



ASSOCIATION OF MICROFINANCE INSTITUTIONS OF SOUTH AFRICA

PROFILE: FEBRUARY 2006

Background

The Association of Microfinance Institutions of South Africa (AMFISA) was registered in November 2005. AMFISA was founded by Pro-poor microfinance institutions and practitioners from all corners of South Africa.

The main object of AMFISA is to unite and empower poverty eradication focused MFIs in South Africa towards sustainability and to provide a common voice for the promotion and support of its member's ideas and objectives.

Location

The AMFISA is represented in eight provinces of South Africa through its membership. The AMFISA has a flat structure and all its members contribute towards its running. The AMFISA's Chairperson is Mrs. Yvonne Radinku. The AMFISA Association is made up of 19 Pro-poor microcredit organizations which reach an estimated 85000 clients. These are mostly women entrepreneurs.

Services

The AMFISA provides Capacity Building; Advocacy; Research and Documentation for its membership. The content of the services provided is defined by its membership at its Annual General Meeting.

Methodology

The AMFISA is a democratic association controlled by its membership. Its membership elects its leadership once a year. The leadership's annual program is determined by its leadership. The AMFISA is not led by a leader rather by a leadership elected by its peers.

The AMFISA has its Annual General Meeting at the beginning of each financial year and led by its Board of Directors during the course of the year through General meetings.

Poverty Profile

The AMFISA supports all Pro-poor microcredit organizations that target the poor. These include organizations that use the Participatory Wealth Ranking and the Housing Index tools. The members of AMFISA fund survivalist and small businesses including non farm production in rural areas. The clients of AMFISA members sell fruits, vegetables, clothing, crafts, spaza shops, small construction company's e.t.c.

Growth Plans, Challenges, and Lessons

The AMFISA aims to reach 100, 000 clients by the end of 2008. This will highly be influenced by the growth strategy adopted by the South African Microfinance Apex Fund (SAMAF) or any other funder committed to reaching the poorest of the poor. The AMFISA will strive to work closely with the DTI and other Government Departments to ensure growth in the sector is realized.

The challenges for AMFISA continue to be the setting up of Government agencies and donors that give sustainable and continuous funding to the sector.

Finally, the AMFISA has learnt that unity is more important than individualism and thus will continue to ensure that the sector speaks in one voice.

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