



## **A Brief Note on Microfinance Community of Practice, Solution Exchange and UNDP's Publication - "Knowledge Products of Microfinance – A Synthesis of Consolidated Replies"**

The Solution Exchange, United Nations and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), India jointly published – "Knowledge Products of Microfinance – A synthesis of consolidated Replies". The publication was launched on 19 May 2009 in an international workshop on Financial Inclusion, organized by the UNDP Regional Centre, Colombo in collaboration with United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF).

The Solution Exchange is a unique knowledge sharing initiative of the United Nations in India, targeted at helping development practitioners to move towards attaining national and Millennium Development Goals. The Microfinance Community of Practice, Solution exchange is co-facilitated by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and International Labor Organisation (ILO).

In this document, fifty Knowledge products are classified into five major themes:

- Microfinance Products, Services and Delivery Mechanism;
- Microfinance for Livelihoods and its Sub sectors;
- Microfinance for Inclusion;
- Microfinance Technologies, Tools, Processes and Systems; and
- Enabling Policy and Institutional Environment for Microfinance

Besides thematic coverage, the document covers issues related to all the three environments of microfinance – internal (Micro), intermediary (Meso) and external (Macro).

This document incorporates synthesis papers on all the five themes. These papers not only present an overview of the discussions held within the MF Community but also identify the strategically crucial issues that need to be taken up for discussion in the coming year. Synthesis papers give a broad idea of the particular theme. These papers also provide inputs to different microfinance players on important issues to be addressed in the MF sector.

The preparation of this synthesis document owes a great deal to all the contributors of 50 Knowledge Products incorporated in this document. These contributors are members of Microfinance Community of practice representing a variety of organizations - NGOs, Civil Society institutions, Microfinance institutions (MFIs), Cooperatives, Research and Management institutions, private companies, Government and UN organizations. Some of the respondents are independent experts, activists, consultants and researchers.

### **Use of the Synthesis Document**

- For practitioners of Microfinance, this volume is a reference book for trouble shooting and problem solving on day-to-day problems faced by them in implementing microfinance at grassroots.
- For others, it should be useful for guiding future work on various innovative issues (e.g. 'Health Mutuals', Microfinance in disaster affected areas, Micro health insurance, Housing microfinance for the poor, etc.).
- The document will be of special interest to agencies working on financial inclusion of the most disadvantaged groups in India.
- The document could be useful in preparation of new projects on poverty reduction, livelihood promotion and microfinance as the five themes covers a wide variety of development issues.
- The volume also lists agencies and experts working on various topics within Microfinance, who may be available as a common pool resource to guide formulation of new projects and to design ongoing projects.
- The document will be useful for getting tools and technologies on monitoring and evaluation, impact assessment and identification of clients.

In order to maintain the technical quality, the document was reviewed at two levels - internal and external. Ms. Prema Gera, Head Poverty Unit and Mr. Pankaj M&E Analyst, UNDP India were the internal reviewers. Besides internal reviewers, two national level microfinance experts - Mr. Harish Chotani and Mr. Brij Mohan have also provided technical inputs as external peer reviewers.

### **Future Plan**

We plan to translate this document into local languages so as to reach grassroots organisations and practitioners. UNDP India is open to partner organizations in different states translating this document into regional languages and disseminating it to a wider audience.

We have also planned to publish directories of organisations and experts recommended by our members for the benefit of microfinance practitioners.