

From Pilots to Impact: Pre-AI Summit Pushes Scalable AI for Indian Agriculture

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MicroSave Consulting (MSC) convened a high-level pre-summit event in New Delhi focused on practical pathways to scale climate-resilient agriculture using artificial intelligence (AI) anchored in Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI). The discussion brought together policymakers, development partners, technology leaders, and practitioners to move from fragmented pilots to sustained public delivery at scale.



Srivalli Krishnan, Deputy Director, Agricultural Development, Gates Foundation; Kunjbihari Daga, Partner, Centre for Responsible Technologies, MSC and Gauri Bandekar, Advisor, Royal Norwegian Embassy

Mitul Thapliyal, Managing Partner, MicroSave Consulting, framed climate impacts as a seasonal reality for farmers and noted that farmers often recognise changing conditions without using the vocabulary of climate change, creating a translation gap that can limit uptake of climate-focused solutions.

Hemendra Mathur, Venture Partner, Bharat Innovation Fund and Co-founder, ThinkAg, emphasised that Indian agriculture is data-rich and highly complex, and that AI will deliver scale only if systems can connect across registries with compliant data sharing and privacy safeguards. **C. V. Madhukar, Chief Executive Officer, Co-Develop**, cautioned that not every pilot

merits scale, and that responsible adoption requires clear scale criteria, federated-first data governance that avoids both silos and risky centralisation, and trust safeguards across both technology and institutions.

Discussions on private-sector innovation highlighted that AI services must be built around farmer realities to be adopted and sustained. **Neeraj Huddar, Product Manager and GTM Lead, Digital Public Infrastructure, Google India**, emphasised that scalable AI needs shared digital rails with clear protocols, secure access, verifiable credentials, audit logs, and feedback and grievance pathways, with data quality and provenance as the most sensitive requirements. **Nidhi Bhasin, Chief Executive Officer, Digital Green Trust**, shared lessons from scaling voice-first farmer advisory, noting that adoption at scale depends on trust, localisation, and continuous feedback loops, especially for women farmers who face access barriers but sustain strong engagement once onboarded through trusted channels.

The conversation also focused on what it takes for states to move from digitisation to AI readiness. **Kirti Pandey, Country Engagement Partner, Centre for Open Societal Systems (COSS)**, noted that AI readiness requires advisory and market information to be published in consistent, machine-readable formats aligned to shared protocols, so services can be integrated on common rails rather than rebuilt state by state. **Jagadish Babu, Chief Operating Officer, EkStep Foundation**, emphasised that institutions are the trust anchors in public systems, and that APIs are institutional commitments, requiring AI layers to fit government workflows and accountability.

Navin Bhushan, Partner, MicroSave Consulting, reflected on implementation lessons from Bihar Krishi, including the importance of unifying farmer-facing services, strengthening system reliability as schemes evolve, and building institutional ownership and review mechanisms that sustain delivery beyond a single pilot cycle.

In the closing session on India and the Global South, **Srivalli Krishnan, Deputy Director, Agricultural Development (Asia), the Gates Foundation**, emphasised AI's potential to reduce information asymmetry for small and marginal farmers by enabling voice-based access, timelier advisories, and lower-cost service delivery. She also noted that reuse and replication depend on clear value for the next adopting state or institution and on breaking data silos across departments to enable integrated services.

Other participants included **Siddharth Chaturvedi**, Senior Program Officer, Agricultural Development (Asia), the Gates Foundation; **Jatin Singh**, Founder and Managing Director, Skymet Weather Services Pvt. Ltd.; **Poorna Pushkala Chandrasekaran**, Chief Executive Officer, Samunnati Foundation; **Gauri Bandekar**, Advisor, Royal Norwegian Embassy, New Delhi; **Vikash Kumar Sinha**, Associate Partner, Climate Change and Sustainability, MicroSave Consulting; **Kunbihari Daga**, Partner, Centre for Responsible Technologies, MicroSave Consulting; and **Rahul Agrawal**, Partner, Agriculture and Food Systems, MicroSave Consulting.

About MSC

[**MSC**](#) is a global inclusion consulting firm that works with governments, providers, and innovators to enable social,

financial, and economic inclusion for everyone in the digital age. Its local teams in 70+ countries bring practical expertise across finance, technology, agriculture, and social protection.

