

Friday, October 16, 2009

Making globalization work for the working poor

The Global Fairness Initiative (GFI) promotes a more equitable, sustainable approach to economic development for the world's working poor by advancing fair wages, equal access to markets and balanced public policy to generate opportunity and end the cycle of poverty

Investing in the "Missing Middle"



GFI's sister organization, The Synapse Market Access Fund is filling the often overlooked need for mid-level financing in poor communities around the globe. Making investments where microfinance cannot and commercial banks will not, Synapse is helping small-producer communities access financing and connect to high-value, sustainable markets for their products.

[Learn more about Synapse](#)

Connect with GFI

At GFI we believe in dialogue and see engagement as key to creating fair and sustainable development initiatives. Join our dialogue by connecting to GFI.

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GFI News:

The Harrah's Foundation enables program partnership with GFI, SEWA and the Prince of Wales Foundation to empower 30,000 women farmers



At the Clinton Global Initiative in New York City Secretary Clinton asked the audience to envision the difficult life of poor women farmers in developing countries referencing the long hours, tough conditions and lack of access to markets and infrastructure. A plan for food security and investing in women agricultural producers is now a key part of the

Obama Administration's foreign policy priorities and shows the important recognition of the link between hunger and broader U.S. strategic interests such as economic growth, energy, environment, and security.

GFI has been working at the forefront of efforts to improve food security in developing countries by working with small farmers to build livelihoods and connect products to high-value, sustainable markets. In an ongoing collaboration with India's Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), GFI is introducing mechanisms to help improve production, distribution and core product value for more than 30,000 farmers. Now, with the support of the Harrah's Foundation and in partnership with the Prince of Wales Foundation, GFI and SEWA will expand market opportunity for women farmers by linking them to the UK based line of organic products "Duchy Originals". Through the partnership a new initiative has been launched that will seek to introduce organic certification to thousands of farmers and create a direct market links between poor farmer communities and the Duchy Original brand. As the new partnership improves agricultural capacity for poor and marginalized farmers and creates long-term supplier and buyer relationships, GFI will continue to address the very critical links between hunger, food security, environmental sustainability and the lack of market access that prohibits poor women producers from realizing their true livelihood potential.

GFI and Georgetown Develop Program – based Case Study: *Finding Economic Solutions through Multi-Stakeholder Engagement in Central America, a Case Study of the GFI Process*

The Global Fairness Initiative, in partnership with Georgetown University recently conducted an analysis of GFI's work on responsible competitiveness and multi-stakeholder engagements in the textile and apparel sectors of developing countries.

Recommended Reading

“Plea for Poor to be Heard”

Financial Times;
September 25, 2009.

“Economic Crisis is Devastating for World’s Hungry”

World Food Programme;
October 14, 2009.

The analysis and subsequent case study provides background on GFI’s initial work in Cambodia but focuses primarily on the challenges and opportunities of extending this model to Central America, specifically examining the strategy and procedural steps involved in establishing the Central American Labor Enhancement Program (CALREP) in Guatemala and El Salvador. The case study concludes with an examination of lessons learned, analyzing conditions that could facilitate the success of future multi-stakeholder programs to help raise labor standards and compliance in garment sectors around the globe. Georgetown Graduate student Verinda Fike, Professor of International Business Diplomacy Dr. John Kline, and GFI Program Manager Whitney Mayer contributed to the report which can be found on the GFI website or by linking [here](#)

Featured GFI Partner:

The Prince of Wales Foundation

Bringing sustainable agriculture to
poor and marginalized farmers



Feature:

The GA, G-20, and GFI

The recent gathering of the United Nations General Assembly and later the G-20 Summit brought together the financial leaders of the developed and developing world to address both the economic and social challenges that are facing countries around the globe. On the agenda for both is prioritizing assistance for poorer countries whose citizens are most affected by the recent economic crisis. Whether strengthening aid to developing countries or discussing the broad based implications of climate change on poor communities, it is clear that much is needed to help the fifty-five million people expected to fall into poverty this year alone (World Bank, Global Monitoring Report 2009: A Development Emergency).

Secretary General Ban Ki Moon’s request for an additional 250 billion dollars in aid to help developing countries adopt new technologies to cope with global warming is an important starting point for creating global partnerships and the political leadership needed to directly help the poorest of the world’s poor. This impetus and the attention given to poorer countries at both the meetings of the General Assembly and the G-20 will hopefully galvanize developed nations into providing the assistance that is needed to improve livelihoods for our world’s most vulnerable citizens.

While global leadership at the multi-national level is crucial to helping the millions of people out of work and facing livelihood challenges, equally important is the work being done by grassroots organizations and NGOs at the local level. As global leaders, such as Secretary Ban continue to advance international frameworks and government action, organizations like GFI are looking for ways to support and operationalize these higher level poverty and climate change commitments. With increased action by both leaders and implementing organizations, we can continue to make significant progress in the fight against global poverty.

Other Events & News:

The annual GFI Board meeting was held on September 22nd in New York City where GFI welcomed new board members Dr. Andrew Arkutu, Ambassador Paula Dobriansky, Richard Nordstrom, and Arne Cartride. Following the Board meeting a reception and fundraiser was held at Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge celebrating the expansion of GFI’s womens’ agriculture program in India.

GFI’s Central America Project Director Michel Andrade recently spoke on Guatemalan national television about the work GFI is doing to improve social safety nets and labor rights for informal workers in Guatemala and Nicaragua. To see Dr. Andrade’s on Guatelevision please visit the news section of the GFI site or link [here](#)