



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

Invitation

Graduation Models: Graduating the Poorest into Microfinance

DATE: **Thursday, 3rd December 2009 (9:00 to 16:00)**

LOCATION: **Hotel Kreuz, Bern**

Dear Colleagues,
Dear Madam, Dear Sir,

The next Savings & Credit Forum organised by Intercooperation on behalf of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is dedicated to the topic of "**Graduation Models: Graduating the Poorest into Microfinance**". When discussing about microfinance, the question whether credit helps the poorest of the poor is asked over and over again. Graduation models specifically target the poorest who are not (yet) "bankable" and helps them graduate into clients of financial institutions. The methodology combines elements of safety net programmes (cash transfer, food aid or price subsidies) with an introduction into entrepreneurship through training, asset grants and credit.

BRAC in Bangladesh, one of the largest Southern development organisations, invented and first implemented the graduation approach. **Mr Munshi Sulaiman**, who was lead researcher in BRAC's graduation program will provide us with a conceptual framework on graduation models, explaining what the hypotheses behind this model are and how the model is conceived. He will then present BRAC's "Targeting the Ultra Poor Program" - started in 2004 - which has since then helped 800'000 households to graduate out of poverty and become successful enterprises.

BRAC's experience has been replicated in other countries by other institutions thanks to CGAP and different donor agencies, including SDC. **Mrs Aude de Montesquiou** from CGAP will present us CGAP and Ford Foundation's graduation program with an overview of 9 projects from 7 countries and first results.

Mrs Karishma Huda from BRAC's development institute will present us the experience of Fonkoze's graduation program where 150 poor families benefited from weekly 6 \$ during 8 months, a livestock asset valued at around 350 \$, home repair and water purification systems. Fonkoze is one of Haiti's leading microfinance organisations.

Mrs Teresa Khanna, Chief Executive Officer of SKS in Andhra Pradesh, India, will present us SKS's graduation program where 600 households benefited from goats or cows for an average value of \$ 200 plus training and advice on animal care.

Looking forward to meeting you in Bern on that occasion, we remain, with best regards,

Intercooperation Backstopping Team
On behalf of SDC's Focal Point Employment and Income