

## Press Release

Paris, 28 October 2009

### PlaNNet Finance presents the 2<sup>nd</sup> “International Microfinance Awards”

On November the 10<sup>th</sup>, PlaNNet Finance holds its second “International Microfinance Awards” ceremony, honouring outstanding microentrepreneurs from across the world, at the “musée du quai Branly” in Paris. The prize-giving ceremony will be preceded by a conference devoted to a key issue within international development and microfinance, the theme of this year’s conference being “Microfinance and Food Insecurity”.

**As part of the 2009 “International Microfinance Awards”, PlaNNet Finance has organised a conference entitled “Microfinance and Food Insecurity”**

In 2009, the number of people suffering from hunger passed the billion mark and came in the wake of the previous year’s food riots – highlighting food security as one of the top international development issues. The conference will look at issues such as the state of play regarding the world food situation and its underlying factors. It will also deal with questions concerning key players, how policy towards food security is determined and implemented and whether microfinance, especially in rural areas, can be an effective weapon in combating food insecurity.

Addressing these issues will be four leading figures whose knowledge and expertise range across economics, food issues and microfinance:

- **Jean-Hervé Lorenzi**, President of the economics forum “Cercle des Economistes” and Professor at Paris-Dauphine University
- **Denis Metzger**, President of the French anti-hunger NGO, “Action contre la Faim”
- **Rakotoarivao RANDRIANIAINA**, Director of the Madagascan microfinance institution, OTIV Antananarivo
- **Jean-François Sempéré**, Head of the Agricultural Policy and Food Security Division of IRAM (Institut de Recherche et d’Applications des Méthodes de développement)
- **François Durollet**, Chief Executive Officer, PlaNNet Finance

The **introductory speech** will be given by **Jacques Attali**, President of PlaNNet Finance, and the conference will be **chaired by Jean-Marie Colombani**, founder of the websites [www.slate.fr](http://www.slate.fr) and [www.youphil.com](http://www.youphil.com). The conference will be followed by the “International Microfinance Awards” ceremony.

### The “International Microfinance Awards” – honouring the world’s top microentrepreneurs

PlaNNet Finance’s second “International Microfinance Awards” will honour the top microentrepreneurs of 2009. The award ceremony will be held on **Tuesday November the 10<sup>th</sup> at the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris, starting at 6 o’clock.**

The prize-winning microentrepreneurs will receive their awards from the jury, with prizes being awarded for each of the following six categories:

- Women
- Innovation/New Technologies
- Environment
- Health
- Agriculture/Food Security
- Craftsmanship/Art

A distinguished panel of judges, all actively involved in the world of microfinance, was chaired by **Bernard Kouchner, France's Minister for Foreign & European Affairs**. The other members of the panel are:

- **Arthur Arnold**, former CEO of the Dutch development bank, FMO;
- **Eric Boustouller**, General Manager, Microsoft France;
- **Abdou Diouf**, former president of the Republic of Senegal and General Secretary of the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), represented by **Tharcisse Urayeneza**, Director of Sustainable Development and Solidarity at the OIF;
- **Corinne Evens**, Chair of the Evens Foundation;
- **Elizabeth Littlefield**, a Director of the World Bank and Chief Executive Officer of the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP); represented by **Alexia Latortue**, Senior Microfinance Specialist, CGAP;
- **Caroline Mille**, Senior Vice-President Brand & Communications, France Télécom/Orange, represented by **Mireille Le Van**, Chief Executive, Orange Foundation;
- **Felix George Rohatyn**, President, Rohatyn Associates
- **Luc-François Salvador**, Chairman, Sogeti Group;
- **Dr. Robert Sebbag**, Vice-President, Access to Medicines, Sanofi-Aventis;
- **Jean-Michel Severino**, CEO of the French Development Agency, Agence Française de Développement

Over 100 nominations were received. From these **the judges selected 7 prize-winners**, with their decisions reflecting personal, financial and social issues. Prize winners for each of the categories are:

- **“Women”**: **Aminata Tamba** (Senegal), supported by Caurie Microfinance
- **“Innovation/New Technologies”**: **Mohamed Moussa** (Egypt), supported by the microfinance institution (MFI) Alexandria Business Association – **Sponsored by SAP**
- **“Health”**: **Griselda Flores** (Mexico) supported by the MFI Ambito Productivo – **Sponsored by SANOFI-AVENTIS**
- **“Environment”**: jointly awarded to **Mohamed Said** (Morocco), supported by the ARDI Microcredit Foundation and **Thomas Buffard** (France), supported by FinanCités– **Sponsored by SUEZ-ENVIRONNEMENT**
- **“Agriculture/Food Security”**: **Gang Ding** (China), supported by the MFI MicroCred Nanchong – **Sponsored by CAPGEMINI**
- **“Craftsmanship/Arts”**: **Marie-Alexandrine Rasoantenaina** (Madagascar), supported by the MFI, OTIV Antananarivo

In addition, a **special prize** will be awarded this year to a **student whose final year dissertation was on the subject of microfinance**. The prize is part of the “University meets Microfinance” programme between PlaNNet Finance and the Freie Universität Berlin. The winner's name will be announced at the end of October.



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**About PlaNNet Finance**

PlaNNet Finance is a Paris-based international NGO. It is dedicated to combating poverty by developing microfinance as a means of tackling financial exclusion through improving access to financial services by those in poverty. PlaNNet Finance and its international network are active in almost 80 countries.

[www.planetfinancegroup.org](http://www.planetfinancegroup.org)

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