

Seventh Colloquium on Micro Finance and Livelihoods, 2014-15

The 7th Colloquium on Micro Finance and Livelihoods was held successfully in Jaipur, Rajasthan, India, on January 19-20, 2015, by the Centre for microFinance (CmF). The aim of the colloquium was to bring together all stakeholders in the micro finance sector on one platform to discuss the status of the sector, particularly self-help groups, clusters/CDOs, federations, financial capability/inclusion and rural livelihoods; debate issues that hinder growth and devise strategies for strengthening the sector.



Day one saw the inaugural session 'Abhivyakti: Women Speak' at Indira Gandhi Panchayati Raj Sansthan in Jaipur. It included a role play presentation 'Journey towards Change' by SHG federation members from Dholpur. A report on microfinance for the year 2013-14 was also released. There were discussions by SHG members and cluster/ federation leaders on various topics and presentations on innovations and new initiatives. The concluding session on day one was 'Deliberations on Way forward'.



The 'Bankers and Practitioners Meet' was the focus of day two at Hotel Clark in Jaipur. It included the screening of a documentary 'Voices of women', a presentation on the 'Rajasthan Micro Finance Sector Report' and a panel deliberation on 'Access to Credit: Challenges and Way Forward'. There were sessions on the 'Strengthening of CDOs and Federations and Their Future Perspective' and presentations on successful experiences, limitations and the way forward.



Eminent dignitaries such as economist Padma Bhushan Prof VS Vyas; Ms Anita Bhadel, Hon`ble Minister for Women and Child Development, GoR; Sri Abhay Kumar, Secretary for Industries and CSR, GoR; Sri Rajeev Singh Thakur, Secretary for Rural Development, GoR; Mr Burzis Taraporevala, Secretary and Chief Accountant, Sir Ratan Tata Trust; and heads of agencies, senior bankers, SLBC convener, etc, were present at the colloquium.



The colloquium witnessed an MoU between the GoR and the Tata Trusts for the Transformational Initiative planned for 70,000 households in four blocks of Rajasthan by 2020. The Colloquium witnessed the MoU of the GoR and the Tata Trusts for the Transformational Initiative planned with 70,000 HH in 4 blocks by 2020. Post the Colloquium, we are getting encouraging responses as narrated below;



- The DWCD for the potential partnership for Women Empowerment and Nutrition (ICDS)
- The discussion with the Secretary Industries on a joint CSR meet and possibilities of funding support to FPOs/NGOs working in the agro-food sector
- Interest shown by IDFC Bank to visit SSV areas to explore business and possibility of grant investment for FPOs
- Interest shown by NABFINS to explore financing (loans) to Federations
- RBI, Jaipur approached us for conducting research on SHGs in Rajasthan



The colloquium received a positive response and was covered widely by the media.