

## Pro Mujer

Pro Mujer is a women's development organization whose mission is to provide Latin America's poorest women with the means to build livelihoods for themselves and futures for their families through microlending, business training, and healthcare support. It establishes sustainable MFIs that offer credit and training programs geared to the needs of poor, undereducated women who either operate or would like to operate a small business.

Bolivia houses the flagship program for Pro Mujer. Serving for nearly fifteen years, the program has over sixty-eight thousand borrowers. It offers loan capital for the women's small-scale businesses and provides opportunities to save a portion of their profits through the communal bank structure.

For these women, credit alone does not serve their needs. Pro Mujer provides an alternative delivery system for its credit services—the group-oriented communal banks—that appeal to women traditionally accustomed to working in community groups. Pro Mujer also offers integrated credit and training services, which few other organizations offer, as well as business training, personal-



PHOTO: PRO MUJER

development education, legal education, and health-related services.

Pro Mujer constantly looks for ways to improve their services. In line with their mission statement, they are always striving to give a lot more to their clients than just credit and savings services. They provide a myriad of services aimed at improving the overall quality of life, development, and health of both their clients and their families.

Visit [www.promujer.org](http://www.promujer.org) for more information.

## Single Mom Foundation

The Single Mom Foundation (SMF) is committed to improving the lives of single moms by helping them return to school for additional and appropriate training. SMF is creating a network of educational partners who will work together to help more single moms achieve their educational dreams and develop long-term self-reliance.

SMF's partnership with the ESR Center has already resulted in the gathering of practitioners, researchers, and community leaders throughout Utah to foster mobilization and change. This impressive coalition of practitioners is working to help identify the emotional and institutional barriers that face single moms returning to an educational environment, and to study the impact a marketable education and skills have on long-term self-reliance.

Today, SMF is using research to understand how to help single moms build an educational foundation for the future. For single moms and their children, the tangible outcomes of getting an appropriate education

are significant: higher wages, greater job security, better health insurance, stable housing, etc. SMF is focused on increasing the intangible benefits as well: self-esteem, confidence, career satisfaction, etc.

Education is the key to a vast ripple effect. The educational connections SMF provides benefit the lives of single moms, who in turn positively influence the lives of their children. Those children will then improve their communities and, ultimately, the world.

Visit [www.singlemomfoundation.org](http://www.singlemomfoundation.org) for more information.



## FINCA International

The Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA), founded in 1984 by John Hatch, provides financial services—primarily small capital loans—to the world’s lowest-income entrepreneurs via a global network in twenty-one countries.

The core of FINCA’s mission is to promote a systematic and generational impact on poverty by providing business loans on a massive scale in a sustainable way. FINCA’s village banking methodology has been replicated by hundreds of microfinance programs globally. A key principle in village banking is the management of the bank by the borrowers themselves, with guidance and support from the FINCA loan officer. Clients elect officers to serve as president, secretary and treasurer on a rotating basis, and receive a group loan distributed among its members. This peer lending model creates a strong bond between the members of the group to support one another in their endeavors so they can repay their loans promptly.

FINCA is partnering with other organizations and universities to broaden its outreach and to enhance its



services. FINCA Malawi, in a joint effort with the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health’s Center for Communication Programs (CCP), provided peer education training to four hundred village bank members. The bank members then volunteered within their village banks and local communities to offer HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention, and education information to more than five thousand of their fellow clients.

The *Life Savings Partnership*, as the project was coined, saw significant improvements in knowledge about HIV/AIDS, comfort in interacting with people with AIDS, and rates of HIV testing. FINCA believes projects like this will better equip clients for self-reliance and productivity.

Visit [www.villagebanking.org](http://www.villagebanking.org) for more information.

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## Microcredit Summit Campaign

The first Microcredit Summit was held in February 1997 in Washington, DC. Nearly three thousand people from 137 countries gathered to address issues of global poverty and self-reliance. Together, the delegates launched a nine-year campaign with the goal of reaching 100 million of the world’s poorest. They wanted to ensure a positive, measurable impact through financially self-sufficient institutions that reach the very poorest and empower women.

Nine years later, in 2006, with their previous goal nearly met, a Global Microcredit Summit was convened in Halifax, Nova Scotia, to assess the progress and to establish two new goals: (1) ensure credit for



*Professor Muhammad Yunus and Director Sam Daley-Harris at Global Microcredit Summit 2006.*

175 million clients and their families and (2) raise the income of 100 million families above US\$1 per day.

The Microcredit Summit Campaign holds global summits, as well as regional conferences, in Asia,

Africa, and Latin America. These meetings bring together practitioners, advocates, educational institutions, financial institutions and nongovernmental organizations to work toward overcoming barriers to reach its goals and forward the learning agenda.

Brigham Young University has worked closely with the Microcredit Summit Campaign for the past five years to further the best practices of microcredit. Ned Hill is the dean of the Brigham Young University Marriott School of Management and the co-chair of the Microcredit Summit Campaign Council of Educational Institutions.

Visit [www.microcreditsummit.org](http://www.microcreditsummit.org) for more information.