

### MICROCAPITAL BRIEFS | TOP STORIES

### IFMR Raises \$25m from Accion, LeapFrog, Lok

Please see page 2 for coverage of this "MicroCapital Deal of the Month."

### Starbucks, Fairtrade, Root to Lend \$30m to Coffee Farmers

US-based Starbucks Coffee Company recently announced that it will commit an additional USD 30 million to its Global Farmer Fund, one of the organization's "ethical sourcing initiatives." The fund distributes loans to coffee farmers in collaboration with Root Capital, a US-based nonprofit investment fund, and Fairtrade Access Fund, an affiliate of German NGO Fairtrade International. Liam Brody, a senior vice president at Root Capital, said "the farmers need to pay interest of 10 percent on loans through which about 1 to 3 percent are returned to the investors." Starbucks committed USD 20 million to the Global Farmer Fund upon its launch in 2008. September 9. 2015

### **Peru Enacts National Financial Inclusion Strategy**

The government of Peru recently enacted a National Financial Inclusion Strategy in consultation with the World Bank. The effort includes promoting electronic transaction tools, improving access to financial services, and enhancing financial education and consumer protection. Alberto Rodriguez, the World Bank's country director for Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela, stated that the goal of the strategy is that by 2021, 75 percent of adults will have access to bank accounts to help them "build assets, manage risk, reduce food insecurity and gain access to a range of other services." Peru is one of 20 countries with which the World Bank Group has been working on similar strategies. September 8. 2015

### **BOPA Buys 25% Stake in Elet-Capital of Kyrgyzstan**

For an undisclosed price, Base of Pyramid Asia (BOPA), a Singapore-based equity investor in small microfinance institutions in Asia, recently purchased a 25-percent stake in Elet-Capital, a microlender in Kyrgyzstan. BOPA CEO Christian Andersen said, "...we look forward to making economic and social impact together with our partner Elet-Capital." Founded in 2005, Elet-Capital reports assets of USD 5.4 million and a gross loan portfolio of USD 5.1 million. August 29. 2015

### IFC Syndicates \$65m for Cambodia's Prasac for Rural MSMEs

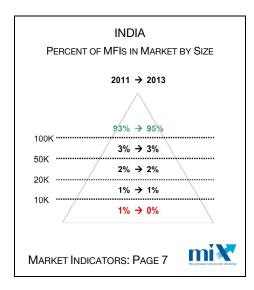
The World Bank Group's International Finance Corporation recently arranged a syndicated loan for Cambodia's Prasac Microfinance to boost funding access for micro-, small and medium-sized rural enterprises. The Netherlands' ING Bank invested USD 5 million, and the following institutions invested USD 20 million each: Thailand's Kiatnakin Bank, Thailand's Siam Commercial Bank and India's Tamilnad Mercantile Bank. Prasac reports assets of USD 700 million, a gross loan portfolio of USD 580 million outstanding to 251,000 borrowers and deposits of USD 305 million from 370,000 depositors. August 26. 2015

### **UN Releases "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development"**

The United Nations recently released the final version of "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," highlighting 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) intended to eradicate poverty by the year 2030. These goals evolved from the UN millennium development goals, which were established in 2000 with the aim of reducing extreme poverty by 2015. The first of the SDGs is to "end poverty in all its forms everywhere," and one "target" within this goal is to "ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to...financial services, including microfinance." August 22. 2015

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### **MICROCAPITAL BRIEFS**

### Vision Funds Loan \$7m to MFIs in Asia, Latin America, Nigeria

During August, C-Quadrat Asset Management issued loans totaling the equivalent of USD 7 million via its two Vision Microfinance funds to unspecified microfinance institutions (MFIs) in Cambodia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Nigeria and India. Of this total, an MFI based in Lagos borrowed USD 1 million. C-Quadrat Asset Management, which provides investment and advisory services in microfinance, founded the Dual Return Fund-Vision Microfinance and Dual Return Fund-Vision Microfinance Local Currency in 2006. The funds report combined assets of USD 267 million. C-Quadrat Asset Management is a unit of Austrian fund group C-Quadrat, which manages assets valued at USD 6.3 billion. September 10. 2015

### **India's MFIN Advises Members to Cut Interest Rates**

The Microfinance Institutions Network (MFIN), an association of 47 Indian microlenders, recently recommended its membership "reduce interest rates by at least 25 basis points" by the end of September. This advice is based on a mandate from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) that microfinance institutions (MFIs) lend at rates no higher than the cost of funds plus a 10-percent margin for MFIs with a credit portfolio over the equivalent of USD 15 million and cost of funds plus a margin of 12-percent for smaller MFIs. MFIN President Manoj Kumar Nambiar said, "as MFIs grow, they are getting more credit trustworthy and are being also upgraded by rating agencies. This apart, economies of scale ha[ve] helped reduce the cost of operations...". RBI has recognized MFIN as a self-regulatory organization since 2014. September 9. 2015

### IFMR Raises \$25m from Accion, LeapFrog, Lok

Institute for Financial Management and Research (IFMR) Holdings, an arm of Indian nonprofit IFMR Trust, recently raised USD 25 million from Accion, a US-based nonprofit organization; LeapFrog Investments, a for-profit private equity fund based in Mauritius; and Lok Capital, an India-based microfinance investment vehicle. The total amount comprises USD 12.5 million from Accion, USD 9 million from LeapFrog and USD 3.5 million from Lok. IFMR Trust, which reports total assets equivalent to USD 26 million, operates three entities that provide services such as finance for small businesses, affordable housing and commercial vehicles as well as insurance, pension and technology products for financially excluded areas. September 9. 2015

### EBRD May Loan \$70m to NBK-Egypt for SMEs

The UK-based European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) is considering extending a credit line of USD 70 million to the National Bank of Kuwait-Egypt (NBK-Egypt), a commercial bank based in Egypt, for on-lending to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in that country. If approved, the package would include a senior loan of USD 50 million and a trade finance line of USD 20 million for "guarantees and cash advances." EBRD will also provide capacity-building "technical cooperation" with the aim of assisting NBK-Egypt with training its employees on SME banking practices and boosting the financial skills of potential borrowers. NBK-Egypt reports the equivalent of USD 3.5 billion in total assets, a loan book of USD 1.3 billion and deposits of USD 2.9 billion. The bank is 95-percent owned by the National Bank of Kuwait. September 8. 2015

### **Belarus, IFC Partner on SME Business Environment**

The World Bank Group's International Finance Corporation recently announced that it will partner with the Ministry of the Economy of Belarus "to improve the business environment through measures that will support the growth of small [and] medium-sized enterprises." The effort will include harmonizing Belarusian regulations with international norms and establishing an e-registry to streamline import-export and other procedures. IFC will also recommend methods to "cut costs to help local producers join global supply chains." September 4. 2015

#### India's Janalakshmi Raises \$28m

Janalakshmi Financial Services, an Indian provider of microloans and microinsurance, recently raised the equivalent of USD 23.5 million from an unidentified mutual fund via senior, secured non-convertible debentures. The microfinance institution (MFI) also raised USD 4.2 million through an unsecured term loan from IFMR Capital, an affiliate of the Chennai-based nonprofit Institute for Financial Management and Research (IFMR). Janalakshmi CEO V S Radhakriahan said, "Most microfinance institutions are primarily funded by banks and private equity players, and it is therefore critical for MFIs to diversify their sources of funding." Janalakshmi reports total assets of USD 420 million, a gross loan portfolio of USD 342 million outstanding to 1.4 million borrowers, return on assets of 3.67 percent and return on equity of 20 percent. September 3. 2015

### FMO Syndicates \$15m for FINCA Kyrgyzstan for Rural MSMEs

Nederlandse Financierings-Maatschappij voor Ontwikkelingslanden (FMO), a Dutch public-private partnership that promotes growth in developing economies, has arranged a five-year syndicated loan denominated in local currency equivalent to USD 15 million for FINCA Bank Kyrgyzstan, a subsidiary of the US-based nonprofit microfinance network Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA) International. FMO will commit USD 10 million of the funds, while an unidentified financial institution will invest the remainder. FINCA Bank Kyrgyzstan CEO Margarita Cherikbaeva said, "This key transaction will expand the financing of small businesses, especially in the agricultural sector and across the rural regions of Kyrgyzstan." FINCA Bank Kyrgyzstan reports a loan book of USD 152 million and 128,000 clients. FINCA International has total assets of USD 1.1 billion and serves 1.7 million clients through subsidiaries in 22 countries. September 3. 2015

### India's MUDRA Loans \$15m to 6 MFIs

The Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency (MUDRA) Bank, a lender to financial institutions that is subsidized by the Indian government, recently announced that it disbursed loans totaling the equivalent of USD 9.3 million to be on-lent to micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the country. The beneficiaries include Arohan Financial Services, which reports total assets of USD 37 million: Belstar Investment and Finance Private Limited, which has assets of USD 35 million and is controlled by Indian NGO Hand by Hand; Equitas Microfinance Private Limited, with assets of USD 351 million; Margdarshak Financial Services Limited, with assets of USD 6.7 million; and Sonata Finance Private Limited, which has assets of USD 75 million. Although the sizes of the individual transactions are not available, each of the loans bears an annual interest rate of 7 percent. MUDRA also loaned USD 5.5 million to Satin Creditcare Network Limited, a for-profit microfinance institution that reports assets of USD 185 million. August 21 and September 1. 2015

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Microfinance Information Exchange for their outstanding work disseminating
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### **Philippines to Establish Regulator of Microfinance NGOs**

The Philippine Senate recently passed the Microfinance NGOs Act, mandating the establishment of a Microfinance Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Regulatory Council. The council will be responsible for managing the registration and licensing of microfinance NGOs; monitoring their performance; suspending their accreditation in cases of adverse judgment; collecting reports of their activities; charging reasonable fees for their accreditation and monitoring; and submitting annual reports to Congress and the President of the country. The bill also decrees that accredited microfinance NGOs "shall not be subjected to any government taxes and fees imposed under the Internal Revenue Laws and other tax laws," and donations to microfinance NGOs "shall be fully deductible from the gross income of the donor" and "exempt from donor's tax" subject to certain qualifications. September 1. 2015

### India's Ujjivan Raises \$8m from Mutual Funds

Ujjivan Financial Services Private Limited, a microlender in India, recently announced that it has raised the equivalent of USD 7.9 million from United Trust of India (UTI), a mutual fund company based in Mumbai, through the issuance of secured, non-convertible debentures (NCDs). The issuance was arranged by IFMR Capital, an affiliate of the Chennai-based nonprofit Institute for Financial Management and Research (IFMR) that facilitates funding for organizations that serve low-income individuals. IFMR Capital CEO Kshama Fernandes said, "UTI asset management company subscribing to the NCDs issued by Ujjivan is a significant breakthrough for the sector in terms of bringing back a valuable class of investor...". Ujjivan reports total assets of USD 614 million, a gross loan portfolio of USD 495 million, return on equity of 14 percent and 2.2 million active borrowers. August 29, 2015

### IFC Loans \$25m to Azerbaijan's AccessBank for MSMEs

The International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the US-based World Bank Group, recently announced that it will issue a subordinated loan of USD 25 million to AccessBank, a microfinance bank in Azerbaijan that is associated with Germany's Access Microfinance Holding AG (AccessHolding), to enable it to serve more micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises with the goal of increasing employment and innovation as well as developing the non-oil sectors of the economy. AccessBank reports total assets of USD 834 million, a gross loan portfolio of USD 664 million outstanding to 167,000 active borrowers and deposits of USD 279 million in 332,000 accounts. AccessHolding reports that its affiliates hold total assets equivalent to USD 1.6 billion, an aggregate gross loan portfolio of USD 1.3 billion disbursed to 566,000 active borrowers, USD 508 million in deposits held for 1.1 million depositors and return on assets of 3.8 percent. August 29. 2015

### Apis Raises \$157m for Financial Technology Startups

Apis Partners, a London-based private equity firm, recently raised USD 157 million in investments for the Apis Growth Fund, which it launched in 2014 to target technology firms working in payments, savings, investments, credit and insurance in Africa and South Asia. The investors include international banks Itesa Sanpaolo of Italy and Old Mutual of South Africa and government-backed development finance institutions CDC Group of the UK and Swedfund International AB of Sweden. The sizes of the individual investments have not been disclosed. "We strongly believe that the next wave of business-model innovation in financial services will come from growth markets," said Apis Co-Founder Matteo Stefanel. "As income in these markets continues to rise, so will demand for financial services, representing a unique opportunity for those entrepreneurs creating innovative and cost-effective solutions." August 29. 2015

### India's PSC Rolls Out Tablets, Microware Software

Qualcomm, a US-based technology company, recently announced a collaboration with the Indian arm of the US-based NGO Project Concern International (PCI); Planned Social Concern (PSC), a microlender launched by PCI India in 2005; and Microware Computing and Consulting, an Indian technology company. The organizations are providing 3G-connected tablet computers to PSC staff to help them manage 6,000 microborrowers via MicroLekha, an app developed by Microware. MicroLekha offers functions including document scanning and access to real-time customer information, such as loan balance and repayment history. PCI reports total assets of USD 13 million and annual revenue of USD 47 million. August 27, 2015

### Grameen Credit Agricole Lends \$170k to Togo's COOPEC SIFA

The Grameen Credit Agricole Microfinance Foundation, a Luxembourg-based provider of financial services to microfinance institutions (MFIs) and other social businesses, recently informed MicroCapital that it has disbursed the initial tranche of a local-currency loan equivalent to USD 170,000 to Coopérative d'Epargne et de Crédit des Soutien aux Initiatives de Femmes pour l'Autopromotion, a MFI in Togo that serves 21,000 borrowers, mostly poor women. The remainder of the loan is scheduled for disbursal by May 2017. August 25. 2015

### India's SIDBI Sets Up \$154m Fund to Support MSMEs

The government-backed Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) recently announced that it has set up a fund worth USD 154 million to provide concessional financing to micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the manufacturing sector. SIDBI also reportedly has signed an agreement with the Word Bank Group to create a "Partial Risk Sharing Facility for Energy Efficiency Projects" to reduce energy usage by MSMEs. This contract consists of a guarantee fund of USD 37 million and technical assistance totaling USD 6 million. August 18, 2015

### **HDFC Bank Introduces Biometric Micro-ATMs in Rural India**

India's private-sector Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC) Bank reportedly has introduced micro automated teller machines (ATMs) in rural India to improve access to banking services in underserved areas of the country. The handheld machines enable services similar to those of traditional ATMs, with security maintained via both fingerprint verification and the use of national identifiers known as Aadhaar numbers. HDFC Bank began piloting its micro ATM program in October 2014 and, according to the bank, customers have since used the ATMs to complete transactions worth the equivalent of USD 154,000 since then. The bank is in the process of doubling its number of the devices to 3,000 by October 2015. HDFC Bank reports USD 83 billion in total assets and 3,400 branches. August 15, 2015



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NETWORKING WITH THE SOUTH

### SPECIAL REPORT

This interview is part of a sponsored series relating to European Microfinance Week, which is held each November by the European Microfinance Platform (e-MFP), a 120-member network in Luxembourg. MicroCapital will report live from the event.

### **Edvardas Bumsteinas on "Microfinance in Crisis"**

MicroCapital: Please tell us a bit about how you to came to work in microfinance.

Edvardas Bumsteinas: My interest in microfinance began with a summer job some 20 years ago when I was a student at the London School of Economics. At the request of Lithuania's Open Society Institute, I spent one of my summers helping to set up external financing facilities for the Lithuanian Credit Union's network. During my meetings with staff members and clients, I was impressed with positive results that those member-owned financial institutions were having in their communities.

MC: In reading about the European Investment Bank (EIB)-funded Microfinance in Crisis project, I was struck by the language "The main thing is to make the system user-centric, not provider-centric, and to consider microfinance (and more broadly finance) as a common good."

EB: The main outcome of the study will be a "delinquency crisis prevention dashboard," which can be used to identify the factors that are likely to lead to a microcredit repayment crisis. The concept of "common good" should be seen in a broader context of building inclusive and sustainable financial systems. In the past, the main emphasis was placed on the (financial) sustainability of microfinance institutions. On the other hand, the actual needs and constraints of the final beneficiaries remained poorly understood and largely overlooked by the microfinance community. The end result was a backlash against microfinance providers in countries such as India and Nicaragua. Since then, much more attention is being paid to financial inclusion as an ecosystem in which customers occupy a central place.

MC: Why should our readers be sure to attend the 2015 European Microfinance Week this November?

EB: This year's European Microfinance Week coincides with Luxembourg holding the EU Presidency. Since financial inclusion is one of the topics traditionally promoted by the government of Luxembourg, I would expect that the 2015 European Microfinance Week will be one of the largest and busiest ever (last year it welcomed 400 participants!). In addition, EIB will host the Sixth European Microfinance Award ceremony, which will recognize the work of microfinance institutions operating in post-disaster, post-conflict areas and fragile states. We anticipate the presence of HRH Grand Duchess of Luxembourg along with other prominent public personalities. I also am looking forward to welcoming the readers of MicroCapital in Luxembourg this November! For more information, please see the following website: http://www.e-mfp.eu/european-microfinance-week-2015/information.

Edvardas Bumsteinas serves as the head of the microfinance unit of the European Investment Bank. While the dashboard should become operational by December, the research programme already has produced a number of research and policy briefs that can be found at: http://www.microfinance-in-crisis.org/resources/.

## **EUROPEAN MICROFINANCE WEEK 2015**

FINANCIAL INCLUSION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

18th - 20th November 2015 Abbaye de Neumünster, Luxembourg

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to meet excellent new contacts"

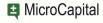
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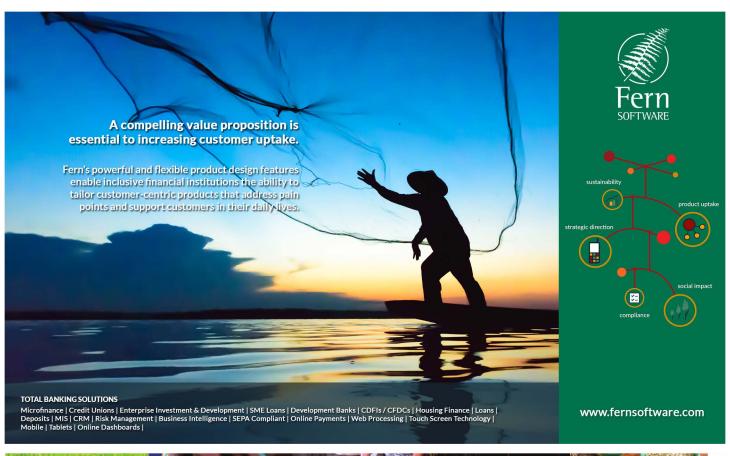


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Vision Microfinance is an appeal to combat poverty in a meaningful and sustainable way. So far 605 m USD have been distributed in the form of 563 promissory notes to 223 microfinance institutions in 40 countries. Thanks to our investors, the lives of over 1 m people in developing countries have been transformed.

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### **EAR TO THE GROUND**

#### **Ecce Homo: An Existential Crisis in Microfinance**

In the May issue of this newspaper, I talked in jest about my new "microfinance therapy" practice. I still feel like I should invest in a good couch. I have met with a number of CEOs and managers of microfinance institutions (MFIs) over the past few months and am finding that microfinance, particularly in mature markets, is going through an existential crisis. There are both immediate concerns and larger questions to be resolved, particularly in the face of a strong push from non-financial service providers to tap into some of the business lines traditionally dominated by MFIs. Digital payments, online lending and consumer product-linked financing are growing, making many of us wonder whether the bulky cost structure of an MFI and its one-on-one visits with customers should continue to exist. I argue MFIs should continue to exist if they add value beyond providing additional access to loans to people who already have alternatives. So this existential crisis is probably a good thing, because business as usual is not how they will survive. One CEO said to me over breakfast this week, "Microfinance is no longer in vogue, but that's a good thing." He meant that this allows MFIs more freedom to define what they are - considering their strengths, weaknesses and resources - rather than being bombarded with external constructs of what microfinance "should" be.

One of the fathers of existentialism, Friedrich Nietzsche, believed that in the absence of God, people must look within to find meaning and identity. The microfinance sector has reached this point in many countries. MFIs can no longer rely on an external guide - there is no microfinance "God" - but must look inward to find their purpose. This

will lead to differentiation: Some will focus on lending to farmers, others on empowering women, still others on addressing climate change. Some may have a lean list of financial products but more value-added services, while some may try to offer a broad range of products. Others may be laser-focused on doing only one thing cheaply. Given the current state of financial exclusion, informal employment and income inequality in so many countries, there is probably room for a mix of models, depending on the market context, client needs and institutional strengths. But the first step is recognizing this essence internally and defining who and why your institution exists.

This morning, I chatted over breakfast with a couple of senior managers of a major financial institution in Latin America. They agreed that differentiation is a key direction in the industry. Yet we talked about the need to bring into management a variety of perspectives and ideas in order to avoid today's homogeneity in leadership. Having similar management profiles may be keeping MFIs from the innovation and internal thinking they need to offer a unique value proposition to their clients. I have no doubt that the institutions that challenge themselves in these ways can become stronger and offer greater value to the end customer than we ever imagined.

About the Author: Ms Barbara Magnoni is President of EA Consultants, a development-consulting firm based in New York. She has over 20 years of international finance and development experience and has worked with organizations including Goldman Sachs, Chase and BBVA and has advised institutions such as the International Finance Corporation, the US Agency for International Development and the International Labour Organization. She may be reached at +1 212 734 6461 or bmagnoni[at]eac-global.com, or you may follow her on Twitter at BarbaraatEA.



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## MICROCAPITAL MARKET INDICATORS INDIA

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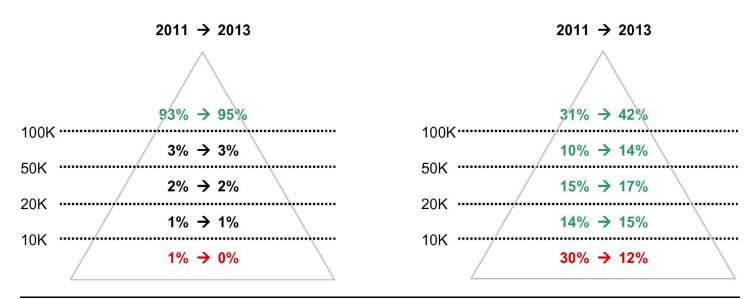
79 MICROFINANCE INSTITUTIONS (MFIs) REPORTING<sup>1</sup>

### TOP MFIs BY GROWTH IN GROSS LOAN PORTFOLIO: CHANGE IN USD

MFI NAME	AVERAGE ANNUAL USD INCREASE	AVERAGE ANNUAL % INCREASE	2011	2013
Bandhan Financial Services	141,764,524	18	733,282,475	1,016,811,522
Janalakshmi Financial Sevices	136,432,641	123	68,949,007	341,814,290
Shri Kshethra Dharmasthala Rural Development Project	107,576,830	30	317,695,973	532,849,633
SKS Microfinance	95,107,911	26	328,072,345	518,288,167
Ujjivan Financial Services	65,498,214	40	138,278,951	269,275,380
Satin Creditcare Network	56,449,850	67	62,933,708	175,833,409
Equitas Micro Finance India	53,967,577	33	142,315,133	250,250,287
Muthoot Fincorp	50,493,756	97	35,169,187	136,156,699
Grameen Koota Financial Services	30,751,097	35	74,948,387	136,450,581
ESAF Microfinance and Investments	22,637,367	35	55,306,228	100,580,962

## PERCENT OF MFIs IN MARKET BY SIZE (NUMBER OF ACTIVE BORROWERS)

# MARKET SHARE BY MFI SIZE (NUMBER OF ACTIVE BORROWERS)



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Denotes only MFIs that reported data for 2011 and 2013 to the Microfinance Information Exchange (MIX) Market

Source: MIX, September 2015

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### adults lack access to ion formal financial services.



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### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **Pacific Microfinance Week 2015**

September 21 - September 25, 2015; Honiara, Solomon Islands This series of workshops, field visits and formal conference sessions will address digital finance and delivery channels, women's empowerment, enhancing the potential of non-bank financial institutions, policy and regulation, innovations in products and services, measuring financial inclusion, how corporate governance structures can improve organizational performance, and financial inclusion in the Solomon Islands. The cost to attend is USD 300, with discounts available for representatives of NGOs and groups of four or more. For additional information, you may email info[at]microfinance-pasifika.org, visit http://microfinance-pasifika.org/pmw2015.html or call +61 7 3217 2924.

### **SEEP Network Annual Conference**

September 28 - October 1, 2015; Arlington, Virginia, USA Themed "Inclusion and Resilience: The Next Challenge," the last two days of this event will revolve around four topic areas: (1) financial services and technology; (2) women's economic empowerment; (3) small-scale producers in agricultural and livestock systems; and (4) public-private partnership models. The conference will also include a "Global Network Summit" on September 28, which is a gathering of regional and national microfinance associations. A "Member Day" on September 29 will provide an opportunity for Small Enterprise Education and Promotion (SEEP) Network members to discuss member initiatives in working groups. Attendance at the Member Day is free for both SEEP members and others, while the fee to attend the remaining three days is USD 1,300. Discounts are offered for SEEP members and those registering for only certain days. For additional details you may email annualconference[at]seepnetwork.org, visit http://www.seepnetwork.org/annual-conference-pages-20008.php or call +1 202 534 1400.

### **WSBI Eastern Europe Central Asia Meeting 2015**

September 30 - October 1, 2015; Minsk, Belarus

The purpose of the event is to work to develop an "enabling financing environment" to promote economic growth and prosperity in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The fee to attend is EUR 250, but there is no charge for members of the World Savings and Retail Banking Institute. For inquiries, you may contact Mina Zhang at +32 211 11 34 or mina.zhang[at]wsbi-esbg.org; or Tania Lemos at +32 211 11 38 or tania.lemos[at]wsbi-esbg.org. The event website is available at http://www.wsbi-esbg.org/Events/EECA/Pages/default.aspx.

### **Central Asian and Caucasus Microfinance Forum**

October 1 - October 2, 2015; Tbilisi, Georgia

This conference will address topics such as: (1) the influence of economic and political structures on financial sector development; (2) strategies and trends in financial services; and (3) increasing financial access for microentrepreneurs. The fee to attend is EUR 990. For more information, you may visit http://uni-global.eu/en/event/2015-188, call +420 226 538 100 or e-mail registration[at]uni-global.eu.

### **Global Youth Economic Opportunities Summit**

October 6 - October 8, 2015; Washington, DC, USA Themed "Scale in Practice," this summit is intended to boost the "impact, scale, and sustainability of youth economic opportunity programming." The fee to attend is USD 825. For additional information, you may contact the organizers by phone at +1 202 783 4090 or by email at summit[at]makingcents.com.

#### MORE DETAILS COMING SOON ON...

### **Opportunity Collaboration**

October 11 - October 16, 2015; Ixtapa, Mexico

Opportunity Collaboration seeks to engage attendees to explore methods of collaboration, identify opportunities for leveraging resources across organizations and generate mechanisms for reducing poverty. The fee for the event is USD 4,950, which includes registration, lodging and meals. No phone number is offered, but you may seek additional information via http://opportunitycollaboration.net/ or by emailing Tracie Hudgins at thudgins [at] opportunitycollaboration.net.

### **Increasing Financial Inclusion of Smallholder Farmers**

October 15 - October 16, 2015; Milan, Italy

### **Sanabel 2015 Conference**

October 20 - October 21, 2015; Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt

### Foromic (Foro Interamericano de la Microempresa)

October 26 - October 28, 2015; Santiago, Chile

### **Asia-Pacific Financial Inclusion Summit 2015**

October 27 - October 29, 2015; Manila, the Philippines

### 11th International Microinsurance Conference

November 3 - November 5, 2015; Casablanca, Morocco

### SRI Conference on Sustainable, Responsible, Impact Investing

November 3 - November 5, 2015, Colorado Springs, USA

### **18th Annual MFC Conference**

November 5 - November 6, 2015; Prague, Czech Republic

### **The Power of Savings Groups**

November 10 - November 12, 2015; Lusaka, Zambia

### **Making Finance Work for Women Summit**

November 11 - November 12, 2015; Berlin, Germany

### **Africa SME Champions Forum**

November 17 - November 18, 2015; Nairobi, Kenya

### **TBLI Conference Europe 2015**

November 19 - November 20, 2015; Zurich, Switzerland

### **European Microfinance Week**

November 18 - November 20, 2015; Luxembourg

### **Global Islamic Microfinance Forum**

November 24 - November 25, 2015; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

### Cracking the Nut: Regenerating Rural & Agricultural Development

March 1 - March 2, 2016; Washington, DC, USA

### **Latin American MicroInsurance Summit 2016**

March 29 - March 30, 2016; Miami, Florida, USA 9

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### **PAPER WRAP-UPS**

### Mobile Financial Services in Latin America & the Caribbean: State of Play, Commercial Models and Regulatory Approaches

Published by the Global System for Mobile Association, May 2015, 29 pages, available at: http://gsma.com/ mobilefordevelopment/mobile-financial-services-in-lac

The authors of this report analyze the commercial models and regulatory framework that are shaping the mobile money industry, which allows people to use cellular devices to make and receive payments without traveling to a traditional bank branch. They cite 37 mobile money providers in 19 Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries and categorize these countries into lower- and higher-income markets.

Approximately one third of the adult population in lower-income markets has access to formal financial services, while 58 percent of the population has access to a mobile phone. The authors conclude that this type of market is best suited to an East African-style business model with a "simple value chain." Most account balances in these countries, particularly in rural areas, will be too small for a formal banking branch to manage profitably. The digital ecosystem necessary for the growth

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of mobile money services is inadequate, thus partnerships between mobile money operators and financial institutions may be helpful in mitigating the costs of operation.

Higher-income countries have relatively higher market penetration of both formal banking and mobile banking. This allows for more partnerships among mobile operators, banks and retailers. Also, mobile money providers are more integrated with the formal banking infrastructure, which makes them more scalable.

While the authors concede that there is "no one-size-fits-all commercial model for mobile money," they stress the importance of the adoption of global best practices and increased regulation in the industry to ensure that mobile money schemes have integrity and stability.

## Alternative Delivery Channels and Technology

Published by the International Finance Corporation (IFC), The MasterCard Foundation and the Software Group; 2015; 104 pages; available at http://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/5d99c500477262e89844fd299ede9589/ADC+Handbook++2014.pdf?MOD=AJPERES

This handbook offers guidance intended to help financial institutions expand inclusion through alternative delivery channels, such as automated teller machines, internet banking, mobile banking and mobile wallets.

The authors cite lessons learned from previous projects, including to "use existing networks / platforms to test out new channels" and "prioritize flexibility and scalability."



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