



Press Release

The Microfinance Enhancement Facility's keystone investors renew their commitments to 2025

Luxembourg, 17 November 2017.

With total assets of almost USD 700 million and after 8 years of successful operations, the Microfinance Enhancement Facility (MEF) has become a critical player in the microfinance industry, fulfilling its mission to provide a stable and reliable source of regular debt and emergency liquidity funding to microfinance institutions (MFIs) in developing countries. Its blended finance structure, combining public and private investors, has enabled the MEF to help stabilise and further develop microfinance markets with speed and convening power without crowding out much-needed private sector or development finance actors.

Keystone investors in the MEF, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), KfW (Germany's Development Bank) and the Development Bank of Austria (OeEB) have recently renewed their funding commitments to 2025. These complement the unlimited duration commitments of the other foundational shareholders of the MEF, namely the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation (BMZ), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and OeEB. Further public and private investors are expected to similarly renew their investments in the fund.

Since its inception in 2009 the MEF has lent over USD 1.5 billion to more than 160 MFIs in 47 countries across all developing regions. It thus enhanced access to financial services for 550,000 micro-entrepreneurs and employers running productive small businesses.

The MEF has demonstrated its key role during microfinance sector crises such as in Cambodia in 2013 and, more recently, in 2016 in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Similar situations can happen again unexpectedly, and the MEF, with its broad investor and stakeholder community in shareholding and governance, would again be well positioned to help partners involved with finding and implementing mutually acceptable solutions.

From October 2017 Symbiotics S.A., together with the long-serving investment managers BlueOrchard Finance S.A., Cyrano Management S.A. and responsAbility Investments AG, will further strengthen the capacity of the MEF in its support to MFIs in developing markets worldwide. This will help the fund meet its mission in accordance with the principles of additionality and sustainability.

For further information about the Microfinance Enhancement Facility, please consult www.mef-fund.com or e-mail info@mef-fund.com.