

Press Release

Paris, October 30th 2008

Winners of the first edition of the « International Microfinance Awards » held at the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris.

The members of the “International Microfinance Awards” jury awarded 8 prizes to microentrepreneurs from across the world among more than 100 applications, on Tuesday.

The first “International Microfinance Awards” were given by PlaNet Finance as part of its 10th Anniversary celebration.

Members of the jury were:

- Alexandre Allard;
- Arthur Arnold, Chief Executive Officer, FMO (the Netherlands Development Bank);
- Jean-Philippe Courtois, President, Microsoft International & Senior Vice-President, Microsoft Corporation;
- Abdou Diouf, Former President of the Republic of Senegal and Secretary General of the international French-speaking Union, L'Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie;
- Corinne Evens, Chair of the Evens Foundation;
- Clara Gaymard, Chairman of General Electric, France;
- Bernard Kouchner, French Minister of Foreign and European Affairs;
- Elizabeth Littlefield, a Director of the World Bank and Chief Executive Officer of CGAP (Consultative Group to Assist the Poor) - represented by Alexia Latortue, Senior Microfinance Specialist at CGAP;
- Caroline Mille, Senior Vice-President of Communications and Brand, France Télécom/Orange;
- Felix G. Rohatyn, President, Rohatyn Associates;
- Luc-François Salvador, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Sogeti;
- Dr. Robert Sebbag, Vice-President, Access to Medicines, Sanofi-Aventis;
- Jean-Michel Severino, Chief Executive Officer, Agence Française de Développement - represented by Pierre Jacquet, Director of Strategy and Chief Economist, Agence Française de Développement;
- Philippe Zaouati, Director of Development, Natixis Asset Management.

The jury awarded 8 prizes:

- In the category *Education*, prize was awarded to Enaiat Abdel Aziz Merghany Shawkat (Egypt), client of the Microfinance Institution (MFI) Alexandria Business Association
- In the category *Health*, prize was awarded to Luc Sotima Yoro Tante (Benin) client of the MFI Vital Finance
- In the category *Environment*, prizes were awarded to Maroine Mergheni (France) supported by Créo-ADAM Aulnay-sous-Bois (Programme « Entreprendre en Banlieue ») and Ambia Khatun (Bangladesh) client of the MFI Grameen Shakti

- In the category *Innovation*, prize was awarded to Elimane Drame (Senegal) client of the MFI IMCEC Casamance
- In the category *New Technologies*, prizes were awarded to Alain Kaplan (France) supported by Créo-ADAM Sevrans (Programme « Entreprendre en Banlieue ») and Luo Chaoshuang (China) client of the Harbin Bank DAZHI Branch
- In the category *Women*, prize was awarded to Liu Qinghe (China) client of the MFI TRDWA



Winners of the first "International Microfinance Awards"

Funding for the prizes has come from Microsoft, Natixis Asset Management, France Télécom/Orange, Sanofi-Aventis and Sogeti.

The "International Microfinance Awards" will be an annual prize-giving event. Next "International Microfinance Awards" will take place on October 2009.

About PlaNet Finance:

PlaNet Finance is a non-profit international development organisation dedicated to using microfinance (microloans and microinsurance) to reduce global poverty.

In its 10 years of existence PlaNet Finance has supported more than 1,500 microfinance institutions, providing funds which have given more than 30 million microentrepreneurs a life-changing escape route from poverty. Based in Paris, PlaNet Finance is active in more than 60 countries and has a network of 29 bureaux in Europe, North America, Latin America, Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

Visit PlaNet Finance's website at: <http://www.planetfinancegroup.org>

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