The International Network of Alternative Financial Institutions (INAFI) was established in Cusco, Peru in March 1995 as a global network of practitioner microfinance institutions (MFIs). Its founding members are 25 non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Today INAFI counts 146 member organizations, including four large networks, from 39 countries. Together they serve more than 26 million clients with a combined portfolio of USD750 million in credit and USD350 million in savings.

INAFI Membership & Outreach

Continent	Member MFIs	No. of Countries	Clients Served
Latin America	29	9	2, 138, 000
Africa	48	24	3, 900, 000
Asia	69	6	20, 480, 000
TOTAL	**146**	**39**	**26, 518, 000**

More than one billion people in the world live on less than one dollar a day. Most of them are located in the underdeveloped regions of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, especially in rural areas that have no access to formal financial services.

Financial services are an effective means of enabling poor households to climb out of poverty. Through lower transaction costs and non-traditional lending and savings methodologies, customized financial services enable the poor to meet their financial needs, fulfill social and economic obligations, and become less vulnerable to internal and external shocks.

Sustained advocacy is crucial to creating an environment that brings about the effective delivery of financial services to the poor. Advocacy efforts ultimately result in increased awareness among donors and stakeholders, and therefore added support to the development of the microfinance industry.