



**B.W T.P.**  
Banking With The Poor Network

[www.bwtp.org](http://www.bwtp.org)

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### Asia Microfinance Forum 2008

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. The Asia Microfinance Forum 2008 is being held in association with PlaNet Finance Group and the European Union, and in collaboration with the State Bank of Vietnam. This milestone event will bring together around 300 leading microfinance practitioners, policy-makers, financiers, academics and advocates from around the world to outline their visions and priorities, and explore new ideas and opportunities.

The Asia Microfinance Forum 2008 formally commences on the evening of Tuesday, 26 August 2008, and concludes on the afternoon of Friday, 29 August 2008. A number of pre-event activities and meetings will take place on Monday, 25 August 2008, and Tuesday, 26 August 2008. A number of parallel events will also take place during the course of Asia Microfinance Forum 2008.

The theme for the conference will be:  
**Microfinance in the 21st Century:  
Future Trends & Opportunities**

Attendance at the event is **free of charge**, however to be able to attend the event it is essential that you register to receive your official event invitation letter.

We recommend that you register early as places are limited for the event. **Registration for the Asia Microfinance Forum closes on the 31st May, 2008.**

To register for the Asia Microfinance Forum 2008 go to:  
<http://www.bwtp.org/register-online-amf-2008.html>

### BWTP Executive Committee Meeting

The BWTP Executive Committee held its second meeting of the year on the 20th and 21st of April at the offices of the Citi Foundation in Singapore.

The meeting was convened to hear a preview of the preliminary findings of the BWTP Network Capacity Assessment (NCAT) and to discuss the implementation of the Citi Network Strengthening Project.

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The BWTP Network is an initiative of [The Foundation for Development Cooperation](http://www.citifoundation.com)

The [Citi Foundation](http://www.citifoundation.com) is a supporter of the BWTP Network.

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The meeting was attended by Chairman Chandula Abeywickrama (Hatton National Bank), Nimal Mamaduwa (Sanasa Development Bank), Nani Zulminani (PPSW), Jamie Bedson (FDC), Katrina Crawford (FDC), Nina Nayar (BWTP Consultant) and representing the SEEP Network were Diana Dezso and Kelly Hattel.

## Network Capacity Assessment

Thank you to all BWTP Network Members that participated in the Network Capacity Assessment undertaken by Kelly Hattel (CNSP Consultant), Diana Dezso (SEEP Network) and Nina Nayar (BWTP Consultant). Over the course of a busy 3 weeks members participated in an online survey, focus group discussions and individual interviews in all member countries. The Network looks forward to making the results of NCAT available to members when the final report is prepared.

## BWTP Capacity Building for Partnerships in Microfinance Information Session

BWTP Network held an Information Session on the recently produced Banking with the Poor Network (BWTP) Capacity Building for Partnerships in Microfinance Trainer's Manual on the 8th of April 2008 in Manila, Philippines.

This BWTP Network Information Session was an initiative of the BWTP Network and the Foundation for Development Cooperation, and was organised with the assistance of the Microfinance Council of the Philippines, Inc. The sponsor of the event was the Citi Foundation.

The Information Session was specifically targeted at MFIs, capacity building organisations and other microfinance stakeholders in the Philippines which deliver training programs, either in-house or to other organisations. The BWTP Network is encouraging other organisations to use these materials, free of charge, to conduct their own trainings to encourage the use of partnerships in their microfinance activities. [More....](#)

## BWTP Secretariat to Move to Singapore

FDC's Chairman, Mr Bob Lyon, has approved the establishment of FDC's first overseas office. FDC Singapore will commence operations on 30 July 2008. The BWTP Secretariat will be co-located with the FDC Singapore office. The move of the BWTP Secretariat to Singapore was fully endorsed by the Executive Committee at the recent meeting. FDC's Mr Jamie Bedson has been appointed as FDC's Asia Regional Representative and will be based in Singapore and head up FDC Singapore.

## BWTP Member News

### ❖ **BSP Approves Housing Microfinance Product to Address Shelter Needs of the Economically Active Poor**

The Monetary Board has approved the Housing Microfinance product that aims to address the shelter needs of the economically active poor that are currently unserved by financial institutions. This Housing Microfinance Product involves the application of microfinance principles and best practices to the provision of housing finance for home improvements, house construction as well as house/lot acquisition. [More...](#)

### ❖ **MIX and MICRA Announce New Partnership**

MIX recently announced the opening of a new East Asia office, in Jakarta, Indonesia, to be staffed by regional partner MICRA (Microfinance Innovation Centre for Resources and Alternatives). The new partnership is part of MIX's global efforts to provide more detailed and responsive coverage of microfinance. [More....](#)

## ❖ 2008 FT Sustainable Banking Awards

BWTP Network would like to congratulate ASA for being shortlisted for the 2008 FT Sustainable Banking Awards in the Banking at the Bottom of the Pyramid category. The 2008 FT Sustainable Banking Awards are the leading global awards for triple bottom line banking. [More...](#)

## Microfinance News

### ❖ Microcredit Summit Campaign Hopes to Reach 100 Million Poorest This Year

Microloans to the poor around the world went to 133 million in 2006, up from 13 million just nine years ago, according to a report released in December by the Microcredit Summit Campaign, an initiative of the U.S.-based NGO RESULTS Educational Fund. In order to ensure that the 100 million poorest are counted for this year's Report, the Microcredit Summit Campaign is currently soliciting Institutional Action Plans (IAPs) from current members and encouraging new members to submit as well. The IAP is the "building-block" of the Campaign, and the process by which progress towards the Microcredit Summit Campaign's goals are counted, including its newest goal to "ensure that 175 million of the world's poorest families, especially the women of those families, are receiving credit for self-employment and other financial and business services by the end of 2015." [More....](#)

### ❖ Mobile banking to transform microfinance: CGAP finds market conditions mean benefits for poor still several years away

WASHINGTON - (April 30, 2008) A new report from the global microfinance body CGAP predicts that, with the right market conditions, mobile banking could reach large numbers of poor people who are outside the formal financial system. The Early Experience with Branchless Banking calls for the development of interoperable payments platforms, practical and risk-based approaches to regulation, as well as shared networks of cash-handling agents. There is also a need for product development that overcomes the lack of human interaction and reliability concerns that may hinder customer adoption today. [More...](#)

### ❖ MasterCard Foundation Partners with Microfinance Information eXchange to Enhance Transparency of Microfinance Industry

The MasterCard Foundation awarded a two-year, \$740,000 grant to Microfinance Information eXchange (MIX) to launch MIX Market 2.0, a next-generation Web platform for sharing reliable, comparable and publicly available information on the financial strength and performance of microfinance institutions. MIX, a not-for-profit private company, has received industry-wide recognition for its efforts to increase the transparency of the microfinance sector. [More...](#)

### ❖ Microinsurance Facility Invites Grant Applications

The Microinsurance Innovation Facility, a partnership between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, is inviting applications for innovation grants. The grants aim to stimulate new ideas and test new approaches to providing better products to underserved markets. They will help introduce new products, processes or models, improve on existing ones, or take successful products/models to new markets. Applications close 16 May 2008. [More...](#)

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