



# **Taranginee**

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# Micro Finance and Women Empowerment in Rural Assam

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## **1. Introduction:**

Microfinance has been recognized world over as one of the new development paradigms for alleviating poverty through social and economic empowerment of the poor particularly women. Microfinance encouraged many researchers all over the world to rethink about the concept of financial inclusion of the marginalized people, especially women, who were thought to be unthinkable. But in present days the economists are expressing concerns about the market oriented nature of the micro finance institutions in India.

Microfinance refers to the provision of various financial services like savings, credit, money transfers, insurance etc. in small doses for the poor to enable them to raise their income levels and improve living standards. The emergence of women entrepreneurs and their contribution to the national economy is quite visible in India.

Microfinance programs have significant potential for contributing to women's economic, social and political empowerment. Access to savings and credit can initiate or strengthen a series of interlinked and mutually reinforcing 'virtuous spirals' of empowerment. Microfinance development has emerged as major strategy to combat the twin issues