

ABC Fund accelerates its investments in microfinance and cooperative lending in Africa

- **The Fund commits an additional EUR 6.4 million to microfinance and cooperative lending in three countries in both East and West Africa**
- **The capital is targeted at supporting thousands of smallholder farmers, especially women**
- **This brings the Fund to a total of over 20 investments in 9 countries**

Luxembourg, 23 December 2021 – The Agri-Business Capital Fund ('ABC Fund') today announces that it has completed a latest round of investments totaling EUR 6.4 million across four microfinance providers in Mali, Kenya and Uganda – the latest in a series of recent investments all focused on tackling poverty and improving the lives and livelihoods of smallholder farmers.

The Fund has committed EUR 2.4 million and EUR 1 million respectively to the savings and credit cooperatives Nyesigiso in Mali and EBO in Uganda, as well as EUR 2 million and EUR 1 million respectively to the Kenya-based credit-only microfinance institutions Premier Credit Kenya and Yehu.

Nyesigiso is a network of rural savings and credit cooperatives operating in Mali, which collects savings from members and provides them loans and microcredits. With over 260,000 members and a presence in six of Mali's nine regions, Nyesigiso is the country's second largest microfinance institution with one of the largest rural farmers networks. Today, over 60% of loans are short term, with a tenure of less than 9 months. The ABC Fund's financing will help provide longer term facilities to members and increase the agriculture portfolio size by a third. The ABC Fund's financing will help increase financing for specific food crops which are currently under financed in the country including rice, potato, onions and maize.

EBO is a savings and credit cooperative society (SACCO) with nearly 48,000 members, which provides sustainable financial services to almost 12,000 borrowers, most of whom are smallholder farmers operating predominantly in the agriculture and food crops sector in rural Uganda. Out of EBO's six branches, five are based in rural towns servicing clients engaged primarily in agriculture activities. More than half of EBO's active borrowers are women. The cash injection from the ABC Fund will enable it to provide more than two thousand new loans to smallholder farmers.

Yehu is a credit-only microfinance institution that provides financial services to disadvantaged communities in rural Kenya. The company currently serves more than 30,000 clients, almost a quarter of which are operating in agriculture. Its clients are predominantly women (92%) while almost a third (32%) are young people. Between 2021 and 2025, Yehu plans to increase its agriculture exposure and develop products and partnerships to support the growing number of women and young people interested in working in the agribusiness sector. Around 5,000 women are expected to receive a loan from Yehu over the tenure of the facility. Yehu also plans to create an educational programme to help clients with weather and climate related risk mitigation strategies as well as expanding its own team.

Premier Credit Kenya is a credit-only microfinance institution which provides credit to individuals and SMEs in Kenya. The company employs over 1,300 people, 87% of whom are young and 69% are women. With over half branches located in rural areas, the company plans to expand into the agriculture sector. Currently, 87% of Premier Credit's agriculture clients are involved in crops or in food security related value chains such as dairy and poultry. The ABC Fund's loan will allow the company to extend a further 10,000 loans to agriculture clients.

Jean-Philippe de Schrevel, Founder and Managing Partner of Bamboo Capital Partners commented:
"It gives us great pleasure to support four true game changers in Africa and enable these financial institutions to further support economic prosperity of its beneficiaries and contribute to the employment and empowerment of women and young people, impacting their wider communities."



Jerry Parkes, CEO of Injaro Investments, commented: *"I am excited about partnering with these four financial intermediaries, which are important agents for achieving financial inclusion. By providing small loans in agricultural and rural communities, these investments will enable people to build small businesses and earn dignified livelihoods. Reaching these smaller borrowers is a key objective of the ABC Fund."*

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Media Contacts:

Impact & Influence

bamboo@impactandinfluence.global

Notes to Editors:

About the ABC Fund:

The ABC Fund is a blended-finance impact fund which provides catalytic financing to underserved yet profitable segments of agribusiness value chains in developing countries. The ABC Fund deploys loans and equity investments in farmer organisations, rural SMEs and financial institutions. They have potential for high growth and job creation and can also drive social development for their own communities and countries, but they often lack the capital they need to grow their businesses. The ABC Fund was initiated by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in partnership with, and is currently funded by investments from, the European Union, the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), the Luxembourg Government and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), and IFAD. The IFAD investment was made possible thanks to financial support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). The ABC Fund is managed by Bamboo Capital Partners in partnership with Injaro as investment advisors and with technical assistance led by Agriterria.

About Bamboo Capital Partners:

Bamboo Capital Partners ("Bamboo") is an impact investing platform which provides innovative financing solutions to catalyse lasting impact. Bamboo bridges the gap between seed and growth stage funding through a full suite of finance options – from debt to equity – which it activates unilaterally or through strategic partnerships. Founded in 2007 by Jean-Philippe de Schrevel, Bamboo aims to improve the lives of the world's most marginalized communities while delivering strong financial returns. Since its inception, Bamboo has raised \$450m and invested in over 30 developing countries. Its investees have positively impacted over 193 million lives and supported over 48,000 jobs, including 17,900 jobs for women. The firm has a team of 30 professionals active across Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia. Bamboo also acts as the Asset Management arm of global impact firm Palladium, which operates in over 90 countries, following a strategic partnership in 2020. For more information, please visit www.bamboocp.com or follow @bamboocp.

About Injaro Investments:

Established in 2009 by Dadié Tayoraud and Jerry Parkes, Injaro Investments is a private capital investment firm with a long track record in impact investments in Africa. Injaro makes investments in debt, quasi-equity, and equity in African SMEs, deploying capital and solutions to create value for partners and investors. Injaro's experience includes managing Injaro Agricultural Capital Holdings ("IACHL"), a US\$49m impact investment fund focused on SME investments across the agricultural value chain in West Africa. Injaro's investment portfolio has generated \$107m of revenues and benefitted more than 3.7 million persons, mainly comprising smallholder farmers, low-income persons and their families. For more information, please visit www.injaroinvestments.com or follow @injaro on Twitter and Injaro Investments Limited on LinkedIn.



ABC Fund sponsors and partners:



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