

Financial Education Update

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A Letter from the Steering Committee

The Financial Education for the Poor (FEP) curriculum has now been out for ten months. Awareness of our unique contribution to the microfinance community is growing by leaps and bounds. We are receiving an increasing number of inquiries about the project from a wide range of institutions as well as requests to participate in conferences.

Monique Cohen was invited to participate in the Clinton Global Initiative annual meeting in September 2006. At the meeting, FEP was recognized for making the following pledge:

“We commit to increase the adoption of technology-based financial services among low-income populations in developing countries through the use of a financial education curriculum that teaches poor people about financial services in general and electronic banking in particular.”

In late November 2006, the G8 held a conference in Moscow on Improving Financial Literacy, at which our partner Michal Matul, Financial Education Program Manager for The Microfinance Center, highlighted FEP in his presentation, “Financial Education for Low-Income Households.” Earlier in November, Citigroup and INSEAD’s Singapore Campus held a regional summit on Financial Education in Seoul, bringing together more than 200 delegates from governments, non-profit organizations, academia and the private sector. Rossana Ramirez, Freedom From Hunger’s Technical Advisor for Financial Education (FE), was among the participants and her presentation was the only one to recognize the importance of reaching low-income households with financial education.

FEP is emerging as a market leader on FE both in the microfinance industry and among community based organizations. There is also interest among banks seeking to serve the bottom of the pyramid.

Please feel free to share with us similar events in your country or region.

Sincerely,

The *Financial Education for the Poor* Steering Committee
Monique Cohen, Microfinance Opportunities
Kathleen Stack, Freedom from Hunger
Jennefer Sebstad, Consultant, Microfinance Opportunities

The Philippines TOT Workshop: Trainers Inspire ‘Super Savers’

In the fall of 2006, the Financial Education for the Poor Project headed to Asia and hosted its first country-level training-of-trainers (TOT) workshop from September 19-28 in Manila, Philippines.

The Philippines TOT workshop was attended by 10 organizations. The Philippines has a dynamic microfinance sector resulting in a mix of organizations attending the workshop: non-governmental organizations (NGOs), training institutions and service providers, microfinance institutions (MFIs) and national and regional networks. The following organizations were represented:

- **Microfinance Networks:** Alliance of Philippine Partners in Enterprise Development (APPEND), Microfinance Council of Philippines (MCPI), and Mindanao Microfinance Council (MMC)
- **Microfinance Institutions:** Alalay Sa Kaunlaran Sa Gitnang Luzo, Inc. (ASKI), Negros Women For Tomorrow Foundation (NWF) and Taytay sa Kauswagan, Inc. (TSKI)
- **Training Institutions and Service Providers:** Center for Agriculture and Rural Development MRI Development Institute (CARD MRI), Catholic Relief Services - LINKS Learning Center (CRS-LINKS), Punla Sa Tao Foundation, Visayas Cooperative Development Center (VICTO)

During the training-of-trainers workshop, participants had the opportunity to practice their facilitation skills by delivering a learning session from the financial education curriculum. The participants really appreciated this part of the training workshop and showed their creativity and enthusiasm in each session.

One group’s adaptation of a learning session from the Savings Module was a hit with the participants. To emphasize the power of

savings, the group adapted the session by converting participants into ‘Super Savers’, similar to super heroes, to motivate participants to develop ‘super’ strong savings plans. The use of fictional characters well known by participants was a creative way to adapt the learning session to motivate participants into saving as much as possible. (See picture). All learning sessions from the FEP curriculum can be adapted in such a way to reflect various cultural preferences.

If you would like to share a creative way in which you are adapting the FEP modules, please email us at info@mfopps.org. We will compile a list of the most creative adaptations and share them with the FEP Global Network.

Ms. Mylene Narvaez, a participant from CRS-LINKS summed it up nicely by stating,

“Financial Education is a must for everyone (because we all deal with our finances everyday), but more so for the poor with limited resources to manage. The FEP training course provides a practical and informative approach to financial education—it’s a very useful learning tool that can help individuals become better financial decision makers and better money managers.”

The workshop was a great success, and as a result, many organizations in Philippines are beginning to roll out training activities and beginning to disseminate the curriculum through their respective organizations and clients.



Participants pose as ‘Super Savers’

Uganda: FEP Joins with AMFIU to Prepare Master Trainers

This fall, FEP partnered with the Association of Microfinance Institutions of Uganda (AMFIU) to conduct a training-of-trainers workshop in Kampala, Uganda from November 7-16, 2006. AMFIU selected 29 members to attend, with participants coming from various types of organizations. The workshop produced a corps of skilled facilitators who will be able to conduct future training-of-trainers workshops within their organizations.

The following organizations were represented in Kampala:

- **Communication Organizations:** Straight Talk Foundation (STF)
- **Microfinance Networks:** AMFIU
- **APEX Organizations:** MicroSupport Center Ltd (MSCL Hoima), UIB-MCC, Uganda Cooperative Alliance (UCA)
- **Extension Media:** Rural Business Culture Fund
- **Private Sector Promotion Centers:** Acholi Private Sector (APSEDEL), CPSPCL, DEMIS, Karamoja SPC, MANLH, Masaka Private Sector Promotion Centre, Murick Consult, PRICON, SGPSEL, Teso Private Sector Promotion Centre, Uganda Women Entrepreneurs Association (UWEAL), West Nile Private Sector Promotion Centre Ltd.
- **Financial Institutions:** ADRA-UGANDA, CEEWA, Feed the Children Uganda, Finca Uganda, Post Bank Uganda, UGAFODE Ltd.

During the workshop, the participants were trained on adult learning principles and practices, FEP training methodology and techniques, conducting market research to inform the design of the content and delivery of the financial education training, adapting the modules to the local context, and



AMFIU members use song as a delivery channel of Financial Education

measuring the outcomes of the financial education training.

Participants then put their facilitation skills to use and presented a learning session from the financial education curriculum to their peers. Showcasing their creativity in the adaptation of these sessions, the participants employed a variety of delivery channels such as radio call-in shows, public service announcements, literacy campaigns, extension media, music, dance and drama. Workshop participants experienced a live adaptation to dance and drama when the UFCA Cultural Dance Troupe Uganda performed and acted out financial education messages that were developed in partnership with AMFIU/FSDU.

The AMFIU members strongly endorsed the training and felt that their facilitation skills were greatly improved due to the many hands-on activities that allowed them to practice what they had learned. Some of the participants have already asked AMFIU for a follow-up workshop within the next year. One member's comment reflects the success of the workshop as well as the participants' belief in the effectiveness of the training:

"This was perfectly presented and I am positive that participants will be able to link financial education to the desired behavior of their clients."

Regional TOT in Jakarta, Indonesia: Building Lasting Relationships

In December 2006, FEP conducted a regional TOT in Jakarta, Indonesia for 26 participants representing 14 organizations and 5 countries.

The organizations and countries present were:

- **Cambodia:** PRASAC, Thaneakea Phum Cambodia Ltc. (TPC), VisionFund Cambodia Ltd.
- **Indonesia:** Bank Rakyat Indonesia (BRI), Bina Swadaya, Lembaga Management Fakultas Ekonomi Universitas, Rural Income Generation Project (RGIP), USC-Satunama, MICRA/Mercy Corps
- **Mongolia:** XacBank
- **Sri Lanka:** SANASA Development Bank, Sarvodaya Economic Enterprises Development (SEEDS)
- **Vietnam:** Capital Aid Fund for Employment of the Poor (CEP), Vietnam Bank for Social Policies (VBSP)

The workshop kicked off with an opening ceremony featuring presentations by the Citigroup Country Officer, an executive from the Central Bank of Indonesia and Danielle Hopkins of MFO. Local press attended the event and FEP was featured in a December 7th *Jakarta Post* article, “Citigroup Offering Finance Education to the Poor.”

Other highlights of the training included field visits and a cultural night during which participants from each country performed typical songs and dances. The field visits included a session at a local BRI branch office to learn about BRI products and services.

The field visits contributed greatly to the group’s cohesion and the close bond the participants formed is reflected in a song they wrote together for the closing ceremony:

*“Let’s make this FEP
Promoting social empowerment
Let’s make this FEP
Enhancing long life relationships
As class is over,
Everyone will be missing each other
When class is over,
You will be always in my heart . . .”*

The training was well received by the participants, who found the adaptation activities especially helpful. One participant noted:

“All modules are designed in a common way for everybody so adaptation is really a good topic for us to modify this FE to our local context.”



Participants visit a nearby branch of BRI



Participants perform during a cultural night

Partner Spotlight: CRS Indonesia and VICTO

Organizations make quick turnaround in delivering FEP Curriculum

CRS: In the aftermath of the May 2006 earthquake in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) established the Livelihood Program, which includes financial education as one of the strategies to assist poor communities in the area. Seventeen participants from CRS Indonesia attended an FE training in December 2006. The workshop was conducted by trainers from CRS LINKS Philippines who had been trained by the FEP team during the Philippines TOT in September 2006. Fourteen of the participants were from partner institutions working on projects for the Livelihood Program. The workshop, which attracted many more people than anticipated, was conducted through the use of translators and was highly praised by participants. Of the sessions presented during the five-day training, participants were especially interested in and appreciative of the learning sessions on budgeting.

VICTO: After participating in the Philippines FEP TOT in September, the Visayas Cooperative Development Center (VICTO) conducted a TOT for a group of 14 VICTO trainers in November. Each of these trainers was tasked with replicating the workshop in their region of responsibility and assisting the member cooperatives to include the FEP curriculum in their education programs. VICTO was able to make several adaptations that enhanced the training within the local context, including the use of VICTO's trademark song and dance as an energizer.



VICTO
Visayas Cooperative Development Center



A Call for Articles

FEP wants to hear from you! Please submit articles, spotlights and notes about trainings you have held and share your successes, challenges, adaptations and lessons learned with us. Articles may be sent to Danielle Hopkins at danielleh@mfopps.org.

Korea: Citigroup-INSEAD Regional Financial Education Summit

As financial services have grown in complexity and scope, even the young must juggle multiple financial products and make difficult financial decisions. For these reasons, this year's Citigroup-INSEAD Regional Financial Education Summit highlighted the need to provide financial education for children and adolescents starting at an early age.

The summit, held in Seoul, South Korea, November 9-10, brought together experienced practitioners and distinguished speakers from 15 different countries. Throughout the summit, panelists and speakers presented initiatives that aim to strengthen the ability of youth to make smart financial decisions through budgeting and prioritized spending and emphasize the importance of saving and investing.

Rossana Ramírez, from Freedom from Hunger and one of the FEP team members, shared the progress to date on the Financial Education for the Poor: Youth Initiative. The project, which targets young people in low-income countries, stood out from other youth initiatives because it addresses how financial education can mitigate the vulnerabilities and risks faced by young people.

Financial education for vulnerable young people aims to address these issues by expanding financial options for youth, improving their access to and ability to seize opportunities, preparing them to face future financial responsibilities and increasing their capacity to use financial resources. The presentation on the FEP: Youth Initiative drew the attention of many participants, who view this as a unique perspective.

New Delhi, India: Grameen Foundation High-Growth Partners Forum

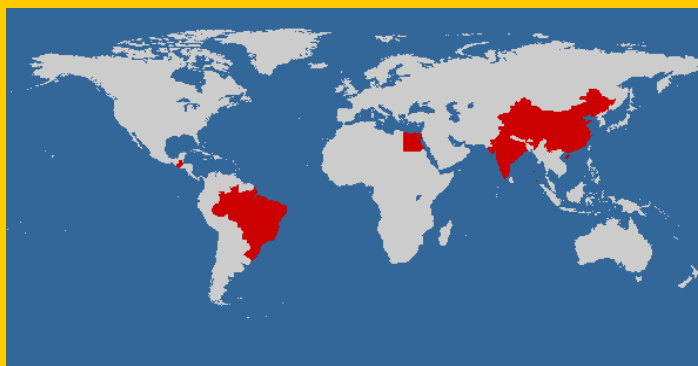
At the request of the Grameen Foundation, Monique Cohen delivered a one-day Financial Education workshop at Grameen's High-Growth Partners Forum held October 15- 20, 2006 in New Delhi, India. The forum brought together more than 60 participants from 16 Grameen partner institutions in 8 different countries which have made significant commitments to developing and expanding their operations.

Attended by CEOs, COOs and CFOs, the financial education workshop provided an opportunity to expose senior managers of six organizations from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, the Philippines, Nigeria and Tunisia to the FEP curriculum. The high level of satisfaction of the participants with the content and thematic areas addressed by the FEP curriculum has already propelled participants to follow up with the Grameen Foundation to undertake further activities.



Forthcoming TOTs: A Chance to Get Involved with the FEP

The FEP has scheduled additional training-of-trainer workshops to be held regularly in the upcoming months. They will be held in Guatemala and Pakistan in April 2007. Workshops are also planned for Brazil, China, India and the Middle East, possibly in Egypt, in 2007. Additional trainings will continue to be scheduled.



The FEP welcomes organizations with strong outreach and training capacity, as well as a commitment to financial education, to express interest in participating in future TOT workshops. Please send inquiries to Danielle Hopkins at danielleh@mfopps.org.

Outreach: Tracking the FEP Curriculum's Global Scope

The Financial Education for the Poor curriculum has now been out for ten months. While the project is still relatively young, we can begin to predict the scope of participants that the financial education training has reached. The following table illustrates 3 levels of outreach to date (May 2006-Jan. 2007): 1) the trainers that have been trained by the FEP team (Master TOT), 2) trainers that have been trained by our partner organizations (TOT by Organization) and 3) low-income participants that have received Financial Education. The total outreach of these 3 levels is 479.

Outreach of Financial Education Training (May 2006- Jan 2007)			
Master TOT	# Organizations	# Trainers Trained	# Low-Income Participants
LAC	13	21	
Philippines	11	19	
Uganda	25	29	
Asia-Indonesia	14	26	
Total Master TOT	63	95	
TOT By Organization			
RFR	14	21	
ADOPEM	1	39	
Fondo Esperanza	1	74	
SEEDS	1	25	
CRS	2	17	
VICTO	1	14	
Total TOT	20	190	
Participant Training			
ADOPEM			194
TOTAL OUTREACH			479



UFCA Cultural Dance Troupe Uganda acts out financial education messages at the AMFIU TOT

The *Financial Education for the Poor* project is made possible through the partnership and cooperation of:

The Citigroup Foundation

The Citigroup Foundation supports organizations that help people improve their lives, businesses to grow, and communities to prosper around the world. The Citigroup Foundation focuses its grants primarily in three areas: financial education, educating the next generation, and building communities and entrepreneurs. Additional information can be found at <http://www.citigroupfoundation.org>

Microfinance Opportunities

Microfinance Opportunities was established in 2002 as a microenterprise resource center that promotes client-led microfinance. It seeks to help poor people increase their access to well-designed and delivered financial services. Microfinance Opportunities provides action-research, training and technical assistance in three areas focused on the clients of microfinance services: Financial Education, Microinsurance and Client Assessment. www.microfinanceopportunities.org

Freedom from Hunger

Founded in 1946, Freedom from Hunger is a nonprofit, international development organization bringing innovative and sustainable self-help solutions to the fight against chronic hunger and poverty. Freedom from Hunger specializes in ensuring that the poor have access to microfinance and health protection services, and life skills training to achieve food security for their families. www.freedomfromhunger.org

