

Call for applications: Postdoctoral position

Research project: Financial inclusion in crisis. Combining demand and supply analyses in the context of global crisis

1) Position title/ short description

Postdoc in development economics

Duration: one year, starting from April/June 2012

Hosting institution: UMR 201 Développement et sociétés, Paris I Sorbonne / IRD (Institut de recherche pour le développement)

Applications deadline: February 15, 2012

Contact: isabelle.guerin@ird.fr and solene.morvant-roux@unifr.ch

2) Context

The research unit **Development and Societies** (Paris I Sorbonne / IRD) invites applications from candidates in development economics or any related field. The successful candidate will work within a specific research project funded by the European Investment Bank. See below for project description and team members.

3) Main Duties

The postdoc will be responsible for:

- Conducting econometric analysis on microfinance clients characteristics in order to identify key determinants of repayment defaults at household level (gender, age, use of financial services, economic activity, etc.). This work will be done for two microfinance institutions in two different countries (Morocco and another country still to be defined). Data bases will include various variables of interest along time.
- Conducting spatial analysis of repayment defaults distribution within these two countries.

More specifically, it includes the following responsibilities:

- Research and dissemination activities: Participating in specific empirical research and synthesis on special studies based on identified program of work; assisting and providing support to the senior team in holding workshops
- Communication and Liaison: updating the website of the project, maintaining active communication with national counterparts, establishing active links with various national research institutions.

4) Required Qualifications:

- PhD in Economics, development Economics Public Policy or closely related field

- Skills and experience in econometrics: qualitative and quantitative variables, time series.
- Software management skills: Access, Stata and/or "R"
- Knowledge and experience working in developing or emerging countries world
- Survey design and field data collection experience desired
- Ability to work across disciplines
- Excellent written and spoken French and English

Salary: calculated according to IRD's pay scale

5) Application Instructions

Interested candidates should send their CV and brief letter of interest by email to:

Isabelle Guérin, IRD-UMR 201 : isabelle.guerin@ird.fr

Solène Morvant-Roux, Unifr: solene.morvant-roux@unifr.ch

Applications should be received as soon as possible and no later than February 15, 2012.

Selected applicants will be offered an interview.

Description of the research project (2012-2015)

Financial inclusion in crisis

Combining demand and supply analyses in the context of global crisis

Executive summary

Objectives

The main purpose of this research is to offer a global analysis of microcredit delinquency crises, looking simultaneously at the supply, the demand and the environment. Available literature indicates that microcredit delinquency crises may be the result of four interconnected factors:

- Governance related factors: lack of enforcement mechanisms, credit delivery without any analysis of customers' creditworthiness and potential for success in the activity to be financed, focus on the highest-risk financial products, mismanagement, etc.
- Regulation related factors: inadequate regulation, political interference, government programs creating distortion, etc.
- Saturation effects and the inability of local economies to absorb external liquidities beyond a given threshold and to support the creation of new income generating activities, crises being thus a symptom of a wider economic crisis.
- Collective resistance practices, that can be interpreted as political messages toward an MFI, the microfinance industry or more globally toward the « authority ».

Drawing on this body of knowledge, this research has the following objectives:

- Analyse the exact nature of these four factors and possibly identify new factors
- For each factor, identify the role of the demand, the supply and the environment
- Analyse how the four factors interact with each other in different contexts and phases of growth and maturity of the microfinance industry, in order to build a typology of delinquency crises
- Build a “delinquency crisis prevention dashboard” which aims to identify the main factors/configurations that are likely to lead to a crisis. One factor alone might not be enough to lead to a crisis: it is rather a combination and/or one particular factor in one specific context.

Method

The project methodology relies on the following features:

- a multidisciplinary approach (economics, business and management, political economy, economical anthropology and agro-economy)
- a combination of tools for data collection and analysis
- an emphasis on the generation of primary data
- a comparative perspective with a focus on four countries/states (Morocco, Andhra Pradesh and two other countries to be selected)
- a strategic collaboration with microfinance institutions.

Expected outcomes

The project will lead to the following expected results:

- Literature review on microfinance crises. The main focus will be to bring together diverse disciplinary approaches
- Production of original empirical data:
 - A detailed analysis of the crisis in Morocco and Andhra Pradesh and two MFIs (one in each country)
 - A comparative analysis with two other countries
- An innovative theoretical analysis of microfinance crises, aiming first to identify both factors of recurrences and country/regions specific factors if any, and second to build a typology of crises
- Operational output: a “delinquency crisis prevention dashboard”
- A wide dissemination of results, in English and in French, through research briefs and policy briefs, communications in national and international conferences, working papers, peer-reviewed scientific publications, training sessions, contributions to public events and to newspapers articles.

The team

The research will be carried out by a team of microfinance specialists with complementary skills and methodologies:

- political economy (partner 1 coordinator “Labour finance and globalisation”, UMR Paris I Sorbonne/IRD),
- business and management (partner 2 Centre for European research on Microfinance - CERMi),
- applied economics (partner 3 Lasaare, located in Casablanca).

