

2020

Activity Report

of the e-MFP Secretariat

ADVANCING
FINANCIAL
INCLUSION



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MICROFINANCE
PLATFORM

NETWORKING WITH THE SOUTH

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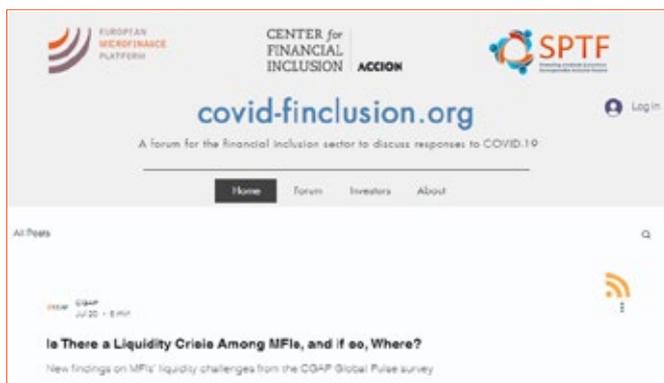
NETWORKING WITH THE SOUTH

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ACTIVITIES IN 2020

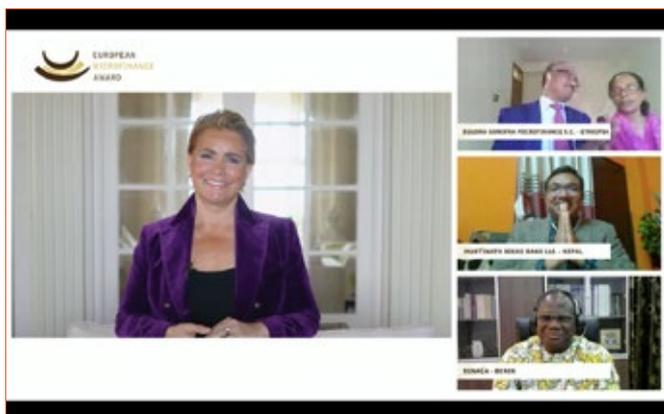
The Platform's Year in Focus

Another year has passed – but one like no other before it. By the start of Spring 2020, it was becoming clear that the Covid-19 pandemic would pose a critical threat to the sector – to providers, funders, support providers, regulators, and of course, to clients. e-MFP responded quickly to this change in circumstances, and re-configured a lot of the planned activities for 2020. We knew that e-MFP could – and indeed must – add value, to its members and the broader sector. But we knew as well that, while assisting in the sector-wide response to the pandemic would be critical, we would need to continue our typical activities alongside. This has meant an enormous amount of work and planning, and we are proud that not only have we introduced new workstreams (supporting the collective investor response on moratoria, launching a dedicated blog and discussion forum called covid-finclusion.org, conducting webinars, and producing case studies of responses to previous crises, as just some examples), but we have continued to publish members' blogs, run the *Compass* survey, produce the EMA 2019 and 2020 publications – and many others.



The European Microfinance Award this year has been on *Encouraging Effective & Inclusive Savings*. The team that oversees the Award decided not only that the Award should continue to go ahead (despite the immense pressures on potential applicants this year), but that, indeed, this topic has never been more important. So there were some extensions to deadlines in the early stages of the Award process, and the application form re-focused to include applicants' responses to the challenges of Covid-19 and lockdowns, and especially their use of savings products and services to help protect vulnerable clients during these most difficult times.

This decision was entirely vindicated when a record field of 70 institutions applied for the Award – above even the most ambitious forecasts. Moreover, a full 38 out of 38 applicants that were invited to continue to the pre-selection phase elected to do so, and in doing so revealed a fascinating and diverse array of responses to these challenges. Effective and inclusive savings have never been more important and valuable than right now, and we are gratified that so many institutions share this perspective.



European Microfinance Week (EMW) is the Platform's flagship event and in November 2019 prior to the covid travel restrictions, our 2019 conference brought together 450 stakeholders from 62 countries at the Abbaye de Neumünster in Luxembourg to present and debate the key current and future issues in the financial inclusion sector. EMW 2019 featured three plenary sessions which were complemented by a diverse range of workshop sessions – featuring over 90 organisations – which showcased the most exciting innovations advancing sustainable and responsible financial inclusion around the world (more details on page 31).

Our 2020 event, in face of the global health situation, was virtual and while the decision to take EMW2020 online was a result of current circumstances, it also meant abundant opportunities – to bring the work, initiatives, ideas and discussions to a much broader international audience, while at the same time adapting the format of sessions to maximise interactivity and engagement. We were proud to host 55 sessions and delighted to welcome over 500 participants from 60 countries for our first virtual EMW which we will report on in our next Activity Report.



In 2020, our Action Groups continued to be an important driver of e-MFP's activities, despite the many challenges faced due to the Covid-19 crisis. The year started with the creation of the new AG 'From Research to Practice', which quickly had to reshape its year plan focusing on a research project on the impact of the crisis in the financial inclusion value chain. The research initial results were presented through a creative video at one of the ten sessions organised by e-MFP AGs at the European Microfinance Week 2020. This strong involvement at EMW shows the energy and commitment of AG members with ambitious plans of activities for 2020-2021 being approved for the Green Inclusive and Climate Smart Finance AG and the Human Resources Development AG (see more on page 12).

It's fair to say that this has been the most challenging year in e-MFP's history, and one which has involved unprecedented productivity. This annual activity report provides a summary to our members of what we have been doing this year – from Covid-specific workstreams to Action Groups, publications and new communications models – and to put these activities in the context of what e-MFP has planned for the future, always ensuring that everything we do is responsive to the concerns, ideas and priorities of our members and the financial inclusion sector at large.

We hope you find this report interesting, and I'd like to thank all the e-MFP members, the e-MFP Board, our sponsors, funders and the dedicated e-MFP Secretariat, without all of whom none of this would be possible.

Christopher Pausch, Executive Secretary

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COMMUNITY IS STRENGTH.

BE STRONG. LET'S LOOK OUT FOR ONE ANOTHER.

Photo credit: John Cameron via Unsplash

John Cameron via Unsplash

ABOUT US

The European Microfinance Platform (e-MFP) is the leading network of European organisations and individuals active in the financial inclusion sector in developing countries. e-MFP has grown to 130 members from all geographic regions and specialisations of the microfinance community, including consultants & support service providers, investors, financial institutions, multilateral & national development agencies, NGOs and researchers.

Up to two billion people remain financially excluded. To address this, the Platform promotes co-operation, dialogue and innovation among these diverse stakeholders working in developing countries. e-MFP fosters activities which increase global access to affordable, quality sustainable and inclusive financial services for the un(der)banked by driving knowledge-sharing, partnership development and innovation.

e-MFP members believe that everyone should have access to financial services and that microfinance contributes to this goal.

Our mission implies:

- Strong expertise due to the professional quality of its members which include the large majority of relevant European microfinance and inclusive finance actors;
- Interconnection with other microfinance and inclusive finance actors around the world;
- Ongoing dialogue with public authorities; and
- Support initiatives contributing to developing the microfinance and the inclusive finance sector.



Vision

Our vision is to be the leading European platform working towards the goal of universal financial inclusion



Mission

e-MFP facilitates networking, knowledge creation and sharing, fosters collaboration and advocates sustainable microfinance and inclusive finance globally



WE WISH A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS:

e-MFP MEMBERSHIP

e-MFP currently has three types of members: Full members, Associate members and Sponsors.

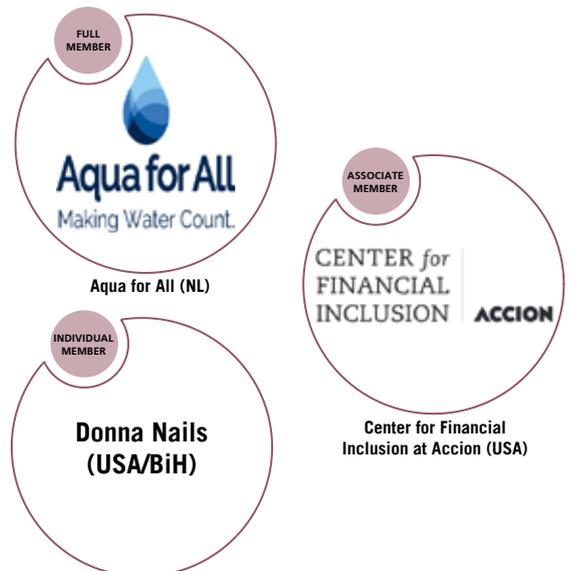
FULL MEMBERSHIP is open to entities with headquarters based in Europe supporting microfinance in Southern countries. These members considered as “Associés” in terms of the Luxemburgish Law, have the right to participate in all activities and Action Groups of the Platform and to vote in the governing bodies of the Platform, including the election rights for the Board of Directors of the Platform.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP is open to any entities or individuals which are involved in the development of the microfinance sector inside or outside Europe. Associate members have the right to participate in the activities of the Platform and to be present at the General Meeting of Members. However, they do not have the right to vote in its governing bodies.

In addition, e-MFP considers a third type which is different from the first two members and named “**SPONSOR**”. An entity that does not meet the criteria to become a full or associate member or that does not want to become a member but wants to support specific activities of the Platform may become a “sponsor” of e-MFP. This relationship is determined on a case by case basis between the potential sponsor and the Board of Directors of the Platform. Sponsors do not have the right to vote in the governing bodies of the e-MFP but may be admitted to the General Meeting of Members on special invitation issued by the Board.

The Platform gathers actors located in various European countries and, having different backgrounds and interests in the financial inclusion sector including consultants & support service providers, financial institutions, investors, multilateral & national development agencies, NGOs and researchers.

Always proactive in our efforts to attract new members and increase representation from all specialisations and geographic regions of the financial inclusion community, in 2020 we were delighted to welcome 3 new members.

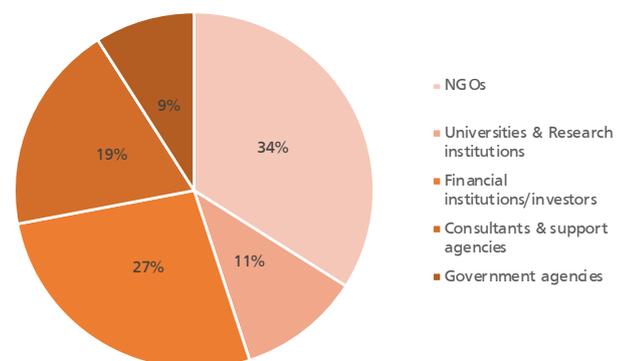


At the end of 2020 e-MFP had 82 full members, 22 associate members (organisations) and 26 associate individual members.

The diversity of our membership (see chart) demonstrates our unique multi-stakeholder nature representing the full spectrum of the financial inclusion sector.

Current number of members: 130
 European countries: 21
 Non-European countries represented: 7

PEER GROUPS OF MEMBER ORGANISATIONS



e-MFP MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

e-MFP membership is a must for microfinance professionals working in developing countries. e-MFP offers great networking, promoting active cooperation and knowledge sharing between members which furthers new opportunities. Membership benefits include:

The European Microfinance Platform (e-MFP), with **over 130 members from all geographic regions**, is the sector-leading network working towards the goal of universal financial inclusion. Membership of our unique community is an invaluable resource for financial inclusion professionals operating in developing countries.

Whether Full Membership – available to European-based organisations – or Associate Membership – for individual or non-European based bodies – e-MFP membership is a must, offering **great networking, promoting active cooperation and knowledge creation & sharing between members** which furthers new opportunities.

Peer-to-Peer Collaboration & Outreach

- Unique networking opportunities with leading financial inclusion organisations
- Affiliation with a global network of leading experts
- Engage in active partnerships with key sector initiatives
- Collaborate and influence the sector through e-MFP's activities
- Learn from an unparalleled field of experts from across the sector at workshops and other knowledge-sharing events
- Participate in e-MFP Action Groups
- Organise events (Offsite Sessions) in collaboration with e-MFP

Visibility & Communication

- Showcase your work in e-MFP knowledge and communications channels
- Leverage e-MFP's media partnerships with key industry knowledge portals
- Include your logo and profile on e-MFP website
- Subscribe to the e-MFP newsletter and members e-Bulletin service
- Announce events and job vacancies
- Access to a range of publications each year on the hottest topics of the sector
- Full members: representative at Board of Directors & full voting rights at the General Meeting of Members

European Microfinance Week

EMW is one of the top events in the financial inclusion calendar

- One free entry for institutional members/registration fee discount for individual members
- Shape the agenda by suggesting sessions, topics and speakers
- Organise parallel meetings and events

[Learn more](#)



MIMOSA

- Discounted subscription rate (5%) to MIMOSA reports
- Project updates, including announcements of recently completed MIMOSA reports
- Free access to historical country scores and reports
- For university members and other researchers: ad hoc access to some of its datasets

[Learn more](#)



Research

- Participate at the biennial European Research Conference on Microfinance
- Join e-MFP Scientific Committee
- Research and academic members: host the European Research Conference on Microfinance

Trainings

- Discounted rate for Frankfurt School of Finance & Management's online certified expert programmes
- Opportunity to propose trainings
- Discounted rate for trainings organised by e-MFP

European Microfinance Award

- Support your partners' applications
- Opportunity to be a member of the Selection Committee - panel of experts that selects the Award semifinalists and three finalists
- Invitation to the prestigious European Microfinance Award ceremony

[Learn more](#)



e-MFP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The e-MFP Board of Directors is the general overseeing body of e-MFP and has currently 10 members who are appointed by the General Meeting of Members for a 2-year period. Board members can be re-elected for more than one term.

In November 2019 Ms. Anne Contreras-Muller was elected to the Board. Ms. Josien Sluijs and Mr. Aurélien Hollar left the Board. We warmly welcome Ms. Contreras-Muller and would like to thank Ms. Josien Sluijs and Mr. Hollar for their support and commitment during their terms.

Board's responsibilities:

- Decision on the strategic direction and objectives of the e-MFP
- Approval of the e-MFP budget
- Approval of the e-MFP annual accounts
- Supporting e-MFP with their expertise

THE e-MFP BOARD 2020



Laura Hemrika
nominated by Credit Suisse
Chairwoman



Marc Bichler
nominated by ADA and
LMDF
Deputy Chairman



Alan Moore
nominated by ILCU
Development Foundation
Treasurer



Claudia Belli
nominated by BNP Paribas



Pierre van Hedel
nominated by Rabobank
Foundation



**Anne Contreras-
Muller**
Arendt & Medernach



Marie-Anne Marx
nominated by the
Luxembourg Ministry of
Foreign and European
Affairs – Directorate for
Development Cooperation
and Humanitarian Affairs



Aimée Suarez
nominated by WSBI



Sachin S. Vankalas
nominated by LuxFLAG



Johann Will
nominated by KfW



Specific tasks and responsibilities of the Board are allocated to four sub-committees:

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: The Executive Committee consists of the Chairwoman, the Deputy Chairman, the Treasurer and the Secretary of the Board; it is entrusted with the day-to-day powers delegated by the Board and fulfils this role with the support of the Secretariat.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: The Membership Committee's objective is, with the support of the Secretariat, to work on membership development. The committee's role is to: identify and approach potential new members; consider applications from new members and recommend them for approval to the Board; assess the current membership in order to determine strengths and weaknesses in its coverage (e.g. geographic or by sector/peer group). In 2020, Claudia Belli, Marie-Anne Marx, Anne Contreras-Muller and Pierre van Hedel were active in this committee.

ACTION GROUP COMMITTEE: This committee's role is to

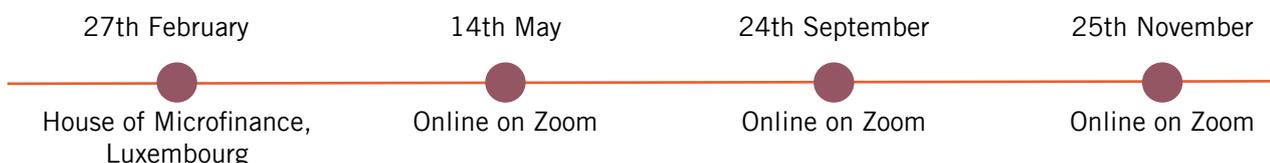
ensure that our Action Groups and their initiatives are relevant to the e-MFP network and the whole financial inclusion sector. In 2020, Alan Moore, Aimée Suarez and Johann Will were members of this committee.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE: This committee provides ideas and support on the topics the Secretariat should focus on and also gives the necessary feedback on research work done by the Secretariat. In 2020 Marc Bichler, Laura Hemrika and Johann Will were members of this Committee.

EUROPEAN MICROFINANCE WEEK COMMITTEE: This committee supports the Secretariat in the preparation of the annual conference. In 2020 Claudia Belli and Pierre van Hedel, Aimée Suarez and Sachin Vankalas were members of this committee.

Additionally in 2020, the **EUROPEAN MICROFINANCE AWARD COMMITTEE** assisted the Secretariat in decisions concerning the Award. Members of the committee were Claudia Belli, Marie-Anne Marx and Sachin Vankalas.

2020 BOARD MEETINGS



Preparation, organisation, minutes and follow-up activities related to Board meetings are taken care of by the e-MFP Secretariat.

THE e-MFP TEAM 2020

In 2020 we welcomed Joana Silva Afonso to e-MFP's dynamic, multicultural and multilingual team of seven which serves e-MFP's 130 members.



Christoph Pausch
Executive Secretary
cpausch@e-mfp.eu



Daniel Rozas
Senior Microfinance Expert
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Gabriela Erica García
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Joana Silva Afonso
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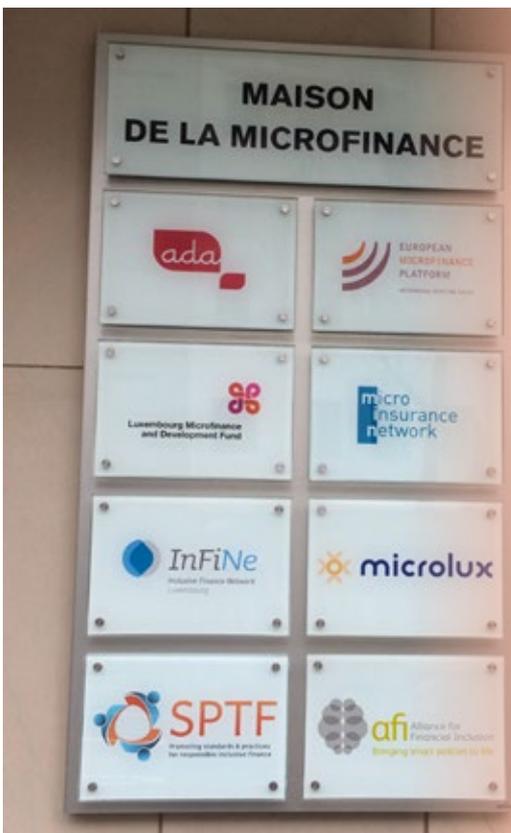
Sam Mendelson
Financial Inclusion
Specialist
smendelson@e-mfp.eu



Niamh Watters
Information Officer
nwatters@e-mfp.eu



Camille Dassy
Communication &
Administration Officer
cdassy@e-mfp.eu



WHERE TO FIND US

The European Microfinance Platform's office is situated in the House of Microfinance in Luxembourg City which also includes the offices of ADA, the Luxembourg Microfinance and Development Fund, the Microinsurance Network, the Inclusive Finance Network Luxembourg (InFiNe.lu), Microlux and SPTF. In 2020 we also welcomed the Alliance of Financial Inclusion (AFI) who opened their Europe representative office.

The House of Microfinance is situated at:

39, rue Glesener
L-1631 Luxembourg
Tel : + 352 2627 1382
Email: contact@e-mfp.eu
www.e-mfp.eu

e-MFP'S ACTION GROUPS



The e-MFP Action Groups (AGs) are an opportunity for members to join forces on specific projects or activities on common areas of interest. The Action Groups provide a unique cross-sector forum, enabling constructive dialogue and cooperation within the platform, and contributing to the advancement of the whole financial inclusion sector.

In 2020, e-MFP's Action Groups continued to be an important driver of e-MFP's activities, despite the many challenges faced due to the Covid-19 crisis. Recognising the relevance of their work, the e-MFP Secretariat sought to strengthen the support provided to the Groups in their different stages. This included nurturing the creation of the AG 'From Research to Practice' as well as supporting the existing Groups in planning and implementing some of their activities, and in disseminating their results through different types of outputs (publications, webinars and other online events, etc.).

The e-MFP Secretariat would like to thank all members involved in the Action Groups for their ideas, their valuable time, and their enthusiasm and dedication, without which the activities described below would not have been possible. In the complex and volatile scenario of 2020, a very special thank you goes to the heads of the Action Groups for adapting to the new situation and guaranteeing the engagement of the AGs' members throughout the year. For the e-MFP Secretariat, it is rewarding to see that the experience of e-MFP's Action Groups in 2020 is a good example of an increasing cooperation between diverse financial inclusion actors, that has been enhanced by the response to the pandemic.

If your organization would like to join any of the Action Groups, do not hesitate to contact e-MFP Secretariat (jafonso@e-mfp.eu).



The screenshot shows a Beamer presentation slide with the following content:

- Logos:** EUROPEAN MICROFINANCE PLATFORM (with tagline 'REINTEGRATING WITH THE SOUTH') and GICSF e-MFP AG.
- Title:** Think Tank - Learning from the heroes
- Agenda:**
 - Bringing together 20 – 30 MFIs
 - Lessons learned
 - Exchange of experiences
 - Crossborder sister MFIs
- Expected outputs:**
 - Guidelines on green product and service implementation
 - Match best local practices with highest international standards to make green inclusive finance grow
- Call to Action:** Propose your MFIs!
- Illustration:** A cartoon illustration of two figures holding up a box with a recycling symbol, standing next to a tree and a clipboard with a green checkmark.



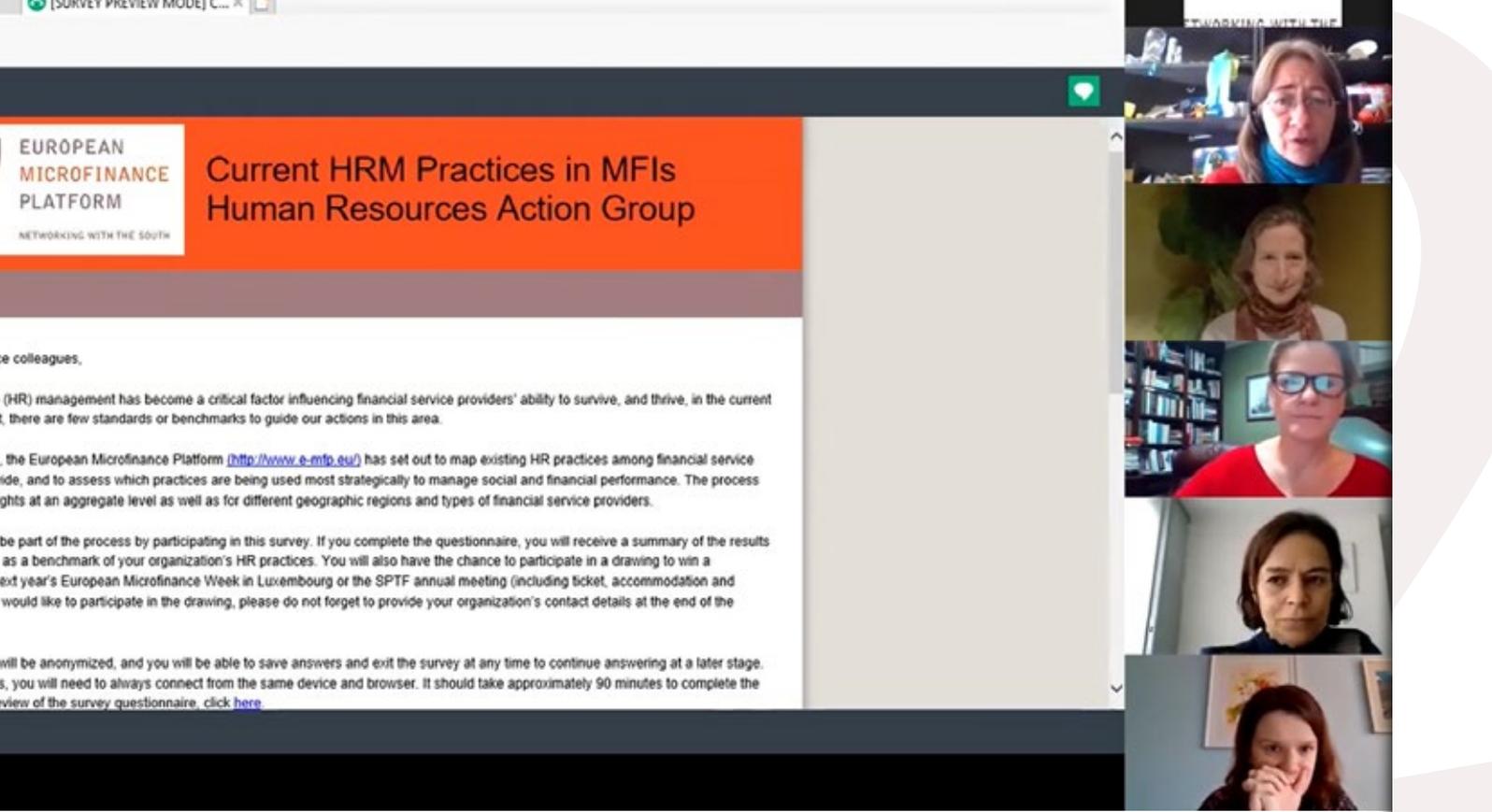
e-MFP GREEN INCLUSIVE & CLIMATE SMART FINANCE ACTION GROUP

The GICSF Action Group is the e-MFP AG that has been active for the longest time, with continuous activities since 2013. It counts 30 active participants, including 21 e-MFP members and also external organisations relevant in the environmental field, such as UNEP.

During the year 2020, the AG focused on preparing the update of the Green Index, involving and collecting inputs from a large number of AG members from different peer groups (investors, researchers, NGOs, consultants, government organisations, etc.), and working with SPTF, CERISE and the e-MFP Secretariat in a collaboration project to develop a new Dimension 7 of the Universal Standards of SPM. The project started in September 2020 and aims to align the new Green Index 3.0 and the environmental dimension of USSPM, which is expected to become a mandatory section of SPI4.

Besides this significant collaboration, the AG plan of activities 2020-2021, approved by the e-MFP Board in October, includes a number of other initiatives aiming to share knowledge and information on green inclusive and climate smart finance as well as build capacity among different stakeholders through trainings. Among the activities already being developed by the AG are a series of webinars to showcase the work of AG members on green finance, 3 webinars in different languages in partnership with FinDev to disseminate the Green Index and an online library. These activities are being supported by two junior consultants, Cecilia Scott and Silvia Recupero. At EMW 2020, the AG organised 4 sessions with high participation, including an open working session where the new plan of activities was presented; a training on the Green Index and a panel with SPTF presenting the work and results of the joint project. The fourth session focused on investing in green finance highlighting FSPs' funding needs and funders' requirements, with three FSPs (Fondersurco, FDL and CACMU) and three investors (BNP Paribas, BBVA and SIDI) sharing their experiences.

Action Group Heads: Natalia Realpe Carrillo, HEDERA; Davide Forcella, CERMi and Yapu Solutions.



e-MFP HUMAN RESOURCES ACTION GROUP

The Action Group on Human Resources (former AG on Human Capacity Development) was launched in 2018 with the objective of promoting Human Resources Development as an integral part of good business practices in the microfinance sector.

During the year 2020, the AG continued the work of the previous years in the preparation of a world-wide survey on the HRD practices in the sector. Throughout the months of September and October, the AG implemented a pilot survey with 7 MFIs from Asia, Africa, Latin America and MENA region. The pilot survey allowed to test the questionnaire and collect feedback on the respondents' experience.

In October, the plan of activities 2020-2021 was approved by the e-MFP Board. The plan includes rolling out the main survey and analysing its initial results during November and December 2020. The analysis will provide inputs to the process of revision of Dimension 5 of SPTF's Universal Standards of Social Performance Management. By the end of November, the survey will be launched in 4 languages (English, French, Spanish and Russian), with its dissemination being supported by a short video produced by SPTF introducing the survey and promoting its relevance for FSPs and the sector.

The current AG Heads are Patricia Richter, International Labour Organisation – ILO; Elisabeth Niendorf, Academy of German Cooperatives – ADG; Abbad El-Rayyes, ADG.

eMFP Investor Action group LabODD Call #2

Outcome measurement and SDG

Nov 18, 2020

Virtual meeting



www.e-mfp.eu

e-MFP INVESTORS ACTION GROUP

The e-MFP Investors Action Group resulted from the enlargement of the former e-MFP Investors in Tier 2&3 MFIs Action Group. It aims to provide a platform for a broad spectrum of investors (debt & equity, social and commercial) to share experiences and collaborate in projects on areas of common interest.

In 2020, the AG worked on a project to measure the contribution of financial inclusion organisations to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The project was launched in 2019 under the coordination of CERISE and has involved not only investors but also DFIs (including AFD/Proparco, BIO and CDC) and GIIN. Despite delays in some of the activities, the validity of the work on outcomes measurement has been strengthened by the Covid-19 crisis. The growing focus on client data collection, and particularly the effort by SPTF and some investors to promote the Client Interview Tool, has been used by the AG to gather inputs that reinforce the business case for outcome measurement, and showcase collecting and using outcome data.

During the European Microfinance Week 2020, the AG organised two sessions, one of them in collaboration with SPTF's SIWG and LabODD. In these sessions, different sector stakeholders, including GIIN, FMO, Symbiotics, Oikocredit, Opportunity International and ESAF India shared their experiences measuring and reporting on SDGs outcomes. The sessions showcased some of the good practices identified within the AG project that will be part of an AG report presenting the state of practices on using the SDGs as a reporting framework for investors.

Action Group Heads: The Investors AG is coordinated by the e-MFP Secretariat.



PowerPoint Slide Show - [EMW2020_session F14R final] - PowerPoint

MICROFINANCE WEEK
connecting the inclusive finance world

EUROPEAN MICROFINANCE WEEK
connecting the inclusive finance world

Growth paths: Serving FDPs over time

Organization	Jan 2000	Jan 2019	Oct 2020
Al Majmoua	0	~17,000	6,988
UGAFODE	0	0	3,922
VisionFund	0	0	2,500
Banca Mia	0	0	3,643

Courtesy: T.Bahji, COOPMED

www.e-mfp.eu

e-MFP ACTION GROUP ON ADVANCING REFUGEE FINANCE

The Action Group Advancing Refugee Finance gathers e-MFP members interested in the topic of financial inclusion for refugees and forcibly displaced populations. The AG is an on-line community where resources - files, documents, as well as updates on upcoming events, data release, blogs and media - on the topic of Refugee Finance can be centralised, stored and shared. The online platform is open to external organisations and individuals actively working on the topic to enlarge the scope of the contributions to the online platform. By end of November 2020, the online platform counted with 63 members.

This year, following the interest shown by several e-MFP members, the Secretariat organised 3 sessions on the topic at EMW 2020 addressing the role of regulators (with GIZ and AFI), the impact of financial inclusion programmes on forcibly displaced people in Jordan and Kenya (with IRC, FMO, WFP and Catholic University Eichstätt-Ingolstadt), and the successes and challenges for FSPs providing financial services to forcibly displaced people (panel moderated by Lene Hansen with 4 FSPs – Ugafode, VisionFund Uganda, Bancamía and Al Majmoua).

If you would like to join the online community, please send a request to e-MFP by using the following link: <https://uncdf.dgroups.io/g/e-MFP.refugeeAG>

Action Group Heads: The Advancing Refugee Finance AG is coordinated by the e-MFP Secretariat.



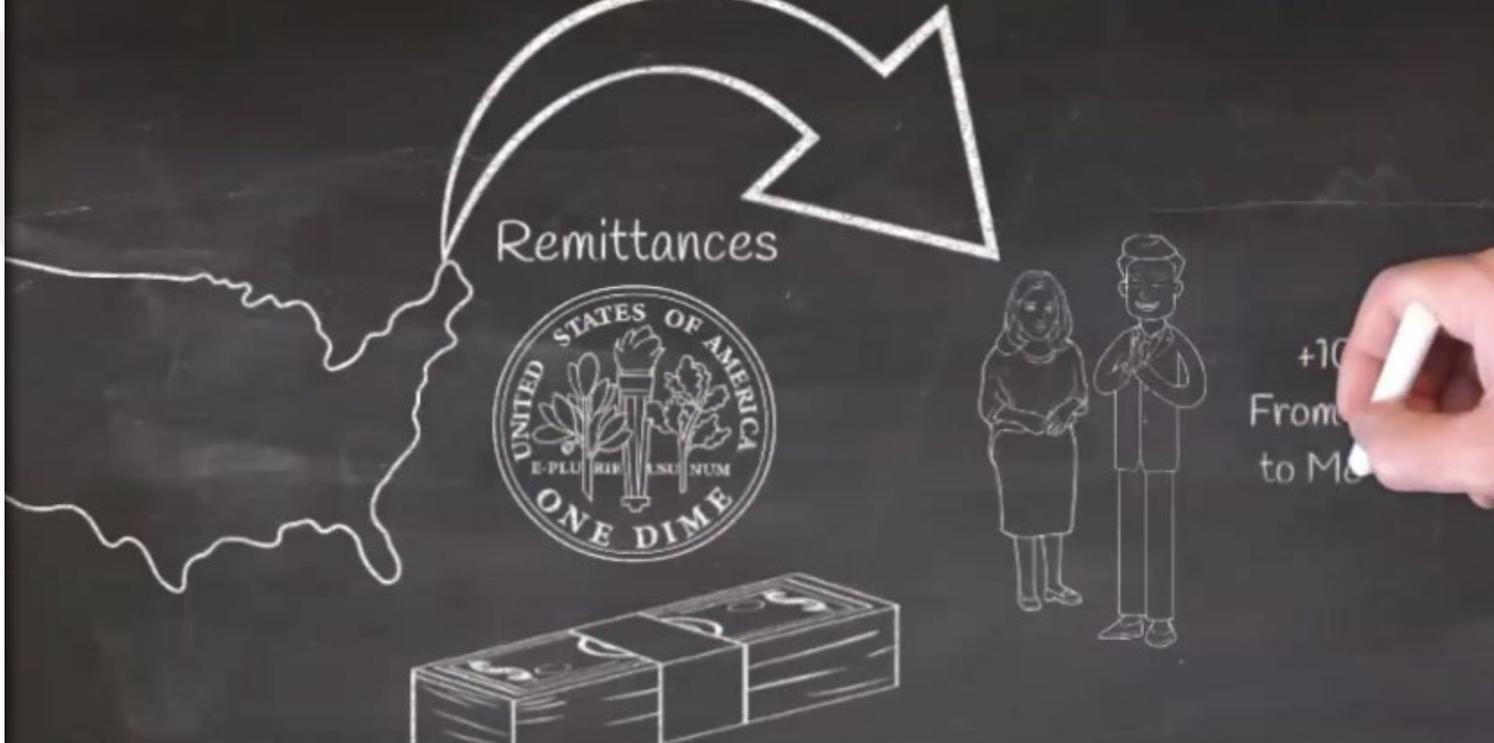
© Brett Matthews

e-MFP ACTION GROUP ON CAMBODIA

The Action Group on Cambodia was created in January 2020 in response to the increasing interest of e-MFP members on the topic of market risk in Cambodia. The AG has conducted research on the nature of distress land sales in the country, with its results being incorporated into the Cambodia Microfinance Association Lender Guidelines project. This project is supported by several members of the Action Group who participated in the working session at EMW 2020 (ADA, Proparco, Incofin, Triple Jump, Oikocredit, Grameen Cr dite Agricole, BIO, Triodos Investments, Alterfin, MFR, AFD and EIB), which also included representatives from the Cambodia Microfinance Association. The role of the AG also includes the active dissemination of the research results through publications prepared by Sam Mendelson.

As the research entails direct field study, the AG work plan in 2020 was heavily affected by the constraints resulting from the limitations on movement in Cambodia and the global restrictions to travel, however, research was restarted in Q4 and currently expected to continue into 2021, as long as the covid risk in the country remains low.

Action Group Heads: The AG is coordinated by the e-MFP Secretariat.



también se vieron afectados los flujos de remesas. Sin embargo, en algunos casos como México, las remesas de EEUU a México aumentaron durante la pandemia en un 10%.

e-MFP ACTION GROUP 'FROM RESEARCH TO PRACTICE'

The Action Group 'From Research to Practice' was created in April 2020 to bring the latest research findings, best practices and new technologies to financial inclusion practitioners in a language easily understood by all, contributing in this way to increase the usefulness and impact of research being conducted in the sector. Among its members are academics, practitioners and experts on financial inclusion and international development.

The pandemic and its consequences in the developing countries, and in particular in the financial inclusion sector, have changed the priorities of the AG. After a re-arrangement of the plan of activities for the year 2020, the AG defined a research project related to the impact of Covid-19 crisis and the responses of different stakeholders adopting a framework of analysis based on risks, opportunities, and challenges. Having the support of a young research assistant, Valentina Garofalo, the AG has conducted an extensive literature review on the topic and interviews with more than 30 key informants, including MFIs, investors, regulators, and infrastructure organisations. Contacts with the respondents have been in large extent facilitated by MFR and ADA.

At EMW 2020, the AG organised a session where the initial research results were presented through a video and a country case study (Mexico). This was the only Spanish session at EMW with the participation of a FSP (Te Creemos), an investor (Global Partnerships) and a regulator (Mexican banking and Securities Commission). In addition, the AG had an open working session to review their plan of activities, which includes the publication of the first Research Digest.

Action Group Heads: Davide Castellani, University of Bergamo; Max Niño Zarazua, Financial Inclusion and International Development Consultant

TACKLING OVER-INDEBTEDNESS THROUGH THE MIMOSA INITIATIVE PARTNERSHIP



The Microfinance Index of Market Outreach and Saturation (MIMOSA) is a major sector initiative to assess overheated markets and avoid overindebtedness. MIMOSA is an effort to fill an important gap in the sector by establishing a standard framework for measuring credit saturation. Since 2017 e-MFP has partnered this important initiative which is continuing apace. Since the last activity report, MIMOSA published two update reports -- in Bolivia and Cambodia. This maintains the project's coverage of 11 countries: Azerbaijan, Bolivia, Cambodia, India, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Peru, and Senegal. The project has also gained three new subscribers and 2 renewed subscriptions.

e-MFP OFFSITE SESSIONS

First rolled out a few years ago, 'Offsite Sessions' provide e-MFP with opportunities throughout the year for more frequent touchpoints with our members and external stakeholders, all the while advancing e-MFP's standing as a leading financial inclusion network. Offsite Sessions include different types of events, including seminars, panel discussions, training sessions, working sessions, and others, all of which have the objective of raising awareness on e-MFP and its members' activities as well as visibly engaging on the sector's pioneering topics.

During 2020, due to public health restrictions from March onwards, we had to adapt and move online, with the Brussels event in January being our only in-person gathering. However the subsequent virtual events gave us a great opportunity to reach out to an even wider audience online.



WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? TRENDS, FOCUS AREAS AND FORECASTS FROM THE FINANCIAL INCLUSION COMPASS 2019 - BRUSSELS ON JANUARY 21ST



e-MFP's Sam Mendelson, author of the *Financial Inclusion Compass 2019*, presented the trends, future areas of focus, challenges and opportunities for inclusive finance from the second e-MFP survey of financial inclusion trends in an event jointly held with the World Savings and Retail Banking Institute (WSBI) - the European Savings and Retail Banking Group (ESBG) and e-MFP. This was an opportunity not only to present the findings, but in particular to solicit feedback for the proposed 2020 edition of the Compass, including on questions, methodology and new focus areas. While much of this feedback could not be included in this year's special edition Covid-19 Financial Inclusion Compass, it will be invaluable for when the regular Compass series does resume.

Are We Managing?

An e-MFP/FIF UK Cross-Sector Panel Discussion on Covid Responses



Rolando Victoria
ASKI



Johanna Ryan
VisionFund
International
& FIF UK



Babak Abbaszadeh
Toronto Centre



Fabian Kasi
Centenary Bank



Noémie Renier
Incofin



Timothy Ogden
Financial Access Initiative



Moderator:
Sam Mendelson
e-MFP & FIF UK



THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG
Ministry of Finance



0:01 / 1:31:07

Zoom Webinar - 13 May 2020



ARE WE MANAGING? AN e-MFP/FIF UK CROSS-SECTOR PANEL DISCUSSION ON COVID RESPONSES - ONLINE ON MAY 13TH

The joint European Microfinance Platform (e-MFP) / Financial Inclusion Forum UK cross-sector panel held on 13th May with six outstanding speakers discussed how the financial inclusion sector is responding to the Covid-19 pandemic. Panelists were: Rolando Victoria, ASKI; Johanna Ryan, VisionFund International; Babak Abbaszadeh, Toronto Centre; Fabian Kasi, Centenary Bank Uganda; Noémie Renier, Incofin; Timothy Ogden, FAI and moderated by e-MFP's Sam Mendelson.

[Watch here](#)

SPECIAL EDITION COVID-19 FINANCIAL INCLUSION COMPASS, ONLINE ON JULY 13TH



Several months into a global crisis with enormous implications for the financial inclusion sector, e-MFP launched a special Covid-19 edition of the *Financial Inclusion Compass* survey in English, French and Spanish, a genuinely cross-sector look at what challenges different stakeholder groups are facing, what they see as the medium-term priorities to transition out of the crisis, and what a post-Covid sector will look like. Because of the urgency of the issues, while the final report was being written, the preliminary and pre-publication findings were presented in a webinar led by Sam Mendelson, author of the *Compass* series, and Financial Inclusion Specialist at e-MFP together with Mayada El-Zoghbi, Managing Director of the Center for Financial Inclusion (CFI) at Accion, who gave her perspectives.

[Watch here](#)

SPANISH LANGUAGE WEBINAR TO PRESENT FINDINGS ON THE COVID-19 CHALLENGES & PRIORITIES OF THE FINANCIAL INCLUSION SECTOR, SEPTEMBER 21ST

A Spanish language webinar with a particular focus on the financial inclusion sector's challenges and responses to the Covid-19 challenges in South and Central America was led by Gabriela Erice Garcia, e-MFP's Senior Microfinance Officer and part of the core team responsible for the *Compass* series. Gabriela was joined by Georgina Vazquez from Calmeadow, who shared her perspectives in response while attendees also give their input during a lively Q & A.

[Watch here](#)



Have you an idea for an Offsite Session? Don't hesitate to reach out to the Secretariat at contact@e-mfp.eu



In Spring 2020 when it was clear the impact Covid-19 would have on the financial inclusion sector, e-MFP responded quickly to assist in the response, by strengthening collaboration and leveraging links with existing partners and stakeholders.

e-MFP both actively instigated and supported a coordinated sector response to the pandemic through many different initiatives which include:

- Creation, together with CFI and SPTF, of www.covid-finclusion.org blog and discussion portal.
- Publication of a series of papers by Daniel Rozas and Sam Mendelson on triaged sector responses, especially on the importance of maintaining liquidity.
- Creation of a dedicated <http://www.e-mfp.eu/covid-19> page on e-MFP website, to solicit and centralise e-MFP members' Covid responses and publications.
- Actively supporting the coordination of the investor response to the Covid crisis, including by the group of MIVs that published the Investor MOU on a coordinated response to the crisis, and the Pledge on Key Principles to Protect MFIs.
- Organisation of a series of webinars on: the cross-sector responses to Covid; interviews with key stakeholders on lessons learnt from past crises; and on the findings from the *Covid-19 Financial Inclusion Compass*.
- Collaboration with investors (plus SPTF, CGAP, and MFR) on the development of common reporting/data platform for Covid data.
- In partnership with CFI, production of case studies of MFIs' past crisis responses, as part of larger initiative to update *Weathering the Storm* (2010 CFI paper, authored Daniel Rozas).





KNOWLEDGE @ e-MFP

Creating and exchanging knowledge is one of the most important things e-MFP does and it's highly valued by our members and others in the sector. There is no doubt that 2020 has been the year when creating and exchanging knowledge has been the most important of all, with various sector stakeholders – including e-MFP's members – looking for coordination, guidance, opinions and analysis on how to manage the Covid crisis, and to adapt lessons from the past to the present context. We'd like to thank all those who contributed their time and expertise to generate and help share this body of knowledge. In 2020, e-MFP's Covid-specific work was accompanied by a continuation of other content on our typical knowledge channels, from blogs, bulletins, surveys, and European Dialogue publications on the European Microfinance Award.

BLOGS

The e-MFP **Blog** focuses on important issues facing the financial inclusion sector and features blogs from among the e-MFP team, e-MFP members and guest bloggers. In 2020 we posted on many diverse topics.

'Our Perspectives from the Frontline' series reached out to friends around the globe, previous winners of the European Microfinance Award, to explain the impact of COVID-19 and bring us up to speed on the situation on the ground in their country.

Look back on our interviews with:

- Álvaro Aguilar Ayón, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Cooperativa Tosepantomin in Mexico;
- Mariam Djibo, CEO of Advans CI in Cote d'Ivoire;
- Margarita Cheriakbaeva, CEO of Kompanion Bank in Kyrgyzstan;
- Roshaneh Zafar, Founder and Managing Director of Kashf Foundation in Pakistan; and
- Rolando Victoria, President and CEO of Alalay sa Kaunlaran, Inc. (ASKI) in the Philippines.

Highlighting the 2020 European Microfinance Award focus on "Effective & Inclusive Savings", throughout the year e-MFP published guest blogs on the topic, including contributions from various experts who have worked in Savings over the decades.

Other blogs in 2020 included:

- "e-MFP launches 2019 Award publication, Adapting to a New Normal, synthesising factors for success in strengthening climate change resilience";
- "e-MFP's role during the COVID-19 pandemic & lessons from the European Microfinance Award on crisis contexts";
- "Urgent action on climate change must go beyond microfinance 'business as usual'";

With the realisation of the sector's need to initiate discussion and exchange on the challenges the pandemic has posed and the responses required. In April 2020 e-MFP together with the Center for Financial Inclusion at Accion and the Social Performance Task Force, launched a new platform, www.covid-finclusion.org, for original essay content and a discussion forum where sector stakeholders can ask questions, initiate discussions and provide details of their own experiences, forecasts and concerns. At the height of the pandemic and the most serious immediate threats to the sector the new site was receiving thousands of unique views, especially on a series of essays on liquidity challenges. This new platform was envisioned to be complementary to the other resources available on this topic, such as the FinDev COVID-19 hub.

Sign up to receive the latest Blog updates at <http://www.e-mfp.eu/blog>. If you've got an idea for a blog please contact Niamh Watters at the e-MFP Secretariat (nwatters@e-mfp.eu).

WEBINARS



During 2020, in addition to the virtual Offsite Sessions featuring a 'Cross-Sector Panel Discussion on Covid Responses' and the 'Special Edition *Covid-19 Financial Inclusion Compass*' (see page 20), we were delighted to also host and take part in several webinars.

- **Financial Inclusion Conversations: Learning from the past - a conversation between e-MFP's Sam Mendelson and Roshaneh Zafar of Kashf Foundation, Pakistan, 20th May 2020**
"Success in life is not always about being successful; it's when you fall down - how quickly do you get up?" e-MFP's Sam Mendelson sat down with Roshaneh Zafar of Kashf Foundation, Pakistan an institution which has successfully weathered past crises, to talk about the past, present and future.

Watch the discussion [here](#)

- **Past, Present, Future; What Previous Crises Can Teach us About the Road Ahead, 13th October Financial Inclusion Week**
The webinar held during CFI's Financial Inclusion Week, featured lessons from a series of case studies jointly published by CFI and e-MFP. The studies examine the experience of MFIs following previous crises, and steps taken by investors, board members, and leadership to set them on the path to recovery and future success. The webinar looked at lessons and recommendations for stakeholders navigating their way through the current pandemic, to similarly steer organizations toward future success as they emerge from the crisis. The panellists were: e-MFP's Daniel Rozas with Deborah Drake, CFI; Alaa Sisalem, Vitas Palestine; Aynur Aliyeva, Viator Microcredit Azerbaijan and Narasimhan Srinivasan, Development Finance expert.

Watch the discussion [here](#)

LEARNING VISIT

On 26th February e-MFP welcomed a delegation of the Nigerian Microfinance Platform (NMP) and the Microfinance Learning and Development Centre (MLDC) at the House of Microfinance. The discussions with the 21 members of this high level delegation (including well-known MFIs but also regulators such as the Central Bank of Nigeria) were excellent and the e-MFP Secretariat also arranged for them meetings with other organisations of the House of Microfinance. e-MFP and NMP agreed on exchanging information and on fields of possible collaborations such as newsletter articles and blogs.





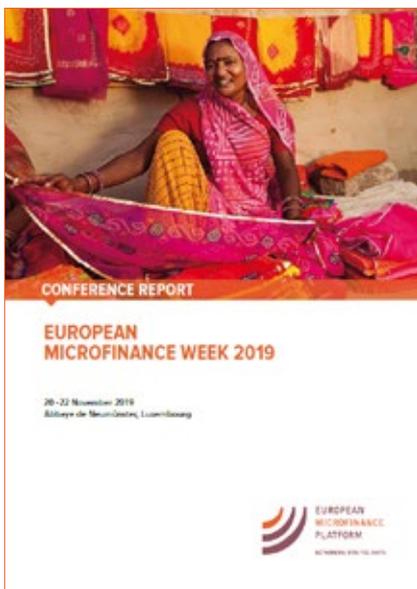
PUBLICATIONS

Each year, our **e-MFP Newsletter** provides e-MFP members and the wider community with updates on what's happening in the financial inclusion sector. Dedicated articles from members, industry experts or team members are always included, and our newsletter prides itself in offering a platform for exchange, stimulating discussion and reporting on latest trends. It presents news from the e-MFP members, Secretariat, Board and from our Action Groups and also features announcements of members' events and presents new members. Typically, we publish in both paper and electronic version four times a year and distribute to all our contacts.

In 2020, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, we adapted our newsletter to an electronic only format which focused mainly on our content related to the response of the challenges posed by Covid-19, our various blog series and online events. It is e-MFP's belief that flexibly responding to members' real needs is paramount, and that includes adjustment of the platform's typical channels.

The e-MFP Newsletters are available at <http://www.e-mfp.eu/category/newsletters>

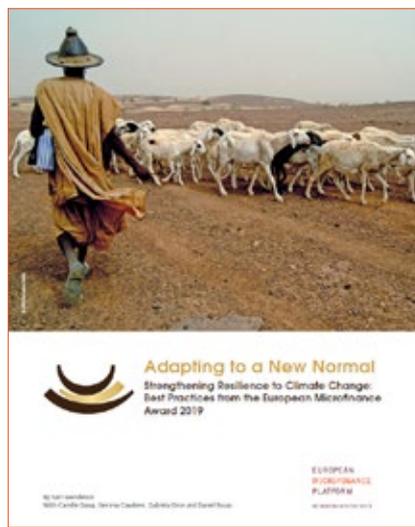




LOOKING BACK AT EUROPEAN MICROFINANCE WEEK 2019

European Microfinance Week 2019 gathered 450 leading experts from 62 countries to showcase the most exciting innovations advancing sustainable and responsible financial inclusion around the world. Catch up on the stimulating discussion and knowledge exchange in our unique extensive report which features all the sessions and brings together the important discussions, findings and presentations of the conference.

Read the report [here](#)



EUROPEAN MICROFINANCE AWARD 2019 ON STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

One of the key goals of the European Microfinance Award is collecting and disseminating the most relevant practices for replication by others. So each year we produce two important publications on the theme of the Award which in 2019 was 'Strengthening Resilience to Climate Change'.

Brochure – presents the winner and the finalists of the 2019 Award: APA Insurance Ltd., Kenya ASKI, the Philippines and Financiera Fondo de Desarrollo Local (FDL), Nicaragua See [here](#)

Adapting to a New Normal: Strengthening Resilience to Climate Change - Best Practices From The European Microfinance Award 2019 - presents the outcomes and summarises the Award process, profiling the Award semi-finalists and their relevant initiatives, extracting factors for success that distinguish these programmes. More than ever, the lessons from the 2019 Award on how to protect clients, staff and institutions from external crises are especially relevant as a Covid-threatened sector seeks to adapt today to not just one, but two 'new normals'.

See [here](#)



THE COVID-19 FINANCIAL INCLUSION COMPASS

The *Covid-19 Financial Inclusion Compass* is a special edition of the *Compass* series specifically focused on the current challenges, medium-term priorities, concerns, opportunities and forecasts for a sector facing probably the greatest crisis in its modern history. It revealed a sector that is highly anxious about the consequences of the pandemic and especially the economic downturn but there are glimmers of hope too. The *Covid-19 Compass* survey was open during June and July for two weeks, with the paper completed and published in July, preceded by a webinar, held on 13 July, to present exclusive pre-publication findings from the survey.

The *Compass* was authored by Sam Mendelson with the support of the e-MFP team and for the first time the report is available in English, Spanish and French – with the last two language versions published in September, with an accompanying webinar in Spanish.

See [here](#)



MEMBERS' SPOTLIGHT ON ENCOURAGING EFFECTIVE AND INCLUSIVE SAVINGS

e-MFP is a member-led platform, and we always want to hear what our members are doing in different fields, to increase linkages and knowledge sharing both across the platform and with other stakeholders.

Over 2020, e-MFP reached out with some questions to its members to see who was doing what in the area of this year's European Microfinance Award theme – *Encouraging Effective & Inclusive Savings*. Thanks to our members for sharing their experience!

See [here](#)

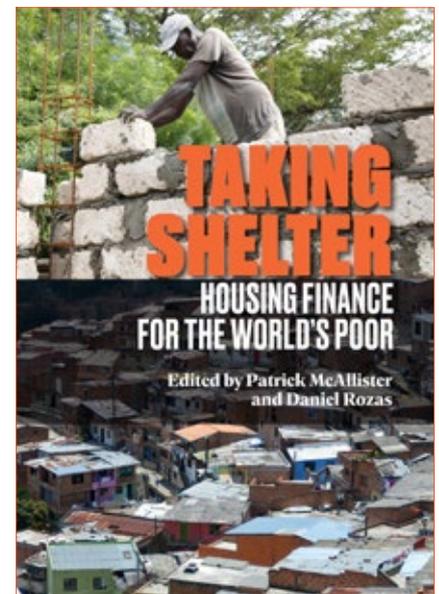


ENCOURAGING EFFECTIVE & INCLUSIVE SAVINGS: LESSONS AND BEST PRACTICES FROM THE EUROPEAN MICROFINANCE AWARD 2020

Despite the incredible challenges faced by financial service providers throughout 2020, this year's Award on Encouraging Effective & Inclusive Savings received a record number of applicants from all regions of the world. Among the various lessons that this difficult year has shown is that saving – to set goals, manage household finances but particularly to mitigate the effects of sudden financial and economic shocks – is more important than ever.

The publication covers why savings matter, how 'real' people save, why savings are valuable to clients, providers and society – before profiling the ten semi-finalists (and among them, the three finalists) from this year's Award, and places these ten organisations' initiatives into three broad categories: 'Designing Products for People and Purpose'; 'Enabling Savings through Delivery Innovation'; and 'Encouraging Clients to Save'. The paper concludes with the 'Factors for Success' that have emerged over this almost year-long evaluation process: what distinguishes the exceptional initiatives profiled within *Encouraging Effective & Inclusive Savings*, and how can other organisations replicate their success?

See [here](#)



e-MFP PUBLISHES ITS FIRST BOOK: TAKING SHELTER: HOUSING FINANCE FOR THE WORLD'S POOR

In November, e-MFP was delighted to publish in partnership with Practical Action Publishing, its first book: "Taking Shelter: Housing Finance for the World's Poor." Co-edited by Patrick McAllister and e-MFP's Daniel Rozas and generously funded by Calmeadow, Credit Suisse, Habitat for Humanity, Triple Jump and the Agence Française de Développement, the new volume explores the full spectrum of housing finance practice, from the perspective of the household, the FSP, investors, and regulators and policymakers.

Taking Shelter draws on the experience of nearly a dozen expert authors and their contributions are woven together into a seamless volume by the editors who close the book by calling on all the stakeholders in the sector -- providers, investors and policymakers -- to up their efforts and make housing finance available to poor households around the world.

Watch the teaser video [here](#)

Learn more on the Practical Action website [here](#)

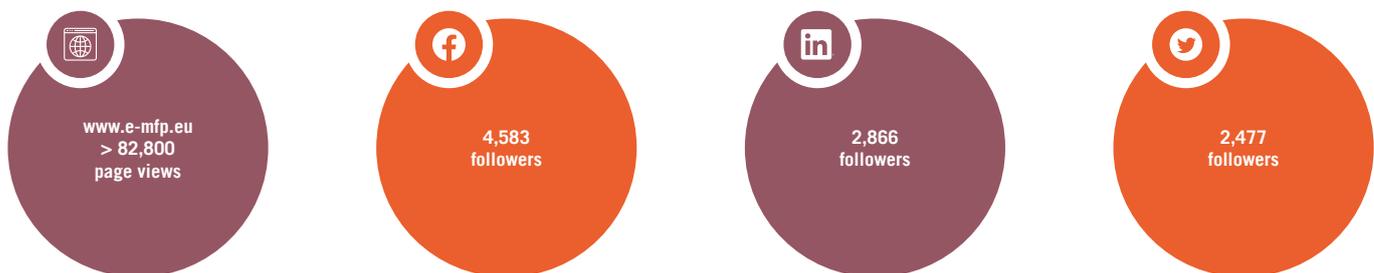


COMMUNICATION

At e-MFP we continue to make sure our quality content is known within the financial inclusion community and beyond, and we're proud to play a leading role in disseminating knowledge throughout the sector. This was particularly important during 2020 and throughout the year we mobilised our resources to assist in the sector-wide response to the pandemic.

Our **website** keeps members and external stakeholders up to date on our activities and those of the e-MFP members, as well as relevant sector news. It also hosts our blog and all other in-house publications. We amplify our outreach through social media platforms -**Twitter, Facebook, Youtube and LinkedIn**- to extend dissemination further into the financial inclusion sector. In 2020 the e-MFP Twitter account has 2,477 followers, we have 1,299 members in our LinkedIn Group, 2,866 followers of our LinkedIn e-MFP organisation page and our Facebook page has 4,583 followers.

Be sure to sign up and follow us!



During the year e-MFP sent 54 **e-bulletins**. These periodic emails share concise, newflash information providing our members with prompt and useful updates. We're delighted to also use our **dissemination service** for our members' job vacancies, calls for proposals, tenders, papers etc. So if you've something to share, don't hesitate to send to contact@e-mfp.eu

Through our valuable partnerships with the leading microfinance/inclusive finance media specialists such as MicroCapital, FinDev Gateway, Portail FinDev and NextBillion we ensure greater visibility and awareness of e-MFP, its activities and its members. Results of these partnerships were numerous news stories and interviews about our Action Groups, publications, EMW and the Award and also live twitter feed and blog posts during and after EMW. Furthermore e-MFP team members worked together to produce dedicated pieces for these platforms which were then cross-posted on the e-MFP site and social media platforms, reflecting the growing strength of e-MFP's partnerships with these important industry information portals.



Artwork by Joe Cummings



EUROPEAN MICROFINANCE AWARD

European Microfinance Award 2020 “Encouraging Effective & Inclusive Savings”

The European Microfinance Award is a prestigious annual €100,000 award, which attracts applications from organisations working in the financial inclusion sector around the world that are innovating in a particular area of financial inclusion. The Award was launched in 2005 by the Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs – Directorate for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs, and is jointly organised by the European Microfinance Platform (e-MFP), the Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, and the Inclusive Finance Network Luxembourg (InFiNe.lu), in cooperation with the European Investment Bank. It serves two parallel goals: rewarding excellence, and collecting and disseminating the most relevant practices for replication by others.

Each year’s Award focuses on a different area in which microfinance institutions can benefit their clients and communities.

The 2020 topic is *Encouraging Effective & Inclusive Savings* sought to highlight organisations and programmes that are innovating in the encouragement and delivery of savings to low-income and excluded populations.

The Award was launched on March 9th through a worldwide campaign thanks to the support of the e-MFP network; global, regional and national networks around the world, as well as e-MFP media partners such as MicroCapital, NextBillion.net, Microfinance Gateway, etc. 70 applications from 37 countries were received by the deadline of May 5th (amended in response to the Covid-related pressures on applicants).

The Award process in 2020 was composed of the following three phases:

PRESELECTION PHASE

Round I (mid-March – May 2020)

Round I Committee (composed of e-MFP Secretariats as well as the team of consultants supporting the Award) assessed the 70 applications received and as a result 38 successful applicants were invited to Round II.

Round II (May – July 2020)

All 38 applicants that were invited to proceed took part in Round II. Their applications were evaluated throughout July by the Preselection Committee (composed of the e-MFP and InFiNe.lu Secretariats as well as the team of consultants supporting the Award selection process).

19 Applications from 17 countries were preselected for the next phase.

SELECTION PHASE

A Selection Committee composed of e-MFP and InFiNe.lu members was set up with a total of 19 members. The Committee held a two half-day online meeting over 30th September and 1st October.

The Selection Committee selected 10 semifinalists for the Award and, among them, the three finalists.

Finalists (in alphabetical order):

- Buusaa Gonofaa Microfinance, Ethiopia
- Muktinath Bikas Bank, Nepal
- RENACA-Bénin

Semifinalists (in alphabetical order):

- Cooperativa Fondesurco, Peru
- DSS Platform Ltd., Ghana
- Fansoto, Senegal
- Mobilink Micro-Finance Ltd., Pakistan
- Opportunity Bank Serbia, Serbia
- RENEW Microfinance Private Ltd., Bhutan
- Ujjivan Small Finance Bank, India

All applicants were contacted and informed of the results and a press release was published to announce the finalists on the 6th October.

FINAL PHASE

A High Jury composed of seven members was set up by the Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs.

The High Jury met virtually to select the winner and Muktinath Bikas Bank Ltd was announced as the winner during the Award ceremony which was held online and live-streamed on the 19th November during EMW2020.



Muktinath Bikas Bank (MBB) is a leading National Development Bank in Nepal with the social mission of financial inclusion of the community which serves poor households and low income women with a range of banking products. To reach its targeted population, MBB designed an adapted solidarity group savings model with doorstep services, encouraging positive savings activity via a combination of mandatory and interest-earning voluntary savings, including dedicated pension and insurance savings products, alongside extensive financial education.

Buusaa Gonofaa Microfinance (BG) is an Ethiopian MFI which offers credit, savings and agriculture value chain financing to poor population segments, especially women. BG was selected for its high-touch saving initiative called 'Dejaf Iqub', which offers a safe, easy and appealing way of saving through regular doorstep collection of goal-based small deposits. Dejaf Iqub targets informal microentrepreneur operators with active cash flows who run businesses in densely populated market centres.

RENACA-Bénin is a union of cooperatives in Benin which mainly targets low income and vulnerable populations predominantly in rural areas. RENACA's savings initiative focuses on doorstep collection of local savings via a wide range of products ('tontine' doorstep models, term deposits and demand deposits), and promotion of savings through community savings and credit groups, supported by a mobile application and use of tablets for secure and trustworthy client transactions. These products are backed up by a wide range of financial education and other non-financial services.



As one of the co-organisers of the Award, e-MFP's main role is to organise the selection process. This involves:

- Research on the potential topics to be selected as Award topic
- Preparatory work and Award launch: selection of a consultant to support the Award selection process; developing, in collaboration with the consultant, the Award evaluation model and all documentation for the application phase (i.e.: explanatory note and application form); as well as launching and promoting the Award to potential applicants and the sector at large.
- Application phase: communication with potential applicants, reception of applications and follow up with applicants.
- Preselection Phase: e-MFP Secretariat participates in the Round I and Preselection Committees and organises all the logistics and documentation needed for the work of the Committee and its meeting.
- Selection Phase: In collaboration with InFiNe.lu, e-MFP sets up the Selection Committee composed of members of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, e-MFP and InFiNe.lu. e-MFP is also in charge of preparing the Committee documentation, organising of the meeting and supporting the evaluation process.
- Final Phase: e-MFP provides the Ministry with suggestions for the High Jury and prepares the documentation for the High Jury.
- e-MFP organises and coordinates the communication activities related to the Award during the launch and the selection process until the finalists are announced.
- e-MFP authors and publishes the Award publication (former European Dialogue) presenting the innovations, lessons and factors for success identified during the selection process as well as featuring snapshots of the ten semi-finalists' initiatives. This publication is since 2020 ready to be launched during EMW in order to maximise all the Award exposure and work.

During 2020 the e-MFP Board and the Secretariat worked together with InFiNe.lu on defining the theme to be proposed to the Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs – Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs for the 2021 European Microfinance Award and 'Microfinance and Health' has been chosen as the topic.



EUROPEAN MICROFINANCE WEEK

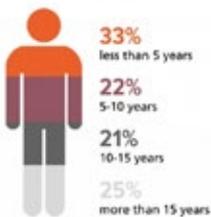
Feedback European Microfinance Week 2019

European Microfinance Week 2019 took place between 20-22 November and brought together in Luxembourg 450 opinion-leaders from 69 countries, including top management of banks, funds and other financial institutions, practitioners, academics, analysts, raters and industry commentators to present key innovations and challenges. The 2019 conference offered a wide and interesting range of plenary and workshop sessions.

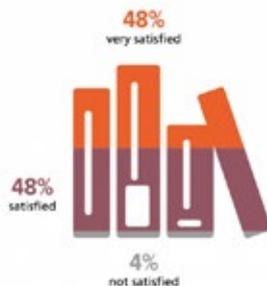
Three plenaries were featured in EMW 2019: an opening one with the three finalists of the European Microfinance Award 2019 on 'Strengthening Resilience to Climate change through financial inclusion', as well as a keynote speech by Tim McDonnell, journalist and National Geographic 'Explorer', a second one entitled 'Protecting the working poor in the 21st century through responsible finance', and EMW 2019 concluded with a provocative debate on the limits of client choice, entitled 'Responsible client choices in finance: whose responsibility is it? Over the three days, distinguished speakers took part in more than 25 sessions, featuring over 90 organisations and covering a much diversified range of topics such as digital transformation, climate change, cyber security and advancing access to financial services for refugees.

Feedback from attendees was extremely positive:

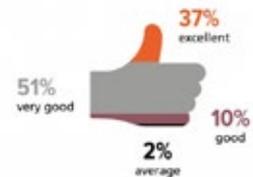
How long have you been involved in financial inclusion?



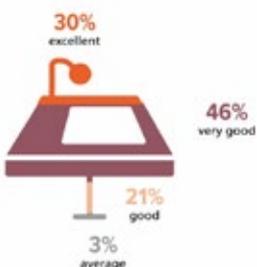
Satisfaction with conference materials



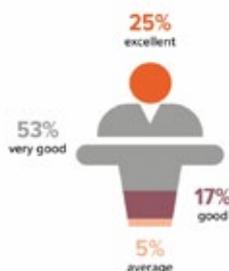
Quality of the conference organisation



Impression of conference speakers



Impression of the moderation of the conference sessions



Participation next year





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EUROPEAN MICROFINANCE WEEK 2020

European Microfinance Week (EMW) 2020 for the first time was virtual with participants joining from all around the world to connect for three days of knowledge exchange, peer to peer learning and the chance to engage with thought leaders from the financial inclusion sector.

EMW is a member-driven event which takes the pulse of the industry - a unique meeting point for knowledge sharing and an excellent forum for networking. In other years, as an in-person conference, in Luxembourg, EMW welcomes 500 professionals from all over the world - leading global experts, opinion-leaders, policy-makers and investors from the financial inclusion sector. And while the decision to take EMW 2020 online was a result of current circumstances, it also meant abundant opportunities – to bring the work, initiatives, ideas and discussions to a much broader international audience, while at the same time adapting the format of sessions to maximise interactivity and engagement.

#EMW2020 remains a member-led conference and based on feedback of what they wanted included, a rich and dynamic conference programme emerged. The more than 50 sessions were organised across several thematic streams – the Impact of Covid-19, Climate Change Resilience; Client Protection, Digitalisation, and Encouraging Effective and Inclusive Savings (the topic of the European Microfinance Award) among them. Other front line topics included – housing microfinance, WASH, remittances, refugees, agri-finance – among others. As always, we lined up top experts – practitioners, academics, investors, raters and others – to lead these sessions and the extensive Q&A and audience engagement activities as well.

In our first virtual EMW we offered plenaries focusing on – the current ‘state of the sector’, client protection post-Smart, the client experience in savings, and ‘2020 in the rear mirror: conversations on the future of financial inclusion’. There were publication launches too – from the Housing Microfinance book ‘Taking Shelter’ to e-MFP papers on climate change and savings. Many new session formats featured – topic lounges, working sessions, fireside chats, interviews, as well as the more traditional panel sessions, to keep attendees engaged.

e-MFP WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE SPONSORS OF EUROPEAN MICROFINANCE WEEK 2020:

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