

Press Release

9th AFMIN Annual and 10th Anniversary Conference



Access to Financial Services:

Reaching the Poor and Excluded

5-8 October 2010
La-Palm Royal Beach Hotel, Accra, Ghana

For immediate release



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2010 ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY AFMIN

October 5-8, 2010 - La Palm Royal Beach Hotel, Accra, GHANA



Thank you to our conference partners

Platinum Level



Gold Level



silver Level



Local Partners

Platinum Level



Gold Level



Silver Level



Accra, October 11, 2010 – The Africa Microfinance Network, an institution representing networks of microfinance institutions from 22 African countries, organized its 9th Annual and 10th Anniversary Conference in Accra, Ghana from the 5th to 8th October, 2010. The main theme of this annual conference was Access to Financial Services: Reaching the Poor and Excluded.

The overall objective of the conference was to bring together different stakeholders including microfinance practitioners, bank leaders, policy makers and development partners to recommend strategies to boost access to finance for low-income households in Africa.

In view of the scope and relevance of this challenge that AFMIN had set for itself in order to promote the socio-economic development of Africa, several development partners co-sponsored this event. Among them were the Government of Ghana, USAID, Bank of Ghana, GTZ, African Development Bank, Making Finance Work for Africa, ACCION International, Oikocredit, Catholic Relief Services, Ingenico, Craft Silicon, the SMART Campaign, DFID-UK, UNDP Ghana MSME Project, Export Development and Investment Fund, Microcredit Summit Campaign, Merchant Bank, Opportunity International and Unicredit.

The annual conference brought together more than 300 participants from 41 countries, representatives of ministers and ministries in charge of microfinance and small and microenterprise promotion, Central Banks, executive directors of microfinance networks, microfinance institutions and international organizations.

This Annual Conference received strong support from the Government of Ghana, and the opening ceremony was presided over by high-level officials from the Ghanaian government. At the official opening ceremony, the Partnership Coordinator of Making Finance Work for Africa (MFW4A) presented the major challenges faced by different stakeholders in delivering financial services in rural areas, and he encouraged governments, development partners and the private sector to strengthen their support for market-leading innovation to boost financial access.

This conference enabled participants to deepen their knowledge through the experiences shared by organizations such as Consortium ALAFIA (Benin), Social Performance Task Force, APSFD-Senegal, CRS/MISION 2, The SMART Campaign, GHAMFIN-Ghana, AMFIU-Uganda, Opportunity International, Ingenico, Craft Silicon, CGAP, MIP Lending South Africa, Caurie-Microfinance, AEMFI-Ethiopia, AFMIN, Oikocredit, Microfinanza Rating, The Rating Initiative, Making Finance Work for Africa, African Development Bank, ProCredit Ghana, Ecobank-Ghana, KfW, Grameen Foundation, UNCDF, ARB-Apex Bank, GTZ, MicroEnsure, Star Micro Insurance, DFID-UK, World Bank, Microfinance Transparency and LAPO-Nigeria.

Leveraging the new knowledge acquired, participants formulated strategies and made concrete propositions for boosting access to finance for the poor and excluded in Africa. They recommended the promotion of and the support for social performance management in Africa; the establishment of an enabling environment; and the promotion of other innovative ideas such as mobile banking and micro insurance that enable access to financial services for the poor and excluded. They also recommended that the successes should be documented and disseminated worldwide for lateral learning among practitioners.

AFMIN celebrated its 10th Anniversary in The State House in Accra and took this opportunity to give two prizes to two network members, APSFD-Senegal and APIM-Burkina Faso, who provided the most support to AFMIN throughout 2010.



Mr. Davy Serge AZAKPAME
Executive Director AFMIN



From the left to the right Mr. Mahamadou OUEDRAOGO (Burkina-Faso)-Treasurer, Mr. Emmanuel DARKO (Ghana)- Vice-Chair, Mr. Ousmane THIONGANE (Sénégal)-Chairman, Ms. Marie Louise NSABIYUMVA (Burundi)- Member, Mr. AKA GNOUMON (Cote d'Ivoire), Member.

Following the Annual Conference, AFMIN held its 9th General Assembly. At the end of this General Assembly, a new board of directors was elected, headed by Mr. Ousmane Thiongane from Senegal. The new Board is composed of:

Mr. Ousmane THIONGANE (Senegal), Chairman
Mr. Emmanuel DARKO (Ghana), Vice Chair
Mr. Mahamadou OUEDRAOGO (Burkina-Faso), Treasurer
Mr. AKA GNOUMON (Cote d'Ivoire), Member
Mme Marie Louise NSABIYUMVA (Burundi), Member

The Extraordinary General Assembly decided to extend the membership of AFMIN to associate members. Therefore, any organization resolutely committed to developing the microfinance industry in Africa and that shares the vision and the mission of the Africa Microfinance Network is eligible to be an Associate Member.

The Ordinary General Assembly decided on a plan of action to accelerate the development of microfinance in Africa and to further strengthen the institutional capacity of AFMIN. It was also decided to exclude the national networks that have not fulfilled their obligations under the terms of this Constitution.

The Assembly decided to hold its next annual conference in Bujumbura, Burundi.

The new Chairman concluded this 9th Annual General Assembly by the renewal of the Board's total commitment to lead AFMIN to the achievement of its objectives. Furthermore, he reaffirmed AFMIN's commitment to continue collaborating with a larger number of organizations involved in the development of the microfinance industry in Africa. These strategic partners will enable the promotion of innovative and effective solutions, such as those identified during the Annual Conference, in order to allow AFMIN to contribute, in a more sustainable way, to the building of inclusive financial systems in Africa, with the view to significantly reduce poverty in rural areas.

About AFMIN:

The Africa Microfinance Network (AFMIN) is an African regional association of country-level microfinance networks in Africa resulting from an initiative led by African microfinance practitioners to create and/or strengthen country-level microfinance networks for the purpose of establishing shared performance standards, institutional capacity and policy change. AFMIN was formally launched in November 2000 and established its Secretariat in Abidjan (Republic of Côte d'Ivoire), where AFMIN is legally recognized as an international Non-Governmental Organization pursuant to Ivorian laws. Because of the political unrest in Côte d'Ivoire, AFMIN temporarily relocated its office to Cotonou, Benin in October 2006.

AFMIN's mission is to contribute to the provision of effective and sustainable financial services to the low income population of Africa by supporting Country-Level Networks and their member MFIs to achieve their mission and objectives, and helping to improve the microfinance environment in Africa and globally.

As a result, AFMIN aims to position itself as a leader in microfinance in Africa and globally by working with country-level networks, microfinance practitioners, private sector operators, policy makers and donors to create linkages and develop financial systems and innovative practices that work for microfinance institutions and their clients.

AFMIN and its members aim to leverage their knowledge, resources and results on the ground to have a major impact on microfinance services for low income populations by:

- Building consensus around performance indicators and standards for microfinance to ensure that the sector maintains a high standard of performance that will enable MFIs to achieve sustainability and become integrated in the financial systems of their countries, while retaining a focus on providing services to the poor.



- Sharing and disseminating best practices and innovations to build institutional capacity of members, including the coordination of technical services from external agencies or donors and the promotion of lateral learning among practitioners.
- Creating a strong and unified voice for policy change actions and consensus building around policies that work for the poor majority in Africa.

To date, AFMIN membership consists of 22 country-level networks from: Benin (Consortium Alafia), Ethiopia (AEMFI), the Gambia (GAMFINET), Ghana (GHAMFIN), Guinea (APIM-Guinea), Côte d'Ivoire (APSFD), Kenya (AMFI), Mali (APIM), Niger (ANIPMF), South Africa (MEA), Togo (APIM), Uganda (AMFIU), Zimbabwe (ZAMFI), Malawi (MAMN), Nigeria (CDMR), Democratic Republic of Congo (RIFI-DEC), Burkina-Faso (APIMBF), Madagascar (APIFM), Burundi (RIM), Senegal (APSFD), Congo (APEMF), Tanzania (TAMFI).

Due to its membership, AFMIN is the largest microfinance association in Africa, representing more than 1,118 African Microfinance Institutions serving over 18 million poor but active clients.



For questions relating to this press release
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