

## **Workshop Report: TAGS Ideathon – TAGS for Tribal Women: Digital Skills, Safety, Health and Entrepreneurship**

**Date:** 12th May 2025

**Time:** 12:00 PM – 4:30 PM

**Location:** MPDO Office, Chintapalli, Andhra Pradesh

**Resource Person:** Dr. B. Spoorthi, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Humanities & Social Sciences, NIT Warangal

**Organised in collaboration with:** Vasavya Mahila Mandali

On 12th May 2025, the *TAGS Ideathon* titled “*TAGS for Tribal Women: Digital Skills, Safety, Health and Entrepreneurship*” was conducted at the MPDO Office in Chintapalli, a remote agency area located approximately 20 kilometers from Lambasingi. Known for its tribal settlements and natural beauty, Chintapalli faces numerous challenges due to its geographic and infrastructural limitations. The workshop was organized as a joint initiative between the facilitators and Vasavya Mahila Mandali, an NGO committed to women's empowerment. The resource person for the workshop was Dr. B. Spoorthi, Assistant Professor from the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at NIT Warangal, who brought her expertise in community-centered learning and digital literacy.

The primary objective of the workshop was to introduce tribal women to the responsible and productive use of technology, particularly AI, in solving real-life problems and exploring entrepreneurial opportunities rooted in their local context. The session began with a needs analysis activity, where participants were divided into small groups of five. Each group was asked to list five challenges they or their communities faced. These problems were then discussed within the group to identify ten common issues that resonate across different lived experiences.

A wide range of issues came to light during this discussion. The most frequently mentioned problems included unemployment, lack of access to proper education, scarcity of drinking water, insufficient food resources, and difficulties in transportation. Health-related concerns such as lack of medical facilities, unavailability of medicines and blood, and poor sanitation were also raised. Social problems like child marriage, alcoholism, domestic insecurity, and lack of family support were recurring themes. Other key challenges identified were poor roads and infrastructure, colleges being located far away (around 50 km in some cases), network connectivity issues, pollution, and superstitions. Women's health and safety remained a critical concern across groups. Lack of awareness being a close second.

Following the identification of issues, each group selected one problem they felt most connected to or passionate about. Using chart paper and visual markers, participants illustrated their chosen problems. These visuals served as the basis for short group video presentations, where they explained the issue in their own words. This process encouraged self-expression and collaboration, and gave participants an opportunity to articulate their concerns in a clear, structured manner—many for the first time using technology.

After a short lunch break, the workshop resumed with a session on local skills and entrepreneurial thinking. Participants were asked to reflect on products or skills unique to their locality, such as traditional pickles, handwoven items, or handmade crafts. Each group selected one product they believed could be turned into a sustainable business idea.

They were then introduced to ChatGPT, and taught how to use it as a learning and planning tool. The women were guided to ask three specific questions using the AI tool:

1. How to make the chosen product?
2. Where and how to learn the skills to improve product quality?
3. How to market the product locally or online?

This session demystified technology and opened up possibilities for learning, skill development, and entrepreneurship. A few groups confidently presented their business ideas and shared how they planned to use technology to enhance their livelihood opportunities.

The workshop concluded with enthusiastic feedback from the participants, many of whom expressed a sense of empowerment and curiosity to explore digital tools further. The event not only helped surface real community issues but also planted the seeds of technological awareness and self-reliance in a region often overlooked in digital inclusion programs.