IFC A2F SERVICES

WE FOCUS ON

IFC’s Access to Finance Advisory (A2F) priorities are to help our clients provide broad-based financial services to individuals (such as credit, savings, payments, and insurance products) and to promote growth and employment generation by supporting sustainable lending to SMEs. We also help build the necessary financial infrastructure, such as credit bureaus and collateral registries.

- We build **bank and nonbank financial institutions**, with emphasis on banks that serve SMEs or provide microfinance, agriculture finance, housing finance, leasing, trade finance, insurance, and sustainable energy finance.
- We improve **financial infrastructure** such as credit bureaus and collateral registries and promote principles of responsible finance.
- We help **improve the legal and regulatory framework** to enhance the enabling environment for increasing access to finance.

HOW WE DO IT

IFC delivers advice on access to finance through our regional offices, with more than 200 dedicated staff members worldwide. IFC and the World Bank closely collaborate to deliver development results, including through our work on financial inclusion, investment climate, microfinance, and the **Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion** of the G20 countries.

We work closely with our donor partners to deliver innovative initiatives and products.

- A new, $37.4 million partnership with The MasterCard Foundation will help increase financial services to 5.3 million unbanked people in Sub-Saharan Africa in the next five years.
- Another new partnership with the Government of the United Kingdom will help IFC make a $200 million investment (of which $63 million provided by the UK) in the **Global SME Finance Facility**-- a platform to expand lending to small businesses in emerging markets. The Facility is part of the **SME Finance Initiative**, launched in 2011--a catalytic investment and advisory services framework to assist banks targeting SMEs and for reaching to underserved markets.

ADVANCING RESPONSIBLE FINANCE

A2F works with over 700 global clients to build capacity for following **responsible finance** practices, closely coordinating this work with IFC’s investment arm. For IFC, embedding **responsible finance** into the DNA of financial institutions allows for a client- centric approach in product design and delivery of customized services for households, and micro, small and medium enterprises. By embedding these principles into the core delivery of financial services, the financial institution is able to appropriately manage risk, balance profitability with inclusive finance, and contribute to long-term sustainability and wider systemic growth.
Democratic Republic of Congo: Reaching Women Entrepreneurs

In 2010, Rawbank, the largest bank by asset size in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), approached IFC looking to expand its business into the country’s SME market. Rawbank partnered with IFC to design and launch a Women in Business program. The program – Lady’s First aimed at capturing DRC’s very dynamic and growing women-owned SME sector. IFC provided initial financing of $7.5 million for SMEs of which 25 percent ($1,875,000) was for a credit-line for lending to women entrepreneurs. The program included an advisory component by which IFC helped train women borrowers and worked with Rawbank to design products that address challenges commonly faced by women borrowers, such as lack of traditional collateral and lack of credit history.

Rawbank’s achievements under its Women in Business program have stretched well beyond original expectations. After its launch in 2010, Rawbank’s women active borrowers grew from three to over 110, their loan portfolio expanded from $200,000 to about $8 million, they have more than 950 deposit accounts worth over $15 million, and well over 500 women-owned SMEs have received training and legal advice. During the two years in working with IFC, the Bank also developed women-friendly and flexible collateral options in their lending program. The Bank launched RawConseil – a legal advice desk that provides assistance to women entrepreneurs in registering their businesses and helps them navigate through difficult business environment processes such as getting spousal permission to register a business or open a bank account. Rawbank’s Lady’s First program has been very successful leading the Bank to replicate the program throughout the region.

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