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ADB and Rural and Micro Finance

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has committed to a multi-million US dollar intervention combining grants and loans to the 'Institutional Strengthening for Rural Finance' project in Lao PDR.

The project will focus on a number of key interventions including reform of microfinance policies and of the Agricultural Promotion Bank (APB).

A combination of loans and grants will be used to upgrade the APB ICT system to ensure they are

better equipped to implement reforms successfully. A number of consultants will be supported by the project to facilitate this process.

The project will also commit 1.98 million US dollars to provide technical assistance to market-driven MFIs that seek to achieve sustainability. This strand of the project will also offer matching grants to MFIs that fit into this criteria.

The project will also work closely with the Bank of Lao to increase capacity to

ensure that the microfinance regulations issued in 2005 are being implemented by MFIs.

It is anticipated that this two year intervention will begin in January, 2007.

Full information on the project is available for download at www.adb.org

Global Microcredit Summit 2006

The Global Microcredit Summit 2006 will be held in Nova Scotia Canada from 13-15 November. The summit will bring together over 2,000 delegates from more than 100 countries, including heads of state, government and other dignitaries. This Global Summit will offer the opportunity for microfinance practitioners, advocates, donors and others to assess progress toward the summit's goal of reaching 100 million poorest and to launch the second phase of the campaign.

SNV Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV) will present a session at the summit titled "Bridging the Gap: Microfinance

Capacity Development in Economies in Transition. Case studies from Lao PDR and Vietnam". The presentation will focus on the demand for capacity development in the burgeoning Lao PDR microfinance sector and the role of local service providers and international organisations in achieving this. SNV will support Ms. Kaesorn Manivong from the Bank of Lao and Mr. Souphith Darachanthra from the National Economic Research Institute (NERI) and the Microfinance Capacity Building and Research Project (MCBR) to join a delegation from Lao PDR and Vietnam to present a case study from the Lao PDR.

The Global Microcredit Summit will continue on the success of the first Microcredit Summit, held in 1997 in Washington, D.C., USA, which launched a nine-year Campaign to reach 100 million of the world's poorest families, especially the women of those families, with credit for self-employment and other financial and business services by the year 2005.

For further information please contact Mr. Phillip Smith, SNV Microfinance Advisor on +856(0) 20 782 1763 email: psmith@snvworld.org

For Your Information

Training

As part of the Northern Microfinance workshop, 3 days of training will be available from 15th—17th in Bokeo on basic microfinance. For more information contact the MCBR team.

Workshop

The Northern Microfinance Workshop will take place in Bokeo on the 13th—17th November. For more information contact GTZ or the MCBR team.

Training

The MCBR project is looking for organisations willing to provide financial support to private sector skills development in the microfinance sector. Any organisations requiring further information should contact the MCBR team.

Microfinance on the Web

The Microfinance Capacity Building and Research Project (MCBR) in conjunction with the National Economic Research Institute and Concern Worldwide will soon launch a website for Microfinance in the Lao PDR.

The website aims to provide comprehensive information on the sector as well as providing a platform for smoother information exchange between stakeholders in the sector.

The website will be managed by the MCBR team and regular updates and inputs are expected from stakeholders across the sector. In addition, all MCBR publications will be available on the website as well as publications submitted by practitioners, policy makers and other stake-

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This e-bulletin will be provided on a monthly basis to ensure that key stakeholders remain informed of developments in the microfinance sector; the MCBR twice yearly newsletter publication will continue to be printed in June and December of each year with more in-depth national and international information, reports and articles from stakeholders across the sector.

holders.

The website will also hold information on announcements, workshops, meetings and training opportunities, as well as other information posted by stakeholders. It is hoped that this resource will encourage further positive developments across the sector.

The website will also provide links to a number of external sites including Banking with the Poor and the Microfinance Gate-

way; both of which will cover the opening of the website resource.

Any organisations wishing to submit publications or to recommend any content for inclusion on the website can contact the MCBR team on:

mfrc@laotel.com

Village Banking Workshop

The Lao-German Rural Development programme in conjunction with GTZ will host a workshop on 'Village Banking Operations and Support Structures' during October.

The workshop will bring together key stakeholders from the Bank of Lao, multi-lateral agencies, practitioners and government officials to exchange experiences on village banking in Lao

PDR and to identify resources and relationships that can strengthen microfinance institutions.

For more information, please contact GTZ on mimi@gtrural.org or the MCBR team.

Northern Microfinance Workshop

GTZ in Bokeo will host the 6th Northern Microfinance Workshop between the 13th and 17th of November. The workshop will provide practitioners with the opportunity to exchange experiences and to identify common problems and solutions facing the sector. Training will also be provided as part of on-going efforts to improve standards across the sector.

The workshop will compliment the work of the Southern Microfinance workshop held in June, 2006 and will include stakeholders from the Northern region as well as policy makers from the Central Government in Vientiane.

Supported by



Please let the MCBR team know if you would benefit from this publication also being available in Lao.

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Any queries, comments or submissions can be sent to the MCBR project at:

mfrc@laotel.com

If you require any further information on any of the articles included in this bulletin, please contact the MCBR team on mfrc@laotel.com or call on 021 711 180