



Microfinance Pasifika

www.microfinance-pasifika.org

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Microfinance Pasifika Network News

Letter from the Chair

Microfinance Pasifika Network in the last 6 months has nearly doubled in membership to 17 members. This is a direct response to the success of the Pacific Microfinance Week held in August 2007 and through more awareness of the Network. Membership now ranges from microfinance institutions, banks, software companies, a Central Bank and not-for-profit organisations working in the financial sector. We welcome each new member warmly and hope to engage in more dialogue with you through our online discussion in our Pacific Resource Centre for Microfinance (PRCM) available through the Network's website at: <http://www.microfinance-pasifika.org/resource-centre.html>

While most of us continue to promote areas of financial inclusion in the Pacific through traditional methods, we are becoming increasingly bombarded with information on the use of technology in microfinance. This was one of the key outcomes of the Pacific Microfinance Week and one I believe that several island countries may be taking bold steps to introduce.

IFC's Brigit Helms who was a speaker at our last Forum suggested use of mobile phone technology as a way to 'leap frog' microfinance services in the Pacific and to bypass the 'evolutionary steps' in other continents. The constraints of low population density and wide geographical spread in the Pacific would make this switch a natural choice; however, each island country is at a different stage of telecommunications advancement and may find this more of a challenge. Nevertheless, we still wait in anticipation to see this developed in the near future and to bring the level of microfinance services to another level in the Pacific.

We again invite you all to view our PRCM for information and to take part in the ongoing online discussions.

Vinaka Vakalevu

Luse Kinivuwai

Chair of the Executive Committee of the Microfinance Pasifika Network and,
Director, Microfinance Unit
National Centre for Small and Micro Enterprise Development
Suva
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Microfinance Pasifika Member News

❖ **Digicel – SPBD Partnership: A DigiCare initiative**

This partnership came through from the South Pacific Business Development Business Foundation Women Awards of the Year held in November 2007. DigiCare analysed SPBD and decided that SPBD meets the criteria of sustainability, lasting positive impact, proven organisation and efficient and effective planning as per DigiCare guidelines.



Digicel through DigiCare is providing 1000 handsets to SPBD as giveaways to be utilised as incentives for deserving members and centres. The incentive scheme was developed by SPBD with input from DigiCare. [More...](#)

❖ **Electronic banking to bring financial services to Vanuatu's rural areas**

Rural areas in Vanuatu, out of normal reach of bank branches, will soon enjoy access to modern banking services thanks to funding support from Japan and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) that will bring electronic banking and card-swipe technology as close as the local shop.

National Bank of Vanuatu (NBV) clients in rural areas will be able to use a plastic card with a magnetic strip to gain access to many financial services using electronic funds transfer point of sale (eftPOS) cards, or SmartCard technology. [More...](#)

❖ **Pacific Credit Union Technical Congress, 8 - 19 September 2008**

Credit Union Foundation Australia (CUFA) will co-host with the Fiji Savings and Credit Union League (FSCUL) and World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU) - the Pacific Credit Union Technical Congress in Nadi, Fiji, from September 28 to October 3 2008. The Technical Congress is a joint collaboration between the credit union movements, with the objective of collectively bringing together emerging and mature credit union movements, leagues, federations and regulators from the Pacific region. All enquiries regarding the Pacific Credit Union Technical Congress should be directed to Carla Elbourne at celbourne@cuscal.com.au.



The MF Pasifika Network is an initiative of [The Foundation for Development Cooperation](http://www.fdc.org)

If your organisation is interested in becoming joining the Microfinance Pasifika, information is available online at <http://www.microfinance-pasifika.org/membership.html>.



If you have an announcement that you would like publicised in our newsletter or on our website, please contact us at: info@microfinance-pasifika.org



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❖ **Deputy Prime Minister launches Savai'i branch of leading Samoan microfinancing organisation**

During February, a grand opening ceremony was held in Salelologa for the official launch of the Savai'i branch of the South Pacific Business Development Foundation (SPBD) which was officially opened by Mr Misa Telefoni.

The Deputy Prime Minister has consistently supported the efforts of SPBD and has long advocated for its expansion to Savai'i. During the ceremony, Mr Telefoni gave the keynote speech and conducted the ceremonial loan disbursement for SPBD's first five women members on Savai'i. [More...](#)

❖ **Pacific Resource Centre for Microfinance Monthly Online Discussion Sessions**

During the coming months Microfinance Pasifika Network is planning on hosting monthly online discussion sessions with key microfinance stakeholders in the Pacific. We are currently seeking expressions of interest from individuals and organisations who would be interested in being a guest host in the coming months. If anyone has a specific issue or theme concerning financial inclusion in the Pacific that they would like to see discussed please let us know. To do so, email your suggestions to info@microfinance-pasifika.org or alternatively post your comments on the online discussion forum at: <http://www.microfinance-pasifika.org/forums/index.php?topic=6.0>

New Microfinance Pasifika Members

❖ **New Microfinance Pasifika Member: Central Bank of PNG**

The Bank of PNG (BPNG) is a corporate organisation and was established an Act of Parliament (The Central Banking Act) in 1973. Prior to its establishment, BPNG was a branch of the Reserve Bank of Australia. The Central Banking Act (CBA) gives the necessary powers to BPNG to fulfil its principal obligations under the Act. [More...](#)

❖ **New Microfinance Pasifika Member: Credit Union Foundation Australia (CUFA)**

The CUFA was created in the 1970's as the development agency for the Australian Credit Union Movement. CUFA has both domestic and international development focus in its activities. Credit Union Foundation Australia mission is empowering communities through access to affordable financial services. [More...](#)



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Microfinance News

- ❖ **EU/ACP Microfinance Programme offers scholarships to ACP policymakers for top class training in microfinance**
For the second year in a row, the EU/ACP Microfinance Programme is offering scholarships for ACP policymakers, including public agency staff of central banks, ministries, supervisory bodies, etc. The scholarships, worth 3,100 EUR, will cover tuition expenses for the Boulder Microfinance Training Programme that takes place in Turin, Italy, from 21 July to 8 August 2008. Further information is [available here](#).

A copy of the scholarship application form is [available here](#).

Microfinance Publications

- ❖ **Online Publication of 'Capacity Building for Partnerships in Microfinance - Trainer's Manual'**
The Banking With the Poor Network and The Foundation for Development Cooperation is proud to announce the online publication of the Capacity Building for Partnerships in Microfinance - Trainer's Manual. The Trainer's Manual was produced with support for the Citi Foundation.

The Capacity Building for Partnerships in Microfinance – Trainer's Manual is subject to a simple registration process, upon which a username and log in details will be forward to interested organisations. The Trainer's Manual is available to registered users and all BWTP Network members free of charge.

To register and access the trainer's manual, [click here](#).
- ❖ **Pacific Resource Centre for Microfinance**
If you have any papers, publications etc. that you would like to see featured in the Pacific Resource Centre for Microfinance which is located on the Microfinance Pasifika website, please don't hesitate to email the information to info@microfinance-pasifika.org.

Please feel free to distribute the MF Pasifika E-newsletter among friends and colleagues.

If you want to **subscribe** to our E-newsletter, [click here](#).

Contact Us

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