

IDLO IN ROMANIA TO EXAMINE MIRCOFINANCE IN EASTERN EUROPE

The latest advancements in internet and cellular phone micro-banking are among the topics to be covered in IDLO's microfinance program for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, which begins on Monday, July 14, 2008 in Bucharest, Romania.

The two-week program is designed to help lawyers, bankers, policy-makers and NGOs from across the region to navigate the legal issues surrounding the rapidly growing microfinance industry.

IDLO training sessions and interactive workshops will analyze the impact of commercial legislation and regulatory policies on the microfinance industry in countries including: Romania, Kosovo, Armenia, the Ukraine, Albania, Armenia, Bulgaria, Poland and Hungary.

The IDLO Microfinance Program will examine:

- Innovative technologies for use in microfinance entities: IT and telecom tools to support and promote microfinance, the opportunities and the regulatory implications
- Commercialization of microfinance
- Consumer protection issues and tools for alternative dispute resolutions
- Rural and agricultural microfinance tools and the challenges specific to an EU accession economy
- International investment opportunities currently available to microfinance institutions (MFIs), future investment trends and the key legal issues related to cross-border transactions
- Legislation and regulation relating to microfinance; an examination of international approaches and success stories
- The legal implications of transformation of an NGO into a licensed MFI
- Securing and managing debt financing: capital-raising options for MFIs and to how to implement financial due diligence

International microfinance experts from FINCA, Grameen Foundation, UNITUS and Women's World Banking, will be joining IDLO's specialist microfinance team, along with local professionals working in this field.

IDLO's Romanian program forms part of the Organization's three-year global microfinance project, funded by the Omidyar Network. This project aims to build the capacity of developing country legal professionals to enable them to take an active role in the microfinance industry. Beneficiaries include microfinance entities, NGO's, central banks, other bank regulators, think-tanks, borrower groups and government law and policy-makers.

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IDLO (International Development Law Organization) is an international, inter-governmental organization with a mandate to promote the Rule of Law and good governance in developing countries, countries in economic transition and countries emerging from post-conflict situations. Since its establishment in 1983, IDLO has contributed to the training of more than 18,000 lawyers, magistrates and officials from approximately 175 countries.

IDLO has its Headquarters in Rome, Italy and two Regional Offices; in Cairo, Egypt, covering Arabic-speaking countries and in Sydney, Australia, covering the Asia Pacific area. IDLO currently operates Project Offices in Afghanistan, Indonesia and Kyrgyzstan. IDLO is funded by contributions from its 18 Member States and other donors.

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