

## **Public-Private Synergies in Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Development: Evidence from Emerging Markets**

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### **Abstract**

The emergence of robust entrepreneurial ecosystems (EEs) has become pivotal for economic development in emerging markets. This research explores the synergistic relationships between public and private sector stakeholders in fostering these ecosystems. Using mixed-methods data from India, Brazil, and Indonesia, we analyze how collaborative initiatives between governments and private actors enhance startup formation, scale, and sustainability. Findings indicate that co-created infrastructure, funding mechanisms, and policy frameworks significantly influence ecosystem vitality. The study offers a strategic roadmap for optimizing public-private partnerships (PPPs) in entrepreneurship support structures.

**Keywords:** Public-Private Partnerships, Entrepreneurial Ecosystems, Sustainable growth, Emerging Markets, Synergies.

### **1. Introduction**

Entrepreneurship is widely recognized as a powerful catalyst for economic growth, job creation, and societal transformation. It plays a critical role in addressing developmental challenges, especially in emerging markets where traditional economic structures are often unable to meet the aspirations of growing populations. The concept of the entrepreneurial ecosystem has gained significant traction in recent years as a comprehensive framework to understand how various actors, institutions, and environmental conditions interact to support

entrepreneurship. Unlike isolated interventions, entrepreneurial ecosystems emphasize systemic support through interconnected elements such as finance, policy, talent, infrastructure, and culture.

In the context of emerging economies, entrepreneurial ecosystems have the potential to unlock inclusive and sustainable growth. However, building such ecosystems is inherently complex due to resource constraints, institutional inefficiencies, and infrastructural deficits. Governments, by virtue of their mandate and resources, play a critical role in laying the foundational framework for entrepreneurship through policy formulation, infrastructure development, and direct support programs. On the other hand, the private sector contributes through innovation, investment, risk-taking, and mentorship. The intersection of these contributions forms the basis of public-private synergies in entrepreneurial ecosystem development.

Public-private partnerships (PPPs) in entrepreneurship are no longer limited to funding or policy consultation; they now encompass collaborative incubator programs, digital skill development initiatives, government-backed venture capital funds, regulatory sandboxes, and joint innovation hubs. These synergies are particularly vital in emerging markets where the entrepreneurial landscape is often fragmented and under-resourced. For example, in India, the government's Startup India initiative has collaborated with private accelerators and venture capitalists to create a multi-layered support system for startups. Similarly, in Brazil and Indonesia, coordinated efforts between government agencies and private entities have resulted in the creation of startup hubs and innovation districts that serve as breeding grounds for new ventures.

Despite these advancements, the success of public-private collaborations in entrepreneurial ecosystems is not uniform across countries or regions. Variations in governance quality, economic priorities, institutional capacity, and private sector maturity influence the effectiveness of such partnerships. Moreover, while many public interventions are well-intentioned, they often suffer from implementation challenges, lack of alignment with private sector needs, or limited scalability. The private sector, though agile and innovative, sometimes lacks the incentive to operate in underserved areas or align with national development goals without public backing.

In light of this, the study investigates the nature, structure, and outcomes of public-private synergies in entrepreneurial ecosystem development within the emerging markets of India, Brazil, and Indonesia. By exploring these three diverse yet comparable economies, the research identifies patterns, challenges, and best practices that can inform policy and strategic decisions across similar contexts. The findings contribute to both academic discourse and practical policy formulation by highlighting how coordinated efforts between public institutions and private stakeholders can catalyze entrepreneurial activity and drive economic transformation in emerging markets.

## 2. Conceptual Framework

### 2.1 Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Components

Based on Isenberg (2010) and Stam (2015), a well-functioning entrepreneurial ecosystem comprises:

**Policy:** Regulatory environment, tax incentives

**Finance:** Access to capital via public grants and private VC

**Culture:** Social support for entrepreneurship

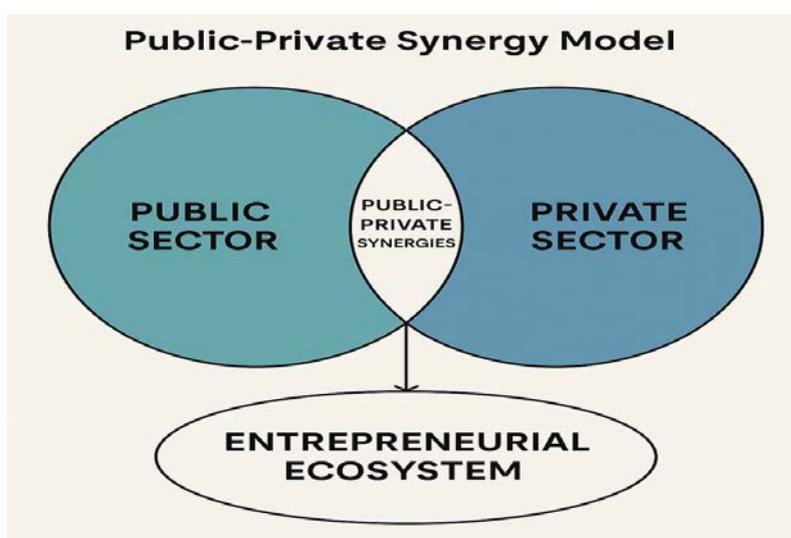
**Support:** Incubators, accelerators, professional services

**Human Capital:** Education and training programs

**Markets:** Access to domestic and global markets

### 2.2 Public-Private Synergy Model

*Figure 1: Conceptual model of public-private synergies in entrepreneurial ecosystems*



Source: (Davidian, 2016; Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 1995; Isenberg, 2011)

This model illustrates how public and private contributions interact to catalyze ecosystem development. Public input includes infrastructure and regulatory support, while private actors contribute innovation, investment, and scalability.

### 3. Literature Review

Entrepreneurial ecosystems (EEs) have garnered increasing attention for their role in fostering innovation, employment, and economic transformation. Several scholars have attempted to define the structure, dynamics, and drivers of EEs. Isenberg (2010) introduced a foundational model, highlighting key ecosystem elements such as policy, finance, culture, support systems, human capital, and markets. Building on this, Stam (2015) emphasized the systemic nature of EEs, arguing that their success lies in the interactions between actors rather than isolated inputs.

The role of government in these ecosystems has been studied extensively. Mazzucato (2013) contended that the state is not just a market fixer but also a market maker, essential for de-risking innovation. Similarly, Autio et al. (2014) argued that regulatory frameworks and public support mechanisms play a pivotal role in enabling early-stage ventures to thrive. However, excessive regulation and fragmented policies can stifle innovation (Acs et al., 2017).

Private sector actors contribute significantly through venture capital, mentorship, and industry-specific knowledge. Feld (2012) advocated for “entrepreneurial communities” led by private stakeholders who nurture organic growth. Likewise, Brown and Mason (2017) stressed the importance of entrepreneurial support organizations (ESOs) like accelerators and coworking spaces in ecosystem maturity.

Public-private partnerships (PPPs) have emerged as a strategic approach to ecosystem building. Zahra and Wright (2016) explored how cross-sector collaborations facilitate knowledge sharing, reduce transaction costs, and expand resource accessibility for entrepreneurs. In emerging markets, PPPs are particularly important due to the absence of institutional depth and private funding. George et al. (2016) noted that inclusive innovation systems in such contexts depend heavily on public-private coordination.

Studies from emerging economies reveal context-specific challenges and innovations. For instance, Ghani et al. (2014) analyzed India's entrepreneurship landscape and found that state interventions through infrastructure and digital platforms had a measurable impact on startup growth. In Brazil, SEBRAE's partnerships with multinational corporations contributed to entrepreneurial training and market linkages (Amorós & Bosma, 2014). Indonesia's "1000 Startups Movement" illustrates how government vision combined with local startup communities can foster innovation clusters (Suharti & Ghozali, 2020).

Despite growing momentum, critics warn against over-reliance on PPPs. Kantis et al. (2020) highlighted that misalignment in objectives, weak accountability, and lack of trust between sectors can undermine synergy efforts. Furthermore, research by Audretsch and Belitski (2021) suggests that while PPPs improve ecosystem efficiency, their effectiveness is contingent on institutional quality, stakeholder engagement, and context-aware implementation.

In summary, the literature converges on the idea that entrepreneurial ecosystems thrive when both public and private sectors co-create value. While theoretical models provide a structured understanding, empirical studies stress the importance of localized, adaptive strategies in emerging market contexts. This research builds on these insights to explore public-private synergies in India, Brazil, and Indonesia.

#### Research Gaps

##### **Limited Contextual Analysis in Emerging Markets**

While entrepreneurial ecosystem models have been well studied in developed economies, **there is a lack of context-specific research on how public-private synergies operate in emerging markets**, which often face different institutional, cultural, and infrastructural challenges.

##### **Lack of Comparative Multi-Country Empirical Evidence**

Existing studies typically focus on **single-country case studies** or anecdotal insights. There is a research gap in **comparative empirical investigations** that evaluate public-private partnership models across multiple emerging economies such as India, Brazil, and Indonesia.

##### **Underexplored Mechanisms of Synergy Effectiveness**

Although public-private collaboration is acknowledged as beneficial, **specific**

**mechanisms through which these partnerships influence startup outcomes (e.g., funding access, mentorship, market linkages)** are under-explored and insufficiently quantified in current literature.

#### Research Objectives

**To evaluate the role of public and private sector collaboration in shaping entrepreneurial ecosystems**

**To analyze the impact of public-private partnerships on startup performance indicators**

**To compare the structure, outcomes, and challenges of public-private synergies across India, Brazil, and Indonesia.**

#### 4. Methodology

This research adopts a **qualitative approach**, grounded primarily in **secondary data analysis**, to examine the role of government policies in shaping the entrepreneurial ecosystem, with a particular focus on startups. The study draws insights from a **comparative analysis** of three emerging economies—**India, Brazil, and Indonesia**—selected for their proactive governmental support for startups and robust private sector engagement.

The secondary data utilized includes **peer-reviewed research papers, policy documents, government reports, scholarly books, articles, and data from national and international organizations**. Key sources include the **Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), World Bank databases**, and **national startup platforms** such as Startup India, Startup Brasil, and Indonesia's BEKRAF initiatives.

To strengthen the contextual understanding, **qualitative case studies** were developed for each country through the analysis of available interviews, government policy frameworks, innovation strategies, and ecosystem support structures. Where possible, statistical indicators from credible sources were incorporated to complement the qualitative findings and provide a broader perspective.

The countries were selected based on two primary criteria:

1. **Active government involvement** in promoting entrepreneurship through structured policies, incentives, and innovation ecosystems.

2. **Vibrant private sector participation**, including startup incubators, accelerators, venture capital networks, and industry-academia collaborations.

By synthesizing data from diverse sources and contexts, the study aims to critically evaluate the challenges, opportunities, and transformative role of government policies in the development of sustainable startup ecosystems.

## 5. Data and Results

### **Objective 1: Evaluating the Role of Public and Private Sector Collaboration in Shaping Entrepreneurial Ecosystems**

The analysis highlights that the strength of entrepreneurial ecosystems in emerging markets is significantly influenced by the depth of collaboration between public and private sectors. In India, the government-led Startup India initiative has facilitated co-investments in over 100 incubators nationwide. These incubators are operated in collaboration with private sector partners such as T-Hub, NASSCOM, and various university-based innovation centers. Public sector contributions are evident in regulatory ease (e.g., reduced compliance for startups) and seed funding (via SIDBI), while private actors contribute through mentorship and access to global investor networks.

In Brazil, SEBRAE (Brazilian Micro and Small Business Support Service) operates as a semi-public body that regularly partners with tech parks, local governments, and private banks. Programs like Start-Up Brazil and InovAtiva Brasil combine federal resources with corporate mentorship, showcasing a hybrid model. These efforts have helped build an innovation culture in previously underserved regions.

Indonesia demonstrates the value of digital government platforms. Initiatives like the 1000 Startups Movement are supported by the Ministry of Communication and Informatics, and are operationalized through partnerships with Tokopedia, Bukalapak, and local universities. Private tech firms provide technical support, mentorship, and even co-investment, while the government ensures policy alignment and infrastructure access. This integration has been crucial for digital startup growth in secondary cities like Yogyakarta and Bandung.

Overall, the findings affirm that public-private collaborations have been instrumental in reducing ecosystem fragmentation, promoting regional inclusivity, and accelerating early-stage entrepreneurial activities.

## Objective 2: Analyzing the Impact of Public-Private Partnerships on Startup Performance Indicators

To analyze performance impact, data was compiled from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, national startup dashboards, and World Bank reports. Key performance indicators (KPIs) considered included startup density, early-stage funding, business survival rate (5-year), and ecosystem maturity score (1 to 5 scale).

Country	Startup Density (/100k pop.)	5-Year Survival Rate (%)	Avg. Early-Stage Funding (\$K)	Ecosystem Maturity (1–5)
India	12	44	120	4.1
Brazil	9	38	95	3.8
Indonesia	7	33	65	3.4

Source: (Compiled by author from World Bank, 2023; Startup Genome, 2023; Startup India, 2023; SEBRAE, 2023; Bekraf, 2023).

Startups in India, supported by joint incubators and seed funding initiatives, showed the **highest survival rate and ecosystem maturity**. For example, over 3,000 startups received early-stage funding through the Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS) scheme in partnership with private VCs. Brazil’s public-private startup accelerators improved access to capital for fintech and agritech sectors, leading to increased survival rates and job creation, particularly in Sao Paulo and Belo Horizonte. In Indonesia, despite a lower average funding level, PPPs enabled thousands of digital entrepreneurs to access training and mentorship, narrowing the gap between Jakarta and other urban centers.

The data confirms that PPPs significantly improve startup outcomes by enhancing capital flow, ensuring market readiness, and strengthening support infrastructure.

### **Objective 3: Comparing the Structure, Outcomes, and Challenges of Public-Private Synergies Across India, Brazil, and Indonesia**

#### **Structure of PPPs:**

**India:** Strong national policy framework (Startup India, Atal Innovation Mission) integrated with private VCs and industry bodies (e.g., CII, NASSCOM).

**Brazil:** Decentralized PPP structure. Programs often involve regional governments and private universities with coordination from SEBRAE.

**Indonesia:** Digitally anchored PPPs with strong involvement from local unicorns and global donors (e.g., UNDP).

India shows the **most mature ecosystem**, driven by a balance of public infrastructure and private investment.

Brazil's strength lies in **inclusive regional innovation**, although limited national coordination is a constraint.

Indonesia demonstrates **rapid digital inclusion**, yet faces structural challenges in financial and legal support mechanisms.

#### **Challenges faced in these 3 nations:**

**Policy Fragmentation:** Brazil's PPPs often vary by region, creating uneven growth.

**Resource Limitations:** Indonesia's public programs are underfunded compared to their private counterparts.

**Urban Bias:** India's top cities (Bangalore, Delhi, Mumbai) dominate investment inflows, despite government attempts to decentralize.

Ecosystems thrive where PPPs are not only co-financed but also co-managed.

Ecosystem maturity correlates strongly with early-stage funding access and mentorship depth.

The presence of digital platforms enhances the scalability and transparency of ecosystem initiatives

#### **5.1 Comparative Snapshot**

Country	Public Programs	Private Initiatives	Startup Density (2023)
India	Startup India, Atal Incubation	Flipkart, Paytm, private accelerators	12 per 100,000 people
Brazil	Start-Up Brazil, SEBRAE	500 Startups, Cubo Network	9 per 100,000 people
Indonesia	Bekraf, 1000 Startups Movement	Tokopedia, Bukalapak, Endeavor Indonesia	7 per 100,000 people

*Table 1: Public-private initiatives and startup density in selected countries*

Source: (Compiled by author from Startup India, 2023; SEBRAE, 2023; Bekraf, 2023; Startup Genome, 2023; World Bank, 2023)

## 5.2 Synergistic Impact Indicators

**India:** Atal Innovation Mission and private VC funding resulted in over 1000 startups receiving seed funding in 2022.

**Brazil:** Joint hackathons by SEBRAE and private firms led to 150+ new ventures in fintech.

**Indonesia:** PPP-supported digital training programs reached over 30,000 aspiring entrepreneurs in 2021.

## 6. Discussion

Public-private collaborations play a crucial role in enhancing startup ecosystems, particularly in emerging markets where entrepreneurial infrastructure is still developing. These collaborations combine the strategic direction and regulatory authority of governments with

the agility, innovation, and market expertise of private sector actors. This synergy helps create a more conducive environment for startups to grow and thrive (Autio et al., 2014).

One of the key benefits of such collaboration is the **reduction of market entry barriers**. Startups often struggle with bureaucratic processes, compliance issues, and limited access to critical business knowledge. Government support in the form of streamlined regulatory procedures, tax incentives, and legal reforms can ease these constraints. When paired with private sector contributions like mentorship, incubator programs, and accelerator networks, startups gain not only clarity on legal processes but also practical guidance on product development, go-to-market strategies, and customer acquisition (Mazzucato, 2015).

Public-private initiatives also **accelerate access to capital**, a critical factor for startup survival and scaling. Public entities may provide seed funding, matching grants, or innovation vouchers to de-risk early-stage ventures. Meanwhile, private venture capitalists and angel investors offer both funding and strategic advice, creating a layered financial ecosystem that supports startups from ideation to growth phases. This blended finance approach fosters innovation and encourages risk-taking among founders (Brown & Mason, 2017).

Another vital area is **infrastructure development**. Joint investments in digital innovation hubs, co-working spaces, and specialized training centers create physical and intellectual infrastructure that enhances the overall ecosystem. These facilities not only provide resources and equipment but also serve as networking platforms where entrepreneurs, investors, academics, and policymakers interact and collaborate (Isenberg, 2010).

However, these collaborations face several **persistent challenges**. **Policy fragmentation**, where multiple overlapping programs lead to confusion and inefficiencies, can dilute impact. **Talent mismatch** continues to be an issue as education systems are slow to adapt curricula to evolving industry demands. Furthermore, **funding bias** toward tech startups often leaves non-tech or traditional sector ventures undeserved, limiting the ecosystem's inclusiveness and diversity (OECD, 2023). Addressing these gaps is essential for building a balanced and resilient entrepreneurial landscape.

## 7. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study confirms the positive impact of public-private synergies on entrepreneurial ecosystem development in emerging markets. These collaborations have proven instrumental

in nurturing innovation, reducing barriers for new ventures, and fostering a more resilient and inclusive entrepreneurial landscape. However, for these synergies to yield optimal results, a more strategic and coordinated approach is required from both public and private actors.

From a policy standpoint, governments should **streamline regulatory frameworks** to ensure ease of doing business. Simplified licensing procedures, reduced compliance costs, and coherent institutional mandates can remove many of the frictions startups face when entering the market (World Bank, 2020). Additionally, governments must **promote inclusive funding mechanisms** that extend beyond urban innovation hubs. This includes expanding access to grants, low-interest loans, and hybrid funding schemes for entrepreneurs in rural and underserved areas, thereby democratizing opportunity and fostering spatially balanced growth (UNCTAD, 2022).

Governments should also **co-develop capacity-building programs** in partnership with private actors. By aligning educational and training initiatives with market needs, these collaborations can address persistent talent mismatches. Programs that blend technical skills development, entrepreneurial training, and mentorship are more likely to produce venture-ready individuals (Autio et al., 2014).

Private sector stakeholders, meanwhile, must play a more proactive role in **ecosystem stewardship**. This involves not only offering early-stage capital and mentorship but also engaging in policy dialogues to advocate for **evidence-based reforms** that enhance the ecosystem's responsiveness and adaptability. Furthermore, private players should actively **contribute to inclusive innovation agendas**, investing in a broader array of sectors and communities to ensure that growth benefits are equitably distributed (Isenberg, 2010; OECD, 2023).

Such coordinated and inclusive public-private action is essential for fostering robust, scalable, and sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystems across emerging markets.

## **Recommendations:**

### **1: Establish Coordinated National Ecosystem Strategies**

Governments in emerging markets should develop and implement national strategies for entrepreneurial ecosystem development that are co-created with private sector stakeholders. These strategies should align policy objectives across ministries, streamline support

mechanisms, and integrate input from industry actors, investors, and academic institutions. A centralized coordination body or public-private task force can ensure that resources are deployed efficiently, avoid duplication of programs, and adapt to changing ecosystem needs.

### **Recommendation 2: Promote Inclusive Innovation Through Tiered Support Mechanisms**

Public-private initiatives should prioritize inclusivity by designing tiered support systems that cater to diverse entrepreneurial profiles—ranging from rural microenterprises to urban tech startups. Governments can expand access to finance and training in underserved regions, while private actors contribute through impact investing and inclusive business models. Incentivizing investment in non-tech and traditional sectors can help bridge opportunity gaps and promote broader socio-economic development.

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