

2nd Rural Udyamita

Building & Enabling Sustainable Rural Entrepreneurship Ecosystem

December 12, 2025
Guwahati, Assam





Context

Rural women in Assam and the North East are primarily engaged in livelihood or income-generating activities, with few transitioning into entrepreneurship. Moving towards enterprise-building requires formalization, compliance, skill development, access to resources, and market opportunities.

This is crucial post-COVID, given the low Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR): 23.69% in Assam, 22.4% in Tripura, and below the national average of 54.9%. In Assam, only 0.54% of MSMEs are women-owned, and female employees in MSMEs account for just 9% of the national average.

Challenges in Rural Women

Enterprise Building

- Limited awareness of registration, compliance, and formalities in rural areas.
- Lack of professional management, bookkeeping, and data handling.
- Quality, diversification, packaging, and labeling issues.
- Low product visibility, limited markets, and transport barriers.
- Weak costing, revenue margin management, and access to finance.
- Gaps in networks, partnerships, licenses, and end services like packaging/testing.
- Limited access to skills, technology, mentoring, and digital tools.

Digital Enterprise as a Core Challenge



Less than 30% of rural women entrepreneurs use digital tools. Focused digital support can enhance opportunities, market access, and financial resilience.

Opportunities Galore for Rural Women Entrepreneurship

Backbone of Rural Economy

Rural women play a central role in sustaining the rural economy and society.

Strength in Value Chains

They drive key value chains as a vital and dedicated workforce

Skills and Work Ethic

Their skills, hard work, and responsibility make them strong entrepreneurs.

Scope for Enterprise Growth

Women with sustainable businesses can be scaled up to boost rural enterprise.

Eco-Friendly Products

Their eco-friendly, health-conscious products have high urban market demand.





1st Rural Udyamita 2022 Highlights

The Digital for Rural Women Entrepreneurs Consultation (Nov 16, 2022) brought together stakeholders including CSDD, DEF, and NEDF.

Key Insights

◆ Changing Landscape of Entrepreneurship

Rural women are increasingly open to entrepreneurship, with micro-enterprises growing, though scaling up remains a challenge.

◆ Support Initiatives

Agencies like NERAMAC and FPOs provide training and engagement, but more focus is needed on value addition and strong market linkages.

◆ Financial Challenges

While loans are available, rural women entrepreneurs struggle with fund utilization and professionalism, highlighting the need for sustainable financing models.

◆ Digital Adoption

Interest in digital tools and online marketing is rising, but hurdles like GST registration and access to e-marketplaces slow progress.

◆ Capacity Building

Beyond basic training, women require long-term support in business planning, management, and quality control.

◆ Collaborative Efforts

Institutions like NEDFi, SIDBI, and NABARD play critical roles, but stronger collaboration between government, NGOs, and private partners is essential.





2nd Rural Udyamita 2025

Objectives

- Deliberate on key issues and challenges in enabling rural women to shift from livelihood to entrepreneurship;
- Mapping the key needs, scope and opportunities to invest on rural women entrepreneurs across key value chains in various stages of enterprise developments.
- To assess the issues and challenges, need and scope in ICT / digital integration in existing key value chains for RWEs for enterprise development;
- To assess existing efforts, policies and programmes with focus on technology / digital based support in developing RWEs.
- Recognising and celebrating the best practices and examples of rural women entrepreneurship

Components

Rural Entrepreneurship Award 2025

Celebrating women-led enterprise excellence.



Technical Sessions

Rural Women Entrepreneurship, climate change, digital technology, market, innovations, enterprise development.



Rural Udyamita Start-Up Challenge 2025

From Idea to Impact for Rural Women Business Innovators.



Knowledge & Solution Exchange

Rural Udyamita Mela

Showcasing products and enterprises.



Sessions

Enabling Policy for Rural Entrepreneurs

Panel discussion on improving rural women's access to finance, technology, markets, and support services; reviewing policies and institutional frameworks for women-owned businesses.

Capacity Building and Training

Workshop on skill development, leadership, mentoring, and business planning with focus on management skills and quality control.

Market Access and Value Chains

Discussion on enhancing rural women's participation in value chains; strategies for marketing, branding, and distribution.

Digital Integration

Dialogue on leveraging digital tools for sales, visibility, networking, and finance; addressing challenges and adoption pathways.

AI for Rural Enterprises

Exploring how Artificial Intelligence can support rural women entrepreneurs in product design, digital marketing, customer insights, and business efficiency.

Climate-Resilient Rural Enterprises

Discussions on integrating climate-smart practices, sustainable production, and green entrepreneurship to build resilient rural businesses.



Key Themes

- **Access & Empowerment:** Finance, technology, markets, and services.
- **Policy & Institutional Support:** Strengthen frameworks to support women-owned enterprises.
- **Capacity Building:** Tailored training, mentoring, and leadership development.
- **Market Access & Value Chains:** Improve linkages, diversification, marketing, and branding.

Expected Outcome ”

- Strengthened policy recommendations for rural women entrepreneurs.
- Roadmap for digital and AI adoption in rural enterprises.
- Framework for climate-smart and sustainable rural entrepreneurship.
- Enhanced collaboration between financial institutions, government, and NGOs.
- Recognition and promotion of best practices and success stories.
- Empowered rural women with improved access to finance, skills, technology, and markets.





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