

**SPACE IS LIMITED
Register Early!**

**United Nations Association of Greater Boston
and
John F. Kennedy School Financial Sector Program**

invite you to attend

A Half-Day Conference

International Year of Microcredit 2005

Microfinance in Support of Poverty Alleviation

*Promoting Sustainable Financial Markets
to Meet Poor Household and Micro Enterprise Needs*

Monday, May 23, 2005

9:00 am - 1:30 pm

Taubman ABC
John F. Kennedy School of Government
Cambridge, Massachusetts

*With Support by:
Citigroup Foundation*

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Key Strategy to Meet Millennium Development Goals

The microfinance industry is in its third year of expansion, and is a major component of development efforts in most developing countries. Today, over 3,000 microfinance institutions are serving more than 70 million low income clients. It is also seen as a key strategy in reaching the UN Millennium Development Goals and in building financial institutions that meet the needs of poor people.

Targeting Financial Resources Effectively

Microfinance is widely seen as the most effective way in which to target financial resources directly to poor people to enable them to raise their incomes above poverty thresholds and to meet other critical needs such as school fees and health requirements. While microfinance has proven its ability to reduce poverty, its impacts have been variable, proving more successful in some contexts than others. It has perhaps been most successful where it responds conveniently to the perceived priority needs of financial service clients.

Approaches and Challenges for Microfinance Institutions

Microfinance initiatives take two prime approaches: (1) contributing to poverty reduction by providing financial services to poor people who have the potential to improve their livelihoods, but lack the financial resources to achieve their potentials; and (2) contributing to the establishment of functioning financial markets, particularly in poor rural and urban areas for poor households and micro enterprises that previously lacked adequate access to financial services. The challenge for many microfinance organizations is how to combine the two approaches to help establish viable financial institutions and markets that can reach out to poor households and other micro clients and meet their financial needs on a sustainable basis, thereby achieving both social performance and profitability objectives.

About the Conference

The Conference will focus on the experiences of microfinance organizations managing the tradeoffs between social performance and profitability. It will address a range of related issues such as microfinance organization interest rate policies, cost containment, including with respect to types and quantities of staffing needed to support poor household borrowing, motivation of financial service workers, critical roles of women, and social performance impact assessment and feedback techniques. A final report capturing the findings and recommendations of speakers regarding MFI "best practices" for the achievement of greatly expanded levels of access to financial institutions and markets by poor households and micro enterprises will be prepared that will be circulated to the UN International Year of Microcredit 2005 Secretariat and to other interested organizations.

Who should attend?

The UNA-GB Conference will be convened in collaboration with the John F. Kennedy School Financial Sector Program, the Citigroup Foundation, and ACCION International. Attendees are drawn from leading financial corporations, non-profit organizations that specialize in international development, the world of academia, and a range of other institutions with an interest in microfinance.

**For additional information, contact United Nations Association of Greater Boston
Tel: 617-482-4587 Fax: 617-482-0937 Email: info@unagb.org**

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

8:15 am - 8:45 am REGISTRATION

8:45 am - 9:00 am WELCOME:

Arthur Holcombe, President, United Nations Association of Greater Boston
Jay Rosengard, Director, Financial Sector Program, JFK School of Government

9:00 am - 9:45 am KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

Microfinance From Philanthropy to Commerce

Charles V. Raymond, President, Citigroup Foundation

**The Inter-Relationship of Microcredit, Connectivity, Commerce,
Income Generation and Poverty Alleviation Taken to Scale:
The Case of Grameen Phone in Bangladesh**

Iqbal Quadir, Former President of GrameenPhone

Questions & Answers

9:45 am - 11:00 am PANEL DISCUSSION: **International Experience Promoting More Sustainable
Microfinance Institutions Reaching the Poor**

Experience of USAID Supporting Pro Poor Microfinance Institutions

Kate McGee, USAID

**From Credit Led Microfinance to Village Managed Self Help Groups;
a Savings Led Alternative to Financial Institution Building**

Jeffrey Ashe, Oxfam America

Accion's Approach to Mainstreaming Microfinance

Elizabeth Rhyne, ACCION International

Moderator: Jay Rosengard, Director, Financial Sector Program, JFK School of Government

Questions & Answers

11:00am - 11:15 am BREAK

11:15 am - 12:30 pm PANEL DISCUSSION: **Experience Providing Financial Services to Poor
Households and Enterprises**

Housing Microfinance: Fashion or Footware

David Porteous, Affordable Housing Institute, Boston

Experience in New England with Community Banking Services

Gail Snowden, Boston Foundation

**Accion's Experience with Credit for Small Enterprises in
New England and Elsewhere**

Livingston Parsons, ACCION International

Moderator: Matt Quigley, Director of Community Affairs Division,
Federal Reserve Bank of Boston

Questions & Answers

12:30 pm - 1:00 pm LIGHT LUNCHEON AND UNA-GB LEADERSHIP AWARD PRESENTATION

1:00 pm - 1:30 pm SUPPLEMENTARY AUDIENCE QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS TO PANELISTS

Jay Rosengard, Director, JFK School of Government
Arthur Holcombe, UNA-GB

Program subject to change. Speakers confirmed as of May 5, 2005.

See inside for a detailed program of speakers and presentations.

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Microfinance in Support of Poverty Alleviation.

On May 23 the United Nations Association of Greater Boston, in collaboration with the John F. Kennedy School Financial Sector Program, will present a half-day conference on



United Nations Association of Greater Boston
One Milk Street, Boston, MA 02109

**An Exclusive Invitation
to a Half-Day Conference
on Monday, May 23, 2005**
at the J.F.K. School of Government
Harvard University, Cambridge

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Cambridge, Massachusetts

REGISTRATION FORM

For Easy, Immediate Registration, Call 617-482-4587.

Name: _____ Title: _____

Company/Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Email: _____

Tel: _____ Fax: _____

Additional Registrants:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Register by:

Phone: 617-482-4587

Fax: 617-482-0937

Email: info@unagb.org

Mail to: UNA-GB, One Milk Street,
Boston, MA 02109

Register online at www.unagb.org

___ \$50 Per Participant

___ \$25 Per Participant: **Special Rate** for Students

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

SPACE IS LIMITED. REGISTER TODAY.

Please make check payable to United Nations Association of Greater Boston.
Send payment and registration form to:



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