



Fund for  
**Triangular  
Cooperation**  
with Asia



Deutsche Gesellschaft  
für Internationale  
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

## **Agri Business Incubator Model for Women in Agriculture & Food Systems in Malawi** *A Triangular Cooperation Pilot*

### **Background and Objective**

Commissioned by the German the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Government of India and the Republic of Malawi along with the respective stakeholder organisations join forces to innovate and scale up models which have the potential and relevance to create significant impact on women agriculture farming communities. Key focus area is facilitating the development of a sustainable incubator ecosystem in Malawi.

Given the large informal participation of women in agriculture and enterprises, women-centric agri-business incubators have emerged as an important medium for their inclusion in formal economy. In India, various successful incubator models have been set up which can be adapted and replicated in Malawi. The overall goal is thus the establishment of a proof-of-concept for an agri-business incubator model for women in agriculture and food systems. The incubators will then assist women to develop start-ups with latest technologies which have the potential to reimagine the supply chains, support value addition and help innovate food products meeting the demands of new-age consumers.

### **Political Partners of the Triangular Cooperation Pilot**



**Ministry of External Affairs**  
Government of India



### **Implementing Partners of the Triangular Cooperation Pilot**



Access  
Livelihoods



NITI Aayog

Supported By



### **Key Component**

- Develop one agri-business incubator for women entrepreneurs in Malawi.
- Build capacities of at least one local institution as Trainer of Trainers.
- Build skill competencies of at least 50 women entrepreneurs.
- Conclude policy recommendations for further agri-business incubator development.

This pilot contributes to SDG 1 (Reduction in Poverty), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), and SDG 8 (Decent Work & Economic Growth).



## Current Status and Impact

The pilot started by field visits on both side: In October 2022, a delegation from India visited Malawi to finalise the implementation strategy and engage with various public and private sector stakeholders. In November 2022, a Malawi delegation led by Deputy Director SMEs, MoTI, and representatives from SMEDI, SYNERGY (a private incubator) and women entrepreneurs visited Hyderabad, India. Visits were made to various incubators, including NutriHub at Indian Institute of Millet Research, Centre for Innovation & Agripreneurship, Agri Innovation Hub, Women Entrepreneurs Hub and Technology Hub. The delegation also visited agri-cooperatives, women cooperatives and women thrift cooperative models. The delegates also learned about the Woman Entrepreneurship Programme of Access Livelihoods implemented under the Green Innovation Centre project of GIZ India. Accompanying the first-hand experiences, a one-day workshop was organised by Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)-NITI Aayog, Govt of Telangana and MANAGE on how to develop favourable policies for setting up sustainable and inclusive incubators and enterprises, as well as for developing policy frameworks that promote innovation and international cooperation.



In December 2022, 'AmayiHub' was inaugurated – the first ever incubator exclusively for women entrepreneurs in Malawi – at SMEDI, Mponela Centre, with support of MoTI. Through implemented online calls for participation, AmayiHub received over 380 applications for its incubation programme. Out of these, 55 women entrepreneurs were shortlisted for further training under the pilot.

Since then, on the technical level, the Indian partners have undertaken multiple Training of Trainers sessions for staff of SMEDI, SYNERGY, along with workshop sessions for women entrepreneurs to provide support needed for different phases of incubation. Capacity building included skill development to manage and run the AmayiHub. In May 2023, SMEDI will be supporting women entrepreneurs in market access for their products by taking part in an exhibition at the 33rd Malawi International Trade fair.

On the political level, AIM-NITI Aayog has proposed a multifront collaboration between AIM and the Government of Malawi starting with Atal Incubation Centres. In Malawi, the Presidential Delivery Unit, Government of Malawi, has shown great interest during workshops to understand challenges of SMEs and cooperatives in Malawi, among which the AmayiHub incubator was also discussed. A series of discussions were held between SMEDI, MoTI (Malawi), MANAGE and AIM-NITI Aayog to finalise the



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areas of cooperation under the proposed triangular cooperation project. As of now, a draft MoU between SMEDI and MANAGE has been formulated.

## Several success stories from the field can already be reported

**Ms. Temwa Disi** owns a small enterprise 'Temwanani Agri Foods Enterprise' in Nakhata Bay district of Northern Malawi. Her business includes selling agriculture produces like rice, beans, groundnut and soyabean, along with natural honey from her Bee farm. As a part of Malawi delegation to India, she attended exchange programmes with Bee Keeping Entrepreneur and acquired knowledge on working with multiple type of honey and bee-based products that she can also replicate at her bee farm in Malawi. Learning from the cooperatives in India, she has also initiated a Women Thrift Cooperative model involving 43 women of her area.



**Ms. Florence Mankhwazi**, owner of Wabwino Enterprises, trades in agriculture commodities. She was aspiring to venture into value addition and got support from the AmayiHub on product development. There she received training in tomato processing into tomato puree. To date, she has launched her product on the market called Wabwino Tomato Puree. The next steps for support are access to standards certification and developing a business plan for the Tomato Puree business.

**Ms. Lucy Mandala** is the owner of JESCAL Enterprises and attended a workshop with triangular cooperation partners in October 2022. There she learnt that one necessary requirement for a working ecosystem to support a successful incubation programme is mentorship. So, she opened up her peanut butter manufacturing facility to fellow women, to share skills and knowledge on peanut butter production. In November 2022, Lucy mentored 4 women in who are now in the process of mobilizing to start their own operations.



**Amazing Grace Women group** is one of the group businesses that attended the workshop facilitated by Indian Partners in March 2023. The group engages in poultry production business and was looking for peer-to-peer advice on feed making. The group was trained by SMEDI on feed making, poultry management and farm record keeping. Through this intervention, they will be able to reduce the cost of feed by 20% (from current MK49,500.00 to MK39,600.00) which can be invested in meeting other farm requirements.

**Mwawi Manda** owns Jiree Investments and has been part of the AmayiHub from inception. She was supported by the Incubator on product development along

the tomato value chain. In December 2022, she was assisted to launch her tomato puree line called Sisu. As of April 2023, Mwawi has been assisted to develop two more product lines, Sisu Tomato Paste and Sisu Tomato Jam. Both products have already been launched on the market and passed initial tests for pre-certification by the Malawi Bureau of Standards.

## **Self-Assessment of the Pilot**

Under the guidance of GPI, OECD and RIS, a Self-assessment tool was shared for assessing the impact of Triangular Co-operation pilot projects. An online workshop was conducted with partners from India and Malawi in July 2023. The feedback from partners was crucial in analysing the impact of the pilot project, identifying the challenges faced during the pilot, and the way forward to strengthen the cooperation.

## **Scale-up Proposal**

During the months of July and August, the proposal for scaling up the pilot was drafted. The proposed project is of 2-year duration and the partners include MANAGE & AIM-NITI Aayog from India, and SMEDI & MoTI from Malawi. The proposal is in line with the Malawi 2063 Strategy and seeks to strengthen an inclusive business incubation ecosystem in Malawi with special focus on capacity of incubation hubs and participation of key stakeholders.

Through this project, networking of ecosystem players, and inclusive and functional agribusiness incubators will be established. Emphasis is also given to knowledge exchange on new models and developing guidelines for National Business Incubation Strategy. The goal is to provide training to transform at least 5 incubators into inclusive ones with focus on women entrepreneurs, and capacity building support to 200 MSMEs/Agri-entrepreneurs (of which 80% would be women-led or with focus on women engagement). Through these, the project aims to achieve a functional and inclusive Agripreneurship ecosystems in Malawi.