TRI TRANSFORM RURAL INDIA

# Strategic Direction 2025

## 2021-2025

TRANSFORMING RURAL INDIA FOUNDATION

# Introduction

> **"After climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb"**
>
> ***– Nelson Mandela***

*Last year, along with intensifying development interventions in rural India, we at TRIF, reflected on our journey since 2016. Julia Lowe and Fiona Walsh completed our Quinquennial Institutional Review, drawing feedback and guidance from all our stakeholders on our capacities, limitations, space and positioning. QQR report along with our own analysis has strengthened our vision to leverage new opportunities and adapt to changes in the unfolding landscape for development action in India.*

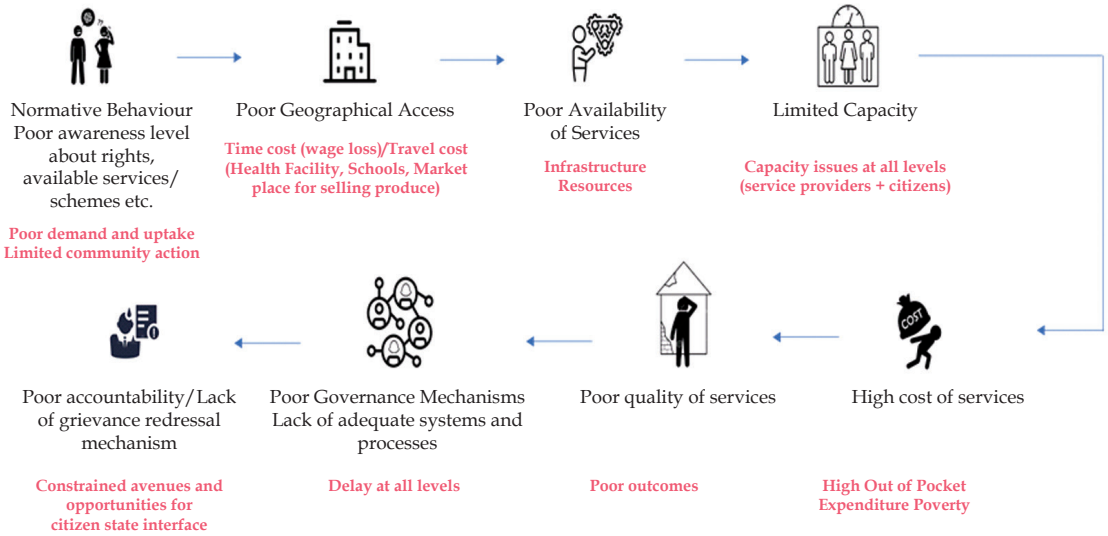
In the last five years, our efforts have emerged as one of the largest formal multi-partner initiatives on integrated village development. We have built strong alliances with 21 leading Civil Society Organizations in health & nutrition, education, livelihoods, governance.

We have also forged partnerships with NRLM, SRLM, Mission Antyodaya and the Aspirational Districts Programme. This platform has enabled us to galvanize action for a larger impact. Our community action pilots, bolstered by our public system engagements, have developed protocols and standard operating procedures for scaling up community-led multi-thematic development efforts.

## TRIF Strategic Focus: "Developing Solutions for Stranded India

TRIF will be deeply focused on critical challenges/issues of the marginalized communities and in particular of women in the bottom 100,000 villages of India ("stranded India"). The value TRIF bring is its deep knowledge and an inventory of working "solutions" for "stranded" India and mechanism for scaling-up those "solutions". Another differentiator is our focus on the rural urban continuum for these poor families in context of continuing migration in search of better opportunities.

# Situational Analysis



# TRIF Approach

*The long-term impact envisioned is equal life-time opportunity with inter-generational mobility. The intermediate outcomes achieved would contribute towards this goal.*

**Intermediate outcomes:** Creation of necessary ecosystem conditions towards facilitating a quality life experience. Specifically described these intersectional results would be:

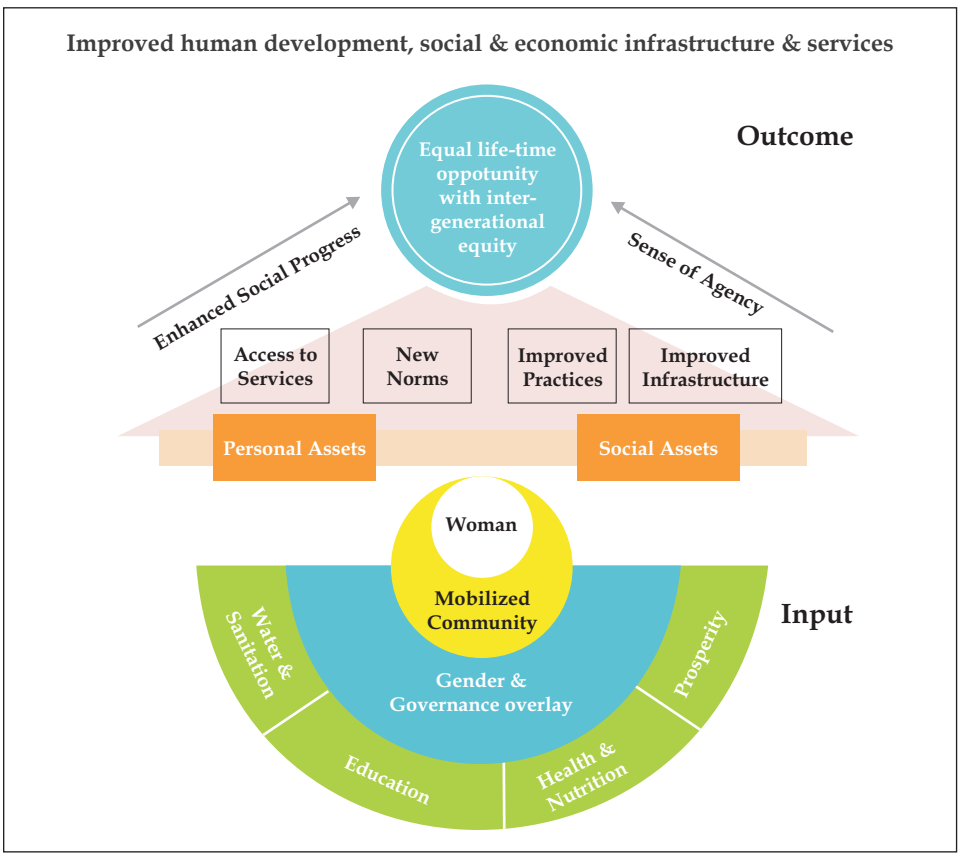
- **Improved access to essential services constituting a quality life experience** enhanced access of participating households for services around livelihoods, basic health, nutrition, education, WASH and governance.
- **Establishment of "New" social norms:** foster new social norms for access, control, influence and decision making associated with resources & institutions-traditional and neo; concurrently contributing to efficacy of the enhanced access to essential services.
- **Adoption of contemporary and scientific practices by households and communities:** adoption of practices grounded in sound scientific knowledge across the multiple sectors.

Visioning for integrated village development through multidimensional change with community

Building a cadre of community volunteers to bridge demand-delivery disconnect

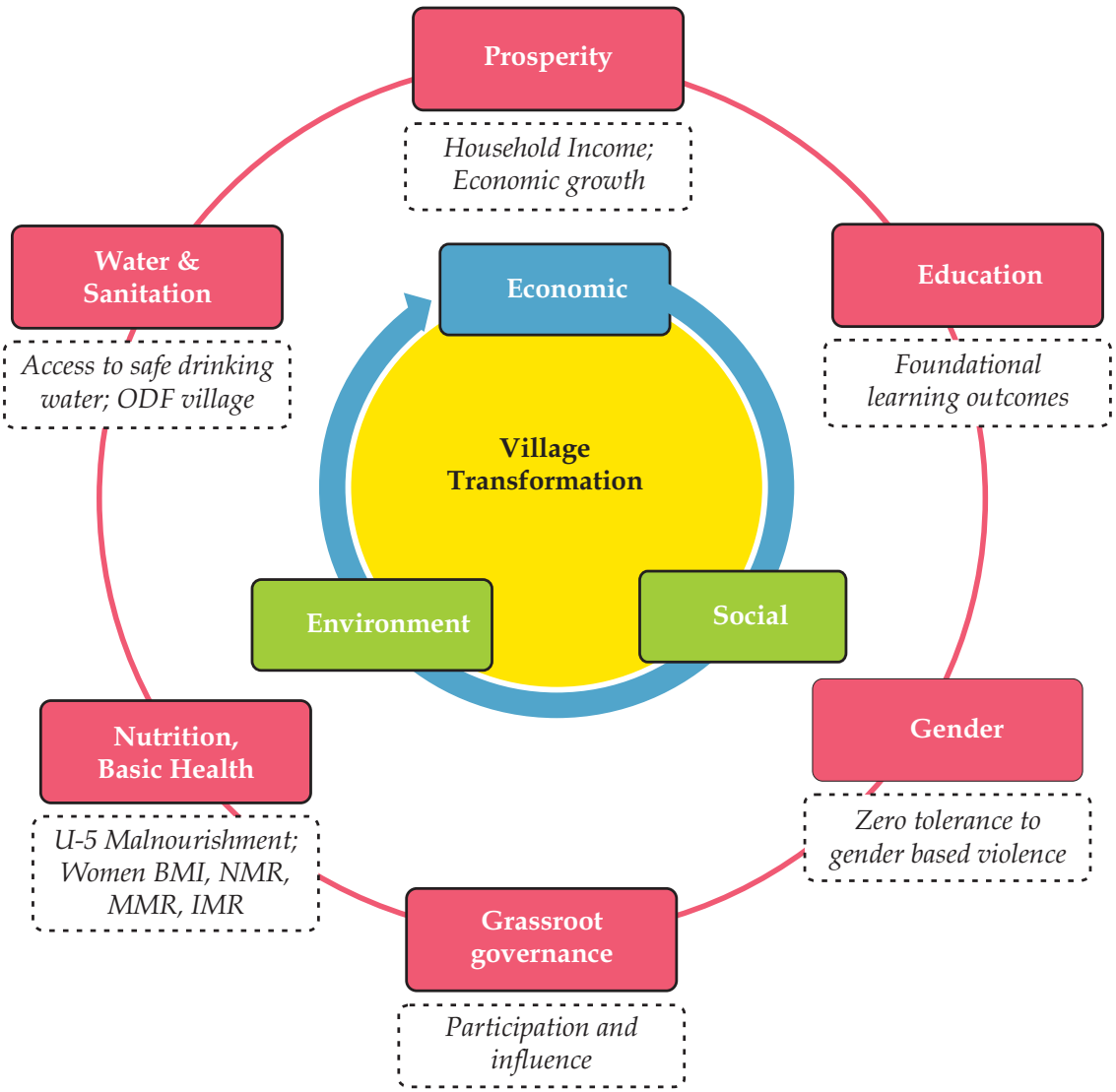
Catalyse market solutions to address missing goods and services as well as build income-generating rural enterprises

Working closely with the government to ensure last mile delivery of public services, entitlements and infrastructure



# Value Proposition

## Programme Areas

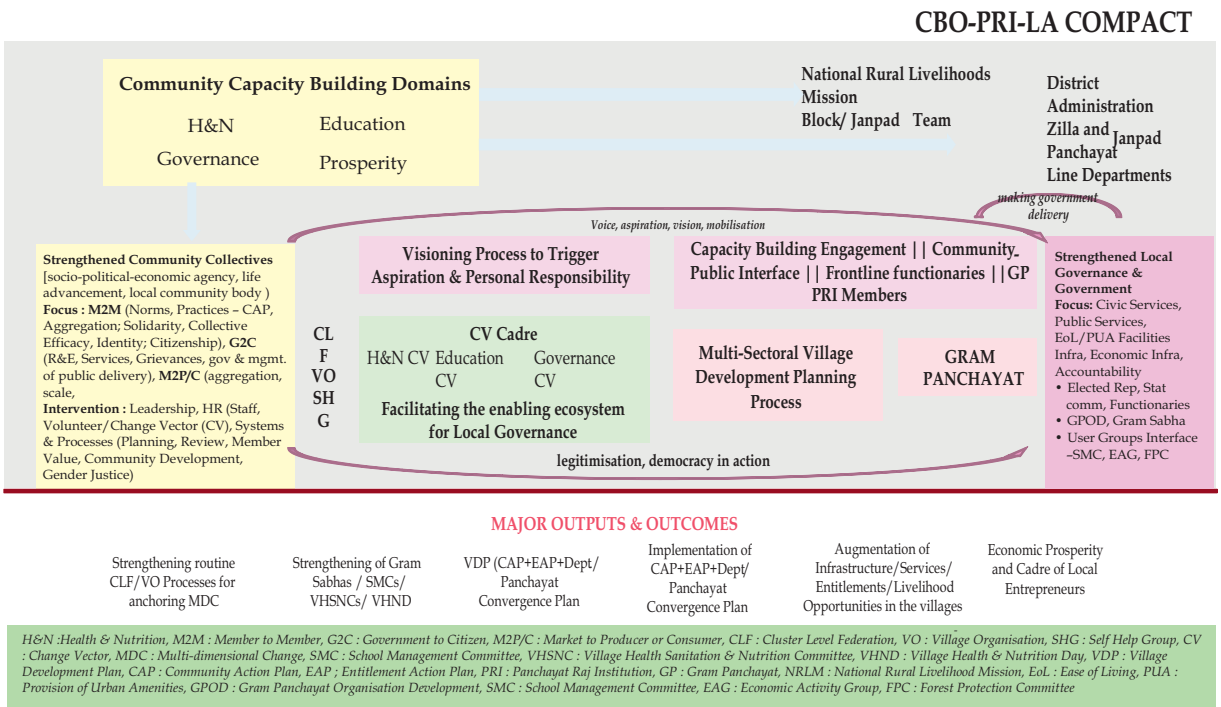


# Distinctive Elements

**Maximise impact with unique programme design:**

- Add value to individual program (s) beyond what they deliver "today" by multiplying impact, through concerted action, synergistic efforts and promoting best practices
- Leverage community collectives to maximize gains and create local impact beyond the "tipping point"
- Partnerships with other sector/thematic organizations and leaders, social enterprise ecosystem
- Credible window for corporate and state partnerships - solving problems at scale

## Localisation Framework




*H&N :Health & Nutrition, M2M : Member to Member, G2C : Government to Citizen, M2P/C : Market to Producer or Consumer, CLF : Cluster Level Federation, VO : Village Organisation, SHG : Self Help Group, CV : Change Vector, MDC : Multi-dimensional Change, SMC : School Management Committee, VHSNC : Village Health Sanitation & Nutrition Committee, VHND : Village Health & Nutrition Day, VDP : Village Development Plan, CAP : Community Action Plan, EAP ; Entitlement Action Plan, PRI : Panchayat Raj Institution, GP : Gram Panchayat, NRLM : National Rural Livelihood Mission, EoL : Ease of Living, PUA : Provision of Urban Amenities, GPOD : Gram Panchayat Organisation Development, SMC : School Management Committee, EAG : Economic Activity Group, FPC : Forest Protection Committee*

**Along with creating an enabling environment by:**

- Strengthening PRI and Self-governance
- Strengthening citizen-government engagement
- Positioning women as equal partners in socio-economic & political action

# Vision 2025

The key action focus for TRIF in next 5 years (2021-25) will be:

a) **Community Action-pilots** (in select sub-regions within a few states) on the ground working closely with community institutions, local constitutional bodies (Panchayati Raj Institutions), public systems delivery and with relevant market solutions. Our experience and analysis, confirms **deep community engagement** as the critical driver of sustained change. The *focus of action-pilots is and will continue to be developing working solution which are tested for impact and specific elements of scale-readiness.* The protocols for these action-pilots is of adapting design sprints/rapid prototyping/problem driven iterative adaptation methods to the conditions prevailing on the ground. This could involve, for example, design thinking, in-depth workouts with communities, group-based work with government front-line or other staff, etc. with a clear transition from prototype; and documentation as guidebook.

b) **Expansion and deepening of Public Policy Engagement for scale-impact,** we will embed the knowledge/ insights / solutions developed in Action-pilots or context-tweaked versions of existing solutions **in large implementation systems.** TRIF will do this through continuing and deepening the current formal arrangements at the National and State level e.g.

   i. Embedding **Nudge-Units** to integrate "solutions" within the architecture of the large government programs e.g. Technical/Programme Assistance to National Rural Livelihoods Mission, Rural Development Departments with different state governments, Rurban Mission, etc.,

   ii. Augmenting capacity gaps by (i) developing capacities of existing staff deploying digital, best-practices and (ii) enhancing efficiency and effectiveness of implementation by deploying competent human resources as **"Short-term Public Service Professionals" (e.g. Fellowship)** engagement for professionals deployed within clear outcome framework

   iii. Adding a new unit on **"evidence generation"** for policy impacting; among others this unit will review impact of any solution that TRIF develops , supports or implements on women, migrants, youth.

The "embedded in government + implementation at scale" approach requires understanding how the state works, its internal incentives and how it interacts with community and other actors. Embedded approach is lever for catalytic action, however, an exit strategy is crucial to be sustainable and needs to be planned appropriately.

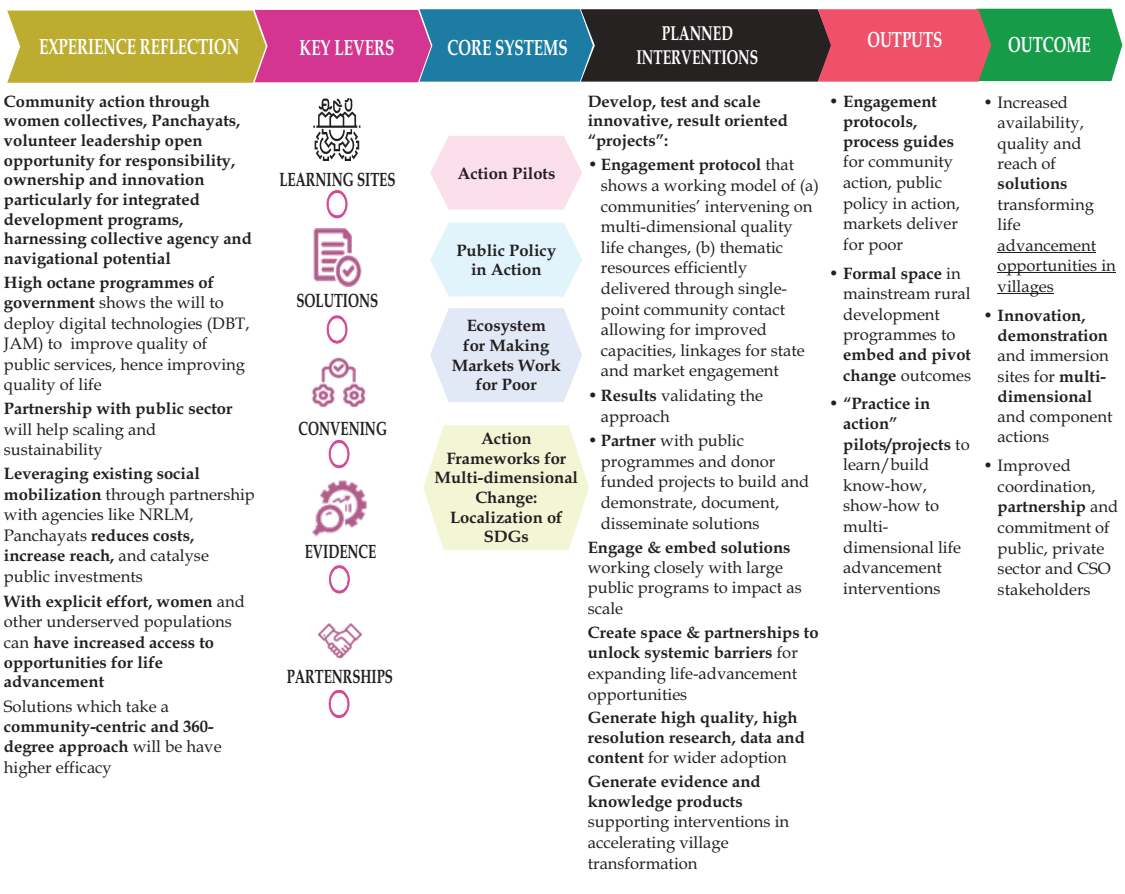
c) Supporting **market based eco-systems where required and feasible, and incubating and accelerating entrepreneurial start-ups –** these could take various forms e.g., budget schools/hospitals, contract farming, youth focused interventions linking with local enterprise development, connecting local informal sector jobs etc. We are referring to these interventions broadly as **"markets solutions for Stranded India".**

*Together these efforts are aimed at (a) improving the quality of life and (b) transforming basic amenities & opportunity sets for the families and in particular women leading to accelerating inter-generational mobility*

# Our Theory of Action

- Community action through women collectives, Panchayats, volunteer leadership open opportunity for responsibility, ownership and innovation particularly for integrated development programs, harnessing collective agency and navigational potential
- High octane programmes of government shows the will to deploy digital technologies (DBT, JAM) to improve quality of public services, hence improving quality of life
- Partnership with public sector will help scaling and sustainability
- Leveraging existing social mobilization through partnership with agencies like DAY-NRLM, Panchayats reduces costs, increase reach, and catalyse public investments
- With explicit effort, women and other underserved populations can have increased access to opportunities for life advancement
- Solutions which take a community-centric and 360-degree approach will have higher efficacy

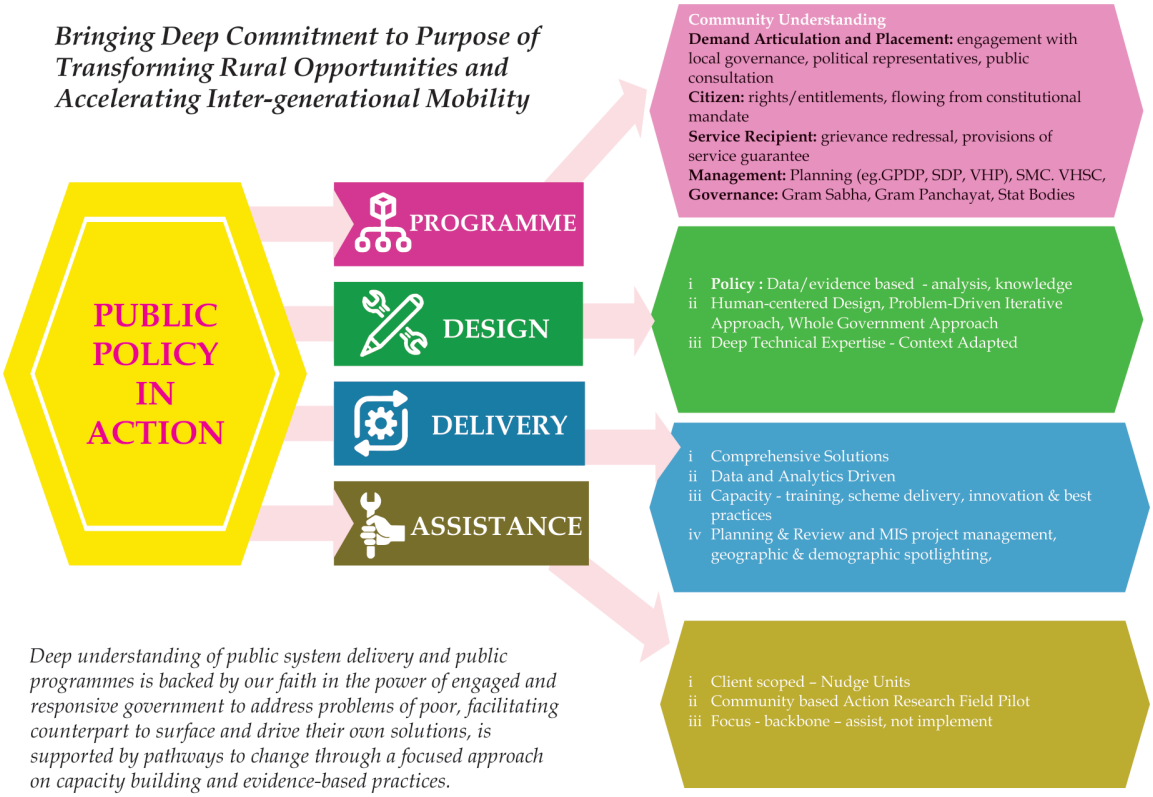
## Scale Solutions to Transform Rural India



# Public Policy in Action

Our deep understanding of public system delivery and public programmes is backed by our faith in the power of engaged and responsive government to address problems of poor, facilitating counterpart to surface and drive their own solutions. It is supported by pathways to change through a focused approach on capacity building and evidence-based practices.

***Bringing Deep Commitment to Purpose of Transforming Rural Opportunities and Accelerating Inter-generational Mobility***

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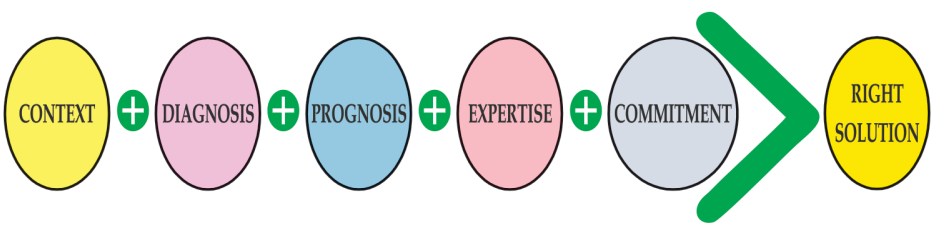

# Specific Focus in the next 5 years

Together these efforts are aimed at (a) improving the quality of life and (b) transforming basic amenities & opportunity sets for the families and in particular women in the bottom 100,000 villages, leading to accelerating inter-generational mobility.

## Impact lives of 10 million households during 2021-25

- **Overall focus:** *Stranded India – bottom 100,000 villages and marginalised communities – ST, SC, OBCs, especially women and girls within these communities,*
- **Geographical focus:** Selected poverty sub-region in 6 States – MP, Jharkhand, UP, Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh, and Rajasthan.
- **Intensive Ground Engagement focused** on *"prototype and solution creation and demonstration":* 25 Blocks ~2,500 Villages, **Directly, impacting lives of 1.2 million**
- **Policy in action:** Key focus Schemes and programs that look at multi-dimensional nature of poverty; eg. Aspirational District program, NRLM, Creating Village transformation programs at State level including prosperity, basic health and nutrition, primary education; Convergence focused programs like Mission Antodaya – with a focus on getting SDGs in action on the ground, etc. TRIF will be focused in these 6 states and at the Central level in this space.
- **Critical donors:** Large Indian and International Philanthropy and CSRs[1] (5-7 grants each year)
- **Market Ecosystem Development:** TRIF will trigger efforts with appropriate legal structures and capable human resources to solve for capital flows aimed a triggering enterprise, near-farm processing, service sector opportunities in addition to investments for hi-value farming. Also, it will invest more efforts to bring in market players to develop vibrant production clusters around farm and livestock. TRIF will play an anchor role in developing and nurturing a suite of partner/sister organisations providing market based solutions for capital infusion, and large market access for enterprise *(nano, micro, social and B2B)* opportunities in rural India.

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*Support under Corporate Social Responsibility*

# Building Internal Capacities

To be successful in its next phase TRIF needs to augment **its internal capacities,** especially around the three dimensions of technology, markets, capital in the new action lines - public policy in action, market solutions for poor. TRIF needs to strengthen its capacities in creating "knowledge" from "practice", generating **data and evidence to support public policy** and the development discourse. This will entail both bringing in new staff with appropriate skillsets and reorienting existing staff to look at "action on the ground" as a space to generate knowledge and protocols for Transforming Stranded Rural India. The intent of focused engagement with government will require concrete "offering" around know-how and show-how, evidence and documentation will be critical.

In order to deliver on TRIF's objective to develop ecosystems to make **markets work for stranded India** we require human resources with very different orientation and skillsets. Further, many of the possible solutions are outside the grant oriented legal structure of TRIF. **Thus, TRIF takes on itself to build partnership and / or trigger & nurture channels outside of the existing legal entity.** This requires more work and we intend to expand the level of co-founders/co-creators to add skills and enterprise to the idea of TRI. This entire segment may have to sit outside the current structure of TRIF but work in tandem with both the "community action-pilots" and the "policy in action" verticals of TRIF.

**Technology will be substantively and tactically important,** apart from efficiency and effectiveness, specific interventions; like platform-based sharing of innovations potentially through real tech platforms. TRI has a specific advantage in working on the human and social dimension of technology, that is often a critical link for effectiveness—on "human-tech".

The **institutional systems and capacities to draw expert resources and partnerships** in the space of health & nutrition, education, governance, sanitation, youth engagement have been developed in TRIF with lot of intentionality and has shown success with innovation and new practice, this is tactically critical as we strive to translate multi-dimensional and SDG@Local change processes and deploy distilled and best practices. Managing these CSO partnerships requires us to remain committed to the process and augment our internal capacities to continue anchoring this engagement.

Overall articulation, communication and process documentation skills need to be enhanced. Lastly, the next phase will focus on developing a second line of leadership for taking the idea of Transforming Rural India forward in the coming years especially with women and the rural-urban continuum.

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