

To strengthen the capacity of micro-finance institutions and to promote effective collective action in advancing the interests of the micro-finance community.

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## AMFA organizes its first training on Universal Standards on Social Performance Management (USSPM) .

On the 28th of February 2013, at the Qafqaz Leasing Office in Baku, AMFA organized its first awareness raising training on the USSPM. The aim of this teaching session was to present SPM standards to the project partners and to discuss the cooperation between different participants within the project. AMFA was selected as one of the microfinance networks globally to implement the scheme in Azerbaijan, and only 12 AMFA members will collaborate on the initiative. Within this project AMFA and its selected members will:

- document and disseminate country specific concrete good practice examples and managerial solutions
- identify improvements needed to achieve compliance with selected sections of USSPM
- support members in their improvement implementation efforts on the two universal standards : Treating Clients Responsibly & Treating Employees Responsibly



Project partners will be in charge of sharing tools and experiences on two universal standards (i.e. **Treating Clients & Employees Responsibly**), actively participating in project activities, supporting AMFA in documenting best practices, and tracking improvements on these two standards.

## USAID ACT Layihəsi və AMFA

Over the past two years the USAID/ACT -Azerbaijan Competitiveness and Trade Project has been providing technical assistance to selected finance institutions on MSE/SME lending including agriculture. The approach used, Risk Based Lending, follows international best practices and has been designed to meet the needs of institutions operating in increasingly competitive environments with an increasingly indebted client base. It has also been designed around scale and profitability objectives.

Since 2012, AMFA and the ACT Project agreed in collaboration, with the main objective of transferring to AMFA the technology and materials developed by the Project to benefit AMFA member microfinance institutions at large in the country. The first step into this direction is a presentation on the technical aspects of the approach and the contents of the training modules and other materials developed by the Project.

## MEMBERS' CORNER

### Viator MicroCredit Azerbaijan appoints new Executive Director

Viator MicroKredit has recently announced the appointment of its new Executive Director, **Mr. Vencent A. Abraham**. Azerbaijan Microfinance Association would like to warmly welcome Mr. Abraham into our midst and is looking forward to continue to strengthen the excellent business relationship we have always had with Viator.

### FINCA Azerbaijan to widen loan portfolio to \$175 million in 2013

The FINCA Azerbaijan non-bank credit organization intends to raise its loan portfolio to \$175 million in 2013, the CEO of the organization, Manish Sane said at press conference. As Mr. Sane noted, today's loan portfolio of FINCA Azerbaijan amounted to \$153.47 million. According to him, the previous year was quite successful for the organization. "In 2012, the total credit portfolio increased by 20% compared to 2011, while the number of customers increased by 14%," Sane said. As of February 8, 2013, according to Mr. Sane, the number of customers of FINCA

### NBCO "Caucasus-Credit" LLC temporary changes address

The NBCO "Caucasus-Credit" LLC was temporarily moved to a new office. The new office address is: AZ1009, Baku, Alovzat Guliyev street, house 79, apartment. Contact phone number and e-mail addresses, as well as the re-

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### 16th MFC Conference: "Microfinance 2.0: Charting New Waters". 28-30th May 2013, Budva, Montenegro.

While it's important to acknowledge the challenges that the industry has collectively faced over the past years, MFC firmly believes that this year's conference should focus on turning crisis into opportunity — using failure as a catalyst for positive and sustainable change. As such, they will use this occasion to ask "dangerous questions" about the identity, role, and future of the microfinance industry, in Europe and beyond. In doing so, they will explore the changing role of the microfinance industry within the broader global financial landscape, and discuss important lessons that microfinance innovators have to learn from other industries. Each conference workshop will tackle a new and challenging issue such as using technology to balance quality and scale, using social media to fight the backlash, a value-chain approach to transparency and accountability, and the lessons we can learn from venture philanthropists. For details (including registration & visa requirement) please click here: <http://www.mfc2013.com/registration-and-accommodation/> **Early Bird registration available till 31st of March!**

### The CLIMBIZ Challenge: Enabling Green and Inclusive Entrepreneurs and Markets in the Black Sea Region

The CLIMBIZ Challenge – implemented in partnership with the UNEP, UNDP and IUCN founded SEED Initiative – supports innovative small-scale and locally-driven entrepreneurship in the Black Sea region, which integrate social and environmental benefits into their business model. The goal of the CLIMBIZ Challenge is to support these entrepreneurs to scale up and replicate their activities across the Black Sea region.

CLIMBIZ Challengers have the chance to participate in an innovative accelerator program. It enables participating ventures to significantly scale their social and environmental impact. The program comprises tailored capacity building workshops in Istanbul and Vienna, coaching and mentoring sessions, access to funders, networking with a wide range of stakeholders, and adherence to a growing community of social and environmental entrepreneurs in the Black Sea region.

The Black Sea Climate and Business Initiative (CLIMBIZ) is a regional partnership for action on sustainable development, initiated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC), funded by the Austrian Development Cooperation and BSEC.

## AMFA TRAININGS: BOOK YOUR CALENDAR

Dates	Course Title
March 29, 30, 31	<a href="#">Risk Certification Program</a>
May 20-21	<a href="#">Islamic Banking and Finance</a>
June 20, 21	<a href="#">SMART GIRAFE Methodology</a>
October 7-8	Islamic Micro-finance & Methodology
October 4	Investors Fair (detailed information will be soon at AMFA website <a href="http://www.amfa.az">www.amfa.az</a> )

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Azerbaijan Micro-finance Association

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