As an added boost to this end, let me give negotiators some food for thought and action.

1. **Recycle the savings of the poor:** the narrow focus on microcredit ignores the fact that the poor save. Most often, they do it through informal or semi-formal structures. Proposal: give high priority to the development and recycling of local savings schemes at the service of local development projects, by removing regulatory obstacles to its collection and intermediation by microfinance institutions.

2. **Earmarking migrant savings:** transfers from migrants to their home countries totalled $440 billion. A greater part of these savings could be “earmarked” to local development projects through long-term savings accounts without interest or solidarity investment funds. The cost of money transfers has, however, to be halved, as G20 had committed to do, and labelling or sponsorship devices need to guarantee the seriousness of funded projects.

3. **Invest the employees’ savings:** in France €4.1 billion were collected last year on solidarity-based employee savings schemes. But this powerful long-term solidarity savings collection tool excludes de facto the cause of development, since it may benefit only companies licensed as solidarity-based, with their headquarters based in France. Proposal: create a “social and solidarity-based development companies” certification allowing companies that have the fight against poverty in developing countries at the core of their mission to have access to the solidarity-based employee savings resources.

4. **Further guide philanthropy towards development:** in France, according to a 2010 report by the General Inspectorate of Finance, the contribution of philanthropy to development assistance would be between €600 and €800 million. These figures are modest. In the US, Foundations can implement their social mission either in the traditional form of grant programmes, or in the form of “mission related investments”. This approach has yet to be invented in France. Proposal: remove the obstacles that prevent French Foundations to play a much more active role in the impact investing field.

5. **Mobilising the companies’ investment and expertise potential:** companies are an essential vector of development. As part of a renewed approach to their CSR, these companies can help create social business pilot enterprises that can benefit from their investment capabilities, expertise and innovation. Major French companies have resolutely engaged on this pioneering route by creating suitable investment vehicles. The AFD-Proparco Group decided to support this movement by establishing a full toolkit for social business financing. Beyond these pioneering initiatives, the challenge is to give a European dimension to this “new CSR” and develop a new asset class that attracts the most socially motivated institutional investors.

The eradication of poverty is the central aim of the Addis Ababa conference. To achieve this, all resources must be mobilised. However, important as the issues related to the increase in official development assistance or the provision of funding to the Green Climate Fund are, the financing of sustainable development will only meet its purpose if it mobilises a broad coalition of public and private actors, and if appropriate tools for the collection and recycling of savings and investment are created or improved.

**Addis Ababa comes from the Amharic word “new flower”**

This name was given to the city by Menelik II at the request of his wife who had discovered a flower of rare beauty in this place!

Hopefully the Addis Ababa Conference on Financing for Development from 13 to 16 July helps to nurture new flowers of a fair and sustainable development!
Financial Times chose Professor Muhammed Yunus as one six Finance Pioneers of all time

In the March 31, 2015 issue in an article entitled “Business Pioneers in Finance” Professor Yunus, Director of the Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation, has been placed alongside Warren Buffett, Amadeo Giannini, Henry Kravis, J. P. Morgan, and Mayer Amschel Rothschild as greatest business finance pioneers of all time.

All our best congratulations to our friend professor Yunus!

The Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation participates in an exchange visit on agricultural insurance in Sri Lanka

The Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation participated in the exchange visit on agricultural insurance in Sri Lanka, organised by the Global Index Insurance Facility (World Bank) and the International Labour Office.

From 12 to 14 May, 24 participants from 12 countries met in Sri Lanka with the objective of discovering the agricultural insurance programme of the local insurer Sanasa Insurance Company Limited (SICL). This field visit aimed both at presenting the SICL activities in the insurance field for tea and rice smallholders, and at collecting the opinions and advice of participants to improve the insurance product. To do so, participants used the PACE tool, a microinsurance product evaluation methodology developed by the ILO.

Today, SICL covers almost 15,000 farmers in the country, thanks to an index-based insurance product that covers the risk of drought or excessive rain. Participants in the study visit had the opportunity to meet with producers who have purchased the insurance, to hear their testimonies and learn from their experiences. One of them explained that “this insurance provides essential security to protect (his) harvest.” He was accompanied by a farmer colleague so he could convince him to also take out the insurance.

On the last day of the visit, participants had the opportunity to share their recommendations with SICL leaders: simplification of the procedures, use of mobile technology or use of satellite data have been proposed to improve the product. For Pierre Casal Ribeiro, researcher in agricultural insurance at the Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation, “this visit is a very rewarding experience because you learn a lot by analysing the Sanasa project but also by exchanging with other participants. I was very impressed with the local rooting of SICL, whose agents are present and known in rural communities.”

More information on the Foundation’s agricultural microinsurance activities: Click here.
M. Yunus in Dhaka: Zero Poverty! zero unemployment! zero carbon!

The Social Business Day organised by the Yunus Centre in Dhaka was held on May 28 with over 1,000 participants on the theme “We are not job-seekers. We are job-givers.”

In the presence of the ambassadors of many countries, including Mrs Aubert, Ambassador of France in Bangladesh, Prof. Yunus delivered its vision of a sustainable and equitable development, on the eve of major international conferences scheduled in 2015 in Addis Ababa (development finance), New York (Sustainable Development Goals) and Paris (global warming).

The slogan “Zero Poverty! zero unemployment! zero carbon!” summarises this vision. Is it a utopia? To achieve this, says Professor Yunus, humanity has four “super-powers”:
- Youth, which has the power to change everything
- Technology, which provides levers incredibly powerful to change the world,
- Social business, which puts the rigour and energy of the company at the service of social causes,
- Good governance

This meeting was also an opportunity to hear that
- Grameen America, under the direction of Andrea Jung, former CEO of Avon, was now working in the poor neighbourhoods of 11 US cities and had more than 50,000 active borrowers.
- Yunus Social Business, under the direction of Saskia Bruysten, had invested in 28 social businesses through the investment funds established in Haiti, Albania and Tunisia.
- A joint social business venture, Grameen Euglena Ltd, was established in partnership with Euglena Ltd. (Japan) to produce fortified biscuits, made from mung beans, to help fight malnutrition and provide income to 8,000 farmers in Bangladesh.
- The launch, by Grameen Intel, of a new mobile application, “Krishe, the land doctor”, for farmers, giving them advice for a measured use of fertilisers.

Jean-Luc Perron for his part, had the opportunity to present the latest Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation news.

TPC, partner of the Foundation, first Cambodian MFI to receive the Client Protection Certification awarded by the Smart Campaign and the MIX S.T.A.R.

TPC (Thaneakea Phum Cambodia) received on 10 June the Client Protection Certification awarded by the Smart Campaign and attributed by Microfinanza Rating. TPC is the first institution in Cambodia to receive this certification and joins LOMC (Sri Lanka), MBK Ventura (Indonesia), Arvand (Tajikistan) and Viator (Azerbaijan), other partners of the Foundation certified in 2013, 2014 and 2015. Since January 2013, the Smart Campaign has certified 36 institutions serving over 18 million people worldwide.

TPC is also the first MFI to receive the S.T.A.R. (Socially Transparent And Responsible) Award in 2015, after completion of the comprehensive study of the social performance (SP) by the MIX Market. This success makes TPC the third Cambodian MFI and the 35th in the world to achieve this recognition.

TPC, partner of the Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation since 2011, is a microfinance institution that started its microfinance operations in 1994 and that targets primarily women in rural areas where 99% of its clients are located, and in particular the agricultural sector. In Cambodia, it is one of the leading institutions in terms of number of clients with almost 186,000 active customers as of end of March 2015, 85% of them women.
On 2 June, the Agence Française de Développement (French Development Agency) presented its “Social Business Initiative” in the presence of Ms. Girardin, French Secretary of State in charge of Development and Francophony.

For 2 years, the French Development Agency conducted a thorough internal reflection and held numerous consultations with many private players to encourage social business as a lever for development.

This reflection led by Claude Périou, Managing Director of Proparco, then by Jean-Michel Debrat, advisor to Mrs Paugam, resulted in the adoption by the Board of the Agency of a policy and a toolbox adapted to meet the needs of this innovative approach. This facility includes:

- A € 9 million «Social Business Facility» over a three-year period, allowing repayable advances or subordinated debt,
- A € 30 million fund of funds, over a four-year period, intended to invest alongside the private sector in social business funds, with a foreseeable profitability between 0 and 3%.
- The ARIZ guarantee which will now apply to equity investments,
- A lending envelope totalling € 60 million over a three-year period, at possibly concessionary interest rates,
- A hub of expertise and know-how capitalisation, especially in terms of social performance evaluation.

This new social entrepreneurship and inclusive economy projects’ supporting and funding scheme was presented on June 2 at the Quai d’Orsay, in the presence of Mrs Girardin, with the participation of several major companies involved in this process: Essilor, Lafarge, Schneider Electric gave their testimony alongside Agrisud and the Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation.

For Ms. Girardin “the tool exists and I am delighted; this is a strong signal. Now, this tool must demonstrate its usefulness and it will have to, if it is so and within the limits of your ability to make decisions, go even further, to be enhanced as from my point of view this tool is a priority. We must meet the supporting challenges these new economic models that are significant for southern territories sustainable development face”.

Jean-Luc Perron congratulated the AFD Group on this initiative, which is in line with the recommendations of the Faber and Sibille reports. Taking into account both the commitment of major companies in social business projects or funds, teaching and research chairs facilitated by HEC and ESSEC, and now this support scheme launched by the AFD, we can say that “the Social Business team of France looks good”.

The Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation recognised during the Solidarity Days organised at Credit Agricole SA headquarters

From 8 to 12 June took place on the Evergreen Campus (Crédit Agricole S.A. headquarters) the 4th edition of Solidarity Days organised by Crédit Agricole SA and its subsidiaries. Once again, the Group’s employees had an appointment for a week of generous actions in favour of a number of associations.

The Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation was particularly highlighted through the organisation, by the Communication Department, of an exhibition of photos shot by Philippe Lissac and Didier Gentilhomme.

The exhibition allowed presenting to the Crédit Agricole SA employees at the Montrouge and Saint-Quentin facilities the activities of the Foundation in the microfinance and Social Business sectors in developing countries, through portraits of some of the 2.9 million beneficiaries of the institutions and companies it helps to finance.

The Foundation also had the pleasure to present a show performed by the PPSE Phare circus, a live shows Cambodian Social Business company in which the Foundation is a shareholder since 2013, holding 16.1% of its capital.
The annual meeting of the Microinsurance Network members was held in Königstein on 23 and 24 June. The Foundation, always very active in this network, coordinated two workshops: one on investors and one on agriculture. The first group took stock of the ongoing study on investor practices and in the second group it was decided to work on the relationship between MFIs and agricultural microinsurance and on the role of the State. In this respect the Foundation hosted a plenary session on the issues of State’s financing of agricultural microinsurance.

The exchange of knowledge and advocacy are more important than ever to promote an effective insurance as an essential part of global discussions on resilience, risk mitigation and financial inclusion.

By bringing together industry players to encourage the sharing of knowledge and collective action, the network plays a crucial role in the efficient development of the sector. “The Network is going to concentrate on increasing regional presence in Latin America, Asia, and Africa by providing effective opportunities for peer learning and advocacy work”, explains Michael J. McCord, chair of the Microinsurance Network and president of the Microinsurance Centre.

The annual Network meeting included the pre-launch of a new major initiative – the annual “The State of Microinsurance” magazine, designed to help unfamiliar insurers understand the sector and keep microinsurance players in abreast of latest developments. The magazine was applauded by the Network members and launched officially in July.
Great success of the African Microfinance Week in Dakar with over 560 participants and a strong mobilisation of the Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation

“Accelerating Innovative Rural Finance in Africa”, was the title of the second edition of the African Microfinance Week (SAM) held in Dakar from 29 June to 3 July at the initiative of the four AMT (African Microfinance Transparency) African networks: AFMIN (the African Microfinance Network), AFRACA (African Rural and Agricultural Credit Association) and MAIN (Microfinance African Institutions Network), and with the support of ADA, the Government of Senegal and the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

In this 2015 edition, the Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation facilitated several workshops, including one entitled “Strengthening MFIs operating in rural areas: issues and challenges”, moderated by El Hadji Diop and with the participation of three representatives of microfinance institutions (MFI) supported by the Foundation; Renaca (Benin), Encot (Uganda), Asiena (Burkina Faso) and a representative of the French Development Agency (AFD). It also organised the workshop on “Social business in the development of an agricultural value chain” with the presence of Aissatou Le Blond, Social Business Investment Officer at the Foundation and our two Senegalese partners: la Laiterie du Berger and la Sénégalaise des Filières Alimentaires. In the field of agricultural microinsurance, Yann Gelister, Agricultural Microinsurance Programme Officer, led the workshop on “MFIs in agricultural microinsurance – from theory to practice” with representatives of Planet Guarantee, Acre-Africa (Kenya) and Soro Yiriwaso (Mali), all three partners of the Foundation.

The Foundation also organised side events, including a working session on “Agri Microinsurance and MFIs: What type of funding is needed?” in partnership with Planet Guarantee: the 50 participants reflected on the relationship between MFIs and agricultural microinsurance.

The SAM confirmed that, more than ever, in Africa, agriculture and rural activities financing is fundamental to improving living conditions. Over one quarter of Sub-Saharan Africa’s population has no access to adequate food and about 70% live in rural areas. It becomes urgent to find innovative financial solutions capable of stimulating food production, agricultural development and the transformation of the rural space. The SAM has allowed to explore new directions for collaboration between the various stakeholders, to reflect on innovations linked to the financing of inclusive value chains, the development of mobile finance and new technologies, the role of States and the involvement of the people affected.

Assessment of the Take-off Facility for agricultural and rural microfinance in Africa: the partners funded by the Foundation and the French Development Agency meet in Dakar

On the occasion of the African Microfinance Week (SAM), the Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation assesses the “Take-off Facility for agricultural and rural microfinance in Africa”

The 28 representatives of the 14 institutions partner of the Foundation within the framework of the African Facility, Soukeyna N’Diaye Bâ, Director of the Foundation, and Raphael de Guerre, in charge of the Facility at the AFD (French Development Agency), met between 27 and 29 June in Dakar, during the SAM, with the Foundation’s team and assessed the two years of implementation of this innovative scheme.

As of end of June, the Foundation had funded 14 institutions for a total commitment of € 4 million. This funding is linked to technical assistance services: so far, the Foundation has conducted 32 technical assistance missions and there are 10 ongoing missions, for a total commitment of € 1.05 million. To carry out these missions, the Foundation has created a database of consultants eligible for tenders: this database is made up of 167 consultants. The purpose of technical assistance missions is varied, the main topics being the training and strengthening of human resources (26% of missions), risk management and audit/external evaluation (12% of missions) or the business plan (10% of missions).

The assessment covered several topics: the content of the partnership, the disbursement of funding and the implementation of technical assistance programmes, the management of the scheme or the effects of the partnership. Overall, partners are satisfied with the partnership, concerning both the funding and the technical assistance offer, with a mechanism that works well and has already produced positive effects on institutions.

For more information on the African Facility, [Click here](#).
Convergences publishes its 2015 Microfinance Barometer

“We are at the dawn of a new era in the way we manage, transfer or spend our money (...) and many microfinance practitioners are among the most innovative players”

Jean-Luc Perron
Vice President of Convergences & Managing Director of the Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation

For the 6th consecutive year, Convergences publishes the Microfinance Barometer, in partnership with the National Federation of Savings Banks, the MasterCard Foundation, the Caisse des Dépôts Group, the European Microfinance Platform (e-MFP) and Oikocredit. This annual publication provides updated figures worldwide and in France, analyses the key industry trends and examines new opportunities for microfinance in northern and southern countries.

In this new edition, the Barometer presents a special dossier on “Financial inclusion 3.0: What challenges for digital finance?” Researchers and high-level professionals analyse the changes arising from digital finance in the microfinance and financial inclusion sectors, both at financial institutions and beneficiary’s level.

Among these professionals, Yann Gelister, in charge of the agricultural microinsurance programme at the Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation, presents in his article index insurance, which uses satellites to determine the payment of compensation to farmers through the value of a correlated index and which could revolutionise the sector. Similarly, Sophea Suon, CEO of Chamroeun Microfinance Limited, partner of the Foundation since 2010, describes the development of digital finance in Cambodia through the mobile banking offer by the principal payment aggregator in Cambodia to which the MFI is associated to better serve its customers.

The Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation at the Convergences World Forum 2015

Since its launch in 2008, the Convergences World Forum has become a key event for all actors involved in the fight against poverty and exclusion and for more sustainable development.

The 8th Convergences World Forum will take place on the 7th, 8th and 9th September 2015 in Paris on the topic “Zero exclusion, zero carbon, zero poverty”, broken down into 3 main pillars:
Pillar 1: The new Sustainable Development Goals: What next?
Pillar 2: Business models that accelerate social change
Pillar 3: Tackling climate change with an agenda of shared solutions

The Convergences World Forum, in which the Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation will take part, is also a professional Marketplace to show case their projects and expertise.

It is still time to register! Click here.
The Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation is investing for the first time in the Ivory Coast

During the first half of 2015, the Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation has made 10 investments including three new partners and one new investment in a new country, the Ivory Coast.

In January, the microfinance institution **Graine (Burkina Faso)** was granted a loan by the Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation for an amount in local currency equivalent to €385,000 over a two and a half-year period. Graine, partner of the Foundation since 2012, has been refinanced within the framework of the African Facility. Graine is a microfinance institution whose mission is to “contribute to improving social and economic conditions of poor people in Burkina Faso, mainly women in rural areas, by providing them with suitable financial services.” At the end of March, the institution had 25,850 active borrowers, 99.8% of them women and 73% of them located in rural areas.

In April, the Foundation granted a new loan to **Aldé (Bénin)**, for an amount in local currency equivalent to €800,000 over a three-year period. Aldé’s mission is to provide sustainable access to productive credit, savings and training for the most disadvantaged families in peri-urban and rural areas excluded from credit and formal savings schemes. At the end of March, the institution had 26,274 active borrowers, 92% of them women and 31% of them located in rural areas. Also in Benin, the Foundation granted a first loan to the institution **COMUBA** for a total amount of €305,000 over a two-year period. The **Coopérative Des Membres Unis Bethel Actions (COMUBA)** aims at improving the well-being of low income women groups in southern Benin by providing them with financial and non-financial quality services. At the end of September 2014, the institution had 42,513 active borrowers, 98% of them women and 89% of them located in rural areas. This investment is part of the African Facility.

In May, it granted a loan in local currency equivalent to €153,000 over a two-year period to the microfinance institution **Coopec Sifa (Togo)**. This financing is also part of the African Facility. Coopec Sifa offers small loans to poor women living in the north of Togo, with a strong social orientation. At the end of March, the institution had 20,983 active borrowers, 98% of them women and 98% of them located in rural areas.

In Asia, the Foundation has made three new investments during the period with a new loan granted to **Chamroeun (Cambodia)** in February for an amount equivalent to €599,000 over a three-year period and a loan granted to **TPC (Cambodia)** in June for an amount equivalent to €1.6 million over a three-year period as well. These institutions are both partners of the Foundation since 2010 and have received several loans each during these years. At the end of March, Chamroeun had 47,240 active borrowers, 84% of them women and 64% of them in rural areas. For its part, TPC had 185,867 active borrowers, including 85% of women and 99% of customers in rural areas. In Sri Lanka, the Foundation granted a first loan to the microfinance institution **Janamithu Lanka Limited**, for a total amount in local currency equivalent to €462,000 over a three-year period. JLL’s mission is to help improve the living standards of the poor by offering loans for education and asset building. At the end of December 2014, the institution had 15,622 active borrowers, 95% of them women and 79% of them in rural areas.

Finally, in Tajikistan, the Foundation granted a new loan to the microfinance institution **Humo and Partners** for a total amount of €850,000 over a one-year period. The institution, which is ranked among the top 5 microfinance institutions in the country, mainly targets rural entrepreneurs and farmers. At the end of March, Humo and Partners had 39,146 active borrowers, including 42% women and 79% of clients in rural areas.

At the end of March, the institution had 13,296 active borrowers, including 36% women and 88% of clients in rural areas.

For its part, **PAMF – CI (Ivory Coast)** was granted a first loan in local currency equivalent to €762,000 over a three-year period. This is the first investment the Foundation grants to this microfinance institution and it is the first investment it makes in the Ivory Coast. *Première Agence de Microfinance Côte d’Ivoire S.A.*, whose main activity is also the collection of savings and the provision of credit, is one of the few microfinance institutions that remains operational in the north of the country and which provides reliable services in rural areas. At the end of December 2014, the institution’s outstanding portfolio amounted to €3.3 million and had 10,064 active borrowers, including 42% women and 63% of clients in rural areas.

For more information on the Foundation’s partners, click here.
COOPEC SIFA (Togo)

COOPEC SIFA (Soutien aux Initiatives de Femmes pour l’Autopromotion - Support to Women’s Initiatives for Self-promotion) is a Togolese institution created to institutionalise the project implemented by the JARC (Mouvement des Jeunes et Adultes Ruraux et Catholiques - Rural and Catholic Youth and Adult Movement) in order to provide small loans to poor women in northern Togo. During the project phase, the institution’s microcredit activities were characterised by a strong social orientation and some caution that limited the operational development of the institution.

Today, with the end of microfinance support operations in the UEMOA region of CRS (Catholic Relief Services), the only foreign financial partner of the institution for many years, small changes in the governance of the institution in recent years and its new goal to expand its outreach activities and to better ensure its sustainability, COOPEC SIFA has taken steps to identify new partners to obtain financial and technical support. That is how the Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation has been the first foreign partner to establish a relationship and to conduct a due diligence mission with the institution to assess its integration capabilities into the African Facility scheme developed by the Foundation in partnership with the AFD (French Development Agency).

To date, the Foundation has granted to the institution two loans in local currency equivalent to a cumulative total of €229,000. The Foundation has also conducted three technical assistance missions regarding the action plan, the business plan and internal control. Three additional missions are planned on offering non-financial services, reliability or the analysis of drop off rates. These technical assistance missions, which fall within the context of the African Facility, aim to contribute to the strengthening of the institution to enable it to develop and deliver sustainable financial services to its customers which were 20,983 at end of March 2015, 98% of them women and 98% of them located in rural areas.

InFine – Inclusive Finance

Partner of InFine since 2014, the Grameen Crédit Agricole Foundation takes part in the general assembly of the network in Luxembourg

On 19 May, the Inclusive Finance Network Luxembourg (InFiNe.lu) held in Luxembourg its annual general assembly, also celebrating its first anniversary. On this occasion, the 22 members from the Luxembourg private, public and voluntary sectors have assessed the first year of the network and reviewed the challenges for 2015. This was also an opportunity for the Foundation to present itself to the other members of the network and explain its mission and activities.

InFiNe is the national inclusive finance network bringing together Luxembourg players active in the sector. The network was created on the initiative of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs - Directorate for Development and Humanitarian Aid, one of whose main concerns is to make the financial inclusion a cross-sectoral theme of its international cooperation programmes for development.

Inclusive Finance aims to increase access of vulnerable populations to responsible and low cost financial services. InFiNe promotes the vision of a society with universal access to quality financial services and products and aims to consolidate Luxembourg as a centre for excellence for financial inclusion, to disseminate knowledge and good practices in the field of financial inclusion and to build synergies between its members. So InFine is putting together a task force on financial inclusion and new sustainable development goals. The next meeting will take place in the framework of the European Microfinance Week to be held from 18 to 20 November in Luxembourg.

More information on InFiNe, Click here