DESIGN IMPACT AWARDS

TITAN COMPANY

A Social Initiative by Titan

IMPACT EVALUATION REPORT

TITAN DESIGN IMPACT AWARDS 2.0

2024-2025

Deloitte.

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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Form / Description
AIM	Atal Innovation Mission
AMRUT	Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation
ASCII	Association of Small-Scale Industries
BIRAC	Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council
BWSSB	Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board
CA	Chartered Accountant
COP26	26th United Nations Climate Change Conference
CRS	Catheter Reprocessing System
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DI Awards	Design Impact Awards
DI Awards 1.0	Design Impact Awards – First Edition
DI Awards 2.0	Design Impact Awards – Second Edition (Water-focused)
DI Movement	Design Impact Movement
EIR	Entrepreneur-in-Residence
FPC	Finite Population Correction
FY	Financial Year
HCD	Human-Centred Design
IDI	In-Depth Interview
IIMCIP	IIM Calcutta Innovation Park
IKP	IKP Knowledge Park
INR	Indian Rupees
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
MVP	Minimum Viable Product
NABARD	National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
NEST	National Entrepreneurship Program for Social Transformation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIF	National Innovation Foundation
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
PE	Private Equity
SDG / SDGs	Sustainable Development Goal(s)
SEBI	Securities and Exchange Board of India
SSE	Social Stock Exchange
TRL	Technology Readiness Levels
ULB	Urban Local Body
WRI	World Resources Institute

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Executive Summary

Executive Summary

The Design Impact Awards 2.0 (DI Awards 2.0) is a flagship social innovation initiative of Titan Company Limited, designed to support market-ready, design-led enterprises in scaling solutions that address complex social and environmental challenges. The second edition of the Awards, launched in 2024, is thematically focused on water to reflect the urgency of water scarcity and challenges across India. Through a combination of grant support, structured incubation, and pilot-based implementation, DI Awards 2.0 aims to strengthen the execution capabilities of early-stage social enterprises and translate validated innovations into measurable on-ground impact.

The impact assessment of the DI Awards 2.0 was guided by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development- Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) evaluation framework, examining relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability across the programme. The assessment covered the implementation year 2024–25 and was designed to evaluate whether programme activities were delivered as planned alongside the extent to which they addressed identified gaps, progression, and generated meaningful outcomes. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative in-depth interviews (IDIs) and key informant interviews (KII) involving participants, grantees, implementation partners, and ecosystem actors. Programme documentation, financial records, annual reports, and secondary literature were used to triangulate primary findings.

DI Awards 2.0 findings were based on interactions with the 6 shortlisted business teams, revealing strong performance across relevance, effectiveness, and impact. The programme was well aligned with sector specific needs in the water domain. It addressed gaps related to pilot financing, impact measurement, operational execution, and engagement with municipal systems. Coherence with Titan's design led sustainability ethos was strong, while alignment with national water priorities was limited and grantee dependent rather than formally institutionalised as part of the incubation programme. Effectiveness was reflected in the completion of pilots, product refinements, and milestones, notwithstanding contextual disruptions such as administrative delays, climatic variability, and site readiness. Efficiency of resource use was high, with full utilisation of grants for pilot and operational activities, though some procedural delays and audit requirements affected disbursement timelines and required enterprises to bridge costs using internal resources. Impact was observable at multiple levels, including measurable water savings, improved service efficiency, strengthened business models, and enhanced credibility with government stakeholders. Sustainability prospects were supported by enterprise ownership, market demand, and follow-on engagements; however, long-term continuation remains contingent on access to procurement pathways, capital, and government uptake beyond the programme period.

Moving forward, the DI Awards 2.0 should prioritise readiness and operational rigour, sound financial and audit processes, structured post-programme support in the form of a platform strategy, and initiate the positioning of pilots as credible models for wider replication. These recommendations are elaborated upon in both the cross-cutting and case-based recommendations section.

Table 1: DI Awards 2.0 Findings: Summary

Programme	Evaluation findings	Recommendations
Design Impact Awards 2.0	**Relevance:** DI Awards 2.0 was relevant in intent and design, addressing key gaps for early-stage water enterprises, but relevance varied in practice due to contextual and operational constraints such as municipal readiness and environmental conditions.	Conduct pre-pilot readiness assessments and provide structured orientation on government processes to improve contextual fit and anticipate implementation bottlenecks.
	Coherence: The programme aligned with national water sustainability priorities and Titan's ethos, but coherence depended largely on partner execution rather than formalised ecosystem integration.	Create lightweight coordination pathways with selected government schemes or research institutions and identify two or three post-programme ecosystem partners for clearer integration.
	Effectiveness: DI Awards 2.0 delivered tangible outputs including pilots, products and impact frameworks, but effectiveness varied due to field conditions, infrastructure readiness and administrative dependencies.	Introduce problem-specific implementation playbooks, especially in the administrative set up.
	Efficiency: Resources were fully utilised, but financial processes and delivery pacing were uneven due to audits, verifications and contextual delays.	Streamline financial verification and audit processes by consolidating documentation requirements and reducing duplication across review stages.
	Impact: The programme generated measurable product, operational and market-level impacts, though long-term outcomes depended on post-pilot uptake and follow-on decisions.	Develop standardized pilot impact case studies and encourage systematic documentation to support replication, policy engagement and investor discussions.

The Impact Assessment also revealed the value of early business continuity planning to strengthen long-term impact of grant supported initiatives, particularly those implemented with ULBs or through pilot-based models. Product focused and replicable investments showed relatively stronger prospects for sustained use and scale, while ULB focused engagements would benefit from clearer pathways for post pilot adoption. Going forward, a structured, risk-aligned continuity approach combined with longer-term engagement and ecosystem partnerships, can further enhance outcomes and support a gradual transition toward a platform led model for sustainable solutions.

Section 1: Introduction

1. Introduction

1.1 Current status of Social Entrepreneurship in India

The following section situates social entrepreneurship within India's evolving development landscape to assess both- its growth and institutional support alongside the conditions under which it translates from intent and innovation into sustained social impact.

As home to the largest concentration of social enterprises globally, India provides a critical context for examining how socially oriented ventures interact with state welfare provision, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and evolving market institutions. The rapid growth of the social sector alongside shifts in public expenditure, CSR engagement, and private philanthropy, highlights the importance of situating social entrepreneurship within India's broader political economy of development.[1] Social enterprises in India have not only sought to improve the functioning of markets serving low-income and marginalised populations, but in several cases have contributed to the creation of entirely new market spaces. Examples such as microfinance, low-cost healthcare delivery models, decentralised renewable energy solutions, and fair-trade agricultural supply chains illustrate how social entrepreneurship has redefined both economic participation and the means through which social value is generated.[2]

The resonance of social entrepreneurship in India is closely associated to the country's long-standing traditions of social reform, cooperative movements, and community-based action. However, until the late 1990s, the concept remained marginal in academic and policy discourse. Since then, the expansion of scholarship has mirrored the growth of social entrepreneurship which, in turn, has been shaped by economic liberalisation, the recalibration of the welfare state, and the rise of new financing mechanisms (CSR funding, impact investment, etc.). The field remains conceptually diverse, reflecting India's heterogeneity across regions, sectors, and socio-political contexts.

Defining social entrepreneurship in the Indian context therefore presents analytical challenges. The term is used to describe a wide spectrum of organisational forms and motivations, ranging from individual-led ventures driven by change agents to collective, membership-based organisations rooted in community ownership. In practice, Indian social entrepreneurship spans a continuum that includes mission-driven for-profit firms, cooperatives, producer companies, and non-profit organisations that adopt market mechanisms to sustain social objectives. This diversity reflects the coexistence of multiple institutional logics: civil society's emphasis on empowerment and equity, the state's focus on service delivery and development outcomes, and the private sector's growing interest in inclusive markets and measurable impact.[3]

Notwithstanding this diversity, Indian scholarship converges on several core characteristics of social entrepreneurship. First, the pursuit of social or environmental goals is prioritised over profit maximisation, even where commercial activity is central to the business model. Second, innovation is a defining feature, whether expressed through new products and services, novel organisational arrangements, or alternative framings of entrenched social problems such as poverty, gender inequality, or access to basic services. Third, social enterprises frequently employ market-oriented strategies,

[1] Unlocking India's strength in social entrepreneurship | Hindustan Times
[2] https://orbi.uliege.be/bitstream/2268/99644/1/Huybrechts%20Nicholls%20social%20entrepreneurship%20book%20chapter.pdf
[3] (PDF) The Rise of Social Enterprises in India: Opportunities and Challenges

including cross-subsidisation, partnerships with the state or private sector, and scaling through replication, to extend impact beyond localised interventions.[4]

At the same time, the visibility of social entrepreneurship has prompted debate over whether it represents a transformative pathway for social change or an unevenly realised approach. Some frameworks emphasise the potential of social enterprise to correct structural inequities by creating new equilibria. On the other hand, empirical studies acknowledge the conditional nature of such outcomes. This is because progression from problem identification to sustained impact does not singularly depend on entrepreneurial intent, rather, also on institutional support, ecosystem coherence, and participants' capacity to navigate uncertainty, resource constraints, and expectation mismatches. This tension suggests that social entrepreneurship functions less as a guaranteed "game-changer" and more as a context-dependent process. [5]

1.2 Existing Policy and Initiatives to Enable Social Entrepreneurship

India does not operate a single, unified "social entrepreneurship policy". Instead, support has emerged indirectly through a combination of entrepreneurship promotion, innovation, finance, CSR, and development programmes. These can be grouped into the following categories:

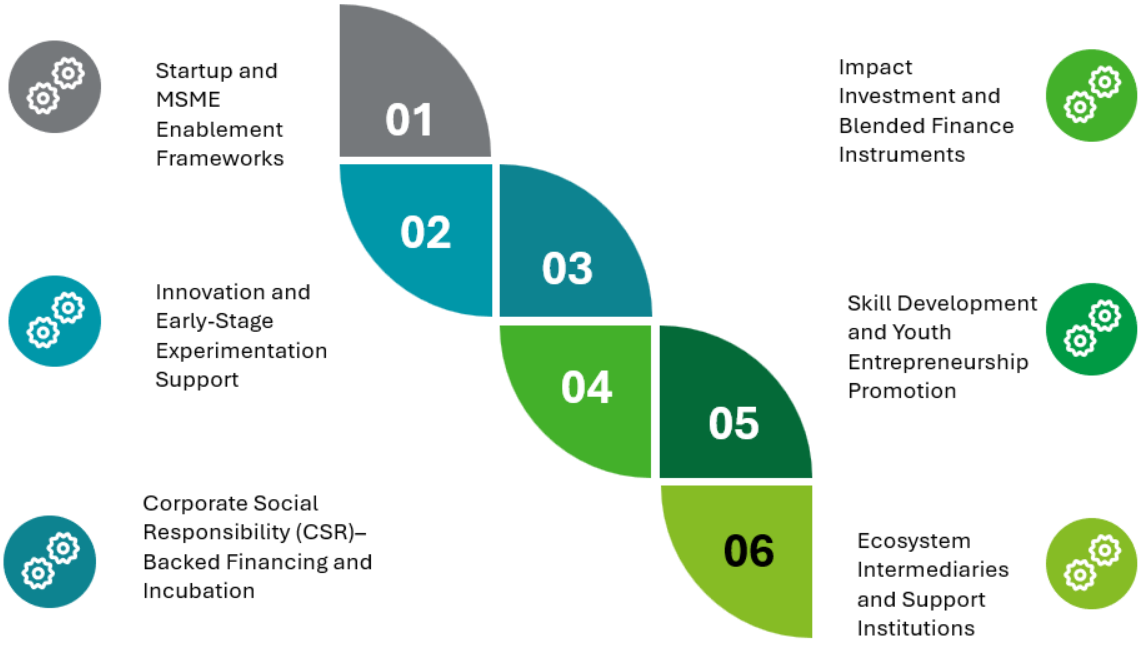


Figure 1: Existing Policies and Initiatives - Social Entrepreneurship

Government and quasi-governmental support for social entrepreneurship in India is delivered through a diverse set of policies, schemes, and institutional initiatives rather than a single, dedicated framework. These interventions describe functional support that collectively shape how social enterprises enter, experiment within, and navigate India's development ecosystem. The table below summarises the key policy categories, associated flagship initiatives, and the primary forms of support they provide for entrepreneurship:

[4] Ibid

[5] https://www.wipo.int/documents/d/global-innovation-index/docs-en-2024-gii-2024-contributors-sruthi-kannan-srinivas-ramanujam.pdf

Table 2: List of Policies/Schemes for Entrepreneurship

S. No.	Sub-Theme	Policies/Schemes	Description
1.	Entrepreneurship and Startup Promotion Policies	Startup India Initiative	The Startup India Initiative is a government program launched in 2016 that supports entrepreneurs and startups in India. The goal of the initiative is to create a strong ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship that will drive economic growth and employment by supporting startups through measures such as tax benefits, easier compliance, and access to funding.
		Stand-up India Scheme	Stand-Up India focuses on expanding entrepreneurship among women and Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities by facilitating bank credit for greenfield enterprises. The scheme is relevant for inclusive and community-oriented social enterprises seeking to address inequities through enterprise creation.
2.	Innovation and Grassroots Enterprise Initiatives	Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)	AIM, launched in 2016, under NITI Aayog is India's flagship initiative that promotes innovation through Atal Tinkering Labs in schools and Atal Incubation Centres in higher education and innovation hubs. The initiative supports early-stage experimentation and solution development in areas such as healthcare, education, agriculture, and sustainability.
		National Innovation Foundation (NIF)	NIF is India's national initiative to strengthen the grassroots technological innovations and outstanding traditional knowledge. Its mission is to help India become a creative and knowledge-based society by expanding policy and institutional space for grassroots technological innovators. NIF scouts, supports and spawns' grassroots innovations developed by individuals and local communities in any technological field, helping in human survival without any help from formal sector.
		Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC)	BIRAC provides grants, incubation, and mentoring for biotechnology and health innovations with social relevance. It supports early validation of solutions addressing public health and development challenges.

S. No.	Sub-Theme	Policies/Schemes	Description
3.	Skill Development and Entrepreneurship	National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship	This policy promotes entrepreneurial skills, self-employment, and enterprise readiness, particularly among youth and marginalised populations. It indirectly supports social entrepreneurship by strengthening foundational capabilities.

Together, the landscape reflects a system that enables entry, experimentation, and capability development, but less consistent in supporting long-term enterprise progression and sustainability. Most initiatives operate indirectly and treat social enterprises as subsets of startups, innovators, or beneficiaries rather than as a distinct category with dual social and financial objectives. As a result, while the ecosystem offers multiple access points, support remains fragmented across lifecycle stages, creating gaps that intermediary and programme-level interventions are often required to bridge.

1.3 Challenges to Social Entrepreneurship

Despite the heightened growth of social entrepreneurship in India, evidence indicates that the sector continues to face specific challenges which constrain the ability of social enterprises to move beyond early experimentation and generate sustained, scalable social impact. Existing literature consistently highlights fragmentation across policy frameworks, uneven access to finance, weak progression pathways, market constraints, and capacity gaps as key limiting factors shaping outcomes for social enterprises in India.

Fragmented legal and policy frameworks

A challenge for social entrepreneurship in India is the absence of a single legal identity or policy framework for social enterprises. Social ventures operate under diverse organisational forms, including for-profit companies, non-profits, cooperatives, producer companies, and trusts, each governed by different regulatory requirements. While this flexibility enables innovation, it also increases compliance complexity and uncertainty, particularly for hybrid enterprises seeking to balance commercial revenue with social objectives. Policy instruments such as Startup India, MSME schemes, and innovation missions largely treat social enterprises as generic businesses or innovators, offering limited recognition of their distinct social value propositions. [6]

Uneven access to finance across the enterprise lifecycle

Access to appropriate finance remains one of the most frequently cited barriers facing social enterprises in India. Ecosystem studies show that early-stage social ventures often rely on grants, CSR funding, and prize-based competitions, which are typically short-term and project-linked. At later stages, impact investment and blended finance mechanisms prioritise enterprises that demonstrate commercial viability and scale potential, leaving a "missing middle" of ventures that are too mature for grants but

[6] Policy Ecosystem of Social Entrepreneurship for Sustainable and Resilient Development: A Doctrinal Review | Springer Nature Link

insufficiently de-risked for investment capital. This financing gap is particularly pronounced for youth-led and community-embedded enterprises.[7]

Weak pathways from innovation to enterprise sustainability

India has developed strong capabilities in supporting ideation, prototyping, and proof-of-concept development through innovation missions and grassroots initiatives. However, multiple studies note that mechanisms for supporting enterprise consolidation, operational maturity, and long-term sustainability are comparatively underdeveloped. As a result, a large proportion of social enterprises remain small in scale, geographically concentrated, or dependent on continued external support rather than market revenues. The emphasis on innovation over execution has led to a proliferation of pilots without corresponding pathways for mainstream adoption or institutionalisation.

Market access and demand-side constraints

Social enterprises in India frequently operate in markets characterised by low purchasing power, high price sensitivity, and limited consumer awareness. Even where solutions demonstrate social value, enterprises face challenges in achieving adoption at scale due to behavioural barriers, fragmented value chains, and weak integration with public service delivery systems. Limited access to government procurement and formal markets further restricts opportunities for growth, particularly for enterprises operating in rural, peri-urban, and informal contexts.

Human capital and enterprise readiness gaps

Although entrepreneurship education and skill development initiatives have expanded across India, studies highlight persistent gaps in enterprise readiness among social entrepreneurs. These include limited access to experienced leadership, operational talent, and sector-specific expertise, especially outside major urban hubs. Many early-stage support programmes emphasise ideation and motivation but provide insufficient support for execution, governance, and organisational development. This affects enterprise resilience and contributes to high rates of stagnation or attrition beyond initial stages.

Measurement, credibility, and ecosystem trust

Measuring social impact remains a challenge across the sector, with no universally adopted frameworks or metrics. This complicates engagement with investors, CSR funders, and policymakers, and limits comparability across enterprises. The Global Innovation Index notes that social entrepreneurship outcomes are often difficult to aggregate or evaluate due to inconsistent reporting standards and variable data quality. In some cases, unmet expectations around funding, recognition, or progression pathways have also been observed to undermine trust in ecosystem actors and programmes, particularly among early-stage participants.

Collectively, the literature suggests that India's social entrepreneurship ecosystem is characterised by strong entry points and experimentation capacity, but relatively weaker progression pathways. While policy and institutional mechanisms enable ideation and early engagement, they do not consistently support enterprises through consolidation, scale, and long-term sustainability. Addressing these challenges requires interventions that integrate capability building, expectation management, and

[7] The Role of Social Entrepreneurship in Addressing Global Social Challenges | Journal of Law and Sustainable Development

ecosystem linkage, particularly for youth-led and early-stage social enterprises operating at the margins of existing policy frameworks.

1.4 Titan CSR Programme

As part of the Tata Group, Titan Company Limited has historically articulated CSR as integral to its organisational purpose and mode of doing business. Incorporated in 1984 as a joint venture between the Tata Group and TIDCO, Titan has consistently positioned itself as a values-driven organisation, seeking not only to deliver lifestyle products but also to contribute meaningfully to the quality of life of the communities it engages with. This orientation is reflected in the way the company has redefined practices across its industries - spanning manufacturing, service delivery, workforce relations, and customer engagement.

Titan's CSR philosophy is anchored in the company's vision statement:

"We create elevating experiences for the people we touch and significantly impact the world we work in."[8]

Titan's CSR approach is centred on the objective of contributing to long-term and inclusive social impact which recognises community-wellbeing as integral to business success. It conceptualises social impact as multi-dimensional- envisioned to materialise through multiple and interconnected channels instead of a single intervention pathway.

Within this framework, Titan's CSR engagement is guided by a strong sense of reciprocity and responsibility towards the social ecosystems that intersect with its operations and value chains. As a pan-India organisation, its approach balances responsiveness to community-specific and locally relevant priorities with support for causes of national importance.[9]

Titan's Focus Areas and Flagship Programmes

Titan's CSR strategy is implemented through a set of thematic areas focusing on education, skilling and livelihoods, cultural heritage, responsible citizenship, inclusion, and design-led social innovation. Together, these themes reflect a long-term and integrated approach to social impact - combining programme delivery with capacity-building and ecosystem-oriented interventions across the company's pan-India footprint.

Across these themes, Titan's CSR portfolio prioritises outcomes such as educational access and continuity, employability and income generation, preservation of traditional knowledge systems, community well-being, and the inclusion of socio-historically marginalised groups. Programmes are designed to operate at multiple levels: individual, community, and institutional.

Within this portfolio, the Design Impact Initiative occupies a distinct position by leveraging design as a catalyst for social innovation and systems-level change. The following overview outlines Titan's CSR

[8] Titan Company Limited. (2023). *CSR policy*. https://www.titancompany.in/sites/default/files/2023-07/CSR-Policy-Titan_2.pdf
[9] Titan Company Limited. (2025). *Annual report 2024–25*. https://www.titancompany.in/sites/default/files/2025-06/Titan%20AR%202024-25%20AR.pdf

themes and flagship programmes to situate the Design Impact Movement (DI Movement) and DI Awards within the broader CSR architecture.[10]

Table 3: Titan's Flagship CSR Projects

S. No.	Theme	Focus	Flagship Programmes	Outcomes
1.	Education (Special Focus on Girl Child)	Equitable access to quality education and learning continuity for underprivileged children, with a focus on the girl child	Titan Kanya, Kanya Sampoorna, Science Experiential Learning, Titan Scholarship	Enhanced educational access and continuity; improved learning outcomes and functional literacy; strengthened life skills and educational preparedness among disadvantaged learners
2.	Skilling and Placement of Less Privileged Youth	Market-aligned skill development, employability, and livelihood enhancement for marginalised youth	Skill Development for Employment, Employability for People with Disabilities, Livelihood & Entrepreneurship	Improved employability and income-generation opportunities; strengthened vocational, life, and behavioural skills; increased participation of underrepresented groups in sustainable livelihood pathways.
3.	Support for Indian Arts, Crafts and Heritage	Strengthening artisan livelihoods and preserving traditional crafts through market access, skill enhancement, and enterprise-led value chain development.	Project Tarasha, Project Kashika, Project Antran	Improved income security and market linkages for artisans; sustainability and visibility of traditional craft practices; increased participation of women and marginalised groups in such livelihoods.
4.	Design Impact Initiative	Design-led social innovation aimed at addressing complex social and environmental challenges through ecosystem building, product innovation, and systems-oriented solutions.	DI Movement, DI Awards	Development and scaling of socially impactful design solutions; strengthened social design ecosystem; measurable social and environmental benefits generated through design interventions.
5.	Responsible Citizenship	Community well-being, public health, disaster response, and civic engagement through place-based interventions and employee volunteering.	Happy Eyes, Neighbourhood Initiative, Integrated Village Development, Watershed Programme, Titan Footprints	Improved access to health and essential services; enhanced community resilience during crises; strengthened local infrastructure and sustained civic participation.
6.	Affirmative Action	Promoting inclusion of underprivileged and tribal	Education for Children, Tribal	Improved access to educational and training opportunities; strengthened learning and

[10] Titan Company Limited. (n.d.). *Sustainability*. Retrieved February 16, 2026, from https://www.titancompany.in/sustainability

S. No.	Theme	Focus	Flagship Programmes	Outcomes
		communities through targeted support for education, vocational training, and institutional capacity building	Scholarships, Tribal ITI Support, Teacher Training	employability pathways for marginalised groups

Within this portfolio, the Design Impact Initiative represents a distinct stream of engagement centred on design-led approaches to addressing social and environmental challenges. Unlike interventions focused on direct service delivery or livelihoods, the DI Awards and DI Movement operate through ecosystem building, innovation, and the development of scalable design solutions. The Impact Assessment covered in this report is scoped to DI Awards 2.0, and the subsequent sections examine this initiative in detail.

Design Impact Initiative is a flagship initiative of Titan Company Limited that celebrates design as a core organisational strength, recognising its potential to create purposeful futures and sustainable value. The initiative focuses on the transformative power of design to address real-world challenges, encouraging new-generation innovators to apply their skills to issues facing Indian society and the planet. It comprises 2 programmes: DI Movement Programme, and the DI Awards Programme. Both streams together illustrate Titan's layered approach: a wide-reaching movement to cultivate social impact designers, complemented by a competitive awards track that accelerates a few highly mature solutions.

Section 2: Background of Titan Design Impact Initiative

2. Background of Titan Design Impact Awards

2.1 Programme Overview

Figure 2: Titan DI Awards: Projects

The DI Awards by Titan is a social initiative that supports social innovators developing design-led solutions to address critical social and environmental challenges. The programme focuses on design for social good, with an emphasis on solutions that contribute to sustainability, improve quality of life, and respond to the needs of underserved and marginalised communities. DI Awards is positioned as a platform to enable scalable impact by supporting innovations that are grounded in real-world contexts and capable of operating at scale.

The awards are designed to identify and support market-ready or solutions that demonstrate clear social impact. Eligible solutions may take the form of products or services. The second edition of DI Awards was anchored around a specific theme. In the current cycle, the focus is on water- recognising its centrality to environmental sustainability, public health, and social equity. Solutions are required to demonstrate relevance to the chosen theme and a clearly articulated pathway to impact.

Under the latest edition, DI Awards 2.0, selected innovators are supported through a structured engagement model spanning two phases. This includes financial support, access to advocacy and stakeholder networks, and rigorous mentorship aimed at strengthening implementation readiness, refining impact pathways, and enabling scale. The programme places emphasis not only on innovation, but also on feasibility, sustainability, and long-term adoption across communities. To be eligible, solutions must meet defined qualification criteria: they must be designed to deliver measurable social impact, have been prototyped, tested, and validated, and be ready for market deployment or already operational. The first edition of the DI Awards established the programme's foundational framework, while the second edition, launched in 2024, builds on this by strengthening its thematic focus, scale ambition, and support mechanisms.[11]

[11] Titan Company Limited. (n.d.). *Design Impact Awards*. https://designimpactawards.titan.in/

Key Objectives of DI Awards

DI Awards is a program that identifies, celebrates and supports innovative designs that cause social change.

- Create impact by identifying innovations and supporting them to scale up their reach across the country
- Create a unique, best-in-class innovation challenge program, which is transparent, engaging & inclusive with meaningful experiences for all participants
- Leverage and integrate collaborations[12]

DI Awards 1.0

The first edition of DI Awards (DI Awards EDITION 1) supported design solutions in various sectors and was theme-agnostic. Winners received Grants of ₹65 Lakhs in tranches as per milestones with a total of 7 grants executed. The major milestones covered by DI Awards 1.0 in terms of social impact are as follows:

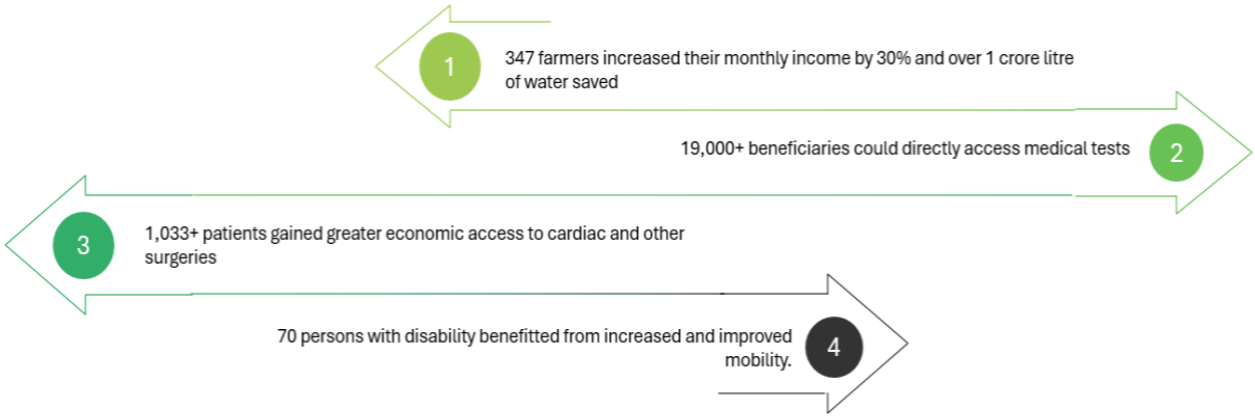


Figure 3: DI Awards 1.0 Milestones

Below is a sectoral-specific overview of the innovative products that helped scale impact. These innovative products and solutions were selected from over 540 applications:

Table 4: DI Awards 1.0 Products/Services

S. No.	Sector	Winners	Description
1.	Healthcare	AnuPath USense	PathShodh Healthcare developed anuPath as the world's first Lab-on-Plam for diabetes, anaemia, malnutrition, liver diseases, and Covid-19 antibody – incubated at IISc Bengaluru

[12] According to the report titled *Design Impact Awards - Intro Deck* shared by Titan

S. No.	Sector	Winners	Description
		CRS	USense is an innovative diagnostic tool, designed as a credit-card size test to detect Uropathogens that cause most Urinary Tract Infections Catheter Reprocessing System (CRS) is a product that bypasses the need to manually clean catheters.
2.	Water and Sanitation	Zerodor	Zerodor Waterless Urinals is developed by Ekam in conjunction with IIT Delhi.
		NanoSolutions	NanoSolutions is a product that uses nanotechnology-based treatment to convert wastewater and textile effluents to potable water
3.	Agriculture	Khyeti – Greenhouse in a box	Affordable ready-to-assemble greenhouse kit that protects crops from climate risks as well as increases food growth by 7x using 90% less water
4.	Assistive Technology	Neomotion	NeoFly, developed by NeoMotion, is India's first wheelchair made for customisable use for increased comfort, mobility, and ergonomics. It specialises in customisations – countering the one-size-fits-all wheelchair market

DI Awards 2.0

DI Awards 2.0 edition, is a 3-year social initiative by Titan, launched in 2024 in collaboration with Villgro and Sattva. The program is dedicated to accelerating innovators with impactful solutions to tackle the global water crisis.

This edition focuses on the following:

- Integrating technology platform for application, shortlisting, and engagement process
- Structured and customized capacity building program for the grantees and enterprises
- Collaboration with key partners for bringing the best value proposition for the grantees (with incubators, mentors, sector-leaders)
- Long term Impact and optimum grant utilization for impact on ground for underserved communities and environment [13]

The theme of DI Awards 2.0 is water, which has been deliberately chosen due to the following reasons:

- Solving the water crisis is one of the most highly prioritized goals during COP26 that also aligned with the G20 Priority Areas, making it the need of the year.
- Sustainability for water conservation has been role modelled by the Titan Company through their various initiatives – it embodies Titan's core value.

[13] According to the report titled *Titan Design Impact Awards - Concept Note* shared by Titan

- Predictions for the future show we are headed for disaster. As per the existing consumption patterns, it is estimated that 2/3rd of the world's population may face water shortages by 2030. In this context, it becomes imperative to mitigate uncertainty.
- People across the world are facing a water crisis, impacting every nation's development, economic trade and manufacturing. There is an urgent call for immediate solutions – making it an issue that goes beyond borders. [14]

Process and Benefits

The three years are split into 2 phases: Year 1 i.e. 12 months (Implementation Phase), and Year 2&3 i.e. 18-24 months (Pilot and Deep Impact Phase).

Implementation Phase: Up to INR 50 Lakhs for each of the 6 winners, awarded based on the solution's potential.

Incubation: This can be subsumed under the forms of support provided, included but not limited to technical assistance, mentorship, and networking.

Deep Impact Phase Grant: An additional grant amounts up to 3 Crore across two projects, assessed based on the performance during implementation phase with the focus on scaling of the solution.

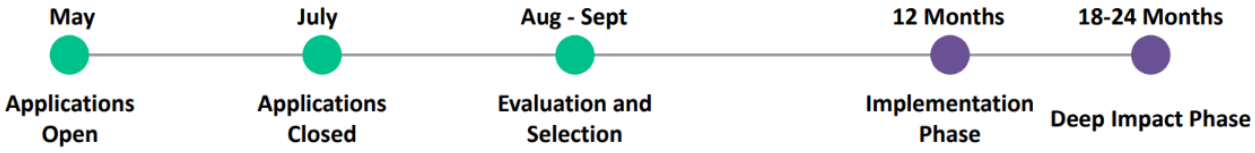


Figure 4: Timeline detailing the various phases of DI Awards 2.0

Below is a month-by-month breakdown of the activities under DI Awards 2.0

Table 5:DI Awards 2.0 Process and Benefits

S. No	Month	Activities	Outcomes
1.	May – October 2024	Call for Applications: This includes both preliminary Impact Assessment (DI Awards Core Team) and Semi-Finals and Finals (Online panel for semifinals, and in-person for finals	1,208 Applications Received out of which 540 Applications were shortlisted. 175 Semi-Finalists 20 Finalists
2.	24th and 25th October 2024	Knowledge & Awareness Session (12+ hours of sessions and exhibition with the Top 20 finalists)	20 Startup Exhibits 12 Sessions
3.	Due Diligence of Potential Grantees	Due Diligence (Three-pronged due	9 Finalists shortlisted

[14] Titan Company Limited. (n.d.). *Water theme*. https://designimpactawards.titan.in/water-theme

	[Nov-Dec 2024]	diligence conducted	
4.	Grantee Onboarding (Jan-March 2025)	Onboarding & Goal Setting (LFA, Milestones Setting, Signing of Partnership Agreements)	6 Grantees

DI Awards Grantees

Below is a sectoral-specific overview of the innovative products that helped scale impact.

Table 6: DI Awards 2.0 Grantees

S. No.	Focus Areas	Grantees
1.	Pipeline Leak Detection and Supply Management	• Solinas Integrity Private Limited • SmartTerra
2.	Wastewater Recycling and Management	• EcoSTP Technologies Private Limited • Transwater System Private Limited
3.	Water & Agri Management	• Farm2Folk Private Limited • EF Polymer Private Limited

Partnerships of the DI Awards

Table 7: DI Awards 2.0 Partners

S. No.	Name	Role	Brief Description
1.	Villgro	Implementation Partner	Villgro is one of India's impact-first incubators with expertise in 4 sectors – Healthcare, Agriculture, Climate Action, and Gender Inclusion. At Villgro, we are addressing pressing social and environmental challenges by rapidly mobilizing innovations in India. We engage with early-stage inventors and entrepreneurs, across the country, to build their ideas and create impact at scale.
2.	Sattva	Program Management Partner	Sattva partners with – corporations, philanthropists, foundations and social organisations – to achieve their social impact goals effectively and maximise the return on social investment. We offer end-to-end support covering research, strategy consulting, implementation, programme management, impact assessment, social audit, talent solutions and more.
3.	Lopez Design	Creative Partner	LOPEZ is a multidisciplinary design studio, and a leading brand consultant based out in India, specialising in a

			range of services such as brand strategy, identity design systems, communication design, packaging design
4.	Tangent Tech Solutions	Technology Partner	Tangent Tech Solutions provides IT services both within and outside India. They provide end to end software services to ensure digital solutions, and help in the upgradation of an offline platform to a digital one

2.2 Alignment to SDGs and National Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are used as a framework to map the thematic focus of the DI Awards. This section outlines the SDGs aligned with the Awards based on the programme's focus on market-ready, design-led solutions and the nature of enterprise-scale challenges addressed through pilots and implementation. The DI Awards 2.0 align with SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and 13 (Climate Action) due to its theme i.e. water.

They are explicitly oriented towards enterprises that have moved beyond ideation and validation, and are ready to demonstrate operational feasibility, commercial viability, and measurable impact. The programme focuses on enabling market-ready solutions to be implemented in real-world contexts through pilots, strengthened business models, and engagement with institutional and market stakeholders. Support under DI Awards is concentrated on execution-stage requirements such as refinement, readiness, impact measurement, and scalability.

By advancing solutions that are ready for adoption, replication, or procurement, the DI Awards translate design innovation directly into development outcomes. This approach reflects the SDG framing of social entrepreneurship as a mechanism for delivering sustainable impact through viable enterprises and responsible production systems, where economic sustainability and social or environmental benefits are achieved simultaneously through market-based pathways.

Figure 5: Sustainable Development Goals

DI Awards: Alignment with SDGs

The DI Awards showcase early-stage innovations that address water related challenges through technology, design, and sustainable practices. The portfolio of award eligible projects (e.g., AI driven leak detection, modular wastewater treatment, atmospheric water harvesting, satellite-based groundwater monitoring, biodegradable superabsorbent polymers) reflects a focus on improving water security, enhancing sanitation, reducing resource consumption, and generating livelihood opportunities for rural and urban communities. At the programme level, the awards also create a pathway for young innovators to acquire market ready skills, develop prototypes, and engage with mentors and investors.

Below is a non-exhaustive list of DI Awards and SDG Alignment [15]

Table 8: Alignment of DI Awards 2.0 (2024-25) with SDGs

S. No.	Startup Name and Product Objective	SDG Alignment	Rationale for Alignment
1.	**Transwater System Pvt Ltd: Potable water recovery from STP-treated water**	SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production	Recovering potable or reuse-grade water from treated sewage directly advances water reuse, reducing dependence on freshwater sources and minimising wastewater discharge. This supports efficient water management and circular use of resources within urban systems.
2.	**Farms2Fork: Address groundwater depletion through precision irrigation and sustainable agriculture**	SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation SDG 2 – Zero Hunger	Precision irrigation reduces groundwater extraction while maintaining agricultural output. The intervention improves water-use efficiency in farming systems, strengthening food security while addressing long-term groundwater sustainability.
3.	**ECOSTP Technologies Private Limited : Biomimetic baffle pipes for improved sewage treatment**	SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production	The biomimetic design enhances biological treatment efficiency, improving wastewater quality and reuse potential. Transitioning from DIY kits to manufactured components strengthens sanitation infrastructure while promoting sustainable, low-chemical treatment processes and industrial innovation.
4.	**EF Polymer: Enhancing agricultural productivity and water conservation in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan**	SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation SDG 2 – Zero Hunger SDG 13 – Climate Action	Water conservation in an arid region directly supports water security under climate-stressed conditions. Improved water productivity strengthens agricultural resilience, addressing both food security and climate adaptation.
5.	**SmartTerra: Pilot for water network optimisation in Khammam, Telangana**	SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	Digital monitoring across DMAs and reservoirs enhances leak detection, pressure management and system efficiency. This improves reliability of water supply infrastructure and reduces non-revenue water losses.
6.	**Solinas: Robotic pipeline inspection for water infrastructure in Bhatinda**	SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-Being	Advanced robotic inspection strengthens water pipeline integrity, reducing leaks and contamination risks. Improved infrastructure reliability supports safe drinking water access and lowers exposure to water-borne health hazards.

Beyond the thematic focus on water, the DI Awards operate as a catalyst for scaling up social enterprises. The competition format encourages teams to form, iterate, and present viable business models, thereby

[15] The mapping above reflects only the thematic content of the award submissions and the stated design priorities. It does not evaluate the effectiveness of the projects nor claim any progress toward the Sustainable Development Goal targets.

Section 3: Scope and Methodology

3. Scope and Methodology

3.1 Scope of Work

The Impact Assessment examined the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of Titan's DI Awards 2.0.

The primary unit of analysis for this impact assessment was the DI Awards programmatic interventions. The purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which the intervention has strengthened adoption of market ready products with social impact value. The scope of this impact assessment was limited to FY 2024-25.

Stakeholders including Titan, programme partners, mentors, institutional collaborators, and programme participants across different stages constituted units of observation. Their perspectives provided diverse vantage points to assess how DI Awards created value, delivered experienced, and how it contributed to capability development, innovation processes, and ecosystem strengthening.

The assessment examined whether DI Awards:

1. Influenced ecosystem perceptions, including mentors, partners, institutions, and external stakeholders, around the value of design-led approaches.
2. Fostered ecosystem linkages, collaboration pathways, and opportunities for scale.
3. Achieved coherence with:
    - Titan's CSR policy
    - community and stakeholder need.
    - national innovation priorities

The Impact Assessment triangulated insights from beneficiary feedback from participants belonging to the current programme cohort; stakeholder consultations, including Titan teams, implementation partners, mentors, and ecosystem institutions; document review of programme materials, process records, and outputs; secondary data, including external innovation benchmarks and comparative models. These evidence streams were synthesised to reveal strengths and improvement areas.

The Impact Assessment generated insights to strengthen programme design and delivery, resource allocation and efficiency improvements, enhance the ecosystem positioning of DI Awards, identify opportunities for scaling or deepening programme impact, and support Titan in continuous learning and adaptive management.

The OECD-DAC framework guided this impact assessment, ensuring global-standard rigor and comparability[16]. The detailed methodology is outlined below.

[16] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (n.d.). *Evaluation criteria*. https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/sub-issues/development-co-operation-evaluation-and-effectiveness/evaluation-criteria.html

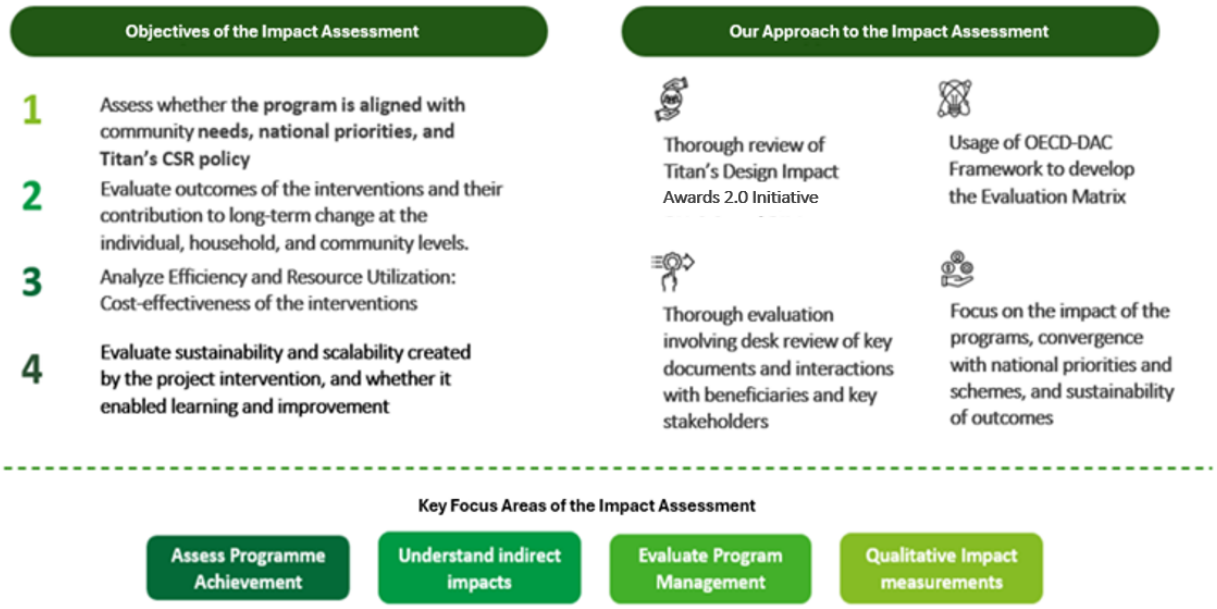


Figure 6: Objectives, Approach, and Focus of Impact Assessment

3.2 Approach & Methodology

3.2.1 Assessment Approach

The Impact Assessment adopted a mixed-methods approach - quantitative methods to estimate entrepreneurial acumen, value delivered through the programmes, and outcome patterns among beneficiaries, while qualitative enquiry provided contextual understanding of programme delivery, enabling factors, and constraints.

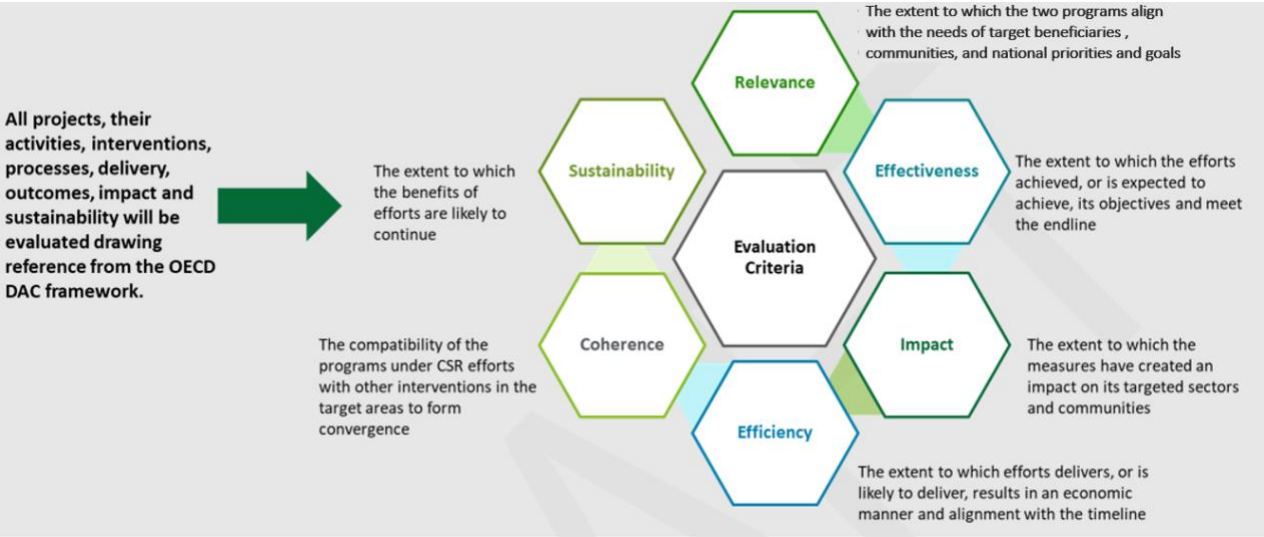


Figure 7: Impact Assessment Approach

DI Awards 2.0 was evaluated to determine value of the programme across OECD DAC framework. Each programme was guided by a bespoke Impact Assessment matrix to ensure coverage of all elements associated with the two programmes with respect to OECD DAC frameworks 6 reporting areas.

3.2.2 Impact Assessment Matrix

Design Impact Awards 2.0

The impact assessment matrix given below provided an overview of the DI Awards 2.0 outlining the evaluation design and key research questions guiding the study. It mapped the core areas of enquiry alongside corresponding theme, and sources.

Table 9: Impact Assessment Matrix for DI Awards 2.0

Theme	Questions
Relevance	• What are the specific needs of businesses addressed through the DI Awards 2.0? • How does the incubation programme enable businesses to grow? • How relevant were the selection measures to the nature of businesses applying for the award?
Coherence	• How does the DI Awards 2.0 theme align with national priorities and global goals? • What is the internal coherence of DI Awards 2.0 with the Titan company ethos? • How does DI Awards 2.0 complement other initiatives/policies promoting responsible business and sustainable design?
Effectiveness	• What is the completion rate of activities and outputs against set targets? • What was the perceived value amongst stakeholder i.e. participants, partners etc. against the activities completed under the DI Awards 2.0? • Challenges faced in achieving objectives and best practices across the DI Awards 2.0.
Efficiency	• What was the financial utilization rate of the DI Awards2.0 initiative? • Were there any financial process delays, causes for the same? • What are the instances of scaling within existing resources? • To what extent were the programme's delivery and management processes efficient in converting planned inputs into outputs?
Impact	• What is the impact created for applicants, applicant beneficiaries and stakeholders, and on the water focused areas on applicant's target geographies? • What is the impact of DI Awards 2.0 incubation, grant etc. on the applicants? What change did it bring into the existing business models?
Sustainability	• How are the DI Awards 2.0 partners and titan team ensuring continuity of the awards, and continuity of the social benefits fostered by finalists in the award? • What is the sphere of influence developed under the DI Awards for ecosystem development initiatives and observable changes accrued under the intervention? • What are some post pilot phase support systems developed for incubated and grant receiving businesses? • Do participating businesses demonstrate the capacity and ownership that is key to sustain changes introduced through DI Awards 2.0

3.2.3 Assessment Methodology

The Impact Assessment was structured around a Define-Gather-Analyze-Report approach, with clear steps covering objective setting, data collection, analysis of findings, and structured reporting.

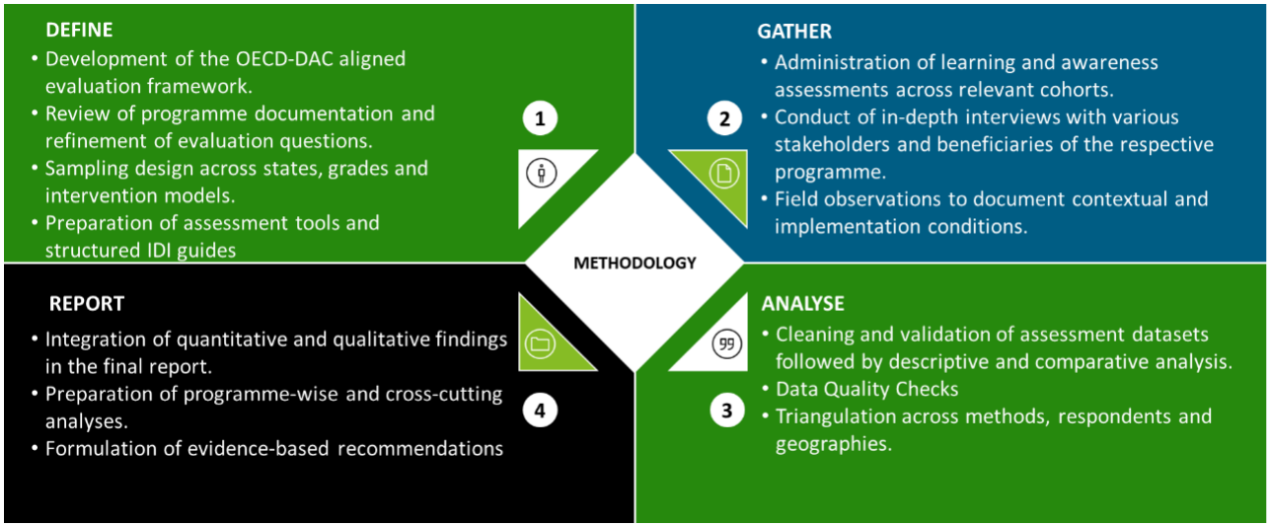


Figure 8: Define, Gather, Analyse Report Approach

- **Define:**
  A detailed review of programme documentation, including Proposals, Annual reports, Quarterly reports, Utilisation Certificates, programme monitoring reports, Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) and partner submissions, was undertaken at the outset to establish an understanding of programme intent, delivery arrangements and expected outcomes. This review informed the framing of Impact Assessment parameters and sampling design across the DI Awards 2.0 for FY 2024-25, implemented across the country. The sampling strategy sought to reflect programme stakeholder heterogeneity while retaining operational feasibility for conducting the assessment. Assessment instruments for businesses in deep impact phase of DI Awards 2.0 were drafted keeping in mind nature of the programme, implementation approach, and planned outcomes and impact. The in-depth interview guides for business owners and teams, incubation partners, and implementing partners were structured around OECD DAC considerations.

- **Gather:**
  Field activities included administering quantitative surveys along with conducting qualitative discussions and observational visits. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with deep impact phase business teams, implementation partners i.e. Villgro and Sattva, and DI Awards 2.0 programme team from Titan. This discussion focused on the impact of the awards in an existing ecosystem of startup promotion, incubation, funding etc. along with decoding the value delivered to businesses to scale existing solutions, building government alignment and partnerships, and ensuring financial and operational sustainability, and impact. Secondary datasets i.e. programme monitoring reports, financial reports etc. enabled decoding of efficiency and effectiveness of the DI Awards within the MoU modalities and pre-agreed outputs, outcomes, and impact. These engagements provided insights into the context of program delivery and how well it is carried out.

- **Analyse:**
  The analytical process consisted of the systematic cleaning, validation and examination of quantitative and qualitative data. Secondary datasets were subjected to descriptive and comparative analysis to identify patterns. Qualitative data was transcribed and thematically analysed following the OECD DAC criteria. This approach enabled a structured interpretation of

stakeholder perspectives. Triangulation across tools, respondent categories and locations was undertaken to strengthen the credibility of findings and minimise interpretive bias.

- **Report:**
  The reporting stage involved synthesising quantitative and qualitative evidence into an integrated evaluative narrative aligned with the OECD DAC framework. The final report presented programme-wise insights, supported by data visualisations and documentation derived from field interactions. Recommendations were framed to remain actionable, context-sensitive and oriented towards strengthening programme performance and sustainability.

3.2.4 Sampling Plan

The Impact Assessment for DI Awards 2.0 utilised purposive sampling for qualitative inquiry through IDI and survey. This methodology was adopted for the purpose of capturing stakeholder perspectives on implementation processes and drivers behind observed programme patterns.

Sample for DI Awards 2.0

The proposed sample for DI Awards 2.0 has been designed to cover nearly ~70% of the total beneficiary population included in the study. Only finalist businesses were considered for the survey process as opposed to the population of applicants, as this subset was the one who had a higher degree of engagement with Titan, beyond filling the application form. All pilot phase businesses were considered for the IDIs. Given the relatively small universe of participants, a higher sampling ratio was adopted to ensure representative findings.

Stakeholder Selection and Rationale

Stakeholder selection for the impact assessment was based on programme objectives and impact pathways. The following target stakeholders constituted the sample:

- **Finalists (Business Leaders)** were included as a target stakeholder group because of their sustained, in-person engagement with Titan during the DI Awards 2.0 after they were shortlisted. Their on-ground interactions with the programme team gave them a practical, experience-based understanding of the initiative beyond the application stage. This allowed them to offer more nuanced insights than general applicants and helped inform programme improvements.
- **Pilot Phase Business Teams** were included to capture in-depth beneficiary experiences related to programme design, delivery, and outcomes among select businesses that progressed beyond the finalist stage into the pilot phase, reflecting their deeper exposure to the programme.
- **Villgro Incubation & Programme Team** was included to provide an internal implementation perspective on programme functioning, design intent, and functional constraints. These offered insights distinct from those of enrolled stakeholders.

Table 10: Sample for DI Awards 2.0

S.No.	Target Stakeholders	Tools used	Population	Actual response
1	Finalist - business leaders	Survey (Online)	20	9
2	Pilot phase business teams	IDI (F2F/Online)	6	6

S.No.	Target Stakeholders	Tools used	Population	Actual response
3	Villgro incubation & programme team	IDI (F2F/Online)	1	1

Amongst the Finalist Business Leader survey, there were 5 pilot phase respondent, while the remaining 4 responses came from businesses (Aumsat Technologies LLP, Geo Climate Risk Solutions pvt. Ltd., Indra, and Sustainable livelihoods initiatives India pvt. Ltd.) who were not selected for the pilot phase.

3.3 Limitations

Certain methodological and data constraints limit the scope and robustness of the findings. Some of these are listed below for reference:

- Limited survey responses for DI Awards 2.0:
  Survey participation for the DI Awards was low, which restricts drawing generalized insights and findings based on the survey data. Response rate was 9 out of 20 (minimum sample planned was 15) finalist businesses under DI Awards 2.0. The survey duration was limited to one and a half weeks which added to the constraint of gathering responses. Reminders were shared during the survey period, but response was limited from the cohort that was not selected for pilot phase. The low response from non-pilot phase cohort of applicant may reinforce positivity bias. Further, the impact assessment was conducted ~1.5 years post the last engagement with Titan DI Awards 2.0 application's workshop phase, which may have added to a disconnect and desire to respond.
- Mode of data collection (online IDIs):
  All in-depth interviews (IDIs) were conducted online. This may have limited the depth of probing and observation of non-verbal cues, potentially affecting the richness of responses and the ability to explore sensitive or nuanced issues in comparison to in-person interviews.
- Potential unintentional response bias:
  Responses may have been influenced by respondents' personal beliefs, perceptions, or the broader contextual environment in which they were interviewed. As most stakeholders interviewed were closely involved in the design and implementation of the DI Awards, there is a possibility of unintentional positive bias, which may have affected the objectivity of certain perceptions and assessments reported during the surveys.
- No interaction with Grantee beneficiaries:
  The Impact Assessment did not include interactions with grantee beneficiaries, due to limited time availability for conducting impact assessment. Interactions with Grantee's were prioritized to capture the value of DI Awards in their businesses and the experience of applying for DI Awards 2.0, which was the primary activity in the FY 24-25 (year under review).
- Coverage limited to finalist businesses:
  The sample selection focused on finalist businesses (N = 20), and pilot phase business (N = 6), due to the degree of engagement these population groups had with the DI Awards 2.0 programme. The remaining applicant's engagement was limited to applying for the grant and did not have any direct engagement or in-person connect with the DI Awards programme team, evaluators, and incubation team.

Section 4: DI Awards 2.0Findings

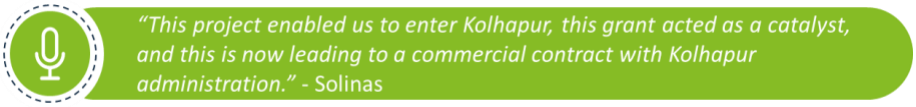
4. DI Awards 2.0 Findings

4.1 Relevance

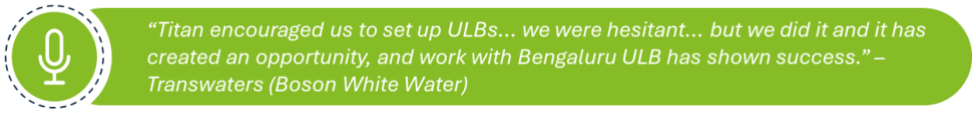
4.1.1 Business Needs Addressed through DI Awards 2.0

The business teams entered the programme with defined needs shaped by their organisational maturity, field context and engagement with government systems. These needs related to impact measurement, market access, technological refinement, operational clarity and financial de risking.

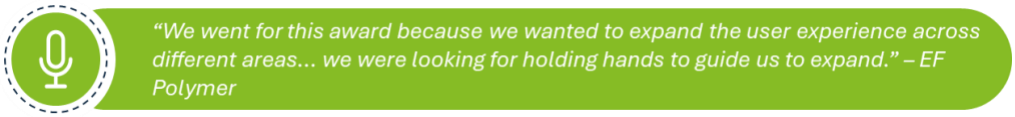
Solinas Integrity Private Limited required support to develop a structured impact framework, since earlier work had focused on identifying defects in water and sewer infrastructure without quantifying benefits such as water saved or the number of households affected. The team also needed assistance in managing inconsistent government engagement, which had been affected by officer transfers and varied levels of interest across administrative levels. Additional needs included working capital guidance and facilitation to enter new municipal geographies. DI Awards 2.0 addressed these gaps by introducing structured impact reporting requirements, facilitating access to expert panels for technical and financial guidance, and supporting engagement with municipal authorities, which enabled Solinas to enter a new city (Kolhapur) and continue implementation despite earlier disruptions.



Transwaters (Boson White Water) needed a platform to test its tertiary wastewater treatment model in a municipal setting, which moved away from their existing plan of setting up wastewater treatment units in residential complex. The organisation had earlier faced challenges in demonstrating feasibility due to site conditions, administrative delays and payment structures that differed across utility boards. The team required support to navigate government procedures, structure implementation within defined timelines and build acceptance for the reuse of treated wastewater. DI Awards 2.0 addressed these gaps by enabling a municipal pilot, providing incubation support for milestone tracking, and facilitating engagement with utility officials (Bengaluru Wastewater Supply and Sewage board), which allowed Transwaters to validate its model under real public-sector conditions and demonstrate the viability of treated wastewater reuse.



EF Polymer needed assistance to expand into new agro climatic regions and strengthen its engagement with farmers in these contexts. The organisation had not previously developed standardised methodologies to calculate water savings and yield effects, and it sought guidance to prepare its first impact report. It also needed support to refine communication practices for customers and stakeholders. DI Awards 2.0 addressed these gaps by supporting field deployment in Jaisalmer across ~800 acres, introducing structured monitoring and impact measurement processes, and strengthening the organisation's ability to document and communicate water and income related outcomes.



Cultyvate required support to optimise its irrigation technology. Earlier field deployment had revealed gaps in data collection and farmer interaction, and the team needed guidance to reduce sensor costs, adjust hardware design and strengthen its approach to government partnerships. The organisation sought alignment between its technological model and actual irrigation practices observed in the field. DI Awards 2.0 addressed these gaps through joint field visits, diagnostic discussions and technical guidance, which informed hardware redesign, cost reduction and improved alignment between solution design and farmer behaviour. The revision in technology reduced cost of sensors from ~INR 2500 to ~INR 299 which increased adoption through aggregators working with farmers.

Smarterra needed support to engage directly with municipal authorities. The organisation had previously worked through private contractors and had avoided direct government projects due to administrative constraints. It required a structured mechanism to test its analytics layer in a municipal environment, examine procurement pathways and frame a government facing market approach. DI Awards 2.0 addressed these gaps by supporting the grantee in implementing a municipal pilot in Khambham, the grant enabled the grantee to deploy the infrastructure i.e. flow meters and other measurement instruments, in the existing ULB ecosystem. The instrument deployment was complemented by the ULBs investment of pipe replacements basis the data emerging from instruments deployed under the grant.

EcoSTP entered the programme with a specific need to develop and validate a new product that it could not finance independently as a bootstrapped enterprise. While the organisation had previously engaged in impact measurement and mentoring programmes, it lacked access to grant funding that could support product development and field implementation simultaneously. The DI Awards 2.0 grant addressed this gap by enabling EcoSTP to design, manufacture and deploy a gravity-based sewage treatment system grounded in biomimicry principles. The programme also aligned with EcoSTP's need to transition from concept-level innovation to execution with measurable outcomes, including proof of concept through an operational sewage treatment plant.

The incubation team (Villgro) confirmed that these needs reflected common challenges within the water sector. Many early-stage enterprises faced long gestation periods before achieving financial viability, limited access to working capital, difficulties meeting government procurement requirements, and the absence of standardised impact measurement practices. The programme had been designed to help businesses overcome these barriers through structured pilots, expert guidance and multistage support processes.

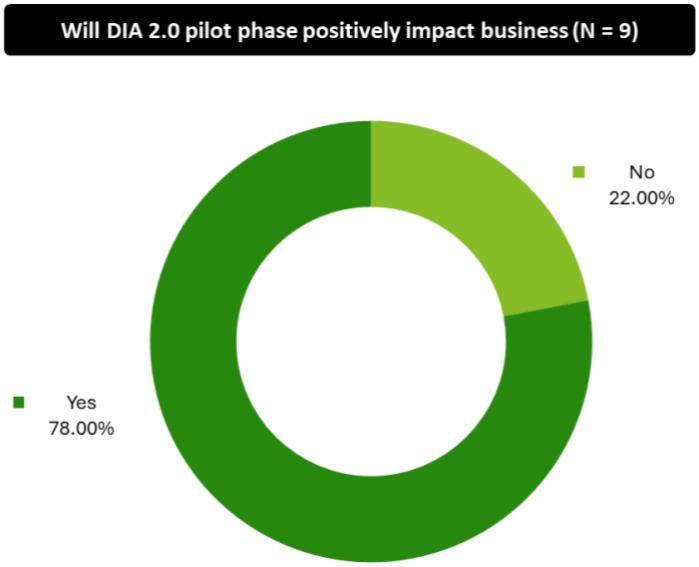


Figure 9: Perceived value of pilot phase

78% of respondents, from businesses selected as finalists, believed being selected for the pilot phase would have had an impact on their existing business operations, addressing their current business needs.

4.1.2 Role of the Incubation Programme in Enabling Business Growth

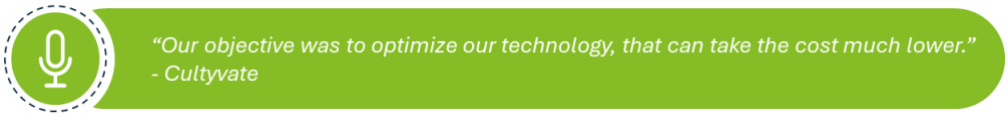
The incubation programme enabled business growth by providing diagnostic support, technical assistance, market linkages, structured milestone tracking and facilitated engagement with government bodies.

Solinas benefitted from problem specific expert panels that helped resolve challenges related to working capital, impact assessment and technical constraints around pipeline access. The programme facilitated entry into Kolhapur after an earlier municipal partner withdrew, which enabled continuity of implementation and created a pathway for future commercial engagement. The structured reporting requirements supported the development of internal systems for articulating impact.

Transwaters used incubation support to maintain alignment with defined milestones, manage implementation delays arising from local conditions viz. flooding of site, permissions delay etc. and refine its approach to utility board engagement, building direct linkages with chairman. Advisory support from water sector professionals helped the organisation understand potential scale pathways. The programme also expanded its access to institutional networks involved in water reuse.

EF Polymer strengthened its internal monitoring systems and developed its first impact report through programme facilitated review processes. The improved methodology for water saving and yield measurement helped the team communicate with investors and stakeholders. Field level exposure in new geographies provided insight into farmer practices under different environmental conditions.

Cultyvate refined its technological model based on operational observations made during field visits conducted jointly with support teams. These visits highlighted inconsistencies in data collection and field deployment, prompting a redesign towards a more affordable Bluetooth enabled technology as opposed to wired sensors. The programme strengthened process clarity and supported greater alignment between solution design and farmer needs.



Smarterra used the programme to conduct its first direct municipal pilot, enabled by the grant money and existing relationships with Khammam district administration. The implementation provided evidence for its continuous supply model and enabled adjustments to its government facing strategy. Diagnostic discussions and curated panels offered limited but relevant introductions to policy and market actors.

The incubation support enabled EcoSTP to move from a research-oriented phase into a product-driven business model. Grant funding supported the development of a new proprietary product, filing of intellectual property and execution of on-ground implementation. The requirement to implement the solution during the pilot programme phase resulted in the construction and operation of a functioning sewage treatment plant, which generated unplanned but beneficial spillover outcomes. These included a long-term memorandum of understanding with a government research institution and access to advanced laboratory facilities, which strengthened EcoSTP's bacterial research and development capacity. Mentoring support was primarily delivered by the incubation partner and focused on monitoring and guidance rather than direct intervention by the corporate sponsor.

The incubation team described its support model as comprising pilot design, diagnostic exercises, curated mentoring and technical assistance. Mentors were contracted through formal agreements, and their inputs helped address sector specific and organisational needs. The programme required detailed tracking of milestones and outcomes, which helped organisations refine internal processes and strengthen readiness for future engagements.

4.1.3 Relevance of Selection Measures to the Nature of Businesses

Business teams reported that the selection measures applied during the award cycle were relevant to the nature of their work and the characteristics of their solutions.

Solinas found the selection process appropriate, as jury rounds and evaluation criteria were specific to water sector challenges and aligned closely with its solution area. Transwaters observed that although it was initially unaware of the detailed criteria, the focus on enterprises that addressed water related problems matched its offering. EF Polymer viewed the process as aligned with its work on water scarcity in agriculture. The selection steps helped refine how the team positioned its product within a water focused impact narrative.

Cultyvate noted that the field visit component allowed evaluators to observe practical elements of the solution and assess relevance based on real world deployment. Smarterra reported that the selection process provided room to present the systemic aspects of its analytics driven model. This was useful because such elements were often overlooked in traditional procurement assessments. EcoSTP reported that the selection process aligned well with the nature of its work. The emphasis on tangible product development, implementation and measurable outcomes reflected the organisation's operational focus.

The incubation team described the selection measures as intentionally aligned with the diversity of the water value chain. The multistage process involved technical due diligence aligned with CPCB and ISO

standards, site visits focused on operational practices and stakeholder interactions and financial governance reviews. This structure ensured that selected enterprises were suited for pilot work with municipal bodies and aligned with the programme's objective of addressing water related challenges.

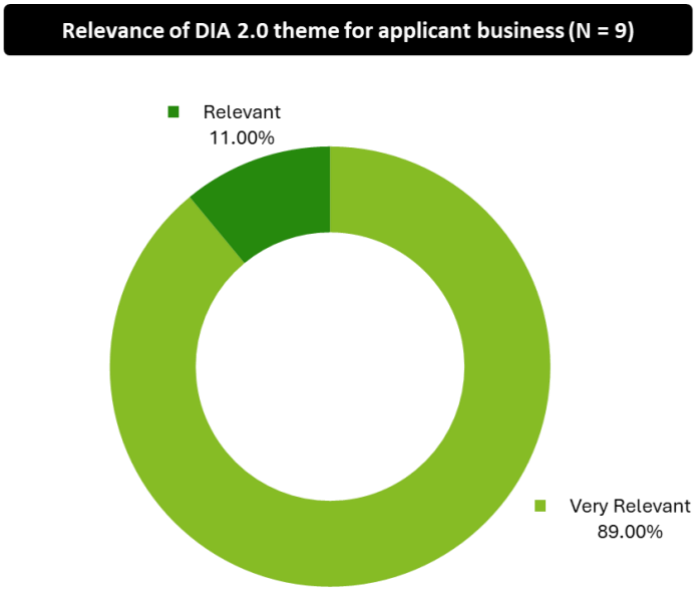


Figure 10: Perceived relevance of DI Awards 2.0 for Water Theme

89% of the respondents from the DI Awards 2.0 finalists claimed the Design Impact Awards 2.0 (water theme) to be very relevant for their business, creating a niche opportunity for them to get access to capital infusion in an otherwise relatively underserved industry.

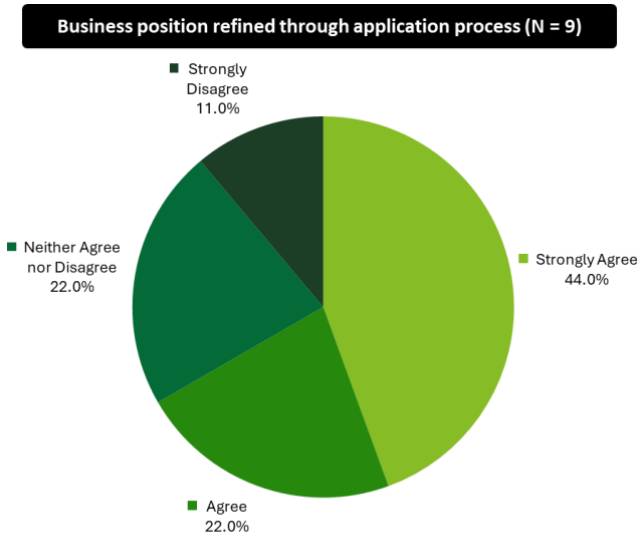


Figure 11: Perceived value of the DI Awards 2.0 application process towards defining business positioning

44% of respondents strongly agreed and 22% agreed that the application process itself enabled value in defining their business position, with respect to water theme.

4.2 Coherence

4.2.1 Alignment of DI Awards 2.0 Theme with National Priorities and Global Goals

Business teams and the incubation team described varying degrees of alignment between the programme and broader national or global priorities related to water management, sustainability and impact driven innovation. Some business teams reported limited direct alignment with central government schemes.

Solinas stated that it had not expected alignment with national programmes such as Swachh Bharat or AMRUT and noted that such connections had not been a priority in their engagement. At the same time, Solinas described the work as inherently connected to challenges in water supply, leakage and contamination, which were issues addressed by broader government missions aimed at improving municipal water systems, revealing an opportunity for deliberate actions for larger policy alignment to enable systemic interventions.

Transwaters described participation in AMRUT 2.0 independently of the DI Awards 2.0 programme and stated that the DI Awards engagement helped establish a rapport with the Bengaluru Wastewater Supply and Sewage Board. Through this connection, the team engaged with senior officials and submitted a proposal for expanded deployment across multiple sewage treatment plants. While Transwaters did not describe explicit alignment with specific national policy mandates within DI Awards 2.0, the programme facilitated connections that overlapped with government priorities on reuse of treated wastewater.

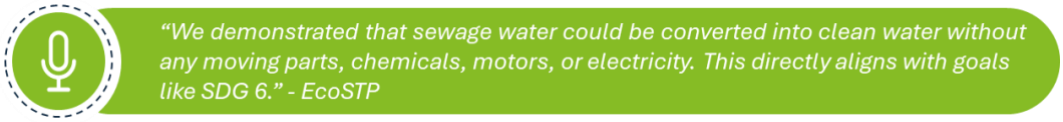
EF Polymer noted that the programme did not directly relate to specific national goals but stated that its work aligned with agro-ecological practices and the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals. The team highlighted that it held certifications aligned with international organic standards and had participated in other programmes that addressed agriculture and water issues in different regions. Although DI Awards 2.0 did not explicitly engage with such frameworks, EF Polymer viewed its participation as consistent with these global themes.

Cultyvate reported that there was no direct alignment with government programmes during their engagement. They had interacted with various departments outside of DI Awards 2.0 for separate projects. The team stated that DIA 2.0 did not directly facility government engagement although the emphasis on reducing technology cost, leading to higher adoption of products, enabled a stronger position for us to engage with government departments. .The team stated that DI Awards 2.0 did not directly facility government engagement, rather include government facing activities aimed at broader national coherence but focused instead on process-oriented support.

Smarterra noted that the programme did not involve activities such as workshops, outbound events or structured entry into additional urban local bodies. However, it acknowledged that social media communication (LinkedIn posts) around the programme created visibility that reached some government officials. This helped the team receive interest from new municipal counterparts. Smarterra also described diagnostic discussions that touched on outreach, including suggestions on participation in conferences. These were positioned as general capacity building rather than explicit alignment with national or global goals.

EcoSTP identified a direct alignment between its solution and global water sustainability goals. The gravity-based sewage treatment system demonstrated the conversion of untreated sewage into

reusable water without electricity, chemicals or moving parts. The organisation linked this outcome to Sustainable Development Goal 6 and broader national challenges related to untreated sewage and energy-intensive treatment systems. The focus on decentralised, low-energy water reuse was described as consistent with sustainability and resource efficiency priorities, although the programme itself was not formally mapped to national schemes during implementation.



The incubation team explained that the programme's work aimed to create lighthouse projects that could eventually inform local and regional policy environments. They described interactions with institutions such as the National Institute of Urban Affairs and indicated that the long-term intention was to influence how municipalities could work with such startups. Although not formally tied to national schemes, the incubation team characterised the programme as operating within spaces relevant to national concerns on water management and systemic problem solving.

4.2.2 Internal Coherence of DI Awards 2.0 with Titan Company Ethos

Evidence from business teams and the incubation team suggested that the programme maintained internal coherence with Titan's broader ethos related to design, sustainability and support for impact driven initiatives.

Business teams consistently referenced the perceived credibility associated with Titan. EF Polymer stated that the association created trust among customers and stakeholders. Cultyvate highlighted that Titan's reputation within the Tata group aligned with their own interest in sustainability and agricultural improvement. Transwaters, EF Polymer and SOLINAS also described how Titan provided flexibility during implementation, which they viewed as consistent with an ethos that allowed experimentation and adaptation.

Smarterra described Titan's engagement as reflective of a systems thinking approach, stating that Titan took time to understand their constraints and the nature of their solution. The team described this as distinct from other engagements where requirements were predefined and less adaptive.

EcoSTP recalled an initial orientation that introduced Titan's values, culture and integrity standards. The organisation reported that this orientation resonated with its own values, particularly the use of real-life examples to communicate ethical principles. However, beyond this early stage, direct engagement with the Titan team was limited. Most mentoring and operational engagement was managed by the incubation partner. Despite this, EcoSTP perceived coherence between the programme's emphasis on execution, sustainability and design integrity and Titan's stated ethos.

The incubation team stated that Titan's design ethos was reflected in the structure of the programme, which required coordination across multiple stakeholders such as municipalities, civil society organisations and technical partners. They characterised the programme as aligned with Titan's interest in design thinking, sustainability and long-term systemic solutions. The team noted that solutions selected for the programme were designed for Indian conditions and that both product design and implementation design involved iterative improvement and multi stakeholder integration.

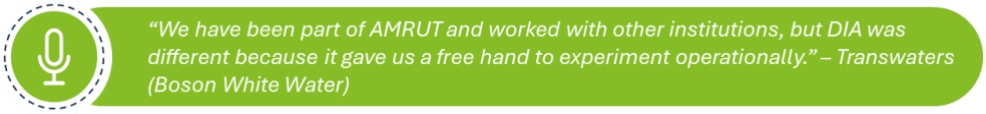
The incubation team also highlighted that Titan demonstrated flexibility through capital support and openness to working with government partners despite uncertainties. They viewed this as coherent with Titan's organisational approach to social innovation and its intention to support sustainable, market-based impact solutions.

4.2.3 Complementarity with Other Initiatives and Policies on Responsible Business and Sustainable Design

Business teams described multiple points of complementarity between DI Awards 2.0 and other initiatives or programmes they participated in, although the nature of complementarities varied.

Solinas explained that it had worked with other organisations and CSR partners on similar projects but noted that the programme provided a bespoke framework that differed from other accelerators. It viewed DI Awards 2.0 as complementary because it introduced impact reporting and structured incubation that it had not previously experienced.

Transwaters described previous engagements with AMRUT 2.0, WRI and ASCII, stating that these programmes helped build their network in the water sector. They noted that DI Awards 2.0 differed from these initiatives because it provided a free hand to experiment operationally within a municipal setting. They also reported that involvement in DI Awards 2.0 complemented other incubation programmes by creating opportunities to be considered for additional water focused initiatives.



EF Polymer referenced past participation in programmes linked to Tata Trusts, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and international subsidy schemes. They described DI Awards 2.0 as their most detailed project related to understanding farmers and impact outcomes. It complemented earlier work by introducing structured impact measurement, which strengthened their positioning in other programmes and contributed to subsequent expansion opportunities.

Cultyvate referenced accelerator programmes and engagements with NABARD, Yes Bank, Miller Centre and other initiatives. They stated that DI Awards 2.0 complemented these by offering more hands-on support and structured expectations for deliverables. The field-based feedback provided during the programme complemented earlier experiences by enabling practical adjustments to their technology.

Smarterra cited engagements with multilateral organisations, contractors and urban water programmes, stating that DI Awards 2.0 complemented these by providing an entry point to direct municipal work. They noted that suggestions on conference participation and ecosystem engagement helped them consider broader outreach strategies. They also mentioned organisations such as Imagine H2O and described how similar approaches could complement ongoing efforts to build stronger water sector networks.

EcoSTP had participated in several international and domestic programmes related to biomimicry, engineering, sanitation and entrepreneurship. These initiatives contributed domain knowledge, design principles and exposure to global networks. However, EcoSTP noted that DI Awards 2.0 was the only programme that provided grant funding specifically for both product development and implementation.

In this sense, DI Awards 2.0 complemented earlier initiatives by enabling execution rather than conceptual advancement alone.

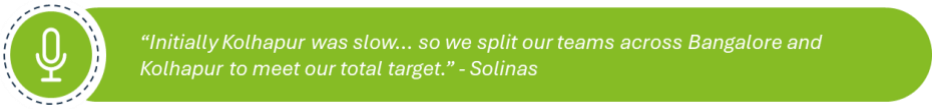
The incubation team explained that DI Awards 2.0 complemented other sector initiatives by deepening their own capability in working with hardware and product led innovations. The team noted that the approach and learnings were being shared with other partners, including those in blended finance and corporate social responsibility programmes. They described that the programme introduced methods for piloting with municipalities that could inform future collaborations with companies such as Accenture or Cisco.

4.3 Effectiveness

4.3.1 Completion Rate of Activities and Outputs Against Set Targets

Completion of activities varied across business teams due to operational, environmental and administrative conditions.

Solinas reported that the required inspection targets were eventually met through a redistribution of field efforts. The team faced delays in Kolhapur because municipal staff did not initially allocate resources needed to provide pipeline access. To address the shortfall, the organisation split its teams across Kolhapur and Bangalore, 9.8 Km in Kolhapur and 6.5 Km in Bengaluru. This adjustment enabled them to meet the cumulative target.



Transwaters experienced delays caused by site flooding, prolonged agreement finalisation with the utility board and the need for civil works before installation. These conditions resulted in missed initial timelines. The organisation revised its target from 2000 kilolitres to 1800 kilolitres and achieved the revised quantity once operations stabilised.

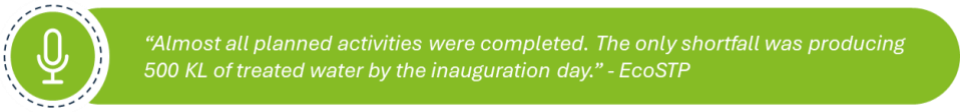
EF Polymer reported that heavy rainfall in Rajasthan and Gujarat affected its ability to demonstrate product performance within the intended timelines. Although the organisation did not complete the full planned acreage, it conducted implementation over 880 acres, as opposed to 1000 acres, and collected data on water use and yield with 100 model farmers whose impact was the base for estimating overall impact. The team described achieving its planned field deployments to the extent possible under the conditions.

Cultyvate reported that it met its primary activities through process-oriented adjustments, optimization of sensor and deployment of the same across a larger group of farmers, leading to water savings. The team refined the sensor model and resolved issues related to field officer visits and farmer interaction. Internal technological milestones were completed within the programme period.

Smarterra reported slight delays in meeting certain milestones. Its goals included achieving continuous water supply, securing a follow-on contract and establishing templates for replication. The team achieved most operational milestones but did not fully complete the contracting milestones during the

programme window due to procurement timelines and delays. Despite this, the municipal corporation acknowledged the improvements and engaged with the team on post pilot pathways.

EcoSTP reported that almost all planned activities were completed. The only shortfall occurred on the inauguration day, when the system did not reach the targeted volume of treated water due to lower sewage inflow caused by reduced building occupancy. The organisation reported that this limitation was contextual rather than technical and stated that the system subsequently exceeded the original output targets over time. Product development, implementation, intellectual property filing and operational demonstration were completed within the programme period.



The incubation team stated that programme level activities were generally completed. Multistage evaluation, due diligence and onboarding were delivered as planned. Field implementation progressed with adaptations, and monitoring occurred through regular review calls. Minor deviations occurred when the second-year cohort expanded from two startups to three and when funding disbursement for one startup was delayed due to an extended verification process.

4.3.2 Perceived Value Among Stakeholders

Stakeholders reported varied forms of value generated through the programme, including operational learning, market exposure, technical improvement and improved clarity on impact.

Solinas described the value of expert panels, tailored guidance and facilitation for municipal engagement as highly beneficial. The programme supported entry into Kolhapur, which created a pathway for commercial discussions. The team also viewed the structured approach to impact reporting as beneficial.

Transwaters valued the support provided by Villgro in maintaining alignment with milestones and preventing a loss of focus amidst competing business priorities. The team also appreciated the opportunity to work closely with the Bengaluru water utility and noted that senior sector experts contributed to their understanding of wider market potential.

EF Polymer viewed the structured monitoring and impact reporting processes as helpful in strengthening internal systems and investor communication. The team described the programme as their most detailed experience in understanding customer behaviour and impact outcomes. They also reported that the credibility associated with Titan was well received by farmers and stakeholders.

Cultyvate reported that the hands-on support from the programme team helped identify and address operational gaps. The team valued field visits that highlighted issues in data collection and farmer interaction. These insights informed improvements in their technological model and delivery mechanism.

Smarterra valued the opportunity to work directly with a municipal body for the first time, with grant amount playing an important role in enabling the same. The organisation described the programme as helpful in making operational adjustments and providing early visibility within government circles

through indirect communication channels. Diagnostic discussions helped them clarify outreach strategies.

EcoSTP identified grant funding as the most valuable component of the programme. While some training sessions were useful, the organisation stated that funding enabled real execution, including manufacturing, installation and proof of concept. Feedback from government stakeholders and partners was reported as positive, particularly regarding the ability to treat sewage without electricity or chemicals. The programme was perceived as enabling tangible outcomes rather than theoretical learning.

The incubation team noted that the programme improved the capabilities of business teams to deliver in complex environments and deliver lighthouse systemic solutions. They observed improved confidence among founders in engaging with municipal systems, strengthened processes for impact measurement and better understanding of scale pathways.

4.3.3 Challenges Faced in Achieving Objectives and Best Practices Across DI Awards 2.0

Challenges

Business teams experienced a range of challenges related to government procedures, environmental conditions, operational constraints and data collection.

Solinas reported inconsistent municipal engagement, especially at junior administrative levels. Delays occurred because field staff did not prioritise providing access to pipelines.

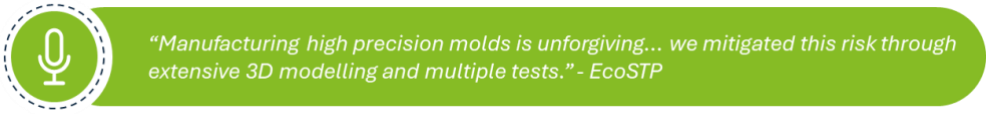
Transwaters faced administrative delays during agreement finalisation and encountered flooding at the installation site, which slowed initial implementation.

EF Polymer described climatic shocks, particularly heavy rainfall, which disrupted water saving demonstrations and created difficulty in achieving controlled field conditions. Farmer behaviour also reduced predictability, as some farmers applied more water whenever rainfall was available.

Cultyvate encountered challenges linked to field officer turnover, inconsistent data collection and the need to train farmers regularly. The team reported that unplanned field visits by multiple stakeholders sometimes created competing priorities.

Smarterra faced delays due to municipal procurement processes and the need to align multiple parties around its systemic solution. Shipping delays for pressure sensors also slowed progress.

The primary challenge faced by EcoSTP was technical rather than financial. Manufacturing high-precision moulds carried irreversible risk, which required extensive modelling, testing and iterative design prior to final production. The organisation mitigated this risk through advanced 3D modelling and repeated testing. This approach was described as essential to successful delivery and avoided rework during later stages.



Best Practices

A set of practices emerged across stakeholders, which contributed to improved delivery.

Structured diagnostic sessions helped business teams articulate operational needs and allowed the incubation team to curate relevant experts and mentors. Cost sharing in technical assistance ensured organisational ownership while enabling access to specialised support. Regular monitoring calls with donors improved responsiveness to emerging challenges and facilitated timely decision making.

Field visits conducted jointly with business teams provided practical insight into implementation issues and informed adjustments to technologies and processes. Adaptation of targets and geographies, such as Solinas's redistribution of efforts or Transwaters's revised water quantity target, helped maintain progress despite external constraints.

Finally, the emphasis on impact reporting and milestone tracking strengthened organisational discipline and helped build clarity on the contribution of solutions to water outcomes.

The incubation team identified external disruptions such as geopolitical tensions, government officer transfers and limited readiness in some municipalities. They also described the difficulty of defining water saving methodologies that suited varied solutions.

4.4 Efficiency

4.4.1 Financial Utilisation Rate of the DI Awards 2.0 Initiative

Business teams and the incubation team reported that financial utilisation generally followed planned allocations, with funds used for implementation, technical assistance and operational needs associated with the pilots. In FY 24-25, a cumulative amount of INR 2,70,00,000 was disbursed over two tranche's viz. INR 1,50,00,000 in July 2024 and INR 1,20,00,000 on march 2025. The CA audited utilization certificate reported 100% utilization as per grant MoU.

Business teams indicated that they used their grants for direct project activities such as deployment, field operations, technological refinement and data collection. Transwaters described that disbursement occurred without difficulty and stated that its team had experience with previous installations, which enabled planned use of funds for equipment and implementation. Cultyvate noted that funds supported both technology adjustments and field processes. EF Polymer used its grant for farmer engagement, field deployment and data capture, including tools for monitoring water use. Smartterra leveraged the funds to demonstrate viability of their software services and analytics based on existing measurement instruments and newly deployed one's.

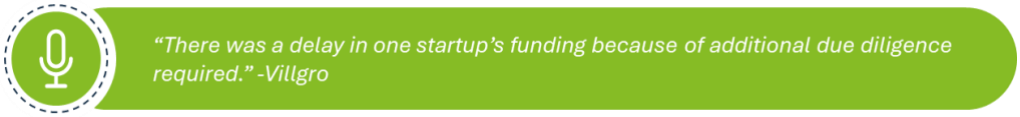
The incubation team explained that most startups followed a reimbursement-based model to ensure alignment between expenditure and milestones. They reported that funds were largely utilised as planned, with only minor variations where one startup requested slightly less than the allocated

amount. They also noted that the allocation structure included shared cost arrangements for technical assistance to maintain ownership among business teams while ensuring access to specialised support.

4.4.2 Financial Process Delays and Causes

Instances of delay were limited and largely procedural. Transwaters reported no challenges with fund disbursement, and Solinas did not mention delays related to financial flows. Most business teams indicated that funding was available in time for implementation. EcoSTP reported significant delays in grant disbursement due to extensive documentation requirements, audits and verification processes. The final tranche of funding was received much later than planned. Despite these delays, EcoSTP continued implementation to meet programme timelines. The structuring of the tranches enabled continuity of operations.

The incubation team reported two specific causes of delay. First, in the second programme year, funding disbursement for one startup was held temporarily due to an extended verification process linked to an affiliation with a former Titan employee. Second, the first tranche for that year reached slightly later than expected, although the team did not report major disruptions arising from this delay. They noted that such delays were manageable due to the reimbursement model, which allowed implementation to progress while financial processes were being completed.



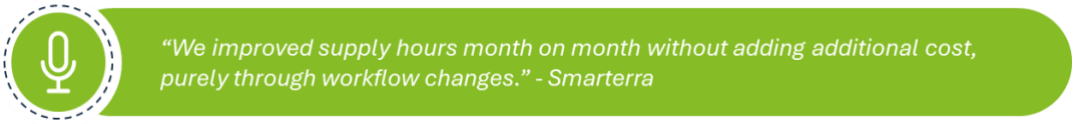
4.4.3 Instances of Scaling Within Existing Resources

Several business teams demonstrated scaling or operational expansion within existing resource envelopes.

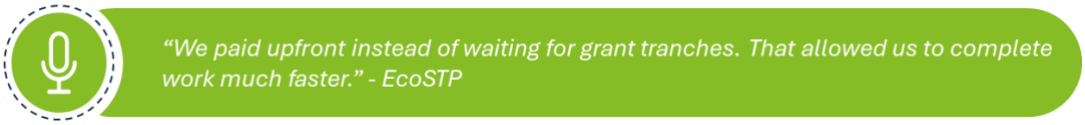
Solinas addressed initial delays in Kolhapur by distributing work across two cities. The team added a parallel deployment in Bangalore so that the cumulative inspection target could be met. This adjustment represented a form of scaling within the same financial resources because the additional activities remained within the existing grant allocation.

Transwaters reported that once installation was complete, demand for treated water exceeded initial expectations. The team discovered new users such as construction companies and supplied water without requiring additional financial inputs beyond operational costs that had already been planned.

Smarterra described that monthly improvements in supply hours and reductions in water losses were achieved through adjustments to workflows, pressure management and leak detection, all within the initial resource allocation for analytics and field deployment. These operational gains required no additional grant funding and relied instead on optimisation of existing tools and teams.



EcoSTP demonstrated scaling by advancing implementation using internal funds rather than waiting for grant disbursement. The organisation paid upfront for high-precision manufacturing and infrastructure work that government partners could not execute within required timelines. This decision enabled faster completion and allowed EcoSTP to exceed initial delivery expectations, albeit with increased financial pressure



The incubation team noted that multi stakeholder coordination, including the introduction of diagnostic panels and shared cost technical support, enabled wider reach without additional financial requirements. They also stated that the cohort selection in the second year increased from two to three startups without expanding the financial pool, which required reallocating funds by project rather than by enterprise.

4.4.4 Efficiency of Delivery and Management Processes in Converting Inputs into Outputs

Business teams described varied experiences in delivery efficiency, influenced by municipal coordination, environmental factors, stakeholder readiness and internal team processes.

Solinas reported that administrative delays related to municipal cooperation slowed initial progress. Junior staff did not prioritise providing pipeline access, which delayed inspections. However, the team stated that the structure of documentation and guidance from the programme team prevented duplication and reduced administrative burden.Transwaters cited external delays, including flooding at the installation site and extended negotiations with the utility board. Despite these challenges, the team reported smooth coordination with programme partners, including periodic field visits and milestone reviews that kept the implementation aligned with expected progress.

EF Polymer described that rainfall affected field conditions, which limited the programme's ability to demonstrate product performance as originally planned. The team faced challenges in collecting standardised data due to farmers' water application practices. They noted that the programme supported them as they adapted their data collection methods to the contextual limitations. Cultyvate reported that managing field officers and conducting frequent training sessions created operational load. They noted that unplanned stakeholder visits occasionally disrupted schedules. However, the team also indicated that the programme helped them identify these issues early, which led to adjustments that improved data collection and field deployment.

Smarterra reported that procurement timelines and alignment between stakeholders affected their ability to meet all targets within the programme period. They also described delays in receiving hardware components. The team acknowledged that the programme structure helped maintain progress through regular review and flexibility in adapting goals. Coordination among partners was reported as largely smooth. The main inefficiency identified was repeated questioning by multiple auditors, which increased administrative burden. Apart from this duplication, EcoSTP described execution as focused and delivery-oriented, with adaptations made to maintain progress despite financial delays.

The incubation team stated that fortnightly coordination calls with the donor enabled timely monitoring of challenges and adjustments to plans. They highlighted that although some delays occurred due to officer transfers, geopolitical conditions and municipal readiness, the programme's management approach allowed for problem solving without major disruption to overall delivery. They also noted that multi-tier due diligence, milestone-based disbursement and field visits supported effective conversion of inputs into outputs.

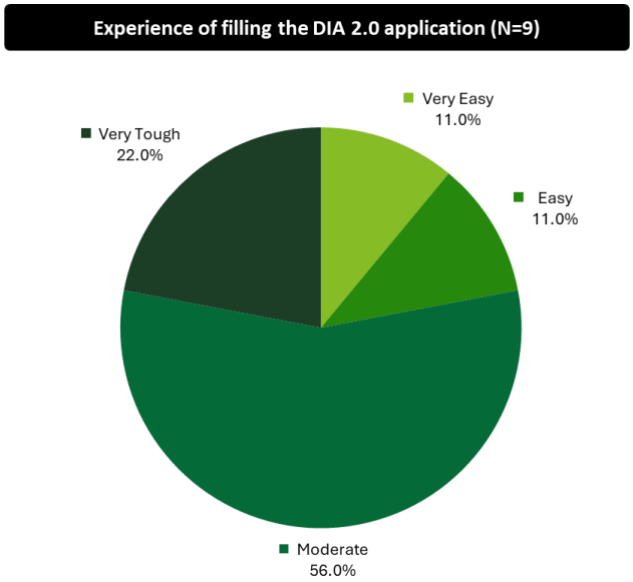


Figure 12: Perceived experience of filling DI Awards 2.0 application

56% respondents, from the finalist business cohort, reported neither troubles nor found it easy to go through the application process, with 2 respondents found it easier while two reported very tough. This may be taken as an indication of balanced application process rigour, which can be continued, with contextual tweaks as per the next cycle of DI Awards.

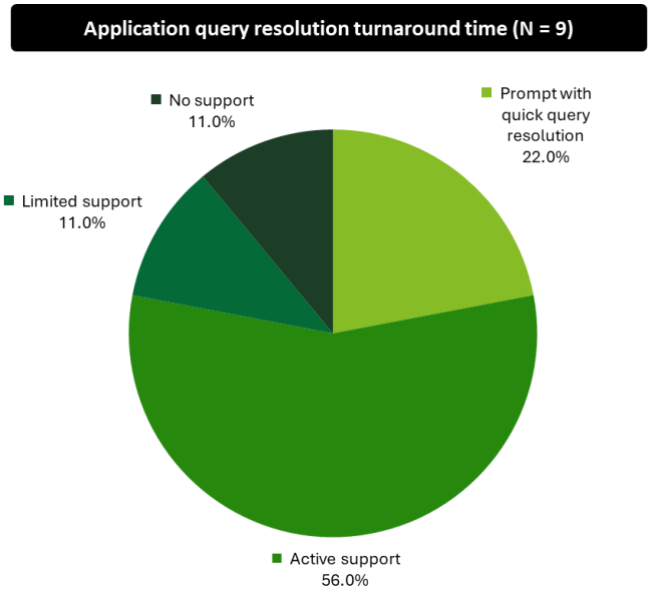


Figure 13: Experience on query resolution turnaround time

56% of respondents reported the query resolution to be prompt and 22% reported to have gotten active support through the application process. The same may be taken as an indication of active query resolution, a practice that may be retained in the future editions as well, enabling the applicants to put their best foot forward.

4.5 Sustainability

4.5.1 Continuity of Awards and Continuity of Social Benefits

Business teams described several ways in which ongoing work was expected to continue after the programme ended. These reflections focused on continued engagement with municipalities, retention of operational improvements and replication of pilot learnings.

Solinas reported that the pilot in Kolhapur created the basis for continued engagement, with discussions underway for a long-term arrangement following the programme period. The team viewed the pilot as a case study that municipalities could use to understand the potential of robotic inspection and noted that such reference points could support continued activities in other cities. EF Polymer stated that work in Jaisalmer provided a foundation for replicating their approach in regions with similar environmental conditions and reported continued interest from farmers after the intervention.

Transwaters explained that the Bangalore demonstration created a pathway for potential expansion across multiple sewage treatment plants managed by the utility. The team noted that the utility board renewed the memorandum of understanding for an additional year following the three-month initial assessment period. Smarterra stated that the continuous supply demonstration in Khambhat positioned the team to engage with nearby states and municipalities. They noted that they were preparing to present the results to officials in Telangana.

EcoSTP stated that its product, intellectual property portfolio, revenue model and internal research capacity supported long-term sustainability. The organisation expressed confidence that demand for decentralised sewage treatment would persist due to structural limitations of centralised systems in India. Internal technical capacity and ownership of core technology were identified as key factors supporting continuity.

The incubation team stated that they aimed to create lighthouse projects that municipalities could reference while making decisions. They explained that the programme supported visibility among government officials and described post programme discussions with state departments that were considering further engagement with selected business teams. They also described emerging knowledge sharing with external partners interested in water sector interventions.

4.5.2 Sphere of Influence for Ecosystem Development and Observable Changes

Business teams and the incubation team described a variety of ecosystem level effects, although the scope varied across contexts.

Solinas stated that the programme helped them communicate the societal value of robotic inspection more clearly and gave them credentials that could support tender processes in additional municipalities. They noted that the Kolhapur project improved administrative awareness of proactive pipeline maintenance.

Transwaters reported that the programme increased interest among utility officials in recycled wastewater applications. They highlighted that the demonstration prompted consideration by the utility

to scale the model across several plants. Cultyvate stated that the programme prompted greater awareness among partners regarding sensor-based irrigation approaches and described emerging engagement with large agribusiness organisations and government institutions.

Smarterra reported that the demonstration in Khambhat showed local governments a practical route to transition from intermittent to continuous supply. The team highlighted that senior officials recognised the intervention, and this exposure facilitated new outreach to other states. EF Polymer stated that the project enhanced understanding of water saving approaches among farmers in drought affected regions and contributed to increased demand for their product after the pilot.

The incubation team described broader ecosystem effects through collaboration with entities such as the National Institute of Urban Affairs. They noted that these engagements aimed to increase exposure of water related innovations to city level administrations. They also described cross learning activities with corporate foundations that were exploring similar incubation models.

4.5.3 Post Pilot Phase Support Systems

Business teams described several forms of ongoing support or linkage opportunities after the programme period.

The incubation team stated that they continued to support businesses through other programmes, particularly those positioned for expansion into new markets. They reported that one agricultural enterprise was being supported through an additional incubation track to strengthen last mile distribution. They also described plans to use blended finance mechanisms to help startups combine philanthropic and commercial capital.

Solinas and Smarterra described ongoing discussions facilitated by the programme team with municipalities for potential long term arrangements. EF Polymer reported that the structure of impact reporting and tracking introduced by the programme continued to guide their internal practices.

Cultyvate stated that interactions facilitated during the programme created ongoing access to senior experts and institutional partners. Transwaters noted that visibility generated during implementation created prospects for pitching to additional organisations linked to the programme team.

EcoSTP reported that plans to scale the solution to rural schools and villages were constrained by the absence of a second phase of grant funding. The organisation noted that private investors were generally unwilling to fund sanitation projects involving government or rural contexts, making grant support critical for continued social impact. Identified risks included regulatory changes and material price fluctuations, although these were considered unlikely to undermine long-term demand.

The incubation team also stated that they intended to continue informal support in the form of introductions, policy engagement and participation in new sector initiatives. They reported that learnings from the programme were being incorporated into other water related workstreams, ensuring continued relevance for participating businesses.

4.5.4 Capacity and Ownership Displayed by Business Teams to Sustain Programme Induced Changes

Business teams demonstrated varying forms of capacity and ownership that supported sustainability of outcomes.

Solinas showed operational ownership by redesigning field strategies, splitting teams across locations and pursuing commercial follow-on contracts independently. They also adopted structured impact reporting methods introduced during the programme.

Transwaters demonstrated capacity through operational independence after installation, daily management of their plant and ability to secure interest from new industrial buyers. They described a pricing model that allowed continued operation without reliance on external subsidy.

EF Polymer displayed ownership through refinement of their methodology, independent expansion into new areas and continued engagement with farmer clusters formed during the project. They stated that the case study from the programme was being used as a foundation for entry into other regions, including international markets.

Cultyvate demonstrated ownership by independently addressing field deployment issues, redesigning hardware and refining internal processes for data capture. These adjustments were sustained after the programme. Smarterra continued working on municipal procurement pathways, expanded outreach to other states and used the programme's demonstration results to support policy facing discussions.

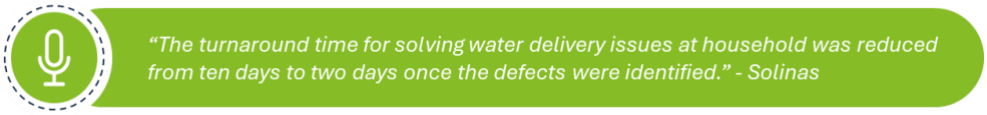
The incubation team stated that the startups had shown the capacity to engage with government systems and manage scale related challenges. They viewed the businesses as having developed stronger internal systems, improved impact articulation and a greater ability to sustain market relationships that were initiated during the programme.

4.6 Impact

4.6.1 Impact on Applicants, Beneficiaries and Stakeholders, and on Water Focused Areas in Target Geographies

Business teams reported impacts across operational outcomes, beneficiary experience and municipal engagement. These impacts varied by solution type and context of deployment.

Solinas reported that pipeline inspections in Kolhapur and Bangalore enabled the detection of defects that were resolved more quickly than before. They noted that turnaround time for addressing issues had reduced from ten days to two days. The organisation stated that community level benefits included improved continuity and cleanliness of water supply in areas where inspections were conducted. They also highlighted that municipal engineers gained clearer visibility into network conditions, which supported decision making.



Transwaters reported that the reuse of treated wastewater in Bangalore created new supply channels for construction and industrial users. They stated that the intervention reduced dependence on freshwater and created employment for tanker operators who transported the recovered water. They also observed that utility officials showed increased interest in scaling the model across additional sewage treatment plants.

EF Polymer reported that deployment across 880 acres resulted in measurable impacts on water conservation and agricultural outcomes. They indicated that farmers recorded water savings of about eighteen percent, along with yield improvements between fifteen and twenty percent in specific crops. They also observed changes in soil characteristics such as increased organic carbon content and improved root development in treatment plots. The intervention increased demand among farmers, with several requesting continued access to the product. EF Polymer also noted that the pilot strengthened farmer understanding of water saving agriculture in drought affected regions.

Cultyvate described that their work supported more efficient irrigation through improved water level monitoring. They noted that farmers reported reduced fungal issues and slight improvements in yield consistency when guidance was followed. The programme also supported the introduction of a redesigned sensor model that improved field level usability.

Smarterra reported that the pilot in Khambhat reduced water losses from seventy percent to fifteen percent and enabled a transition from intermittent to continuous water supply. They highlighted that leak detection, network repairs and pressure management activities created operational benefits for the municipal body. Senior officials recognised the improvements and expressed interest in expanding the approach.

EcoSTP reported multiple outcomes, including development of a new product, filing of intellectual property and a near doubling of revenue. The operational system treated sewage and enabled water reuse for applications such as gardening and flushing. The organisation tracked impact using a Theory of Change framework and reported savings in electricity use, coal consumption and carbon emissions. It stated that its systems monitored large volumes of reclaimed water and contributed to reductions in energy demand associated with conventional treatment systems.

The incubation team stated that the overall cohort achieved water savings higher than initial targets, driven partly by the scale of agricultural interventions. They also reported that government officials observed the benefits of the pilots and communicated these during programme events. The team indicated that the improved delivery mechanisms adopted by Smarterra and SOLINAS contributed to strengthened engagement with municipal bodies.

4.6.2 Impact of Incubation and Grants on Applicants and Changes Introduced in Business Models

Business teams described several changes arising from incubation and grant support. These changes influenced business processes, solution design, market positioning and long-term strategic planning.

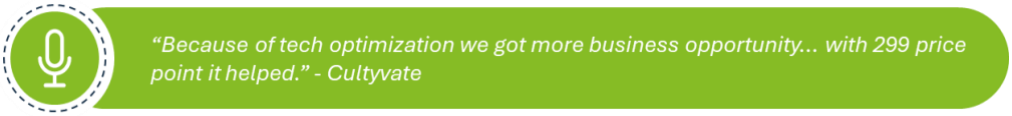
Solinas reported that the programme helped them articulate impact more clearly and introduced structured impact assessment methods. The team refined its communication with municipal partners and developed processes that supported future tendering. The grant facilitated entry into new geographies, which they stated would contribute to a more diversified operational model.

Transwaters stated that incubation support encouraged them to experiment with municipal applications for their model, which they had been hesitant to pursue earlier due to cost and procedural concerns.

The validation achieved through the pilot allowed them to reposition their model for broader urban use and open discussions with other utilities. Programme guidance also reinforced internal discipline in meeting milestones.

EF Polymer described that impact reporting requirements helped them formalise their measurement methodology and use a volume-based approach instead of previous number-based approaches. The team used these methods during investor engagement and noted that the programme contributed to closing their next funding round. They also introduced an expanded product portfolio and planned to replicate the Jaisalmer model in international markets.

Cultyvate stated that insights from field visits helped them redesign their sensor technology, reduce hardware cost and simplify data collection. This modification shifted aspects of their business model towards more accessible pricing. The team also refined internal processes for field officer oversight and data verification.



Smarterra reported that the programme enabled them to pilot directly with a municipal body and adjust their model to incorporate more field execution alongside analytics. They stated that the results strengthened their ability to approach other states and municipal agencies. The programme also influenced their understanding of procurement requirements and shaped their strategy for government entry.

Participation in DI Awards 2.0 resulted in a shift towards a product-centric business model. EcoSTP expanded its research and development activities, invested in new bacterial strains and prioritised product sales and deployment. The organisation stated that this shift would not have occurred without the programme, as earlier efforts were focused on research and concept validation rather than commercial execution.

The incubation team explained that the programme helped businesses strengthen capabilities required for scale, particularly in engaging with government systems. They reported that several organisations used the programme outcomes as reference points to approach new partners. They also noted that the pilot structures, monitoring systems and impact methodologies introduced during incubation were retained by the teams after the programme.

Section 6: Observations and Recommendations

4. Observations and Recommendations

4.1 Cross-Cutting Recommendations

Observation 1: Relevance – DI Awards 2.0 was relevant in intent and design, but relevance in practice varied due to context specific operational constraints.

DI Awards 2.0 was relevant in addressing clear gaps faced by early-stage water sector enterprises. The programme's focus on municipal pilots, impact methodology, product refinement and government engagement aligned well with the needs expressed by business teams. Enterprises valued the structured impact frameworks, technical panels and opportunities to enter new geographies. However, practical relevance varied across teams due to factors such as fluctuating municipal engagement, administrative delays, unpredictable field conditions and, in some cases, limited alignment between programme timelines and government readiness. Relevance was strongest where programme activities aligned closely with field realities and where business teams were able to adapt operational plans to shifting conditions. In other cases, relevance was moderated by contextual constraints rather than by programme intent.

Recommendation: Strengthen contextual readiness and operational fit to ensure consistent relevance across enterprises.

- Conduct pre-pilot readiness assessments with municipalities or field partners to identify procedural, administrative or environmental constraints that could affect implementation.
- Develop a structured orientation on expected government processes and constraints to help enterprises better anticipate operational bottlenecks.

Observation 2: Coherence – DI Awards 2.0 was logically coherent with national water sustainability priorities and Titan's ethos, but operational coherence depended largely on partner execution rather than formalised integration.

The programme was coherent with broader national and global water-management priorities, including wastewater reuse, agricultural water conservation and urban water efficiency. Coherence with Titan's ethos was observed in the emphasis on design integrity, sustainability and problem-solving, although direct engagement with Titan was limited after the initial orientation. At the ecosystem level, coherence operated through indirect connections rather than formal linkages. While several enterprises participated in external incubators and sectoral programmes, DI Awards 2.0 functioned as an enabler of execution and real-world testing rather than as a structured component of the wider innovation ecosystem.

Recommendation: Establish clearer and more deliberate linkages with ecosystem actors and Titan's strategic positioning to strengthen overall coherence.

- Create lightweight coordination pathways with select government schemes, research institutions or water sector platforms to support continuity beyond the pilot period.
- Identify two or three ecosystem partners for post programme handoffs, enabling clearer integration.

Observation 3: Effectiveness – DI Awards 2.0 delivered key activities and generated tangible value for enterprises, but effectiveness varied due to uneven field conditions and external dependencies.

Most enterprises completed core activities such as product development, pilot execution, impact reporting and market engagement. The incubation structure, diagnostic panels and milestone monitoring supported timely delivery for several teams. However, effectiveness varied across pilots due to factors such as administrative delays in municipal processes, environmental shocks affecting agricultural demonstrations and infrastructure readiness constraints. Some enterprises exceeded planned outcomes by independently investing additional resources to maintain timelines. Perceived value was high where the programme enabled new products, municipal validation or structured impact frameworks. Challenges included supply chain delays, data collection barriers, limited municipal coordination and variance in training utility.

Recommendation: Improve effectiveness by enhancing predictability, strengthening operational support.

- Introduce problem specific implementation playbooks for municipal, agricultural or hardware focused pilots to reduce variability in execution.

Observation 4: Efficiency – The programme used resources fully, but financial processes and delivery pacing were uneven due to audit requirements, contextual delays and external dependencies.

Enterprises reported full utilisation of funds and effective use of human resources. However, delays in grant disbursement occurred due to extensive documentation, audits and multi-stage verifications. Some enterprises accelerated implementation using internal funds. Efficiency was also influenced by government tender timelines and varying public infrastructure readiness.

Recommendation: Strengthen efficiency by simplifying financial processes and establishing clearer pacing structures.

- Streamline verification and audit processes by consolidating document requirements and reducing duplication across review teams.

Observation 5: Impact – DI Awards 2.0 generated clear product, operational and market level impacts, though long term pathways depended on post-programme linkages and contextual uptake.

Enterprises reported measurable improvements in operational outcomes such as reduced water losses, improved agricultural yields, increased water reuse and strengthened municipal processes. New products, intellectual property, expanded geographies and improved revenue performance were reported as direct outputs. Impact methodologies introduced by the programme improved the ability of enterprises to articulate water savings, user outcomes and environmental benefits. Several pilots created lighthouse demonstrations that influenced municipal interest and improved credibility in government engagements. However, long term impact was dependent on follow on government decisions, investment readiness and enterprise led continuation of activities.

Recommendation: Strengthen impact continuity by supporting visibility, documentation and selective deepening of high potential models.

- Develop standardised impact case studies for each pilot to support enterprise use in municipal or investor engagements. Encourage systematic documentation of impact data during and after the programme to create clear evidence of change.

4.2 Case-Based Recommendations

The recommendations listed out above capture dominant patterns observed across the portfolio. The following section presents outlier insights drawn from specific cases, offering more detailed, case-based explanations of how certain issues manifested across business contexts.

4.2.1 Business Continuity Planning

As projects are implemented in collaboration with ULBs (Urban Local Bodies), there is a risk of impermanence arising from factors such as leadership changes, dependence on ULBs for infrastructure/equipment, and reliability of post-grant market adoption. It is in this context that planning for continued operations becomes a pre-requisite. The following cases highlight risk factors that may hinder continuity:

Cases of Continuity Risk

- Boson white water's treatment plants are set up on land allocated by the BWSSB (Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board), which in turn is dependent on renewal of contracts. A plan for scenarios in which renewal is not granted was under-planned for. Such scenarios pose risks to continued operations since changes in ULB leadership could block continued renewal of contracts.
- Similarly, the sensors deployed by Smarterra in the Khambam municipality appear as one-time input cost to diagnose problems in the municipal water supply system. However, planning for the scenario where the ULB does not continue to work with Smarterra implies handover of the sensors, which are costly, and would require Smarterra to incur the cost again for implementation. Such scenarios demonstrate repeat cost implications which the grantee could offset with additional grants, company capital infusion, or by convincing future ULB partners to invest; planning for such scenarios is not evident.
- EF Polymers implementation was product and service-oriented, the cost of which was offset through the grant to build a case study of their solution working in a drought prone area. However, expansion and continued operations depended on farmers' interest to take on EF Polymer in the future.
- Ecostp focused on building and testing a deep-tech product. Here, Titan's role was largely limited to financial oversight rather than technical or business support. While this enabled proof-of-concept development, an explicit roadmap for scalability beyond the pilot phase was not planned for; in the absence of this, continuity depended on Ecostp's internal capacity and resources, which did not emerge as a structured plan rather as options that could be pursued.

While the ULB based engagements serve as lighthouse projects, their continuity is highly dependent on ULB's continued interest in implementing solutions. Strategies on how to become institutional partners or offsetting risks for continued interventions need to be developed, especially in cases of high-cost infrastructure being deployed. Similarly, for products or service expansion-based investments, where investments are utilised to generate case studies, emphasis should be on how the proof of concept will lead to continued expansion of offering being supported under the grant.

Investment leads to complete ownership of investment output:

SOLINAs and Cultyvate demonstrate better ownership control as investment were directed towards products, with repeatable use, within ULBs or last mile beneficiaries. SOLINAs procurement of robotic pipeline analysis equipment can be implemented across geographies using the same set of procured equipment. Cultyvate optimized cost of production for their sensors, which made the product more accessible to beneficiaries, in turn enabling scale in their operations. These grant investments demonstrate higher control and replication of invested amounts and may have better future for continuity.

Recommendations for Business Continuity Planning

- Basis the nature of investment done with the grant money, risk categorization may be employed for business continuity planning.
- Investments dependent on ULBs or third-party approvals may garner higher continuity risk rating unless, 5–6-year approvals granted by third party (ULBs).
- Investments directed towards optimizing existing product costs or increasing offerings, may garner lower risk ratings.
- Basis the assigned risk ratings conversations on strategies for business continuity may be planned, with clear intention on how long the returns from grant are expected (what is the return drop off point).
- Continued check ins should be established with monitoring of returns or documenting growth story of grantee's, based on milestones that are decided during business continuity engagements done during grant period.
- Grant life cycle may also be considered to expanded beyond just investment period to 3 years post investment completion.

4.2.2 Moving to platform-based strategy, building on grant making initiative:

- Titan is well-positioned to initiate a transition towards becoming a platform that mainstreams social ventures as solutions for a sustainable future.
- Engagements for curating a network of solutions, capital providers, and technical and business advisors should be initiated to launch the Titan platform for sustainable solutions. Findings i.e. learnings, challenges, and best practices should be documented regularly to create a compendium or knowledge repository that the platform can leverage in the future. This literature may inform operational principles for each stakeholder group who should be part of the network.
- Advisory services or partnerships could be formed through the DIA team to build network relations with capital providing entities. While the grant-based approach will contribute to building solutions, business and incubation networks, efforts may also be directed towards positioning Titan as a contributor to events aligned with its platform-development strategy i.e. India Net Zero Forum, Municipalika, AVPN Global Gathering, EAW Global Aqua Expo, Bharat Sustainability Expo, etc.
- Efforts to become a conduit for knowledge sharing across organisations and international borders would further enable the transition towards a platform-based approach.
- Organizations such as AVPN and its associated network platforms, Impact Europe, GIIN, EdelGive, etc. may be studied to decode a maturity framework that enables Titan to build a similar platform.

Section 7: Conclusions and Way Forward

7. Conclusion and Way Forward

The Titan DI Awards 2.0 represents Titan Company Limited's commitment to advancing design-led social innovation as a pathway for systemic change. Anchored in Titan's CSR philosophy and its belief in design as a transformative force, the DI Awards supports mature enterprises to convert validated solutions into measurable social and environmental outcomes at scale. This signals Titan's intent to strengthen the social innovation ecosystem through building capabilities, credibility and pathways.

Across the OECD-DAC criteria, the assessment finds that DI Awards 2.0 demonstrates strong alignment with Titan's design-led sustainability ethos and broader national water priorities. Programme coherence was evident at the level of intent but depended largely on partner and enterprise execution rather than on formalised integration with government schemes or ecosystem platforms. As a result, continuity and ecosystem linkage outcomes differed across enterprises.

In terms of effectiveness, DI Awards 2.0 delivered tangible outputs, including pilots, refined products and services, and emerging impact frameworks. Variations in effectiveness were largely driven by field conditions, infrastructure readiness, and administrative dependencies external to the programme. Structured incubation support and milestone monitoring enabled several enterprises to adapt implementation strategies and achieve outcomes despite these constraints.

Efficiency was achieved in terms of full financial utilisation, with resources directed towards implementation-critical activities. At the same time, delivery pacing was uneven due to audit requirements, verification processes, and contextual delays, occasionally affecting predictability of implementation.

The programme generated measurable product, operational, and market-level impacts, particularly in water conservation, reuse, and system efficiency. Longer-term outcomes remain dependent on post-pilot uptake, procurement decisions, and follow-on support, indicating the need for stronger positioning beyond the pilot phase.

Future iterations of DI Awards 2.0 can strengthen consistency and sustainability of outcomes through focused refinements. Pre-pilot readiness assessments, alongside structured orientation on government processes, would improve contextual fit and reduce implementation bottlenecks. Programme coherence can be strengthened by establishing lightweight coordination pathways with select government schemes or research institutions and identifying a limited set of post-programme ecosystem partners.

Effectiveness can be improved through problem-specific implementation playbooks, particularly for pilots involving municipal systems. Efficiency gains can be realised by streamlining financial verification and audit processes to reduce duplication. To support longer-term impact, the programme should develop standardised pilot impact case studies and encourage systematic documentation to enable replication, policy engagement, and investor discussions.

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Annexures

Annexure 1: Design Impact Awards 2.0 – Survey Tools

1.1 Finalist Businesses

SECTION 1: General Information

Question	Response Type
Name	Open ended
Role in Business	Open ended
Business Name	Open ended
Incorporation Month and Name	MM/YYYY
HQ State	Drop Down
HQ District	Drop Down
Business Coverage	Qualitative i.e. Pan India, 3 states, 10 cities etc.

SECTION 2: Survey Questionnaire

S. No.	Theme	Questions
1	Relevance	Q1: How relevant were the Design Impact Awards 2.0, considering the theme for water, for your business? (single select) • Very relevant, we met all application requirements. • Somewhat relevant, some effort was required to meet listed application requirements. • Relevant but required effort to meet the application requirements. Q2: Are there other opportunities, specific to your business, to raise grants through an awards-based approach? (single select) • Yes • No Q3: Did the application process to the DI Awards 2.0 (water theme) enable value and opportunity towards defining business positioning? (single select) (1 to 5, 1 being no value- we know our business too well and 5 being immense value revealed bright spots in business positioning)
2	Coherence	Q4: Do you believe getting selected for the DI Awards 2.0 Deep Impact Phase would have an impact on your business? (single select) • Yes • No

S. No.	Theme	Questions
		Q4.1: If yes, please share what was the expected business value, beyond mentorship and grant amount? (50 words) Q5: Do you believe DI Awards 2.0 application form requirements were aligned to typical requirements (govt., grant makers, PE firms, banks etc.) for a business of your nature? • Yes • No Q5.1: if no, please share in what way did the application requirements differ from what the ecosystem generally asks for? (50 words)
3	Efficiency	Q6: How was the experience of filling the application form, meeting its requirements, and jury presentations? (single select) (1 being very tough and 5 being very easy) Q7: How would you rate the response time of the DI Awards 2.0 programme team on query resolutions? (single select) (1 being no support and 5 being prompt turnaround with resolution on query)
4	Feedback	Q8: If there is any feedback for the DI Awards 2.0 team, please share

Annexure 2: Design Impact Awards 2.0 – IDI Tools

2.1 Pilot Phase Business Teams

Interviewer Prompt:

Hello! My name is _____.
I am representing Deloitte, which has been engaged by Titan to carry out a research study to understand the impact of Titan's Design Impact initiatives, including the *Design Impact Awards 2.0*.

This discussion is part of a larger study that looks at how Titan's projects have helped communities: particularly in areas like health, education, and well-being. Through this conversation, we hope to understand your experiences as a deep impact phase business team.

Your responses will help us learn how the programme has supported your mission, what challenges you may have faced, and how it can be made even more effective in the future.

I want to assure you that:

- The information you share will be kept strictly confidential and used only for research purposes.
- Your participation is completely voluntary. You may choose not to answer any question or to stop the interview at any time.
- This discussion will take about 30 to 45 minutes. We also seek your permission to record this conversation.

There are no right or wrong answers, we are interested in your honest views and experiences.

Before we begin, do you have any questions or concerns about this discussion? I'll be happy to clarify anything that is unclear.

SECTION 1: General Information

Question	Response Type
1. Name (optional)	Open text
2. Gender	M/F
3. Designation	
4. Business Name/Org Name	_____
5. Organization focusses areas/solutions	
6. (Headquarters)	_____
7. Implementation scale/Coverage	
8. Incorporation Year/Initiation Year	

S. No	Theme	Questions
1.	Program Relevance and Business Fit	• When you got shortlisted for the DI Awards 2.0 Pilot Phase, what challenges or goals were you hoping the program would address for your business? What were your motivations to apply? (An example of a challenge or goal you hoped to address through this program?) • How well did the program's focus and activities align with your business objectives? Describe an instance where the program's content or support either matched or did not match your needs. (For example, was

S. No	Theme	Questions
		there a particular workshop or resource that was relevant (or irrelevant) to what you were trying to achieve? • How well did the selection criteria and process capture the nature of your business? In what ways do you think the criteria captured what's important in your sector, or were there parts that felt out of place? (Which selection factors do you think were most relevant to your work? Were any criteria less relevant? • In what ways has the incubation support (mentoring/training/grants) contributed to your business's growth or development? Can you describe a specific example of how this support helped your business? (Which element of the support had the biggest impact and why?)
2.	Alignment with Broader Goals	• How does participating in this program align with broader priorities, such as national/regional water-management goals or Titan's mission? Can you give an example of a synergy or fit you observed? (For instance, did any national water targets or industry goals come to mind during the program?) • Have you been involved in any other related programs or initiatives in your sector? How did the DI Awards 2.0 program complement or differ from those efforts? (Did any program component remind you of other initiatives (government schemes, NGO projects, etc.) you know of?) • Were you aware of any specific goals or values of the sponsoring organization (Titan) that the program was meant to reflect? Did you notice these in how the program was run? (If you know Titan's mission (e.g. water sustainability), did the program's activities seem to reflect that ethos?)
3.	Efficiency	• In your experience, were the programme activities and milestones completed on time as planned? If not, what were the main reasons for delays? How were they handled? (Programme Activities: screening and selection, grant disbursement, incubation and mentorship support, milestone-based progress tracking, and extended deep impact engagement for select ventures) • How effectively were financial and human resources used during the programme? Were there instances of underspend, overspend, or adjustments? • Did any changes or adaptations made during the programme help improve the speed or quality of delivery? What prompted these changes? • How smooth was coordination between different teams or partners during delivery? Were there any inefficiencies or duplication that affected timelines or costs? • Were there any instances where outputs were scaled up or reached more people than originally planned, without a significant increase in resources? What/Who enabled this?
3.	Implementation & Effectiveness	• To what extent were your planned activities and outputs completed by the end of or during the phase? For targets not fully met, what were the challenges? (Which activities were successfully completed, and what helped you achieve them? What barriers prevented other activities from being completed?)

S. No	Theme	Questions
		• What were the biggest challenges your team faced in carrying out the program, and how did you overcome them? (Can you describe a specific obstacle (e.g. funding, technical issues, staffing) and a strategy or practice your team used to address it?) • How did your team and any partners perceive the value of the program's support and outcomes? What feedback did they give about what was useful or not? (What did participants or partners say they found most beneficial? For example, did they comment on the usefulness of training sessions, technical advice, or the grant funding?)
4.	Impact and Outcomes	• What tangible outcomes have resulted from your participation in this program? For example, have you introduced new products, processes, or partnerships as a result? (Can you give an example of something your business has done differently (e.g. a new service or operational process) because of what you learned or gained?) • What impact, if any, has this program had on the communities or areas you target (especially regarding water resources)? Please provide some examples, if possible. • Has your business model or strategy shifted because of this program? If so, what new methods or approaches have you adopted? (For instance, did you pursue new markets, partnerships, or technologies that you hadn't before? Do you plan to continue these changes going forward?)
5.	Sustainability	• Do you believe your business now has the capacity to sustain the changes made through this program after it ends? Why or why not? (What internal resource (skills, team members, processes) have you put in place to keep things going? Are there any concerns about sustaining these efforts?) • What plans or structures have you set up to continue the progress after the program ends? Are there partnerships, funding plans, or policies in place to support ongoing work? (For example, have you budgeted for these activities in the future, sought new investors, or formalized partnerships to carry on the work?) • What risks or challenges could threaten the sustainability of the program's results, and what gives you confidence that these results will endure? (External factors (like market or policy changes) or internal ones (like staffing) – how might they affect your ability to maintain the outcomes?)

2.2 Villgro Incubation and Programme Team

Interviewer Prompt:

Hello! My name is _____.
I am representing Deloitte, which has been engaged by Titan to carry out a research study to understand the impact of Titan's Design Impact initiatives, including the *Design Impact Awards 2.0*.
This discussion is part of a larger study that looks at how Titan's projects have helped communities: particularly in areas like health, education, and well-being. Through this conversation, we hope to understand your experiences as a part of the Villgro incubation and programme team. Your responses will help us learn how the programme has supported its intended mission, what challenges you may have faced, and how it can be made even more effective in the future.
I want to assure you that:

- The information you share will be kept strictly confidential and used only for research purposes.
- Your participation is completely voluntary. You may choose not to answer any question or to stop the interview at any time.
- This discussion will take about 30 to 45 minutes. We also seek your permission to record this conversation.

There are no right or wrong answers, we are interested in your honest views and experiences. Before we begin, do you have any questions or concerns about this discussion? I'll be happy to clarify anything that is unclear.

SECTION 1: General Information

Question	Response Type
1. Name (optional)	Open text
2. Gender	
3. Designation	
4. City/State	_____
5. Time spent in the programme	

S. No	Theme	Questions
1.	Alignment	• In your view, how did the objectives and design of DI Awards 2.0 align with Villgro's and Titan's vision and values — particularly around design, sustainability, and social innovation? • Were there any specific national or sectoral priorities (e.g. water security, entrepreneurship, circular economy) that the programme intentionally aligned with? *(Did this influence how the incubation was structured or delivered?)* • Did DI Awards 2.0 build on or complement other initiatives in the social enterprise or innovation ecosystem that Villgro had been involved with? *(Anything about approach, partnerships, or selection that stood out?)*
2.	Programme Delivery	• What were the core support components delivered by Villgro under DI Awards 2.0, and to what extent were they completed as planned? How were the implementation/programme delivery/support elements identified, what are the needs that were being addressed and how were these needs identified? • What kinds of mentorship or incubation support were most actively used by the cohort? (*variation between teams/gaps in delivery?)*

S. No	Theme	Questions
		• From your perspective, what feedback (formal or informal) did the participating teams give about the value of the incubation and support received? • What were the operational or delivery challenges Villgro faced during the implementation of DI Awards 2.0? *(Consider onboarding delays, grant disbursal, coordination, etc.)* • Can you share delivery practices that worked well- ones you might recommend replicating in future rounds?
3.	Delivery and Utilisation of Resources	• Do you believe the programme's delivery and coordination processes were effective in converting inputs into tangible outputs? If yes, why? • what were the bottlenecks to effective utilization or planned utilization of resources? • Were there any major deviations or shifts from the original implementation plan? *(What triggered these changes, and how were they handled?)* • How would you describe the financial process — particularly related to grant disbursal, partner payments, and activity budgeting? *(Were there any notable delays or friction points?)* • Did Villgro identify any examples of scaling, cost-efficiency, or resource optimisation during the programme? *(Any adaptations that saved time or improved delivery?)* • What were the anticipated risks and mitigation measures, how relevant were the same during implementation?
4.	Impact	• Have the businesses made tangible progress toward solving their target water-linked problem? Have these reached meaningful scale, market traction, or community outcomes because of incubation? • Did Villgro's incubation help improve founders' ability to lead, adapt, or sustain their ventures? Are founders reporting changes in how they think about product-market fit, impact metrics, or scale? • Has Villgro's implementation introduced any best practices for incubating hardware or product-led social innovations? Additionally, has the programme helped surface or shape replicable models in the water-tech impact sector? • Did executing DI Awards 2.0 help Villgro deepen its capability in working with early-stage product innovators? (Has this work enhanced their methodology, visibility, or future partnership prospects or helped it integrate new tools, systems, or approaches into its core operations as a result?)
5.	Sustainability	• From Villgro's standpoint, what role (if any) are you expected to play post–Deep Impact Phase? *(In terms of handholding, alumni support, or linkages to other incubators?)* • Are there any mechanisms or relationships (e.g. government, investor, academic) that were initiated during DI Awards 2.0 that could help sustain the social outcomes of the selected teams? • What, in your view, would be essential to ensure that the gains made through DI Awards 2.0 (especially by the deep impact cohort) are not lost going forward? • Open-Ended: Looking back across the DI Awards 2.0 implementation, what are some best practices you feel worked well — and what are some areas that you think need improvement or redesign in the future? *(across programme design, delivery systems, communications, timelines, or coordination)*

Deloitte.

Together makes progress