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**Electronica Raises $10m for Cleaner Manufacturing in India**

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**MFIs in Nicaragua Lose $30m During Year of Political Turmoil**

La Cámara de Microfinanzas, a network of 27 microfinance institutions in Nicaragua also known as ASOMIF, recently reported that its members lost USD 30 million during 2018. Among the reasons cited for the decline are the country’s political unrest that began in April 2018 and related government plans to increase taxes. The losses follow a profit of USD 13 million reported for 2017. Also during 2018, total investment in ASOMIF members fell by USD 100 million, contributing to 118,000 fewer clients being served, a yearly drop of 21 percent. April 26. 2019

**Angaza, Mastercard Collaborate on Pay-as-you-go Appliances**

Angaza, a provider of “pay-as-you-go” metering technology that has offices in Kenya and the US, recently partnered with US-based payments firm Mastercard to create a digital payment service for people to purchase equipment over time. The companies have pilot-tested their collaboration in Nigeria, confirming that it can provide “new levels of payment flexibility and affordability” for products such as solar power systems, water pumps and low-pollution cookstoves. Angaza and Mastercard now plan to expand the project elsewhere in Africa as well as in Latin America. Angaza previously has worked with 100 distributors to enable 1 million purchases in 30 countries. The service allows people to buy these products with a down payment plus micropayments over time. These micropayments can be due on a schedule or pay-as-you-go. In the latter case, the device can be enabled remotely by the seller for a certain span of usage each time the user makes a payment. April 9. 2019

**Parting Ways with Omidyar, Fintech Investor Flourish Nets Fresh $300m**

The Omidyar Network, a US-based actor in education, governance, property rights and other areas, recently spun off its financial inclusion program to create Flourish Ventures, an “evergreen venture fund backing FinTech [financial technology] entrepreneurs who are focused on financial health and prosperity.” Flourish, which maintains offices in the UK and the US, has USD 200 million invested in 50 firms. These include providers of digital banking services, non-traditional insurance coverage and “asset optimization tools.” As part of the spinoff, Pam and Pierre Omidyar, who founded the Omidyar Network and the US-based shopping website eBay, have agreed to commit an additional USD 300 million to Flourish over the course of five years. In addition to its investments, Flourish will continue to sponsor “thought leaders” and “ecosystem builders,” such as the Alliance for Financial Inclusion, a Malaysia-based network of financial regulators from 90 developing countries. Omidyar Network has commitments of USD 780 million through its NGO arm and USD 700 million through its for-profit arm. April 1. 2019

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SPECIAL REPORT

This vignette is part of a sponsored series demonstrating the value of SAM (the French acronym for African Microfinance Week), a major conference dedicated to financial inclusion in Africa. The next SAM will take place in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, during October 21-25, 2019! The first three SAMs were in Tanzania in 2013, Senegal in 2015 and Ethiopia in 2017.

The goal of SAM is to provide a unified platform for addressing issues facing microfinance in Africa by bringing together investors, microfinance institutions (MFIs), researchers, banks, networks, innovators, governments and other stakeholders.

The 2017 SAM hosted 700 participants from 58 (mostly African) countries, including representatives of 200 MFIs; 25 exhibitors at the Innovation Fair; and 26 investors who made 170 MFI contacts at the Investor’s Fair. The proceedings also included conference sessions presented by 60 speakers plus 20 training programs.

18 Months After SAM, Better (Digital) Services for 200k Kenyans

Caroline Karanja, the CEO of Kenya’s Association for Micro-finance Institutions (AMFI), said that, “The SAM conference in Addis gave us a platform to meet with new partners with whom we have created a steady working relationship since.” AMFI’s membership of 51 includes microbanks, credit institutions and other actors in the country’s microfinance sector. One of the organizations that Ms Karanja learned about at SAM was Musoni Services, which offers a software-as-a-service package called the Musoni System. This system is licensed to 90 MFIs in 16 countries in Africa and Asia. Together, these MFIs serve 756,000 people. (Musoni Investments, which is based in the Netherlands, holds stakes in Musoni Services as well as Musoni Microfinance, an MFI in Kenya.)

Cameron Goldie-Scot, the CEO of Musoni Services, said, “We found the conference both interesting and beneficial, in part because of the relationship we were able to start with AMFI…. After meeting during SAM 2017, Musoni Services has worked closely with AMFI…. Our focus has been on helping financial institutions in Kenya to leverage technology like the Musoni core banking system and Musoni mobile app to improve efficiency and their customers’ experiences.”

Mr Goldie-Scot added, “AMFI has been key in helping Musoni better understand the questions about technology coming from the Kenyan microfinance sector. In turn, we've been proud to sponsor a number of AMFI events, including workshops focussed specifically on emerging technology trends, and as a result have been able to showcase Musoni to many organisations in the country. Musoni now works with 10 MFIs in Kenya serving over 200,000 end customers. We look forward to building on this relationship over the course of 2019 and beyond!”

“The SAM conference in Addis gave us a platform to meet with new partners with whom we have created a steady working relationship since.”

- Caroline Karanja, CEO, AMFI

ADA, an NGO based in Luxembourg, co-organizes SAM every two years with the support of Luxembourg’s Ministry for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs. The SAM steering committee members are: ADA, Luxembourg’s Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, the Microfinance African Institutions Network, the African Rural and Agricultural Credit Association, and the Fédération des Association Professionnelle des Systèmes Financiers Décentralisés de l’Union Économique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine. We invite you to learn more about SAM at http://www.sam.africa.
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EAR TO THE GROUND

Finding Value in Teaching Immigrants About Personal Finance

Over the past few weeks, my team has been working on an evaluation strategy with a nonprofit organization in New York, Qualitas of Life, which offers financial education and training for Spanish-speaking immigrants. I realize that more than one thing I just said in that sentence is probably enough to stop most donors and stakeholders in the financial health space from reading further. They would claim NGOs aren’t scalable; financial education “doesn’t work;” and finally, supporting migrants is politically unpopular. Despite this, I don’t think we should give up on this topic for this population.

Why? First, this population is unique. My firm’s experience working with migrants suggests that they are more motivated to adopt new financial behaviors than other groups. After all, many of these individuals underwent significant sacrifices to come to the US, often with an economic goal in mind (think: borrowing over USD 7,000 to cross rivers and deserts, placing themselves and their families in harm’s way). These characteristics may help this population overcome some of the behavioral limitations of “Turning Ideas into Action,” as Barbara Kiviat and Jonathan Morduch discuss in their 2012 work From Financial Literacy to Financial Action.

Similarly, immigrants are often thinking about long-term goals. Many tell us they want to save to buy a house or start a business in their home country. Others who plan to stay in the US are working to get their children into college and good jobs.

Another case for financial education is that this population is unfamiliar with the financial products, rules and tax requirements they are encountering in the US. They face a knowledge gap that is greater than that of many other Americans. Immigrants learning how to play by our “rules” will yield benefits for all of us.

While there is an opportunity to help immigrants increase their financial health through financial workshops, we need to keep some limitations in mind. Sixty percent of respondents to a 2017 post-workshop survey reported that they earned less than USD 12,000 per year. That is quite low, even if more than one member of the household earns an income, considering that the median income in our city is USD 57,782. This is likely a real constraint, as it is hard to convince people to save money, especially in banks, where fees might represent a large chunk of monthly savings. But apart from savings, there are other potential upsides. For example, participants in the same survey reported that the classes helped reduce their anxiety about money and gave them hope. Many ended up with clear financial goals and better organized finances.

Even if it isn’t easy to make money from helping people reduce stress or improve their sense of control over the future, these seem like important things to do. For example, a recent study from Universidad de Los Andes (Rodriguez) finds that government-to-person cash transfers reduce domestic violence in Colombia - which affects one in three women - by 6 percent. Rodriguez suggests that lower financial stress may be a cause of this reduction in violence, which would bode well for interventions aimed at reducing financial stress in migrant communities. This alone may be a worthwhile impact, but I suspect we can uncover more by continuing to study this case.

About the Author: Ms Barbara Magnoni is President of EA Consultants, a development-consulting firm based in New York. She has 25 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 BarbaraEA.
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**Sizing the Impact Investing Market**


The authors assembled data, including the results of the Global Impact Investing Network’s (GIIN’s) Annual Impact Investor Survey, to estimate the size of the worldwide impact investing market. GIIN defines “impact investments” as those that return a monetary profit while creating “positive, measurable social and environmental impact.” As of December 2018, the authors estimate that the assets under management (AUM) in the impact investing…*

**Mobile-enabled Economic Identities for Smallholder Farmers in Ghana**


The authors report that 20 percent of the 1.7 billion adults worldwide who do not use banking services cannot open a financial account because they lack documents to prove their identity (ID). Among the standard forms of ID in Ghana is the “Ghana Card,” which…*

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