
INTERNET RESOURCES ON MICROFINANCE*

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From its genesis, microfinance has been accompanied by an academic interest, and this has enabled us to register its development, to identify new supplies of analysis, and to case-study the impacts that this set of financial products have in reducing poverty and human development.

The contemporary approach of microcredit came in 1976 in Bangladesh, as part of an academic research project implemented by the Professor in Economics and Nobel Peace Prize, Muhammad Yunus, starting a new era of research in this area. The participation of National and International institutions—both public and private—in these financing systems, came with a growing academic, political, social and informative interest, resulting in an amalgam of empirical and scientific approaches that now represent the current universe of information resources on microfinance.

Although it is not the subject of this section to address in too much detail all the work and/or references about information on microfinance—considering the volume of resources available—, this section does intend to offer an overview on the bodies and sources of information for the study of microfinance around the world. In this way, the following is a list of major organizations and relevant sources, so that we can understand the state of the art on microfinance. This list is accompanied by relevant websites, where readers can investigate further.

Multilateral institutions

The United Nations Organization has shown a great interest in microfinance, declaring 2005 as International Year of Microcredit. He also created the United Nations Fund for the Development of Capitalization as a specialized agency in the matter. Within the UN network, it is possible to find literature,

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policies and events, among other resources, linking microfinance with various areas for Development and international campaigns, such as the Millennium Objectives for Development.

www.un.org
www.yearofmicrocredit.org
www.uncdf.org

Multilateral Banks for Development have recognized the importance of microfinance in developing countries, and have included it among its main areas of work. In these institutions microfinance is dealt with different approaches, responding to the characteristics and needs of each region. These institutions are an excellent source of information on projects, stakeholders, legislation, best practices and strategies that link these financial services to poverty reduction.

World Bank
www.bancomundial.org

Inter-American Development Bank
www.iadb.org

African Development Bank
www.afdb.org

Asian Development Bank
www.adb.org

Networks of Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) in Latin America

These networks have emerged with the aim of creating institutional platforms of action to facilitate coordination of national and regional microfinance:

Latin American and Caribbean Forum on Rural Finance
www.forolacfr.org

Central American and Caribbean Network of Microfinance
www.redcamif.org

Pro Development, Finance and Small Business, A.C. of Mexico
www.prodesarrollo.org

Association of Financial Entities Specialized in Microfinance in Bolivia
www.asofinbolivia.com

Microcredit Institutions Network in Argentina
www.reddemicrocredito.org

Colombia Entrepreneur Network
www.cooperativaemprender.com

Ecuador Financial Rural Network
www.rfr.org.ec

Microfinanzas.org Network
www.microfinanzas.org

Private sector

The increasing interest shown by the private sector in recent years in microfinance should be taken into account, either through the inclusion of such services in its corporate offering, IMF capital investment, or through their CSR projects (Corporate Social Responsibility Projects). Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the work of some of these entities:

Deutsche Bank Microcredit Development Fund
www.db.com

Sequoia Capital
www.sequoiacap.com

Standard Chartered
www.standardchartered.com

Credit Suisse Group
www.credit-suisse.com

Catalyst Microfinance Investors
www.catalyst-microfinance.com

World Business Council for Sustainable Development
www.wbcsd.org

MIX Market
www.mixmarket.org

Planet Rating
www.planetrating.com

Universities and research centres

Finally, as mentioned at the beginning of this section, microfinance has been accompanied by academic contributions from universities and research centres. The contributions of these institutions are key if we want to understand the evolution of the phenomenon and identify its relationship with the components of human development. The following are just some of these instances:

Centre for Micro Finance
www.ifmr.ac.in

Center for International Development Harvard University
[www.cid.harvard.edu / micro](http://www.cid.harvard.edu/micro)

Microfinance Gateway
<http://www.microfinancegateway.org>

Microfinance Meets University
www.universitymeetsmicrofinance.eu

Center for European Research in Microfinance
www.cermi.eu

Uganda Martyrs University - Department of Micro Finance
www.fiuc.org

University of Bergamo - Research Group Finance and Development
www.unibg.it

Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India
www.ediindia.org

Rural Microfinance and Employment
www.rume-rural-microfinance.org

Microsave
www.microsave.org.

INCAE Business School
www.incae.edu

Other sources of information

Considering their contributions in creating innovative microfinance services, lending methodologies, studies, initiatives to reduce poverty that combines microfinance with gender, remittances, education, technology, public-private partnerships, among other issues, we must also take into consideration the work of the following institutions:

Consultative Group to Assist the Poor
www.cgap.org

Yunus Centre
www.muhammadyunus.org

Women for Women International
www.womenforwomen.org

Opportunity International
www.opportunity.org

Accion International
www.accion.org

FINCA International
www.finca.org

Multilateral Investment Fund
www5.iadb.org/mif

Spanish Agency for International Development
www.aecid.es

Canadian International Development Agency
www.acdi-cida.gc.ca

United States Agency for International Development
www.usaid.gov

Ford Foundation
www.fordfoundation.org

Michael & Susan Dell Foundation
www.msdf.org

Omidyar Network
www.omidyar.com

Social Performance Task Force
www.sptf.info