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Asia Microfinance Forum 2008 Call for Papers

**Hanoi, Vietnam
August 26 - 29, 2008**

The world's microfinance industry is in the midst of unprecedented expansion and transformation. These changes are resulting in an increasing array of competing imperatives and the growing need for long-term strategic planning. Accordingly, the Asia Microfinance Forum 2008 will focus on the challenges and innovations that will have the greatest impact on microfinance in the coming decades and provide a window to the future of microfinance, especially in Asia.

The Banking With the Poor Network (BWTP) and the Foundation for Development Cooperation (FDC), with funding from the Citi Foundation, are pleased to convene the Asia Microfinance Forum 2008 in Hanoi, Vietnam, August 26 -29, 2008. This milestone event will bring together over 200 leading microfinance practitioners, policymakers, financiers, academics and advocates from around the world to outline their visions and priorities, and explore new ideas and opportunities.

The theme for the Asia Microfinance Forum 2008 will be: Microfinance in the 21st Century: Future Trends & Opportunities. Papers are invited for consideration to be presented at the Asia Microfinance Forum 2008, addressing any of the following five themes, to be received no later than the 15th March 2008:

- Theme 1: Financing and Investment
- Theme 2: Savings and Asset Building
- Theme 3: Industry Networks
- Theme 4: Technology
- Theme 5: Microfinance and Sustainable Development

Further information regarding themes and submission details are [available here](#).

Over the coming month's updated information regarding the event will be published in our newsletter and on our website. If you would like to be kept informed about this event, please subscribe to our electronic mailing list.

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The BWTP Network is an initiative of [The Foundation for Development Cooperation](#)

The [Citi Foundation](#) is a supporter of the BWTP Network.



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BWTP NETWORK NEWS

Capacity Building for Partnerships in Microfinance Workshop

- ❖ The first Linkages and Partnerships in Microfinance Symposium and Workshop to use the completed Capacity Building for Partnerships in Microfinance Trainer's Manual was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh from the 26th – 29th February. The BWTP/Citi Foundation event was held in partnership with local partner and BWTP associate member, the Credit and Development Forum.

The symposium consisted of a series of prominent microfinance practitioners and representatives of several commercial banks, and was attended by almost 100 industry participants and speakers. The symposium touched on several key aspects of partnerships and resulted in a healthy debate over the role of government and commercial funding for the microfinance sector.



The 2.5 day workshop was attended by 54 participants and highlighted how the Trainer's Manual can be a valuable tool in facilitating and encouraging discussion and debate on issues central to domestic microfinance industries.

A thorough wrap-up of the workshop will be included in the next newsletter.

BWTP Executive Committee Meeting

- ❖ On the 28th February a BWTP Network Executive Committee meeting was held at the offices of the Citi Foundation in Singapore.

Several key issues addressing the Network were addressed in the meeting that was attended by Chairman Chandula Abeywickrama (Hatton National Bank), Samadani Kiriwandeniya (Sanasa Development Bank), Nani Zulminani (PPSW), Ruben de Lara (TSPI Development Corporation), Craig Wilson (FDC) and Jamie Bedson (FDC).



An overview of the meeting will be provided in the next newsletter.

BWTP Technical Exchange

- ❖ The BWTP Network, through the technical exchange program, aims to assist the 'younger' members in the network, and also to build capacity in countries or areas where microfinance practice and industry is less developed. If your organisation is interested in becoming involved in the technical exchange, contact us by email at info@bwtp.org. Further details about the program are available from http://www.bwtp.org/Programs/Disseminating_Best_Practices.html.

BWTP Member News

- ❖ **Vietnam Bank for Social Policies (VBSP): 2007 Overview**
2007 was a memorable year for VBSP with remarkable achievements in providing loans to extremely disadvantaged ethnic minority households, production households in difficulty areas and disadvantaged students. [More...](#)

❖ **SANASA Development Bank Ranks Amongst the World's Top Microfinance Institutions by Forbes Magazine USA**



Forbes' first-ever list of the World's Top 50 Microfinance Institutions were chosen from a field of 641 micro-credit providers. The list was prepared by the Microfinance Information Exchange under the direction of Forbes magazine. To qualify, the institutions must have made available their audited financials and must have passed review by a Forbes panel of advisers. Amongst the 641 Microfinance providers, SANASA Development Bank was ranked 50th and is the only Microfinance provider in Sri Lanka ranked within the top 50 MFI's. [More...](#)



Microfinance News

❖ **Innovative Program Launched in India to Finance Clean Micro Energy Technologies**
Green Microfinance (GMf™), and MicroEnergy International (ME) recently announced the launch of Energizing India™. The microfinance institution, Evangelical Social Action Forum (ESAF), has contracted with Energizing India™ in its endeavour to provide micro energy products for its 232,310 clients (micro-businesses and families) in four provinces in south India. Energizing India™ will provide clean energy products to ESAF's clients and will establish working relationships among ESAF and various renewable energy providers. [More...](#)

❖ **"Financing Village-Level Energy for Development in the Asia-Pacific" Workshop**
The Foundation for Development Cooperation (FDC) intends to host a small, high-level workshop in Manila on 10 and 11 April 2008 entitled "Financing Village-Level Energy for Development in the Asia-Pacific". The agenda will focus on the methodologies and options available for financing sustainable energy supply initiatives linked with microfinance and/or SME finance in the Asia-Pacific region.

Registration for the event is now open. To register [click here](#).
Further regarding the event is [available here](#).

❖ **Srijan Microfinance Business Plan Competition 2008**
Launched in 2005, with a mandate to encourage the most innovative business opportunities in the microfinance sector, the Srijan Microfinance Business Plan Competition has been providing entrepreneurs with a platform to present superior ideas and business models that can revolutionise the sector, and promote complete financial inclusion. Srijan in a search for individuals, groups, companies and microfinance institutions with innovative microfinance ideas with viable business model that aim at expanding geographic coverage, address resource and infrastructure challenges, present new models of microfinance delivery, or otherwise improve the sector and promote financial inclusion of the poor. The competition boasts of a cash prize component and an opportunity to turn the best business plans into actual enterprises. [More...](#)

Microfinance Publications

❖ **Using Microfinance to Expand Access to Energy Service**
The SEEP Network and Sustainable Energy Solutions has published a study on using microfinance to expand access to energy services in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The findings are documented in three regional reports on Asia, Africa, and Latin America and one Summary paper that brings together the main findings from the full project. This study is an important and groundbreaking document on a new and innovative aspect of microfinance and highlights new opportunities for partnerships in the future. In the Asia region, the study focuses on energy lending initiatives in India, Sri Lanka and Cambodia.

These studies are available on the SEEP Network website (www.seepnetwork.org).

❖ **Performance Trends Report for Cambodia**

This report provides an opportunity to view the development of the sector in Cambodia over a period of four years, using standardised, adjusted indicators. This report was developed to shed light on the nature of change and growth in the Cambodian microfinance market, as well as in individual institutions in the country. The report highlights potential strengths and weaknesses of the sector, for the ongoing use of MFI managers and practitioners. [More...](#)

❖ **Online Publication of 'Capacity Building for Partnerships in Microfinance - Trainer's Manual'**

The Banking With the Poor Network and The Foundation for Development Cooperation is proud to announce the online publication of the Capacity Building for Partnerships in Microfinance -Trainer's Manual.

The Foundation for Development Cooperation, in partnership with the Banking with the Poor Network (BWTP) and with funding support from the Citi Foundation, has developed these materials as part of a larger multi-year programme, which aims to promote partnerships in the microfinance industry in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. The programme is a natural extension of the objectives, activities and needs of the BWTP Network which centre on promoting partnerships and the exchange of ideas and know-how among its diverse group of members.

The Capacity Building for Partnerships in Microfinance – Trainers Manual is subject to a simple registration process, upon which a username and log in details will be forward to interested organisations. The Trainer's Manual is available to registered users and all BWTP Network members free of charge.

To register and access the trainer's manual, click the link below:

[Capacity Building for Microfinance Partnerships - Trainer's Manual](#)

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