

Press release

## Baobab+, leader in rural electrification in West Africa and Madagascar, is raising €10 million from Norfund



**Norfund, the Norwegian Government's Investment Fund for developing countries, is investing €10 million in equity in Baobab+, the leading distributor of solar home systems in Western Africa and Madagascar.**

The financing from Norfund comes at a time when Baobab+ has demonstrated its robustness despite the Covid-19 pandemic crisis: as of August 2021, Baobab+ had experienced sustained  $\approx +60\%$  yearly business growth.

### Expanding presence in Africa

Baobab+, a panafrikan group already present in Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Senegal and Madagascar, has equipped 220,000 households and served more than 1,200,000 beneficiaries in the past 5 years. This funding will allow the company to strengthen its presence in its existing countries and deploy operations in Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Baobab+ aims to equip one million households with solar and digital products within 5 years.



## Access to energy and much more

For Norfund, this investment is an opportunity to support a sustainable company with a strong social impact. For Baobab+, access to energy is also a springboard to enable every African household to take part in the digital revolution. In the countries where the company operates,



Baobab+ has been a pioneer in launching a smartphone offer with flexible payment. In partnership with local start-ups, Baobab+ offers additional content that meets its customers' needs, such as e-education, health or the management of small business activities. To date, Baobab+ has equipped more than 90,000 households with digital solutions.

In addition, in partnership with its parent company, the Baobab microfinance group, a major player in access to financial inclusion in Africa, Baobab+ has developed

a unique scoring framework that allows its Pay-As-You-Go clients to become eligible for a nano-credit, using their repayment history from the solar or digital product serving as their first credit experience. This proprietary solution, initially introduced in Senegal, will be gradually deployed in all countries.

### **Alexandre Coster, co-founder and CEO of Baobab+:**

"I am very happy that Baobab+ is taking this next step, made possible by the incredible work done by our teams in the field over the past 5 years. We are fortunate to have Norfund at our side as we move forward. We share many common values."

### **Tellef Thorleifsson, CEO of Norfund:**

"Increased access to electricity greatly improves the living standard of people living in rural or poor areas, and Baobab+ has proven its ability to deliver great impact through a sustainable business model. Norfund is looking forward to supporting the company in bringing affordable solar energy to even more households and expanding into new markets through our first investment in the solar home system space in Francophone Africa."

### **About Baobab+**

Launched in 2015 and operating in six African countries, Baobab+ is a social enterprise that supports households and micro-entrepreneurs in their energy autonomy through the distribution of solar kits, with 220,000 households already equipped (1.2 million beneficiaries), particularly in rural areas. In addition to this primary vocation, the Baobab Group's subsidiary offers digital devices for educational and professional purposes, with more than 90,000 households (300,000 beneficiaries) already equipped. These products benefit from financing facilities to make them accessible to all.

For more information, please see: [www.baobabplus.com](http://www.baobabplus.com)

For more information, please see: [www.baobabgroup.com](http://www.baobabgroup.com)

## About Norfund

Norfund is the Norwegian Investment Fund for developing countries. Our mission is to create jobs and to improve lives by investing in businesses that drive sustainable development. Norfund is owned and funded by the Norwegian Government and is the Government's most important tool for strengthening the private sector in developing countries, and for reducing poverty. Norfund's committed portfolio amounts to USD 3.3 billion in sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia and Central America. Norfund has four investment areas: clean energy, financial institutions, large-scale enterprises and green infrastructure. Clean energy investments account for about 50% of the portfolio and 50% of the portfolio is in sub-Saharan Africa.

For more information, please see: [www.norfund.no](http://www.norfund.no)

## Media contact:

### Baobab+

**Laurie Maitenaz**

[laurie@baobabplus.com](mailto:laurie@baobabplus.com)

+33 6 18 40 00 50

**Olga Akin-Dina**

[oa@concerto-pr.com](mailto:oa@concerto-pr.com)

+229 97 97 12 27

### Norfund

Per Kristian Sbertoli

[per.kristian@norfund.no](mailto:per.kristian@norfund.no)

+47 930 89 103