

A woman wearing a yellow sari and a floral-patterned blouse is kneeling on a large pile of red chili peppers. She is looking down at the peppers, and her hands are visible as she sorts through them. She is wearing several bangles on both wrists. The background is a solid red color.

Savings & Credit Forum / SDC  
Berne, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2018

Women's financial inclusion: How to reach one billion women?  
Mary Ellen Iskenderian, Women's World Banking

**1 billion women are unbanked**

**20%**

Of the 1.75 billion women that have a bank account, 335 million are inactive.

**9%**

*Global Findex shows that the Gender Gap persists*

**And in some countries – e.g., Bangladesh and Pakistan – digital financial services have actually doubled the gender gap.**

*Scale of untapped potential*

**Closing the gender gaps in product access across the retail banking sector could unlock at least \$50B in additional annual revenue**

## Reaching women with financial services



**Benefits of  
women's  
financial  
inclusion**

**Key  
barriers  
women face**

**Actions for  
consideration**

# Benefits of Women's Financial Inclusion

1.1%

Goldman Sachs Global Markets Institute

*Women's World Banking's research shows that women manage to save on average 10-15% of their earnings, despite low and often unpredictable incomes, though they are often forced to save in informal and unreliable ways.*

**Female-controlled finances increase welfare and productivity of the family**

*It's not just about access to a bank account, it is what she can do with it*

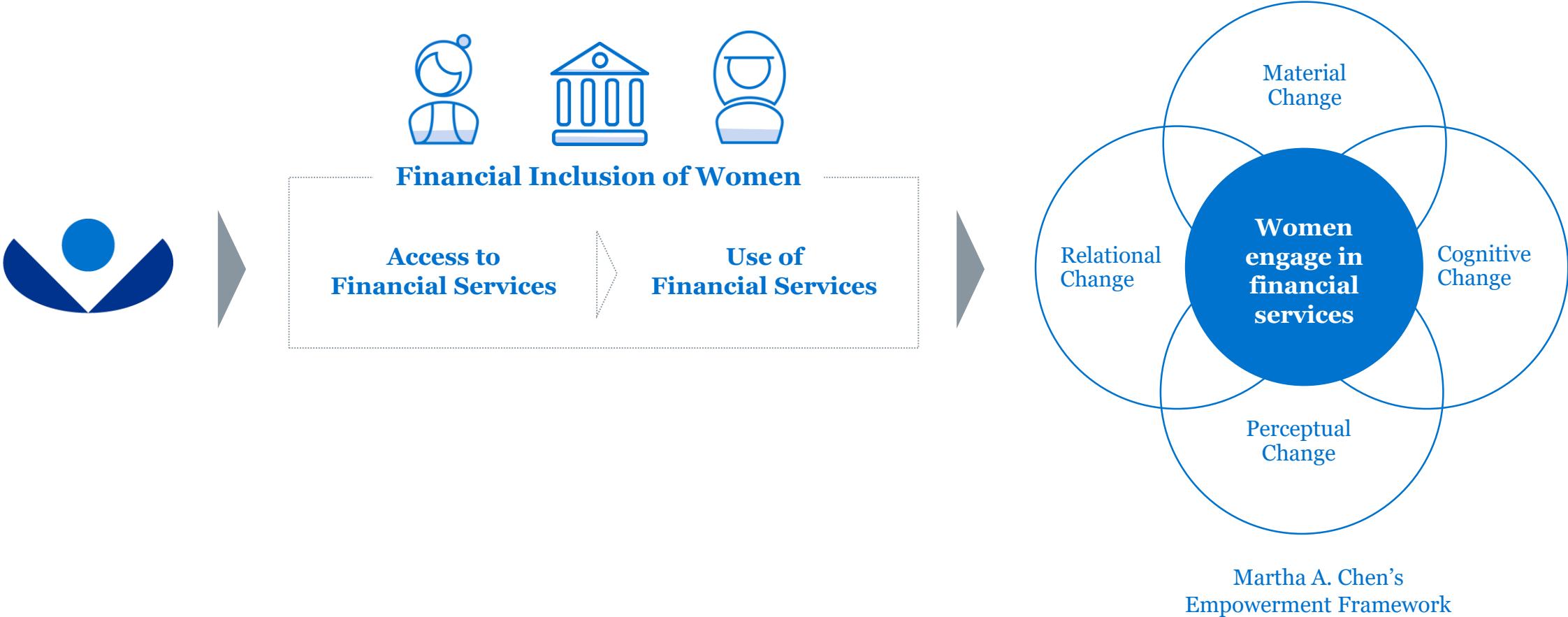
**Women are excellent borrowers with very low NPLs**

# Women's financial inclusion serves as a key accelerator to the SDGs. Beyond SDG5, financial inclusion impacts:

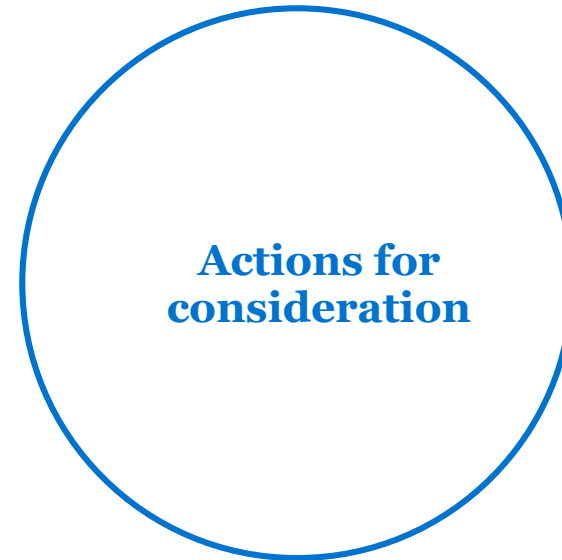
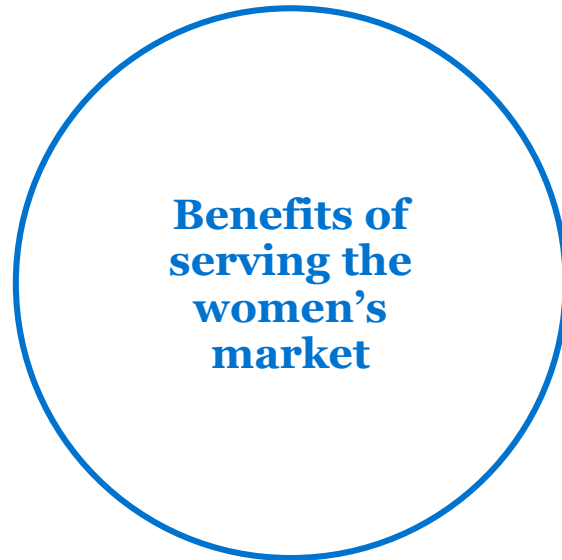
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# Connecting financial inclusion to women's empowerment



## Addressing challenges in advancing women's financial inclusion



# Key Barriers Women Face

Problem

## Women Financially Excluded

Symptom

**LOW ENGAGEMENT BY WOMEN WITH FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS**

**LACK OF AVAILABILITY OF FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS FOR WOMEN BY FINANCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS**

**REGULATORY AND INFRASTRUCTURE CHALLENGES**

Cause

**Low awareness**

Lack of compelling use cases

Inadequate channels

Low levels of financial literacy

Low phone/SIM ownership

Social and cultural norms

**Lack of business case data**

Lack of gender-disaggregated data

**No ID**

Lack of tiered KYC

Weak credit infrastructure

Limited focus by government



## **Fundamental truths about women about women and financial services**

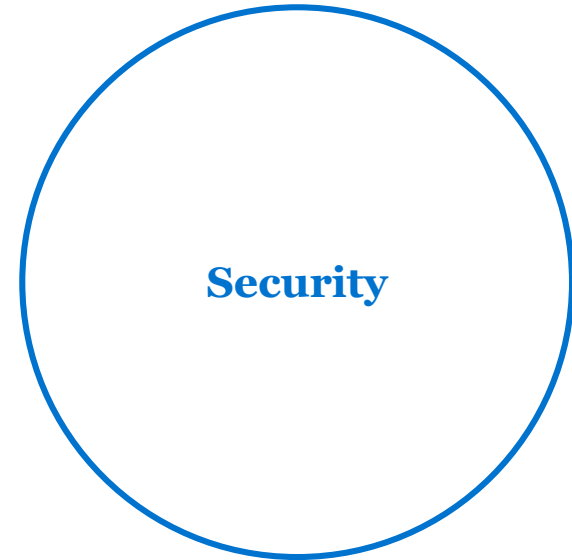
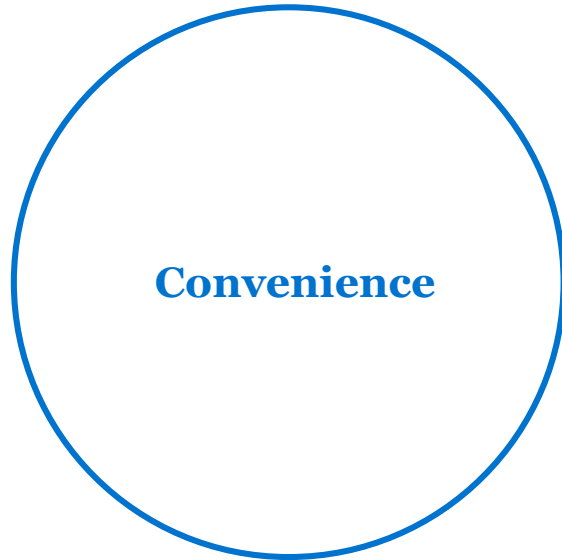


**Convenience**

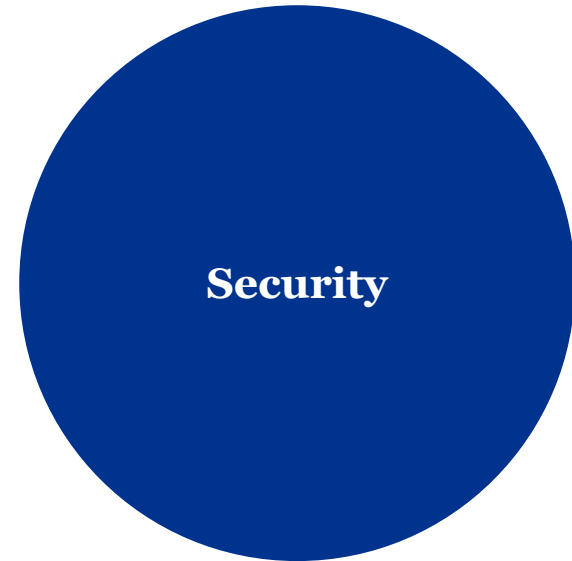
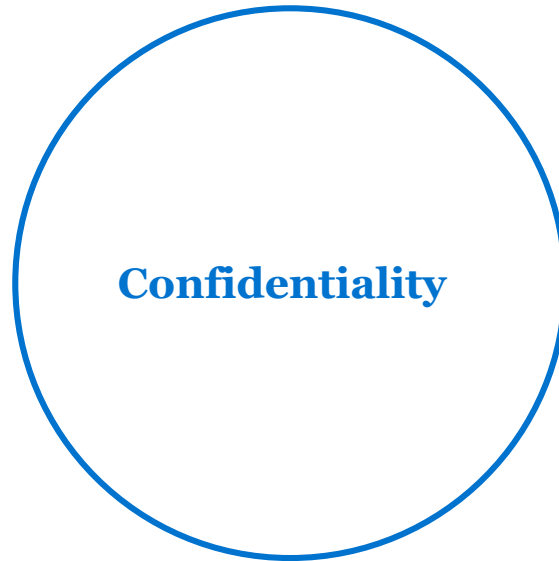
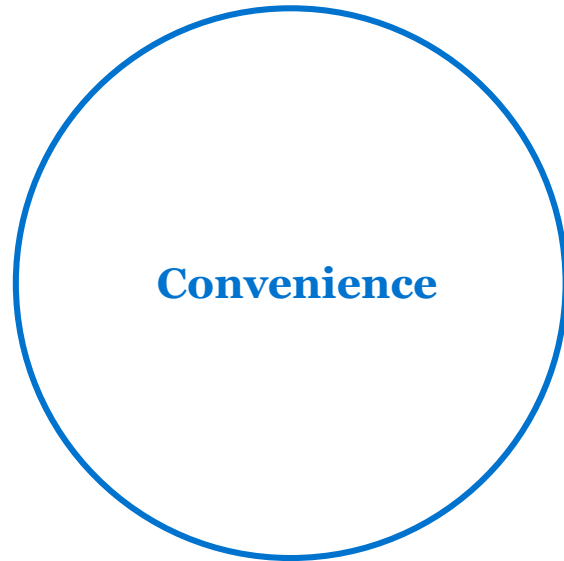
**Confidentiality**

**Security**

**Fundamental truths  
about women and  
financial services**



## **Fundamental truths about women and financial services**



## What We Know About Serving Women



*Minimize  
Barriers*

*Take  
Service to  
Her*

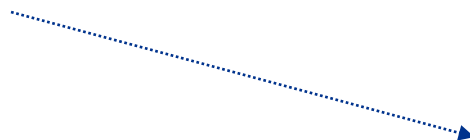
*Bridge  
Emotional  
Distance*

*Build Trust,  
Confidence  
& a Positive  
User  
Experience*

## DFS address women's needs

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Women lack tools to manage household budget



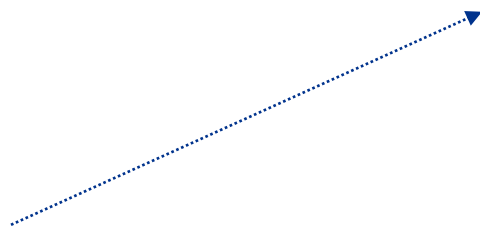
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Women face time and mobility constraints



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Women have a preference for confidentiality



### WHAT DFS PROVIDES

Accessibility

Convenience

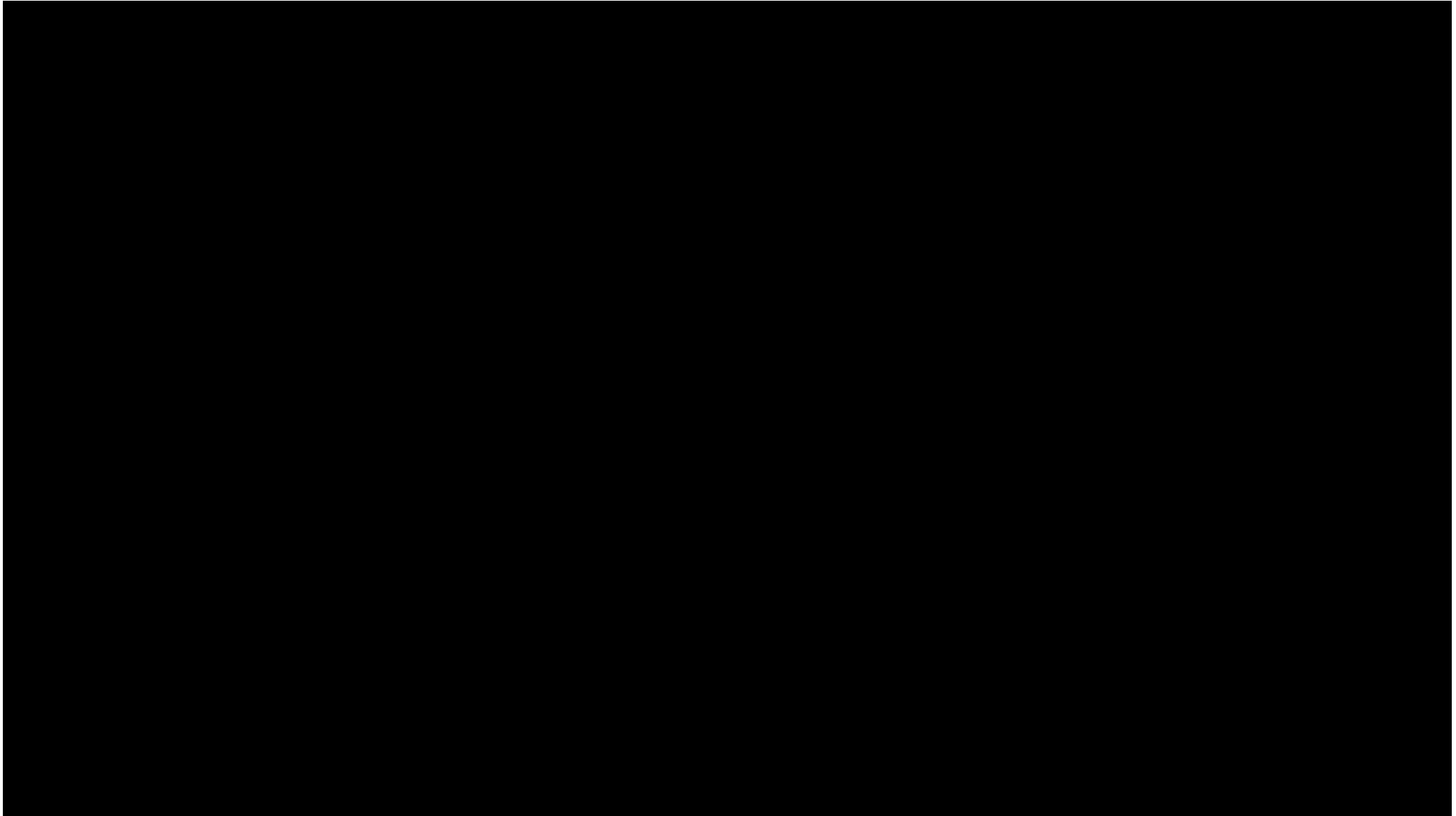
Privacy

Security

Customization

Financial education

More service options



# Protecting her future: health microinsurance

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FSPs in Jordan, Egypt, Uganda, and Morocco introduce hospital cash policy

## The Product: Hospital Cash Insurance “Caregiver”

### The Objective

Address women’s needs for risk mitigation solutions to strengthen their security and stability

### How does it work?

Fixed amount cash benefit that is triggered by hospitalization and can be used to pay for hospital cost, medicine, transport, lost income, etc.

### Approach: the solution development process

1. Client and country research
2. Women-centered design
3. Marketing and consumer education
4. Optimize operating model of partner institution

### Results

- More than two million lives covered in four countries (>1m women)
- Proven positive outcomes for women clients in regard to material, cognitive, perceptual and relational dimensions
- Solid track record of profitability

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Acquisition

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Activation

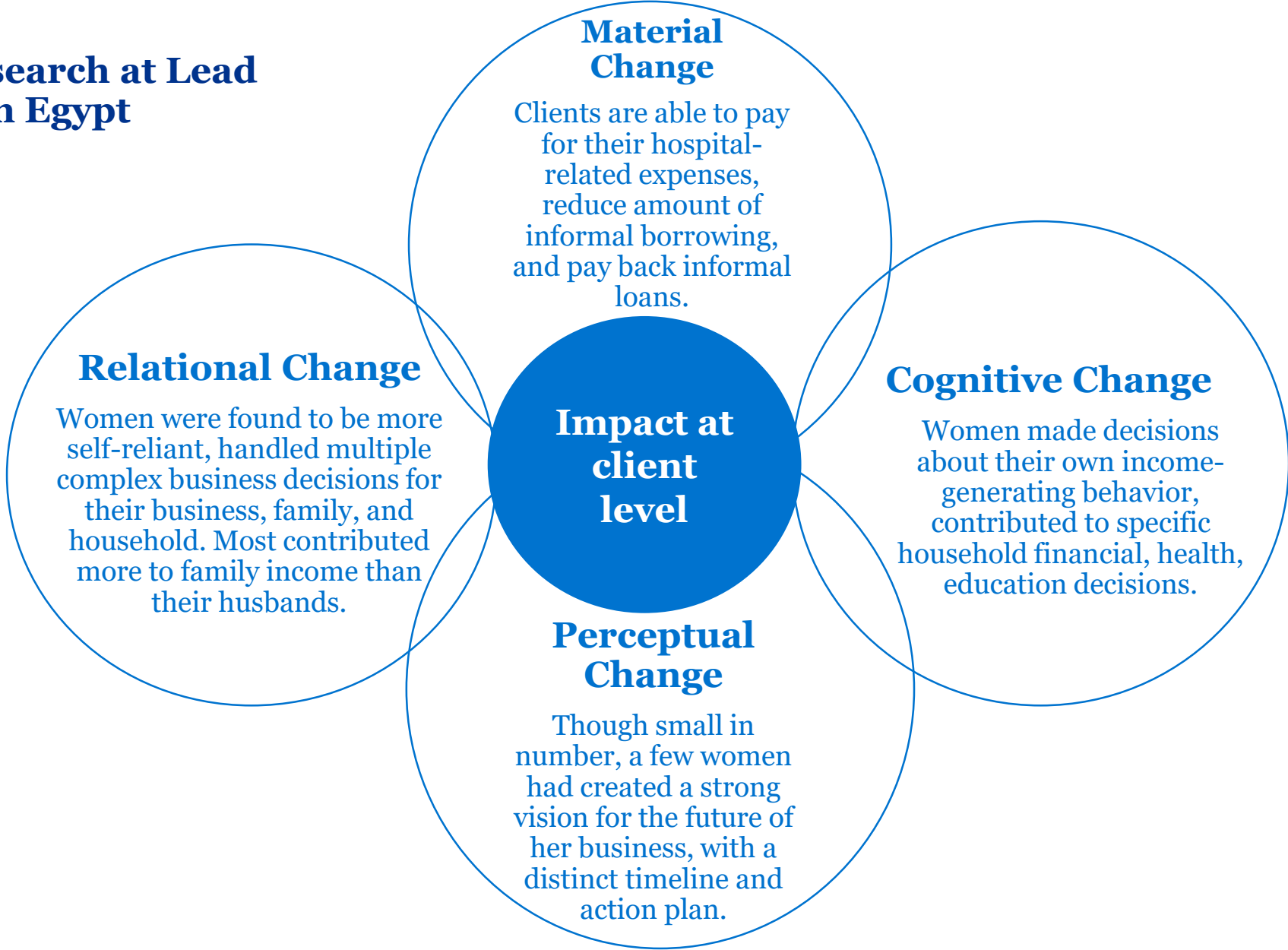
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Engagement

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Retention

# Outcomes research at Lead Foundation in Egypt





# Impact at the institutional level

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# Making microinsurance profitable

Globally, very few microinsurance programs work commercially at scale.

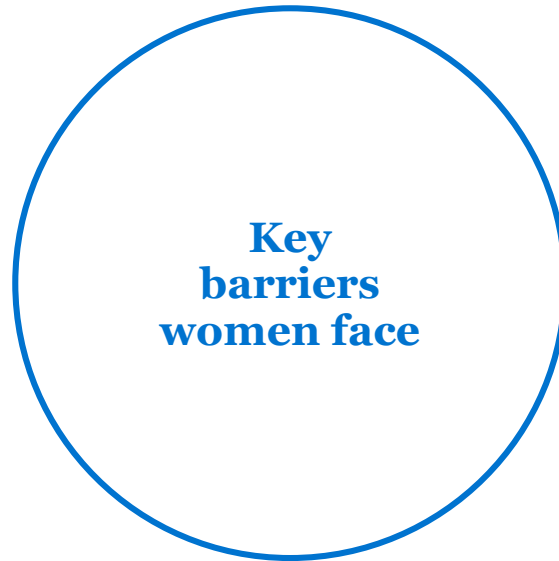
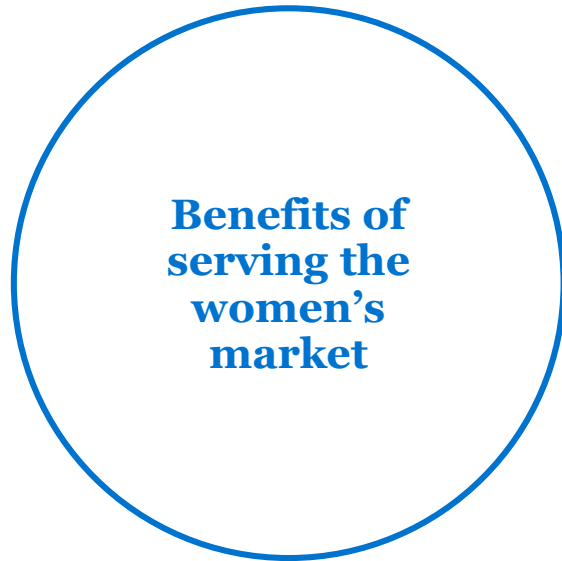
## “Win, Win, Win”

- Women’s World Banking worked with Lead Foundation to develop a proposition that allowed them to
  - ✓ diversify their offering
  - ✓ increase customer satisfaction and
  - ✓ create a unique competitive advantage
  - ✓ build in-house capacity on insurance to reduce claims process costs and turn-around
- The result is a **profitable arrangement** for both the insurance company and the financial service provider.

## Impact

- Lead Foundation has covered over 200,000 lives with health insurance.
  - Financial projections show a break-even on all investments in microinsurance within two to three years with a new sustainable source of growing revenue.
  - It has also created in-house career development opportunities.
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## **Actions for consideration**



## Global Outlook on Financial Inclusion

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- **Great opportunity (but also risk) comes with advances in digital finance and fintech**

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- **The next great challenge: solving for usage**

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- **Partnership with regulators is critical to drive action**

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- **Much broader variety of actors in financial inclusion landscape than ever before**

## **Call to Action: Financial Service Providers**

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- **Disaggregate your data by gender**

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- **Identify where your opportunity lies  
(Activation? Engagement?)**

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- **Prioritize building gender-diverse  
teams**

## Call to Action: Donors & Investors

### Donors

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- **Think twice about making investments in economic empowerment and financial inclusion that don't have a specific gender lens**

### Investors

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- **Adopt a gender-lens strategy by investing in:**
- **Women-led businesses**
- **Institutions with gender-diverse staff and leadership**
- **Companies that advance gender equality through their products and services**

A woman wearing a green patterned dress and a gold bangle is counting a stack of banknotes. In the background, there is a white tray filled with small, round, golden-brown items, possibly fried snacks. The scene is set in a market or a small business.

For the past 40 years,  
Women's World Banking  
has been Powering Economies  
by *investing* in women

## **Four Ways We Drive Impact**



***Building  
gender-  
diverse  
institutions***

***Increasing  
activation  
and  
engagement  
for women***

***Investing in  
women-  
focused  
financial  
institutions***

***Influencing  
for action***



Women's World Banking