



Microfinance India Conference 2007

October 9 - October 10
New Delhi

Microfinance India Conference 2007 held on October 9-10, 2007, was the fourth in a series of annual conferences organized to provide an international learning, sharing and visioning platform for the Indian Microfinance industry. The first such conference held in February 2004 attempted to articulate a five-year vision for the Indian Microfinance sector. The conference was able to generate awareness and highlight key challenges for a convergent action to facilitate growth of the sector. In 2005, marked as the '*International Year of Microcredit*' by United Nations, 'Microfinance India 2005' took stock of the Indian Microfinance sector. The conference themes – inclusion, impact and innovation were aimed at addressing the Millennium Development Goals of reducing poverty by half till 2015. The 2006, Microfinance India Conference focussed on two specific themes viz. – *expanding Microfinance in urban areas and ensuring impact*.

The 2007 **Microfinance** India Conference highlighted the unique success of the Indian Microfinance sector to successfully integrate the formal financial sector in providing financial services to the poor. The specific theme for this year's conference was Formal Financial Institutions and Microfinance – "The Challenges of Depth and Breadth". It focused on the past experiences of FFIs downscaling their operations for provisioning financial services to the poor, the operating environment in which these processes are rolled out, the policy regime and the enabling environment. The Conference also looked at future possibilities in terms of expanding and diversification of services and products by the formal financial sector. The conference was an attempt to prepare a roadmap for investments and efforts required towards universalizing financial services.

An added new feature of Microfinance India Conference this year was the 'Investment Fair', organised for the first time in India, where investors and MFIs met to discuss investment needs and opportunities for MFIs wishing to scale up. Investors also set up booths and MFIs visited them their pitchbooks to introduce their institutions, their projections and funding requirements and learn about financing opportunities from the various investors.