

An Evaluation of Micro Finance Credit Scheme of
NBCFDC in the state of Assam

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Declaration

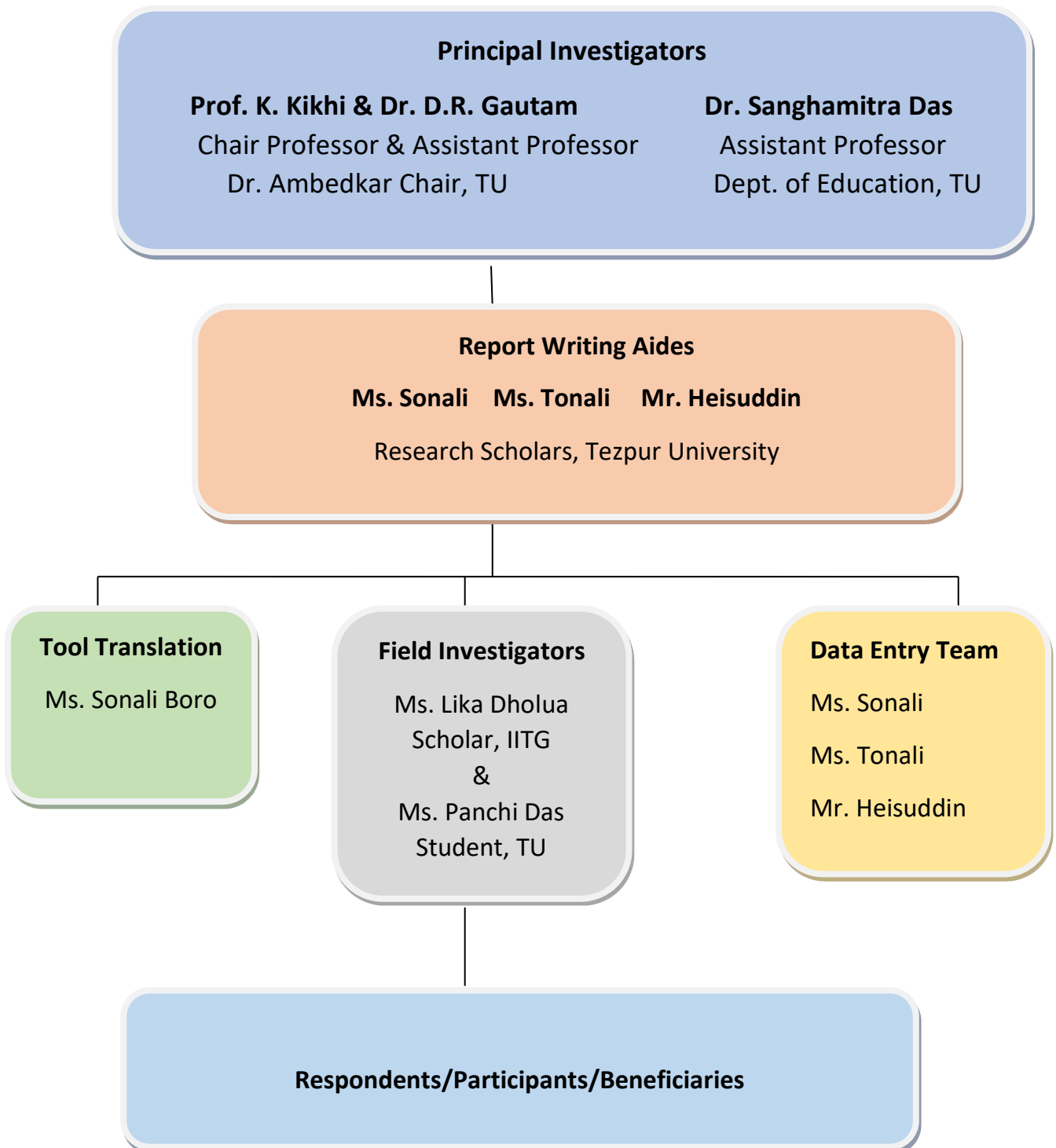
The report titled 'An Evaluation of Micro Finance Credit Scheme of NBCFDC in the state of Assam' is a reflection of the empirical study conducted with the motive of fulfilling the requirements mentioned in the Letter of Intent (LoI) of NBCFDC. The study was originally conducted by the principal investigators (Prof. Kedilezo Kikhi, Dr. Dharma Rakshit Gautam, and Dr. Sanghamitra Das) affiliated with Tezpur University, Assam. To maintain the integrity and confidentiality, no part of this study has been shared with anyone hitherto. The undersigned owns the responsibility of the facts presented in the report.

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Prof. K. Kikhi, Dr. D.R. Gautam & Dr. Sanghamitra Das

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List of Abbreviations

- AAY : Antyodaya Anna Yojana
- ARTFED : Assam Apex Weavers & Artisans Co-operative Federation Ltd.
- BCC : Backward Classes Cell
- BPL : Below Poverty Line
- CA : Channelizing Agency
- COCA : Code of Conduct Assessment
- DNT: Denotified Tribes
- LOI : Letter of Intent
- MD : Managing Director
- MFS : Micro Finance Scheme
- MSY : Mahila Samridhi Yojana
- NBCFDC : National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation
- NBC-MFI : Non-Banking Financial Company-Micro Finance Institution
- NPA : Non-Performing Assets
- OBC : Other Backward Classes
- p.a. : Per Annum
- PSB : Public Sector Bank
- PwD : Person with Disabilities
- RBI : Reserve Bank of India
- RRB : Regional Rural Bank
- SCA : State Channelising Agency
- SHG : Self Help Group
- UTs : Union Territories

Executive Summary

Alleviating poverty has been uniformly understood as a crucial aim for the development of any society and therefore all the economies strive for its achievement. They have become main targets of unprecedented attention at many developing and undeveloped countries. As a result several policies have been continuously designed and implemented to ensure the reduction in the poverty level and enhancement of the parity among unequal socio-economic groups in the society. Indian social stratification has placed a unique position whereby several sections remained disadvantaged due to historical reasons. This has led to ad hoc policies for the economic advancement of several historically disadvantaged social categories. Other Backward Classes (OBCs) is one such disadvantaged group which has been lately acknowledged for the specific policies. In 1992, National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation came into existence for the welfare and development of the OBCs through measures for economic development. Apart from several other measures, microfinance has proven to be an effective tool for combating poverty by enabling the environment for the self-sustenance. It has been noticed across the cultures that micro-finance could yield remunerative returns for establishing gender parity by becoming a tool for economic empowerment of women while simultaneously improving their social image. NBCFDC, working under the aegis of ministry of social justice & empowerment, Government of India, is determined As a part of their mandate towards enhancement of the status of people belonging to OBC category, NBCFDC has designed Micro Finance Schemes – As part of supporting the financial and related social interests of the people belonging to the Other Backward Classes (OBCs), National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India has started four micro finance schemes:

- a) Micro Finance Scheme for small entrepreneurs
- b) Mahila Samridhi Yojana (Micro Finance Scheme for women)
- c) Small Loan for Individuals
- d) NBFC-MFI

Channel partners are the main implementing agencies for this scheme in rural as well as urban areas in the state. They are responsible for providing financial support to the beneficiaries either directly or through the self-help groups (SHGs) preferably in the uncovered areas for the scheme.

Broad Objective: To evaluate Micro Finance Credit scheme (of NBCFDC) in the state of Assam

Specific Objectives:

1. Examine the nature and extent of micro finance credit scheme of NBCFDC in the state of Assam at ARTFED, Guwahati.
2. Evaluate implementation of micro finance credit scheme at ARTFED, Assam including the perception of the beneficiaries towards State Channelising Agency (ARTFED, Guwahati).
3. To assess economic as well as social impact of micro finance schemes on the beneficiaries. The impact was analysed in the restricted sense which could be stated as:
 - a) To analyse the difference in the occupational level of the beneficiaries after availing the loan.
 - b) To analyse the difference in the income level of the beneficiaries after availing the loan.

- c) To analyse the difference in the expenditure of the beneficiaries after availing the loan.
 - d) To analyse the social impact of the beneficiaries after availing the loan.
4. Explore the scope for further improvement and recommending the actionable points in the context of Assam in particular and other parts of the country in general.

Assam Apex Weavers & Artisans Co-operative Federation Ltd. (ARTFED), Assam is a cooperative body which came into existence in the year 1977 by reorganising the Assam Apex Weavers Cooperative Society Ltd. It aims to promote handloom weaving and cottage industries in the state of Assam. Through their support in promotion of these industries, it is encouraging employment opportunities (of weavers and artisans) in the entire state of Assam. By getting involved with one or the other welfare schemes of the government, it is promoting social as well as economic welfare among those involved in handloom and handicraft production in the state. The extension and support of ARTFED could be noticed from its presence in 22 districts of Assam. It has become instrumental in the selling of the products (handloom and handicraft) through its various showrooms both inside the state (53) and outside (5). In Guwahati itself, ARTFED has opened 8 showrooms amongst which one sophisticated showroom is constructed at Rehabari on its own land.

With an aim to implement its micro-finance schemes in the state of Assam, NBCFDC has considered ARTFED as a State Channelising Agency (SCA). Therefore, ARTFED has become instrumental in implementing the micro-finance loan schemes meant for the economically disadvantaged categories of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in the state of Assam. It implies that this organisation is acting as a facilitator to the applicants as well as the loan disbursing agency (NBCFDC).

Population or universe for this evaluation study was 700 beneficiaries which was 53.5% of total beneficiaries 1308 who were availing Micro Finance Scheme from identified sixteen sites of Assam. To strengthen the scope of generalization for the findings, a truly representative sample of 700 was drawn from the population of 1308 beneficiaries for various years starting from 2018-2021. The sample size has been determined in consultation and as per terms of reference given by NBCFDC.

The present evaluation study was done through research tool of questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised of questions/statements seeking objective as well as subjective information on different dimensions such as content of the economic status, and loan process and awareness about scheme and repayment (see annexures). For the analysis of objective as well as subjective information collected through questionnaire, descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were employed to arrive at generalisations about identified dimensions.

Findings:

Findings of the report reflected the perspective from the sampled respondents who were beneficiaries of NBCFDC Micro Finance Scheme. Broad dimensions of evaluation (in sync with the objectives) for the beneficiaries were:

1. Majority of the sampled beneficiaries (90.7 percent) had taken loan for small business/artisan type of activities. Remaining sample had share of agriculture & allied activities (8.9 percent) and transport sector type of activities (0.4 percent). Therefore, all the beneficiaries (100 percent of the sampled beneficiaries) utilized the loan amount as per their intended purpose.

2. There were two categories of loan amount distributed to the applicants. These were, a) Rs. 50,000.00 and b) Rs. 1,00,000.00
3. It was found that majority of beneficiaries of the Micro Finance Schemes of NBCFDC belonged to age group of 29 to 49 years. Total percentage for the aforesaid age group came to be 79.2 percent. Apart from that, 8 percent of the beneficiaries belonged to age bracket of 50-60 years while around 0.8 percent beneficiaries were above 60 years of age, and those who were 28 years and below constituted around 12 percent.
4. Gender composition for the implementation of the scheme was sensitive towards both male as well as female gender. The findings reflected that there were few differences between male and female. In the selected sample, there were 53.7 female while 46.3 male beneficiaries.
5. Regarding marital aspects of the selected beneficiaries, it was found that majority of them were married (74.4 percent) followed by unmarried/single (23.4 percent) while 1.6 percent were widowed, and 0.4 percent comprised of those beneficiaries who got divorced/separated.
6. Information sought for educational level of the selected beneficiaries revealed the low educational status of the beneficiaries for micro-finance credit scheme of NBCFDC in the state of Assam for the selected period of review. In terms of decreasing order, it was observed that 37.4 percent had primary or middle level of schooling, 27.3 percent had matriculation as their educational level, 14 percent of the selected beneficiaries were graduates and merely 1.4 percent had post-graduation as their highest qualification. In the total sample, 1 percent were found to be illiterate while less than 1 percent with the qualification of diploma or ITI.
7. For the accommodation, it was found that almost all of the beneficiaries (99.4 percent) had their own houses and merely 0.6 percent were residing in the rented accommodation. Informally, it was noted that all (100 percent) of the beneficiaries were living in the rural setting of Assam. Therefore, the present study was conducted in a rural setting.
8. Regarding the information about the family of the sampled beneficiaries, it was found that majority of them (84.1 percent) were having a nuclear family and 15.4 percent of the beneficiaries had a joint family. No response was received on this count from 0.5 percent of the sampled beneficiaries. In regard to family, information was also sought for the number of family members, and it was revealed that majority of the beneficiaries (76 percent) had a family with maximum three members. This was followed by those with 4-5 family members (19.7 percent) while only 4 percent of the sampled beneficiaries had family with more than 5 members.
9. For the employment aspect, it was noticed from the sampled beneficiaries that at the time of availing the loan facility the percentage of unemployed persons was 7.7 percent which got reduced to 1.1 percent after the utilization of the loan given by NBCFDC. Interestingly, as per the expectation, there was promotion of self-employment among the selected beneficiaries. It was found that 5.6 percent of the sampled beneficiaries were wage laborers before availing the loan, and this was reduced to 3.1 percent after availing the loan.

10. Overall positive economic implications for the loan scheme were witnessed through the enhanced economic situation of the beneficiaries. This was reflected in the annual income, savings, investment, expenditure, and debt of the sampled beneficiaries. Regarding annual family income, it was noticed that despite the pandemic led economic challenges there were few beneficiaries who could surpass the threshold level of Rs. 3.00 Lakh as their annual income. Out of total sample of 700, there were 20 beneficiaries (2.9 percent) who have crossed this level for annual income.
It is quite significant to mention here that when seen through realistic level of annual income of the selected beneficiaries for the study even the crossing of threshold limit of Rs. 1.50 Lakh as annual income could be presumed as a major economic push. It was found that from the given level of 375 beneficiaries with annual income less than Rs. 1.50 Lakh, 207 (29.5 percent) beneficiaries crossed the annual income of Rs.1.50 Lakh after availing the loan scheme of NBCFDC. Average annual and monthly income of the sampled beneficiaries saw a jump of 20.1 percent after availing the loan. Average annual income before loan was Rs. 1,59,978.00 which became Rs. 1,91,090.00 after availing the loan.
11. After availing the loan, an improvement in economic situation was noticed in terms of annual savings of the beneficiaries. On analysis it was found that prior to loan, majority of the beneficiaries (44 percent) were having annual saving range of Rs. 10,001.00 – 15,000.00 while after the loan this concentration was shifted to higher level. Now, the majority of the beneficiaries (45 percent) were having annual savings in the range from Rs. 15,001.00 – Rs. 20,000.00. Along with this, the percentage of beneficiaries got better for other higher-level slabs for the annual savings.
12. Similarly, for the annual investment level of the beneficiaries indicated for their better economic situation after the utilisation of loan scheme. Prior to loan scheme, the majority of the selected beneficiaries (33.3 percent) were annually investing between Rs. 25,001.00 and Rs. 30,000.00. However, after availing the loan scheme, majority of the beneficiaries (76 percent) were found to be investing annually in the range of Rs. 50,001.00 and Rs. 1,50,000.00 probably indicating improvement in the economic situation of the selected beneficiaries.
13. Other indicators for the economic condition of the beneficiaries were monthly expenditure and debt. Direct and inverse relationship are respectively associated for the better economic situation with the former and latter indicator. In the study it was found that there was reduction in the number of beneficiaries with monthly expenditure between Rs. 5,000.00 and Rs. 10,000.00. There were 92.4 percent of the sampled beneficiaries with this monthly expenditure prior to taking of their loan. This number was reduced to 82.6 percent after availing of loan by the beneficiaries indicating a shift for the higher monthly expenditure by the beneficiaries.
Also, the debt was found to be reducing, although marginally, for the sampled beneficiaries after the taking of loan by them. It is important to mention here that the concept of debt is largely comprehended ambiguously in the rural set-up where borrowing is a norm, and therefore majority of the respondents (beneficiaries) (more than 60 percent) didn't respond. However, of those who have responded, 34.3 percent

mentioned their annual debt of Rs. 5,000.00 or less before taking the loan. This number got reduced to 33 percent after availing of the loan by the beneficiaries

14. Intended aim of the scheme to fulfil (small) business aspirations of the beneficiaries was found to be either largely achieved or on the track of achievement. A higher Mean score was achieved for the opinion of the respondents (sampled beneficiaries) towards statements for their enhanced entrepreneurial aspirations with the loan scheme. Also, information was sought for the procurement of capital assets with the utilisation of loan grant. Though majority (more than 60 percent) of the sampled beneficiaries didn't respond to the possession of capital assets, the number of beneficiaries having an affirmative response for the possession of capital assets was increased from 17 percent (before loan) to 20 percent (after availing of loan). This probably indicates support provided by the loan scheme in procurement of capital/business related assets.
15. For individual, familial, social, and other gains from the loan, information was collected seeking agreement of the sampled beneficiaries. Higher Mean score on agreement scale was noticed for enhancement in income in the family, enhancement of support for education of children in the family and access to better health facilities, social prestige, etc. indicating the improvement through loan scheme. However, the high Mean score (3.87) towards the short-term gain from the loan scheme was a matter requiring immediate concern from NBCFDC. Actually, from the informal discussion it became clear that due to the smaller loan amount, bigger aspirations of the loan applicant remained unfulfilled. Due to the pandemic of Covid-19, they had a bad experience forcing several apprehensions apart from the obvious limited applications of the (small) loan amount ranging from Rs. 50,000.00 to Rs. 1,00,000.00. This, according to them, was having a possibility of unsustainable outcome. In such a situation, many beneficiaries held a strong opinion for a further provision of loan along with some scope of guidance and training especially in the handloom sector.
16. Information gathered on the accommodation revealed that 93.6 percent of the beneficiaries were having their own pucca house even before applying for the loan scheme. This number, however, was increased to 95 percent after availing the loan indicating probable support from the loan scheme.
17. About the loan scheme (of NBCFDC) and its implementation (by ARTFED, Guwahati), sampled beneficiaries held affirmative opinion about the idea and concept of the scheme. In fact, majority of the beneficiaries mentioned the awareness spread by ARTFED, Guwahati as the source for availing the loan scheme. The intention of the scheme, i.e., promotion of the self-employment, loan utilisation, repayment, etc. seems to have been communicated by the State Channelising Agency (ARTFED, Guwahati) among the beneficiaries.
18. The loan disbursement was smooth as reflected from the responses of the beneficiaries and for majority of the cases (84.1 percent), it took two months or less to receive the loan amount in their bank account. 10.4 percent of the beneficiaries received loan amount in a period between 2 to 4 months, and 1.1 percent received in a time frame between 4 to 6 months while 4.3 percent of the sampled beneficiaries mentioned to have received the loan amount in their bank account after six months of their application.

19. All the beneficiaries were having their own bank account. However, few of them, i.e., 8.9 percent, have opened their account under financial inclusion scheme of Government of India, better known as Jan Dhan Yojana.
20. Regarding the repayment status of loan, there were irregularities among majority of the beneficiaries. In the study, 70.9 percent of the beneficiaries were found to be irregular while 28.3 percent were regular in their repayment. There were merely 0.9 percent of the sampled beneficiaries who were found to be defaulters for the loan repayment. The reason majorly cited by the beneficiaries for their lack of regular or any payment was the economic challenges posed by the pandemic of Covid 19.
21. Feedback about SCA (ARTFED, Guwahati) from the perception of the sampled beneficiaries, was positive on the count of loan disbursement, awareness about NBCFDC and its different schemes, awareness about MFS scheme of NBCFDC particularly, its scope and utilization.

General recommendation

- 1 Large number of beneficiaries in the open-ended responses recommended that rate of interest should be slashed especially in the rural setup as the instant gain from such MFS is less. Suggestion was also made to increase the duration of the loan recovery anticipating the adverse conditions in a context like that of Assam where calamities such as flood is regularly observed. Also, the unforeseen situations such as pandemic should have been considered and the needed relaxations may have been provided.
- 2 While interacting with the beneficiaries and analysing their responses, it was observed that the loan amount should be enhanced generally catering to the specific requirements of the applicants. This is extremely important as in the field it was noticed that the State Channelising Agency (ARTFED) have granted uniform loan to the applicants in the particular timeframe. Therefore, it is strongly recommended to have a provision of the dynamic loan amount which may cater to the differing individual needs.
- 3 Need for the formation of the Self-Help Group (SHGs) was felt to make the best utilisation of the conceived micro-finance loan scheme of the NBCFDC. Conceptually as well as empirically, the SHGs aim for the collective good for the members, and therefore could act as effective tool for the implementation viz. disbursement as well as monitoring the repayment. It shall create an enabling environment with elements such as accountability which may enhance the chances for the repayment of the instalments. In this way, it could act as a true facilitator for the successful outcome of the micro-finance schemes. However, the provision for the individual grant of the loan should not be discontinued due the dynamic empirical situations at the ground level.
- 4 The results of the present study have suggested the improvement in the loan disbursement process. In the informal interaction with the existing beneficiaries, it emerged that though

the loan application process was extremely smooth, there is ample scope for improvement in the disbursement process which could impact the anticipated planning of the applicant.

- 5 It's observed that awareness about the scope of Micro-Finance Scheme and its usage can have positive impact for the gains made from the scheme and hence this may improve the chances of repayment by the loan beneficiary. Therefore, it is recommended to have comprehensive awareness program that will explain the short-term as well as long-term gains in terms of better utilisation of the loan to promote entrepreneurial aspirations among those belonging to the disadvantaged category of Other Backward Classes.
- 6 The data from the present study and informal interaction with the beneficiaries have highlighted few desirable changes such as provision for interaction with the successful beneficiaries from the previous year(s) and existing entrepreneurs in the sector where the current loan beneficiary has showed its interest.
- 7 Monitoring usually connects the beneficiary with the loan granting agency and creates the positive responsiveness of the beneficiary towards the repayment process. Therefore, a timely monitoring should be incorporated as a component in the implementation strategy of the micro-finance scheme in particular and loan schemes in general.
- 8 Success of the newly established small entrepreneurs may need some initial protection for establishment and sustenance. This is specifically true for the production of handicrafts/handloom products. Therefore, it is desirable to facilitate the sale of such products, and the state channelising agency could be the best available option for the individual beneficiaries. In the present study, it was revealed through the objective and subjective responses that the ARTFED was previously promoting the individual interests of the small entrepreneurs by procuring their produce and selling in the open market through its platform. This was a win-win situation both for the beneficiaries and the state channelising agency (ARTFED). However, recently this has got altered and therefore the risk of open market operation has negatively affected the vulnerable interests of the beneficiaries for the micro-finance scheme of NBCFDC.
- 9 In the context of the present study, it was found that implementation of women specific micro-finance schemes such as Mahila Samridhi Yojana (MSY) was missing. Due to its specific objective, MSY is relatively a better scheme for the empowerment of women belonging to the Other Backward Classes (OBCs), and therefore it may be required to do the necessary promotion among the women entrepreneurs.
- 10 Stereotypes associated with gender in respect of work/occupation has been emphatically noticed generally in the Indian society and specifically in the present study. It was observed that there is largely high concentration of women in handicrafts (handloom products in Assam) while that of men in other sanctioned activities for the micro-finance. In order to initiate a change for a more gender-neutral society, there is a need for

promotion of diverse interests among the potential women entrepreneurs such as in the agriculture and allied activities.

- 11 Due to non-availability of persons belonging to the third-gender in the secondary as well as in the empirical study, there is a possibility of limited scope of the micro finance scheme of NBCFDC among these categories. Therefore, some mechanism should be devised to make such schemes accessible to them. One probable way could be introducing a specific scheme which may help in acknowledging them and enabling their process of empowerment. Specific schemes should also be conceived for the interests of the physically handicap persons belonging to the Other Backward Classes.

Actionable points

In the light of the general observations and recommendations, the following actionable points at the level of State Channelising Agencies (SCA) and that of National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation (NBCFDC) could strengthen the implementation of the micro-finance loan scheme in particular context of Assam and probably in the context of the entire country. These could be read as:

A). State Channelising Agency (SCA) level

1. SCA should be prompt and responsive towards the emergent requirements of the beneficiaries such that it transcends the formal boundary of being a loan disbursement channel between NBCFDC and the beneficiary.
2. It was observed that administrative reforms at ARTFED level was essentially required that was impacting its effectiveness to act as a proper channel. Though its success at ground level was evident from the findings of the study, there was a need to address the existing managerial related issues such as appointment of a regular head (Managing Director) who could devote time and energy for the smooth functioning of the organisation.
3. There is an inevitable need for the conduct of comprehensive awareness about the micro-finance loan scheme which should essentially include the information about the utilisation of the loan amount in setting/strengthening up the enterprises, promotion of the purchase of capital assets, enhancement in the propensity to invest, etc.
4. It is highly recommended for the SCAs to regularly organise programs such as interaction with the successful beneficiaries for the previous years. Also, the agency should mediate the process whereby established entrepreneurs could interact and motivate those beneficiaries who hold interest in setting up their own enterprise.
5. SCA should act as a channel to link with the market and protect the interests of the small entrepreneurs benefitted through the micro finance scheme. If possible, they should devise a mechanism to procure the products such as handicrafts and put it to sale either through its own platform or through big enterprises with the similar interests. Alternatively, the agency may facilitate the sale process through e-commerce. Integration with large enterprise may act as a source for the remunerative gains to the loan beneficiaries withing a stipulated timeframe.
6. In order to add efficiency, SCA should promote formation of the Self-Help Group (SHGs) for the purpose of the implementation of micro finance scheme. The collective pool could be

relatively better in serving the individual as well as the group interests largely in all of the aspects pertaining to the successful utilization of the micro-finance.

7. In case of a situation with the concentrated demand of loan for a particular or similar purpose, SCA should conduct awareness programme highlighting the relative gain for the diversified demands (for loan) yielding remunerative returns in the market. It implies that in a particular location, promotion should be given for the diversified entrepreneurial interests among the applicants. This shall avoid the stagnant outcome due to overproduction vis-à-vis the demand (for that particular product such as 'handloom related produce' in a handloom surplus region as is seen in the context of Assam) at local level.

8. Considering the efficiency in the operation of the micro finance scheme, it would be better for the SCA to explore the maximum beneficiaries in the adjacent locations. Inclusion of far-away districts may reduce the efficiency and hence it may hamper the process of successful implementation of the scheme at the grass-root level. Therefore, for the better facilitation of applicant coverage area of SCA should be restricted to particular centres rather than covering entire Assam unless there are regional/zonal centres ensuring the same.

9. SCA should promote the micro finance scheme among all the categories of 'gender' (inclusive of the Third Gender). Along with this the agency should promote some mechanism that will help in changing the existing gender-stereotypes in the society by empowering the vulnerable such as 'women' and those belonging to the 'third gender'.

10. Provision for the interaction with the previous beneficiaries should organize in SCA level so that applicant gets oriented towards loan disbursement process and recovery.

B) NBCFDC Level

1. In order to enhance the efficiency in the implementation of the micro finance scheme, strong and transparent (pre-evaluative) monitoring mechanism should be emphasised by NBCFDC shortly after the disbursement of the loan. This shall promote cohesiveness with the loan beneficiaries and may motivate them for better compliance with the interests of NBCFDC including the socio-economic gain and repayment.

2. A provision of top-up loan or a small subsequent loan by the NBCFDC shall enhance the scope of the micro-finance scheme for small entrepreneurs. This shall help the agency as well as the loan-beneficiaries to mitigate the losses in unprecedented situations. Provision of further-loan to the successful (small) entrepreneurs may act as an incentive to further the aspirations among small entrepreneurs from the disadvantaged categories such as Other Backward Classes (OBCs). This will motivate the beneficiaries to achieve success in their initiatives. If deem necessary, NBCFDC can put appraisal report (for the previously taken loan) as an eligibility condition along with a roadmap for utilization. The amount of top-up/subsequent loan could be rationally determined with clauses such as not more than 75 percent of the loan previously approved for the (applicant) beneficiary subject to the fulfilment of norms of NBCFDC. Additionally, provision should be there for fresh application for loan by the returning beneficiary whereby priority shall be assigned by NBCFDC towards the same. The top-up or subsequent loan shall be irrespective of the age-limit however a fitness certificate could be desirable for those above 65 years.

3. Considering the importance of Self Help Groups (SHGs) in (successful) implementation of the micro-finance scheme especially among those belonging to the disadvantaged categories, NBCFDC should (to the larger extent) make it mandatory for the disbursement of the loan to State Channelising Agency (SCA). The multi-fold gains associated with the Self-Help Group (SHG) shall cater to the differential individual needs and may also protect the interests of the vulnerable individuals if there is any such need.

4. To enhance the ambit of socio-economic gains in the state of Assam, NBCFDC can devise a new scheme such as those supporting Cooperatives through lending a major quantum of money upto Rs. 30.00 Lakh catering the local interests

5. It has been observed that loan amount was uniformly granted to the beneficiaries. In the present study, there were only two categories of loan amount given to all the applicants, i.e., Rs. 50,000.00 (on or before the year 2019) and Rs. 1,00,000.00 (after the year 2019). In this context, it is highly desirable to have differential slots (of loan amount) that will fulfil the unique requirement of each applicant. This may have some significant impact towards the success of the scheme and also on the repayment process later on. Also, the maximum loan amount (of Rs. 1,50,000.00 per beneficiary) should be modified considering some of the promising business proposals.

6. It would be better on part of NBCFDC to request from the applicants their need for the loan with basic explanation while receiving the applications for MFS. This will enhance the chances for successful implementation of the scheme. Further, it would entail idea of timely advice to the applicants by the experts foreseeing their business returns.

7. In the context of rural setting due to extremely low-income background of the individuals, the economic gains from the micro-finance scheme may not reach the benchmark of Rs. 3,00,000.00 in a shorter period of analysis. However, there is no denial to the fact that in the given context such economic gains are either transformative or holds the potential for transformation of the family of the beneficiary. Therefore, the NBCFDC should modify its evaluation pattern for economic gain by reducing the income limit from (existing level of) Rs. 3,00,000.00. Also, in such context other gains (social as well as cultural) should be given due importance for a comprehensive evaluation of micro-finance scheme especially in the rural settings.

8. NBCFDC should develop some mechanism through which procurement of the produce or facilitation for the sale of produce (skilled production) such as handicrafts which may provide an enabling environment for the aspirants of small entrepreneurship with the micro finance scheme. The facilitation could be in terms of tie-up for the setting up of sale point at regional as well as national level in consultation with different departments of Assam government and those of Government of India.

9. To promote the entrepreneurship among women candidates belonging to OBC category, emphasis should be laid on Mahila Samridhi Yojana, or similar women specific schemes in the context of ARTFED, Assam. Also, some specific schemes for promotion of persons belonging to Third Gender and Physically Challenged should be devised and implemented by NBCFDC.

10. The present study has strongly revealed that the evaluation, if done pre-maturely may provide misleading picture of (low) economic gain. Considering the importance of duration in the establishment of an enterprise/business, there should be a minimum gap of two years for the evaluation. Also, the unprecedented situation such as epidemic, flood, and pandemic may reduce the scope for successful implementation of the micro-finance scheme in a context. Therefore, an evaluation should be comprehensively planned by NBCFDC considering the influencing factors as happened in the present study.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Microfinance is the provision of a broad range of financial services such as deposits, loans, payment services, money transfers and insurance to the poor and low-income households and their microenterprises. Microfinance is defined as Financial Services (savings, insurance, fund, credit etc.) provided to poor and low-income clients so as to help them raise their income, thereby improving their standard of living. The history of microfinancing can be traced back as far as the middle of the 1800s, when the theorist Lysander Spooner was writing about the benefits of small credits to entrepreneurs and farmers as a way of getting the people out of poverty. Independently of Spooner, Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisen founded the first cooperative lending banks to support farmers in rural Germany. The modern use of the expression "microfinancing" has roots in the 1970s when organizations, such as Grameen Bank of Bangladesh with the microfinance pioneer Muhammad Yunus, were starting and shaping the modern industry of microfinancing. Another pioneer in this sector is Akhtar Hameed Khan. There are two broad approaches that characterize the microfinance sector in India is Self Help Groups (SHGs)-Bank linkage programme and Microfinance Institution (MFIs). In India microfinance is dominated by Self Help Groups (SHGs)-Bank linkage programme aimed at providing a cost-effective mechanism for providing financial services to the unreached poor. Considering the micro-finance as an effective mechanism to promote economic as well as social development, NBCFDC (apex body for the socio-economic development of OBCs) initiated extension of support to OBCs through micro-finance loan schemes where loan is being granted to those belonging to economically poor categories of the OBCs for fulfilling their different aspirations with economic potential. These include loan for small entrepreneurs, business, agriculture & allied activities, etc. Micro finance loan scheme of NBCFDC in the state of Assam is being implemented through ARTFED, a State Channelising Agency (SCA).

1.2 Other Backward Classes (OBCs)

The term 'Other Backward Classes' (OBCs) is essentially a post-independence development, since a separate class had not emerged prior to independence. The Other Backward Classes comprise those socially and educationally backward sections of the population other than the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes including Christians and Muslims. Backward Classes may be specified by the Central Government in the lists prepared by the Government of India from time to time for purposes of making provision for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of backward classes of citizens which, in the opinion of that Government, are not adequately represented in the services under the Government of India and any local or other authority within the territory of India or under the control of the Government of India. The Constitution has also endeavoured to rectify discrimination against a group of people who are known as the Other Backward Classes through Articles 15, 16, 335 and 340 of the Constitution.

The government under Articles 340(1), 340(2) and 16(4) to promote the welfare of the OBCs.

Article 340(1)- The president may by order appoint a commission, consisting of such persons as he thinks, fit to investigate the conditions of socially and educationally backward classes within the territory of India.

Article 340(2) A commission so appointed shall investigate the matters referred to them and present to the president a report setting out the facts as found by them and making such recommendations as they think proper.

Article 15(4) Nothing in this article or in clause 2 of Article 29 (protection of minorities) shall prevent the state from making any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes.

Article 16(4) Nothing in this article shall prevent the state from making any provision for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of any backward class citizens which, in the opinion of the state, is not adequately represented in the services under the state.

The Constitution also provides reservation for the upliftment of OBCs. The eligible OBCs are entitled to 27% reservations in public sector employment and higher education.

The affairs of Backward Classes were looked after by the Backward Classes Cell (BCC) in the Ministry of Home Affairs prior to 1985. With the creation of a separate Ministry of Welfare in 1985 (renamed as Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment on 25.5.1998), matters relating to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Minorities were transferred to the new Ministry. The Backward Classes Division in the Ministry looks after the policy, planning and implementation of programmes relating to the social and economic empowerment of OBCs. It also looks after matters relating to two institutions set up for the welfare of OBCs namely, the National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC) and the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC).

1.3 National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation (NBCFDC)

National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation (NBCFDC) was incorporated on 13 January 1992 as a non-profit company under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India to improve and develop the economic activities for the members of the Backward Classes who are living below double the poverty line. It was incorporated under Section 25 of the Companies Act 1956 on 13th January 1992 (now section 8 of Companies Act 2013) as a Company not for profit with an objective to promote economic and developmental activities for the benefit of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and to assist the poorer section of these classes in skill development and self-employment ventures.

1.4 Vision & Mission of NBCFDC

Vision: The Corporation has been established with a vision to play a leading role in upliftment of economic status of the target group of Backward Classes.

Mission: To provide concessional financial assistance to the eligible members of the Backward Classes for Self-employment ventures and Skill Development Training.

1.5 Objectives of NBCFDC

There are following broad objectives of NBCFDC:

- A) To promote economic & development activities for the benefit of Backward Classes.
- B) To assist, subject to such income and/or economic criteria as may be prescribed by government from time to time, individuals or groups of individuals belonging to Backward Classes by way of loans and advances for economically and financially viable schemes and projects.
- C) To provide for gainful employment and skill development to the target group.
- D) To grant concessional finance in selected cases for poor persons belonging to Backward Classes as per annual income criteria defined from time to time (presently Rs. 3.00 lakh).
- E) To extend loans to the Backward Classes for pursuing general/professional/vocational/technical education or training at graduate and higher level.
- F) To assist in the upgradation of technical and entrepreneurial skills of Backward Classes for proper and efficient management of production units.

NBCFDC provides financial assistance through State Channelizing Agencies (SCAs) nominated by the State Governments/UTs and Banks (RRBs & PSBs). It also provides Micro Financing through SCAs/ Self Help Groups (SHGs). The Corporation assists towards a wide range of income generating activities for the poorer section of OBCs in self-employment ventures under following broad sectors:

- a. Agriculture and Allied Activities
- b) Small Business/Artisan and Traditional Occupation
- c) Transport and Service Sector etc.
- d) Technical, Vocational and Professional Trades/Courses

1.6 Loan Schemes of NBCFDC

To achieve the identified objectives, NBCFDC has conceived and implemented several schemes that broadly falls under two categories, i.e., Loan Schemes and Skill Training Schemes. In the loan there is categorisation of Term Loan Scheme, Micro Finance Scheme, and Other Scheme of Performance Linked Grant in Aid Scheme. There are three schemes under the term loan scheme namely General Loan, New Swarnima for Women, and Education Loan while four schemes under Micro Finance Scheme, i.e., Mahila Samridhi Yojana (MSY), Micro Finance Scheme for Small Entrepreneurs, Small Loan for Individuals, and NBC-MFI. The description about these schemes could be seen as under:

1.6.1 General Loan Scheme

Objectives

Under this scheme, loan assistance is available for various income generating activities such as Agriculture and Allied Activities, Small Business/Artisan & Traditional Occupation, Transport Sector & Service Sector and Technical & Professional Trades/Courses.

Eligibility

- a) Members of Backward Classes, as notified by Central Government/State Governments from time to time.
- b) Applicant's annual family income should be less than Rs. 3.00 Lakh.

Salient Features

Maximum loan limit : Rs. 15.00 Lakh (per beneficiary)

Pattern of Finance

- (i) NBCFDC Loan : 85%
- (ii) Channel Partner/Beneficiary Share : 15%

Rate of Interest

- (i) Loan upto Rs. 5.00 Lakh : 6% p.a.
- (ii) Loan above Rs.5.00 Lakh upto Rs. 10.00 Lakh : 7% p.a.
- (iii) Loan above Rs.10.00 Lakh upto Rs. 15.00 Lakh : 8% p.a.

Repayment Period

Loan is to be repaid in quarterly installments with maximum 8 years (including the moratorium period of six months on the recovery of principal).

1.6.2 New Swarnima for Women

Objectives

Inculcating the spirit of self-dependence among the women of Backward Classes under Term Loan.

Eligibility

- The women belonging to Backward Classes as notified by the Central/ State Governments from time to time shall be eligible for loan under this scheme.
- Applicant's annual family income should be less than Rs. 3.00 Lakh.

Salient Features

- The target group of the "New Swarnima" scheme of NBCFDC is the women belonging to Backward Classes having annual family income less than Rs.3.00 Lakh.
- The beneficiary women is not required to invest any amount of her own on the projects upto cost of Rs.2,00,000/-.
- The rate of interest on the amount of loan is less as compared to the general loan scheme of the Corporation.

Maximum Loan Amount : Rs. 2.00 Lakh (per beneficiary)

Pattern of Financing

1. NBCFDC Loan : 95%
2. Channel Partner Contribution : 05%

Rate of Interest

1. From NBCFDC to Channel Partner : 2% p.a.
2. From Channel Partner to beneficiary : 5% p.a.

Repayment

Loan is to be repaid in quarterly instalments with maximum 8 years (including the moratorium period of six months on the recovery of principal)

1.6.3 Education Loan

Objective

To extend Education Loan to the students of Backward Classes for pursuing professional/technical education at graduate and higher level and for pursuing vocational Courses.

Eligibility

- a) Members of Backward Classes, as notified by Central Government/State Government from time to time.
- b) The annual family income of the applicant is fixed as Rs.3.00 Lakh. The Channel Partners (State Channelising Agencies/Banks) are requested to release at least 50% of total funding to persons with annual family income upto Rs.1.50 Lakh.
- c) The applicant should have obtained admission for any professional and technical courses approved by appropriate agency such as AICTE, Medical Council of India, UGC etc. in a duly accredited/recognized institute. Minimum 50% marks in qualifying exam i.e. the exam whose qualification is a pre-requisite for the course.
- d) Should have secured admission to professional/technical courses in India or abroad through entrance test/merit-based selection process.

Or

The trainees should have secured admission in a course of duration of at least period of six months in India and or supported by a Ministry/Deptt./Organization of the Government or a Company/Society/Organization supported by National Skill Development Corporation or State Skill Missions/State Skill Corporations, Sector Skill Council approved courses, preferably leading to a Certificate/ Diploma/Degree etc. issued by a Government Organization or an organization recognized /authorized by the Government to do so including but not limited to Nursing, Phrama, Tourism & Catering, Teachers Training etc.

Courses Covered

All professional and technical courses at graduate and higher level approved by appropriate authority and vocational courses as mentioned above.

Expenses Covered

Admission Fee & Tuition Fee; Books; Stationery & other instruments required for the course; examination fee; boarding & lodging expenses; insurance premium for policy during the loan period.

Quantum of Finance

For Professional / Technical Courses only

- 90% of the expenditure of the course subject to maximum loan limit of Rs.15.00 Lakh per student (For study in India), the balance will be borne by student/SCA.
- 85% of the expenditure of the course subject to maximum of Rs.20.00 Lakh per student (For study in abroad), the balance will be borne by student/SCA.

For Vocational Courses

- Need based finance to meet 90% of admissible expenses for the course which may be ascertained by the Channel Partners based on the prevailing government stipulations, market

conditions, level of specialization of course etc., subject to limit prescribed For Professional / Technical Courses as described above.

Rate of Interest

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------|---|-----------|
| i) | For Boys | : | 4% p.a. |
| ii) | For Girls | : | 3.5% p.a. |

Moratorium Period

The moratorium period for recoveries from these Channel Partners is hereby uniformly fixed as five years irrespective of the type and duration of the course for which loans are provided.

Repayment

The maximum recovery period may be 10 years after the lapse of the moratorium period of 5 years i.e., the loan will require to be repaid to NBCFDC by the Channel Partner within 15 years of the same being disbursed.

Pre-payment of Loan

The borrower can repay the loan any time after commencement of repayment of loan. No pre-closure charges shall be insisted from beneficiary in case of early repayment of loan.

1.6.4 Performance Linked Grant in Aid Scheme

Objectives

The objective of the Scheme is to strengthen the infrastructure of Channel Partners in order to improve their delivery mechanism for better implementation of NBCFDC schemes as well as timely utilization of allocated funds and strengthening the recovery system. Further, to ensure compliance of Govt. of India directives by the Channel Partners w.r.t. DBT & Digitization of records etc.

Quantum of Assistance

Maximum Rs.10.00 lakh. Normally restricted to 1% of the released funds during current financial year subject to maximum of Rs. 10.00 lakh may be considered on the basis of past performance of the Channel Partners and availability of funds.

Eligibility Criteria for Channel Partners to claim PLGIA

- a. All Channel Partners implementing NBCFDC scheme will be eligible except the Channel Partners which are dormant/non-functional or have not drawn funds from NBCFDC for implementing its lending schemes during the last three years
- b. Where more than one Channel Partners has been nominated in any State/UT, all eligible Channel Partners can be funded under the grants-in-aid scheme
- c. The basis of selection for releasing PLGIA is as under:
 - 1) Timely submission of Annual Action Plan
 - 2) Drawal of allocated funds
 - 3) Timely utilization & submission of UC for earlier released funds in prescribed format
 - 4) Timely recovery of dues from Channel Partners to NBCFDC
- d. Partners, subject to availability of funds.

The NBCFDC reserves the right to accept or reject the claim without citing any reason.

Permitted Activities which can be covered with GIA

The assistance will be available for the following activities

- a. Improvement in delivery mechanism
- b. Hiring of vehicles for loan recovery during recovery season
- c. Outsourcing of staff for Date Entry Operator and Recovery staff etc
- d. Training to officials of channel partners

Under the above-mentioned heads, Channel Partners may submit their proposal along with information in the prescribed format and submit action plan to utilize proposed Grant-in-aid for following illustrative expenditure: -

- a. Training to Officials: (Normally upto Rs.3,00,000/- (Rupees Three Lakh)

To facilitate training to the officials of the Channel Partners dealing NBCFDC schemes in the field of Information Technology, Project formulation, Delivery Mechanism, Monitoring and Evaluation of NBCFDC scheme.

- b. Improvement in Delivery System: (Normally upto Rs.5,00,000/- (Rupees Five Lakh). This include:

- 1) Procurement of Computers/Printers/Internet Connectivity & related peripherals etc.
- 2) Computerization of beneficiary records & ensuring Digitization & DBT system and linking & synchronization with NBCFDC LEAP Software etc.
- 3) Toll-free Helpline etc.

- c. Recovery related expenditure: (Normally upto Rs.5,00,000/- (Rupees Five Lakh). This include:

- 1) Outsourcing of staff for recovery and Data Entry Operator etc
- 2) Hiring of vehicles during Recovery season (maximum for 60 days in a year) or purchase of motorcycle along with petrol charges for their recovery staff etc.

Funding Pattern

- a) Under the PLGIA scheme, 100% assistance will be provided to Channel Partners by NBCFDC.
- b) The criterion of assistance shall be the performance of Channel Partners in terms of drawal of funds from NBCFDC for disbursement of loans to the target group
- c) The proposals would be examined and recommended by nominated committee of officials of NBCFDC and funds would be released accordingly.
- d) The Channel Partners will be responsible for evaluating the PLGIA proposal before submission to ensure that proposal is submitted as per guidelines of NBCFDC. The Channel Partners will consolidate Utilization Certificate of PLGIA and furnish to NBCFDC within 90 days of receipt of GIA in GFR 12 A (copy appended) duly signed by practicing Chartered Accountant and countersigned by Managing Director/CEO/Chairman of the Channel Partners/authorized signatory. In case the Channel Partners fails to submit the UC within stipulated period, the Channel Partners will be liable to refund the GIA with interest @ 10% p.a.

Monitoring and Review

Implementation of the PLGIA scheme will be monitored by NBCFDC or Authorized Independent Agency. The Scheme will be reviewed annually.

Time Lines

Channel Partners will be required to submit their proposals under this scheme by end of the year.

1.6.5 Micro Finance Schemes

With an intention to promote entrepreneurial aspiration among the small business and farmers belonging to the other backward classes (OBCs), NBCFDC has initiated Micro Finance Scheme. Under the scheme, there are four categories meant to serve the diverse interests and groups in the economically disadvantaged people of the OBC category. These schemes are:

- a) Micro Finance Scheme for small entrepreneurs
- b) Mahila Samriddhi Yojana (Micro Finance Scheme for women)
- c) Small Loan for Individuals
- d) NBFC-MFI

1.6.5.1 Mahila Samriddhi Yojana (Micro Finance Scheme for Women)

Objective:

To provide Micro Finance to women entrepreneurs belonging to the target group.

Eligibility:

- a) Women belonging to Backward Classes, as notified by Central Government/State Governments from time to time.
- b) Applicant's annual family income should be less than Rs. 3.00 Lakh.
- c) In a SHG 60% of members can be from Backward Classes and remaining 40% members may be from other weaker section like SC/Handicapped/Minorities etc.

Salient Features:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---------------|
| 1. Maximum loan limit per SHG | : | Rs.15.00 Lakh |
| 2. Maximum loan limit per beneficiary | : | Rs.1,25,000/- |
| 3. Maximum number of women in one SHG | : | 20 |

Implementation:

The scheme is to be implemented by Channel Partners in rural and urban areas by way of financing the women beneficiaries either directly or through Self-Help Groups (SHGs).

Pattern of Finance:

- | | | |
|---|---|-----|
| 1. NBCFDC loan | : | 95% |
| 2. Channel Partner/Beneficiary contribution | : | 05% |

Rate of Interest:

- | | | |
|--|---|---------|
| 1. From NBCFDC to Channel Partner | : | 1% p.a. |
| 2. From Channel Partner to SHG/Beneficiary | : | 4% p.a. |

Repayment:

Loan is to be repaid in quarterly instalments within 4 Years (including the moratorium period of six months on the recovery of principal).

1.6.5.2 Small Loan for Individuals

Objective:

The Corporation has introduced Small Loan Scheme for the individual for starting small business. The scheme is implemented through Channel Partners (State Channelising Agencies/Banks).

Eligibility:

- Members of Backward Classes, as notified by Central Government/State Governments from time to time.
- Applicant's annual family income should be less than Rs. 3.00 Lakh.

Salient Features:

Maximum loan limit : Rs.1,25,000/- (per beneficiary)

Pattern of Finance:

1. NBCFDC Loan : 85%
2. Channel Partner/Beneficiary contribution : 15%

Rate of Interest:

1. From NBCFDC to Channel Partner : 3% p.a.
2. From Channel Partner to Beneficiary : 6% p.a.

Repayment Period : 4 years

1.6.5.3 NBFC-MFI (NBCFDC Lending Policy for NBFC-MFIs)

Eligibility for MFI:

The Last Mile Financier i.e., NBFC-MFI fulfilling the following norms shall be considered eligible to avail financial assistance from NBCFDC:

- a) The NBFC-MFI should be registered with the RBI as Non-Banking Financial Company-Micro Finance Institution (NBFC-MFI).
- b) The NBFC-MFI should be following all RBI norms related to Micro Finance.
- c) The NBFC-MFI should have 3 years of continuous profit track record.
- d) The NBFC-MFI should have Gross Non-Performing Assets (NPA) less than 2% and net NPA below 0.5% as per their Annual Accounts at the end of the preceding financial year.
- e) The NBFC-MFI should be a member of a Credit Bureau.
- f) The NBFC-MFI should have minimum Capacity Assessment Rating of mfr5 by CRISIL or its equivalent.
- g) The NBFC-MFI should not have defaulted in repayment of outside borrowings in the last three years or undergone a corporate debt re-structuring.
- h) The NBFC-MFI should have proper system for internal accounting, risk management, internal audit, MIS, cash management, etc. and its annual accounts should have been audited in the last three years.
- i) It will be desirable for the NBFC-MFI to have undergone Code of Conduct Assessment (COCA) with a minimum score of 60 or equivalent.

Further with a view to promoting Startups in consonance with Government of India focus new MFIs may also be considered subject to their complying to above criteria except sub clause (c) and after due diligence/assessment by reputed certification agencies. However, the extent of funding to such Startup will be limited to recommendation of the certification body.

Eligibility for Target Group:

- a) The beneficiary(ies) should be from the Backward Class community.
- b) The applicant should belong to a caste covering under the Other Backward Classes list as notified by State/Central Government from time to time. Relevant Caste Certificate to be issued by relevant authority of District Administration.

- c) Annual family income should be below Rs.3.00 Lakh per annum irrespective of rural or urban area. Following certifications to establish the income criteria can be used by the applicant:
- i. Certificate of income issued by Competent Authority of State Government/Distt. Administration or Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) Card or Below Poverty Line(BPL) Card.
 - ii. Annual family income certificate may be considered by the SCAs/Banks/SSCs on self-certification of the beneficiaries with endorsement of the same by any Gazetted Officer notified by State/Central Government.
 - iii. In case of loan being applied at Bank (Channel Partner), Self-Certification assessed and endorsed by Branch Manager can be used for providing the loan.
 - iv. For Landless agriculture labour, marginalized farmers (those with up to One hectare land holding) and small farmers (those with up to Two hectare land holding), as assessed by the Banks through their standard processes and belonging to the Backward Classes will be automatically treated as part of the target group as per following considerations:-
 - I. Landless agriculture labour and marginalized farmers with land holding less than One hectare will be deemed as having annual family income below Rs.1.50 Lakh per annum.
 - II. Small farmers i.e. those with land holding between One and Two hectares will be deemed as having annual family income below Rs.3.00 Lakh per annum.

NBCFDC recognizes Self Help Groups (SHGs) in which predominantly (60% and above) members belong to Backward Class provided other members belong to weaker sections (as per income or economic criteria prescribed by Govt.) including Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes/Minorities and Person with Disabilities (PwD).

(Note: The verification of eligibility criteria shall be the sole responsibility of the NBFC-MFI. NBCFDC shall, however, be entitled to re-verify the eligibility of the applicants, if it so desires.)

NBCFDC & NBFC-MFI Relationship:

The shortlisted NBFC-MFI fulfilling the eligibility criteria of NBCFDC may be appointed to act as Channelizing Agency (CA) of NBCFDC in the selected State/UT. The relationship between NBCFDC and the NBFC-MFI shall be governed and guided by contractual relationship by signing an Agreement between the parties strictly in accordance with the NBCFDC Lending Policy and the terms and conditions of the Agreement.

Quantum of Assistance:

NBCFDC provides loans upto 90% of the Project Cost for units costing upto Rs.1,25,000/- per beneficiary member. The balance 10% share shall be contributed by the NBFC-MFIs and/or beneficiaries. Maximum Loan limit per SHG is Rs. 15.00 lakh.

Interest rate:

The pattern of charging interest under the scheme is:

NBCFDC to NBFC-MFI	Interest Spread to NBFC-MFI	NBFC-MFI to Beneficiaries
4% p.a.	8% p.a.	12% p.a.

Repayment:

The loan amount shall be repaid in quarterly installments within a maximum period of four years from the date of each disbursement including the moratorium period of Six months. There shall not be any moratorium period for payment of interest.

Second Loan:

On repayment of loan, the eligible beneficiaries can avail further loan under NBCFDC scheme(s) from NBFC-MFI or other channelising agencies of the NBCFDC.

Social Priorities:

The Channelising Agency shall endeavour to cover 40% female beneficiaries in physical as well financial terms.

Procedure for Availing Assistance:

The following procedure shall be adopted by the NBFC-MFI for availing funds:

- i. The NBFC-MFI shall sponsor viable project proposals to NBCFDC covering unit cost, means of finance in separate group for Male and Female.
- ii. The proposals submitted would be for the need based economic activities preferably in which the target group has practical experience or required capability to manage the business.
- iii. The NBCFDC may sanction the proposal as per policy and guidelines of the Corporation.
- iv. After receipt of the sanction letter, the NBFC-MFI shall request NBCFDC in writing for disbursement of funds. The NBCFDC shall disburse funds to the NBFC-MFI on fulfilment of conditions laid down in the agreement between NBFC-MFI and NBCFDC and NBCFDC's Lending Policy.
- v. NBFC-MFI shall implement the schemes as per NBCFDC Lending Policy and the terms and conditions stipulated in LOI (Letter of Intent).
- vi. Funds disbursed by NBCFDC shall be utilized by the NBFC-MFI as per the Para 14 of this Lending Policy.
- vii. Selection of the beneficiaries shall be made by NBFC-MFI as per NBCFDC Lending Policy.
- viii. NBFC-MFI shall issue Sanction Letter(s) to the applicants selected for the loans.
- ix. The NBFC-MFI shall endeavour to link subsidy from concerned authorities if any for eligible beneficiaries with NBCFDC loan component to reduce the burden loan on the beneficiaries.
- x. NBFC-MFI shall charge interest rate from the beneficiaries not more than the rate stipulated by NBCFDC.
- xi. NBFC-MFI shall widely publicize the schemes sanctioned by NBCFDC.

Disbursement of Funds by NBCFDC:

Funds for the sanctioned projects/schemes shall be disbursed by NBCFDC subject to fulfillment of the following conditions:

- a) Acceptance of the LOI by returning a copy thereof duly signed and stamped on all the pages by an authorized signatory of the NBFC-MFI as token of acceptance of all terms and conditions stipulated in the LOI.
- b) Written request by the NBFC-MFI for disbursement of funds for the implementation of the scheme.

- c) All unutilized funds at the end of preceding year to be refunded as per the NBCFDC lending policy, if any.
- d) Overall cumulative utilization percentage of funds disbursed by NBCFDC should not be less than 80% at the time of subsequent demand of credit.
- e) No overdues payable to NBCFDC at the time of disbursement.
- f) The disbursement to NBFC-MFIs shall be subject to Security.

Security:

While seeking disbursement from NBCFDC, NBFC-MFI shall provide the Bank Guarantee and/or Fixed Deposits issued by Scheduled Commercial Banks in the name of “NBFC-MFI account NBCFDC” equivalent to the amount to be disbursed to them as security to NBCFDC for timely repayment of installments of the loan sanctioned under this Agreement together with interest thereon. The validity period of the Bank Guarantee/Fixed Deposit shall continue until all the dues of the NBCFDC have been paid in full or otherwise fully discharged by the NBFC-MFI. In case NBFC-MFI has provided Fixed Deposit to the NBCFDC, the interest thereon shall be payable to the NBFC-MFI. In the event of default by NBFC-MFI either for the whole or part amount advanced under this Agreement, the Bank Guarantee shall be invoked/the Fixed Deposits shall be encashed by NBCFDC.

Right to Recall the Loan:

If at any time, in the opinion of NBCFDC, NBFC-MFI has failed to observe or fulfill any of the terms and conditions stipulated in the Agreement on the occurrence of any event or circumstances which, in the opinion of NBCFDC would or is likely to prejudicially or adversely affect in any manner the capacity of NBFC-MFI to repay the amount of the said financial assistance and interest thereon, in the manner aforesaid notwithstanding any provisions contained herein in connection with the time/period of repayment of the amount of the said financial assistance and the interest thereon, NBFC-MFI shall be liable to repay to NBCFDC the outstanding principal of the said assistance and interest(s) thereon as per demand of NBCFDC and NBCFDC shall be entitled to recall the entire outstanding amount of principal and interest from NBFC-MFI .

Standard Conditions for the Scheme:

These include:

- a) For any change in the parameters and terms and conditions of the scheme, prior approval of NBCFDC shall be obtained in writing by the NBFC-MFI.
- b) The NBFC-MFI shall form a Project Implementation Committee for monitoring the implementation of the project in which NBCFDC may nominate its representative.
- c) The NBFC-MFI shall ensure that beneficiaries are selected strictly as per the eligibility criteria of NBCFDC.
- d) Cost over-run, if any, in the scheme shall be borne by the NBFC-MFI/Beneficiary(ies).
- e) The funds disbursed for implementation of the scheme shall be utilized within the sector. The unutilized amount under the scheme, if any, shall be refunded to NBCFDC.
- f) Funds transferred by the NBFC-MFI to its Branch/District Offices are not considered as funds utilized.
- g) The NBFC-MFI shall ensure effective monitoring and periodic flow of information to NBCFDC relating to the scheme during the currency of the loan.

- h) The Letter of Intent (LoI) issued by NBCFDC to NBFC-MFI will be valid only till the end of financial year of issue and no disbursements will be made against the said LoI after the lapse of the financial year.
- i) Advertisements for the scheme should carry the message that NBCFDC is one of the financiers of the scheme.
- j) NBFC-MFI shall ensure that prior to sanction of financial assistance to beneficiary(ies), the names of legal heir(s) of the beneficiary(ies) are obtained so that assets/liabilities are taken over by legal heir(s) in the event of death of the beneficiary(ies). It is desirable that adequate insurance cover be obtained for all the beneficiaries.
- k) NBFC-MFI shall maintain separate accounts for loan assistance received from NBCFDC.
- l) The NBFC-MFI shall also comply with special conditions stipulated in Letter of Intent (LOI) and any other condition(s) that the NBCFDC may deem fit to stipulate during the currency of the loan.

General Conditions:

These include:

- a) The NBFC-MFI shall take measures to generate adequate awareness amongst the prospective beneficiaries in their jurisdiction by making use of local media and public bodies.
- b) All necessary documents shall be maintained by NBFC-MFI and shall be made available for inspection by NBCFDC or by any authority. NBFC-MFI shall also place required information on performance under NBCFDC funded schemes on their website.
- c) The NBFC-MFI shall carry out concurrent monitoring of funded units on regular basis.
- d) The interpretation of any or all provisions of the Lending Policy by NBCFDC shall be final and binding as to its terms, content, purport and/or implementation.
- e) The NBCFDC may from time to time add to, substitute, alter, amend and/or any terms and conditions of the Lending Policy.
- f) In case of any disputes or claims under or arising out of the Lending Policy, Courts of New Delhi shall have the sole and exclusive jurisdiction.

1.6.5.4 Micro Finance Scheme

Objectives:

In order to cater to the Micro Finance needs of small entrepreneurs belonging to the target group, the Corporation has introduced a scheme for Micro Financing through nominated Channel Partners (State Channelising Agencies/Banks). It is desirable to disburse loans through Self-Help Groups (SHGs) by Channel Partners under Micro Finance Scheme.

Self-Help Groups (SHGs)

SHGs is a small economically homogenous and affinity group of poor people voluntarily formed to save and mutually agree to contribute to a common fund to be lent to its members as per group decision.

Channel Partners may also play a vital role through their field officers, encouraging people of the target group in forming Self-Help Groups and get financial assistance under Micro Finance Scheme of NBCFDC.

Eligibility:

1. Members of Backward Classes as notified by Central/State Govt. from time to time.
2. Applicant's annual family income should be less than Rs. 3.00 Lakh.
3. In a SHG 60% of members can be from Backward Classes and remaining 40% members may be from other weaker section like SC/Handicapped/Minorities etc.

Salient features of the Scheme:

The scheme of micro finance is governed by the following considerations:

- | | | |
|---|---|----------------|
| a) Maximum loan limit per SHG | : | Rs.15.00 Lakh |
| b) Maximum loan limit per beneficiary | : | Rs. 1,25,000/- |
| c) Maximum number of persons in one SHG | : | 20 |

Implementation:

Channel partners are the main implementing agencies for this scheme in rural as well as urban areas in the state. They are responsible for providing financial support to the beneficiaries either directly or through the self-help groups (SHGs) preferably in the uncovered areas for the scheme.

Pattern of Financing:

The following pattern of financing is to be adopted:

- | | | |
|--|---|-----|
| 1. NBCFDC Loan | : | 90% |
| 2. Channel Partner/ Beneficiary contribution | : | 10% |

Rate of Interest:

- | | | |
|--|---|---------|
| 1. From NBCFDC to Channel Partner | : | 2% p.a. |
| 2. From Channel Partner to SHG/Beneficiary | : | 5% p.a. |

Repayment:

Loan is to be repaid in quarterly instalments within 4 Years (including the moratorium period of six months on the recovery of principal).

Procedure for Selection of the Beneficiaries:

Selection Committee for selection of eligible beneficiary will be formed at local and comprising of-

- Representative of State Channelizing Agency/ RRB/ Nationalized Bank.
- Representative of Social Welfare Department/Collector Office/ Government officials from District Administrations
- Representatives from concerned industry
- Representative from training institute/SSC/Training Partner
- Representative of NBCFDC

1.7 Rationale for conducting this study

The advantage of micro-finance schemes has been evident through several empirical research study. Indian system with differential and hierarchical social status has left masses of the people disadvantaged, both economically as well as socially. Other Backward Classes (OBCs) is one such disadvantaged social category in India which has been lately acknowledged for the affirmative action policies. National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation

is a dedicated institution under the ministry of social justice & empowerment, GoI that intend to promote the welfare among those belonging to the OBCs.

Providing support through various micro finance schemes is one among several effective initiatives taken by NBCFDC to ameliorate the situation of OBCs in the country. Under these schemes easy loan is being granted to the economically disadvantaged among the OBC community. These loans are convenient to apply, process and with a low interest rate to cater the needs of the OBCs.

In the state of Assam, among several agencies, ARTFED, Guwahati is one State Channelising Agency to implement the scheme of micro-finance to OBCs. As the welfare schemes are to further welfare by taking care of the disadvantages, it could act as a source of empowerment by undoing the existing form of disadvantages. It becomes crucial to monitor as well as timely evaluate the empirical reality of the implementation of the scheme. This may provide scope for verification and exposing the weakness of the scheme whose timely management could check the dilution as well as leakage. In this way, a proper evaluation could act as a guide to strengthen the implementation of the scheme by suggesting the necessary measures required at the grass-root level of implementation in a specific (of Assam) as well as general context of the country.

1.8 Objectives of the study

The study strived to achieve the following objectives:

1. Examine the nature and extent of micro finance credit scheme of NBCFDC in the state of Assam at ARTFED, Guwahati.
2. Evaluate implementation of micro finance credit scheme at ARTFED, Assam including the perception of the beneficiaries towards State Channelising Agency (ARTFED, Guwahati).
3. To assess economic as well as social impact of micro finance schemes on the beneficiaries.

The impact was analysed in the restricted sense which could be stated as:

- a) To analyse the difference in the occupational level of the beneficiaries after availing the loan.
 - b) To analyse the difference in the income level of the beneficiaries after availing the loan.
 - c) To analyse the difference in the expenditure of the beneficiaries after availing the loan.
 - d) To analyse the social impact of the beneficiaries after availing the loan.
4. Explore the scope for further improvement and recommending the actionable points in the context of Assam in particular and other parts of the country in general.

CHAPTER 2

Profile of ARTFED - The Scheme Implementing Agency

Assam Apex Weavers & Artisans Co-operative Federation Ltd. (ARTFED), Assam is a cooperative body which came into existence in the year 1977 by reorganising the Assam Apex Weavers Cooperative Society Ltd. It aims to promote handloom weaving and cottage industries in the state of Assam. Through their support in promotion of these industries, it is encouraging employment opportunities (of weavers and artisans) in the entire state of Assam. By getting involved with one or the other welfare schemes of the government, it is promoting social as well as economic welfare among those involved in handloom and handicraft production in the state. The extension and support of ARTFED could be noticed from its presence in 22 districts of Assam. It has become instrumental in the selling of the products (handloom and handicraft) through its various showrooms both inside the state (53) and outside (5). In Guwahati itself, ARTFED has opened 8 showrooms amongst which one sophisticated showroom is constructed at Rehabari on its own land.

With an aim to implement its micro-finance schemes in the state of Assam, NBCFDC has considered ARTFED as a State Channelising Agency (SCA). Therefore, ARTFED has become instrumental in implementing the micro-finance loan schemes meant for the economically disadvantaged categories of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in the state of Assam. It implies that this organisation is acting as a facilitator to the applicants as well as the loan disbursing agency (NBCFDC).

2.1 Vision & Mission

Vision: The vision of the ARTFED includes the following points:

- 1) Focus on weavers and Artisans.
- 2) Areas based promotion.
- 3) Result oriented Institutional Infrastructure.
- 4) Search for New Organizational forms for target-oriented Handlooms and Handicrafts.

Mission: As declared by the organisation, it has the following missions:

- a) To sustain and create avenues of employment in handloom and handicrafts sector.
- b) To improve the socioeconomic status of handloom weavers and handicrafts artisans of the State.
- c) To improve productivity, quality and cost competitiveness of handloom and handicraft products.
- d) To improve the market potentiality of handloom and handicrafts of Assam and compete with confidence for an increasing share of the global market.

2.2 Functions and Objectives of ARTFED

The functions and objectives of the federation are:

1. Strengthening the handloom weaving and cottage industries

To organise handloom weaving and other cottage industries in the state on Co-operative basis. Along with this, the organisation aims to:

- a) To procure raw materials such as yarn, dyes, chemicals etc., required by the members in connection with the industry and arrange for proper storage, packing and transport of such goods and sale them to the affiliated societies.
- b) To purchase weaving appliances, such as looms and accessories etc. required for weaving industry and sale them to the affiliated societies.
- c) To purchase the finished product from the affiliated societies and sale them to the best advantage.
- d) To carry on inter-state trade in raw materials, finished products looms and accessories and also export trade in finished products either independently or as an agent of the Govt. or other authorised body in the best interest of the affiliated societies.
- e) To undertake spinning, weaving and other allied activities either directly or on behalf of the affiliated societies.
- f) To undertake processing activities, such as, bleaching, calendaring, preparatory, finishing, dyeing, printing, and designing etc. connected with handloom industries and for this purpose to install, run and manage one or more factories and plants.
- g) To serve as the central marketing centre of the affiliated societies and supervise the working of the affiliated societies and render technical guidance and assistance to them to maintain improved methods, qualities and designs and to provide the required management technique to bring about an improvement in their managerial and operational efficiency.
- h) To open sales depots, branches, centres, and offices in or outside the state in the interest of business of the society or its affiliated societies and to take up agency in connection with handloom and other cottage industries.
- i) To organise and participate in fairs, exhibitions, displays etc. on handloom, power loom and cottage industries products.
- j) To create and maintain a pool of qualified supervisory and technical staff, manager, accountants etc., for the Apex Society as well as for the affiliated societies.
- k) To make advances to and realise service charges from the affiliated societies for procurement, production, marketing storage and sales of raw-materials and finished products.
- l) To enter into a contract with Govt. or other agencies for import and export of raw-materials and handloom and other cottage industries products.

- m) To accept deposits from members in such terms and conditions as may be determined by the board in this behalf and
- n) To do such other acts as may be required to fall in line with the directives issued by the Govt. of the All India Handloom Board or the All India Co-operative Spinning Mills, Federation and such other statutory and promotional bodies set up for the handloom industry designed to improve the economic condition of the weavers.

2. Benefitting the society: In order to expand the benefit in the society, ARTFED made provisions through which society shall have the following opportunities:

- i) To receive share capital and loans and grants from Govt. or other, State Bank of India, Commercial Banks. All India Handloom Board, National Co-operative Development Corporation etc.
- ii) To accept agency of registered manufacturers, firms of Govt. for wholesale agency of articles dealt with by the society.
- iii) To establish and negotiate business relations with marketing, industrial whole-sale consumers and Gaon Panchayat Level Co-operative Societies.
- iv) To become members of State Co-operative Bank, National and State Level Co-operative Federation and Unions and other Co-operative Financing agencies.
- v) To acquire lands and buildings, vehicles, factories, workshop, machineries and equipment etc.
- vi) To undertake management of any affiliated society where necessary on such terms and conditions as may be mutually agreed upon with the approval of the Registrar and the consent of the financing Bank.
- vii) To arrange for supply of raw materials for the members of the artisan co-operatives and to take suitable steps necessary for marketing their products.
- viii) To arrange finance for members of the artisan co-operatives to facilitate better productions.
- ix) To open sales depots exclusively for the products of the artisan co-operatives inside and outside the state, if and when felt necessary.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Through achievement of different objectives, the present study intended to make a comprehensive evaluation (in the stipulated time) of Micro Finance Scheme sponsored by NBCFDC in the state of Assam. The study made modest attempt to collect objective as well as subjective information related to various aspects. The methodology adopted was largely in compliance with the terms of reference (ToR) shared by NBCFDC.

3.1 Research Design

The present study was an evaluative study, and therefore was designed to collect necessary information which NBCFDC deemed as important for evaluation. Such information was having quantitative as well as qualitative aspects about the experience of beneficiaries/trainers.

3.2 Universe and Sample

Population or universe for this evaluation study was 1308 beneficiaries who were availing Micro Finance Scheme from identified sixteen sites of Assam. To strengthen the scope of generalization for the findings, a truly representative sample of 700 (53.5 percent) was drawn from the population of 1308 beneficiaries for various years starting from 2018-2021. The distribution of the sample is reflected in the following table (Table 3.1). The sample size has been determined in consultation and as per terms of reference given by NBCFDC. The sample size has been determined in consultation and as per terms of reference given by NBCFDC.

3.3 Sample Design

Selection of Districts- The state of Assam was selected for this evaluative study. State Channelising Agency selected for this evaluation was ARTFED, Guwahati. Therefore, all the districts for which consent was received became part of the present study. These districts were selected in consultation with ARTFED as well as NBCFDC. The period of evaluation was initially planned in the year 2021. However, due to unprecedented situation of Covid-19, the time frame was revised, and study was conducted in the months of January – April 2022.

3.4 Sources of Data

This was an empirical study intending for an evaluation of Micro Finance Scheme already implemented. The list of the beneficiaries for micro-finance scheme of NBCFDC for the said period was shared by the ARTFED which comprised to the name and other details of the beneficiary of the micro-finance loan scheme. Apart from the basic details (including name and contact details) all other information was directly collected from the primary sources, i.e., the beneficiaries of selected sixteen sites of training in the state of Assam. All the willing beneficiaries were contacted through the ARTFED (State Channelising Agency) and were verified from the available list of beneficiaries.

Table no. 3.1 Distribution of the sample for the study

Sl No	Name of the Centre	Sampled Beneficiaries	Percentage
1	Agchia	14	2.0
2	Azara	59	8.4
3	Barpeta	22	3.1
4	Chansari	77	11.0
5	Chaygaon	54	7.7
6	Darrang	23	3.3
7	Dudhnoi	49	7.0
8	Guwahati	111	15.9
9	Hazo	7	1.0
10	Mazbat	12	1.7
11	Mukalmua	26	3.7
12	Palasbari	13	1.9
13	Rajapukhuri	12	1.7
14	Rangia	103	14.7
15	Sualkuchi	38	5.4
16	Other	80	11.4
Total		700	100

Source: Field survey

(Note: Others include the centres where there were less than 5 sampled beneficiaries. The list comprises of Kamrup, Tezpur, Jorhan Moran, Nagaon, Lakhimpur and Dhemaji)

3.5 Research Tools

The present evaluation study was done through research tool of questionnaire, each for the beneficiaries. The questionnaire comprised of questions/statements seeking objective as well as subjective information on different dimensions such as content of the MFS, and implementation of the loan scheme from the perspective of beneficiaries (see annexures). It's important to note down here that each dimension of the questionnaire was developed considering terms of reference (given by NBCFDC) for evaluation of MFS.

A structured questionnaire was developed with an aim to gather objective as well as subjective information from the beneficiaries. In this, subjective information was attempted through open-ended questions while objective aspects were known through pre-determined choices for the selected dimensions in tune with the objectives of evaluation. Open-ended questions were broad while the closed-ended questions were narrow with large multiple-choice questions to be answered with a single word or selection.

As per our requirement, open-ended questions were designed to gather viewpoints of the beneficiaries regarding their experience, suggestions and recommendations towards the scheme. With an intention to keep queries (about experience) lucid and yet comprehensive for arriving at some relevant inferences, questions/statements were largely developed on 5-point likert scale where maximum points were given for strongly agree and lowest for strongly disagree towards a positive statement while the reverse for a negative statement.

3.6 Statistical Tools

For the analysis of objective as well as subjective information collected through questionnaire, few descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) were employed to arrive at

generalisations about identified dimensions. The analysis was performed utilising SPSS software version 22 of IBM. Mean was estimated largely for all Likert type statements/questions while percentages were carried for other questions with mutually exclusive response categories, and also for presenting subjective information after categorising them into similar broad areas.

Chapter 4

Analysis & Interpretation

The present chapter highlights major findings in accordance with the objectives of the study. As a part of evaluation, perspective (about the implementation of Micro Finance Scheme (MFS) from the beneficiaries was enumerated on the identified dimensions. However, this chapter will focus on the comprehension through experience of the beneficiaries about the Micro Finance Loan Scheme they have availed for extend entrepreneurial aspiration. In such a way an attempt has been made to shed light on different aspects indicating idea of implementation and impact apart from the basic demographic profile of the trainees.

At the outset, it is important to give an overview (in terms of the purpose of loan taken from NBCFDC via ARTFED, Guwahati) of the selected beneficiaries of the scheme for evaluation.

Table 4.1 Purpose for taking loan

Purpose	Number of Beneficiary	Percentage
Agriculture & Allied Activities	62	8.9
Small business/Artisan & traditional occupational type of Activities	635	90.7
Transport sector type Activities	3	0.4
Service Sectors	0	0
Total	700	100

Source: Field

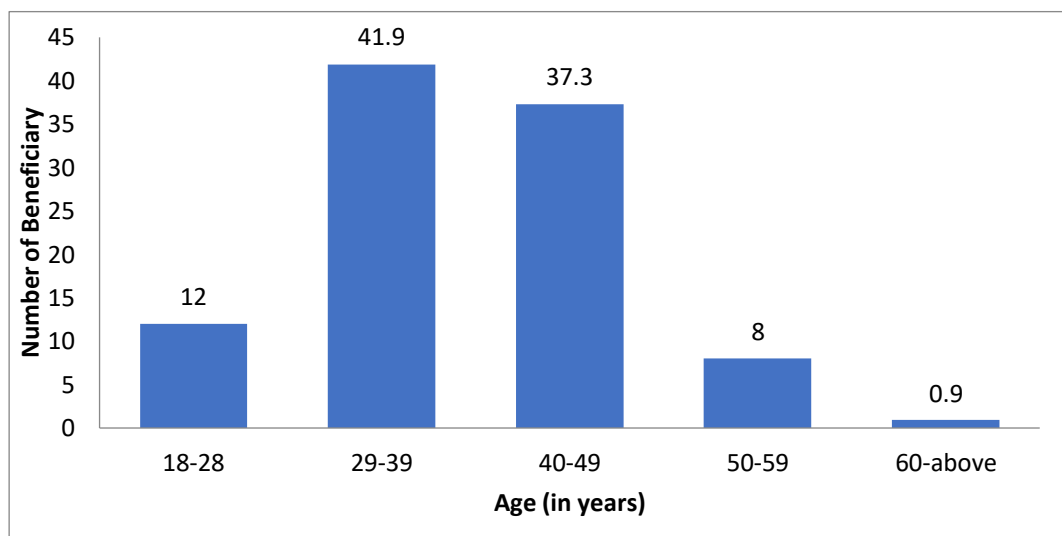
The Table 4.1 provides the distribution of beneficiaries according to the purpose with which loan was taken from NBCFDC via ARTFED, Guwahati. It was found that majority of the beneficiaries (90.7 percent) had the intention to utilise the loan amount on small business/artisan and traditional type of activities. Apart from this, 8.9 percent of the beneficiaries took the loan to be spent on agriculture and allied activities like dairy farming, agriculture, poultry farming, etc. Remaining 0.4 percent had taken the loan for spending on transport related activities. Actually, from the informal communication it was gathered that all the sampled beneficiaries utilized the loan amount on their intended purpose.

4.1 Demographic Profile of the Beneficiaries

Brief overview of beneficiaries helps in establishing the context of implementation of MFS. It will build the need and set the parameters of impact for the MFS. Demographic profile in this evaluative study comprised of indicators as age, gender, education, marital status, and major family profession of the sampled beneficiaries for the micro finance scheme under evaluation.

4.1.1 Age profile

Age profile of the sampled beneficiaries has been depicted through figure below (Fig. 4.1). It was found that largely beneficiaries of the Micro Finance Schemes of NBCFDC belong to age group of 29 to 49 years. Total percentage for the said age group came to be around 80 percent. Apart from that, around 9 percent of the beneficiaries belonged to age bracket of 50-60 years and those who were 28 years and below constitutes around 12 percent. It was also shown that around 1 percent of the beneficiaries were more than 60 years. This probably reflects the need for such a loan even among those who have crossed the age of 60 who may wish to start their own business or an upgradation which they might have failed till now due to their economic distress.

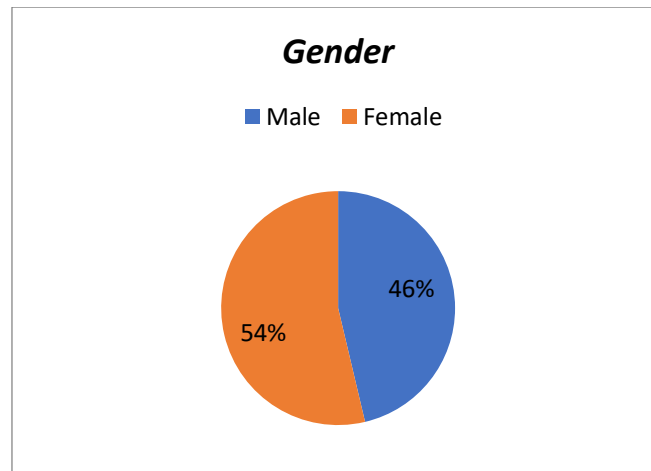


Source: Field

Fig. 4.1 Age profile of the beneficiaries

4.1.2 Gender of the Beneficiaries

Gender composition of the sampled beneficiaries is reflected in the below given figure (Fig. 4.2). It was found that the gender composition in the sampled group was balanced and rather had more of females. The percentage of male and female beneficiaries in the sampled group of respondents came to be 46 percent and 54 percent respectively. However, there is conspicuous absence of the persons belonging to the Third Gender. This might be an indication that the scope of welfare is yet to cover persons of this category from the community of OBCs.



Source: Field

Fig. 4.2 Gender classifications of the beneficiaries

4.1.3 Marital Status

The table 4.2 is about marital status of the sampled beneficiaries, and it's found that mostly beneficiaries were married (74.4%) followed by single (23.4%), widowed 1.6%), and divorced/separated beneficiaries (0.4%). Apart from that one beneficiary opted not giving any indicative response. This largely corresponds to the age profile of the trainees where majority of them were belonging to age group of 29-49 years.

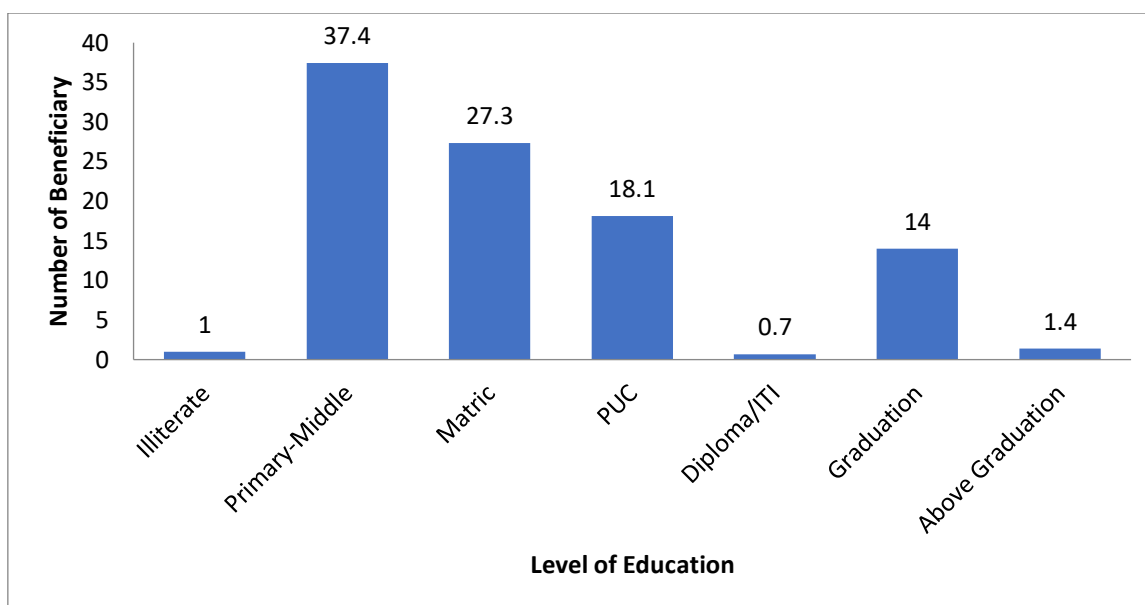
Table 4.2 Marital status of the beneficiaries

Marital status	No of beneficiaries	Percentage
Married	521	74.4
Single	164	23.4
Widowed	11	1.6
Divorced/Separated	3	0.4
No response	1	0.1
Total	700	100.0

Source: Field

4.1.4 Educational Qualification

Figure given below (Fig. 4.3) highlights educational status of the sampled beneficiaries. Through this figure it can be understood that there's low educational status of the beneficiaries at different sites of the Micro Finance Schemes of NBCFDC. Around 37.4 percent of the total sampled Beneficiaries did their Primary or middle schooling. While 27.3 percent were found to be matric. Among those with higher level of learning both at school or tertiary level, 18.1 percent were holding qualification up to 12th standard, 14.0 percent were graduates, and merely around 1.4 percent were above graduation as their highest degree. Apart from this, around 1 percent of the sampled beneficiaries were illiterate and less than 1 percentage with diploma or ITI.



Source: Field

Figure:4.3 Educational qualification of the beneficiaries

4.1.5 Type of Accommodation

Table given below (Table 4.3) highlight the type of accommodation of the sampled beneficiaries. Through the table it can be understood that 99.4 percent lives in their own house and less than 1 percent live in rent. Informally, it was verified that all the beneficiaries (100 percent of sampled beneficiaries) were living in a rural setting.

Table 4.3 Type of Accommodation

Type	No. of Beneficiaries	Percentage
Own House	696	99.4
On Rent	4	0.6
Total	700	100

Source: Field

4.1.6 Family Type

The Table below (Table 4.4) indicated the type of family in which the beneficiaries belong. It was found that majority of the beneficiaries belong to nuclear family which constitutes 84.1 percent of the sampled beneficiaries, followed by joint family which constitutes 15.4 percent and three of the sampled beneficiaries opted not to disclose any indicative response.

Table 4.4 Family type

Type	No. of Beneficiaries	Percentage
Nuclear	589	84.1
Joint	108	15.4
No response	3	0.5
Total	700	100

Source: Field

4.1.7 Size of the Family

The table 4.5 is about the size of the family of the sampled beneficiaries. 76 percent was found to be beneficiaries whose family have up to 3 members, followed by 19.7 percent whose family have 4 to 5 members, 4 percent of those family above 5 members. Apart from that, two beneficiaries opted not to share any indicative response.

Table 4.5 Size of the family

Size	No. of Beneficiaries	Percentage
Up to 3 members	532	76.0
4-5 members	138	19.7
above 5 members	28	4.0
No response	2	.3
Total	700	100

Source: Field

4.1.8 Bank Account Status

As per the norms of the scheme, the loan grant should be transferred directly in the bank account of the beneficiary. Therefore, essentially a bank account was needed by the beneficiary for receipt of the assistance. Information was sought for availability of the bank account with the beneficiary and it was found that all of them were having their bank account.

Considering the Jan Dhan Yojana as poorer friendly, information was sought for the Jan Dhan bank account of the beneficiaries. It's found that majority of the sampled beneficiaries were not having the bank account through scheme (Table 4.6). However, all the beneficiaries were having a bank account.

Table 4.6 Opening of Bank Account under Jan Dhan Account Yojana

Jan Dhan Account	Responses in number	Responses in percentage
Yes	62	8.9
No	638	91.1
Total	700	100

Source: Field

4.1.9 Employment Status

Another indicator for the employment status of the sampled beneficiaries is the profession in which the beneficiaries largely involved before and after availing the loan. The table 4.7 reveals that the number of unemployed before availing the loan was 7.7 percent which was reduced to 1.1 percent after availing the loan. Beneficiaries who were wage labours before the loan were 5.6 percent and this percentage reduced to 3.1 percent after availing the loan. The finding shows that majority of the beneficiaries were self-employed before and after availing the loan though their number increased after availing the loan. The table shows that 86.7 percent were self-employed before the loan which increased to 95.7 percent after availing the loan. This reflects

the strengthening of the employment/self-employment aspect as a benefit from the scheme under evaluation. Mean score of 4.00 (see table 4.14) in Likert type of scale indicates that loan scheme has helped beneficiaries in getting employment/self-employment.

Table 4.7 Employment status before and after loan

Status	Before loan		After loan	
	No. of beneficiaries	Percentage	No. of beneficiaries	percentage
Unemployed	54	7.7	8	1.1
Wage labour	39	5.6	22	3.1
Self- employed	607	86.7	670	95.7
Total	700	100	700	100

Source: Field

4.2 Economic Status of Beneficiaries

There were identified few dimensions through which attempt was made to evaluate MFS and its impact on the entrepreneurial aspiration. Such dimensions included annual family income, annual savings, annual investments, annual debt and monthly expenditure.

4.2.1 Annual Income (Before and After Loan)

Annual family income is one crude indicator about the economic status of a family and therefore a basic way to analyse if there is economic gain through the loan scheme when utilised by the selected beneficiaries. Results of the present study about this indicator is reflected in Table 4.6. It was found that annual income of the beneficiaries had improved after availing MFS (Table 4.8 & Table 4.8a). It shows that before availing loan all the selected beneficiaries were earning less than Rs. 3.00 Lakh annually. However, this number has reduced to 680 (97.1 percent) after availing the loan scheme of NBCFDC.

Table 4.8 Economic Status of beneficiaries before and after availing loan

Before loan			After loan		
Economic status before loan	Number of beneficiaries	%	Economic status after loan	Number of beneficiaries	%
Less than Rs.3.00 Lakh p.a	700	100	Less than Rs.3.00 Lakh p.a	680	97.1
Above Rs.3 Lakh p.a	0	0.00	Above Rs.3 Lakh p.a	20	2.9
Total	700	100	Total	700	100

Source: Field

This implies that there has been enhancement (though marginally) of the income status of beneficiaries. At least 20 beneficiaries (2.9 percent) have mentioned their income level crossing the limit of Rs. 3.00 Lakh. This is also reflected in their agreement (Mean score of 3.93) towards the statement if loan has led to more income in their family. The improvement in the income scenario of the beneficiaries could also be noticed from the below given table 4.6a where the result of average annual as well as monthly income (before and after the loan) of the selected beneficiaries is displayed. It is noteworthy to mention that there was enhancement of Rs.32,112.00 for the average annual income while it was Rs. 2,676.00 for the monthly income indicating the change of 20.1 percentage (Table 4.8a).

Table 4.8a Average Annual and Monthly Income of the Beneficiaries

Average Annual Income (in Rs.)			Average Monthly Income (in Rs.)		
Before Loan	After Loan	Change (in Percentage)	Before Loan	After Loan	Change (in Percentage)
1,58,978.00	1,91,090.00	32,112.00 (20.1 %)	13,248.00	15,924.00	2,676.00 (20.1%)

Source: Field

Though the result shows very marginal growth in term of economic status for those crossing the bracket of Rs. 3.00 Lakh, there are absolute/relative gains when analysis was done for the income bracket of Rs. 1.50 Lakh. The table 4.8b explains the scenario of the beneficiaries who could cross the margin of annual income of Rs. 1.5 Lakh after availing the loan.

Table 4.8b Variation of economic status Centre wise

Name of the centre	Economic status of the family Before Availing Loan		Economic status of the family After Availing Loan		
	Less than Rs. 1.50 Lakh	1.50 – 3.00 Lakh	Less than Rs. 1.50 Lakh	1.50 – 3.00 Lakh	More than 3.00 Lakh
Agchia	7	7	1	13	0
Azara	31	28	26	28	5
Barpeta	5	17	2	20	0
Chansari	62	15	41	35	1
Chaygaon	37	17	16	35	3
Darrang	12	11	6	12	5
Dudhnoi	46	3	46	3	0
Guwahati	69	42	7	99	5
Hazo	4	3	0	7	0
Mazbat	10	2	0	12	0
Mukalmua	0	26	0	26	0
Palasbari	6	7	3	10	0
Raapukhuri	6	6	0	12	0
Rangia	3	100	2	101	0
Sualkuchi	23	15	3	35	0
Others	54	26	15	64	1
Total (%)	375(53.6%)	325(46.4%)	168(24%)	512(73.1)	20(2.9%)

Source: Field

(Note: Others: Centre where less than 5 beneficiaries comprising Kamrup, Tezpur, Jorhan Moran, Nagaon, Lakhimpur, Dhemaji Districts)

With an aim to understand variation of the economic status of the beneficiaries before availing loan and after availing loan an analysis has been done on centre wise (Table 4.8b). The result

indicates that centre such as Azara, Chansari, Chaygaon, Darrang, Guwahati has shown an improvement in the economic status after availing loan which crossed the slab of Rs. 3.00 Lakh. Though there are very few numbers of beneficiaries to have crossed the slab of Rs. 3.00 Lakh after availing loan, such an improvement is encouraging and crucial for two reasons. First, in the context of rural setting with the help of micro finance loan scheme there were beneficiaries (2.9 percent) who could cross the annual income group of Rs. 3.00 Lakh. -Second, improvement in annual income to cross the level of Rs. 3.00 Lakh in such a setting (rural) though low as 2.9 percent is credible due to the unprecedented effect of Covid-19.

Also, the improvement probably due to the loan scheme should be seen in the reduction of number of sampled beneficiaries with annual income less than Rs. 1.50 Lakh. Before availing loan this number was 53.6 percent which has significantly reduced to 24 percent after availing the loan scheme indicating 207 number of beneficiaries crossing the limit of Rs. 1.50 Lakh after availing the loan. This improvement could be clearly seen in the enhancement of number of sampled beneficiaries with annual income between Rs. 1.50 and Rs. 3.00 Lakh. This number has grown up to 73.1 per cent (after availing loan) from 46.4 percent (before availing the loan). As the given economic status of the beneficiaries of the study were low, it was found that traditional boundary (for economic improvement) set by NBCFDC (which is more than Rs. 3.00 lakh) could not be largely achieved in the sampled beneficiaries.

However, overall growth in terms of economic status of the beneficiaries has been recorded. It is important to note down that the period of analysis could not prove to be an appropriate one as during this period there was negative impact on the economic gains of the selected beneficiaries due to the pandemic of Covid-19 in this period of time. This was reflected in the open-ended responses of beneficiaries where Covid-19 was cited as the major reason behind irregularity of repayment and hence the immediate gain from the MFS as per their responses could not be materialised.

4.2.2 Annual Savings (Before and After Loan)

Annual saving is one of the important indicators which reflected the economic status of the beneficiaries in the study. The more of it is generally considered to be a reflection for the better economic situation. In the present study, due to the variation of annual savings among the beneficiaries, the analysis (for annual savings) has been done through categorization. There were ten broad categories formed to encapsulate the responses received from the selected respondents (Table 4.9). The minimum and maximum annual savings range, as per the responses came to be Rs. 5,000.00 and Rs. 1,50,000.00 respectively.

It was found that after availing loan the amount of annual saving has increased. It is seen that the number of beneficiaries in the lowest savings range (less than or equal to Rs. 5,000.00) has reduced from 11.1 percent before availing loan to merely 0.7 percent after availing loan. It implies that the annual savings has increased in the selected beneficiaries. Also, the concentration in the number of beneficiaries for annual savings could be seen for the range of Rs. 10,001 – 15,000 which was 44 percent. This got shifted to higher range of Rs. 15,001 – 20,000 which has 45.3 percentage of the total beneficiaries after loan. The percentage of the beneficiaries for this range was up from 25.6 percent before availing loan. Similarly, there is improvement in the number of beneficiaries for all the succeeding higher range for the annual savings indicating the economic gain from the micro finance scheme in the present study done for ARTFED, Guwahati.

In the context of the present study, less of saving is a probable result of the two aspects, i.e., first less earnings or surplus expenditure as the study was done without having enough time lapse to generate enough economic surplus, and also there is a lack of saving awareness among the rural households which forms greatest part of the implementation of the micro finance scheme in the study.

Table 4.9 Annual saving of beneficiaries

Savings Range (in Rs.)	Annual Savings (Before Loan)	Percentage (%)	Annual Savings (Now-After Loan)	Percentage (%)
Less than or equal to 5000	78	11.1	5	0.7
5001-10000	67	9.6	98	14.0
10001-15000	308	44.0	87	12.4
15001-20000	179	25.6	317	45.3
20001-25000	21	3.0	119	17.0
25001-30000	5	0.7	17	2.4
30001-35000	0	0.0	3	0.4
35001-40000	5	0.7	6	0.9
40001-50000	15	2.1	9	1.3
50001-150000	22	3.1	36	5.2
Missing/No response	0		3	0.4
Total	700	100	700	100

Source: Field

4.2.3 Annual Investment (Before and After loan)

Another business/enterprise related aspect for the economic status is ‘annual investment’. On this dimension, the result from the present study highlights the variations and therefore for the analysis, ten broad categories (indicating the investment range) were formed (Table 4.10). The minimum and maximum range for the formation of such categories was Rs. 5,000 and Rs. 1,50,000 respectively.

It was found that after availing loan the amount of annual investment has increased. As seen from the table, a greater number of beneficiaries belonged to the lower range of annual investment before availing loan. Before loan, the maximum number of beneficiaries (33.3 percent) were found to be in the investment range of Rs. 25,001.00 – Rs. 30,000.00, while after the loan the maximum number (76.6 percent) was found to be in the investment range of Rs. 50,001 – 1,50,000.00. This percentage was an enhancement from meagre 12.9 percent of the beneficiaries for this range, before availing the loan scheme. It is seen that after availing the loan, there is enhancement in the number of beneficiaries in the higher investment range while it was in the lower range before availing loan (see Table 4.10). This clearly indicates the enhancement in the investment capacity of the beneficiaries after availing the micro finance loan scheme of the NBCFDC through ARTFED, Guwahati in the state of Assam.

Table 4.10 Status of annual investment of the beneficiaries

Investment Range (in Rs.)	Annual investment (Before Loan)	Percentage (%)	Annual investment (Now-After Loan)	Percentage (%)
0 – 5000	7	1.0	4	0.6
5001-10000	5	0.7	7	1.0
10001-15000	10	1.4	3	0.4
15001-20000	93	13.3	9	1.3
20001-25000	66	9.4	3	0.4
25001-30000	233	33.3	2	0.3
30001-35000	44	6.3	0	0.0
35001-40000	30	4.3	5	0.7
40001-50000	108	15.4	118	16.9
50001-150000	90	12.9	536	76.6
Missing/No Response	14	2.0	13	1.9
Total	700	100	700	100

Source: Field

4.2.4 Status of Debt of Beneficiaries (Before and After Loan)

Debt is another crude indicator for the economic status of an individual and therefore this was selected as a dimension for the analysis of Micro Finance Loan Scheme. The intention behind choosing this dimension for the analysis was to notice the impact of the micro finance loan scheme towards reduction/increment of the debt amount on the family of the beneficiary. The results for the responses of the beneficiaries could be seen in the Table 4.11. Though marginal, there is reduction in the total number of beneficiaries with a debt vis-à-vis the situation before availing loan. Simultaneously, there is addition in the number of debtors in the higher range from Rs. 20,001 which is a probable indicator of business pursuit among the beneficiaries as the higher investment may lead to higher debt. Also, there is a need to understand the context of the study which is rural where the concept (of debt) in common parlance is confused with the loan. Therefore, majority of the respondents (more than 60 percent) have not responded to such a dimension. It reflects that majority of the selected respondents were not having any debt either before or after availing loan scheme.

Table No: 4.11 Annual Debt of the beneficiaries

Debt Range (in Rs.)	Annual debt (Before Loan)	Percentage (%)	Annual debt (Now-After Loan)	Percentage (%)
0 – 5000	240	34.3	235	33
5001-10000	0	0	4	0.6
10001-15000	2	0.3	0	0.0
15001-20000	2	0.3	1	0.1
20001-25000	3	0.4	5	0.7
25001-30000	6	0.9	5	0.7

30001-35000	2	0.3	1	0.1
35001-40000	1	0.1	1	0.1
40001-50000	9	1.3	9	1.3
50001-150000	6	0.9	14	2.0
Missing/No response	429	61.3	425	60.7
Total	700	100	700	100

Source: Field

4.2.5 Status of Monthly Expenditure

Another crucial dimension which was selected to know the economic status of the beneficiaries included 'monthly expenditure'. The response for this dimension is reflected in the Table 4.12. The study reveals that the monthly expenditure of the beneficiaries has increased albeit slightly. Before availing loan scheme majority of the beneficiaries (92.4 percent) were having monthly expenditure below Rs. 5,000.00. This number got reduced to 82.6 percent after availing the loan. Actually, these beneficiaries after availing loan were spending more (probably as a result of the strengthened purchasing power) and became part of the expenditure range of Rs. 5001 – 10,000.00. Total number of beneficiaries belonging to this range before taking the loan was 5.1 percent which has increased to 14.1 percent after availing the loan. This, in a way, indicates the economic gain of the selected beneficiaries through micro finance loan scheme.

Table 4.12 Status of monthly expenditure of beneficiaries

Monthly expenditure Range (in Rs.)	Monthly expenditure (Before Loan)	Percentage (%)	Monthly expenditure (Now-After Loan)	Percentage (%)
0 – 5000	647	92.4	578	82.6
5001-10000	36	5.1	99	14.1
10001-15000	4	.6	11	1.6
15001-20000	1	.1	2	.3
20001-25000	0	0	0	0
25001-30000	1	.1	0	0
30001-35000	0	0	0	0
35001-40000	0	0	0	0
40001-50000	1	1.1	2	1.3
50001-150000	0	0	0	0
Missing/No response	10	1.4	8	1.1
Total	700	100	700	100

Source: Field

4.2.6 Other Dimensions for the Gain from the MFS Scheme

Apart from the crude economic indicators, other dimensions for the gain from the scheme were identified and information was gathered for the same. These dimensions include the perception of the beneficiaries about the objective as well as subjective gains related to the availing of the loan scheme.

4.2.6.1 Entrepreneurial Aspirations

The idea behind the micro finance scheme by the NBCFDC was to strengthen the entrepreneurial aspirations of the small entrepreneurs belonging to the OBC category. Therefore, information was sought to know if the implementation strategy followed in the state of Assam was successful for this aspect. Information was gathered on select dimensions through the agreement level (likert type scale named after the Psychologist Rensis Likert to scale the responses in a survey) of the respondent beneficiaries. The results for the gathered data are reflected in the table 4.13 which indicate summary of the information pertaining to entrepreneurial aspirations of the respondents. Mean score was calculated to draw the inferences where the score of ‘5’ indicated complete agreement of the respondents while the score of ‘1’ pointed the complete disagreement towards identified dimensions.

Higher mean score for four out of five dimensions, indicate that the respondents agreed for the entrepreneurial assistance from the micro finance scheme of NBCFDC. These dimensions include ‘availing of loan to start/upgrade an enterprise’, ‘loan helped in self-employment/employment’, ‘help from the loan to become an entrepreneur’, and ‘comprehensiveness of the loan scheme to include all the enterprises’. Mean score of ‘4’ was observed for the dimensions of ‘availing loan to start/upgrade an enterprise’, ‘loan has helped in getting self-employment and becoming self -employed/entrepreneur’ implying the scheme has largely helped in entrepreneurial aspirations of the beneficiaries. However, a neutral (Mean of 3.27) score was observed for the comprehensive coverage of the loan scheme to include all the professions/skills/enterprises. This may be the result of lack of comprehensive awareness programs by the SCA about the loan scheme to the beneficiaries. Also, a low Mean score of 2.32 (indicating the disagreement) was observed for the ‘satisfaction from the loan amount received’. This is probably the result of the economic hardship emerged due to the pandemic situation immediately after availing the loan by the selected beneficiaries.

Table 4.13 Entrepreneurial Aspiration of the Beneficiaries

Components	Mean score
Loan was availed with an intention to start/upgrade an enterprise	4.04
Loan amount was sufficient to satisfy the business need	2.32
Loan scheme has helped you in getting employment/self-employment	4.00
Loan has helped you aspire to become self-employed/entrepreneur	3.87
Loan scheme is comprehensive to include entrepreneurs of all the sector	3.21

Source: Field

4.2.6.2 Possession of the Capital Assets

One of the most objective gains for the entrepreneur is possession of the ‘capital’ assets, i.e., those assets which could be utilised for commercial (entrepreneurial) purposes yielding the economic returns. These include machines, shop, animal (for animal husbandry), vehicles, etc. The result for the study on this ground is reflected in the Table 4.14 where it is seen that maximum number of beneficiaries (63.1 %) didn’t respond to question seeking information on this dimension. The probable reason for this could be lack of immediate gain due to the pandemic situation.

Table 4.14 Possession of the Capital Assets

Responses	Possession of Capital Assets before availing loan (Percentage)	Possession of Capital Assets after loan (Percentage)
Yes	119 (17%)	140 (20%)
No	147 (21%)	118 (16.9%)
Did not respond	434 (62%)	442 (63.1%)
Total	700 (100%)	700 (100%)

Source: Field

Also, in their informal as well as formal interaction and responses, the beneficiaries have made it clear that they possessed one or the other capital assets before applying for the loan such as loom machine, cow/cattle, etc. This is further reflected in the loan amount demanded/received by the selected beneficiaries which was sufficient only for their small recurring requirements such as purchase of raw materials, goods, etc. However, there was enhancement of 3 percent in such possessions among the beneficiaries (Table 4.14). Therefore, the scheme has probably helped (through economic support) the willing beneficiaries in acquiring the capital or business-related assets.

4.2.6.3 Occupancy of a (Pucca) House (Housing)

As a part of noticing the improvement in the livelihood of the beneficiaries as a result of the loan scheme, information was sought about the gain in terms of own (pucca) house. The result of the study is displayed in the Table 4.15. From the table it is observed that on the count of owning a pucca house, majority of the beneficiaries (93.6 percent) were having their own pucca house even before availing the loan scheme. However, the percentage of such beneficiaries got enhanced to 95 percent as a probable result of the loan scheme availed by the respondents.

Table 4.15 Housing

Responses	Housing before availing loan (Percentage)	Housing after loan (Percentage)
Kutchha	6.4	5
Pucca	93.6	95
Total	100	100

Source: Field

4.2.6.4 Loan Repayment

Repayment of loan is a crucial indicator of economic gain of the beneficiary for the micro finance loan scheme. The result for the information about the loan recovery could be gauged from the table 4.15a. As per the guidelines suggested by the NBCFDC, the beneficiaries were categorised into 'regular', 'irregular', and 'defaulter'. From the study, it was found that majority of the beneficiaries (70.9 percent) were irregular, and 28.3 percent were regular in their repayment of the quarterly instalments to settle their loan amount. Only a very small number of 6 beneficiaries (0.9 percent) were found to be defaulter. Considering the pandemic situation of Covid-19 such a result is quite encouraging where almost all of the sampled beneficiaries were able to make enough gain to repay their loan amount either regularly or irregularly. The major reason for irregularities and bankruptcy was found to be pandemic of Covid-19. In fact, ARTFED should make proper arrangements to transfer the proper

(successful) image of the ground in terms of recovery on regular or irregular basis. This is important in the wake of existing managerial related issues of the organization with no regular MD in place, impacting the functional aspect and channelisation to NBCFDC. Therefore, administrative reforms are the need of the hour for institutions like ARTFED, Guwahati.

Table 4.15a Loan recovery

Loan Recovery mode	Responses in number	Percentage
Regular	198	28.3
Irregular	496	70.9
Defaulter	6	.9
Total	700	100

Source: Field

4.2.6.5 Familial and Social Gain

It was also observed that the respondents had a positive response towards familial gains and social gains (Table 4.16). The beneficiaries agreed that the loan amount has helped them to gain a better status in the family (Mean score 3.83), and in the society (Mean score 3.21) by reducing the backwardness (Mean score 3.84) which could be directly/indirectly related to the enhancement of the family income and the assets (in the family) as agreed by the beneficiaries with respective Mean score of 3.93 and 3.31. In terms of empowerment of the beneficiaries after availing loan, respondents agreed that they felt empowered after availing MFS (Mean score 3.88). In the response towards accessing better health facilities, Mean score of 3.40 reflected more than 'neutral' satisfaction indicating the related economic gains after availing the loan scheme. Also, the beneficiaries have agreed that the loan has helped them to provide better education to their children (Mean score 3.45) than previously.

Table No 4.16 Familial and Social gain

Components	Mean score
Loan has led to more income in your family	3.93
Loan has enhanced the number of assets	3.31
Loan scheme has added to your prestige in the society	3.21
You could provide better education to the children/family members after availing the loan	3.45
After availing loan, you could access better health facilities	3.40
You feel empowered after availing and utilising the loan	3.88
Your value in the family has increased after availing the loan	3.83
Loan scheme could reduce backwardness/disadvantaged position of your family	3.84
Gains of loan scheme were short-term	3.87

Field

However, in terms of sustainability of gain of such loan, respondents agreed that the gains of this scheme were for the short-term (Mean score 3.87). The less satisfaction level related to sustainability of the gains from the loan scheme could be due to two factors. First, the onset of

the Covid-19 pandemic on the horizon, and second because of their (beneficiaries’) need for the top-up/other loan to make up for the loss due to the pandemic.

4.3 Experience of the Beneficiaries Towards Awareness and Implementation of MFS by SCA (ARTFED, Guwahati)

With an aim to notice the grassroots level implementation of the micro finance scheme (MFS) in the state of Assam by the ARTFED (State Channelising Agency – SCA), information from the beneficiaries were sought about the dimensions such as awareness about the scheme and smooth implementation of the loan process, idea about the MFS loan scheme of NBCFDC, and awareness about the scope of the MFS to the beneficiaries.

4.3.1 Experience Towards the MFS Loan Scheme and its Implementation

For the successful implementation of the MFS loan scheme among the beneficiaries, it becomes desirable to notice the experience of the beneficiaries in the context. Awareness and experience (about the MFS) of the beneficiaries was sought through few dimensions. The results for such experience of the selected beneficiaries are reflected in the following tables (Table 4.17, Table 4.17a, Table 4.17b, Table 4.18, Table 4.19). From the table 4.17a, it is visible that there was awareness among the beneficiaries about the MFS of NBCFDC which is reflected through the Mean score of 3.21. In this regard, it is quite encouraging to note that the concerned SCA, ARTFED was instrumental in spreading the awareness about the MFS among the potential applicants who became beneficiaries for the scheme later. This was shared through the responses for the source of awareness about the MFS among the selected beneficiaries (Table 4.17b). It was found that 86.7 percent of the selected beneficiaries have mentioned SCA as their source of awareness about the micro finance loan scheme of NBCFDC. In their informal responses, the beneficiaries mentioned that officials of ARTFED visited their place/village for such awareness.

However, the selected beneficiaries disagreed for the smooth disbursement of the loan process (Mean 2.38) while there was relatively higher satisfaction (Mean 2.66) towards the process of availing loan implying the experience with application and process (of loan) was relatively better than the receipt of the same. The reason could be time lapse from the date of their application as was mentioned by the beneficiaries. From the table 4.17, it could be seen that though the maximum number of beneficiaries (8.1 percent) received their loan amount in a period less than two months, there were 73 beneficiaries (10.4 percent) and 30 beneficiaries (4.3 percent) who received their loan amount respectively in a time period of 2-4 months and more than six months.

Table 4.17 Tenure of loan disbursement

Tenure	Responses in number	Responses in percentage
Less than 2 months	589	84.1
2-4 months	73	10.4
4-6 months	8	1.1
Above 6 months	30	4.3
Total	700	100

Source: Field

Further, this was reiterated in open-ended responses where it’s mentioned that although there is no such major difficulty in availing loan availing process needs to be smoother. This directly or indirectly indicates scope of improvement for the SCA in the context of Assam. However,

for other crucial aspects such as interest rate and repayment duration of the loan the selected beneficiaries showed their agreement. It could be noted down from the table that high Mean scores of 3.98 and 4.03 were observed for the agreement of the beneficiaries towards convenient interest rates and duration of the loan repayment respectively. Also, Regarding the interest rate also responded suggested to minimise the rate of interest in the future implementation of any loan scheme. Further, a high Mean score (of 4.02) was observed towards agreement of the sampled beneficiaries for the conception of the MFS scheme by the NBCFDC.

Table 4.17a Awareness and effectiveness of loan process

Components	Mean
Awareness of NBCFDC and Schemes to support backward class	3.28
Loan availing process was smooth	2.66
Loan disbursement was smooth	2.38
Interest rates for the payment are convenient	3.98
Period fixed for repayment is convenient	4.03
Loan scheme is well conceived scheme of NBCFDC	4.02

Source: Field

Table 4.17b Sources of Awareness about MFS

Source of Awareness	Number of Beneficiaries	Percentage
Print media	45	6.4
Family/friends/relatives	12	1.7
Television/radio	4	.6
Other beneficiaries	11	1.6
State channelizing agency	607	86.7
Self-help group	4	.6
Other	15	2.1
Did not respond	2	0.3
Total	700	100

Source: Field

4.3.2 Awareness About the Scope of the Micro Finance (Loan) Scheme

As a part of noting the successful implementation of MFS scheme in the context of Assam, information was sought on dimensions such as communication for the scope of gains associated with the scheme and other related aspects. From the content of the scheme, it is known that this scheme is an assistance for the small entrepreneurs from the economically disadvantaged section of the OBC community. Therefore, the information was sought whose result could be seen in the Table 4.18.

In the present study it was found that the beneficiaries were well informed about the scope of the micro finance scheme as the high Mean score of 4.05 was observed for the agreement of the selected/sampled beneficiaries. Also, a high Mean score of 3.95 was observed for the agreement level of the beneficiaries towards the dimension of support from SCA for the better utilization of the loan scheme.

Table 4.18 Awareness about the scope of MFS

Components	Mean score
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Information about loan was well communicated	4.05
Knowledge about better utilization was provided by SCA	3.95

Source: Field

4.3.3 Measures for Enhancing the Scope of Implementation

The performance of SCA (ARTFED, Guwahati) was noticed through information about the measures that would have enhanced the scope of (successful) implementation of MFS in the context of Assam as well as other parts of the country. The results for such information are reflected in the Table 4.19.

Table 4.19 Desirable Dimensions for the Successful Implementation

Components	Mean
Information of success stories shared about availing loan	3.21
Interaction with employers/ entrepreneurs	3.83

Source: Field

It was found that SCA was instrumental in strengthening the scheme by sharing the success stories (Mean 3.21) and providing scope for interaction with entrepreneurs (Mean 3.83). This, as told by the respondents in their oral interaction, was done as a part of awareness program about MFS in their own context. Although, such measures were done in a rudimentary sense by the SCA in the present study, it must have motivated the applicants to become part of this MFS scheme. Such measures could be formalised to yield better returns in terms of making the scheme truly successful.

Chapter 5

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

5.1 Summary of the Findings

Following point will help to summaries the findings of this evaluative study of MFS:

1. Majority of the sampled beneficiaries (90.7 percent) had taken loan for small business/artisan type of activities. Remaining sample had share of agriculture & allied activities (8.9 percent) and transport sector type of activities (0.4 percent). Therefore, all the beneficiaries (100 percent of the sampled beneficiaries) utilized the loan amount as per their intended purpose.
2. There were two categories of loan amount distributed to the applicants. These were, a) Rs. 50,000.00 and b) Rs. 1,00,000.00
3. It was found that majority of beneficiaries of the Micro Finance Schemes of NBCFDC belonged to age group of 29 to 49 years. Total percentage for the aforesaid age group came to be 79.2 percent. Apart from that, 8 percent of the beneficiaries belonged to age bracket of 50-60 years while around 0.8 percent beneficiaries were above 60 years of age, and those who were 28 years and below constituted around 12 percent.
4. Gender composition for the implementation of the scheme was sensitive towards both male as well as female gender. The findings reflected that there were few differences between male and female. In the selected sample, there were 53.7 female while 46.3 male beneficiaries.
5. Regarding marital aspects of the selected beneficiaries, it was found that majority of them were married (74.4 percent) followed by unmarried/single (23.4 percent) while 1.6 percent were widowed, and 0.4 percent comprised of those beneficiaries who got divorced/separated.
6. Information sought for educational level of the selected beneficiaries revealed the low educational status of the beneficiaries for micro-finance credit scheme of NBCFDC in the state of Assam for the selected period of review. In terms of decreasing order, it was observed that 37.4 percent had primary or middle level of schooling, 27.3 percent had matriculation as their educational level, 14 percent of the selected beneficiaries were graduates and merely 1.4 percent had post-graduation as their highest qualification. In the total sample, 1 percent were found to be illiterate while less than 1 percent with the qualification of diploma or ITI.
7. For the accommodation, it was found that almost all of the beneficiaries (99.4 percent) had their own houses and merely 0.6 percent were residing in the rented accommodation. Informally, it was noted that all (100 percent) of the beneficiaries were living in the rural setting of Assam. Therefore, the present study was conducted in a rural setting.
8. Regarding the information about the family of the sampled beneficiaries, it was found that majority of them (84.1 percent) were having a nuclear family and 15.4 percent of the beneficiaries had a joint family. No response was received on this count from 0.5

percent of the sampled beneficiaries. In regard to family, information was also sought for the number of family members, and it was revealed that majority of the beneficiaries (76 percent) had a family with maximum three members. This was followed by those with 4-5 family members (19.7 percent) while only 4 percent of the sampled beneficiaries had family with more than 5 members.

9. For the employment aspect, it was noticed from the sampled beneficiaries that at the time of availing the loan facility the percentage of unemployed persons was 7.7 percent which got reduced to 1.1 percent after the utilization of the loan given by NBCFDC. Interestingly, as per the expectation, there was promotion of self-employment among the selected beneficiaries. It was found that 5.6 percent of the sampled beneficiaries were wage laborers before availing the loan, and this was reduced to 3.1 percent after availing the loan.
10. Overall positive economic implications for the loan scheme were witnessed through the enhanced economic situation of the beneficiaries. This was reflected in the annual income, savings, investment, expenditure, and debt of the sampled beneficiaries. Regarding annual family income, it was noticed that despite the pandemic led economic challenges there were few beneficiaries who could surpass the threshold level of Rs. 3.00 Lakh as their annual income. Out of total sample of 700, there were 20 beneficiaries (2.9 percent) who have crossed this level for annual income. It is quite significant to mention here that when seen through realistic level of annual income of the selected beneficiaries for the study even the crossing of threshold limit of Rs. 1.50 Lakh as annual income could be presumed as a major economic push. It was found that from the given level of 375 beneficiaries with annual income less than Rs. 1.50 Lakh, 207 (29.5 percent) beneficiaries crossed the annual income of Rs.1.50 Lakh after availing the loan scheme of NBCFDC. Average annual and monthly income of the sampled beneficiaries saw a jump of 20.1 percent after availing the loan. Average annual income before loan was Rs. 1,59,978.00 which became Rs. 1,91,090.00 after availing the loan.
11. After availing the loan, an improvement in economic situation was noticed in terms of annual savings of the beneficiaries. On analysis it was found that prior to loan, majority of the beneficiaries (44 percent) were having annual saving range of Rs. 10,001.00 – 15,000.00 while after the loan this concentration was shifted to higher level. Now, the majority of the beneficiaries (45 percent) were having annual savings in the range from Rs. 15,001.00 – Rs. 20,000.00. Along with this, the percentage of beneficiaries got better for other higher-level slabs for the annual savings.
12. Similarly, for the annual investment level of the beneficiaries indicated for their better economic situation after the utilisation of loan scheme. Prior to loan scheme, the majority of the selected beneficiaries (33.3 percent) were annually investing between Rs. 25,001.00 and Rs. 30,000.00. However, after availing the loan scheme, majority of the beneficiaries (76 percent) were found to be investing annually in the range of Rs. 50,001.00 and Rs. 1,50,000.00 probably indicating improvement in the economic situation of the selected beneficiaries.
13. Other indicators for the economic condition of the beneficiaries were monthly expenditure and debt. Direct and inverse relationship are respectively associated for the

better economic situation with the former and latter indicator. In the study it was found that there was reduction in the number of beneficiaries with monthly expenditure between Rs. 5,000.00 and Rs. 10,000.00. There were 92.4 percent of the sampled beneficiaries with this monthly expenditure prior to taking of their loan. This number was reduced to 82.6 percent after availing of loan by the beneficiaries indicating a shift for the higher monthly expenditure by the beneficiaries.

Also, the debt was found to be reducing, although marginally, for the sampled beneficiaries after the taking of loan by them. It is important to mention here that the concept of debt is largely comprehended ambiguously in the rural set-up where borrowing is a norm, and therefore majority of the respondents (beneficiaries) (more than 60 percent) didn't respond. However, of those who have responded, 34.3 percent mentioned their annual debt of Rs. 5,000.00 or less before taking the loan. This number got reduced to 33 percent after availing of the loan by the beneficiaries

14. Intended aim of the scheme to fulfil (small) business aspirations of the beneficiaries was found to be either largely achieved or on the track of achievement. A higher Mean score was achieved for the opinion of the respondents (sampled beneficiaries) towards statements for their enhanced entrepreneurial aspirations with the loan scheme. Also, information was sought for the procurement of capital assets with the utilisation of loan grant. Though majority (more than 60 percent) of the sampled beneficiaries didn't respond to the possession of capital assets, the number of beneficiaries having an affirmative response for the possession of capital assets was increased from 17 percent (before loan) to 20 percent (after availing of loan). This probably indicates support provided by the loan scheme in procurement of capital/business related assets.
15. For individual, familial, social, and other gains from the loan, information was collected seeking agreement of the sampled beneficiaries. Higher Mean score on agreement scale was noticed for enhancement in income in the family, enhancement of support for education of children in the family and access to better health facilities, social prestige, etc. indicating the improvement through loan scheme. However, the high Mean score (3.87) towards the short-term gain from the loan scheme was a matter requiring immediate concern from NBCFDC. Actually, from the informal discussion it became clear that due to the smaller loan amount, bigger aspirations of the loan applicant remained unfulfilled. Due to the pandemic of Covid-19, they had a bad experience forcing several apprehensions apart from the obvious limited applications of the (small) loan amount ranging from Rs. 50,000.00 to Rs. 1,00,000.00. This, according to them, was having a possibility of unsustainable outcome. In such a situation, many beneficiaries held a strong opinion for a further provision of loan along with some scope of guidance and training especially in the handloom sector.
16. Information gathered on the accommodation revealed that 93.6 percent of the beneficiaries were having their own pucca house even before applying for the loan scheme. This number, however, was increased to 95 percent after availing the loan indicating probable support from the loan scheme.
17. About the loan scheme (of NBCFDC) and its implementation (by ARTFED, Guwahati), sampled beneficiaries held affirmative opinion about the idea and concept of the scheme. In fact, majority of the beneficiaries mentioned the awareness spread by

ARTFED, Guwahati as the source for availing the loan scheme. The intention of the scheme, i.e., promotion of the self-employment, loan utilisation, repayment, etc. seems to have been communicated by the State Channelising Agency (ARTFED, Guwahati) among the beneficiaries.

18. The loan disbursement was smooth as reflected from the responses of the beneficiaries and for majority of the cases (84.1 percent), it took two months or less to receive the loan amount in their bank account. 10.4 percent of the beneficiaries received loan amount in a period between 2 to 4 months, and 1.1 percent received in a time frame between 4 to 6 months while 4.3 percent of the sampled beneficiaries mentioned to have received the loan amount in their bank account after six months of their application.
19. All the beneficiaries were having their own bank account. However, few of them, i.e., 8.9 percent, have opened their account under financial inclusion scheme of Government of India, better known as Jan Dhan Yojana.
20. Regarding the repayment status of loan, there were irregularities among majority of the beneficiaries. In the study, 70.9 percent of the beneficiaries were found to be irregular while 28.3 percent were regular in their repayment. There were merely 0.9 percent of the sampled beneficiaries who were found to be defaulters for the loan repayment. The reason majorly cited by the beneficiaries for their lack of regular or any payment was the economic challenges posed by the pandemic of Covid 19.
21. Feedback about SCA (ARTFED, Guwahati) from the perception of the sampled beneficiaries, was positive on the count of loan disbursement, awareness about NBCFDC and its different schemes, awareness about MFS scheme of NBCFDC particularly, its scope and utilization.

5.2 Conclusion

The implementation of MFS by NBCFDC accomplished all the main objectives. Intended outputs were produced, with the exception of the variation of economic status of the targeted population. Significantly the expected improvement has been seen in terms of economic growth among the applicant of MFS introduced by NBCFDC. Moreover, entrepreneurial aspiration was found to be increasing among the beneficiaries after availing loan. However, on all the identified dimensions there is ample scope for the context specific improvements, and therefore the present study has come with suggestions and actionable points both at SCA and NBCFDC level.

Chapter 6

Recommendations & Actionable Points

This chapter attempts to highlight recommendation on the basis of findings of this evaluation study for Micro Finance Scheme sponsored by NBCFDC in the state of Assam. These feedbacks were received from the beneficiaries through their open-ended responses in the questionnaire.

6.1 General Recommendations

- 1 Large number of beneficiaries in the open-ended responses recommended that rate of interest should be slashed especially in the rural setup as the instant gain from such MFS is less. Suggestion was also made to increase the duration of the loan recovery anticipating the adverse conditions in a context like that of Assam where calamities such as flood is regularly observed. Also, the unforeseen situations such as pandemic should have been considered and the needed relaxations may have been provided.
- 2 While interacting with the beneficiaries and analysing their responses, it was observed that the loan amount should be enhanced generally catering to the specific requirements of the applicants. This is extremely important as in the field it was noticed that the State Channelising Agency (ARTFED) have granted uniform loan to the applicants in the particular timeframe. Therefore, it is strongly recommended to have a provision of the dynamic loan amount which may cater to the differing individual needs.
- 3 Need for the formation of the Self-Help Group (SHGs) was felt to make the best utilisation of the conceived micro-finance loan scheme of the NBCFDC. Conceptually as well as empirically, the SHGs aim for the collective good for the members, and therefore could act as effective tool for the implementation viz. disbursement as well as monitoring the repayment. It shall create an enabling environment with elements such as accountability which may enhance the chances for the repayment of the instalments. In this way, it could act as a true facilitator for the successful outcome of the micro-finance schemes. However, the provision for the individual grant of the loan should not be discontinued due the dynamic empirical situations at the ground level.
- 4 The results of the present study have suggested the improvement in the loan disbursement process. In the informal interaction with the existing beneficiaries, it emerged that though the loan application process was extremely smooth, there is ample scope for improvement in the disbursement process which could impact the anticipated planning of the applicant.
- 5 It's observed that awareness about the scope of Micro-Finance Scheme and its usage can have positive impact for the gains made from the scheme and hence this may improve the chances of repayment by the loan beneficiary. Therefore, it is recommended to have comprehensive awareness program that will explain the short-term as well as long-term

gains in terms of better utilisation of the loan to promote entrepreneurial aspirations among those belonging to the disadvantaged category of Other Backward Classes.

- 6 The data from the present study and informal interaction with the beneficiaries have highlighted few desirable changes such as provision for interaction with the successful beneficiaries from the previous year(s) and existing entrepreneurs in the sector where the current loan beneficiary has showed its interest.
- 7 Monitoring usually connects the beneficiary with the loan granting agency and creates the positive responsiveness of the beneficiary towards the repayment process. Therefore, a timely monitoring should be incorporated as a component in the implementation strategy of the micro-finance scheme in particular and loan schemes in general.
- 8 Success of the newly established small entrepreneurs may need some initial protection for establishment and sustenance. This is specifically true for the production of handicrafts/handloom products. Therefore, it is desirable to facilitate the sale of such products, and the state channelising agency could be the best available option for the individual beneficiaries. In the present study, it was revealed through the objective and subjective responses that the ARTFED was previously promoting the individual interests of the small entrepreneurs by procuring their produce and selling in the open market through its platform. This was a win-win situation both for the beneficiaries and the state channelising agency (ARTFED). However, recently this has got altered and therefore the risk of open market operation has negatively affected the vulnerable interests of the beneficiaries for the micro-finance scheme of NBCFDC.
- 9 In the context of the present study, it was found that implementation of women specific micro-finance schemes such as Mahila Samridhi Yojana (MSY) was missing. Due to its specific objective, MSY is relatively a better scheme for the empowerment of women belonging to the Other Backward Classes (OBCs), and therefore it may be required to do the necessary promotion among the women entrepreneurs.
- 10 Stereotypes associated with gender in respect of work/occupation has been emphatically noticed generally in the Indian society and specifically in the present study. It was observed that there is largely high concentration of women in handicrafts (handloom products in Assam) while that of men in other sanctioned activities for the micro-finance. In order to initiate a change for a more gender-neutral society, there is a need for promotion of diverse interests among the potential women entrepreneurs such as in the agriculture and allied activities.
- 11 Due to non-availability of persons belonging to the third-gender in the secondary as well as in the empirical study, there is a possibility of limited scope of the micro finance scheme of NBCFDC among these categories. Therefore, some mechanism should be devised to make such schemes accessible to them. One probable way could be introducing a specific scheme which may help in acknowledging them and enabling their process of

empowerment. Specific schemes should also be conceived for the interests of the physically handicap persons belonging to the Other Backward Classes.

6.2 Actionable points

In the light of the general observations and recommendations, the following actionable points at the level of State Channelising Agencies (SCA) and that of National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation (NBCFDC) could strengthen the implementation of the micro-finance loan scheme in particular context of Assam and probably in the context of the entire country. These could be read as:

6.2.1 State Channelising Agency (SCA) Level

1. SCA should be prompt and responsive towards the emergent requirements of the beneficiaries such that it transcends the formal boundary of being a loan disbursement channel between NBCFDC and the beneficiary.
2. It was observed that administrative reforms at ARTFED level was essentially required that was impacting its effectiveness to act as a proper channel. Though its success at ground level was evident from the findings of the study, there was a need to address the existing managerial related issues such as appointment of a regular head (Managing Director) who could devote time and energy for the smooth functioning of the organisation.
3. There is an inevitable need for the conduct of comprehensive awareness about the micro-finance loan scheme which should essentially include the information about the utilisation of the loan amount in setting/strengthening up the enterprises, promotion of the purchase of capital assets, enhancement in the propensity to invest, etc.
4. It is highly recommended for the SCAs to regularly organise programs such as interaction with the successful beneficiaries for the previous years. Also, the agency should mediate the process whereby established entrepreneurs could interact and motivate those beneficiaries who hold interest in setting up their own enterprise.
5. SCA should act as a channel to link with the market and protect the interests of the small entrepreneurs benefitted through the micro finance scheme. If possible, they should devise a mechanism to procure the products such as handicrafts and put it to sale either through its own platform or through big enterprises with the similar interests. Alternatively, the agency may facilitate the sale process through e-commerce. Integration with large enterprise may act as a source for the remunerative gains to the loan beneficiaries withing a stipulated timeframe.
6. In order to add efficiency, SCA should promote formation of the Self-Help Group (SHGs) for the purpose of the implementation of micro finance scheme. The collective pool could be relatively better in serving the individual as well as the group interests largely in all of the aspects pertaining to the successful utilization of the micro-finance.
7. In case of a situation with the concentrated demand of loan for a particular or similar purpose, SCA should conduct awareness programme highlighting the relative gain for the diversified demands (for loan) yielding remunerative returns in the market. It implies that in a particular location, promotion should be given for the diversified entrepreneurial interests among the applicants. This shall avoid the stagnant outcome due to overproduction vis-à-vis

the demand (for that particular product such as ‘handloom related produce’ in a handloom surplus region as is seen in the context of Assam) at local level.

8. Considering the efficiency in the operation of the micro finance scheme, it would be better for the SCA to explore the maximum beneficiaries in the adjacent locations. Inclusion of far-away districts may reduce the efficiency and hence it may hamper the process of successful implementation of the scheme at the grass-root level. Therefore, for the better facilitation of applicant coverage area of SCA should be restricted to particular centres rather than covering entire Assam unless there are regional/zonal centres ensuring the same.

9. SCA should promote the micro finance scheme among all the categories of ‘gender’ (inclusive of the Third Gender). Along with this the agency should promote some mechanism that will help in changing the existing gender-stereotypes in the society by empowering the vulnerable such as ‘women’ and those belonging to the ‘third gender’.

10. Provision for the interaction with the previous beneficiaries should organize in SCA level so that applicant gets oriented towards loan disbursement process and recovery.

6.2.2 NBCFDC Level

1. In order to enhance the efficiency in the implementation of the micro finance scheme, strong and transparent (pre-evaluative) monitoring mechanism should be emphasised by NBCFDC shortly after the disbursement of the loan. This shall promote cohesiveness with the loan beneficiaries and may motivate them for better compliance with the interests of NBCFDC including the socio-economic gain and repayment.

2. A provision of top-up loan or a small subsequent loan by the NBCFDC shall enhance the scope of the micro-finance scheme for small entrepreneurs. This shall help the agency as well as the loan-beneficiaries to mitigate the losses in unprecedented situations. Provision of further-loan to the successful (small) entrepreneurs may act as an incentive to further the aspirations among small entrepreneurs from the disadvantaged categories such as Other Backward Classes (OBCs). This will motivate the beneficiaries to achieve success in their initiatives. If deem necessary, NBCFDC can put appraisal report (for the previously taken loan) as an eligibility condition along with a roadmap for utilization. The amount of top-up/subsequent loan could be rationally determined with clauses such as not more than 90 percent of the loan previously approved for the (applicant) beneficiary subject to the fulfilment of norms of NBCFDC. Additionally, provision should be there for fresh application for loan by the returning beneficiary whereby priority shall be assigned by NBCFDC towards the same. The top-up or subsequent loan shall be irrespective of the age-limit however a fitness certificate could be desirable for those above 65 years.

3. Considering the importance of Self Help Groups (SHGs) in (successful) implementation of the micro-finance scheme especially among those belonging to the disadvantaged categories, NBCFDC should (to the larger extent) make it mandatory for the disbursement of the loan to State Channelising Agency (SCA). The multi-fold gains associated with the Self-Help Group (SHG) shall cater to the differential individual needs and may also protect the interests of the vulnerable individuals if there is any such need.

4. To enhance the ambit of socio-economic gains in the state of Assam, NBCFDC can devise a new scheme such as those supporting Cooperatives through lending a major quantum of money upto Rs. 30.00 Lakh catering the local interests

5. It has been observed that loan amount was uniformly granted to the beneficiaries. In the present study, there were only two categories of loan amount given to all the applicants, i.e., Rs. 50,000.00 (on or before the year 2019) and Rs. 1,00,000.00 (after the year 2019). In this context, it is highly desirable to have differential slots (of loan amount) that will fulfil the unique requirement of each applicant. This may have some significant impact towards the success of the scheme and also on the repayment process later on. Also, the maximum loan amount (of Rs. 1,50,000.00 per beneficiary) should be modified considering some of the promising business proposals.

6. It would be better on part of NBCFDC to request from the applicants their need for the loan with basic explanation while receiving the applications for MFS. This will enhance the chances for successful implementation of the scheme. Further, it would entail idea of timely advice to the applicants by the experts foreseeing their business returns.

7. In the context of rural setting due to extremely low-income background of the individuals, the economic gains from the micro-finance scheme may not reach the benchmark of Rs. 3,00,000.00 in a shorter period of analysis. However, there is no denial to the fact that in the given context such economic gains are either transformative or holds the potential for transformation of the family of the beneficiary. Therefore, the NBCFDC should modify its evaluation pattern for economic gain by reducing the income limit from (existing level of) Rs. 3,00,000.00. Also, in such context other gains (social as well as cultural) should be given due importance for a comprehensive evaluation of micro-finance scheme especially in the rural settings.

8. NBCFDC should develop some mechanism through which procurement of the produce or facilitation for the sale of produce (skilled production) such as handicrafts which may provide an enabling environment for the aspirants of small entrepreneurship with the micro finance scheme. The facilitation could be in terms of tie-up for the setting up of sale point at regional as well as national level in consultation with different departments of Assam government and those of Government of India.

9. To promote the entrepreneurship among women candidates belonging to OBC category, emphasis should be laid on Mahila Samridhi Yojana, or similar women specific schemes in the context of ARTFED, Assam. Also, some specific schemes for promotion of persons belonging to Third Gender and Physically Challenged should be devised and implemented by NBCFDC.

10. The present study has strongly revealed that the evaluation, if done pre-maturely may provide misleading picture of (low) economic gain. Considering the importance of duration in the establishment of an enterprise/business, there should be a minimum gap of two years for

the evaluation. Also, the unprecedented situation such as epidemic, flood, and pandemic may reduce the scope for successful implementation of the micro-finance scheme in a context. Therefore, an evaluation should be comprehensively planned by NBCFDC considering the influencing factors as happened in the present study.

Annexures

Annexure 1 (Success Stories)

1. Name of the beneficiary- Bharati Nath

Age- 63years

Address- Village: Changsari, PO: Changsari, District: Kamrup (Rural), Assam

Purpose of loan: Handloom, Weaving

Year: 2019

Loan Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Annual income before loan: Rs. 80,000.00

Annual income after loan: Rs. 4,00,000.00

Usage: loan amount was used to set up a handloom machine and purchase of raw materials

Productivity: Ms. Bharati Nath is producing enough to make an annual profit of Rs. 4,00,000.00

Experience: Before applying for this loan she had already taken a loan previously from other sources to purchase a cow. Then, it was found that the income generated is not sufficient, and therefore the family decided to seek micro-finance loan from NBCFDC in the name of Ms. Bharati Nath. On the receipt of the loan amount (of Rs. 50,000.00), the family decided to sell off their cow. Ms. Bharati set up a loom in the cow-shed and utilised the money for establishment and purchase of the raw material. The material was consumed in the manufacturing of the Mekhala Chador as well as Gamusa. This has led to enhancement of the family income to a respectable level of Rs. 6,00,000.00 along with the other sources of income (Farming, etc.).

Their social status has changed in the way that people have come to know about them and their work, this brings in more customers for the business. They believe their social status has been enhanced.

She sells the products within the village. The loan has benefitted her. Prior to the loan, her monthly income was Rs1500 per month. The loan has helped her business and now she earns around Rs5000 per month. She is satisfied with the loan that has been offered.



2. Name of the beneficiary- Anamika Nath

Age- 29years

Address- Village: Changsari, PO: Changsari, District: Kamrup (Rural), Assam

Year: 2019

Loan Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Annual income before loan: Rs. 70,000.00

Annual income after loan: Rs. 1,00,000.00

Usage: Purchased two bearing machines and a loom

Productivity: With the modification in the existing loom, the earning from it got enhanced leading to an annual profit of Rs. 30,000.00

Experience: Ms. Anamika Nath belongs to a family which is economically in distress and the annual family income was insufficient to provide education for two children. Previously family took a loan and its repayment was still ongoing. There was a functional loom but the bearing machines were to be replaced. Becoming aware about the micro-finance loan scheme of NBCFDC through ARTFED, Guwahati renewed the interest among Ms. Nath to start her own business of manufacturing and selling the gamusa, mekhela chador, etc. Her application was approved and she received a loan amount of Rs. 50,000.00 which was utilised in the replacement of the bearing machines and also towards the purchase of loom. This step has helped her in enhancing the monthly as well as annual income. Now the annual family income is Rs. 1,00,000.00 up Rs. 30,000.00. Now she can work faster and fulfil the demand of the customer on time. But, with the Covid-19 situation was badly affected due to reduction in demand and therefore the repayment process was affected. With the resumption of work after the ease of situation, things have become better again and she has a business in Sualkuchi.

Her husband is supportive in her business. On asking about the enhancement of their social status post-loan, she could not be specific about it. But after her business increased, more people came in contact with her. Her work is known-for in the village. She elaborated a little on her expenses. When buying 'muga' thread, she paid Rs7500 per kg of thread in the pre-covid market. Post-covid market price of the thread is Rs9000 per kg. In the process of producing one pair of 'muga' mekhela saador, thread of Rs27,000 is used. She is thankful to ARTFED and NBCFDC for supporting her interests.



3. Name of the beneficiary: Sampa Devi

Age- 43years

Address- Village: Sangchari, PO: Changsari, District: Kamrup (Rural), Assam

Year: 2019

Loan Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Annual income before loan: Rs. 60,000.00

Annual income after loan: Rs. 95,000.00

Usage: Purchased loom and raw materials with this assistance.

Productivity: She could manage to produce Gamusa and Mekhala Chador leading to an annual income of Rs. 95,000.00.

Experience: Ms. Sampa Devi had a really difficult time before she thought of becoming a beneficiary of micro-finance scheme of NBCFDC for OBCs. Her husband was critically ill and passed away in six months' time. She was left with no option for economic sustenance of the family after this loss. She thought of education of her children where elder daughter was pursuing B.Sc. and son in the 9th standard, and applied for the micro-finance loan scheme to revive the handloom for business purpose. She prepared the loom and can put her knowledge to conduct her own business. Now, with some financial earnings, she is determined to fulfil post-graduation aspirations of her daughter. She had conceived a plan of constructing rooms in the existing building for rent and materialised it by saving from the monthly income. She could construct two rooms and put them on rent for additional income. Even her daughter is adding to the family income by providing tuitions to the junior classes. With her limited capacity she has not planned to expand her business and is satisfied with the progress she is making although there was a slump in between due to Covid-19 situation. Her in-laws are supportive in the business. She hopes to get more financial help from other government agencies so she can look after her children. She also hopes to find people to give rooms on rent. From rented rooms, she can earn Rs2000 per month in pucca rooms and Rs1000-1500 in kaccha rooms.



4. Name of the beneficiary: Pankaj Das

Age: 27 years

Purpose of taking loan- he took it for business purposes and had plans of investing in commercial vehicles. Prior to taking the loan, he was working in a company.

Year: 2020

Amount: Rs. 1,00,000.00

Usage: Purchased an goods carrier auto

Annual Income prior to loan- Rs 1,30,000.00

Annual Income post loan- Rs 1,60,000.00

Other source of income: He lives in a family of five members. His father contributes to the agricultural process.

Repayment: Regular

Productivity: With the regular run of the auto, he manages to earn a profit of Rs. 1,60,000.00.

Experience: Mr. Pankaj Das is a youth who lives in a humble family background of five members and his father is the main bread-earner. Looking towards the family situation, he decided to contribute and thought of a plan to purchase commercial vehicles after he left the work at a company due to economic exploitation and low satisfaction there. Considering the economic feasibility, he decided to apply for a small micro-finance loan scheme through ARTFED, Guwahati. After his successful application he received an amount of Rs. 1,00,000.00 from NBCFDC which was utilised to purchase an auto for the transfer of small goods which he drives on his own. On asking about his satisfaction with the loan amount received, he said it would have been better if they received Rs 50,000 more. He is repaying the current loan amount. Once he has completed repaying this loan, he would like to apply for another loan.

He has expanded his business to poultry. He owns local and broiler chicken farms, running a local supply business. He also aspires to open a pig farm. Recently he has not generated employment, but once he can open a pig farm, he wants to employ two persons with an estimated payment of Rs 7,000 per month. His family is supportive in his business and motivates him.

On asking about their family's social status, he believes that their status has changed as compared to the previous positions. More people have come in-touch with them because of their expanding business.



5. Name of the beneficiary: Akhil Kalita

Took a micro-finance loan of Rs 1,00,000.

Reasons for taking the loan- he took the loan as he wanted to invest in poultry (broiler farms). He owned one farm before taking the loan. After receiving the loan, he expanded his business by opening one more poultry farm.

He lives in a family of five members. His brother contributes to the family income as he owns his own shop.

Annual Income prior to loan- Rs 1,40,000.00

Annual Income post loan- Rs 1,70,000.00

Previously he had his own pig farm, but due to personal issues he had to sell the pigs. During this he employed one person as help. The helper was paid Rs 5,000 per month while also provided him meal. After he sold out the pigs, he suffered some loss in his business. Therefore, he hasn't employed any other person. And then he shifted his business to poultry and public transportation. He was of the opinion that his profit from the business barely helps him fulfil his needs and helps him look after the family.

On expanding his business, he wants to take loan to invest it in a pig farm which might help him earn a profit of Rs 5,000 per month from 4-5 pigs.

Regarding the family's social status, he says their status is unchanged. But he is receiving support from his family in his business.



6. Name of the beneficiary: Pranab Kumar Mahanta

Took a micro-finance loan of Rs 1,00,000

Reasons for taking the loan- He wanted to invest in farming his 5 bighas of land. He has fields where he cultivates bananas, jujube, vegetables of different types. He has his goats, cows and pigs.

Income prior to loan- Rs 9,000/month (Annual : Rs. 1,08,000.00)

Income post loan- Rs15,000/month (Annual : Rs. 1,80,000.00)

He mentioned about how he is satisfied with his profits. He lives in a family of four, the profits help him fulfil their needs. In one expo (trade fair), he sold 1 quintal of jujubes (per kilogram of jujubes was sold at Rs70). In this sale, he has had profits as they were sold at a fast pace.

The money that he has invested in pigs has earned him profits. In January, 2022; he sold 11 piglets at Rs 3,700 each. The female pig gives birth twice a year, earning him profit twice a year. His cows also earn him profits from the milk that is sold.

Regarding his family's social status and changes, he was of the opinion that since people came to know him for his agriculture and the products; he is known amongst people. He believes the social status has increased since his successful farming business.



7. Name of the beneficiary: Ramen Das

Took a micro-finance loan of Rs 1,00,000

Reasons for taking the loan- he wanted to invest in agriculture. But since COVID-19 made them face certain losses, he invested in his electrical shop which he opened in 2016.

Annual Income prior to loan- Rs 1,55,000.00

Annual Income post loan- Rs 1,85,000.00

He lives in a family of 5. His family is supportive in his business. His father helps out in agriculture related activities and his younger brother is completing his studies. They work together to earn their living and has not employed others yet.

Earlier the profits were better but the last two years of pandemic has put them at a loss, also floods, recent changes in weather and others.

On expanding his business, he aims to establish farms with poultry, pigs, cows and goats away from home. The presence of cows and 6-7 goats at present was not considered as business. He believes business needs to be established differently from home. He also wants to expand his sound-system and add more technology to it so that bigger crowds could hire their systems.

The family's social status has changed as quite a number of people know them for their shop and their farming products.



8. **Name of the beneficiary: Ms. Pokhila Das**

Age: 38 years

Purpose of taking loan: Weaving, Handloom

Year of Receiving Loan: 2019

Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Usage of the loan: preparation of the shed for the loom and purchase of the raw material.

Annual income: Prior to Loan: Rs. 2,26,000

After Loan: Rs. 2,56,000.00

Other Sources of Income: Farming

Repayment status: Regular till Covid period.

Gains: a) increase in income, b) increase in the social status, and preparation of the cloth

Productivity status: She could prepare annually Gamusa (20 pieces), Mekhala Chador (3-4).

Children: 2 daughters

Experience: She had some initial gains which got stalled due to the pandemic situation. Now, the market is reviving and therefore she is hopeful of resumption of the economic gains.

Regarding the sale of the produce, she mentioned that it has become a struggle now to deal with the retailers while previously Artfed was facilitating the sale by procuring from small weavers like her. Showing her ambition, she mentioned about her interest to have a Jacquard machine which may require further financial assistance as well as training.



9. **Name of the beneficiary: Ms. Bhanumati Das**

Age: 45 years

Location: Rangia

Purpose of taking loan: Weaving, Handloom

Year of Receiving Loan: 2019

Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Usage of the loan: installation of the tin-shed for the loom and purchase of the raw material (yarn).

Annual income: Prior to Loan: Rs. 2,00,000

After Loan: Rs. 2,30,000.00

Other Sources of Income: Farming

Repayment status: Regular till Covid period.

Gains: a) increase in income, b) increase in the social status, and preparation of the cloth

Productivity status: She could prepare annually Gamusa (50-70 pieces), Mekhala Chador (12-15).

Experience: The process of economic gain was badly affected with the pandemic situation. She holds hope of revival with the normalcy of the situation and market. She holds ambition of having her own jazquard loom through which productivity could enhance, and therefore hope of purchasing one as her financial situation improves and with some assistance by NBCFDC.



10. Name of the beneficiary: Ms. Anamika Rajbangshi

Age: 30 years

Location: Rangia

Purpose of taking loan: Dairy Farm

Year of Receiving Loan: 2019

Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Usage of the loan: with the assistance she purchased one cow (cross-breed) for Rs. 60,000.00.

Annual income: Prior to Loan: Rs. 2,16,000

After Loan: Rs. 2,46,000.00

Other Sources of Income: Farming

Repayment status: Regular till Covid period.

Gains: a) increase in income and social status

Productivity status: She could sell 7 litres of milk in a day leading to monthly profit of Rs. 10,500.00.

Experience: She is satisfied with her decision to take loan from NBCFDC as she could make a huge gain of Rs. 60,000.00 annually (1st year) which has helped her in purchasing another cow. She had a plan to increase the number of cows and would develop a dairy. This may provide employment to many unskilled labour.



11. Name of the beneficiary: Ms. Rukmani Das

Age: 30 years

Location: Rangia

Purpose of taking loan: Weaving, Handloom

Year of Receiving Loan: 2019

Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Usage of the loan: with the assistance she made a tin shed for the existing loom and purchased raw materials.

Annual income: Prior to Loan: Rs. 2,13,000.00

After Loan: Rs. 2,43,000.00

Other Sources of Income: Farming

Repayment status: Regular.

Gains: a) increase in income and social status

Productivity status: She could make and sell annually 60 pieces of Gamusa and 30 pair of Mekhala Chador making annual profit of Rs. 31,500.00.

Experience: Overall she is satisfied with the scheme of loan as she could set up her own mechanism for self-sustenance. With a small amount of Rs. 50,000.00 she could develop a small tin-shed for her existing loom and purchased raw material in the form of yarn to start her professional production though at very small level. It started well however due to the impact of Covid-19 she, alike several small entrepreneurs was badly affected. With the improvement of the situation, she's determined to make a comeback and fulfil all her entrepreneurial aspirations. She is planning for further small financial assistance towards this.



12. Name of the beneficiary: Ms. Sabita Das

Age: 40 years

Location: Rangia

Purpose of taking loan: Weaving, Handloom

Year of Receiving Loan: 2019

Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Usage of the loan: with the assistance she purchased slechet machine (loom) for Rs. 20,000.00 while the remaining amount was utilised towards purchase of the raw materials.

Annual income: Prior to Loan: Rs. 2,40,000.00

After Loan: Rs. 2,90,000.00

Other Sources of Income: Farming

Repayment status: Regular till Covid situation.

Gains: increase in income and social status

Productivity status: She could make and sell annually 42 pieces of Gamusa and 30 pair of Mekhala Chador making annual profit of Rs. 40,000.00.

Experience: Ms. Sabita Das was having an aspiration to be her own self and found an opportunity in the micro-finance scheme of NBCFDC. She was told about this scheme by the officials of ARTFED, Guwahati, and she applied for a loan in the year 2019. The purpose was to set-up a handloom machine and produce gamusa and other loom related products. She was granted a loan of Rs. 50,000.00 which was utilised to purchase a slechet loom and for the raw materials. Through a humble beginning she started her own loom which could help her gain in economic as well as social sense. However, the pandemic of Covid-19 has adversely impacted her economically as a result of which her process of repayment of loan stalled. Now, with the re-opening of the markets, she is expecting normalcy to return at the earliest such that she could revive her business and aspirations. In order to overcome her difficult situation, she has emphasised on the need for further loan assistance which may enable her to purchase a jacquard machine that would transform the production process rapidly. Hope she comes out victorious and may receive the necessary assistance from the NBCFDC, New Delhi.



13. Name of the beneficiary: Ms. Pratima Das

Age: 39 years

Location: Rangia

Purpose of taking loan: Weaving, Handloom

Year of Receiving Loan: 2019

Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Usage of the loan: entire amount was spent on the purchase of the raw materials.

Annual income: Prior to Loan: Rs. 2,11,000.00

After Loan: Rs. 2,41,000.00

Other Sources of Income: Farming

Repayment status: Regular till Covid situation.

Gains: increase in income and social status

Productivity status: She has an annual production of 60 pieces of Gamusa and 20 pair of Mekhala Chador. This has generated an annual profit of Rs. 30,000.00.

Experience: With a small nuclear family of five members, Ms. Pratima Das, tried to fulfil small ambition of making the idle-lying handloom functional. She required some initial investment of capital to take of the project. Through ARTFED, she contacted NBCFDC and placed her request for the loan. It took more than two months for her to receive the loan amount of Rs. 50,000.00. her work was satisfactorily growing but the situation of Covid-19 has dampened her spirit to grow. With the situation turning out be normal, she is expecting improvement in the business and economic situation. Meanwhile, she had a desire to jacquard loom machine which may save her time and energy. She is looking forward to NBCFDC to accommodate her genuine interests.



14. Name of the beneficiary: Ms. Biju Das

Age: 42 years

Location: Chapania, Rangia

Purpose of taking loan: Weaving, Handloom

Year of Receiving Loan: 2019

Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Usage of the loan: the loan received was utilised in the purchase of small handloom machine and raw materials.

Annual income: Prior to Loan: Rs. 2,30,000.00

After Loan: Rs. 2,60,000.00

Other Sources of Income: service of husband in the garage.

Repayment status: Regular however Covid-19 situation has slowed down the pace of the repayment.

Gains: increase in income, self-respect, and the social status

Productivity status: When engaged fully, she could make 60 pieces of Gamusa and 18 pair of Mekhala Chador in a year. This, according to her yields the profit of Rs. 30,000.00.

Experience: Though knowing about performing on the handloom machine, Ms. Biju Das could not find the economic feasibility to have one. She was having some desire to make earning through her skill and found an opportunity in the name of micro finance scheme of NBCFDC. In 2019, she applied and received the loan amount of Rs. 50,000.00 through ARTFED for the purpose of weaving. With the money she purchased a small handloom machine and raw material to run the production process. Initially, she made an annual profit of Rs. 30,000.00 which was quarterly utilised to pay the due instalments for the loan. In the year of 2020 there was huge setback for all the small entrepreneurs due to pandemic of Covid-19. She, could manage to survive because of some sale and due to salary of the husband who works in car garage. After, the end of Covid-19 related restrictions, she is hoping for the improvement in her situation to resume the practice of production and sale of the handloom related production.



15. Name of the beneficiary: Ms. Pramila Das

Age: 38 years

Location: Rangia, Chapani

Purpose of taking loan: Weaving, Handloom

Year of Receiving Loan: 2019

Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Usage of the loan: purchase of the handloom machine and raw materials

Annual income: Prior to Loan: Rs. 2,19,000.00

After Loan: Rs. 2,49,000.00

Other Sources of Income: husband working in a shop

Repayment status: Regular

Gains: realisation of self-respect, increase in income and social status

Productivity status: As told, she produces 60 pieces of Gamusa and 20 pair of Mekhala Chador in a year. There is an annual profit of Rs. 30,000.00

Experience: Ms. Pramila Das has a small nuclear family of four people that include husband and two children. Her husband works in private shop and make a meager earning. Realising this, she had a desire to contribute to the income of the family and therefore looked for an opportunity. Along with several other people from the village, she got a chance to meet officials of ARTFED and was successful in convincing them for the micro-finance loan scheme. As a successful applicant, she received a loan-grant of Rs.50,000.00. The money was utilised by her towards the purchase of handloom machine and raw metrials needed to start the production process. Annually, she is preparing 60 pieces of Gamusa and 20 pairs of Mekhala Chador for sale making a profit of Rs. 30,000.00. She is regularly repaying all her instalments and holds a desire to go for another loan which could help her in fulfilling other entrepreneurial aspirations.



16. Name of the beneficiary: Mr. Tarun Deka

Age: 47 years

Location: Chapania, Rangia

Purpose of taking loan: Poultry

Year of Receiving Loan: 2019

Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Usage of the loan: along with his own accumulated savings of Rs. 7,00,000.00, he had utilised the loan money on developing the poultry including the expenditure on purchase of chicks, equipment and seeds(food).

Annual income: Prior to Loan: Rs. 2,15,000.00

After Loan: Rs. 2,45,000.00

Other Sources of Income: service of wife in the Anganwadi.

Repayment status: Regular.

Gains: Increase in income and satisfaction of becoming an entrepreneur.

Experience: Mr. Tarun Deka always had an aspiration to become an entrepreneur with his own poultry farm for which he was saving a small bit over the years and could accumulate Rs. 7,00,000.00 till the year 2019. This was possible through regular earning of wife who is working in the nearby anganwadi centre. The amount was having a shortfall of Rs. 50,0000.00 to establish and run the poultry farm. After hearing from ARTFED officials, he applied for the loan and was granted in two months' time. This was utilised to fulfil his dream and a poultry farm was set-up with a stock of newly born chicks and their food (seed). This business has helped him fetch a good return which has helped him to earn an initial profit of around Rs. 30,000.00 making his annual income to Rs. 2,45,000.00 from Rs. 2,00,000.00 previously. Though the pattern of income has been negatively impacted by pandemic situation he has now recovered well and is planning to invest his earned capital on expansion to Goatry (dairy) for which he believes to receive support from NBCFDC as was done previously.



17. Name of the beneficiary: Ms. Anima Das

Age: 45 years

Location: Mahkhali, Rangia

Purpose of taking loan: Weaving, Handloom

Year of Receiving Loan: 2019

Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Usage of the loan: the loan amount was utilised on repairment of the existing handloom machine and for the purchase of the raw materials.

Annual income: Prior to Loan: Rs. 2,06,000.00

After Loan: Rs. 2,36,000.00

Other Sources of Income: poultry and goatry

Repayment status: was regular till the pandemic of Covid-19.

Gains: self-respect, and increase in income

Productivity status: as mentioned by her, she could annually produce around 100 pieces of Gamusa and 25 pair of Mekhala Chador for the sale. This has helped her in revising the annual income by Rs. 30,000.00.

Experience: Managing a joint family of seven person has always been really challenging for Ms. Anima Das with a meagre annual income of around Rs. 2,00,000.00. She though of utilising her own skill to prepare cloth for building an additional support to husband who is a farmer. Hearing about the micro-finance loan scheme of NBCFDC, she became hopeful and applied for a loan with the support from ARTFED, Guwahati. On receipt of the loan-grant in her bank account, she started repairing of the long lying idle handloom machine. Also, she purchased the raw material to mark her professional beginning. With her consistent efforts, she could manage to earn an annual profit of Rs. 30,000.00 which not only provided support to the family but also helped her to repay her loan. However, the situation was adversely affected by the onset of pandemic in the year 2020. Now with the ease of the norms for doing business, Ms. Anima Das is hopeful again to rise like a star in her locality. She is eyeing to receive a skill development training to operate the jacquard handloom machine and thereafter may look towards NBCFDC to receive the necessary support to install one such machine in her household area.



18. Name of the beneficiary: Ms. Bharati Deka

Age: 36 years

Location: Mahkhali, Rangia

Purpose of taking loan: Weaving, Handloom

Year of Receiving Loan: 2019

Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Usage of the loan: the loan received was utilised in repairing of the handloom machine, preparing a tin-shed and purchasing the raw materials. Also, little amount was spent in maintenance of the poultry.

Annual income: Prior to Loan: Rs. 2,03,000.00

After Loan: Rs. 2,23,000.00

Other Sources of Income: poultry of the husband.

Repayment status: Regular till the Covid-19 situation and now again regular.

Gains: own enterprise has helped Ms. Bharati to earn self-respect and additional income for the family.

Productivity status: Her annual production includes 45 pieces of Gamusa and around 25 pair of Mekhala Chador. This is yielding her an annual profit of Rs. 20,000.00.

Experience: In a small nuclear family of three family members, it has always been difficult for Ms. Bharati to meet the basic requirements of the family which is solely dependent on the poultry of the husband. Sources to enhance the income has always been hitting her imagination. Being a little skilled in the production of handloom stuff, she thought of starting her old handloom machine. Through ARTFED, Guwahati she requested NBCFDC for support in the form of micro-finance loan. She received a loan-grant of Rs. 50,000.00 which she utilised to repair the machine, preparing a tin-shed to avoid direct sunlight and rain, purchasing of the raw materials, and little investment in the existing poultry. This has led to high initial returns but was marred by the Covid-19 situation and now she has an annual profit of Rs. 20,000.00 apart from preparing cloths for own family. She is extremely satisfied with the reopening of the market although with the lack of procurement by the ARTFED she has to really struggle with the open market operations. With an expectation to further her professional production, she holds desire to receive support from NBCFDC to purchase Jaquard loom machine and also wish to receive training to run its operation smoothly. This may lead to provide employment to one-two person in her production process.



19. Name of the beneficiary: Ms. Runn Das

Age: 40 years

Location: Karara, Rangia

Purpose of taking loan: Weaving, Handloom

Year of Receiving Loan: 2019

Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Usage of the loan: purchase of the machine and raw materials for the handloom

Annual income: Prior to Loan: Rs. 2,25,000.00

After Loan: Rs. 2,55,000.00

Other Sources of Income: Fishery, Goat, Chicken, Cow, and Farming

Repayment status: Regular

Gains: economic as well as social status

Productivity status: Annually she is able to produce 80 pieces of Gamusa and 30 pair of Mekhala Chador. This is helping her to enhance the family income by Rs. 30,000.00 annually.

Experience: in the midst of being in a farming family with small enterprise of fishery, goat, and poultry, Ms. Runn Das had a strong desire to start something of her own where she could utilise her skill of running a handloom machine. However, limited amount of family income was putting a constraint to her such a desire. Therefore, she had a reason to approach ARTFED for the necessary support. ARTFED, Guwahati helped her to fetch a small loan of Rs. 50,000.00 which was utilised to purchase a small machine and raw materials although for this she had to lend some money (Rs. 20,000.00) from the husband who had supported her passion of becoming self-dependent. Initially she had an earning of around Rs. 50,000.00 which was reduced due to Covid-19 and now even after recovery from Covid-19 she manages to earn only Rs. 30,000.00 per year. This, she believes will improve gradually. She is satisfied with the gain in self-respect and social status in the family.



20. Name of the beneficiary: Ms. Dipika Das

Age: 35 years

Location: Karara, Rangia

Purpose of taking loan: Weaving, Handloom

Year of Receiving Loan: 2019

Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Usage of the loan: repairing of the existing handloom machine and purchase of the raw materials

Annual income: Prior to Loan: Rs. 2,20,000.00

After Loan: Rs. 2,60,000.00

Other Sources of Income: Farming, Cow, and husband being a carpenter.

Repayment status: Regular till Covid-19 and resumed now.

Gains: Economic self-sufficiency, better education of the children and enhancement in the social status.

Productivity status: With her small traditional handloom machine she manages to annually produce 100 pieces of Gamusa and 25 pair of Mekhala Chador for sale apart from production for self-consumption in the family.

Experience: In a nuclear family of four family members (couple and two children), Ms. Dipika Das was looking for certain support to better the lot of her family. Her husband is a carpenter and works on day-to-day basis for little work in the nearby area while seasonally he cultivates rice for sale and consumption in the family. The family was having a cow to provide some financial support. After getting emotional support from husband and motivation from the school going children, Dipika contacted officials of ARTFED, Guwahati when they arranged an awareness meeting about the micro-finance scheme of NBCFDC. She could apply and successfully receive Rs. 50,000.00 as a loan which she utilised on repairing the existing handloom machine and purchasing the raw materials. Her products were initially procured by ARTFED which was a huge support for her apart from selling produce when demanded by someone in the locality. She managed to make a jump of Rs. 50,000.00 – Rs. 60,000.00 as an annual profit. This has helped her in spending better on the education of the children and making little addition to the existing infrastructure in the family. This was however stopped due to the sudden situation of Covid-19 in the country which has negatively affected the demand for the produce. This also has impacted the repayment process. Now after the resumption of the business, she has started receiving demand and earning a profit of Rs. 40,000.00 on annual basis. She believes in enhancement of demand in the coming days which include the celebration of 'Bihu' and aspires to receive another loan from NBCFDC in future.



21. Name of the beneficiary: Ms. Bishaya Rajbongshi

Age: 40 years

Location: Karara, Rangia

Purpose of taking loan: Weaving, Handloom

Year of Receiving Loan: 2019

Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Usage of the loan: purchase of the sewing machine and raw materials

Annual income: Prior to Loan: Rs. 2,10,000.00

After Loan: Rs. 2,40,000.00

Other Sources of Income: husband selling Egg

Repayment status: Regular till the onset of Lockdown due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Gains: economic well-being and self-respect

Productivity status: With the help of her existing handloom machine and newly acquired sewing she could manage to produce the finer version of around 50 Gamusa and 15 pair of Mekhala Chador annually. Through this she could manage to earn an annual profit of Rs. 30,000.00.

Experience: Ms. Bishaya Rajbongshi was a homemaker living in a nuclear family with husband and two children. Her husband owns a small shop to sell eggs in the locality and also works as a seasonal farmer in his own field. Due to insufficient family income, Ms. Bishaya always thought of starting her own business of selling self-prepared Gamusa, Mekhala Chador, etc. Incidentally, she could meet the official of ARTFED, Guwahati to know about the micro-finance scheme for the OBCs. She applied and received the loan grant of Rs. 50,000.00 in the year 2019. She utilised the money to purchase her own sewing machine and raw materials needed for the production in the handloom machine. The sewing machine was deliberately purchased to add a special finishing to the gamusa and mekhela which may enhance the value of the product. This was well appreciated in the market and her products soon gained demand. This has led to initial profit of Rs. 50,000.00 in that year. However, with the pandemic of Covid-19 everything was stopped for few months. She could earn nothing during this period on this count and therefore was unable to repay the quarterly instalment against the loan. Now, with the improvement in the market situation things are becoming normal and therefore she has started her work again and now gaining a profit of Rs. 30,000.00 annually. This may soon soar with the approaching festival and marriage season in the state. She is thankful to NBCFDC for providing the necessary financial support. However, she is in need for another loan to upgrade and expand her work.

22. Name of the beneficiary: Ms. Bijuli Das

Age: 40 years

Location: Karara, Rangia

Purpose of taking loan: Weaving, Handloom

Year of Receiving Loan: 2019

Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Usage of the loan: purchase of the handloom machine and raw materials

Annual income: Prior to Loan: Rs. 2,05,000.00

After Loan: Rs. 2,45,000.00

Other Sources of Income: husband doing farming and son working in the shop

Repayment status: Regular till the pandemic of Covid-19

Gains: increase in the annual income and skills to run a business

Productivity status: She manages to annually produce 30 pieces of Gamusa and 15 pair of Mekhala Chador which has helped her in adding Rs. 30,000.00 to her existing annual income.

Experience: With a small aspiration to become self-reliant, Ms. Bijuli Das met the official of ARTFED, Guwahati and placed her request for micro-finance to fulfil her entrepreneurial desire. She received a loan-grant of Rs. 50,000.00 which was utilised to purchase of handloom machine and raw materials. She made a humble beginning with a production of 35 pieces of Gamusa and 20 pairs of Mekhala which gave her a moral as well as economic boost of annual profit of Rs. 60,000.00. This was however, reduced to nothing due to pandemic of Covid-19. This has affected her repayment and also her willingness to do something in her life. She waited patiently by producing for self-consumption during this period, and now with the ease of restrictions and betterment of health situation around, she could revive her business of producing handloom products. She desires to receive a small top-up loan to compensate for the loss and for resumption of work at a greater pace. She hopes to receive support from NBCFDC in this regard.

23. Name of the beneficiary: Ms. Arpana Das

Age: 35 years

Location: Kekani Kuchi, Rangia

Purpose of taking loan: Weaving, Handloom

Year of Receiving Loan: 2019

Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Usage of the loan: purchased few samples of gamusa and mekhela chador and the necessary raw materials to run the handloom production

Annual income: Prior to Loan: Rs. 2,01,000.00

After Loan: Rs. 2,39,000.00

Other Sources of Income: She is an ASHA Worker in the village and her son works in a company

Repayment status: Regular

Gains: Self-respect and economic earning

Productivity status: While managing with her office timings, she could manage to annually produce 24 pieces of Gamusa and 30 pair of Mekhala Chador. This has helped her in enhancing her annual income by Rs. 40,000.00

Experience: Ms. Arpana Das is an ambitious person who believes in changing her future through sincere efforts. She has a nuclear family with five members, and is having contractual employment as ASHA worker in the village. Because of her faith in herself she decided to start her own business of producing Gamusa and Mekhala Chador for which she sought help from NBCFDC through micro-finance scheme for OBCs. She received an amount of Rs. 50,000.00 as a loan grant which she utilised to purchase few samples of gamusa and mekhela chador and also the necessary raw materials. She managed to produce 24 pieces of Gamusa and 30 pair of Mekhala Chador fetching her an annual profit of Rs. 50,000.00. However, due to Covid-19 situation, her production unit was stopped as there was lack of demand due to Covid-19 pandemic. Also, she suffered health-wise due to her continuous visits for providing support as a health worker in the battle against Covid-19. The battle of Covid-19 was successfully tackled by her medically and now she has resumed her production work to make an annual profit of Rs. 40,000.00 which she believes to improve in the coming days. With an intention to upgrade her own production unit, she has shared her desire to receive some financial support from NBCFDC.



24. Name of the beneficiary: Mr. Kushal Baishya

Age: 56 years

Location: Agchia

Purpose of taking loan: Shop (Grocery- stationery, seeds, etc.)

Year of Receiving Loan: 2019

Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Usage of the loan: purchase of the products for the shop

Annual income: Prior to Loan: Rs. 1,00,000.00

After Loan: Rs. 1,20,000.00

Other Sources of Income: playing musical instruments at occasions

Repayment status: Regular

Gains: self-respect, increase in income and social status

Productivity status: With an annual sale of the products in the shop, he manages to earn a nominal profit of Rs. 20,000.00

Experience: Mr. Kushal Baishya is an artist and a person with self-respect. Failing to receive the patronage for his talent of playing all the musical instruments, he was shattered and therefore planned an alternative method for the self and family's sustenance in the form of opening a grocery shop. He opened the shop with some financial assistance and was able to manage some profit. However, he had a desire for its expansion and therefore applied for the micro-finance support from NBCFDC. He received the amount of Rs. 50,000.00 and utilised the same in procuring few additions in the shop which has enhanced the value and demand in the locality. His business due to its nature remained largely unaffected in Covid-19 pandemic and therefore he could manage to make the regular instalments of the repayment. He is happy with his decision to approach NBCFDC and now desire to have a provision for top-up loan from NBCFDC to further his business interests.

25. Name of the beneficiary: Ms. Sankar Bhuyan

Age: 38 years

Location: Agchia

Purpose of taking loan: Investment in the Grocery Shop.

Year of Receiving Loan: 2019

Amount: Rs. 50,000.00

Usage of the loan: purchase of the handloom machine and raw materials

Annual income: Prior to Loan: Rs. 2,00,000.00

After Loan: Rs. 2,20,000.00

Other Sources of Income: None

Repayment status: Regular

Gains: increase in income and social status

Productivity status: With regular working at his own grocery shop, Mr. Sankar Bhuyan annually earns Rs. 20,000.00 as a profit.

Experience: Mr. Sankar Bhuyan has a small family of four members with two school going children. To fulfil his desire to be business he had set-up a grocery shop with his own investment, and was looking for an opportunity to expand his business through addition of the stock which may fetch more demand from the customers. He found one such opportunity in the name of micro-finance scheme of NBCFDC for the OBCs. He applied through ARTFED, Guwahati and received a loan amount of Rs. 50,000.00 which was well utilised by him in adding to the existing stock of products. This was appreciated by the customers and the demand for purchase from his shop risen to yield an additional annual profit of Rs. 20,000.00. He is a satisfied businessperson and thankful for the micro-finance scheme of NBCFDC.

Annexure 2

Research Tool

An Evaluation of Micro Finance Schemes of NBCFDC in the State of Assam

QUESTIONNAIRE / FEEDBACK

প্রশ্নাবলী/সঁহাৰি

Sl. No. _____

For your consideration

আপোনা অনুধাৱনৰ বাবে

- This questionnaire is a part of research study and does not intend to reveal identity of the respondent. Therefore, collected information will remain confidential and restricted to research analysis.
- এই প্রশ্নাবলী অধ্যয়নৰে এক অঙ্গ। কোনো ব্যক্তিৰ ব্যক্তিগত চিনাকি বা পৰিচয় ফাদিল কৰাৰ মনস্কৰ নহয়। সংগ্ৰহ কৰা যিকোনো সংবাদ গোপনীয় ৰখা হ'ব।
- Please try to give information to the best of your understanding.
- আপুনি বুজা অনুসাৰে সংবাদ দিব।
- In case you find any question irrelevant in your context, please mark Not Applicable or NA as your response.
- যদি কোনো প্রশ্ন আপোনাৰ সৈতে প্ৰযোজ্য নহয়, অনুগ্ৰহ কৰি Not Applicable অথবা NA লিখিব।
- Kindly elaborate your opinion/experience in the given space for open-ended questions.
- আপোনাৰ ভাবধাৰা/অভিজ্ঞতা অনুসাৰে খালি ঠাইত প্ৰকাশ কৰিব বা লিখিব।

THANKING YOU IN ANTICIPATION FOR YOUR COOPERATION

আপোনাৰ সঁহাৰি বিছাৰি ধন্যবাদ যাঁচিলো

(2021)

Dr. Ambedkar Chair, Tezpur University (Assam)

**Established and Maintained by Dr. Ambedkar Foundation, Ministry of
Social Justice and Empowerment, GoI.**

An Evaluation of Micro Finance Schemes of NBCFDC in the State of Assam

Questionnaire for Beneficiaries

Part - I

General Demographic Information:

1. Name/ নাম :

2. Age/ বয়স/ :

3. Sex/ লিংগ:

<input type="radio"/> Male পুৰুষ	<input type="radio"/> Female মহিলা
<input type="radio"/> Third Gender <input type="radio"/> তৃতীয় লিংগ	<input type="radio"/> Don't want to mention <input type="radio"/> উল্লেখ কৰিব নিবিচাৰে

4. Category বৰ্গ/ শ্ৰেণী :

<input type="radio"/> OBC <input type="radio"/> অন্যান্য পিছপৰা জাতি	<input type="radio"/> ST <input type="radio"/> অনুসূচিত জনজাতি
<input type="radio"/> SC <input type="radio"/> অনুসূচিত জাতি	<input type="radio"/> EWS <input type="radio"/> আৰ্থিক দুৰৱস্থাজনিত শ্ৰেণী

5. Domicile State ৰাজ্য:

6. District জিলা:

7. Residence বাসস্থান

<input type="radio"/> Address ঠিকনা::	<input type="radio"/> Email:	<input type="radio"/> Mobile No.:
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8. Accommodation বাসস্থান :

<input type="radio"/> Own House নিজৰ ঘৰ	<input type="radio"/> On Rent ভাড়াত	<input type="radio"/> Other (provided by the employer) অন্যান্য (নিয়োগকৰ্তাৰ দ্বাৰা প্ৰদান কৰা)
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9. Location অৱস্থান :

<input type="radio"/> Urban নগৰ	<input type="radio"/> Rural গ্ৰাম্য
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10. Educational Qualification শিক্ষাগত অৰ্হতা :

<input type="radio"/> Illiterate	<input type="radio"/> Primary
<input type="radio"/> Middle	<input type="radio"/> Matric
<input type="radio"/> PUC (Class 12 th)	<input type="radio"/> Diploma
<input type="radio"/> ITI	<input type="radio"/> Graduation
<input type="radio"/> PG	<input type="radio"/> Others (specify)

11. Marital Status বৈবাহিক স্থিতি :

<input type="radio"/> Single একক	<input type="radio"/> Married বিবাহিত
<input type="radio"/> Widowed বিধৱা	<input type="radio"/> Divorced/Separated বিবাহ বিচ্ছেদ/পৃথক

12. Family Type পাৰিবাৰিক প্ৰকাৰ :

<input type="radio"/> Nuclear family সৰু পৰিয়াল	<input type="radio"/> Joint family যুটীয়া পৰিয়াল
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13. Size of the family পৰিয়ালৰ আকাৰ :

<input type="radio"/> Up to 3 Members 3 জনলৈকে সদস্য	<input type="radio"/> 4 – 5 Member 4 – 5 জন সদস্য	<input type="radio"/> <5 Members <5 জন সদস্য
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14. Economic Status of Family (Annual Income):

পৰিয়ালৰ অৰ্থনৈতিক স্থিতি (বাৰ্ষিক উপাৰ্জন):

Annual Family Income (in Rs.) বাৰ্ষিক পাৰিবাৰিক উপাৰ্জন (টকাত) :

(1= Income less than Rs. 1.50 Lakh; 2= Income between Rs. 1.50 Lakh and Rs. 3.00 Lakh; 3= Income more than Rs. 3.00 Lakh) (1= 1.50 লাখ টকাতকৈ কম উপাৰ্জন; 2= 1.50 লাখ টকাৰ পৰা 3.00 লাখ টকাৰ ভিতৰত উপাৰ্জন; 3= 3.00 লাখ টকাতকৈ অধিক উপাৰ্জন)

<input type="radio"/> Before availing Loan ঋণ প্ৰাপ্ত কৰাৰ আগতে	<input type="radio"/> Now বৰ্তমান

15. Employment Status: (1=Unemployed; 2=Wage Labour; 3=Self-Employed) :

নিযুক্তিৰ স্থিতি: (1=নিবনুৱা; 2=মজুৰী শ্ৰমিক; 3=স্ব-নিয়োজিত) :

<input type="radio"/> Before availing Loan ঋণ প্ৰাপ্ত কৰাৰ আগতে	<input type="radio"/> Now বৰ্তমান

16. Employment/Self-employment Details (Designation & Name of organization)

নিযুক্তি/স্ব-নিযুক্তিৰ বিৱৰণ (পদবী আৰু সংগঠনৰ নাম) :

<input type="radio"/> Before availing Loan ঋণ প্ৰাপ্ত কৰাৰ আগতে	<input type="radio"/> Now বৰ্তমান

17. If you have generated employment, please mention the number of people along with their income:

যদি আপুনি নিযুক্তি সৃষ্টি কৰিছে, অনুগ্ৰহ কৰি তেওঁলোকৰ উপাৰ্জনৰ সৈতে লোকৰ সংখ্যা উল্লেখ কৰক:

18. Did you own a House?: (Yes / No)

আপোনাৰ ঘৰ আছিল নেকি?: (হয় / নহয়)

<input type="radio"/> Before availing Loan Loan ঋণ প্ৰাপ্ত কৰাৰ আগতে	<input type="radio"/> Now বৰ্তমান

19. Type of House: (1=Kutch; 2=Pucca)

ঘৰৰ প্ৰকাৰ: (1=কচ্ছ; 2=পকী)

<input type="radio"/> Before availing Loan Loan ঋণ প্ৰাপ্ত কৰাৰ আগতে	<input type="radio"/> Now বৰ্তমান

20. Possession of capital assets (Business related)?: (Yes / No)

মূলধন সম্পত্তি বখা (ব্যৱসায় সম্পৰ্কীয়)?: (হয় / নহয়)

<input type="radio"/> Before availing Loan Loan ঋণ প্ৰাপ্ত কৰাৰ আগতে	<input type="radio"/> Now বৰ্তমান

21. Addition of capital assets (business related) after loan?: (1=Yes; 2= No)

ঋণৰ পিছত মূলধন সম্পদ (ব্যৱসায় সম্পৰ্কীয়) যোগ?: (1=হয়; 2= নহয়)

22. Specify the capital assets (business related) purchased after availing loan (if applicable):

ঋণ প্ৰাপ্ত কৰাৰ পিছত ক্ৰয় কৰা মূলধন সম্পত্তি (ব্যৱসায় সম্পৰ্কীয়) নিৰ্দিষ্ট কৰক (যদি
প্ৰযোজ্য হয়):

1.	2.
3.	4.
5.	6.

23. Your education status:

আপোনাৰ শিক্ষাৰ স্থিতি:

<input type="radio"/> Before availing Loan Loan ঋণ প্ৰাপ্ত কৰাৰ আগতে	<input type="radio"/> Now বৰ্তমান

24. Did you take any skill development training? (Yes/No)

আপুনি কোনো দক্ষতা বিকাশৰ প্ৰশিক্ষণ লৈছিলনে? (হয়/নহয়)

<input type="radio"/> Before availing Loan Loan ঋণ প্রাপ্ত কৰাৰ আগতে	Now বৰ্তমান

25. Annual Savings (in Rs.):

বাৰ্ষিক সঞ্চয় (টকাত):

<input type="radio"/> Before availing Loan Loan ঋণ প্রাপ্ত কৰাৰ আগতে	<input type="radio"/> Now বৰ্তমান

26. Investment (in Rs.):

বিনিয়োগ (টকাত):

<input type="radio"/> Before availing Loan Loan ঋণ প্রাপ্ত কৰাৰ আগতে	<input type="radio"/> Now বৰ্তমান

27. Debt (if any) (in Rs.):

ঋণ (যদি থাকে) (টকাত):

<input type="radio"/> Before availing Loan Loan ঋণ প্রাপ্ত কৰাৰ আগতে	<input type="radio"/> Now বৰ্তমান

28. Monthly Expenditure (in Rs.):

মাহিলী ব্যয় (টকাত):

<input type="radio"/> Before availing Loan Loan ঋণ প্রাপ্ত কৰাৰ আগতে	<input type="radio"/> Now বৰ্তমান

29. Bank Account?: (Yes / No)

বেংক একাউন্ট?: (হয় / নহয়)

<input type="radio"/> Before availing Loan Loan ঋণ প্রাপ্ত কৰাৰ আগতে	<input type="radio"/> Now বৰ্তমান

30. Do you have a Jan Dhan Bank Account? Yes / No

আপোনাৰ জন ধন বেংক একাউন্ট আছে নেকি? হয় / নহয়

31. Do you have an Aadhar Card? Yes / No

আপোনাৰ আধাৰ কাৰ্ড আছে নেকি? হয় / নহয়

Part - II

Loan Scheme Related Information:

ঋণ আঁচনি সম্পর্কীয় তথ্য:

1. Date/Month (Year) of application for the loan:

ঋণৰ বাবে আবেদনৰ তাৰিখ/মাহ (বছৰ):

2. Type of loan: ঋণৰ প্ৰকাৰ: a) Micro Finance Scheme b) Mahila Samridhi Yojana

3. Please specify the need for which loan assistance was availed:

অনুগ্রহ কৰি কোনটো ঋণ সহায়প্ৰাপ্ত হৈছিল তাৰ প্ৰয়োজনীয়তা নিৰ্দিষ্ট কৰক:

4. Is this a part of sanctioned activity? Yes / No

এইটো অনুমোদিত কাৰ্য্যৰ এটা অংশ নেকি? হয় / নহয়

5. Name of the sanctioned activity:

অনুমোদিত কাৰ্য্যকলাপৰ নাম:

6. Amount for which loan was applied:

কি পৰিমাণৰ বাবে ঋণ প্ৰয়োগ কৰা হৈছিল:

7. Total time you took to complete the loan process:

ঋণ প্ৰক্ৰিয়াটো সম্পূৰ্ণ কৰিবলৈ আপুনি মুঠ সময় লৈছিল:

<input type="radio"/> Below 2 Months 2 মাহৰ তলত	<input type="radio"/> 2 – 4 Months 2 – 4 মাহ
<input type="radio"/> 4 – 6 Months 4 – 6 মাহ	<input type="radio"/> More than 6 Months <input type="radio"/> 6 মাহতকৈ অধিক

8. Date/Month (Year) of receiving the loan:

ঋণ প্ৰাপ্ত কৰাৰ তাৰিখ/মাহ (বছৰ):

9. Amount of the loan received:

প্ৰাপ্ত ঋণৰ পৰিমাণ:

10. Did you face any difficulty in availing loan? Yes / No

ঋণ প্ৰাপ্ত কৰাত আপুনি কোনো অসুবিধাৰ সন্মুখীন হৈছিল নেকি? হয় / নহয়

11. Please specify the difficulty faced (if any):

অনুগ্রহ কৰি সন্মুখীন হোৱা অসুবিধাবোৰ নিৰ্দিষ্ট কৰক (যদি থাকে):

12. Did you take loan as a member of self-help group (SHG)? Yes / No

আপুনি স্ব-সহায়ক গোটৰ (SHG) সদস্য হিচাপে ঋণ লৈছিল নেকি? হয় / নহয়

13. Name of the self-help group you are associated with:

আপুনি যি স্ব-সহায়ক গোটৰ সৈতে সম্পৰ্কিত সেইগোটটোৰ নাম:

14. Duration of your relationship with the self-help group (SHG) (Months/Years):
সৈতে আপোনাৰ সম্পৰ্কৰ ম্যাদ (SHG) (মাহ/বছৰ):

15. Were you aware of the loan scheme of NBCFDC? Yes / No
আপুনি এনবিচিএফডিচিৰ ঋণ আঁচনিৰ বিষয়ে অৱগত আছিলনে? হয় / নহয়

16. If Yes, source of awareness:
১৬. যদি হয়, সজাগতাৰ উৎস:

<input type="radio"/> Newspapers/Magazine	<input type="radio"/> Family/Friends/Relatives	<input type="radio"/> Internet/Social Media
<input type="radio"/> Television	<input type="radio"/> Radio	<input type="radio"/> Other Beneficiaries
<input type="radio"/> From State Channelising Agency (SCA) officials	<input type="radio"/> Self Help Group	<input type="radio"/> Others (Specify)

17. Awareness about maximum amount of loan sanctioned from SCA:
এছ.চি.এ.-ৰ পৰা অনুমোদিত সৰ্বাধিক পৰিমাণৰ ঋণৰ বিষয়ে সজাগতা:

<input type="radio"/> Aware	<input type="radio"/> Not Aware
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18. Awareness about loan repayment for the availed loan:
প্ৰাপ্ত ঋণৰ বাবে ঋণ পৰিশোধৰ বিষয়ে সজাগতা:

<input type="radio"/> Aware	<input type="radio"/> Not Aware
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19. Rate of interest for your loan repayment:
আপোনাৰ ঋণ পৰিশোধৰ বাবে সূতৰ হাৰ:

20. Awareness about National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation. (NBCFDC):
ৰাষ্ট্ৰীয় পিছপৰা শ্ৰেণীবিত্ত আৰু উন্নয়ন নিগমৰ বিষয়ে সজাগতা (NBCFDC):

<input type="radio"/> Aware	<input type="radio"/> Not Aware
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21. Awareness about other schemes of NBCFDC like provision of different term end loans:
ৰ অন্যান্য আঁচনিযেনে বিভিন্ন ম্যাদী অন্তিম ঋণৰ ব্যৱস্থাৰ বিষয়ে সজাগতা:

<input type="radio"/> Aware	<input type="radio"/> Not Aware
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22. Did you meet any beneficiary before applying for the loan?
Yes / No

ঋণৰ বাবে আবেদন কৰাৰ আগতে আপুনি কোনো হিতাধিকাৰীক লগ পাইছিলনে?

হয় / নহয়

23. Did you hear of any gain from such loan? Yes / No

এনে ঋণৰ পৰা আপুনি কোনো লাভৰ বিষয়ে শুনিছিলনে? হয় / নহয়

24. Mode of receiving loan: Directly in Bank Account / Cash

ঋণ প্ৰাপ্ত কৰাৰ পদ্ধতি:

পোনপটীয়াকৈ বেঙ্ক একাউণ্ট / নগদ ধনত

25. Was there delay in getting loan?

Yes / No

ঋণ প্ৰাপ্ত কৰাত পলম হৈছিল নেকি?

হয় / নহয়

26. How much delay happened (Days/Months)?

কিমান পলম হৈছিল (দিন/মাহ)?

27. Reason cited for delay (mention the main reason)?

পলম হোৱাৰ কাৰণ উল্লেখ কৰা হৈছে (মুখ্য কাৰণটো উল্লেখ কৰক)?

28. Your agreement towards the following statements. (Tick whichever is applicable)

নিম্নলিখিত বিবৃতিবোৰৰ প্ৰতি আপোনাৰ সন্মতি। (যিটো প্ৰযোজ্য হয় টিক কৰক)

Sl. No	Statements	Strongly Disagree দৃঢ়ভাৱে অসন্মত	Disagree অসন্মত	Neutral নিৰপেক্ষ	Agree সন্মত	Strongly Agree দৃঢ়ভাৱে সন্মত
I.	Information about loan was well communicated to you ঋণৰ বিষয়ে তথ্য আপোনাক ভালদৰে জনোৱা হৈছিল					
II.	Loan was availed with an intention to start/upgrade an enterprise এটা উদ্যোগ আৰম্ভ/আপগ্ৰেড কৰাৰ উদ্দেশ্যৰে ঋণ প্ৰাপ্ত কৰা হৈছিল					
III.	Loan taking process was convenient ঋণ লোৱাৰ প্ৰক্ৰিয়া সুবিধাজনক আছিল					
IV.	Loan repayment was explained comprehensively ঋণ পৰিশোধব্যাপকভাৱে ব্যাখ্যা কৰা হৈছিল					
V.	Loan amount was sufficient to satisfy the need প্ৰয়োজনীয়তা পূৰণ কৰিবলৈ ঋণৰ পৰিমাণ পৰ্যাপ্ত আছিল					
VI.	Knowledge about the better utilisation of loan was provided by the SCA/SHG ঋণৰ উন্নত ব্যৱহাৰৰ বিষয়ে জ্ঞান এছচিএ/এছএইচজি-ৰ দ্বাৰা প্ৰদান কৰা হৈছিল					
VII.	You became aware of NBCFDC and its schemes to support backward classes আপুনি NBCFDC আৰু পিছপৰা শ্ৰেণীসমূহক সমৰ্থন কৰাৰ আঁচনিসমূহৰ বিষয়ে অৱগত হৈছিল					
VIII.	Information about the success stories was shared along with other					

	information about availing loan সফলতাৰ কাহিনীবোৰৰ বিষয়ে তথ্য ঋণ প্ৰাপ্ত কৰাৰ বিষয়ে অন্যান্য তথ্যৰ সৈতে ভাগ বতৰা কৰা হৈছিল					
IX.	There was interaction with employers/ entrepreneurs নিয়োগকৰ্তা/উদ্যোগীসকলৰ সৈতে বাৰ্তালাপ হৈছিল					
X.	Loan availing process was smooth ঋণ প্ৰাপ্ত কৰাৰ প্ৰক্ৰিয়া মসৃণ আছিল					
XI.	Your idea of availing loan was well supported by family members ঋণ প্ৰাপ্ত কৰাৰ আপোনাৰ ধাৰণাটো পৰিয়ালৰ সদস্যসকলে ভালদৰে সমৰ্থন কৰিছিল					

29. Did you aspire to become an entrepreneur?

Yes / No

আপুনি এজন উদ্যোগী হোৱাৰ আকাংক্ষা কৰিছিলনে?

হয় / নহয়

30. Did you think the loan scheme will help you to satisfy your entrepreneurial aspirations?

Yes / No

আপুনি ভাবিছিলনে যে ঋণ আঁচনিয়ে আপোনাক আপোনাৰ উদ্যোগী আকাংক্ষা পূৰণ কৰাত
সহায় কৰিব?

হয় / নহয়

31. Did you receive any skill training recently (after availing loan)?

Yes / No

আপুনি শেহতীয়াকৈ কোনো দক্ষতাৰ প্ৰশিক্ষণ লাভ কৰিছে নেকি? (ঋণ লোৱাৰ পিছত) হয়

/ নহয়

32. What plan did you devise for the repayment of the loan?

ঋণ পৰিশোধৰ বাবে আপুনি কি পৰিকল্পনা কৰিছিল?

33. Did you take loan from other organisations as well?

Yes / No

(Please specify)

আপুনি আন সংগঠনৰ পৰাও ঋণ লৈছিল নেকি?

হয় / নহয়

(অনুগ্রহ কৰি নিৰ্দিষ্ট কৰক)

34. Was/Is the loan from other organisation(s) more convenient? Yes / No
(In which sense, please specify)

আন সংগঠনৰ পৰা ঋণ অধিক সুবিধাজনক আছিল নেকি? হয় / নহয়

(কোন অৰ্থত, অনুগ্রহ কৰি নিৰ্দিষ্ট কৰক)

Part - III

Impact of the Loan Scheme

ঋণ আঁচনিৰ প্ৰভাৱ

1. Did you utilise the loan as anticipated? Yes / No
আপুনি ঋণটো প্ৰত্যাশিত অনুসৰি ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিছিলনে? হয় / নহয়
2. If not, what has largely caused non-utilisation of the loan?
যদি নহয়, তেন্তে কিহত ঋণৰ ব্যৱহাৰ নহ'ল?
3. Did you make gain out of this loan scheme? Yes / No
আপুনি এই ঋণ আঁচনিৰ পৰা লাভ কৰিছিলনে? হয় / নহয়
4. Please identify few (around three) gains.
অনুগ্ৰহ কৰি কেইটামান (প্ৰায় তিনিটা) লাভ চিনাক্ত কৰক
 - a)
 - b)
 - c)
5. Reasons for not making gains (if applicable).
লাভ নকৰাৰ কাৰণ (যদি প্ৰযোজ্য হয়)।
6. Your annual family income আপোনাৰ বাৰ্ষিক পৰিয়ালৰ উপাৰ্জন:
 - a) Before Loan ঋণৰ আগতে:
 - b) After Loan ঋণৰ পিছত:
7. Your agreement towards the following statements. (Tick whichever is applicable)
নিম্নলিখিত বিবৃতিবোৰৰ প্ৰতি আপোনাৰ সন্মতি। (যিটো প্ৰযোজ্য হয় টিক কৰক)

Sl. No	Statements	Strongly Disagree দৃঢ়ভাৱে অসন্মত	Disagree অসন্মত	Neutral নিৰপেক্ষ	Agree সন্মত	Strongly Agree দৃঢ়ভাৱে সন্মত
I.	Loan scheme is well conceived scheme of NBCFDC ঋণ আঁচনি এ NBCFDCৰ ভালদৰে ধাৰণা কৰা আঁচনি					
II.	Loan disbursement was smooth ঋণ বিতৰণ মসৃণ আছিল					
III.	Interest rates for repayment are convenient পৰিশোধৰ বাবে সূতৰ হাৰ সুবিধাজনক					

IV.	Period fixed for the repayment is convenient পৰিশোধৰ বাবে নিৰ্ধাৰিত ম্যাদ সুবিধাজনক					
V.	Self Help Group has helped (in guidance) in utilisation of the loan amount আত্মসহায় গোটো ৰূপৰ পৰিমাণ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰাত (নিৰ্দেশনাত) সহায় কৰিছে					
VI.	Loan scheme has helped you in getting skilful employment/self-employment ৰূপ আঁচনিতে আপোনাক কুশল নিযুক্তি/স্ব-নিযুক্তি প্ৰাপ্ত কৰাত সহায় কৰিছে					
VII.	Gains of loan scheme were short-term ৰূপ আঁচনিৰ লাভ হ্রস্বম্যাদী আছিল					
VIII.	Loan has led to more income in your family ৰূপৰ ফলত আপোনাৰ পৰিয়ালত অধিক উপাৰ্জন হৈছে					
IX.	Loan has enhanced the number of assets ৰূপে সম্পত্তিৰ সংখ্যা বৃদ্ধি কৰিছে					
X.	Loan scheme has added to your prestige in the society ৰূপ আঁচনিতে সমাজত আপোনাৰ সন্মান বৃদ্ধি কৰিছে					
XI.	Loan has helped you aspire to become self-employed/entrepreneur ৰূপে আপোনাক স্ব-নিয়োজিত/উদ্যোগী হোৱাৰ আকাংক্ষা কৰাত সহায় কৰিছে					
XII.	You could provide better education to the children/family members after availing the loan ৰূপ গ্ৰহণ কৰাৰ পিছত আপুনি শিশু/পৰিয়ালৰ সদস্যসকলক উন্নত শিক্ষা প্ৰদান কৰিব পাৰে					
XIII.	After availing loan, you could access better health facilities. ৰূপ প্ৰাপ্ত কৰাৰ পিছত, আপুনি উন্নত স্বাস্থ্য সুবিধা প্ৰাপ্ত কৰিব পাৰে।					
XIV.	Loan scheme is comprehensive to include entrepreneurial skill of all the sectors. সকলো খণ্ডৰ উদ্যোগী দক্ষতা অন্তৰ্ভুক্ত কৰিবলৈ ৰূপ আঁচনিখন ব্যাপক।					
XV.	You feel empowered after availing and utilising the loan ৰূপ টো প্ৰাপ্ত					

	আৰু ব্যৱহাৰ কৰাৰ পিছত আপুনি সবল অনুভৱ কৰে					
XVI.	Your value in the family has increased after availing the loan পৰিয়ালত আপোনাৰ মূল্য আছে ঋণ লোৱাৰ পিছত বৃদ্ধি হৈছে					
XVII.	Loan scheme could reduce backwardness/disadvantaged position of your family ঋণ আঁচনিয়ে আপোনাৰ পৰিয়ালৰ পিছপৰা/সুবিধাবঞ্চিত স্থিতি হ্রাস কৰিব পা					

8. Have you started the repayment process? Yes / No

আপুনি পৰিশোধ প্ৰক্ৰিয়া আৰম্ভ কৰিছে নেকি? হয় / নহয়

9. Your monthly instalment (in Rs.):

আপোনাৰ মাহিলী কিস্তি (টকাত):

10. What is the status of loan repayment to the channel partner (SCA)?

চেনেল অংশীদাৰ (এছচিএ)ক ঋণ পৰিশোধৰ স্থিতি কি?

a) Regular নিয়মীয়া b) Irregular অনিয়মীয়া c) Defaulter ডিফল্টাৰ

11. Reasons for being defaulter (if applicable): ডিফল্টাৰ হোৱাৰ কাৰণ (যদি প্ৰযোজ্য হয়):

a)

b)

12. Whether you would recommend your family relations or friends to avail such loan scheme?

Yes / No / Can't Say

আপুনি আপোনাৰ পাৰিবাৰিক সম্পৰ্ক বা বন্ধুবৰ্গক এনে ঋণ আঁচনি প্ৰাপ্ত কৰিবলৈ পৰামৰ্শ দিব
নে? হয় / নহয় / ক'ব নোৱাৰে

13. Are you satisfied with the additional income after utilisation of the loan? Yes / No / Can't Say

ঋণব্যৱহাৰকৰাৰ পিছত আপুনি অতিৰিক্ত উপাৰ্জনত সন্তুষ্ট নেকি? হয় / নহয় / ক'ব

নোৱাৰে

14. Do you think process of loan scheme needs improvement? Yes / No / Can't Say

Please elaborate through suggestions.

আপুনি ভাবেনে ঋণ আঁচনিৰ প্ৰক্ৰিয়াটো উন্নত হোৱাৰ প্ৰয়োজন? হয় / নহয় / ক'ব নোৱাৰে
অনুগ্রহ কৰি পৰামৰ্শবোৰৰ জৰিয়তে বৰ্ণনা কৰক।

15. Do you think socio-economic gain from the loan scheme has helped you to support education
of children/family members? Yes / No / Can't Say

Please elaborate.

আপুনি ভাবেনে যে ঋণ আঁচনিৰ পৰা আৰ্থ-সামাজিক লাভে আপোনাক শিশু/পৰিয়ালৰ সদস্যসকলৰ শিক্ষাত সহায় কৰাত সহায় কৰিছে? হয় / নহয় / ক'ব নোৱাৰে অনুগ্ৰহ কৰি বৰ্ণনা কৰক।

16. Any suggestion you wish to mention for the micro finance loan scheme regarding its concept, implementation, and implication.

মাইক্ৰ' ফাইনেঞ্চ ঋণ আঁচনিৰ ধাৰণা, ৰূপায়ণ আৰু প্ৰভাৱ সম্পৰ্কে আপুনি উল্লেখ কৰিব বিচৰা যিকোনো পৰামৰ্শ।