

**Advans SA signs grant agreements with AFD and OeEB**

Advans SA, the international venture capital company specialised in microfinance, is pleased to announce the signature of grant agreements with two renowned development finance institutions. These grants represent a tremendous contribution to the development and extension of the Advans network, as they will be channelled to several of Advans SA's affiliated microfinance institutions.

Agence Française de Développement (AFD) provided three grants to Advans SA. The first one, amounting to EUR 440,000, will be made available to Advans Banque Congo to enhance the provision of financial services to Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The second grant amounts to EUR 750,000 and is dedicated to the creation of Advans Côte d'Ivoire, a microfinance institution which will shortly open its doors to the public in Abidjan. The third grant, amounting to EUR 1.5 million, is AFD's contribution to the creation of three greenfield microfinance institutions, which will increase the Advans network in the near future.

OeEB, the Development Bank of Austria, awarded Advans SA the amount of EUR 500,000 from the Advisory Programmes, funded by of the Austrian Ministry of Finance. OeEB's grant is dedicated to the implementation of technical assistance activities for the benefit of existing and future institutions of the Advans network, including training, transfer of knowledge and best practices, and implementation of Management Information Systems.

Advans SA would like to express its appreciation to both AFD and OeEB for their support, which will indeed contribute to the provision of sound financial services to micro and small enterprises in the countries of its network.

**About Advans SA:** Advans SA is headquartered in Luxembourg and was launched in December 2005. Its mission is to build a network of microfinance institutions (MFIs) in developing and emerging countries to cater to the financial needs of micro, small, and medium sized enterprises, which have limited or no access to formal banking services. The Advans network currently spans six countries: Cambodia, Cameroon, Ghana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania and Côte d'Ivoire. Advans MFIs serve about 261,000 loan clients from 72 points of sale, and have an outstanding loan portfolio of circa EUR 70 million. Over the next three years, Advans SA plans to establish 6 to 7 new MFIs in Africa, Asia and the Middle-East. For more information, please visit [www.advansgroup.com](http://www.advansgroup.com)

**About AFD:**

The French Development Agency (AFD), a public agency, has been working to combat poverty and promote development in Southern Hemisphere countries for over 60 years. The agency implements the development policy defined by the French Government. The AFD, which has a presence in the field in over 50 countries, finances and supports projects that improve the living conditions of the population, support economic growth and protect the planet: children's schooling, support for farmers and small companies, water supply systems, conservation of tropical forests, combating climate change, etc. In 2010, the Agency invested over EUR 6.8 billion in financing initiatives in Southern Hemisphere and overseas countries. These investments involved providing primary schooling for 13.4 million children, improving drinking water supplies for 33 million people and granting microloans to 700,000 people. Energy saving projects carried out in the same year will enable almost 5 million tonnes of CO2 to be saved on an annual basis. For more information, please visit <http://www.afd.fr/>

**About OeEB:** Oesterreichische Entwicklungsbank AG (OeEB) has been operating as the official Development Bank of Austria since March 2008. It is specialized in the provision of long-term finance for the implementation of private sector projects in developing countries which create sustainable development. OeEB provides tailor-made financing solutions for a diverse set of long-term investments that would otherwise find it difficult to raise funding or borrow money in international capital markets. Additionally OeEB provides Technical Assistance (Advisory Programmes) which can be used to enhance the developmental impact of projects. For more information, please visit <http://www.oe-eb.at/>

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