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University of Michigan Students Present Findings to MicroVest's Investment Team

MicroVest partners with the University of Michigan to explore the investment climate in Africa.

(PRWEB) June 13, 2006 -- In March 2006, MicroVest opened its doors to University of Michigan (U-M) students looking to increase their knowledge of microfinance investing. Student teams have now presented their findings to the MicroVest Investment Team with considerable success.

MicroVest partnered with the Stephen M. Ross School of Business, enabling students to work in-conjunction with MicroVest's Investment Team and gain hands-on experience performing due diligence. Students bid for slot participation through the School's Multidisciplinary Action Program (MAP). The program is often called "Michigan's business residency program" because of its similarities to how medical schools teach students to go from textbooks to practicing medicine. In the business world, this fieldwork is designed to challenge students to apply theory to a functioning workplace and help it overcome challenges while affecting meaningful change.

MicroVest welcomed students to conduct preliminary country risk analysis on four emerging markets: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Mozambique, and Tanzania. During the seven-week program, students joined MicroVest Staff in the Bethesda, Maryland, office for orientation and to conduct informational interviews with industry leaders aimed at understanding the general background of the microfinance sector and informational needs. Students then broke into teams of two and performed an independent desk study of country risk prior to embarking on a 10 day due diligence trip. Upon return, student teams were able to present findings and make recommendations to MicroVest's Investment Team concerning country and financial sector risk as well as initial prospecting of microfinance institutions.

Matthew Speh, MicroVest's Investment Officer, worked closely with Bradley Farnsworth, Director of the Center for International Business Education at U-M, arranging program details. Speh was pleased with the sophistication and professionalism students brought to the project. Edi Sian, a MicroVest Investment Associate who worked closely with the student teams, felt that this collaboration was "a successful program that provided MicroVest with well-informed suggestions within the various target markets".

About MicroVest:

MicroVest (Bethesda, MD) is a \$20 million investment firm providing debt and equity capital and management oversight to microfinance institutions (MFIs) in emerging markets. It is the first private equity microfinance investment firm in the United States. MicroVest's goal is to expand the capacity of existing,

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profitable MFIs throughout the world while building capital markets that work for the poor. MicroVest was founded by CARE, MEDA and the Seed Capital Development Fund - three non-profit organizations with longstanding credibility in the microfinance industry.

For more information on MicroVest's activities, or to learn more about MicroVest's Investment Fellowship Program, please visit our website at <http://www.microvestfund.com>.

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