



Paris – 3rd of February, 2011.

MicroWorld, the new social microcredit platform from PlaNet Finance

PlaNet Finance Group and Allard Group, backed by a pool of French and international shareholders, have set themselves the challenge of becoming the European leading online provider of microcredit for micro-entrepreneurs throughout the world.

Launched online in January 2011, MicroWorld, the social microcredit platform, gives individuals and businesses the opportunity to select and finance, via interest-free loans, micro-entrepreneur projects from around the world. All funds received are used to combat poverty by supporting the development of micro-entrepreneur projects in Peru, Cambodia, Senegal and Lebanon. Once the loan period is over, the funds are returned to the initial lender. Under its roll-out program, MicroWorld plans to add one new country per quarter.

A BROAD RANGE OF PERSONALITIES ARE COMMITTED TO FURTHERING THE MICROFINANCE CAUSE



MicroWorld is an entity of PlaNet Finance, which was founded by Jacques Attali and Arnaud Ventura and contributes to the development of microfinance in over 80 countries. MicroWorld is managed by Alexandre Allard and is financed by Allard Involved, a Group Allard subsidiary, and by other international shareholders seeking to grow the initiative around the world.

From an operational perspective, the MicroWorld team comprises banking, internet and communications professionals, who have strived to develop a reliable and innovative platform.

Furthermore, large companies and well-known celebrities, inspired by this socially responsible initiative, have also teamed up with MicroWorld to form a broad community of lenders. All of these partners share the same objective: to be involved in building a new social economic model, a social business that strives to combat poverty by developing responsible finance.

The principal financial beneficiary from MicroWorld will be the NGO PlaNet Finance, which belongs to the PlaNet Finance group. David Langlois, managing director of MicroWorld, emphasizes: “Our goal is to become the leading microcredit Internet platform in Europe, and we would like to offer the general public the opportunity to take practical steps to combat poverty by lending just a few euros. We also strive to establish a new trusting and respectful relationship with micro-entrepreneurs by focusing on their work and their projects”.

EXPERTS AND MICROWORLD

To maximize security for lenders, PlaNet Finance, which works with over 200 microfinance institutions (MFI) throughout the world, provides MicroWorld with its professional expertise in MFIs selection. These local institutions are chosen based on a criteria including transparency, financial strength and social impact, and support the micro-entrepreneurs locally.

In order to monitor all funds that pass via the platform, MicroWorld relies on Oracle Flexcube UBS from Oracle, a well-known back-office banking system, which allows users to make secured payments via PayPal, a company specializing in Internet-based payments.



LARGE PARTNER COMPANIES



Large, socially-engaged companies seeking to offer their employees the opportunity to be involved in this new economic model have also teamed up with MicroWorld. They are able to develop specific programs internally in order to mobilize their staff behind pre-selected micro-entrepreneur projects. GDF SUEZ is the first company to commit its support to MicroWorld.

“As a citizen, I believe the development of microcredit is necessary: in the current recession, I think it is essential to introduce social mechanisms and boost entrepreneurial spirit. It is up to a company such as GDF SUEZ to demonstrate universal values of social engagement and solidarity. This is a natural commitment.” emphasizes Gérard Mestrallet, Chairman and CEO of GDF SUEZ.

MICROSHOWS: AN EXCLUSIVE MEETING BETWEEN CELEBRITIES AND LENDERS

With a view to building awareness of the platform and to thank the lenders for their support, MicroWorld organizes regular MicroShows, which are exclusive meetings between a celebrity and a small number of lenders, selected at random. Several artists have already expressed an interest in supporting our cause, and Jean-Louis Aubert, the first artist to have committed to support MicroWorld, will host the first MicroShow on February 21, 2011.



Visit microworld.org!



About PlaNet Finance group

Founded in 1998, PlaNet Finance is one of the world's leading microfinance groups which aim at fighting poverty through the development of inclusive finance. The group aims to help those excluded from mainstream financial services to save, borrow and gain access to insurance coverage, thus enabling them to smooth their income, create and develop income-generating activities and seek protection against everyday risks. PlaNet Finance Group is active in 80 countries, working continuously to promote the growth and development of microfinance.

www.planetfinancegroup.org

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About Allard Involved

Allard Involved, an Allard Group subsidiary, is a socially responsible investment company. The company seeks to contribute to projects as a party committed to improving local life. Allard Involved brings a modern approach to its commitment by going beyond pure financial support attempting to develop new economic models.

<http://www.groupe-allard.com/allardinvolved>

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