CEGIS
Centre for Effective
Governance of Indian States

Abhijit Singh

Current Institution:
**Chief of Staff,
Wholsum Foods Pvt. Ltd.**

Role at CEGIS:
**Strategy Manager,
CEO's Office**

Duration of time at CEGIS:
1 year 3 months

What **inspired** you to **join** CEGIS? What **drew** you to its **mission**?

Having worked with a variety of stakeholders before, I realised that working with the government was the only way to achieve scale in development outcomes. What drew me to CEGIS was the comprehensiveness of Karthik's body of work and his ideas of catalysing the existing system for stronger outcomes. Further, the organisation is very uniquely positioned in the ecosystem —what we call a "think-do tank"—bridging research with implementation in a unique way. The opportunity to see how an organisation grows from its inception to driving impact at scale deeply excited me.

How did your **experience** at CEGIS **contribute** to your professional and personal **journey**?

From a role perspective, my experience helped me understand how organisations are created, scaled, and the multiple levers that define organizational strategy. Working with people from extremely diverse walks of life showed me how different perspectives, when aligned towards a common goal, create immense value.
At a deeper level, it gave me a firsthand understanding of the complexities of India's labyrinth of government machinery—how it operates, where the challenges lie, and how meaningful change can be enabled. This experience fundamentally influenced my approach to problem-solving and systems thinking.

At the Goa Retreat - 2023

Was there an experience at CEGIS that made a **lasting impression** on you?

One of the projects that left a lasting impression on me was the Delhi tax filing project using machine learning. I was amazed that a public finance problem could be solved through technology in such an innovative way. This project broadened my perspective on how technology can be leveraged for governance beyond the usual applications seen in government today. It reinforced my belief that solutions to complex problems often lie at the intersection of different fields, and showed me firsthand the vast potential of technological innovation to foster effective governance.

3

What are you most **proud** of regarding your **time** at CEGIS?

One of the most important projects I worked on as part of the CEO's office was CEGIS' first-ever annual goal-setting exercise. This was a pivotal moment for the organisation—it not only helped define our purpose with greater clarity but also fostered a shared understanding of interdependencies and collaboration across teams. By aligning our efforts strategically, we could maximize our effort-to-outcome ratio, ensuring that our work had the greatest possible impact. Seeing how this exercise strengthened our collective vision was particularly fulfilling.

With Karthik, at the Bangalore Retreat - 2022

How has your **experience** at CEGIS shaped your professional **goals** and **aspirations** moving forward?

My time at CEGIS, engaging with almost all kinds of stakeholders due to my central role, gave me a broader and more nuanced understanding of impact. It shifted my perspective away from the mainstream notion that governance impact is solely about capital expenditure and made me see it as something deeply embedded in how systems function. This experience has helped me approach every challenge with a systems-thinking lens, breaking down problems into their fundamental components. Moving forward, I want to continue working on solutions that drive systemic and scalable change.

If there was one piece of **advice** you could give to **new team members** just joining CEGIS, what would it be?

If I had to give one piece of advice to a new team member at CEGIS, it would be this: hold on, trust the process, and be patient—it takes time to see the impact of governance work, but the change is real and deeply meaningful. This is one of the most scalable ways to create impact, and if you stay open to learning and engagement, the experience will be worthwhile.

The Strategy Team, 2023-24

6