



Grant Thornton

Impact assessment of Dairy Farmers Livelihood Programme

IndusInd Bank

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Background and introduction

- Established in 1994 by the late Mr. Srichand P. Hinduja and members of the Indian diaspora, IndusInd Bank has emerged as a trusted and inclusive financial institution serving individuals, businesses, public sector entities, and development partners across India.
- The Bank is committed to delivering a seamless, efficient, and technology-enabled customer experience while staying anchored in the principles of responsible and sustainable banking. Its operations are closely aligned with Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) frameworks, underscoring a long-term commitment to ethical conduct and social impact.
- Guided by its vision “to be trusted, valued and respected for our financial, environmental and social performance,” the Bank places inclusivity at the core of its initiatives. It actively champions equity by facilitating access and participation for underrepresented groups, particularly women, persons with disabilities, and economically marginalized communities.



About the study

Grant Thornton Bharat LLP (GTB) was engaged by IndusInd Bank to conduct impact assessment studies for its CSR Projects. The assessment was conducted in 2024.

The scope of work for the assignment included:

1. To assess the achievement of outcomes committed under the project MoU
2. To confirm the activity reports & utilization certificates provided to donors using available means of verifications.
3. To assess the project impacts and sustainability of benefits generated.
4. Document relevant success stories and challenges.

About the Project

- India, despite being a global leader in milk production, faces low milk yield per animal due to limited access to veterinary care, poor farm practices, and weak market linkages.
- To address this, the Social Action Foundation (SAF) launched the Dairy Farmer's Livelihood Programme in Punjab, aiming to uplift 15,000 small and marginal dairy farmers.
- Starting with a pilot in Rajpura, the initiative expanded to Sangrur, offering veterinary extension services, ICT tools via a mobile app, and improved market access.
- The programme focuses on reducing input costs and increasing farmer incomes through a holistic, tech-enabled, and community-driven approach.

Project Objectives



Enhance dairy productivity through improved cattle health, nutrition, and farm management practices.



Reduce input costs by 12–13% through efficient resource use and expert guidance.



Increase farmer income by 5–10% via better yield and market linkages.



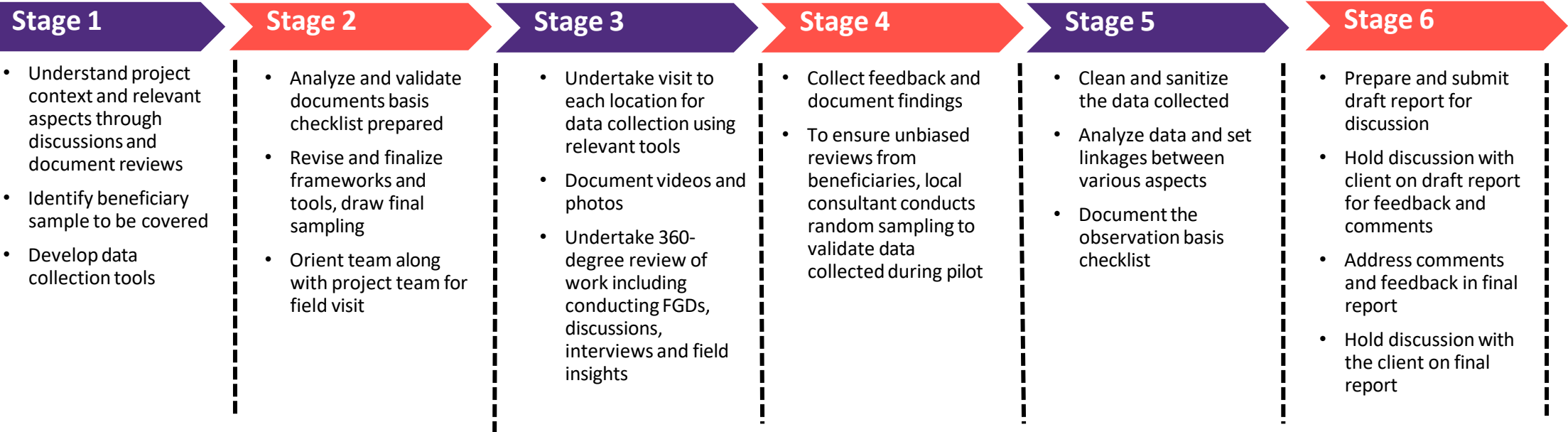
Digitise dairy farming using a mobile app for real-time updates, health tracking, and financial records.



Strengthen rural veterinary services by deploying trained Village-Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs) for on-ground support

Methodology

- The aim of the study was to assess the activities, outputs and impact of the projects through discussions with relevant stakeholders. The study also documented the stakeholder’s perception and feedback on the outcomes and impact of the project. Additionally, it also focused on capturing their suggestions for improvement.
- The study was conducted through a pre-defined approach to assess the outcome/ impact of the project on the beneficiaries. Mixed methodology was use for the study including both qualitative and quantitative techniques of data collection and analysis.
- The study followed the OECD-DAC indicators which helped understand the project holistically and focuses on six (06) key principles



Key findings

Relevance

The Dairy Farmer's Livelihood Programme design reflected a deep understanding of the sector's needs, **offering targeted solutions to improve productivity**, reduce input costs, and enhance income. The programme's comprehensive approach made it **highly relevant and impactful** for the communities it aimed to serve.

- Successful knowledge transfer of best dairy practices around veterinary nutrition and healthcare among 80% respondents.

- **Addressing Farming Challenges:** Improved cattle hygiene, feed, and management tackled key issues like low milk yield, high veterinary costs, and inconsistent quality. Practical solutions such as regular deworming, better feeding, and improved breeding techniques empowered farmers to enhance productivity.
- **Sustainable Growth Support:** The program provided veterinary care, expert visits, and ICT-based tools, ensuring farmers had timely access to professional advice and services. While digital adoption faced some challenges, it represented a modern approach to dairy farming.
- **Strengthening Market Linkages:** By improving access to reliable buyers and fair pricing, farmers could sell milk more efficiently, increase income, and reduce reliance on middlemen, leading to greater economic stability.

Effectiveness



Dairy farmer with his cattle

The Dairy Farmer's Livelihood Programme **proved effective in improving both the knowledge and economic conditions** of participating farmers.

Improved Knowledge and Farm Practices: The programme significantly enhanced farmers' understanding of best practices in cattle management and healthcare. Most respondents reported adopting improved methods such as regular deworming, better record-keeping, veterinary consultations, and artificial insemination. These changes contributed to better overall farm management and livestock health.

Over 70% highlighted major reduction in veterinary care, medical expenses during the intervention period.

Economic and Productivity Gains: Farmers experienced an average monthly income increase of ₹2,500–3,000, alongside a rise in milk yield by 1–3 litres per milking cycle. The quality of milk also improved, particularly in terms of Solid-Not-Fat (SNF) and fat content. Additionally, free veterinary services during the programme helped farmers save ₹500–1,000 per visit, further boosting their financial well-being.

Efficiency

Harpal Singh, 44 years, Village Kanjili

"I didn't know much about nutrition before, but the vet shared valuable information about deworming, vaccinations, and new high-yielding breeds. He recommended adding chuna powder and a mineral mixture to the feed. I learned about the major vaccinations that should be administered to the cattle. As a result, the quality of FAT and SNF improved, and milk production increased by 1-2 litres."

The programme demonstrated **strong execution** and meaningful behavioural outcomes. It effectively delivered **timely support** while encouraging the adoption of **improved dairy farming practices**

- **Efficient Implementation:** The program was executed in a timely and well-coordinated manner, ensuring farmers received benefits without delays or disruptions.
- Strong collaboration between field extension workers and veterinary experts enabled the seamless delivery of veterinary care, training sessions, and digital support, fostering trust within the farming community.

An average monthly income increase of Rs. 2,500-3,000 for about 40-50% respondents, demonstrating positive economic outcomes.

- **Knowledge Gains & Behavioral Change:** Farmers significantly improved their knowledge and adopted better cattle management practices, including regular deworming, maintaining health records, and seeking timely veterinary care.
- By enhancing technical know-how and decision-making, the initiative contributed to long-term improvements in livestock health and productivity.

Coherence

By aligning with **national policies, local needs, and global sustainability goals**, the program ensures **scalability, long-term impact, and sector-wide improvements** in dairy farming.

The Dairy Farmer's Livelihood Program demonstrates strong internal and external coherence with **national priorities and sectoral strategies** in India's dairy development landscape

- **Integrated Approach:** The program combines **veterinary services, ICT solutions, and market linkages, ensuring synergy to improve dairy farmers' livelihoods**. Its pilot-to-scale model, expanding from Rajpura to Sangrur, reflects a strategic, adaptive implementation.
- **Alignment with National Priorities:** The initiative complements **Rashtriya Gokul Mission and National Dairy Plan**, reducing input costs and increasing farmer income while addressing gaps in veterinary care and digital access.
- **Public Health & Sustainability:** Emphasis on clean milk production, cattle health, and digital record-keeping supports food safety, environmental sustainability, and better farm management. **Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs) foster community ownership** and local engagement.
- **SDG Alignment:** The program advances **SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), and SDG 8 (Decent Work & Economic Growth)** by improving milk productivity and farmer income. It also supports **SDG 3 (Health), SDG 9 (Innovation), and SDG 12 (Sustainable Production)** through veterinary care and responsible farming practices.

Impact

70% noted a positive impact on their cattle's overall health after implementing the program's recommended best practices.



Dairy farm in Sangrur

The Dairy Farmer's Livelihood Programme brought about a **multi-dimensional impact** on the lives of small and marginal dairy farmers, addressing both **economic and operational challenges** in dairy farming.

- **Knowledge & Adoption of Best Practices:** The program significantly improved cattle management and healthcare, leading to fewer infections and mastitis cases and enhancing milk quality, particularly SNF levels. Farmers adopted regular deworming, record-keeping, and veterinary consultations, strengthening overall farm management.
- **Economic Benefits:** Farmers reported an income increase of Rs. 2,500–3,000 per month, attributed to better feeding, regular health check-ups, improved breeding, and hygiene practices. These measures boosted milk yield and quality, reducing disease prevalence and enhancing productivity.
- **Reduction in Veterinary Expenses:** With free veterinary care and medicines, farmers eliminated veterinary costs, leading to significant financial savings and improved economic stability.
- **Improvement in Milk Yield:** Adoption of best practices resulted in an increase of 1–3 litres per milking cycle, directly enhancing income and farm sustainability. Veterinary support, expert visits, and ICT solutions played a key role in achieving these improvements.
- **Overall Impact:** The program strengthened farmers' earnings, milk yield, and operational efficiency, demonstrating its effectiveness in improving both economic and agricultural outcomes in dairy farming.

Sustainability

Beneficiaries, Rampura Village

"We gained knowledge and learned better dairy farming practices, which was a significant benefit. The doctor used to visit once a month, and sometimes once a week when needed. Deworming and vaccinations were happening regularly because of his visits. We are continuing with a few practices, such as deworming. Nowadays, we consult private vets who charge Rs 150-200 per visit, plus extra for medications. Additionally, we gained information about new breeds like Mura, Neeli Rabi, Jersey, and Sahiwal."

The project ensures **long-term sustainability** by integrating **community engagement, digital tools, and best practices**, fostering **self-reliance and continued impact** among dairy farmers.

- **Enhancing Productivity & Income:** The program combined veterinary support, digital tools, and knowledge dissemination to improve farm-level decision-making and promote sustainable cattle management.
- **Adoption of Best Practices:** Farmers actively implemented regular deworming, hygiene maintenance, and timely veterinary care, demonstrating strong engagement and behavioral shifts that **improved livestock health and productivity**.
- **Digital Tools & SBC Approach:** While the mobile application provided real-time information and record-keeping, adoption was limited by digital literacy gaps, highlighting the need for inclusive digital training. **Embedding Social Behavior Change (SBC) strategies** can further strengthen adoption and long-term impact by addressing attitudes, beliefs, and social norms.

SROI Analysis

- Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis helps to measure and account for change, with respect to social, economical & environmental outcomes that are relevant to the stakeholders
- It enables a ratio analysis of benefits to costs incurred, making it easier for an organization to communicate the overall value of their projects to external stakeholders
- To establish the impact, the cumulative monetized value of impacts was adjusted against the deadweight, displacement, attribution and drop-off factor

SROI result	
Total Investment	INR 1,28,25,504
SROI Ratio	1.37

Recommendations

For further improvement, Indus Ind Bank may consider the following recommendations to make the programme more efficient:

- **Integrating Social Behavioural Change (SBC) Components:** It was observed that there are barriers to information adoption and practice. This affects the programme's ability to achieve its intended impact. Therefore, for future programmes, Indus Ind Bank may consider integrating social behavioural change (SBC) components to understand and evaluate these barriers and devise sustainable solutions to minimize project gaps and enhance the overall impact.
- **Implementing a Robust Monitoring System:** It was noted that there was a systemic issue with regards to the lack of regular monitoring of the programme. This impacts the programme implementation as well as the sustainability of the program. Therefore, for future programmes, Indus Ind Bank may consider putting in place a robust monitoring system to ensure project KPIs are on track and beneficiaries are able to receive due benefits.
- **Defining Clear Project KPIs and Outcomes:** It was observed that the programme's core objectives and implementation need clearer definitions of project KPIs and outcomes. This affects the programme's ability to maximize its envisioned impact. Therefore, for future programs, Indus Ind Bank may consider defining clear project KPIs and outcomes to ensure that the programme continues to meet its goals effectively.

Thank You.