



MFTransparency Receives Ford Foundation Grant to Promote a Fair and Transparent Microfinance Industry in Latin America

LANCASTER, PA & NEW YORK, NY USA, March 22, 2010 –MFTransparency has received grant from the Ford Foundation to promote fair and transparent pricing in the microfinance industry in Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia and Ecuador. The effort, known as the *Transparent Pricing Initiative*, will launch later this month.

The grant will enable MFTransparency, the industry leader in issues of transparent pricing, to collect and publish complete and comparable data on the interest rates and fees charged to microfinance clients in the participating countries. This data will be published on the MFTransparency website, available for viewing by investors, regulators, microfinance institutions (MFIs) and clients. In addition, MFTransparency will produce a set of educational materials for investors, regulators, policymakers and the press that will give context to the data collected. MFTransparency will work with a range of stakeholders in these four countries to create an environment that is conducive to transparent pricing and responsible finance.

MFTransparency is a global initiative for fair and transparent pricing in the microfinance industry. In each country included in the *Global Transparent Pricing Initiative*, MFTransparency collects data on the interest and fees charged on each microfinance loan product in order to calculate the accurate, true price (Effective Interest Rate) on those loans. MFTransparency then posts that data along with educational materials for the public on its website (www.mftransparency.org). The group hopes to establish the industry standard for pricing disclosure, and believes collecting, calculating, and presenting information on credit products and their prices in a clear and consistent fashion will facilitate a fair exchange between suppliers and consumers of microcredit products. In addition to the data collection and dissemination, MFTransparency works with central banks and regulatory authorities to set transparency standards for the microfinance industry. MFTransparency will also produce a set of educational materials for each stakeholder group that will enhance their understanding of the data collected during these country projects.

The Ford Foundation has supported microfinance since its inception, providing Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus a grant in 1977 for an experiment in providing small loans that eventually became the Grameen Bank. In Latin America, Ford supports an array of civil society organizations, often working in coordination with governmental agencies, to build education and knowledge, to foster citizen participation in economic and political life, to consolidate human rights and the rule of law and to build the capacity of public institutions to respond to societal needs..

Alexandra Fiorillo, Vice President of MFTransparency said of the partnership, “We are delighted and honored to be working with the Ford Foundation, a pioneering donor in microfinance and a leader of the social performance movement. This recognition from the Ford Foundation is a great motivation for our work in Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia and Argentina. We look forward to working closely with the Foundation on our shared vision for pricing transparency in the Latin American microfinance industry.”

About MF*Transparency*

MicroFinance Transparency is an international non-governmental organization founded in 2008 with the purpose of facilitating transparent markets through the dissemination of true cost information to all market stakeholders. MF*Transparency* represents an industry movement toward fair practices and responsibility. Based in the United States, the group has organized transparent pricing efforts in Bosnia, Peru, Cambodia, Azerbaijan, Kenya and Bangladesh. For more information please visit www.mftransparency.org. Grameen Bank's Dr. Mohammad Yunus and Elizabeth Littlefield, CEO of CGAP, as well as more than 200 industry professionals and organizations have committed to transparent pricing by endorsing MF*Transparency* and its initiative. For information on MF*Transparency* staff, please see [Who We Are](#).

About the Ford Foundation

The Ford Foundation is an independent, nonprofit grant-making organization. For more than half a century it has worked with courageous people on the frontlines of social change worldwide, guided by its mission to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty and injustice, promote international cooperation, and advance human achievement. With headquarters in New York, the foundation has offices in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.

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