Sanmati 2.0
Call for Collaborations

Sanmati 2.0: Call for Collaborations

Sanmati 2.0 is a collaborative initiative led by [Gender x Digital hub](#) and [The/Nudge Institute](#) to build a deeper understanding of how women can meaningfully participate in AI and data value chains, and design pathways that combine skills, autonomy, safety, and economic agency. In the first phase of this project, we conducted an in-depth review of women's participation across digital and data-enabled work models, mapped existing digital work ecosystems, platforms, and intermediaries, identified persistent barriers to access and inclusion, and synthesised insights on what digital work looks like in the Indian context. The full report from Phase I is available [here](#), with a summary video [here](#). These insights now form the base for designing interventions and pilots.

Now in our second phase, we are looking to co-develop and test a portfolio of interventions that respond to the evidence gaps and opportunity areas for accelerating women's participation in the digital and AI economy and address frictions identified in Phase I. We will use action-oriented research and small-scale pilots (with clear scale pathways) to test viable, scalable models that enhance women's meaningful digital participation. Our mandate is not just to pilot programs and solutions, but to generate causal evidence, stress-test assumptions, and build proof on what can actually work at scale.

We invite mission-aligned organizations to collaborate with us to pilot and test innovative models. We are sharing two specific pilot ideas below. If you think you would be a good fit for either of these, please share a brief concept note outlining your proposed idea/solution, approach, budget, geography, and learning agenda through this online [Form](#). Concept notes should be clearly aligned with our three core mandates: (i) generating credible pathways to increase women's incomes and improve their livelihoods; (ii) meaningfully strengthening digital and AI capabilities; and (iii) embedding strong learning components that generate evidence to inform future scale through government, market, and civil society systems. These mandates will guide our assessment and shape the overall learning agenda under Sanmati 2.0.

If you would like to partner with us to pilot another idea that is aligned with the overall objectives of Sanmati 2.0 as outlined here, please reach out to us at gxdhub@ifmr.ac.in for an exploratory conversation.

Pilot 1: Gender Intentional AI Job Aides for Livelihood Intermediaries

Problem Statement

India's livelihood ecosystem relies on millions of community intermediaries, such as Community Resource Persons (CRPs), Krishi Sakhis, Pashu Sakhis, and Bank Sakhis. While these cadres are highly motivated, they face significant bureaucratic overload and staff shortages, hindering effective service delivery ([NRLM](#)). To streamline their work, digital tools such as LokOS and the Sarathi App have been introduced. However, currently they facilitate **upward accountability** (monitoring and compliance) rather than serving as **job aides** that support daily tasks and decisions. Evidence cautions that digitization of welfare services could potentially reinforce existing inefficiencies because it often lacks a gender-intentional design, fails to take into account the underlying gender digital divide, and can increase cognitive and administrative burdens for women with low literacy or connectivity contexts. ([IWWAGE](#); Srinidhi et al., 2021; Verdezoto et al., 2021; Ismail et al., 2022).

Proposed Solution

We seek to pilot and test AI-driven/AI-augmented digital tools that function as "job aides and decision support mechanisms" to streamline work and reduce cognitive load for SRLM and livelihood community cadres. Through this partnership, we can test existing tools/AI solutions for specific gender-intentional features and whether these features increase women's sustained use of the tool, shift certain livelihood outcomes, or generate downstream impacts.

> **Some gender-intentional design features for AI solutions (indicative list)**
>
> - Simplified UI/UX: Minimal text, strong visual cues, and local language integration. Multimodal Interaction: Audio-based options and voice-first interfaces to bypass literacy barriers.
> - Contextual Advisory: Content tailored to women's specific roles in livelihoods and community care.
> - Gender-sensitive framing: Agency-building language that avoids reinforcing gender biases, replaces punitive monitoring, and validates the worker's professional identity.

Learning Agenda: The GxD hub (LEAD at Krea University) will anchor the research study to test *whether AI tools improve efficiency, digital skills and incomes of livelihood intermediaries (CRPs, Pashu Sakhis, Krishi Sakhis etc) in rural areas.* The research will also test if these tools reduce cognitive load, build trust, and support job performance and decision making, and if meaningful adoption of these tools/job aides has any downstream effects. The final learning agenda and approach will be co-designed with the partner.

We invite mission-aligned organizations to partner with us:

1. Technology partners: Organizations building or deploying GenAI-based job aides or advisory platforms, with a focus on

- Models already developed and tested for accuracy, latency, and performance,
- Solutions currently used or ready for use by community workers or women-led livelihood groups/intermediaries,
- Intent to test the model/AI solution for gender intentionality and sustained uptake by women intermediaries/frontline workers

2. Implementation partners: Action-oriented NGOs, CSOs, social enterprises, or platforms with:

- Existing engagement with women workers (e.g., SHGs, FLWs, BC Sakhis, agri-cadres),
- Capacity to support pilots, training, and feedback loops.
- An active on-ground presence in the proposed geography and execution capability to drive adoption and AI preparedness (not research-led or think-tank institutions).

When preparing your concept note, please include details around the cadre/intermediary group you want to work with (and why), the AI-driven solution/tool/app you want to pilot and test for gender intentionality, and what its current status is, details on geography and reach of the proposed pilot, and an indicative budget for pilot implementation. Please note that the learning study will be designed and anchored by GxD hub.

Pilot 2: Common Digital Hubs

Problem Statement

More than half of women in India over the age of 15 do not own a smartphone (NSS, 2025). Even when women own phones, they often receive second-hand devices with limited storage or data, or deal with shared and intermittent access and use (GxD hub, Forthcoming). Together, this limits women's ability to leverage digital and AI tools for livelihood augmentation and income generation. Research suggests that hardware transfers alone rarely lead to sustained impact, as devices are frequently co-opted by male family members (Barboni et al., 2024; GSMA, 2025). Effective engagement requires a focus on the **social architecture of access**, ensuring women have safe, locally accessible spaces where they can return repeatedly without social sanctions.

Proposed Solution

We seek to design and test local, women-only, **Common Digital Hubs** that account for women's limited autonomous access to the internet and devices.

These hubs may:

- Allow women to learn digital and AI skills and use cases without male-dominated social pressure.
- Augment women's existing livelihood practices through access to online market linkages, price discovery, and access to entitlements and/or credit.
- Serve as access points for AI/data value chain microwork opportunities.

Different approaches can be tested for pooling women to the hubs such as training, free internet and device access with women-only hours, trained women facilitators/VLEs, stable gig work opportunity, etc. To ensure scale pathway, these hubs should be layered onto existing government infrastructure, such as Common Service Centres (CSCs), Gender Resource Centres (GRCs), Cluster Level Federation (CLF) offices or incubation cells, or should be operated as self-sustaining community-run enterprises.

Learning Agenda: The GxD hub (LEAD at Krea University) will anchor the research study to test *whether Common Digital Hubs - maintained and run by local women and layered on existing infrastructure - can lead to meaningful improvements in women's incomes, agency, and retention.* This can include evaluating whether AI-enabled information, market linkages, distributed work opportunities, or infrastructure design features such as childcare support or the establishment of micro-centres closer to women's homes, drive these outcomes. The final learning agenda and approach will be co-designed with the partner.

We invite mission-aligned implementation organizations to partner with us. This can include NGOs, CSOs, social enterprises, or platforms with significant experience working with government systems and structures (e.g, with NRLM/SRLMs), capacity to support

pilots, training, and feedback loops, and an active on-ground presence in the proposed geography and execution capability to drive adoption and AI preparedness.

When preparing your concept note, please include details on:

1. **Common digital hubs model:** A hub model grounded in existing evidence and infrastructure availability.
2. **Strategy:** Implementation strategy for the target population and geography.
3. **Outcome Goals:** Specific metrics you aim to test (e.g., income, skill proficiency) (Please note: Research/MLE component will be anchored by the GxD hub).
4. **Budget:** Estimated implementation costs .

Please keep in mind, instead of straightforward top-down skilling strategies, we encourage innovative, evidence-driven, and scalable approaches - such as comparing infrastructure models (layering digital hubs on CSCs vs. GRCs vs CLFs), or testing community digital hubs against home-based arrangements for sustained participation in gig-based AI microwork. Proposals will be assessed on their ability to strengthen AI skills or use cases, increase women's incomes, and generate scalable lessons for government and market systems.

How to apply?

Organizations interested in partnering with us are required to submit a brief concept note outlining their proposed idea and approach, which should be attached to this [Google Form](#) when registering their interest.

Concept notes should be clearly aligned with our three core mandates: generating credible pathways to **increase women's incomes and livelihoods**; meaningfully strengthening digital and AI capabilities; and embedding strong learning components that generate evidence to inform future scale through government, market, and civil society systems. These mandates will guide our assessment and shape the overall learning agenda under Sanmati 2.0.

Submissions must also adhere to the following boundaries: proposals should fall within realistic budget parameters, clearly specify the proposed geography and operational presence (with demonstrated implementation capacity in the relevant states), and be led by action-oriented organizations with experience delivering programs on the ground. Both nonprofit and for-profit entities, including Pvt. Ltd. companies, are eligible to apply, provided they meet the above criteria and align with the initiative's objectives.

Following an internal review of submitted concept notes, we will reach out to selected organizations for further discussions.

For further details, please reach out to: gxdhub@ifmr.ac.in