

#TheCEGISCircle

Suramya Srivastava

Current Organisation:
**Junior Professional,
Indian Regional Office,
New Development Bank**

Role at CEGIS:
**Senior Program Associate,
MEL Team**

Duration of time at CEGIS:
3 years



What **inspired** you to **join** CEGIS?

What **drew** you to its **mission**?

During a summer internship at NITI Aayog, I had the opportunity to evaluate a government scheme. While listening to Professor Muralidharan's podcast episode on Education, I found many of the insights he shared on how to fix and strengthen the system aligned with my findings from my internship experience. CEGIS' mission in how it addressed governance and aimed to achieve systems-level outcomes at the state-level in India, thus, really interested me. Additionally, I have spent a significant part of my schooling outside India, but while completing my undergraduate degree in India, I knew that I wanted to work in the country. CEGIS was really the perfect fit in all aspects.



OM & MEL Teams, 2025



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

As a first job, I couldn't have asked for a better experience. Over 3+ years at CEGIS, I got to grow exponentially—from conducting field research, traveling across states and learning their contexts, engaging with stakeholders across administrative levels, to helping set up the M&E unit within CEGIS. Working with extremely talented colleagues drove me to hone my own technical skills. Additionally, the trust placed in me, allowed me to develop confidence and seek new challenges—whether it was with understanding different sectors (nutrition, education, rural development, etc.) or skills (stakeholder engagement, hosting workshops, writing articles and proposals). This is also what led me to my new job: a curiosity to understand new sectors, new areas of work, and to continue to grow.

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

Many! It's hard to pick just one, because each project, in every state, every district, is so complex and has so much to learn from. If I had to pick one thing, though, it would be the experience of working alongside the teams—especially those I had the opportunity to work closely with: the Outcome Measurement team, the MEL team, and the ECD teams. For me, it was the people I worked with who made the work all the more meaningful and engaging. Their dedication and hard work, their openness and willingness to help, are what have made my years at CEGIS so memorable.



*Inaugurating CEGIS
guesthouse in Bodoland
with Vijay, 2022*

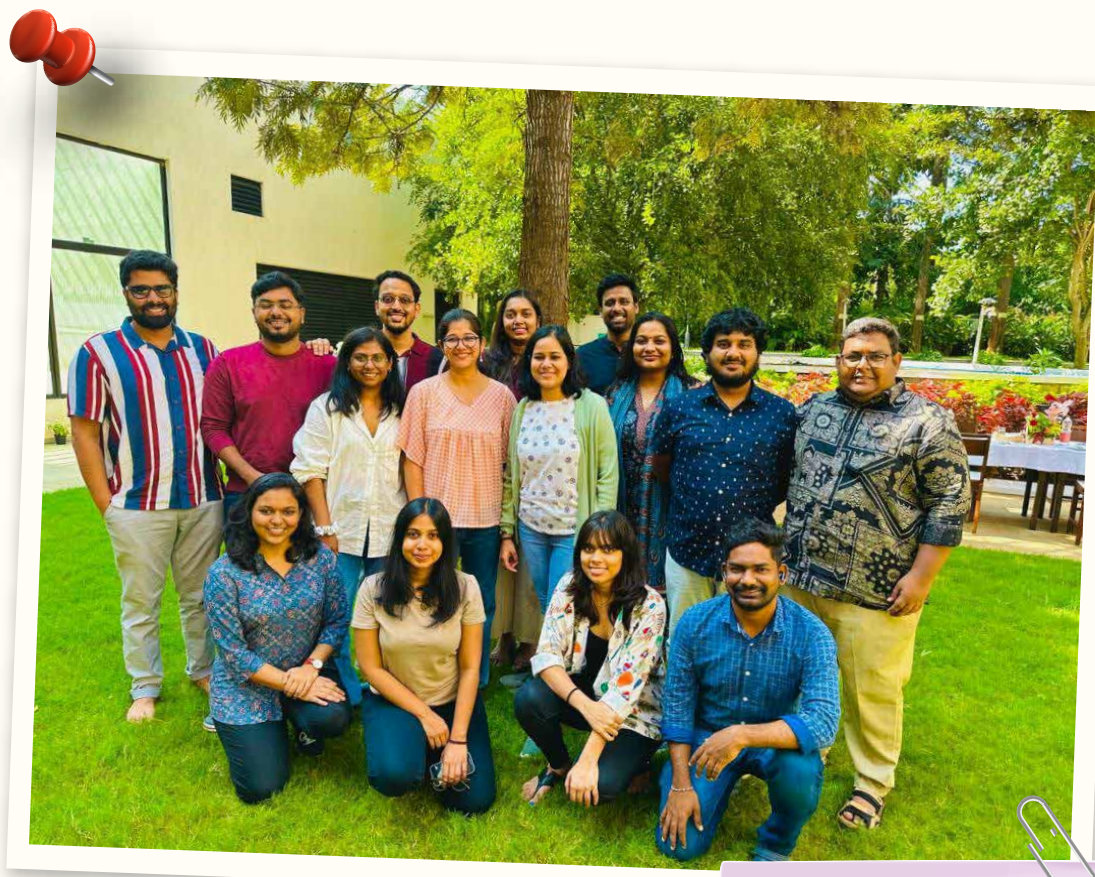


What are you most **proud** of regarding your **time** at CEGIS?

Helping set up the MEL unit at CEGIS is one thing I'm really proud of. I'm glad that I was given this opportunity and space by CEGIS, that the team I worked with—Parul, Krishna, Prachi, Vranda, and Krishan—was like a dream team. Being able to establish a new unit within an organisation isn't easy, but it was a great learning experience. Not only did I get to learn more about the evaluation sector and really do a deep dive into understanding its various methodologies, frameworks, and schools of thoughts, but I also got to learn about management and organisational development. Starting something from scratch, making mistakes, improving and learning from those mistakes, building and rebuilding strategies and frameworks, it was a new experience and I'm really glad I got the chance because it also allowed me to broaden my career path.

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

To make the most of working in such a diverse organisation! There's so much to explore and learn from and CEGIS gives you the freedom to try it all. Whether you want to really dig deep and see how on-ground implementation brings results, understand state-level decision-making processes, or even experience and strengthen the organisational structure— don't hesitate and give it a try!



*ECD Team (across states)
at Bangalore retreat, 2022*

Any other reflections from your time at CEGIS that you would like to share?

I still remember my first work trip to Kokrajhar, in the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) of Assam. It was the first project I got to work on in depth: implementing the Early Childhood Development mission in BTR. The months I spent in Bodoland, travelling to other districts and in and around Kokrajhar, exploring the region, remain one of the highlights of my time at CEGIS. Working there and watching the team grow, with Javed, Madhurima, Prachi, and Sravan at first, and later with Bhanita, Jyotsna, Prarthana, and Krishan, was truly wonderful, and I've gained some lifelong friendships.

Bodoland also helped me unlearn many of my own misconceptions, broaden my perspective, and challenge myself further. I picked up a little bit of Bodo along the way to better understand the local people and culture, and experienced all its seasons—from blistering heat and flooding monsoons to chilly winters. It was a unique experience I don't think I could've had without CEGIS. There's still some great work happening there, and I'd really recommend everyone, especially those at CEGIS, to visit Kokrajhar at least once!