



To the members of the Savings & Credit Forum and interested persons:

Invitation

The Long March of BASIX and the Indian Microfinance Adventure

covering the Issues: Needs of the Poor, Microfinance Crisis, Role of Foreign Investments
and Indebtedness in a Comparative Perspective

DATE: Friday, May 11, 2012

LOCATION: SDC, Bern-Ausserholligen, Freiburgstr. 130, room A2023

Dear Colleagues,
Dear Madam, Dear Sir,

Some think that Basix in India is a microfinance institution. But Basix sees itself more as an institution providing **livelihood services** for the poor. This includes financial services, but also business, agricultural extension and institution building services.

But what is Basix really and how has it developed over the years and right into the **microfinance crisis** of the recent past and presenceⁱ? What is the nature of this crisis and of the problem of **indebtedness** of poor clients? What has been the role of foreign, including **Swiss investors** in these developments?

Are there similar signs of crisis and of over-indebtedness in other countries, such as Bangladesh? And what about alternative ways to developing “inclusive financial sectors” followed in some African countries? And finally: Is Basix’ model of livelihood services of relevance to other parts of the world?

These are some of the questions our two speakers will address and discuss with the audience of the forthcoming Savings and Credit Forum.

Malcolm Harper was Professor of Enterprise Development at Cranfield School of Management and has worked independently since 1995. He was Chairman of Basix Finance for ten years and has worked on enterprise development, micro-finance and livelihoods in South and South East Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East.

Sanjay Sinha is Managing Director of Micro-Credit Ratings International Limited (M-CRIL) – the world’s leading specialist in financial and social ratings of microfinance institutions. He has also specialized in the analysis of value chains of relevance to poor people in addition to microfinance. His knowledge and experience covers over two dozen countries in South and South East Asia and Africa.

Looking forward to meeting you in Bern on 11th of Mai, we remain, with best regards.

Hansruedi Pfeiffer
On behalf of SDC’s Focal Point Employment and Income

ⁱ The development of Basix was documented in a book just published under the title “Whose Sustainability Counts? – Basix’s Long March from Microfinance to Livelihoods”.