

Building Responsible Finance Ecosystems

A Summit on Responsible Finance in Action

Cerise+SPTF
Annual Meeting
Manila, the Philippines
June 4-7, 2024



CERISE+SPTF



RIFF-SEA

Press Release – August 5th, 2024

Driving global change:

Cerise+SPTF and MCPI champion Responsible Finance at Annual Meeting in the Philippines.

Washington – Bordeaux - Luxembourg — 5 August 2024 — Cerise + SPTF, in partnership with The Microfinance Council of the Philippines (MCPI), successfully hosted their annual meeting in Manila from June 4-7, 2024. The event, themed "Building Responsible Finance ecosystems: A summit on Responsible Finance in action," brought together 300 guests from 42 countries for an impactful series of discussions on advancing responsible financial practices.

With 26 content sessions delivered over four days, this gathering addressed the crucial need to build responsible finance ecosystems, emphasizing the importance of social and environmental performance management. The event highlighted that financial inclusion is all about driving positive and responsible impact.

The pre-conference workshops on June 4 set the stage with sessions on regulator exchange, universal standards for social and environmental performance management, and governance and risk management tailored for CEOs and board members. A significant highlight was the "Regulator Dialogue," sponsored by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), which brought together representatives from 13 central banks, including those from Cambodia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Nicaragua, the Philippines, Uganda, Vietnam, and Zambia. This dialogue focused on centering client voices in regulatory design and implementation, fostering strategic collaboration among peers to tackle shared challenges on client protection.

The main conference on June 5 kicked off with an opening plenary on cultivating responsible financial inclusion ecosystems, featuring prominent speakers such as Governor Eli Remolona, Jr. of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and Commissioner Javey Paul Francisco of the Securities and Exchange Commission. Breakout sessions continued throughout the day, focusing on client protection, customer empowerment, and implementation of social and environmental performance management.

On June 6, the discussions turned to environmental strategies, digital financial services, and sustainable outcomes management, underscoring the industry's commitment to addressing

global challenges, notably climate change adaptation, with innovative solutions that can be proposed by financial service providers to their vulnerable customers.

The conference concluded on June 7 with field visits to various program sites, offering participants firsthand insights into the impact of responsible finance initiatives on communities. These visits included:

- CARD & ASA Philippines 's financial services related to microenterprise loans, micro savings, and housing;
- K-COOP's climate mitigation project focused on energy efficiency and renewable energy sources;
- and NWTF's non-financial services aimed at decreasing customer vulnerability through initiatives like medical missions.

Laura Foose, Executive Director of SPTF, explained: *“We were thrilled with our partner MCPI to see so many of our partners and members at our annual meeting. This event, our largest in-person gathering each year, is incredibly inspiring and energising. The collective commitment to advancing responsible finance globally is truly heartening. Thank you to all for invaluable contributions, curiosity, and dedication that enriched our discussions.”*

Cecile Lapenu, Executive Director of Cerise, added: *“At Cerise+SPTF, our objective is to understand and empower vulnerable customers. We believe in combining financial and non-financial services to deliver solutions that work, making finance more responsible and aiming for a better world. This annual meeting showed what all stakeholders can achieve together.”*

Allan Robert Sicat, Executive Director of the Microfinance Council of the Philippines, Inc. (MCPI), concluded: *“We are so happy to have hosted and built this Annual Meeting with our partner Cerise + SPTF. As the microfinance sector continues to evolve, networks must involve regulators, government agencies, and other stakeholders in developing responsible financial inclusion. Collaboration stems from the willingness of diverse stakeholders to listen to clients.”*

Loïc De Cannière, Chairman of SPTF added: *“Attending a Cerise+SPTF Annual Meeting means for me going back to the deepest motivation of what drives me to work in the financial inclusion space. It is a refreshing source of inspiration that energizes me and helps me to face the difficulties and disappointments that we inevitably face. The annual meeting is not only unique because of its outstanding content, but also because it gathers highly committed, noble and fundamentally good people. It is not difficult to make friends for life at the Cerise+SPTF meetings”*

Our heartfelt thanks to our Annual Meeting sponsors for their generous support and commitment to our shared goals of supporting and advancing responsible finance:

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