



SWISS CAPACITY BUILDING FACILITY for Income and Employment Generation

Fribourg, Switzerland, 20.04.2011

Swiss institutions launch the Swiss Capacity-Building Facility in Microfinance and Microinsurance:

The Swiss Capacity-Building Facility for Income and Employment Generation will link capacity-builders and social investors in Switzerland with financial intermediaries in developing countries, helping them to significantly scale up their outreach to poor people and small businesses.

The SCBF will provide tailor-made capacity building to assist financial intermediaries, such as insurance companies, microfinance banks, and savings and commercial banks, in developing countries, to expand their services and outreach to poor people and small businesses. The goal of the initiative is to enable up to 50 financial intermediaries¹ over the next five years to give an additional 360,000 poor households (and their approximately 1,800,000 family members) access to financial services, allowing them to strengthen their economic potential, build up physical and financial assets, protect their families through better housing, health and education, and improve resilience to economic shocks.

Based on their longstanding participation in financial sector development around the world, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Credit Suisse, FIDES|Financial Systems Development Services AG, Swisscontact, swiss microfinance holding, and Zurich Financial Services Group, forged the SCBF as a public-private development partnership (PPDP) in April, 2011. The SCBF will initially be sponsored by these founding partners who are all represented in the steering committee. Other institutions are strongly encouraged to join the SCBF.

SCBF will launch the first projects in the coming weeks. Projects and partners will be selected according to the SCBF's pre-defined criteria which include a focus on good governance and client protection principles².

Addressing the Constraints to Expanding Financial Services to Poor People and Small Businesses

Approximately 2.7 billion people³ worldwide do not have access to formal financial services. The development and delivery of appropriate services offered by financial intermediaries to unserved customer segments generates income and employment. Financial intermediaries face two key constraints in expanding their outreach to this segment of the population: 1) attracting, developing and maintaining skilled management and staff; and 2) mobilizing investor funding to maintain and grow their institutions.

The SCBF addresses these constraints and contributes to the development of a strong and responsible microfinance industry. In addition, based on the leading role that Switzerland's financial centre plays in microfinance, the SCBF aims indirectly at linking social investors with financial intermediaries to finance the latter's pro-poor business expansion.

FIDES will manage the SCBF with the support of Swisscontact and under the supervision of the SCBF Steering Committee.

Further information:

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SCBF Website: www.swisscapacitybuildingfacility.ch

¹ This is the estimate with initial funding but the numbers could be augmented with new partners and further funding'.

² www.smartcampaign.org

³ CGAP/World Bank: "Financial Access 2010. The State of Financial Inclusion through the Crises", Sept. 2010.

Partners in Brief (in alphabetical order):

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is Switzerland's international cooperation agency within the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). In operating with other federal offices concerned, SDC is responsible for the overall coordination of development activities and cooperation with Eastern Europe, as well as for the humanitarian aid delivered by the Swiss Confederation. Further information can be found at www.deza.admin.ch.



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

**Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC**

Credit Suisse AG

Credit Suisse AG is one of the world's leading financial services providers and is part of the Credit Suisse group of companies (referred to here as 'Credit Suisse'). As an integrated bank, Credit Suisse offers clients its combined expertise in the areas of private banking, investment banking and asset management. Credit Suisse provides advisory services, comprehensive solutions and innovative products to companies, institutional clients and high-net-worth private clients globally, as well as to retail clients in Switzerland. Credit Suisse is headquartered in Zurich and operates in over 50 countries worldwide. The group employs approximately 50,100 people. The registered shares (CSGN) of Credit Suisse's parent company, Credit Suisse Group AG, are listed in Switzerland and, in the form of American Depositary Shares (CS), in New York. Further information about Credit Suisse can be found at www.credit-suisse.com.



FIDES | FINANCIAL SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES AG

FIDES | FINANCIAL SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES AG is a company focusing on the development and management of sustainable microfinance institutions in rural areas, as well as related research and consulting activities. Created in Montpellier, France in 1996 and located in Fribourg, Switzerland since 2007, FIDES offers extensive experience in the field of financial systems development and small business promotion. FIDES has been involved in leading initiatives in Africa and in some of the most important rural microfinance systems in Eastern Europe. Further information can be found at www.fidesgroup.org.



Swisscontact - Swiss Foundation for Technical Cooperation

Swisscontact is the Swiss private sector organization for development cooperation. It was founded in 1959 by representatives from the Swiss economy and universities as a politically and religiously neutral foundation. Swisscontact is involved in over 20 developing countries and Eastern Europe in vocational education and training, supports the development of small and medium-sized companies, and is committed to effective environmental protection. Swisscontact projects help people to help themselves. Further information can be found at www.swisscontact.org.



swiss microfinance holding sa (SMH)

SMH is a holding company specializing in equity investment mainly in rural Africa. Created by FIDES in 2007, SMH provides capital and ensures sound governance for the microfinance institutions (MFIs) developed and managed by FIDES. A joint stock company uniting a range of private social investors, swiss microfinance holding sa is registered and headquartered in Fribourg, Switzerland.



Zurich Financial Services Group (Zurich)

Zurich Financial Services Group (Zurich) is a leading multi-line insurance provider with a global network of subsidiaries and offices in Europe, North America, Latin America, Asia-Pacific and the Middle East as well as other markets. It offers a wide range of general insurance and life insurance products and services for individuals, small businesses, mid-sized and large companies as well as multinational corporations. Zurich employs about 60,000 people serving customers in more than 170 countries. Founded in 1872, the Group is headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland. Zurich Financial Services Ltd (ZURN) is listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange and has a level I American Depositary Receipt program (ZFSVY) which is traded over-the-counter on OTCQX. Further information about Zurich is available at www.zurich.com.

