

MEDA Jamaica Project Profile

Project Name

Micro Enterprise Financing Limited (MEFL)

Project Location

Kingston, Jamaica

Project Value and Funding Agency

US\$250,000 (June 2002 – present), funded by Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Project Description

Started as a joint venture between the CIDA Bank of Nova Scotia and the Kingston Restoration Company, MEFL is a microfinance institution with a vision to help disadvantaged communities increase their participation in and contribution to the economic life of the country, while at the same time, enhancing their quality of life. Their mission is to strengthen the economic base of the urban micro entrepreneurs, particularly women, by providing high-quality, sustainable financial services, combining cost-efficient methodologies with exemplary customer service.

MEDA's role is that of long-term technical assistance provider for MEFL. MEDA has been working with MEFL since inception and has facilitated every stage of the MFI's development from start-up to the growing institution that exists today. Technical assistance provided to date has included:

- Staff hiring and training, human resource systems development
- Loan product development and refinement
- Operation procedures and policy development
- Operations and administration manual development
- Accounting system set-up
- Loan portfolio management system (MIS) custom design, installation, technical support and troubleshooting. The system is now in its third version and has moved from an access to SQL server platform.
- Financial projections and business planning
- Internal control diagnostics and policy development
- Portfolio and delinquency management training
- Business process (efficiency) review

Achievements:

Today, MEFL is a young, dynamic, and growing MFI, serving microenterprises in the challenging markets of Kingston. They made a small profit in their last fiscal year, after disbursing over 1240 loans to a clientele that is 81% female and working in the retail, services and manufacturing sectors. Their portfolio quality is high as is their outlook for growth.

The program is currently testing an innovative loan product for the manufacturing sector by facilitating contracts between manufacturing clients and larger Jamaican companies.

