



Japan Microfinance Symposium 2007 Program

Poverty Alleviation and the Role of Private and Public Sectors in
Microfinance

(Each presentation is available at the link below)

To download all the files, please click the link here

<http://www.planetfinance.or.jp/files/symposium/presen/en/all.zip>

Morning session

9:00– **Welcome**

Douglas Brooks, Acting Director, Research, Asian Development Bank Institute

9:05– **Opening Remarks**

Wakako Hironaka, Member of the House of Councillors, Japanese Diet

9:15– **Keynote Speech: Modern Microfinance – Achievements and Challenges**

The Asian Development Bank has long played a leading role in supporting the microfinance sector in its member countries. The current president of the Bank expresses his views on microfinance, its achievements in fighting poverty and the challenges it faces.

Speaker

Haruhiko Kuroda, President, Asian Development Bank

9:30– **Corporate, Government and NGO Cooperation: The Shape of Microfinance**

What makes microfinance successful is not only the effectiveness of the services that are provided, but the way they are provided. Microfinance is unique among poverty alleviation methods because it brings together governments, corporations and NGOs, each adding value in a cooperative approach. As a microfinance platform, PlaNet Finance has worked with governments, companies and NGOs on its projects.

Speaker

Jacques Attali, President, PlaNet Finance

10:00– **The Microfinance Industry: Continuities and Changes**

Microfinance practices have developed and diversified considerably since the Grameen Bank was established in 1983. The needs of the client base are better understood, and private sector actors, more than governments, are playing a larger role. In this session, representatives of various different types of suppliers of microfinance services discuss the continuities and changes they have experience in microfinance from their unique organizational perspective.

Speakers

Overview: Nimal Fernando, Principal Finance Specialist (Microfinance), ADB

✚ Presentation available at:

<http://www.planetfinance.or.jp/files/symposium/presen/en/01Nimal.pdf>

Microfinance by an MFI: Jeff Ferry, Operations Manager, MicroCred Holdings

✚ Presentation available at:

<http://www.planetfinance.or.jp/files/symposium/presen/en/02JeffFerry.pdf>

Microfinance by bank: Barry Maddams, Deputy CEO, Khan Bank, Mongolia

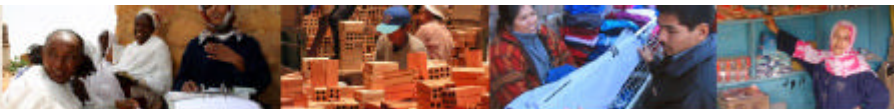
✚ Presentation available at:

<http://www.planetfinance.or.jp/files/symposium/presen/en/03BarryMaddams.pdf>

Microfinance by a credit cooperative: Ranjith Hettiarachchi, Chief Executive Officer, Association of Asian Confederation of Credit Unions

✚ Presentation available at:

<http://www.planetfinance.or.jp/files/symposium/presen/en/04Ranjith.pdf>



The Role of Finance in Poverty Reduction: The Japanese Experience: Professor Yoichi Izumida, Tokyo University

✚ Presentation available at:

<http://www.planetfinance.or.jp/files/symposium/presen/en/05Izumida.pdf>

Moderator: Sununtar Setboonsarng, Senior Research Fellow, ADB Institute

Afternoon session

1:30– **Commercial Microfinance: Achieving Sustainability and the “Double Bottom Line”**

Microfinance alleviates poverty in two ways: in the short term, it enables beneficiaries to earn income from an economic activity. In the long term, it is a very important tool for developing entrepreneurship at the grass roots level. The former frees the poor economically. The latter can often free them socially as well. In one of the newest approaches to microfinance, private non-financial companies are supporting this entrepreneurship by harnessing it in order to reach the market at the “bottom of the pyramid.” The private sector has increased its involvement because microfinance offers “double bottom line” returns in which the financial goal of a reasonable profit and the social goal of empowering the poor are achieved simultaneously. In return, the involvement of the private sector reinforces the self-sustainability of microfinance activities.

Speakers

Md. Imamus Sultan, Managing Director, Grameen Danone Foods Limited, Bangladesh

✚ Presentation available at:

<http://www.planetfinance.or.jp/files/symposium/presen/en/06Sultan.pdf>

Shawn A. Covell, Senior Director, International Government Affairs, QUALCOMM, US

✚ Presentation available at:

<http://www.planetfinance.or.jp/files/symposium/presen/en/07Covell.pdf>

Vijay Sharma, Business Head, Project Shakti, Hindustan Lever, India

✚ Presentation available at:

<http://www.planetfinance.or.jp/files/symposium/presen/en/08Vijay.pdf>

Naoko Felder, Microfinance Investments & Microfranchising Consultant, NFK Consulting

✚ Presentation available at:

<http://www.planetfinance.or.jp/files/symposium/presen/en/09NFK.pdf>

David Lehr, Acumen Fund Fellow, Drishtee, India

✚ Presentation available at:

<http://www.planetfinance.or.jp/files/symposium/presen/en/10Lehr.pdf>

Brian Murray, Managing Director, Research, AIG, Asia

✚ Presentation available at:

<http://www.planetfinance.or.jp/files/symposium/presen/en/11BrianMurray.pdf>

3:15- Q&A

Moderator: Makoto Sunagawa, Former Director of Private Sector Department, Inter-American Development Bank

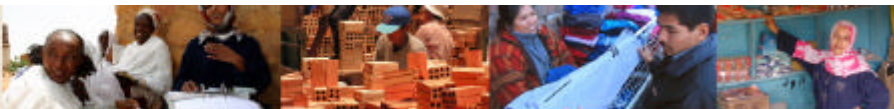
4:00- **Microfinance and the Role of the Public Sector**

The previous sessions of this conference demonstrate that microfinance is unique among approaches to international development because it enjoys deep involvement from private sector. That said, the public sector is also critically important in creating the enabling environment for successful microfinance. While many government-supported lending programs have faced challenges, there is still a role for governments to provide the public goods needed to facilitate the private sector’s involvement in microfinance. In this part of the conference, representatives of bilateral and multilateral donors and other actors in microfinance discuss the role various ways the public sector can assist the private sector in becoming more involved in microfinance.

Opening Remarks: Supporting Microfinance in Japan and Overseas

Nobuaki Usui, Governor, National Life Finance Corporation

✚ Presentation available at:



Panel Discussion

Moderator: Kimio Fujita, former president, JICA, and Chairman, Foundation for Advanced Studies in International Development

Speakers/Panelists

Hiroshi Arichi, Director, Tokyo Office, International Finance Corporation

✚ Presentation available at:

<http://www.planetfinance.or.jp/files/symposium/presen/en/12Arichi.pdf>

Shigeki Kimura, Director Development Institutions Division, International Bureau, MoF
Professor Mitsuhiro Maeda, Director for Trade Finance, METI

Aiichiro Yamamoto, Senior Advisor to Director-General, Africa Department, JICA

Kazushi Hashimoto, Director General, Sector Strategy Development Dept, JBIC

✚ Presentation available at:

<http://www.planetfinance.or.jp/files/symposium/presen/en/14Hashimoto.pdf>

Taro Morita, Director, International Cooperation Office, National Life Finance Corporation

Nimal Fernando, Principal Finance Specialist (Microfinance), Asian Development Bank

5:15– Q&A

Moderator: Kimio Fujita, former president, JICA, and Chairman, Foundation for Advanced Studies in International Development

About the conference

The success of microfinance in sustainably alleviating poverty and supporting the development of entrepreneurship is well documented. Nevertheless, despite three decades of growth and development in the sector, the vast majority of the world's poor continue to lack access to basic financial services that are an essential tool for them to better their lives. Increasing the outreach of microfinance institutions (MFIs) requires developing human capital in order to build the capacity of the MFIs as much as it requires improving access to capital for the MFIs to lend to their clients.

Not even the most optimistic forecasters, however, believe that everyone can effectively use microfinance services. But even for those who cannot benefit directly, microfinance can help them indirectly. In recent years as the sector has matured and deepened, there has also been an increase in demand for microfinance institutions to address the financial needs of the very small enterprises wishing to transform themselves into full-fledged SMEs. This is an extremely important trend because in most developing countries the micro and SME sectors offer the only realistic avenue for desperately needed and meaningful employment for the economically and socially dispossessed.

Among developed nations, Japan relied the most on concepts and practices similar to modern microfinance to alleviate poverty and support the development of both farmers and urban entrepreneurs. Moreover, some of those practices and the institutions which pioneered them still exist today, giving Japan an institutional memory of microfinance unavailable elsewhere.

Since the 1990s, the Japanese aid agencies and socially responsible companies have experimented with different approaches to modern microfinance practices, but to date neither has formulated a policy for building sustainable microfinance. However, key figures in Japan realize that microfinance can compliment the country's international cooperation policies and corporate CSR programs while simultaneously establishing a sustainable solution to fighting poverty around the world.

This one-day conference brings together global leaders in microfinance, specialists and practitioners in the field, and key thinkers in Japan to discuss the future of microfinance as a



tool for fighting poverty, its sustainability, and the role that Japanese individuals, companies and its public sector can play.

The goals of this conference are:

- Demonstrate the growth and success of the microfinance movement and the central role the private sector is playing in that process
- Provide specific examples of what the private sector is doing in the field of microfinance
- Open a discussion of the role governments play in providing the public goods necessary to support private sector involvement in microfinance
- Provide directions for developing an in-depth research program for possible funding