

Financial Technology

for

Rural Transformation

Bridging the Financial Inclusion Divide

— Edited By —

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Financial Technology for Rural Transformation: Bridging the Financial Inclusion Divide

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PREFACE

In the past few years, financial inclusion has moved from the margins of India's policy debate to its centre. Bank accounts have grown in numbers, digital payments have become routine, and public digital infrastructure has changed the way citizens receive subsidies, save, and borrow. Yet access and usage are not the same thing. In North East India, particularly Assam, geographical constraints, frequent floods, and uneven digital literacy, continue to impede the success of financial inclusion.

"Financial Technology for Rural Transformation: Bridging the Financial Inclusion Divide" presents these issues empirically through twenty-five chapters focusing on the role of financial technology in the promotion of financial inclusion and rural development. The volume examines the adoption and usage of technology among farmers, weavers, artisans, small manufacturers, students, women, and bank customers across the region. It also spotlights the importance of financial literacy, trust, gender, infrastructure, and individual behaviour in determining the successful adoption of financial technology.

The volume is organised into five major themes: conceptual and empirical foundations; digital financial literacy and payment behaviour; FinTech adoption among specific communities and enterprises; regional and sectoral development, including agriculture and agro-based industries; and the emerging role of artificial intelligence in banking and inclusive finance. The contribution consists of primary surveys, secondary data analysis, conceptual discussion, and different research methods. The collection also gives an opportunity for young researchers to contribute their results and views on financial inclusion in the North East Region of India.

The chapters offer different findings and viewpoints. Some research highlights the benefits of financial services, while others discuss the challenges of limited awareness, unequal access, and difficulties in technology adoption. In nutshell, they comment that the success of financial inclusion greatly depends on proper infrastructure, awareness, and public trust.

We hope this volume will be useful to researchers, academicians, policymakers, bankers and others interested in financial inclusion, financial technology, and rural development. We sincerely thank all contributing authors for their valuable contributions and patience, the reviewers for their constructive comments, and Research Collab for making the ideas into publication.

Nagaon, Assam

Shujan Ghosh
Dr. Rita Marak
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FOREWORD

The rapid advancement of Financial Technology (FinTech) has brought significant changes to the financial sector. Digital payments, mobile banking, online lending, and technology-enabled financial services are transforming the ways in which individuals and businesses access and use financial resources. In this changing environment, FinTech has emerged as an important instrument for promoting financial inclusion, strengthening rural entrepreneurship, and supporting sustainable economic development. The edited volume *“Financial Technology for Rural Transformation: Bridging the Financial Inclusion Divide”* addresses this important and contemporary subject with particular relevance to Assam and the North Eastern Region of India.

Financial inclusion is vital for equitable growth and economic development. Although FinTech offers affordable and accessible financial services, rural communities still face challenges such as inadequate banking facilities, limited digital infrastructure, low financial literacy, and restricted access to institutional credit. Appropriate technological solutions, supported by awareness and adequate safeguards, can help bridge these gaps.

This is particularly relevant to Assam and the North Eastern Region, where agriculture, rural livelihoods, and micro-enterprises play important economic roles. Digital payments, mobile banking, digital lending, and technology-enabled insurance can empower farmers, women entrepreneurs, artisans and small businesses. However, cybersecurity, digital fraud, data privacy, and the digital divide require careful attention.

The present volume explores key themes, including digital financial inclusion, rural entrepreneurship, agricultural finance, women’s empowerment, financial literacy, artificial intelligence, and insurance inclusion. Its interdisciplinary approach and regional focus can enhance understanding of rural challenges and promote practical solutions.

I believe this volume will be a valuable resource for students, researchers, academicians, policymakers and development practitioners. It can encourage further research and informed policies to strengthen financial inclusion and rural development. Ultimately, FinTech must go beyond technological advancement to empower people, reduce inequalities, and improve rural livelihoods.

I congratulate the editors, **Shujan Ghosh**, **Dr. Rita Marak** and **Dr. Dipankar Baidya**, of the Department of Commerce, Nagaon University, on this meaningful academic initiative. I also appreciate the contributors for exploring the opportunities and challenges of financial technology and rural transformation. I hope this volume will inspire further research and contribute to building an inclusive, resilient and sustainable rural economy.

I wish the editors and the volume every success.

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First and foremost, we extend our sincere thanks to all contributing authors for their rigorous scholarship, willingness to engage with reviewer’s comments, and patience through successive rounds of revision have given this book its depth and diversity of perspective. Each chapter reflects the care and expertise its author brought to the task and we are deeply grateful for their trust in this project.

We appreciate the anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments and suggestions, which greatly enhanced the quality of the volume. The time they gave to this work, often without recognition, remains one of the quite foundations of scholarly publishing.

We gratefully acknowledge the Faculty of Commerce and Management, Nagaon University, for providing an intellectually supportive environment for smooth carrying out the project.

We also express heartfelt appreciation to the editorial and production team at Research Collab for their professionalism, guidance, and faith in this project, from the initial proposal through to publication.

Nagaon, Assam
October 2026

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Dr. Rita Marak
Dr. Dipankar Baidya

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DISCLAIMER

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