

## udyaME Partners with Students from Yale University for Supporting Micro-Entrepreneurs

To enhance the sustainability of rural enterprises it is imperative to provide them with a support system. In this regard, Development Alternatives (DA) is incubating 'udyaME',<sup>1</sup> which uses phygital platforms to create a network of udyame kiosks (physical touch points), complemented by udyame.in – a digital platform. DA has been working closely with Yale School of Management to build udyame as a business model in order to create a robust support network of micro-enterprises and solve their day-to-day challenges as well as help potential entrepreneurs start their enterprises.



Students from the Yale University visited udyame kiosks and interviewed rural entrepreneurs to understand opportunities for entrepreneurship in Mirzapur

This year also, DA and Indian Micro Enterprises Development Foundation (IMEDF) hosted a cohort of five students and a Teaching Assistant from Yale School of Management. The students and the Teaching Assistant are working with DA/ IMEDF to build a comprehensive feedback mechanism that would help in understanding the needs of entrepreneurs and developing products in real time. The students visited India between 9 and 18 January, 2023, and visited Mirzapur in Uttar Pradesh. They met 45+ stakeholders, which included udyame kiosks, entrepreneurs, government stakeholders and ecosystem players, to better understand the need and opportunities for udyame. They presented their findings in a session at Indian Institute of Management Bangalore on 18 January, 2023, which was attended by four other organisations including Xen Farms, Microsave Consulting, Hasten Ventures, and Selco Foundation.

Interesting inputs were received from other Yale teams as well as agencies, which included onboarding strategic partnership to ensure the last mile delivery of such services through the udyame phygital approach. The Yale team will work together with the DA/ IMEDF team to integrate the findings from the field and suggestions of the experts to build the feedback survey by March 2023.

DA and IMEDF aims to strengthen the existing network of entrepreneurs by making it easier for entrepreneurs to access support services locally as well as build a support network for improved peer-to-peer connections.

<sup>1</sup> Set up in 2021, udyame is a 'one-stop shop' to cater to the unmet demands of underserved communities and the entrepreneurs by delivering services through digital medium (website and app) and a physical network of Common Service Centres (CSC) called 'udyaME kiosks'.