



## **EUROPEAN MICROFINANCE WEEK 2015 (#emw2015) FOCUSES ON FINANCIAL INCLUSION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

- *Over 450 practitioners, investors, academics and support providers gather at Abbaye de Neumünster in Luxembourg*
- *Day of Action Group meetings, plus 2 days with plenary sessions and over 20 workshops across several thematic streams*
- *EMW includes the European Microfinance Award on Thursday 19th at European Investment Bank; this year's focus on post-conflict and post-disaster microfinance*

Luxembourg

Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> November 2015

For Immediate Release

[European Microfinance Week](#) (#emw2015) got underway today in Luxembourg, with this year's attention on *Financial Inclusion for Sustainable Development*.

The annual European Microfinance Week (EMW), organised by the European Microfinance Platform (e-MFP), one of the industry's premier networks for knowledge sharing and supported by the Luxembourg Government, takes place this year from 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> November, with a greater range of exciting debates, discussions and workshops than ever before. EMW is the major annual event of the microfinance industry hosting in-depth discussions by all sectors of the European microfinance community working in developing countries. It brings together over 400 opinion-leaders, top management of banks, funds and other financial institutions, practitioners, academics, analysts, raters and industry commentators to present key innovations and challenges.

As in previous years, EMW kicked off with a day of Action Group meetings and other day-long workshops on 18<sup>th</sup> November. These Action Groups met to present their work conducted over the previous year and to plan their objectives for the coming 12 months. These sessions were followed by the University Meets Microfinance

Award Ceremony. The day rounded off with a convivial evening reception sponsored by the e-MFP Digital Innovations for Financial Empowerment Action Group.

November 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> are the dates of the conference proper, with plenary sessions, workshops, and the now-annual European Microfinance Award. The opening plenary, 'Assessing limits: towards sustainable growth in microfinance' led by the editor of MicroCapital, presented two leading projects developing early warning metrics for overheating markets and overindebtedness, with two important microfinance investors discussing strategies for managing these risks. Other plenaries will include 'Sustainable Development Goals and financial inclusion' – how financial inclusion fits within the next incarnation of development goals – the SDGs. And the closing plenary on Friday, 'Where do we go from here: the future of microfinance', will peer into the crystal ball of financial inclusion to forecast the changes, challenges and opportunities ahead.

The plenaries will be supplemented, as usual, by a wide array of workshop sessions across different seven different streams: the European Microfinance Award, Investors; Social Performance; Digital Innovations; Green Microfinance; Agri-finance; and Networks .

On the evening of the 19<sup>th</sup> November we will learn the winner of the 6th European Microfinance Award at the ceremony held at the European Investment Bank. Organised jointly by the Inclusive Finance Network (InFiNe) Luxembourg, e-MFP and the Government of Luxembourg, in cooperation with the European Investment Bank, this year's Award recognises excellence and innovation in the uniquely difficult contexts of post-conflict and post-disaster financial services. The €100,000 prize, presented by Her Royal Highness the Grand Duchess of Luxembourg, will be awarded to one of three finalists, selected from a record 47 applications from 28 countries.

The ceremony will include addresses by Peter Maurer, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross; Dr Werner Hoyer, President of the European Investment Bank; and Mr Romain Schneider, Minister for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs.

Anne Contreras, Chairwoman of the e-MFP Board said of this year's European Microfinance Week:

"Sustainable development has never been more important in financial inclusion than it is today, with clients facing the challenges of civil conflict and natural disaster, including those resulting from climate change."

“With the recently announced Sustainable Development Goals taking the place of the expiring Millennium Development Goals, it gives me great hope to see at this European Microfinance Week such a wealth of ideas on how we can innovate in providing financial services in a sustainable and scalable way.”

END

The European Microfinance Platform (e-MFP) is a multi-stakeholder organisation representing the European microfinance community, and comprises banks, financial institutions, government bodies, consultancies, NGOs researchers and academics. Its aim is to promote cooperation among European microfinance bodies working in developing countries. It facilitates high-level debate and research on key issues in inclusive finance, and is an invaluable opportunity for stakeholders to share Good Practice in a rapidly-evolving sector.

For more information, contact Niamh Watters, [nwatters@e-mfp.eu](mailto:nwatters@e-mfp.eu)