

Commercial Sector

Microfinance Institutions



Introduction

Micro-finance institutions (MFIs) are becoming more prevalent in many developing countries. MFIs provide loans to individuals to cover health or other expenses, and may also provide loans to small-scale health providers. A number of them also provide health insurance to their members, typically on behalf of an insurance company. Compared to commercial bank loans, MFI loans are typically smaller, with a shorter lending period. A small number of MFIs also act as underwriters for an insurance product, extending access to low-cost health insurance for the informal sector.

Questions

MFI as provider of loans and savings products

- What are your eligibility requirements for loan products? For savings products? Do they differ for men and women? How so?
- How large is your target market for your loan products? [Estimated number of people]
- How large is your target market for your savings products [Estimated number of people]
- How many active loan members do you currently have? What percentage would you say are women/men?
- How many active savings accounts do you currently have? What percentage would you say are held by women/men?
- What are the terms for your savings and loan products?
- What are the loans being used for? What percentage of your lendees do you believe use their loans to finance health care emergencies?
- Do your borrowers receive any health information or coverage through your programs? What is the average size of your loans?
- What is the average size of savings accounts?
- Do you offer health-only savings or loans products?
- Do you lend to the private health sector?
 - If so, who are your typical clients – pharmacy, solo practitioner, clinic, etc.? What percentage would you say are women/men?
 - If not, why not?
- What might be an incentive for you to lend to the health sector?

MFI as insurance intermediary

- Do you currently have any health insurance products targeting the informal sector?
 - If so, who in the informal sector do you target? How do you reach those clients?
- What is covered by products that target the informal sector? How have informal sector products performed?
- Do you currently have any distribution partnerships to reach the informal sector?
 - If so, with what type of distribution channels – microfinance banks, mobile money providers?
 - If so, how are your distribution partnerships doing? (Going well? Challenging?)
- What is the percentage of their total client base that has already purchased your informal sector targeted product?