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Letter from the Chair

Dear members and friends,

I am very pleased to announce that the Citigroup Foundation has renewed its support to the Banking with the Poor network through a grant of \$US 570, 000 for 2007 and 2008 which will enable the network to expand its activities and further strengthen microfinance in Asia.

2006 was an exciting year for the BWTP network. With the support of the Citigroup Foundation we were able to consolidate the network and engage in successful activities which helped our members, to better face the challenges of providing inclusive financial services to low income households across Asia.

The network has expanded and currently has some 30 members spread over nine countries in Asia.

We have also started to issue a monthly e-newsletter which has significantly increased the visibility of our BWTP website.

With the Citigroup Foundation support, the next year appears to be equally exciting. The BWTP network will continue working on the key areas of capacity building and information exchange.

One stream of activities will focus on expanding the outreach and quality of financial services to under-served people, and to maximize the impact of these services on their livelihoods through innovations in **partnerships and strategic alliances** between organisations engaged in the sector.

We also believe that the network should take advantage of the expertise of some of our members and help "younger" and newer members. A **Technical Assistance Program** to be offered within our network will start in 2007.

We will also continue the dissemination of the curriculum on **Microfinance and Disaster Management** and encourage further training to take place where relevant and needed.

In addition, we will hold a second Asia Microfinance Forum during 2008 and expect to showcase innovations and best practices in microfinance relevant for Asia.

We want to thank the Citigroup Foundation and the Foundation for Development Cooperation for their support, but also our members, partners and friends who have helped us in our efforts to contribute to poverty reduction in Asia.

Chandula Abeywickrema
Chairman, Banking With The Poor Network

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If you know of any MF organisations that would be interested in joining the BWTP Network let us know. Our contact details are listed below.



If you want to subscribe to our E-newsletter, [email us](#).



The BWTP Network is an initiative of [The Foundation for Development Cooperation](#)

The [Citigroup Foundation](#) is a supporter of the BWTP Network.



Joint Press Release BWTP and Citi: 5th March 2007

[Citi Partners with Foundation for Development Cooperation & the Banking With The Poor to Strengthen Asia's Microfinance Sector](#)

New BWTP Programs

The Citigroup Foundation's renewed support over the next two years will provide the BWTP Network the opportunity to continue to improve the quality of life of the poor in Asia. It will do so by promoting and facilitating access to credit, savings instruments and other financial services through linkages between financial sector institutions (such as commercial banks), NGOs and SHGs.

❖ [Linkages and Partnership Approach in Microfinance](#)

Partnerships and alliances between formal and less formal institutions are an alternative way of expanding financial services into rural areas. The essence of the partnership approach is to bring together complementary resources and skills from diverse sources drawing on each partner's core strengths. Partnerships are a useful way to allow all partners the opportunity to overcome weaknesses and constraints which are not easy to overcome on their own. The BWTP Network is working to develop and disseminate a set of curriculum and training materials on the partnership approach, which will be delivered through in-country workshops in Asia.

Paper: [Partnerships in Microfinance: A Discussion Primer](#) (PDF 404KB)
Paul Greener, Senior Project Manager, ([FDC](#))

❖ [Best Practices Dissemination](#)

Across Asia there is a strong common need to build the capacity of microfinance providers to enable them to manage efficiently their traditional business of financial service provision. The BWTP Network seeks to provide assistance in this field by disseminating best practice models throughout Asia. The Network will draw on the experience of its members to develop the 'younger' members in the Network and to improve the capacity in countries or areas where microfinance and industry is less developed. In this context, workshops and technical assistance will be delivered throughout Asia.

❖ [Dissemination of Disaster Management Curriculum](#)

The BWTP Network's previous work in the field of microfinance and capacity building in post-tsunami reconstruction has produced a package of high quality, multi-language training manuals and resources on "Microfinance and Disaster Management". The resources include manuals, presentations and handouts which are currently available in five different languages with other languages expected in the future. The resources are available free-of-charge through a dedicated [website](#). At this stage nearly 500 microfinance personnel have received the microfinance and disaster management training. The Network plans to make further use of these resources by generating a greater awareness of the issue among MFI managers.

❖ **2nd International Asia Microfinance Forum 2008**

Given the success of the first [Asia Microfinance Forum](#), the BWTP will hold a second Forum in 2008. Consultation with our partners will start mid 2007.

Other BWTP News

❖ [Overview of Swabalamban Bikas Bank \(Nepal\)](#) (PDF – 277 KB)

Swabalamban Bikas Bank Ltd. (Literally means Self-help Development Bank Ltd.) is a Microfinance Development Bank. SB Bank started its operation from January 14, 2002.

❖ [Newsletter - Rural Microfinance Development Centre \(Nepal\)](#) (PDF – 750KB)

January 2007

- RMDC Disbursed 1.38 Billion Rupees
- A Study Visit to Bangladesh
- Performance of RMDC's Partner Microfinance Organisations

New BWTP Members

The BWTP network would like to welcome our new members:

- [Bandhan-Konagar \(India\)](#) (PDF 87KB)
- [Swabalamban Bikas Bank \(Nepal\)](#) (PDF 109KB)
- [Lak Jaya \(Sri Lanka\)](#) (PDF 18KB)

Microfinance News

❖ [Online Microfinance Portal for the Lao PDR opens](#)

The Microfinance Capacity Building and Research (MCBR) project is proud to announce the opening of the first Microfinance Website (<http://www.microfinancelaopdr.org/>) for the Lao PDR. This initiative has been implemented by the National Economic Research Institute (NERI), which is part of the Committee for Planning and Investment (CPI) within the Government of the Lao PDR.

❖ [CGAP Virtual Conference on the Future of Microfinance](#)

26 February – 2 March 2007

CGAP hosted a virtual conference entitled “Vision 2015: What Does the Future of Microfinance Hold?” A summary of discussions and comments from each day of the conference are available from: <http://www.cgap.org/Vision2015/index.html>.

❖ [CGAP Portfolio Newsletter - Technology Issue](#)

February 2007 – Portfolio is now available as a bi-monthly e-newsletter.

- How Will Technology Expand Access to Finance?
- Behind the Headlines: Harnessing the Telecom Explosion
- Mobile Phone Banking in South Africa

❖ [MicroRating International](#)

M-CRIL and MicroRate – the two largest microfinance rating agencies in the world – announce the creation of a global alliance called, MicroRating International (MRI). The two agencies pioneered the rating of microfinance institutions (MFIs) and have now rated over 400 MFIs globally.

❖ [Protecting the Poor: A Microinsurance Compendium](#) (PDF – 2.2MB)

The publication provides an overview of the field of microinsurance and considers in depth, product design, marketing, premium collection and governance. The Compendium was launched as a result of a research project produced by CGAP’s Working Group on Microinsurance into the experiences of microinsurance operations around the world and to identify good and bad practices.

For further information regarding Microinsurance, visit [The MicroInsurance Centre](#).

❖ **10 Years of World Bank Support for Microcredit in Bangladesh**

December 2006 marked a decade of the World Bank’s support for Microcredit in Bangladesh. Through this support, more than 6 million poor have been reached through microfinance projects totalling US\$260 million. During the decade, the World Bank through its Poverty Alleviation Microfinance Projects has expanded the outreach of microfinance programs and enhanced the institutional financial sustainability of Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) and its Partner Organizations (POs).

Contact Us

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