

FARM Seminar - press release - Tuesday 5 /11/ 07

Which microfinance for developing countries' agriculture?

**What microfinance can contribute to agriculture in developing countries:
4 - 5 - 6 December, 2007**

Access to finance is a prerequisite for modernizing agriculture, a critical element of poverty reduction. The expansion of microfinance institutions should be reducing the overwhelming majority of peasants in developing countries who are currently excluded from formal banking systems. Yet agricultural loans by these promising institutions are few and far between. Indeed, the specificities of agriculture—high climactic and economic risks, dispersed populations, low profitability of activities financed—require distinct approaches and modalities.

Given all this, **what can microfinance contribute to agriculture in development countries?**

This is the theme of the international seminar that will take place at the Pierre Mendès France Conference Center in Paris, organized by the **Institute for Public Management and Economic Development (IGPDE)** and the **Foundation for world Agriculture and Rural Life (FARM)**.

The seminar will take stock of current initiatives and formulate proposals for microfinance to respond more fully to the needs of the agricultural sector. Examples from Africa, Madagascar, Asia and Latin America, too often ignored, will be presented by the various actors—agricultural organizations, microfinance networks, public authorities—committed to making sustainable agricultural microfinance a reality.

The seminar will bring together peasant leaders, financial experts, researchers, political and government authorities from around the world. Over three-hundred people are expected to come together to share their viewpoints during the three plenary sessions and six workshops planned around many key questions: **What have we learned so far? What is new? Has any one model emerged as a reference? Under what conditions can microfinance bring about economic development? What role can governments play?**

The organization of this seminar has been made possible by the following institutions committed to rural finance: **Agence Française de Développement, AREF, Crédit Agricole S.A., CERISE, FERT, HEC, ICAR, IFAD, Planet Finance, SOS FAIM.**

**Rendez-vous at the Pierre Mendès France Conference Center,
139 rue de Bercy – Paris 75012**

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