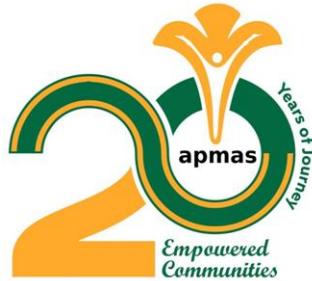


APMAS Vision & Strategic Plan 2030

August 2021



Mahila Abhivruddhi Society, Andhra Pradesh

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1. Background

Mahila Abhivruddhi Society, Andhra Pradesh (APMAS) established in 2001 works for the advancement of self-help institutions built on strong cooperative values and principles to become member-owned, member-managed and member-controlled institutions through capacity building, livelihoods promotion, research and advocacy, and extending necessary technical services to various stakeholders. With its genesis in strengthening the women Self Help Groups (SHGs) and SHG Federations, it works with Self-Help Promoting Institutions (SHPIs), Farmers Producer Organisations (FPOs), Cooperatives and other Community Based Organizations (CBOs), who believe in and respect the spirit of self-help, mutual benefit and self-responsibility.

APMAS played a pivotal role in building the capacities of the SHG promoters and advocating for appropriate systems and processes for the SHG movement to evolve into an autonomous and self-reliant system. It engaged in piloting innovations like self-regulatory systems for the SHG movement and in having decentralized capacity building centers for livelihood enhancement and natural resource management. For the past seven years, APMAS has been intensively engaged in promotion and strengthening of Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) and value chain activities. There have been other pilots and innovations taken up at a small scale in the areas of health, nutrition, education and model villages.

Over the past two decades, APMAS has grown in scope, scale and strength, established its credibility as a national level Resource Organisation engaged in diverse partnerships with strong presence in field implementation and as capacity building institution. In the process, APMAS transformed as sectoral expert and expanded its outreach and impact across different regions in the domains of financial inclusion and livelihoods. It has acted as a facilitator, enabler and successful implementer to empower communities, families and individuals towards building self-reliant institutions to reduce poverty and inequalities.

The journey for the last 20 years has been filled with challenges especially the implementation of projects in partnership with the Governments; the drastic changes due to external environment in terms of shirking space for the civil society organisations, rigid legal restrictions, decline in foreign funding sources, changing aspirations of communities, changing development scenario, etc. There have also been various opportunities during these years in terms of increasing access to corporate funding and partnership with the private sector, enabling policy environment, space of the CSOs with professional capacities and values, technology revolution etc. Against the backdrop of the challenges faced and the opportunities available, it became imperative to restructure the work and functioning of the development organisations.

In this context, the Board and the Management of APMAS felt necessary to revisit the organizational vision, mission and strategies for the decade (2021-2030). Over the past eight months, retreats, meetings and workshops were held with the staff and the Board on developing '**Vision 2030: Strategy Plan for APMAS**'. This strategy document is an outcome of the intensive consultations and discussions held with the staff, Board, domain experts, donors, partners and collaborators, officials, and the communities.

2. Journey of 20 Years

Key achievements, core strengths and qualities of APMAS which enabled the organisation to achieve its vision and mission in the last 20 years and key learnings are given below:

Key Achievements

1. Provided incredible services to the SHG institutions across the country in the form of processes, mobilization and strengthening, rating system and self-regulation guidelines to become self-reliant institutions
2. Established high credibility with key stakeholders like states, NGOs, banks, international agencies, donors, collaborators, corporates and demonstrated policy advocacy capabilities
3. Demonstrated a very strong track record in training, capacity building, institution building and enhancing livelihoods of marginalized communities. Trained four lakh community professionals and staff in the space of promotion and development of people's organisations
4. Created a unique identity in the civil society through partnering with the governments and other key development players and successful ground level implementation.
5. Established as a national level technical cum resource organization and implementing agency
6. Enabled and capacitated the SHG institutions to take up higher order functions such as health, nutrition, WASH, education and non-farm livelihoods
7. Playing a lead role in FPO promotion and strengthening by working with 47 FPOs covering one lakh farmers in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana
8. Promoting climate resilient farming systems and providing technical cum advisory services to the farmers on package of practices, collective input and output marketing, value chain development, agri-based enterprises, leverage of schemes, resources and services from the government departments, agri business and financial institutions
9. Implemented pilots on promotion of model villages and integrated development
10. Advocated and influenced policies in favour of the women and the marginalised based on field experience and research studies conducted on the impact of programmes implemented

Core Strengths and Qualities

- Strong governance, high standards of financial management, internal control systems and demonstration of values in true spirit
- Exemplary guidance from the Board on strategic matters
- Committed, professional human resources from diversified fields
- Trust and credibility gained as a pioneering organisation in empowering community institutions of SHGs, Farmers and Cooperatives etc
- Quality resource materials and processes developed for SHGs and FPOs to build strong social and institutional capital
- Partnership and collaborations with the state and central governments, funding agencies, corporates and key development players in the development sector
- Remain relevant by adopting suitable strategies as per the changing scenario and development challenges
- Hands-on experience, in-depth understanding of the ground realities, the problems and needs of the marginalised sections

Learning

- Reach Tribal communities
- Continuous focus on gender mainstreaming
- Focus on non-farm income
- More of policy advocacy
- Up-grade the organisation with new skill sets required for business and enterprises promotion, wealth creation, technology adoption, systematic MIS etc
- Focus on holistic development of the households including nutrition, health, education, skills and livelihoods

3. Organisational Climate Survey

A key element in re-looking at the strategy is to capture the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation, by studying the organisational climate or environment. As part of visioning exercise, an organisational climate survey (OCS) was administered with all the staff and anonymous responses were recorded for 30 sets of different questions pertaining to work climate, nature and work focus, gender, awareness on policies, rebranding/repositioning, domains and outreach. Majority of the questions required respondents to provide rating on a scale of 1 to 5. The questionnaire also involved a fair share of open-ended questions, where the respondents had the space to give their feedback and suggestions on various attributes.

Areas for Improvement & Suggestions

Organizational level

- Staff less than five years dissatisfied with working conditions (20%)
- Staff less than one year expressed to have short term due to dissatisfied working conditions (9%)
- Staff less than two years do not relate with the vision and reported low work satisfaction (25%)
- Current focus on FPOs inadequate (17%)
- SHG portfolio is not significant anymore; focus on digitisation and effective collaboration with SRLMs (50%)
- Not able to answer the name of the person to be approached for clarifications and support (69%)
- Organisational environment and processes are gender insensitive (13.6%)
- Required moderate approaches with deepening of existing partnerships rather than getting into new partnerships (68%); and initially on pilots and then develop them into success models (76%)
- Rebranding /repositioning of APMAS, TMAS & SF (57%)
- Required improvements at organisational level - decision making at team level; staff role clarity, staff induction and capacity building; competitive salary structure, website update, upgrade technology & usage, effective implementation of policies; timely feedback and mentoring from supervisors, decentralised approach,

Program Level

- Gender targets are rarely materialised (11.9%)
- Expand to new operational areas in the existing geography (73%) & enter into new geographies (22%)
- Required improvements at program level – demonstrate model FPOs, strengthening MIS and monitoring, review and course corrections, team work & result orientation, breaking stereotyped approaches, implement new ideas, focus on education, health, nutrition, hygiene, gender mainstreaming,

Areas Need further Strengthening

Organizational level

- Strongly connected to the vision/mission (90%)
- Favourable work culture & supportive climate (80%)
- Environment favourable for expressing opinions (70%)
- Structured & innovative work (48%)
- Received required feedback from supervisors (75%)
- Perceived positive working conditions and strong career growth opportunities (70%)
- Desire for long-term association (66%)
- Well aware of all components of organisational policies (70%)
- APMAS role is perceived as - towards technical support (50%); implementation (30%), policy-advocacy (10%) and others (10%)

Program level

- Able to take decisions at individual level on assigned projects (80%)
- Gender is always a focal domain in terms of project activities and outcomes (27%)
- Services to SHG sector adequate (70%)

Major strengths are; leadership, management, capacity building and technical support, good rapport with government, established credibility and well positioned in the domains, recognition in the sector, Funding from diversified sources, committed staff and working on diverse issues

4. External Environment Assessment

The importance of strategic thinking and planning is integral to the growth of the organisation. It is necessary to assess the factors influencing the organisation externally and internally. This ensures collective decision making and deepening the ownership among the staff. As part of visioning 2030, an External Environmental Assessment (EEA) was carried out focusing on the political, economic, social, and technological forces that influence the vision, mission and goals of an organization. The following are the outcomes of the assessment:

Funding Patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changed from grant-based to project based or fee based • Increased availability of CSR funds for projects in specific areas and verticals • Donor priorities shifted from South to Central & North India and North East • Funding for emerging opportunities - natural resource conservation, FPO movement, watershed development, tribal area development, climate resilient agriculture etc
Socio-economic-political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shrinking space for civil society organizations and a lot of pressure due to rigid legal measures (FCRA & IT) • Government taking over the work of NGOs and not keen to partner with NGOs • Projects supported by the government still continue to dominate and the funds are drying up and causing cash flow problems • COVID induced loss of livelihoods and deprivation of incomes for marginalized sections of society with medium term impact on economic growth of the country • Higher income and middle-income groups moving to nutrition-based foods with no chemical residues – increasing demand for organic food and food products
Government Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With a promise on doubling income of the farmers, the Government is promoting FPOs, agri value chain development, value addition, micro processing, domestic and export market linkage for the farmers • New Farm Laws and their implications on farm output trade – supply chain restructuring and market access • Emphasis on rural entrepreneurship to bring youth back into agriculture/agri value chain • Agri subsidies getting channelized into Direct Benefit Transfer Programmes • Government policies and programmes result in increased expectations of the communities and dependency
Business Models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm mechanization and custom service centres are gaining prominence in order reduce drudgery, address labour shortage and due to technological development • Digital technology induced new agri-tech enterprises providing solutions to farmers through various services and e-commerce platforms which were not there earlier • Emerging opportunities in the form of agri business entities and financial institutions coming forward to support FPOs and value chain activities
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing vulnerabilities • Ongoing Covid-19 pandemic • Rapid climate change due to increasing human interferences • Changing aspirations, lifestyles and livelihood practices

The external environmental assessment has also given certain potential opportunities such as:

- ✦ Development of CBOs focusing on tribal women farmers, non-crop farmers, climate resilient agriculture, organic farming, market linkages, alternate employment for rural youth, public health, nutrition and livelihoods for urban poor
- ✦ Information and communication technology, social media and technological developments
- ✦ Business orientation - social returns and financial returns – opportunity to bridge last mile for corporates with farmers and create value for farmers and their families
- ✦ Development of models, development frameworks and training programmes will make the organisation to become resourceful across the country
- ✦ Organisational development in strengthening leadership, succession planning, adding relevant skill sets, organization structure/culture suitable for taking up new scale of activities
- ✦ Change in portfolio as per the changing needs of the communities and funding patterns
- ✦ Shift from being an implementation agency to advocacy and think-tank leadership position

5. Stakeholders Analysis

Stakeholder analysis was undertaken to understand the perceptions of the communities and the partners about APMAS work and suggestions for future. The focused group discussions were held with the primary stakeholders (communities) and the feedback forms were circulated and responses received from the secondary stakeholders (partners and collaborators).

Primary Stakeholders Feedback

- 88% community institutions are well aware and 12% have limited understanding of APMAS work
- Most availed services by the community institutions are capacity building, marketing, technical, funding, leverage and management support
- 50% members availed input support and 50% availed output marketing support services
- **Expected services are;** storage facilities, value addition, processing, technology, integrated rural development rather than just FPO support

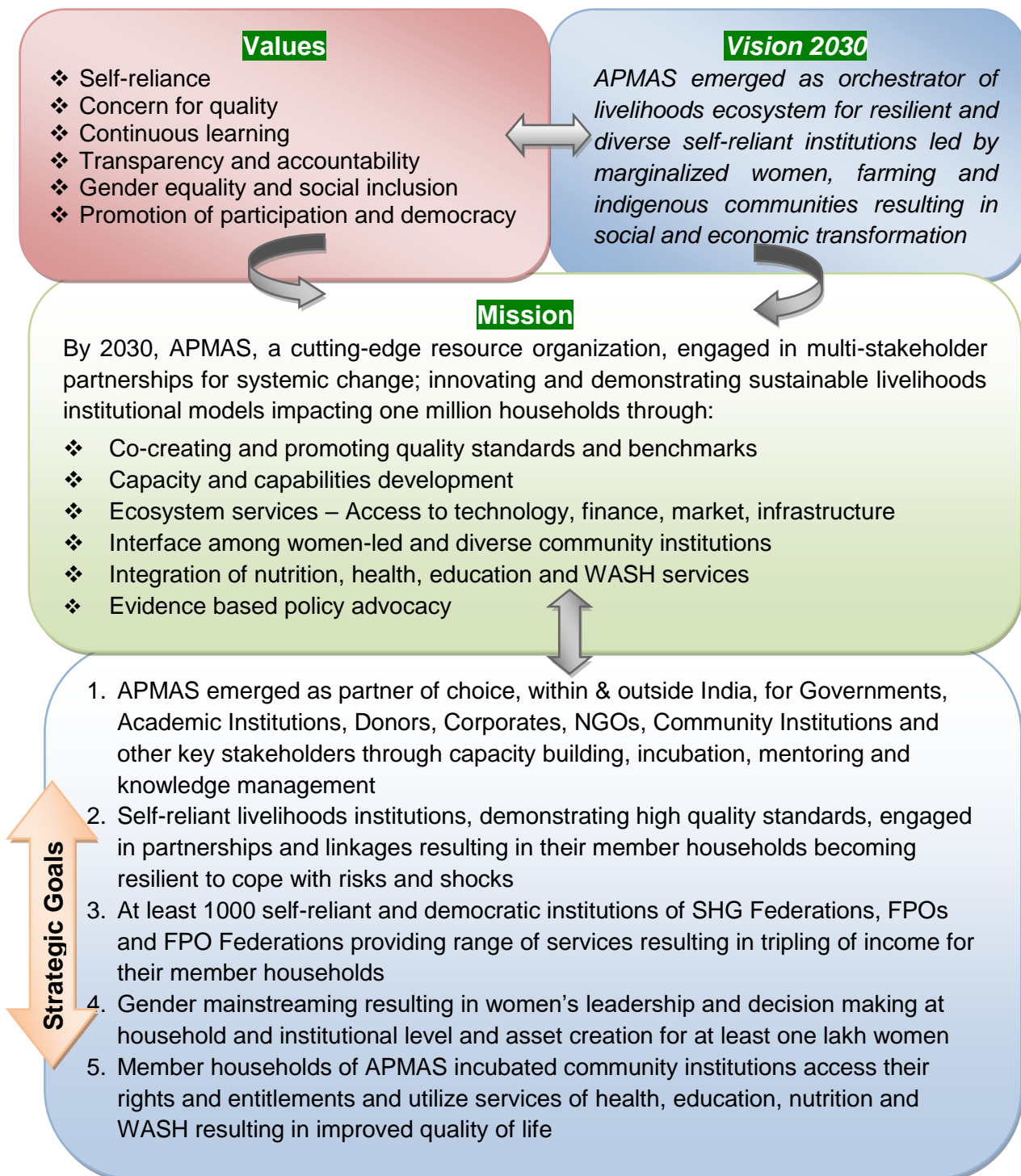
Secondary Stakeholders Feedback

- Excellent field level engagement and services due to leadership, domain expertise, qualified staff, networking, advocacy and influencing skills
- Well designed and innovative programs on ground
- Quality materials & high quality training programs
- Committed to strengthening SHGs and FPOs
- **Suggestions:** stability of staff, better budget and activity planning, reduce too many changes in the plan & budget, better communication & contact point, improve decision making processes, better documentation, organize trainings as per the need rather than pre designed, strengthen strategic partnership, enhance staff capacities in business development, processing, marketing, enterprise promotion and skill development, focus on girls education, explore more of CSR funds, use of digital technology, systematic MIS and advocacy

6. Vision 2021-2030

The outcomes of various workshops and consultations held with the staff, management and partners, organizational climate survey, external environment assessment, stakeholder analysis, and emerging avenues of opportunities formed the basis for undertaking visioning exercise.

6.1. Vision, Mission and Strategic Goals 2023, 2026, 2030



6.2. Strategic Plan for Goals

Goal 1: APMAS emerged as partner of choice, within & outside India, for Governments, Academic Institutions, Donors, Corporates, NGOs, Community Institutions and other key stakeholders through capacity building, incubation, mentoring and knowledge management

Outputs	Specific Strategies
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training of 3 lakh stakeholders 2. Conduct regional, state, national and international level ToTs of 50 3. Establish training centres in two regional offices (Chittoor and Patna) 4. Developing a Resource pool of 50 5. Develop robust database for effective documentation 6. Development of resource materials in 10 regional languages 7. Incubate 250 higher-governance order institutions, social enterprises and microenterprises 8. 50 Action-oriented research projects 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organizational Development 2. Building synergy among APMAS, SF and TMAS <p>Technology adoption</p>

Goal 2: Self-reliant livelihoods institutions, demonstrating high quality standards, engaged in partnerships and linkages resulting in their member households becoming resilient to cope with risks and shocks

Outputs	Specific Strategies
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training of 20,000 BoDs, 10 lakh members, 5000 staff and 5000 CRPs 2. 50 pilots of interface between community institutions 3. System establishment: standardized accounting systems as per IAS, MIS, Audits – Internal & statutory, HR, business rules, SoPs 4. Linkages for Federations (minimum 20 market linkages and 2-3 finance linkages) 5. Linkages for community institutions (minimum 05 –Insurance, package of practices, climate resilient practices/technology & convergence) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Application of SoP practices 2. Building social capital of CRPs/ Community Cadre 3. Direct Linkages for Federations

Goal 3: At least 1000 self-reliant and democratic institutions of SHG Federations, FPOs and FPO Federations providing range of services resulting in tripling of income for their member households

Outputs	Specific Strategies
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finance support to enterprises 2. Capacity building and skill up-gradation to entrepreneurs 3. Promotion and strengthening of new FPOs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enterprise promotion and skill up-gradation 2. Linkages and leverage of services

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Strengthening and incubating of existing FPOs 5. Strengthening existing SHG Federations and other community institutions 6. Promotion and strengthening of FPO Federations 7. Provision of financial, technical and market linkages support to FPOs 8. Post harvest management and value addition 9. Technical linkages to the institutions in five areas : Systems, Insurance, Quality assurance, productivity enhancement, sustainable agri-practices 	and resources
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Goal 4: Gender mainstreaming resulting in women’s leadership and decision making at household and institutional level and asset creation for at least one lakh women

Outputs	Specific Strategies
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gender Material 2. Sensitization to men in the household and institutions 3. Specific activities & budget for women in all projects 4. Platforms for women within and across the projects 5. Incubating Individual and collective enterprises for women 6. Investment and market linkage for input and output marketing for women institutions 7. Develop infrastructure for women’s institutions 8. Advocacy for policy influence on women’s leadership and participation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Skill up-gradation in business development 2. Promotion of Women-led enterprises 3. Linkages for leveraging resources (financial, technical & services) 4. Interface among community institutions 5. Bridging digital divide and technology 6. Gender policy (focused interventions, budget, technical training & handholding)

Goal 5: Member households of APMAS incubated community institutions access their rights and entitlements and utilize services of health, education, nutrition and WASH resulting in improved quality of life

Outputs	Specific Strategies
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness creation on basic entitlements, schemes, Covid Appropriate Behaviour etc 2. Mapping of eligible households for basic needs, entitlements and including in GPDP 3. Training to stakeholders at the grassroots level (ANM, ASHA, Anganwadi Teachers, volunteers) 4. Training on Nutrition, Health & WASH for SHG Federations and FPOs 5. Facilitating optimal community participation in Village Health & Nutrition Days (VHND) 6. Strengthening Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSC) / Village Health Sanitation & Nutrition Committees (VHSNC) 7. Strengthening Parent Management Committees (PMC) of Schools, 	<p>Advocacy GO – NGO collaboration Social Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) Skill Development</p>

Child Protection Committees and Hospital Development Societies (HDS)	
8. Supporting Gram Panchayat in streamlining Solid Waste Management (SWM) systems	

6.3. Milestones and Partnerships

Milestones	2023	2026	2030	Partnerships
Organizational level				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIRD-PR • BIRD • NAFPO • Welthungerhilfe • SHPIs, SPMS, RDT, GO-NGO, ENABLE • NABARD, FWWB • NRLM, SERP, Jeevika • BANKS, Fis: TSCAB, APCOB, FWWB, Samunnati • Donors : GIZ, HSBC, Heifer, Aurobindo, DGRV, AEIN, SFAC, DoH, Water Org, UNICEF, SERP • Academic Institutions : SPMVV, ANGRAU, PJTSAU, MANAGE, FABS, IRMA • Training Partners: NSDC, ASCI, T-Hub • Private Partnerships with Agri-business agencies (eFresh, Coromandel) • GP, Village Secretariat
Donors& Partnerships	30	40	50	
Turnover (in Cr)	15	20	30	
Qualified full-time staff	200	250	300	
Program level				
Outreach (HHs)	2,00,000	5,00,000	10,00,000	
CB programs reach out (in lakhs)	0.5	1.5	3	
250 institutions directly promoted/incubated	100	150	250	
Five lakh smallholder farmers get optimum productivity by adopting sustainable/ climate resilient agriculture through FPO linkages	2.5	2.5	5	
20,000 micro-enterprises (farm, off farm and nonfarm) with an annual profit of Rs.10 lakh	5,000	10,000	20,000	
50 all women institutions promoted and incubated by APMAS	25	50	50	
Women have assets created in their name worth of minimum Rs.one lakh	20,000	30,000	50,000	
Percentage of households (total 10	90%	90%	95%	

lakh) having access to entitlements like pensions, schemes, scholarships, etc.				
Percentage of households (total 10 lakh) with improved quality of life	20%	40%	50%	
Sector level				
Products/services offered	40	50	50	
Resource pool developed	40	50	50	
Number of agencies (secondary stakeholders) reached out	50	100	200	
750 institutions indirectly promoted/incubated	300	450	750	

Pathways

1. Promotion and incubation of 1000 community institutions in terms of governance, financial management, business development and provision of multiple services to members
2. Information, education, communication and training materials development in vernacular languages
3. Usage of digital technology by community institutions
4. Setting up infrastructure and custom hiring centres for FPOs
5. Promotion of sustainable & climate resilient agriculture practices
6. Skill building and creating access to credit, technology, tools & implements, infrastructure and marketing for enterprises
7. Household and integrated development through linkages and leverage of entitlements, schemes and resources
8. Gender mainstreaming and social inclusion
9. Action research and impact studies
10. Knowledge management for learning, sharing and replication
11. Evidence based advocacy
12. GO-NGO Collaboration

Inputs

- 40 donors & 217 Cr funds
- 291 Staff & Resource Pool
- 50 Products/ Services
- 50 Partnerships
- Infrastructure

Risks

- Disasters and pandemic
- Distress Migration
- Changes in government policy
- Local politics / lack of political will
- Government takes over institutions
- Social and economic barriers

Strategies

- *Capacity and capabilities development*
- *Co-creating and promoting quality standards & benchmarks*
- *Diversified funding (government, donors, private, CSR)*
- *Deepening in existing geographies and communities*
- *Partnerships and Collaborations with key stakeholders*
- *Ecosystem services – access to technology, techniques, finance, market, infrastructure*
- *Demonstration of models for dissemination and advocacy*
- *Action research for learning, course corrections and evidence based advocacy*
- *Interface among women-led and community institutions*
- *Household as a unit for integrated development*
- *Integration of nutrition, health, education and WASH*

Outcomes

1. Partner of choice for about 40 donors and 50 partners
2. 50 products /services are high in demand by key stakeholders
3. One million households get diverse services from 1000 sustainable livelihoods institutional models
4. 50% of community institutions promoted adopt sector own control
5. 5 lakh small landholders adopt sustainable and climate resilient agricultural practices
6. One lakh women led enterprises earn Rs.3 lakh annual profit
7. 20000 micro enterprises earn Rs.5 lakh annual profit
8. 50% women membership and leadership in APMAS promoted 200 FPOs and all-women membership & leadership in 50 FPOs
9. One lakh women have assets on their name worth minimum Rs.one lakh
10. 75% women have enhanced decision making at household level
11. 95% of eligible households avail their entitlements
12. 50% of one million households have improved nutrition & health

Assumptions

- Affirmative action from government for the poor/marginalised sections
- Community institutions focus on inclusiveness and gender equality
- Political will to promote women empowerment
- Cooperation and all kinds of support from government and other stakeholders for women-led initiatives
- Staff will have adequate expertise and commitment to promote gender equality and inclusive development

Impact

Quality Life for One Million Households