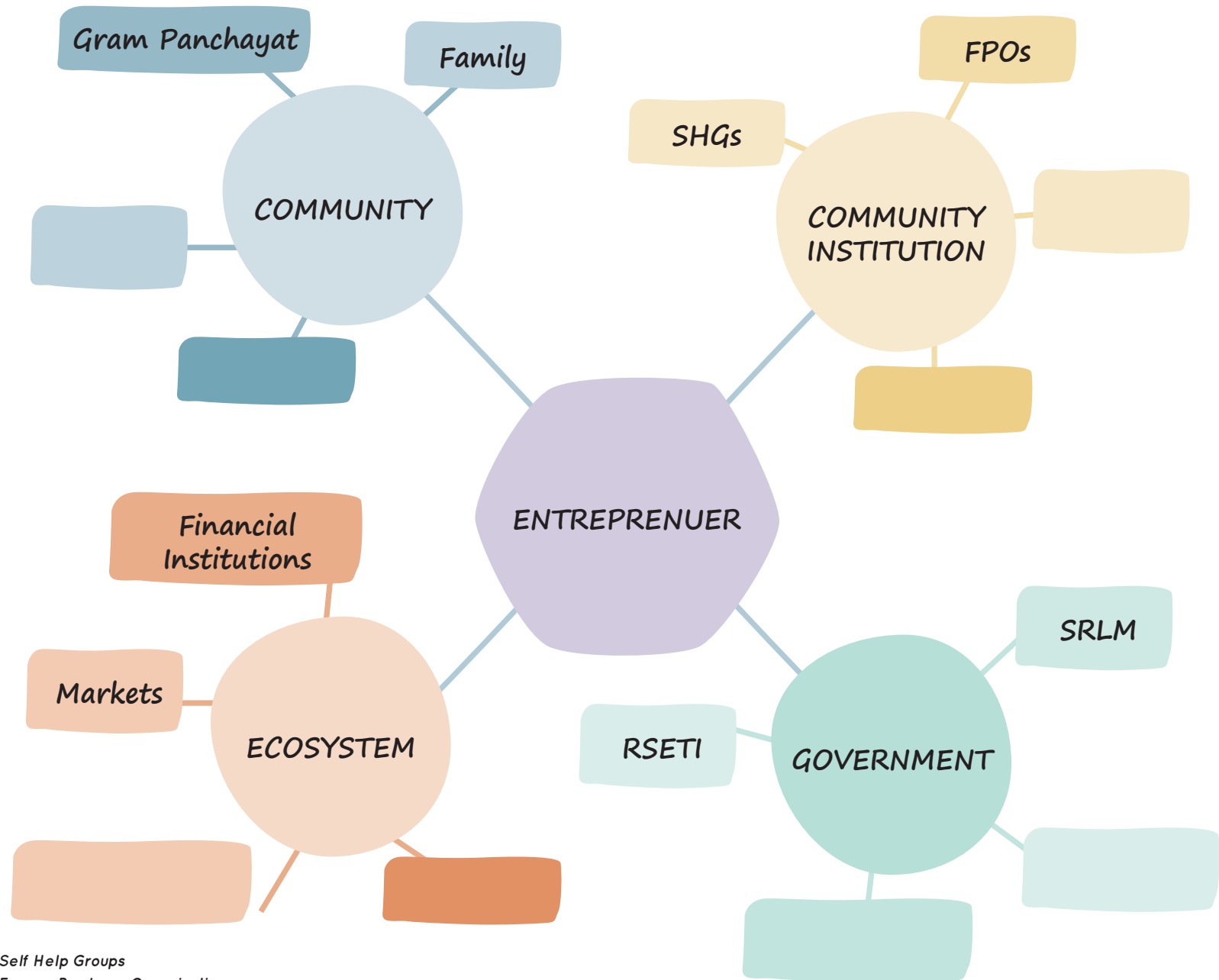
He was introduced to Development Alternatives through his peers. On average Surendra witnesses transactions done by 50-60 people daily and attributes his success to district entrepreneurship coalition, which connected him with different financial institutions such as Banks, Micro-Finance Institutions (MFIs) and credit institutions. He managed the operations of his ATM by taking permission from the District Administration. This situation elevated his reputation in the village. He was quick to capitalise on the connection made through the strong peer-to-peer linkage that DA enabled for him.

> **I find the interactions at the meeting very useful, and everyone always leaves the room with new ideas. As I became a more active member of the coalition, I also started voicing the aspirations of my community members and friends at the coalition, which has attracted more support providers in my village.**

TEMPLATE FOR DOCUMENTATION
STAKEHOLDER MAPPING (PRE- COALITION)

COMMUNITY
- Gram Panchayat
- Family

COMMUNITY INSTITUTION
- SHGs
- FPOs

ENTREPRENUER

ECOSYSTEM
- Financial Institutions
- Markets

GOVERNMENT
- SRLM
- RSETI

SHG : Self Help Groups
FPOs: Farmer Producer Organisation
SRLM: State Rural Livelihood Missions
RSETI: Rural Self Employment Training Institute

*Similar to a systems map, but including stakeholder names in addition to systemic units.

TEMPLATE FOR DOCUMENTATION
STAKEHOLDER MAPPING (DURING- COALITION)

MINUTES OF COALITION

PLACE:

DATE:

AGENDA:

PARTICIPANTS:

KEY POINTS TO DISCUSS

SPEAKER	DISCUSSION POINTS	REMARKS

TEMPLATE FOR DOCUMENTATION

STAKEHOLDER MAPPING (POST- COALITION)

ACTION POINTS

ACTION POINTS	TIME LINE	RESPONSIBILITY

NEXT COALITION DATE:

PLACE FOR NEXT COALITION:

FUTURE OF COLLABORATION: INNOVATION AMPLIFIER - MAINSTREAMING BOTTOM UP INNOVATION

In the Work4Progress (W4P) programme of Development Alternatives (DA) and "la Caixa '' Foundation, DA is engaged in accelerating entrepreneurship-led job creation in the state of Uttar Pradesh using W4P's social innovation approach and processes. The approach followed in promoting entrepreneurship aims to listen to multi-stakeholder perspectives through dialogue, find answers through co-creation, prototype solutions and share learnings to accelerate impact at scale. These tools and prototypes designed under the W4P programme have gained recognition at national and global levels due to their effectiveness in promoting entrepreneurship that is inclusive by design and sustainable in nature.

Under its national-level programme Startup Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP), Uttar Pradesh Rural Livelihood Mission (UPSRLM) has adopted the Work4Progress tools and prototypes, which will be piloted in three districts of Uttar Pradesh; Basti, Lakhimpur and Bahraich. The mainstreaming of social innovation marks a shift from top-down approach followed by traditional entrepreneurship development programmes to community-centred methods, an imperative to drive impact at scale.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Why and when should platforms for collaboration be set up?

A. In initiatives such as entrepreneurship development, with multiple stakeholders working towards a common goal in their own ways, it becomes imperative to unleash collective strengths to build synergies between these stakeholders. This helps in scaling impact, enabling policy shifts and bringing sustainability in the results.

Q. How does a system map unlock complex challenges?

A. System mapping enables us to understand complexities, relationships, strengths and enablers in the system. It gives insights on the numerous interrelated elements, such as resources available and key actors in entrepreneurship development and other useful information. This helps us identify the leverage points and break out of our silos to provide the resources we need to comprehend the bigger picture and have a multiplying impact.

Q. What are some of the main elements of system mapping?

A. A system map shows the components of a system and the components of the environment at a point in time along with relationships among these components. The main elements include stakeholders, infrastructure, resources and demographics.

Q. How can we measure the success of platforms such as coalition?

A. The success can be measured through following indicators:

• Ecosystem Impact: Number of collaborative actions co-created with stakeholders; Number of stakeholders adopting tools in their own geographies

• Enterprise Impact: Number of enterprises supported by coalition members

• Community Impact: Number of self-governance representatives/ SHGs/ Federation representation; Number of women and youth projects implemented.

• Contribution to scale: Policy shifts at meso level in the lines of social innovation leading to entrepreneurship and job creation.

• · Sustainability: Entrepreneurs and organisations collaborate on a regular basis.

Q. What kind of stakeholders can be approached for coalition meetings and how?

A. Initial one-to-one dialogue with institutions should be carried out, and one representative should be identified who will act as point of contact. While selecting representatives, care is to be taken about the nature of their work; it is always suggested to select mid management employees who are working on ground or are related directly to operations; although heads of institutions can also be invited to chair the meetings and to expedite decision-making.
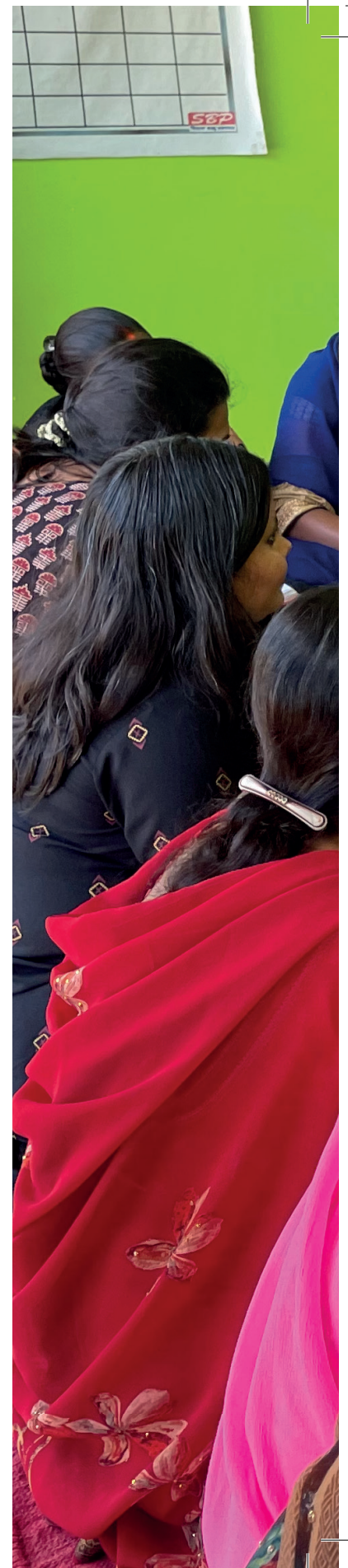
Cluster-level meeting being conducted in Bankati of Basti district, Uttar Pradesh

EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The social innovation approach for entrepreneurship-led job creation mandates a need for working at scale and collaborating with multiple stakeholders to achieve "inclusive entrepreneurship" or "*sam-udyam*".

The need for innovation and systemic shifts is urgent. Policies and interventions need to address issues of dignified and meaningful employment to match the aspirations of under-represented groups such as women and youth, their difficulties in transitioning from traditional to new occupations, and pervasive gender gaps in participation in entrepreneurship.

For entrepreneurship policies to actively promote job creation and inclusive growth, platforms for collaboration at the three levels of macro, meso, and micro are needed.
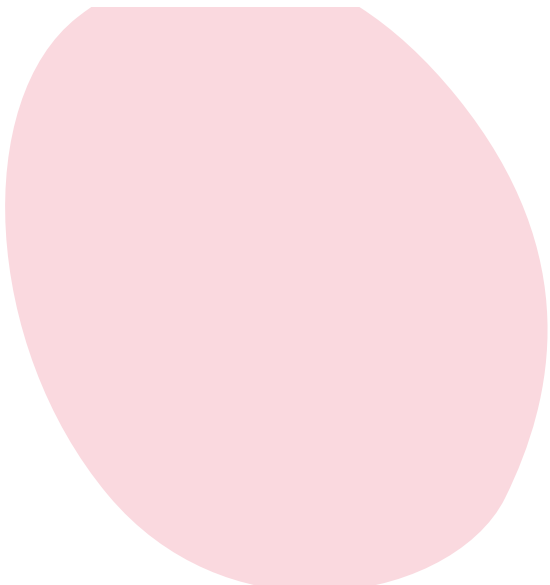
- At the macro level – for mainstreaming social innovation practices through conducive policy shifts.

- At the meso level – for building a robust ecosystem for transference or processes

- At the micro level – for shifts in community behaviour towards entrepreneurship to replicate prototypes based on local contexts

MACRO

MESO

MICRO

CALL FOR ACTION

Development Alternatives with its partners call for the support of development practitioners, leaders, changemakers, and influencers to collaborate on the following inter-connected objectives:

- Leverage new economic opportunities by enabling access to digital and shared infrastructure

- Replicate inclusive approaches with women and youth-led social good enterprises that remove generational and gender divide

- Boost collaborative action by forging active networks that enable a shift in local systems

- Influence social innovation practice on entrepreneurship through platforms and partnerships with regional, national and global actors

> " I received a few orders in the offline market. It was difficult at that point. However, I turned that into an opportunity by opting to sell on e-commerce platforms. We can sell anywhere, living anywhere "
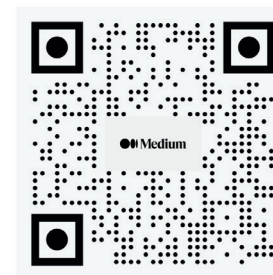
- Sachin Shrivastava,
Custom Printing Enterprise,
Niwari, MP

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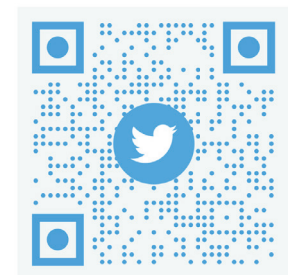
Development Alternatives

Development Alternatives (DA) is a social enterprise with
global presence in the fields of green economic development,
social empowerment and environmental management. It is
credited with numerous innovations in clean technology and
delivery systems that help create sustainable livelihoods in
the developing world. DA focuses on empowering communities
through strengthening people's institutions and facilitating
their access to basic needs; enabling economic opportunities
through skill development for green jobs and enterprise
creation; and promoting low carbon pathways for development
through natural resource management models and clean
technology solutions.

"la Caixa" Foundation

The "la Caixa" Foundation of Spain, the third largest foundation
in the world, promotes diverse social, economic, cultural and
ecological initiatives to foster sustainable development across
the world. "la Caixa" has worked for more than 110 years in
contributing to the advancement of society and the progress of
individuals, with a special emphasis on those who need it most.
Its main strategic objective is to provide opportunities and fight
inequalities in Africa, Asia, and Latin America through programs
that contribute to the achievement of the United Nations 2030
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).