



POLICY INTERVENTIONS

**needed for the Cognitive
Revolution in Agriculture**



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Abbreviation	Full Form
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AI4AI	Artificial Intelligence for Agriculture Innovation
ADeX	Agricultural Data Exchange
APAIMS	Andhra Pradesh Agricultural Information and Management System
ATMA	Agricultural Technology Management Agency
CCE	Crop Cutting Experiments
CoE	Centre of Excellence
CSC	Common Service Centres
DBT	Direct Benefit Transfer
DPI	Digital Public Infrastructure
eNAM	Electronic National Agriculture Market
FASAL	Forecasting Agricultural Output using Space, Agro-meteorology and Land Based Observations
FPO	Farmer Producer Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIS	Geographic Information System
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IoT	Internet of Things
IRRI	International Rice Research Institute
iFMS	Integrated Fertilizer Monitoring System
iSAT	Intelligent Systems Advisory Tool
KVK	Krishi Vigyan Kendra
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (Japan)
MARS	Monitoring Agricultural Resources
ML	Machine Learning
MSP	Minimum Support Price
PAU	Punjab Agricultural University
PMFBY	Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana
SHG	Self Help Group
WEF	World Economic Forum

FOREWORD

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Agriculture in India stands at a defining moment. Today, the agriculture sector faces new pressures, including climate variability, resource constraints, and market volatility. It is evident that the next phase of transformation must be driven not only by inputs but by intelligence.

The emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and data-driven systems offers an opportunity to re-imagine how agricultural decisions are made across the value chain. This transformation enables more precise, data-driven decision-making across the value chain. In this sense, the agriculture sector is entering its next phase, "Cognitive Revolution," where the focus shifts from increasing output to optimising outcomes.

India has made significant progress in building the digital foundation of the sector. National initiatives such as the Digital Agriculture Mission, AgriStack, and the digital public infrastructure ecosystem are facilitating the creation of large-scale agricultural datasets and digital services.

In this evolving landscape, Maharashtra has taken a leadership role through its MahaAgri-AI Policy, positioning itself at the forefront of AI-driven agricultural transformation. The State's approach focuses on leveraging digital public infrastructure, fostering innovation ecosystems, and enabling farmer-centric solutions to improve productivity, resilience, and incomes. These efforts reflect a

clear shift towards embedding intelligence within agricultural systems and decision-making.

The Maharashtra state's approach provides a practical starting point for other states that seek to initiate and lead AI-driven transformation in agriculture. As states across India begin to operationalise AI in agriculture, such approaches will play a critical role in shaping scalable and interoperable models. Maharashtra itself needs to improve further on its foundation.

As the report highlights, the next phase will require a stronger focus on translating digital and AI capabilities into effective, field-level decision-making. This report presents 6 practical interventions such as building trust and inclusivity in AI by introducing validation mechanisms, integrating indigenous knowledge, ensuring women's participation and access, and AI-based quality-linked MSP to improved farmer incomes.

It is also very important to recognise that the success of this transition to cognitive revolution will depend on coordinated efforts across government, research institutions, private sector players, and farming communities.

I commend the authors for bringing together a comprehensive perspective on the role of AI in agriculture and for outlining actionable pathways for policy and implementation.

Executive SUMMARY



With the advent of AI, Indian agriculture is entering a phase of an emerging Cognitive Revolution. Unlike previous technological transitions that focused on expanding physical inputs such as seeds, fertilisers, and irrigation, the Cognitive Revolution centres on improving the quality of decisions for increased productivity and quality through data and analytical capability.

National initiatives such as the National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence, the IndiaAI Mission, and the Digital Agriculture Mission, along with digital public infrastructure such as AgriStack, are beginning to organise agricultural datasets and enable data-driven services, while growing agri-tech ecosystem is expanding use of AI in crop diagnostics, advisory services, logistics optimisation, credit assessment, and quality monitoring.

At the same time, the expansion of digital systems and AI capabilities has also revealed an emerging crisis of intelligence. Today the challenge is not the absence of data or technology,

but the difficulty of embedding agricultural intelligence within institutional systems, extension networks, and farmer decision-making.

In this context, Maharashtra has already taken a leadership position through its Agri-AI Policy, which lays a comprehensive foundation for AI-driven transformation of the agricultural sector. The policy focuses on building a robust digital public infrastructure, fostering innovation, strengthening institutional capacity, and enabling global collaboration to address persistent challenges such as low productivity, climate variability, and water stress.

Key pillars of the Maharashtra framework include establishment of shared Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), Agriculture Data Exchange (ADeX) and AI-enabled advisory platforms. The policy targets innovation funding to support startups and enterprises across the agriculture value chain. There is also a plan to engage in large-scale capacity building of farmers, institutions, and officials for AI adoption.

These interventions position Maharashtra as a national leader in AI-enabled agriculture and create a strong, replicable model for other states to build on. To ensure that the emerging Cognitive Revolution translates into improvements in productivity, sustainability, and farmer welfare, this report proposes the following additional interventions.

AI-Enabled Agricultural Governance

Artificial Intelligence (AI) in agriculture is in its early phase of implementation. While governments, agri-tech firms, and research institutions are actively exploring its potential in areas such as crop monitoring, pest prediction, and advisory services, most initiatives remain limited to pilots, and farmers largely continue to rely on traditional decision-making practices.

While the expansion of AgriStack and agricultural datasets is beginning to create the foundation for intelligence-driven agriculture, global experience shows that the real value of AI lies in **translating insights into practical decisions and field-level action**. To support this change, the report recommends:

1. Develop an Indigenous Digital Agricultural Knowledge Dataset/Registry to Improve AI Advisory Systems

Most AI applications in agriculture rely primarily on structured datasets such as crop statistics, weather data, soil data, and satellite imagery. However, farmers across India continue to rely heavily on indigenous and locally evolved agricultural practices that are rarely captured in digital datasets.

Similar to Farmer and Crop Registry under Agristack, a Digital Indigenous Agricultural Knowledge Registry should be developed to capture region-specific farming practices, local pest management methods, water man-



agement approaches, and locally adapted crop species. Integrating this dataset with AgriStack and State Agricultural Data Exchanges (ADeX) would enable AI advisory systems to incorporate indigenous agricultural knowledge alongside scientific and satellite data.

2. Introduce an Optional Agri-AI Rating System for AI tools

Establish an optional rating system to strengthen farmer trust and ensure reliability of AI-driven advisories. An Agri-AI accreditation framework and a designated evaluation body (such as ICAR or other government-run technical institutions) shall assess AI applications for accuracy, reliability, Inclusion, user-friendliness and field performance, and assign ratings.

Inclusive AI for Women Farmers

Women farmers face structural barriers in benefiting from emerging AI adoption. Although women constitute 40-45% of the agricultural workforce, they hold only 11.7% of land titles, reflecting a persistent gap between labour contribution and ownership recognition. This imbalance extends into the digital ecosystem where women account for only about 25% of AgriStack Farmer IDs and are 14-15% less likely to use mobile internet, limiting their access to AI-enabled advisory, credit, and service platforms.

As AI shapes advice, credit, and insurance decisions, gaps in data and system design risk introducing bias. To promote fair inclusion, the report recommends:

3. Develop a framework to assess and certify inclusion of women farmers in agricultural AI Systems

Mandate independent testing and certification of AI systems by centers like ICAR-CIAE Bhopal or AICRP-FIM universities (e.g., MPKV Rahuri), requiring gender- and tribal-disaggregated data on women/tribal farmer participation, feedback, and outcomes.

4. Ensure Women's Representation in Agricultural AI Governance

All agritech policy bodies and publicly funded agricultural AI projects should report the share of women in decision-making and governance roles, including experts from institutions such



as ICAR institutes, state agricultural universities, civil society organizations, and independent researchers.

This reporting should establish a Year 1 baseline of women's representation, based on which institutions can adopt progressive targets to increase participation—such as reaching at least 20% representation by Year 3 and 30% by Year 5, supported through targeted recruitment, capacity-building, and institutional incentives.

5. Promote Women-Friendly Design in Government Agritech Procurement

Government procurement of agritech solutions should mandate voice-enabled interfaces in local languages (e.g., Hindi, Marathi, Telugu) as a baseline standard, mirroring the success of the NaMO Drone Didi program,

where women farmers use voice-guided drones for crop spraying without needing advanced literacy. Procurement and evaluation frameworks should also include reporting on women-friendly design features, such as voice controls, simplified user interfaces, and offline accessibility, to ensure agritech tools remain accessible and usable for women farmers.

AI for Enhancing Farmer Incomes

Minimum Support Price (MSP) system in India plays a critical role in income security for the farmers. 1.06 crore farmers benefited during the kharif season 2023-24, where government agencies procured over 525 LMT of paddy.

However, farmers receive similar prices regardless of quality parameters, discouraging investment in higher-quality production. Transitioning towards a value-based procurement approach is therefore essential to enhance farmer incomes. AI-enabled grading systems can provide objective and rapid quality assessments, reducing human bias in procurement.

To enable income improvements, the report recommends:

6. Introduce AI-based Quality Linked MSP

The Government should introduce an AI-enabled scientific quality assessment system that links Minimum Support Price (MSP) with crop quality parameters. Using AI tools like computer vision and sensor-based grading at procurement centres can enable objective and transparent quality evaluation. Farmers producing higher-quality crops can receive premium MSP incentives, encourage better farm practices and improve overall productivity and income. Under this framework, MSP procurement should be strictly based on quality grades: Grade 1 crops

would command a premium price compared to Grade 2 and Grade 3, ensuring that the highest standards are financially rewarded.

India is in the early stages of its cognitive revolution, and today's policy will set the groundwork for how AI systems are developed, regulated, and used in the years to come. Only with coordinated efforts of government with agritech firms, startups research institutions, can AI intelligence be embedded in agricultural decision-making, translating data driven decisions into quantifiable improvements in crop management, productivity, climate resilience and farmer well-being.

01

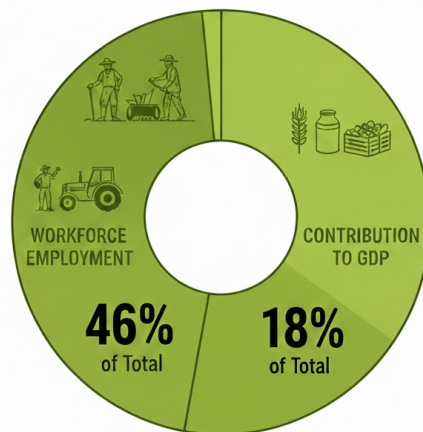
Context and Structural Realities of INDIAN AGRICULTURE



Agriculture in India remains economically significant but is structurally constrained. While it employs nearly 46% of India's workforce, it contributes to only around 18% of the country's GDP [1]. Several structural factors contribute to this relatively low productivity in the sector. India's farming landscape is dominated by small and marginal farmers, who account for about 89.4% of operational landholdings [2]. These fragmented landholdings contribute to low economies of scale and poor adoption of mechanization and technology. In addition, nearly 60% of India's agricultural land is rain-fed, which makes production highly dependent on the monsoon and exposes farmers to extreme climate events like droughts and floods.

INDIAN AGRICULTURE: WORKFORCE & GDP CONTRIBUTION

[1] & [2] Various Reports



STRUCTURAL WEAKNESSES:
89.4% Small & Marginal Farmers,
Fragmented Land [2]

CLIMATE DEPENDENCE: 
~60% Rain-fed Land,
Extreme Weather Exposure [2]

Beyond these physical constraints, agriculture has historically faced an information deficit where farmers lack access to timely, localized and scientifically grounded advisory services. India currently has more than 140 million operational farm holdings, [3] yet the reach of the agricultural extension system remains limited which prevents farmers to take informed deci-

sions on crop selection and sowing windows. In several states, a single extension worker may be responsible for 5000 to over 10,000 farmers [4] making it difficult to provide personalised and timely guidance. Therefore, farmers often rely on informal networks, traditional practices, or delayed advisories which are often delayed and commercially biased.

Many of these challenges have deep historical roots. After independence, India faced severe food shortages and the risk of famine. In response, the Green Revolution of the 1960s introduced major technological changes in agriculture. High-yielding varieties (HYV) of crops, chemical fertilisers and irrigation expansion helped significantly increase food production which transformed India from a food-deficit country into a food-surplus nation. However, the Green Revolution also created new challenges over time like intensive use of fertilizers and irrigation which lead to groundwater depletion and soil degradation contributing to overall ecological stress.

In the decades that followed, governments introduced several initiatives to address these challenges. Programmes such as Soil Health Cards, micro-irrigation initiatives, and digital market platforms like e-NAM aimed to improve access to services and financial protection. However, they only partially addressed the deeper challenge of farm-level decision-making as they often lack integrated and real-time information.

In recent years, technological advances have begun to create the foundation for a new phase of agricultural transformation. The expansion of 4G connectivity, satellite-based monitoring systems, and digital public infrastructure such as Aadhaar and Direct Benefit Transfer has laid the foundation for a new



emerging phase known as the Cognitive Revolution. Unlike earlier agricultural transformations that focused mainly on expanding physical inputs such as seeds, fertilisers, and irrigation, the Cognitive Revolution focuses on improving the quality of decisions made by farmers through technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and satellite imagery.

Table 1 : Evolution of agriculture from Green Revolution to Cognitive Revolution



Early applications of these technologies have already demonstrated promising results. For example, the AI-based sowing advisory developed by Microsoft in collaboration with ICRISAT in Andhra Pradesh helped farmers increase yields by up to 30% by recommending optimal sowing dates based on weather and soil conditions [5]. AI in agriculture also has the potential to make farming more inclusive, increase farmers' incomes, and improve environmental sustainability, which this document explores in greater detail in the following sections.

In this context, artificial intelligence and data-driven systems present a promising pathway to transform Indian agriculture by improving decision-making across governance, advisory services, procurement systems, and farm management.

1.1 Cognitive Revolution: How AI Improves Everyday Farm and Value-Chain Decisions

Artificial intelligence has the potential to improve decision making in agriculture by transforming large volumes of static information into localised insights. AI systems can process multiple datasets- including weather forecasts, soil characteristics etc to frame decisions on crops selection, sowing time and irrigation scheduling amongst others.

AI-enabled systems are already beginning to support farmers through a range of application.

For instance, Saagu Baagu project is a collaboration between the Government of Telangana and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation aims of improve the chilli value chain of more than 7,000 farmers. The project has demonstrated remarkable results in its first phase with 21% increase in chilli yields per acre, 9% reduction in pesticide use and 8% increase in unit prices [6]. Further, through machine learning and deep learning platforms such as Cropin and Plantix, AI systems learn from real-time and localised datasets to generate predictions and recommendations for the farmers. (Table 2) When integrated with IoT devices and edge AI, these technologies enable real-time and localised decision support.

Table 2 : Examples of AI technologies in agriculture

S.No.	Applications	Description
1.	MahaVISTAAR	An AI-powered chatbot developed to provide farmers with real-time, localized agricultural advisory services. This is developed by government of Maharashtra.
2.	Cropin	An agri-tech platform that uses artificial intelligence, satellite imagery, and data analytics to monitor crop health, predict yields, assess risks, and improve supply chain transparency. It supports farmers and agribusinesses in precision farming and climate-resilient planning.
3.	Plantix	An AI-based crop disease detection application that allows farmers to upload images of affected crops and receive instant diagnosis and treatment recommendations. It helps in early pest and disease identification, reducing crop losses and minimizing excessive pesticide use.

S.No.	Applications	Description
4.	TartanSense	Using AI models, the robot identifies weeds and sprays only where necessary instead of blanket pesticide application.
5.	Intello Labs	AI inspects food quality (fruits & vegetables) using image analysis and segregates produced by different grades.
6.	Ninjacart	AI manages demand prediction, route optimization, and inventory planning for fresh produce logistics

These applications collectively demonstrate how intelligence is embedded across the agricultural lifecycle from crop planning and disease detection to logistics optimisation and quality assessment. Collectively, they have the potential to support farmers across the entire agricultural life cycle.





1.79 CRORE
REGISTERED
FARMERS

26 CRORE
FARMERS IN
INDIA ESTIMATED

1.2 The Emerging “Crisis of Intelligence”

Despite the several benefits of AI, its presence alone will not guarantee the transformation to agriculture’s cognitive revolution. The effectiveness of this revolution depends on how these tools are integrated within broader agricultural systems.

India today generates large volumes of data through its national initiatives like Digital Agriculture Mission and AgriStack. However, availability of data does not automatically translates into actionable intelligence for farmers especially when the information remains non-inclusive and inaccessible. For instance, women account for only around 25% of registered Farmer

IDs under AgriStack, indicating that a large share of women farmers remain underrepresented in digital agricultural databases. [7] Further, these datasets don’t capture smallholder farms, rain-fed regions and indigenous farming practices which reduced their trust in digital advisory services and slow their adoption.

Limited participation in existing digital agricultural platforms further illustrates this crisis of intelligence. The National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) platform currently has approximately 1.79 crore registered farmers, while India has an estimated 26 crore farmers overall [8]. Such limited digital inclusion makes us wonder if large segments of farmers struggle to access or interpret even basic digital systems?

Beyond the issues of accessibility and inclusion, crisis of agriculture is also shaped by fragmented data system and untimely data access. Currently, multiple institutions like Kisan Vigyan Kendras, Meteorological departments etc. generate agricultural data but it exists in institutional silos and are rarely integrated in a single system that can generate holistic insights. Therefore, a farmer can access a weather forecast but not a recommendation on how it would affect the sowing decision and irrigation scheduling. In addition, delays in information dissemination can reduce its usefulness. For example, Pink bollworm infestation worsened because of delayed response, resulting in 20-30% crop damage and increased expenditure on pesticides (often ₹25,000 to ₹60,000 per acre) [9].

Taken together, these challenges point to an

emerging **“crisis of intelligence”** where the challenge Indian agriculture is facing is not simply a shortage of data but rather shortage of usable intelligence. At the same time, concerns have also been raised about the potential over-reliance on algorithmic recommendation. Even if rapid adoption occurs, the use of AI carries the risk that farmers may soon stop relying on their experiential knowledge and become dependent on AI algorithms.

Yet the benefits of the cognitive revolution cannot be undermined. As input-intensive farming has become widespread in agriculture, AI can help farmers better utilise inputs. In this sense, the cognitive revolution is not a replacement of farmer’s intelligence, but a recalibration of it, shifting agriculture from volume maximisation to value optimisation.



02

India's Evolving AI Landscape in AGRICULTURE

India's AI agri-policy environment is still developing, moving from a broad national approach to state-level pilots and initiatives.

2.1 National AI, Digital Agriculture, and Data Initiatives

The **National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence**, published by NITI Aayog in 2018, laid the foundation for AI adoption in India and identified agriculture as one of the key priority sectors. It proposed using AI for yield prediction, pest detection, market price analysis, and resource optimisation.

Building on this, the **IndiaAI Mission**, approved in March 2024, established a seven-pillar framework to create a robust national ecosystem for AI innovation, including in agriculture. It includes Compute Capacity, Innovation Centre, Datasets Platform, Application Development, Future Skills, Startup Financing, and Safe & Trusted AI [10].

The Digital Agriculture Mission, approved in September 2024, aims to develop digital public infrastructure, including AgriStack (built on three core components: a Farmers' Registry, geo-referenced village maps,



and a Crop Sown Registry), the Krishi Decision Support System (which integrates remote sensing data on crops, soil, weather, and water resources into a comprehensive geospatial system), and soil profile maps, thereby enabling AI- and analytics-driven services to improve productivity, sustainability, and farmer incomes across the country [11].

2.2 State AI Initiatives: Comparative Insights

Among Indian states, Maharashtra stands out as the most comprehensive and policy-driven example of AI adoption in agriculture, with a dedicated, standalone AI policy specifically for agriculture, the MahaAgri-AI Policy. It provides a clear policy aims to support AgriStack and other digital agriculture systems by using AI, geospatial tools, and data-sharing platforms to improve overall farm productivity.

While MahaAgri-AI Policy 2025–2029 outlines an ambitious roadmap to revolutionize the state's agricultural landscape through the strategic integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies in Agriculture sector. The policy aims to foster sustainable growth enhancing productivity, resilience, and farmer incomes through technology-driven farmer centric interventions and overcome persistent challenges being faced such as lower productivity, climate variability, and water stress using AI and emerging technologies. This forward-thinking policy seeks to position Maharashtra as a national leader in AI-driven agriculture, produce replicable models, aligning with broad initiatives like Viksit Bharat@2047 and making a substantial contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that will lead to the economic transformation of the farmers in the state.

Under the policy framework, following core initiatives are being take:

A. Comprehensive Shared Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI): will be established to provide



support to the various stakeholders such as startups, companies, research institutions and innovators to develop farmer-centric AI and emerging technology-based solutions etc. List of DPI's-

1. Establish the Agriculture Data Exchange (ADeX) and Sandboxing Environment as statewide shared Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI). A secure sandbox environment will be provided to the stakeholders for simulation of real-world conditions for controlled experimentation and validation of AI based agricultural solutions.
2. Deploy a Shared Remote Sensing and Geospatial Intelligence Engine
3. Operationalize Generative AI and Emerging Technologies for Farmer-Centric Advisory and Simulation through the Virtually Integrated System to Access Agricultural Resources (VISTAAR) Initiative
4. Build a Statewide AI-Enabled Agri-Food Traceability and Quality Certification Platform

B. Innovation Funding: To build the pipeline of **Innovative Digital Solution Providers for Farmer-Centric AI Innovation**. To provide differentiated support to both startups and established companies working on AI and emerging technology-based solutions across the agricultural value chain. support will be tailored based

on the maturity of solutions and their potential to address critical challenges in Maharashtra Agri value chains. Startups will be onboarded through an innovation pathway model and supported via grants, incubation, and technical mentorship.

C. Capacity Building: The Maharashtra Agri-AI Policy prioritizes capacity building by upskilling SAUs, agriculture officials, farmers, and FPOs through targeted AI/ML training, toolkits, and fellowships. Collaborations with academia, industry, and global partners will co-design modular programs, ensuring hands-on adoption via district AI Champions and multilingual content.

D. Global Innovation Summit: This high-impact platform will catalyze partnerships, promote knowledge exchange, and mobilize both domestic and international capital into the state's agri-tech ecosystem. It will convene a diverse cross-section of stakeholders, including global thought leaders, frontier technology firms, venture capitalists, multilateral agencies, state delegations, policy think tanks, and farmer producer organizations (FPOs).

Taken together, Maharashtra's approach moves beyond isolated pilots to a structured, ecosystem-led model combining digital infrastructure, innovation support, institutional capacity, and global engagement. This makes it a strong reference model for other states looking to scale AI-driven agricultural transformation.

In contrast, most other states remain project-driven rather than policy-driven, with AI adoption limited to specific use cases or pilot programmes.



State	Initiative	What It Is Doing	Projected / Initial Impact
Telangana	Saagu Baagu (AI4AI)	Uses AI for soil testing and quality checking to help chilli farmers get better market prices.	7,000 farmers helped in Phase-1. Phase-2 is scaling up to 5 lakh farmers in 10 districts [12].
Andhra Pradesh	APAIMS 2.0	AI/ML-enabled agricultural platform that integrates farm data into a unified system for government officials and, increasingly, farmers.	Contributed to digitizing services for tens of millions of acres and databases covering tens of lakhs of farmers , with around 45.48 lakh farmers registered and 56 lakh acres of crop bookings recorded [13].
	AI/ML Advisory System (Farmchat)	AI-powered conversational advisory tool/app	Targets 50,000 farmers (launched Jan 2026); aims 20% income rise for 30% users [14].
Gujarat	Krushhi Pragati	Uses AI and satellite photos to give farmers advice specific to their own farm plots.	Used by 1+ lakh farmers; has sent over 1.5 crore advisories so far [15].
Uttar Pradesh	UP-AGREES	A 4,000 crore World Bank project using AI and drones for smart irrigation and mapping.	Targets 10 lakh farmers in 28 districts; includes 10,000 women producer groups [16].
	UPONA Network	A Google Cloud platform using Gemini AI for voice-based advice in local languages.	Helps farmers who can't use smart apps by giving advice through voice commands .

	AI GIS Command Centre	A hub in Lucknow that maps data for 57,000+ villages using satellite and AI [17].	Covers all 75 districts ; gives early alerts for drought and floods to the government.
	AI Pragya	A training program to teach youth and officials about AI and Data Science in farming.	Goal to train 10 lakh people ; currently training 1.5 lakh every month . [18].
Odisha	AgriAI (PaddyMitra)	A WhatsApp-based AI chatbot (IRRI) that gives advice in Odia language.	Usability pilot with 117 farmers showed strong acceptance; provides instant rice advice [19].
Madhya Pradesh	Drone Data Repo	India's first state-level "cloud" to store and analyze drone maps with AI.	Reduced survey duplication by 30-50% ; speeds up government decisions [20].



2.3 Global Initiatives

Global experience shows that intelligence-driven governance emerges when multi-source data systems, clear policies, regulations, and institutionalised governance are in place. The following practices illustrate how leading countries operationalise this.

Country	Initiative	What it is doing	Projected / Initial Impact
Netherlands	Autonomous Greenhouse & AI/Digital Twin Programme	Uses AI, IoT sensors, and Digital Twins to autonomously manage greenhouse climate, water, and pest control minimising human labour	90% water savings vs open field; AI greenhouses matched expert human growers in net profit [21].
Japan	MAFF Smart Agriculture Programme (incl. Sagri, WAGRI)	Integrates satellite, AI, IoT sensors, and drones to monitor crops and soil in real time; automates irrigation and machinery via a national data platform (WAGRI)	205 demo projects; Sagri AI identifies abandoned farmland with ~90% accuracy [22].
European Union	Copernicus / MARS (JRC Monitoring Agricultural Resources)	Combines satellite data with weather and crop models to publish monthly in-season yield forecasts for all EU member states	C3–5% yield forecast error; 19,980+ forecasts informing EU CAP policy since 1993 [23].
Kenya	Twiga Foods (AI-Enabled Supply Chain Platform)	AI-powered mobile marketplace that matches farmers directly with urban vendors, optimising logistics and forecasting demand to cut waste	Post-harvest losses cut 30%–4%; farmers paid 20–40% above broker rates within 24–48 hrs [24].

Ghana	Farmerline / Darli AI (WhatsApp-based AI Advisory Chatbot)	WhatsApp AI chatbot giving farmers personalised advice on pests, fertiliser, and logistics in 20+ local African languages	110,000+ farmers reached since March 2024; 50%+ aggregators are women [25].
Ethiopia	DAAS / PxD Digital Agriculture Advisory Services (Voice & SMS)	Delivers AI-driven agronomic advice via outbound voice calls on basic mobile phones no smartphone or literacy required	\$12–\$19 farm profit per \$1 invested; institutionalised into Ethiopia's Ministry of Agriculture [26].

The evolving AI policy presents both significant promise and clear challenges that focused interventions must address to enable AI's full impact on productivity, sustainability, and farmer incomes across India's diverse agriculture ecosystem.



03

Plausible Intervention I: AI-Enabled AGRICULTURAL GOVERNANCE



Indian agriculture is becoming increasingly digital, driven by initiatives such as Digital India that have transformed public service delivery. This has resulted in large-scale digitisation of agricultural data across the value chain.

Farmers are being empowered through digital platforms such as mKisan, Kisan Suvidha, eNAM, iFMS, Soil Health Card, and Agrimarket, which aim to reduce information asymmetry and improve transparency across the supply chain. Together, these platforms are creating a data-rich agricultural ecosystem. However, this data is not yet translating into decision-making. This creates a gap between data creation and decision-making, limiting

the use of AI in governance.

For AI potential to be realised, policy must act as the bridge between data and decision-making, guiding how AI models capture Indian agricultural realities and reach farmers.

NITI Aayog, in its National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence, identifies agriculture as a key priority sector. To enhance farmers' income, increase productivity, and reduce wastage, the strategy highlights the role of AI-led innovations as central enablers. The strategy notes that agriculture, which forms the bedrock of the Indian economy, requires a multi-layered infusion of technology and strong coordination among multiple stakeholders.

In India, digital inputs are derived from various sources, including drones, mobile apps, and sensors; physical data such as soil samples and crop-cutting results; and, in many cases, manual forecasts or field inspections conducted by officials. This has resulted in the generation of large and diverse datasets across the agricultural ecosystem.

AI modelling depends on complex, diverse datasets such as weather patterns, soil profiles, seed varieties, crop disease information, pest management data, and climate indicators. Traditionally, these data pools have been maintained by public agencies. However, significant baseline gaps exist in the quality and standardization of the data across regions. Further, these models are currently trained primarily on structured datasets and do not incorporate indigenous and locally evolved farming practices followed by farmers.

At present, there is no formal mechanism to assess the accuracy, reliability, and field performance of AI-driven tools. In the absence of such validation frameworks, AI-generated advisories are not widely used. Farmers and field-level functionaries are more likely to rely on advisories that are backed by trusted institutions, particularly those supported or endorsed by the government. As a result, the availability of data and AI capabilities has not fully translated into their adoption as reliable decision-support tools at the field level.

Agriculture in India is inherently diverse,



shaped by region-specific agro-climatic conditions and local practices. Across regions, farmers rely on indigenous and experience-based methods that are cost-effective, accessible, and adapted to local conditions. However, these practices largely exist within informal farmer networks and remain undocumented in formal systems.

While institutional advisories and best practices are developed, they are not systematically captured in datasets that can be used to train AI models. AI models in agriculture are currently trained primarily on structured datasets such as crop statistics, weather, soil, and satellite data. These datasets do not capture how farming is actually practiced across India, including local crop choices, traditional methods, and region-specific decision-making.

As a result, AI systems are built on a partial representation of Indian agriculture. The absence of indigenous and localised knowledge creates a gap where AI-driven advisories may not fully reflect field realities, limiting their relevance and effectiveness.

3.1

Recommendations around AI-enabled agriculture governance

To address the above challenges, the following measures are proposed:



3.1.1. Develop an Indigenous Digital Agricultural Knowledge Dataset/Registry to Improve AI Advisory Systems

To address the absence of indigenous and locally evolved agricultural knowledge in existing datasets, a structured effort is required to capture and digitise region-specific farming practices. Most AI applications today do not reflect the full spectrum of on-ground agricultural practices.

Similar to the Farmer and Crop Registry under AgriStack, a Digital Indigenous Agricultural Knowledge Registry should be developed to document local farming practices, traditional pest management methods, water-use techniques, and region-specific crop varieties. This should capture variations across agro-climatic zones and reflect actual field-level practices followed by farmers.

Integrating this dataset with AgriStack and State Agricultural Data Exchanges (ADeX) would enable AI systems to incorporate both scientific and indigenous knowledge, improving the relevance and usability of AI-driven advisories for farmers.



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“Indian agriculture presents a unique opportunity for AI-led transformation; however, the effectiveness of such systems depends on the quality, diversity, and contextual relevance of the underlying datasets. A large part of farming decisions today still comes from local experience, indigenous practices, and farmer knowledge that often remains outside formal datasets. The real opportunity lies in combining this ground-level understanding with technologies like AI and NLP to build practical, farmer-friendly advisory systems. Going forward, the focus should be on creating trusted and accurate solutions that are continuously learning from field realities and helping farmers make better decisions in a simple and accessible manner.”



3.1.2. Introduce an Optional Agri-AI Rating System for AI Tools

To address the absence of formal validation mechanisms and build trust in AI-driven advisories, an optional Agri-AI rating system should be introduced. Farmers and field-level functionaries are more likely to adopt AI-based recommendations when they are supported or endorsed by trusted institutions.

An Agri-AI accreditation framework, supported by a designated evaluation body, can assess AI tools based on parameters such as accuracy, reliability, inclusiveness, user-friendliness, and field performance. Importantly, systems should be tested on real farmer use-cases, capturing feedback on whether advisories were actionable and led to improved outcomes (e.g., yield, cost savings, input optimisation).

Such a system would provide a transparent mechanism to evaluate AI applications, enabling informed adoption by farmers and departments. It would also encourage developers to improve the quality and accountability of AI solutions, strengthening trust in AI-enabled agricultural decision-making.

04

Plausible Intervention II: Inclusive AI for WOMEN FARMERS



Indian agriculture is evolving quickly, where the digital tools and artificial intelligence are increasingly shaping how farmers get advice, reach markets, move produce, and secure credit covering the entire value chain. This shift arrives in a sector where women perform a large, often unseen share of labour. Recent counts show that women make up 40-45% of the workforce.

But the formal systems that channel the new technologies often do not recognize women. The latest Agriculture Census records women as constituting only 11.7% of operational land-holders. They carry out almost half of all farm work, but their names account for barely 1/10 of the data.

Women farmers face structural barriers in

benefiting equally from AI-driven agricultural systems. The first is access: women in low and middle-income countries remain 14–15% less likely than men to use mobile internet, and women are 25% less likely to use ICT for basic tasks, limiting their ability to engage with AI platforms [27].

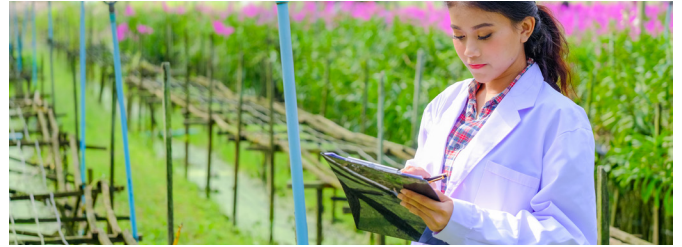
Moreover, across agricultural datasets, women are marginalized through land-title-based definitions of “farmer” and records that assume the male is the household head; this, in turn, results in models optimised for male farming patterns while overlooking women’s realities. All of the above leads to algorithmic systems that might replicate bias, particularly in areas like credit scoring, where women lacking land collateral may be undervalued.

There are barriers to inclusive product development because data representing female profiles are not accounted for enough in AI system design and agritech leadership. In India, of the 9.20 crore Farmer IDs issued under Agristack, only approximately 2.30 crore (about 25%) [28] are held by women. Given that women form only 11.7% of operational landholders [29] and 40–45% of the agricultural workforce, their representation is lower than their actual role in agriculture.

Research in Nature Human Behavior captures a revealing domino effect: biased inputs from data lead to biased outputs, which shape policies, resulting in biased outcomes, which are again fed back into the system. In agriculture: male-dominated datasets train a model the model advises farming practices for men women who receive irrelevant advice disengage, and women's data becomes rare in subsequent training cycles. Breaking this loop requires deliberate intervention at every stage of data collection, design, validation, and monitoring.

The official statistics do not capture the real picture of women farmer's contributions to the Indian economy. They perform approximately 60-75% of farming-related work across most states, yet they remain marginalized as farmers in land-based systems.

Karnataka's Household Asset Survey (KHSA) which enumerated assets and land ownership disaggregated by gender across rural households and the International Water Management Institute (IWMI)'s research on women's access to water and land resources in small-



holder systems demonstrate that this invisibility is correctable with a targeted methodological design, but it demands political will and institutional commitment. Without gender-disaggregated data that captures women's decision-making, asset ownership, and labour contributions, AI systems will continue to be built on a fundamentally incomplete picture of agricultural reality [30][31].

Most agricultural AI is built for a default farmer: male, literate, smartphone-owning, and connected to formal land and financial systems. One such example is the development of an advisory application for fisher farmers. In the early stages, the team designed the tool primarily for male fishers who go out to sea. It was only later that they realised an important gap: once the men return, the catch is handled almost entirely by women, who face a completely different set of challenges that the application had not considered [32].

This cultural mismatch does not capture the realities of women smallholders, lack of time due to domestic labor, reliance on word-of-mouth knowledge networks, lower literacy, and mobility constraints. Voice-based, local-language, offline-capable, low-bandwidth tools can only be embedded in design principles if women are at the table where these systems are built.

4.1 Recommendations around Inclusive AI for women farmers

Making AI work for women in agriculture requires more than design fixes; it requires governments to change how they collect data, fund innovations, and define eligibility across institutions.

4.1.1 Develop a framework to assess and certify inclusion of women farmers in agricultural AI Systems

Mandate independent testing and certification of AI systems by designated institutions such as ICAR-CIAE Bhopal or AICRP-FIM universities (e.g., MPKV Rahuri), requiring gender- and tribal-disaggregated data on women/tribal farmer participation, feedback, and outcomes across both testing and deployment stages. This should move beyond self-declaration by agritech firms and establish a structured evaluation framework, including standardised protocols to assess usability, accessibility, accuracy of advisories, and field-level outcomes for women farmers.

The framework may also incorporate ergonomic and user-experience assessments, drawing from existing models such as Odisha's SOP for government-procured farm equipment which mandates women-centric ergonomic testing for farm equipment supplied via government schemes, to ensure that AI systems are practical and inclusive in real-world conditions.



Dr. Soumya Swaminathan

Chairperson, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, Plenary Keynote at AI4AgSummit 2026

"AI will change how people get and use information. But big gaps still remain for women. Many women farmers lack access to credit, technology, information, and government schemes. A key reason is land ownership. Most schemes, loans, and even water access depend on having land in one's name. When a woman's name is missing from land records, she is often left out of these benefits."

4.1.2 Ensure Women's Representation in Agricultural AI Governance

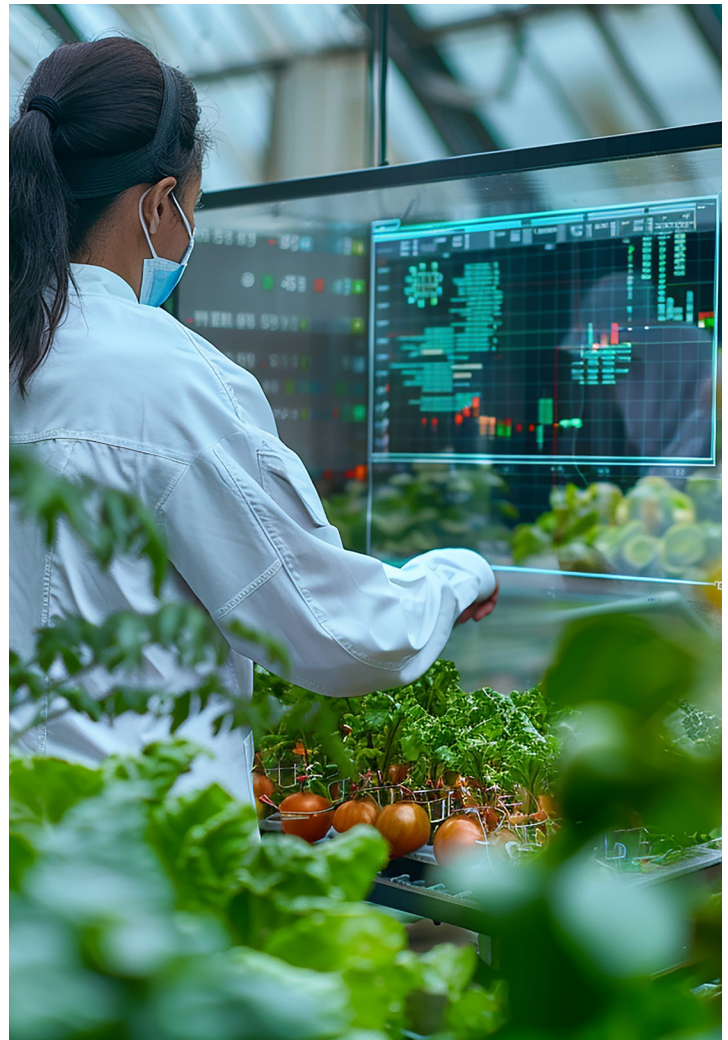
All agritech policy bodies and publicly funded agricultural AI projects should report the share of women in decision-making and governance roles, including experts from institutions such as ICAR institutes, state agricultural universities, civil society organizations, and independent researchers.

This reporting should establish a Year 1 baseline of women's representation, based on which institutions can adopt progressive targets to increase participation—such as reaching at least 20% representation by Year 3 and 30% by Year 5, supported through targeted recruitment, capacity-building, and institutional incentives.

4.1.3. Promote Women-Friendly Design in Government Agritech Procurement

Government procurement of agritech solutions should mandate voice-enabled interfaces in local languages (e.g., Hindi, Marathi, Telugu) as a baseline standard, mirroring the success of the NaMO Drone Didi program, where women farmers use voice-guided drones for crop spraying without needing advanced literacy. Procurement and evaluation frameworks should also include reporting on women-friendly design features, such as voice controls, simplified user interfaces, and offline accessibility, to ensure agritech tools remain accessible and usable for women farmers.

Additionally, provide tax incentives for agritech companies with >90% female employees, and procurement priority or certification for those with >90% women farmers as users, to encourage inclusive design and adoption at scale.



05

Plausible Intervention III : AI FOR ENHANCING FARMER INCOMES



India's agricultural transition is shifting from resource-intensive growth to intelligence-driven

paradigm of the Cognitive Revolution. At the heart of this transition lies a fundamental re-imagining of the farmer income equation. For decades, the primary objective of Indian agricultural policy was the achievement of national food security through the maximization of gross output.

The Minimum Support Price (MSP) system emerged as the cornerstone of this policy,

providing a critical income safety net for millions of farmers. However, as the sector faces escalating ecological stress, rising capital intensity, and stagnant net margins, the traditional volume-based model of procurement is revealing its limitations.

The path toward sustainable farmer prosperity now requires a shift from "more" to "better" a transition facilitated by the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI), precision technologies, and a scientific, quality-linked approach to price support.

The Green Revolution addressed food insecurity through input intensification, increasing the quantity of fertilizers, water, and seeds. While this model successfully boosted productivity, it created a volume-based procurement culture. Currently, the Minimum Support Price (MSP) system is a critical safety net, in the Kharif season 2023-24, government agencies procured over 525 LMT of paddy, benefiting 1.06 crore farmers [33].

However, structural gaps remain:

- **Limited Reach:** The MSP benefits only approximately 15% of paddy farmers and 9.6% of wheat farmers.
- **Volume vs. Quality:** The current model is volume-based and does not differentiate between varying crop qualities. This results in uniform pricing that discourages farmers from investing in high-quality seeds.

The Cognitive Revolution shifts the focus from “growing more” to “growing better.” By converting traditional heuristics into data-driven actions, AI narrows the gap between expected and realized outcomes. In economic terms, AI intervenes in the farmer income equation by acting as a decision optimizer and a margin protector, ensuring that “quality” becomes a measurable, bankable asset.

5.1 Four Income Levers Activated by AI Problem: Beyond MSP

5.1.1 Productivity Multiplier (Yield Per Acre)

AI increases productivity through optimized sowing windows, crop-stage advisories, pest prediction, and micro-climate irrigation plans. This leads to higher yields and reduced yield variability. As yield stability increases, it translates into a more reliable source of income.

Israel, despite having only 24.8% agricultural land, are a pioneer in agricultur-

al technology. The Israeli model justifies that AI-powered precision irrigation and wastewater recycling can sustain and grow a multi-billion-dollar export industry. AI-connected irrigation software in Israel allows farmers to grow “more crop per drop,” increasing yields by 15% to 30% while saving 20% to 40% in water usage [34].

In **Andhra Pradesh**, ICRISAT and Microsoft's AI-based sowing advisory program guided ~3,000 farmers on optimal sowing dates and soil-based fertilizer inputs, delivering yield increases of 10–30% across groundnut, maize, and rice [35].

5.1.2 Cost Compression (Input Efficiency)

Precision tools reduce the use of fertilizers, pesticides, water, and energy. For smallholders, lowering unnecessary input costs directly improves net income.

In Telangana (Khammam district), the WEF-backed Saagu Baagu project uses AI crop advisories to help chilli farmers reduce the use of pesticides and fertilizer by 9% and 5% without sacrificing yields [36].

5.1.3 Risk Mitigation (Income Volatility)

A farmer's income depends not just on produce but on the prices they get. AI tools for demand forecasting, price discovery, and quality grading help farmers align better with the market. When farmers receive early signals and have direct market linkages, their price realisation improves.

In **Karnataka** (Raichur district), organizations have deployed AI systems that combine soil sensors, drone imagery, and weather forecasts to provide daily farming-related advisories, shifting from an intuitive to predictive crop management and stabilizing seasonal income.

5.1.4 Price Realisation (The Quality-Linked MSP)

The most significant impact of AI lies in improving market alignment through AI-based Quality Linked MSP. To bridge the current gaps, the report recommends:

- **Automated Grading:** Moving away from traditional "eye-testing" by using AI-enabled computer vision and sensor-based grading at procurement centers.
- **Premium Incentives:** Linking MSP to digital quality scores, ensuring farmers get true market value for high-quality crops.
- **Case Study:** In Karnataka, Microsoft's AI-based price forecasting model predicted tur (red gram) prices three months in advance, helping farmers time their sales to capture the best farmgate prices.





Comparison of Grading Methodologies

Feature	Traditional Manual Grading	AI-Based Automated Grading
Speed	15–20 minutes per sample	30 seconds to 2 minutes
Accuracy	Subjective, prone to human error	>95% accuracy, objective
Transparency	Low, results are often untraceable	High, digital reports cloud-synced
Parameters	Visual only (size, color, damage)	Physical+Chemical (moisture, protein, oil)
Integrity	Prone to manual manipulation	Tamper-proof digital records
Labor Cost	High (requires trained personnel)	Low (automated sorting and analysis)

5.2 Recommendations around AI for Enhancing Farmer Incomes

5.2.1 Introduce AI-based Quality Linked MSP

The implementation of an AI-based Quality Linked MSP will represent a shift from subjective “eye-testing” to a scientific, data-driven procurement model. By deploying computer vision and sensor-based technologies at procurement centers, the government can objectively measure critical parameters like moisture content, grain size, protein levels, and foreign matter with high precision. This eliminates human bias and ensures that every lot of produce is assigned a transparent Digital Quality Score (DQS).

This system fundamentally transforms the farmer income equation by introducing “Quality Premiums” on top of the base MSP. When farmers receive a financial incentive for producing higher-grade crops, it encourages a market-wide transition toward superior farm practices and the use of high-quality, nutrient-dense seeds.

Under this framework, MSP procurement would be strictly structured around distinct quality grades to ensure that the highest standards are financially rewarded. In this tiered system, Grade 1 crops, defined by superior physical and chemical parameters such as high protein content, optimal moisture, and uniform grain size would command a significant premium price compared to Grade 2 and Grade 3.

By institutionalizing these price differentials at the point of procurement, the government creates a powerful market signal that prioritizes value over volume. This transparent, grade-based pricing not only ensures a fair return on investment for farmers utilizing advanced technologies but also establishes a competitive benchmark that elevates the overall quality and export potential of India's agricultural output.



Praveen
Farmer

“My name is Praveen. My father's name is Satbir. I came to Ganaur APMC to sell my mustard. After obtaining a gate pass, I used the MATT machine analyzer to check the moisture and damage levels of the mustard. The analysis showed that both the quality and moisture levels were good. This MATT machine is highly beneficial for all farmers.”

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