



local solutions for a global economy

Monday, April 19th, 2010

The Global Fairness Initiative Newsletter

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.

[Click here to get connected](#)

Recommended Readings:

Our Work:

GFI Attends the Second Annual International Women's Day Breakfast



Women Thrive Worldwide held a breakfast briefing celebrating International Women's Day. At the breakfast, participants listened to an international panel of women share their experiences moving forward development projects under severe circumstances. In eye opening remarks, Suraya Pakzad, Director of Voice of Women in Herat, Afghanistan and Kathy Mangones, Haiti Country Program Director for the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), revealed the need to continue furthering efforts for women programs in emergency situations and conflict zones. These include capacity building, leadership development, as well as ensuring such programs also include the voices of male counterparts.

The honorable speaker Senator Mary L. Landrieu conducted an inspiring message and challenged the audience to aspire that all development programs have a women focus. Dr. Ines Alberdi, Maria Otero, Carol Costello and Ritu Sharma also shared their views and

[Follow GFI board member Iqbal Quadir at USAID's Global Pulse 2010. Find out more about development practitioners suggestions and innovative solutions at Issues facing the global community within the fields of science and technology entrepreneurship, and human development.](#)

<http://www.globalpulse2010.gov/>

Featured Beneficiary:

[Federacion Nacional de Vendedores Independientes de Guatemala \(FENTRAVIG\)](#)

[GFI provides targeted trainings to informal sector workers in Guatemala, ranging from computing to management skills. FENTRAVIG has over 5,000 members and works to give a voice to informal workers, such as street vendors, part-time informal nurses, micro garment producers and more.](#)

Catch up on information from FENTRAVIG on their blog:

<http://www.fentravig.blogspot.com/>

made a truly memorable morning of women working with and for women.

GFI's partner, Women Thrive Worldwide, works to shape U.S. policy to help women in developing countries lift themselves out of poverty.

To read more about the event "The Lessons From the Frontline, Afghanistan, Haiti and the Path to a more Secure World" please

see: http://www.unifem.org/news_events/story_detail.php?StoryID=1043

Presentation of Barriers to Formalization Report

On March 23, GFI hosted a roundtable of key speakers in Guatemala to discuss the release of the report titled "Barriers to Formalization." The report specifies the causes and major obstacles for registration of micro and small enterprises in Guatemala. The report further delineates steps to improve formalization using as a framework the ILO Decent Work standards. A main recommendation was the establishment of the single tax payment system to streamline government processes and diversify the tax base, while providing social security to registered enterprises. The two commentators, Mr. Luis Linares – Deputy Executive Director of ASIES, and Mr. Hugo Maúl – Director of the Economical Area of CIEN, presented the diverse arguments being discussed in Guatemala concerning informality, but most importantly, they shared that all parties agreed and shared interest in the establishment of a single tax system that provides a tangible benefit that encourages registration – such as social security.

On March 25 the report was released in Nicaragua, though the format was similar, recommendations differed from the ones presented in Guatemala. In Nicaragua the

one stop window system has made significant inroads in improving benefits for unregistered, informal, enterprises. However, the report recommends that it this system also includes social security and that the benefits are better publicized in an outreach effort that changes the current perception that formalization is costly, burdensome, and valueless. The commentators in Nicaragua were Mr. Fanor Avendaño - Director of UNEH University, and Mr. Carlos Fajardo – the Economical Advisor of CONIMYPIME.

Approximately 80 participants dialogued, and contributed ideas for moving forward a public policy for formalization.



In the news:

On March 30th, 2010, Paula Dobriansky, was honored with the Commander Cross of the Order of Merit of Poland. Awarded by the Polish President, the order is awarded to those who have rendered great service to the Polish nation. Ambassador Robert Kupiecki hosted the ceremony at the Polish embassy, highlighting Ms. Dobriansky's contributions to the country.

The Global Fairness Initiative would like to extend our deepest condolences to the families of all Polish citizens on board of the plane carrying Polish president Lech Kaczynski and to the Polish people as a whole for their loss.

Feature:

Business Women Invest in their Families

GFI currently implements PILAR (Promoting Informal Labor Rights), a two-year project funded by the US Department of State to improve government capacity to collect data on the informal sector while developing strategies that encourages formalization. The program also provides capacity building to informal sector workers in Nicaragua and Guatemala. In Guatemala GFI provides trainings for diverse workers, from domestic workers to street vendors. One of our beneficiaries, Sandra Peralta, shared with us that the greatest help the PILAR program has given her are the computing trainings.

As a street vendor she never thought she would need to use a computer, or even that she would ever have access to one. But now, thanks to the training, she has changed her mind and happily states that computers are not as difficult to use and now she uses the computers at the Fundacion Mario López Larrave, GFI's local partner, to run her business.

But her new skills are not the main reason why Sandra shares her enthusiasm. For her, what matters the most is that nowadays when her child asks her questions she can work with him and together they use the computer. She is optimistic that her son can learn skills she didn't have access at his age and consequently have more and better opportunities. Reinforcing GFI's core belief that a better future for Guatemalan families is possible by connecting local knowledge and leadership with global innovation and structures. Trainings provided also include accounting, business management, registration, all designed to fit the need of micro enterprises.

