UNCDF global head to address microfinance forum

Organisers of the biennial Pacific Microfinance week are pleased to announce that the head of the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) will be visiting Honiara in September.

UNCDF is the UN’s capital investment agency for the world’s 48 Least Developed Countries (LDCs). UNCDF uses its capital mandate to help LDCs pursue inclusive growth.

Ms Judith Karl, Executive Secretary of UNCDF, will be delivering the opening address at the Pacific Microfinance Week on 22 September 2015.

In addition, Ms Karl will also be launching the “Solomon Islands Financial Services Demand Side Survey” report with the Central Bank of Solomon Islands.

UNCDF has a unique role in providing investment capital and technical support to both public and private sectors in developing countries around the world to progressively improve their economies.

In the Pacific, UNCDF and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) are jointly managing the Pacific Financial Inclusion Programme, a Pacific-wide programme helping low-income households gain access to quality and affordable financial services and financial education, with Australian Government, European Union and New Zealand Government as development partners.

"UNCDF is recognised internationally as an innovator in both policy and practice of financial inclusion and we’re looking forward to Ms Karl sharing insights and experience on financial inclusion trends, achievements and learnings from across UNCDF’s country and global programmes, and implications for the Pacific” said Stephen Taylor, Executive Governor of the Foundation for Development Cooperation.

Pacific Microfinance Week (PMW) 2015 is the region’s leading event on microfinance and financial inclusion convened by the Microfinance Pasifika Network, and organised by the Foundation for Development Cooperation, together with major event sponsors; the Pacific Financial Inclusion Programme and Asian Development Bank, and the Central Bank of Solomon Islands as local host.

PMW 2015, being held in Honiara from September 21 through 25, is a week-long series of events, meetings and gatherings of organisations and individuals with an interest in promoting the provision of inclusive and sustainable financial services in the Pacific.

The focus of PMW 2015 is on “Next mile financial services in the Pacific”, and will include panels and workshops on topics such as:

- Digital finance and delivery channels;
- Women’s empowerment through access to finance;
- Growing micro clients' businesses;
- Products and services innovation;
- Value chain microfinance; and
- A special session on financial inclusion in the Solomon Islands.

Over 150 delegates representing microfinance institutions, domestic government agencies, credit unions, community-based institutions, commercial banks, mobile network operators, central banks and regulators, development banks, insurance companies, educational and research institutions, donor groups, NGOs, hardware and software providers, consultants and professional service firms, are expected to attend.

Delegates can look forward to exploring product and delivery innovations in financial inclusion, sharing knowledge and experience with peers across the Pacific, and forming new partnerships to develop ideas and initiatives.