

Mid-Term Evaluation of the UNCDF Migration and Remittances Programme

MID-TERM EVALUATION REPORT

1ST AUG 2019 UNTIL 31ST DEC 2023



2024

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About

The UN Capital Development Fund makes public and private finance work for the poor in the world's 46 least developed countries (LDCs). UNCDF offers "last mile" finance models that unlock public and private resources, especially at the domestic level, to reduce poverty and support local economic development.

UNCDF's financing models work through three channels: (1) inclusive digital economies, which connects individuals, households, and small businesses with financial eco-systems that catalyse participation in the local economy, and provide tools to climb out of poverty and manage financial lives; (2) local transformative finance, which capacitates localities through fiscal decentralization, innovative municipal finance, and structured project finance to drive local economic expansion and sustainable development; and (3) investment finance, which provides catalytic financial structuring, de-risking, and capital deployment to drive SDG impact and domestic resource mobilization.

Programme Data Sheet

Project/outcome Information		
Project/outcome title	Migration and Remittances Programme	
Atlas ID/Quantum ID		
Corporate outcome and output		
Country	Africa, Asia	
Region	South Asia, IGAD, ECCAS, ECOWAS	
Date project document signed	SIDA 2 Sept 2019 SDC 22 Nov 2019	
Project dates	Start	Planned end
	01 Aug 2019 (SIDA)	Ongoing
Total committed budget	USD 23.8 million (till 2023)	
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation	USD 21.4 million (till 2023)	
Funding source	SIDA, SDC, UNCDF	
Implementing party ¹	UNCDF	
Evaluation information		
Evaluation type (project/outcome/thematic/country programme, etc.)	Programme	
Final/midterm review/ other	Mid-term	
Period under evaluation	Start	End
	01 Aug 2019	31 Dec 2023
Evaluators	Microfinanza, Microfinanza Rating, Timpoc Consultants	
Evaluator email address	Davide Libralesso MF	davide.libralesso@microfinanza.com
Evaluation dates	Start	Completion
	11 Sept 2023	Ongoing

Financial Breakdown (by donor)

Commitments	As per Prodoc (amount USD)	Actual project budget (amount USD) till 2023
UNCDF	440,438	808,197
SIDA phase 1	5,761,576	7,861,497
SIDA phase 2	7,631,253	4,060,688 (2023)
SDC	7,878,292	9,989,003
SDC Financial Resilience	1,202,461	1,410,619
Funding gap		

Delivery to date (31st December 2023) (per donor)

¹ This is the entity that has overall responsibility for implementation of the project (award), effective use of resources and delivery of outputs in the signed project document and workplan.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
SIDA Phase 1	64,595	731,814	2,683,915	2,906,715		6,387,038
SIDA Phase 2					3,737,030	3,737,030
SDC	0	721,678	2,864,476	3,255,719	2,393,729	9,235,603
SDC Financial Resilience				1,093,157	92,348	1,185,504
UNCDF	0	0	0	808,197	0	808,197
	64,595	1,453,492	5,548,391	8,063,788	6,223,107	21,353,373

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Acronyms and abbreviations

A2II	Access to Insurance Initiative
API	Application Programming Interface
BCEAO	Central Bank of West African States
BEAC	Central Bank of Central African States
CEMAC	Central African Economic and Monetary Community
DFL	Digital Financial Literacy
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EQ	Evaluation Question
FSP	Financial Sector Partner
IDE	Inclusive Digital Economics (of UNCDF)
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPA	Innovations for Poverty Action
HCD	Human-Centric Design
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
KYC	Know Your Customer
LDS	Lean Data Survey
LORI	Learnings, Observations, Risks and Issues
MFI	Microfinance Institution
MoEWOE	Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment
MRP	Migration and Remittances Programme
NBE	National Bank of Ethiopia
PWB	Project Work Book
REC	Regional Economic Committee
RFA	Request For Applications
RMF	Result Measurement Framework
RSP	Remittance Service Provider
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TA	Technical Assistance
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union

Executive Summary

The Migration and Remittances Programme (MRP), implemented by UNCDF, and part of the UNCDF “Inclusive Digital Economies” practice area, commenced in August 2019, and is currently in the second phase. The goal of MRP is to improve the financial resilience and economic inclusion of migrants and their families through low-cost digital remittance services and remittance-linked financial products, with a view to contribute to the sustainable development of countries of origin in the Global South. MRP is organised along four workstreams: 1) Policies and regulations that enable access and usage of digital remittances services, 2) Open, affordable, and interoperable (shared) digital infrastructure (national and regional), 3) Innovative business models and remittance-linked financial services, 4) Financial and digital capabilities of migrants and beneficiaries to meaningfully use such services. MRP works both with national and regional policy-makers and regulators, and with private sector partners in the payments and telecommunications sectors. While MRP did address gender as a cross-cutting issue, the project did neither incorporate disability nor human rights concerns.

MRP phase 1 was co-funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), along with a small contribution by UNCDF. MRP is not implemented under joint-donor co-financing. Instead each donor agreed with UNCDF its own programme document and interventions. While SIDA focused on reducing the transfer costs of remittances through enabling environment reform, SDC complemented the effort by focusing on the availability and usability of low-cost remittance services and financial products (e.g., savings, credit, insurance) that cater to migrants’ needs. Sweden took a regional development approach, prioritising interventions through the Regional Economic Commissions IGAD, ECCAS and ECOWAS, and in addition the monetary unions WAEMU and CEMAC. Switzerland focused on private sector engagement in five countries with a corridor approach (Senegal, Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Nepal and Myanmar – later dropped due to sanctions).

The objective of the (mid-term) evaluation was to assess both programme results to date (direct and indirect, whether intended or not) and the likelihood of MRP meeting its end-goals based on current design, human resource structure, choice of partners, and broad implementation strategy. The evaluation was to provide actionable recommendations to increase the likelihood of success by the end of the programme (currently till 2025). The target “audience” of the evaluation are both UNCDF and the respective donor agencies, with the possibility for wider dissemination. The period under evaluation was 1st Aug 2019 until 31st Dec 2023, coinciding with the first phases of SIDA and SDC support and the first year of the second phase of SIDA. The programme expenditures until 31st Dec 2023 were USD 21.4 m. The evaluation followed a mixed-methods approach, following the OECD/DAC criteria. The (mid-term) evaluation covers MRP in its entirety and does not separately evaluate the SDC and SIDA components.

Relevance

The evaluation has shown MRP to be broadly relevant, but not equally in all regions and countries.

The IGAD and ECCAS regions are characterized by severe constraints in all aspects of cross-border money transfer as well as last-mile access and services, which national governments and central banks recognise. By contrast, cross-border payment systems in CEMAC and WAEMU broadly function, but inhibitors related to financial inclusion and communications infrastructure remain. Constraints in Bangladesh and Nepal include the very low levels of digital and financial literacy of migrants, which bring them to rely on unregulated and cash-based payment systems. This underscores the need for MRP phase 2 to adopt a differentiated approach, tailored to reflect regional needs, and to prioritize those countries and regions most in need of support. Thus, MRP engagement in IGAD and ECCAS could prioritise the regulatory environment and payment infrastructure, while the other regions and countries mentioned

could see a focus on private sector partners, developing innovative remittance-related services for migrant families.

MRP aligns with international development priorities, such as the SDGs. However, it would be inaccurate to explain the programme as a direct response to these priorities. Instead, MRP's design was influenced by a combination of factors, including the strategic goals of donors, their geographical focus, and their investment priorities.

Relevance to migrants and recipients depends on their situation and preferences. The core strategy of MRP is to promote digital remittance channels and products through the formal sector. The implicit assumption that this is the best option for migrants from the point of view of cost, security and convenience has been challenged by stakeholders. It depends on migrant characteristics, such as the amounts sent, their level of education, its use for consumption or investment, urban/rural, being documented or not, and the corridors including differences between official and parallel exchange rates. Migrants are free in their choice, and many rationally opt for unregulated and cash-based channels, which resource persons note are often remarkably efficient. MRP may incorporate this in its future programme orientations.

Coherence

The design of MRP in four workstreams was found to be internally coherent. It is also reflective of the wider UNCDF IDE programme. However, it is worth considering that MRP was significantly shaped by donors. For example, SIDA prioritizes enabling environment reforms, preferably through Regional Economic Communities (RECs), while SDC focuses on enhancing client-facing services through private sector engagement in five selected countries.

While there is coordination with other international organizations active in remittances at the institutional and local levels, there is also risk of overlap. The BCEAO single-ID project was an example where MRP and World Bank-led projects significantly overlapped, which early coordination might have avoided. More regular and proactive contacts (both ways) with IFAD are also needed. MRP may also look for a clear market niche, not being tempted "to do it all". This market niche may be in the private sector, in line with UNCDF's core mandate, or public sector, in line with its UN-convening status. This also depends on the countries of intervention (see above).

Effectiveness

The evaluation shows that MRP has been strong at the output level, not at the outcome level. A large number (100+) of diagnostics, studies, guides, and toolkits were produced, which was the most important deliverable. While the quality of this work was good, most of these knowledge products cannot (yet) be traced to developmental outcomes according to the project ToC, let alone impact. The download history as recorded by MRP does not suggest these reports have been widely consulted, neither did the evaluators' country visits find many people who did. The research did, however, help nourish webinars and events, which participants appreciate for the new ideas accessed. As to the outcomes, workstream 1 produced reform in two areas in Ethiopia, not yet in the other countries and regions of intervention. Workstream 2 did not yield outcomes. Workstream 3 produced innovations through private sector partners, but half were unviable and discontinued, while the other half could not (yet) be scaled. In workstream 4 digital and financial literacy training mainly entailed client onboarding. Only SentBe worked on teaching users how to use money wisely.

MRP phase 1 was preparatory in nature. MRP phase 1 needed to build a stock of guides and tools to support the implementation phase 2. However, many studies were general knowledge products whereby the contribution to public and private sectors' actions is hard to ascertain, hence the contribution to

MRP's objectives unknown. More broadly, MRP was skewed toward actions at the macro level, enabling environment and knowledge development.

MRP only had nine private sector partners (target 15), which received just 3% of the programme budget (no target given). Sixty-two per cent of the budget went to programme staff, contract agents included, and much of the remainder to research, publications and overall programme management.

Workstream 1 on policy and regulation has the potential to be impactful. MRP's work in policy and regulatory reform could drive efficient remittance streams and financial inclusion if core constraints are relieved. However, apart from Ethiopia none of these projects has yet reached the stage where significant (regional) policy and regulatory harmonisation was realised. Staff at RECs and MRP's own project teams recognise the challenges of bringing about regional policy convergence within politically and economically quite varied regions. The timelines of such policy convergence are bound to be long.

The most evident development outcomes and possibly impacts were produced in workstreams 3 and 4. BRAC Bank and RAKBANK onboarded large numbers of new clients into digital remittance channels, and both offered relevant services. The evaluators estimated that up to 400,000 migrant families may have received benefits in terms of improved "financial health", although field work including FGDs shed doubt on the depth of such impact. This is less than the MRP target of 900,000. The failure rate in private sector innovations was high, as the business case did not hold up, and most projects were about access, not remittance-linked services. Digital and financial literacy training rarely went beyond simple client onboarding. The gender TA to F/RSPs aimed at giving women access to digital remittance services, with the assumption that women-empowerment will follow. Twenty-seven percent of clients reached were women, compared to an SDC target of 60%.

While MRP increased access to remittance services and promoted technological innovation, challenges persist in driving adoption and usage of inclusive business models and products. For MRP phase 2 to achieve effectiveness, it should emphasise working with private and public sector partners on concrete projects, not issuing further knowledge products of which there should be sufficient by now. As to the means of support, field work suggests that in-person events, training and webinars are more effective ways of capacity building and information dissemination than research publications, which are not generally being read.

Efficiency

Overall, MRP was efficiently implemented. However, in work with private sector partners the cost of MRP TA was often high compared to the size of the grant.

Despite the limited outcomes achieved, there remains an opportunity to enhance the MRP value proposition. To determine value for money, the evaluators considered the original result targets agreed upon with SIDA and SDC, particularly focusing on the core result of improving the financial health of (900,000) migrants and their families (as outlined above), and the initial budget of USD 18.1 m for SIDA 1, the first year of SIDA 2, SDC, financial resilience and UNCDF. Having found that many newly onboarded clients do not use the service while many of those who do consider the financial health impact shallow, the true financial health effect falls short of target as shown above. Considering that the programme expenditures exceeded the initial budget by USD 3.2 m, the evaluation of value for money must be unfavourable. Looking ahead, MRP can build upon the groundwork laid in phase 1, showcasing its value and leveraging both public and private sector capacity and investment to ensure future development results, impact migrant families and sustainability.

Sustainability

In workstream 1, only the work with NBE has reached the stage where regulatory reform was introduced in the market, impeding a conclusion on sustainability within the workstream.

Nevertheless, there remains a need for ongoing MRP support to facilitate policy convergence across IGAD and ECCAS. The intellectual resources cultivated during phase 1 offer valuable opportunities for RECs and countries to enhance their capacities and pass regulatory reform in the cross-border payment system.

In workstreams 3 and 4, sustainability is varied. Partners such as BRAC Bank, RAKBANK, BelCash and Wizall have demonstrated commitment to continuing and expanding their initiatives. Conversely, projects undertaken by SympliFi, Lucy, TerraPay, and SentBe were discontinued due to the absence of a sustainable business case. It has become evident that sustaining financial literacy training and gender-sensitive services requires clear business justification and revenue streams to incentivize private sector partners to pursue such initiatives un-aided.

Some of the core recommendations for MRP phase 2 are the following:

1. For MRP phase 2, it is recommended to reorient the focus from preparatory diagnostics and knowledge development to the **implementation** of reform actions in collaboration with public and private sector partners.
2. For all regulatory reform initiatives, **public sector partners must take the lead role.**
3. Strengthen **collaboration with both UN and non-UN agencies to leverage synergies and avoid duplication.**
4. **Expand digital and financial literacy training initiatives**, going beyond simple client onboarding, while recognizing that private sector partners may be more inclined to participate if it aligns with their commercial interests.
5. Exercise judiciousness in undertaking any action, ensuring the presence of a **well-defined impact pathway and robust mechanisms for demonstrating the attainment of outcomes and impacts** within a timeframe that is both feasible and realistic.
6. Allocate a minimum **of 25% of the programme budget to grants for private sector partners.** Additionally, designate at least 10% of the programme budget specifically for initiatives aimed at promoting gender empowerment.
7. Within project selection (Request for Applications), give priority (through proposal scoring) to projects with an **explicit** strategy to enhance **gender inclusion**. The same principle applies to initiatives targeting the poorest segments in society.

The full set of recommendations is found in section 5.2.

1 SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE (MID-TERM) EVALUATION

1.1 Migration and Remittances Programme (2019-23)

The Migration and Remittances Programme (MRP), implemented by UNCDF, is part of the UNCDF “Inclusive Digital Economies” practice area, aiming at digital financial inclusion of low-income accountholders, to engage in the economy, and to improve their skills, productivity and marketability in this growing age of digital economies.² MRP focusses on remittance streams from migrants to their family-members back home, and their financial inclusion, resilience, and empowerment. Digitalised instead of cash-based services are considered key to improved service delivery and cost reduction. MRP works with policy makers and regulators to take away regulatory constraints in the ecosystem and facilitate cross-border money flows, with private sector partners to enhance digital money flows including last-mile access and development of digital remittance and related financial services for migrants and recipients (e.g., family-members), as well as thought partners for technical assistance, knowledge development and training.

MRP is primarily active in LDCs in the Global South. In the period till 2023, activities were undertaken in about a dozen countries as well as in three regional groupings in Central, West and East Africa. MRP was co-funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), along with a small contribution by UNCDF.³ The programme expenditures until 31st Dec 2023 were USD 21.4 m (see section 2.5). The SIDA second phase has already started, while SDC second phase is under negotiations.

1.2 Evaluation purpose

The (mid-term) evaluation is conducted in accordance with UNCDF’s Evaluation Plan 2022–2025 and in line with UNDP’s Evaluation Policy (to which UNCDF is party). This policy expects the evaluation to be independent and provide technically and methodologically credible findings that are useful and relevant to support evidence-based programme management. The evaluation has the following **overall objectives**:

- to allow UNCDF and its funding partners to meet their accountability and learning objectives;
- to support ongoing efforts to capture good practice and lessons to date;
- to guide the remaining years of implementation as well as inform subsequent UNCDF Programming;
- to assess the impact of COVID-19 on the overall implementation framework and provide recommendations for the future.

The objective of the (mid-term) evaluation was to assess both programme results to date (direct and indirect, whether intended or not) and the likelihood of MRP meeting its end-goals based on current design, human resource structure, choice of partners, and broad implementation strategy. The evaluation was to provide actionable recommendations to increase the likelihood of success by the end of the programme (currently till 2025) including remedial actions where MRP might not be on track. The target “audience” of the evaluation are both UNCDF and the respective donor agencies, with the possibility for wider dissemination.

Critical to this evaluation was the assessment of the relevance and effectiveness of the MRP approach in improving the financial resilience and economic inclusion of migrants and their families through low-cost

² Source: IDE Strategy, “Leaving No One Behind in the Digital Era”, Dec 2022

³ The SDC contribution focussed on five countries (Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Myanmar, Nepal and Senegal). The SIDA contribution aimed at Africa, primarily through regional bodies. This resulted in the MRP’s work with Regional Economic Commissions (IGAD, ECCAS, ECOWAS), and regional central banks (BEAC and BCEAO).

digital remittance services and remittance-linked financial products, with a view to contribute to the sustainable development of countries of origin in the Global South. The MRP partners, both in the public and private sectors, as well as thought partners, were closely involved in the evaluation.

The evaluation questions, as revised during the inception phase, are reproduced in chapter four.

1.3 Evaluation scope

The (mid-term) evaluation follows the UN/OECD-DAC criteria, applied to the MRP ToC (appendix A), its implementation and achievement of agreed targets. The contribution agreements of SDC and SIDA include impact, outcome, and output targets, which are listed in appendix C. However, given the nature of the work, including policy and ecosystem work with long timelines and involving multiple jurisdictions, many MRP interventions are still ongoing and will be continued and completed in phase 2, or even in subsequent phases. Thus, the evaluation did not just review the interim results, but the implementation process as well. The evaluation was to assess the extent to which gender, human rights, disability and other crosscutting issues were integrated. It is observed, however, that neither disability nor human rights were incorporated in the design and execution of MRP.

The period under evaluation was 1st Aug 2019 until 31st Dec 2023, coinciding with the first phases of SIDA and SDC support and the first year of the second phase of SIDA.⁴ The geographic scope was limited to the countries where MRP intervened, either directly or through regional bodies. The evaluation followed a mixed-methods approach, following the structure of the ToC, as indicated in section 2.2 below. The evaluation reviewed most but not all sub-projects under MRP, considering their level of advancement, size and importance of the intervention. About half of the sub-projects were reviewed in-depth through country visits or case studies, some others through a more light-touch desk review supplemented with online interviews.

The (mid-term) evaluation covers MRP in its entirety and does not separately evaluate the SDC and SIDA contributions, nor separate phases.

1.4 About this report

The (mid-term) evaluation of MRP (2019-23) was conducted from September 2023 until April 2024. The evaluation included field visits to Senegal, Ethiopia and Bangladesh, selected during the inception phase. The evaluation also included six case studies, see appendix F. Chapter 2 presents the programme. Chapter 3 reveals the evaluation methodology and tools. Chapter 4 includes the evaluative findings. Conclusions, lessons learned, and recommendations follow in chapter 5. Chapter 6 takes a closer look at the LNOB agenda, in particular attention to gender. The report is closed with its appendices.

In this report, “programme” relates to the Migration and Remittances Programme, while “projects” are all sub-activities undertaken with private and public sector partners.

2 PROGRAMME PROFILE

2.1 Development Problem

According to UN estimates, globally an estimated 281 million people live and work outside their countries of origin. This represents 2.8 per cent of the world’s population, and 3.6 percent of those that work. Forty-eight per cent of migrants are women. Migration is an important contributor to economic development in countries of origin because of remittances, investments, trade and knowledge exchange. The contribution of remittances is direct, providing a social lifeline to numerous communities in developing

⁴ SIDA first phase from 1st Aug 2019 till 31st Dec 2022, and second phase from 1st Jan 2023 till 31st Dec 2025. The SDC programme ran from 1st Nov 2019 till 31st Dec 2023.

countries. Furthermore, upon their return, migrants bring innovation through their learned skills and undertake investment. According to the World Bank, remittances reached USD 840 billion in 2022, of which USD 94 billion to LDCs. This, however, does not fully cover remittances through unregulated channels. In 50+ countries remittances are more than 5% of GDP.

Examples of countries and regions with widespread migration, hence remittance streams, are the ones included in MRP. The **IGAD** (Intergovernmental Authority on Development) case study (appendix F) demonstrated the importance of remittances with vast numbers of East Africans working in the Gulf states, as well as intra-regional migration, often irregular. Remittance streams make up about 4% of GDP in IGAD, but as much as 25% in Somalia and South Sudan, underlining the importance to migrant families. More than one million **Ethiopians** are migrants, refugees included, with inbound remittances reaching USD 591 million in 2023 (source: KNOMAD) mainly from USA, Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Canada. Remittances are a source of foreign currency and livelihood for nearly a quarter of Ethiopian households, largely used for consumption.⁵ Remittances account for 1.4 per cent of GDP of the **ECCAS** (Economic Community of Central African States) region (2020), mainly originating from France and Belgium, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda and Rwanda.⁶ In West Africa remittances also keep afloat poor communities (10% of GDP in **Senegal**). **Bangladesh** is particularly dependent on income from migration, with inbound money flows reaching USD 23 billion in 2023, equal to 7% of GDP.⁷ At least 10% of families receive money from abroad, chiefly the Gulf states, but also Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, and the UK. Other migration countries include Nepal, The Philippines, Tajikistan, just to name a few.

While the importance of remittances is well-known, research by World Bank, UN agencies and many others also reveal constraints in the remittance eco-system, often leading to unnecessary costs, affecting the contribution remittances can make to socio-economic development. This includes the persistence of unregulated cash-based remittance flows, high remittance transaction cost, unfavourable policy and regulatory environment, limited capacity of regulators to monitor remittance flows, and limited offer of remittance-linked financial products available to migrant families.

Such inhibitors are visible in all countries and regions included in MRP. **IGAD** is a case in point, with very poor economic and financial integration across IGAD, resulting in inefficiencies in the cross-border payment ecosystem and regulatory environment, and leading to remittance and exchange rate costs reaching up to 10% of funds remitted. The opportunities lost to family income are obvious. By contrast, the visit to Senegal revealed the financial and economic integration in the **WAEMU** to be of a much higher level than IGAD, as it has been for decades. Sending money across the region or from abroad, including through mobile money providers, is easy.⁸ Due to the FCFA, no exchange rate costs are incurred neither regionally nor from Europe. Transfer costs are reasonable (albeit still above 3%).⁹ Nevertheless, constraints remain of a practical and operational nature, such as lack of last mile access (few agents in remote areas), limited mobile phone ownership, poor internet and mobile phone connectivity in rural areas. The economy remains cash-based, and so do remittances, with even digital remittances quickly cashed-out.

⁵ Migration and Development Brief, World Bank Group, 2021 and 2022. Income dependency (up to 40% of the family income) from remittances particularly affects rural (largely unbanked) communities.

⁶ Source: MRP ECCAS inception report, 2021

⁷ en.prothomalo.com/business/local/eb42kq2x9f, this is just the formal remittance

⁸ Only banks may operate international transfers, hence other financial service providers must partner with banks. However, BCEAO is setting up full interoperability of all financial service providers in WAEMU (but not beyond), including fintechs and mobile money providers, which will operate under a “payment operator” license.

⁹ See remittance cost analysis in the Senegal country assessment by Dalberg, 2022

In **Ethiopia**, an estimated seventy-eight per cent of remittances enter the country through unregulated channels.¹⁰ The prominence of such channels (especially *hawala*) is explained by the higher parallel exchange rates, lack of easy-access to formal services for receivers in remote/rural areas, high costs of formal channels, and barriers to access formal channels for Ethiopian undocumented migrants abroad.¹¹ The cost of sending money to Ethiopia varies (2-11%), depending on the corridor and the method employed.¹² According to local stakeholders, the transaction and exchange rate cost of unregulated remittances is often less than formal channels.¹³ All stakeholders met during the field visit confirmed a decreased use of formal remittance services. Factors hindering digital payments in Ethiopia include low internet penetration, low digital literacy, and low access to financial services, especially in rural areas and among females. There is also limited market competition, need for regulatory improvements (specific guidelines to existing Directives), ID national system reform, KYC regulation and compliance and cyber security.

The cost of sending remittances to **Bangladesh** is relatively low at about 4% (albeit still above 3%), partly due to government subsidies and caps to curtail transfer costs. While remittance markets broadly function, these are characterised by unregulated channels and cashing out money on arrival, used for consumption.¹⁴ As much as 40% of remittances may arrive through the unregulated hundi channel.¹⁵ Migrants' reliance on informal channels is explained by their low levels of literacy and trust, making depositing money in a formal MTO hard, to which is added that they have little time off, may not have an MTO in reach, and may not understand the language and script of their host country.¹⁶ This also impedes the use of remittance apps, although this is growing.¹⁷ On the receiving end, there is lack of financial products beyond just cashing the money for immediate use.

The other regions and countries with MRP interventions were not visited and reviewed during this evaluation. However, the situation in CEMAC, also being a regional monetary union, is reportedly similar to WAEMU. Remittance markets broadly function, with access impediments at client level due to poor financial inclusion. By contrast, payment flows across ECOWAS are constrained by multiple currencies and monetary systems. Remittance markets in Nepal resemble Bangladesh, but remittances are about 30% of GDP.

The development problem MRP aims to solve can be inferred from MRP's goals: *"The goal of the Migration and Remittances Programme is to improve the financial resilience and economic inclusion of migrants and their families through low-cost digital remittance services and remittance-linked financial products, with a view to contribute to the sustainable development of countries of origin in the Global South."*¹⁸ Hence, it is thought that remittances, which represent a very large sum globally and of GDP of some countries (e.g., Senegal, Bangladesh), do not (sufficiently) contribute to sustainable development.

The most important stakeholders and partners to MRP are the following:

- Financial Service Partners (FSP) and Remittance Service Providers, (RSP), who channel remittances from migrants to recipients
- Migrants (senders) and their family members back home (recipients)

¹⁰ IOM, Scaling up formal remittances to Ethiopia, 2018.

¹¹ IOM, 2017. National Labour Migration Management Assessment: Ethiopia

¹² <https://remittanceprices.worldbank.org/corridor/United-Kingdom/Ethiopia> (accessed on 04/03/2024).

¹³ During the field visit to Ethiopia the formal exchange rate was 1 USD = 61 ETB, while it was 120 ETB in the parallel market.

¹⁴ See Bangladesh country assessment by Dalberg.

¹⁵ See Bangladesh country assessment by Dalberg. Stakeholder in Bangladesh believe it is much higher.

¹⁶ In addition, unregulated channels use the parallel market exchange rate, which gives an advantage of 5-10%.

¹⁷ Both BRAC bank and bKash are investing in the local connectivity, e.g., through Ripplenet which connects a broad range of financial intermediaries in sending countries.

¹⁸ Source: SDC programme document 2019

- Financial sector regulators, mostly central banks
- Government in charge of financial sector and financial inclusion, usually ministry of finance
- Telecoms providers when mobile money is used

2.2 Programme description and ToC

The programme ToC, as initially presented in the separate SDC and SIDA prodocs (2019), is included in appendix A.¹⁹ The ToC can be presented as follows in a synthesised manner:

Goal: improved financial resilience and economic inclusion and reduced inequality of migrants and their families through low-cost digital remittance services and remittance-linked financial services.²⁰

UNCDF has introduced the term “financial health” to indicate the migrants’ and beneficiaries’ desired end-state, in the MRP annual report 2022 defined to include the following:

- Financial security: the ability to meet short-term commitments.
- Financial resilience: the ability to cope with unexpected or adverse events.
- Financial control: confidence in one’s current and future finances.
- Financial freedom: the ability to meet long-term financial goals and desires.

Financial health goes beyond financial inclusion, which denotes access and usage, and is the extent to which persons or families can smoothly manage their current financial obligations and have confidence in their financial future. The SDC and SIDA prodocs (2019) did not use the term financial health, instead defining the end-goal as “economic inclusion, financial resilience and reduced inequality”. Financial health only comes into play once migrants and their families are financially included, which is by no means universally so in LDCs.

Outcomes: 1) Migrants and recipients have access to and use low-cost digital remittance services and related financial products. 2) Remittance and financial service providers invest in profitable business models and delivery channels to serve migrants and their families, women included, as a customer segment with remittance and financial service products.

Intermediary outcomes (so-called stakeholder outcomes): 1) Policies and regulations that enable access and usage of digital remittances services, 2) Open, affordable, and interoperable (shared) digital infrastructure (national and regional), 3) Innovative business models and remittance-linked financial services, 4) Financial and digital capabilities of migrants and beneficiaries to meaningfully use such services.

Workstreams, inputs and outputs: The four workstreams, denoting inputs, activities and outputs, broadly follow the above-mentioned four intermediary outcomes: 1) Enabling Policy and Regulation, 2) Open Digital Payment Ecosystem, 3) Inclusive innovation, 4) Empowered Customers. Workstreams 1 and 2 can be seen as pre-conditions for success in workstreams 3 and 4, MRP outcomes and goals.

MRP undertakes TA, training, knowledge development and sharing (e.g., publications, webinars), to support policy makers and regulators, remittance service providers, payment aggregators, banks, MFIs, fintechs, and other partners to bring digital remittance and financial services and related knowledge to migrants and their families. MRP distinguishes public sector, private sector, and thought partners (typically research institutes and consultants).²¹ MRP reports are organised by types of partners, not by workstreams. This is explained by the fact that many partners work in multiple workstreams, as these

¹⁹ The prodoc for SIDA phase 2 (2023-25) includes a somewhat modified ToC.

²⁰ The primary target of MRP is labour migrants, not refugees.

²¹ In the context of MRP, a public sector partner would be a governmental/regional body or financial sector regulator. A publicly-owned bank would be considered a private sector partner. A thought partner is usually a research institute or a private consultant.

are interlinked. Workstreams 3 and 4, for example, overlap and often involve the same partners. It is the same for workstreams 1 and 2, and sometimes 2 and 3. Publications and events help ensure the respective projects learn from each other – across workstreams.

MRP is designed to be implemented through a market systems development approach, identifying, and addressing the constraints in existing market systems where low-income individuals operate, aiming to bring about systemic change. Thus, the direct project partners are public and private-sector stakeholders from whom policies and regulations, digital infrastructures and innovative business models originate. MRP does not directly engage with migrants and receivers, but partners do. Remittance-linked financial products, including savings, insurance, pensions and credit, developed by private sector partners, help migrant families build financial resilience.

The programme documents include a number of risks, notably lack of support or low capacity by key partners in both the private and public sectors (e.g., Regional Economic Commissions), low buy-in from private sector, and the very short implementation period of MRP given the ambitious goals formulated. There are also a number of assumptions formulated, such as macroeconomic and political stability, government commitment to digital financial inclusion, close collaboration with other UN agencies, IFAD included, and private sector willingness to offer suitable financial products to migrants and remittance receivers.

The programme documents emphasise gender equality and equal access, also considering that women comprise half of remittance senders, and that sending or receiving remittances can greatly impact their empowerment. However, the ToC does not include a specific gender component, rather treating this as cross-cutting. The ToC does not address disability concerns, nor human rights.

Further detail and implementation progress on the four workstreams is presented in the next subsection. Each of the respective sub-projects have their own ToC, which interlock with the above programme ToC, and which tend to present stronger causality links than the overall MRP ToC does.

2.3 Current programme implementation status

Appendix B shows the implementation status of the sub-projects in the respective workstreams.

2.3.1 Workstream 1 (WS1) – Enabling Policies and Regulations

The **objective of WS1** is that “regulators assess the policies and regulations that limit the flow of remittances through formal channels and draft measures to address related regulatory challenges and market inefficiencies”. WS1 consists of **3 pillars**:

- A. **policies and regulations** are developed/improved to facilitate formal and digital remittance flows.²² The main target is policy makers and public authorities.
- B. **remittance statistics** and data are improved. The main target is central banks.²³
- C. **domestic resources** are mobilized. The main target includes public and private sector stakeholders.²⁴

²² Improving the legal and regulatory framework, the financial and payment infrastructure, market aspects, consumer protection, and collaboration among stakeholders.

²³ By capturing formal remittance flows and estimating informal flows, analysing supply side transaction data, building capacities of public and private stakeholders, conducting demand-side research.

²⁴ With impacts in developing foreign currency deposits and savings, credit/insurance and pension schemes, increasing domestic investments in the innovation ecosystem and international investments.

Activities of WS1 are undertaken at the **Regional level**²⁵ (through Regional Secretariats/Commissions (REC) and regional central banks) and the **Country level** (Central Bank and/or Ministry of Finance). MRP supports RECs/countries in the policy and regulatory framework according to their specific demands. Efforts in knowledge development and dissemination have a **global** audience.

Pillar A) Policies and regulations

Regulatory review

MRP engaged 28 countries through central banks and RECs. The collaboration included studies to identify barriers and gaps in payment regulations (WS1) and infrastructure (WS2), and highlighted reforms to promote digital remittance access. Thus, 240 remittance related laws and regulations were reviewed and 33 identified for revision.

Progress at regional level

MRP distinguishes five levels of regional engagement, and coincidentally one finds a regional body at each level:

1. **Initial engagement** - data analysis and literature review (**ECOWAS**);
2. **Agreement** to collaborate: stakeholder mapping (**CEMAC**);
3. **Assessments** in collaboration with REC Secretariat/regional central bank (diagnostic reports and policy benchmarking) (**WAEMU**);
4. Roadmaps/**recommendations** on what could be improved and how (**ECCAS**);
5. **Implementation** - REC Secretariat/central banks determine which recommendations to implement and in what sequence, to ensure political ownership (**IGAD**).

Pillar B) Data and statistics

Information on remittance flows in the target regions varies from country to country due to differences in the availability of data, methodology and concepts used. The fragility of remittance data is often caused by large unregulated remittance streams and the weakness of remittance data collection and analysis (central banks). Improving the capacity to monitor remittance data produces better informed financial policies. Private sector partners sharing with MRP granular transaction data also contribute to policy making.

Examples of MRP data collection deployment

- **IGAD** National Coordination Mechanism offers a platform to discuss on migration and remittances statistics and TA.
- **AU Statistics Commission**, in a joint MRP initiative, is developing a remittance transaction reporting system in Africa. UNECA is similarly interested in harmonized statistics in Africa.
- The **Financial Stability Board** Targets Data Group invited MRP to provide suggestions for **G20** cross-border remittance targets.

Pillar C) Domestic Resources mobilization

Where they are recorded in the Balance of Payments (BoP) and where they are significant, formal remittances contribute to the country's financial sector development and creditworthiness.

A National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) policy directive on foreign currency saving accounts addresses migrants and their families with improved conditions to save, in foreign currency, in Ethiopian bank accounts.²⁶ The directive contributes to Ethiopia's BoP maintenance of forex reserves.

²⁵ Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States), Bank of Central African States (BEAC), Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO).

²⁶ No. EX1V 68 /2020 - and its 2021 and 2022 amendments.

2.3.2 Workstream 2 (WS2) – Open Digital Payment Ecosystem

Workstream 2 follows from the second pillar in the IDE strategy, to perform transactions and other (financial) activities digitally, specifically for remittance senders and receivers. The goal of this workstream is to enable smooth cross-border transfers, consisting of three pillars of interventions:

- A. Last mile Distribution (e.g., CongoPay and Glenbrook projects)
- B. Shared market infrastructure (e.g., PWC and Accenture ID studies, country assessments)
- C. Open Digital Infrastructure (advocacy, technical papers)

MRP partners are both public and private sector institutions. WS1 and 2 are interlinked and overlap, as regulations influence what digital infrastructure can be developed and deployed. There is also overlap with WS3 regarding digital innovations in cross-border money transfers and last-mile access.

2.3.3 Workstream 3 (WS3) – Inclusive Innovation (financial services)

Workstream 3 supports the private sector to design and implement innovative remittance services that are accessible to migrant families at fair cost. A second objective is the use of remittances for investments or social services, accessible by the recipients in the migrants' countries of origin. WS3 creates or enhances digital remittances channels and linked financial services, tests the ease of access by customers as well as usage of such services. In some cases, WS3 projects were combined with digital and financial education (workstream 4). MRP support takes the form of co-investments (average 50% in the form of grant) and technical assistance by the MRP team, sharing the RSPs' risks and encouraging them to develop innovative and inclusive methodologies and instruments. MRP has neither deployed capital nor debt instruments. MRP supports a wide range of financial institutions such as banks, microfinance institutions, money transfer and mobile network operators, and fintechs. Although private sector partners are competitively selected and projects tailor-made, MRP TA is often similar, including institutional assessment and data mapping; market scan; supply- and demand-side data analytics for product development; impact monitoring; and learning.

Whereas not all MRP partners are equally active in terms of reaching out to the LNOB priority groups, women in particular, MRP encourages partners to graduate to higher levels of inclusion.

Key features of workstream 3:

- 9 private sector partners to develop migrant-centric and gender-responsive remittance products and services, and related publications issued;
- 14 new or improved digital services and business models piloted, and two scaled up;
- Capacity-building led to 84 events or activities and 371 staff of the partner FIs trained in a range of skills, from data analysis to gender mainstreaming;
- Since the start, more than 3 million transactions conducted by new customers registered with the private-sector partners, through innovative financial products and services.

2.3.4 Workstream 4 (WS4) – Empowered Customers (skills)

Workstream 4 was inspired by the fourth pillar in the IDE strategy: "The active participation of the public and private sectors in digital and financial skills development, as well as the usage of digital channels for relevant skills development." What was skills in the IDE strategy became empowered customers in MRP. Thus, the aim of WS 4 is that migrants and recipients understand and trust the services offered to them and have the skills to use such to improve their financial health. This is done through capacity building of RSPs, which subsequently roll out training and sensitisation campaigns.

The number of WS4 projects and the budget assigned is less than the other workstreams (see section 2.5). There are a few projects in financial literacy in conjunction with WS3 partners, and demand, financial health and impact studies with thought partners. The latter would impact customers indirectly through better service delivery due to better knowledge.

2.3.5 Knowledge Development

The respective MRP reports show that, until Dec 2023, all sorts of training events, webinars (32) and seminars, and publications (107) were produced that disseminate lessons learned under the various workstreams, including related to gender mainstreaming. Apart from “flagship reports”, these publications include legal and regulatory reviews, market scans, country diagnostics, case studies, and various reference guides and toolkits for stakeholders. These research findings are made available to public and private sector partners, cross-fertilise the respective workstreams, and inform MRP’s selection of projects to support. Webinars are the key means to disseminate information contained in these publications. The utility of these publications and webinars is discussed in chapter 4.

2.3.6 Gender mainstreaming and “Leaving No One Behind”

As women are overrepresented among remittance receivers, while these also tend to be in the low-income segments, by design a programme aiming to improve remittance streams has LNOB benefits. However, the question is to what extent MRP induces project partners to make this a deliberate strategy through targeting or service development.

RSPs have been encouraged to develop services well-tailored to women, considering such issues as women’s often limited mobility, low literacy levels and lack of IDs. MRP undertook market scans and transaction data analysis to identify the gender aspects related to remittances and financial services. This information is communicated to RSPs in order to adjust the product and distribution methods, such as allowing small transaction amounts, lowering registration barriers, hiring female agents, and offering women-centred financial literacy. RSPs were encouraged to progress from gender blind to gender aware, and eventually to gender accommodating or transformative. Several projects had a gender focus (e.g., Lucy, RAKBANK).

The evaluation did not identify any projects that explicitly reached out to disabled people or any of the other vulnerable groups identified by the UN, nor was this mentioned in the prodocs.

2.4 Programme results (31st Dec 2023)

Appendix C shows the intended result targets as per the original prodocs and contribution agreements with donors (2019), and the results achieved according to UNCDF records. Further result indicators (according to UNCDF) are shown in the Result Measurement Framework (RMF) in appendix D.

The **SDC** prodoc included only one result target, which was the impact target. However, attached to the contribution agreement signed between SDC and UNCDF was a detailed logical framework with result indicators and targets. These follow the ToC structure. As can be seen from appendix C, measuring some of the outcome indicators has been a challenge.

The **SIDA** prodoc (phase 1) included, on page 25 (table 2), the proposed KPIs and their targets as shown in appendix C. In contrast to the SDC logframe, these are grouped by workstreams, and not the ToC structure. The SIDA prodoc for phase 2 included a new set of indicators and targets, but as these are only to be reached by 2025 these are less relevant to this (mid-term) evaluation.

As the SDC result report only records results achieved with SDC funding, while SIDA reports do the same for SIDA funded activities, UNCDF subsequently developed an integrated Result Measurement Framework (**RMF**) with indicators and targets for most result areas, reproduced in appendix D. This is meant to cover both SDC and SDA funded operations. The KPIs and targets partly but not fully replicate the indicators of the SIDA prodoc and SDC logframe. Some indicators in the RMF are earmarked to SDC, some to SIDA, and some to both. Unfortunately, the RMF is not presenting results by workstream (e.g., RMF adds up results on workstreams 2, 3 and 4), which posed a challenge to the evaluators in

effectiveness evaluation (section 4.3), as the evaluation questions follow the ToC. Hence, this report intermittently used SDC, SIDA and RMF indicators as appropriate to answer the evaluation questions.

The RMF has not replaced or superseded the donor indicators and targets, hence MRP has been separately recording and reporting on all of them. The necessary data are derived from the AirTable data management system. The raw data are compiled by MRP programme staff based on data collected from private and public sector partners, as well as research undertaken by thought partners.

MRP is also reporting to **UNCDF’s Integrated Results and Resources Matrix (IRRM)**, which is the accountability framework for UNCDF’s Strategic Framework overall, see appendix D.

2.5 Programme financial status (31st Dec 2023)

The detailed programme expenditures are included in Appendix E. A summary of expenditure per workstream is depicted in table 1 below, categorised in costs of externals (e.g., grants, external consultants, events), and the cost of TA provided by UNCDF staff and contract agents.²⁷

Table 1 – Expenditure by workstream, until 2023 (USD)²⁸

	Grants and external costs	Technical assistance cost	Total cost	%
WS1 - Policy and Regulations	712,494	4,306,846	5,019,340	23.5%
WS2 - Digital Payment Ecosystem	512,432	1,052,773	1,565,205	7.3%
WS3 - Inclusive Innovation	1,515,567	2,441,773	3,957,340	18.5%
WS4 - Empowered Customers	885,602	905,933	1,791,535	8.4%
Advocacy and strategic communication	1,078,575	1,354,933	2,433,508	11.4%
Gender mainstreaming	10,000	394,409	404,409	1.9%
Result measurement	-	360,575	360,575	1.7%
Programme management	3,300,405	2,383,100	5,683,505	26.6%
Other costs	137,955	-	137,955	0.6%
	8,153,031	13,200,341	21,353,373	100.0%

Source: MRP from Combined Delivery Report (CDR), Account Activity Analysis (AAA), and HR report by UNCDF

Table 2 shows the evolution of approved budgets and expenditure over time, by source of funding.

Table 2 – Budget and Expenditure by donor, 2019-2023 (USD)²⁹

		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
SIDA phase 1	Budget	137,930	1,570,937	2,710,932	3,441,698		7,861,497
	Expenditure	64,595	731,814	2,683,915	2,906,715		6,387,038
	Budget -/- Expenditure	73,335	839,123	27,017	534,984		1,474,459
SIDA Phase 2	Budget					4,060,688	4,060,688
	Expenditure					3,737,030	3,737,030
	Budget -/- Expenditure					323,658	323,658
SDC	Budget	0	1,709,191	2,614,589	3,193,083	2,472,140	9,989,003
	Expenditure	0	721,678	2,864,476	3,255,719	2,393,729	9,235,603
	Budget -/- Expenditure	0	987,513	-249,887	-62,636	78,411	753,400
SDC Financial Resilience	Budget				1,267,920	142,699	1,410,619
	Expenditure				1,093,157	92,348	1,185,504
	Budget -/- Expenditure				174,763	50,351	225,115

²⁷ MRP does not maintain a time-writing system, hence the allocation of staff cost to projects is an estimate.

²⁸ The expenditure data were received from MRP on 28 June 2024.

²⁹ The budget and expenditure data were received from MRP on 28 June 2024.

UNCDF co-funding	Budget	0	0	0	440,438	0	440,438
	Expenditure	0	0	0	808,197	0	808,197
	Budget -/- Expenditure	0	0	0	-367,759	0	-367,759
Total	Budget	137,930	3,280,128	5,325,521	8,343,139	6,675,527	23,762,245
	Expenditure	64,595	1,453,492	5,548,391	8,063,788	6,223,107	21,353,373
	Budget -/- Expenditure	73,335	1,826,636	-222,870	279,351	452,421	2,408,873

Source: MRP from Combined Delivery Report (CDR), Account Activity Analysis (AAA), and HR report by UNCDF

The SIDA contribution consisted of phase 1 (2019-2022) and the first year of phase 2 (2023-2025). The contribution from SDC consisted of the initial contribution of USD 7.9 million, plus addenda and extensions reaching nearly USD 10 million. In line with the evaluation ToR, the above are evaluated as one single programme under the initial ToC. Most of the combined budget allocated to the period up to 31st Dec 2023 was expended by UNCDF.³⁰

There was a separate grant “SDC Financial Resilience” of USD 1.2 m (March 2022) for social protection related to migration. The Financial Resilience project, which was later added, operates on a significantly different ToC and aims at developing wage digitization, insurance and pension products for migrant communities, not remittances. This project is evaluated separately from MRP.

The donor programme documents did not include output-based budgets or budgets by main result categories (e.g., workstreams). However, such budgets were made and revised annually based on programme advancement and partner contracts signed.

2.6 Key recommendations from previous evaluations

MRP has not been subjected to any previous (mid-term) evaluation. This evaluation may be seen as a (mid-term) evaluation for SIDA phase 1 and 2, or an end-of-term evaluation for SDC phase 1.

3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Key evaluation methods and tools

The evaluation team used a mixed-methods approach as listed below. The use of a variety of research methods allows for triangulation of research findings, looking at the Evaluation Questions (EQ) from different angles. This allowed the evaluation team to make evaluation and contribution claims. The programme ToC was the basis for evaluation.

- i. **Data at MRP.** MRP has compiled a wide set of programme and performance data, not limited to the 23 RMF KPIs, which the evaluators used.³¹
- ii. **Document review.** Many documents were consulted, including MRP programme reports and reports related to individual projects under review, as well as various publications. See appendix J.
- iii. **Financial reports.** Expenditure reports (annual, up to Dec 2023), disaggregated to projects and workstreams, show the expense made by partners and project staff.
- iv. **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs).** Meetings and discussions with MRP staff, project partners (e.g., public sector, private sector, thought partners), and related stakeholders gave valuable insights into project performance.

³⁰ According to the information availed to the evaluators, the budget of SIDA Phase 1 was USD 5,761,576, and SDC USD 7,878,292 plus an addendum of USD 763,560. According to UNCDF, there were regular budget revisions agreed with the donors resulting in the above (much higher) budget figures.

³¹ All MRP sub-projects have their own ToC and result indicators, collected through partners and validated by MRP.

- v. **(Mini-)Survey.** The evaluation team worked with private sector partners to do a limited number of surveys, conducted by phone, asking clients about their service experience, and how this is affecting their lives. In Senegal the evaluators surveyed (20) clients from SympliFi (credit clients) and (31) from Wizall (remittance receivers). In Ethiopia the team interviewed (9) clients from BelCash, using the MamaPays app. In Bangladesh BRAC Bank did not allow the evaluators to contact clients due to concerns about client confidentiality, and its dissatisfaction with the prior UNCDF-funded IPA research that involved survey questions that were deemed harmful to the bank's client relations. The team also conducted a survey among (14) participants in the Harvard Kennedy School course (see appendix F). Finally, the team spoke to (9) clients from RAKBANK/Edenred (Bangladeshi remittance senders).
- vi. **Focus groups discussions/meetings (FGDs).** Due to the geographical dispersal of clients and the fact that they are reached digitally, no FGDs were conducted in Senegal and Ethiopia. By contrast, in Bangladesh BRAC Bank mobilised its local offices in districts and hosted 6 FGDs with 83 Participants in total (50 women). The questions of the FGDs were quasi-identical to the above-mentioned mini surveys.
- vii. **(six) Case studies** with different types of partners and the different intervention strategies. See appendix F.

For the KIIs and FGDs the team developed **standardised interview guidelines** that made sure that all field research teams asked the same (relevant) questions and reported the same information. These guidelines are structured following the evaluation questions and matrix (appendix A) and cover all elements of it. It is the same for the (mini-) survey. The data collection tools are gender sensitive and ensured disaggregated data as presented in the ToR. The tools are attached in appendix L.

3.2 Application of contribution analysis

Any (major) development outcomes observed at programme and project levels need to be traced to MRP's activities. The inception report explained the commonly used methodology of **contribution analysis**. The data collection tools include the questions to make contribution analysis possible, in particular the "why" and "how" questions, identifying all factors that resulted in the effects observed, as well as counterfactuals. As far as possible (level of outcome achievement), the evaluation team applied contribution analysis to the case studies, as these have sufficient detail and depth to identify contributing factors.

As noted in section 2.2, the goal of MRP is to see improvement in financial resilience of migrants and their families, expressed in four dimensions of financial health. While MRP's interventions with the private sector should directly impact migrants and recipients, in other areas this influence may be more indirect or tangential. This is true for all workstream 1 work, research work, as well as most publications, webinars and data collection efforts. The impact pathway is generally too long and diffuse to make firm causal claims on any outcomes and impacts that may have been observed in the evaluation and through MRP's impact and financial health studies. Furthermore, few workstream 1 interventions have reached the stage of adopting and issuing policies and regulations that may affect the market hence migrants. Thus, in most cases the evaluation was limited to ex ante postulating the developmental effects that MRP may eventually have.

3.3 Evaluation matrix

The evaluation matrix is included in appendix H. The matrix grouped the Evaluation Questions (EQ) of the ToR, as revised during the inception phase, according to the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, and following the sequence of the programme ToC. Refer to the inception report for a detailed explanation on the evaluation questions and matrix.

All OECD-DAC criteria result in an evaluative conclusion, either positive or negative. More importantly, the findings lead to recommendations on improvement of MRP in phase 2 and beyond.

3.4 Sampling strategy and data aggregation

MRP contains more sub-projects and activities than could be reviewed in the timeframe allotted to the evaluation. Sampling has taken place at several levels, chiefly the countries, case studies, individual projects for review, and finally clients through mini-surveys and FGDs (see appendix G).

1. The **country selection**, presented in the inception report (Senegal, Ethiopia, Bangladesh), reflected the extent to which these include a variety of projects across the workstreams.
2. The **case studies** were selected based on them having reached a high level of implementation, of being representative, and offering potential for lessons learned.
3. The **specific projects** to review are those that are conducted in the above-mentioned countries and the case studies. Given their advanced implementation status the team also reviewed (through desk review and online interviews) the work done with ECCAS, Accenture, Amarante, Glenbrook, SentBe, Lucy and Dalberg. Given low implementation status, the team did not research BEAC, ECOWAS and A2II. Likewise, the projects with PingMoney, Kapronasia and MSC Global were deemed small and very localised. UAB stopped, and IME Pay would be quite hard to research from a distance.
4. Regarding the **mini-surveys**, the sampling was pragmatic rather than scientific. The evaluation team requested a list of clients, and randomly started calling some. Throughout the process adjustments were made to ensure representativeness, in particular to include women. No control groups were established. However, the data collected by the KIT demand study partly served as a baseline.
5. In the **FGDs** hosted by BRAC Bank, the participants were invited by BRAC Bank, based on willingness to come and proximity to the bank branch.

The approach to data aggregation, reported in chapter 4, started from the results as presented by MRP to the donors or in its own RMF. The evaluators made a broad assessment to what extent the results claimed by MRP are plausible. It is noted, however, that some results (e.g., the number of clients onboarded by private sector partners) can impossibly be validated by the evaluators. The evaluators then used the above research means to better understand, interpret and judge the results achieved by MRP. The case studies are in fact mini-evaluations, leading to evaluative conclusions. The same depth cannot be reached for the other projects reviewed, although more generalised conclusions were arrived at. The mini-surveys and FGDs were particularly useful to assess programme impacts.

3.5 Limitations to the evaluation methodology

- The evaluation used data collected by MRP and its partners, which the team could not always validate. In such cases the source of data was identified, without necessarily stating these data are true.
- The MRP KPIs do not one-on-one match the outcome categories of the ToC.³²
- The “mini-” surveys were limited in size, consequence of the budget allotted to the evaluation, and in addition not allowed in Bangladesh. The number in Ethiopia was particularly small as the partners declined to give a list of sufficient length. Therefore, the survey results cannot be claimed to meet the requirements of scientific validity.
- It was also found that the surveys were skewed toward urban and educated clients, which was in fact representative of the clients served by these RSPs, but not the archetypical migrant. By contrast, the FGDs conducted in Bangladesh involved rural and peri-rural communities.

³² For example, the ToC intermediary outcome “policy-makers and regulators engage with the private sector...” is not accompanied by an indicator or target.

Combined, the mini-surveys and FGDs gave valuable insights, even if not fully valid from a methodological standpoint.

- As MRP staff is dispersed across the world only two MRP colleagues were met and interviewed in person, in Senegal and Ethiopia (the staff for Bangladesh was impeded for personal reasons). While online communication methods offer considerable convenience, there is a unique value to personal interactions that cannot be fully replicated.
- **It is emphasized that this report does not mention and assess each and every activity that has been undertaken by MRP, just those that were selected after sampling (see 3.4 above and see the inception report).**
- **It is also emphasised that the evaluation report does not mean to present the achievements of MRP, and even less the learnings from research. The evaluation report means to answer the evaluation questions.**

3.6 Ethical Considerations

The evaluation team encountered some issues of an ethical nature that were resolved as follows:

- The evaluation team had direct contact with RSP clients, through surveys and FGDs, in Senegal, Ethiopia, Bangladesh and UAE. In order to protect their privacy, respondents are in no way identified in this report. This was explained to them. More broadly, the team took great care to explain the purpose of the interview (and indeed, some were distrustful), showing understanding when interviewees declined to answer certain questions.
- In order to ensure respect for the cultural and social customs of persons interviewed, all surveys and FGDs were conducted by national experts.
- Where RSPs made available client data for analysis, sometimes including names and contact details, these were treated with utmost care for confidentiality.
- The same respect of confidentiality is true for the KIIs. To the extent possible, resource persons are not identified in this report. In addition, in view of the EU General Data Protection Regulation, the evaluation report does not include the names of any resource person or interviewee, also not in the appendixes.
- The entire evaluation team has signed the UNEG Code of Ethics (see inception report).

4 EVALUATION FINDINGS

4.1 Relevance / quality of design

The relevance section assesses the extent to which the MRP's objectives and design respond to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.

4.1.1 International Agenda

EQ 1.1 How relevant and how well designed is the approach/ToC of the MRP to the priorities and needs of the global and inter-governmental agendas such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), and Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM)? Including the UNCDF Strategic Framework.

SDGs

The programme documents (SIDA and SDC) describe how remittances contribute to global development and the SDGs. As there are 17 SDGs, 169 targets and 247 indicators, MRP was designed to the SDGs in many ways:

- At household level: by making remittances cheaper, more available, and accompanied by suitable financial products, MRP may contribute to all of SDGs 1-6 (no poverty, zero hunger, health, education, gender equality, and clean water and sanitation);

- At community level: MRP supports initiatives that leverage remittances for savings, credit, or insurance products, among other innovations. These may empower poor people to live a more secure life or engage in income generating activities - SDG 7 and 8.
- In a broader sense: inequalities nationally and internationally (SDG 10) may be reduced – this is in the MRP goal statement. SDG target 10.c aims to reduce the transaction costs of migrant remittances to less than 3 per cent and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 per cent by 2030.

From all SDGs, MRP is most relevant to the first SDG, no poverty, as MRP aims to harness remittances to increase the financial resilience and economic inclusion of migrants and their families. Efficient and accessible remittances, the “access” component in the MRP ToC, directly affects the spending power of migrants and their families. Furthermore, the “usage” component in the MRP ToC creates opportunities to invest in income-generating activities.

GCM

The prodocs, including SDC, also refer to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration by IOM (in short, GCM) to underpin MRP’s relevance. It is noted, however, that the government of Switzerland has neither taken a position on GCM, nor signed up to the partnership.

The Global Compact is a non-binding document that respects states’ sovereign right to determine who enters and stays on their territory and commits to international cooperation on migration. The document is political in nature, and includes 23 objectives for safe, orderly, and regular migration. One of these, # 20 to “promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants”, is close to MRP’s goal statement. Applicable is also objective 19 (“harness the benefits of migration as a source of sustainable development”), and 21 (“developing financial safety net and wealth stock for migrants and their families”). These are fully reflected in the design of MRP.

Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA)

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda (2015) supports the SDGs by establishing a global framework for financing sustainable development and aligning all financing flows and policies with economic, social, and environmental priorities. Section 40 elaborates on the obstacles and costs of remittances, essentially repeating SDG 10.c. As reducing these obstacles and costs is the core of MRP, the programme is aligned with AAAA.

UNCDF Strategic Framework and IDE LNOB Strategy

The UNCDF Strategic Framework 2018-21, which was in force when MRP started, pursued two outcomes, namely 1) Enhanced inclusive financial markets and local development finance systems that benefit poor and vulnerable populations, and 2) unlock public and private finance for the poor, with a focus on LDCs. One of three financing channels proposed was Inclusive Digital Economies (IDE), which is one of the UNCDF practice areas. This reflects the MRP strategy to mobilise remittance streams for development and digitise these.³³

In 2020, UNCDF IDE developed “Leaving no one behind in the digital era” (LNOB), aiming to equip poor people with innovative digital services in their daily lives, which will empower them and contribute to the SDGs. The strategy is built on four workstreams, namely 1) skills (of customers), 2) innovation (by financial service providers), 3) infrastructure (physical and services), and 4) policy and regulation. These are nearly the same labels as used by MRP.

³³ Paragraph 41 of the Strategic Framework provides a direct reference to remittances: “UNCDF will work with governments and service providers to formalize remittance channels leveraging digital and fintech solutions to lower costs and link remittances to a wider range of financial services for senders and recipients.”

Under the UNCDF Strategic Framework 2022-2025, UNCDF aims to accelerate financing for development in LDCs by supporting them to achieve three interlinked strategic game-changers: 1) Catalyse additional private and public flows of capital; 2) Strengthen market systems and financing mechanisms; 3) Accelerate inclusive, diversified, green economic transformation. The first two reflect the core strategies of MRP. Inclusive Digital Economies (IDE) is still one of (five) priority areas in UNCDF's strategy.

It was noted that while UNCDF at institutional level coordinates with other UN agencies through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNSDCF), there was little evidence of MRP being integrated in UN-wide country programming exercises. Local UNDP offices were unaware of MRP. IOM, however, was aware and in contact with UNCDF on migration related work.

Donor Agenda

While the above might suggest that MRP was designed as a direct response to international policy concerns regarding migration and remittances, this is not fully reflective of the strong role played by donors. The formulation of MRP was initiated by SIDA and SDC, which subscribe to the SDGs but also have longstanding strategies on migration on their own, which permeate the MRP design (see coherence section below).³⁴ For UNCDF, this presented an opportunity to cultivate expertise and services in digital remittances, an area it had ventured into from 2016. The programme and design, however, was significantly donor-driven.

In 2018, SIDA, as part of its regional development programme for Africa, including Regional Economic Committees (RECs), identified migration and remittances as a core intervention area. UNCDF was identified as a suitable partner and invited to draft a programme document along the orientations given by SIDA. The mentions of SDGs and GCM in the prodoc served to validate UNCDF's engagement, aligning with objectives that SIDA certainly supports.

Likewise, SDC has long focussed on migration. Migration is one of four priorities in the SDC strategy 2021-2024, recognising the role of migration and the diaspora (including remittances) in the development of their native countries, and financial inclusion of remittance recipients. An optimal utilization of remittances leverages the potential of migrants to contribute to the development of their communities of origin. Through the SDC migration programme, which has both global and national components, SDC contributes to SDGs 1, 5, 8, 10, and 17.³⁵

According to SIDA and SDC, SIDA approached SDC to join forces in MRP. While SIDA focused on reducing the transfer costs of remittances through enabling environment reform, SDC complemented the effort by focusing on the availability and usability of low-cost remittance services and the development of financial products (e.g., savings, credit, insurance) that cater to migrants' needs. Sweden took a regional development approach, while Switzerland, which already was the largest donor of UNCDF, focussed on private sector engagement in five countries with a corridor approach. The selection of countries aligned with Swiss policy priorities, made subsequent to extensive consultations with Swiss representations in these countries.

Evaluative conclusion

MRP aligns with international development priorities, such as the SDGs. It would be inaccurate, however, to explain the programme as a direct and deliberate response to these priorities. Instead, MRP's design was influenced by a combination of factors, including the strategic goals of donors, their investment and

³⁴ Although the SDC and SIDA prodocs were drafted by UNCDF, donor orientations were narrowly followed. This is why the prodocs are so different, or indeed why there is not just one prodoc for joint donor funding.

³⁵ Through SDC's Migration & Forced Displacement Network information is disseminated, and remittances is one of the themes. <https://www.shareweb.ch/site/Migration>

geographical priorities. While these donors endorsed most international development agendas, they also have their own development strategies that underpin the MRP design.

4.1.2 Stakeholder and national priorities

EQ 1.2 How relevant and how well designed is the approach/ToC of MRP to the priorities and needs of the global, regional, and country-level stakeholders - both public and private, including the migrants, considering the challenges and the programme intended support to improve the financial resilience and economic inclusion of migrants and their families?

More important than satisfying broadly defined international policy aspirations, is the question to what extent MRP reflects the needs of private and public stakeholders in the target regions and countries chosen, and most importantly of migrants and their families. The core stakeholders in MRP are the following: 1) Regional Economic Commissions, 2) Financial sector regulators, 3) Private sector in the remittance ecosystem, 4) migrants and remittance recipients. As earlier observed, MRP does not directly engage with beneficiaries (migrants and recipients), but private sector partners do.

Regional Economic Commissions

The **IGAD** case study (appendix F) demonstrated the importance of remittances. Poor economic and financial integration across IGAD, and very low levels of development of several member states, leads to inefficiencies in the cross-border payment ecosystem and regulatory environment, and remittance and exchange rate costs reaching up to 10% of funds remitted. The case study showed that the (eight) IGAD governments and central banks recognise the importance of remittance policy and regulatory reform. IGAD and its member states developed and adopted the *IGAD Regional Migration Policy Framework* (RMPF, 2012) and *Migration Action Plan* (MAP). Both identified the facilitation of labour mobility, transhumance and free movement of persons as a strategic priority. MRP has followed-up by developing proposals to make remittance streams more efficient. As IGAD lacks the powers to mandate policy changes in Member States, and as member states guard their sovereignty, MRP has been particularly relevant in supporting IGAD in its role to bring national governments and regulators together and develop a roadmap for regionwide reform.

A free movement of people agreement within **ECCAS** (the ECCAS-ECOWAS interregional cooperation agreement, 2006) exists, facilitating the mobility of goods, people and money. However, the same frictionless movement does not apply to money streams. As in other regions, unregulated payment channels and parallel currency exchange markets are often used. The licensing and authorization requirements for RSPs tend to differ among ECCAS countries, as are the levels of infrastructure development, making regional cooperation crucial in addressing cross-border remittance barriers and setting convergence criteria among regulatory frameworks.³⁶ ECCAS has embraced the collaboration with MRP to develop a roadmap for regional convergence in remittance regulation and infrastructure.

The evaluation did not investigate **ECOWAS** as MRP did not progress beyond the initial desk research and contacts. However, like IGAD and ECCAS the region consists of quite diverse countries in different stages of development, which hampers building efficient cross-border payment streams.

Financial Sector Regulators

Financial sector regulators in charge of remittance policies include central banks and ministries of finance, but others are involved as well. MRP mainly worked with central banks.

³⁶ Differences exist in remittance-related procedures, for example in licensing and authorization requirements for RSPs, prudential supervision, AML/CFT laws and regulations, foreign exchange regimes, consumer protection, complaints resolution mechanisms, transparency and disclosures.

From 2011, the Government of **Ethiopia**, mostly through the National Bank of Ethiopia (**NBE**), has been working on improving the remittance/payment system regulations, recognising the costly constraints in cross-border payments and last-mile access.³⁷ Multiple changes, amendments and revisions took place in the last five years. The *National Strategies on Digital Payments* (January 2020) and on *Financial Inclusion* (February 2021) identified the key actions to be implemented, including remittance transfers. MRP was welcomed to make contributions to NBE's reform path.

As noted in chapter 2, remittance systems across **WAEMU** are broadly functional, with constraints more of a practical level, e.g., related to low financial inclusion hence poor last-mile access and digital connectivity. The economy remains cash-based, and so do remittances, with even digital remittances quickly cashed-out. **BCEAO**, which regulates across the region, has a particular interest in remittances, in particular last-mile access, as part of its *regional financial inclusion strategy*. BCEAO has asked UNCDF for TA in specific topics, such as getting a better grip on informal remittance streams and conducting a feasibility study for putting in place an ID system adapted to low-income populations. The government of **Senegal** has a financial inclusion strategy too, with a department in the Ministry of Finance dedicated to developing strategies for improved financial access and inclusion. Remittances cannot be seen in separation of the wider financial ecosystem and financial inclusion of poor communities in particular, and in that respect MRP has been relevant to WAEMU and Senegal.

MRP has not worked with the financial regulators in **Bangladesh**, but did start work with the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE) in the financial resilience project. Bangladesh has extensive policies on migration and remittances, among others putting caps on the cost of remittance fees and even providing subsidies for digital remittances. This work commenced nearly three years after the start of MRP.

Private Sector

The private sector above all needs an environment that does not constrain its operations. Bangladesh, for example, has a bank-led remittance ecosystem, with only banks or linked Mobile Financial Service (MFS) providers allowed to process remittances. Although the use of digital remittance products (wallets and bank transfers) has increased, more than half of the remittance volume is still cashed on arrival. Likewise, in Ethiopia incumbent financial sector partners (banks) held the monopoly on cross-border money streams. The reform agenda in Ethiopia was in no small measure accelerated by the private sector (mobile money operators) demanding reform. West Africa also restricts the types of payment providers that can transact money internationally. Thus, MRP is directly relevant to the private sector when working at the macro and regulatory level and seeking to broaden the market.

At the level of the private sector itself, it was found that many and incumbent payment providers in particular, tend to be stuck in their usual ways of doing. MRP can demonstrate through data analytics the profile of their clients hence market and distribution opportunities, help design innovative products, and serve migrant communities better including through digital products.

Migrants and Remittance Recipients

Research by MRP and the evaluation team shows that migrants value inexpensive and efficient remittance streams. Those that tried, appreciate digital means of remitting money, and related services (e.g., savings) as well. Nevertheless, the three country visits reveal that digital uptake is slow in all three countries.³⁸ Payment systems and consequently remittances remain predominantly cash-based.³⁹ In

³⁷ National Payment System Proclamation No 718/2011.

³⁸ See Digital Financial Inclusion rate (Findex)

³⁹ In Bangladesh and Senegal it is estimated that half of remittances enter through informal channels, while this is three-quarters in Ethiopia – see country assessments by Dalberg.

Ethiopia new or amended directives allow more operators to provide financial products/remittance-linked financial and mobile and digital products, especially allowing non-bank financial services providers to offer remittance services/electronic money services. However, the country visit and mini-survey of BelCash showed that usage is limited. Likewise, less than 10% of clients onboarded in the C3Pay app of RAKBANK use it to regularly transact remittances. The FGDs in Bangladesh showed that clients chose their bank because of their confidence in the banks' personnel, and clients may even swap banks when bank staff do. Given their reliance on personal interaction, such clients groups may not always be susceptible to accept digital distribution methods. Indeed, BRAC Bank's relation with migrant communities and recipients remains firmly relationship based.

The MRP prodocs and various reports emphasise the benefits of using digital and formal remittance channels.⁴⁰ Migrants, however, do not necessarily see it that way, and may prefer unregulated (informal) and non-digital channels for the following reasons:

- In some countries, and Ethiopia in particular, there is a huge gap between official and parallel exchange rates, making formal remittance transfers financially unattractive.
- Insights from country visits highlighted the remarkable speed and cost-effectiveness of unregulated remittance channels. In the Senegal – EU corridor, *Hawala* operators visit both sender and receiver at home to make the transaction.
- The claims made in MRP documents linking unregulated networks to activities such as money laundering, financing of terrorism, and human trafficking were not echoed by stakeholders during the field visits. Also, arguments such as the need for remittances to contribute to the balance of payment and country credit ratings do not resonate with migrants.
- Reliance on unregulated channels is also explained by low literacy and trust (e.g., Bangladeshis), making depositing money in a formal MTO hard, to which is added that they have little time off, may not have an MTO in reach, and may not understand the language and script of their host country. This also impedes the use of remittance apps, although this is growing.⁴¹
- As to the use of digital channels and related financial products, MRP research and the evaluators revealed that nearly all remittances are cashed on arrival and used for immediate consumption. This makes the use of digital channels (e.g., a mobile money wallet) less appealing to those still wedded to cash money. This also underlines the importance of financial literacy activities.

Hence, whereas the MRP strategy emphasizing digital and formal payment transfers and related financial products (e.g., saving, investment) is well-meant, it does not necessarily match the immediate needs, perceptions and realities of migrants.

Evaluative conclusion

MRP, in all its aspects, is highly relevant in IGAD and ECCAS and probably ECOWAS too due to poor cross-border economic and monetary integration, different currencies, legal and monetary systems. MRP, by bringing together public and private stakeholders, can help enhance regional cooperation and reduce the inhibitors that keep remittances from passing borders efficiently. Once such reforms passed, MRP could also work with the private sector to develop products the new regulations would allow.

The African monetary unions (WAEMU and CEMAC) do not face the same cross-border payment constraints, but obstacles remain at the level of financial inclusion (e.g., no bank accounts, reliance on cash, no connectivity). MRP can be relevant by targeting those specific constraints. MRP can also be relevant by working with the private sector to improve last-mile access.

⁴⁰ The MRP annual report uses the word digital 302 times, its appendixes 528 times.

⁴¹ Both BRAC bank and bKash are investing in the local connectivity, e.g., through Ripplenet which connects a broad range of financial intermediaries in sending countries.

In Bangladesh and Nepal, the core constraints are the very low level of literacy and understanding of migrant money senders, leading to a reliance on parallel (informal) money flows, and the dearth of financial products suitable to recipients. MRP is relevant by aiding private sector partners develop services well-suited to the migrants needs, while introducing them to more modern digital payment services.

In Ethiopia constraints are found both in the regulatory environment and financial services. MRP is both relevant to the financial sector regulators, as many constraints remain to be solved, and the private sector as product innovation and access has been lacking.

As a final remark, the MRP emphasis on digital transactions through the formal sector do not always match the needs and realities of migrants. A more flexible approach, being open to non-digital and even informal payment streams, could increase MRP's relevance.

4.1.3 UNCDF broader mandate

EQ 1.3 How relevant and appropriate is the current programme implementation structure considering the objectives and UNCDF's broader mandate?

"The vision of UNCDF is that LDCs are able to access and leverage the development impact of capital to enable sustainable and inclusive economic growth and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals."⁴² The mandate of UNCDF is first and foremost to develop Least Developed Countries (LDCs), without excluding more developed markets. Furthermore, UNCDF came into being to attract capital for development, the private sector in particular.

The emphasis on the (46) LDCs is emphasised in the prodocs (2019), and selection of (5) priority countries and (3) regions of intervention.⁴³ Although some projects under workstreams 3 and 4 are not based in LDCs (e.g., in Singapore, UAE, South Korea), this is for LDC remittance corridors. Overall, MRP is oriented on LDCs including fragile states (in IGAD and ECCAS). The pre-selection of countries and regions by donors, however, presents a challenge in harmonizing with the overarching mandate of UNCDF, namely its emphasis on LDCs of which many were excluded (e.g., in Southern Africa).

The MRP team is based all around the world, with many residing in LDCs. This is not the case for the private sector partners, as many are from developed countries or emerging markets. This is even more obvious for the thought partners such as Harvard Kennedy School, IPA, and KIT (although local research partners participated).⁴⁴ The reasons for this bias are the following:

1. Most research projects are global in nature, making it hard for LDC-based research institutions to offer services as they lack the global resources and network
2. UNCDF issues its tenders and RfAs in English language, hampering access to bidders that do not regularly use this language (e.g., in Western and Central Africa)

MRP may explore opportunities for enhanced collaboration with knowledge providers in LDCs, recognizing the potential for capacity-building benefits that such engagement could offer.

Talking about language, all internal and external communication is conducted in English, the Migrant Money website included. Furthermore, nearly all publications are in English. This reduces MRP's relevance to LDCs in the Francophone and Lusophone spheres.

As to UNCDF's capital mandate, MRP (private sector) projects typically leverage MRP grants for attract partners' co-financing, sometimes a lot (e.g., CongoPay). Once private sector innovations reach the

⁴² Source: opening page of the UNCDF website, uncdf.org

⁴³ Within these, only a few are not LDCs (e.g., Kenya, Nigeria, Rep of Congo).

⁴⁴ Dalberg is a major international research company too, but the contract was won by Dalberg Senegal.

scaling phase, substantial external finance might be attracted. This, however, has not been the focus of MRP phase 1.

Evaluative conclusion

MRP has been relevant in light of UNCDF's LDC mandate. However, the rather restrictive country pre-selection is regretted. While it makes sense to limit enabling environment work to selected countries and RECs, in the private-sector workstreams MRP might have chosen to open RfAs to all (46) LDCs. It was also noted that MRP has issued contracts and worked with major institutions from developed countries mainly, while the evaluation team sees an opportunity for enhanced collaboration with partners from LDCs. MRP could reinforce its LDC focus through partner selection. MRP needs to reinforce French language capacity in its team and issue RfAs and publications in French, taking into account that so many LDCs are in the francophone sphere. Portuguese speaking countries should not be overlooked either.

MRP grants and TA could leverage external capital (private capital or impact investment) once projects reach the scaling stage.

4.1.4 LNOB

EQ 1.4 Crosscutting: To what extent does the Programme incorporate gender, human rights, conflict and disability inclusion in its design, strategy/ToC? To what extent is the programme designed to reach last-mile customers (youth, women, low-income)?

The MRP ToC (2019) does mention women, not any of the other elements from the UNCDF LNOB agenda. As earlier noted, the project design in large measure was oriented by donors. At the formulation stage UNCDF incorporated elements of UN best practice. While gender was included, fragile states targeted, and migrants are often part of low-income populations, this did not include explicit attention to disability and human rights.

The SIDA prodoc included gender-disaggregated result indicators, as did the RMF developed by MRP (appendix D). This attention to gender is also reflected in the ToCs of many, but not all, projects developed under MRP. MRP brings a gender lens into all projects through gender-disaggregated data collection and analysis, which help central banks develop policy and private sector partners products. By design, workstreams 3 and 4 are aimed at reaching, through RSPs, last-mile customers, which in the case of remittance receivers are often women. In the Request for Applicants, applicants are explicitly encouraged to focus on women and youth, and gender inclusion is reviewed in the initial selection of project applications. This, however, is not repeated under the evaluation criteria, hence applicants would not get (additional) points for gender (and youth) inclusion.

Although most workstream 3 and 4 projects focus on just onboarding more women, the fundamental MRP strategy is to give women more control over (their) money. This is done by moving remittances from a cash to a digital system, directly under women's own management.⁴⁵ A woman migrant sending cash immediately loses control to the receiver. A women migrant with a digital wallet may opt to pay school fees, house rent, energy, directly to the beneficiary, without the risk of interference by other family members, or may save for her return.⁴⁶ MRP also aims to achieve a mindset change in RSPs, inducing them to incorporate gender considerations in the development of their service offer.

⁴⁵ Transaction data show remittances to be gendered. Women disproportionately use cash channels, remit more often, in smaller amounts, and often for family consumption. Source: Lean Data Survey (KIT)

⁴⁶ The Bangladesh country visit revealed that male migrants remit not to their wives, but to another family member who keeps control on their behalf. A female migrant typically remits to the husband, with her having little control over its use. On their return, female migrants are often left without financial buffer for their reintegration. Source: BRAC NGO.

Disability did not play a role in MRP, and it was neither mentioned in the prodocs nor in any of the annual or quarterly reports. Disabled people are not normally migrating, but may be remittance recipients. In this respect MRP might have attempted to collect information on this.

MRP does not explicitly focus on low income people, but migrants often are young and low-income. In Senegal, for example, migration mainly originates from poor villages in the North (push factor). The same dynamics are seen in Bangladesh, with distinct migration zones.

Through the RECs, MRP operates in fragile states (e.g., Somalia, South Sudan, Central Africa), possibly contributing to their stability. While these fragile states are home to many poor people and migrants, it also poses challenges in project execution due to weak public services (e.g., financial sector regulators) and insecurity.⁴⁷

MRP has not incorporated the human rights theme.

Evaluative conclusion

The MRP design explicitly incorporates the LNOB concern gender. The MRP design does neither include disability, nor human rights, which the evaluators can understand given the nature of the programme. Nevertheless, field surveys might have attempted to identify disabled people under the recipients. As migrant populations are typically poor, MRP indirectly contributes to LNOB concerns related to low-income populations. Fragile states are fully included in MRP. Going forward MRP may wish to analyse to what extent its interventions contributed to the stabilisation of these fragile countries.

4.2 Coherence

The coherence section assesses the extent to which MRP offers complementarity, harmonisation and co-ordination with others - the extent to which MRP is adding value while avoiding duplication of effort (external coherence). This section also looks at the synergies and interlinkages withing MRP (internal coherence).

EQ 2 As presently designed, how coherent is the programme design in view of its objectives? This is sub-divided into external and internal coherence.

EQ 2.1 External - How distinct/complementary is the MRP's approach to other initiatives that deploy financial and technical assistance at the regional and country levels towards strengthening the financial resilience, financial health and economic inclusion of migrants and their families? Including to the UNDS and UNSDCF at country level and the UNCDF Strategic Framework.

As many international agencies, including development banks, have the mandate to work on financial and economic inclusion, this section looks specifically at those that target migrants and international money streams.

Table 3 – Other development partners working on remittances

IOM	The International Organization for Migration (IOM), the UN Migration Agency, has an interest in remittances and issued several publications on the subject. IOM also contributes to awareness raising (e.g., through the International Day of Family Remittances, information and advocacy) and occasionally remittance-related projects, such as “Making Migration Work for Sustainable Development”, M4SD, in Senegal. In Bangladesh IOM offers pre-departure training including financial literacy and safely sending remittances home.
IFAD	IFAD's multi-donor Financing Facility for Remittances (FFR) since 2006, aims at maximizing the impact of remittances on development. Active in over 50 countries, FFR promotes innovative investments and transfer modalities, supports financially inclusive mechanisms, enhances competition, provides financial education and inclusion, and encourages migrant investment and entrepreneurship. In MRP terminology, FFR is active in

⁴⁷ The IGAD team never visited South Sudan and Somalia.

	<p>workstream 3 and 4 type projects. However, FFR also conducts dedicated research on global and regional remittances flows.⁴⁸</p> <p>Led by IFAD through FFR, the Global Forum on Remittances, Investment and Development (GFRID), a UN-led informal process, brings together stakeholders from around the world involved in remittances, migration, and development. GFRID culminates in the <i>Summit</i>, hosted biannually, to discuss the remittance ecosystem with public and private sectors and civil society. For MRP, these would be workstream 1 and 2 type activities.</p>
World Bank	<p>The World Bank hosts the Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD), a global hub of policy expertise on migration and development (which is ending in August 2024).⁴⁹ Financed by the EU and SDC, KNOMAD draws on experts to create and synthesize knowledge for use by policy makers in sending, receiving and transit countries. This mirrors the work of MRP, which engages in knowledge dissemination too.</p> <p>In collaboration with countries where remittances provide a financial lifeline, KNOMAD launched the International Working Group on Improving Data on Remittances (RemitStat), aiming to monitor the implementation of remittance data compilation guidelines, improve the timeliness and comparability of data, and international cooperation in remittance data collection and dissemination.</p>
IMF	<p>The IMF has also undertaken a wide range of research into remittances in support of partner governments. A lot of data recorded and used by other organisations originates from the IMF through its collaboration with national central banks.</p>
CARIM	<p>The African Centre for the Study and Research on Migration, CARIM, established by the African Union in 2020, is a specialized technical office to advance the knowledge base of the African continent on migration and mobility, and contributes to evidence-based interventions on migration in Africa. The centre would be a natural partner for MRP but has not been able to play this role due to internal capacity constraints.</p>

All the above engage in **policy research**. Interviews with stakeholders and reviewing public sources reveal that the World Bank is the leading agency on global remittance research. However, research done by UNCDF and IFAD is appreciated when it involves country and thematic deep dives. Generally, World Bank research tends to be more global in nature, while UNCDF has addressed more technical subjects. Nevertheless, a risk of duplication exists. Interviews reveal that UNCDF, World Bank and others regularly meet through various fora to compare notes and share experiences.

The World Bank and IMF are the leading sources of **global remittance data**, but MRP may have a role to play in data collection specifically for its public and private sector partners. MRP has direct contacts with the private sector (IMF always goes through central banks), giving it access to relevant data streams. Examples were the work done with TerraPay and IME-Pay.

From the above, only IFAD, UNCDF and IOM support **last-mile interventions** with the private sector. Interviews reveal that UNCDF and IOM coordinate and sometimes collaborate, IFAD does not. This may lead to coherence issues as stakeholder interviews revealed that IFAD and UNCDF work with similar or the same public and private sector partners (e.g., Wizall, AMIFA in Senegal).⁵⁰

More broadly, it was found that **collaboration and information sharing**, even within countries, can be improved. MRP was found to collaborate with key stakeholders in the field of remittances such as World Bank, IMF, IOM, ILO, to name just a few. UNCDF is also represented in various coordination mechanisms, but incompletely so. There is, for example, a World Bank International Working Group to Improve Data on Remittance Flows under KNOMAD, and UNCDF is not listed as a member.⁵¹ UNCDF is also not listed as a member of the (UN-led) Migration Network. IFAD co-leads with UNDP its Working Group on Remittances.⁵² In Bangladesh it was found that there is a UN-migration network as well as a broader donor working group on migration; UNCDF and IFAD participate in neither. As to country programming,

⁴⁸ <https://www.ifad.org/en/ffr>

⁴⁹ <https://www.knomad.org/about-us>

⁵⁰ In the case of Wizall Senegal, UNCDF worked on connecting the mobile wallet to remittance systems, while IFAD helped Wizall expand its agent network in remote areas.

⁵¹ <https://www.knomad.org/remittance-data-working-groups>

⁵² <https://migrationnetwork.un.org/network-members>

country visits revealed that UNDP was not aware of MRP, and MRP's country strategy had not been coordinated with UN agencies.

Specifically to IFAD, the work of this institution and UNCDF shows a lot of similarity (see above). UNCDF began its remittance efforts in 2016, a decade after IFAD, which IFAD finds hard to appreciate. However, the simultaneous engagement of two UN agencies in such a significant area is not necessarily detrimental and could foster synergy. Strengthening collaboration at both institutional and country levels would facilitate the realization of this potential synergy.⁵³ However, as noted above, both institutions are rarely found in the same coordination bodies. In Senegal, UNCDF plays a valued role in the donor working group on financial inclusion, IFAD does not take part. Given these examples, UNCDF and IFAD should plead with any such donor and UN coordination mechanisms that both are included, helping all relevant technical agencies to compare notes and reducing the risk of output duplication. It is also recommended by the evaluators that IFAD and UNCDF, being the core agencies reaching the last mile, enhance their bilateral communication through phone calls, participating in each other's webinars, and routinely visiting their respective websites to stay abreast of opportunities to join forces.⁵⁴

A final word is on the coherence with remittance-related activities in **partner countries**, notably the public sector. In Senegal, efficient remittances are on the agenda of the ministry of finance, which has a dedicated department in charge of financial inclusion. Senegal has at least four national institutions providing services to migrants. MRP is in close contact with these partners, the ministry of finance in particular, coordinating through bilateral meeting and larger events. Likewise, in Ethiopia MRP is well connected to the local government, partly through NBE and directly with the ministry of finance. In Bangladesh MRP's connection to government initiatives is of more recent date, through the financial resilience project started with MoEWOE.

Evaluative conclusion

MRP offers complementarity to most of the above-mentioned development partners. There is, however, risk of overlap with IFAD and to a lesser extent with the World Bank. This became painfully clear in the BCEAO single ID project – see the effectiveness section. The risk of duplication between IFAD and UNCDF is acute as sectorial coordination mechanisms often do not include both, while IFAD and UNCDF have missed opportunities to speak to each other more regularly and more cordially.

EQ 2.2 Internal - How coherent/ reinforcing are the different workstreams in supporting the intervention objective?

MRP was devised with the aim of addressing both overarching constraints within the remittance ecosystem (workstreams 1 and 2) and enhancing last-mile access and utilization (workstreams 3 and 4), ultimately leading to financial inclusion and financial health of migrants and their families. As such, the ToC as presented in section 2.2 looks coherent and capable of contributing to the overall goal of improving the financial health of 900,000 migrant families (although the basis for this number was never justified). Direct benefits on migrant communities were expected. Whether MRP did what it was supposed to do, i.e., was effective, is discussed in section 4.3 below.

As earlier observed, MRP was composed of two related but still distinct donor-inspired interventions yet operating under one single ToC. Had UNCDF been given leave to structure the programme as it might have wished, not considering donor orientations, some programmatic choices might have been different.

⁵³ IFAD staff have taken part in MRP webinars and vice versa. However, direct working contacts related to remittances are limited, and virtually non-existent at the institutional level.

⁵⁴ MRP reports list collaboration with many institutions, but pointedly leave out IFAD, even though contacts are maintained at the national levels.

UNCDF might, for example, not have opted for an approach through RECs and might not have selected the same remittance corridors, or indeed any a priori corridors at all.

For MRP to be a coherent programme, MRP needed not necessarily pursue both enabling environment and private sector work simultaneously (in all countries). MRP could have opted to work on the enabling environment only, which may be deemed in line with the status of UNCDF as a specialised UN agency with convening powers, and let the private sector take advantage once the proper conditions have been set. Or UNCDF could have preferred to put in place the enabling environment first and reach to private sector later (e.g., in IGAD, in a second or third phase). The opposite strategy of doing last-mile access projects without the enabling environment work is less logical, although it would have reflected UNCDF's private sector mandate. Focus on the private sector might have been the better response strategy in environments that are already reasonably conducive to cross-border payments (e.g., WAEMU, Bangladesh).

As to the remittance corridors, it may be argued that had MRP not pre-selected countries of intervention (just five, later four), far more private sector partners for workstream 2, 3 and 4 could have been found. This would arguably have made it easier to reach or exceed the set target of 900,000 migrant families whose financial resilience increased. Thus, the choice of very selected migrant countries may be deemed unsupportive of the large number of migrant families to reach.

The fact that both donor projects, in spite of different orientations, could be united under one single ToC is due to the donors coordinating their requirements at the formulation stage, and UNCDF also helped ensure the necessary coherence.

Evaluative conclusion

MRP has been able to integrate two quite distinct donor strategies into one single programme under one single ToC that is coherent. The broad set of actions would logically contribute to the overall development goal, which is to raise the financial health of 900,000 migrant families.

However, had UNCDF been given more leeway by the donors, it might have made some choices differently and more coherently, including broader geographical choices and more remittance corridors, or possibly a narrower ToC, in some countries initially prioritising the enabling environment, in others the private sector.

4.3 Effectiveness

Effectiveness in the OECD-DAC terminology is the extent to which MRP achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and its results, including any differential results across groups.

The evaluation questions in this section were matched to the outputs and outcomes of the programme ToC, and follow its wording narrowly. At all levels the evaluators attempted to identify the appropriate result indicators from the SDC and SIDA result reports, with results achieved, and in some cases the MRP RMF, depending on where the most suitable indicator could be found.

4.3.1 Outputs, intermediary outcomes

*EQ 4.1 To what extent the MRP's activities contributed to improving the **capacity** of policymakers and regulators and availability of information to develop, supervise and enforce inclusive policies and regulations on remittances? Including an increased engagement with the private sector to address market constraints and align objectives?*

There is no indicator in the prodocs or RMF that neatly captures the above "capacity" element of the EQ and corresponding box in the programme ToC (workstream 1). The closest would be the SIDA indicators (see appendix C):

Target indicator SIDA	Target	Result 2022
# regional diagnostics and reharmonization reports	3	61
# regulator workshops on policy and data analytics	6	44
# data portals supported	1	2

The above-reported results correspond with information collected by the evaluators, such as the Power BI reports on publications and events.

Workstream 1 projects

All workstream 1 projects follow a similar sequence of events, namely starting from country and ecosystem diagnostics, best practice benchmarking, approval of the recommendations, and then steps to convert the recommendations into policy and regulatory reform. Only in Ethiopia MRP proceeded beyond the diagnostic phase to implementation.

The **IGAD** case-study (appendix F) revealed that the country and regional diagnostic studies were done by MRP staff, with validation by IGAD, national policy-makers, regulators, and private sector. National stakeholders did not participate in co-writing, but did take part in commenting the drafts, consultations, and discussions with foreign peers during multi-country events. These diagnostics may help national stakeholders develop, supervise, and enforce inclusive policies and regulations on remittances, which is the focus of phase 2 of the IGAD engagement. However, the IGAD case study argued that capacity-building could have been stronger with more active involvement of national counterparts at the research and diagnostics phase, even if this had meant that drafting the country assessments would have taken more time.

The **BCEAO** visit also showed the bank passively receiving any reports prepared by MRP staff and consultants. The main exception is the single ID project, as BCEAO participated in multiple rounds of review of the single ID project and actively guided the process. Unfortunately, MRP was unable to deliver the promised Informal Remittances Estimation Model, which BCEAO indicated a priority in its capacity development. According to UNCDF sources the REM is still in development, and MRP has too hastily offered this service to BCEAO.

The visit to the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment in **Bangladesh** also suggests the partner has not actively participated, with the Ministry only able to remember the stakeholder meeting, not the technical notes received from MRP, nor the country assessment of Bangladesh social security. The fact that the key MRP expert is not in-country and only visited the country with sometimes long time intervals has also impeded the Ministry's engagement. MRP may have more actively used the staff at the UNCDF offices in Bangladesh, as relevant knowledge exists in a team that works on (another) SDC-funded remittances programme. While these are not insurance and pension experts, at least they could have provided regular follow-up.

For the **ECCAS** region, in addition to eleven country monitors and a regional assessment, three capacity building sessions were delivered online.^{55,56} Two representatives from ECCAS took part in the HKS online course. A roadmap for remittance reform was prepared (a regional diagnostic is expected in Q1 2024).

⁵⁵ As part of the MRP-BEAC MoU, in 2022 visits were made to Burundi, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), to meet central banks and understand the remittance-related challenges, needs and opportunities.

⁵⁶ Three online sessions (2 hours each) took place in 2021 involving UNCDF staff and in total three experts at ECCAS (source: Meeting with ECCAS).

According to representatives interviewed, the MRP activities positively reinforced the ECCAS capacities at the technical level, while the institutional level and member states need to be better involved.⁵⁷

In **Ethiopia** too, MRP conducted country diagnostics, which supported the drafting of regulatory directives (see section 5.1 below). MRP also prepared studies on micro-saving products and on the Central Securities Depository for Government listed Bonds, which were not followed up by NBE. From a sequential perspective, the MRP contributions were as follows:

- UNCDF collaboration to NBE started with an NBE Letter of Endorsement (February 2019) asking for technical assistance to support the National Financial Inclusion Strategy.
- This led to the “Review of Remittance Policy, Legal and Regulatory Framework in Ethiopia”, Autumn 2020, i.e., the country diagnostic.⁵⁸
- In 2021, the NBE, with inputs from MRP, prepared “Proposals for Enhancing Remittance Flows to Ethiopia”, a document containing technical analyses and policy suggestions. This note assessed the regulatory, marketing, and infrastructure landscape in Ethiopia and proposed strategies to leverage remittances into development.
- The “Technical Assistance Infrastructure Engagement” took place in 2022/23, involving the Payment and IT departments, aiming to replace the Core Banking System and automate the Cheque Truncation System. It also involved studies on the Central Securities Depository for Government listed Bonds and on Micro-Saving Bonds.
- An NBE official took part to the Harvard Kennedy School course (online - December 2021; in-person - August 2022).

Meetings at NBE revealed that most directly involved staff were aware of the policy and regulatory recommendations MRP had made. The technical assistance support to the External Economic Analysis and International Relation Directorate, the Foreign Exchange Monitoring and Reserve Directorate, and the Information System Management Directorate was also recognised for its capacity contribution to NBE. One person in NBE had taken part in the Harvard Kennedy School course and cited examples how this influenced his capacity to undertake policy advisory and write policy notes. Other Directors, were not much aware of UNCDF publications, webinars, or the *migrant_money* website, and just appreciated the external support they received (UNCDF staff/consultants) especially in improving the NBE data collection system.

Activities across projects and partners

Key outputs of MRP assistance in workstream 1 are **written documents**. According to MRP records (Power BI), up to 2023 MRP issued 61 publications under this workstream. From these, 36 are country diagnostics, migrant money monitors, and similar reports that should be considered working documents (under the above-mentioned projects) rather than “publications”. There were also 12 short articles and case studies. This leaves 13 major reports (flagship publications), reference or assessment guides, and toolkits, as part of MRP’s advocacy and communication agenda. These reports could only have contributed to “capacity building” of regulators and policy makers if these were received and read by the latter.⁵⁹ Discussions with staff at BCEAO, NBE and MinFin in Senegal revealed that only a handful of

⁵⁷ Two key projects are mentioned that involve the regional community and represent a synergy opportunity for MRP with ECCAS: the development of a pan-African payment system and settlement (with the support of the African Development Bank among others), and the reinforcement of a migration data collection (Statafric), including information on remittances (with the support of the African Union and the Government of Sweden).

⁵⁸ <https://migrantmoney.uncdf.org/resources/research/ethiopia-remittance-policy-and-regulatory-diagnostic/>

⁵⁹ MRP availed to the evaluators the download history of the 26 most important publications. This varied from 5 (the South Sudan Payment Infrastructure Report) to 390 (the MRP annual report 2022), with an average of 51 downloads. The evaluators deem this frequency low given the cost of producing these works.

respondents were aware of these studies and knew of the Migrant Money website where such materials could be found. Only one person at NBE and one with BCEAO was able to name a document that had been consulted and may have influenced policy making. On the other hand, many of these reports, the reference guides and toolkits in particular, are long-term investments into tools in support of MRP collaboration with regulators and policy makers. Hence it is too early to make a definite conclusion on the utility of such work in terms of “capacity building”.

MRP also conducted **webinars** intended for regulators and policy makers, 14 in total up to 2023. The webinars were well-attended, with a total of 620 (unique) organisations and a total of 1,892 participants in attendance. Data analyses reveal a total of 647 registrations from 93 central banks and 214 registrations from 102 public sector institutions. During the field visits, the evaluation team met staff at central banks and financial authorities, who were generally able to recall a few webinars, and indicated their satisfaction, in particular the fact that it allowed exposure to practices in other markets and jurisdictions, hence access to new ideas.

Of special interest is the capacity contribution made by the online/in-person course organized by **Harvard Kennedy School** (2021-22) - attended by 63 senior managers selected by UNCDF from public, private, and multilateral stakeholders of MRP – see case study in appendix F. This course addressed aspects of remittances, presented case studies, and a problem-solving approach designed for policy analysis. Most participants (86% - 50 persons) reported they had increased their knowledge on remittance/financial inclusion/data issues and confirmed the professional and personal usefulness of the initiative (source: HKS evaluation survey, 2022). According to a survey (February 2024) by the evaluation team, of the seven public sector respondents reached, all confirmed that the “knowledge and capacities gained through the HKS course are still put into practice”, and six confirmed the HKS course reinforced their “capabilities to develop, supervise, and reinforce inclusive policies and regulations on remittances”.⁶⁰

Evaluative conclusion

Workstream 1 activities could have made a stronger contribution to capacity development of public sector partners. The IGAD study suggests stakeholders could have been more actively involved in the diagnostics for better capacity building. BCEAO has been waiting for its priority to be met (the informal remittances model). Support to MoEWOE in Bangladesh lacked in continuity (by MRP), impeding the advancement of the work. The picture in NBE is mixed, with some staff recognising MRP capacity support, others more indifferent.

MRP in workstream 1 has been focussed on generating policy research and publications, which had a limited effect on “capacity” of regulators and policy makers in terms of moving forward policy reform. Staff at central banks and ministries often have a lot of material to review from various sources and donor-funded initiatives, hence new reports may not immediately attract their attention. As noted, the research work could have had a stronger capacity-building effect had the counterparts been more involved in the (technical) work. Nevertheless, the current body of research, diagnostics, guides and toolkits, still has the potential to support RECs and central banks once MRP projects move into implementation in phase 2.

Based on data analysis and interviews with stakeholders, the evaluators conclude that hands-on advisory, webinars and the HKS training, because of the participants’ direct engagement, are more effective in capacity building than MRP’s research and publication activity. While the enthusiastic

⁶⁰ The examples reported refer: “I learned a lot how to formulate policy analysis”, “It contributed to my ability to design inclusive policies”.

participation in webinars may not conclusively demonstrate that capacity has been developed or effectively applied, it does signify an interest that MRP can leverage in the future.

The evaluators’ conclusion is that MRP can enhance its capacity building effectiveness by more strongly engaging public sector partners in the actual research and analysis, not just the validation of results produced by UNCDF.

*EQ 4.2 To what extent the MRP’s activities contributed to develop the **capabilities and commitment** of Service Providers, mobile network operators, governments and other actors to developing and expanding inclusive and open digital infrastructure, as well as improved access at the last mile through strengthening digital rails and facilitate easier adoption and onboarding on digital channels for migrants and their families?*

This EQ is about the strengthened capacity of FSP/RSPs to develop the means that improve migrants’ and recipients’ access to digital remittance services. The most relevant result indicators would be from the SIDA results report as follows:

Target indicator SIDA	Target	Result 2022
# pilots launched to improve the last mile connectivity	4	1
# capacity building activities for remittance providers	6	23
# active agents offering remittances with clear focus (also) on women as customer group	1,000	3,827

Workstream 2 projects

Several MRP interventions aimed at the development of ecosystem operators, but only one involved the potential investment in last-mile infrastructure: the CongoPay intervention in the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville). Related interventions were the WAEMU-wide single-ID project with the BCEAO, the broader policy-oriented studies regarding portable IDs (by Accenture), the global remittance inhibitors (by Amarante, also workstream 1), and a policy handbook (by Glenbrook). These last three interventions were knowledge products, with no immediate advantages for a priori defined end-users.

In terms of results, the **CongoPay** project had little effect on the capacities of the project partners. The intervention did not proceed beyond the early-implementation stage as there were legal and operational complications – see the case study in appendix F.

The project with the **BCEAO** gave the financial authorities of the WAEMU-countries insights in how a unique ID system for financial service clients could be set up across the region. A feasibility study was carried out presenting several scenarios for implementation (of which BCEAO selected one) and a business plan was drafted. BCEAO (financial inclusion department) still needs to submit the report with an explanatory note to the governor for decision-making and subsequent approval by (eight) member states. It is, however, increasingly unlikely that this will happen, given that five WAEMU countries through ECOWAS worked with World Bank support on an alternative digital ID-system that covers all spheres of public life and not just the financial sector. The case study (appendix F) came to the conclusion that the BCEAO ID-project will not likely be implemented.

Activities across projects and partners

The **three global studies** have not directly resulted in capacity strengthening.

- The study of global **remittance inhibitors**, by Amarante, contributes to the country diagnostics the MRP team is undertaking in programme countries, covering both workstream 1 and 2. While the country assessments for IGAD and ECCAS were done by the MRP team, Amarante helps in expanding this to other regions and countries.
- The **portability of digital ID** study, by Accenture, gives the perspectives of financial service and international remittance service providers operating in many jurisdictions, development professionals, and experts from academia and public institutions on their needs, constraints, and

recommendations with regard to harmonized Know Your Customer (KYC), the portability of identification (ID) for migrants, and the cost drivers related to KYC and ID globally.

- The **cross-border payments interoperability** reference guide by Glenbrook explains how to develop and implement interoperable payments schemes led by governments, central banks, or regional economic communities (RECs). The handbook could guide these stakeholders through the process of planning, designing, launching, and governing a local/regional interoperability scheme.

The evaluators observe that while these knowledge products contain valuable information, it is not clear how these will be accessed by private and public sector partners, and how their capacity will then be reinforced. These reports can only contribute to institutional capacity if these are used for specific developmental or investment activities.

The evaluators do note that one element of research that could have been stronger relates to the preparation of the CongoPay project. As the case study shows, the main reason for this project not getting off the ground was insufficient understanding of the broader financial ecosystem and market in Congo, and market partners' unwillingness to sign up to the infrastructure initiative. When the goal is to change the market structure (as was the case in Congo), it would have been useful to first understand why the current market functions as it does; what are the benefits and challenges for the current providers and users and what are the (government) rules. These are practical, operational issues and preferably include an estimate of the financial and other benefits for the market participants. A change in the market structure should be an improvement on this but should take into account who can block any change. As was seen in the CongoPay case study, incumbent payment providers can block the innovation, as can regulators, and as can clients if the product does not suit them and if they have alternatives. UNCDF research could have been developed in this light, being practical, and in support of direct and concrete payment infrastructure work.

Regarding **publications**, Power BI shows just one publication under this workstream 2: "Open Regulated Payments Inter-Network". This paper explores options for the future of international remittances: an open, regulated global payments inter-network specifically designed for low-value international remittances that address the needs of migrants around the world. The evaluators have not obtained information to prove that this report has been used by public or private sector partners.⁶¹ The three above-mentioned studies, by Amarante, Accenture and Glenbrook, have not yet been published, but these are planned for publication when all peer review and editing has been done.

Two **webinars** were conducted, namely one on Open Regulated Global Payments Inter-network (the above-mentioned publication), and one on Portable Digital Identity as an Enabler of International Remittances (the Accenture study). These two webinars were well-attended with a total of 255 organizations and 387 participants, of which 177 private sector organisations with 243 participants, mainly from financial institutions, payment providers, fintechs, while some academics and consultants also showed an interest.

Private sector partners also took part in the online/in-person capacity building course organized by **Harvard Kennedy School** (2021-22). According to a (mid-term) evaluation survey (February 2024), among the seven private sector respondents all confirm that the "knowledge and capacities gained through the HKS course are still put into practice", and six confirm the HKS course reinforced their "capabilities to expand inclusive and open digital products/services for migrants and their families".⁶²

⁶¹ According to MRP, this report was downloaded 103 times.

⁶² An example reported: "We implemented a pre-migration loan product based on the learning outcomes, also we enabled remittance payout aggregation".

Evaluative conclusion

The evaluative conclusion on capacity building in workstream 2 is inconclusive, as activities predominantly focused on knowledge development, currently awaiting publication and wider dissemination. These documents may yet support private and public sector partners in developing infrastructure projects. However, these publications are generic and may not fully inform the challenges of concrete infrastructure projects.

Given the MRP’s objectives, the lack of direct involvement of MRP in infrastructure projects, beyond the unsuccessful CongoPay initiative, is regrettable (target was four such projects). While the quantitative target of four pilot projects always depended on opportunities and private sector demand, at the outset UNCDF and the donor (SIDA) likely expected more than just one experiment.

The evaluation found that webinars serve as an effective platform for engaging private sector partners in discussions on financial infrastructure, a sentiment echoed by stakeholders in interviews. While this does not conclusively establish capacity-building outcomes or direct influence of webinars on infrastructure projects, it does underscore a general interest from the private sector. This offers the foundation for future MRP initiatives in this respect. MRP may use the body of research now available for further capacity building through grants and TA, training or webinars, potentially resulting in financial infrastructure being built. However, the possible temptation to write yet another study should be repressed as long as the current set has not been shown useful.

*EQ 4.3 To what extent the MRP’s activities contributed to increased **capacities and resources** of start-ups, corporations, and other actors to offer inclusive business models and products as well as incentivize their usage?*

This EQ is about the strengthened capacity of FSP/RSPs to develop remittance-linked services. The most suitable result indicators are found in the SDC results report as follows:

Target indicator	Target	Result 2023
# of MNOs, MTOs, FinTech, and Financial Institutions supported by UNCDF through Grants or Technical Assistance or both for design, development and scale up of ‘new products’ in the market	7	6
# Number of partnerships facilitated to improve the outreach of digital remittance channels and offer financial products for migrants	15	5
# Number of trainings / workshops conducted with remittances/financial service providers on business case for innovative financial solutions for migrants and their families	15	100+

Relevant is also RMF KPI 11 “Number of institutions that report improved data analytics capacity for product development”, target = 8, result = 7 (BRAC Bank, RAKBANK, IME Pay, TerraPay, Wizall, SentBe, Lion Bank), see appendix D. It is nevertheless noted that the number of private sector partners has been less than planned (15).

The above result data are plausible in view of information collected by the evaluators.

Workstream 3 projects

MRP undertook pilot projects with **SympliFi, BRAC Bank, Wizall, SentBe, Lucy, Lion Bank, and IME Pay**. These projects aimed to enhance the capacities and resources of fintechs, mobile money providers, banks, and other actors to offer inclusive business models and products, incentivizing their usage. The contributions made by MRP consisted of grants and TA, mainly by MRP experts. In addition, nearly all partners received support (in the start-up phase) through 1) institutional assessment and data mapping, 2) market scan, 3) supply- and demand data analytics to support product development and ideation, using a migrant and gender lens. Some partners (e.g., RAKBANK, BRAC Bank, Lion Bank, Wizall, SentBe) also benefitted from the KIT study and lean data survey (see next EQ 4.4) and extensive analysis of transaction data (e.g., IME Pay). Finally, several participated in the HKS course.

- The partnership with **SympliFi** explored an innovative financial guarantee system, whereby migrants provided cash collateral that enabled young entrepreneurs in Senegal (pilot country) to enter into business - see case study in appendix F. SympliFi leveraged technology to provide MFIs a user-friendly platform for onboarding guarantees and subsequently issuing a loan. The guarantee system worked, but greatly underperformed the quantitative targets. The business case not being proven, the service was discontinued by SympliFi and partner MFI Baobab.
- Collaboration with **BRAC Bank** focused on developing remittance channels. The MRP grant and TA were intended to improve two existing remittance solutions (e.g., app interface, client engagement and onboarding), and develop five new channels to meet the specific needs of migrant populations. BRAC Bank succeeded in onboarding significant numbers of new clients (see section 5.9), but nearly all through the existing two channels. Four of the intended five new channels were developed but are yet to generate deal flow.
- Support to **Wizall** was to improve remittance termination on the Wizall mobile wallet, and launch two remittance-linked pilot projects in nano-credit and nano-insurance for migrants and their families. The Wizall mobile wallet would also allow for digital payments. The nano-credit and insurance would leverage remittance data, hence allow for automated credit scoring. The mobile wallet is operational but suffered delays after a cyber-attack. Wizall is a fringe player on the market, next to the much larger Orange money and Wave. The nano-credit and insurance were never launched due to regulatory and technical challenges.
- **SentBe's** partnership explored cross-border payment options, addressing the challenges associated with high remittance fees and lengthy transaction times, thus improving the efficiency and affordability of remittance transfers. Most importantly, MRP developed with SentBe a financial literacy programme, see EQ 4.4 below.
- The support to **Lucy** was undertaken to integrate women migrants in Singapore, chiefly originating from Myanmar, The Philippines, and Indonesia, into digital remittance services. Lucy promoted its Lucy app among domestic workers in Singapore, aiming to give them control over how and where their income is sent and to allow them to save for unexpected financial shocks and towards their own goals. In spite of wide promotion efforts, Lucy was unable to attract the required number of women clients and had to terminate its service. The core constraint has likely been the migrants' lack of trust in a service provider not known to them.
- The **Lion Bank / BelCash** (later Bank of Abyssinia, due to the war in Tigray) project pilot-tested a new digital remittance-linked product (MamaPays) that allows migrants to make online payments. Beneficiaries in Ethiopia initiate a request to receive a micro-transfer via any phone or merchant, the migrants confirm payment, and the merchant is paid via HelloCash mobile money (BelCash is the mother company). Value-added services such as utility bills, school fees and health advice are integrated into the system. The MRP grant was used for IT and infrastructure development and marketing. The pilot was successful, and the service is operational, but the number of users (1,700) and transaction volumes have remained small.
- The project with **IME Pay** consisted of analysis of transaction data to obtain a better understanding of client profiles, this to inform the development of suitable products and distribution strategies. IME Pay made product and business strategy changes toward access and usage of digital remittance with an emphasis on women.

In discussions with MRP private sector partner, MRP capacity building was recognised. Partners particularly mentioned the new insights through data analytics and market scanning, as well as training including the HKS programme, and peer-to-peer contacts. The grants and TA also helped partners take the risk of developing new products and distribution methods. One of MRP's contributions lies in fostering partnerships between established financial institutions and technology firms. Examples are the projects by SympliFi (with Baobab), Wizall (with AMIFA), and Lion Bank (with BelCash). By leveraging these collaborations, MRP facilitated the development of new financial products, such as mobile banking platforms and digital payment solutions, specifically for migrant populations, which incumbent financial

institutions would likely not have done on their own. MRP also incentivized partners to develop such products.

Activities across projects and partners

As a more general workstream 3 intervention, MRP undertook the study “Framework for Inclusive Innovation for Migrant Remittances”, the **supply study**, consisting of country studies in Senegal, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Ethiopia (by Dalberg). This information was used by MRP to develop the country strategy plans and, to some extent, by local policymakers and regulators. Although the studies recommended innovations to be undertaken by RSPs, the country visits did not reveal that any of the RSPs have given follow-up on the reports.

Power BI shows that 33 **publications** were produced under workstream 3, but 29 of those are articles and case studies, migrant money notes, country and regional diagnostics or working papers of projects, leaving four major publications.⁶³ The evaluators have no information whether any of these reports having been used by the private sector. Regarding the supply study by Dalberg, only the country assessments were shared with national stakeholders, RSPs included, but not the innovation strategy.

Eleven **webinars** were conducted under this workstream. These webinars were well-attended by a total of 1,177 participants from 595 organizations, of which 433 private sector entities with 742 participants. Some webinars were of a general nature, such as “Remittances as a gateway to financial resilience”. Other webinars presented the experiences gained in the programmes in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Nepal and Senegal. RSPs met during the field visits confirmed having taken part in webinars, and they found it valuable to gain access to new ideas.

Evaluative conclusion

MRP has an assortment of instruments to support capacity of FSP/RSPs, which were applied with varying success. The grant is an important inducement for partners to engage in innovative projects, without which several of the above would not have undertaken these pilots. Through the grant, MRP helped share the risk and encourage private sector partners to undertake innovative projects. The TA, data analysis and market assessment helped many partners adjust their product offer (e.g., focus on women). In both Ethiopia and Senegal MRP contacted the regulatory authorities on behalf of its partners, using the contacts UNCDF has. Partners also mentioned that webinars helped gain new insights. Staff of Lion Bank, BRAC Bank and Wizall took part in the HKS course and deemed it valuable to their capacity development.

The evaluators’ conclusion is that MRP’s capacity building tools are suitable, it is just that the number of partners to be capacity-built has been few. MRP only had 9 private sector partners across workstreams 3 and 4, whereas the SDC prodoc expected 15. Only one round of RfA was launched.

*EQ 4.4 To what extent the MRP’s activities contributed to improved **capacities**, tools and delivery channels to build the financial capacities, soft and hard skills of migrants and beneficiaries?*

⁶³ These are “Diaspora micro-savings products” (downloaded 23 times), “Mechanisms for Diaspora Finance” (downloaded 49 times), “Accessible and Affordable Remittance Services for Refugees Toolkit”, and “Benchmarking Toolkit for Remittances” (viewed by 122 users).

This EQ is about the capacity of RSP/FSPs to improve the soft/hard skills of their clients. The capacity of those clients is assessed in EQ 5.5. The most suitable result indicators are found in the SDC results report as follows. This is also MRP KPI #6 (see appendix D).

Target indicator SDC	Target	Result 2023
# Number of financial awareness trainings organized, and digital literacy applications contributed to	10	5

According to MRP records, the above result number of financial education and digital literacy training relates to BRAC Bank (3), RAKBANK (1), and SentBe (1). The evaluators confirmed that these activities took place.

Workstream 4 projects

MRP supported **BRAC Bank, RAKBANK and SentBe** in developing digital and financial literacy training programmes. In the cases of BRAC Bank and RAKBANK these were essentially client awareness and onboarding campaigns, aiming to attract new clients to the bank, open accounts, or get clients on their proprietary digital remittance apps and channels. BRAC Bank did this mainly through its branches.⁶⁴ RAKBANK applied SMS and video messages, while field staff contacted potential clients at work. In case of SentBe, training was more substantive and went beyond the use of remittance sending products. SentBe was assisted by Aflatoun, which later went on to develop the MRP Digital Financial Literacy Toolkit (DFL), see below.

Interviews with SentBe staff revealed that MRP's support was key in improving their capacity and tools for delivering financial literacy trainings as the institution had no prior experience with this type of service. The training was developed during the project, both in terms of content and delivery channel. As a result, SentBe acquired a capacity that it did not previously have, and now has ready-to-deploy material tailored to the needs of customers, which it may expand to a larger number of corridors. However, while willing and eager, SentBe does not have the financial capacity to perform financial literacy training at its own expense. SentBe has been fundraising since the end of the project, and the financial literacy activities are currently on hold.

Regarding financial literacy activities by RAKBANK and BRAC Bank, these activities (rather information campaigns) were not new to these partners, but interviews revealed that MRP support allowed them to improve their capacity to tailor the content and communicate it well. In both cases, an effort was made to reach women, and institutional changes were made accordingly (e.g., recruit female field staff, adjust the messages).

Activities across projects and partners

MRP undertook several high-level **research programmes** in the context of workstream 4, notably the demand-side study by KIT, the impact study for remittance-linked savings with BRAC Bank by IPA, and the financial health surveys in Senegal, Cameroun, and Côte d'Ivoire.⁶⁵

- The **demand study**, including the Lean Data Survey (LDS) and one-on-one qualitative interviews with migrant families, gave valuable insight into the migrant client group (e.g., gender insights), and there is evidence that some RSPs (e.g., BRAC Bank, RAKBANK and Wizall) incorporated this information in their product offer (hence capacity effect). MRP research also informed the product offer by IME-Pay in Nepal.

⁶⁴ The FGDs revealed that most clients were aware of the bank's information events, but few had participated. Rather, the source of information was direct contact with bank staff at branches.

⁶⁵ The demand-side study was already announced in the SDC prodoc.

- The **IPA project** in Bangladesh is a socio-economic experiment (soon to be completed), aiming to align the interests of migrant senders and recipients who agree on the usage (e.g., spending, saving) of remittances. While this provides valuable insights for BRAC Bank and may influence its product offerings and distribution strategies, savings products included, it is improbable that the bank will continue conducting individual consultations with migrant families to establish family budgets and define spending and saving objectives. Such activities typically fall outside a bank's mandate. It is also noted that one of the IPA project objectives was "to contribute to academic literature", which is not a component in the SDC project.
- The **financial inclusion and health surveys**, in the reporting stage, will generate information on the characteristics and financial health of migrants and recipients, complementing Finscope surveys that do not identify migrants specifically. Crucially, these surveys include migrant families that are not using RSP services, hence were not reached by KIT's demand research. This may bring insights that RSPs could use in their product development. It may also produce valuable information for policy makers and regulators on the migrant market. This includes information on unregulated remittance streams, something very difficult to capture through other means.

The **DFL toolkit** was developed as part of the contract with KIT, also involving Butterfly Works (for Human-Centred Design) and Aflatoun (for DFL), aiming to offer all MRP RSPs a standard set of DFL materials they could adapt, localise and translate as needed.⁶⁶ DFL is an online tool with content modules specifically for migrants and recipients, freely available online.⁶⁷ Its purpose is to allow institutions to provide digital financial literacy training adapted to different user groups. However, at the time of the evaluation, there was no evidence that the toolkit had been used by any of the MRP partners or any institution working with migrants or recipients.⁶⁸

Regarding publications, Power BI reports 12 **publications** under workstream 4, but 10 of those are articles and case studies, country, and regional diagnostics, leaving just 2 major publications.⁶⁹ These are "Migrant Money Annual Report 2022, Beyond sending money back home: remittances and migrant-centred sustainable development", and the above-mentioned DFL Toolkit. The DFL Toolkit has been disseminated among related organisations and RSPs and was the subject of a well-visited webinar.⁷⁰ However, no information is available to confirm that any adopted some of these tools.

Five **webinars** were conducted under this workstream. These webinars were well-attended with a total of 555 organizations and 1,207 participants, of which 664 participants from 391 private sector organisations. The participants list shows that most private sector participants are with financial institutions, MFIs included, and private consultants. The webinars addressed a variety of topics, all having a strong gender component. Feedback received during the country visits was generally positive, with participants claiming to have learned something.

Evaluative conclusion

Workstream 4 made a start in developing the capacity of private sector partners to build skills of migrant customers through digital and financial literacy training and messaging. The LDS provided better

⁶⁶ Inputs were obtained from the 7 RSPs that participated in the Lean Data Survey in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Senegal, Nepal, South Korea, Singapore and the UAE.

⁶⁷ <https://dfl.migrantmoney.org/>

⁶⁸ The SentBe project informed the development of the DFL Toolkit since Aflatoun provided technical assistance to SentBe on developing training content.

⁶⁹ These are "Migrant Money Annual Report 2022: Beyond sending money back home: remittances and migrant-centred sustainable development" (which was downloaded 390 times), and the above-mentioned DFL Toolkit.

⁷⁰ MRP availed a list of 40 organisations that had expressed an interest. The DFL webinar attracted 268 registrations from 180 organisations.

understanding of client segments, hence better communication and targeting. Workstream 4 has been particularly valuable in enhancing understanding of and service to the female client segment.

Nevertheless, the “training” by RAKBANK and BRAC bank has not progressed beyond onboarding clients and explaining how to make digital payments. Clients’ capacity to use money wisely and productively was not the core focus. Consequently, the impact of such training on client empowerment has likely been limited. Looking forward, MRP needs to promote the inclusion of elements from the DFL in private partners’ training and communication, as far as compatible with their business model (see EQ 5.4). This MRP already started to do.

The evaluators deem research such as the IPA project too theoretical in view of MRP’s objectives. The project has minimal scope for sustainable replication and impact. Similar projects should not be repeated.

4.3.2 Sector, stakeholder and customer Outcomes

*EQ 5.1 Were policies and regulations on digital remittances services **designed, approved / adopted, and implemented?***

According to the MRP RMF, the indicator “Number of policies, regulations and standards introduced or improved”, KPI # 16, was 11 (see appendix D).

Target indicator MRP RMF	Target	Result 2023
12) Number of responsive policy measures related to remittances initiated	N/A	21: ECCAS (4), IGAD (17)
16) Number of policies, regulations and standards introduced or improved	1	11

The evaluators are aware of two policy areas with implemented change in Ethiopia as described below. As these consist of multiple directives, regulations and addenda to these, the above result figure (11) is plausible (see the text box below, which lists most of them).

As observed in section 4.2.1, under workstream 1 only the **Ethiopia** programme reached the outcome level through two regulatory directives and other reforms. In **IGAD** the programme completed the output stage, namely approved regional and national diagnostic reports and a roadmap for implementation, endorsed by central bank governors. In **ECCAS** the diagnostic was completed but not yet presented to regional and national decision-makers for approval. In the other regions the diagnostic phase is still ongoing. In parallel, and through its consultations, MRP is claiming some results in ECCAS and IGAD countries (see below). Policy work in **Bangladesh** only started last year, namely a migrant insurance and pension initiative under the SDC Financial Resilience project. The project aims at wage digitization, insurances or pension products for migrant communities, which may be connected with remittances. The project did not progress beyond an initial stakeholder meeting and assessment of (migrant) social protection systems in the country.

Assistance to NBE

From 2011, the Government of **Ethiopia** has been working on the remittance/payment system regulations.⁷¹ Multiple changes, amendments and revisions took place in the last five years. The *National Strategies on Digital Payments* (January 2020) and on *Financial Inclusion* (February 2021) identified the key actions to be implemented, including remittance transfers.

⁷¹ National Payment System Proclamation No 718/2011.

Key policy changes affecting remittances in Ethiopia

A) Opening the spectrum of players providing innovative payment instruments, including remittances, shifting from a bank-led to a mobile money model. From 2011 onward, new, amended, or replaced Directives were issued by NBE to regulate remittance operations, mobile banking and digital financial services, affecting Payment System Operators and Payment Instrument Issuers.^{72,73} In April 2020, a Directive allowed non-bank financial institutions fulfilling specified criteria to issue payment instruments and offer related services.⁷⁴ In August 2020, another Directive authorized fintech companies to offer payment processing and related services.⁷⁵ In October 2021, the International Remittance Service Directive enabled Mobile Network Operators to provide remittance services in partnership with international remittance service providers.⁷⁶ These Directives opened the market to new players.⁷⁷

The result of these key Directives is visible in the new licensed operators that entered the market: five Payment System Operators were licenced from 2020, and four Payment Instrument Issuers were licensed from 2020.^{78,79}

B) Opening foreign currency bank accounts for migrants. In 2020, a Directive (No. EX1V 68 /2020) on the “Establishment and Operation of Foreign Currency” saving accounts was issued targeting especially migrants to open bank accounts and deposit foreign currency in Ethiopian banks.⁸⁰ Two additional Directive Amendments entered into force (2021 and 2023) with improved conditions for migrants and their families and for depositors to maintain balances in forex, contributing to Ethiopia’s Balance of Payments maintenance of forex reserves to offset its forex liabilities.⁸¹

The total amount of domestic resources mobilized since the policy directive was adopted in Q2 2021 amounts to USD 141.5 million. Foreign currency deposits were received on 50,014 accounts across 24 banks (Source: MRP, June 2023).

The **MRP contribution** to the Ethiopian policy reform can be acknowledged in the:

- **Technical assistance** offered to staff in NBE, which was continuous in nature and took the form of technical documents and consultations.

⁷² **Payment System Operator:** Financial institution licensed to establish and operate a payment system, affected by the 2020 Directive (No ONPS/02/2020 - up to the Amendment Proclamation No 1282/2023)

⁷³ **Payment Instrument Issuer:** A company, a government owned enterprise, a bank or MFI authorized to issue payment instruments. Affected by the Directive ONPS/01/2020 - ONPS/06/2022 (Amendment), up to the ONPS/09/2023 (Amendment).

⁷⁴ Payment instrument issuers can provide remittance services in partnership with international remittance service providers. The directive also permits using application programming interfaces (APIs) so that services can operate between global and local remittance service providers directly (Directive No. ONPS/01/2020).

⁷⁵ No. ONPS/02/2020.

⁷⁶ FXD 74/2021.

⁷⁷ Non-bank financial services operators can offer international remittance services and electronic money issuance services, employing a broad range of channels to deliver digital financial services (such as POS, ATMs and payment gateways). Until 2020, RSPs could only offer cross-border remittances in partnership with a bank.

⁷⁸ Not all fintechs are currently able to become a digital financial service provider, e.g., meeting the capital requirements which stand at 50 million ETB (1 million USD).

⁷⁹ Afripay (2021), Chapa (2022), Santimpay (2022), Addispay (2022), Yagoutpay (2023). And: Telebirr (2021), Katcha (2022), SafariCom (MPesa – the first foreign operator) (2023), Yaya Instrument Issuer SC (2023).

⁸⁰ NBE policy Directive on the Establishment and Operation of Foreign Currency Saving Accounts for Residents of Ethiopia, Non-Resident Ethiopians, and Non-Residents of Ethiopian Origin entered into force 19th of November 2020. It also allows banks to open interest-bearing, no-fee foreign currency savings accounts for both in-country Ethiopians and those abroad. <https://nbebank.com/wp-content/uploads/pdf/directives/forex/fxd-68-2020.pdf>

⁸¹ <https://nbebank.com/wp-content/uploads/pdf/directives/forex/fxd-69-2021.pdf> and [fxd-85-23.pdf](https://nbebank.com/wp-content/uploads/pdf/directives/forex/fxd-85-23.pdf)

- The contribution to improving **NBE data collection systems** (for the Foreign Exchange Monitoring and Reserve, the Payment and Settlement Systems Directorate, and the Information Systems Management Directorates).⁸² This project is still ongoing.
- Through **diagnostic studies**, inputs were provided to Directives in the fields of (a) “Payment operators and Instrument Issuers” and the (b) “Establishment and Operation of Foreign Currency Accounts”. As reported by a NBE official, not all UNCDF recommendations were adopted, but many were considered.
- In combination with the capacity building by the **Harvard Kennedy School** and the continuous assistance and exchanges with UNCDF staff, the External Economic Analysis and International Relations Directorate prepared 25 policy and technical notes to enrich the NBE discussions behind the above-mentioned Directives/Amendments.⁸³

However, during a group interview (Addis Abeba, February 2024 – (mid-term) evaluation), not all NBE officials equally recognized the MRP contribution to the regulatory framework.⁸⁴ One senior official from the External Economic Analysis and International Relations confirmed that MRP had influenced the “Payment Instrument Issuers” Directives and the representative of the Foreign Exchange Monitoring and Reserve agreed on the UNCDF support on the “Foreign Currency Accounts” Directive. No confirmation of MRP contribution to other Directives was made by NBE officials during the (mid-term) evaluation.⁸⁵

Different perceptions among NBE staff on the contribution by MRP may be explained by not all having been involved in preparing policy and discussion notes, lack of information sharing in NBE, reluctance to acknowledge policy support from an external actor, and difficulty to know each stakeholders’ in/direct role in drafting and implementing policy reform. NBE receives support from various sources, including World Bank and IMF. As a result, it can be challenging to discern the specific contributions made by each supporting entity. Additionally, NBE reform agenda pre-dates MRP, and some reforms were strongly responding to market pressure, (e.g. TeleBirr wanting to do payment operations without commercial bank involvement).

Based on the field visit to Ethiopia, it is concluded that MRP understood the existing need to reform the national remittance regulatory framework in Ethiopia and offered relevant inputs. MRP’s direct and indirect contributions through technical assistance and exchanges concerning remittance-related policies are acknowledged as **contributing** to two policy areas as noted above. Reform, however, was already ongoing and predates MRP. Based on feedback from NBE the evaluators conclude that MRP overall supported the need for reform in these policy areas along an already ongoing trend. However, it is noted that not all of the outcomes asserted in the SIDA phase 1 Closure Report 2019-22 are acknowledged by NBE.⁸⁶ The technical support offered on some specific projects (such as the data collection, the core banking system) is considered valuable – despite being incomplete.

⁸² In particular the Foreign Exchange Monitoring System (FEMoS), to collect foreign exchange data, and the Core Banking System and Cheque truncation system, to manage bank transaction processing, integration with external systems, reporting and analysis etc.

⁸³ The Director explained that MRP influenced the technical notes he prepared to inform policy discussions (both in terms of contents - the inputs from UNCDF – and the SPID learned through HKS).

⁸⁴ The Payment System and Settlement Director stated that “The Payment Issuer Directives has been envisioned by the NBE alone, after the explicit request of the operator Telebirr (and other operators)”.

⁸⁵ No reference was made to the UNCDF support to the Directive on “open market operations and standing order facilities (2021)” or on the “Retention and Utilization of Export Earnings and Inward Remittances (2022)”.

⁸⁶ The contribution of MRP was noted by NBE officials in the following Directives: 1. the International Remittance Service Directive FXD 74/2021; 2. Directive of “foreign saving accounts” 2021 and 2023, 3. the Payment System Amendment Proclamation no. 1282/2023; 4. Payment Instrument Issuers (Amendment), ONPS/09/2023; the amendments to the Directive on “Establishment and Operation of Foreign Currency Saving Accounts for Residents of Ethiopia, Non-Resident Ethiopians, and Non Residents of Ethiopian Origin”; 5. the “fintex” Directive (No. ONPS/02/2020).

Other policy contributions

The final report of the SIDA phase 1 project listed several other policy interventions to which MRP contributed, mainly through advisory:

- The Republic of Burundi launched domestic interoperability of its two mobile money operators' namely EcoCash and Lumicash.
- The Bank of the Republic of Burundi (BRB) established a Payment Systems Directorate, which has a specialized unit for the monitoring of payment systems.
- The National Bank of Rwanda BNR extended its payment and settlement system operating hours to 24 hours/7 days.
- The postal services branches in Uganda are now offering international remittance services. This has helped increase access to remittance outlets countrywide.
- The report also mentions uncompleted policy interventions in Ethiopia, Kenya, Djibouti, DRC, Somalia and Sudan.

The final report to SIDA (2022) includes a list of meetings and consultations. There were two such meetings in Burundi, one physical and one virtual, three physical consultations in Rwanda, and one in Uganda. This level of involvement puts into perspective the extent to which MRP can have made a decisive contribution to the above.

Activities across projects and partners

Based on the **Harvard Kennedy School** (mid-term) evaluation survey (February 2024), training results in the form of a commitment, attempt or achievement of developing inclusive policies were reported by (only) 2 out of 7 public sector respondents (1 clearly; 1 slightly).

Examples reported by public sector respondents in the HKS survey:

- There are various policies on FX bureau, FX saving accounts and other reforms, but all are under policy analysis phase.
- It contributed to my ability to design inclusive policies.
- It helped to write some notes to be further discussed at the political/strategic level (now they are at the draft level – no direct policy impact evidence).

Evaluative conclusion

MRP can be credited with having contributed to implementation of policy and regulatory reform in Ethiopia, and perhaps in some other countries to a limited extent. MRP built a good personal rapport with a number of key staff in NBE, which enabled the MRP team to respond to the needs as expressed by NBE. Obviously, building on the work of phase one, further results may be expected in phase 2.

MRP has not reached the same level of outcome achievement in any of the other countries or regions, but may do so in phase 2. One of the key lessons learned of the work with NBE is the importance of continuity in the partner relation. For phase 2 to be effective it is likely best to focus the work on a limited number of public sector partners and work on a limited number of priority topics.

*EQ 5.2 Was digital infrastructure, open and inter-operational, **strengthened**?*

And

*EQ 5.3 Were accessible and affordable digital remittance services **piloted**?*

The stakeholder outcomes of the ToC, workstream 2, that match these EQ are ambiguous, namely "Digital infrastructure is **strengthened**, digital platforms and interconnectivity is **promoted**", and "Available, accessible, affordable, reliable and appropriate digital remittance services are **piloted**".

The various results reports do not contain a suitable indicator for the above two EQ, which relate to workstream 2. The SIDA report, which is structured per workstream, only includes results on SIDA funded actions. The SDC report and the RMF combine workstreams 2 and 3, hence cannot be used to help answer the above two EQ on workstream 2.

However, as described in section 4.4.1, the only intervention in the field of ecosystem strengthening intended to lead to a direct investment in digital infrastructure was to establish a payment platform in the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville). As described in the previous paragraph and the case study, the project did not proceed beyond the early implementation phase and did not lead to results.

The project with the BCEAO regarding an ID-system could in the long-term lead to a stronger digital infrastructure, provided that the completed feasibility study and business plan are translated into actions. As earlier observed, this is unlikely in the face of a competing World Bank initiative.

No information exists on the publication “Open Regulated Payments Inter-Network” having inspired any infrastructure project. The three other knowledge products (portable IDs, global remittance inhibitors, a policy handbook) have not yet been published, so cannot have inspired investment in open and interconnected digital infrastructure.

Evaluative conclusion

In MRP phase 1 digital infrastructure has not been strengthened. The basis for this assessment is that no infrastructure projects were brought to conclusion, while knowledge products (three unpublished) have not contributed to infrastructure work.

Going forward, MRP needs to engage with public and private sector through direct consultations and Calls for Applications to offer its (grant and TA) support in overcoming infrastructure inhibitors, as country assessments show the constraints to be many. Alternatively, if no such demand exists, MRP may decide to remove workstream 2 from the ToC.

EQ 5.4 Were innovative business models and remittance-linked financial services tested and deployed?

There are many indicators in the result reports to SDC, SIDA and the MRP RMF that refer to this ToC level, see appendixes C and D. In order to capture the results of both SDC and SIDA supported projects, the indicators of the RMF are reproduced. These indicators, however, combine workstreams 2, 3 and 4.

Indicator	Targets	Results
8) Number of new or improved digital services and business models piloted (digital remittance channels; remittance linked financial services; remittance linked health, insurance and basic services; receiving methods; specific focus on last mile connectivity women-centric pilots.)	37	14 - BRAC: 4; Lion Bank/HelloCash: 1; Lucy: 6; RAKBANK: 1; SympliFi: 1; IME: 1
10) Number of partnerships facilitated to improve the outreach of digital remittance channels and offer financial products for migrants	15	7 partnerships: BRAC Bank, Lion Bank partnerships, Lucy/Rapyd, SympliFi/Baobab.
13) Number of new or improved digital services and business models scaled (digital remittance channels; remittance linked financial services; remittance linked health, insurance and basic services.)	15	4 - BRAC Bank (2); IME (1); RAK BANK (1), Lion Bank/HelloCash (1)

Based on the evaluation research, the above performance indicators are plausible. Private sector partners like SympliFi, BRAC Bank, Wizall, BelCash and Lucy explored innovative ways to leverage technology and partnerships to develop inclusive banking products, digital payment solutions, and

remittance transfer platforms. In the counterfactual, in the absence of MRP most of these innovation projects would not have taken place. As can be seen, there were fewer innovative partnerships as intended.

The success rate in the development of innovative business models was fairly low. **SympliFi** and **Lucy** had to stop their services for lack of business case. **BRAC Bank** was successful in its pre-existing products, not the new ones, hence could not scale any. **Wizall** could not launch the innovative nano-credit and nano-insurance. The **BelCash** product (MamaPays) is operational, but with few users only. None of the innovative products could be scaled as they apparently do not sufficiently meet client needs.

Nevertheless, many of the above-mentioned innovations remain interesting. The **SympliFi** transnational guarantee scheme, aiming to mitigate the risk for local financial institutions in providing loans to local entrepreneurs, thereby increasing their access to capital for business ventures, is valuable to other partners and countries. **Wizall** still aims to set up the nano-credit programme. **BelCash** tries to expand “MamaPays” to other financial institutions. These pilot projects explored how to improve the efficiency and accessibility of financial services for migrant populations and their families at home. While such initiatives are positive, challenges persist in driving widespread adoption and usage of these innovations. One of the core constraints has been to enlist the support of local legacy financial institutions, which tend to hesitate to work with (small) fintechs and have their own business models to protect.

Evaluative conclusion

MRP partners tested innovations to address the needs and challenges faced by migrant communities, such as high remittance fees, lengthy transaction times, and limited access to formal financial services. All of the above experiments are relevant in view of MRP’s objectives and innovation agenda, and have the potential for demonstration effects across the sector.

While some of these innovations survived the testing phase and were deployed, none reached scale. BRAC and RAKBANK only scaled pre-existing services. A high failure rate in product innovation is not unexpected, but still disappointing. Going forward, MRP has accumulated valuable experiences to better select innovative projects, truly meeting client needs, with scaling potential in phase 2.

The field work underlines the importance of embedding innovations in (strong) local financial institutions, which should be in the driving seat (see case study SympliFi, appendix F). Partners SympliFi, BelCash, and Wizall, all young fintechs, found themselves in a situation where financial reality and regulation required to partner with an existing financial institution, which hesitated to fully embrace this role. Had the roles been reversed, the financial institution being in the lead and the fintech in a support role, some of these projects might have had a more successful outcome.

Local ownership not only enhances the relevance and adaptability of services to community needs but also fosters sustainability by leveraging established networks and expertise. For future developments, prioritizing solid partnerships with local financial institutions will be crucial for scaling initiatives and lasting impact.

EQ 5.5 To what extent were new business models and delivery channels successful in building financial and digital capacity (hard and soft skill) of migrants and recipients?

The most suitable result indicators are found in the SDC results report as follows:

Target indicator SDC	Target	Result 2023
# Number of migrants and beneficiaries with improved skills and capabilities as a result of UNCDF support (financial, digital, soft and hard skills)	80,000 - 60,000 women	246,659 - 35% women

The above numerical result relates to digital and financial literacy skills campaigns conducted by BRAC Bank (98,400, of which 78,000 women), RAKBANK (193,726, including 10,995 women) and SentBe (1,050,

of which 315 women).⁸⁷ The evaluators cannot validate these numbers, but note that the team managed to reach 9 clients out of list of 51 made available by RAKBANK, of which only three used the C3Pay app, and only one confirmed having been trained (through a WhatsApp video instructing how to make a remittance payment). This person used the app (once) to make a remittance payment.

Workstream 4 projects

In the **RAKBANK** project, the reported number of beneficiaries who improved their skills and capabilities primarily stems from users who participated in awareness-raising campaigns (like SMS and videos) and received field visits, see the case study in appendix F. These campaigns informed participants on the benefits of using digital financial channels, how to onboard and use these services. This cannot be equated with a traditional financial literacy training, e.g., how to spend, save, invest and manage money. RAKBANK/Edenred already conducted these awareness campaigns before MRP, making it difficult to solely attribute results to MRP. The improvement in beneficiary skills and capabilities could not be fully assessed as this was not researched. The LDS by KIT, however, suggests that clients experience financial health benefits when they move to the digital platform.

BRAC Bank reported 98,400 unique customers trained through coaching and support on account usage and social media campaigns. Notably, these initiatives targeted both senders and receivers. As in RAKBANK, these campaigns were focussed on client onboarding, although it relied more strongly on personal contact through the bank's branch network and staff. As with RAKBANK, the LDS by KIT suggests that clients experience financial health benefits after using these services (sending remittances through BRAC bank accounts or through BKash). The FGDs with BRAC Bank clients, however, contradicted this finding as clients feel the same (remittance) service could have been received from any bank. In addition, the FGDs revealed that nearly all clients onboarded by BRAC Bank had previously used another bank, so following BRAC Bank's information campaign they just moved bank to get a similar service. So claiming that clients' skills and capabilities were improved would be a stretch, while none thought this move contributed to their financial health. To its credit, however, BRAC Bank encouraged clients to open savings accounts, which the FGDs showed to support financial health.

In the case of **SentBe**, it was the first time the institution provided financial literacy training. Training consisted of storytelling-based financial literacy training delivered online. It reached 1,050 migrants across four remittance corridors, according to SentBe. The training used an interactive question-and-answer format, focusing on the specific financial goals migrants had upon moving to South Korea. To encourage participation, an incentive (discount on transaction fees) was offered. However, once over, there was no further assessment or follow-up on usage. As noted after EQ 4.4, this training, which went beyond simply using a remittance tool or channel, had been developed with the support of Aflatoun, and informed the subsequent design of the DFL Toolkit.

Overall, the effectiveness of the new business models and delivery channels in developing financial and digital capacity of migrants and recipients is likely positive in terms of client financial health, as suggested by the KIT research. However, given that BRAC Bank and RAKBANK offered the service essentially in support of their own commercial interests (client onboarding) the effects on the clients' capacities to manage money have likely been limited. It is noteworthy that MRP had encouraged both BRAC Bank and RAKBANK to reach out to women, which resulted in an improved communication and contact strategy. Both were successful, although BRAC Bank reached far higher numbers of women than RAKBANK.

⁸⁷ Source MRP Oct 2023. The same indicator is found in the RMF, KPI 19, with a total result of 185,548 on 31 Dec 2023.

Activities across projects and partners

The evaluators do not expect immediate developmental outcomes from the **IPA study** and the **financial health surveys**. It is true that IPA participants, women included, will have reinforced their capacity to plan and manage their remittance use, but this was a relatively small number (< 1,500) of families. BRAC Bank has not confirmed it possesses the requisite capacity and mandate to maintain this activity in the long term. Furthermore, the FGDs revealed that clients found the line of questioning during baseline and endline surveys to be intimidating, which much alarmed BRAC Bank and will influence its appetite to repeat such exercise.

Evaluative conclusion

The experiences of BRAC Bank, RAKBANK and SentBe show that it is possible to build financial and digital capacity of migrants and recipients. However, only SentBe went beyond the use of the financial instrument, aiming to instil the capacity to use money wisely. This activity, however, was stopped when MRP funding ended.

Stakeholder meetings in Bangladesh suggest that women’s control over money, either as migrants or recipients, tends to be low. Onboarding women on a digital payment platform may help their empowerment, but more comprehensive training on using money is needed as well. This is barely offered by the MRP private sector partners, to be more firmly pursued in MRP phase 2.

Going forward, the elements of a successful digital and financial literacy programme may include the following:

- More comprehensive training content that not only focuses on remittances but also introduces clients to other relevant financial topics and products that may increase financial security and growth (e.g., budgeting, saving, investing, microloans, interest-bearing savings accounts).
- Support private sector partners in designing and implementing revenue models that sustain digital and financial literacy training initiatives.
- Partner with local community organizations (or incentivize partnerships with private partners) to advocate the benefits of the new products/platforms, which may help overcome distrust and enhance adoption. These partnerships can also be useful for delivering financial literacy trainings.

EQ 5.6 Are migrants and recipients regularly using digital remittance services, as well as related remittance-linked financial services? What was the contribution of MRP?

The most suitable result indicators are found in the RMF, KPIs 17 and 18, which partly mirror the SDC results report as follows:

Target indicator RMF	Target	Result 2023
17) Number of registered customers of new or improved digital services supported by UNCDF	859,000	916,202 - 27.3% Women
18) Number of active customers of new or improved digital services supported by UNCDF	n/a	BRAC Bank: 54,228 active customers per quarter; RAKBANK: 24,805; Wizall: 1,011; Lucy: 140; IME: 2,795

The first mentioned indicator is a reach indicator, collected from private sector partners. While the evaluators cannot validate the number exactly, it is true that RAKBANK and BRAC Bank both onboarded large numbers of new clients. Of the above, 56% new clients are on account of BRAC Bank and 41% RAKBANK / Edenred, and just 3% combined for other RSPs including Wizall, IME and BelCash.

The second indicator (and confirmed in MRP’s presentation on 30 Oct 2023) suggests that only about 10% regularly transact (quarterly). However, analysis of transaction data by MRP suggests that 57% of BRAC Bank, RAKBANK and Wizall clients transacted at least twice over the past year. Nevertheless, the

evaluation found that many RAKBANK clients who signed up to the C3Pay app are inactive, as was the case with clients from MamaPays and Wizall.^{88,89} The FGDs with BRAC bank revealed that bKash transfers do in fact originate from unregulated Hundi systems. Migrants present their remittance to a Hundi operator, who sends the money to Bangladesh, and only then it is transferred to a bKash account. The FGDs also revealed that migrants use multiple channels simultaneously, which explains relatively low usage of new ones.

Resource persons during the field visits provided several reasons for low or infrequent usage of new introduced digital financial products, but most importantly strong distrust in some communities to accept new products, while some clients may just not find the offer appealing or only need it infrequently (e.g., to pay school fees or respond to emergencies back home). These factors were at work in the Lucy project, and with RAKBANK as well. The low uptake of the Belcash product (MamaPays) was not well researched, but the interaction with respondents through the mini-survey suggests it is a niche product only suitable for a small part of the market. This is true for SympliFi as well. The quantitative output targets were unrealistic from the outset.

The mini-survey at Wizall revealed that most Wizall wallet users also have an Orange or Wave wallet, which has better acceptance in the market. They often just use the Wizall wallet to get their salary or study stipend (which Wizall processes), and immediately cash out or transfer to another wallet. Research in all countries visited showed that most clients immediately cash out their remittances, not using mobile wallets for payment or saving, as they are not yet used to digital payment products.

Evaluative conclusion

Many migrants or recipients onboarded on digital payment platforms do not use these services regularly, with the utilisation of additional features, such as payment and saving options, also remaining low. The reasons are multiple, including a reliance on cash in all countries visited by the evaluation and the fact that remittances are mostly used immediately for daily needs (as confirmed by the KIT study and the mini-surveys), hence no need to keep funds on digital accounts. However, there is also a strong residual distrust in some communities against “modernity”, while some other clients may just not find the offer appealing and responding to their needs. This shows that MRP in phase 2 may accelerate its work in client communication as well as helping private sector partners design products that truly meet their customers needs. Crucially, MRP needs to be open to all possibilities to serve clients, not dogmatically insisting that these must always be digital and formal.

EQ 5.7 To what extent are private companies in the digital ecosystem, responding to market demand, investing in a range of remittance and financial services? Are innovation and competition increasing? What was the contribution of MRP?

The SDC and SIDA result reports and MRP RMF do not have suitable indicators for this EQ. One indicator that may come close is from SDC (appendix C), also KPI 20 on MRP’s RMF:

Target indicator	Target	Result 2023
Value of non-UNCDF external funds mobilized by UNCDF partner institutions due to UNCDF’s support	50%	USD 2.6 m

The evaluators have no exact means to confirm the above result figure for all private sector partners. However, Lucy reportedly received a capital investment of USD 706,600 while SympliFi received a capital

⁸⁸ The evaluators reached 9 clients out of list of 51 made available by RAKBANK. Five were women, and none were aware of the C3Pay app. Four were men, three used the C3Pay app, and only one had used the app (once) for a remittance payment. Edenred, however, insisted that all (9) had the C3Pay app and may have declined to answer for mistrusting the caller. The KIT LDS was faced with similarly non-response rates.

⁸⁹ BelCash was only able to provide the survey team with a list of 51 clients out of a supposed total of 1,700, which the evaluators believe indicates very low active usage.

injection of USD 1.7 millions, as well as some smaller grants and equity stakes. The format “50%” and “USD 2.6 m” is from the SDC report. MRP private sector partners, however, have been co-financing their innovation projects.

Attracting external (investment) funding would be expected where MRP-supported pilot projects are subsequently **scaled**. As noted under EQ 5.4 above, none of the innovative pilot projects under workstream 3 was scaled, and several were discontinued. BRAC and RAKBANK scaled pre-existing services and likely invested their capital to do so – the amount is not known. It is true that some of the fintechs taking part in MRP have, in the past, attracted capital. SympliFi, for example, participated in funding rounds by accelerators and private investors in Europe, receiving capital from Akuna Capital, Mercy Corps, Simplex Ventures, The Eugene Lang Entrepreneurship Centre, and 1to4 Foundation. It is unlikely, however, that these investment decisions were influenced by the SympliFi partnership with MRP.

The MRP support to CongoPay was undertaken in the hope of catalysing significant private investment in interconnected payment infrastructure. This project was done together with TerraPay, a well-established private company in payment processing. However, the project did not get past the initial implementation and no soft launch was completed, hence did not yield results. The other projects in the field of strengthening the ecosystem (workstream 2) were knowledge products. Even if this work influences the market, it would not necessarily be known to UNCDF.

Evaluative conclusion

It is unlikely the capital mobilised by Lucy and SympliFi was connected to the MRP project. In case of SympliFi it certainly was not, this company having many other activities in the cross-border payment ecosystem. BRAC and RAKBANK likely invested their own capital in expanding the remittance service. Overall, none of the innovation projects reached the scaling stage. Attracting capital for development is in the UNCDF mandate, and part of MRP too. The programme just did not come to the stage where this could be pursued in earnest.

Looking forward to MRP phase 2, MRP needs to more consciously select private sector partners for their scaling potential. In addition, some of the current partners may yet reach the stage where UNCDF can deploy its contacts and capacities in capital mobilisation.

EQ 5.8 To what extent are programme results likely to contribute to migrants and their families to have access to low-cost digital remittance services and financial products and the required financial literacy to meaningfully use these services?

The EQ reflects the top and bottom boxes in the sector outcomes in the MRP ToC (see appendix A). Due to the structure of the ToC, sector and client outcomes somewhat overlap, both talking about migrants using digital remittance services. The result reports to SDC and SIDA and the MRP do not seem to have suitable indicators at this level, other than the ones already shown under EQ 5.6 above.

While most private sector partners focussed their efforts on improving migrants’ and recipients’ access to digital remittance services, to some extent BRAC Bank, RAKBANK, Lucy, Wizall, and SentBe in particular also addressed the usage component. SympliFi is a special case, as it directly targeted service use by small-scale entrepreneurs in Senegal.

As noted above, BRAC Bank and RAKBANK onboarded large numbers of new clients, but MRP data and field research suggest that many do not regularly use the channel to remit. Interviews with BRAC Bank, bKash and Wizall suggest that digital money once received in-country is usually cashed out immediately, not kept making digital payments. This was confirmed by the mini-survey among RSP users and explained by the fact that markets in LDCs still operate on cash, while remittances are used for daily family expenses. This reduces the appeal of using digital payment products. Nevertheless, the FGDs with BRAC Bank clients revealed that migration communities, once they pass a certain threshold of prosperity,

increasingly start to save (in the bank) and subsequently invest in productive assets. The bank actively encourages them to do so.

The SympliFi project was the only example of an innovation to leverage remittances into another product (credit), although the mini-survey results indicate that two-thirds of respondents were not regular recipients of remittances. They were able to secure a willing guarantor, often through their social circles or even via social media.

As to financial literacy, the evaluation revealed that only SentBe made an effort to offer financial literacy training that went beyond the use of financial products and onboard new clients.

Evaluative conclusion

MRP contributed to migrants shifting from cash to digital remittance channels, but evidence of further digital money use (e.g., for payments, saving, insurance) is limited. MRP phase 2 holds promise in contributing to migrants and their families' not just accessing low-cost digital remittance services and financial products, but also enhancing their financial literacy to meaningfully utilize these services for the improved financial resilience of their families and businesses. This, however, requires moving from MRP focus on "access" to MRP focus on "usage", this by leveraging innovative digital solutions and strategic partnerships, and incorporating DFL to a much larger degree. By equipping migrants and their families with the necessary knowledge and skills, they can make informed decisions about managing their finances and effectively utilize available financial services. The snag, however, is that FSP/RSPs do not consider DFL their core mandate and task, nor can the corresponding cost easily be absorbed in the current business model of these financial services.

4.4 Likely Impact

EQ 5.9 To what extent are the programme results likely to contribute to improve the financial resilience and economic inclusion of migrants and their families through low-cost digital remittance services and remittance-linked financial products? What are the gaps if any? As well as any unintended positive or negative higher-level effects?

The core MRP result indicator is presented on the first page of the SDC programme document as follows: "By 31 October 2023, the programme is expected to impact at least 900,000 migrants (and beneficiaries), at least 60 percent will be women". This indicator is unspecific as impact is not defined. MRP subsequently operationalised the indicator through the four dimensions of financial health (see section 2.2), but again unsmart as the indicators do not indicate what level of advancement is needed to conclude that financial health has improved. Thus, even a minute improvement would count.

The most suitable result indicators are found in the SDC result report and in the RMF KPI 17 and 23. The latter are reproduced below:

Target indicator RMF	Target	Result 2023
17) Number of registered customers of new or improved digital services supported by UNCDF	859,000	916,202 - 27.3% Women
23) Number of migrants and beneficiaries with improved financial health	900,000 60% women	916,202 - 27.3% women

According to the RMF (appendix D), by 2023 a total of 916,202 migrants and recipients were reached (reach indicator under customer outcomes), of which 56% on account of BRAC Bank and 41% RAKBANK / Edenred, and just 3% combined for Wizall, IME and BelCash.⁹⁰ This information was obtained from RSPs and refers to new clients onboarded on the product lines supported by MRP. The 60% women outreach target was evidently not reached (page 2 of the SDC prodoc). Of interest is also KPI 21, which suggests

⁹⁰ Forty percent of new BRAC bank clients were women, while it was just 9% for RAKBANK. Source MRP Oct 2023.

that about 20-30% of remittance receivers invest in productive assets (appendix D). This was also found at the FGDs with (83) BRAC Bank clients.

The RMF, KPI 17 and 23, equates reach with the number of clients whose financial health improved, hence reach is assumed sufficient for impact. These reach and impact figures, however, may be challenged for the following reasons:

1. Clients may have switched from another, similar, service, so reduced reach elsewhere. These dynamics were strongly visible with Wizall in Senegal and BRAC Bank in Bangladesh.
2. In the absence of MRP, new clients would also have been onboarded, so not all can be attributed to MRP's support.⁹¹ Data from BRAC Bank show strong client acquisition pre-project on the two existing product lines, and the trend continued during the project and post-project.⁹² In the absence of the MRP grant, the bank would have continued this effort. However, BRAC Bank staff indicated that the MRP grant motivated them to work hard and achieve KPIs (on time), while they valued advisory on such issues are gender integration, data collection and analysis. The same may be concluded for RAKBANK, where MRP helped expedite client onboarding on the existing C3Pay App, although MRP induced the bank to target women, which the bank otherwise would not have.
3. As KPI 23 gives the same result as KPI 17, MRP's impact indicator assumes that all newly onboarded clients experience positive effects on financial inclusion and resilience due to the new financial product, which is unlikely. The KIT survey as well as the mini survey and FGDs by the evaluation team shed light on this:
 - The survey conducted by KIT (2022) revealed that about two-thirds attributed improvements in their financial health to using the services of their current provider.
 - This was based on analysis of LDS clients from BRAC Bank, RAKBANK and Wizall, who transact digitally. 92% stated they could better handle a financial emergency. 66% felt more confident in handling their own money. 49% felt less stressed about sending money. 97% were satisfied with the service.
 - The mini survey with (20) SympliFi clients found 60% of respondents positive on the impact of the service on the (4) dimensions of financial health. This is understandable as the service is aimed to raise their income-generating capacity.
 - By contrast, hardly any of the (31) Wizall clients attributed an improvement in their financial health to Wizall mobile wallet. This is logical as mobile wallets in Senegal are ubiquitous and the mere use of Wizall instead of Orange or Wave cannot have much impact.
 - The survey of BelCash, which sample was very small (9), suggests a strong contribution of MamaPays to "financial security" and "financial resilience", less to "financial control" and "financial freedom". MamaPays is a service that allows recipients to ask for financial assistance if needed, so it is understandable it helps people feel more secure.
 - The FGDs with (83) clients of BRAC Bank did not reveal impact on financial health across the four dimensions, as clients indicated that remittance services delivered by BRAC Bank were similar to other banks, and indeed all had migrated from the competition. However, BRAC Bank's encouragement to open savings accounts had the beneficial effect of reducing impulsive spending and increasing saving and investment, hence would have long-term financial health benefits.

⁹¹ The need to establish causality is clear from the SDC prodoc.

⁹² According to BRAC bank, it raised its remittance market share from 2.3% in 2020 to 4.5% in 2023. Over the same period, the remittance volume went from USD 167 m to USD 870 m. In addition the proportion of BRAC Bank remittance transactions that were received digitally, in either a bank account or mobile wallet, increased from 37% in 2019 (before the project) to 96% percent by Dec 2023. However, the FGDs revealed that bKash remittance termination typically originates from a traditional Hundi operator. There is also a rise in women recipient users from 37% to 45% and a higher inclusion of low-income people in that period.

4. Finally, MRP transaction data show that only part of newly onboarded clients are “active” clients, regularly transacting (see EQ 5.6).⁹³ KPI18 suggests that less than 10% transacted recently (last quarter). However, MRP analysis based on annual transaction records suggests 57% of BRAC Bank, RAKBANK and Wizall clients transacted at least twice over the past year. Some migrants may remit regularly to the household (e.g., monthly), others irregularly, to pay for school fees or to invest. Thus, the usage frequency of a remittance account is not necessarily a good indicator of financial health impact. However, those who did not transact at all likely did not derive any financial health benefits.

The above makes it challenging to quantify the financial health benefits due to MRP support, but it is clearly much less than 900,000. Significant numbers of onboarded clients do not transact, and from those who do many do not recognise financial health benefits, while attributing such to MRP (alone) does not do justice to the work done by the F/RSPs. The FGDs with 83 BRAC Bank clients revealed that not one of them thought that onboarding on the BRAC account made any difference to their lives. By contrast, a quarter of FGD participants noted that BRAC Bank had encouraged them to start saving, which is recognised to have financial health benefits as it is the start of capital formation and investment.

With all methodological caveats observed, the evaluators offer the following estimate of financial health benefits. 916,200 clients were newly onboarded by MRP partners. If we take the upper limit of 57% usage (at least twice per annum), that makes 522,234 users. Of these, about two-thirds would have derived financial health benefits, or about 350,000. The field work, however, sheds doubt on the depth of such effects. The FGDs with BRAC Bank suggests this is only the case for those who use additional services, such as savings.

Given the methodological challenges observed, the following may be concluded and recommended:

1. Since actual use, on top of access, plays a key part in the financial services’ effect of migrants financial health, further research is warranted. This includes better understanding the frequency patterns, and subsequently developing use cases aligned with client needs.
2. The concept of financial health requires clarification, developing parameters which help decide when such claim can be made. MRP phase 2 needs to embed this in a impact measurement exercise, directly linked to the F/RSP clients affected by MRP’s private sector partners. Efforts to discuss with WB Findex are encouraged.

Whereas the above financial health impact effects relate to workstreams 3 and 4, eventually workstreams 1 and 2 should generate impact too. As previously noted, workstreams 1 and 2 have so far produced few developmental outcomes, and even if they had, it would be hard to prove impact in an opaque impact pathway. It would require evidence that a new regulation or infrastructure enabled the RSPs to better serve clients and quantify the effect. Nevertheless, MRP reports that, following the Ethiopian Directive on Foreign Currency savings accounts, by June 2023 USD 140 millions of foreign currency deposits had been mobilised via 50,014 accounts across 24 banks. It is impossible to know how much came from migrant remittances (the average amount of USD 2,800 is significant) as opposed to local wealth-owners who used to keep their money off-shore. However, their decision to put money in a local foreign currency account must be financially rational, hence contributing to financial health. The Ethiopian policy changes moving from a bank-led to a mobile money model may also have impacted migrant families, but this has not been researched.

Evaluative conclusion

The evaluation is not able to quantify the number of migrant families whose financial health may have been affected, and even less to indicate the extent of such impact. The estimate of 350-400,000 is just

⁹³ Source: presentation by MRP on 30 Oct 2023 and RMF KPI 18 (appendix D)

indicative, for the reasons indicated above. The single onboarding of a client on a new service is not necessarily impactful as clients do not recognise it to be much better than the previous channel used. The depth of such financial health impact is shallow at best. However, there may be long-term effects, such as savings, that may be impactful. There may also be financial health effects of workstream 1 work in Ethiopia, potentially a lot. This has, however, not been researched. Such effects would be difficult but not impossible to trace and measure. As noted, impacts of knowledge development can probably not be traced.

MRP contributed to observed financial health effects but must share a significant part of result attribution with local F/RSPs that did most of the work. It can also not be claimed that MRP catalysed this effect (which would have allowed full result attribution) as increased reach and impact was generated across existing financial services. None of the innovative pilot project generated significant deal flow.

Going forward to MRP phase 2, some ways to make MRP more impactful are the following:

- Assist (more) private sector partners in developing services clients really want, hence use. This requires experimentation on the market, as practice is the only way to know the true client needs.
- Deepen impact by not just pursuing the numbers but also the quality of such impact, e.g., going beyond onboarding clients and introducing them to ways to manage the money better. BRAC Bank motivating clients to save is a good example.
- Design workstream 1 interventions such that outcomes and ultimately impacts on end-clients are likely and can be causally observed. By way of example, the work with NBE resulted in a series of directives aiming to broaden market participation (payment directives, see EQ 5.1). It should be or have been possible for MRP to contact the market participants involved (listed in a footnote in the same section) to find out the commercial benefits generated and estimated consequences in terms of client acquisition and deal flow. This would then have allowed for analysis of possible financial health impacts.⁹⁴

*EQ 5.10 To what extent are the programme results contributing to changing **attitudes and behaviours** towards Human Rights and Gender, disability and most vulnerable on the various stakeholder groups and the underlying causes of inequality and discrimination?*

This EQ asks for the behavioural changes in FSP/RSPs, which is indeed an objective of MRP. As observed, MRP has gender as a cross-cutting theme, but did not incorporate human rights and disability, nor was there great scope to do so.

The result reports to SDC and SIDA and the MRP RMF do not have indicators that support this EQ, other than that numerical data are usually gender disaggregated. However, in all projects MRP has encouraged partners to develop gender smart policies and product innovations. Evidence of this was found at RAKBANK, BRAC Bank, Lucy, IME Pay, and somewhat in SentBe. Also, MRP targets low-income communities. The other LNOB priorities were not addressed.

Discussions with private sector partners in Senegal did not reveal any changed attitudes toward serving women. These RSPs are gender blind, or gender aware at best. Although Wizall had actively taken part in the KIT project and researched the characteristics of the respective market segments, there is no wish to develop distribution or communication methods specifically designed to facilitate access to women. By contrast, BRAC Bank has taken measures to better serve women in a culturally sensitive manner (e.g., opening hours, female staff). According to the bank, MRP TA encouraged a shift from gender aware to gender accommodating. The Lucy project, specifically targeting women, was unsuccessful and discontinued as women did not recognise the value of the product being offered.

⁹⁴ The evaluators spoke to some and found such result to be in the very early stages.

The RAKBANK case study (appendix F) underlines MRP's strategy in changing attitudes and behaviours towards gender equality. Prior to the project, RAKBANK and Edenred based decision making on remittance corridor analysis, neglecting a gender-inclusive approach. The institutions focussed on male clients from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The project successfully introduced the gender concept. Although initial misconceptions existed about women's (lack of) financial independence, MRP data analysis support provided RAKBANK and Edenred a more nuanced understanding of migrant working women in the UAE and as a desirable market segment. This understanding facilitated tailoring communication materials and led to enhanced field efforts to reach women. This contributed to an increase in women's awareness of and access to the digital remittance services. However, the case study also reveals the limits to this. Current staff of Edenred suggest that post-MRP financial support the institution will revert to its core market without concern for gender inclusivity.

Evaluative conclusion

Changing attitudes of private sector partners is challenging. These generally found the data and gender analysis presented by MRP interesting, recognised the need to develop gender-sensitive distribution methods, and saw the commercial benefits. However, few subsequently assimilated this into their corporate culture and operations. Even partners like BRAC Bank, with a strong focus on development, have certain cultural norms ingrained within their staff. With hindsight, RAKBANK may have been pushed too hard to do something the bank post-project admitted it did not want to.

4.5 Efficiency

Efficiency in the OECD-DAC terminology is the extent to which MRP delivered results in an economic and timely way. "Economic" is the conversion of inputs (funds, expertise, natural resources, time, etc.) into outputs, outcomes and impacts, in the most cost-effective way possible, as compared to feasible alternatives in the context. "Timely" delivery is within the intended timeframe, or a timeframe reasonably adjusted to the demands of the evolving context. This may include assessing operational efficiency (how well the intervention was managed).

EQ 3.1 How well has the Programme delivered its expected results to date, including in terms of budget management and allocation, cost- effectiveness of activities? And Value for Money?

Some indicators of implementation efficiency are on time, on budget, and cost-efficiency, which may be separated in cost per unit of output (output efficiency) and cost per unit of outcome (value for money). On the first two, the case studies and country visits revealed that MRP interventions generally operated within the agreed timelines and budget. The evaluation of cost-efficiency is more circumspect.

4.5.1 On Time

The implementation period of some projects was extended, but rarely beyond the ordinary. In fact, the key evaluative efficiency observation on timing is that MRP tends to have timelines that are too short, both in private sector and public sector projects. For example, both SympliFi and Wizall had an implementation period of 15 months, which is short for this type of project (and indeed, both were extended, although not successfully). BRAC Bank only had 10 months to implement 7 sub-projects, but the team worked at full strength to meet deadlines, KPIs and secure the grant. This is an exceptional achievement. The IGAD project was supposed to last 21 months, with outcome achievement expected over a six-year period (hence into phase 2). Even this extended period is much optimistic for a project involving deep regulatory reform in many areas and simultaneously in eight very diverse countries. The IGAD case study (appendix F) shows that three years after the beginning of the project results have not progressed beyond diagnostic studies and agreement on a broad roadmap for reform, with nationwide policy and regulatory harmonisation probably years away.

Evaluative conclusion

While short timelines may indeed encourage focus, in many cases, they are not entirely realistic. Going forward, MRP may wish to establish longer project implementation periods. Donor engagements need to be sufficiently long to allow for this.

4.5.2 On Budget

Section 2.5 presented expenditures by workstream (table 1), with appendix E showing cost details per project. Section 2.5 also showed the MRP budgets and expenditures per funding source (table 2). It is noted that as MRP does not keep a time registration of its staff, these expenses are estimates only. MRP prodocs did not include result-based budgets (e.g., per workstream), but such were developed annually to reflect the commitments taken with partners.

It is observed that the budgets shown in table 2 are considerably higher than those figuring in the prodocs, as donors periodically agreed to budget revisions. The original budget of SIDA phase 1 was USD 5.8 million, it was raised to USD 7.9 million. The original budget of SDC was USD 7.9 million, it became nearly USD 10 million. SIDA phase 2 had an approved budget of USD 7.6 million for 2023-2025. Based on 2023 expenditure of USD 3.4 million, the SIDA programme may run out of money before the end.

It is immediately visible from table 1 that MRP has relied on its in-house staff and consultants. Workstreams 1 and 3 have expended substantially more than workstreams 2 and 4. However, as workstreams overlap within projects these figures are indicative only. The programme management cost, which is the largest expense item, consists of the programme management team (10% of total cost), UNCDF overhead (7%), travel (4%), and other expenses.

A more analytical review of expenditure shows that diagnostics, studies, guides, and toolkits across the four workstreams absorbed just over 50% of the budget. Grants to private sector partners developing client-facing services were just 3% of the budget, to which may be added 7% in TA cost. 30% of the budget went to programme management, learning and gender mainstreaming, with the remaining 10% for training and various consultancies.⁹⁵

It is observed that both the SDC and SIDA prodocs included input-based budgets (e.g., salaries, travel, consultants), which are meaningless for project monitoring. A proper expenditure budget in the prodocs would have followed a result-based format, or at least the four workstreams, allowing for analytical progress reporting as output achievement and expenditure could be matched (e.g., 10% of output produced and 11% of the budget line expended).

As to expenditure at the project level, only few projects exceeded their budgets. The BCEAO ID study received additional funding, mainly due to BCEAO asking additional assistance, but many other projects underspent (e.g., SympliFi, Wizall, TerraPay), as partners could not reach the agreed milestones.

Workstream 1 projects did not normally have a budget agreed with the recipient government, REC or central banks, because most inputs were delivered “in-kind” by MRP staff. This makes it impossible to judge the “on budget” element of efficiency evaluation.

Evaluative conclusion

MRP required significant additions to the approved 2019-2023 budgets, including not previously foreseen co-financing by UNCDF, yet no increase in the corresponding performance targets. This suggests weaknesses in expenditure management: donors had to pay more for the same intended result.

⁹⁵ Calculations made by the evaluators, based on data from appendix E.

4.5.3 Output efficiency

The key efficiency question relates to the deployment of resources and their cost. As was observed above, a large part of the technical work was undertaken by in-house MRP experts, absorbing 62% of the total MRP budget.⁹⁶ In workstream 1, 86% of cost was incurred by MRP's own TA staff, some was spent for events, while few external consultants were hired. A significant body of output was produced, and it was appreciated by recipient countries (see IGAD case study, appendix F, and confirmed by BCEAO and NBE). There is little reason to believe that the efficiency in terms of cost (per unit of output), quality or timelines of TA in developing remittance policy and regulations would have been higher if consultants had been hired from the market instead.⁹⁷

The other three workstreams rely on the work of partners, be they private sector companies in the financial or communications sectors, including fintechs, or thought partners, chiefly commercial consultants and research and education institutions. Here too, the figures show a large expenditure incurred for MRP staff, see table 1, section 2.5, the efficiency of which is sometimes doubted. Private sector partners reported that they were asked to participate in two-weekly monitoring meetings, which they found a lot. They also cited the plentiful Steerco meetings, e.g., eight in case of SympliFi, five for TerraPay, and six for Wizall, as well as reporting requirements that some partners found excessive. In addition, there were always multiple UNCDF staff involved simultaneously, which some partners found wasteful. As to the overall cost of TA, it compares unfavourably to the grants, such as in case of SympliFi with a TA cost of USD 148,059 versus a grant of USD 44,000, or USD 206,866 TA cost versus USD 20,000 grant for TerraPay. In nearly all cases the TA need (hence cost) was identified by MRP, not the partner.⁹⁸ When asked, private sector partners gave mixed appreciation of such TA, finding some elements useful (e.g., intervene at the level of BCEAO in case of SympliFi, data analysis), being less appreciative of others (e.g., RAKBANK that not wholeheartedly embarked on gender work). RSPs observed, however, that the MRP team had introduced partners to lessons learned in other countries. The webinars also played a useful role in this respect.

As a mitigating factor for the high TA cost, it can be noted that partners such as TerraPay, SympliFi and Wizall were not experienced project managers, finding it hard to plan and stick to it. Established institutions such as BRAC Bank and RAKBANK have vastly more management and implementation capacity than some of the novel fintechs, which needed a lot of handholding. These fintech partners had also made errors in their grant applications. SympliFi had initially indicated that partner Baobab was on board - further examination revealed that this was not accurate. Wizall had grossly underestimated the regulatory challenges for nano-credit as well as the investment in its IT platform. TerraPay had failed to mobilise the financial ecosystem pre-project. All of this asked more of UNCDF staff than should have been.

Evaluative conclusion

MRP's accompaniment of private sector projects is costly. A light-touch and demand-led TA support would have been more compatible with the core philosophy of grant funding, which is to put the grant partner in the lead. However, this also requires a much stronger pre-project due diligence, assuring partners have the necessary capacity and give truthful information on the project and partnerships they are in. Furthermore, it would also require UNCDF to downscale or terminate its support more quickly once it becomes clear that chances for success are slim (e.g., CongoPay).

⁹⁶ However, in the absence of timesheets it cannot be ascertained what they really did and spent their time on.

⁹⁷ Amarante is producing 45 country diagnostics for a mere USD 318,000, but MRP staff needs to contribute to this.

⁹⁸ This is also the reason why many TA projects have the same elements.

4.5.4 Outcome efficiency (value for money)

The effectiveness section showed a mixed picture on outcome achievement in alignment with the MRP Theory of Change. While this suggests challenges in demonstrating "value for money," it is important to consider the broader context and potential for future impact.

In workstream 1, practically the only concrete outcome was that just over 50,000 persons in Ethiopia now maintain foreign currency savings accounts. It is not certain all or any are migrants. Few other outcomes in workstream 1 are known, which does not mean such cannot exist. For example, the payment directives in Ethiopia may have resulted in new services being developed and clients served. This, however, has not been documented and was not observed during the field visit (probably too early). As a mitigation factor it was noted that all interventions in workstream 1 are still ongoing (e.g., work with RECs), and many of the publications (guides, toolkits) may support MRP in the implementation work during phase 2 and beyond.

In workstream 2, the intervention with CongoPay was unsuccessful. The studies conducted by Glenbrook, Amarante and Accenture each costed about USD 300,000, to which should be added nearly the same as internal UNCDF costs. To what extent meaningful developmental outcomes will result hence value for money will be generated from these studies is uncertain.

In workstream 3 the major results were achieved by BRAC Bank and RAKBANK, which together onboarded over 900,000 new clients. However, the extent to which these services are used by migrant families varies. With a total cost of USD 835,000, these two projects still look good value. The results of other activities in workstream 3 are less convincing. The mini-survey and case study of SympliFi shows its value to clients, but the numbers reached were just a fraction of target. The Wizall service, a mobile wallet, was not innovative compared to the existing service offer of Orange and Wave (which most clients use as well). Lucy was discontinued. The value for money of the Dalberg studies, costing more than USD 1 million in total with little developmental outcome in sight, is questionable.

Workstream 4 mainly consisted of knowledge development. To some extent these are necessary to undertake this kind of programme (e.g., the demand-side studies). However, the value of the IPA study and the financial health surveys is uncertain as long as no concrete contribution to MRP objectives and migrant families in particular is visible. The client onboarding campaigns of BRAC Bank and RAKBANK have probably been valuable, given the large numbers, and some impact achievement was suggested by the KIT survey. However, no information exists on the broader "literacy" and financial empowerment effects. It is the same for SentBe.

Evaluative conclusion

MRP has not yet yielded the anticipated development value that could justify the expenditure of USD 21 million. It not excluded, however, that work done in phase 1 will generate developmental outcomes during phase 2. Moving forward, it is incumbent upon UNCDF to leverage the groundwork laid in phase 1 to create tangible value in phase 2.

EQ 3.2 How well is the programme's broader approach to partnerships (with other UNCDF/ UN interventions and broader institutions and stakeholders) and strategy to scaling up (maturity model) working?

The issue of scaling is relevant to workstream 2, 3 and 4 projects, if there is a scalable innovation (e.g., not just a study), and only if the pilot was successful. Scaling is also the starting point for meeting the UNCDF mandate to mobilise capital for development.

The projects where successful scaling has been seen are the following:

- BRAC Bank, in two existing products, not the (four) new products
- RAKBANK, in one existing product

- IME Pay, for women especially
- BelCash, but only 1,700 registered users now, and likely few active ones
- Wizall, after an initial loss of customers in the Wizall wallet

Based on the experience of the first phase of MRP, it is concluded that projects with well-established financial institutions (e.g., BRAC Bank, RAKBANK) tend to be more successful than smaller players in the fintech ecosystem (e.g., SympliFi, Wizall, Lucy). Both banks successfully scaled existing products, but not new products. The fintechs were generally more innovative, putting new services in the market. SympliFi has been unable to scale the pilot guarantee programme (it was ended), while Wizall is still struggling to enter the competitive mobile money market (its nano-credit product was never launched). Lucy had to end its pilot project for lack of clients. SympliFi was the only example of an innovative remittance-linked service, the others are just remittance services.

MRP has not involved other UN-agencies in scaling the above-mentioned initiatives, beyond inviting them to webinars, conferences, etc.

Evaluative conclusion

The vectors of successful scaling are 1) the pre-existing capacity of the RSP/FSP, 2) the pre-existing product. This does not imply that MRP must not work with innovative fintechs for product development and remittance-linked services, just that one must recognise their potential to pilot rather than scale remittance products. As was noted under EQ 5.4, it is generally a good idea (and often required by regulators) that incumbent financial service providers and fintech join forces, whereby it was recommended that the financial institution takes the lead, not the fintech.

EQ 3.3 What is the quality of outputs (deliverables) provided to date? How appropriate is the Programme's monitoring system to track direct Programme results and their broader contribution to the overall objectives?

It would go beyond the evaluators to judge the quality of **project outputs**, other than to observe general partner and stakeholder satisfaction. The evaluators did not meet partners or beneficiaries who were patently dissatisfied. Of course, the mini-surveys with clients found some respondents with complaints, but that was to be expected. The main exception to the above finding was the IPA project, which left BRAC Bank deeply unhappy with the process (but not necessarily the result). It transpires, and this was confirmed through the evaluation team's FGDs, that clients were much annoyed, even shocked, by the intrusive questions IPA enumerators asked them. This resulted in some clients losing trust in BRAC Bank, and demands by bank staff in branches for the field surveys to be ended.⁹⁹

Evaluation of project **monitoring** is linked to the adequacy of the ToC, as result indicators need to reflect MRP's aspired results. MRP opted for a fairly complex ToC, with outcomes looked at from three dimensions, namely stakeholder, sector and customer outcomes. This leads, however, to overlap and duplication, between customer and sector outcomes in particular as both talk about customer use. This is also the reason for some overlap of the evaluation questions, as these mirror the respective boxes in the ToC. The "outputs" in the ToC are more like intermediary outcomes, due to the use of such words as "capacity".¹⁰⁰ In addition to the above, the evaluation observed that not all boxes in the ToC have indicators attached (see section on effectiveness), or the indicators do not well cover the core meaning of the ToC boxes.

The evaluators also reviewed the sub-project ToCs, which most MRP projects have in the Project Work Book. The project ToCs show the project steps in great detail, helping better understand the work at

⁹⁹ It was not just the type of highly personal questions that were objected to, but also the fact that women were interviewed in their homes in the absence of their husbands.

¹⁰⁰ Perhaps the authors of the ToC meant that study reports (e.g., country diagnostics), training and events help policy makers and regulators in their work, in which case the ToC might have been written accordingly.

hand. As observed in the case studies, the project ToCs often go beyond the intended project result (e.g., diagnostics for IGAD, a feasibility study for a single ID in WAEMU), which helps show the wider picture, but may also be confusing when the project document does not explicitly point out where the intervention stops and where the steps in the ToC are to be undertaken in a follow-up phase. The indicators used at project level are the same as the MRP RMF.

The collection of result indicators is done with the help of project partners, as well as through own research and by thought partners (e.g., the KIT study). The indicators are collated into AirTable and reported to donors in the necessary format (see section 2.4). The evaluators broadly confirm the results reported, except for the impact indicator KPI 23, which was equated with the reach indicator KPI 17 (see section 4.4, EQ 5.9).

MRP also collects data on publications and webinars, summarised through the application Power BI. It showed 107 publications up to 2023, excluding at that point unpublished research. However, the majority were documents that would normally qualify as working documents (e.g., country diagnostics, country monitors, case studies), leaving 15 classic publications, guides and toolkits. The Power BI gives instant access to the publications and webinar contents, which is efficient.

Looking into the broader ToC, it is seen that MRP has strong data on results at the output level (e.g., number of studies, number of trainings), less so at the outcome and in particular customer level, not to speak of developmental impacts. Only once MRP financed a demand survey, the excellent KIT study, but this was concluded in 2022 and was not repeated since. The new financial health survey is not linked to any MRP intervention, hence not directly contributing to result measurement. It may, however, allow MRP to model impact gains from its various interventions and better understand the (potential) migrant market segment. The evaluation has also shown that MRP has undertaken many projects (e.g., all knowledge products) whereby the impact pathway is theoretical to a large extent, and outcomes let alone impact can very likely never be determined. Taking as an example the Glenbrook handbook, Accenture study, Dalberg supply study, or the Amarante diagnostics, the extent to which this may be contributing to the MRP's overall objectives is unknowable, and it is not even clear to what extent such publications are being read by the intended audience. During the country visits the evaluators systematically asked stakeholders which MRP publications they had seen, and very few could remember and mention any.¹⁰¹ By contrast, most stakeholders recollected having taken part in webinars, and all were appreciative. However, none went as far as to suggest that the webinar had an effect on their daily work.

Evaluative conclusion

For at least 70% of programme operations, measured by budget, the MRP M&E system has not tracked direct programme outcomes and their broader contribution to migrant financial resilience. Such outcome tracking has only been done for private sector partners. It is not that outcome tracking would be impossible for the work with public sector partners (e.g., policy reform), just not done. As to the thought partners (research), measuring developmental outcomes and impacts of knowledge development work would be a challenge due to the length and opacity of the result chain. It is very difficult to know who might have used this knowledge for actions that generate developmental outcomes.

Going forward, MRP phase 2 needs to more carefully reflect on the extent to which activities undertaken generate observable and measurable outcomes, and eventually impacts. This is not to interdict actions that do not (e.g., most of the knowledge development work), but is a warning against a programme that is significantly constructed from actions that do not allow for meaningful result measurement and

¹⁰¹ E.g., one person in BCEAO and one person in NBE.

reporting at the outcome and impact levels as donor funding depends on proof of having developed tangible benefits on target populations.

For monitoring purposes, the project could have benefited from a simpler ToC, fewer result boxes, shorter and less adjectivized sentences, and written into each and every box at least one result indicator that neatly demonstrates the output, outcome or impact.¹⁰² It is recommended to develop result measurement in phase 2 along these lines.

EQ 3.4 How well is the Programme being managed and governed, including through the involvement and contribution of key partners such as the donors and government counterparts, both at the global, regional, and national levels?

The EQ refers to management and governance at various levels:

- By the project management team
- By the donors, including UNCDF, as part of overall governance
- By government and counterparts

Project management team

The MRP team, currently comprising 36 persons of which nearly half women, is dispersed over 19 geographical locations. Consequently, digital and online communication and management systems are key to team and project management. The team is structured along four pillars: (1) Programme management, (2) Systems and Research, (3) Financial sector, (4) Remittance policy, which reflects competencies rather than workstreams. Only three of the MRP team are UN-staffers, the others are contract agents.

The core management and reporting systems (not including expenditure) are the following (this list is not exhaustive):

- At the level of sub-projects, a central role is played by the Project Workbook (PWB).
 - It includes a project description, project ToC, workplan, Result Measurement Plan, budget and disbursement schedule with KPIs, and expenditure reporting.
 - Partners submit a quarterly narrative report and Excel with KPIs, this in addition to bi-weekly progress meetings
 - UNCDF prepares notes of (bi-weekly) meetings and steering committee
 - UNCDF prepares its own closure report
- AirTable, collecting project results for aggregation and reporting (KPIs per funding source), as well as risks, issues, internal workload management, contacts, and data on publications and events. Donors have access to AirTable.
- Learnings, Observations, Risks and Issues (LORI) form filled-in by MRP staff, including an activity log, team observations, and to flag potential performance risks
- Enterprise dashboard, to give insight into partner investments due to MRP support
- Power BI, a top-level tool to give insight into programme achievements, publications and webinars, including dashboards that external users can access
- Tracking core statistics on traffic on Migrant Money website (e.g., visits, document downloads) through Google Analytics
- Transaction data dashboard, presenting and analysing remittance data from key private sector partners (e.g., BRAC Bank, TerraPay, IME)
- The above are inputs into MRP's quarterly and annual reports, as well as separate reports to SIDA and SDC on earmarked projects and expenses.

These data systems are comprehensive. Nearly all data and information the evaluation team requested were produced. The closure report to SIDA, 2022, includes a detailed list of partner consultations, which

¹⁰² Section 2.2 includes the narrative of how such ToC could look like.

is impressive. The evaluation also found programme staff to be well-informed. Data and information are shared in weekly portfolio meetings and monthly general team meetings. Overall, project management is evaluated to be efficient. This includes risk management, which is part of the LORI form, and discussed at regular team meetings.¹⁰³

The major observation in the context of management is that MRP convenes meetings with far too many persons, its own staff included, which both the evaluators and partners deem inefficient and costly use of human resources. Furthermore, because of the lack of a dedicated time registration system, UNCDF does not know how staff use their time (efficiently), and may inadvertently allocate costs to projects while staff spent their time otherwise. This needs to be rectified in MRP phase 2.

In project selection, a central role is played by the Request for Applications (RfA) process. This is not applicable to projects with governments and central banks, which pass through a consultation process. The RfA follows a formal process of publication, receipt and evaluation of applications by an evaluation committee. However, once the initial selection done, MRP works closely with the partner to develop the project description and PWB. Although the process is rigorous, it failed to catch some major flaws in the TerraPay, SympliciFi and Wizall applications – see EQ 3.1.

Regarding project reporting, both the evaluators and donors were appreciative of the depth of information provided, although long and repetitive. Reports do not hide the challenges and failures encountered. However, reports and result dashboards may more explicitly show the leading role of partners, as these did most of the work, while MRP just supported through TA, training and grant funding. Through discussions with project partners across all workstreams, it was apparent that these tend to downplay MRP's role in the outcomes achieved.

Regarding staffing, it is positive that many programme countries have resident MRP advisors. However, running the Bangladesh activities from India has been inefficient, as was seen by the passiveness of MoEWOE, while UNCDF does have a well-staffed local office.

Governance and the role of Donors

MRP has several layers of governance:

- The Programme Steering Committee (SC), consisting of donors as well as one non-funding, technical member. The SC provides guidance and strategy direction to the Programme, advises and approves the strategy, annual work plan and budget.
- The project evaluation committee, reviewing proposals received after Request for Applications
- The investment committee, deciding on projects (public, private, thought partners) to finance

MRP conducted 2-3 Steering Committee (SC) meetings per years, e.g., after the publication of the annual report. The SC was the forum for both donors, along with UNCDF and a private sector representative, to raise their critical questions. According to participants, discussions were quite high level, in particular aiming to align MRP strategy with donor policies. Donors were appreciative and found the discussions lively, open and honest. Information obtained from SDC revealed that there was concern that annual reports did not sufficiently address 1) key achievements; 2) key lessons; 3) the way forward. Also, SDC was concerned about lack of outcome reporting and indicators that are too complex to allow for data collection. Reporting on gender at the output and outcome levels was open for improvement. It was noted that the SC did not issue meeting minutes (report of discussions, conclusions and recommendations), neither did UNCDF do this on the SC's behalf, which is unusual and an efficiency shortcoming. Also, no SC took place after 2022.

¹⁰³ LORI stands for Learnings, Observations, Risks and Issues, a standard form used by the MRP team.

As was observed in this report, chapter 2, the two donor prodocs were significantly different, with SIDA focussing on the enabling environment through RECs, and SDC on client-facing services through the private sector in five selected remittance corridors. Although the ToC was the same in both prodocs, the result indicators and structure of result measurement were not (see appendix C). Also, the implementation periods were different.¹⁰⁴ Although MRP delivered one single annual report, parallel reporting to donors and fund-earmarking took place, adding to the managerial workload on UNCDF.¹⁰⁵ As it has been advocated for at least three decades that donors engage in joint co-financing of one single project with one single set of result indicators and joint, non-earmarked, funding of sub-projects, this efficiency shortcoming is puzzling.¹⁰⁶ The use of input-based budgets by both donors is also inefficient as it does not allow for analytical result monitoring, e.g., matching progress in results to budget absorption on the same activity.¹⁰⁷

According to SIDA and SDC representatives, regular contacts were maintained with UNCDF (e.g., monthly). For SIDA, the regional Africa team in Addis Abeba did this. For SDC this was done both by SDC HQ in Bern and the embassies in Dhaka, Dakar and Addis Abeba. In addition, ad hoc contacts took place at the request of either party. In such meetings, all kinds of operational subjects were discussed, while donors could draw UNCDF's attention to their development agenda (e.g., for SDC gender inclusion). Consequently, SDC and SIDA staff met by the evaluation team were well-informed.

Contacts between SDC and SIDA on MRP were rather infrequent.

Partner governments

MRP has close relationships with partner governments and central banks in particular, but these are related to specific workstream 1 and 2 projects only, and do not play a role in governance.

Covid

The project was undertaken while Covid ravaged the world. The limitations to travelling and partner engagement hampered the implementation of the programme, in particular in the first full year and critical start-up phase. Nevertheless, although some activities were delayed, overall MRP proceeded as planned. Communications were moved online, IT systems were adapted, and project staff worked from home. The choice to conduct most of the HKS training online was also a response to Covid. Covid may have contributed to the team being located across the globe, which is now the new normal. There may be benefits in concentrating a few core staff at UNCDF HQ, but most MRP technical advisors should be close to their clients, e.g., embedded in LDCs. Overall, the level of activity undertaken by MRP, in particular in those early years, does suggest the challenges for Covid were efficiently overcome.

In response to Covid, MRP contributed to Covid-19 crisis recovery by setting up a member-state led call to action to keep remittances flowing in times of crisis, led by Switzerland and UK.

EQ 3.5 How well are resources (financial, time, people) allocated to crosscutting issues, including gender and gender mainstreaming, LNOB, disabled, and conflict sensitive approaches as relevant. To what extent are such resources being used efficiently?

From the LNOB priorities, only gender was integrated as an explicit intervention, and only in a few projects (RAKBANK, Lucy). Other private sector partners were encouraged to develop gender sensitive services, which BRAC Bank did, others to a limited extent (e.g., Wizall, TerraPay). According to financial

¹⁰⁴ This was explained by the donors' own budget cycle.

¹⁰⁵ MRP has been preparing four reports, 1) to SDC on SDC-earmarked results and expenses, 2) the same for SIDA, 3) the MRP's own RMF, and 4) the IRRM to UNCDF.

¹⁰⁶ See, for example, Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, 2005 (OECD)

¹⁰⁷ As an example, MRP expended 3% of its budget as grants to private sector partners. The budget does not allow for an evaluative statement whether this is too little or too much.

records (appendix E), gender mainstreaming absorbed less than 2% of the MRP budget. If we added RAKBANK and Lucy as “gender-projects”, the gender inclusion expense would be 5% of the total MRP expense. However, this does not fully capture the attention given to gender, considering its status as a crosscutting issue. Gender was, for example, integrated in the KIT LDS and in transaction data analyses. This does not show up in expenditure data.

While integrating gender as a core strategy in workstream 1 or 2 poses challenges, given regulators' commitment to gender neutrality and the gender-blind nature of infrastructure development, there are opportunities for positive impact. For instance, the single ID project with BCEAO could potentially empower women, who are often marginalized in terms of identification access. Moreover, both workstream diagnostics identified inhibitors that may disproportionately affect women, underscoring the significance of addressing these barriers to foster more inclusive outcomes. Examples of this are found in the country assessments, in particular related to ID and KYC procedures that exclude women.¹⁰⁸ However, a more comprehensive gender approach in workstream 1 presupposes that financial regulators collect gender-disaggregated remittance data, which NBE for example does not.

Scope for gender inclusion is much stronger in workstreams 3 and 4. In private sector projects the partners might have opted to orient the project to specific women's needs (as RAKBANK did) or to offer financial and digital education (e.g., SentBe). In the projects with SympliFi, Wizall and TerraPay gender was discussed, and TA offered by UNCDF, which influenced communication strategies, even though no specific gender product or distribution strategy were developed.¹⁰⁹

Evaluative conclusion

The allocation of resources to gender was limited. However, a direct comparison to the programme budget is not possible, as the budget did not include specific allocations for gender or Leave No One Behind (LNOB) initiatives. Furthermore, there is evidence that gender issues were discussed in all interventions, hence attention to this priority theme has likely been larger than expense figures would suggest.

No budget was allocated to disability or human rights as this was never incorporated in MRP. MRP did not explicitly develop conflict sensitive approaches but included fragile states in regional programmes.

4.6 Sustainability of programme results

Sustainability is the extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue, after MRP has exited from its partner support.

EQ 6.1 To what extent are changes in the capacities of regulators to address regulatory challenges and market inefficiencies likely to continue over time?

As observed in the section on effectiveness, capacity building in MRP was not particularly strong. The **IGAD** case study revealed that MRP drafted the country assessments and diagnostics, with national staff taking part in validation and debate, but not the actual writing. In most countries capacity building took the form of regular consultations and training. In **ECCAS**, MRP helped to introduce increased remittance knowledge and awareness – mostly within the Secretariat, and secondly among Member States. While MRP outcomes were directed at improving capacities to identify, adopt and manage policy decisions at the national and regional level, the activities until today undertaken represent a preparatory work. A regional meeting involving Ministries/Central Bank Governors to ratify the diagnostic report is missing as

¹⁰⁸ For example, in the South Sudan diagnostic it was suggested to direct digital and financial literacy programmes to women, simplify access to ID cards, and for the central bank to collect gender-disaggregated data.

¹⁰⁹ MRP worked with TerraPay to integrate gender considerations in the design of the CongoPay app, while it helped conduct a gender-smart market scan for Congo-Brazzaville.

well as the subsequent action plan. Capacity building at **MoEWOE** in Bangladesh was weak due to lack of regular presence and follow-up by project staff.

IGAD and ECCAS, both including several fragile states, may find it hard to pursue the convergence agenda without significant **MRP support**. IGAD and ECCAS representatives underline the need that UNCDF keeps offering its assistance and completes what was started. By contrast, NBE and BCEAO, both central banks, have stronger internal capacity than the above-mentioned regional bodies. BCEAO, for example, has a strong (regional) financial inclusion agenda, and is pursuing actions to improve interconnectivity of payment processors, including remittance providers, while aiming to master unregulated remittance streams. The evaluation revealed that the regions most in need of convergence of remittance systems (e.g., IGAD, to some extent ECOWAS) have the weakest technical and human capacity to do so. MRP may wish to prioritise its resources accordingly. This is not to say that NBE and BCEAO do not require support, but it could be far more punctual and specific as for the aforementioned RECs.

Factors that hamper the sustainability of MRP's TA are regular staff changes in regulators (seen in all country visits), political and economic fragility (IGAD, ECCAS, even WAEMU), and competing political interests (IGAD, ECOWAS). Factors that could support the sustainability of MRP's TA include continuity in well-targeted TA, and evidence of successful results and monetary impacts of regulatory reform (such as increased formal remittance inflows) that can push remittances up in the political agenda. MRP advocacy (e.g., peer learning) may help this effort.

Evaluative conclusion

The evaluation has shown that MRP's capacity building of public sector partners could be more sustainable by further building capacities of national policy makers and regulators, with UNCDF working with key staff to improve their skills and competences, who would take leadership of the research, analysis and reform process. Furthermore, MRP needs to concentrate its efforts on those that most need it (e.g., IGAD, not BCEAO).

EQ 6.2 To what extent are changes in enhanced regional and domestic payment infrastructure and improved access to shared market infrastructure by banks and non-bank RSPs likely to continue over time?

One of the workstream 2 projects that could lead to an improved market infrastructure is the single ID-project with the BCEAO. MRP project helped the financial authorities prepare and understand the options to set-up an ID-approach for the eight WEAMU countries. However, as was noted in section 4.3, one year after completing the feasibility study it had still not been presented to the BCEAO governor and member states for decision. Sustainability of the other workstream 2 activities, which are all studies and publications, cannot be assessed in terms of the above EQ.

Evaluative conclusion

The work in developing payment infrastructure has shown few results, and by consequence little scope for sustainability. However, the workstream presents opportunities for refinement and improvement moving forward. The knowledge products may be actively introduced to key partners who may be inspired to undertake the necessary payment infrastructure work, with or without UNCDF support.

EQ 6.3 To what extent are changes at the level of market participants (local private sector and micro, small and medium enterprises) and reconfiguration remittance value chains likely to continue over time?

MRP's core intervention aim is enhancing financial health among migrant communities. Central to its realisation is the strategic involvement of the private sector, which has shaped the various initiatives within the programme, involving both fintechs (often start-ups or early-stage businesses) and established financial institutions. For example, MRP supported small **fintechs**, like SympliFi and Lucy, enabling them to design and promote innovative financial products tailored to migrant communities. Despite initial momentum, these projects have not been sustainable. The MRP grant propelled their launch, but without

a robust business case or market maturity, they struggled to navigate operational complexities, develop markets, and achieve long-term viability. While the lessons learned are valuable, their journey emphasizes the hurdles faced by nascent ventures in the remittance space.

Contrarywise, MRP's collaboration with large **financial institutions** with a proven track record has yielded significant returns. Notably BRAC Bank and RAKBANK, already well-established in the digital remittances market but with appetite for growth, leveraged MRP support to scale existing remittance channels and to a lesser extent develop new ones. Bolstered by their in-house capacity and market presence, these entities capitalized on MRP support and captured markets. By embracing innovation and expanding their offerings, they reinforced their status as industry players, while catalysing change within migrant communities.

As MRP enters into phase 2, it may **strike a balance** between fostering innovation through fintech operators and leveraging the expertise of established institutions. While fintechs inject dynamism and fresh perspective into the financial landscape, they require sustained support and capacity-building to develop a sustainable business case. Conversely, established institutions offer stability and scalability but may be short on the needed ideas and agility to adapt to evolving markets and consumer needs. The evaluation suggested that some innovative projects might have had more chance of success if not the fintech but the financial sector partner had been the core MRP project partner.

Evaluative conclusion

The private sector's involvement in MRP has generated varied outcomes, exemplified by the contrasting experiences of fintechs and established institutions. While usually young fintechs struggle with scaling and consequently sustainability, established institutions leverage their strengths to drive scale but less evidently innovation. For MRP phase 2, fostering an ecosystem that nurtures both innovation and institutional capacity will be needed to advance MRP's mission of contributing to financial health of migrant communities, and do so sustainably.

EQ 6.4 To what extent are the changes in terms of access, use and resilience by migrants and their families/ beneficiaries likely to continue over time?

In principle, all workstreams are meant to contribute to access, use, and resilience, but most directly the workstreams 3 and 4.

Initiatives aimed at increasing **access**, such as the one undertaken with RAKBANK/Edenred, are likely to persist over time. Interviews revealed RAKBANK's strong commitment to expanding its digital remittances business, as evidenced by a recent agreement with Western Union to broaden RAKBANK's international remittance activities to over 200 corridors. However, the focus on enhancing women's access may not be sustained, as it is not a priority. BRAC Bank and Wizall are also continuing to increase reach and serve the migrant market. Lucy, SympliFi and TerraPay ended the projects.

Regarding financial literacy activities aiming a **use and resilience**, workstream 4 partners RAKBANK and BRAC Bank are likely to continue with existing financial awareness campaigns as these were already in place before MRP support. However, as these are focussed on onboarding clients rather than helping them use money wisely, the (sustainable) results for migrants and families are sub-optimal. In the case of SentBe, which went beyond client onboarding, this partner shows commitment to expanding financial literacy trainings but lacks the necessary financial resources, making continuation uncertain.

Evaluative conclusion

Private sector partners will continue the activities developed with MRP, but from their own commercial perspective, e.g., focus on client onboarding and explaining how to use (digital) financial services. This means that gender inclusion (e.g., RAKBANK) or financial literacy training (e.g., SentBe) may not persist.

In order for digital and financial literacy training to more sustainably change people's lives, MRP needs to encourage private sector partners to expand the message to include using money wisely and

productively for the long-term benefit of the family. This will only be possible if a suitable revenue model is built consisting of client contributions, possibly external grants, and above all cost-efficient delivery of the messages and training. However, to some extent BRAC bank staff in branches already do this as part of their daily service to customers.

5 CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Overall Assessment

5.1.1 Relevance

The evaluation has shown MRP to be broadly relevant, but not equally in all regions and countries.

The IGAD and the ECCAS regions are characterized by severe constraints in all aspects of cross-border money transfer as well as last-mile access and services, which national governments and central banks recognise. This is much less the case in the monetary unions CEMAC and WAEMU, although inhibitors related to financial inclusion and communications infrastructure remain. Constraints in Bangladesh and Nepal include the very low levels of digital and financial literacy of migrants, which bring them to rely on unregulated (informal) and cash-based payment systems. This underscores the need for MRP phase 2 to adopt a differentiated approach, tailored to reflect regional needs, and to prioritize those countries and regions most in need of support. Thus, MRP engagement in IGAD and ECCAS could prioritise the regulatory environment and payment infrastructure, while the other regions and countries mentioned could see a focus on private sector partners developing innovative remittance-related services to migrant families.

MRP aligns with international development priorities, such as the SDGs. However, it would be inaccurate to explain the programme as a direct response to these priorities. Instead, MRP's design was influenced by a combination of factors, including the strategic goals of donors, their geographical focus, and their investment priorities. Switzerland has not taken a position on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

Relevance to migrants and recipients depends on their situation and preferences. The core strategy of MRP is to promote digital remittance channels and products through the formal sector. The implicit assumption that this is the best option for migrants from the point of view of cost, security and convenience has been challenged by stakeholders. It depends on migrant characteristics, such as the amounts sent, their level of education, its use for consumption or investment, urban/rural, being documented or not, and the corridors including differences between official and parallel exchange rates. Migrants are free in their choice, and many rationally opt for unregulated cash-based channels, which resource persons note are often remarkably efficient. MRP may incorporate this in its future programme orientations.

5.1.2 Coherence

The design of MRP in four workstreams was found to be internally coherent. It is also reflective of the wider UNCDF IDE programme. However, it is worth considering that MRP was significantly shaped by donors. For example, SIDA prioritizes enabling environment reforms, preferably through Regional Economic Communities (RECs), while SDC focuses on enhancing client-facing services through private sector engagement in a small number of selected countries. Had UNCDF been given the freedom to design the programme as it wished, some choices might have been different. This includes the selection (and exclusion) of regions and remittance corridors.

While there is coordination with other international organizations active in remittances at the institutional and local levels, there is also risk of overlap. The BCEAO single-ID project was an example where MRP and World Bank-led projects significantly overlapped. More regular and proactive

contacts (both ways) with IFAD are also highly recommended. MRP may also look for a clear market niche, not being tempted “to do it all”. This market niche may be in the private sector, in line with UNCDF’s core mandate, or public sector, in line with its UN-convening status. This also depends on the countries of intervention (see above).

5.1.3 Effectiveness

The evaluation shows that MRP has been strong at the output level, across all workstreams, not at the outcome level. A large number (100+) of diagnostics, studies, guides, and toolkits were produced, which was the most important deliverable. While the quality of this work was good, little evidence exists that any of these generated developmental outcomes according to the project ToC, let alone impact. The download history as recorded by MRP does not suggest these reports have been widely read, neither did the evaluators’ country visits find many people who did. As to the outcomes, workstream 1 produced reform in two areas in Ethiopia, not yet in the other countries and regions of intervention. Workstream 2 did not yield outcomes. Workstream 3 produced innovations through private sector partners, but half were unviable and discontinued, while the other half could not (yet) be scaled. In workstream 4 digital and financial literacy training mainly entailed client onboarding. Only SentBe worked on teaching users how to use money wisely.

MRP phase 1 was preparatory in nature. It is true that MRP phase 1 needed to build a stock of guides and tools to support the implementation phase 2. However, other studies were knowledge products with their contribution to the MRP’s objectives unknown. More broadly, MRP was skewed toward actions at the macro level, enabling environment and knowledge development, with long and opaque impact pathways. The execution of MRP phase 1, in particular the strong focus on research output, was not in accordance with the programme documents, which had more operational outputs in mind, leading to direct results on migrant families.

MRP only had nine private sector partners (target 15), which received just 3% of the programme budget (no target given). Sixty-two per cent of the budget went to programme staff, contract agents included, and much of the remainder to research, publications and overall programme management.

Workstream 1 on policy and regulation has the potential to be highly impactful. MRP’s work in policy and regulatory reform could drive efficient remittance streams and financial inclusion if core constraints are relieved. However, apart from Ethiopia, none of these projects has yet reached the stage where significant (regional) policy and regulatory harmonisation has been realised.

The best observable development outcomes and possibly impacts were produced in workstreams 3 and 4. The excellent work of BRAC Bank and RAKBANK led them to onboard over 900,000 new clients into digital remittance channels, and both offered relevant services. However, FGDs with (83) BRAC Bank clients and interviews with clients of Wizall (31) and RAKBANK (9) shed doubt on the extent to which the mere onboarding of clients on such services is adding to financial health. Clients do not recognise such effects, and not consider the service different from the service they used to have. Also, research by the evaluators and MRP show that many newly onboarded clients do not regularly transact, if at all.¹¹⁰ This brings the evaluators to conclude that the target of improving the financial health of 900,000 migrant families was not reached, by a long stretch. The evaluation also demonstrated that the failure rate in developing innovative private sector products was high (e.g., SympliFi, Lucy, TerraPay), as the business case did not hold up, while all innovations with private sector partners have seen low usage rates by customers. These innovations apparently do not meet clients’ current needs. SympliFi was the only example of a remittance-linked service, all the others were about access. Digital and financial literacy

¹¹⁰ There is some residual ambiguity on the percentage of use, depending on the periodicity chosen.

training rarely went beyond simple client onboarding. Only SentBe went further, trying to teach clients how to use money wisely and productively. The gender component was mainly about giving women access to digital remittance services, with the assumption that women-empowerment will follow. Twenty-seven percent of clients reached were women, compared to an SDC target of 60%.

Workstreams 2 produced few developmental results. Most of the output consisted of knowledge development, which has not yet inspired public and private sector actors to embark on investment in the cross-border payment infrastructure.

While MRP generated some positive results, such as increased access to remittance services and the promotion of technological innovation, challenges persist in driving adoption and usage of inclusive remittance products. Despite efforts to enhance financial inclusion and empower migrant communities through digital and financial education, regulatory barriers and limited awareness continue to impede access. Furthermore, several financial innovations did not meet the needs of clients, resulting in low usage of innovative remittance products. For MRP phase 2 to achieve effectiveness, it should emphasise working with private and public sector partners on concrete projects, not issuing further knowledge products of which there should be sufficient by now.

- *Enabling environment:* the case of Ethiopia showed that continuous consultations with regulators can contribute to remittance-friendly reform, driving down cost and enhancing access.
- *Access to remittance services:* collaborations with partners like BRAC Bank contributed to enhancing access to remittance services and streamlining cross-border payment processes, thus benefiting migrant workers and their families.
- *Technological innovation:* partnerships with technology firms like SympliFi, BelCash and Wizall promoted technological innovation in the financial sector, the development of user-friendly platforms and digital tools to facilitate remittance transfers and financial management. MRP has shown that no market study can truly find out the clients' needs and wishes, only a practical (pilot) product in the market can.
- *Financial education and literacy:* empowering migrant communities to make informed decisions about their finances and effectively use available financial services requires dovetailing access and training, preferably in person. So far, it is not clear how to merge this in the FSP/RSP business case.
- *Financial inclusion:* MRP demonstrated the potential to improve financial inclusion among migrant populations by facilitating access to affordable and inclusive banking products and digital payment solutions.

As to the means of support, field work suggests that in-person events, training and webinars are more effective ways of capacity building and information dissemination than research publications, which are not generally being read.

5.1.4 Efficiency

Overall, MRP was efficiently implemented. However, in work with private sector partners the cost of MRP TA was often high in comparison to the size of the grant.

Despite the limited outcomes achieved, there remains an opportunity to enhance the MRP value proposition. To determine value for money, it is essential to consider the original result targets agreed upon with SIDA and SDC, particularly focusing on the core result of improving the financial health of (900,000) migrants and their families (as outlined above), and the initial budget of USD 18.1 m for SIDA

1, the first year of SIDA 2, SDC, financial resilience and UNCDF.¹¹¹ Having found that many newly onboarded clients do not use the service while many of those who do consider the financial health impact shallow, the true financial health effect falls short of target as shown above. Considering that the programme expenditures exceeded the initial budget by USD 3.2 m, the evaluation of value for money must be unfavourable. Looking ahead, MRP can build upon the groundwork laid in phase 1, showcasing its value and leveraging both public and private sector capacity and investment to ensure future development results, impact migrant families and sustainability.

5.1.5 Sustainability

In workstream 1, only the work with NBE has reached the stage where regulatory reform was introduced in the market, impeding a conclusion on sustainability within the workstream.

Nevertheless, there remains a need for ongoing MRP support to facilitate policy convergence across IGAD and ECCAS. The intellectual resources cultivated during phase 1 offer valuable opportunities for RECs and countries to enhance their capacities and pass regulatory reform in the cross-border payment system.

In workstreams 3 and 4, the sustainability landscape is varied. Partners such as BRAC Bank, RAKBANK, BelCash and Wizall have demonstrated commitment to continuing and expanding their initiatives. Conversely, projects undertaken by SympliFi, Lucy, TerraPay, and SentBe were discontinued due to the absence of a sustainable business case. It has become evident that sustaining financial literacy training and gender-sensitive services requires clear business justification and revenue streams to incentivize private sector partners to pursue such initiatives independently.

5.2 Recommendations

All the below recommendations are intended to improve MRP's operations in phase 2. **All recommendations are intended for UNCDF, unless otherwise indicated.**

5.2.1 Recommendations on programme operations:

Recommendation 1: For MRP phase 2, reorient the focus from preparatory diagnostics and knowledge development to the **implementation** of reform actions in collaboration with public and private sector partners.

The inhibitors in the payment system were identified during phase 1, now MRP needs to proceed with supporting financial sector regulators to act on those findings. Likewise, there should be a concerted effort to strengthen remittance channels and services through private sector partners, working on the opportunities identified in country studies. This is not done through further studies, but through direct engagement with the private sector.

Recommendation 2: Take a more **flexible approach**, using the elements from the ToC that most reflect the countries' needs.

In some countries/contexts, such as IGAD and ECCAS, the regulatory framework and enabling environment can be the focus in MRP phase 2, reinforcing the legal and physical architecture, and to complete the regulatory framework (including privacy aspects, data collection, etc). In other cases, such as WAEMU, CEMAC and much of South Asia, MRP may prioritise private sector engagement, even considering the possibility to financially invest in some remittance companies, which is in line with the UNCDF mandate.

¹¹¹ SDC used the term financial resilience, which is just one element of financial health.

Recommendation 3 (for UNCDF and donors): Also, take a more flexible approach in **country and corridor selection**.

The narrow country and corridor selection of phase 1 likely resulted in potentially impactful (private sector) projects being overlooked in LDCs that were not targeted. This is inconsistent with the stated goal to reach large numbers of migrant families. MRP needs to be able to offer services where these are needed and asked. Public sector engagements need to be logically focussed as such projects require long-term and intensive collaboration. The corridors are selected considering donors priorities, taking into account where other (UN) remittance players are currently working, and following the needs identified in country assessments. However, the geographic criteria for selecting private sector engagements can be more flexible and broad as the private sector partner is fully in charge and the engagements tend to be relatively small in terms of budget and time. Also, grants to private sector partners do not imperatively need to be combined with UNCDF TA, hence UNCDF local presence need not be a selection criterion.

Already, MRP engaged both sides of the remittance corridor. In some cases, targeting the sender may be more impactful than targeting the receiver. Such flexible approach may include mapping of migrant communities abroad, the involvement of Ministries of Foreign Affairs in a diaspora dialogue and needs assessment (and other players), and financial literacy on both sides.

Many migrant origin countries are developing legal labour migration channels with destination countries. Pre-departure training shall include aspects of sending and using remittances, which UNCDF (with IOM) is well-placed to support.

Recommendation 4: For all regulatory reform initiatives, **public sector partners must take the lead role**.

UNCDF should adopt a supportive stance, providing critical inputs and guidance, while refraining from taking on the responsibility of drafting policy documents. Leveraging the expertise of entities such as the studies department of NBE could significantly enhance diagnostic efforts, better embed the work in the recipient organisations, and add to sustainability.

This recommendation extends beyond the mere promulgation of new or updated regulations. It underscores the importance of ensuring effective communication and understanding of these regulations among private sector partners, thereby mitigating the risk of subjective interpretations. This is particularly crucial in countries where state-owned entities operate in the market, as regulations should not be perceived as hindering market competition.

Recommendation 5: Strengthen **collaboration with both UN and non-UN agencies** to leverage synergies and avoid duplication.

This includes close alignment with organizations like the World Bank and IFAD, including at the local (country) levels. UNCDF should proactively identify its unique value proposition to maximize its impact. This also implies more critically reflecting on the need for MRP to engage in types of work that other (UN-)agencies also do.

Recommendation 6: Moreover, MRP should enhance its engagement strategy by prioritizing **partnerships, especially with the private sector**.

Enabling environment work and research should be balanced with fostering strong relationships with key stakeholders. More closely associate global remittance players (Western Union/Money Gram), considering what UNCDF/MRP can offer them. A dual strategy to link market players shall both address global ones and those small/local ones that need support to reinforce the local remittance ecosystem.

Recommendation 7: Encourage the establishment of **regional or cross-border working groups** and facilitate peer exchanges, ideally conducted in a common language.

These initiatives foster collaboration and knowledge exchange, enhancing collective learning and progress. The work through RECs is but one example of this. MRP needs to progress from its one-sided reliance on the English language in publications, RfAs and communications, as it excludes large segments of the LDC target group in other language spheres.¹¹²

Recommendation 8: Embrace in-person events, training sessions, webinars, and horizontal peer exchanges as preferred avenues for capacity building and information sharing, **prioritizing direct engagement as opposed to research and publications.**

The evaluation showed such events to be appreciated and seen as contributing to idea generation, which is much less the case in MRP's publication activity.

Recommendation 9: Expand digital and financial literacy training initiatives, going beyond simple client onboarding, while recognizing that private sector partners may be more inclined to participate if it aligns with their commercial interests.

While such training, covering areas like savings, investment and money management, holds promise in empowering women especially, it may be unrealistic to expect private sector partners to fully finance these efforts. Given their operation within competitive markets and adherence to commercial mandates, MRP should explore potential revenue models, which may include a modest contribution by participants or external sponsorship from market operators or even humanitarian (donor) funding.

5.2.2 Recommendations on M&E:

Recommendation 10 (for UNCDF and donors): Ensure that each component within the Theory of Change (ToC) framework **incorporates a clearly defined indicator**, integrated directly into the respective ToC box, along with a feasible methodology for data collection.

The ToC is only complete when each box has an indicator that clarifies the meaning of the respective box, and which indicator is observable and measurable. The process of ToC development is iterative, and only stops when the above is fulfilled.

Regular tracking of progress concerning financial health among end-beneficiaries is essential. This could be built into private sector engagements through a base / endline moment, which need not be complicated and expensive. Furthermore, a specific indicator should be devised to measure the empowerment of women within the programme's scope.

Recommendation 11: Exercise judiciousness in undertaking any action, ensuring the presence of a **well-defined impact pathway and robust mechanisms for demonstrating the attainment of outcomes and impacts** within a timeframe that is both feasible and realistic.

This necessitates meticulous planning and evaluation, guided by a commitment to transparency and accountability. Adherence to these principles allows for the ascertainment of effectiveness and legitimacy, thereby fostering greater confidence and trust among stakeholders.

5.2.3 Recommendations on Budget and Cost Management:

Recommendation 12 (for UNCDF and donors): Structure and manage the MRP budget in a **result-based format** rather than an input-based format.

¹¹² The Migrant Money website is only available in English.

This approach ensures clarity in programmatic orientations and facilitates effective monitoring as progress in key output indicators can be compared to the corresponding budget absorption.

Additionally, it would be beneficial to specify the amounts of external finance that MRP aims to leverage, providing transparency and accountability in financial planning and resource allocation.

Recommendation 13 (for UNCDF and donors): Allocate a minimum **of 25% of the programme budget to grants for private sector partners**. Additionally, designate at least 10% of the programme budget specifically for initiatives aimed at promoting gender empowerment.

It is to be noted that all impact reported by MRP, impact in terms of migrants reached, came from private sector partners. So, the recommendation is to do a lot more of it.

This approach also aims to rectify the current programmatic imbalance, where most budget has been expended to UNCDF staff/TA and the production of publications. It should ensure a more equitable distribution of resources towards initiatives with tangible impact on the ground.

Recommendation 14: Within project selection (Request for Applications), give priority (through proposal scoring) to projects with an **explicit strategy to enhance gender inclusion**. The same principle applies to initiatives targeting the poorest segments in society.

In the case of RAKBANK MRP, gender focus was incorporated after project approval, effectively redesigning the intervention. While successful, this approach has not proven sustainable, as the bank is reverting to its previous business model focused on blue-collar working men.

Gender inclusion encompasses more than merely reaching women and meeting numerical targets. It entails finding ways to utilize financial resources to strengthen the decision-making capacity of women for the benefit of their families and themselves.

Recommendation 15: Install a **time-registration** system so that staff expenditure can be traced to projects for better cost-management and transparency.

This includes recording staff time unproductively used, e.g., not directly related to technical work.

5.2.4 Strategic orientations

The below recommendations go beyond the evaluation mandate, hence aim to encourage UNCDF and donor reflections on the subjects mentioned.

Orientation 1 (for UNCDF and donors): Time allocated to engagements needs to be sufficient for development, testing, implementation and assimilation by migrant communities.

- Private sector: 3+ years
- Governments and Central Banks: 5+ years
- RECs: 10+ years

This requires the corresponding donor engagements.

Orientation 2: UNCDF to define its risk appetite in grants to private sector partners

- What probability of success is expected of innovative fintech projects?
- What level of loss (USD) is acceptable?

This determines to what extent MRP should prioritise grants to medium-to-large RSP/FSPs, which typically have project implementation capacity but are not generally so innovative, or prioritise innovative fintechs that are typically innovative but have less operational capacity, or a combination of these.

Orientation 3: Develop alternative funding mechanisms beyond grants (scaling phase)

- Leverage UNCDF's own capital instruments (and team)

- Impact investors and eventually DFIs
- Commercial finance

5.3 Lessons Learned

- Regulatory reform and policy projects require long timelines, much beyond the donor funding cycle. As continued donor-funding is never certain, partner engagement must be prioritized to ensure sustainability.
- Complex projects, such as those related to technology, have a high risk of failure. This was visible in many MRP private sector engagements. Good preparation, including good knowledge of local legal issues, decreases that risk. Also, assess upfront if the intervention may have backlashes for other market participants. Stimulating a remittance platform, for instance, could affect the fee earning income of financial institutions. Getting their buy-in through an earning sharing approach increases the chances of project success.
- Large projects, such as infrastructure activities, need a long-term commitment and some flexibility as to the budget if the intervention does not develop as planned. The UNCDF contribution should also be meaningful, to be able to have leverage on the work. UNCDF should also be ready to discontinue support if it becomes clear a project will not yield results.
- Projects involving multiple participants need to have a firm commitment from all before starting, this to avoid ending up with stalled projects after the initial phase.
- Developing diaspora remittance products requires work on both sides of the corridor (e.g., diaspora engagement, needs assessment, marketing, financial literacy etc). MRP has successfully engaged RSPs on the migrant side of the corridor (e.g., digital and financial literacy). Diaspora agency/competent public bodies may also need to be involved at a certain point. IOM's pre-departure training of migrants in Bangladesh is such example.

6 GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The (mid-term) evaluation highlighted MRP's focus on gender inclusion as a cross-cutting topic. As migrants tend to originate from low-income communities, this LNOB concern is included indirectly. MRP did not address disability and human rights aspects. As earlier noted, MRP might in its surveys have tried to identify benefits on disabled people among remittance receivers.

Gender inclusion in MRP mainly meant improving **access**, onboarding women on digital products, giving them the same opportunities as men. This is in line with the LNOB agenda and MRP result indicators. Thus, in workstreams 1 and 2 MRP identified inhibitors to women accessing digital remittance services, such as lack of IDs that would help RSPs' KYC of women. MRP developed the single ID project with BCEAO in response.

Moreover, recognising the gendered nature of remittance patterns, MRP collaborated with central banks to develop gender-disaggregated transaction data. This acknowledges that informed gender policies rely on adequate data and knowledge. Within workstreams 3 and 4, the majority of gender-focused initiatives aimed to increase female participation, provide better information, and cater to their needs effectively. Additionally, efforts were made to make products and distribution methods more inclusive and accessible to women. The emphasis on "access" remained paramount across all MRP activities.

The underlying assumption is that providing access will lead to more frequent and improved "**usage**" of financial services, and, as indicated by lean data surveys, financial health benefits and increased **resilience**. It is believed that women migrants who utilize digital money have better control over their finances compared to those who rely solely on cash transactions. Similarly, women recipients receiving remittances via digital wallets may show interest in using additional financial services. However, the depth of such impacts remains uncertain, as evidenced by findings from the KIT survey, our own mini

survey, and discussions with Retail Service Providers (RSPs), which revealed that most remittances are immediately converted to cash and used for family expenses.

Efforts such as the IPA project, which aimed to align male and female priorities to empower women as decision-makers, and initiatives like SentBe's financial literacy training on prudent money management, have been undertaken.

Looking forward, MRP has scope to (financially) empower women through more meaningful financial education, showing them how using money wisely and productively can improve their personal life and their families, also post-migration. The evaluation showed that F/RSPs have an interest in this as it also helps them develop new clients' segments and product lines. However, partners' capacity to support this cost is limited, which is why SentBe discontinued its financial education programmes. Instead, MRP needs to seek a combination of external grant funding and client contributions to co-finance such work.

7 ANNEXES

Appendix A – Programme ToC (initial, 2019)

Inclusive digital economies support migrant and beneficiaries towards economic inclusion, financial resilience and reduced inequality.										
SECTOR OUTCOMES	↗		Migrants and beneficiaries regularly use a range of remittance-linked financial services as remittances act as a gateway to other services				↘			
	Expansion of the digital ecosystem with more investment, competition and innovation, and an increasing range and reach of services that leverage technology							Remittance and financial service providers benefit from diversified revenues from cross-selling opportunities and improved sustainability		
	↖		Migrants and beneficiaries regularly use digital remittance services				↙			
↑										
CLIENT OUTCOMES	Migrants and their families/beneficiaries are included by having access and using digital remittance and financial services Specific customers focus on: women (as the main recipients of remittances)									
	Migrants have improved ability, knowledge, skills and behaviors to meaningfully access and use digital remittance and financial services									
STAKEHOLDER OUTCOMES	Inclusive policies and regulations that enable access and usage of digital remittances services are acknowledged and accepted with a scope to be responsibly adopted and implemented		Digital infrastructure is strengthened, and open digital platforms and interoperability are promoted		Available, accessible, affordable, reliable and appropriate digital remittance services are piloted		Inclusive innovative business models and remittance-linked financial services are tested and deployed in two regions		New business models and delivery channels for building financial and digital capabilities, and soft and hard skills of migrants and beneficiaries are piloted	
OUTPUTS	Policy-makers and regulators have improved capacity and information to develop, supervise and enforce inclusive policies and regulations on remittances	Policy-makers and regulators engage with the private sector to address market constraints and align objectives	Remittance service providers, mobile network operators, government and other actors, are capable and committed to develop and expand inclusive and open digital infrastructure, and digital remittance offerings for migrants and beneficiaries				Start-ups, corporates and other actors have increased capacity and resources to offer inclusive innovative business models and services		Partners have the capacity, tools, and delivery channels to efficiently build financial and digital capabilities, and soft and hard skills of migrants and beneficiaries	
ACTIVITIES	UNCDF provides advice and TA, to remittances and financial sector and relevant sectoral policy makers and regulators, for the development of inclusive remittance policies and regulations	UNCDF provides investments and TA to regulators towards data driven decision making based on remittances and financial flows	UNCDF provides investment, TA, advocacy and brokers alliances to support remittance service providers, government and development partners in improving oversight capacity and digital rails (distribution network, e-KYC) for migrant communities	UNCDF provides investment, TA and brokers alliances to digital finance providers, payment aggregators and other stakeholders in support of open platforms and interoperable payment services for customers	UNCDF provides investment, TA and brokers alliances to support digital finance providers and other stakeholders to improve or develop digital remittance services for migrants/recipients	UNCDF provides investment, TA and brokers alliances with government, private sector and other actors to incentivize usage of digital remittance channels	UNCDF invests and crowds-in investment partners to test inclusive innovative business models and services		UNCDF provides investment, TA so that partners can build financial and digital capabilities of migrants and beneficiaries	UNCDF provides investment, TA so that partners can build the soft and hard skills of their migrants and beneficiaries through digital channels
	Research and Learning, Knowledge Sharing, Public-Private Dialogue, Development Partner Coordination, Events, Training, Workshops, Exposure Visits, etc.									
Workstream 1: Enabling Policy and Regulation			Workstream 2: Open Digital Payment Ecosystem			Workstream 3: Inclusive Innovation		Workstream 4: Empowered Customers		

Appendix B - List of MRP sub-projects, implementation status (31st Dec 2023)¹¹³

#	Projects / Contracts	Workstream				Synopsis	Status
		1	2	3	4		
1	IGAD	X	X			Regional harmonization of remittance policies, cross-border remittance infrastructure, and capacity-building	Regional diagnostic report and roadmap accepted. Moving into phase 2, implementation.
2	ECCAS	X	X			Regional harmonization of remittance policies, cross-border remittance infrastructure, and capacity-building	Regional diagnostic report and roadmap await endorsement.
3	WAEMU/BCEAO	X				Policy and regulation diagnostic in the WAEMU region, remittance data collection, and training and capacity-building.	Draft roadmap realized. Training with HKS done, and preparing for training in analysing informal remittances
4	CEMAC/BEAC	X				Policy, regulatory and payment infrastructures diagnostic reports in CEMAC countries; estimate informal remittance flows; establish a data collection system; capacity building	Draft roadmap realized
5	ECOWAS	X				No LOA, no project document, just informal contacts	Diagnostic assessment is ongoing, most countries done
6	NBE (Ethiopia)	X	X			Implement the remittance agenda within the National Financial Inclusion strategy	Diagnostic report (2020), TA on different topics, Directive on Foreign Currency Saving Account for Residents and Non-Resident Ethiopians, and Remittance service providers (RSPs) Directive
7	MoEWOE (Bangladesh)	X				TA and capacity-building support to develop insurance products for migrants and their family	Ongoing, stakeholder meeting done, preliminary research
8	Online/in person course, Harvard Kennedy School	X				Global remittances landscape and Smart Policy Design and Implementation (SPDI) approach in policy settings	63 senior managers from MRP's public- and private-sector partners trained. No further training foreseen
9	Access to Insurance Initiative (A2II)	X				New project under SDC Resilience programme, no information available	Ongoing
10	Digital ID (BCEAO / PWC)	X	X			Feasibility study to develop a region-wide system to identify unique financial service users in WAEMU	Completed, report submitted for BCEAO's decision and acceptance by member states

¹¹³ Projects indicated in a red "X" were not sampled for evaluative research.

11	TerraPay (Rep Congo)		X	X		Preparing a domestic digital payment infrastructure in the Republic of Congo, creating payment interoperability for the different digital financial service providers	Not successful due to lack of stakeholder response and regulatory constraints
12	Interoperability of digital identities (Accenture)		X			Study how the portability/interoperability of digital identities can be leveraged to improve the onboarding of migrants/recipients on digital channels	Report submitted and under peer review
13	Remittance-related enablers (Amarante)	X	X			Study on identifying remittance-related enablers and recommendations to advance this market, including advancing gender equality, for 44 remittance sending or receiving countries	Ongoing, part of studies completed and submitted. Is input into MRP's country diagnostics as part of work with RECs.
14	Handbook on Interoperable Payments (Glenbrook)		X			Handbook on Interoperable Payment Solutions led by Governments, Central Banks, or Regional Economic Community stakeholders	Report submitted and under peer review
15	SympliFi (Senegal, UK, France)			X		The project allows Senegalese residents to access credit locally for productive uses, based on a guarantee provided by Senegalese migrants in the European Union.	Completed. Low product take-up: only 114 guarantees were secured and 71 loans issued in the total value of EUR 35,000 (of which 9 defaulted).
16	Wizall Money (Senegal)			X		The project aimed at un/underbanked migrants and recipients intends to increase the adoption of Wizall digital wallet to accept international remittances.	Completed. Mobile wallet is working and remittances are received. Nano-credit sub-product not launched due to regulatory constraints and lack of IT platform.
17	BRAC Bank (Bangladesh)			X	X	Improve usage of digital modes of remittance both at the sending as well as at the receiving side. The project involved two existing solutions and five new solutions.	Completed, but not all sub-projects successful. Trained nearly 98,000 existing and potential remittance customers, with 78,000 of them being women
18	RAKBANK / Edenred (UAE)			X	X	Improve access to and usage of the digital remittance channel through the dedicated C3Pay app instead of physical cash exchange, focusing on blue-collar migrant workers, especially women	Completed, 193,726 customers were trained, including 6% women
19	SentBe (S Korea)			X	X	Introduce new services that improve the financial health of users and their families, such as financial literacy programmes, both online and offline, simple notification services channels and customer service centres	Completed, but financial literacy services discontinued due to high cost

20	Lucy (Singapore)			X		Fintech platform providing international remittance services, developed exclusively for women foreign domestic workers	Project completed but service discontinued.
21	BelCash / Lion Int Bank (Ethiopia)			X		Digital remittance-linked product that allows migrants to make online payments (MamaPays)	The product has been developed and launched with the support of the fintech BelCash and Bank of Abyssinia, which replaced Lion Bank
22	UAB Bank (Myanmar)			X	X	Digital apps, the addition of new international remittance partners, and the integration of real-time international remittance services	Stopped because country under sanctions
23	Framework for Inclusive Innovation for Migrant Remittances (Dalberg - Global)			X		Framework to guide the inclusive innovation strategies of RSPs, country assessments for Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Senegal, Nepal and subsequent action plans	Completed, country reports shared with key stakeholders and through closing workshops. Action plans made for inclusive innovation. Input into MRP strategic planning.
24	Ping Money (Gambia)			X		Institutional Assessment and Data Mapping of Ping	Completed
25	Kapronasia (Singapore)			X		Develop a gender responsive wages digitisation strategy in Singapore	Completed, report not yet issued
26	MSC Global consulting (Singapore)			X		Study on social protection of migrants in Singapore	Completed
27	IME Pay (Nepal)				X	Analyse data and obtain a better understanding of client profiles, this to inform the development of suitable products and distribution strategies	Completed. Product and business strategy changes toward access and usage of digital remittance with an emphasis on women
28	KIT Demand-side (with Wizall, BRAC Bank, RAKBANK and others)				X	Demand-side research consisting of transaction data analysis, lean data surveys and qualitative research (Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Senegal)	Completed. Informed the creation of two toolkits, A Human-Centred Design (HCD) toolkit and a Digital Financial Literacy (DFL) toolkit
29	Digital Financial Literacy (DFL) toolkit				X	See above	Seventeen modules available on Migrant Money website, for all to use and adapt to local context and language
30	IPA Impact study (Bangladesh)				X	Evaluate how aligning the financial goals of remittance senders and recipients influences their financial behaviour, including their remittance access, usage, savings, and resilience	Ongoing, baseline and endline survey done, analysis and reporting ongoing
31	Financial Health Survey (Senegal, Cameroun, Côte d'Ivoire)				X	Provide insights into barriers to migrants' financial access and usage, financial resilience, and health	Ongoing, surveys completed

Appendix C – Results reported to SIDA and SDC

Table 4 – Result indicators and targets according to programme documents, and results up to 2023

From SDC logical framework, attached to the contribution agreement 22 Nov 2019		
Target indicator	Target	Results Q3 2023 (according to UNCDF)
Impact		
Migrants and beneficiaries with improved financial health by 2023 Of which women	900,000 - 60%	910,930 - 27% women
Customer outcomes		
# Number of new customers onboarded to digital remittance channels supported by UNCDF, disaggregated by sex	480,000 - Women 300,000	910,930 - 27% women
# Number of customers who adopted new or improved remittance-linked financial services and products, disaggregated by sex	250,000 - Women 150,000	824
# Number of customers who adopted new or improved financial services linked to clean energy, water, education, health, disaggregated by sex	90,000 - 60,000 women	N/A
# Number of migrants and beneficiaries with improved skills and capabilities as a result of UNCDF support (financial, digital, soft and hard skills)	80,000 - 60,000 women	246,659 - 35 % women
Stakeholder outcomes		
# Number of agents trained	1,000	2,370 - 978 women
# Number of new active agents recruited by providers (delivery channel)	800	255 - 48 women
# Number of receiving methods increased	6	12
# Number of new or improved services piloted - digital remittance channels	8	9
# Number of new or improved services scaled - digital remittance channels	6	4
# Number of new or improved services piloted - remittance-linked financial services (payment, savings, credit, pension, micro-investment, etc.)	12	7
# Number of new or improved services scaled - remittance-linked financial services (payment, savings, credit, pension, micro-investment, etc.)	6	0
Sector outcomes		
Average remittance transaction cost by money transfer operators engaged (financial services)	3%	?
Amount of remittance flow channelled to productive investment	USD 10 m	?
# Number of partners with increase in revenue in partner organisations due to cross selling opportunities	7	?
Value of non-UNCDF external funds mobilized by UNCDF partner institutions due to UNCDF's support	50%	USD 2.6 m
Outputs		
# Number of partnerships facilitated to improve the outreach of digital remittance channels and offer financial products for migrants	15	5
Number of events, trainings, workshops, and exposure visits (by type) ▪ Event:	10	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trainings: ▪ Workshops: ▪ Exposure visits: 	12 20 5	21 webinars, 29 events
# of MNOs, MTOs, FinTech, and Financial Institutions supported by UNCDF for design and development of 'new products' in the market	15	0
# of MNOs, MTOs, FinTech, and Financial Institutions supported by UNCDF through Grants or Technical Assistance or both for design, development and scale up of 'new products' in the market	7	6
# Number of financial awareness trainings organized and digital literacy applications contributed to	10	5
# Number of business cases developed with documented lessons learned with remittance service providers	5	1
# Number of trainings / workshops conducted with remittances/financial service providers on business case for innovative financial solutions for migrants and their families	15	100+
Number of publications, blogs and videos (by type) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Publications: ▪ Blogs: ▪ Videos: ▪ Public speaking opportunities at regional and global level 	8 50 5 10	100+

From SIDA prodoc, phase 1 (2019-2022)		
Target indicator	Target	Result 2022 (according to UNCDF)
Enabling Policy and Regulation		
# policies changed or adopted, built upon PoWER diagnostic and/ or similar gender mainstreaming tools	1	0
# regional diagnostics and reharmonization reports	3	61
# regulators workshop on policy and data analytics	6	44
# data portals supported	1	2
Open Digital Finance Ecosystem		
# pilots launched to improve the last mile connectivity	4	1
# capacity building activities for remittance providers	6	23
# new enrolled customers of digital remittance services	35,000	4,854, women 1,842
# active agents offering remittances with clear focus (also) on women as customer group	1,000	3,827
Inclusive Innovation		
# capacity building activities to develop innovative products	4	24
# remittance-linked financial services piloted with a focus on women centric products	2	0
# users enrolled to remittance-linked financial services	4,000	0
# institutions that integrate financial services linked to remittances in their operations	2	0
Empowered Customers		
# financial education and digital literacy campaigns	4	0
# female and male migrants and beneficiaries trained on digital and financial literacy	1,000	0
# people that received training or education through digital channels	500	0

Research and Knowledge Sharing		
# market research	3	2
# publications	6	19
# knowledge sharing events	4	6

Source: both tables were generated by the MRP team from AirTable

From 2023, the SIDA project shifted into phase 2, and operated under another programme document and a new set of result indicators. The result table was availed to the evaluators. However, as this phase 2 project has only progressed through its first year, this result table is not reproduced here.

Appendix D – Result Measurement Framework MRP (per Dec 2023)

ToC level	Indicator	Disaggregation	Targets	Donor	Results	Evaluators' comment
Activity	1) Number of stakeholders supported by UNCDF	by type	22	SDC, SIDA	9 private sector partners, 30 public sector stakeholders (RECs + member countries)	Validated
Activity	2) Value of UNCDF investments (Committed/ Expensed/ Milestones)	by type (Grant, TA, Loan)			20,419,459 USD, including 12,390,630 USD in Technical Assistance and 687,300 USD in grants to private sector partners.	Validated
Activity	3) Value of partner investments due to UNCDF's support (Committed/ Expensed/ Milestones)	X	1	SDC	50% of grants value by private sector partners	Validated
Activity	4) Number of capacity building activities (events, trainings, exposure visits. and workshops)	by type	67	SDC, SIDA	181 workshops and trainings	Not Validated, but there were many
Activity	5) Number of participants of capacity building activities (events, trainings, exposure visits. and workshops)	women	n/a	SDC, SIDA	1,177 participants (Non-UNCDF)	Likely more, e.g., webinars
Activity	6) Number of financial education and digital literacy campaigns	n/a	SDC: 10, SIDA: 4	SDC, SIDA	5: BRAC Bank (3): RakBank (1), SentBe (1)	Validated
Activity	7) Number of publications, blogs and videos and market research	by type	80	SDC, SIDA	109 publications, including 4 assessments guides, 5 reference guides, 18 country and regional diagnostics, 4 toolkits, 3 exploratory papers and 39 articles and case studies	Validated through PowerBI
Output - level I	8) Number of new or improved digital services and business models piloted (digital remittance channels; remittance linked financial services; remittance linked	women-centric	37	SDC, SIDA	14 -BRAC: 4; Lion Bank/HelloCash: 1; Lucy: 6; RAK BANK: 1; SympliFi: 1; IME: 1	The four new services by BRAC do not presently generate deal flow. Lucy has been discontinued.

	health, insurance and basic services; receiving methods; specific focus on last mile connectivity women-centric pilots.)					
Output - level 2	9) Number of institution showing increased commitment in integrating financial services, linked to remittances, in their operations	n/a	n/a	SIDA	SIDA indicator, relevant for Wizall and TerraPay: 0	Validated
Output - level 2	10) Number of partnerships facilitated to improve the outreach of digital remittance channels and offer financial products for migrants	n/a	15	SDC	(SDC indicator) 7 partnerships: BRAC Bank, Lion Bank partnerships, Lucy/Rapyd, SympliFi/Baobab.	Validated, but several have been discontinued. The usage of MamaPays (former Lion Bank) is negligible.
Output - level 2	11) Number of institutions that report improved data analytics capacity for product development	n/a	8	SDC?	7 -BRAC Bank, RAKBANK, IME, TerraPay, Wizall, SentBe, Lion Bank	Validated
Output - level 2	12) Number of responsive policy measures related to remittances initiated	n/a	n/a	SDC, SIDA	21 policies initiated, 11 regulations and policies changes implemented; 4 partially implemented and 6 under consideration; ECCAS (4), IGAD (17)	There have been a number of policies and regulations under two policy areas in Ethiopia.
Stakeholder outcome	13) Number of new or improved digital services and business models scaled (digital remittance channels; remittance linked financial services; remittance linked health, insurance and basic services.)	women-centric	15	SDC, SIDA	4 -BRAC Bank (2); IME (1); RAK BANK (1), Lion Bank/HelloCash (1)	See above, the four channels for BRAC Bank were developed but do not generate transactions.
Stakeholder outcome	14) Number of agents trained on new remittance or remittance-linked products	women	1,000	SDC	8,152 -12.3% Women	The number could not be validated, but that women agents were hired is true.

Stakeholder outcome	15) Number of active agents recruited by providers offering remittances or remittance-linked products	women	1,800	SDC, SIDA	(data measured on quarterly basis, non-cumulative) Q1 2023: 2,996 (Wizall)	Ditto
Stakeholder outcome	16) Number of policies, regulations and standards introduced or improved	n/a	1	SIDA	11 policies and regulations improved (fully implemented)	In two policy areas in Ethiopia.
Client outcome	17) Number of registered customers of new or improved digital services supported by UNCDF	type of service, women	859,000	SDC, SIDA	916,202 - 27.3% Women <i>(figure differs from report to SDC, which was 910,930, but that was 2023 Q3)</i>	Data by private sector partners that evaluators cannot verify with precision. However, BRAC bank did significantly increase its remittance volume.
Client outcome	18) Number of active customers of new or improved digital services supported by UNCDF	type of service, women	n/a	SDC, SIDA	<i>(data measured on quarterly basis, non-cumulative) Q1 2023: BRAC Bank: 54,228 active customers per quarter; RAKBANK: 24 805; Wizall: 1,011; Lucy: 140; IME: 2,795</i>	Research by evaluators confirms generally very low uptake and active usage of new services, around 10% usage.
Client outcome	19) Number of migrants and beneficiaries with improved skills and capabilities as a result of UNCDF support	women	81,500	SDC, SIDA	185,548 customers with improved skills and capabilities (45% women). <i>(figure differs from report to SDC, which was 246,659 on 2023 Q3)</i>	Data by private sector partners that neither UNCDF nor evaluators can verify with precision. It mainly concerns actions and messages to onboard clients.
Sector outcome	20) Number of partner organizations with increased sustainability	n/a	7	SDC	Partners are offering the products developed/tailored with UNCDF beyond the project closure with the exception of Lucy and Lion Bank. USD 2.6 million of non-UNCDF external funds mobilized by our partners.	No data to support this claim.

Sector outcome	21) Amount of remittance flow channelled to productive investment	n/a	USD 10 million	SDC	Lean Data Survey estimates on remittance usage: Education 31% Electricity Water 31%; Production 19% Buying/Renting land, a house, livestock 13% Starting or improving a business, buying agricultural equipment and inputs 6% Health 22% Paying medical bills, pay for (health) insurance and pension: 4% Total Remittance Volume: USD 1.3 billion.	Field work and mini-survey suggests most remittances are immediately expended for consumption and daily needs.
Sector outcome	22) Average remittance transaction cost by money transfer operators engaged (financial services)	n/a	3%	SDC	Savings of US\$ 27 million (as estimated) on remittance transaction costs.	No data. However, going from informal to formal channels may actually increase the cost.
Goal	23) Number of migrants and beneficiaries with improved financial health	women	900,000 60% women	SDC	916,202 - 27.3% women	Given the low usage of (new) digital remittance services, this cannot be true. It also does not indicate the extent and depth of financial health benefits.

Indicators from UNCDF’s Integrated Results and Resources Matrix (IRRM)

The indicators MRP (annually) reports to are the following indicators (Strategic Framework 2022-2025):

- Oc 1.3 - # of new or improved products, services and infrastructures a) scaled up by UNCDF-supported partners; b) crowded in through UNCDF or its partners' influence
- Oc 1.4 - # of people engaging with UNCDF-supported products, services and infrastructures
- Oc 2.1 - US\$ value of finance mobilized in association with UNCDF investments
- Oc 3.3 - # of new/improved policies, strategies and regulations that have been adopted following UNCDF support or influence.
- Op 1.1 - # and total US\$ value of UNCDF investments under execution at the end of the year
- Op 3.1 - # of new/improved policies, strategies and regulations that are or have been in development in the SF period with UNCDF support and/or with clear link to UNCDF advocacy

- Op 3.3 - # of product, service and infrastructure providers that are or have been supported by UNCDF in the SF period with capacity development and/or technical assistance
- Op 4.1 - # new or improved products, services and infrastructures piloted / launched with UNCDF support
- Op 4.2 - # of people who have received capability support

Appendix E – Programme Expenditure 2019-2023 (USD)

Workstreams	Projects	Grants and external costs	Technical assistance cost (MRP staff)	Total cost	% Distribution
Enabling Policy and Regulations	IGAD	138,210.12	611,806.72	750,016.84	4%
Enabling Policy and Regulations	ECCAS	7,607.80	474,696.82	482,304.62	2%
Enabling Policy and Regulations	WAEMU/BCEAO		396,422.76	396,422.76	2%
Enabling Policy and Regulations	CEMAC/BEAC		160,252.03	160,252.03	1%
Enabling Policy and Regulations	ECOWAS		42,870.39	42,870.39	0%
Enabling Policy and Regulations	NBE (Ethiopia)		324,669.63	324,669.63	2%
Enabling Policy and Regulations	MoEWOE (Bangladesh)		20,381.77	20,381.77	0%
Enabling Policy and Regulations	Online course Harvard	249,949	250,423.57	500,372.57	2%
Enabling Policy and Regulations	Access to Insurance Initiative (A2II)	-	25,088.44	25,088.44	0%
Enabling Policy and Regulations	Digital ID (BCEAO / PWC)	192,000.00	112,112.67	304,112.67	1%
Enabling Policy and Regulations	Nepal Rastra Bank		14,015.29	14,015.29	0%
Enabling Policy and Regulations	Remittance-related enablers (Amarante)	124,727	377,139.08	501,866.08	2%
Enabling Policy and Regulations	Remittance Data and Statistics	-	1,304,675.93	1,304,675.93	6%
Enabling Policy and Regulations	Risk Management	-	192,291.12	192,291.12	1%
Subtotal Enabling Policy and Regulations		712,493.92	4,306,846.23	5,019,340.15	24%
Open Digital Payment Ecosystem	Interoperability of digital identities (Accenture)	285,550.00	144,531.38	430,081.38	2%
Open Digital Payment Ecosystem	Handbook on Interoperable Payments (Glenbrook)	206,882.40	252,297.71	459,180.11	2%
Open Digital Payment Ecosystem	TerraPay (Rep Congo)	20,000.00	206,865.51	226,865.51	1%
Open Digital Payment Ecosystem	G20 TechSprint 2023	-	59,932.47	59,932.47	0%
Open Digital Payment Ecosystem	POC: Proxy Addressing System Service (PASS)	-	173,226.58	173,226.58	1%
Open Digital Payment Ecosystem	Open Digital Payment Ecosystem Account Addressing, Tokenized Compliance, Real-time settlement	-	215,919.04	215,919.04	1%
Subtotal Open Digital Payment Ecosystem		512,432.40	1,052,772.68	1,565,205.08	7%
Inclusive Innovations	SympliFi (Senegal, UK, France)	44,000.00	148,059.23	192,059.23	1%
Inclusive Innovations	Wizall Money (Senegal)	72,500.00	175,842.65	248,342.65	1%
Inclusive Innovations	BRAC Bank (Bangladesh)	241,800.00	183,703.18	425,503.18	2%
Inclusive Innovations	Rakbank / Edenred (UAE)	140,000.00	271,763.72	411,763.72	2%
Inclusive Innovations	SentBe (S Korea)	50,000.00	140,140.14	190,140.14	1%
Inclusive Innovations	Lucy (Singapore)	24,000.00	152,396.77	176,396.77	1%
Inclusive Innovations	Lion Int Bank (Ethiopia)	115,000.00	169,310.77	284,310.77	1%
Inclusive Innovations	UAB Bank (Myanmar)	-	92,306.46	92,306.46	0%
Inclusive Innovations	Framework for Inclusive Innovation for Migrant Remittances (Dalberg - Global)	650,000.00	373,601.95	1,023,601.95	5%
Inclusive Innovations	Ping Money (Gambia)	-	27,844.90	27,844.90	0%
Inclusive Innovations	Kapronasia (Digital Wages)	52,500.00	108,764.94	161,264.94	1%
Inclusive Innovations	MSC Global consulting (Social Protection)	44,930.00	296,305.12	341,235.12	2%
Inclusive Innovations	IME Pay (Nepal)	-	90,905.27	90,905.27	0%
Inclusive Innovations	Social Protection Study and advocacy - D3P Global	80,837.40	153,727.86	234,565.26	1%
Inclusive Innovations	Other consultants		57,100.00	57,100.00	0%
Subtotal Inclusive Innovations		1,515,567.40	2,441,772.99	3,957,340.39	19%
Empowered Customers	KIT Demand-side (with SympliFi, Wizall, BRAC)	623,536.00	412,248.21	1,035,784.21	5%
Empowered Customers	Digital Financial Literacy (DFL)/HCD toolkit		226,339.43	226,339.43	1%
Empowered Customers	IPA Impact study (Bangladesh)	139,966.20	149,600.25	289,566.45	1%
Empowered Customers	Financial Health (Senegal, Cameroun, Cote d'Ivoire)	122,100.00	117,744.86	239,844.86	1%
Subtotal Empowered Customers		\$885,602	\$905,933	\$1,791,535	8%
Advocacy and Strategic Communication	Vendors 1. Copyediting 2. Copyediting and Design 3. Design 4. Editing 5. Interpretation/Translation 6. Photography and Videography 7. Technical Writing	1,078,574.89	1,144,124	2,222,699.30	10%
Advocacy and Strategic Communication	Remittances Call to Action		210,809	210,808.93	1%
Subtotal Advocacy and Strategic Communication		1,078,574.89	1,354,933.34	2,433,508.23	11%
Gender Mainstreaming		10,000.00	394,409.16	404,409.16	2%
Subtotal Gender Mainstreaming		10,000.00	394,409.16	404,409.16	2%
Result Measurement		-	360,575	360,574.54	2%
Subtotal Result Measurement		-	360,574.54	360,574.54	2%
Programme Management	Team Costs	105,136.84	2,121,186.27	2,226,323.11	10%
Learning Costs and Trainings	Learning Costs and Trainings	257,096.05	261,913.26	519,009.31	2%
GMS	GMS	1,508,433.38		1,508,433.38	7%
Office Costs	Office Costs	350,867.85		350,867.85	2%
Software costs	Asana, Sales Force, Tableau, Adobe, Microsoft, etc	190,877.94		190,877.94	1%
Travels	Travels	887,993.29		887,993.29	4%
Subtotal Programme Management		3,300,405.35	2,383,099.53	5,683,504.88	27%
Other costs		137,955.17		137,955.17	0.65%
Total costs		8,153,031.33	13,200,341.22	21,353,372.55	

Appendix F – Case Studies

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Case study IGAD (2021-23) - Intergovernmental Authority on Development

1) Introduction

As part of its workstream 1, policy and regulation, MRP has been working with Regional Economic Commissions (RECs) in Africa, namely IGAD, ECCAS, and ECOWAS to bring about harmonisation of remittance policies. In parallel, MRP also works with the monetary groupings WAEMU and CEMAC and their regional central banks BCEAO and BEAC to achieve the same purposes and harmonise aspects of financial sector regulation related to seamless cross-border payment systems and last-mile access and usage. From these, the IGAD project is the most advanced as it reached the stage where recommendations for harmonisation of national and regional remittance policies and regulations were accepted by regional governments and central banks, and an action plan was drawn up for short and medium-term implementation. Because of its advanced and comprehensive nature, the IGAD project was selected for this case study, demonstrating the approach followed in all workstream 1 projects with RECs. The case study refers to phase 1, which was completed in mid-2023, not phase 2 that just started.¹ The IGAD project is funded from the SIDA budget and follows SIDA's funding cycle of MRP.²

Discussions with SIDA revealed that the idea to work with IGAD and other RECs originated from SIDA, this in line with SIDA's regional development programme for Africa, migration being one of the focus areas. SIDA identified UNCDF as a suitable partner for implementation, this in recognition of remittance work already done by UNCDF, in West Africa in particular. Although IGAD formally requested MRP support, the possible collaboration with IGAD had already been identified in the SIDA prodoc. IGAD, which works with SIDA on various projects, was aware of this. While SIDA's support did not preclude national-level interventions, the core of support was meant for regional harmonisation of remittance policies, regulations and payment structures. When the IGAD project started, MRP was already assisting National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) and country assessment had already taken place. However, NBE participated in all other parts of the IGAD project.³ The IGAD project was formalised through a Letter of Agreement, accompanied by a result chain and work plan.

As collaboration and integration among IGAD member states is quite weak, the project opted to take a broad and all-encompassing approach. Also, the IGAD project put a lot of emphasis on bringing public and private sector stakeholders together, get their buy-in, and develop a road map for harmonisation reform. It will eventually be their responsibility to implement the reform agenda, and they need to set the priorities.⁴ It was early recognised that regional policy convergence requires several subsequent phases of policy and regulatory reform, hence will be a long-term endeavour. As noted above, SIDA has not committed to any of such successive phases beyond the first and second.

The case study was undertaken through desk review, interviews with UNCDF staff, IGAD, and NBE in Ethiopia during the country visit.

¹ The IGAD region and project covers Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda. However, most of the analytical Ethiopia work was conducted through a separate bilateral project between NBE and UNCDF (MRP).

² SIDA has indicated that the second phase of its support to MRP, hence the IGAD project, was not a priori decided, and depended on results in phase 1. There was, however, the understanding that further SIDA support might follow on successful project implementation in phase 1.

³ NBE has confirmed its active participation in the project meetings, and appreciates the need for regional harmonisation. However, NBE also noted the great diversity of IGAD countries, which hampers regional convergence.

⁴ As confirmed by the country visit to Ethiopia, both public and private sector (e.g., Telebirr Chief Mobile Money Business officer)

Picture 1 – The countries of IGAD



2) Background

The MRP projects with RECs are a recognition of the fact that a lot of migration takes place within the regions, hence there are also vast intra-regional remittance streams, this on top of inbound remittances from Europe, the Middle East and elsewhere. Remittances are hugely important in IGAD, constituting some 4% of regional GDP, and close to a quarter in South Sudan and Somalia. The trendline in international and intra-regional remittances in IGAD is upward, reaching nearly USD 9 billion in 2021. However, there are many inefficiencies hampering remittances, impeding their security and adding to transaction costs. According to the IGAD inception report (Sept 2021), some of the core challenges are the following:

- Regional differences, even contradictions, in licensing and authorization requirements for remittance service providers (RSPs), making it difficult for RSPs to set up services across borders. The same is true for mobile money services wanting to connect remittance corridors. This reduces migrants' options for (cost-effective) remitting.
- Likewise, prudential supervision, AML/CFT, laws and regulations, foreign exchange regimes, consumer protection, complaints resolution mechanisms, transparency and disclosures, all tend to differ, which are barriers for RSPs to provide cross-border remittance services. IGAD member states also lack robust ID systems, complicating customer onboarding into the formal sector and of irregular migrants and women in particular.
- Lack of connectivity of payments systems, settlement and reconciliation, leading to needlessly complex routes through international correspondent banks, and favouring incumbent financial sector players at the detriment of MFIs, fintechs, and mobile money providers that serve otherwise financially excluded customers.
- Restrictions on currency conversion in some countries (e.g., Ethiopia), or illiquid markets, leading to costly conversions through third currencies (USD, EUR) before the currency of the recipient is arrived at. This is in contrast to the CEMAC and WAEMU monetary unions that benefit from a single currency, fixed to the EUR.
- Because of the above, high remittance transaction costs, up to 10% in some cases, which remittances in addition are slow to arrive at their destinations and inconvenient to access (lack of digitalisation).
- Because of the above, migrants' reliance on informal, insecure and sometimes expensive cash-based remittance channels, which in addition escape control and (gender-disaggregated)

registration by monetary authorities and regulators, this instead of likely more secure regulated digital channels.

The IGAD diagnostic report (Sept 2022), published after the country assessment and stakeholder meetings, includes a more detailed problem analysis. This report also clarified the **harmonisation concept** as follows: “Harmonization for this project shall include all the processes by which policies and regulatory frameworks and standards related to remittances or payment infrastructures approved by different regulatory bodies establish similarity of processes and services or mutual understanding of the information provided according to these policies, regulations and standards or interoperability of payment infrastructures. The processes may include the application of similar or aligned laws, regulations, and standards, mutual recognition, and/or determining equivalence focusing on core issues in the areas of licensing and authorization regimes; electronic money, particularly mobile money; pay-out networks, particularly on agencies; customer onboarding particularly on risk-based know-your-customer (KYC); consumer protection; foreign exchange regulations and interoperability of payment infrastructure.”

3) The IGAD project

According to the IGAD project inception report (Sept 2021), the objective of the project was to “elaborate a conducive gender-responsive policy and regulatory framework and supporting infrastructure to facilitate affordable and accessible cross-border remittances, that will drive remittance costs down and increase flows through formal channels”. The IGAD project was to assess policy and regulatory regimes to identify areas for possible convergence in areas such as licensing and authorization regimes, prudential supervision, AML/CFT laws and regulations, consumer protection, complaints resolution mechanisms and transparency, disclosures, and foreign exchange regimes.

The Letter of Agreement (LOA) between UNCDF and IGAD does not mention that it concerns phase 1 and that other phases of UNCDF support may be foreseen and necessary.⁵ However, the result chain, part of which is reproduced as an appendix below, includes many boxes which timing goes beyond the implementation period of the project phase 1 (until 2022), hence implicitly suggests the need for follow-up actions with or without UNCDF.⁶ For the purpose of this evaluation, phase 1 is considered completed, hence UNCDF accountability ends, when a road map and implementation plan for regional harmonisation were presented to the respective decision makers (box 13 of the ToC). Boxes 14 and 15 (IGAD and member state capacity building) also fall within the scope of the IGAD project. Who and how the harmonised policies will be implemented (boxes 16 and further) is not in scope for phase 1 hence not part of this case study.

The IGAD project (phase 1) was divided into three components (see LOA):

- Harmonization of **laws and regulations** - developing convergence criteria for (five) priority elements of the regulatory framework (e.g., licensing and authorization, prudential supervision, integrity and risk, consumer protection, foreign exchange)
- Cross border **remittance infrastructure** - leveraging on existing infrastructure to support cost-effective solutions (e.g., cross-border interoperability, harmonisation of operating standards, ID systems)
- **Capacity building** - of key stakeholders including IGAD Secretariat, regulatory institutions, central banks and relevant ministries in member states, in the areas of cross-border remittances and payments

The IGAD inception report describes the sequential activities to be undertaken:

⁵ Neither does the MRP programme document mention the possibility of future phases of SIDA support.

⁶ This is a feature of most project ToCs in MRP. It would be good to explicitly state where the project ends, and what part of the ToC just shows the wider impact pathway with hoped-for post project outcomes and impacts.

- Desk reviews of remittance-related policies, laws and regulations at country level, with a review of existing payment infrastructure, and operating standards at country and regional level.
- Stakeholder consultations, both public and private sectors
- Ensure gender mainstreaming
- Define IGAD remittance landscape, identifying policies, regulations, infrastructure, operating standards, and enablers and barriers of harmonization, with recommendations on convergence criteria. Prepare Roadmap with practical steps and timelines or achieving harmonization. Develop implementation plan, prioritizing actions to attain the intended goals.

While the inception report and result measurement plan for phase 1 do not include a specific performance metric, we may assume the approved roadmap and implementation plan to be the final deliverables and metric for success of phase 1. As noted, the project is preparative in nature, and does not include the actual implementation of policy and regulatory harmonisation. It is observed, however, that the dates written into the ToC at the level of customer and sector outcomes suggest significant progress in the reform agenda by the year 2025. Given the poor level of inter-IGAD integration, low level of development of several member states, and very large number of harmonisation actions to be undertaken, this is overambitious.

4) The process

The IGAD project was implemented by UNCDF and IGAD, drawing on the resources of national regulators, chiefly central banks. No external consultants were hired. Project teams consisted of staff from UNCDF, IGAD secretariat, and member states. The interviews revealed, however, that most of the technical work (e.g., country assessments) was performed by MRP staff who divided the countries among the team.

The respective country assessments were validated first with IGAD, and then with member state representatives (government, central bank, private sector) through stakeholder meetings, and a final validation workshop held in Entebbe – Uganda. During this Entebbe Workshop, UNCDF sat together with the representations from each member - about 8-9 representatives from central banks/line ministries from each country. The participants were split per country, walked through each item of the draft report, and provided further input to the draft report.

In spite of the above, drafting the diagnostics was not a truly collaborative and participatory work. While many online meetings were held, the project team did not, in preparation of the country assessments, travel to all member states (e.g., not to South Sudan and not to Somalia), and did not sit with (all relevant) public and private sector stakeholders to draft the diagnostics together. Rather, stakeholders were given the drafts to comment on. Budgetary constraints as well as covid were the cause of this.

5) Results achieved

The following work was done and results achieved:

- **Assessment reports for all (7) countries**, including an analysis of the remittance landscape (market, infrastructure, products), and recommendations for country-level reform (legal and regulatory framework, cross-border payment infrastructure, market aspects, consumer protection, cooperation and collaboration among regional regulators).⁷ Most of the country diagnostics were completed by September 2022, after various rounds of feedback.
- **Roadmap for regional harmonisation** on the above-mentioned topics. The Roadmap, presented in December 2021 as a PPT, showed the timing of broad reform actions to be undertaken across the various subject areas (e.g., national payment systems laws, enabling e-

⁷ By way of example, the assessment for South Sudan recommended establishing a national switch to help non-bank RSPs access the payment system. It also recommended a microfinance law, as the sector is currently self-regulated. Another recommendation was the establishment of shared and integrated financial infrastructure for all financial sector participants, including mobile money providers. ID databases could be standardized and digitized. All-in-all, there were over 50 recommendations over the five convergence criteria researched.

money, non-bank remittance services, AML/CFT laws, fintechs, foreign exchange, microfinance), with a timeline till December 2025 – hence much beyond phase 1 of the IGAD project.

- **Regional diagnostic report**, September 2022, including a summary of causes and consequences of lack of harmonized policy and regulatory frameworks relating to remittances, recommendations at the regional level, and benchmarking among IGAD countries and with external reference countries (policies, legal and regulatory frameworks, payment infrastructure, market practices).
- **Action plan (2023-2025)** for harmonization of remittance policies in IGAD. In contrast to the above, the action plan lists for each of the seven countries and IGAD just a few reforms, related to policy and to digital infrastructure, that could be undertaken in the short to medium term. The action plan set the priorities for phase 2 under SIDA funding, taking into account that SIDA cannot finance everything. However, the regional monitoring and evaluation matrix contains all items, short-term, medium-term and long-term, that IGAD countries can implement through other support.
- **Closing meeting with central bank governors**, accepting the regional road map and individual country assessments, and agreeing to establish a Regional Steering Committee, National Working Groups on Remittances (NWG-R), and national (central bank) Single Points of Contact to support and coordinate (regional and national) implementation.

As mentioned above, IGAD phase 1 did not yet produce the actual harmonisation, just prepared for it. The (2022) Regional Diagnostic report shows ten levels of harmonisation, with the project just having reached the first level: “Central banks and other regulators agree and commit to the obligation to implement the roadmap in the laws and regulations of each Member State”. The action plan shows where to begin, but it is up to national governments and regulators to make it happen. IGAD may help them prioritise, apply its convening power, but has no ultimate power to enforce reform actions. According to UNCDF, the contact persons/focal points/points of contact were identified, to help communication and ensure the next steps in the convergence process, but most had not yet started work (as of 31st Dec 2023).

6) Evaluative conclusions

Relevance

The IGAD project inception report justifies the intervention through the same references that underly MRP in its entirety, namely the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which seeks to “promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants”, and SDG target 10.c to “by 2030, reduce to less than 3 percent the transaction costs of migrant remittances.” The challenges listed in section 2 above, in particular the high volume of intra-regional remittances and the high cost of such, reflect the same concerns. Reference is also made to the IGAD foundational document aiming to “promote joint development strategies and gradually harmonize macro-economic policies and programmes.” Migration is a priority area for IGAD, considering the high level of migration to the Gulf States in particular, as well as strong intra-regional migration, much of which undocumented. Remittance streams, often informal, are a consequence. Strong high-level participation of member states in various events organised by MRP suggests that understanding of the developmental potential of remittances is widely understood across the region. The IGAD project also reflects the UNCDF and Inclusive Digital Economics (IDE) strategy, namely the pillar on policy and regulation.

The response strategy of the IGAD project reflects the above policy goals, aiming to remedy top-level constraints in the enabling policy and regulatory environment that make remittances needlessly complex and costly. In terms of the MRP ToC, the IGAD project covers workstreams 1 and 2, and is coherent with the work undertaken in other RECs. The evaluative conclusion is that the project was relevant to both global policy concerns and the MRP ToC. The IGAD project also directly responds to SIDA’s policy concerns, in particular its interest in migration in a regional context, as well as to facilitate the possible return of migrants.

It is noted, however, that gender did not play a strong role in the IGAD project, and it was not mentioned in the LoA, nor did the LoA refer to human rights, disability and other cross-cutting issues. Gender inhibitors and recommendations, however, were included in the country assessments. Also, three IGAD members states are fragile states, four experience internal conflict, and most have very poor populations.

Effectiveness

The evaluation of effectiveness relates to the production of outputs and achievement of outcomes.

According to the result chain presented at inception, the core expected outputs of the project were (box 4-13):

- **Country assessments** of (1) remittance policy and regulations, (2) market and competition aspects, (3) payments infrastructure, (4) consumer protection, and (5) comparative assessments (benchmarking), with (7) country assessment reports issued
- **A road map of policy recommendations** in the above areas and implementation (action) plan approved
- **Capacity building** of regional and national authorities in remittance policies and regulations

The expected outcomes (box 14 and 15) were:

- IGAD has the capacity to identify, develop, supervise and enforce policy harmonization across members states
- IGAD member states have capacity to identify policy gaps to improve the regional harmonization of policy linked to remittances

Although the result chain also showed the actual implementation of harmonisation proposals (box 16-20), this was not part of the project (phase 1) and therefore not part of the mid-term evaluation and case study.⁸

As was shown above, the IGAD project (phase 1) was effective in output achievement. Detailed assessments of remittance related policies at national and regional level were made, and recommendations formulated with a broad timeline for implementation. The country assessments were discussed with national stakeholders, and after adjustment accepted by member states and central bank governors. It is to be noted, however, that most of these recommendations are not “implementation ready”, and still need a lot of work to be translated into policies or regulations ready for adoption.

Outcome achievement in terms of capacitating member states to reach the harmonisation goals of the action plan is to be continued in phase 2. It was noted, however, that the UNCDF TA to IGAD, in the form of a resident expert, helped the secretariat develop a migration and remittances programme.

The case study also brought to light a number of factors that may hamper further outcome achievement (box 16 and higher), hence outcome effectiveness:

- The country assessments include a very large number of recommendations for harmonisation, as many as fifty per country. As it is inconceivable that all or even a small part can be implemented within the timeframe of the road map (until 2025), this was narrowed down in the subsequent action plan and proposed for phase 2 MRP support. It might, however, have been more effective to limit the country diagnostics and recommendations to the most important elements right away, focussing on reforms truly necessary to bring about efficient cross-border payment streams. The 2023-2025 action plan indicates what those priorities might have been.⁹ The IGAD

⁸ According to the UNCDF report to SIDA, there were in IGAD 17 “regulations initiated, improved, or under consideration”, of which 13 from Ethiopia. However, the activities in Ethiopia were under the MRP/NBE programme, not the IGAD programme. In addition, it mainly involves two outcome areas, namely 1) Payment operators, and 2) Foreign currency savings. In both cases there were multiple directives, regulations, and repeated amendments issued. There is also the issue of result attribution to MRP, on which there is clearly no consensus in NBE. The report also mentions uncompleted policy interventions in Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia and Sudan, which as a claimed result is a bit premature.

⁹ IGAD indicated that member states came up with many reform proposals, and wanted all of them included in the assessments.

team flagged the risk that member states may be distracted by issues of lesser importance and priority in a regional setting. Already, IGAD and UNCDF face push back from member states and central banks that jealously protect their sovereignty, with IGAD being able to do little more than bring to bear its convening powers.

- Furthermore, the recommendations in country assessments mainly focus on national measures, not harmonisation that all IGAD countries need to undertake simultaneously to allow for seamless remittance streams across the region. It is true that convergence actions need to take place at the national level, and IGAD does neither have the power to mandate such national policy change, nor does IGAD have the equivalent of BCEAO or BEAC that by design regulate across borders. It is also true that some IGAD member states have very large internal (national) inefficiencies in the payment system that need to be tackled too. Still, both IGAD and the MRP technical team flagged the risk that national authorities and central banks may now decide to take on quite disparate and uncoordinated pathways to reform, each pursuing their own priorities and not the true cross-border bottlenecks. While the roadmap and strategic action plan are meant to bring regional focus, in the end member states are fully entitled to pursue their interests, which the visit to NBE also demonstrated. Phase 2 with IGAD leadership was designed to bring about regional focus, but it may have been more effective (to MRP's aims) to more strongly emphasise regionally coordinated convergence right from the start.
- It was also observed that while recommendations at the country level are relatively specific, the recommendations at the regional IGAD level are more vague and aspirational in nature (e.g., "Central banks without a stand-alone national payment system law may consider promulgating a separate payment system law"). MRP explained it wanted to leave some flexibility. The risk, however, is that member states take it as no more than a suggestion. The regional diagnostic could have been bolder in its recommendations.
- As observed, the involvement of the national stakeholders in the project could have been stronger, as UNCDF and IGAD did most of the work. It might have been more effective (in terms of capacity building and national appropriation) to compel local stakeholders to be in the driving seat, even if preparing country assessments would have taken more time. In other words, capacity outcomes may have deserved more priority than just producing outputs. The setting-up of a regional steering committee, national working groups and single points of contact in phase 2 is a good step in the right direction. Without such regional and national leadership, the chances of any of the harmonisation outcomes coming true look remote.

As part of the case studies, it was intended to perform **contribution analysis**. The relevant outcome level would be box 20: "IGAD members states launch initiatives to harmonize remittance and remittance linked policy (2023)". As this outcome has not been achieved during phase 1, only the first tentative initiatives undertaken, no outcome results can be attributed to UNCDF. The underlying outputs, however, were produced (box 11-13), and this can be attributed to UNCDF in large measure. In the absence of the IGAD project (counterfactual), these outputs would not have been produced, not even partially. As far as harmonisation will take place over the coming years, this can likely be attributed to UNCDF in part at least.

Impact

The ultimate impact goal of the IGAD project is "Increased access to, and adoption and usage of, affordable digital remittances and financial services that strengthen financial resilience of migrants and their families" (box 28 in the ToC). This would be achieved through regional harmonization of policies and regulations, payment infrastructure, market and competition aspects, and regional cooperation. As the project's recommendations are now entering the implementation stage, no harmonisation has taken place and no impacts can have been generated through the project, yet. The evaluative conclusion is that the first phase of the IGAD project has not been impactful, and neither was it expected to be so in phase 1, but the second phase might. However, given the volume and depth of convergence required, it may

take many years for the first impacts to emerge. The expected impact date of the ToC, the year 2025, looks decidedly unrealistic.¹⁰

It is noted that gender has not been very visible in the project.¹¹ While it is indeed hard to imagine how financial regulation and infrastructure cannot be gender blind, constraints may exist in the payment ecosystem that disadvantage women. For example, in the South Sudan diagnostic it was suggested to direct digital and financial literacy programmes to women, simplify access to ID cards, and for the central bank to collect gender-disaggregated data. In the final diagnostic report gender was only mentioned a few times, in the context of authorities not having access to gender disaggregated remittance statistics, and women being disadvantaged in not having suitable identification documents.

Efficiency

The IGAD project was meant to last 21 months, namely from Jan 2021 to Sept 2022. However, as the LoA was only signed in June 2021, the project may be assumed to have started in July 2021. The final meeting with central bank governors took place in May 2023. All in all, the project was implemented on time and with little delay. UNCDF and IGAD efficiently worked together to produce the intended results.

The evaluation, however, revealed efficiency constraints in the involvement of member states. The evaluation shows that UNCDF did most of the work, supported by IGAD. It was also reported that staff in member states (e.g., central banks) tend to move on from their jobs, which impedes continuity of the work, and national staff are not as available as may be desired. This was one of the reasons phase 2 will pay more attention to local capacity in form of local working groups and a single points of contact in central banks.

The evaluation also revealed that the MRP team did not travel to each of the seven IGAD countries to sit with a broad section of local stakeholders and conduct the diagnostics – explained by a lack of travel budget (although covid also played its part). Instead, online workshops were held and stakeholders were brought to physical meetings (e.g., Entebbe). While covid was a reality, security considerations in some countries an impediment, and timelines were to be kept, this tendency of doing the work somewhat isolated from local partners hampered national appropriation and subsequent sustainability. It certainly reduced the number of stakeholders consulted and their active participation.

As to the project expense, the total expense was USD 756,931, of which USD 530,537 by MRP staff and USD 226,394 to external contractors and to IGAD by way of TA grant. It is hard to make an evaluative statement on output efficiency (cost per output) for lack of reliable benchmark. The expense was larger than on the other REC projects, but so was the amount of work done. As the IGAD phase 1 intervention was not designed to generate outcomes, outcome efficiency (value for money) is logically nil. The evaluators do not have information if any part of the budget was explicitly allocated to address LNOB (Leave No One Behind) themes, gender included. However, the MRP gender team took part in the project.

Sustainability

There are several dimensions of sustainability. The first, IGAD's and member states' capacity to follow up on the recommended harmonisation of policies and regulations, is likely limited. Several of the seven IGAD countries count among the least developed in the world, three are fragile states, four face or recently faced internal war, and human capacities at all levels are stretched. Already, IGAD states face

¹⁰ Also confirmed by a meeting with NBE.

¹¹ UNCDF Policy specialists reviewed The IGAD Regional Gender Equality Strategy 2016 - 2020 & 2023-2030 to understand IGAD's approach to translating their commitments to gender equality, inclusion, and empowerment into demonstrable results. This informed the UNCDF team's engagement with IGAD and the member states, ensuring that, where possible, the recommendations made to IGAD and the member states were informed by and aligned with IGAD's official commitments on gender equality. The UNCDF team also conducted a deep dive to understand the efforts individual member states and their partners are making with regards to gender equality and women's empowerment to align with and build on those efforts in their engagements with the member states. For instance, in the case of South Sudan, the UNCDF team reviewed the Pro Gender Diaspora and Remittances Policy drafted by The Technical Advisory Working Group (TAWG) on Remittances and Diaspora Engagement in South Sudan with support from IOM.

difficulties in appointing the working groups and single points of contact as agreed. Also, the IGAD group as such is politically much looser than ECCAS and ECOWAS, and financially much less integrated than the monetary unions WAEMU and CEMAC. IGAD does neither have a unified monetary policy nor a financial sector regulator. In fact, in the words of the IGAD representative, IGAD only disposes of its convening power to get the member states to take up the tasks at hand and do so in coordination. On the positive side, UNCDF secured funding for the second phase, so may offer TA and training, while decidedly leaving the responsibility at the national stakeholders.

The second dimension of sustainability is the capacity of member states political and regulatory bodies, which must be a priority to UNCDF now. UNCDF must avoid the temptation to do the work on their behalf.

As a third dimension of sustainability, there is considerable replication potential of the IGAD-methods in other RECs or monetary unions. MRP phase 1 has developed a wide body of guides and toolkits, including a Guide how to assess the regional remittance policy and regulatory landscape that other regional groups may find inspiration in. The IGAD project holds important lessons for other regions aiming at convergence of remittance policies, regulations and infrastructure. This, however, assumes that (written) lessons learned are actively disseminated, either by drawing attention, through consultations or webinars. As observed above, the use and adoption of diagnostic and other studies may also be promoted by seeking a larger collaboration and commitment of local stakeholders by contributing to and co-writing such documents, instead of just receiving them in draft from UNCDF.

7) Lessons Learned

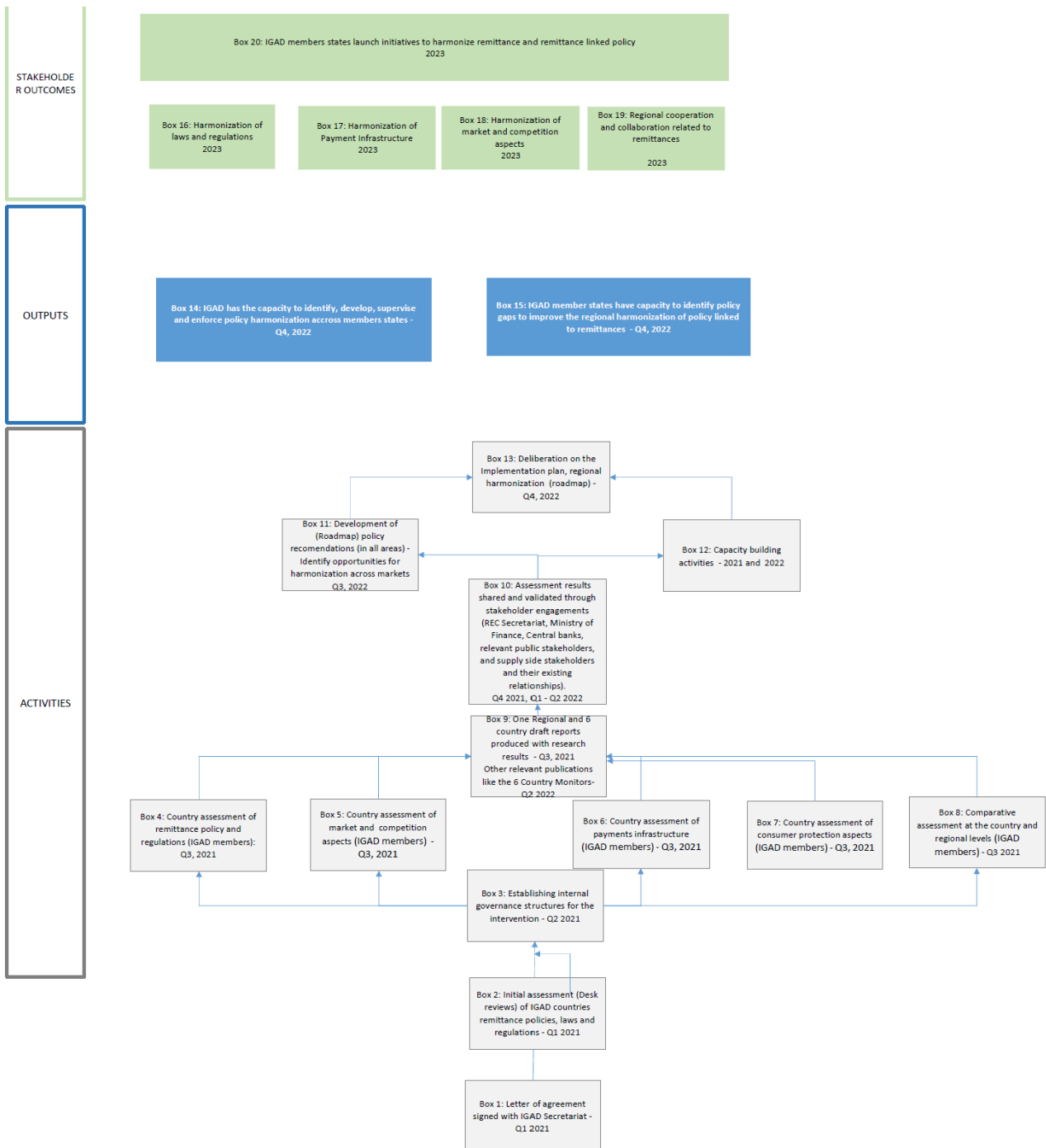
Some of the core lessons learned, that may have a bearing on future operations with regional groups, are the following:

- The methodology applied, starting from country and regional diagnostics, and then convening regional stakeholders for assimilation of the recommendations, is basically sound.
- However, a longer time allocation may have enabled a stronger involvement of local stakeholders, really bringing them onto the team, ensuring local appropriation, hence larger probability of future implementation and sustainability. The NBE studies department, for example, asked why they had not been associated in the project.
- Also, the diagnostics, both national and regional, would likely be more effective if a more limited and regionally coordinated set of recommendations were arrived at that can subsequently be implemented through regional collaboration. Stakeholders flagged the risk that member states may be distracted by national priorities, not those that meet the MRP ToC goals.
- Given the importance of women in remittance streams, gender deserves more attention.

8) Documents consulted

- Letter of Agreement IGAD and UNCDF, May 2021, with appendixes including ToC and RM Plan
- IGAD Inception report, Sept 2021
- Migration and Remittances Regional Harmonisation Roadmap, Dec 2021
- Guide to assess the regional remittance policy and regulatory landscape
- Country diagnostics (7x), mostly Sept 2022
- IGAD diagnostic, Sept 2022
- Several reports of meetings and workshops

9) Appendix: Part of the result chain of the IGAD project



Feasibility Study for Setting Up a Single Identification System for Financial Service Users in the WAEMU

1) Introduction

This case study regards the single-ID project with BCEAO (one of five MRP projects with the bank). As described in the project document, the goal of the project was to prepare a feasibility study to set up a single identification system for all users of financial services in WAEMU. The case study was performed through desk research and KIIs. Interviews were conducted with MRP programme staff, personnel of the financial inclusion department at BCEAO in Dakar, and the World bank office in Dakar.

The case study was selected as it aims to address a fundamental challenge to all financial services, namely, to be sure of the identity of clients, minimizing the risk of misdirecting money to the wrong person or association with criminal or terrorist activities. Once a client has been identified and accepted into the financial ecosystem, financial services can be provided, including cross border remittances within the eight WAEMU-member states and from abroad. The second reason to select this project as a case study was that it was considered useful to see how UNCDF collaborates with financial authorities on long-term projects with ability for high impact. A third reason to select this case study was its replication potential among other jurisdictions and monetary unions.

2) Background

The single-ID project with BCEAO is part of workstream 2, “Open digital payment ecosystem”. The programme document with SIDA, to which this project was earmarked, mentioned as one of the activities under workstream 2 a “risk-based approach to using digital IDs to enable electronic KYC and CDD, which lowers costs while potentially increasing effectiveness”. Lack of traditional IDs particularly affects women, hence, contributes to their lack of financial inclusion.

Prior to the MRP project, BCEAO had already worked on single identification systems from a conceptual perspective. This resulted in the conclusion that a single ID was desirable, but a feasibility study was needed on how (and if) a single-ID system could be implemented across WAEMU. The perceived usefulness of better identification was described in the project document, which identified benefits such as improved reporting, lower risks (better client KYC and AML), increased operational smoothness, and improved cross border transactions. Hence, as described in the project plan, a deeper insight into the operational and financial feasibility of introducing a single financial ID across WAEMU was needed, prior to a decision on its implementation. Operational issues mentioned in the problem description include how to roll out national identification, how to involve financial institutions, how to store data securely, how to communicate between financial institutions, and the role of the financial authorities.

As explained in the project document, the following long-term project goals were identified by the BCEAO, with input from UNCDF:

- Rather than the current broad range of national ID-options, which are not interlinked, give financial institution customers a unique user identity, accepted by all financial service providers, not just banks and MFIs, but also payment providers, mobile telephone operators and fintech operators across WAEMU;
- Improve the quality of gathered data as part of monitoring financial inclusion providers;
- Simplify transaction authentication by means of biometric functions and an identification number;
- Act against fraud in the financial system and identity theft by making the operations of financial institutions more traceable;

- Reduce customer identification costs and facilitate flows of funds via official channels, also for funds sent between regions, in a context of tougher action against money laundering and terrorism financing.

3) The single ID project with BCEAO

The feasibility study was conducted by PwC Côte d'Ivoire and concentrated on assessing the feasibility of different identification approaches. According to the project plan, the scope of work was to build a:

- Full inventory of the identification systems in place in the WAEMU-members states;
- Review four identification systems elsewhere;
- Elaborate different scenarios for the set-up of the identification system and a proposal for suitable solutions;
- Describe the technical equipment needs;
- Evaluate the system needs and the necessary support;
- Identify interdependencies and possible synergies with other ongoing projects in the region;
- Prepare a high-level workplan, including an evaluation of the needed resources to carry out the project;
- Identify the system regulations, institutional arrangements and governance to put in place;
- Draft the business plan for the client identification platform.

The ultimate beneficiaries of the project are to be the financial service users of the eight WAEMU-member states. These should benefit of better access to financial services and remittances (such as smoother client identification, quicker service, easier transfers, easier cross border services). The project itself focused on how the financial authorities could introduce ID-systems. Once this was clarified, a follow-up project would have to focus on implementation. This involves introducing the ID-system at the financial authorities' level and at the financial ecosystem level (such as banks, MFIs and mobile money operators). The project's output performance metric was defined as producing a feasibility study (see the Project Work Book - PWB), with outcomes at the level of the financial sector and the general public (e.g., better and cheaper digital financial services), expected post-project.

It is observed that the single-ID study goes much beyond remittance flows only, affecting all aspects of (consumer) finance and financial inclusion.

4) The process

The consultant was competitively selected, in which six bidders were considered. The work was performed by PwC, starting in 2021 and completed in March 2023. The consultant did desk research and had interactions with the WAEMU-members states. Also, comparisons were made with ID-systems in other countries (e.g., India and Nigeria).

MRP was part of the steering committee and provided insights. As the BCEAO did not co-finance the project, the full budget of USD 160,000, plus the extension budget of USD 32,000 was funded by MRP (SIDA). In addition, MRP also incurred internal costs amounting to USD 104,000. Hence, the total cost of the single ID project was USD 296,000. As noted in the project addendum, the extra budget of USD 32,000 was needed because BCEAO wanted to broaden the scope of the work, and because there were project delays caused by lack of responsiveness of WAEMU-members states. Furthermore, MRP had some observations on the quality of the work as described in the quality issue document, although this was subsequently resolved.

5) Results achieved

The goal of the work was to get insight in how to set up a single financial sector ID-system across the WAEMU-member states. The work covered the following elements:

1. Inventory of the identification systems in place in the WAEMU-members states;

2. Review and benchmark four identification systems: Nigeria BVN, BEAC single ID, India Aadhaar, Estonia eID;
3. Proposition of different scenarios for the set-up of the identification system;
4. For three shortlisted scenarios, the technical equipment needs, the system needs, the regulatory requirements, the associated costs, the high level implementation plan, and the socio-economic benefits;
5. For the preferred scenario out of the three, identified the institutional arrangements and governance to put in place, drafted the business plan for the client identification platform, and defined the detailed implementation plan.

Eleven alternative single ID solutions were presented, with a focus on the main options. The main differences between the presented ID-approaches regarded how clients could identify themselves, how their data were to be stored, and how identification information should be shared in the financial service ecosystem. The feasibility study showed that selecting and implementing a WAEMU-wide ID-system is a large undertaking in terms of investment and onboarding work. The total investment cost would be USD 130 m, to which must be added annual maintenance costs. The system would need to be fully embraced by all WAEMU-member states as much of implementation and client onboarding would take place at the national levels. The report was completed by March 2023.

It is noted that by February 2024 the responsible officers in the Financial Inclusion Department in BCEAO had not submitted the report with their recommendation to the BCEAO-governor for formal approval and onward submission to the member states.¹² Only after formal selection and approval by the WAEMU council of ministers the practical work of investing in IT systems and setting-up the ID-system, as explained in the feasibility study, can start. This includes technical and operation changes at the financial authorities, adapted legalisation and onboarding of the financial ecosystem including clients.

Thus, while the single-ID project provided BCEAO with the knowledge of what is required to develop an identification system (the output), no subsequent outcomes have been produced (which was not within the scope of PwC and would be a follow-up project with or without UNCDF). The choice is now for the BCEAO and member states to go ahead or drop the single-ID project. The evaluators consider that the latter is more likely for the following reasons:

1. In parallel to BCEAO, and with World bank support, ECOWAS has been undertaking a similar but broader ID project, not just for the financial sector. The West Africa Unique Identification for Regional Integration and Inclusion (WURI) Programme covers Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Niger and Togo, hence five WAEMU countries, with open invitations to further ECOWAS member states, the three remaining WAEMU states included.¹³
2. The BCEAO ID project would require significant funding both for the initial investment and its annual upkeep, as the PwC study pointed out (USD 130 m). The ECOWAS-led WURI already secured massive World bank funding (USD 400 m), which is not now available for the BCEAO single-ID project.¹⁴ As this kind of investment would normally require support by a DFI, options for the BCEAO project are limited now (e.g., AfDB).
3. Benin and Togo explicitly indicated to BCEAO and UNCDF their preference for WURI as it provides them with a foundational digital ID that they can use for all use cases including financial services.¹⁵

Upon discovering this potential for duplication, meetings were held between BCEAO, UNCDF, World bank and PwC. While World bank implored BCEAO to terminate the project, BCEAO decided to go on as it deemed the project not be a duplication because of its orientation to financial service providers. Also,

¹² The officers involved declined to explain this delay to the evaluators.

¹³ <https://old22.ecowas.int/?p=57277>.

¹⁴ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/loans-credits/2020/04/28/west-africa-unique-identification-for-regional-integration-and-inclusion-phase-2>

¹⁵ Source: UNCDF and World bank staff

three WAEMU countries (Senegal, Guinea Bissau and Mali) were not part of WURI (yet), which is a non-starter to BCEAO as it cannot undertake projects that do not involve all eight WEAMU states. Finally, BCEAO considered the single ID project an immediate priority, to be realised without delay. There was no clarity as to what WURI had planned for integration of the remaining non-WURI countries. While UNCDF understood the risk of overlap and duplication, it also felt that the ownership of this critical project lies with the BCEAO and WAEMU council, not with UNCDF, hence UNCDF could not tell BCEAO to stop the project.

6) Evaluative conclusions

Relevance

As mentioned above, the establishment of ease-access ID systems was a priority in the SIDA programme document, and MRP systematically researched this in country diagnostics. In this context, MRP also conducted the “portability of digital ID study”, by Accenture. This goes to the core of the MRP intervention logic, namely to transfer previously unbanked clients from cash-based and informal systems into digital financial services in the formal sector, not limited to banks. This is only possible when clients can be identified.

The visit to BCEAO also confirmed this to be a priority to the bank, in particular seen in light of low financial inclusion across WAEMU, whereby clients’ lack of acceptable ID is often hindering their acceptance into the financial system, women in particular. To BCEAO, the project is part of its broad policy framework of making the financial system in the WAEMU-member states more inclusive, remittance streams included.

Having a unique ID per person simplifies knowing who the customer is (including simplifying a link to credit registers or blacklists). This should diminish the risk of serving fraudulent people, decrease overindebtedness, lower the administrative burden, and ease interactions between different financial providers and platforms, hence reduce costs. This corresponds with another BCEAO aim, namely to improve the interoperability of different payment service providers, banks, MFIs, mobile money providers and related fintechs. These potential benefits respond to a well-known financial sector development problem that has hampered financial inclusion and efficient remittance markets.

Effectiveness

The evaluation of effectiveness relates to the extent to which outputs were produced and outcomes were achieved. The outputs and core outcomes according to the ToC in the Project Work Book were the following:

- Output: BCEAO has the knowledge of what is required to develop an identification system - Q4 2021;
- Stakeholder outcome: BCEAO adapts relevant policy and regulation to accommodate for development of chosen identification system, and BCEAO mobilizes resources (financial and technical) to start implementing the identification system, and BCEAO implements the identification system.

The objective of the single-ID project was to provide the BCEAO with a feasibility study and business plan of alternative single ID-approaches. This was delivered and accepted by the BCEAO financial inclusion team and UNCDF, hence the project was effective at the output level. The longer-term follow-up objective of the project is to select an approach among the suggested scenarios and start implementing it. This is outside the assignment of PwC and has not yet been started. It is unclear if the project will reach that level, given that the BCEAO governor has not yet taken a position (a year after it was finished by PwC), and given that five WAEMU member states are collaborating in an ECOWAS-World bank project for a government-led national ID. Another observation is that the costs of setting-up/maintaining the ID-system are high, and no budget has been secured. This regards particularly the initial investment, although maintenance costs are high too.

If the BCEAO governor and member states were to approve the feasibility study and decide to move forward with the implementation, it could be useful for UNCDF to be involved in such implementation.

Impact

The impact pathway according to the Project Work Book (PWB) for this project is a long one and consists of several stages: assess ID-approaches, approve and implement at the level of financial authorities, onboard clients in the financial ecosystem, unify client identification. Once the ID-project is implemented, the impact would be on several levels:

- Easier to access financial services across different financial service providers, hence efficiency gains and cost reduction, not limited to remittances;
- Lower risk of overindebtedness as credit registers can be maintained;
- Lower risk of serving fraudulent clients (which losses are indirectly paid by regular clients);
- Because of the above, easier and less costly access to remittances and related services.

There are not currently any impacts to be reported.

Efficiency

The project was delayed by one year. A reason for the delay was that the BCEAO needed more time to consider operational and policy issues, and that the bank broadened the scope of the work, adding elements to the initial ToR. Consequently, the budget was increased from USD 160,000 to USD 192,000. In addition, MRP used internal staff resources worth USD 104,000. Hence, in total MRP spent USD 296,000 on the intervention. While this is a significant investment, it does not seem out of the ordinary given the work done. Hence the output efficiency is judged to be “normal”. On the other hand, the evaluators observe that the eight WAEMU countries have many legal, regulatory and economic similarities, reducing the workload to the consultants and likely addressing topics that BCEAO already knew.

In the absence of outcomes, “value for money” (outcome efficiency), cannot be assessed. The project results are an intermittent step in a potentially structural change within the financial ecosystem (achieving this change was not the immediate goal of the work). The result of the MRP-investment consisted of an overview of alternative ID approaches and a business plan for implementation. It should be money well spent if the intervention leads to strengthening the financial system in the eight WAEMU-member countries. Unfortunately, it is unclear if the single ID-system will ever be implemented by WAEMU member states.

Another efficiency finding is that the World Bank had been working on another ID-approach in five of the WAEMU member states, through ECOWAS. As it was part of the PwC mandate to evaluate existing ID systems, UNCDF soon learned of this, but BCEAO pushed to go on, wanting to cover all WAEMU and keep short timelines. The evaluators deem the execution of two very similar projects in parallel inefficient. While there are differences in scope (e.g., BCEAO only focussing on the financial sector and WURI based in the public sector with broad applicability), it is unlikely that both ID systems will be implemented simultaneously. Togo and Benin have already taken that position, while BCEAO staff at the financial inclusion department are dragging their feet. Right now, it is likely that at least one of the two ID projects will come to naught.

Sustainability

The single ID project is an intermittent step in setting-up a single ID-system in WAEMU. Based on current knowledge of the project status, sustainability is hard to judge as that depends on what is done with the feasibility report and business plan. If the BCEAO and member states select an ID-approach, find the investment funds, and implement it, the intervention would likely be sustainable as it would create systematic change with evident benefits, while a revenue model was part of the business plan.

The information collected and documented by PwC could also benefit other countries and regions in Africa and even beyond. This regards issues such as how to identify financial inclusion clients, what information should be captured, how to store client data, how to exchange client data between different

financial service actors, and how to handle cross border transactions. The feasibility study is planned for publication in Q2 2024.

Lessons learned

The main lesson learned is that UNCDF should improve on coordination with other donor agencies and projects. The ECOWAS / WURI project was already ongoing when the BCEAO single ID project started, which UNCDF / BCEAO could have known. Hence, either MRP should not have allocated funds to this project with evident risk of duplication, or developing a strategy for synergy and interoperability should have been part of the PwC assignment.

As UNCDF only found out about WURI after it had accepted to support BCEAO, it could have more forcefully pressed for the two projects to join forces, considering the legitimate concerns of BCEAO (e.g., of not all WAEMU countries being in WURI, timing), pooling efforts and competences. In the very least, the PwC assignment should have included a reflection on how the ID systems could be synergetic and interoperable.

Sources used

Many sources were used for this case study, the following list provides the key ones:

- Project set-up: 1. PD PwC_Feasibility study.docx
- Project set-up: 20210310 Identification systems.pptx
- Project plan: Approved Revised Project plan_BCEAO Digital ID_280622.pptx
- Project approach: 210625 UNCDF BCEAO inception report_Final_EN.pdf
- Amendment: NTF request for PwC PBA amendment.pdf
- Quality issues: Letter_to_PwC_FINAL.docx.pdf
- Analysis : DIF0181J21_Synthèse des observations sur le projet de note de cadrage.pdf
- Analysis : DIF0335J21_Séjour d'information virtuel au sein de la BCEA_points de discussions possibles.pdf
- Analysis : Single ID_UNCDF_BCEAO_Liste_Partie Prenante.xlsx
- Analysis: UNCDF_Assessment Report_Analysis_2602_V2.pptx
- Progress: UNCDF Single ID_Draft_FR Report_201021.pdf
- Scenarios: Business scenarios 01052022 .docx
- Project results: Project Evaluation PwC.xlsx
- Project results: EN_UNCDF_BCEAO_Report_27072022.docx
- Project results: EN_BCEAO_Final Report.docx
- Project results: UNCDF Final report_Phase4_Support Presentation_230223.pdf

Case study TerraPay / CongoPay

1) Introduction

As described in the project description, CongoPay was to be an interoperable payment infrastructure operated by TerraPay under an MoU with the Ministry of Telecommunications of the Republic of Congo. The project goal was to provide universal acceptance in Congo of different payment instruments at low costs and should have created payment interoperability of different payment providers, accessible to individuals and businesses. Once successful in Congo, the intention was to implement similar projects in Central Africa afterwards.

The intervention was to address an issue for people receiving remittances, namely the need to cash them out, and possibly deposit the money on another financial channel. An interoperable infrastructure should have facilitated receiving and using remittances as it simplifies access to remittances, for example a remittance received through the banking system terminating on a mobile phone. This should have reduced the current receivers' tendency to cash out the received remittances at once and improved the use of digital payment services.

The project was selected as a case study as it intended to address last-mile access for remittance receivers, as it was intended to be scaled to other countries, and because it allows the evaluators to assess how UNCDF develops markets in collaboration with commercial operators.

The case study was conducted as desk research in early 2024 – no visit was made to the Republic of Congo. Interviews were conducted with UNCDF and TerraPay.

2) Background on the intervention with TerraPay

The TerraPay project was set up as a practical and operational intervention to enhance remittance streams in Central Africa, notably by improving last-mile access to remittance recipients. The project was the only workstream 2 intervention supporting a private sector actor in investing in the payment infrastructure, whereas other workstream 2 projects aimed at policy or strategy development. As described in the TerraPay workplan, the intervention focused on the following main challenges by way of problem description:

- Access and behaviour of customers: clients typically feel compelled to immediately cash out received remittances, not leaving it in the financial system to perform digital payments, hence not building a current account history (useful when applying for credit), or not accumulating savings in the financial system;
- Operational issue: financial intermediaries can have poor product design that does not take into account the lack of digital/literacy skills of especially women/low-income people;
- Legal issue: regulators can have cumbersome regulations that hamper market development. These regulations make it more complicated to set up and participate in a payment ecosystem.

As described in the progress reports and the project overview, the TerraPay infrastructure was designed for mobile phone based, in-country transactions, rather than for remittances perse. Consequently, the intervention focused on the last mile of the customer journey, after the remittance entered the market:

- Providing acceptance of different payment instruments and affordable processing;
- Real-time payment processing for account-to-account and merchant payments;
- Follow-up option: access to the global TerraPay network and other payment service providers.

As described in the workplan, this focus led to the following intervention activities:

- Set up a digital transaction infrastructure (CongoPay was to become a digital ecosystem);
- Development of technical specifications for Straight Through transactions, in the form of formally approved scheme rules;

- Reference set-up and demonstration mobile application (API) for platform participants.
- Developing an integration approach with other platform participants. These were for the first phase planned to include UBA Bank, MTN and Airtel merchants, plus e-commerce payment providers;
- Soft launch and promotional activities, followed by a broad enrolment of platform participants and clients;
- In the longer-term the project was to provide an efficient payment infrastructure in the Republic of Congo that could interoperate with other markets through switches (to simplify regional remittances) and serve as a model for platforms in Central Africa.

CongoPay was to handle the following type of transactions:

- Transfers between bank accounts and mobile wallets. Thus, a remittance received on a bank account could be forwarded to a mobile wallet;
- Transfers between mobile wallets;
- QR payments, request to pay merchants using QR codes;
- Handle exceptional transactions, such as payment rejects and reversals.

3) The project

As described in the project agreement, the goal of the work was to have a functioning interoperable payment infrastructure in the Republic of Congo. The total budget for the project was USD 718,000, of which USD 100,000/14% was to come from UNCDF (MRP), and of which USD 20,000 was disbursed upfront. The remaining USD 80,000 was never disbursed as the project goals could not be achieved. In addition to the budget contribution, UNCDF also helped with connections, gender mainstreaming, market assessment, data analytics and demand side research. **The cost of this work by MRP staff was USD 207,000, according to UNCDF’s estimate.**

The project had the following goals and achieved the following results by project end (2022/12):

Indicators for the use of CongoPay	Goal	Achieved end 2022	Achieved end 2023
Cumulative number of registered clients	25,750	14	<--
Cumulative number of female registered clients	10,300	0	<--
Number of clients engaging in international transactions	2,000	0	<--
Number of new merchants	60	2	<--
Number of clients trained on financial/digital literacy	25,750	-	<--
Number of female clients trained on financial/digital literacy	10,300	-	<--

Hence, almost none of the foreseen results were achieved as, according to the project closure document, the platform did not get past the operational and legal hurdles during the early implementation phase.

4) The process

As described in the project description and project scope, Terra Payment Services was the lead partner, licensed in several countries and providing a:

- Digital payment infrastructure that connects payment systems;
- Cross-border digital payment switching service that enables partners to offer digital financial services to their clients to transact through mobile wallets and bank accounts;
- Handle FX, compliance, KYC monitoring and reporting.

As described in the project document and progress reports, from a practical point the intervention consisted of the following tasks:

- Local resources were to manage project implementation and provide operational support, especially by engaging with the government;
- Integration of partners to digitalise remittance solutions and to ease the financial burden for the development and integration of APIs;
- QR code development and deployment to enable P2B-payments;
- Validate the product viability and guideline standardization;
- Develop the client mobile application to drive digital adoption for payments and remittance services.

As described in the project extension document, the intervention was extended by one year till the end of 2022 because of:

- Regulatory issue: the central operating entity needed to get a Payment Service Provider license by the financial authorities;
- Business unclarity: unclear capacity/willingness of the stakeholder DigiPay to provide a platform rollout plan. After the start of the project, DigiPay was added to the intervention by the Congolese ministry, which complicated roll-out as DigiPay was not always responsive;
- Technical delays: the technical integration with UBA bank was delayed as the bank first had to move its database;
- Technical difficulties: Airtel was not able to support P2B-transactions on the platform because of a lack of suitable APIs and because TerraPay could not send technicians to the ground to solve the issue due to Covid.

5) Results achieved

As described in the project closure document, the project did not achieve the intended results within or after the project period as the infrastructure project could not be implemented and completed. The CongoPay platform did not reach the soft launch stage. CongoPay had several implementation challenges, notably that it needed a license from the central bank, and there were technical issues with the starting partners, not all of whom were fully aligned. It is possible that the project would have had a better start if it had been given more time to prepare, in particular getting the buy-in of all private and public sector stakeholders. This also entails that it would have needed a larger budget.

6) Evaluative conclusions

The project with TerraPay was a high potential/high-risk intervention. UNCDF is well suited to take such risks to stimulate commercial entities to develop pro-poor business approaches. The intended project results did not materialise because of implementation complications, and to some extent due to deficient pre-project planning as mentioned above. Such setbacks could probably have been avoided with a better preparation, especially regarding the required license needs as well as fully involving and aligning all stakeholders.

Relevance

The CongoPay project focused on creating a local payment platform. While it was not immediately focussed on remittances, it would have facilitated remittance termination once the platform had reached sufficient scale to make a full link between remittance entry points and the (mobile) wallets of remittance receivers. Hence, the project as such is relevant to migrants and remittance receivers. If the platform had reached scale, and if it had built extensive links between remittance points of entry (such as bank accounts) and usage points (such as mobile money accounts), there would have been a clear advantage for remittance receivers to use the platform. This would have been further enhanced if the system had also been deployed in other countries in the region, improving cross-border connections.

In the context of MRP, it corresponds with the “access” component, making it easier to get hold of the remittances when in-country, through more efficient and accessible remittance termination. Interconnectivity of cross-border and local payment systems would also reduce the cost of remittance access (SGD 10.c). It may also contribute to the “usage” component if remittance recipients keep the money in the financial system for savings, payments, or other financial services.

The CongoPay project did not have a specific gender component, but women being prime remittance receivers and in need of efficient and easy-accessible services, would have been key beneficiaries. Compared to men, women are less likely to have bank accounts and are more constrained in their physical movements, such as visiting a financial institution to pick up cash. Mobile money typically responds well to the needs of women. UNCDF also worked on making sure that the women customer segment was taken into account, for instance through workshops to incorporate a gender lens, a market scan and use cases to address the women segment, while assessing the CongoPay App on accessibility to women.

Effectiveness

The evaluation of effectiveness relates to the extent to which outputs were produced and outcomes were achieved. The outputs and core outcomes according to the project ToC were the following:

- Output: Terrapay is capable of developing and deploying CongoPay as a basis for payments interoperability in the Congo - Q2 2021
- Stakeholder outcome: TerraPay pilots CongoPay in the Republic of Congo with at least 2 partners, offering payments interoperability between them and improved remittance receiving capabilities - Q2 2021
- Customer outcome: Migrants and receiving households use the platform to send and receive remittances - Q2 2021

As neither outputs nor outcomes were reached, the project was not effective. There are no indications that the project has left tangible results in the remittance market in the Republic of Congo, although the work may have shown the local and regional financial authorities the conditions for payment interoperability in the future.¹⁶

The evaluators offer some explanations for the lack of effectiveness, which may help MRP avoid such unsuccessful projects in the future:

1. Interviews revealed that platform partners were unsure how the new payment platform would affect their own mobile money and bank transfer fee income, and more broadly what their benefits would be. The communication and engagement with the future platform participants could have been better managed to avoid misconceptions, and ensure insights and interests from participants are incorporated in the set-up of the platform.
2. Building on the above, payment platforms become interesting for users and merchants once they reach scale. In fact, at some point participants feel compelled to join the ecosystem because of its size, lest they are left out. It is unclear why not more financial institutions and payment providers were included in the initial project. The lack of action by the ministry and the unclarity of the needed license by the central bank certainly did not help in expanding partners, and neither did Covid. Also, payment solutions need to be tested first, but one would suppose that TerraPay has sufficient experience in other countries to have a tested solution ready for roll-out.
3. Finally, the project encountered unexpected difficulties. One constraint was that the ministry insisted on a new partner (DigiPay) after the project launch. This complicated the project as

¹⁶ However, through the project BEAC clarified the regulatory environment and conditions applicable for setting up an interoperable payment system in CEMAC, including clarification by GIMAC about the mandate of payment interoperability granted to GIMAC by the BEAC. This may help similar efforts in the future.

DigiPay was not a responsive partner. Some core partners (e.g., UBA, Airtel) ran into technical difficulties. Also covid did not help and hampered deploying technicians in the field.

Impact

The expected impact of the project was that migrants and recipients, because they progress toward using digital remittance and payment channels, would experience improved financial health.

The impact pathway of the project was based on the assumption that with the development of a broadly accepted local payment platform, also remittance receivers would benefit as they would be able to link incoming remittances (for instance through a bank) to their (mobile) wallet. This would simplify and digitalise their payments, reduce transaction cost, while allowing them to access a broader range of financial services, savings included. However, there was no evidence of impact of the project as it stalled in the early implementation phase.

Efficiency

The most important efficiency finding is that the project suffered from a lack of preparation and management. TerraPay is a large organisation operating across the continent and has experience with similar projects in other countries. According to the project description the infrastructure was ready for seamless service provisioning. Nevertheless, in the Republic of Congo the project faced a number of starting issues that probably could have been avoided with a more thorough and early preparation. Examples are the unknown need for a license, unclarity on the readiness of the local payment sector to participate, and technical issues including ineffective integrations with stakeholder's payment systems and QR-code usage issues as described in the technical test document. Considering the ecosystem nature of building an interoperable payment platform, the scope of the MRP TA should have been focused on both the ministry of digital economy and the company TerraPay. This way, UNCDF could have started its technical assistance by engaging early on with the policymakers and regulators and spot expectation gaps.

Soon after starting the project, the above-mentioned challenges in the project, notably the finding that the local financial sector was not on board, and the licensing and technical constraints, revealed themselves. In Nov 2020, MRP gave TerraPay a project extension of one year, hoping that this would be sufficient to solve the legal and operational difficulties. However, as none of these shortcomings could be resolved, the project was eventually terminated. MRP only paid its upfront contribution of USD 20,000. From this point of view the project functioned efficiently; payments were only provided upon reaching agreed results. However, UNCDF also spent USD 207,000 on own staff costs for the project during and after the set-up period.

This leads to the following conclusions on efficiency:

- The oversight of UNCDF / project management team was insufficient. It should not have allowed TA cost to go so much out of control. MRP could have disengaged more rapidly and saved staff time and cost.
- As noted above, MRP TA in the initial phases of the project could have been more broadly applied, engaging early on with both private sector partners and policymakers and regulators to identify expectation gaps.
- To some extent, the RfA stage has also been lacking in depth as it failed to identify the risks that eventually derailed this project.

Sustainability

The project certainly had upscaling and replication potential. However, no evidence has been seen that CongoPay is continuing as intended by the UNCDF intervention. Furthermore, no evidence has been seen by the evaluators that indicate that UNCDF uses the performed work for a follow-up project in the Republic of Congo or elsewhere. MRP did, however, integrate the lessons learned into a knowledge

product, the “cross-border interoperability handbook” by Glenbrook. MRP and TerraPay also set up a Data Collaborative, with one of the significant outputs interactive LDC remittance transaction analysis dashboards - 25 LDCs and 31 LMICs. Insights have been presented at webinars and to Central Banks as a prototype for real-time granular reporting dashboards on remittances and statistics.

7) Lessons learned

Some of the broad lessons learned, discussed above, are the following.

- The project should have had more clarity on the regulations and buy-in from the authorities before the start. Given its contacts with BEAC and government, UNCDF would have been well-positioned to intermediate in such consultations.
- Setting-up a payment platform requires financial sector participants to become part of the ecosystem. In this case the ecosystem was to be set up with financial institutions and payment service providers, such as mobile money operators. Payment platforms become interesting for users and providers if they reach scale. CongoPay was only able to attract one bank (UBA) and two main mobile money operators (MTN and Airtel), plus some Payment Gateway Providers. Payment platforms elsewhere have a much larger number of participants, which makes them ubiquitous (e.g., PayPal and AliPay). With the limited number of CongoPay participants, the ecosystem was probably not interesting for them as it just would add an extra operational layer, rather than reaping the benefits of scale. Potential participants will only join a platform if they believe that others will join too, and if they see that the approach is well funded to pass the initial difficulties. It is therefore necessary to consider how to reach size for such projects right from the start.
- Also, some partners may have considered CongoPay as a potential competitor that would monopolise transaction fee benefits. It is therefore recommended to ensure buy-in of prospective partners by taking such financial considerations into account.

8) Documents consulted

Many sources were used for this case study, the following list provides the key ones:

- Project description: 1 - PD TerraPay.docx
- Financing agreement: PBA Terra Pay_1130.pdf
- Project scope: 1. Project Scope ECCAS_Sida Phase I.pdf
- Workplan: 3 - Workplan TerraPay.xlsx
- Market scan: 220727 - MoM Market scan Workshop.docx
- Overview: CongoPay Scheme Document FINAL 6.8.2020.pdf
- Budget: 2-BdgtTerraPay.xlsx
- Technical test: Rapport Test Application Mobile Client CongoPay V1.11.02.2022 (2).pdf
- Agreement with ministry: DigiPay - COE Appointment 16 avr. 2021.pdf
- Agreement with ministry: Accord Cadre de Partenariat - Signé.pdf
- Steering committee: 221216 - Steerco Terrapay.pptx
- Kick-off meeting: 2. Meeting Minutes.pdf
- Progress report: 1. 2022 Q4 Quarterly Progress Report.docx
- Progress report: 2. 2022 Q4 Data Masterfile .xlsx
- Progress report: BTOR Mission Report - Brazzaville November 2021.docx
- Project closure: ProjectClosure Report TerraPay - CongoPay.xlsx
- Exchanges with UNCDF and TerraPay

Case study SympliFi migrant-backed loan project

1) Introduction

The SympliFi project was a digital migrant-supported loan initiative, enabling migrants residing in the UK and EU to assist family members and friends in their home countries in accessing local credit for income-generating purposes, rather than relying solely on remittances. Migrants act as guarantors by providing cash collateral for the loan, enabling their relatives to access affordable credit from Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) in their respective home countries. This approach intended to ease the financial burden on migrants, reducing the need for constant money transfers, while also fostering financial autonomy and sustainable income development for the loan beneficiaries.

SimpliFi Financial Solutions Limited, operating under the trade name SympliFi, is a newly established technology enterprise incorporated in the United Kingdom (UK). In 2020, SympliFi introduced a digital loan service backed by migrants, allowing Nigerians living in the UK to provide loan guarantees for their relatives and acquaintances in Nigeria. With backing from the UNCDF-led MRP programme, SympliFi strategized to broaden its reach to corridors extending from the European Union (EU) to French-speaking countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. The initial step involved launching a trial in the EU-Senegal corridor.

The case study was selected because of its potential for innovation in the nexus between the economic capital of migrants and access to finance for investments in the countries of origin for their relatives. The primary potential benefit of the digital migrant-supported loan lies in its capacity to allow credit accessibility for migrants' families in regions where access to finance for micro and small businesses is limited. Additionally, the product facilitates the establishment of a credit record for first-time borrowers, paving the way for future loan opportunities and fostering financial self-reliance. Moreover, SympliFi had the potential to alleviate financial tension on migrants and aid integration in their new country of residence.

The project was conducted in the period November 2020 to September 2022 in the corridor EU (especially France, Italy, Spain) and Senegal. A wide array of interlocutors provided essential elements to prepare this case study. Contributions from the SympliFi management, the Baobab Senegal team, and from all the interviewed clients have been crucial elements.

2) Background

The SympliFi project addressed some global challenges within migration and development:

1. Lack of access to credit in developing markets: currently only 8% of adults in developing nations have accessed loans from traditional banks and MFIs. This is equally applicable to Senegal and WAEMU;
2. The unavailability of collateral and guarantees for the households in the countries of origin to facilitate access to credit;
3. The difficulty in leveraging the economic potential of remittances towards investments as remittances are typically immediately expended and consumed;
4. The high costs and obstacles associated with remittances: the average expense of sending remittances to developing countries ranges from 7% to 10%, creating significant friction in the process (although less expensive in the EU-Senegal corridor).

SympliFi is a typical workstream 3 intervention, testing pilot solutions to improve the overall financial health of its remittance recipients, in this case through improving their income generating capacity.

The project was identified and selected by UNCDF through a Request for Applications (RfA), seeking proposals from private sector partners in the context of workstreams 2, 3 and 4 (last mile access, innovative services, and empowered customers). UNCDF positively assessed the relevance of the project

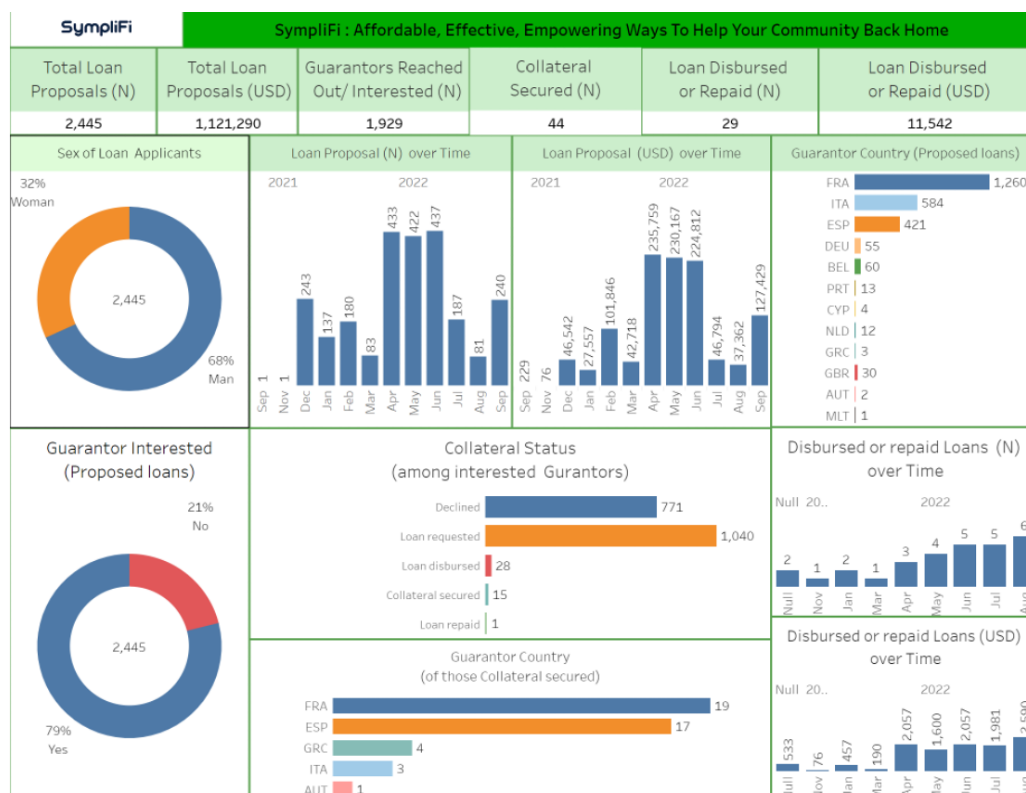
and the expertise of the applicant to implement a solution that could address the challenges described above, focusing on the EU/Senegal corridor, with significant replication potential elsewhere.

3) The project

When the project proposal was approved by UNCDF, it presented the following KPIs, considered as achievable by UNCDF at the RfA stage:

KPIs	Target	Data at end of the project (Sept 2022)
Loan proposals received	12,000	2,445
Loan proposals received – female	3,000	777
Active Customers	4,000	29
Active Female Customers	1,000	n/a
Loan disbursed	3,200	71
Loan disbursed – female customer	800	30

Main financial data reported at the end of the project (September 2022):



Two primary performance indicators (KPIs) were established for this pilot project: the volume of loan applications received and the number of active customers. Despite concerted efforts by the partner, which included hosting in-person events aimed at the Senegalese community in France as well as continuous campaigns through social media, neither of these KPIs were met. The initial assumptions regarding the product's acceptance among migrants did not materialize as expected. For instance, while a projected success rate of 25% in guaranteeing loans over the total number of guarantees requested was anticipated, the project achieved a mere 2%.

As mentioned above, the primary benefit of the digital migrant-supported loan was its intended ability to enhance credit for migrants and their families in regions where access to credit for micro and small

businesses is scarce. Additionally, the product could empower first-time borrowers to establish a credit history, opening doors to further loan opportunities and fostering financial autonomy. Moreover, it had the potential to ease financial burdens on migrants, allowing them to send remittances at more convenient intervals and under terms suitable for personal, non-business purposes.

4) The process

The project was led by **SympliFi**, a UK-based limited company. SympliFi operates as a technology service provider, with its infrastructure powered by an authorized electronic money institution. SympliFi received formal FCA (Financial Conduct Authority in the UK) clearance for the credit facilitation product.

The partners in the consortium were the Senegalese microfinance institution **Baobab** and **Rapyd** (UK). Baobab had the responsibility of: a) developing the migrant-backed loan product to be issued in Senegal; b) perform joint marketing and promotion of the product; and c) onboard borrowers in Senegal and manage the underwriting process, including loan disbursement and repayment. Rapyd was the digital escrow and payment processor. To secure the guarantee, SympliFi received regulatory guidance requiring the migrant to provide a cash collateral as part of the guarantee, which is released back to the migrant once the loan is repaid. The transaction was processed online and held in a secure digital escrow account. Rapyd was the regulated partner that provided these services, both payment processing and digital escrow. Rapyd was also performing KYC of the migrant based in the UK and the EU.

The SympliFi digital loan scheme utilized reimbursable deposits from migrants residing abroad to guarantee loans for their friends and family members, many of whom are unbanked, in their home country Senegal. Borrowers in Senegal initiated the loan application process by submitting a request for a loan of up to XOF 500,000 (USD 780) through the SympliFi website, often encouraged by digital advertisements on social media platforms. The request included details about the guarantor, typically a migrant living in the EU or UK. Afterwards, SympliFi sent an SMS invitation to the migrant, asking him/her to guarantee the loan by downloading the SympliFi app (if he/she is a new SympliFi customer) and depositing the required funds as guarantee for the loan. Subsequently, the loan request and the guarantee were communicated to Baobab. While the guarantee was initially 100%, it was gradually reduced to as low as 25% of the loan. Baobab contacted the borrower, encouraged him/her to open an account (if he/she is not an existing customer), conducted the necessary due diligence for the loan, and ultimately disbursed the loan if the request was accepted.¹⁷

Upon complete repayment of the loan by the borrower, the deposit and a cash-back reward (2%) are refunded to the migrant. The migrant can then opt to guarantee another loan or withdraw funds from the SympliFi wallet. While the customer journey is entirely digital for the migrant, it involves some manual processes for the borrower, depending on the procedures of the local financial institution partner.

SympliFi developed the loan offering with less digitally enabled Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) in mind. This is why the technology platform was designed as a plug-and-play solution that does not necessitate any integration from the MFI's end. A lender simply requires a laptop, internet access, and email account to utilize the platform. From a functional standpoint, a non-digitally enabled lender can readily employ the platform as is. The disbursement process is conducted externally to the platform, while the platform manages the guarantee process.

UNCDF had a key role in the project, other than co-financing the initiative. It especially facilitated the relations with BCEAO to confirm the regulatory compliance of the guarantee instrument. Moreover, its role was pivotal in relation with the marketing activities: to expand to new corridors EU-Senegal, by translating the platform into French, developing an App for guarantors, improving its customer journey, and hiring a marketing agency and customer support service for French-speaking customers. Without

¹⁷ Out of 114 credit secured by guarantees, Baobab accepted to finance 71. The main reasons to decline (guaranteed) loan applications were the borrower characteristics and the soundness of their business plan.

UNCDF assistance, SympliFi would have most likely remained in Nigeria and other English-speaking countries.

5) Results achieved

From the point of view of Baobab, the project was not a success as it resulted in just 71 loans in the value of EUR 35,000, of which 9 (15%) defaulted against normal PAR30 < 1%. The product was discontinued in both Senegal and Nigeria.

The broader results of the SympliFi pilot project must be viewed in a medium-term perspective to fully understand the challenge embraced by the project in promoting the use of remittances for productive investments by migrant families in Senegal and potentially in other countries. While the project did not achieve its main Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), some positive outcomes are noteworthy and align with the challenge of MRP to test innovative technological solutions to address the economic and social needs of the most vulnerable communities.

One relevant project outcome is the achievement of the regulatory clearance process from the BCEAO. Thanks to the MRP support, the solution provided by SympliFi received the clearance of the financial inclusion team of the BCEAO, confirming that a foreign loan guarantee is acceptable. However, the guarantee being outside of BCEAO / WAEMU jurisdiction, for regulatory capital purposes, the loans were treated as unsecured.

The evaluation work included a mini-survey, conducted through phone interviews, with a sample of twenty SympliFi users (see appendix G). Most reported having used the loan for business or self-employment activities, while two used it for expenses related to managing their family budgets (as typically happens with remittances). This suggests SympliFi achieved one of the core project objectives, namely facilitating access to credit for productive purposes, which the mini-survey suggests improved the financial health of beneficiaries.

From the point of view of customers, it was their only way to get access to credit as 45% of the mini-survey respondents were youth (below 29 years of age), had no alternative access to credit and collateral, and nearly all used the loan to support their business activity. The majority of them (55%) access financial services regularly via their mobile phone and have a recent (between 1 to 2 year) relation with the partner financial institution (80% of them). The mini-survey also revealed that 40% of the respondents are accessing new financial services thanks to SympliFi, fully responding to the objective of promoting financial inclusion in the migrants' country of origin. Baobab has confirmed a fairly strong conversion of SympliFi clients to regular clients.

6) Evaluative conclusions

Relevance

The pilot project aimed to enhance access to and the utilization of remittances for productive use while also bolstering the resilience of migrants and their families. By offering funding for migrant family members to initiate or expand income-generating activities, the project contributed to boosting the resilience of migrants and their families. This was broadly confirmed by the mini-survey (appendix G). Additionally, it alleviated the burden on migrants by reducing the necessity to continuously send remittances, facilitating the integration in their new country of residence.

The ToC of the pilot project was designed consistently with the development priorities of the global agenda, particularly with the SDGs, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) and the UNCDF Strategic Framework. The project aims to primarily contribute to SDGs 1 and 8, as well as SDGs 2 and 4. It is perfectly aligned with the objectives of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, particularly with reference to the second action area, "*Domestic and international private business and finance*". It is highly relevant to "*objective 20: Promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants*" of the Global Compact for Safe,

Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM). Furthermore, the pilot project is relevant to the UNCDF Strategic Framework, particularly for the Flagship Priority Area "*inclusive digital economies*".

Existing policy priorities in Senegal (Senegal Financial Inclusion Strategy) were identified and incorporated into the ToC and design of the pilot project. An explicit problem statement was formulated and integrated into the ToC and project design. This problem statement was based on the identified challenges and needs within the target communities, particularly concerning lack of access to financial services and leveraging remittances for economic development.

The needs of migrants and recipients were identified, and this information was integrated to ensure that the project addressed the specific needs and challenges faced by both migrant senders and recipients. The main constraints at the beneficiary level related to receiving remittances and the difficult access to credit informed the development of targeted interventions to enhance financial inclusion and resilience.

SympliFi actively used intellectual resources from Senegal to inform its project design and implementation. Local expertise, knowledge, and insights were leveraged to ensure that SympliFi's interventions were contextually relevant, sustainable, and effective in addressing the needs of migrant communities and their families.

In designing the project, attention was given to reaching the female target audience and promoting their financial inclusion, facilitated through the local partner Baobab. In fact, the project intended, once scale was reached, to offer women-dedicated products. The project also targeted its communication and marketing activities, including through social media channels, to younger recipients, whereas no specific actions addressed people with disabilities.

The SympliFi project was fully in line with the MRP ToC and the strategic orientations of the SDC programme document, which prioritised private sector services to priority target groups, women included. It was also a unique intervention, not duplicating or overlapping any similar intervention in Senegal or even in WAEMU.

Effectiveness

The evaluation of effectiveness relates to the extent to which outputs are produced and outcomes are achieved. The outputs and core outcomes according to the project ToC were the following:

- Output: SympliFi is capable of offering migrants in France, Spain and Italy migrant backed loans to migrants families in migration countries including Senegal;
- Stakeholder outcome: SympliFi pilots its migrant-backed loan service and new or adjusted migrant centric products to new countries and markets;
- Customer outcome: Migrants and receiving households adopt and use new migrant-backed loans and guarantee system.

The evaluation revealed that outputs were produced and outcomes achieved (see results section above), but in far smaller numbers and amounts than planned, leading to the conclusion that the product could not be commercially continued.

Although the pilot project successfully transferred the model tested in the UK-Nigeria corridor to the France/EU-Senegal corridor through the activation of technical and strategic partners, the outcome KPIs were achieved only to a very limited extent. The SympliFi guarantee product for Nigeria was also discontinued.

SympliFi deserves recognition for obtaining clearance from BCEAO to operate with a certainly innovative and challenging mechanism, from which other operators or programmes may benefit in the future, and introduced an innovative instrument to the Senegalese and European (mainly French) markets that did not previously exist.

In this regard, the demonstration of the functioning of a transnational guarantee system to facilitate access to credit in a migrant's home country is a remarkable achievement. The implementation of a system that replaces international fund transfers, promoting financial inclusion, and thereby contributing

to financial well-being in vulnerable communities is positive. In this dynamic, the necessary activation of diverse partners who are technologically complementary and suitable for the functioning of the system is equally deserving of attention. The innovative spirit and support for cutting-edge initiatives to address social challenges, which characterizes the MRP programme, is reflected in SympliFi. The challenging results gathered in this short period of time appear as a potential necessary and temporary step towards a path that could be successful in the medium term.

Moreover, the SympliFi approach allows migrants in the destination countries to enhance their economic capital, which is not reduced by the physical transfer of funding to the homeland, thus facilitating their economic capacity and social integration.

As noted above, the project was not effective in reaching its numerical targets. In this context, one of the main challenges has been the difficulty in sharing the entrepreneurial opportunity with a local Financial Institution. Baobab did not show a desire in taking ownership of the service, e.g., pro-actively promoting it within its networks and amongst its own clients. In fact, SympliFi generated the highest rate of guaranteed loans only when Baobab agreed to conduct a two-week marketing campaign.

SympliFi, with introductions by UNDCF, also tried but failed to establish partnerships with other local financial institutions. These institutions either did not perceive the business rationale or were concerned about the counterpart risk and regulatory ramifications of such collaborations. While the counterpart risk was addressed through the tripartite agreement, there remained concern on the reliability of Rapyd, the ultimate collateral holder.

Impact

Although it is not feasible to conduct a rigorous impact assessment of a small pilot project, the research suggests the mechanism could have impact if it were more widely promoted and reached a number of beneficiaries consistent with what was hypothesized in the initial RfA proposal, particularly in the following areas: **a) improvement of the financial health of migrant families in Senegal; b) enhancement of financial inclusion in origin communities in Senegal; c) increased access to innovative financial services.**

Evidence from the mini-surveys involving a representative sample (20) of SympliFi clients reveals that:

- 60% of the respondents say they are able to pay for their living expenses, also thanks to the support from the partner FSP, even though only 45% declare to be able to face potential expenses deriving from an unexpected incident;
- 13 of 20 still feel worried about paying for their living expenses but 60% declared that the service provided by the FSP had helped in being more confident in the management of their expenses;
- A large majority (85%) perceives to have improved their financial situation, whereas 55% consider that the service had helped in their long-term financial goals.

The respondents identified three main areas of improvement for the service to be closer to the clients' needs:

1. The reduction of the interest rate (which was generally over 20% yearly and considered not sustainable) for the loans provided by the partner MFI;
2. The need to increase the cap for the loan (FCFA 500,000 or USD 780) by the partner MFI;
3. To reduce or remove the collateral requested by the partner MFI to the client (generally 25%).

The project timeline (initially 12 months, with a subsequent extension to 22 months) was likely too short to achieve both product development and customer reach objectives and market penetration with such an advanced solution.

Efficiency

The project had an approved total budget of USD 138,000, with USD 96,400 (69.86%) provided as a grant from UNCDF and USD 41,600 (30.14%) as co-financing from the lead consortium company, SympliFi. Due

to the failure to achieve all KPIs outlined in the financing contract, UNCDF decided to disburse only the first two tranches of the funding, along with a portion of the third tranche, totalling **USD 44,000 out of USD 96,400 (45.64%)**.

In addition, the cost of technical assistance provided to the project by UNCDF (staff time), amounted to USD 148,059. Therefore, the total project expenditure was **USD 192,059**, not counting the cost incurred by SympliFi itself. This high, and disproportional, cost of UNCDF TA is explained by SympliFi's relative inexperience in project management and the complexity of the project, involving partners that do not fully know and trust each other, requiring considerable support from UNCDF.

Considering the number of successful loan operations facilitated by SympliFi (71), we can deduce that the **cost per loan generated through SympliFi was USD 2,667**, while the average loan was just EUR 491. While this looks significantly inefficient, it is to be noted that the number and volume of loans was only a fraction of the project target, and UNCDF's TA much more intense than had been expected.

In the context of efficiency, it is also noted that the project was extended by 10 months, chiefly because SympliFi in its grant application had suggested that Baobab was a confirmed project partner. In reality SympliFi needed eight months to agree operational details with Baobab.

Even though governance and oversight instruments were designed to provide adequate guidance and monitoring to the project, one cross-cutting observation observed is the lack of ownership of the project by the co-implementing partner. Baobab mainly perceived SympliFi as a third-party funded project, rather than a new service to promote among its consolidated and prospective clients, limiting its potential.

Sustainability

The core function of a publicly-funded programme in support of the private sector is to allow innovative and risky projects, with the prospect of significant social impact. From this perspective, as previously mentioned, directing funding to support SympliFi's experimentation is aligned with MRP's objectives. The SympliFi guarantee product, as a business, has not yet achieved sustainability, despite receiving support from other public initiatives and private investors over the years.

The lack of economic and financial sustainability, the product was even discontinued, is in part due to the absence of a financial partner that sees the mechanism as a market opportunity, committing resources not only to technological development but also to marketing the service. The pilot project might have had a better chance of success if not SympliFi but Baobab had been leading the initiative, mobilising its considerable resources and branch network to make the product a success.

SympliFi demonstrated that innovative solutions are not only possible, but also favoured by the local financial and regulatory authorities, paving the way for future more financially viable initiatives. The experience made through the two trials, and the market knowledge gained, could allow SympliFi to retry with a financial partner with strong social purpose (such as an impact investing fund) and an aligned local partner, enabling significant investments in marketing and advertising to tackle the market with a different strength, ensuring its sustainability and commercial viability.

Annex(es)

Main Sources of information:

- SympliFi - Project Description;
- 2 - Budget SympliFi
- Workplan_SympliFi;
- UNCDF_SympliFi_Wb;
- Mrp_Budget Overview_2019-2023
- SympliFi_Project Evaluation External;
- SympliFi Steering Committee Meetings Minutes;
- SympliFi Partners Deliverables;
- 221003 Project Closing Report Internal;
- Project Evaluation External;
- Mrp_Evaluation_-_Mini_Survey_-_All_Versions_-_English_En_-_2024-02-Feb 29
- Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration Final Draft 11 July 2018
- Addis Ababa Action Agenda of The Third International Conference On Financing For Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) The Final Text Of The Outcome Document Adopted At The Third International Conference On Financing For Development (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 13–16 July 2015) And Endorsed By The General Assembly In Its Resolution 69/313 Of 27 July 2015;
- UNCDF Strategic Framework 2022-2025
- Financing Agreement: Grant Between The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) And SympliFi Financial Solutions Ltd Recipient Institution;
- Amendment I to the Financing Agreement: Grant Between The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) And SympliFi Financial Solutions Ltd;
- Interviews With UNCDF Staff involved;
- Interviews With SympliFi Management;
- Field Surveys with SympliFi final clients.

Case study Harvard Kennedy School “Capacity Building Coursework on the Future of Migrant Remittances and Financial Services”

1) Introduction

The case study refers to a course (partly online and partly in person) on inclusive digital remittances and financial services for migrants and their families. The aim of the course was to reinforce the capacities of MRP's (Migration Remittances Programme) stakeholders to build enabling ecosystems, design migrant-centric products and make evidence-based decisions. Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) and the Evidence for Policy Design (EPoD) Programme¹⁸ were competitively selected to deliver a “Capacity Building Course on Future of Migrant Remittances” (2021-22). MRP course participants were selected by UNCDF according to different criteria (job profile, gender, geographic area, public/private sector, workstream, etc). A group of 63 senior leaders and managers took part in the online training¹⁹ and 14 persons were invited to an in-person workshop held at Harvard Kennedy School in Cambridge, Massachusetts²⁰, conducted in English with simultaneous interpretation in French.

The HKS course was selected as case study because, appreciated by participants, it can be potentially replicated during further phases of MRP. Additionally, the case study aims to assess to what extent the course resulted in changes and effects at practice (regulatory or market) level.

The case study analysis took place from December 2023 till February 2024. The methodology included: (i) desk review of shared documents (including two previous evaluation questionnaires: one from HKS-February 2022, and one from UNCDF-April 2022), (ii) online and in-person interviews, and (iii) an online mid-term evaluation with questionnaires in French and English (January-February 2024) by the evaluation team.²¹

2) Background

Literature confirms that in many low-income countries a limited adoption of digital remittance channels is due to a gap between the offer of remittance services, existing policies, and the needs of migrant and their families. In 2020, UNCDF MRP became conscious of a general lack of knowledge and competences on (especially digital) remittance markets and services among public and private key players. Moreover, the Covid-19 pandemic caused changes in individual financial behaviours and digital services. A need became evident for public actors to introduce more suitable norms to regulate digital transfers and for private actors to develop more appropriate digital products and models. UNCDF staff became aware of this through direct observations in different countries (thanks to its local staff) and through high-level exchanges and conversations with the involved stakeholders.²² UNCDF noticed the need to build remittance-related capacities and to provide content for a more up-to-date remittance narrative. An executive training coursework was considered the best tool to support regulators in reviewing remittance policies and private sector operators in developing inclusive digital financial products.

¹⁸ Evidence for Policy Design (EPoD) at Harvard Kennedy School is a research programme that promotes the use of analytical insights.

¹⁹ From the 10th till the 21st of December 2021.

²⁰ From the 9th till the 11th of August 2022.

²¹ Online FR/ENG questionnaire for participants: HKS course (ENG); HKS course (FR).

²² Including different international development organizations, different national line Ministries and other competent public entities, representatives of banking and financial institutions, market players from African or Asian countries etc.

3) The project

The project was implemented by the **Harvard Kennedy School**²³ (HKS) and the **Evidence for Policy Design Programme** (EPoD) at Harvard Kennedy School.²⁴ UNCDF's role was to identify and select the participants of the course; to provide support to HKS in the design of the course work; to identify some group leaders as "champions"; and to encourage building up a community of practice as follow-up.

The project activities included:

Preliminary phase

1. Design syllabus and online course (by HKS/EPoD)
2. Selection of the participants (by UNCDF)
3. Programme input through a pre-course survey among the participants (professional background, learning objectives) (by HKS)
4. Completion of "Building Capacity to Use Research Evidence" (BCURE) digital module to provide a common language on data and evidence

Implementation

5. HKS: an **online coursework** to introduce the following topics: financial inclusion, migration, financial markets and regulations, and policy design. The different sessions included 11 live faculty lectures (distributed over 7 days); 5 asynchronous group assignments (distributed over 10 days). The total course duration was approximately 50 hours.
6. EPoD: an **in-person follow up** workshop for a restricted number of participants (9-11 August 2022) to strengthen their understanding gained online and reinforce a problem-solving approach (*SPDI* - Smart Policy Design framework to identify and diagnose policy problems and formulate solutions using a gender lens). The in-person workshop consisted of approximately 30 hours.

4) The Process

A public call for applications was launched to seek an organization to deliver a "Capacity Building Coursework on the Future of Migrant Remittances and Financial Services" (August 2020). Out of nine applications and four organizations shortlisted, the Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) received the highest score from the evaluation commission (October 2020).²⁵

The course beneficiaries were MRP stakeholders composed of a public sector group (including representatives from central banks, line Ministries, telecommunications regulatory bodies etc), a private sector group (representatives from remittance providers, banks, mobile money providers etc), staff of multilateral organizations, and UNCDF staff as auditors/observers.

In the participant selection process a mix of criteria was applied.²⁶ Ensuring a gender balance was challenging at the outset, but the threshold of min 30% female representation was achieved. The selected participants were all senior managers/profiles with medium-high competences/positions.²⁷

²³ A professional graduate school at Harvard University, focused on the study of public policy and government.

²⁴ A research programme that works to promote the use of analytical insights to design and implement public policies.

²⁵ Two persons from UNCDF, one from the World Bank, one from IOM, one from IAMTN (International Association of Money Transfer Networks).

²⁶ Some examples of organizations involved (non-exhaustive list): RAKBANK, Lion International Bank, Wizall, SympliFi, SentBe, IME Digital Solution Ltd, Belcash, Lucy, National Bank of Ethiopia, Central Bank of Djibouti, Bank of Uganda, National Bank of Rwanda, Nepal Rasta Bank, Bank of South Sudan, Banque de la Republique du Burundi, Banque Centrale du Congo, BEAC, BCEAO, ECCAS, IOM, UNCDF, International Association of Money Transfer Networks.

²⁷ For instance, not Governors, but technical decision makers, director level at central banks. This has been a wise decision to focus on profiles that could technically influence on the internal debate.

The number of targeted beneficiaries for the online course was 100. Eventually a total of 85 persons were admitted (including 6 UNCDF staff members).²⁸ A total of 63 active participants obtained the course certificate (+ 4 UNCDF staff). The in-person workshop was attended by 14 persons (+ 3 UNCDF staff).

5) Results achieved

The HKS training **development outcome and ultimate goal** were that inclusive policies and regulations are implemented that would enable access and usage of digital remittances services.²⁹ More precisely: public/private participants to the course were expected to improve their knowledge and capacities to build digital-remittances enabling ecosystems (inclusive digital remittance policies are adopted, migrant-centric products are designed, accessible/affordable digital services are piloted, inclusive innovative business models linked to digital remittances are deployed, evidence-based decisions are made).

The motivation to attend the course included:

- interest to design gender-smart and migrant-centric products
- interest for practical peer-exchanges and learnings
- interest to address informal remittances and migration.³⁰

The training needed to face current remittance challenges included support to

- develop women-centric products, financial services and digital products
- open conversation with private sector, regulators and policymakers
- collect data
- address the informal sector.

Post-course evaluation by HKS. HKS (February 2022) assessed the course using HKS's own evaluation forms (75% - 50/67 questionnaires received). The participants expressed satisfaction with the overall programme (86% of respondents providing a rating of 4 or 5 on a scale 1-5), with their professional (87%) and personal (86%) usefulness, and with the overall curriculum (86%).

Topic	Respondents providing rating of 4 or 5
Overall evaluation of programme	86%
Professional usefulness	87%
Personal usefulness	86%
Overall evaluation of curriculum	94%
Effectiveness of teaching fellows	94%

Source: HKS evaluation (Feb 2022)

HKS also employed *teachly*³¹, a web application to collect information on online class interactions.³²

Post-course evaluation by UNCDF. UNCDF carried out a post-project survey (April 2022) that generated 17% (11/67) answers. Ten out of eleven respondents confirmed that the course increased their capacities; 9/11 confirmed they were still applying the problem-solving methodology presented during the course; 11/11 confirmed the course facilitated public-private dialogue on remittance.

²⁸ The purpose behind including UNCDF staff was to better support public- and private partners going forward.

²⁹ Source: ToC in the Project Workbook

³⁰ Source: UNCDF-HKS co-creation workshop, migrant remittances and financial services: executive education for policy makers, regulators and financial service providers, 25th October 2021.

³¹ <https://teachly.me/>

³² Exchanges among the participants and participant online interactivity (according to session-by-session analytics) show that: women participated 5% less than men, and francophones participated 1% less than anglophone/bilingual participants. The active learning (meaning the number of comments in the chat) refers to an average 15.6 comments per session, which is considered a medium-to-high number in a virtual session. 71% of the students participated (with a comment) at least once during the course and 10% of the students produced the 39% of the comments.

The course was appreciated (mostly the problem-solving tool to manage decisions) and participants reported that it enriched their knowledge and competences. This conclusion, however, is weakened by the low response rate to the UNCDF post-project survey.³³

The low response rate to the MRP survey was probably because of the timing. It was sent after HKS had completed their own survey with the same set of participants, which may have led to survey fatigue.

Results achieved: activities improved capacities

- a. Different stakeholders reported that they learned how to use **the analytical problem-solving approach** (SPDI), which they subsequently applied in different policy/private sector analysis.³⁴ Most respondents (13/16) of the mid-term evaluation survey mentioned that they are still applying the SPDI approach in their work (*a lot/somehow/so and so*) (source: mid-term evaluation survey, 2024).

Examples reported by respondents:

- *During implementation of new product, identification of the actual problem is crucial before directly looking into the solution*
- *The bank is under reform, which is hugely supported by various policy studies. For those analyses I applied SPDI.*
- *This has been helpful in the newly developed strategies (financial inclusion and financial education strategies).*
- *By identifying problems and potentials*

- b. Qualitative evidence: according to the interviews undertaken for the mid-term evaluation (four persons in Ethiopia and one from Senegal), HSK particularly helped the Ethiopian participants in: **applying the SPDI/problem-solving** method to formulate policy notes (e.g., it affected the 2021 Remittance Service Providers Directive) and analysing business development options (for Lion Bank/Kacha products). The five interviewees positively commented on the broader understanding they gained on financial inclusion/remittances throughout the course.

Examples reported by respondents:

- *I learned how to formulate policy analysis (public sector)*
- *The course has been an eyeopener for me on remittances (private sector)*
- *I learned what others (countries, institutions) are doing*

- c. Most respondents (13/16 – 81%) confirm that they **positively improved specific awareness** (*a lot/somehow*) of financial inclusion, migration and remittances and: human rights, gender, disability and discrimination.

Examples reported by respondents:

- *Nepal leadership is still top-down driven, internal bureaucracy hinders a lot of detailed implementations encompassing all the above.*
- *Uganda recently hosted the AFI-Forcibly Displaced Persons forum, which looked into development of policy that is inclusive right from the type of data collected in our surveys to identifying policies that are relevant to this section of our population*
- *Women, refugees and people with disabilities were taken into account while drafting the national financial inclusion roadmap and financial education roadmap.*
- *The importance of financial literacy has been reinforced in the Pre-Departure programme for migrant workers*

³³ The low response rate to the MRP survey was probably because of the timing. It was sent after HKS had completed their own survey with the same set of participants, which may have led to survey fatigue.

³⁴ BCEAO, NRB Nepal, National Bank of Rwanda, AfricaNenda, BRAC Bank, NBE, LionBank (source: UNCDF evaluation survey, April 2022).

- *The HKS course increased my awareness on all of the elements mentioned above. I am working in Digital Financial Service area at Safaricom Ethiopia, our primary focus being the financial inclusion and building digital capability of the people of Ethiopia.*
- *We are trying to include these categories within our activities and with our partners (Fr)*

6) Evaluative conclusions

Relevance

Based on informal consultations and direct observations, UNCDF realized that there is the need to reinforce the capacities of stakeholders to support digital remittances changes at national and regional level. The request to reinforce the remittance capacities of public actors was included in several MRP agreements (e.g., the MoU with BEAC, October 2022, and the TA Agreement with BCEAO, April 2022), confirming the relevance of this activity for different institutional partners. This is also aligned with international agendas (as the AAA highlighting the importance of strengthening institutional capacity). Capacity building has been a relevant investment within the initial MRP architecture, and for UNCDF to improve relationships with new stakeholders/partners.

Effectiveness

Effectiveness is the extent to which outputs were produced and outcomes achieved. The project Theory of Change was designed in line with the MRP ToC. The HKS project ToC was as follows:

- **Outputs:** “policy makers and regulators have improved capacity and information to develop, supervise and enforce inclusive policy and regulations on remittances”.
- **Stakeholder outcomes:** “Inclusive policies and regulations that enable access and usage of digital remittances services are acknowledged and accepted with a scope to be responsibly adopted and implemented”, and “Regulators and policymakers amend & complete remittance-related policies and regulations framework”.
- **Customer outcomes:** “Migrants and receiving households adopt and use formal digital remittance channels”, and “Migrants send and receive remittances with greater ease and security”.
- **Sector outcomes:** “Migrants and receiving households increasingly use digital remittance channels and remittance linked financial services”, and “Digital ecosystem is expanded with more investment and competition as FSP benefit from a diversified revenue stream and cross selling opportunities”.

The **Output** was successfully produced: increased knowledge and reinforced capacities of participants.

According to the different participants and stakeholders consulted for this mid-term evaluation:

- a. Most stakeholders reported they positively **increased general knowledge** on remittance/financial inclusion/data issues (source: HKS evaluation survey, 2022)
- b. Respondents (source: Mid-term evaluation survey, 2024) confirmed the HKS course overall **reinforced (a lot/enough, so and so) their capabilities** to develop inclusive digital remittances products-services-business models and/or remittance-linked public policies (total 13/16 responses).

Examples reported by respondents:

- *I learned how to approach different subjects, especially financial inclusion (Fr)*
- *I can say that the training helped me in my day-to-day life, most importantly on analysis of the problem/ the root causes and possible solutions.*
- *It helps me a lot to prepare policy notes for National Bank of Ethiopia top management as per the SPID framework.*
- *Analysis of migrants' needs (Fr)*

- *Navigating challenges to transform our cash dependent remittance network to direct mobile wallet user and merchant ecosystem. Also, gradually transitioning the mobile wallet product to a digital banking portfolio*
- *The course contents helped the Ministry where I worked till December 31, 2023 formulate its insurance policy for migrant workers.*
- *It was a wonderful experience participating in this dynamic and collaborative learning programme. We're in fact still working together with IPA (Innovations for Poverty Action) and UNCDF in the field-level demand-side research across Bangladesh, focusing on financial inclusion of migrants and their beneficiaries, exploring gender-smart innovations that can improve the financial hygiene of women. We hope that these collaborations will continue.*
- *The course helped me to understand (...) how technology resolves some of the literacy issues in addressing the digital financial inclusion in the area where there is a massive banking infrastructure problem*

However, the developmental **Outcomes** are difficult to trace in the short-medium term. Among the immediate obstacles faced: a moderate turnover among persons trained (now employed in other occupations/organizations), and difficulty to observe policy/market changes in a short time (especially given the nature and length of the political process to design, approve and implement public policies). While stakeholders' capacities were effectively strengthened, achievement of any of the outcomes by the time of the mid-term evaluation, is mixed according to the information available (December 2023 – February 2024).

- a. The immediate course effect is that different stakeholders built/reinforced their **trust relationship with UNCDF**, engaging with MRP (signing agreements and MoUs, requesting technical assistance, intensifying their commitment in the MR programme). As MRP was at its initial stage, the course intensified the reciprocal knowledge between UNCDF staff and public/private stakeholders who were not yet fully involved in the programme.
- b. Effects were confirmed of the HKS course on **private and public sector partners**.³⁵ 7/14 (50%) respondents from the public and private sector declared the HKS course in/directly affected their business activities or public policy aspects. However, the number of respondents was limited (compared to the 63 total).³⁶ It can be assumed that those who replied to the mid-term evaluation survey are the more committed ones, those willing to report on their HKS personal experience and results and with something to mention.
- c. The result of a commitment, attempt or achievement of **private sector** players in developing inclusive digital remittance-linked products/services/initiatives is acknowledged by 5 out of 7 private sector respondents (3 clearly; 2 slightly).

Examples reported by private sector respondents:

- *I was stuck with explaining immediate commercial success to the Board. Change takes time, business values commercial success over product success.*
- *We are working to digitalise most of the process and focus on education.*
- *We now work better on the gender of our clients and better answer to their needs (Fr).*
- *We implemented a pre-migration loan product based on the learning outcomes, also we enabled remittance payout aggregation (private sector).*
- *All the studies shared within the course and undertaken by UNCDF helped us and still help us during our activities (Nanocredit, épargne) (Fr),*

- d. The result of a commitment, attempt or achievement of **public sector** players in developing inclusive policies was reported by only 2 out of 7 public sector respondents (1 clearly; 1 slightly).

³⁵ Mid-term evaluation survey (January-February 2024, 16 answers/63 participants) and qualitative interviews (four persons in Ethiopia and one in Senegal).

³⁶ It is observed that some institutions had 2 or 3 participants, leading to one single response on behalf of all.

Example reported by public sector respondents:

- *There are various policies on FX bureau, FX saving accounts and others reform but all are under policy analysis phase.*
- *It contributed to my ability to design inclusive policies*
- *It helped to write some notes to be further discussed at the political/strategic level (now they are at the draft level – no direct policy impact evidence)*

- e. The effect of the HKS course on **multilateral players** was reported (source: UNCDF evaluation survey, April 2022).

Example reported by multilateral respondent:

- *IOM: "I have been adapting the proposal we worked on in our group work, to a project proposal that will be funded in the region"*

To come to an evaluative conclusion on effectiveness, the evaluators delved deeper into the qualitative comments derived from the surveys and interviews. Based on the interviews undertaken, the evaluation surveys, and the desk material analysed, a correlation between the course attendance and policy/market outcomes could be established.

The appreciation of course contents and the reinforced capacities in digital remittances, financial inclusion and problem-solving approach (see "results achieved" section).

Public and private sector players confirmed the positive contribution of the HKS course on their knowledge, comprehension and vision on remittances and decision making. The course participants are technical managers that can potentially influence strategies and decisions within their organizations/companies. Twenty-five percent of the course participants (16/63 respondents to the mid-term evaluation survey) confirmed the knowledge and capacities they gained through the HKS course are currently put into practice (*a lot, enough, somehow, so and so*). Nevertheless, information on 75% of the participants is not available. The reinforced remittance capacities and improved knowledge can potentially produce changes in the medium/long term, but there only is direct information from 16/63 participants. This makes it difficult to confirm broad effectiveness at the outcome level.

The effect of the course on private sector products/ services/ initiatives undertaken and, on policies drafted/implemented (main source: Mid-term evaluation survey, January-February 2024, 16 answers/63) (see "effectiveness" section).

Successful evidence (according to the evaluators' knowledge) of a policy effect of the course refers to the case of Bangladesh³⁷ (*"the course contents helped the Ministry where I worked till December 31, 2023 formulate its insurance policy for migrant workers"*). In Ethiopia the HKS course attendance together with the ongoing MRP technical assistance to NBE affected the skills and remittance understanding of the External Analysis and International Relations Director – National Bank of Ethiopia, affecting two Directives. Successful evidence of private sector effect refers to a case in Ethiopia: the staff from Lion Bank (today employed in another company) used the course contents to better develop diaspora/micro-remittances products, while also benefitting of a MRP grant and support.³⁸ In Nepal, IME group reported: *"we implemented a pre-migration loan product based on the learning outcomes, also we enabled remittance payout aggregation"*. These represent positive and successful consequences of the HKS course. However, additional examples are scarce in numbers, according to the information available (February 2024).

As earlier underlined, changes especially in the policy framework are ambitious outcomes, they are not easy to obtain and take time. To generate transformative effects on the public/private remittance framework, apart from the course other conditions must be met (e.g., sharing vision and objectives

³⁷ Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment.

³⁸ The project faced problems due to the war in the Tigray region where Lion bank has many branches.

between the course beneficiaries and the high-level decision makers, gaining momentum in the remittance public/institutional or market debate, receiving additional support, technical assistance or funding to pursue changes etc). Two years after the course, some participants³⁹ confirm that the knowledge and competences achieved on migration and remittances at the personal/professional level induced some changes in the public or private sector sphere.⁴⁰ This is a clear project result. However, such results were only reported by 7 out of 63 participants, and for the others these are not visible, registered or predictable (February 2024). This leaves the evaluation of development outcomes partial (only a few examples) and inconclusive therefore.

Impact

Impact relates to the top-level of the ToC, namely the impact on migrants and recipients’ financial health. Given the modest level of outcome achievement, attributable to the HKS training, it would not be possible to claim any impact at this time.

Apart from ensuring participation of female participants, the course did not have a strong LNOB orientation.

Efficiency

An 18-month project was planned (January 2021 – June 2022), just after COVID-19. The project, under UNCDF committed management⁴¹, faced some delays with the online sessions delivered between January 10 and 21, 2022 and the in-person workshop held in August 2022, while the final assessment report was received by UNCDF in December 2022 (source: final workplan).

The overall cost of the project was USD 481,192, namely USD 249,949 for HKS grant and USD 231,243 for UNCDF technical assistance cost.⁴² The number of beneficiaries was 63 (online participants) + 14 (in person participants). Despite the positive and encouraging feedback on the course (see result and effectiveness sections), the overall cost of the training compared to the evidence and degree of the results achieved is high in terms of return on the investment. The training cost USD 6,000 per participant (63 online + 14 in person workshop) for approximately 80 teaching contact hours.⁴³ The cost per outcome (value for money) cannot be assessed due to lack of definitive information on outcome achievement. Furthermore, as far as outcomes were generated, these are the combined results of the MRP TA, the partners’ own efforts, and the support by the HKS course.

	Target	Output
UNCDF Funding (US\$)	250,000	249,948.54
Target Registered beneficiary	100	79 registered persons (+ 6 UNCDF staff)
% Female	30%	22/63 (35%)
Target Active Customers	100	Tot 63 participants online (+ 4 UNCDF staff as auditors)
Participants to in-person workshop	15-20	Tot 14 participants to the in-person workshop (+ 3 UNCDF staff)

³⁹ According to the mid-term evaluation survey: 7 persons out of the 63 participants.

⁴⁰ E.g. affecting policies or products, increasing awareness and knowledge on migration and remittances.

⁴¹ UNCDF staff: seven persons, of whom one part time.

⁴² This covers staff, personnel and individual consultant costs dedicated to project’s direction, preparing material and community engagement. Members of the Migrant Money team supported the project in: grant administration, interpretation and translation, gender integration, communication etc. Travel costs are aggregated in the annual CDR budget (therefore not included here).

⁴³ The cost has to include also the selection of the participants and the course organization.

The evaluation identified some factors that aided or hampered efficiency:

(+) The **HSK reputation and brand** were attractive for participants.

(+/-) While **the online modality** was preferable to allow distant participation (especially in the immediate post-Covid-19 period) and reduce costs, the in-person workshop resulted in more intense and effective interactions. The tight schedule of the coursework (2.5 weeks – 3 half days live sessions per week + groupwork assignments) has been reported as too demanding taken into consideration participants' normal duties. Sessions distributed over a longer period would have facilitated the coursework attendance and facilitated study requirements.

(+) The participants were both English and French speaking. The course itself was offered in English. Despite budget constraints, simultaneous French translation was ensured (including oral parts and materials). The group diversity (geographic coverage and sectors) was appreciated by participants.

(+) **UNCDF engagement** suggested some remittance case studies and contents integrated in the programme.⁴⁴

(-) **HKS demonstrated rigidity** to incorporate UNCDF suggestions and requests (for instance in terms of contents/selection of case studies, evaluation questions to be included, feedback on materials, engaging in the possibility to co-create a replicable initiative involving regional academia in Africa/Asia). This has been explained by UNCDF staff as “cultural distance” within an education institution that seems to be less flexible to adapt its standards.⁴⁵

Sustainability

Based on the mid-term evaluation interviews with UNCDF staff, UNCDF initially aimed to engage with a partner to co-create a regional model of capacity building to be adapted/replicated with universities/training centres in MRP key areas. Nevertheless, this positive idea was not included in the ToR/call for service provider, nor it has been explicitly mentioned in the HKS grant contract. Essentially, the course was a HKS product, which retained the full intellectual property, thereby precluding UNCDF from replicating it without additional HKS involvement. The project also did not include a Training of Trainers component, which would have helped UNCDF continue this training in next phases on the MRP.

According to the mid-term evaluation survey (2024), 69% of respondents (11/16) expressed their interest and need for further training on remittance issues. A follow up phase to reconnect with the course participants to reinforce some contents or to track possible changes/applications did not take place (regardless of the UNCDF April 2022 evaluation questionnaire).

Lessons learned

- Online training is a good option when facing budget and logistic (geographical) constraints (including COVID). Nevertheless, planning face-to-face and more interactive opportunities (for instance at national or regional level) can further reinforce shared knowledge and commitment.
- A less tight course schedule could have helped participants to face work daily duties and dedicate additional energy to course reading and preparation.
- A better follow up strategy could have helped to keep trace of unregistered outcomes and to further commit the selected group of distinguished stakeholders. There may have been valuable outcomes that escaped the attention of MRP and the evaluators, or additional technical support could have helped course participants to pursue policy/market changes.

⁴⁴ As for the case of the global network WIEGO (Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing).

⁴⁵ In the “request for application”, UNCDF highlighted: “UNCDF will thus be the owner of the intellectual property” (p. 10). In the HKS project description it was specified that “28 months after the commencement of the project, official access to course materials will end (although most course materials are available for download at any time until this date)”. According to the financing agreement signed, UNCDF agreed that HKS owns the entire intellectual property right of all materials and information developed during the course. UNCDF is permitted to use products and materials developed during the course (excluding the online sessions' recordings).

- As ex-post consideration, a different education partner (more willing to collaborate in the relationship and on the remittance topic) could have helped in reinforcing connections with participants and in designing replicable initiatives (at national or regional level, including for instance Training of Trainers or peer exchanges).
- The course experience has been largely appreciated by its participants for the remittance knowledge and problem-solving analysis. A reduced cost of a similar or revised initiative could facilitate its replicability.
- The possibility that a mixed online/in person course produces direct or indirect changes – especially at the policy and regulation level – can be very challenging to obtain and difficult to trace.

Sources consulted

- HKS post-course evaluation (2022)
- UNCDF post-course evaluation (2022)
- Mid-term evaluation (2024)
- Shared documents (Financing grant agreement materials; Project description materials; Project Management materials)
- Interviews: BCEAO (2), National Bank of Ethiopia (1), Lion Bank International (4)

Interviews were held with: UNCDF staff, the present and former director of financial inclusion at BCEAO, the Lion International Bank Director of Alternative Channels and Lion Bank's former staff, the External Economic Analysis and International Relations Director at the National Bank of Ethiopia. The contact person at HKS was not interviewed (not available). The evaluation team is grateful to the UNCDF staff for the support in reaching out to the participants and for the information shared.

Annex(es)

Annex 1 - Effect of HKS in reinforcing capacities to develop inclusive digital remittances products/policies (Mid-term evaluation survey, 2024)

Effect of HKS in reinforcing capacities to develop inclusive digital remittances products/policies				
	Private	Public	Multilateral*	Total
A lot	3	3	<i>n.a.</i>	6
Enough	2	3	<i>n.a.</i>	5
So and so	2		<i>n.a.</i>	2
Not at all		1	<i>n.a.</i>	1
Total	7	7	(2)	14

*No answers from Multilateral sector respondents (2)

Source: Mid-term evaluation survey (2024). Total 16 questionnaires filled out of 63 participants

Annex 2 - Evidence of digital remittance product-service/remittance policy developed as consequence of HKS (Mid-term evaluation survey, 2024)

Evidence of digital remittance product-service/remittance policy developed as consequence of HKS				
	Private	Public	Multilateral*	Total
Not that I know	2	4	<i>n.a.</i>	6
Yes, clearly	3	1	<i>n.a.</i>	4
Yes, slightly	2	1	<i>n.a.</i>	3
No answer		1	<i>n.a.</i>	1
Total	7	7	(2)	14

*No answers from Multilateral sector respondents (2)

Source: Mid-term evaluation survey (2024). Total 16 questionnaires filled out of 63 participants

Annex 3 - Contents of lectures of the online course

1. Introduction and Course Overview – Jay Rosengard
2. Introduction to SPDI – Asim Khwaja
3. Current State of Financial Inclusion – Jay Rosengard
4. Migrants and Microfinance – Maryann Bylander
5. Migrants and the Informal Economy – Yuleina Carmona and Jenna Harvey
6. Savings, Credit, and Liquidity Management of Low-Income Migrant Households - Guy Stuart
7. Ripple Case Study – Shawn Cole
8. MPESA Case Study – Jay Rosengard
9. Migration and Migrant Labor – Jonathan Portes
10. Fintech and Financial Inclusion – Sean Higgins
11. Using Data for Inclusion – Theodore Svoronos
12. SPDI Presentations and Closing – Jay Rosengard and Rema Hanna

Annex 4 – Case study/working groups during the online course

- Group 1 - Low adoption rate of digital financial products among rural Ugandan farmers
- Group 2 – Gender disparity in the uptake of digital financial services
- Group 3 - High rates of Ethiopians use informal remittance channels

- Group 4 - A large proportion of Nigerian women lack access to financial services
- Group 5 - Remittance income is not saved/invested by Nepalese receiving households
- Group 6 - Low-income plantation workers in Malaysia struggle to use financial products and services
- Group 7 - Young female customers typically cash out remittance payments despite alternatives
- Group 8 - Formal remittance channels are too expensive in Rwanda
- Group 9 - Migrant workers in Korea are underutilizing savings and investment products
- Group 10 - FDPs in Malaysia have limited access to formal financial services
- Group 11 (fr) - Migrants from Djibouti are excluded from the formal financial system
- Group 12 (fr) - Insufficient data on the financial transactions of Yemini migrants in Saudi Arabia

Annex 5 - Result achievement contributing factors (based on mid-term evaluation perceptions)

Due to MRP it is expected that: “policymakers and regulators have improved capacity and information to develop, supervise and enforce inclusive policies and regulations on remittances” (ToC)

Factors (contributing, rival or hindering)	Source of evidence	Reliability of evidence	Importance of factor
<i>Course participation</i>			
(+) Reputation and appeal of HKS to attract participants	Interview to UNCDF	High	High
(-) Online modality	Interview to UNCDF	High	Medium
<i>Policy impacts</i>			
(-) Turnover	Interview to UNCDF; UNCDF exchanges	High	Medium
(+) The course contents offered useful inputs to be applied workwise	HKS evaluation form (Feb 2022)	Medium	Medium-High
(+) Course content. An evidence-based policy approach has been appreciated and adopted by different participants	UNCDF Evaluation form (April 2022); Mid-term evaluation (2024); interviews	High	Medium-High
(-) Difficulty to adopt/implement polices in short/medium term	Mid-term evaluation 2024; Interviews	Medium	High
(-) To impact on a policy design/ implementation with a training course, all profiles involved in the policy process shall participate to the course	Interviews	Medium	Medium
<i>Private sector impact</i>			
(+) The course contents offered useful inputs to be applied workwise	HKS evaluation form (Feb 2022);	Medium	Medium-High
(+) Course content. An evidence-based approach has been	HKS evaluation form (Feb 2022); UNCDF	High	Medium-High

appreciated and adopted by different participants	Evaluation form (April 2022); Mid-term evaluation (2024)		
(-) Until changes in the regulatory framework are not implemented, private actors are still limited in their possibilities	Interviews	High	High

Annex 6 - Agenda – HKS online course

Migrant Remittances and Financial Services Executive Education Program					
	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
Program Pre-Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Pre-Work Module on Descriptive Evidence by Monday, January 3, 2022 Submit Pre-Program Survey by Wednesday, December 15, 2021 				
Week 1 Live Sessions	Jan 10 Faculty Session: 8 - 9:30 am Introduction and Course Overview (Jay Rosengard/HKS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggregate class profile and individual introductions (time permitting) Course objectives Course roadmap 	Jan 11 Group Meeting 1: 8 - 9am Group Introductions and Design Challenge Review	Jan 12 Study Groups: 7:30 - 8 am - groups are randomly assigned 1-2 study questions to prepare for the day's lectures. Faculty Session: 8 - 9:30am Current State of Financial Inclusion (Jay Rosengard/HKS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on microfinance institutions and services Base of the pyramid Portfolio of financial services for the unbanked and underbanked Financial sector enabling regulation Distinguishing characteristics of migrant labor Uses and abuses of fintech for financial inclusion 	Jan 13 7:30-8am - Study Groups Faculty Session: 8- 9:30 am - Migrants and the Informal Economy (Yuleina Carmona and Jenna Harvey/WIEGO) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact of COVID-19 on informal workers, including migrants Economic challenges of migrant workers 	Jan 14 Study Groups: 7:30 - 8am Faculty Session: 8 - 9:30am: Savings, Credit, and Liquidity Management of Low Income Households (Guy Stuart/Microfinance Opportunities) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Diaries or Garment Worker Diaries Gender aspects of migrant labor and financial needs
	9:30-9:45am - Break Faculty Session: 9:45-11:15 am Introduction to SPDI (Asim Khwaja/HKS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conceptual framework of SPDI Examples of SPDI in the financial sector 	TF Section 1: 9am -10am SPDI Problem Identification	9:30-9:45am - Break Faculty Session: 9:45-11:15am - Migrants and Microfinance (Maryann Bylander/Lewis & Clark) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal versus international migration Remittances Microcredit (including gender aspects) 	9:30-9:45am - Break TF Section 2: 9:45-10:45am SPDI Problem Diagnosis	9:30-9:45am - Break Faculty Session: 9:45-11:15 am - Remittances and Digital Payments (Shawn Cole/HBS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ripple Case Study (HBS)
Week 1 Asynchronous	Due: Session pre-readings	Due: Session pre-readings	Due: Session pre-readings Group Deliverable DUE: SPDI Problem Identification	Due: Session pre-readings	Due: Session pre-readings
Week 2 Live Sessions	January 17 MLK Holiday Sunday: Group Deliverable DUE: SPDI Problem Diagnosis Slides	Jan 18 Study Groups: 7:30 - 8am Live: 8am-9:30am Mobile Banking (Jay Rosengard/HKS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kenya Case Study (Swift Institute) 	Jan 19 Study Groups: 7:30 - 8am Faculty Session: 8 - 9:30 am - Assessing Migrant Labor (Jonathan Portes/King's College London) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labor gaps and labor mobility Factors of production complementarities Myths and reality Gender aspects of migrant labor 	Jan 20 TF Section 4: 8 - 9am Preparations for final presentations	Jan 21 Faculty Session Live: 8 - 9:30am: Data and Evidence for Smart Policy (Theodore Sovornos/HKS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fundamentals for effective data systems
		9:30-9:45am - Break TF Section 3 - 9:45-10:45 SPDI Solution Design & Implementation	9:30-9:45am - Break Live: 9:45-11:15am FinTech and Financial Inclusion (Sean Higgins/Kellogg Northwestern) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumer sovereignty and assumed rationality Nudges to avoid bad choices Incentives and sanctions for guiding change Gender aspects of behavioral finance 	9-10am Group meeting: final presentation preparation	9:30-9:45am - Break Group Presentations and Wrap-Up: 9:45-12pm (Jay Rosengard/HKS and Rema Hanna/HKS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants complete presentations to faculty Faculty chair gives closing remarks
Week 2 Asynchronous Work	Due: Session pre-readings	Due: Session pre-readings	Due: Session pre-readings Group Deliverable DUE: SPDI Solution Design and Implementation Slides	Group Deliverable DUE: SPDI Final presentation slides	

Annex 7 - Migrant Remittances and Financial Services In-Person Workshop

Evidence for Policy Design (EPoD), Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) - August 8th-11th, 2022

Monday, August 8th

Time	Session and notes
3pm-7pm	Participants arrive from airport
7pm-8:30pm	Dinner

Tuesday, August 9th

Time	Session and notes
9am	Welcome and introductions
10:30am	Break
11am	SPDI Recap
12:30pm	Lunch
2pm	Faculty session - Financial Regulation
3:30pm	Break
4pm	SPDI group work session
5pm	Close

Wednesday, August 10th

Time	Session
9am	Faculty session - Measurement and Evaluation
10:30	Break
11:00	Faculty Session - Migrant Financial Inclusion with Guy Stuart
12:30	Lunch
2pm	SPDI Steps
3:30 pm	Break
4pm	Peer feedback
5pm	Close
6:30	Dinner

Thursday, August 11th

Time	Session
9am	Case Study - Migrant case
10:30	Break
11am	SPDI session - finalizing SPDI presentations
12:30	Lunch networking
2pm	Presentations
4:00 pm	Closing remarks

Expanding Digital Remittances via Wage Payments App in United Arab Emirates

1) Introduction

This case study regards the MRP project carried out in the United Arab Emirates with RAKBANK (National Bank of Ras Al Khaimah), one of the oldest banks in the UAE, and Edenred, one of the largest providers of Wages Protection System (WPS) solutions in the country. Edenred serves as the principal distributor of C3Pay cards issued by RAKBANK, enabling migrant workers to receive salaries through these cards.⁴⁶ Holders of active C3Pay cards have access to the C3Pay app, allowing them to monitor account balances, review transaction history, top up mobile telephone accounts locally and internationally, and facilitate remittances via RAKMoneyTransfer (RMT), a fully digital service offered by RAKBANK.

As described in the project summary, the goal of this intervention was to support quicker penetration of digital remittance solutions into the blue-collar workforce in the UAE by acceleration of customer acquisition and closing the gap between cards issued and digital remittance users through the C3Pay App. This case study was chosen as an in-depth examination of an intervention under workstream 4, Empowered Customers initiative. This choice was based on the reported project results, which revealed a significant number of clients onboarded on the C3Pay app, enabling RAKBANK and Edenred to reach remittance recipients in Nepal, Bangladesh, India, Sri-Lanka, Pakistan and The Philippines. Furthermore, within the framework of this intervention, Edenred provided support to clients through digital and financial literacy campaigns, with a particular focus on reaching out to women. Therefore, the project was also an example of MRP's efforts to ensure gender inclusion. Gender being a priority topic in UNCDF, the case study specifically focuses on the gender outreach component of the project. This intervention may provide valuable insights for replication across MRP.

The case study was conducted in Q1 2024, through desk research and online discussions. Interview were conducted remotely with UNCDF, RAKBANK and Edenred current and former staff. The evaluation team also spoke with nine clients (five women, four men), all onboarded on the C3Pay app, only one of whom had used the app to make a remittance transfer (once).

2) Background

As outlined in the Project Description, the intervention aimed to address a key challenge: blue-collar workers in the UAE prioritize traditional exchange companies with physical locations for sending money back home, despite already having access to convenient and cost-effective digital remittance options. This preference is believed to stem from concerns about the safety and security of digital solutions. RAKMoneyTransfer (RMT), a digital remittance service of RAKBANK, is available to all WPS cardholders through the Edenred C3Pay app. However, despite its benefits, a gap persists between issued cards and use of the digital remittance service. This intervention aimed to address this gap and encourage wider adoption of RMT through the app.

The RAKBANK / Edenred project is a workstream 3 and 4 intervention according to the MRP ToC, specifically aiming to build the soft and hard skill of migrants to use digital financial remittance services, along with digitalisation and data analysis of the project partners.

3) The project

The RAKBANK project was identified through a Request for Applications (RfA). The project had been selected among competing proposals for its quality and scope for reaching significant numbers of

⁴⁶ C3Pay allows to receive wages digitally and can add value-added services such as savings, digital credit, insurance, and pension based on customers' needs.

migrants. According to the Project summary, the targeted beneficiaries were migrant blue-collar workers in the labour and construction industries, as well as domestic workers residing in the UAE and sending money to their home countries in Nepal, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and the Philippines. As outlined in the Internal Project Closing Report, the initial scope of engagement, as presented in the application at the RfA phase, was to get more cardholders into the C3Pay app and the remittances service. However, after project acceptance, the MRP team worked with the project partners to redesign the intervention and bring in an enhanced focus on the inclusion of women. The total budget for the project was USD 200,000, of which USD 140,000 (70%) was provided by UNCDF (MRP) and was destined to appointing telesales and in-field agents to assist with onboarding and training the clients. UNCDF's contribution also supported a market scan, data research and analysis, a lean data survey, qualitative market research, and communication campaigns.

The project initially had a planned duration of 13 months (November 2020 to December 2021), with the following output performance targets:

Indicator	Total (End of project)	Women (End of project)
Number of targeted new customers	80,000	20,000
Number of new customers that used the remittance service at least once in the last 90 days	35,000	10,000
Number of agents onboarded	20	N/A
Number of customers trained on financial/digital literacy	16,000	8,000

Expected outcomes at the customer level included migrants sending remittances with lower commissions, adopting and utilizing formal remittance channels, and enhancing their financial and digital skills, which was expected to result in recipient households having increased disposable income and allocating it into productive use.

4) The process

The lead partner for implementing this project was RAKBANK, with Edenred playing a supporting role as the client-facing partner for direct interaction.

As outlined in project reports, the intervention had a gradual start after signing the Grant Agreement, as MRP and partners took time to align on project objectives and the work plan. During this initial period, five workshops were conducted by MRP and its partners to review project objectives and to shift the focus from simply increasing app users to one that emphasized the inclusion of women in the services offered.⁴⁷ During this initial process, it was also agreed to extend the project to 6 corridors instead of 3, as originally suggested by RAKBANK and Edenred. This expansion stemmed from UNCDF's desire to increase the female customer target. Achieving this target required the inclusion of additional corridors, notably the UAE-Philippines corridor, recognized for its higher proportion of women customers compared to others.

Partners' activities included hiring additional telesales and field staff to accelerate customer acquisition and training. This also involved hiring women, which allowed to reach female migrants directly in their

⁴⁷ The objectives of the five workshops were to achieve the following: (i) Get buy-in from the senior management at Edenred CEO and management on women's financial inclusion, especially given that there was initial resistance from the team, (ii) Redesign the project to include other aspects such as data analysis, demand-side research, HCD process, gender mainstreaming beyond customer acquisition and marketing activities - all of which were tailored to increasing the targets for women, and (iii) Present UNCDF's TA's offering and approach and align on areas of synergies among RAKBANK, Edenred, and UNCDF to ensure seamless engagement through the course of the process.

accommodation sites. The activities undertaken by the telesales and field staff included assisting new customers with logging into their C3Pay app (onboarding) and providing them with information on card usage, remittances, remittance charges, and identifying potential frauds (through information sessions after onboarding). Additionally, based on insights provided with MRP's support (e.g., the research undertaken by KIT), the partners implemented product enhancements and created marketing and communication materials specifically tailored to the needs and characteristics of their clients.

Beyond the grant, MRP provided further TA support through data and research support (market scan, data analysis, lean data surveys, qualitative research), technical assistance in integrating gender lens, prototyping and concept distillation, and capacity building (HKS capacity building training). The demand-side research, lean data surveys, qualitative research were provided through the partnership with KIT, Butterfly Works and Aflatoun.⁴⁸ Specifically, regarding gender mainstreaming, MRP undertook the following activities:

- **Workshops:** MRP conducted capacity building workshops with RAKBANK and Edenred to mainstream gender considerations throughout the project.
- **Project redesign:** The project itself was redesigned compared to the initial proposal at RfA to integrate a gender lens.
- **Concept development:** Further workshops were held for insight validation, concept distillation, and prototyping to develop gender-inclusive project elements.
- **Marketing and Communication:** A dedicated workshop addressed integrating a gender lens into marketing and communication strategies.
- **Knowledge Sharing:** MRP organized a webinar to share learnings and best practices on women's financial inclusion.

The project implementation benefited from the following factors: 1) the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of digital remittance services, 2) strong commitment displayed by the management teams at both RAKBANK and Edenred, and 3) leveraging data analysis to gain detailed insights into clients' behaviour (KIT study). Factors hindering progress during project implementation included delays during the research phase as KIT and Butterfly Works had no local presence in the UAE. Conducting phone surveys and qualitative interviews with migrant workers also proved difficult. This was partly due to COVID-19 restrictions that limited in-person approaches. Additionally, characteristics of the target group (low-income, shared housing, long working hours) made them harder to reach. Telephone numbers were often not in use or not responded to. Some migrants were hesitant to be interviewed as they were fearful of scams. Consequently, the response rate for phone surveys was lower than usual, requiring additional efforts and call attempts. It was particularly challenging to interview women compared to men, an experience shared by the evaluation team when calling nine customers from a list of 51 C3Pay app users made available by Edenred.⁴⁹

5) Results achieved

Project reports validated by the evaluation indicate that all KPIs were either met or surpassed by March 2023:

Clients registered into the C3Pay App: The project exceeded the initial target of 80,000 new customers registered by March 2023, achieving a total of 375,734 registrations, according to Edenred and UNCDF. Additionally, women's participation surpassed the target of 20,000 with 34,000 female users onboarded.

Remittance service users: The target for new customers utilizing the remittance service was also surpassed. By project end, there were 238,629 new regular users compared to the initial target of 35,000,

⁴⁸ The research helped personalising the app experience and led to an ambassador programme to support the uptake and use of the C3Pay app.

⁴⁹ The evaluation team attempted to call all 51 of them, only nine responded. None of the five women called provided meaningful answers, and all denied having the C3Pay app (Edenred subsequently confirmed all five did).

according to Edenred and UNCDF. Women's participation exceeded the target of 10,000 with 16,698 new female users.⁵⁰

Agent recruitment: The project successfully achieved its initial target of onboarding 20 agents (Edenred). Notably, 7 of these agents were women.

Financial/digital literacy training: The project exceeded the target of training 16,000 customers on financial/digital literacy. It was reported by RAKBANK that a total of 193,726 customers were trained, including 10,995 women, exceeding the target of 8,000. Interviews revealed that trainings actually consisted of in-group short information sessions held right after onboarding and online messages and tutorials.

Prior to the project, neither RAKBANK nor Edenred actively considered or implemented a woman-centric approach in their decision-making processes. Their focus was primarily on specific remittance corridors, chiefly the Indian sub-continent. The project brought this crucial issue to the forefront for both partners. Initially, before receiving data insights, both RAKBANK and Edenred held the misconception that women were financially dependent on their husbands. However, through the data analysis support of MRP, they gained a more comprehensive understanding of the profile of working women in the UAE and their financial behaviours. This new knowledge allowed them to tailor communication materials more effectively. Nonetheless, interviews with current staff of RAKBANK and Edenred suggested that the women-centric approach will not be prioritized beyond the project's conclusion. This is due to a combination of factors, including business priorities and the low representation of women within the customer base (see the above figures). RAKBANK has historically been targeting male migrants from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, and is not fundamentally changing that commercial strategy. Although RAKBANK, through the project, added Nepal, Sri-Lanka, and The Philippines, and is now exploring more corridors through a partnership with Western Union, for now the focus on the Indian sub-continent remains in place.

Regarding onboarding and trainings, it is worth noting that Edenred already conducted on-the-ground onboarding and training prior to the project. While these efforts were expanded during the MRP project, budget constraints prevent sustaining the same level of field staff after project completion.

6) Evaluative conclusions

Relevance

The project addressed a well-defined development problem, namely the underutilization of secure and convenient digital remittances services by migrants, including by wages cardholders, in the UAE. The project was included in workstreams 3 and 4 of the MRP ToC, linked to a broad (UNCDF) policy framework of accelerating the adoption of digital channels, ultimately to improve the financial health of migrants and recipients. The project's relevance lies in promoting the use of digital remittance channels and offering a more cost-effective remittance option (see also SDG 10.c).

Furthermore, while the original project application did not specifically mention women, with MRP TA their inclusion became a key component of the project. This focus on women's financial inclusion is particularly relevant in relation to the MRP ToC and the UN's LNOB agenda. Offering women a digital payment option is not just about cost and convenience, but about control and empowerment as well. When women send money through cash channels, control is exercised by recipients (usually the husbands). Where women have money digitally, they may opt to send it straight to a school (for school fees), for rent, or just to transmit it into a savings account to have means available for their return. Hence, digital money is a core element in women's empowerment, independence and control.

⁵⁰ However, according to the MRP Result Measurement Framework there were only 24,804 active users as per Dec 2023, KPI # 18.

It is noted that disability did not play a role in the RAKBANK project, and it was not mentioned in the project documents.

The evaluative conclusion is that the project was relevant to the international development priorities (SDGs), the broader UN policy framework, and the MRP ToC. This project is also deemed relevant to the UNCDF Strategic Framework, particularly to the priority area “*Inclusive Digital Economies*” and priority area “*Women's Economic Empowerment*”. The project was earmarked to SDC funding and was explicitly responding to Swiss development priorities in relation to migration and the contribution of diaspora communities to sustainable development in their native countries. The project was also relevant to the MRP (and SDC) gender inclusion objectives. It was also a unique intervention, not duplicating or overlapping any similar intervention in UAE.

Effectiveness

The evaluation of effectiveness relates to the extent to which outputs were produced and outcomes were achieved. According to the result chain, the expected outputs of the project were the following:

- RAKBANK is capable of offering and expanding the use of the digital remittance services to men and women migrant workers including blue collar workers and domestic workers
- RAKBANK is capable of taking forward gender inclusive migrant product development

The core outcomes were:

- Stakeholder outcomes:
 - RAKBANK builds a business case for serving more women customers
 - RAKBANK pilots and scales the digital remittance service in 6 international corridors
 - RAKBANK adopts gender inclusive practices and approaches for men and women migrant product development
- Customer outcomes:
 - Men and women migrants and receiving households adopt and use new formal remittance channels

The RAKBANK project was effective in output and outcome achievement, demonstrably expanding the remittances services to both men and women migrant workers in the UAE (although women were still less than 10% of the newly onboarded customers). The project implemented specific strategies to reach and integrate the perspectives of women, a previously underserved segment by the partner organizations. Notably the project's outcome evaluation focused on migrants, not receiving households, who are the primary target of the RAKBANK/Edenred service.

As part of the case studies, it was intended to perform contribution analysis. The relevant outcome level would be: “Men and women migrants and receiving households adopt and use new formal remittance channels”, which was found to be true. Outcome results at the migrant level can be partially attributed to MRP. While Edenred already had a network of telesales and field agents, MRP's grant enabled Edenred to significantly expand the field staff to reach a larger number of migrants (on-site, SMS, phone). MRP's TA support also played a role in enhancing communication materials and tailoring messaging to communicate with clients, as the initial communication materials were gender blind and lacked representation of women clients. The increased adoption of new formal remittance channels specifically among women can be largely attributed to MRP's grant and TA. Without the project's intervention (counterfactual scenario), it's highly unlikely that such a dedicated focus on women would have occurred as RAKBANK / Edenred had not identified and targeted this market segment before.

The evaluative conclusion is that the project was effective in its stated goals and the contribution of MRP was significant as far as gender inclusion is concerned.

Impact

A possible impact pathway of upscaling digital remittances use is that migrants could benefit from lower fees compared to traditional methods. This, combined with potential improvements in their digital and

financial skills, could allow them to generate a higher disposable income. This increased income could then be put to productive use, ultimately enhancing their overall financial health. For women specifically we may add the increased control over their money when they shift from cash to digital money and improved opportunities to save for after their return.

Based on the interviews undertaken and the desk material analysed, and in particular the LDS undertaken by KIT among active C3Pay app users, there is some indication that the use of the C3Pay app and the RMT services may contribute to financial health. Just over half of respondents stated that the service helps them come up with emergency funds, while 68% stated they feel more confident in money management. On the other hand, MRP transaction data and KPIs 17 and 18 suggest that only about 10% of onboarded C3Pay clients are regular users. Indeed, the evaluation team called 9 such clients, and only one had used the app for a remittance transaction (once). Furthermore, the training provided to clients in this project mainly consisted of awareness campaigns intended to onboard them on the C3Pay App, not on spending, saving and using money wisely. As far as a financial health impact is occurred, this has been through more appropriate financial services. It is unlikely clients have developed broader financial capabilities (e.g., saving, investing) thanks to this training. The specific impact on women's agency and control was postulated, but has not been researched and confirmed.

While the LDS survey suggests the C3Pay app may help migrants improve their financial health, the full developmental impact is open to further research.

Efficiency

The total budget approved for this project was USD 200,000, with 70% to be covered by the MRP grant (USD 140,000) and the remaining amount (USD 60,000) by the leading partner, RAKBANK. As all targets were met, the full grant was disbursed to RAKBANK. In addition, the cost of technical assistance provided to the project by MRP (staff time), amounted to USD 271,764. Therefore, the total project expenditure was USD 471,764, RAKBANK's own contribution of USD 60,000 included. The cost per new customer using the remittance services was USD 1.98 (USD 471,764/238,629). Considering the overachievement of targets, the cost per output was significantly lower than initially projected (USD 4).

In the context of efficiency, it is also noted that a 13-month project was planned, running from November 2020 to December 2021. However, the project was not completed on time, requiring two amendments to the original agreement. The first amendment extended the project by one year until November 2022. This extension was justified by delays in reaching agreement on project objectives and finalizing a new work plan, which in turn delayed the initial implementation phase. A second and final extension was requested to extend the project until March 2023, citing delays in research activities (KIT). In both cases, the budget remained unchanged.

Project oversight was done by the Project Steering Committee, which consisted of representatives from UNCDF, RAKBANK, and Edenred. Three formal committee meetings were held throughout the project. Additionally, the project delivery team, also composed by members of UNCDF, RAKBANK and Edenred, held bi-weekly meetings to facilitate partnership management and monitor progress. Both RAKBANK and Edenred staff highlighted the responsiveness and flexibility of the project delivery team. Donors and governments did not play an active role in this project.

The evaluative conclusion on efficiency is positive, although the MRP TA cost looks out of step with the grant amount.

Sustainability

The sustainability of the gender focus efforts is limited. Interviews with RAKBANK and Edenred revealed that promoting gender focus through female staff in the field will not be sustained due to budget constraints and a business development focus that prioritizes overall growth. This prioritization does not include a gender focus as the female customer base represents a low percentage of the total client pool.

Interviews further highlighted knowledge retention challenges. Current staff were not part of the project, and their knowledge of gender inclusion is limited. While UNCDF made efforts to train not only project participants but also broader staff, staff turnover has resulted in a dissemination gap, as interviews revealed that this knowledge has not been effectively transferred to the current workforce. While positive shifts have been observed, such as recognizing women as a distinct customer segment, and tailoring communication materials to their needs, there is no evidence to suggest that gender integration has become a permanent or institutionalized aspect of operations. Interviews also revealed that Edenred lacks the necessary budget to maintain the increased number of field staff who were instrumental in driving app adoption during the project. However, the tailoring of communication messages (banners / push-up notifications) to different customer groups continues even after the project's completion.

The evaluation conclusion is that while the project demonstrated short-term success in integrating a gender focus and promoting digital remittances services, the sustainability of the gender component of the intervention is limited due to budget constraints, prioritization of overall growth, and lack of knowledge transfer within the partner organization. The overall promotion, however, not including the women targeting effort, is continuing.

Lessons learned

- Targeted capacity building activities mainly equipped project staff of RAKBANK and Edenred with the knowledge and skills to integrate gender considerations into their work. UNCDF can consider developing long-term knowledge retention strategies.
- The project reported training a large number of clients, but interviews and analysis suggest these were primarily awareness campaigns, onboarding clients and explaining how to make digital transactions. Design training with more ambitious learning objectives (e.g., use money wisely, save for the future) and assess whether clients are acquiring the intended skills.
- For improved sustainability, RSP's willingness to continue the services covered during the TA could be assessed in advance.

Documents consulted

- 221130_UNCDF_RAKBANK_WB_2809202
- Amendment I
- Amendment II
- Budget RAKBANK
- Grant Agreement RAKBANK
- LDS Report for RAKBANK / Edenred
- Minutes and decks of meetings
- NFT Amendment I
- NFT Amendment II
- Project Closure Report – External
- Project Closure Report – Internal
- Project Description RAKBANK – UAE
- RAK & Edenred Qualitative Research Report
- RAKBANK/Edenred MIS Data Analytics
- Quarterly reports
- UAE Market Scan
- Workplan RAKBANK
- “Financial Inclusion of Blue-collar Migrants in the UAE: The Case of RAKBANK and Edenred”, UNCDF
- “Customizing digital remittances for blue-collar migrant workers in the UAE: Harnessing the power of customer archetypes”, UNCDF

Appendix G – Mini evaluation of the SDC subcomponent financial resilience project

Mid-Term Evaluation of the UNCDF Migration and Remittances Programme

MINI EVALUATION OF THE SDC SUBCOMPONENT
FINANCIAL RESILIENCE PROJECT
SEPTEMBER 2024



2024

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1) Introduction

In 2022, SDC and UNCDF embarked upon a pilot project “Private Sector Engagement towards Access to and Portable Social Security for Migrants”, succinctly referred to as the “**Financial Resilience Project**” (FRP). This initiative was incorporated into the existing Migration and Remittances Programme (MRP), as the target group is the same (migrants), as are some of the implementing partners, and as the overall development goal of financial resilience of migrants and their families is the same. However, the FRP Theory of Change (ToC) is not about remittances, but about wage digitization, insurance, and pension products as stand-alone products, specifically for migrants and their families.

The project's implementation spanned from 1st March 2022 to 30th April 2023, later extended to 31st December 2023. The project was endowed with a budget of USD 1,642,854, of which USD 440,438 was funded by UNCDF, and a financial contribution of USD 1,202,416 provided by SDC. Designed as a **pilot initiative**, FRP holds potential for scaling in future interventions based on the insights gained.

Despite being managed by the UNCDF MRP team, which had overseen the ongoing MRP programme since 2019, the distinct nature of the Financial Resilience Project necessitates a separate assessment. The (mini-)evaluation is added as the seventh **case study** to the MRP (mid-term) evaluation (2019-2023).

2) Background

According to UN estimates, globally an estimated **281 million people** live and work outside their countries of origin, constituting nearly four per cent of the global population.¹ Nearly half of migrants are women. Migrants are diverse, ranging from low-income undocumented informal workers to high-income knowledge migrants fully integrated in the labour markets of their host countries.

Most labour migrants from LDCs are in the low-income segment. They may face **income volatility, insecurity in case of illness or death, and poverty after retirement**. Migrant workers from South Asia, who are the focus of FRP, often work in informal or semi-formal occupations, including hazardous professions (construction for men). Many still receive their wages in cash, which is also one of the reasons remittances are often transacted through cash-based channels. The more informal the occupation, the less likely migrants' employers provide cover for social protection, including pensions, in migrants' host countries. To make up for this deficit, some migration countries have developed voluntary or mandatory pre-departure life and disability insurance schemes (e.g., Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal). However, these insurances tend not to cover their stay-behind family members. Remittances remain the key risk coping mechanism for migrant families, but this is limited to the remitters' financial capability.

Social protection schemes in host countries are often embedded in **formal wage payment systems** with insurance and pension premiums deducted at the source. As noted above, low-skilled migrants such as domestic workers may be unbanked, and receive their salaries in cash, outside of formal payment systems. Banks in migrants' host countries are not generally focussed on the migrant segment, failing to propose employers and migrants a suitable and diverse offer of financial services, including wage payment accounts. Reaching such migrant clients may be complicated and costly, and the amounts transacted small. RAKBANK in UAE is an exception, specifically targeting labour migrants through the C3Pay wages card and App, distributed with the help of payroll provider Edenred (see RAKBANK case study). Migrants onboarded on the C3Pay app can receive their wages digitally and transact digitally, even if they have no bank account. Globally, however, large segments of migrants are unbanked, and employers and banks not inclined to change this. Consequently, one of the components of FRP is to bring migrant wages into the bank system, or into an alternative digital payment platform, through payroll accounts or similar. Once wages are in the formal payment system, other services, including insurance and pensions, can also be offered.

¹ Statistic reproduced in various UN publications, including UNCDF reports.

As noted above, migrants face many challenges, apart from being in a foreign country. These include risk of **job loss, vulnerability to crime, illness, death, and disability** especially in the sectors migrants work in (e.g., construction). While migrants may have some risk cover in their host countries (e.g., Malaysia, parts of UAE), this is typically incomplete. Their stay-behind family members are even more exposed to risks, such as those related to health. As noted above, in the absence of social protection systems, remittances in developing economies function as a social safety net for stay-behind migrant families. The evaluators' field visit to Bangladesh revealed that migrants are often pressurised (by family members) to stay abroad even if they no longer wish to, so that the remittance stream and related risk protection continues.

Similarly, the absence of **pensions** for returning migrants means that their families may return to poverty and insecurity once the migrant's productive period ceases. Although migrants worldwide tend to invest in their home countries in the form of real estate and land, thereby providing old-age cover, the migrant families in Bangladesh and Nepal reached through the KIT surveys were seen to use most remittances for immediate consumption and daily needs. The Focus Group Discussions with BRAC bank clients confirmed this, although some communities were increasingly using remittances to invest in productive assets such as land.² The lack of old-age provision impedes and delays the migrants' return.

While host countries such as the UAE and Malaysia have social security schemes for their own people, those are not systematically made available to in-bound migrants in informal and semi-formal positions (although both countries progress in that direction).³ Insurance and pension systems in migrant home countries are much less developed and certainly not available to the rural communities most prone to migrate. In response to observed vulnerability of their migrant citizens, Bangladesh and Nepal now require migrants to participate in **subsidised pre-departure risk schemes** covering life and repatriation, but pay-outs have been limited and for the migrant only, not the family. As far as migrants accumulate pension rights in their destination country as part of national or employer provided schemes, such pension rights and pension capital are often not portable to another (e.g., their home) country, contributing to the pressure not to return.

FRP looks at **mobilising the private sector** to offer wage digitisation, insurance, and pension services to migrant communities, both migrants and their families. Insurance and pension products are basic tools to mitigate risks and to reduce poverty in old-age for migrants and their families. Given the size of the migrant market, the private sector business potential for migrant insurance and pension is beyond question. UNCDF has estimated that the potential market size for private sector insurance and pension for migrants is worth USD 6-7 billion per year in premium collection, allowing migrants to accumulate vast pension wealth over their productive lives.⁴ Hardly any of this market has been developed so far.

3) The project and its ToC⁵

The **goal** of the Financial Resilience Project (FRP) is to improve the financial resilience and economic inclusion of migrants and their families.

The proposed **interventions** under the Financial Resilience Project are the following:

1. **Wage digitization** – introduction of payroll accounts so that migrants can receive wages into a bank account or as mobile (digital) money. The channels for receiving wages digitally are expected to be used for sending money home, to deposit on savings accounts, for domestic

² These FGDs suggest that remittance receivers who had been receiving for a long time at some point overcome deep poverty, at which moment they commence capital formation in the form of asset acquisition. Prior saving is an important trigger.

³ In UAE health insurance is mandatory for all residents, migrants included, pension provision is not. Family members are not covered as the health insurance extends to health services on the UAE territory. Undocumented migrants are not covered by social security in any country.

⁴ FRP project document

⁵ Most of this section contains direct quotes from the FRP project document,

payments, and for accessing other formal financial services, such as loans, insurances, or pensions, which would otherwise not be available if wages were received in cash.

2. **Migrant insurances and pensions** – with the limited availability of social security services (insurances and pensions) in the countries of origin, remittances are used to counter the households' vulnerability to financial shocks related to health, climate/weather, and property loss. However, the dependency on remittances as a risk mitigator has its limitations as migrants cannot always cover the costs of unforeseen events. Even when migrants are included in a social security benefit scheme in their host country (e.g., Bangladesh, Nepal), family members are not usually covered by such insurance and pension. Remittance-linked and migrant-focused private insurance and pension may provide a conduit towards financial resilience of the migrant families, supplementing the role of remittances as the key safety net for migrant families.

The Financial Resilience Project aspires to enhance the social protection of migrant communities through the facilitation of efficient wage payments, the establishment of insurance schemes, and the development of pension systems. While its goal closely aligns with that of MRP, the interventions differ. Unlike MRP, which works on efficient remittance streams and related services, FRP focuses on fostering financial resilience through wage systems, insurances, and pensions. The FRP and MRP target group, migrants communities, is the same. The partners, however, may or may not be the same. An illustrative example is the RAKBANK project within MRP, which links a digital wage payment system with remittances. The Shikhar project supported by FRP, however, did not have such link with remittances.

Broadly speaking, however, remittances and social protection on migrant communities are linked as remittances generally function as a form of quasi-social security for migrant communities, especially for the relatives who remain in their countries of origin. Furthermore, the payment of insurance and pension premiums in existing migrant social protection systems is often paid through the migrants' earnings.

The proposed **outcomes** of FRP are the following:

- **Customer Outcome:** Migrants and their families have access to migrant-centric, gender-responsive *social protection* and digital financial services (insurances, pensions, and digital wage services) that improve their skills, voice, and choice towards making decisions to reduce their financial vulnerabilities and improve their financial resilience.
- **Stakeholder Outcome:** Financial services providers engage in remittances, insurances, pensions, and digital financial services, both public and private, design and implement innovative, commercially scalable migrant-centric, gender-responsive *social protection* (insurances, pensions, and wage digitization) products and services.
- **Sector Outcome:** Advancing dialogue and knowledge sharing regarding appropriate policies and regulations towards better *social protection* systems for migrants and their families and showcasing and documenting private and public sector practices that contribute to financial resilience and decent work for female and male migrant workers alike.

By providing digital wages, social benefits, and associated financial services such as portable pensions and insurance, the project aims to enable migrant workers to invest and contribute indirectly to their home countries. Additionally, it seeks to ensure that they return with enhanced skills, assets, and financial resources.

The **outcomes** are aimed at migrant families, financial service providers, and the broader eco-system through knowledge development. This is visible through the expected **result targets** of FRP:

- Impact at least **50,000 migrants** (including both migrants and their family members) through wage digitization, insurance, or pension products, of which at least 50% will be women;
- Produce ten **knowledge products** (working papers, blogs, white papers);
- Introduce **innovations** (on a pilot basis) programmes with 2 private sector partners.

These targets were to be achieved in the current phase of FRP, notwithstanding its status as a pilot project.

The expected **geography/corridors** of FRP were the following host and home countries:

- Migrant Host Countries: United Arab Emirates and Malaysia
- Migrant Home Countries: Sri Lanka | Bangladesh | Nepal | Indonesia

In 2020, remittances into **Sri Lanka** through formal channels amounted to USD 7.14 billion, equal to 8% of GDP.⁶ One in every 14 households in Sri Lanka receives foreign remittances, playing a significant role in lifting them from poverty. Likewise, **Bangladesh** has seen more than 7.5 million people leave to work abroad, chiefly the Gulf states, but also Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, and the UK. The country is greatly dependent on income from migration, with inbound money flows reaching USD 23 billion in 2023, equal to 7% of GDP.⁷ At least 10% of families receive money from abroad. With about 2.6 million **Nepalese** people living abroad, primarily in India, Malaysia, and the Middle East,⁸ remittances amounted to USD 8.1 billion or 26.5% of GDP in 2019, underscoring the centrality of remittance inflows to the country's economy.⁹ Fifty-six per cent of households in Nepal receive remittances. Finally, as many as 9 million workers from **Indonesia** work abroad, including Malaysia and the Middle East. Remittances amounted to USD 14.5 billion in 2023, equivalent to about 1% of GDP.¹⁰

Gender Marker (The Gender Marker is a UN tool that requires managers to code projects/outputs against a four-point scale, whether or not a project/output is designed to contribute to increase gender equality.)

- GEN2 (gender equality is a significant objective)

4) Activities foreseen

In support of the ToC, FRP was designed to operate at various **levels**:

- **Global level:** to facilitate networks with global think tanks and policy platforms, such as the Access to Insurance Initiative (A2II), to explore their role in policy advocacy, capacity building of private sector players in migrant social protection, data, and research cooperation to explore business models and policy level initiatives.
- **Regional level:** align with regional governments and economic communities on the challenges of migrant social protection and broad level agreement on conducive policy for wage digitization, digital finance access, and mandatory and voluntary insurance and pension products for migrant communities, and explore the possibility of regional cooperation.
- **Bi-lateral level:** facilitate dialogue and policy alignment on social protection agreements across major migrant corridors to ensure portability and exportability of migrant pension and insurance.
- **Country Government:** engage with policymakers and regulatory bodies (financial regulators, telecom regulators, social protection divisions and ministries) across the countries of origin and destination, among others to ensure policies for mandatory and voluntary insurance and pension for the migrant communities, and regulatory foundation for cross-border insurance and portable pensions.
- **Private sector:** private sector insurers, digital financial service providers, pension fund managers, remittance service providers, banks, payroll providers and employers of migrants play a key role in innovation to create an eco-system for migrant social protection.

⁶ Knomad, 2020

⁷ en.prothomalo.com/business/local/eb42kq2x9f, this is just the formal remittance

⁸ UNDESA, International Migrant Stock, 2020

⁹ Knomad, 2020

¹⁰ Source: Statista

The **activities** foreseen were the following:

1. **Research and Analysis:** of existing social protection policies and private sector initiatives, including insights from big-data analytics and country assessments for business models for migrant social protection.
2. **Stakeholder Consultation and Networking:** through partnerships and networks across the country level, regional and global policy think-tanks, industry bodies, regulatory associations, in addition to ministries and regulators in the countries of focus.
3. **Innovation and Technical Assistance:** foreseen were two government-promoted mandatory migrant social protection programmes (e.g., Dubai migrant health insurance programme, Bangladesh Migrant insurance programme), and two private sector innovations on migrant social protection selected through a competitive process, to provide technical assistance on product and process design, and business model innovation yielding efficiency and effectiveness. Each of the selected private sector players would receive an innovation grant (average USD 150,000) to help them scale through the design, distribution, and managerial hurdles to implement innovations.
4. **Learning and Dissemination:** socialize through multi-stakeholder platforms and other dissemination the above-mentioned knowledge products and results from innovation projects.

Private sector engagement was meant to be at the core of FRP. The project intended to engage with policymakers, insurers, reinsurers, DFS providers, employers, payroll service providers, pension fund managers, and payment providers to implement innovative cross-border business models towards private sector financial products (wage digitization, DFS, insurance and pension) targeted at migrants and their families. Research, capacity building initiatives, networking activities across the business entities and thinktanks, technical assistance to potential innovators on migrant social protection and limited financial incentives to the selected partners would help the private sector start appreciating the business case for migrant social protection.

5) Results achieved

UNCDF considers the March 2022 to December 2023 period as an “inception phase” of the Financial Resilience Project (or a pilot project) for an eventual multi-year intervention, which then could run till 2035 (see end of project progress report).

In the four areas of activity the following results were reported by UNCDF in the December 2023 progress report:

1. **Research and Analysis.**
 - a. Through research, analyses, and consultations with key stakeholders the project developed three (3) **research papers** on the necessity, scope, current status, and potential future pathways for migrant financial resilience and social protection.
 - i. Scaling the Next Frontier in Migrant Money: “The case for insurance and pensions”. This document, based on literature review, offers general background to emphasize the need for migrant social security.
 - ii. Migrant Financial Resilience: “Where are we in preparing the building blocks?” This is a technical paper, based on secondary research/sources, to outline the necessity, scope, current status, and potential future pathways for migrant financial resilience and social protection.
 - iii. Migrant Insurance and Pension: “Gazing through the future”. This technical paper, based on 50 consultations, highlights that efficient design opportunities aimed at migrant financial resilience depend on the maturity of the social security systems and the market system environment in the home and the host country.

- b. 1 global paper on **strategies and case studies** on digitization of wage payments for migrants globally: “Charting financial resilience in the first mile exploring private sector business models to empower migrant workers through digital wages”. The paper analyses the opportunities and barriers for the private sector to leverage and scale up the potential of wage digitalization to drive financial inclusion for migrants.
 - c. A small publication (rather a brochure): “Financial resilience of migrants, the case for digital wages, insurance and pensions”. It summarises the above.
 - d. “Learnings from UNCDF’s engagement with the private sector, migrant money – a year in review, 1 March 2022 – 28 February 2023”. The document summarises the activities, learning and progress of UNCDF interventions in the first-year project, in particular based on the three technical papers published and stakeholder consultations.
 - e. Through desk research and stakeholder consultation, six (6) **country studies** (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, UAE) to assess their readiness for an innovative migrant financial resilience market system. These country studies were validated through stakeholder workshops (in person and digitally).
 - f. One (1) blog **Insurance and Pensions**: “Charting the path for migrant financial resilience”. This was developed after the initial stakeholder dialogues.
 - g. One (1) **dashboard** on 25 corridors mapping on migrant social protection.
2. **Stakeholder Consultation and Networking.** The project team consulted representatives from national regulatory bodies, international sector representatives, and private sector players in the digital wage, public sector social security, insurance, and pension ecosystems to highlight the research progress, priorities and plan for future engagements.
- a. FRP bilaterally engaged with more than **60 global experts** in the migrant insurance and pension domain.
 - b. Four formal **partnerships** established to further the discourse and implementation of activities around migrant social protection: Access to Insurance Initiative (A2II), Insurance Development Forum, the Microinsurance Network, and the Ministry of Expatriates’ Welfare and Overseas Employment in Bangladesh (MoEWOE).
 - c. **Other organizations** that are actively and periodically engaged are: International Social Security Association (ISSA), the International Organization of Pension Supervisors (IOPS), the International Association of Insurance Supervisors (IAIS), Arab Monetary Fund, OECD, ILO, International Organization for Migration (IoM), International Finance Corporation (IFC), Better Than Cash Alliance (BTCA), Solidarity Centre, Migrant Justice Institute and Migrant Forum in Asia, etc.
3. **Innovation and Technical Assistance.** The project attempted to incorporate digital wage payments, insurances, and pensions into the migrant money ecosystem by collaborating with digital financial service providers, insurers, reinsurers, pension fund managers, and other stakeholders.
- a. To this effect, a **Request for Applications** (RfA) was launched. Seventeen (17) submissions were received, five (5) shortlisted by the project team, and three (3) were selected by the project evaluation committee. However, no grants were issued as the final approvals by UNCDF (outside the project team) took too long (see the efficiency section below). Two private sector partners accepted to receive technical assistance from the team in kind, but this never took off. One (IME) declined to pursue the project in the absence of the grant.
 - b. The above-mentioned work with **MoEWOE** in Bangladesh, was also part of this workstream. FRP partnered with MoEWOE to provide technical assistance on design, development, digital financial literacy, and strategic priorities for their mandatory

migrant insurance initiative. Through the Probashi Kormi Bima insurance product for migrants, developed by the Ministry prior to the project, and launched in early 2023, a total of 1,305,453 migrants from Bangladesh were insured through the scheme (76,108 women). FRP provided advisory to improve the insurance scheme.

- c. As mentioned above, the project also established a partnership with Access to Insurance Initiative (**A2II**). A2II is a global partnership with the mission to inspire and support supervisors to promote inclusive and responsible insurance, thereby reducing vulnerability. It is the implementation arm of the International Association of Insurance Supervisors (IAIS) on Inclusive Insurance, aiming to generate and disseminate knowledge, build capacity, contribute to IAIS standard-setting, foster learning and dialogue, support implementation at the regional and national levels, and participate in global advocacy processes. A2II is supported by the German and Dutch governments, and previously by SDC too. FRP undertook a number of activities related to migrant insurance with A2II.
4. **Learning and Dissemination.** The project team conducted and participated in various webinars and workshops, both virtual and in-person, to explore the challenges and opportunities related to migrant social protection and financial resilience.
 - a. Five virtual **workshops, webinars and consultations** were conducted with public and private sector stakeholders, including, the Savings and Credit Forum, a series of consultations and workshops with private-sector entities in six countries, a joint public dialogue on "Regulatory challenges and supervisory demands in facilitating remittance-linked insurance" (SDG 1) and a webinar titled "Strengthening Financial Resilience for Migrants: Insights from Bangladesh, Nepal and UAE." .
 - b. Four **high level dialogues** were held with global stakeholders and experts identifying areas of opportunities and focused on working towards the common narrative and cause of migrant social protection, including the Arab Pension Conference, the International Conference on Inclusive Insurance, 2023 (in Jamaica) OECD/IOPS Global Forum on Private Pensions in Zimbabwe, the 2023 International Conference on Inclusive Insurance in Ghana, and fourth Africa Pension Supervisors Association Conference in Uganda in 2023.
 - c. All together, 41 regulators and other public sector entities as well as more than 70 private sector stakeholders, many of whom are engaged further bilaterally to advance the dialogue and capacities on migrant social protection, attended one or more of the two types of sessions mentioned under 'a' and 'b'. The deliberations with global stakeholders resulted in identification of migrant social protection in the global discourse and as an area of strategic importance by A2II, Insurance Development Forum, IOPS, Toronto Centre, among others. Based on the ongoing advocacy efforts and acknowledging migrant social protection as an area of considerable opportunity, Toronto Centre published a paper in October 2023 titled "Supervising Migrant Insurance and Pensions" and held a podcast.

6) Evaluation questions

The evaluation questions of the MRP (mid-term) evaluation primarily pertain to (digital) remittances and do not encompass the focus area of FRP, which is social protection through insurance and pension products. Therefore, for this (mini-)evaluation (or extended case study), UNCDF and SDC have proposed a set of evaluation questions specific to this pilot project.

1. Assess the intervention and the different pathways of change as set out in the Theory of Change of FRP based on the **OECD/DAC Evaluation Criteria**. The assessment of causal links is, however,

constrained by the short project duration (running from April 2022 to December 2023, the evaluation cut-off date).

2. To what extent have **private sector actors been engaged** towards access to and use of portable social security services for migrants?
3. Which **recommendations** and related learnings can be derived from FRP for future projects?
4. Learning or Sub-questions are:
 - a. What has been the breath of the intervention and staffing set-up in relationship with the complexity of the topics to be covered and issues to be addressed?
 - b. What have been the effects of the multiple convening/ networking as well as research done by the project team and how this has been perceived by the stakeholders?
 - c. Did these activities have an effect on participating private sector operators?
 - d. What have been the learnings of the applied RfA process with the private sector?

7) Methodology

The evaluation methodology consisted of the following:

1. **Desk research**, notably the project reports and research output, to better understand the progress made.
2. **KIIs with UNCDF staff** involved in FRP, external experts included, to understand the general conduct of the project and its efficiency.
3. **KIIs with project partners, participants, and stakeholders**, also to find out to what extent the project's research activity was harvested and is likely to be followed up with concrete actions. Ten such interviews were done across a representative sample of stakeholders, resource persons, peer reviewers, and private and public sector partners of FRP.
4. **KII with key donor** representatives.

All KIIs were conducted with the help of interview guidelines, making sure that all consultants ask the same questions and information collected can be used in a structured manner.

8) Evaluative conclusions

Relevance

As was discussed in the above background section, social protection of migrants and their families is much needed, and absent for most. At the **global level**, there are many SDG targets related to social security. This is aimed at all citizens, including migrants, and with a focus on poor people:

- Target 1.3. Implement nationally appropriate **social protection systems** and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable. This includes migrants.
- Target 3.8. Achieve universal **health coverage**, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential healthcare services and access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all. This includes migrants. No date given.
- Target 5.4. Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and **social protection policies** and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate. This includes migrant families. No date given.
- Target 8.5. By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and **decent work** for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value. Social protection is one of the four pillars of decent work. This includes migrants.

- Target 10.4. Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and **social protection policies**, and progressively achieve greater equality. This includes migrants. No date given.
- SDG Indicator 10.7.2: “Number of countries with migration policies to facilitate **orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration** and mobility of people”, which currently 54% of states meet globally.

Global institutions have also flagged the need for migrant social protection. These include UN agencies such as IOM and ILO, and the International Social Security Association (ISSA), which has been highlighting the importance of establishing cross-border interoperability of social security payments, and migrant social security portability.

Relevance of migrant social protection in the **UNCDF mandate** is less clear. Under the UNCDF Strategic Framework 2022-2025 UNCDF aims to accelerate financing for development in LDCs by supporting them to achieve three interlinked strategic game-changers: 1) Catalyse additional private and public flows of capital; 2) Strengthen market systems and financing mechanisms; 3) Accelerate inclusive, diversified, green economic transformation. While the first two are core elements of FRP, social protection, insurance and pensions are not core competences of UNCDF. The subject of social protection entered for the first time in the UNCDF Strategic Framework 2022-2025, and only through one reference, while UNCDF did not have prior track-record.¹¹ This is also the reason why FRP started with such a significant research effort.

One might have expected labour and migration related social protection to be in the purview of **ILO and IOM**, even the **World Bank**. Indeed, ILO has long been engaged in developing digital wage payment systems and social protection, including for migrants, but mainly from a national / public sector perspective as part of the Decent Work agenda.¹² Likewise, the World Bank has social protection as a field of interest in some country programmes, and employs experts in this field (e.g., in Bangladesh, focus on returnee migrants). However, at the global level, migrant social protection is not a core programme in the World Bank. It is the same for the EU. OECD also has conducted research in the field of migration and social protection, but has no capacity to undertake any action-oriented programmes. It is the same for IOM. Consequently, stakeholders agree that no international organisation has migrant social protection in its core mandate, or has put a claim on this domain. This leaves UNCDF in the first-mover position, which stakeholders generally welcome. UNCDF is particularly well-positioned to support engagement of the (private) financial sector in the development and financing of insurance and pension products, this from a market development perspective, a niche that ILO recognises to be in UNCDF’s mandate.

At the **national level**, migration countries have recognised the need for enhanced social protection of their diaspora abroad. Bangladesh, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka all have mandatory or voluntary migrant insurance schemes in place. The Bangladesh mandatory Probashi Kormi Bima pre-departure insurance covers life, repatriation, and accidents, but no pension and no cover for families. It is the same for the Nepalese mandatory pre-departure insurance.

During the evaluators’ country visit to **Bangladesh** a meeting was held with BRAC NGO. The NGO has extensive programmes with migrants both pre- and post-migration. The NGO is fully aware that most migration is caused by the push factors of local poverty and insecurity. BRAC prepares migrants on the challenges they will face but also the rights they are supposed to have. On their return, BRAC helps migrants reinsert into productive life. Sometimes it needs to shield migrants from their communities of origin when these do not want labour migrants to come back as their remittances lifeline will then be cut. This shows the consequences of migrants’ inability to save, invest or accumulate pension rights. The FGDs with BRAC Bank clients, however, showed that communities with migrants in the diaspora over

¹¹ Strategic Framework 2022-2025 para 52: “UNCDF will improve the flow of remittances through formal channels; reduce remittance transaction cost by increasing access to digital channels; and strengthen financial resilience through increased access to and adoption of migrant-centric credit, insurance, pension and investment products.”

¹² ILO has project teams both for wage digitisation and for social protection schemes.

time start to invest their remittances in productive assets, to the point that some migration communities have become quite affluent. This reduces these communities' reliance on foreign money streams for their social security.

For the main donor **SDC** migrant social protection is a new topic, but clearly in line with the SDC strategy 2021-2024, recognising the role of migration and the diaspora in the development of their native countries, and financial inclusion of remittance recipients.

Evaluative conclusions on relevance

A programme focussing on improving social protection of migrant communities is relevant to the migrants' needs, given that most are not sufficiently protected, in line with international and national policy priorities, and a (new) priority subject to core donors and UNCDF as well.

Effectiveness

The evaluation of effectiveness relates to the production of outputs and achievement of outcomes. The result targets were defined in section 3 above, namely, to impact at least **50,000 migrants** through wage digitization, insurance, or pension products, of which at least 50% women, to produce **ten knowledge products**, and introduce innovations with **2 private sector partners**. As shown above, a dozen knowledge products were produced, but no private sector innovations realised and no migrants (directly) impacted. However, mapping of 25 corridors across South Asia and GCC corridors was completed. Eight capacity-building and networking sessions were conducted through webinars and physical conferences. Letters of Association were signed with the Ministry for Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (Government of Bangladesh) and Access to Insurance Initiative (A2II) and preliminary TA offered.

Research and Analysis

The evaluators' review of the (12) research products came to the below **general findings**. While the first six "framework/technical documents" explain why it is important to address migrants' social protection and financial inclusion and offer a conceptual lens (canvas) to assess the maturity of social protection/market/institutional systems, the six country studies apply this lens to national contexts and provide details on the local eco-system. The country studies include "Possible Interventions at the eco-system, product and institution level for market development".

- Contributing to improve migrants' social protection access is a long and complex process.
- Public-private multi-stakeholder engagement is needed in both origin and destination countries to develop non-contributory and co-contributory social protection schemes.
- The country cases include both migrant origin and host countries. The irregular migration/status of migrants is a common problem (migrants' exploitation, workers' rights) impacting the possibility to access social protection schemes. Women represent a large segment of irregular/vulnerable workers.
- Migrants' countries of origin have developed/extended social protection schemes (that need to be completed and integrated with other measures) for their diaspora in response to unfair labour treatment abroad, lack of access to social protection mechanisms, and interest to channel migrant resources into public/private schemes in the origin country. Country or corridor-specific mandatory insurance/pension policies are an immediate opportunity.
- Tech/digital/fintech industries are potential key players to be targeted and involved. Room to link remittances and insurances/pension products exists. Cross-border portability of migrant insurance and pension benefits must be a priority when designing solutions. Wage digitalization is crucial to support access to social protection measures, but complex to be addressed and implemented.
- Public institutions often need to improve regulatory clarity. Support is needed at the institutional level to ratify international conventions and reinforce/enrich bilateral/multilateral agreements.
- Financial and social protection literacy is needed and valuable in all contexts.

The evaluation found the FRP research of **high quality**, although mostly based on literature review and expert consultations and not on field research/primary data collection. The conceptual approach of assessing the maturity of the pension/insurance market and regulatory environment in host and origin countries indicates where each country stands and what shall be reinforced. This is an original intellectual contribution. The description and analysis of each country's insurance and pension landscape is also rich and comprehensive. General recommendations are included according to the market/institutional/product dimension. However, the research and the country studies do not specify the priority actions to focus, while the wording of the recommendations tends to be very general.

It is highlighted that the research activity, and country studies in particular, was meant to support the development of a future **SDC/UNCDF programme** in social protection for migrant communities (FRP was a pilot project). The country studies offer context-based recommendations for such support. However, these recommendations tend to be similar: advocacy, public-private dialogue, partnership creation, further studies, TA to insurtech/fintechs to develop business models, facilitate dialogue with conventional insurers, identify opportunities for digital delivery innovations, demand-side research, etc. The country studies identify general actions, but do not prioritise among those proposed, nor propose a timeline. The country studies do not indicate how UNCDF could support the implementation of these recommendations.

Overall, addressing wage digitalization, pension schemes, insurance schemes and remittances has different implications requiring the engagement of different players and regulatory contexts and different competences to be mobilized. In addition to the general recommendations, **specific circumstances** were reported that could be of interest for FRP phase two. For example, FRP may reinforce existing social protection schemes as in the case of Bangladesh with the Probashi scheme, including health aspects and occupation risks. Suggested options to consider include: 1) having a government promoted health insurance product; 2) allowing for bancassurance and other digital insurance channels. In the case of Sri Lanka, FRP may consider how the "Lanka Remit" product could be further enhanced if linked with migrant-centric financial products and how the Manusavi migrant pension scheme could be innovated. In the case of Nepal, support could be addressed to extend migrants mandatory insurance schemes to health and climate change needs. In the case of Malaysia, support can be addressed to the central bank's interest on microinsurance, Islamic financial services, and fintech sector activity. In the case of UAE, it is mentioned that the insurance company AXA delivered a remittance product linked to insurance. This has replication potential.

In almost all country studies the vulnerability of **migrant women** in accessing social protection/financial resilience is recorded. In many destination countries most migrant women do not belong to the formal workforce entitled to social protection. Gender gaps also exist in terms of female labour force participation and in financial inclusion/access. Special efforts are needed to develop gender inclusive social protection schemes. Market operators shall be reinforced in developing gender smart-products. In Sri Lanka, for example, an insurance programme has been implemented targeting female migrants employed in the domestic sector in the Middle East. The urgency to develop products/services gender sensitive is highlighted in most country studies, but concrete gender-sensitive interventions are rarely identified or prioritized. This may be turned into an explicit component of a future programme by SDC/UNCDF.

A core question is to what extent the research will **induce public and private sector partners into action**. External stakeholders interviewed have noted that while social protection including migrants is not a new topic (e.g., see work done by ILO¹³), much of the research work undertaken in the context of FRP is original and helps put migrant social protection higher on the agenda, both for public sector regulators and private sector insurance and pension providers. Social protection for migrants had not previously been a core topic in migrant financial inclusion, reducing the cost of remittances was. The corridor-focussed FRP research showed the specificity of the respective corridors, each of which have

¹³ <https://www.ilo.org/topics/social-protection#publications>

their unique financial, human and regulatory challenges. The global studies helped offer a broadening and synthetisation of such research for wider dissemination. Nevertheless, stakeholders noted that private sector partners in particular may not find in the research sufficient granularity to start developing insurance and pension initiatives in their countries, given that the business case for serving this diverse and complex migrant customer group is not yet proven. Stakeholders also observed that the insurance and pension systems in home and host countries tend to differ a lot (e.g., private or public sector led, regulatory differences), so that each migration corridor requires a different approach to migrant insurance and pensions. This makes it difficult for private companies to offer products that can be rapidly scaled. Insurance regulators are also looking forward to concrete examples to learn from.

Going forward, the research highlights ways to bring focus in future financial resilience research, depending on the particularities of the countries and migration corridors:

1. Migrant workers as the target/beneficiary of social protection schemes in the “destination country”: inclusion in social protection equal to host country national workforce.
2. Migrant workers as the target of social protection schemes of the “origin country”, while living/working in a “destination country”. This means to limit the country national’s individual vulnerability abroad. It is also linked to a return perspective in the home country.
3. Leverage migrant remittances as an instrument to drive social protection of family members in the home country and/or the migrants themselves.

Stakeholder Consultation and Networking

The evaluators interviewed stakeholders who had been consulted and / or had peer reviewed the above-mentioned research work. This consultation process mostly served to support and inform the research work and webinars.

There is no result indicator and target for this project component.

Private sector engagement

Through the RfA process over 300 potential applicants were contacted, of which 35 participated in an online information session. Seventeen applications were received, of which five pre-selected and three eventually approved by UNCDF. The three approved projects were the following:

- **IME Digital Solution Ltd (Nepal).** IME is a long-time UNCDF fintech partner. UNCDF, through MRP, helped IME launch the IME Pay app to enable migrants transfer money home efficiently.¹⁴ The new project was to expand the app with a digital insurance and pension solution, leveraging the services already on the market by two partners, IME Life Insurance for insurance products and Citizens Investment Trust (CIT) for pensions. The app would enable migrant workers to enrol and contribute to the mandatory migrant insurance and government-managed pension accounts (Citizen Investment Trust and Social Security Fund) through IME Pay’s digital platform. IME Digital sought to improve the reach and accessibility of pension and insurance products with the aim of providing blue-collared migrants’ financial security and resilience from shocks, along with aiding them in building the habit of long-term or retirement savings. UNCDF support would include grant provisioning and technical assistance. The technical assistance would be structured along three main areas: (1) business model and product manuals, (2) data analytics, and (3) gender mainstreaming.
- **PayMedia (Pvt) Ltd (Sri Lanka).** PayMedia is a fintech as well, enabling migrants to send remittances to their families back in Sri Lanka. The project is quite similar to the above, with the applicant proposing to update the existing remittance application “Lanka Remit” with pension and insurance schemes in collaboration with Ceylinco Life Insurance and Ceylinco General Insurance. Through the service, migrant workers would digitally enrol and purchase insurance

¹⁴ Three persons from IME Pay took part in the Harvard Kennedy Business school training organised by UNCDF.

for their family members in Sri Lanka, while the pension plan would target themselves or their families. UNCDF's technical assistance would be structured along three areas: (1) Research and data analytics, (2) product design and business case development, and (3) Human-centred design and gender mainstreaming.

- **Shikhar Insurance Co. Ltd (Nepal).** This applicant proposed a new product to ensure that migrants' families are prepared for unexpected financial expenditures that may arise from death, disease, illness, injury or natural disasters.¹⁵ SICL is the largest (traditional) insurance company in Nepal, not hitherto focussed on the migrant family segment specifically. At a strategic level, the project would focus on addressing the barriers that prevent the adoption of insurance solutions among migrant families in Nepal. SICL would tailor its existing medical, personal accident, and home insurance solutions to customize these solutions to the needs and risks faced by families of Nepalese migrant workers. SICL would also seek to reduce the cost of coverage by structuring the products and effectively reaching the target families through financial literacy campaigns utilizing existing and newly developed channels. Under this project, the technical assistance offered by UNCDF would help SICL build the following capabilities: (1) HCD product development, (2) defining the business case, (3) gender mainstreaming, (4) scalable go-to-market strategy, and (5) data analytics.

Members of the evaluation committee noted that the **number (5) and quality** of eligible proposals was below expectations, with most not particularly innovative and not well thought through. Nevertheless, these projects, if realised, may serve an important local and even global demonstration function in a market that is only now emerging. The three approved projects would have had the potential to contribute to the aim of improving the financial resilience of 50,000 migrant families.

So far, this project component has been ineffective as FRP was unable to proceed with the grants and TA. Interviews also suggest that the private sector partners had not proceeded with the projects in the absence of FRP support, which confirms the ex-ante additionality of the grant and TA projects. It is still worthwhile to undertake these projects in a follow-up project to FRP. The private sector partners are open to this.

Public sector engagements

As noted under section 5 above, the engagements with **MoEWOE and A2II** were both mentioned under the component "Stakeholder Consultation and Networking" and under "Innovation and Technical Assistance". However, the latter component had specific budget for partner engagements, hence is the best place to review these partnerships. As such, A2II is neither a private nor a public sector partner, but a global think tank focussed on supporting insurance regulators. However, as A2II targets public sector regulators and is funded by donor governments, and as its parent IAIS is labelled an "international organisation" based in Basel - Switzerland, the evaluation has categorised A2II as a public sector partner to FRP.

Since 2023, Bangladesh has had a public (subsidised) mandatory pre-departure migrant insurance in place, covering the risk of overseas death and including a voluntary pension product.¹⁶ The FRP partnership with **MoEWOE** was meant to offer TA, consisting of five phases, namely (1) kick-off and stakeholder mapping, (2) supply side assessment, (3) demand side assessment, (4) technical assistance and capacity building, (5) closure. The initial stakeholder meeting took place, but not very fruitful according to the Ministry. Supply and demand assessment took place through the country study, executed by an external consultant (MSC). MoEWOE, however, noted that it had barely been involved in its production, and declined to accept this as a valid project output. MoEWOE confirmed, however, it had participated in some webinars with some value. The claim made by UNCDF that its advisory influenced

¹⁵ These are in majority women, men being abroad for work.

¹⁶ The payment at death to relatives is BDT 1.3 m / USD 10,000, while the body is repatriated.

the existing mandatory migrant insurance scheme was denied by the Ministry. In conclusion, the Ministry does not deem the assistance by FRP to have been effective in building its capacity.

The partnership with **A2II** foresaw four interventions: 1) Collaborate in developing and deepening the understanding of the regulatory challenges around remittance-linked insurance and pensions, 2) Facilitate discussion forums with ministries and regulatory bodies in the target corridors to accelerate migrant insurance and pension, 3) Jointly disseminate learning from the innovation pilots through blogs and case studies to the relevant regulators and policymakers. 4) Facilitate Innovation Labs in the countries of focus.¹⁷ UNCDF, IAIS, and A2II conducted a joint public dialogue on "Regulatory challenges and supervisory demands in facilitating remittance-linked insurance (SDG 1)", on 29 September 2022. A2II also joined in webinars and peer-reviewed research documents. The Innovation Labs were not realised, which A2II regrets as it would have enabled it to create a template to work with regulators on synchronising remittance-linked regulations across borders. A2II concludes that the partnership may have benefitted UNCDF more than A2II, as FRP could profit from A2II's regulatory knowledge. Nevertheless, the partnership helped A2II enhance its understanding of regulatory issues around remittance-linked insurance regulation, where such had received little attention before. Regulators are demanding such knowledge.

Learning and Dissemination

This project component partly follows from or overlaps with all of the above-mentioned, in particular with Stakeholder Consultation and Networking. Many stakeholders appreciated the **webinars and events** hosted or joined by FRP, noting it helped promote the subject of migrant social protection that had not hitherto achieved a lot of attention. However, stakeholders also observed more learning and dissemination is required, both for public and private sector stakeholders.

As it is now, **private sector** partners in many migration countries (host and origin) do not see enough commercial potential to start developing social protection products for migrants and their families and there are few good practices or examples to go by. Although the target group is very large (migrants and their families) it is complex due to personal characteristics, geographic dispersion and often low transaction volumes and values, as well regulatory obstacles to operating across jurisdictions. Where migrant social protection exists, public subsidised products tend to dominate. In Bangladesh, for example, the mandatory pre-departure insurance for migrants is a (subsidised) public product, not yet involving the private sector. In Nepal too, mandatory, and subsidised migrant insurance is offered by the government, although private companies collaborate in distribution. That fact that these products are mandatory through a public channel and in addition subsidised leaves little space for the private sector to propose such services.

Nevertheless, there is broad agreement that involving **private insurance and pension companies** in migrant social protection would add to the quality and efficiency of operations. From the point of view of private companies, it helps if the public sector is facilitating (regulations) or even mandating (private) migrant insurance and pensions and offering subsidies on an equal footing with public providers if applicable. Where mandatory schemes are introduced and subsidies available to all operators, the private sector is certain of a market, hence more inclined to invest in a suitable service offer. This includes collaboration with partner institutions abroad, considering that insurance providers and beneficiaries may not be in the same countries (e.g., risk expertise and claim handling). Thus, all resource persons to this (mini-)evaluation emphasised the need to include the public sector in FRP learning and dissemination actions.

Resource persons also indicated that migrants, often being poor and with limited education, often have no prior understanding of social protection products and may be **distrustful** of insurance and pension companies. In addition, in the pre-migration stage they have no money, and often indebted to pay for the cost of migration. Learning and dissemination by FRP may incorporate pre-departure sensitisation.

¹⁷ Source: FRP final progress report, which somewhat differed from the wording in the LoA.

There is no result indicator and target for this project component.

Evaluative conclusions on effectiveness

Generally, the **research** has been of high quality, and useful for global stakeholders, general public, (country) policy makers, academia, NGOs, and UNCDF itself. The country studies provided useful landscape information. However, the current set of recommendations is not sufficiently operational, neither for future (SDC/UNCDF) programme development, nor for public and private sector partners.

The **private sector** engagements have not been effective.

The **public sector** engagements have not been as effective as planned, and only partly completed.

Stakeholder consultations have taken place, and helped better define the future programmatic priorities. Likewise, FRP has hosted or participated in **learning and dissemination** events, which have helped put the topic of migrant social protection on the international agenda where it hitherto had not received a lot of attention. However, more such is needed to bring private and public sector stakeholders to undertake action in this respect. There are insufficient good practices and examples to encourage private and public partners to develop migrant social protection products.

Impact

The financial resilience project, being a pilot activity mainly focussed on knowledge development, did not generate any impact on migrant communities.

The private sector grant projects could have impacted migrants, including post-project impacts in a possible scaling phase. However, none of these projects was launched.

Efficiency

Team

The FRP **project team** consisted of (4) senior experts already working in the Migration and Remittances Programme and an external insurance expert engaged specifically for FRP. An external consulting firm was contracted to draft the six country studies, and would have offered the private sector TA.¹⁸ The RfA evaluation team also included external experts in insurance and wage digitisation. As the subjects of wages digitisation, insurance and pensions are highly technical and as UNCDF did not have prior experience in this field, the reliance on experts externally recruited was efficient. The significant outputs realised in the pilot phase, notably the research, country studies and corridor mapping, were in large measure due to their involvement. However, if UNCDF were to proceed working in this domain, it would be necessary to bring such core competences into the core team. Stakeholders also reported that project progress hence efficiency suffered due to changes in the FRP project team as well as organisational changes within UNCDF (e.g., no Labs with A2II, no grants to private sector partners).

Budget use

According to UNCDF records, the **entire budget** under the FRP was expended. Of the total budget of USD 1,642,854 the allocation for innovation projects was USD 550,000, namely USD 300,000 for grants and USD 250,000 for TA. Expenditure records show that USD 20,382 was expended on the MoEWOE project and USD 25,088 on A2II, in both cases for TA by UNCDF staff. As the entire FRP budget was used up, the remaining budget for innovation TA and grants was apparently used for other purposes.¹⁹ The budget corresponding to non-executed private and public sector projects was not returned to SDC. See also appendix E in the MRP evaluation report.

¹⁸ MSC Consulting, Singapore

¹⁹ As the FRP expenditures are incorporated in the expenditure report of MRP, the evaluators could not precisely determine how the SDC and UNCDF contribution was applied.

It is observed that the **budget and time allocation look quite small** given the ambitious output and outcome ambitions of this pilot project.

Research

The project produced a significant body of research in a short period of time. It helped that external consultants were engaged. However, MoEWOE indicated it had not been sufficiently engaged in the process. It was also mentioned by stakeholders that the time between finalising a study and its publication (after quality control, editing and layout), was very long.

Private sector engagements

Of special interest in the context of efficiency are the attempts to launch pilot projects with the private sector. To identify such projects FRP launched a Request for Applications, resulting in three approved projects (see above). However, due to **long decision times** in UNCDF none of these got launched. The core efficiency findings relate to time availability and unrealistic timelines.

- The introductory webinar, presenting the upcoming RfA to (35) potential applicants, was conducted in July 2022.
- The RFA was launched in August 2022, with a submission data by 20 September 2022, or seven months into FRP. This means that already at the time of launching the RfA it was known that projects (meant to be 6-12 months in duration) would be difficult to complete on time given the total of 14 months for FRP.
- The evaluation committee was given five proposals, pre-selected by UNCDF from 17 applications received. The short-listed applicants orally presented their proposal in October, and in November (2022) the evaluation committee came to a conclusion. The external members of the evaluation committee confirmed that their deliberations were conducted efficiently, taking no more than six weeks - including interviews with the applicants.
- Given experiences under MRP, UNCDF decided to undertake a thorough review and due diligence of the three private sector projects, after their selection. This was to ascertain the reality of claims made in project proposals. That was completed by December 2022.
- The Project Documents were ready and submitted to the Project Steering Committee/Board for endorsement on 31st January 2023. However, the shortlisted proposals were only endorsed by the Project Board in April 2023. This left little time for their implementation.
- As to the projects themselves, the proposed duration of the IME Pay project was 7 months, PayMedia 6 months, and SICL 6 months as well. This seems unrealistically short given the complexity of the work at hand. Even if the projects had started, their timely completion would have been unlikely. More realistic timeliness for this kind of projects would likely exceed one full year. This is time needed for product and IT development, launch and preliminary scaling to be able to evaluate results.
- Looking at the broad timelines, the duration of the FRP pilot project was 14 months, later extended by 8 months. To develop and advertise the RfA, select and execute private sector pilot projects, in such brief time is unrealistic, as can be seen from the above. By incorporating these private sector pilots into the project design UNCDF set itself up for failure, ex-ante. This means that the corresponding result targets (50,000 families impacted and 2 pilot projects) were also unachievable, ex ante.
- It was also mentioned by stakeholders that the criteria for applying to a private sector grant were quite tough for this kind of greenfield industry, which may explain the small number of applications (17) received. There were no proposals on wage digitisation. Going forward to future RfAs, the eligibility criteria may be reviewed and broadened, being perceived as more inviting.

In view of the above, none of the private sector projects was finally launched. Needless to say that the private sector partners were deeply disappointed, given the time and effort they had invested in

preparing the project and due diligence, setting up project teams, preparing with their own partners, and expending money in the process. Private sector partners were also not given a satisfactory answer by UNCDF as to the reasons the FRP support did not go through. This may prevent these private sector partners from responding to an RfA in the future.

Public sector engagements

Regarding the work with partner MoEWOE, the evaluation found that the major efficiency constraint was the absence of regular (in-person) follow-up by the FRP main expert, who is not based in Bangladesh. This was compounded by the security considerations around the Bangladesh elections, which made it impossible to travel to Dhaka for several months. In order to ensure the continuous follow-up with the Ministry it would have been more efficient to involve UNCDF staff locally present in Dhaka, including some who work in a bilateral remittances project financed by SDC. According to MoEWOE, FRP was expected to take an office at the Ministry for semi-present permanence, which never happened.

A2II also noted limitations in internal UNCDF capacity that had resulted in part of the programme with A2II not being realised (e.g., the Innovation Labs).

Evaluative conclusions on efficiency

The research work was completed efficiently and benefitted from multiple rounds of consultations.

The duration of the FRP pilot project, 14 (later 22) months, was too short to formulate, approve and execute private sector pilot projects. By incorporating this in the project design, including 2 major result targets, UNCDF set itself up for failure, ex ante.

The efficiency of the work with MoEWOE suffered for lack of regular / continuous TA engagement including physical presence in the Ministry.

The projects with private and public sector partners also suffered from UNCDF institutional constraints beyond the project team.

Sustainability

One may not expect a pilot project to be sustainable all by itself, as this is not the purpose of such inception phase. However, the first research work done, contacts made, and events hosted are a first step into putting social protection on the agenda of relevant stakeholders. Sustainability requires a set of follow-up projects. Given the newness of the subject of migrant social protection, protection of the families in particular, a long timeline will be required for sustainability.

9) Conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations

The (mini-)evaluation of FRP reveals that migrant social protection is a relatively new topic in the migration and financial inclusion spaces. Although ILO had been working on social protection, including for migrants, for a long time, this was from the national and public sector perspective. No international organisation had appropriated the topic of migrant social protection. The relevance of migrant social protection, including the role of private sector as service providers, was confirmed. However, the complexity of the subject, including technical and regulatory hurdles to clear, mean that any initiative to develop migrant social protection requires a long timeline and diversified set of players and stakeholders.

Recommendation 1: Continue the work of FRP, set a timeline of at least five years per project phase.

The (mini-)evaluation showed that some countries, including Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, have embarked on mandatory and subsidised pre-departure migrant social protection schemes, which being implemented through the public sector hamper and delay private sector involvement. Private sector simply cannot compete against public institutions that monopolise subsidy streams. This means that their technical knowledge and innovation potential is not used.

Recommendation 2: Any mandatory or voluntary (subsidised) migrant social protection scheme needs to offer equal access to public and private insurance / pension service providers. This could be a core message of UNCDF.

Right now, the private sector sees little commercial perspective in offering migrant social protection products, for reasons of amounts being small, migrants being geographically dispersed and hard to reach, regulatory hurdles in cross border claim handling and payments, and other technical constraints. The private sector also lacks successful examples to learn from.

Recommendation 3: The private sector grant / TA programme is an effective way to enable the private sector to experiment and may be continued. Companies must be given enough time to execute their projects (at least one full year, more likely two). Eligibility criteria must be sufficiently broad to allow a wide variety of creative ideas, in a pilot form if needed. Thus, applicants must be allowed to use the grant to test hitherto unproven business models, gender targeting included.

Recommendation 4: The public sector and regulators must be fully engaged to help alleviate any constraints to cross-border social protection, claim handling and pay-outs.

Recommendation 5: Research must be focussed on concrete actions that public and private sectors can undertake.

10) Summary of evaluation questions and findings

Evaluation Question	Findings
1. Application of OECD / DAC evaluation criteria	
1a. Relevance	FRP was relevant to the needs of migrant communities including stay-behind families, given that most are not sufficiently protected, in line with international and national policy priorities, and a (new) priority subject to core donors and UNCDF as well.
1b. Effectiveness	<p>The research has been of high quality, and useful for global stakeholders, general public, (country) policy makers, academia, NGOs, and UNCDF itself. However, the recommendations are not sufficiently operational, neither for future (SDC/UNCDF) programme development, nor for public and private sector partners.</p> <p>The private sector engagements have not been effective.</p> <p>The public sector engagements have not been as effective as planned, and only partly completed.</p> <p>Stakeholder consultations helped better define the future programmatic priorities.</p> <p>Likewise, learning and dissemination events helped put the topic of migrant social protection on the international agenda. However, more such is needed to encourage private and public sector stakeholders to undertake action in this respect.</p>
1c. Impact	The project, being a pilot activity, did not generate any impact on migrant communities.
1d. Efficiency	<p>The research work was completed efficiently.</p> <p>The duration of the FRP pilot project, 14 (later 22) months, was too short to formulate, approve and execute private sector pilot projects.</p> <p>The efficiency of the work with MoEWOE suffered for lack of regular / continuous TA engagement including physical presence in the Ministry. Likewise, the work with A2II was not completed, due to personnel changes in the FRP team.</p>

1e. Sustainability	One may not expect a pilot project to be sustainable all by itself, as this is not the purpose of such inception phase.
2. To what extent have private sector actors been engaged towards access to and use of portable social security services for migrants?	<p>The private sector was meant to be reached through the grant / TA programme after RfA. This was not successfully completed.</p> <p>The private sector was also included in consultations and learning / dissemination events, and representatives acted as resource persons / peer reviewers.</p> <p>While this has certainly drawn their interest toward migrant social protection, no evidence exists of any private companies already having launched a new migrant insurance or pension product on the market.</p>
3. Which recommendations and related learnings can be derived from FRP for future projects?	See above
4. Sub-questions	
4a. What has been the breath of the intervention and staffing set-up in relationship with the complexity of the topics to be covered and issues to be addressed?	The project team to a significant degree included external experts and consultants hired because of their technical expertise in wage digitisation, insurance, and pensions. As the subject was new to UNCDF, this was efficient. The external experts contributed to the significant level of outputs, research, and country / corridor diagnostics in particular.
4b. What have been the effects of the multiple convening/ networking as well as research done by the project team and how this has been perceived by the stakeholders?	Broadly speaking, stakeholders have confirmed that the research and dissemination activities have helped put migrant social protection on the (migration) policy agenda, where hitherto this was not the case (attention was on the cost of remittances). However, further practical research and practical examples of good practices are needed to induce public and private sector partners to develop migrant insurance and pension products.
4c. Did these activities have an effect on participating private sector operators?	No, not beyond them being sensitised to the existence of a potentially rewarding market segment. Private sector partners are still much unsure how a suitable product can be developed and scaled. The technical and regulatory complexities are daunting, and differ by migration corridor.
4d. What have been the learnings of the applied RfA process with the private sector?	<p>The timeline of the RfA process and the time given to private sector partners to implement their projects was too short.</p> <p>The tough selection criteria probably dissuaded some companies from applying. In particular the requirement that projects must have passed the "proof of concept" stage was too limiting, given the fact that most private sector companies have just started contemplating the development of migrant insurance and pension products and successful examples of existing migrant social protection products are scarce.</p>

11) Documents consulted

- Project document "Private Sector Engagement Toward Access to and Portable Social Security for Migrant" Project, signed 22 Feb 2022
- End of the Project Progress Report on "Private Sector Engagement Toward Access to and Portable Social Security for Migrant" Project, 08 April 2024
- Response to End of Project Report Review (questions raised by SDC)
- **Twelve research papers by UNCDF:**
 - Scaling the Next Frontier in Migrant Money: "The case for insurance and pensions"
 - Migrant Financial Resilience: "Where are we in preparing the building blocks?"

- Migrant Insurance and Pension: “Gazing through the future”
- “Charting financial resilience in the first mile exploring private sector business models to empower migrant workers through digital wages”
- “Financial resilience of migrants, the case for digital wages, insurance and pensions”
- “Learnings from UNCDF’s engagement with the private sector, migrant money – a year in review, 1 March 2022 – 28 February 2023”
- Country study Bangladesh
- Country study Indonesia
- Country study Malaysia
- Country study Nepal
- Country study Sri Lanka
- Country study UAE
- 1 blog “Charting the path for migrant financial resilience”
- Prodoc IME Pay
- Prodoc PayMedia
- Prodoc SICL
- UNCDF Strategic framework 2018-2021 and UNCDF Strategic framework 2022-2025
- The potential of remittance-linked insurance products in sub-Saharan Africa, Cenfri, May 2020

12) Resource persons interviewed

- UNCDF programme staff in charge of the financial resilience project, including external expert for research
- Two external members of the UNCDF project evaluation committee (after RfA, both deeply involved in social protection schemes through their work at World Bank and ILO)
- The main donor SDC, Manager South Asia and Policy Advisor Thematic Division
- Permanent Secretary and Senior Assistance Secretary (Project Focal Point), Ministry of Expatriates’ Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE) of the Government of Bangladesh (Public sector partner)
- Access to Insurance Initiative (A2II) (Public sector partner)
- BRAC bank in Bangladesh (Stakeholder, resource person)
- BRAC NGO, Migration programme, in Bangladesh (Stakeholder and peer reviewer)
- IME Pay in Nepal (Private sector partner after RfA)
- Shikhar Insurance in Nepal (Private sector partner after RfA)
- Emirates Investment Bank, Dubai (Peer reviewer, resource person, observer to the RfA process)
- IOM Bangladesh (Stakeholder, deeply involved in migration issues)
- World Bank Bangladesh, Social Protection and Jobs (Stakeholder and peer reviewer)
- EU Delegation Bangladesh (Stakeholder and peer reviewer)

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Appendix H – Results mini survey and Focus Group Discussions

The evaluation team conducted mini surveys and FGDs in programme countries as follows:

- In Senegal, 20 (out of 71) clients from **Baobab / SympliFi** were interviewed by phone. These are credit clients, having received a financial guarantee from a migrant in the EU.
- In addition, in Senegal 31 **Wizall** clients were interviewed, all receiving remittances through the digital Wizall wallet. It proved quite difficult to interview Wizall clients, as many were suspicious of the interview in light of recent phone scams. In addition, in contrast to SympliFi, their relationship with Wizall is distant (digital) and merely transactional, so they do not feel connected to Wizall and less encouraged to respond.
- In Ethiopia, the team could only interview nine **BelCash** clients. Reaching BelCash clients in Ethiopia, using the MamaPays app, was very difficult as BelCash was only willing to provide a very limited client list and many were not reachable (e.g., phone did not work, never picked up). The evaluation team deems the sample of just nine respondents too small for firm conclusions, but suspects that there are only very few active MamaPays users.
- Partner **BRAC Bank** in Bangladesh did not allow the team to contact clients individually, citing concerns on confidentiality and data protection under the Bangladesh financial sector laws, and referring to prior negative experiences with IPA research that negatively impacted on the bank's relationship with its clients. Instead, BRAC Bank facilitated 6 Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with 83 beneficiaries in six bank branches in migration areas.¹¹⁴ As the questions in the mini survey and FGD are quasi identical, the results from the FGDs are reported along with the mini survey.
- In UAE, partner **RAKBANK/Edenred** made available a list of 51 Bangladeshi clients of Edenred. The evaluation team called all of them, and managed to contact nine (five women, four men). The results from this research, focused on senders, not receivers, was included in chapter 4 of this evaluation report.
- The survey done among (14) participants in the HKS training was reported in chapter 4 of this report.

The numbers of clients reached by the evaluation team were small, and do not pretend to be a statistically valid sample of MRP beneficiaries. Rather, mini surveys and FGDs aimed to give the evaluation team a feeling for the clients' use and appreciation of the services rendered by MRP partners, to be triangulated with other pieces of evaluation research. To some extent, this can also be compared with the Lean Data ewz Survey conducted by KIT by way of baseline.

The interviews with clients from SympliFi, Wizall and BelCash were standardised through a mini survey, the format of which is found in appendix L. The French language survey contained some additional questions related to credit, specifically for SympliFi clients. The format for the FGDs with BRAC Bank clients is included in appendix L as well. For RAKBANK / Edenred clients the team used a much simplified set of questions, just asking if they have the C3PAY app, if they used it for sending remittances, and if they participated in training, and how this went.

Sample characteristics

The core characteristics of the respondents to the mini survey are shown in the below table. Most respondents are below the age of 30 (in all three FSP/RSPs the average is raised by a few outliers). Women are well-represented. Wizall clients tend to be urban, which may be explained by the fact that salary processing and payment is one of its core services. Apart from urbanicity, the high level of education is remarkable. In case of SympliFi this was to be expected, as educated youth including university students

¹¹⁴ These FGDs were undertaken from 9 to 11 June 2024, at the premises of the following six bank branches: Jhitka, Golaidanga, Gorai, Chatihati, Kadoer, and Suaganj.

were explicitly targeted. For Wizall it may have to do with the fact that Wizall clients are typically salary receivers or students whose stipends Wizall processes. For BelCash this was unexpected, and may suggest MamaPays is a niche-type product, appealing to the educated. The mini survey sample is certainly not representative of the archetypical remittance receiver in LDCs, hence no generalised conclusions may be drawn. The same problem plagued the KIT lean data survey, likely due to a similar selection bias (all respondents were using the FSP/RSP service).¹¹⁵

Table 5 - Mini survey: Sample characteristics

	SympliFi	Wizall	Belcash
n=	20	31	9
Gender:			
Male	50%	58%	56%
Female	50%	42%	44%
Average age (yrs):	30.6	37.9	38.4
Marital status:			
Married	50%	68%	44%
Single, never married	40%	29%	56%
Separated or divorced	10%	0%	0%
Widowed	0%	3%	0%
Urbanicity:			
Urban	70%	90%	100%
Peri-urban	30%	3%	0%
Rural	0%	6%	0%
Education level:			
Primary education – not completed	5%	0%	0%
Primary education – completed	0%	3%	0%
Secondary education – not completed	10%	23%	0%
Secondary education – completed	15%	45%	11%
Tertiary education, University - not completed	50%	13%	0%
Tertiary education, University - completed	20%	16%	89%
	100%	100%	100%
# of persons in household	8.1	9.1	4.4

The FGDs in Bangladesh did not collect specific demographic data on all (83) participants. However, 50 were women and 33 men, typically married and of all ages. Given the locations visited, very likely the FGD participants, mainly receivers, have received low levels of education.

Economic profile respondents

The economic position of survey respondents is shown in the next table. The self-declared level of poverty varies. Unsurprisingly, two-thirds of SympliFi clients declared being in business – that is what their loan was for. No-one declared that remittances were the main source of income.

¹¹⁵ The KIT LDS also revealed that more than 80% of receivers and nearly all senders had benefitted from at least secondary education.

Table 6 - Mini survey: Income position and poverty

	SympliFi	Wizall	Belcash
Self-classification of income position:			
Very low, very difficult to make ends meet	10%	26%	0%
Low, can just make ends meet	40%	16%	0%
Medium	45%	29%	89%
High	0%	3%	11%
No response	5%	26%	0%
	100%	100%	100%
Main source of income:			
Salaried employment	30%	29%	33%
Self-employment, not employing anybody else (e.g., day work, petty trade)	40%	26%	33%
Small business (up to five persons, family members included)	25%	19%	11%
Medium or large business	0%	0%	11%
Remittances	0%	0%	0%
Other (please specify)	5%	26%	11%
	100%	100%	100%
If salaried, how do you receive your salary:			
Cash	15%	10%	0%
Bank account	15%	23%	33%
Mobile money	0%	3%	0%
In-kind	0%	0%	0%
N/A	70%	65%	0%
	100%	100%	33%

The results from the FGDs in Bangladesh were mixed. The majority of FGDs participants were significantly poor, and many had no other revenue sources than remittances. However, there were also (two) communities that after many years of having received remittances had been able to build up revenue-generating activities, to the point that they were economically solvent.

Remittances

The next set of questions aimed to get more information relating to remittances being received. In SympliFi, 65% of respondents do not receive remittances, which is contrary to the project thesis that aims to convert remittances into guarantees. Interviews revealed that clients, once they learned about the project, contacted acquaintances or even went on Facebook to search totally unrelated individuals to seek support. For Wizall and BelCash it is striking that most remittance senders are not parents or children but more remote family members or friends.¹¹⁶ The importance of remittances to family income varies. The amounts received are typically USD 200-300 per month, but can be as low as USD 10 and as high as USD 1,250. Remittances are mostly used for regular family expenses.¹¹⁷ Remittances are received through formal channels, including wallets, which is logical as interviewees are clients of such payment providers.

¹¹⁶ The KIT LDS also showed that the majority of remittance senders are not part of the core family (spouses, parents or children). This is in contrast to the FGDs the evaluators conducted with BRAC Bank.

¹¹⁷ It was the same in the KIT LDS.

Table 7 – Mini survey: Remittances

	SympliFi	Wizall	Belcash
Who is sending you remittances:			
Spouse	10%	6%	33%
Child	5%	3%	0%
Other family member, friend or other person	20%	87%	67%
N/A	65%	3%	0%
	100%	100%	100%
What part of your income is made up of remittances:			
Very important – most important part of family income (> 60%), living without these would be impossible	0%	29%	22%
Important - about half of income (40-60%), living without these remittances would be difficult	10%	19%	22%
Helpful, less than half of income (20-40%), but supports my expenses	10%	10%	22%
Only a small part of income (< 20%), helpful but not critical	15%	19%	22%
N/A Cannot or decline to say	65%	23%	11%
	100%	100%	100%
Average monthly remittance (if receive and want to tell) in USD (official ex rate)			
	231	288	181
What do you use remittances for, multiple answers:			
Living expenses, food, clothes	20%	87%	89%
Health	5%	16%	44%
Education	5%	23%	44%
Pay back debts	0%	0%	11%
Saving	0%	6%	0%
Investment in private house or land (not including agricultural land)	5%	0%	0%
Investment in my business (including agricultural land)	10%	6%	0%
Investment in a means of transport	0%	0%	0%
Weddings, celebrations, funerals, etc	0%	0%	11%
Other (please specify)	5%	6%	11%
N/A Cannot or decline to say	65%	10%	0%
How do you presently receive remittances:			
Cash, delivered in person	0%	0%	11%
Money transfer service (e.g., Western Union, MoneyGram, Post office, etc...)	15%	0%	22%
Transfer into my bank account	0%	6%	56%
Digital wallet (mobile money)	20%	81%	0%
Other (please specify)	0%	6%	11%
N/A	65%	6%	0%
	100%	100%	100%
How would you like to receive remittances:			
Cash, delivered in person	0%	0%	0%
Money transfer service (e.g., Western Union, MoneyGram, Post office, etc...)	0%	0%	11%
Transfer into my bank account	5%	3%	56%
Digital wallet (mobile money)	25%	68%	33%
Other (please specify)	0%	26%	0%
N/A	70%	3%	0%
	100%	100%	100%

The FGDs in Bangladesh revealed that 43% of FGD participants receive money from husbands, 27% from sons, 10% from brothers, and a few from cousins, grandsons, nieces, and no wives and no non-family members. Nine FGD participants were migrants (remitters) currently on vacation in Bangladesh, and two were returnees who used to be remitters. Some FGD participants receive from multiple persons. The amount of remittances received is typically BDT 40,000-100,000 per month, or USD 340 to 850, a significant amount in the Bangladesh context. In terms of geography, 81% of FGD participants received from countries on the Arab peninsula, 13% from Malaysia, and a few from various other migration countries including Europe and the USA.

Nearly all FGD participants receive remittances through their BRAC bank account. A few also used bKash or Western Union for small amounts as this is faster than the bank (which takes two days) and a few also used unregulated (informal) Hundi agents. All FGD participants were satisfied with the BRAC bank account and services.

As noted above, in two out of six FGDs a majority of FGD participants was no longer dependent on remittances as they have developed income-generating activities, such as agriculture, trade, or real estate investment. One BRAC Bank branch was located on a busy market with all FGD participants trading. Other respondents were entirely dependent, and would be destitute if remittances ended. Overall, out of 83 families, 62 declared to be remittance dependent, and 21 were not.

In line with the above, poor and remittance-dependent families expend most of their remittances in the household, while more prosperous families are able to invest (e.g., in land).

Digital and financial competences, innovation and training

The mini survey revealed that all respondents have a mobile phone and use it to access FSP/RSP services, which was to be expected as they are mobile wallet clients. Clients were asked if they were introduced to a new FSP/RSP service. This is obviously the case for SympliFi/Baobab. Several Baobab clients also reported they had opened savings accounts, and four received a follow-up loan without SympliFi guarantee. The Wizall clients did not deem the mobile wallet novel or innovative, and indeed it is not in the Senegalese context as there are other mobile wallets on offer. The truly innovative Wizall nano-credit and nano-insurance products have not yet been launched. BelCash clients, however, mostly found the service novel, and indeed MamaPays is a product innovation on the Ethiopian market. Advantages cited by BelCash clients (MamaPays users) were convenience and safety of remittance reception, and lower cost. Connectivity is sometimes a challenge in Ethiopia.

The FGDs in Bangladesh revealed that the BRAC Bank service (remittances through bank account) is not essentially different from other banks. However, all groups expressed great appreciation of the bank's staff, which was described as warm and reliable, and many clients shifted to BRAC Bank precisely for this reason. In addition, accessing the account through a fingerprint was deemed convenient, safe, in and contrast to government banks, BRAC Bank never runs out of liquidity and is open for longer hours until deep at night and on Saturdays. None indicated the need to change the remittance channel. It was noted that BRAC Bank had encouraged the opening of savings accounts, which many respondents appreciated as this reduced their tendency to spend the money forthwith. Instead, they withdraw what they need and keep the rest on bank. One FGD respondent had used a remittance-linked loan under the Probasi Poribar scheme.

The FGDs in Bangladesh also revealed that BRAC Bank clients have access to mobile phones, but only a few used these to transact financially. As participants in FGDs invariably emphasised the personal link with BRAC agents, one may wonder if digital services models are adequate for this target group.

Respondents in the mini-surveys were asked if the FSP/RSP offered them digital / financial literacy training. This was answered negatively for Baobab / SympliFi and Wizall. Baobab uses loan officers to support borrowers, while Wizall sends educative text messages through the app, but this was not recognised as literacy training. A similar result emerged from the FGDs in Bangladesh, with BRAC Bank clients being directly counselled by bank staff, although sometimes information and promotion events are organised. By contrast, some BelCash clients reported they had received in-person training from bank staff, and started using the new digital service as a result.

The evaluators specifically discussed credit aspects with Baobab / SympliFi clients. While the loans were meant for small business purposes, two respondents admitted they used it for private means instead. For a few more the evaluators were sceptical. Doubt about loan use was the main reason why Baobab had refused 43 loans, even with guarantee. Respondents indicated it was their first loan, and without the guarantee they likely would not have received it. This confirms the additionality of SympliFi. Although most respondents were happy with the service received, many complained of short loan duration (12 months) and high interest rates, and several complained of aggressive loan officer behaviour to ensure repayment. Two clients stated they had not well understood the loan conditions prior to signing the contract. The business results varied from very positive to failure.

Financial health

The final set of survey questions sought information on the clients' financial health, and the impact the FSP/RSP product had. The survey asked about the current state of financial health across the four

dimensions of financial security, resilience, control, and freedom. As can be seen, about half of respondents in the mini-survey are regularly out of money and may not be able to cope in case of incidents. About a third worry about this. Nevertheless, most can save and are optimistic about their financial future.

Regarding causality of the FSP/RSP service, a plurality of Baobab / SympliFi clients attributes improvement in their financial health to the loan product. This is logical, as the service was intended to strengthen the economic position of clients through investment in their small business.

Wizall clients do not attribute such improvements to Wizall. This is understandable as mobile wallets in Senegal are ubiquitous and clients may use multiple at the same time. The simple usage of Wizall mobile money to receive remittances, which Orange money or Wave could have done just as well, has not likely been a game changer. The conclusion that the Wizall money service had little effect on customer financial health means that the grant to Wizall offered little value for money.

BelCash clients (MamaPays users) were in majority positive on the impact of the new financial services on their financial health, except for the “financial freedom” criterion. MamaPays is a service that allows recipients to ask for financial assistance if needed, so it is understandable it helps people feel more secure. The sample was very small, however.

Table 8 - Mini survey: Financial health

	SympliFi	Wizall	Belcash
Are you able to pay your living expenses (financial security):			
Yes, generally	55%	52%	89%
No, I am often out of money	45%	48%	11%
Has the RSP / FSP service made it easier to pay or manage your living expenses:			
Yes	60%	48%	78%
No	40%	52%	22%
If you are faced with an incident, such as decease or death, can you find the money to deal with it (financial resilience):			
Yes	45%	52%	78%
No	55%	48%	22%
Has the RSP / FSP service made it easier to cope with unexpected expenses and emergencies:			
Yes	35%	16%	89%
No	65%	84%	11%
Do you regularly worry that you may not be able to pay your monthly bills (financial control):			
Yes, often	65%	61%	33%
No, rarely	35%	39%	67%
Has the RSP / FSP service made you feel more confident in your financial situation (not worrying about being able to make ends meet):			
Yes	60%	0%	67%
No	40%	100%	22%
Are you able to save (financial freedom):			
Yes	50%	71%	44%
No	50%	29%	56%
Do you feel your long-term financial situation is improving so that you can better your life:			
Yes	85%	87%	44%
No	15%	13%	56%
Has the RSP / FSP service helped you meet your long-term financial desires and goals:			
Yes	55%	0%	33%
No	45%	100%	67%

The FGDs in Bangladesh did not reveal any impact on financial health attributable to the BRAC Bank remittance services as respondents indicated they could have obtained the same service (remittances through bank account) from another bank. It was noted, however, that BRAC bank encourages the opening of savings accounts, which reduces the tendency of recipients to expend their remittances immediately, hence encourages capital formation. Saving, and by consequence the BRAC Bank savings services, is credited with increasing financial health as it discourages impulsive spending and encourages investment. A quarter of FGD participants reported this financial health effect.

Only two families regularly found themselves out of money, and worried about being able to pay the bills. All families were able to call on their remittance-senders in case of emergency. Only nine families were unable to save. Most save in a BRAC Bank account, some in a cooperative or otherwise, and many invest.

RAKBANK clients

Regarding the **nine Bangladeshi migrants contacted in UAE**, five women and four men, the results were rather unexpected, considering that all 51 on the list received were supposed to be C3PAY app users (and Edenred confirmed this after we made the calls). Of the five women reached, none of them ever used the C3Pay card or app; in fact, they had never heard of those and definitely did not receive any training. Among the four men, three had the C3PAY app, only one received the training, in the form of a WhatsApp video, and he sent a remittance just once through the app. These findings do not allow the evaluation team to make any firm conclusion, other than to question the number of migrants supposedly onboarded on the C3PAY app by Edenred. Edenred, however, suggested that respondents are often unwilling to convey such information to strangers, a problem also faced by the KIT LDS.

Appendix I – Evaluation Matrix (from inception report)

Evaluation Questions – judgement criteria and research methods	Criteria	Research methods
1 Relevance		
<p>1.1 How relevant and how well designed is the approach/ToC of the MRP to the <u>priorities and needs of the global and inter-governmental agendas</u> such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), and Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM)? Including the UNCDF Strategic Framework.</p> <p>1.1.1 Goals, outcomes against SDGs (e.g., 10.c)</p> <p>1.1.2 Goals, outcomes against AAAA</p> <p>1.1.3 Goals, outcomes against GCM (objectives 1, 19, 20, 21)</p> <p>1.1.4 Goals, outcomes against UNCDF Strategic Framework</p> <p>1.1.5 Goals, outcomes against United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Guidance (UNSDCF)</p>	<p>Comparison of MRP (ToC) and its result targets against said policies, on the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem statement • Goals • Outcomes with indicators if possible • Beneficiaries / target group • Cross-cutting issues (LNOB) <p>Judgement criteria: match or no match?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study (e.g., MRP project documents, annual reports, the mentioned policy documents) • KIIs UNCDF staff
<p>1.2 How relevant and how well designed is the approach/ToC of the MRP to the <u>priorities and needs of the global, regional, and country-level stakeholders</u>—both public and private, including the migrants, considering the challenges and the programme intended support to improve the financial resilience and economic inclusion of migrants and their families?</p> <p>1.1.1 Were, at inception, existing policy priorities in LDCs identified and incorporated into the ToC and programme design? (some countries were pre-identified by SDC)</p> <p>1.1.2 Was there an explicit problem statement, and how did it enter the ToC and programme design?</p> <p>1.1.3 Were the needs of the private sector identified? How? How did it enter the ToC and programme design? Is there clarity about the main constraints for financial service providers and mobile network operators?</p> <p>1.1.4 Were the needs of migrants and recipients identified? How? How did it enter the ToC and programme design? Is there clarity about the main constraints at the beneficiary level related to receiving remittances and their usage?</p>	<p>MRP outcomes and goal (ToC) and core indicators compared to beneficiary needs identified at inception:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public sector (regional, national) • Private sector • Migrants and recipients <p>Means of beneficiary needs assessment may include meetings, studies, baseline surveys.</p> <p>Judgement criteria: match or no match?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study (e.g., MRP project documents, annual reports, national and regional policy documents) • KIIs UNCDF staff • KIIs in-country • FGDs in-country • Mini survey in-country • Case studies

Evaluation Questions – judgement criteria and research methods	Criteria	Research methods
<p>1.1.5 Was the concept of “financial resilience” (SDC and SIDA prodocs) translated into objective indicators?</p>		
<p>1.3 How relevant and appropriate is the current programme <u>implementation structure</u> considering the objectives and <u>UNCDF’s broader mandate</u>?</p> <p>1.3.1 To what extent is the programme implementation structure embedded in LDCs?</p> <p>1.3.2 Are the programme partners well-embedded in LDCs? If not, how do partners in non-LDCs impact outbound remittances directed toward LDCs and LMICs?</p> <p>1.3.3 To what extent are LDCs’ (intellectual) resources used?</p> <p>1.3.4 What part of budget is spent in LDCs?</p>	<p>Review budgetary and operational data, analyse where the action takes place.</p> <p>Judgement criteria: match or no match?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study • MRP budget and expense data • KIIs UNCDF staff • KIIs MRP partners in-country
<p>1.4 Crosscutting: To what extent does the Programme <u>incorporate gender, human rights, conflict and disability inclusion</u> in its design, strategy/ToC? To what extent is the programme designed to reach last-mile customers (youth, women, low-income)?</p> <p>1.4.1 Does the programme design include deliberate actions to empower women and reduce gender gaps? How?</p> <p>1.4.2 Does the programme design explicitly ensure HR are respected? How?</p> <p>1.4.3 Does the programme design allow for work in conflict and fragile states? How?</p> <p>1.4.4 Does the programme design explicitly reach out to disabled people? How?</p> <p>1.4.5 Does the programme design explicitly reach out to beneficiaries who are at the lower income tranches of society? How?</p> <p>1.4.6 Does the programme design explicitly reach out to young customers? How?</p>	<p>This question is about programme design, not effectiveness.</p> <p>Extent to which MRP ToC and its operationalisation are designed to <u>deliberately</u> reach said groups, not just by coincidence.</p> <p>Thus, extent to which MRP is designed to impact these beneficiaries. This can be proven through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberate actions • Deliberate budget allocations • Deliberate beneficiary selection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study incl programme data • KIIs UNCDF staff • KIIs MRP partners
<p>2 Coherence</p>		
<p>2.1 As presently designed, how coherent is the programme design in view of its objectives? This is sub-divided into external and internal coherence.</p>	<p>See below</p>	

Evaluation Questions – judgement criteria and research methods	Criteria	Research methods
<p>2.2 <i>External</i> How distinct/complementary is the MRP’s approach to <u>other initiatives</u> that deploy financial and technical assistance at the regional and country levels towards strengthening the financial resilience, financial health and economic inclusion of migrants and their families? Including to the UNDS and UNSDCF at country level and the UNCDF Strategic Framework.</p> <p>2.2.1 Coherence with national level initiatives</p> <p>2.2.2 Coherence with regional level initiatives</p> <p>2.2.3 Coherence with other UNCDF programmes, chiefly national programmes</p> <p>2.2.4 Coherence with other UN-system and multilateral initiatives (e.g., UNDP, IOM, World Bank, IMF)</p> <p>2.2.5 Coherence with broader development community initiatives</p>	<p>Extent to which MRP is complementary and synergetic, and not duplicating other programmes in the UN system and outside it. This is a very broad question, and requires wide knowledge of what is going on the migration and remittance space.</p> <p>Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complementary: the respective initiatives do different but usefully connected things. • Synergetic: the respective initiatives reinforce each other so that all are enhanced (1+1=3). This need not include narrow collaboration. • Duplicative: the respective initiatives do the same, and may weaken each other, e.g., because of contradicting advice (1+1=0). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study incl programme data UNCDF and programmes outside UN system • KIIs UNCDF staff • KIIs related programmes, e.g., by IOM, World Bank, IMF • KIIs in-country, notably MRP partners and knowledgeable resource persons and stakeholders • Case studies
<p>2.3 <i>Internal</i> How coherent/ reinforcing are the <u>different workstreams</u> in supporting the intervention objective?</p> <p>2.3.1 Do the (four) workstreams take away constraints that impede progress in another? Is achieving results in one WS a pre-condition to another?</p> <p>2.3.2 Are the WS synergetic? Reinforce each other (1+1=3). How?</p> <p>2.3.3 What is the counterfactual of one or more WS not being pursued, would it weaken the other WS and MRP goal achievement?</p>	<p>In-depth review of ToC and its result indicators: are the components complementary, contributing to the central goal of financial health?</p> <p>This is both an assessment in principle, and of the coherence of actual projects undertaken.</p> <p>Counterfactual analysis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study incl programme data • KIIs UNCDF staff • Case studies • KIIs in-country
<p>3 Efficiency</p>		

Evaluation Questions – judgement criteria and research methods	Criteria	Research methods
<p>3.1 How well has the Programme delivered its <u>expected results</u> to date, including in terms of budget management and allocation, cost- effectiveness of activities? And Value for Money?</p> <p>3.1.1 On time</p> <p>3.1.2 On budget</p> <p>3.1.3 Output efficiency (e.g., cost of training)</p> <p>3.1.4 Outcome efficiency (= “value for money”)</p> <p>3.1.5 Risk management</p> <p>3.1.6 MRP HR strategy</p> <p>3.1.7 Responsiveness of MRP team to demands from partners and stakeholders</p> <p>3.1.8 General conduct of the work, systems and processes</p> <p>3.1.9 Is the ToC being implemented? All components given due attention?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities within budget reserved for the action (%) and extent of deviations if any • Activities on time, compared to plan (%) and extent of deviations if any • Cost per output (output efficiency can be compared across the portfolio) = cost effectiveness • Cost per outcome (outcome efficiency, requires a benchmark) = value for money • Partners report receiving prompt response to queries • Decision timelines (approval, implementation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study incl budgets, expenditure data and project progress • KIIs programme staff UNCDF • KIIs in-country (e.g., project partners, recipients) • Case studies
<p>3.2 How well is the programme’s broader approach to partnerships (with other UNCDF/ UN interventions and broader institutions and stakeholders) and strategy to <u>scaling-up</u> (maturity model) working?</p> <p>This question is closely related to sustainability and will be partly taken up in that section.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which partners consider their pilot projects scalable (by themselves) • Extent to which partners already scaled their pilot projects • Extent to which partners consider their pilot projects replicable (by others and elsewhere) with MRP assistance • Extent to which partners consider their pilot projects replicable (by others and elsewhere) unassisted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs in-country (project partners and general resource persons) • Case studies
<p>3.3 What is the <u>quality of outputs</u> (deliverables) provided to date?</p> <p>How appropriate is the Programme’s <u>monitoring system</u> to track direct Programme results and their broader contribution to the overall objectives?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfaction surveys (by UNCDF) • Direct information from beneficiaries (participants) and stakeholders, confirm quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study incl programme data • KIIs UNCDF staff • KIIs in-country

Evaluation Questions – judgement criteria and research methods	Criteria	Research methods
<p>The <u>quality</u> of outputs will be evaluated in the effectiveness section. Here we are dealing with the implementation mechanism.</p> <p>3.3.1 To what extent did beneficiaries of programme activities express satisfaction (e.g., training, TA). This refers to the participants in training and TA offered by MRP, not by partners to migrants and recipients.</p> <p>3.3.2 To what extent has MRP formulated result indicators that match the ToC, are objective, and are collected without unnecessary hassle and cost? Are there result indicators for all outputs and outcomes? Does it contribute to the Integrated Results and Resources Matrix?</p> <p>3.3.3 Was the MRP monitoring system used to collect lessons learned?</p> <p>3.3.4 Is there evidence of knowledge development activities being incorporated by users?</p> <p>3.3.5 Was sufficient information collected during the implementation period on specific result indicators to measure progress on human rights, gender equality disability and other cross-cutting issues?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review ToC, the corresponding result indicators and reports. • Data collection tools, usage, completeness, cost 	
<p>3.4 How well is the Programme being <u>managed and governed</u>, including through the involvement and contribution of key partners such as the donors and government counterparts, both at the global, regional, and national levels?</p> <p>3.4.1 Is the governance structure composed of stakeholders that really have a stake and capacity to contribute substantially? To what extent are beneficiary countries (LDCs) represented?</p> <p>3.4.2 What has been the contribution of governance, what has changed due to them?</p> <p>3.4.3 What has been the quality of reporting? Has reporting in any way influenced the way-forward in the programme?</p> <p>3.4.4 What has been the role of the donors?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfaction surveys (by UNCDF) • Direct information from beneficiaries (participants) and stakeholders, confirm quality of management and active participation of governance • Review reports, is relevant information provided? Progress monitored against agreed targets? • Review steering committee reports, is direction being provided? Are decisions taken? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study incl programme data and records of steering committee meetings • KIIs UNCDF staff • KIIs donors

Evaluation Questions – judgement criteria and research methods	Criteria	Research methods
<p>3.5 How well are resources (financial, time, people) allocated to crosscutting issues, including gender and <u>gender mainstreaming</u>, <u>LNOB</u>, <u>disabled</u>, and conflict sensitive approaches as relevant. To what extent are such resources being used efficiently?</p> <p>3.5.1 To what extent are crosscutting issues, including gender and gender mainstreaming, LNOB, disabled, and conflict sensitive approaches a priority in the overall intervention budget?</p> <p>3.5.2 Are there sufficient resources (financial, time, people) allocated to integrate crosscutting issues in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the intervention?</p> <p>3.5.3 Was the use of resources to address crosscutting issues in line with the corresponding results achieved?</p>	<p>Disaggregate spendings, if possible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study incl budgets, expenditure data and project progress
<p>4 Effectiveness (outputs, which to some extent resemble intermediary outcomes)</p>		
<p>4.1 To what extent the MRP’s activities contributed to improving the <i>capacity</i> of <u>policy-makers and regulators</u> and availability of information to develop, supervise and enforce inclusive policies and regulations on remittances? Including an increased engagement with the private sector to address market constraints and align objectives?</p> <p>4.1.1 Were the beneficiary needs well-identified? Were the right beneficiaries identified? How?</p> <p>4.1.2 To what extent were MRP capacity building actions successfully completed? To what extent target central banks/policy makers improved their remittance data collection and analysis capacities (via training and TA received)?</p> <p>4.1.3 Extent to which policy-makers and regulators put their new capacities <u>into practice</u>: design, ensure approval, implement policies and regulations in coordination with the private sector.</p>	<p>Extent to which WS1 outputs are produced, compared to plan (for sample projects).</p> <p># of capacity building activities (= KPI4+5, but these need to be disaggregated to WS and by type of support), e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of trainings and evaluation sheets • # of TA reports <p>Client satisfaction with training, TA and other support provided. UNCDF approval of such outputs (e.g., report is found to be good).</p> <p>Extent to which policy makers and regulators acted on their new capacities (see under stakeholder outcomes).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study incl programme data • KIIs UNCDF staff • KIIs in-country • Case studies

Evaluation Questions – judgement criteria and research methods	Criteria	Research methods
<p>(this is not an output of MRP, it is an intermediary outcome and dealt with under stakeholder outcomes, but is the only way of knowing capabilities were strengthened)</p>	<p>Counterfactual: achieved results they otherwise would not have. (extent of result attribution to MRP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence in current data collection and analysis systems • Technical changes occurred at national / regional level 	
<p>4.2 To what extent the MRP’s activities contributed to develop the <i>capabilities and commitment</i> of Service Providers, mobile network operators, governments and other actors to developing and expanding <u>inclusive and open digital infrastructure</u>, as well as improved access at the last mile through strengthening digital rails and facilitate easier adoption and onboarding on digital channels for migrants and their families?</p> <p>4.2.1 Were the beneficiary needs well-identified? Were the right beneficiaries identified? How?</p> <p>4.2.2 To what extent were MRP capacity building actions successfully completed?</p> <p>4.2.3 Extent to which key actors followed up on this and built digital infrastructure.</p> <p>(this is not an output of MRP, it is an intermediary outcome and dealt with under stakeholder outcomes, but is the only way of knowing capabilities were strengthened)</p>	<p>Extent to which WS2 outputs are produced, compared to plan (for sample projects)</p> <p># of capacity building activities (= KPI4+5, but these need to be disaggregated to WS and by type of support)</p> <p>Client satisfaction with training, TA and other support provided. UNCDF approval of such outputs (e.g., report is found to be good).</p> <p>Extent to which key actors in digital finance infrastructure invested to built digital infrastructure (see under stakeholder outcomes).</p> <p>Counterfactual: achieved results they otherwise would not have. (extent of result attribution to MRP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study incl programme data • KIIs UNCDF staff • KIIs in-country • FGDs • Mini survey • Case studies
<p>4.3 To what extent the MRP’s activities contributed to increased <i>capacities and resources</i> of <u>start-ups, corporations, and other actors to offer inclusive business models and products</u> as well as incentivize their usage?</p> <p>4.3.1 Were the beneficiary needs well-identified? Were the right beneficiaries identified? How?</p> <p>4.3.2 To what extent were MRP capacity building actions successfully completed?</p>	<p>Extent to which WS3 outputs are produced, compared to plan (for sample projects)</p> <p># of capacity building activities (= KPI4+5, but needs to be disaggregated to WS and by type of support)</p> <p># of RSPs with improved data analytics (KPI11)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study incl programme data • KIIs UNCDF staff • KIIs in-country • FGDs • Mini survey • Case studies

Evaluation Questions – judgement criteria and research methods	Criteria	Research methods
<p>4.3.3 Extent to which private sector partners followed up on this and built innovative digital remittance services, or are likely to do so in the near future.</p> <p>(this is not an output of MRP, it is an intermediary outcome and dealt with under stakeholder outcomes, but is the only way of knowing capabilities were strengthened)</p>	<p>Client satisfaction with training, TA and other support provided. UNCDF approval of such outputs (e.g., report is found to be good).</p> <p>Extent to which private sector partners invested to built innovative digital remittance services (see under stakeholder outcomes).</p> <p>Counterfactual: achieved results they otherwise would not have. (extent of result attribution to MRP)</p>	
<p>4.4 To what extent the MRP’s activities contributed to improved <i>capacities, tools and delivery channels</i> to build the financial capacities, soft and hard skills <u>of migrants and beneficiaries</u>?</p> <p>4.4.1 To what extent were MRP capacity building actions successfully completed?</p> <p>4.4.2 Extent to which private sector partners followed up on this to improve financial and digital skills of migrants and recipients, or are likely to do so in the near future.</p> <p>(this is not an output of MRP, it is an intermediary outcome and dealt with under stakeholder outcomes, but is the only way of knowing capabilities were strengthened)</p>	<p>Extent to which WS4 outputs are produced, compared to plan (for sample projects)</p> <p># of capacity building activities (= KPI4+5, but needs to be disaggregated to WS and by type of support)</p> <p># of financial education campaigns (= KPI6)</p> <p>Client satisfaction with training, TA and other support provided. UNCDF approval of such outputs (e.g., training material is found to be good).</p> <p>Extent to which private sector partners engaged with migrants and recipients to strengthen their financial and digital capabilities (see under stakeholder outcomes).</p> <p>Counterfactual: achieved results they otherwise would not have. (extent of result attribution to MRP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study incl programme data • KIIs UNCDF staff • FGDs • Mini survey • Impact and financial health surveys by MRP • Case studies
<p>5 Effectiveness and likely Impact (customer outcomes, sector outcomes, impacts)</p>		
<p>Stakeholder Outcomes (intermediary outcomes that directly follow from the outputs)</p>		

Evaluation Questions - judgement criteria and research methods	Criteria	Research methods
<p>5.1 To what extent are programme results likely to contribute to remittances and financial service providers applying new business models and use new delivery channels to serve migrants and their families (low income/ migrant clients and gender) as a customer segment and benefit from diversified revenues from cross-selling and improved sustainability?</p> <p>As this EQ does not match the ToC it is replaced as follows below.</p>	<p>There are five stakeholder outcomes in the ToC (version of the ToR). For all five the EQ needs to find evidence of outcome achievement.</p>	
<p>5.1 Were policies and regulations on digital remittances services designed, approved / adopted, and implemented?</p> <p>5.1.1 How were policy and regulatory issues and priorities identified?</p> <p>5.1.2 To what extent had regional harmonisation progressed?</p> <p>5.1.3 What would (not) have happened in the absence of MRP?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of policies and regulations designed (= KPI12), incl regional • # of policies and regulations approved / adopted (= KPI16), incl regional • # of policies implemented, incl regional and national action plans (for regulations their adoption should be sufficient to ensure implementation, for policies specific implementation actions would be required) • Quality of the above according to key stakeholders • Likelihood these policies and regulations will be transformational in the financial sector, according to project partners (public and private). • What are the main contributors to outcome achievement? • What the main factors for non-achievement? • Counterfactual: achieved results they otherwise would not have. (extent of result attribution to MRP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study incl programme data • KIIs UNCDF staff • KIIs in-country (e.g., policy makers, central bank) • KIIs regional bodies (e.g., policy makers, central bank) • Case studies
<p>5.2 Was digital infrastructure, open and inter-operational, strengthened?</p> <p>5.3 Were accessible and affordable digital remittance services piloted?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of new or improved digital services and business models piloted (= KPI8- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study incl programme data • KIIs UNCDF staff

Evaluation Questions – judgement criteria and research methods	Criteria	Research methods
<p>5.3.1 What would (not) have happened in the absence of MRP?</p> <p>5.3.2 To what extent the digital infrastructure strengthened address the specific needs of the LNOB targets</p>	<p>10, needs to be disaggregated to WS2 and 3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of models introduced in the market (scaled = KPI13, also KPI14 and 15, needs to be disaggregated to WS2 and 3) • # of (new) clients reached (MRP data) (KPI23 denotes impact, but in reality it is reach) • Quality of the above according to key stakeholders and persons having received these services • Likelihood these models will be transformational on the market • What are the main contributors to outcome achievement? • What are the main factors for non-achievement? • Counterfactual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs in-country • Case studies
<p>5.4 Were innovative business models and remittance-linked financial services tested and deployed?</p> <p>5.4.1 Were new services developed, tested and integrated into existing remittance products?</p> <p>5.4.2 Were new services developed and launched as new financial products.</p> <p>5.4.3 To what extent do the new remittance and remittance-linked Financial Services address the specific needs of LNOB target groups? Were new services specifically targeted to women and other LNOB target groups.</p> <p>5.4.4 What would (not) have happened in the absence of MRP?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of new or improved digital services and business models piloted (= KPI 8-10, needs to be disaggregated to WS2 and 3) • # of models introduced in the market (scaled = KPI13, also KPI 14 and 15, needs to be disaggregated to WS2 and 3) • # of (new) clients reached, incl LNOB • Extent to which models were designed to reach women and LNOB groups. • Quality of the above according to key stakeholders and persons having received these services • Likelihood these models will be transformational on the market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study incl programme data • KIIs UNCDF staff • KIIs in-country • FGDs • Mini survey • Case studies

Evaluation Questions – judgement criteria and research methods	Criteria	Research methods
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the main contributors to outcome achievement? • What are the main factors for non-achievement? • Counterfactual 	
<p>5.5 To what extent were new business models and delivery channels successful in building financial and digital capacity (hard and soft skill) of migrants and recipients?</p> <p>5.5.1 How well does the intervention contribute to improved capacity, tools and channels to build the financial skills of beneficiaries? This includes soft and hard skills - voice, choice, control, decisions.</p> <p>5.5.2 To what extent does the intervention address the specific needs of LNOB target groups? Were new services specifically targeted to women and other LNOB target groups.</p> <p>5.5.3 What would (not) have happened in the absence of MRP?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of models developed including financial and digital capacity building • # of such models introduced in the market • # of (new) clients reached (=KPI17 and 18) • Quality of the above according to key stakeholders and persons having received these services (= KPI19) • Likelihood these models will be transformational on the market • What are the main contributors to outcome achievement? • What are the main factors for non-achievement? • Counterfactual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study incl programme data • KIIs UNCDF staff • KIIs in-country • FGDs • Mini survey • MRP financial health surveys • Case studies
Sector Outcomes:		
<p>5.2 To what extent are the Programme results likely to contribute to the expansion of the digital ecosystem with more investment, competition, and innovation?</p> <p>As this EQ does not match the ToC it is replaced as follows below.</p>	<p>There are four sector outcomes in the ToC, although these can be collapsed into two. For all the EQ needs to find evidence of outcome achievement.</p>	
<p>5.6 Are migrants and recipients regularly using digital remittance services, as well as related remittance-linked financial services? What was the contribution of MRP?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volume (# and value) of remittance transactions (CB data for selected countries and case studies and/or MRP partners) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study incl programme data • KIIs UNCDF staff • KIIs in-country • FGDs

Evaluation Questions – judgement criteria and research methods	Criteria	Research methods
<p>5.6.1 Has MRP led to a remittance cost reduction?</p> <p>5.6.2 Has MRP led to an increase in the use of digital channels?</p> <p>5.6.3 Has MRP led to an increase in the use of related financial services?</p> <p>5.6.4 Impact perception beneficiaries (both senders and receivers)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of remittance transactions (WB remittance price website, for MRP partners and countries) • Volume (# and value) of related financial service transactions • Beneficiary self-assessment • What are the main contributors to outcome achievement? To what extent can it be linked to MRP? • What are the main factors for non-achievement? • Counterfactual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini survey • MRP lean data and financial health surveys • Case studies (e.g., for remittance cost)
<p>5.7 To what extent are private companies in the digital ecosystem, responding to market demand, investing in a range of remittance and financial services? Are innovation and competition increasing? What was the contribution of MRP?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of new products developed and launched • # of last-mile branches • Cross-selling opportunities • Turnover remittance and financial service companies (see also KPI20) • Partner investments (= KPI3, but needs to be disaggregated to WS3) • What are the main contributors to outcome achievement? To what extent can it be linked to MRP? • What are the main factors for non-achievement? • Counterfactual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study incl programme data • KIIs UNCDF staff • KIIs in-country • FGDs • Mini survey • Case studies
Customer Outcomes:		
<p>5.8 To what extent are programme results likely to contribute to <u>migrants and their families to have access</u> to low-cost digital remittance services and financial products and the required financial literacy to meaningfully use these services?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beneficiary self-assessment • Remittance flow to productive investment (= KPI21) • Increase in average remittance amount (= KPI22) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk study incl programme data • KIIs UNCDF staff • KIIs in-country • FGDs • Mini survey

Evaluation Questions – judgement criteria and research methods	Criteria	Research methods
<p>5.8.1 To what extent migrants and recipients have improved ability, knowledge, and skills to access and use remittances and financial services?</p> <p>5.8.2 To what extent migrants and recipients use the above for improving their lives, including access to jobs and markets?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Country visits and case studies show this to be true What are the main contributors to outcome achievement? To what extent can it be linked to MRP? What are the main factors for non-achievement? Counterfactual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRP lean data and financial health surveys Case studies
<p>5.9 To what extent are the programme results likely to contribute to improve the financial <u>resilience and economic inclusion of migrants and their families</u> through low-cost digital remittance services and remittance-linked financial products? What are the gaps if any? As well as any unintended positive or negative higher-level effects?</p> <p>This refers to the goal level in the ToC</p> <p>5.9.1 What type of beneficiaries are reached (economic stratum, age, sex, city/rural, education, digital literacy)?</p> <p>5.9.2 What are the benefits for beneficiaries in improving their financial resilience and inclusion (security/freedom/control)?</p> <p>5.9.3 How did the intervention solve the financial (follow-up) product needs of beneficiaries?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beneficiary self-assessment on financial health (= KPI23, although this indicator denotes reach rather than impact) Country visits and case studies show this to be true Assessment beneficiary needs against services accessed What are the main contributors to impact achievement? To what extent can it be linked to UNCDF support? What are the main factors for non-achievement? Counterfactual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KIIs in-country FGDs Mini survey MRP lean data and financial health surveys Case studies
<p>5.10 To what extent are the programme results contributing to changing <i>attitudes and behaviours</i> towards <u>Human Rights and Gender, disability</u> and most vulnerable on the various stakeholder groups and the underlying causes of inequality and discrimination?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy makers and regulators include these concerns in policies Service providers develop targeted services for these stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KIIs in-country FGDs Mini survey Case studies
<p>6 Sustainability</p>		
<p>6.1 To what extent are changes in the capacities of <u>regulators</u> to address regulatory challenges and market inefficiencies likely to continue over time?</p>	<p>As assessed by the direct project stakeholders, with arguments to demonstrate that changes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KIIs in-country Case studies

Evaluation Questions – judgement criteria and research methods	Criteria	Research methods
<p>6.1.1 Are improvements in the regulatory capacities to address market inefficiencies likely to continue over time, so that further reform work will be undertaken?</p> <p>6.1.2 Which policy and regulatory projects can be replicated in country and elsewhere and why? To what extent will regional harmonization continue?</p> <p>6.1.3 Is the MRP exit strategy such that project achievements can be maintained, and preferably built upon?</p>	<p>made will likely persist and further policy and regulatory reform will be undertaken.</p> <p>Additional staff assigned by public partners</p> <p>Additional budget assigned by public partners</p> <p>Proof of further activities (e.g., meetings, policy proposals)</p> <p>Likelihood that policy initiatives ongoing will be brought to a conclusion, according to project partners.</p>	
<p>6.2 To what extent are changes in enhanced regional and domestic <u>payment infrastructure</u> and improved access to shared market infrastructure by banks and non-bank RSPs likely to continue over time?</p> <p>6.2.1 Are the improvements to address market inefficiencies in the domestic and regional payment infrastructure and remittance value chain likely to continue?</p> <p>6.2.2 Which MRP-funded projects and partner services can be replicated in country and elsewhere and why?</p> <p>6.2.3 Is the MRP exit strategy such that project achievements can be maintained, and preferably built upon?</p>	<p>As assessed by the direct project stakeholders, with arguments to demonstrate that changes made will likely persist.</p> <p>Likelihood that ongoing infrastructure projects will be brought to a conclusion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIs in-country • Case studies
<p>6.3 To what extent are changes at the level of <u>market participants</u> (local private sector and micro, small and medium enterprises) and reconfiguration remittance value chains likely to continue over time?</p> <p>6.3.1 Likelihood of upscaling the pilot projects.</p> <p>6.3.2 Which MRP-funded projects and partner services can be replicated in country and elsewhere and why?</p>	<p>As assessed by the direct project stakeholders, with arguments to demonstrate that changes made will likely persist.</p> <p>Financial feasibility (cost/benefit) of new business models.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIs in-country • Case studies

Evaluation Questions – judgement criteria and research methods	Criteria	Research methods
<p>6.3.3 Extent to which the MRP partners can ensure the continued flow of benefits/services for migrants and their families.</p> <p>6.3.4 Extent to which the access and usage of the remittance products and migrant-centric financial services will remain affordable for target groups over the long term.</p> <p>6.3.5 Is the MRP exit strategy such that project achievements can be maintained, and preferably built upon?</p>		
<p>6.4 To what extent are the changes in terms of access, use and resilience by <u>migrants and their families/ beneficiaries</u> likely to continue over time?</p> <p>6.4.1 Likelihood of upscaling the pilot projects.</p> <p>6.4.2 Which MRP-funded projects and partner services can be replicated in country and elsewhere and why?</p> <p>6.4.3 Extent to which the MRP partners can ensure the continued flow of benefits/services for migrants and their families.</p> <p>6.4.4 Extent to which the access and usage of the remittance products and migrant-centric financial services will remain affordable for target groups over the long term.</p> <p>6.4.5 Is the MRP exit strategy such that project achievements can be maintained, and preferably built upon?</p>	<p>As assessed by the direct project stakeholders, with arguments to demonstrate that changes made will likely persist.</p> <p>Convenience of service model.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs in-country • FGDs • Mini survey • MRP lean data and financial health surveys • Case studies
<p>6.5 To what extent does the programme design include an appropriate strategy to support positive changes in <u>HR & Gender, disabled and most vulnerable</u> (LNOB) after the end of the intervention?</p> <p>6.5.1 Were the elements of the programme exit strategy addressed during implementation?</p> <p>6.5.2 To what extent do stakeholders have confidence that they will be able to build on the HR & Gender, disabled and most vulnerable (LNOB) changes promoted by the programme?</p>	<p>As assessed by the direct project stakeholders, with arguments to demonstrate that changes made will likely persist.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs in-country • FGDs • Mini survey • MRP lean data and financial health surveys • Case studies

Appendix J – List of institutions interviewed (no names for privacy reasons)

Institution	Position
UNCDF (online and in country)	Project manager
	Private sector engagement team
	Public sector engagement team
	Strategic comms and advocacy team
	Systems and research team
	Inclusive Digital Economies department
	Evaluation unit
	Programme representative Ethiopia
	Programme representative West Africa
	Programme representative Bangladesh
	Project Officer IDE Bangladesh
	IDE Consultant
Regional Advisor South Asia, Country Relationship Manager Bangladesh	
IGAD team	
UNDP Regional WAF (Senegal)	Resident Representative West Africa
	Deputy Resident Representative West Africa
UNDP Ethiopia	Country Coordinator, Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction
World Bank Senegal (online)	Lead Financial Sector Specialist
	Financial Sector Specialist
ECCAS (Online)	Commissioner for the Common Market, Economic, Monetary, and Financial Affairs of the ECCAS Commission
IFAD (Rome and online)	Programme Manager, Financing Facility for Remittances
	Senior Technical Specialist, Financing Facility for Remittances
IOM BGD	Deputy Chief of Mission
SIDA (Online)	Programme Manager Africa Department
	Former Head of SIDA regional programmes
	Former SIDA project officer
SDC (Online and at embassies in all three countries)	Senior Policy Advisor in charge of UNCDF global programmes
	Chargé Programme Migration et Développement à Dakar
	Senior Programme Officer Migration in Dhaka
	SDC point of contact in Ethiopia
Steering Committee MRP (online)	Private Sector Representative
IGAD (online)	Coordinator Regional Migration Fund Project Operations
Ministère des Finances Senegal	Technical Advisor of General Director of Financial Sector
Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment Bangladesh	Secretary
	PS to the Secretary
	Director General / Adj Secretary
BCEAO (Senegal)	Directeur Inclusion Financière
	Directeur Opérations Bancaires
	Previous Directeur Inclusion Financière, participant HKS training
AMIFA Senegal	Directeur Général
	Directeur Général Adjoint
	Responsable S.I. et Support
TerraPay (Online)	Case manager Congo
	Senior manager
SympliFi France (online)	CEO – France
Baobab Senegal	Director Development – Marketing
	Chargé Développement et Innovation

Wizall Senegal	Directrice Générale
	Directrice Opérationnelle
Dalberg Senegal	Country Director (Now Haskè Conseil)
bKash Bangladesh	Vice President, International Remittance
	Deputy General Manager, International Remittance
	SVP, Remittance Management
BRAC NGO (Bangladesh)	Associate Director Migration Programme and Youth Platform
BRAC Bank (Bangladesh and online)	Deputy Managing Director Retail Banking Division
	Deputy Managing Director Treasury and FI
	Head of Remittance and Probashi Banking
	Head of Agent Banking
	Regional Coordinator Agent Banking Department
	Manager Remittance Products
NBE - National Bank of Ethiopia	Associate Manager Projects & Alliance, Agent Banking Department
	Director, External Economic Analysis and International Relations
	Director Foreign Exchange Monitoring and Reserve
	Director, Payment and Settlement systems
	Acting Deputy Director, Foreign Exchange Monitoring and Reserve Management Directorate
	Director, Information Systems Management Directorate
Lion International Bank SC (Ethiopia)	Advisor to V/Governor, Financial Institutions Supervision Cluster
	Director, Alternative Banking Channels Department
Katcha (Ethiopia)	CEO, Kacha Digital Financial Service S.C. (previous Lion Bank staff member)
	Manager_ Data Analytics & Mobile Money Commercial (previous Lion Bank staff member)
Belcash/HalloCash (Ethiopia)	CEO, Belcash Technology Solutions PLC
BOA, Bank of Abyssinia (Ethiopia)	Merchant Network Manager
Amole / Moneta Technologies (Ethiopia)	Chief Executive Officer
Telebirr (Ethiopia)	Chief Mobile Money Team
RAKBANK (online)	Executive Vice President
Edenred (online)	Chief Product Officer
	Former Commercial manager
SentBe (online)	Business Impact Lead

Appendix K - Bibliography

- Migration and Remittances Programme, UNCDF, Annual report July 2021 – June 2022
 - Its annexes
- Migration and Remittances Programme, UNCDF, Quarterly reports Q3-2022 to Q2 2023
- Migration and Remittances Programme, UNCDF, Result Measurement Framework (excel sheets)
- Inclusive Digital Economies for Migrants, SDC Project Document 2019, including its annexes (e.g., logical framework) as well as its addenda
- SIDA Remittances for Development, SIDA Project Document 2019
- SIDA Phase 1 closure report, 1 August 2019 – 31 December 2022
- UNCDF Strategic Framework 2022-2025
- Leaving No one behind in the Digital Era, UNCDF IDE strategic framework, 2022
- UNCDF Demand Side Remittances Research Project, KIT et al, 2022
- Stratégies d'innovation inclusive de UNCDF dans les transferts de fonds des migration, évaluation nationale du Sénégal, et Plan d'Action, Dalberg, Sept 2022
- Bangladesh country assessment, Dalberg, Sept 2022
- Impact Evaluation on Migrant Remittances and Financial Services, IPA project description, 2021
- Review of Remittance Policy, Legal and Regulatory Framework in Ethiopia, UNCDF Migrant Money—Autumn 2020 (uncdf.org)
- Migration and Development Brief, World Bank Group, 2021 and 2022
- IOM, Scaling up formal remittances to Ethiopia, 2018
- IOM, 2017. National Labour Migration Management Assessment: Ethiopia
- Contribution Analysis, in Evaluation - July 2012, White and Phillips (2012)
- Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, 2005 (OECD)
- The team also browsed many of the individual project documents and reports made available by UNCDF through the shared folders. Without indicating each and every individual document, these were grouped in:
 - Public sector partners
 - BCEAO
 - BEAC
 - ECCAS
 - IGAD
 - MoEWOE
 - NBE
 - ECOWAS
 - Private sector partners
 - SympliFi
 - TerraPay
 - Wizall
 - BRAC Bank
 - RAKBANK
 - Lion Bank
 - SentBe
 - Thought Partners
 - PwC - BCEAO
 - Harvard Kennedy School
 - KIT / Butterfly Works / Aflatoun
 - Dalberg
 - Amarante
 - Accenture
 - Glenbrook
- <https://migrantmoney.uncdf.org/>

- Publications list MRP on Power BI
- List of webinars conducted by MRP on Power BI

Appendix L – Evaluation Terms of Reference

The terms of reference to this (mid-term) evaluation are placed in a separate Vol 2 to this report.



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Mid-term Evaluation of the UNCDF Migration and Remittances Programme

Countries in which the Programme is implemented	<p>Private sector: Bangladesh, Congo, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Senegal, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom</p> <p>Public sector: Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe</p>
Executing Agency	UNCDF
Donors	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)
Duration	Q4 2019 – present
Programme budget	US\$16,148,474
Disbursed to date	US\$14,289,476



1 Programme description

1.1. Background

1.1.1 UNCDF

The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) is the United Nations' flagship catalytic financing entity for the world's 46 Least Developed Countries (LDCs). With its unique capital mandate and focus on the LDCs, UNCDF works to invest and catalyse capital to support these countries in achieving the sustainable growth and inclusiveness envisioned by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Doha Programme of Action for the least developed countries, 2022–2031.

UNCDF builds partnerships with other UN organizations, as well as private and public sector actors, to achieve greater impact in development; specifically, by unlocking additional resources and strengthening financing mechanisms and systems contributing to transformation pathways, focusing on such development themes as green economy, digitalization, urbanization, inclusive economies, gender equality and women's economic empowerment.

A hybrid development finance institution and development agency, UNCDF uses a combination of capital instruments (deployment, financial & business advisory and catalysation) and development instruments (technical assistance, capacity development, policy advice, advocacy, thought leadership, and market analysis and scoping) which are applied across five priority areas (inclusive digital economies, local transformative finance, women's economic empowerment, climate, energy & biodiversity finance, and sustainable food systems finance).

1.1.2 Strategic Framework 2018 – 2021

The 2018 – 2021 Strategic Framework for UNCDF¹ was in force during the first three years of the implementation period of the Migration and Remittances Programme. The Framework was aimed at two overarching development outcomes that articulate UNCDF's ambition to 'unlock public and private finance for the poor' and support 'enhanced inclusive financial markets and local development finance systems that benefit poor and vulnerable populations' in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs). To achieve this, UNCDF uses financing models through three channels, including inclusive digital economies, local development finance (today "local transformative finance") and investment finance. UNCDF's 2018 – 2021 Strategic Framework was structured according to a theory of change that set out a set of expected 'output to outcome' pathways with progress under each of the two outcomes requiring, and contributing to, progress under the other. For further detail, refer to Annexe 2 Theory of Change of "UNCDF Strategic Framework 2018-2021".

1.1.3 Strategic Framework 2022 – 2025

With its unique mandate and focus on the LDCs, UNCDF works to invest and catalyse capital to

¹ The detailed document of the UNCDF Strategic Framework 2018-2021 is available at this link: <https://www.uncdf.org/article/3207/strategic-framework-2018-21>



support these countries in achieving the sustainable growth and inclusiveness envisioned by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Doha programme of action for the least developed countries, 2022–2031. UNCDF aims to accelerate financing for development in the LDCs by supporting them to achieve three interlinked strategic game-changers:

1. Catalyse additional private and public flows of capital;
2. Strengthen market systems and financing mechanisms;
3. Accelerate inclusive, diversified, green economic transformation.

Under this Strategic Framework, 2022–2025,² UNCDF aims to realize its full potential as a hybrid development organization and development finance institution by fulfilling its overall financing mandate with capital deployment, financial advisory services and capital catalysation. This will be matched with development expertise across five priority areas: (a) inclusive digital economies; and (b) local transformative finance; and in the emerging areas of (c) women’s economic empowerment; (d) climate, energy and biodiversity finance; and (e) sustainable food systems finance.

For further detail, refer to Annex 3 for the Theory of Change of “UNCDF Strategic Framework 2022-2025”.

1.1.4 Leaving No One Behind in the Digital Era (LNOB)

UNCDF wants to equip millions of people, specifically women and girls, to use digital services in their daily lives by 2024. These services should empower their users and contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Meaningful digital financial inclusion must provide outlets for low-income account-holders to engage in the economy to meet their daily needs and to improve their skills, productivity and marketability in this quickly emerging and growing age of digital economies.

To do so, UNCDF must strive to ensure that everyone is able to access, use and benefit from a broad range of meaningful services built on digital platforms.

To do this, UNCDF operates in four interlinked workstreams: (i) enabling policy and regulations, (ii) open digital payment ecosystem, (iii) inclusive innovation, and (iv) empowered customers. IDE core strategies are embedded across these workstreams; gender is mainstreamed by the Programme and its partners; learning, insights, data and research are practised and applied at every step; and UNCDF performs effective advocacy and outreach to engage the wider industry ecosystem and policymakers in this migration and remittances agenda.³

² The UNCDF Strategic Framework 2022-2025, which was presented and noted by the UNDP Executive Board, is available at this link: <https://www.uncdf.org/article/7488/uncdf-strategic-framework-2022-2025-undp-executive-board-version>

³ For further details on the UNCDF strategy on “Leaving No One Behind in the Digital Era”, refer to this link: <https://www.uncdf.org/inclusive-digital-economies>



1.2 Context

1.2.1 Remittances and Migration Background Data

Every year, about 281 million people around the globe send over US\$1 trillion as remittances to families in low- and middle-income countries. This money often serves as the primary income source for the migrants' families and is used for varied purposes, including health, nutrition, household consumption, emergencies, and as an investment for future needs, playing a vital role in the financial development of migrant families. Despite the importance of remittances, they have remained held in a couple of inefficient models. Most formal remittances are over-the-counter, cash-in/cash-out transactions, which is an expensive, inconvenient and inefficient process.

1.2.2 International Policy Framework

International remittances contribute towards achieving increased mobilization as committed in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Remittances also directly impact the following objectives in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, precisely SDG 10 “Reduced Inequalities” and SDG 17 “Partnerships for the Goals”, more precisely on the following indicators:

Indicator 10.c – By 2030, reduce transaction costs of migrant remittances to less than 3 percent and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 percent.

Indicator 17.3 – Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources.

Indicator 17.3.2 – Volume of remittances (in US\$) as a proportion of total GDP.

Remittances help increase the disposable income of migrant families, which leads to increased consumption and investment, including investment in health, education and local businesses.

Therefore, remittances also impact the Sustainable Development Goals⁴: SDG 1 “No Poverty”, SDG 3 “Good Health and Well Being”, SDG 4: “Quality Education”, SDG 5 “Gender Equality”, SDG 8 “Decent Work and Economic Growth”, SDG 9 “Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure”, and SDG 16 “Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions”.

1.3 Programme Description

The Migration and Remittances Programme is part of UNCDF’s inclusive digital economies (IDE) practice of Leaving No One Behind in the Digital Era (LNOB) strategy⁵, which is based on over two decades of UNCDF experience in facilitating access to affordable finance to low-income people, especially through digital channels, in Africa, Asia and the Pacific.

The Migration and Remittances Programme aims at promoting digital financial inclusion towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 1 “No Poverty”, SDG 5 “Gender Equality”, and SDG 8 “Decent Work and Economic Growth”, while SDG 10 “Reduced Inequalities” explicitly calls for

⁴ Remittances can contribute to reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in a variety of ways: at the household level, at the community level, and at the national level, as outlined in <https://www.un.org/en/observances/remittances-day/SDGs>

⁵ For further details on the UNCDF strategy on “Leaving No One Behind in the Digital Era”, refer to this link: <https://www.uncdf.org/inclusive-digital-economies>



remittance transaction fees to be lowered to a maximum of 3 percent, and SDG 17 “Global Partnerships for the Goals” calls for improving the volume of remittances as a proportion of GDP. The Programme’s goal is to contribute to inclusive digital economies that support women and men migrants and their families towards greater financial inclusion, resilience and equality.

1.3.1 About the Programme’s Donors

The Migration and Remittances Programme is supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

The SDC places special emphasis on the management of global risks and challenges, and thereby supports poorer countries in embracing development opportunities and in adapting to global changes. SDC’s Global Programme on Migration and Development (GPMD) contributes to making migration of benefit to all, ensuring safe and regular migration and improving framework conditions to unlock migrants’ potential to contribute to sustainable development and inclusive growth.

Sida is a government agency working on behalf of the Swedish parliament and government, with the mission to reduce poverty in the world. Through its work and in cooperation with others, Sida contributes to implementing Sweden’s Policy for Global Development. Migration is one of the prioritized thematic areas in Swedish development cooperation. Migration is relevant to poverty reduction in line with sustainable development goals (SDGs) and Sida’s strategy goals. Sida applies a broad definition of migration that includes both forced and voluntary migration.

1.3.2 Programme Objective/Goal

The **goal** of the Migration and Remittances Programme is to improve the financial resilience and economic inclusion of migrants and their families through low-cost digital remittance services and remittance-linked financial products, with a view to contribute to the sustainable development of countries of origin in the Global South.

Customer outcome: Migrants and their families will have access to low-cost digital remittance services and financial products, and the required financial literacy to meaningfully use these services.

Stakeholder outcome: Remittance and financial service providers will apply new business models and use new delivery channels to serve migrants and their families as a customer segment, and benefit from diversified revenues from cross-selling opportunities and improved sustainability.

Sector outcome: Reduction in remittance transaction cost in selected corridors and increased flow of remittances into productive investments—access to clean energy, water, education, health—through a range of providers who are connected through the digital remittance ecosystem.

1.3.3 Theory of Change - *A market systems development approach & Systemic Change*

A market development programme, tries to identify the constraints in existing market systems where low-income individuals operate and then attempts to address those constraints in a systemic way. Facilitative in nature, it focuses on leveraging public- and private-sector stakeholders to deliver the desired change rather than directly working with end beneficiaries. The facilitative approach is indirect and focuses on bringing about institutional and behavioural change through detailed and ongoing analysis of local contexts.

This journey to financial health through digital remittances calls for migrants and their families to have access to suitable products and services and to see value in using them actively and consistently because



they meet their needs and are supported by the ecosystem. Beyond access to and usage of digital remittances and payment services, the Programme recognizes the crucial role of the uptake of remittance-linked financial products by migrants and their families. With a migrant-centred and gender-smart focus, remittance-linked financial products, including savings, insurance, pensions and credit, will support education, energy, health, water, and livelihood purposes. Three key dimensions—**access, usage and resilience**—permeate the Programme’s theory of change.

The Programme outcomes are permitted only if similar high-level changes are experienced by the different stakeholders in the remittance and financial services ecosystem. These key stakeholders, with whom the Programme directly engages, include, among others, public and private-sector stakeholders from whom policies and regulations, digital infrastructures and innovative business models originate.

As contributions of the Programme, inclusive policies and regulations that enable access to and usage of digital remittances and remittance-linked financial products are acknowledged and accepted with a scope to be responsibly adopted and implemented. Digital payment and financial market infrastructure is strengthened, and open digital platforms and interoperability are promoted. Among the outcomes at the stakeholder level, the Programme also aims to contribute towards available, accessible, affordable, reliable and appropriate digital remittance services being piloted, with inclusive business models being tested and piloted.

The Programme aims to contribute to these high-level changes by reaching key results—or outputs—through the wide range of activities implemented. UNCDF provides technical assistance, to develop policymakers’ and regulators’ capacities and information to support data-driven decision-making and to develop, supervise and enforce inclusive policies and regulations on remittances.

UNCDF supports the capacity development of partners through market research efforts and customer-focused research informing tools and framework development and channelling supply-side and demand-side insights. Complemented with UNCDF’s investment and ability to crowd in investment partners, partners have increased capacities and resources to offer inclusive innovative business models and services, and to efficiently build the financial and digital capabilities of migrants and beneficiaries

Annex 4: Theory of Change of the Migration and Remittances Programme

1.3.4 Four Workstreams

The UNCDF strategy to promote digital economies that leave no one behind is structured along four interlinked workstreams that constitute UNCDF’s market development approach. These four workstreams reflect the need to transform public policy at global, regional and national levels, make systems interoperable and innovate products and services that truly meet the needs of men and women migrant remittance customers.

Enabling Policy and Regulations: Through the enabling policy and regulations workstream, the objective is for regulators to have assessed the policies and regulations limiting the flow of remittances through formal channels and to have drafted measures to address the regulatory challenges and market inefficiencies in consideration of the macroprudential and financial inclusion policies.

Outcome (Regulator): Regulators have assessed the policies and regulations limiting the flow of remittances and access through formal channels and have drafted measures to address the regulatory challenges and market inefficiencies in consideration of the macroprudential and financial inclusion policies.



Open Digital Payment Ecosystem: Within the Programme’s focus on an Open Digital Payment Ecosystem, the Programme aims to enhance regional and domestic payment infrastructures towards interoperability of domestic and cross-border payments, accounts and agents, in turn improving access to shared market infrastructures by bank and non-bank remittance service providers to facilitate account opening, authentication and issuance of digital products.

Outcome (Public Sector): Enhanced regional and domestic payment infrastructures towards interoperability of domestic and cross-border payments, accounts, and agents. Improved access to shared market infrastructures by the bank and non-bank RSPs to facilitate account opening, authentication and issuance of digital products.

Inclusive Innovation: Through the inclusive innovation workstream, the programme works with the local private sector and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to reconfigure remittance value chains to design and implement digital remittance solution services that match the needs and preferences of both men and women migrants in the local economy. The Migration and Remittances Programme provides grants and technical assistance to a wide range of financial institutions (e.g., banks, cooperatives, microfinance institutions, money transfer operators, and mobile network operators).

Outcome (Private Sector): Interests and incentives of investors and shareholders of the programme’s private sector partners are aligned with testing and scaling migrant-centric and gender-responsive financial services.

Empowered Customers: Finally, all these efforts are rooted in the workstream on empowered customers. Through this workstream, the Programme develops activities, guidelines and tools that strengthen the capacity of public and private stakeholders to ensure that the roll-out of new digital remittance solutions ‘do no harm’, protect and empower migrant customers in their journeys towards (re-)gaining more autonomy over their financial lives. This workstream will help build sustainable and respectful relationships between migrant customers and financial service providers across the ecosystem.

Outcome (Migrants): Migrants and their families/ beneficiaries have access and use digital remittance and financial services (focus: women). Migrants have improved ability, knowledge and behaviours to meaningfully access and use digital remittance and financial services.

The Programme’s team is structured into **four key portfolios:**

- **Service Delivery:** Overseeing budget and planning, contracts and operations, communications and advocacy.
- **Systems and Research:** Overseeing data, research and assessment initiatives, engagement frameworks and toolkits, measuring results and learning.
- **Implementation:** Overseeing private sector engagement and technical assistance through investments—grants, loans, guarantees and industry engagements.
- **Policy and Capacity Building:** Policy and regulatory technical assistance to regulators and line ministries, the UN and multilateral agendas.



1.3.5 Integrated Gender Lens

A growing body of evidence suggests that remittances are gendered, strongly affecting the ways, amounts and frequencies of remittances that women and men migrants send home, as well as how the money is used and by whom. To ensure that the UNCDF innovates digital remittance solutions that work for both men and women on the move, a gender lens was integrated into the Programme. The intervention acknowledges that remittance patterns are gendered and that women and men migrants live different economic and social realities.⁶ Women migrants may prefer cash-based and informal channels and experience additional challenges and risks when they remit because of their gender.⁷

The Programme aims to deliberately explore and identify gender biases and discriminatory practices embedded and reproduced in remittance policies, value chains and business models that differently enable and constrain men and women migrants' access to and usage of remittances, and the resultant financial resilience. Where possible, the Programme promotes good practices, frameworks, methods and activities that contribute to redressing gender biases and ensure that women migrant workers can fully access, use and benefit from the advantages of digital remittance channels, both as consumers and as builders of inclusive digital economies.

1.4 Implementation Status

To fulfil these objectives and results⁸, the Programme engages actively with a wide range of stakeholders: public sector, private sector, and thought partners.

1.4.1 Public-sector Engagements

The programme has supported public-sector stakeholders in the development of regional payment infrastructure strategy and cross-border remittance policy frameworks.

The programme has held consultations with 50-plus stakeholders across 30-plus organizations, including central banks, standards-setting bodies, multilateral organizations and the global actors in the private sector to publish an exploratory paper on an open regulated payment inter-network that leverages and cultivates existing payment and financial market infrastructure—established by both the public and the private sectors—and specifically targeting low-value international remittances to accelerate total interoperability, reduce the cost of transactions and provide migrants with an easy and efficient way to digitally transfer money to their home countries.

Since last year, the engagements with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have progressed. The Programme conducted policy and payment infrastructure diagnostics for IGAD and ECCAS member states, technical workshops with regional and country central

⁶ Migrant women and remittances: Exploring the data from selected countries | Digital library: Publications | UN Women – Headquarters

⁷ Nyoni, P. N. (2021). The Unnoticed Side of Remittance Transportation: Women Encounters with Remittance Transporters - Omalayisha. In *Immigrant Women's Voices and Integrating Feminism into Migration Theory*. IGI Global, pp. 118–1344 Kunz, R., & Maisen

⁸For any additional information about UNCDF and the Migration and Remittances Programme please refer to the following sources of Information. UNCDF Website (<https://www.uncdf.org/>), the Migration and Remittances Programme Website (<https://migrantmoney.uncdf.org/>)



banks across IGAD, ECCAS and ECOWAS member states, and extensive consultations with the private-sector partners in the IGAD region. These efforts have led to (i) an IGAD regional diagnostic report that has been presented for review and adoption by the IGAD member states and central banks towards the harmonization phase, and (ii) the memorandum of understanding towards technical assistance on remittances and digital financial services with Banque des États de l’Afrique Centrale, and (iii) a technical assistance agreement with Banque Centrale des Etats de l’Afrique de l’Ouest (BCEAO) towards strengthening data and the enabling policy and regulatory environment for remittances in the West African Economic and Monetary Union region of ECOWAS. The agreement is in addition to the collaboration with BCEAO on a feasibility study to set up an identification system for users of financial services.

Engagement with central banks is also key at the national level. The work of the Programme with the Government and the National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) has contributed to regulatory directives and amendments to improve remittance flows through formal channels and to address foreign exchange shortages.

1.4.2 Private-sector Engagements

The programme envisions an inclusive financial system for migrants and remittance recipients where digital remittances are affordable and accessible to migrants (access), where migrants trust digital remittances to improve and extend end-to-end digital financial services in the host and home countries (usage), and where migrants’ increased access to and usage of digital remittance channels create commercial incentives for the private sector to offer tailored, gender-smart financial products and services—savings, insurance, pension, credit, investments—to strengthen financial resilience (resilience). These three drivers of financial health—access, usage and resilience—support migrants and their families to realize the outcomes of financial health: security, control and freedom.

To achieve this vision, the programme engages with Remittance Service Providers (RSPs) in host and home countries to innovate and improve their digital remittance services at the corridor, inter-regional, intra-regional and global inter-network levels. The programme is supporting nine private-sector partners to develop migrant-centred and gender-responsive remittances and financial services. Following an approach to target interventions at the corridor, regional and global levels, the programme’s engagement with the private sector is across sending countries such as Singapore, South Korea, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom, and receiving countries such as Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Myanmar, Nepal, and Senegal. In 2022, with the support of SDC, the engagement with the private sector has further expanded to Indonesia, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka.

Moreover, digital remittances can be more easily linked to other financial services such as savings, credit, insurance and pensions, all of which can expand financial health and strengthen resilience to shocks and setbacks for migrants and their families.

1.4.3 Thought Partnerships

The Migration and Remittances Programme has engaged with nine thought partners to ensure that the efforts to deliver affordable access to finance for migrants and their families can be done in a holistic manner : IME Pay and eSewa on understanding the remittance market and advocating that migrant



financial inclusion and resilience efforts are scaled up in Nepal; the Royal Tropical Institute and Butterfly Works on the demand-side research and qualitative behavioural research for human-centred design; Aflatoun on migrant-centred, gender-responsive toolkits for digital financial literacy; Innovations for Poverty Action and the University of Michigan on an impact study measuring the access to and usage of digital remittances; PricewaterhouseCoopers on the feasibility of the single customer ID system being explored in the programme’s engagement with BCEAO; Dalberg SURL on an inclusive innovation framework; and the Harvard Kennedy School on an executive education programme for policymakers and leaders in remittance services and fintech. Eighty participants enrolled in this online programme in January 2022, and 14 were then invited to the Harvard campus in August 2022 to participate in an intensive three-day, in-person workshop.

Over the last year, the programme pursued a comprehensive approach to facilitate a shift in migrants’ financial behaviours from informal to formal channels, with the goal of making remittances and finance work better for migrant customers, both men and women, and their families. However, behaviour change is difficult to effect. For this purpose, the programme recently concluded a comprehensive demand-side research project, to understand the constraints that limit access to and the usage of digital remittances, towards financial resilience for migrants and their families.

The demand-side research insights and convenings with the private-sector partners have led to the development of two migrant-centred toolkits —Digital Financial Literacy (DFL) and Human-Centred Design (HCD). Targeting remittance and financial service providers, the toolkits are a guide to designing digital financial capability programmes and trusted digital interfaces that are tailored to the needs and contexts—humanitarian, economic development and incentives—of remittance customers and institutions.

Since the start of the Programme implementation, the following results have been reported:

- Private Sector Partners supported to develop migrant-centric and gender-responsive remittance products and services: 9
- Public Sector Stakeholders supported in domestic and cross-boarder remittance policy framework development: 30
- Thought Partners organized to generate ideas, calibrate technical assistance, and disseminate unique ideas: 13
- Total number of customers reached: 579,747 (26% women)
- Inbound remittance transactions through digital channels: 3.3 million
- Value of remittance transactions through digital channels: USD 1.2 billion
- Responsive remittance policy measures initiated: 10
- Responsive remittance policy measures introduced or improved: 7
- Active initiatives on payment and financial market infrastructures: 3

1.4.4 Financial Status

Throughout the years, the overall delivery of the Programme has increased substantially, continuing the trend since the beginning of 2021. Expenditures in 2021 and 2022 were driven by team set-up costs, and Programme commitments indicate the delivery of planned work and Programme activities.



Financial Details per Work Stream (2020 -2022), in US\$

	2020		2021		2022	
	Sum of Budget	Sum of Actual	Sum of Budget	Sum of Actual	Sum of Budget	Sum of Actual
Inclusive Innovation	1,501,745	518,245	1,946,809	2,305,569	3,843,641	3,038,950
Enabling Policy and Regulations	1,026,703	318,367	1,380,558	1,304,526	1,715,910	1,763,909
Open Digital Payment Ecosystem	306,530	291,246	641,194	627,774	981,631	1,024,512
Empowered Customers	198,350	191,156	825,564	822,605	1,211,028	1,185,709
GMS	242,972	133,592	394,483	487,916	585,385	672,512
Grand Total	3,276,300	1,452,606	5,188,608	5,548,391	8,337,595	7,685,592

1.4.5 Data Sources available

These include:

- The project documents (PRODOC) signed with both donors, SDC and Sida.
- Annual Reports
- The programme's results Dashboard and the Enterprise Dashboard.
- The quarterly reports - compiling activities and learning across workstreams since Q1 2021.
- The Learning, Opportunities, Risks and Issues (L.O.R.I. form - recorded on Airtable).
- The agreements signed with the programme partners.
- The programme Asana system – Collaboration and Coordination system to ensure Project, workplan and task management.
- The programme Sharepoint – Document co-creation system
- Partners-level information such as transaction data

Further data sources will be made available from the inception stage of the evaluation.

1.4.6 Partners

a. Private sector partners include:

- PSPs: MTOs, MMOs, Cross-border Payment Infrastructure Providers, Card Networks
- FSPs: Banks, Insurance, Pension, Wage Payment Service Providers

b. Public Sector Partners include:

- Regional and National: Regional Economic Commissions, Monetary Unions, and Regional Central Banks, National Central Banks, Payment Switch, Line Ministries.
- Global: Bank of International Settlements (CPMI and FSB), World Bank, IMF, IOM, ILO, UN.



c. Finally thought partners include specialized research institutes and consultancies companies:

- Academic and Research Institutions
- Development Consulting Firms

Further information will be shared during the inception phase.

2 Evaluation Objectives

2.1 Purpose, Scope and Objectives of the Evaluation

This evaluation is being conducted in accordance with UNCDF's commitments under its Evaluation Plan 2022–2025⁹ and in line with UNDP's Evaluation Policy¹⁰ (to which UNCDF is party) that sets out a number of guiding principles and key norms for evaluation in the organization following the Norms and Standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).¹¹ Amongst the norms that the Policy seeks to uphold, the most important ones are that the evaluation exercise be independent and that it provides technically and methodologically credible findings that are useful and relevant to support evidence-based programme management.

With this in mind, the evaluation has been designed with the following **overall objectives**:

- i. to allow UNCDF and its funding partners to meet their accountability and learning objectives for this Programme;
- ii. to support ongoing efforts to capture good practice and lessons to date;
- iii. to guide and inform the remaining years of implementation as well as inform subsequent UNCDF Programming;
- iv. to assess the impact of COVID-19 on the overall implementation framework and provide recommendations for the future.

The formative mid-term evaluation is expected to **assess both project results to date (direct and indirect, whether intended or not) from the first years of implementation as well as the likelihood of the intervention meeting its end goals** on the basis of current design, human resource structure, choice of partners, and broad implementation strategy. It is expected that the evaluation will provide **useful and actionable recommendations** to increase the likelihood of success by the end of the programme including remedial actions where the project might not be on track.

Critical to this evaluation is the assessment of the relevance and effectiveness of the Migration and Remittances approach in improving the financial resilience and economic inclusion of migrants and their families through low-cost digital remittance services and remittance-linked financial products, with a view to contribute to the sustainable development of countries of origin in the Global South.

⁹ Evaluation Plan (SF 2022-25) - UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF). Available at https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/dp2022-12_Annex%20II.docx

¹⁰ United Nations Development Programme – Evaluation. Available at <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/policy.shtml>

¹¹ Detail of Norms and Standards for Evaluation (2016). Available at <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914>



The **specific objectives** of the evaluation are:

- to assess the relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness and likely pathways towards impact and sustainability of the Migration and Remittances Programme in the different contexts and challenges in which it operates.
- to assess appropriateness of programme implementation modality.
- to assess/ validate and refine the programmes' theory of change at this stage of implementation.
- To assess the extent to which gender, human rights, disability and other crosscutting issues have been integrated in line with the 'Leaving no one behind' strategy commitments.
- to provide evidence-based and actionable recommendations (strategic, programmatic, and management);

Recommendations sought:

- UNCDF:
 - The programme's alignment to UNCDF's Strategic Framework.
 - Appropriateness of implementations structure and approach taken by programme management.
- IDE:
 - The programme alignment with the IDE Leaving Non-One Behind in the Digital Area Strategy
- Programme:
 - Inform the drafting of the Phase II of the Programme.
 - Provide insights in the role that UNCDF's market systems development approach plays across workstreams in LDC's.

2.2 Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation should be **transparent, inclusive, participatory and utilization focused**. The overall methodology to be followed should be organized following a theory of change approach, framed by the UN/OECD DAC evaluation criteria, and drawing upon a number of mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative data) to capture programme results as well as (likely) contributions to market development and systemic change to date in the various regions/countries in which it is intervening, including gender equality and the empowerment of women.

To do so, the methodology should draw as appropriate on established measurement frameworks for capturing these kinds of development outcomes, such as the approaches of the **Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP)**¹² and/or the **Donor Committee for Enterprise Development** to measuring the development of markets for the poor in situations of complexity¹³.

¹² http://www.cgap.org/sites/default/files/Technical-Guide-Measuring-Market-Development-Oct-2017_0.pdf

¹³ <https://www.enterprise-development.org/measuring-results-the-dced-standard/>



The approach to the evaluation should also intend to capture progress against UNCDF's 'innovation-to-scale' or maturity model approach whereby UNCDF-supported interventions aim to start with piloting/innovation, move to consolidation in additional countries before being scaled up by others in the markets and country policy systems more broadly.

In line with good practices in evaluating this type of complex-system, change-focused intervention,¹⁴ the overall methodology should be based on three concrete pillars:

- i) the Programme's **theory of change and the way this has been operationalized into a set of concrete expected results**;
- ii) the **evaluation matrix** grouping key evaluation questions and sub-questions by broad UN /OECD DAC evaluation criterion allowing the analysis of the Programme results at different levels of its results chain;
- iii) a **data collection toolkit** for the evaluation describing the quantitative and qualitative primary and secondary data collection tools that will be deployed to collect and analyse data to answer the evaluation questions.

2.2.1 Theory of Change

The main analytical framework for the evaluation is provided by the Programme's theory of change, which should be used to organize the evaluation questions according to the Programme's expected results at each level of its results chain.

In doing so, the evaluation should use a broad **Contribution Analysis (CA)** approach to causal inference¹⁵ with a view to understanding the influence of relevant contextual factors, and alternative and additional drivers or obstacles to change at the regional and national levels that may have influenced the Programme's direct and indirect, intended and unintended results.

The evaluation should also seek to apply additional evaluation techniques that can further strengthen the plausibility of links between the results of the different strands of work on various intended Programme outcomes at the policy, community and individual beneficiary levels as well as tell the story of how and why change has or has not happened as a result of the Migration and Remittances Programme intervention. These techniques could include, for example, Process Tracing (PT), and techniques linked to participatory evaluation.¹⁶

In line with UN evaluation practice, the scope of the evaluation should cover all six standard UN/OECD DAC evaluation criteria: relevance/appropriateness of design, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, and (likelihood of) impact and sustainability. In doing so, the focus of the evaluation goes beyond assessing whether UNCDF and its partners are currently 'doing things right' in Programme execution and

¹⁴ See, for example, pages 78 – 79 in the guidance published by CGAP

¹⁵ For more information, please see: http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/contribution_analysis

¹⁶ For more information, please see publications on evaluation methods by the Independent Evaluation Group of the World Bank as well as the United Nations Evaluation Group: <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2939>, <https://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/evaluation-international-development> as well as Befani and Mayne (2014) "Process Tracing and Contribution Analysis: A Combined Approach to Generative Causal Inference for Impact Evaluation". <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/1759-5436.12110>



management, to a broader assessment of whether, given available evidence, and in comparison, with similar approaches implemented by others, the Programme looks to be the ‘right approach’ to achieving the higher-level objectives agreed in the initial phase.

In addition to the standard UN/OECD DAC criteria, the evaluation design should also address systematically questions around innovation, work with the private sector and **risk identification and management**.

2.2.2 Evaluation Matrix

In proposing how to conduct the evaluation, the evaluators should use an evaluation matrix to operationalize the theory of change and its agreed framework of direct and indirect results into a set of measurable categories of evaluative analysis following the results chain of the intervention. The evaluation matrix should properly address gender equality (GE) and human rights (HR) dimensions, including age, disability, migration, displacement and vulnerability.

The table below presents a set of preliminary questions that the evaluators should address in their proposed approach, . A final, more detailed evaluation matrix will be developed during the inception phase on the basis of document review and initial consultation with key Programme stakeholders.

Criteria	Evaluation questions
<p>1. Relevance</p> <p><i>The extent to which the Migration and Remittances Programme’s objectives and design responded to beneficiaries’, global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.</i>¹⁷</p>	<p>1.1 How relevant and how well designed is the approach/ToC of the Migration and Remittances Programme to the priorities and needs of the global and inter-governmental agendas such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), and Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM)? Including the UNCDF Strategic Framework.</p> <p>1.2 How relevant and how well designed is the approach/ToC of the Migration and Remittances Programme to the priorities and needs of the global, regional, and country-level stakeholders—both public and private, including the migrants, considering the challenges and the programme intended support to improve the financial resilience and economic inclusion of migrants and their families?</p> <p>1.4. How relevant and appropriate is the current programme implementation structure considering the objectives and UNCDF’s broader mandate?</p> <p>1.5 Crosscutting: To what extent does the Programme incorporate gender, human rights, conflict and disability inclusion in its design, strategy/ToC ? To what extent is the programme designed to reach last-mile customers (youth, women, low-income)?</p>

¹⁷ ‘Respond to’ means that the objectives and design of the intervention are sensitive to the economic, environmental, equity, social, political economy and capacity conditions in which it takes place.



<p>2. Coherence <i>The compatibility and/ or complementarity of the Migration and Remittances Programme with other interventions in a country, sector or institution.</i>¹⁸</p>	<p>2.1. As presently designed, how coherent is the programme design in view of its objectives?</p> <p>External:</p> <p>2.2 How distinct/complementary is the Migration and Remittances Programme’s approach to other initiatives that deploy financial and technical assistance at the regional and country levels towards strengthening the financial resilience, financial health and economic inclusion of migrants and their families? Including to the UNDS and UNSDCF at country level and the UNCDF Strategic Framework.</p> <p>Internal:</p> <p>2.3. How coherent/ reinforcing are the different workstreams in supporting the intervention objective?</p>
<p>3. Efficiency <i>The extent to which the Migration and Remittances Programme has delivered results in an economic and timely way.</i></p>	<p>3.1 How well has the Programme delivered its expected results to date, including in terms of budget management and allocation, cost-effectiveness of activities? And Value for Money?</p> <p>3.2. How well is the programmes boarder approach to partnerships (with other UNCDF/ UN interventions and broader institutions and stakeholders) and strategy to scaling-up (maturity model) working?</p> <p>3.3 What is the quality of outputs (deliverables) provided to date? How appropriate is the Programme’s monitoring system to track direct Programme results and their broader contribution to the overall objectives?</p> <p>3.4 How well is the Programme being managed and governed, including through the involvement and contribution of key partners such as the donors and government counterparts, both at the global, regional, and national levels?</p> <p>3.5 How well are resources (financial, time, people) allocated to crosscutting issues, including gender and gender mainstreaming, LNOB, disabled, and conflict sensitive approaches as relevant. To what extent are such resources being used efficiently?</p>

¹⁸ The extent to which other interventions (particularly policies) support or undermine the intervention and vice versa. This includes internal coherence which should address i) the mutually reinforcing nature of the workstreams to achieve the desired objective and ii) the synergies the interlinkages between the intervention and other interventions carried out by the same institution/government, as well as the consistency of the intervention with the relevant international norms and standards to which that institution/government adheres. External coherence considers the consistency of the intervention with other actors’ interventions in the same context, including complementarity, harmonization and coordination with others, and the extent to which the intervention is adding value while avoiding duplication of effort.



<p>4. Effectiveness <i>The extent to which the Migration and Remittances Programme has achieved its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups. <u>The evaluation will aim at where possible at identifying alternative drivers of change.</u></i></p>	<p><i>The assessment of the questions below includes analysis of differential results across groups – gender, youth, disabled, vulnerable and other cross-cutting aspects as per LNOB strategy.</i></p> <p><i>4.1 To what extent has the Migration and Remittances Programme’s activities contributed to improving the capacity of policymakers and regulators and availability of information to develop, supervise and enforce inclusive policies and regulations on remittances? Including an increased engagement with the private sector to address market constraints and align objectives?</i></p> <p><i>4.2 To what extent has the Migration and Remittances Programme’s activities contributed to develop the capabilities and commitment of Service Providers, mobile network operators, governments and other actors to developing and expanding inclusive and open digital infrastructure, as well as improved access at the last mile through strengthening digital rails and facilitate easier adoption and onboarding on digital channels for migrants and their families?</i></p> <p><i>4.3 To what extent has the Migration and Remittances Programme’s activities contributed to increased capacities and resources of start-ups, corporations, and other actors to offer inclusive business models and products as well as incentivize their usage?</i></p> <p><i>4.4 To what extent has the Migration and Remittances Programme’s activities contributed to improved capacities, tools and delivery channels to build the financial capacities, soft and hard skills of migrants and beneficiaries?</i></p>
<p>5. Likely Impact <i>The extent to which the Migration and Remittances Programme has fostered or is likely to foster improved financial resilience and economic inclusion of migrants and their families. The evaluation will aim at where possible at identifying alternative drivers of change.</i></p>	<p>Stakeholder Outcomes:</p> <p>5.1. To what extent are programme results likely to contribute to remittances and financial service providers applying new business models and use new delivery channels to serve migrants and their families (low-income/ migrant clients and gender) as a customer segment and benefit from diversified revenues from cross-selling and improved sustainability?</p> <p>Sector Outcomes:</p> <p>5.2 To what extent are the Programme results likely to contribute to the expansion of the digital ecosystem with more investment, competition and innovation?</p> <p>Customer Outcomes:</p> <p>5.4. To what extent are programme results likely to contribute to migrants and their families to have access to low-cost digital</p>



	<p>remittance services and financial products and the required financial literacy to meaningfully <i>use</i> these services?</p> <p>5.5. To what extent are the programme results likely to contribute to improve the financial resilience and economic inclusion of migrants and their families through low-cost digital remittance services and remittance-linked financial products? What are the gaps if any? As well as any unintended positive or negative higher-level effects?</p> <p>5.6. To what extent are the programme results contributing to changing attitudes and behaviours towards Human Rights and Gender, disability and most vulnerable on the various stakeholder groups and the underlying causes of inequality and discrimination?</p>
<p>6. Sustainability</p> <p><i>The extent to which the net benefits of the Migration and Remittances Programme are likely to continue beyond the life of the intervention.</i>¹⁹</p>	<p>6.1. To what extent are changes in the capacities of regulators to address regulatory challenges and market inefficiencies likely to continue over time?</p> <p>6.2. To what extent are changes in enhanced regional and domestic payment infrastructure and improved access to shared market infrastructure by banks and non-bank RSPs likely to continue over time?</p> <p>6.3. To what extent are changes at the level of market participants (local private sector and micro, small and medium enterprises) and reconfiguration remittance value chains likely to continue over time?</p> <p>6.4. To what extent are the changes in terms of access, use and resilience by migrants and their families/ beneficiaries likely to continue over time?</p> <p>6.5. To what extent does the programme design include an appropriate exit strategy to support positive changes in HR & Gender, disabled and most vulnerable (LNOB) after the end of the intervention?</p>

2.2.3 Data Collection Toolkit

Finally, on the basis of the questions included above and the information present elsewhere in this Terms of Reference and on the UNCDF website, the evaluation team should deploy a set of data collection methods and tools (that includes gender disaggregation) and allow for rigorous triangulation. These methods and tools will allow leveraging existing secondary data as well as collecting new primary data to be gathered during the field visit, which together will be able to answer the initial questions listed above.

¹⁹ Note that this should include, as far as possible, an examination of the financial, economic, social, environmental and institutional capacities of the systems needed to sustain net benefits over time, including analyses of resilience, risks and potential trade-offs.



The combination of primary and secondary tools or separate ‘lines of evidence’ should **number at least five** and be designed – as with the rest of the evaluation - with triangulation and complementary assessment of the sub-questions in the matrix in mind

The supplier is requested to propose a set of mixed methods data collection/analysis methodologies and techniques to answer the evaluation questions.²⁰ This will be refined in the inception phase. The following lines of evidence should be considered:

- **Document, literature and monitoring systems review:** UNCDF will provide access to all relevant documentation, data collected, and analysis. Further documents may be requested by the selected supplier. The Migration and Remittances team will share information and guided walk-throughs of the Programme and project management methods, platforms and tools.
- **Analysis of deliverables and financial reports:** Comprehensive access to deliverables, financial reports, and reporting dashboards will be provided alongside documentation.
- **Structured, semi-structured and/or in-depth interviews or Key Informant interviews (KIIs) :** The Migration and Remittances team will provide a stakeholder list, including a wide range of stakeholders from donors, private sector partners, policymakers, central bankers, and research partners.
- **Quantitative surveys:** Surveys should have a clearly defined scope and seek to answer specific questions about the Programme outcomes/objectives.
- **Direct observations.**
- **Focus groups:** Including implementing partners and end-beneficiaries.
- **Case studies** of different types of partners supported and the different aid modalities deployed by the Programme.

The Data collection tools should be gender sensitive, ensure that the data collection is disaggregated by sex and take into account the broader cross-cutting issues as presented below and elsewhere in the ToR.

Country visits are expected to be conducted to collect evidence. A minimum of **three (3) country visits** should be proposed.

Triangulation of evidence is expected from a combination of various sources for each conclusion drawn. Triangulation techniques used should guarantee inclusion, accuracy and credibility. As previously mentioned, at least five different sources should be used for the entire evaluation. In proposing the evaluation methodology, bidders are requested to respect the various quality standards for UNCDF evaluation set out in Annex 1 “Quality Grid for UNCDF Evaluations”.

Using the lines of evidence proposed, bidders are requested to select a minimum of **six case studies**²¹ that represent a diverse set of implementation efforts, including diverse types of partners (public and private stakeholders), geographies (sending and receiving countries, LDCs) and different support modalities

²⁰ See guidance available within the international development evaluation community on selecting appropriate evaluation methods to answer different types of evaluation questions, such as <https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/approaches> or <https://www.bond.org.uk/resources/evaluation-methods-tool>

²¹ Estimated/ proposed distribution of case studies per workstream: Policy and regulation (2 case studies – country & Regional); Open Digital Payment Ecosystem (one case study); Inclusive innovation (2 case studies – Africa & Asia); Empowered Customers (1 case study – host country of migrants, if possible with a focus on gender).



deployed by the Programme.²² In addition, case study methods such as qualitative comparative analysis is encouraged as part of the proposed methodological approach. The case studies should be designed to enable taking ‘deeper dives’ into programme relevance and performance to date, with a particular focus on identifying key learnings and **best practices** to be taken forward. Contextual and geographic variation should be identified and enable case studies to be a standalone product. A proposed outline for the case studies will be expected as part of the methodological proposal.

2.2.4 Country Visits and Sampling Method

To ensure representativeness of the evaluation findings across the Migration and Remittances portfolio of countries, and to account appropriately for the role of context (policy, institutional, cultural) in the evaluation findings, the evaluation team will be asked during the inception phase of the evaluation to propose the selection of countries (3) based on a sampling approach.

Evaluation method and sampling frame should address the diversity of stakeholders affected by the intervention, particularly the most vulnerable, gender, disabled as set forth by the LNOB strategy.

2.2.5 Human Rights, Gender Equality, Vulnerable Groups and Disability Issues

The promotion and protection of Human Rights (HR) and Gender Equality (GE) vulnerable groups and disability issues are central principles to the mandate of the UN, and all UN agencies must work to fundamentally enhance and contribute to their realization by addressing underlying causes of human rights violations, including discrimination against women and girls, and utilizing processes that are in line with and support of these principles. Those UN interventions that do not consider these principles risk reinforcing patterns of discrimination and exclusion or leaving them unchanged. It is, therefore, important and required that evaluations commissioned by UNCDF take these aspects into account.

- Guidance on Integrating Disability Inclusion in Evaluations²³
- Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations²⁴

Concretely, interested bidders are requested to incorporate the following key principles from the UNEG guidance for integrating human rights, gender equality, and disability inclusion into their proposals:

1. **Inclusion.** Evaluating HR, GE, and DI requires paying attention to which groups benefit and which groups contribute to the intervention under review. Groups need to be disaggregated by relevant criteria: disadvantaged and advantaged groups depending on their gender or status (women/men, class, ethnicity, religion, age, location, etc.), duty-bearers of various types, and rights-holders of various types, in order to assess whether benefits and contributions were fairly distributed by the intervention being evaluated. In terms of HR & GE, it is important to note that women and men, boys and girls who belong to advantaged groups are not exempt from being denied their human rights or equal rights, e.g., violence against media workers from advantaged groups who expose wrong-doing or corruption, or constraints on women’s public presence and freedom of movement in some countries, regardless of belonging to advantaged or disadvantaged groups. The same applies to persons with disabilities. Therefore, the concept of inclusion must

²² The choice of case studies should be finalized during the inception phase and support the broader evaluation approach and sampling strategy.

²³ <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/3050>

²⁴ <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1616>



assess criteria beyond advantage. Likewise, it is not unusual that some groups may be negatively affected by an intervention. An evaluation must acknowledge who these stakeholders are and how they are affected, and shed light on how to minimize the negative effects.

2. **Participation.** Evaluating HR & GE must be participatory. Stakeholders of the intervention have a right to be consulted and participate in decisions about what will be evaluated and how the evaluation will be done. In addition, the evaluation will assess whether the stakeholders have been able to participate in the design, implementation and monitoring of the intervention. It is important to measure stakeholder group participation in the process as well as how they benefit from results.
3. **Fair Power Relations.** Both the human rights and gender equality approaches seek, inter alia, to balance power relations between or within advantaged and disadvantaged groups. The nature of the relationship between implementers and stakeholders in an intervention can support or undermine this change. When evaluators assess the degree to which power relations changed as a result of an intervention, they must have a full understanding of the context, and conduct the evaluation in a way that supports the empowerment of disadvantaged groups, e.g., women's empowerment where women are the disadvantaged gender within a given context. In addition, evaluators should be aware of their own position of power, which can influence the responses to queries through their interactions with stakeholders. There is a need to be sensitive to these dynamics.

3 Governance and Accountability

To ensure independence and fulfilment of UN evaluation standards, the Evaluation Unit of UNCDF in New York is responsible for the design and management of this evaluation and will hire an independent entity (Evaluation Team) to conduct the evaluation.

UNCDF Evaluation Unit: In line with the organizational setup for evaluation at UNCDF, the Evaluation Unit in New York—reporting directly to the Executive Secretary of UNCDF as per the UN Evaluation Group Norms on organizational independence of evaluation entities—is responsible for the design and management of this evaluation and for the overall quality of the evaluation report.²⁵

Evaluation Team: An independent entity will be hired by the Evaluation Unit to conduct the evaluation. The Evaluation Unit will provide substantive support, including joining the Evaluation Team on one of the evaluation's country visits. The Evaluation Team will be responsible for arranging all meetings and field visits, with support from the Migration and Remittances Programme team and the Evaluation Unit.

The Evaluation Team is responsible for respecting the ethical foundations for evaluation within the United Nations, including safeguarding the rights and confidentiality of information providers, for example, and

²⁵ The final evaluation report will be assessed externally by UNDP's Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) once the evaluation has been completed. The quality assessment grid, against which the report is assessed, is available at <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/PDF/section-6.pdf>



taking measures to ensure compliance with legal codes governing areas such as provisions to collect and report data.²⁶ More information will be provided at the start of the inception phase.

Advisory Panel: An Advisory Panel will be set up and composed of representatives of UNCDF, SIDA and SDC as well as other key stakeholders. The UNCDF Evaluation Unit will reach out to interested stakeholders. The role of the Advisory Panel is to support the Evaluation Unit in managing the evaluation by participating in the following:

- Reviewing and commenting on the inception report;
- Reviewing and commenting on the draft report;
- Reviewing and commenting on the case studies;
- Being available for interviews with the evaluation team.

4 Facilities to be Provided by UNCDF

The UNCDF Migration and Remittances Programme staff will provide administrative support. This will include:

- timely access to an extensive range of documentation for the inception phase;
- an updated stakeholder list with contact details, including emails, telephone numbers and the preferred method of access (if possible);
- support in scheduling meetings in the countries.

The regional and country-based staff will also be available for initial briefing and final debriefings and shall make itself available to answer questions, review reports, and provide feedback to the evaluation team.

5 Duty Station and Travel

The work will be home-based, except for phase 2 entailing three country visits.

The Evaluation Team is expected to organize its own travel, visas, accommodation, and local transport.

During the field visits, the expected level of effort for the evaluation should **include five days (minimum) in each country**. Each country visit shall foresee a minimum of two members of the evaluation team visiting the country.

All related travel expenses shall be included in the financial proposal proposed by the Evaluation team.

6 Audience and Timing

The primary audience for this evaluation includes UNCDF and key stakeholders (including Programme funders) and partners.

The Mid-Term Evaluation is scheduled as follows:

Inception Phase: July - September 2023

²⁶ The Evaluation Team will be bound by the UNEG Norms and Standards in Evaluation in the UN System, the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System, the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation, and the UNEG Guidance for Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation.



Country Visits: September – October 2023 (to be confirmed)²⁷

Write-up phase and final Report: November 2023 – January 2024

The evaluation will have three distinct phases:

Phase 1: Inception

- Kick-off meeting between the Evaluation Team and the Evaluation Unit to ensure a clear understanding of the evaluation methodology, approach and main deliverables per the TOR;
- Kick-off meetings with the Advisory Panel, the Programme staff, as well as the senior management of UNCDF, to familiarize the Evaluation Team with the Programme objectives, results to date, and expectations for this evaluation;
- Stakeholder mapping and selection;
- Finalization of the evaluation methodology and tools, including the sampling strategy and the data collection strategy;
- Finalization of the schedule for field visits;
- Submission of the inception report, finalization and approval of the inception report.

Phase 2: Field visits

In-depth data collection and research, including site visits and key informant interviews in selected countries. The Team Leader may be asked to debrief the Advisory Panel and Evaluation Unit at the end of the country visits. This with a view to provide a sense of the evaluation team's preliminary findings ahead of the draft reporting phase.

- Primary data collection, including site visits, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews in line with the proposed methodological approach agreed in the Inception report;
- Visit to UNDP Resident Representative and UNDSS Security Briefing.
- Debriefing sessions with key in-country stakeholders could be requested.

Phase 3: Reporting

- Analysis and synthesis, including a technical debrief with the Migration and Remittances team and UNCDF Technical Expert on initial findings and final questions;
- Drafting of the evaluation report, the evaluation summary and case studies;
- HQ debrief of the final evaluation report to UNCDF senior management.

In drawing up the proposed work plan, the Evaluation Team should be given sufficient time to complete: i) a thorough review of all relevant Programme documentation during the inception phase and preparation of the methodological approach to be followed by the evaluation team; ii) multiple country visits, and iii) a thorough write-up phase of the evaluation report, to include analysis and transparent aggregation of the different 'lines of evidence' collected during the preceding evaluation phases into case studies and a final evaluation report with relevant annexes.

Evaluators should plan to visit **at least three countries** in which the Migration and Remittances Programme is being implemented, at least one of which should be in Asia and Africa respectively. During

²⁷ Based on availabilities of key stakeholders and in-country events



the field visits, the expected level of effort for the evaluation should include **five days (minimum) in each country** with a minimum of two members of the evaluation team visiting the country.

In total, it is expected that the evaluation will take an estimated **150 men days to complete**, including all team members' contributions to the inception, field visits and write-up phases of the evaluation. Estimated distribution of days : i) Inception Phase – 40 Days; ii) Data Collection: 60 Days; Final Report: 50 Days.

The methodology—including the final sampling strategy and choice of countries to be visited—should be further developed by the Evaluation Team during the inception phase under the supervision of the Evaluation Unit. The below-proposed timeframe and expected deliverables will be discussed with the Evaluation Team and refined during the inception phase. The final schedule of deliverables should be presented in the Inception Report.

The Evaluation Unit reserves the right to request revisions to the evaluation deliverables until they meet the quality standards set by the UNCDF's Evaluation Unit for evaluation reports (please see the Annex for more details).

7 Deliverables and Expected Outputs

The Evaluation Team is responsible for preparing and submitting the following deliverables:

Phase	Deliverables	Tentative timeframe
<p>Phase 1: Inception Inception Report and Data Collection Toolkit</p>	<p>The inception report will present a refined scope and a detailed outline of the evaluation design and methodology, including a validated programme theory of change and an accompanying evaluation matrix with questions, sub-questions, judgment criteria/indicators, data collection methods and information sources. The template will be provided by the Evaluation Unit at the start of the inception phase and will include detail timelines and work plan.</p> <p>The report must also detail any adjusted evaluative approaches/methodologies that may be needed to implement the evaluation effectively due to COVID-19.</p> <p>The Inception Report should include in Annex a Data Collection Toolkit that includes a set of data collection instruments for both qualitative and quantitative data collection tools to be used in the course of the evaluation (i.e. for qualitative data: interview guides, focus group discussion guide, direct observation forms, questionnaires for consultations with stakeholders, etc; for quantitative data, relevant templates to assess change in basic financial and operational performance of the partners over the period supported by UNCDF). The toolkit should also include a proposal around how the different data sources will be organized</p>	<p>Q3 2023</p>

Phase	Deliverables	Tentative timeframe
	<p>and synthesized. The data collection toolkit should be able to be tailored to both English and French data collection needs.</p> <p>The Inception report will present the choice of case studies (6) based on their desk review to represent a diverse set of implementation efforts, including diverse types of partners (public and private stakeholders), geographies (sending and receiving countries, LDCs) and different support modalities deployed by the Programme in order to present best practices. The Inception report will present a finalized outline for the case studies as a stand-alone document.</p> <p>The Evaluation Team will maintain an audit trail of the comments received and provide a response on how the comments were address in the revised drafts.</p>	
Phase 2: Field visits	<p>Evaluators should prepare to visit three countries in which Migration and Remittances activities have been implemented, including one country from Africa and Asia respectively. The choice of countries should be finalized during inception as part of the team's final proposed sampling strategy.</p> <p>Debriefing sessions to the key in-country stakeholders, Advisory Panel and Evaluation Unit that present emerging trends/preliminary observations in order to build ownership of the findings with Programme counterparts and provide a sense of the evaluation team's preliminary observations at the end of the country visits and ahead of the draft reporting phase could be requested.</p>	Q4 2023
Phase 3: Reporting	<p>A Draft Evaluation Report organized by evaluation sub-question, presenting evaluation findings and recommendations for the Migration and Remittances Programme, aggregated and synthesized on the basis of the results of the different data collection and analysis tools (35-45 pages).</p>	Q4 2023



Phase	Deliverables	Tentative timeframe
	<p>Annexes with a summary of findings from each of the ‘lines of evidence’ used to support the evaluation findings.²⁸</p> <p>An Executive Summary of a maximum of five pages summarizing the main findings and recommendations in English.</p> <p>Six case studies following the template agreed in the Inception report. The six case studies represent a diverse set of implementation efforts, including diverse types of partners (public and private stakeholders), geographies (sending and receiving countries, LDCs) and different support modalities deployed by the Programme</p> <p>A PPT slideshow for HQ debriefing (20 minutes’ presentation) summarizing the main findings and recommendations.</p> <p>A Final Evaluation Report that incorporates comments received from all partners and a matrix of recommendations to be used for the Management Response and action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If all or part of the evaluation was carried out virtually as a result of COVID-19, the report should reflect such limitations. 	

8 Composition of the Evaluation Team Proposed by the Supplier

The Evaluation Team should present a combination of technical expertise and experience in evaluation with a focus on **financial inclusion, specifically digital financial services, remittances and migrants, private sector engagement and policymaking.**

The team should be familiar with approaches used to assess program contribution to market development/systemic changes as well as theory-based approaches to programme evaluation, using both quantitative and qualitative analysis of existing secondary data and primary data sources. The team should have comprehensive knowledge of inclusive finance industry best practices and experience in applying CGAP benchmarks. Evidence of experience with inclusive finance programmes to support women’s empowerment and gender equality. Understanding of global, regional, and country specific challenges related to the movement of money across borders as it relates to the financial lives of migrants as an excluded segment.

Bidders should present a team to conduct the evaluation, with team members to be combined in whichever way the bidders feel the objective of the evaluation can best addressed. However, it is requested that the proposed evaluation team be made up of at least the following roles:

²⁸ All completed tools and datasets making up the different lines of evidence should be made available to the Evaluation Unit upon request (including field notes, transcribed highlights from interviews and focus group discussions, details from quantitative analysis). Bidders are requested to make sure that the Evaluation Team is ready to provide this information upon request.



- 1 Team Leader with at least 10 years of relevant evaluation experience, and previous experience with UN/ multilateral agencies.
- Team member(s) with 7-10 years of relevant thematic experience (Financial Inclusion, Financial Services, Cross-border and digital payments, Remittances Policy) and gender experience.
- National or Regional expert(s) with relevant thematic experience to participate in the country visits.
- The Team should strive for gender balance in its composition.

For the country visit, the evaluation team should be made up of at least two consultants, including the Team Leader.

8.1 Overall Evaluation Expertise and Experience

Overall, the Evaluation Team should demonstrate:

Team leader

- Proven experience (at least 10 years for the Team Leader) with designing and conducting, managing complex international development evaluations that apply Theory of Change-based mixed-methods and market system evaluation approaches to a variety of different modalities in international development cooperation, involving inter-governmental organisations and their government and private sector counterparts. Evidence and links to at least three final evaluation reports/research are expected.
- Proven experience (at least 10 years) of undertaking/ participating in evaluations in inclusive finance (micro- beneficiary, meso – markets and FSPs and macro – policy/ regulatory- level) generally and specific experience with digital financial inclusion for migration and remittances. Including experience using a range of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methodologies to assess programme results at individual, institutional, market and policy level.
- Evidence of formal evaluation and research training, including familiarity with UN/OECD Norms and Standards for development evaluation, as well as the evaluation of complexity as applied to market development approaches, such as that of CGAP and DCED.
- Demonstrated experience in integrating gender equality, human rights, disabled, youth and most vulnerable in evaluation, in accordance with the Leaving No One Behind strategy.
- Knowledge and experience of working for the UN system at the service of UN Member States is highly preferred, including experience in engaging with a diverse range of stakeholders (national politicians, regional economic communities, banks, nonbank financial institutions, fintech, migrants and vulnerable populations).
- Relevant work experience in developing countries (Africa and Asia).
- Proficiency in English and French is required.



8.2 Team Members (Financial Inclusion / Digital Finance / Remittances (market and policy) / Gender)

Previous evaluation experience for team members is an advantage. Proposed Team Members are expected to have **relevant work experience in developing countries** (Africa and Asia), as well be proficient in **English and French**.

Key areas of expertise for the team members are:

- Digital Financial Services (Cross Border and Digital Payment Systems)
- Digital Financial Services Sector (Market, Private Sector - Savings, Credit, etc)
- Financial Inclusion Policy (Advocacy, Influence, Network, Partnerships)
- Gender

Digital Financial Services (Cross Border and Digital Payment Systems)

- **Cross border payments and remittances**
- **Domestic Payment use cases (P2P, G2P, P2G, P2M)**
- **Payment Systems (payment interoperability and real time payment systems – RTP)**
- **Design and development of digital payments solutions and financial inclusion.**

Demonstrated experience in domestic and **cross-border payments and remittances** as well as domestic/national payment **use cases** including P2P, government-to-people (G2P), people-to-government (P2G), and merchant payments (P2M).

Demonstrated experience in **payment-systems related areas** and challenges: digital identification, digitization and resource mobilization, diaspora finance products, payments interoperability and real-time-payment (RTP) systems, payment addressing systems, clearing and settlement. Experience of human-centred design methods would be a plus.

Demonstrated experience in conducting research, studies or implementing relevant projects and initiatives linking the **design and development of digital payments and the increase in financial inclusion**.

Digital Financial Services Sector (Market, Private Sector - Savings, Credit, etc)

- **Private Sector Development / Market development**
- **Financial Inclusion Product Development**
- **Digital Financial Services for Migrants and low-income people**
- **Human Centered Design**

Demonstrated experience in private sector development/ market development for financial inclusion and financial services.

Demonstrated experience in the design, development and implementation of remittances, digital remittances, **remittance-linked products and financial inclusion of migrants and diaspora** members. Specific experience in savings, credit, insurance, and pension solutions dedicated to migrants would be an asset.



Demonstrated experience in conducting research, studies or implementing relevant projects and initiatives linking the design and development of digital payments and the increase in financial inclusion, with knowledge of human centred design.

Financial Inclusion Policy (Advocacy, Influence, Network, Partnerships)

- **Policy, legal and Regulatory frameworks related to Cross-Boarder Payments and Remittances**
- **Research, policy and regulatory framework assessment and diagnostics**
- **Partnerships, Stakeholder engagement (Governments, Regional Economic Communities, Central Banks, Private Sector, FSPs and TSPs).**

Demonstrated experience at the national or international level working for a central bank, financial services regulator, financial institution, money transfer operator, mobile financial services, or development consulting with a **focus on remittances/cross-border payments policies** relating to policy, legal and regulatory frameworks for cross-border remittances that foster transparency, consumer protection, oversight capacities, and access to remittance services.

Demonstrated experience in country-level research, **policy and regulatory framework assessments**, and stakeholder engagement, along with experience in building relationships with stakeholders to understand **remittance business models and identify potential constraints**.

Demonstrated experience in building and maintaining **partnerships** with wide networks of stakeholders, including governments, regional economic communities, central banks, private sector partners, experts, and financial service providers, technology service providers, and donors.

Knowledge and understanding of **current developments in inclusive digital finance**, including one or more of the following: digital economy, agent banking, mobile money, digital wallets, micro-savings, domestic resource mobilization, or financial literacy.

Gender

To meet good practices in ensuring sufficient coverage of gender equality and women's empowerment in the evaluation design and conduct, one Gender Equality Specialist should be appointed within the evaluation team to support gender analysis and ensure that the evaluation reports this accordingly. The expert should focus on gender data disaggregation and gender-related impacts at the beneficiary level. The expert will have the responsibility for appraising the substance and effectiveness of approaches, products, outcomes, and risks to women's economic empowerment. The expert shall have the following experience.

9 Selection process and proposal requirements

Consistent with the principles of fairness, transparency and best value for money prescribed by the United Nations public procurement rules, UNCDF shall "call-off" the services of the LTA holders based on a process of secondary competition. Under the secondary competition, UNCDF will solicit proposals from the LTA holders, and the firm that presents the proposal that achieves the highest combined score will be



awarded the call-off in the form of a Purchase Order (PO). The TOR for the call-off shall be attached to the PO.

During the secondary competition, UNCDF will send the TORs to LTA holders and provide a fixed period to submit a technical and financial proposal. The technical proposal should include a proposed methodology for the evaluation - not more than 10 pages - as well as the names, CVs and roles of the evaluation experts proposed to conduct the evaluation. The LTA holder shall endeavor to draw from the pre-approved experts under the LTA, and that such experts shall comprise all or a majority of teams that will engage under any call-off.

UNCDF shall perform a comparative analysis and evaluate the proposals received using the 70:30 method, with 70% of scores going to the technical proposal and 30% to the financial offer. The LTA holder who achieves the highest combined score shall receive the call-off PO and perform the assignment. The comparative analysis of the technical proposal will focus on the appropriateness of the proposed methodology and team to the evaluation terms of reference. Methodological innovation will be considered an asset.

The technical proposal shall consist of:

- A focused proposed methodology, approach and implementation plan (maximum 10 pages);
- Presentation of the proposed evaluation team, drawn from the pre-approved list of experts in the LTA. For team members sourced outside of the pre-approved list, a complete CV and justification for not sourcing from the pre-approved list shall be provided;
- As part of the technical assessment, an interview will be conducted for all proposed team members.

The technical proposal cannot include any information on costs

1. Proposed Methodology, Approach and Implementation Plan		Points obtainable
1.1	<p>Appropriateness of evaluation design to the programme being assessed. This includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriateness of the overall methodological approach to the evaluation and variety of evaluation methods and techniques/lines of evidence being proposed to answer the evaluation questions, bearing in mind the complex nature of the policy and market systems that UNCDF is seeking to influence and the presence of likely alternative drivers of these changes • For the Migration and Remittances programme, the design should include a relevant approach to assessing the enabling of policy and regulations to address regulatory challenges and market inefficiencies; enhancing regional and domestic payment infrastructure towards interoperability; the reconfiguration of the MSME value chain; strengthen the access and use of digital remittances solutions towards improving financial resilience and economic inclusion of migrants and their families. 	200



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality and appropriateness of the proposed evaluation matrix including proposed judgement criteria/performance indicators and how the lines of evidence will be deployed to answer the evaluation questions at different levels of the theory of change (at the level of programme execution; at the level of key organisational partners – including MSMEs - that the programme is working with; at the system level; and, if requested in the Terms of Reference, at the programme beneficiary level) • Quality of the data collection strategy to be applied in answering the evaluation questions, including details of the qualitative and quantitative tools that will be used in assessing existing secondary data and generating new primary data to answer the evaluation questions. • Appropriateness of the proposed data analysis strategy, including plans to transform the analysis and aggregation of data into evaluation findings • Appropriateness of the proposed approach to case study as laid out in the ToR. 	
1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which the proposal highlights how the evaluation will apply a gender responsive lens at different stages of the evaluation cycle (inception, data collection, draft and final reports) with a view to generating findings that take into account the perspective of women, rural, and un(der)banked population segments, as well as make use of UNCDF's Gender Economic Empowerment Framework 	75
1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed evaluation work plan for conducting the evaluation, showing the overall time commitment for the evaluation, as well as specific activities and time allocated to each individual team member. 	75
<i>Total Section 1</i>		350

2. Management Structure and Key Personnel		Points obtainable
2.1	Responsiveness of the proposed evaluation team to the team composition set out in the Terms of Reference.	350



	<p>In the event that the LTA holder wants to propose the engagement of experts that are not in the pre-approved list of experts in the LTA, the LTA holder shall : (a) submit a complete CV that UNCDF will review; and (b) paying attention to the specific expert profiles being sought in the evaluation ToR, provide a justification as to why an expert outside of the pre-approved list is being proposed. Both documents shall be reviewed by UNCDF and shall be considered in the determination of rating of the Technical Proposal.</p> <p>The assessment of not pre-approved experts will be based on scoring grid set-out in the LTA on a pass or fail basis, as well as the responsiveness to the team composition set out in the Terms of Reference (see above). For reference, the scoring grid set-out in the Terms of Reference to the RfP sets out a series of expected attributes for each of the following categories of expert:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Directors and Team Leaders experienced in managing and conducting international development evaluation in relevant areas to UNCDF; • Technical experts with deep knowledge and expertise of UNCDF's Areas of Work (either Local Development Finance OR Inclusive Finance experts AND MSME Investment Finance experts) in the countries in which we work as well as relevant evaluation experience; • Knowledge and experience of experts of gender-responsive evaluation; • Knowledge and experience of evaluation methodology; • Junior evaluation experts (enumerators, survey designers etc) <p>In case where the non pre-approved proposed experts do not meet the requirements as set-out both in the LTA scoring grid and call-off terms of reference, UNCDF reserves the right to request submission of CVs that meet the both those sets of criteria.</p> <p>Expertise set out in the ToR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation (90 pts) • Digital Financial Services (Cross Boarder and Digital Payment Systems) (70 pts) • Digital Financial Services Sector (Market, Private Sector - Savings, Credit, etc) (70 Pts) • Financial Inclusion Policy (Advocacy, Influence, Network, Partnerships) (70 pts) • Gender (50 pts) 	
<i>Total Section 2</i>		350

Only firms totaling > 490 points out of 700 points during the first step of the technical evaluation will be invited to the interview.

3. Interview		Points obtainable
3.1	Clarity of presentation on the proposed methodology and evidence of clear division of labour within the team	150
3.2	Quality of responses to the questions	150
<i>Total Section 3</i>		300



10 Impartiality Requirements and Evaluation Ethics

We take the opportunity here to remind potential bidders that in line with UN norms and standards for evaluation, the ability of the evaluation team to conduct an independent and impartial evaluation of the intervention being assessed is a pre-requisite. With this in mind, interested firms should ensure specifically that members of the evaluation team that are proposed have not had any previous experience of working with or supporting the programme being evaluated or have any plans to do so for the duration of the programme being implemented.

This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. The consultants must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees, and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The consultants must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses with the express authorization of UNDP/ UNCDF and partners.

11 Price and Schedule of Payments

The financial proposal should provide a detailed costing for the scope of work and deliverables described for each of the above-mentioned evaluations. The Financial Proposal shall list all major cost components associated with the services and the detailed breakdown of such costs, including fees, travel costs, per diem, etc. All outputs and activities described in the offer must be priced separately on a one-to-one correspondence. Any output and activities described in the offer but not priced in the Financial Proposal shall be assumed to be included in the prices of other activities or items, as well as in the final total price.

In terms of level of effort, interested firms are invited to propose a methodology that includes at least 14 days for the country visit.

Schedule of payments:

- 25% of contract: upon submission of inception report - September 2023

Inception Report presenting a full description of the Programme implementation to date as well as the final evaluation matrix, methodology, **data collection toolkit**, **case study** and detailed work plan with timelines following a template to be provided by the Evaluation Unit.

The report must also detail any adjusted evaluative approaches/methodologies that may be needed to implement the evaluation effectively due to COVID-19.



- 35% of contract: upon submission of draft evaluation report – December 2023

A Draft Evaluation Report organized by evaluation sub-question, presenting evaluation findings and recommendations for the Migration and Remittances Programme, aggregated and synthesized on the basis of the results of the different data collection and analysis tools (35-45 pages).

- Annexes with a summary of findings from each of the ‘lines of evidence’ used to support the evaluation findings.
- An Executive Summary of a maximum of five pages summarizing the main findings and recommendations in English.
- Case studies following the template provided.

- 40% of contract: upon approval of final evaluation report.

A PPT slideshow for HQ debriefing (20 minutes’ presentation) summarizing the main findings and recommendations.

A Final Evaluation Report that incorporates comments received from all partners and a matrix of recommendations to be used for the Management Response and action, with recommendations for the next phase of the Programme.

Payments shall be made upon satisfactory completion and UNCDF’s Evaluation Unit’s written acceptance of each deliverable according to the schedule below.



Annex 1. Quality Grid for UNCDF Evaluations

Following UNDP's Evaluation Policy, to which UNCDF is a party to, all external evaluations commissioned by UNCDF's Evaluation Unit are subject to external quality control by UNDP's Independent Evaluation Office. Bidders are requested to respect the elements of this quality assessment tool in coming up with their proposed approach for the evaluation. Full details of previous UNCDF evaluations can be found here: <https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/units/255>

Report and Methodology
STRUCTURE
1. Is the evaluation report well-balanced and structured?
2. Does the Evaluation report clearly address the objectives of the evaluation as outlined in the ToR?
METHODOLOGY
3. Is the evaluation's methodological approach clearly outlined?
4. Is the nature and extent of the project/programme's stakeholders or partnerships and their role and involvement in the project/programme explained adequately?
5. Does the Evaluation clearly assess the project's/programme's level of RELEVANCE?
6. Does the Evaluation clearly assess the project's/programme's level of EFFECTIVENESS?
7. Does the Evaluation clearly assess the project's/programme's level of EFFICIENCY?
8. Does the Evaluation clearly assess the project's/programme's level of SUSTAINABILITY?
DATA COLLECTION
9. Are data collection methods and analysis clearly outlined?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data sources are clearly outlined (including triangulation methods) - Data analysis approaches are detailed - Data collection methods and tools are explained
10. Is the data collection approach and analysis adequate for the scope of the evaluation?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A comprehensive set of data sources (especially for triangulation) is included where appropriate - A comprehensive set of quantitative and qualitative surveys, and analysis approaches is included where appropriate - Clear presentation of data analysis and citation within the report - Meetings and surveys with stakeholders and beneficiary groups are documented, where appropriate



<p>11. Are any changes to the evaluation approach or limitations in implementation during the evaluation mission clearly outlined and explained?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issues with access to data or verification of data sources - Issues in the availability of interviewees - Outline of how these constraints were addressed
<p>REPORT CONTENT</p>
<p>12. Does the evaluation draw linkages to the UNDP country programme strategy and/or UNSDCF and SDGs? - It evaluates the programme/ project theory of change and its relevance - It analyses the linkage of the project/ programme being evaluated to the UNDP country programme strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It makes linkages to the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF)
<p>13. Does the Evaluation draw linkages to related National government strategies and plans in the sector/ area of support?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The evaluation discusses how capacity development, or the strengthening of national capacities, can be addressed
<p>14. Does the evaluation detail programme/ project funding and provide funding data?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Variances between planned and actual expenditures are assessed and explained - Observations from financial audits completed for the project are considered
<p>15. Does the evaluation include an assessment of the project/programme’s initial results framework, M&E design, implementation, and its overall quality?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring data presented and sufficiently detailed to enable analysis for the evaluation - Data was disaggregated by sex and vulnerable groups
<p>16. Are all indicators in the logical framework assessed individually, with final achievements noted?</p>
<p>Crosscutting</p>
<p>1. Where relevant, does the evaluation adequately include and analyse the intervention’s impact on gender, human rights, disabilities and vulnerable groups?</p>
<p>2. Does the report discuss poverty/environment nexus or sustainable livelihood issues, as relevant?</p>
<p>3. Does the report discuss disaster risk reduction and climate change mitigation and adaptation issues where relevant?</p>
<p>4. Does the report discuss crisis prevention and recovery issues, where relevant?</p>



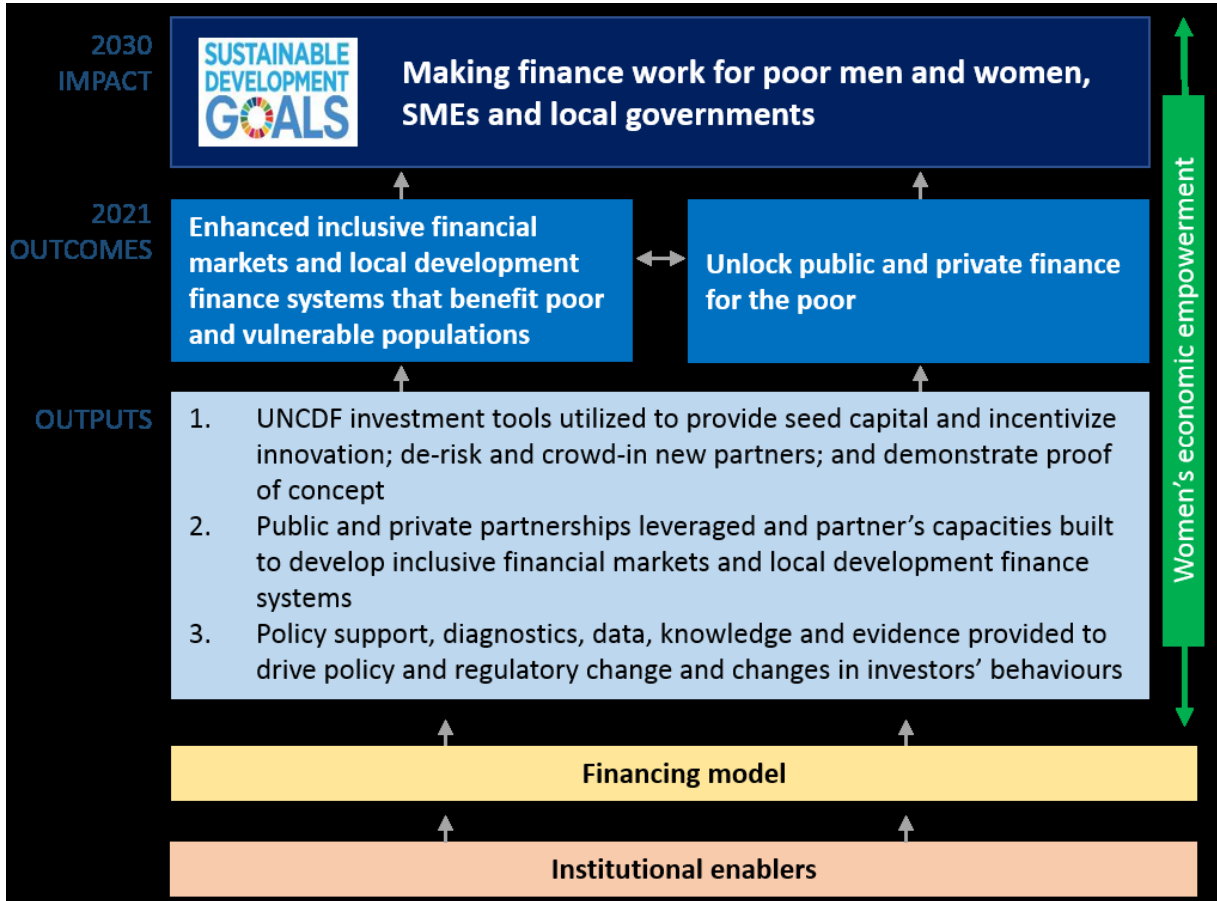
<p>5. Are gender equality and empowerment of women integrated in the evaluation scope, and are the evaluation criteria and questions designed in a way that ensures data related to gender equality and empowerment of women will be collected?</p> <p>- The evaluation includes an objective specifically addressing gender equality and/or human rights issues and/or gender was mainstreamed in other objectives - A stand-alone evaluation criterion on gender and/or human rights was included in the evaluation framework or mainstreamed into other evaluation criteria - One or several dedicated gender equality and empowerment of women evaluation questions were integrated into the evaluation</p>
<p>6. Were gender-responsive methodology, methods and tools, and data analysis techniques selected?</p> <p>- The evaluation specifies how gender issues are addressed in the methodology, including how data collection and analysis methods integrate gender considerations and ensure data collected is disaggregated by sex - The evaluation methodology employs a mixed-methods approach, appropriate to evaluating gender equality and empowerment of women considerations - A diverse range of data sources and processes are employed (i.e. triangulation, validation) to guarantee inclusion, accuracy and credibility - The evaluation methods and sampling frame address the diversity of stakeholders affected by the intervention, particularly the most vulnerable, where appropriate</p>
<p>7. Do the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendation reflect a gender analysis?</p> <p>- The evaluation has a background section that includes analysis of specific social groups affected and/ or spelling out the relevant instruments or policies related to gender equality and human rights - The findings include data analysis that explicitly and transparently triangulates the voices of different social role groups, and/ or disaggregates quantitative data by sex, where applicable - Unanticipated effects of the intervention on gender equality and human rights are described - The evaluation report provides specific recommendations addressing issues of gender equality and empowerment of women, and priorities for action to improve gender equality and empowerment of women or the intervention or future initiatives in this area</p>
<p>8. Does the evaluation consider disability issues?</p> <p>- Evaluation questions cover different aspects of disability inclusion - Evaluation findings and analysis provide data and evidence on disability inclusion - Evaluation conclusions and/ or recommendations reflect the findings on disability inclusion</p>
<p>9. Does the evaluation draw linkages to the SDGs and relevant targets and indicators for the area being evaluated?</p>
<p>Evaluation Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations</p>
<p>FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS</p>



<p>11. Does the evaluation report contain a concise and logically articulated set of findings?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The findings are structured around the evaluation criteria and evaluation questions - The findings are detailed and supported by evidence - The findings go beyond an analysis of activity implementation
<p>Does the evaluation report contain a concise and logically articulated set of conclusions which are stand-alone in nature?</p>
<p>Does the evaluation report contain a concise and logically articulated set of lessons learned?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The lessons learned are substantive - The lessons learned are appropriately targeted at different implementation and organizational levels
<p>Do the findings and conclusions relate directly to the objectives of the project /programme and the evaluation?</p> <p>They relate directly to the objectives of the project/ programme - They relate to the objectives of the evaluation as outlined in the TOR for the evaluation</p>
<p>Are the findings and conclusions supported with data and interview sources?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Constraints in access to data and interview sources are detailed
<p>Do the conclusions build on the findings of the evaluation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The conclusions go beyond the findings and present a balanced picture of the strengths and limitations of the intervention
<p>Are risks discussed in the evaluation report?</p>
<p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p>
<p>8. Are the recommendations clear, concise, realistic and actionable?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They are reasonable given the size and scope of the project/ programme
<p>9. Are recommendations linked to country programme outcomes and strategies, and actionable by the country office?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guidance is given for implementation of the recommendations - Recommendations identify implementing roles (UNDP, government, programme, stakeholder, other)

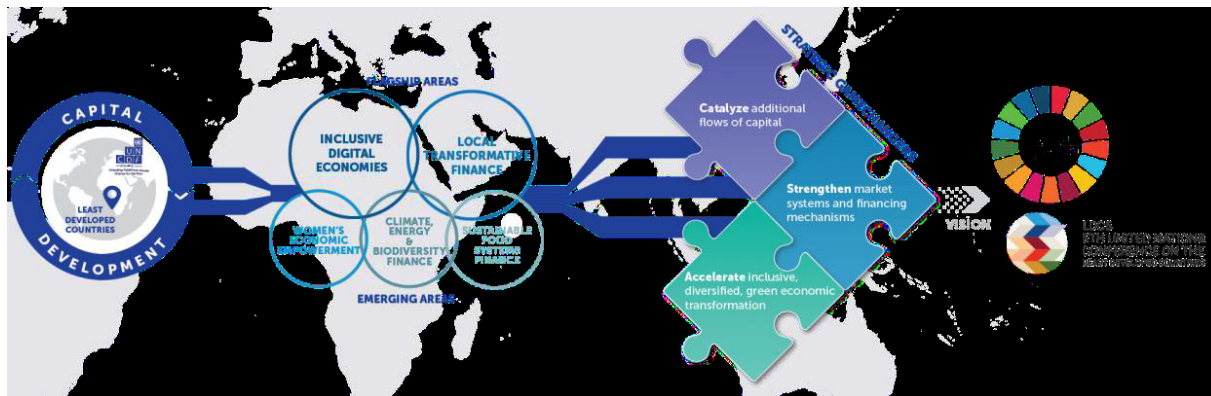


Annex 2. Strategic Framework 2018 – 2021 Theory of Change²⁹



²⁹ <https://www.uncdf.org/strategic-framework-2018-2021>

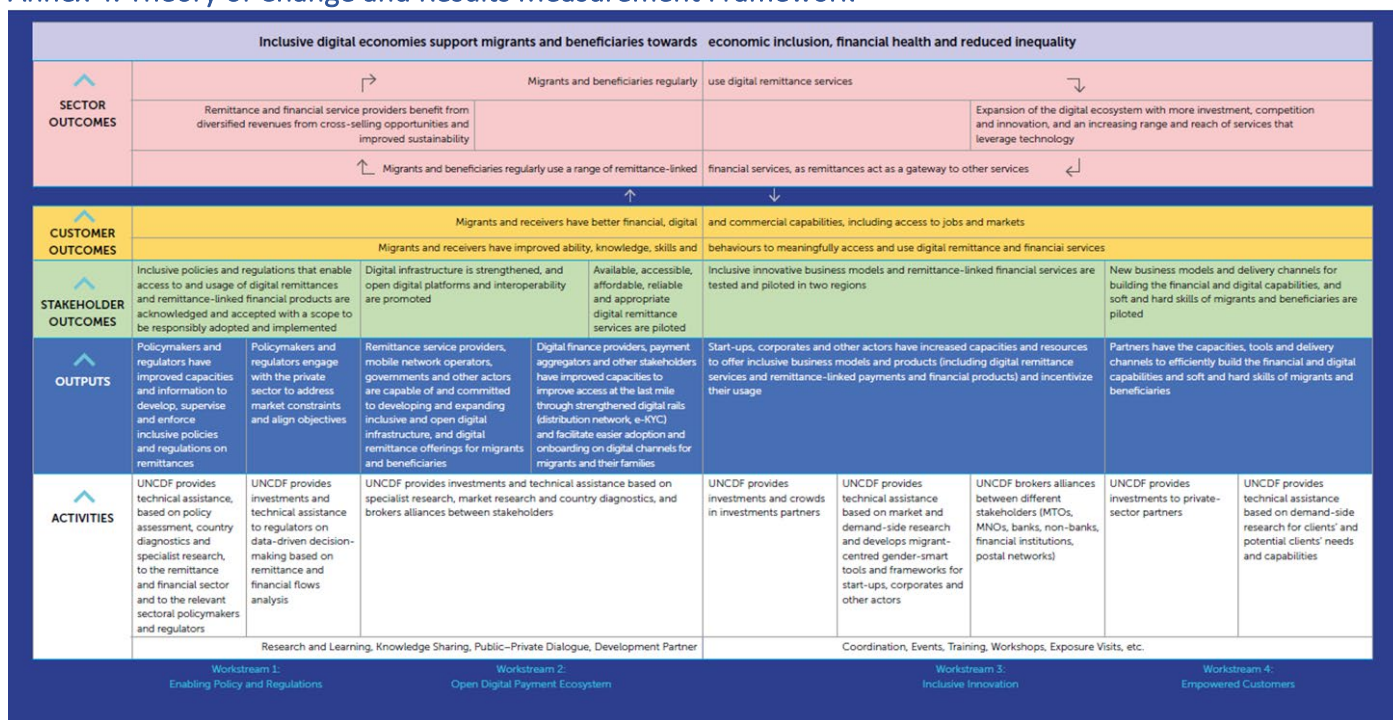
Annex 3. Strategic Framework 2022 – 2025 Theory of Change³⁰



³⁰ <https://www.uncdf.org/article/7488/uncdf-strategic-framework-2022-2025-undp-executive-board-version>



Annex 4. Theory of Change and Results Measurement Framework



No.	ToC level	Indicator	Disaggregation	Definition/Calculation	Source	Frequency	Unit	Donor
1	Activity	Number of stakeholders supported by UNCDF	by type	Includes TA agreements, partnerships, MOU and grants which have been agreed with public and private sector stakeholders	Document Review: 'Contract/PD/Agreement	Quarterly	Number	SDC, SIDA
2	Activity	Value of UNCDF investments (Committed/ Expensed/ Milestones)	by type (Grant, TA, Loan)	Monetized value of the UNCDF support including grant, loan, guarantee, TA support to stakeholder/partner	Document Review: 'Contract/PD/Agreement	Quarterly	USD	
3	Activity	Value of partner investments due to UNCDF's support (Committed/ Expensed/ Milestones)	by partner	The indicator includes new long-term capital investments (e.g., property, plant, and equipment and other fixed assets) and new operating capital investments (e.g., inputs or inventory) leveraged by the UNCDF support.	Document Review: 'Contract/PD/Agreement; Project Appraisal	Quarterly	USD	SDC
4	Activity	Number of capacity building activities (events, trainings, exposure visits. and workshops)	by type	Number of events, trainings, workshops, and exposure visits	Document Review: KM dashboard	Quarterly	Number	SDC, SIDA
5	Activity	Number of participants of capacity building activities (events, trainings, exposure visits. and workshops)	women	Participant lists from events hosted or sponsored in full or in part by UNCDF, including events, trainings, workshops, and exposure visits	Document Review: KM dashboard	Quarterly	Number	SDC, SIDA

6	Activity	Number of financial education and digital literacy campaigns	n/a		Project monitoring: Partner Reporting	Quarterly	Number	SDC, SIDA
7	Activity	Number of publications, blogs and videos and market research	by type		Document Review: KM dashboard	Quarterly	Number	SDC, SIDA
8	Output - level I	Number of new or improved digital services and business models piloted (digital remittance channels; remittance linked financial services; remittance linked health, insurance and basic services; receiving methods; specific focus on last mile connectivity. women-centric pilots.)	women-centric	Includes digital remittance channels and remittance linked financial services. Pilot refers to testing of a prototype product or service before full commercial launch to mass market. New or improved product or service that explicitly takes women needs and barriers into consideration.	Project monitoring: Partner Reporting	Quarterly	Number	SDC, SIDA
9	Output - level 2	Number of institution showing increased commitment in integrating financial services, linked to remittances, in their operations	n/a	Providers/Partners which show mindset shift and increased interest for integration of financial services linked to remittances as a result of UNCDF support	Project monitoring: Key Informant Interviews	Annual	Number	SIDA
10	Output - level 2	Number of partnerships facilitated to improve the outreach of digital	n/a		Project monitoring: Key Informant Interviews	Annual	Number	SDC

		remittance channels and offer financial products for migrants						
11	Output - level 2	Number of institutions that report improved data analytics capacity for product development	n/a	This will be covered across all institutions – PBAs and non-PBA partners, including govts who are receiving our support – who out of those have made improvements in their data analytics capacity.	Project monitoring: Key Informant Interviews	Annual	Number	SDC
12	Output - level 2	Number of responsive policy measures related to remittances initiated	n/a	Regulators initiate concrete steps (e.g. set up committee, establish dialogue, launch study, request TA etc.) to introduce or improve procedures/ policies/ practices /standards as a result of UNCDF facilitation	Project monitoring: Key Informant Interviews Document review	Annual	Number	SDC, SIDA
13	Stakeholder outcome	Number of new or improved digital services and business models scaled (digital remittance channels; remittance linked financial services; remittance linked health, insurance and basic services.)	women-centric	A new or improved digital service is scaled after successful completion of the pilot. Scale refers to full commercial release of product or service with targeted outreach activities focused on certain market segments or geographies.	Project monitoring: Key Informant Interviews	Annual	Number	SDC, SIDA
14	Stakeholder outcome	Number of agents trained on new remittance	women	This refers to agents that	Project monitoring: Partner Reporting	Quarterly	Number	SDC

		or remittance-linked products		complete the training				
15	Stakeholder outcome	Number of active agents recruited by providers offering remittances or remittance-linked products	women	Active: at least one transaction in the past 30 days.	Project monitoring: Partner Reporting	Quarterly	Number	SDC, SIDA
16	Stakeholder outcome	Number of policies, regulations and standards introduced or improved	n/a	Regulators either introduce new or improve existing procedures/ policies/ practices /standards as a result of UNCDF facilitation	Document Review:- Project monitoring: Key informant Interviews	Semi-annual	Number	SIDA
17	Client outcome	Number of registered customers of new or improved digital services supported by UNCDF	type of service, women	Customers registered to remittance and remittance-linked services introduced or improved by UNCDF support	Project monitoring: Partner Reporting	Quarterly	Number	SDC, SIDA
18	Client outcome	Number of active customers of new or improved digital services supported by UNCDF	type of service, women	Active refers to customers that have performed at least one transaction in the last 90 days. Note: for some products or services this definition may be different (e.g. loans, savings)	Project monitoring: Partner Reporting Project Impact Assessment	Quarterly	Number	SDC, SIDA
19	Client outcome	Number of migrants and beneficiaries with improved skills and capabilities as a result of UNCDF support	women	This includes financial and digital literacy, and soft and hard skills. Improved skills and capabilities is proxied by number of people trained.	Project monitoring: Partner Reporting	Quarterly	Number	SDC, SIDA
20	Sector outcome	Number of partner	n/a	Partner institutions are commercially	Project monitoring: Key Informant	Semi-annual	Number	SDC

		organizations with increased sustainability		more sustainable as a result of UNCDF support. This includes an increase in revenue due to cross selling opportunities.	Interviews ; Document review			
21	Sector outcome	Amount of remittance flow channeled to productive investment	n/a	Productive investment is any investment in access to clean energy, water, education, and health.	Project Impact Assessment	Project baseline - end line	Amount (US \$)	SDC
22	Sector outcome	Average remittance transaction cost by money transfer operators engaged (financial services)	n/a		Project monitoring: Key Informant Interviews , Document review	Annual	Amount (US \$)	SDC
23	Goal	Number of migrants and beneficiaries with improved financial health	women	Qualitative self-assessment by target beneficiaries of their financial financial security, financial freedom and resilience	Project Impact Assessment	Project baseline - end line	Number	SDC

Annex 5. Programme Results Measurement Strategy

This annex presents key concepts and sources underpinning the results measurement system of the UNCDF Remittances and Migration Programme.

CONTENTS

- The results measurement framework
 - Results chains
 - Measuring systemic change
 - Attribution and contribution
- Data sources
- Programme reflection and learning

THE RESULTS MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK

Results measurement systems are programme management tools for tracking indicators to identify whether events are occurring as expected. They assist in the articulation of results, guide programme measurement practices, and empower programmes to learn and adapt based on the data and results gathered.³¹ For the remittance and migration programme, UNCDF will follow a market systems development approach,³² which is facilitative in nature and thus focuses on leveraging public and private sector stakeholders to deliver the desired change rather than directly working with end beneficiaries. The facilitative approach is indirect and focuses on bringing about “institutional and behavioural change through detailed and ongoing analysis of local contexts”.³³ The implication of this is that it will take longer to realize impact and that the impact on the end beneficiaries is often beyond the direct control of the programme. It is therefore crucial for programmes following market systems development approaches to continuously monitor and track progress so that effective learning and adaptive management can be employed, and as such results measurement is a critical component of a market systems development programme.

Results chains

Results chains are flow charts that map out how the activities of an intervention³⁴ are expected to lead to changes at the output, outcome and impact levels. These are aligned with the programme’s theory of change and provide a broader overview, allowing users to develop a comprehensive results measurement

³¹ “Introduction to the DCED Standard”, Donor Committee for Enterprise Development (DCED) (<https://www.enterprise-development.org/measuring-results-the-dced-standard>, accessed 27 August 2021).

³² “Programme framework document: Shaping Inclusive Finance Transformations (SHIFT) in SAARC”, UNCDF, New York, 2016 (direct-download link available at <https://www.uncdf.org/article/3344/shapinginclusive-finance-transformations-shift-in-the-association-of-southeast-asian-nations-asean-countries>, accessed 31 August 2021); page 20.

³³ Ben Taylor, “In vogue and at odds: systemic change and new public management in development”, *Enterprise Development & Microfinance*, 2014, volume 25, issue 4, pages 271–287 (doi: 10.3362/1755-1986.2014.026).

³⁴ An intervention is a major initiative taken on by the programme. It could be a group of activities undertaken by entering into a partnership agreement with another agency/stakeholder, or a grant investment, or a group of activities that address a defined market constraint and lead to a specific market change, etc.

plan of regularly monitored quantitative and qualitative indicators that give meaning to observed changes and results within the context of the desired and linked project outputs, outcomes and impact.

- **Adopt** – where partners take up a viable pro-poor change with concrete plans to continue it into the future.
- **Adapt** – where initial partners have invested in the pro-poor change adopted, independent of programme support.
- **Respond** – where non-competing players adjust their practices in response to the pro-poor change.
- **Expand** – where similar or competing players copy the pro-poor change or add diversity by offering variations to it.

Measuring systemic change

As a market systems development initiative, the remittance and migration programme uses the qualitative adopt, adapt, expand and respond (AAER) measurement framework.³⁵ This framework allows an assessment of programme performance and results against a broader theoretical contribution pathway based on sustainability and scalability of results/change as reflected in increasing business scale, model replication and market response.

The framework has four components: adopt and adapt that are parts the piloting phase and respond and expand that are part of the crowding-in phase.³⁶

It is important to exercise case-by-case judgement, but the envisioned pathway moves from 'adopt', which is the first step towards systemic change when innovation and business models or policies are tested with programme support. As the initiative gains traction, partners tailor models to their own and market needs independently, giving the intervention greater sustainability with greater partner ownership. This triggers a market response that begins with the crowding in of other major market players, giving the initiative scale. Finally, interventions reach 'respond', where non-competing market players adjust their own practices in response to the presence of the supported intervention. Both scale and sustainability are greatest at this point.

³⁵ Daniel Nippard, Rob Hitchens and David Elliott, 'Adopt-adapt-expand-respond: a framework for managing and measuring systemic change processes: briefing paper', Springfield Centre for Business in Development, Durham, UK, 2014 (https://beamexchange.org/uploads/filer_public/4d/d3/4dd384d0-a9d6-4fb1-8da4837968926a5d/adoptadaptexpandrespond_compressed.pdf), accessed 22 August 2021).

³⁶ There are multiple methods possible to generate adopt, adapt, expand and respond classifications. For example, market impact and sustainability indicators could be used to set up a more fluid index in the future. The current method applied in this review follows the division between sustainability and market impact of the pilots (see Daniel Nippard et al., 'Adopt-adapt-expand-respond', p10).

Attribution and contribution

Attribution involves drawing causal links and explanatory conclusions about the relationship between observed changes/outcomes and specific intervention activities. Key questions are whether the outcomes of interest are changing because of the project, or not, and the extent to which changes can be claimed by a project. Contribution focuses on determining whether the project contributed to the observed outcomes, as a co-factor. In the higher levels of the theory of change, external factors have an increasing influence (Figure A4:2) and it becomes more difficult to provide evidence of attribution, especially if considering systemic change, crowding-in, and so on. At the goal and sector level, UNCDF focus on contributions to impact in line with industry guidelines.³⁷ However, UNCDF aims to assess plausible attribution at the client outcome level through impact evaluations.

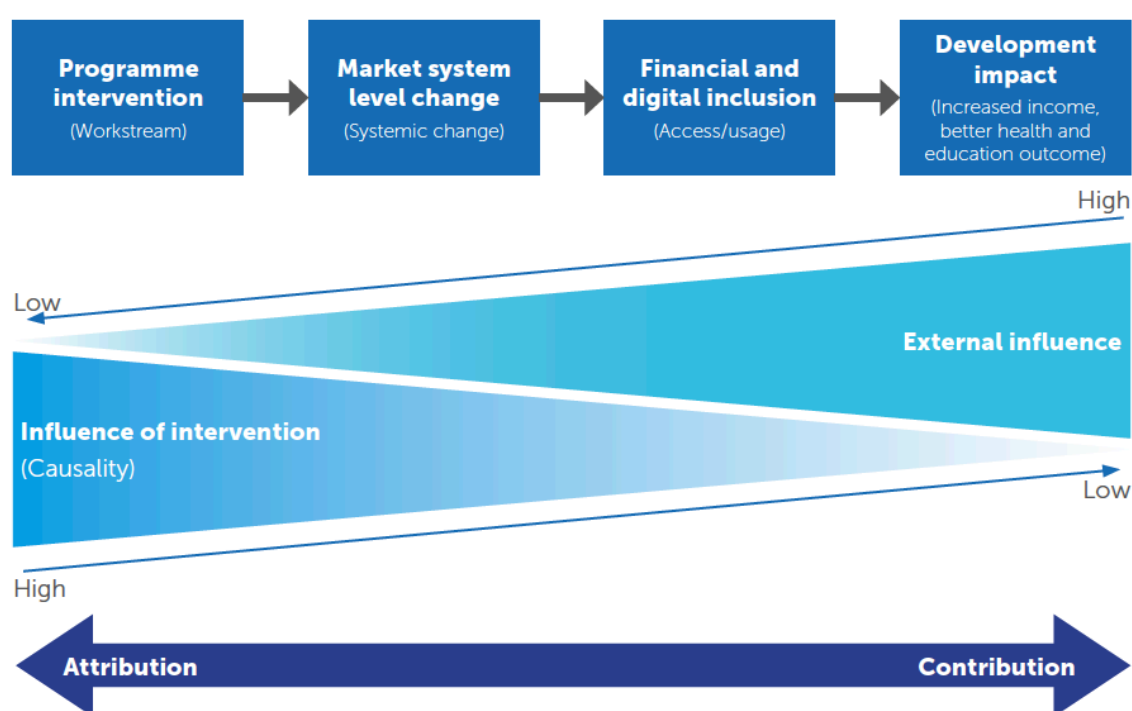


Figure A4:2 The attribution-to-contribution spectrum in development programmes

Source: Adapted from Ruffer and Wach, 2013³⁸

³⁷ "Enhanced monitoring" (chapter 7) in: "MRM handbook for financial inclusion programs", Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP), Washington, DC, 2018.

³⁸ Ruffer, Tim and Elise Wach, 'Review of M4P evaluation methods and approaches', Department for International Development and Itad, London and Hove, United Kingdom, 2013 (https://www.itad.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/M4P-Evaluation-Review_ITAD_Final-Copy.pdf, accessed 23 August 2021); figure 4, page 17.

DATA SOURCES

Project monitoring draws inputs from various sources, e.g focus group discussions (FGDs), stakeholder interviews, in-depths interviews, surveys, field observations, company records and a variety of secondary sources. Table A4:1 details the various sources included in the data collection plan for the remittances and migration initiative.

Sources of data for programme results measurement

Source	Data type, collection process and indicators
<p>Document review</p> <p>Performance-based agreements</p> <p>Non-disclosure agreements</p> <p>Other agreements</p> <p>Other documentation</p>	<p>Documenting and reviewing primary and secondary sources of information allows UNCDF to verify the achievement of results and programme milestones. This includes partner performance-based agreements (PBAs), non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) or other types of agreement, milestone reimbursement requests, and marketing materials, strategies, publications, directives, laws and reports that can be attributed to or linked to programme activities.</p> <p>Responsibility: UNCDF/programme operations and project staff</p> <p>Frequency: Continuous or quarterly depending on the type of verification document</p> <p>Results management framework indicators informed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of stakeholders supported by UNCDF Value of UNCDF investments Value of partner investments due to UNCDF's support. Number of policies, regulations and standards introduced or improved
<p>Contents and dissemination register</p>	<p>Programme publications, blogs, videos, policy briefs, press releases, Infogram presentations and/or diagnostic reports are registered, including their title, type, region, team member involved and associated link. We use the online platforms Asana and Airtable for this process.</p> <p>Responsibility: UNCDF/programme communications staff</p> <p>Frequency: Continuous</p> <p>Results management framework indicators informed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of publications, blogs and videos, and market research activities

Forms for capacitybuilding, events and external speaking opportunities

Using specifically designed online forms, programme capacity-building activities, events and external speaking opportunities are registered, including name, type, team members involved, dates, attendees, notes, and links to relevant documents.

Responsibility: All programme staff

Frequency: Continuous

Results management framework indicators informed:

Number of capacity-building activities

Number of participants of capacity-building activities

Number of events and number of external speaking opportunities

Sources of data for programme results measurement

Partner reporting data master file

Project partners are required to submit a quarterly report, which includes a quantitative component based on project key performance indicators (KPIs) and customized indicators defined with the partner as part of their results measurement plan, and a qualitative component being a short report through which partners are requested to inform UNCDF on project activities, challenges, risks, model changes and next steps. A similar tool is used to capture results with policy and data partners.

Responsibility: UNCDF project staff/partner staff

Frequency: Quarterly

Results management framework indicators informed:

Number of financial education and digital literacy campaigns

Number of new or improved digital services and business models piloted and scaled up

Number of responsive policy measures related to remittances initiated and adopted

Number of agents trained on new remittance or remittance-linked products

Number of active agents, registered customers, active customers, migrants and beneficiaries with improved skills and capabilities • Average remittance transaction cost

Learning, observations, risks and issues (LORI) (programme beneficiaries), private sector partners, key ecosystem actors **form** and policymakers, programme staff register qualitative results on an online

- **Key informant** form, including observations and learning, to understand what is driving **interviews** or inhibiting observed results, their sustainability and scalability. The LORI
 - **Focus group** form is also an important tool to identify unintended results and outcomes.
- discussions** Such insights will also be collected from key informant interviews, focus – **Lean data surveys** group discussions and surveys to be taken forward with programme – **Other similar** beneficiaries as part of human-centred design (HCD) activities.

sources

(continued)

Responsibility: UNCDF project staff and results measurement team

Frequency: Continuous (form)/annual (as necessary)

Results management framework indicators informed:

- Number of institutions showing increased commitment to integrating financial services linked to remittances in their operations
 - Number of partnerships facilitated to improve the outreach of digital remittance channels and offer financial products for migrants
 - Number of institutions that report improved data analytics, HCD or other capacity for product development
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- Number of partner organizations with increased sustainability
 - Customer satisfaction, capacity, motivation, scope and impact of remittance service adoption

Sources of data for programme results measurement

Impact evaluation For inclusive business interventions, an impact assessment assesses how and to what extent programme efforts have translated into impact on beneficiaries. Studies also assess potential negative impacts of UNCDF interventions.

Studies follow a mixed-methods research design, including one or a combination of the following: structured phone surveys, lean data surveys (interactive voice response), qualitative customer journey mapping, or rapid randomized controlled trials. Note that the exact methodology will be what is most appropriate to the nature of the business model being evaluated.

It is expected that such extensive data gathering and impact evaluation will be taken forward with one to two inclusive business interventions. Key informant interviews, document reviews and partner reporting will be used to assess impact for remaining interventions.

These research methods assess assumptions in the programme's theory of change, evaluating if and how new and improved inclusive financial services supported have translated into the overall goal of the improved financial health of end beneficiaries.

UNCDF will enter a long-term agreement with an external research partner to support the research design, data collection and analysis for the implementation of these mixed-methods research studies.

Responsibility: Data and results measurement team

Frequency: End line

Results management framework indicators informed:

- Amount of remittance flow channelled to productive investment
- Number of migrants and beneficiaries with improved financial health
- Customer satisfaction, capacity, motivation, scope and impact of remittance service adoption

PROGRAMME REFLECTION AND LEARNING

In line with international best practice,³⁹ the programme will closely monitor stakeholder and client outcomes through periodic reflection on progress and results. This is embedded throughout the monitoring process and internal programme activities. This systematically captures and documents how and why change occurs (or not). Defined as enhanced monitoring, it entails the following:

1. Monitoring beyond predefined indicators at output and outcome level, and observing unintended positive and negative impacts as part of project monitoring to be discussed during reflection meetings, including identifying, where applicable, alternative drivers of change.
2. Maintaining an open mind and a flexible approach to programme results and impact within the dynamic context of the market, allowing for a greater understanding of results and impact.
3. Regularly reviewing and reflecting on what data and observations suggest about activities and impacts.

To facilitate periodic reflection and enhanced programme monitoring, channels have been established to capture learning and observations to allow greater insights into the scope and impact of results. The learning, observations, risks and issues (LORI) form allows programme staff to record insights as they come up during implementation. The form is easily accessible, and records are used as a basis for brief weekly learning sessions, with discussion of observations held with all implementing teams. A monthly meeting is also held between the results measurement team and implementing teams to consolidate this learning. The first learning week was held in April 2021.

³⁹ See "Introduction to the DCED Standard" and "Enhanced monitoring".

Annex 6. Annual Report 2022

UNCDF Annual Report 2021 is available at this link:

<https://migrantmoney.uncdf.org/resources/research/migrant-money-annual-report-2022/>

Appendix M – Evaluation Tools

The Evaluation Guides and Tools are placed in a separate Vol 3 to this report.

Guideline KII public sector partners

Note 1: this interview guideline is meant for the MRP public sector partners.

Note 2: this interview guideline is maximalist in nature. Not all respondents may have the same information and capacity to answer. Check the relevance of the questions before asking.

Note 3: make sure you have reviewed all relevant information on the public sector partner and their project(s). Some questions may need to be adjusted in view of the specificity of the project. Many questions you can partly answers before the KII, based on the desk review. No need to ask what you could already know.

Note 4: the interview follows the EQ, but not in a sequential manner.

Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of interviewers • Introduction of evaluation and its scope • General discussion • Interviewers are independent • All interviews are confidential, no quotes will be put into the report without prior approval
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Date of interview	
Names informant(s) + function(s) + contact detail(s)	
Name of the public sector partner	
Name of the MRP project	
Noms du ou des répondants + fonction(s) + coordonnées	
Nom du partenaire du secteur publique	
Nom du sous-projet MRP	
General discussion and remarks by the interviewer	<i>(insert key information from the desk research here)</i>
Key information from desk review	
Discussion générale et remarques de l'intervieweur	
Informations clés issues de l'examen documentaire	

On remittance services	
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<p>Open discussion on remittance services.</p> <p>What is your role in promoting or regulating remittances and related services?</p> <p>Discussion ouverte sur les services de transfert de fonds.</p> <p>Quel est votre rôle dans la promotion ou la réglementation des envois de fonds et des services associés ?</p>	<p><i>(in part already known from the desk study)</i></p>
<p>Open discussion on remittance-linked services (built upon or leveraged by remittances)</p> <p>Discussion ouverte sur les services liés aux envois de fonds (construits ou exploités par les envois de fonds).</p>	
<p>What is the core constraint to developing remittance and linked services in your country / region?</p> <p>(EQ1.2)</p> <p>Quelle est la principale contrainte qui empêche les envois de fonds et les services associés ? (QE1.2)</p>	
<p>What is the core constraint to low income people efficiently receiving and <u>accessing</u> remittances?</p> <p>(EQ1.2)</p> <p>Quelle est la principale contrainte qui empêche les personnes à faible revenu d'<u>accéder</u> aux envois de fonds et aux services associés ? (QE1.2)</p>	
<p>What is the core constraint to low income people efficiently <u>using</u> remittance and linked services?</p> <p>(EQ1.2)</p> <p>Quelle est la principale contrainte qui empêche les personnes à faible</p>	

<p>revenu d'utiliser les envois de fonds et les services associés ? (QE1.2)</p>	
<p>To what extent is it within your institution's scope to remedy these constraints?</p> <p>To what extent is this beyond you?</p> <p>Explain.</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure est-il à la portée de votre institution de remédier à ces contraintes ?</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure cela vous dépasse-t-il ?</p> <p>Expliquer.</p>	
<p>To what extent is the promotion of efficient <u>remittances</u> channels a policy priority in your country or region?</p> <p>To what extent is the promotion of their <u>productive use</u> a policy priority in your country or region?</p> <p>To what extent is the promotion of <u>digital</u> financial services a policy priority in your country or region?</p> <p>To what extent it is not.</p> <p>Explain.</p> <p>(EQ1.2)</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure la promotion de canaux de transferts de fonds efficaces est-elle une priorité politique dans votre pays ou région ?</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure la promotion de leur utilisation productive est-elle une priorité politique dans votre pays ou région ?</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure la promotion des services financiers numériques est-</p>	<p><i>(the second point relates to using remittances for investment rather than consumption only)</i></p>

<p>elle une priorité politique dans votre pays ou région ?</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure ce n'est pas le cas.</p> <p>Expliquer.</p> <p>(QE1.2)</p>	
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<p>Do you see potential for digital / financial literacy services / campaigns supporting better remittance services, their access and use?</p> <p>What could be your institution's role?</p> <p>Explain</p> <p>Voyez-vous un potentiel pour les services/campagnes d'éducation numérique/financière soutenant de meilleurs services de transfert de fonds, leur accès et leur utilisation ?</p> <p>Quel pourrait être le rôle de votre institution ?</p> <p>Expliquer</p>	<p><i>This is already known from the desk research</i></p>
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<p>On the MRP-supported project</p>	
<p>What support did you receive from MRP?</p> <p>How do you rate the quality of the support?</p> <p>How responsive have UNCDF staff been to your questions and demands?</p> <p>What could have been better?</p> <p>(EQ3.1, 3.3)</p> <p>Quel accompagnement avez-vous reçu de la part de MRP ?</p>	<p><i>Grant, TA, market scan,... This is already known from the desk research</i></p> <p><i>On time, on budget, ...</i></p>

<p>Comment jugez-vous la qualité de l'accompagnement ?</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure le personnel du FENU a-t-il répondu à vos questions et demandes ?</p> <p>Qu'est qui aurait pu être mieux?</p> <p>(QE3.1, 3.3)</p>	
<p>What support did you receive from other development partners in the context of migrant remittances?</p> <p>Was there overlap with MRP? How was it coordinated?</p> <p>(EQ2.2)</p> <p>Quel soutien avez-vous reçu d'autres partenaires de développement concernant les envois de fonds des migrants ?</p> <p>Y a-t-il eu un chevauchement avec le MRP ? Comment a-t-il été coordonné ?</p> <p>(QE2.2)</p>	
<p>What specific regulation, directive or policy has the MRP grant/support allowed you to improve, which you otherwise would not have?</p> <p>To what extent did MRP improve your data collection practices and systems?</p> <p>(EQ4.1)</p> <p>Quelle réglementation, directive ou politique spécifique la subvention/soutien MRP vous a-t-elle permis d'améliorer, que vous n'auriez pas pu améliorer autrement ?</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure le MRP a-t-il amélioré vos pratiques et systèmes de collecte de données ?</p> <p>(QE4.1)</p>	<p><i>(Counterfactual discussion)</i></p>

<p>How precisely does the above improvement benefit RSPs / FSPs?</p> <p>How precisely does the above improvement benefit migrants and remittance recipients?</p> <p>(EQ4.1, 5.1)</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure précisément l'amélioration ci-dessus profite-t-elle aux RSP/FSP ?</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure précisément les améliorations ci-dessus profitent-elles aux migrants et aux destinataires de fonds ?</p> <p>(QE4.1, 5.1)</p>	<p><i>(possible not yet the case, so ex ante assessment)</i></p>
<p>What is the implementation or adoption status of these new or improved regulations, policies or directives?</p> <p>Same for data collection.</p> <p>(EQ5.1)</p> <p>Quel est l'état de mise en œuvre ou d'adoption de ces réglementations, politiques ou directives nouvelles ou améliorées ?</p> <p>Idem pour la collecte de données.</p> <p>(QE5.1)</p>	
<p>What factors, other than MRP, contributed to the success?</p> <p>Quels facteurs, autres que le MRP, ont contribué au succès ?</p>	<p><i>(May be too early to say)</i></p>
<p>What factors, other than MRP, contributed to lack of the success or underperformance compared to plan?</p> <p>Quels facteurs, autres que le MRP, ont contribué au manque de succès ou à</p>	

<p>la sous-performance par rapport au plan ?</p>	
<p>To what extent will your institution be able to continue undertaking similar work, unassisted by MRP, in the future?</p> <p>(EQ6.1)</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure votre institution sera-t-elle en mesure de continuer à entreprendre un travail similaire, sans l'aide du MRP, à l'avenir ?</p> <p>(QE6.1)</p>	
<p>To what extent does the MRP project, new regulation, directive, policy or data collection impact women? How?</p> <p>(EQ1.4, 5.10)</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure le projet MRP, la nouvelle réglementation, la directive, la politique ou la collecte de données ont-ils un impact sur les femmes ? Comment?</p> <p>(QE1.4, 5.10)</p>	
<p>To what extent does the MRP project, new regulation, directive, policy or data collection impact low-income clients? How?</p> <p>(EQ1.4, 5.10)</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure le projet MRP, la nouvelle réglementation, la nouvelle directive, la politique ou la collecte de données ont-ils un impact sur les clients à faible revenu ? Comment?</p> <p>(QE1.4, 5.10)</p>	
<p>To what extent does the MRP project, new regulation, directive, policy or data collection impact clients with disabilities? How?</p>	

<p>(EQ1.4, 5.10)</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure le projet MRP, la nouvelle réglementation, la directive, la politique ou la collecte de données ont-ils un impact sur les clients handicapés ? Comment?</p> <p>(QE1.4, 5.10)</p>	
<p>What information do you (regularly) provide to MRP?</p> <p>Is it reasonable? How much work?</p> <p>(EQ3.3)</p> <p>Quelles informations fournissez-vous (régulièrement) à MRP ?</p> <p>Est-ce raisonnable ? Combien de travail ?</p> <p>(QE3.3)</p>	

<p>Knowledge development and sharing</p>	
<p>Discussion on the plausible impact pathways of policy and regulatory reform on migrants and remittance recipients.</p> <p>(EQ5.9)</p> <p>Discussion sur les voies d'impact plausibles de la réforme politique et réglementaire sur les migrants et les destinataires des envois de fonds.</p> <p>(QE5.9)</p>	
<p>Do you undertake research to evaluate customer characteristics and the impact of remittances?</p> <p>Entrenez-vous des recherches pour évaluer les caractéristiques des clients et l'impact des envois de fonds ?</p>	

<p>To what extent does MRP share with you knowledge and data on remittances?</p> <p>Have you participated in MRP webinars?</p> <p>Did you review the various studies and reports published by MRP?</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure MRP partage-t-il avec vous des connaissances et des données sur les envois de fonds ?</p> <p>Avez-vous participé à des webinaires MRP ?</p> <p>Avez-vous examiné les différentes études et rapports publiés par le MRP ?</p>	
<p>How has the above-mentioned MRP knowledge development influenced your work?</p> <p>How has it reinforced capacities in your institution related to migrant remittances?</p> <p>Comment le développement des connaissances MRP mentionné ci-dessus a-t-il influencé votre travail ?</p> <p>Comment a-t-il renforcé les capacités de votre institution liées aux envois de fonds des migrants ?</p>	
<p>What could be improved by MRP in knowledge development and sharing?</p> <p>Qu'est-ce qui pourrait être amélioré par le MRP en matière de développement et de partage des connaissances ?</p>	

Guideline KII private sector partners

Note 1: this interview guideline is meant for the MRP private sector partners.

Note 2: this interview guideline is maximalist in nature. Not all respondents may have the same information and capacity to answer. Check the relevance of the questions before asking.

Note 3: make sure you have reviewed all relevant information on the private sector partner and innovative project(s) piloted. Some questions may need to be adjusted in view of the specificity of the project. Many answers you can research and partly answer beforehand. No need to ask what you could already know.

Note 4: the interview follows the EQ, but not in a sequential manner.

Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of interviewers • Introduction of evaluation and its scope • General discussion • Interviewers are independent • All interviews are confidential, no quotes will be put into the report without prior approval
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Date of interview	
Names informant(s) + function(s) + contact detail(s)	
Name of the private sector partner	
Name of the MRP sub-project	
Noms du ou des répondants + fonction(s) + coordonnées	
Nom du partenaire du secteur privé	
Nom du sous-projet MRP	
General discussion and remarks by the interviewer	<i>(insert key information from the desk research here)</i>
Key information from desk review	
Discussion générale et remarques de l'intervieweur	
Informations clés issues de l'examen documentaire	

On remittance services	
<p>Open discussion on remittance services.</p> <p>Through what channel do you distribute the service?</p> <p>What is your competitive position on the remittance market?</p> <p>Discussion ouverte sur les services de transfert de fonds.</p> <p>Par quel canal distribuez-vous le service ?</p> <p>Quelle est votre position concurrentielle sur le marché des envois de fonds ?</p>	<p><i>(in part already known from the desk study)</i></p>
<p>Open discussion on remittance-linked services (built upon or leveraged by remittances).</p> <p>Discussion ouverte sur les services liés aux envois de fonds (construits ou exploités par les envois de fonds).</p>	
<p>What is the core constraint to (you) developing remittance and associated services? (EQ1.2)</p> <p>Quelle est la principale contrainte qui vous empêche de développer les envois de fonds et les services associés ? (QE1.2)</p>	
<p>What is the core constraint to low-income people <u>accessing</u> remittance and associated services? (EQ1.2)</p> <p>Quelle est la principale contrainte qui empêche les personnes à faible revenu <u>d'accéder</u> aux envois de fonds et aux services associés ? (QE1.2)</p>	

<p>What is the core constraint to low-income people <u>using</u> remittance and associated services? (EQ1.2)</p> <p>Quelle est la principale contrainte qui empêche les personnes à faible revenu <u>d'utiliser</u> les envois de fonds et les services associés ? (QE1.2)</p>	
<p>Do you offer digital / financial literacy services / campaigns?</p> <p>Explain</p> <p>Proposez-vous des services/campagnes d'éducation numérique/financière ?</p> <p>Expliquer</p>	<p><i>This is already known from the desk research</i></p>

<p>On the MRP-supported project</p>	
<p>What support did you receive from MRP?</p> <p>How do you rate the quality of the support?</p> <p>How responsive have UNCDF staff been to your questions and demands?</p> <p>What could have been better?</p> <p>(EQ3.1, 3.3)</p> <p>Quel accompagnement avez-vous reçu de la part de MRP ?</p> <p>Comment jugez-vous la qualité de l'accompagnement ?</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure le personnel du FENU a-t-il répondu à vos questions et demandes ?</p> <p>Qu'est qui aurait pu être mieux?</p> <p>(QE3.1, 3.3)</p>	<p><i>Grant, TA, market scan,... This is already known from the desk research</i></p> <p><i>On time, on budget, ...</i></p>

<p>What support did you receive from other development partners related to migrant remittances?</p> <p>Was there overlap with MRP? How was it coordinated?</p> <p>(EQ2.2)</p> <p>Quel soutien avez-vous reçu d'autres partenaires de développement concernant les envois de fonds des migrants ?</p> <p>Y a-t-il eu un chevauchement avec le MRP ? Comment a-t-il été coordonné ?</p> <p>(QE2.2)</p>	
<p>What innovation has the MRP grant allowed you to undertake, which you otherwise would not have?</p> <p>(EQ4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4)</p> <p>Quelle innovation la subvention MRP vous a-t-elle permis d'entreprendre, que vous n'auriez pas pu entreprendre autrement ?</p> <p>(QE4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4)</p>	<p><i>Product design, client onboarding, distribution method,... Or digital / financial literacy</i></p>
<p>In what way is this innovation useful to clients? How precisely does it benefit your customers? How did you determine your clients require this?</p> <p>(EQ4.2, 4.3, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4)</p> <p>En quoi cette innovation est-elle utile aux clients ? Dans quelle mesure cela profite-t-il précisément à vos clients ? Comment avez-vous déterminé que vos clients en avaient besoin ?</p> <p>(QE4.2, 4.3, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4)</p>	

<p>In what way is this innovation unique on the market?</p> <p>How did the innovation strengthen your competitive position on the market? How has the market been affected?</p> <p>(EQ4.2, 4.3, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4)</p> <p>En quoi cette innovation est-elle unique sur le marché ?</p> <p>Comment l'innovation a-t-elle renforcé votre position concurrentielle sur le marché ?</p> <p>Comment le marché a-t-il été affecté ?</p> <p>(QE4.2, 4.3, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4)</p>	
<p>What is the current volume / value of the new innovative service?</p> <p>Is it increasing? (EQ5.6)</p> <p>Do you consider it a (commercial) success?</p> <p>Have remittance flows increased because of the MRP assistance? Quantify.</p> <p>Will you continue to invest in the service?</p> <p>(EQ4.3, 5.7)</p> <p>Quel est le volume/valeur actuel du nouveau service innovant ?</p> <p>Est-ce que ça augmente ? (QE5.6)</p> <p>Considérez-vous cela comme un succès (commercial) ?</p> <p>Les flux de transferts de fonds ont-ils augmenté grâce à l'assistance MRP ? Quantifier.</p> <p>Allez-vous continuer à investir dans le service ?</p>	

(QE4.3, 5.7)	
<p>What factors, other than MRP, contributed to the success of the innovation project?</p> <p>Quels facteurs, autres que le MRP, ont contribué au succès du projet d'innovation ?</p>	
<p>What factors, other than MRP, contributed to lack of the success or underperformance compared to plan?</p> <p>Quels facteurs, autres que le MRP, ont contribué au manque de succès ou à la sous-performance par rapport au plan ?</p>	<i>(e.g., market stakeholders, regulators)</i>
<p>What do you require to upscale the innovation?</p> <p>Are you going to do this?</p> <p>(EQ6.3)</p> <p>De quoi avez-vous besoin pour intensifier l'innovation ?</p> <p>Est-ce que tu vas faire ça ?</p> <p>(QE6.3)</p>	<i>(maturity model)</i>
<p>Is the innovation specifically targeted to women? How?</p> <p>(EQ1.4, 5.10)</p> <p>L'innovation s'adresse-t-elle spécifiquement aux femmes ?</p> <p>Comment?</p> <p>(QE1.4, 5.10)</p>	
<p>Is the innovation specifically targeted to low-income clients? How?</p> <p>(EQ1.4, 5.10)</p>	

<p>L'innovation est-elle spécifiquement destinée aux clients à faible revenu ? Comment?</p> <p>(QE1.4, 5.10)</p>	
<p>Is the innovation specifically targeted to clients with disabilities? How?</p> <p>(EQ1.4, 5.10)</p> <p>L'innovation s'adresse-t-elle spécifiquement aux clients handicapés ?</p> <p>Comment?</p> <p>(QE1.4, 5.10)</p>	
<p>What information do you (regularly) provide to MRP?</p> <p>Is it reasonable? How much work?</p> <p>(EQ3.3)</p> <p>Quelles informations fournissez-vous (régulièrement) à MRP ?</p> <p>Est-ce raisonnable ? Combien de travail ?</p> <p>(QE3.3)</p>	

<p>Effects on clients (EQ5.9)</p>	
<p>What is the general profile of the clients that use your (new) service?</p> <p>Do you know this at all, and how?</p> <p>Quel est le profil général des clients qui utilisent votre (nouveau) service ?</p> <p>Le savez-vous et comment ?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Age groups</i> • <i>Gender</i> • <i>Economic occupation (source of income)</i> • <i>Economic sector (employed, self-employed)</i> • <i>Wealth profile</i> • <i>Possible presence of vulnerable categories</i>
<p>How do you / did you research the financial service needs of your clients?</p>	

<p>What did you conclude - in relation to the project under discussion?</p> <p>Comment avez-vous/avez-vous étudié les besoins en services financiers de vos clients ?</p> <p>Qu'avez-vous conclu - par rapport au projet en discussion ?</p>	
<p>Have you investigated how the new service affects the (financial) well-being of clients?</p> <p>What did you find?</p> <p>Avez-vous étudié comment le nouveau service affecte le bien-être (financier) des clients ?</p> <p>Qu'as-tu trouvé?</p>	
<p>To what extent does the new service reduce poverty, e.g., make it easier on clients to make ends meet?</p> <p>Explain</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure le nouveau service réduit-il la pauvreté, par exemple en permettant aux clients de joindre les deux bouts plus facilement ?</p> <p>Expliquer</p>	<p><i>(Financial security, first dimension of financial health)</i></p>
<p>To what extent does the new service make it easier on clients to pay for emergencies (e.g., illness, death)?</p> <p>Explain</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure le nouveau service permet-il aux clients de payer plus facilement en cas d'urgence (par exemple, maladie, décès) ?</p> <p>Expliquer</p>	<p><i>(Financial resilience, second dimension of financial health)</i></p>

<p>To what extent does the new service make clients feel more confident in their financial situation (not worrying about being able to make ends meet)?</p> <p>Explain</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure le nouveau service permet-il aux clients de se sentir plus confiants dans leur situation financière (sans se soucier de pouvoir joindre les deux bouts) ?</p> <p>Expliquer</p>	<p><i>(Financial control, third dimension of financial health)</i></p>
<p>To what extent does the new service allow clients to improve their lives, long-term? (e.g., invest in housing, business, children, ...)</p> <p>Explain</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure le nouveau service permet-il aux clients d'améliorer leur vie à long terme ? (par exemple, investir dans le logement, les affaires, les enfants, ...)</p> <p>Expliquer</p>	<p><i>(Financial freedom, fourth dimension of financial health)</i></p>

<p>Knowledge development and sharing</p>	
<p>To what extent does MRP share with you knowledge and data on remittances?</p> <p>Have you participated in MRP webinars?</p> <p>Did you review the various studies and reports published by MRP?</p> <p>Dans quelle mesure MRP partage-t-il avec vous des connaissances et des données sur les envois de fonds ?</p>	

<p>Avez-vous participé à des webinaires MRP ?</p> <p>Avez-vous examiné les différentes études et rapports publiés par le MRP ?</p>	
<p>How has the above-mentioned MRP knowledge development influenced your work?</p> <p>How has it reinforced capacities in your institution related to migrant remittances?</p> <p>Comment le développement des connaissances MRP mentionné ci-dessus a-t-il influencé votre travail ?</p> <p>Comment a-t-il renforcé les capacités de votre institution liées aux envois de fonds des migrants ?</p>	
<p>What could be improved by MRP in knowledge development and sharing?</p> <p>Qu'est-ce qui pourrait être amélioré par le MRP en matière de développement et de partage des connaissances ?</p>	

Mini-Survey Migration and Remittances Programme

General information on the survey, for supervisors and enumerators

Target respondents

- Remittance recipients (senders are not interviewed), or those that use financial services leveraged by remittances.

How

- Kobo toolbox (online)

Screening (selection criteria for enumerators to check, *this is known from the RSP/FSP*)

- Is a remittance recipient
- Made use of the MRP innovations pioneered through the RSP / FSP

INTRODUCTION BY ENUMERATOR TO THE SURVEY RESPONDENT

My name isfrom **(name of company of the enumerator...)**.

The United Nations have helped the **(name of the RSP/FSP...)** improve the services of its clients. Specifically, the UN helped the RSP/FSP to **(name the action...)**. We are independent researchers. According to our information, you are receiving remittance payments and use the services of **(name of the RSP/FSP...)**. We like to learn from you how you use these services, how you appreciate it, and how these services could be improved. The interview will take up to 20 minutes. Your responses will be recorded on my tablet or in my phone. You do not need to answer any question you are not comfortable with. Any information you provide will be kept confidential and used only for the purpose of this research.

Do we have your permission to continue with the interview?

(If Yes, proceed with the interview. If No, say thank you and go to the next sampled respondent.)

INTRODUCTION DE L'ENQUÊTEUR AU RÉPONDANT DE L'ENQUÊTE

Je m'appellede **(nom de l'entreprise de l'enquêteur...)**.

Les Nations Unies ont aidé le **(nom du RSP/FSP...)** à améliorer les services de ses clients. Concrètement, les NU ont aidé le RSP/FSP à **(nommer l'action...)**. Nous sommes des chercheurs indépendants. Selon nos informations, vous recevez des transferts internationaux et utilisez les services de **(nom du RSP/FSP...)**. Nous voulions apprendre de vous comment vous utilisez ces services, comment vous les appréciez et comment ces services pourraient être améliorés. L'entretien durera jusqu'à 20 minutes. Vos réponses seront enregistrées sur ma tablette ou sur mon téléphone. Vous n'êtes pas obligé de répondre aux questions avec lesquelles vous n'êtes pas à l'aise. Toute information que vous fournissez restera confidentielle et utilisée uniquement aux fins de cette recherche.

Avons-nous votre permission pour poursuivre l'entretien ?

(Si oui, poursuivez l'entretien. Si non, dites merci et passez au répondant échantillonné suivant.)

GENERAL QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS GÉNÉRALES

1. **Location of interview:** _____
Location de l'entretien: _____

2. **Urbanicity of respondent:**

- Urban
- Peri-urban
- Rural

Urbanité du répondant :

- Urbain
- Périurbain
- Rural

3. **Gender of respondent:**

- Male
- Female

Genre du répondant :

- Mâle
- Femelle

4. **What is your age as at your last birthday?** _____ (years old)

(Can also ask year of birth)

Quel âge aviez-vous à votre dernier anniversaire ? _____ (ans)

(Peut aussi demander l'année de naissance)

5. **What is your current marital status?**

- Single, never married
- Married
- Separated or divorced
- Widowed

Quel est votre état civil actuel ?

- Célibataire, jamais marié
- Marié
- Séparé ou divorcé
- Veuf

6. **What is the highest level of education you have completed?**

- None
- Primary education – not completed
- Primary education – completed
- Secondary education – not completed

- Secondary education – completed
- Post-secondary vocational, polytechnic - completed
- Tertiary education, University - completed

(enumerator needs to adjust the classification to the local educational context)

Quel est le niveau d'études le plus élevé que vous ayez atteint ?

- Aucune
- Enseignement primaire – non complété
- Enseignement primaire – complété
- Enseignement secondaire – non complété
- Enseignement secondaire – complété
- Études professionnelles postsecondaires, polytechniques – complétées
- Enseignement supérieur, Université - complété

(l'enquêteur doit ajuster la classification au contexte éducatif local)

7. How many people including yourself live in your household? _____

(A household consists of a person or group of related or unrelated persons, who live together in the same housing unit, usually with one adult male or female as the head of the household, who share the same housekeeping and cooking arrangements, and are considered as one unit.)

Combien de personnes, vous y compris, vivent dans votre ménage ? _____

(Un ménage se compose d'une personne ou d'un groupe de personnes liées ou non, qui vivent ensemble dans la même unité d'habitation, généralement avec un adulte, homme ou femme, comme chef de ménage, qui partagent les mêmes modalités d'entretien ménager et de cuisine, et sont considérés comme une seule unité.)

8. How many people depend on your family income? _____

(A dependant is "a person who depends on or needs someone or something for aid, support, favour, etc, a child, spouse, parent, or another relative to whom one contributes all or a major amount of necessary financial support". If a family has six persons, including father, mother and four dependent children, this would count as six. However, if some children have their own income, they would not be dependent.)

Combien de personnes dépendent de votre revenu familial ? _____

(Une personne à charge est « une personne qui dépend ou a besoin de quelqu'un ou de quelque chose pour obtenir de l'aide, du soutien, une faveur, etc., un enfant, un conjoint, un parent ou un autre parent à qui l'on apporte la totalité ou une grande partie du soutien financier nécessaire ». Si une famille compte six personnes, dont le père, la mère et quatre enfants à charge, cela comptera pour six. Cependant, si certains enfants ont leur propre revenu, ils ne seront pas à charge.)

GENERAL QUESTIONS REGARDING INCOME AND REMITTANCES

QUESTIONS GÉNÉRALES SUR REVENU ET ENVOI DES FONDS

9. How do you describe your income position (self-classification)?

- Very low, very difficult to make ends meet
- Low, can just make ends meet
- Medium
- High

(enumerator needs to place the question in the local context and income classification)

Comment décrivez-vous votre situation de revenus (auto-classification) ?

- Très faible, très difficile à faire face aux dépenses
- Faible, peut juste couvrir les dépenses
- Moyen
- Élevé

(l'enquêteur doit placer la question dans le contexte local et dans la classification des revenus)

10. What is your main source of income?

- Salaried employment
- Self-employment, not employing anybody else (e.g., day work, petty trade)
- Small business (up to five persons, family members included)
- Medium or large business
- Remittances
- Other

Quelle est votre principale source de revenus ?

- Emploi salarié
- Travail indépendant, n'employant personne d'autre (par exemple, travail journalier, petit commerce)
- Petite entreprise (jusqu'à cinq personnes, membres de la famille inclus)
- Moyenne ou grande entreprise
- Envois de fonds (transferts)
- Autre

11. In case of salaried work, how do you receive your salary?

- Cash
- Bank account
- Mobile money
- In-kind

En cas de travail salarié, comment percevez-vous votre salaire ?

- Espèces (en liquide)
- Compte bancaire
- Argent mobile
- En nature

12. Who is sending you remittances?

- Spouse
- Child
- Other family member, friend or other person

Qui vous envoie des fonds ?

- Conjoint
- Enfant
- Autre membre de la famille, ami ou autre personne

13. What part of your income is made up of remittances, and how important are these?

- Very important – most important part of family income (> 60%), living without these would be impossible
- Important - about half of income (40-60%), living without these remittances would be difficult
- Helpful, less than half of income (20-40%), but supports my expenses
- Only a small part of income (< 20%), helpful but not critical

(enumerator to get a feel for the size class, recognising that the amount of remittances may vary over time)

Quelle part de vos revenus est constituée d'envois de fonds, et quelle est leur importance ?

- Très important – partie la plus importante du rendement familial (> 60 %), vivre sans cela serait impossible
- Important : environ la moitié des revenus (40 à 60 %), vivre sans ces transferts serait difficile
- Utile, moins de la moitié des revenus (20-40%), mais supporte mes dépenses
- Seulement une petite partie des revenus (< 20 %), utile mais pas critique

(l'enquêteur doit avoir une idée de la classification, en reconnaissant que le montant des envois de fonds peut varier dans le temps)

14. What is the approximate amount you receive monthly?

- _____
- Do not know / do not want to say

(this would be a monthly average)

Quel est le montant approximatif que vous recevez mensuellement ?

- _____
- Je ne sais pas / je ne veux pas le dire

(ce serait une moyenne mensuelle)

15. What do you use the remittances for (multiple answers possible, but only if significant)?

- Living expenses, food, clothes
- Health
- Education
- Pay back debts
- Saving
- Investment in private house or land (not including agricultural land)
- Investment in my business (including agricultural land)
- Invest in a means of transport
- Weddings, celebrations, funerals, etc.
- Other: _____

À quoi servent-vous les transferts de fonds (plusieurs réponses possibles, mais seulement si elles sont significatives) ?

- Frais de subsistance, nourriture, vêtements
- Santé
- Éducation
- Rembourser les dettes
- Sauvegarde (épargne)
- Investissement dans une maison ou un terrain privé (hors terres agricoles)
- Investissement dans mon entreprise (y compris terrain agricole)
- Investir dans un moyen de transport
- Mariages, célébrations, funérailles, etc.
- Autre : _____

16. How do you presently receive remittances?

- Cash, delivered in person
- Money transfer service (e.g., Western Union, MoneyGram, Post office, etc...)
- Transfer into my bank account
- Digital wallet (mobile money)
- Other (specify): _____

Comment recevez-vous des transferts à présent ?

- Espèces, livrés en personne
- Service de transfert d'argent (par exemple, Western Union, MoneyGram, Post office, etc...)
- Virement sur mon compte bancaire
- Portefeuille numérique (argent mobile)
- Autre (à spécifier) : _____

17. How would you like to receive remittances?

- Cash, delivered in person
- Money transfer service (e.g., Western Union, MoneyGram, Post office, etc...)
- Transfer into my bank account
- Digital wallet (mobile money)
- Other (specify): _____

Comment aimez-vous recevoir des fonds ?

- Espèces, livrés en personne
- Service de transfert d'argent (par exemple, Western Union, MoneyGram, Post office, etc...)
- Virement sur mon compte bancaire
- Portefeuille numérique (argent mobile)
- Autre (à spécifier) : _____

INFORMATION ON THE RSP / FSP SERVICES

INFORMATION DES SERVICES DU RSP / FSP

(enumerator may have to explain what MRP did with the RSP / FSP, what service was developed)

(l'enquêteur devra peut-être expliquer ce que MRP a fait avec le RSP/FSP, quel service a été développé)

18. How many years have you been a client of the RSP / FSP?

- < 1 year
- 1-2 years
- > 2 years

Depuis combien d'années êtes-vous client du RSP/FSP ?

- < 1 an
- 1-2 ans
- > 2 ans

19. Do you own or have access to a mobile phone?

- Yes
- No

Possédez-vous ou avez accès à un téléphone portable ?

- Oui
- Non

20. Do you use a mobile phone to access financial services from the RSP / FSP?

- Yes
- No

Explain? _____

Utilisez-vous un téléphone portable pour accéder aux services financiers du RSP/FSP ?

- Oui
- Non

Expliquer? _____

21. Did the RSP / FSP introduce you to a new financial service, not previously used?

- Yes
- No

Explain? _____

(enumerator must know what service it could be. The answer is yes when the client was already with the RSP and got a new service, or when the client started with the RSP and receive a service not previously used elsewhere.)

Le RSP/FSP vous a-t-il fait découvrir un nouveau service financier, non utilisé auparavant ?

- Oui
- Non

Expliquer? _____

(L'enquêteur doit savoir de quel service il peut s'agir. La réponse est oui lorsque le client était déjà avec le RSP et a obtenu un nouveau service, ou lorsque le client a commencé avec le RSP et reçoit un service qui n'était pas utilisé ailleurs auparavant.)

22. What are the main benefits of the new financial service compared to the previous situation (multiple answers possible)?

- Receive remittances digitally, used to be cash
- Receive remittances in a more convenient manner, closer to my home
- Receive remittances more securely (safe)
- Cost of remittance sending / receiving reduced
- Leverage remittance to get a loan (If so, please continue first to the supplementary questions on credit)
- Other: _____

(the questions in this section may need to be adjusted depending on the RSPs / FSPs to be visited)

Quels sont les principaux avantages du nouveau service financier par rapport à la situation précédente (plusieurs réponses possibles) ?

- Recevez des fonds par voie numérique, auparavant en espèces
- Recevoir des fonds de manière plus pratique, plus proche de chez moi
- Recevez des fonds de manière plus sécurisée (sûr)
- Coût d'envoi/réception des fonds réduit
- Tirer parti des envois de fonds pour obtenir un prêt (Si tel est le cas, veuillez d'abord passer aux questions supplémentaires sur le crédit)
- Autre : _____

(les questions de cette section devront peut-être être ajustées en fonction des RSP/FSP à visiter)

23. What are the main challenges of the new financial service compared to the previous situation (multiple answers possible)?

- Expensive (transaction cost)
- Too much paperwork
- Often not accessible (connectivity or IT problem)
- Do not know when remittance arrives
- Difficult to convert to cash
- Not safe
- Other: _____
- No challenges, all is fine

Quels sont les principaux défis du nouveau service financier par rapport à la situation précédente (plusieurs réponses possibles) ?

- Cher (coût de transaction)
- Trop de paperasse
- Souvent non accessible (problème de connectivité ou informatique)
- Je ne sais pas quand le transfert arrivera
- Difficile de convertir en espèces
- Pas sûr (faible sécurité)
- Autre : _____
- Pas de défis, tout va bien

24. Do you have recommendations for improving the service? _____

Avez-vous des recommandations pour améliorer le service ? _____

25. Are you intending to continue using the service?

- Yes
- No

Explain? _____

Avez-vous l'intention de continuer à utiliser le service ?

- Oui
- Non

Expliquer? _____

26. Did the RSP / FSP offer you digital / financial literacy training?

- Yes
- No

Explain? _____

(enumerator must know what it could be)

Le RSP/FSP vous a-t-il proposé une formation en littératie numérique/financière ?

- Oui
- Non

Expliquer? _____

(l'enquêteur doit savoir ce que cela pourrait être)

27. How was it conducted?

- In-person
- Through a phone application (e.g., smartphone app)
- Through social media
- Other: _____

(enumerator must already know this)

Comment cela s'est-il déroulé ?

- En personne
- Via une application téléphonique (par exemple, une application pour smartphone)
- Via les réseaux sociaux
- Autre : _____

(l'enquêteur doit déjà le savoir)

28. How did the digital / financial literacy training affect you?

- I started to use a financial service I previously did not know
- Induced me to start saving
- Better understand my private finances
- Better understand my business finances

- Other: _____

(the questions in this section may need to be adjusted depending on the RSPs / FSPs to be visited)

Comment la formation en littératie numérique/financière vous a-t-elle affecté ?

- J'ai commencé à utiliser un service financier que je ne connaissais pas auparavant
- M'a incité à commencer à épargner
- Mieux comprendre mes finances privées
- Mieux comprendre les finances de mon entreprise
- Autre : _____

(les questions de cette section devront peut-être être ajustées en fonction des RSP/FSP à visiter)

29. Do you have recommendations for improving the service? _____

Avez-vous des recommandations pour améliorer le service ? _____

IMPACT ON FINANCIAL HEALTH

IMPACTE SUR LA SANTÉ FINANCIÈRE

(For enumerator: the following questions are about the causal effect of the RSP / FSP service on the recipient, to be compared with the counterfactual of the new service not having been introduced. The narrative explanation may help detect the causal pathway. The questions follow the four dimensions of financial health.)

(Pour l'enquêteur : les questions suivantes portent sur l'effet causal du service RSP/FSP sur le bénéficiaire, à comparer avec le contrefactuel du nouveau service n'ayant pas été introduit. L'explication narrative peut aider à détecter le cheminement causal. Les questions suivent les quatre dimensions de la santé financière.)

30. Are you able to pay your living expenses?

- Yes, generally
- No, I am often out of money

Êtes-vous en mesure de payer vos frais de subsistance ?

- Oui, généralement
- Non, je suis souvent à court d'argent

31. Has the RSP / FSP service made it easier to pay or manage your living expenses?

- Yes
- No

Explain? _____

(Enumerator to compare to the counterfactual pre-project situation, look for the explanation, how exactly the new RSP / FSP service made a change, and what other factors may have played a role)

Le service RSP/FSP a-t-il rendu plus facile le paiement ou la gestion de vos frais de subsistance ?

- Oui
- Non

Expliquer? _____

(L'enquêteur doit comparer à la situation contrefactuelle d'avant-projet, et chercher l'explication comment exactement le nouveau service RSP/FSP a apporté un changement, et quels autres facteurs ont pu jouer un rôle)

32. If you are faced with an incident, such as decease or death, can you find the money to deal with it?

- Yes
- No

Explain how? _____

(e.g., use savings, sells assets such as livestock, borrow money, use informal system such as Rosca, cut back on expenses, take children out of school)

Si vous êtes confronté à un incident, tel qu'un décès, pouvez-vous trouver l'argent pour y faire face ?

- Oui
- Non

Expliquer comment ? _____

(par exemple, utiliser ses économies, vendre des actifs tels que du bétail, emprunter de l'argent, utiliser un système informel tel que le Tontin, réduire ses dépenses, retirer les enfants de l'école)

33. Has the RSP / FSP service made it easier to cope with unexpected expenses and emergencies?

- Yes
- No

Explain? _____

Le service RSP/FSP a-t-il facilité la gestion des dépenses imprévues et des urgences ?

- Oui
- Non

Expliquer ? _____

34. Do you regularly worry that you may not be able to pay your monthly bills?

- Yes, often
- No, rarely

Craignez-vous régulièrement de ne pas pouvoir payer vos dépenses mensuelles ?

- Oui, souvent
- Non, rarement

35. Has the RSP / FSP service made you feel more confident in your financial situation (not worrying about being able to make ends meet)?

- Yes
- No

Explain? _____

Le service RSP/FSP vous a-t-il permis d'avoir plus confiance en votre situation financière (sans vous soucier de pouvoir payer vos dépenses récurrentes) ?

- Oui
- Non

Expliquer? _____

36. Are you able to save?

- Yes
- No

Êtes-vous capable de faire des épargnes ?

- Oui
- Non

37. Do you feel your long-term financial situation is improving so that you can better your life?

- Yes
- No

(think about buying a house, investing in a business or in your children)

Pensez-vous que votre situation financière à long terme s'améliore afin que vous puissiez améliorer votre vie ?

- Oui
- Non

(pensez à acheter une maison, à investir dans une entreprise ou dans vos enfants)

38. Has the RSP / FSP service helped you meet your long-term financial desires and goals?

- Yes
- No

Explain? _____

Le service RSP/FSP vous a-t-il aidé à réaliser vos désirs et objectifs financiers à long terme ?

- Oui
- Non

Expliquer? _____

39. Do you have any final comments to offer? _____

Avez-vous des commentaires finaux à proposer ? _____

Thank you so much for your time and your answers.

Merci beaucoup pour votre temps et vos réponses.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS FOR CREDIT CLIENTS (e.g., SympliFi)

QUESTIONS SUPPLÉMENTAIRES POUR LES CLIENTS DE CRÉDIT (ex. SympliFi)

40. What did you use the credit for?

- Private expenditure
- Business expenditure

À quoi avez-vous utilisé le crédit ?

- Dépenses privées
- Dépenses de mon entreprise

41. Did you borrow from an MFI or bank before?

- No, never
- Yes

Aviez-vous déjà emprunté auprès d'une IMF ou d'une banque ?

- Non, jamais
- Oui

42. How was the loan amount?

- Just right
- Too little, less than I had asked

Quel était le montant du prêt ?

- Juste ce qu'il faut
- Trop peu, moins que ce que j'avais demandé

43. How was the loan duration?

- Just right
- Too short for my needs

Quelle a été la durée du prêt ?

- Juste ce qu'il faut
- Trop court pour mes besoins

44. How long was the loan approval time after you had identified the guarantor?

- One week
- One to four weeks
- More than four weeks

Quel a été le délai d'approbation du prêt après avoir identifié le garant ?

- Une semaine

- Une à quatre semaines
- Plus de quatre semaines

45. Were the loan conditions, including interest rate and repayment, clearly explained to you? Did you fully understand?

- Yes
- No

Les conditions du prêt, notamment le taux d'intérêt et le remboursement, vous ont-elles été clairement expliquées ? Avez-vous bien compris ?

- Oui
- Non

46. If you had not had the guarantor, would you still have been able to borrow the same amount of money from the MFI or elsewhere?

- Yes
- No

Si vous n'aviez pas eu de garant, auriez-vous quand même pu emprunter le même montant auprès de l'IMF ou ailleurs ?

- Oui
- Non

47. Was loan repayment difficult?

- Yes
- No

Le remboursement du prêt a-t-il été difficile ?

- Oui
- Non

48. Did the loan help you increase your business income?

- Yes
- No

Le prêt vous a-t-il aidé à augmenter les revenus de votre entreprise ?

- Oui
- Non

49. Overall, how satisfied were you with the loan product?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Not satisfied

Explain? _____

Dans l'ensemble, dans quelle mesure étiez-vous satisfait du produit de prêt ?

- Très satisfait

- Plutôt satisfait
- Pas satisfait

Expliquer? _____

FGD guide remittance recipients

Note 1: This interview guideline is meant for remittance recipients in group form.

Note 2: Since the characteristics and expected benefits for recipients will differ from one RSP/FSP to the other, please define the exact line of questioning in advance of the FGD.

Note 3: The idea of an FGD is to be able to follow the group dynamics, and explore their responses in a manner a standardised survey could not.

Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of interviewers • Introduction of evaluation and its scope • Interviewers are independent • All interviews are confidential
Date of interview	
Names informants + function(s) + contact detail(s) Noms du ou des répondants + fonction(s) + coordonnées	<i>Not necessary to collect all names, just the leader if applicable, but indicate number, and core characteristics of participants.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age groups • Gender • Economic occupation (source of income) • Economic sector (employed, self-employed) • Wealth profile • Possible presence of vulnerable categories (LNOB)
General discussion and remarks by the interviewer Discussion générale et remarques de l'intervieweur	<i>It may require some effort to explain why the FGD is taking place.</i>
Discussion on remittances	
Who is sending you remittances? Qui vous-envoie de l'argent de l'extérieur ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spouse • Child • Other
How important are the remittances to family income? (EQ1.2) Quelle est l'importance des envois de fonds dans le revenu familial?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very important – most important part of income (> 60%), living without these would be impossible • Important - about half of income (40-60%), living without these would be difficult • Helpful, less than half of income (20-40%), but supports my expenses

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Only a small part of income (< 20%), helpful but not critical</i>
<p>Indication of the amounts received, and periodicity (month, quarter, incidental...)</p> <p>Indication des sommes perçues, et périodicité (mois, trimestre, irrégulier...)</p>	
<p>What are remittances used for (in general)?</p> <p>(EQ1.2)</p> <p>À quoi servent les envois de fonds (en général)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Living expenses, food, clothes</i> • <i>Health</i> • <i>Education</i> • <i>Pay back debts</i> • <i>Saving</i> • <i>Investment in private house or land (not including agricultural land)</i> • <i>Investment in a business (including agricultural land)</i> • <i>Invest in a means of transport</i> • <i>Weddings, celebrations, funerals, etc.</i> • <i>Other: _____</i>
<p>What difference would the absence of remittances make to the family?</p> <p>(EQ1.2)</p> <p>Quelle différence l'absence de transferts de fonds ferait-elle pour la famille ?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Critical, we would not survive</i> • <i>Important, we would be poor</i> • <i>Reduced standard of living</i> • <i>Little difference</i>
<p>How do you receive remittances (now)? Indicate the main channel(s).</p> <p>(EQ1.2, 4.3)</p> <p>Comment recevez-vous les envois de fonds (maintenant) ? Indiquez le(s) moyens de réception principal(aux).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cash, delivered in person</i> • <i>Money transfer service (e.g., Western Union, MoneyGram, Post office, etc...)</i> • <i>Transfer into my bank account</i> • <i>Digital wallet (mobile money)</i> • <i>Other: _____</i>
<p>How did you receive remittances two years ago (e.g., before the MRP intervention in the RSP (..name of RSP..)? Differently as today?</p> <p>(EQ1.2, 4.3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cash, delivered in person</i> • <i>Money transfer service (e.g., Western Union, MoneyGram, Post office, etc...)</i> • <i>Transfer into my bank account</i> • <i>Digital wallet (mobile money)</i> • <i>Other: _____</i>

<p>Comment recevez-vous les transferts de fonds il y a deux ans (par exemple, avant l'intervention du MRP dans le RSP (<i>..nom du RSP..</i>)) ? Différemment qu'aujourd'hui ?</p>	
<p>What is the preferred way of receiving remittances?</p> <p>(EQ1.2)</p> <p>Quelle est la voie préférée de recevoir des fonds ?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cash, delivered in person</i> • <i>Money transfer service (e.g., Western Union, MoneyGram, Post office, etc...)</i> • <i>Transfer into my bank account</i> • <i>Digital wallet (mobile money)</i> • <i>Other: _____</i>
<p>Deeper discussion on changes in remittance reception, what are the benefits?</p> <p>(EQ4.3)</p> <p>Discussion plus approfondie sur les changements dans la réception des fonds, quels en sont les avantages ?</p>	<p><i>Meaning before the MRP project with the RSP / FSP, which the enumerator should know about.</i></p> <p><i>Only if applicable, e.g., the MRP-funded innovation influenced the distribution method.</i></p>

<p>RSP / FSP financial services</p>	<p><i>(Interviewer should know the service, hence can guide the discussion)</i></p>
<p>Can you explain the services of the RSP / FSP in the field of remittances, or service related to it or derived from it?</p> <p>(EQ4.3)</p> <p>Pouvez-vous expliquer les services du RSP/FSP dans le domaine des transferts de fonds, ou le service qui y est lié ou qui en découle ?</p>	<p><i>Interviewer should already know this.</i></p>
<p>Has the RSP / FSP recently introduced a new service (also compared to other service providers)?</p> <p>In what way is it new, innovative or unique on the market?</p> <p>(EQ4.3, 5.4)</p>	<p><i>Interviewer should already know this.</i></p>

<p>Le RSP/FSP a-t-il récemment introduit un nouveau service (également par rapport à d'autres prestataires de services) ?</p> <p>En quoi est-il nouveau, innovant ou unique sur le marché ?</p>	
<p>What are the main benefits of the new financial service compared to the previous situation (multiple answers possible)?</p> <p>Try to quantify the cost element.</p> <p>Try to quantify the distribution element (e.g., faster, more secure, proximity).</p> <p>(EQ5.6)</p> <p>Quels sont les principaux avantages du nouveau service financier par rapport à la situation précédente (plusieurs réponses possibles) ?</p> <p>Essayez de quantifier l'élément de coût.</p> <p>Essayez de quantifier l'élément de distribution (par exemple, plus rapide, plus sécurisé, proximité).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Receive remittances digitally, used to be cash</i> • <i>Receive remittances in a more convenient manner, closer to my home</i> • <i>Receive remittances more securely (safe)</i> • <i>Cost of remittance sending / receiving reduced</i> • <i>Leverage remittance to get a loan</i> • <i>Other: _____</i>
<p>What are the main challenges of the new financial service compared to the previous situation (multiple answers possible):</p> <p>(EQ5.6)</p> <p>Quels sont les principaux défis du nouveau service financier par rapport à la situation précédente (plusieurs réponses possibles) :</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Expensive (transaction cost)</i> • <i>Too much paperwork</i> • <i>Often not accessible (connectivity or IT problem)</i> • <i>Do not know when remittance arrives</i> • <i>Difficult to convert to cash</i> • <i>Not safe</i> • <i>Other: _____</i>
<p>How does the new service compare to other ways to receive or use remittances?</p> <p>(EQ5.6)</p>	

<p>Comment le nouveau service se compare-t-il aux autres moyens de recevoir ou d'utiliser des fonds ?</p>	
<p>How could it be improved?</p> <p>Comment cela pourrait-il être amélioré?</p>	
<p>Have you because of the new service increased the use of remittances or remittance-related services?</p> <p>(EQ5.8)</p> <p>En raison du nouveau service, avez-vous augmenté l'utilisation des envois de fonds ou des services liés aux envois de fonds ?</p>	
<p>Are you intending to continue using the new service?</p> <p>Explain.</p> <p>(EQ6.4)</p> <p>Avez-vous l'intention de continuer à utiliser le nouveau service ?</p> <p>Expliquer.</p>	

Digital / financial literacy training	<i>(Interviewer knows if this was included in the project)</i>
<p>How did the RSP / FSP draw your attention to start using the (new) service?</p> <p>(EQ4.4)</p> <p>Comment le RSP/FSP a-t-il attiré votre attention pour commencer à utiliser le (nouveau) service ?</p>	
<p>How did the RSP / FSP explain to you how to use the (new) service?</p>	

<p>(EQ4.4)</p> <p>Comment le RSP/FSP vous a-t-il expliqué comment utiliser le (nouveau) service ?</p>	
<p>What digital / electronic devices do you have access to in your family?</p> <p>À quels appareils numériques/électroniques avez-vous accès dans votre famille ?</p>	<p><i>Mobile phone, smart phone, computer, Tablet,...</i></p>
<p>Did the RSP / FSP offer you digital / financial literacy training?</p> <p>How was it conducted?</p> <p>How did you appreciate it?</p> <p>(EQ4.4)</p> <p>Le RSP/FSP vous a-t-il proposé une formation en littératie numérique/financière ?</p> <p>Comment s'est-il déroulé ?</p> <p>Comment l'avez-vous apprécié ?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In-person</i> • <i>Through a phone application</i> • <i>Through social media</i> • <i>Other: _____</i>
<p>How did the digital / financial literacy training affect you?</p> <p>Explain.</p> <p>(EQ5.5)</p> <p>Comment la formation en littératie numérique/financière vous a-t-elle affecté ?</p> <p>Expliquer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Started to use a service I previously did not know</i> • <i>Induced me to start saving</i> • <i>Better understand my private finances</i> • <i>Better understand my business finances</i> • <i>Other: _____</i>
<p>Have you because of the digital and financial literacy training increased the use of remittances or remittance-related services?</p>	

<p>(EQ5.8)</p> <p>Grâce à la formation en littératie numérique et financière, avez-vous augmenté l'utilisation des envois de fonds ou des services liés aux envois de fonds ?</p>	
<p>How could digital and financial literacy training be improved?</p> <p>Comment améliorer la formation en matière de littératie numérique et financière ?</p>	

<p>Financial health (EQ5.9)</p>	
<p>Are you able to pay your bills (living expenses)?</p> <p>Are you regularly out of money, unable to pay your bills?</p> <p>Êtes-vous en mesure de payer vos dépenses (frais de subsistance) ?</p> <p>Vous êtes régulièrement à court d'argent et incapable de couvrir vos dépenses ?</p>	
<p>Has the RSP / FSP service made it easier to pay your bills (living expenses)?</p> <p>Explain how.</p> <p>What other factors contributed?</p> <p>If the RSP / FSP did not exist, what difference would it make to your capacity to pay your bills?</p> <p>Le service RSP/FSP a-t-il facilité le paiement de vos dépenses (frais de subsistance) ?</p> <p>Expliquer comment.</p>	

<p>Quels autres facteurs ont contribué ?</p> <p>Si le RSP/FSP n'existait pas, quelle différence cela ferait-il sur votre capacité à couvrir vos dépenses ?</p>	
<p>When you are faced with an emergency (e.g., health, death), how do you cope financially?</p> <p>If at all.</p> <p>Lorsque vous êtes confronté à une urgence (par exemple, santé, décès), comment faites-vous face financièrement ?</p> <p>Si du tout.</p>	<p><i>(use savings if any, borrow, sell assets, economise on daily expenses, take children from school, ask family to send more remittances)</i></p>
<p>Has the RSP / FSP service made it easier to cope with emergencies?</p> <p>Explain how.</p> <p>What other factors contributed?</p> <p>If the RSP / FSP did not exist, what difference would it make to your capacity to cope with emergencies?</p> <p>Le service RSP/FSP a-t-il facilité la gestion des urgences ?</p> <p>Expliquer comment.</p> <p>Quels autres facteurs ont contribué ?</p> <p>Si le RSP/FSP n'existait pas, quelle différence cela ferait-il sur votre capacité à faire face aux urgences ?</p>	
<p>Do you regularly worry that you may not be able to pay your monthly bills?</p> <p>Vous craignez régulièrement de ne pas pouvoir couvrir vos dépenses mensuelles ?</p>	

<p>Has the RSP / FSP service made you feel more confident in your financial situation (not worrying about being able to make ends meet)?</p> <p>Explain how.</p> <p>What other factors contributed?</p> <p>If the RSP / FSP did not exist, what difference would it make to your financial ease of mind?</p> <p>Le service RER/FSP vous a-t-il permis d'avoir plus confiance en votre situation financière (sans vous soucier de pouvoir payer vos coûts) ?</p> <p>Expliquer comment.</p> <p>Quels autres facteurs ont contribué ?</p> <p>Si le RSP/FSP n'existait pas, quelle différence cela ferait-il sur votre tranquillité financière ?</p>	
<p>Are you able to save?</p> <p>Do you feel your long-term financial situation is improving so that you can better your life?</p> <p>Êtes-vous capable d'épargner?</p> <p>Pensez-vous que votre situation financière à long terme s'améliore afin que vous puissiez améliorer votre vie ?</p>	
<p>Has the RSP / FSP service helped you meet your long-term financial desires and goals?</p> <p>What role did it play in saving or investing?</p> <p>Explain how.</p> <p>What other factors contributed?</p>	

If the RSP / FSP did not exist, what difference would it make to your long-term finances?

Le service RSP/FSP vous a-t-il aidé à réaliser vos désirs et objectifs financiers à long terme ?

Quel rôle a-t-il joué dans l'épargne ou l'investissement ?

Expliquer comment.

Quels autres facteurs ont contribué ?

Si le RSP/FSP n'existait pas, quelle différence cela ferait-il sur vos finances à long terme ?

Case study guidelines

(preferably no more than four pages, but depends on the case)

Introduction

Brief introduction:

- What the case study is about (in a few lines)
- Why it was selected for evaluation - what the case study aims to demonstrate
- When and how the case study was conducted
- Thanking the participants, stakeholders and resource persons

Background

- Concise description of the situation before the project was undertaken. Define the problems and/or opportunities that called for MRP intervention (problem description).
- How was this problem identified, and who (the key players) determined that a project intervention was necessary. Some projects were identified through a call for proposals, others by UNCDF.

The project

- A brief description of the project results or changes in the regulatory environment or market system that the project was to bring about (outputs, outcomes).
- Who were the intended immediate and final beneficiaries (outcomes, impacts).¹
- What performance metric / target was defined, if any.

The process

- Who implemented the project as lead partner, who were the other partners – if any.
- Description of the project activities by the lead partner and other partners. How was the project carried out.
- What roles were played by the respective partners.
- What factors helped the project implementation, which hindered it.
- What was the role played by UNCDF, other than providing grant funding, if any.

Results achieved

- Results achieved to date. If possible results that are expected in the coming two to four years.
- Comparison of the pre- and post project situation.
- The changed role of the various players after the project took place.
- Effects on immediate and final beneficiaries.
- Measures to ensure sustainability of project achievements post-project.

Evaluative conclusions

(see also the evaluation matrix in the inception report for further guidance on the questions to answer)

Relevance

- Extent to which the project responds to a well-defined development problem, such as the finding that remittances do not (sufficiently) contribute to human development.

¹ Immediate beneficiaries are those directly affected by the project. Final beneficiaries are migrants and remittance recipients. However, the distance between these groups can be very long in some cases.

- Extent to which the project aligns with the broader policy framework, see inception report.
- Coherence within the MRP ToC.

Effectiveness

- Extent to which the project achieved its own objectives, as initially formulated. This concerns outputs and outcomes.
- Evidence of new policies and regulations launched, innovative products on the market, knowledge systematised and disseminated.
- Tangible proof of change in market systems.
- Contribution analysis (see inception report). **Please soon in the case study process formulate your causal question(s): your hypothesis of the development results the MRP intervention may have brought about, and which the research will confirm or refute.** See separate guidance.

Impact

- Possible impact pathway to the final beneficiaries, which are migrants and remittance recipients, taking into account that some MRP projects are far away from the impact level.
- Evidence of impact, if any.

Efficiency

- Project on time, on budget (or not)
- Its general conduct and explanation for this
- Cost per output (output efficiency)
- Cost per outcome (value for money), if possible (requires a benchmark)

This is not only related to the project, but partner investments as well (cost / benefit).

Sustainability

- Sustainability of the activity itself, extent to which it can outlive the MRP support, be permanent.
- Upscaling potential (same activity, same partner)
- Replication activity (same activity, new partner, preferably unassisted)
- Organisation durably changed (e.g., can undertake similar work unassisted)

Annex(es)

1. Quantitative data
2. Sources of information

Guidance on contribution analysis:

Use the following steps:

1. Reconstruction of **theory of change** related to the case-study project, including assumed contributions of interventions that took place under MRP. N.B. MRP projects usually have their own ToC already.
2. Formulation of the **causal question**, specifying the outcome level change on which contribution analysis will be applied, and formulate the effect – at outcome level – that MRP is hypothesised to have brought about (e.g., “the project reduced the average cost of remitting from A to B from 5% to 4%”).
3. **Research:**
 - a. the activities of the theory of change have in fact occurred

- b. the expected results have been achieved, in particular the above-mentioned outcomes (if not, contribution analysis is not relevant)
- 4. Identification and categorisation of **actual contributing factors**, distinguishing factors (interventions) that are within the scope of the MRP from other contributing factors (contextual, by partner or related to other assistance received).
- 5. **Weighing** of contributing factors based on perceived importance and evidence-base (reliability).
- 6. Formulation of the **contribution claim**, and attribution of observed effects to MRP: Significant attribution to MRP (1), made a difference (2), made a (small) contribution (3), no contribution observed (4)

See also the inception report and separate guidance for further information.

Guidance on contribution analysis for case studies

Example: **SympliFi**

Step 1: Reconstruct the project ToC

Most MRP projects have a project ToC in the RMP, so that helps. If not, the project ToC needs to be reconstituted to figure out what development effect was intended.

Step 2: formulate the causal question / hypothesis.

Formulation of the **causal question**, specifying the outcome level change to which contribution analysis will be applied, and formulate the effect – at outcome level – that MRP is hypothesised to have brought about. This should obviously be an outcome from the above-mentioned ToC, if available, and within MRP's sphere of control hence not too high up. The analysis is meant to confirm or refute this causal claim.

In the case of SympliFi, the testable hypothesis would be something like: **“Due to MRP, receiving households have access to credit and put this to productive use”**.

Step 3: Research the hypothesised results.

- the activities of the theory of change have in fact occurred
- the expected results have been achieved, in particular the above-mentioned outcomes (e.g., households accessing credit and investing it productively)

In the absence of results there can also not be any result attribution and the remaining steps are redundant.

Step 4: Identify major contributing factors.

Identification and categorisation of actual contributing factors (interventions) that are within the scope of the MRP. Identification of other contributing factors, not MRP (contextual, by partner or related to other assistance received), so-called rival (explaining) factors. There may also be external or internal factors that may have hindered result achievement, either passively or actively, hindering factors.

In the case of SympliFi, the own staff and partner Boabab will have contributed a lot of work, which needs to be recognised and rated as a rival factor. A hindering factor may be BCEAO regulations.

Step 5: Weighing of contributing factors based on perceived importance and evidence.

Assess the contribution of each of the contributing, rival or hindering factors to the results by using:

- Quantitative counterfactual: Where possible assess result indicators relative to a control or benchmark (e.g., a similar partner that was not assisted).
- **Qualitative counterfactual:** assessed through interviews (e.g., stakeholder views on what practices/outcomes would have been like in the absence of MRP)

It may help to list contributing, rival and hindering factors as follows:

Factors (contributing, rival or hindering)	Source of evidence	Reliability of evidence	Importance of factor
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		High	High
		Medium	Medium
		Low	Low

Step 6: Assessment of the contribution claim

Based on the above, formulation of the contribution claim, and attribution of observed effects to MRP, summarised through contribution scores as follows:

1. significant attribution to MRP (which means that a very large part of the result can be attributed to MRP, and that in its absence little or no results would have emerged)
2. MRP made a difference (but so did rival factors)
3. MRP made a (small) contribution (rival factors were more important)
4. no contribution of MRP observed (because it was immaterial, ineffective, or no results were achieved)

This assessment is imperatively somewhat subjective and based on the evaluator’s appreciation.

Guideline KII public sector partners Financial Resilience project

Note 1: this interview guideline is meant for the public sector partners in the Financial Resilience project

Note 2: make sure you have reviewed all relevant information on the public sector partner and their project(s). Some questions may need to be adjusted in view of the specificity of the project. Many questions you can partly answers before the KII, based on the desk review. No need to ask what you could already know.

Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of interviewer • Introduction of evaluation and its scope • General discussion • Interviewers are independent • All interviews are confidential, no quotes will be put into the report without prior approval
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Date of interview	
Names informant(s) + function(s) + contact detail(s)	
Name of the private sector partner	
Name of the sub-project	
General discussion and remarks by the interviewer	<i>(insert key information from the desk research here)</i>
Key information from desk review	

On insurance / pension services	
Open discussion on insurance and pension services for migrant communities (sender and receiver).	<i>(in part already known from the desk study)</i>
What is your role in promoting and regulating insurance and pension services?	

<p>What is the core constraint to developing insurance and pension services for migrant communities in your country / region?</p> <p>(EQ1.2)</p>	
<p>What is the core constraint to migrant people <u>accessing</u> insurance and pension services? (EQ1.2)</p>	
<p>To what extent is it within your institution's scope to remedy these constraints?</p> <p>To what extent is this beyond you?</p> <p>Explain.</p>	
<p>To what extent is the promotion of efficient insurance and pension services a policy priority in your country or region?</p> <p>To what extent is the promotion of <u>digital</u> insurance and pension services a policy priority in your country or region?</p> <p>To what extent it is not.</p> <p>Explain.</p> <p>(EQ1.2)</p>	

<p>On the FRP-supported project</p>	
<p>How was the project scope determined?</p> <p>To what extent this reflects the Ministry's wishes?</p>	<p><i>(see the appendix to the legal document)</i></p>

To what extent UNCDF suggested what to include?	
<p>What support did you receive from MRP?</p> <p>How do you rate the quality of the support?</p> <p>How responsive have UNCDF staff been to your questions and demands?</p> <p>What could have been better?</p> <p>(EQ3.1, 3.3)</p>	<p><i>This is already known from the desk research. Mainly the stakeholder workshop, the country study and a mail by Premasis with recommendations</i></p>
Are you still open to work with UNCDF to complete the workplan?	
<p>What support did you receive from other development partners in the context of migrant remittances?</p> <p>Was there overlap with MRP? How was it coordinated?</p> <p>(EQ2.2)</p>	

Knowledge development and sharing	
<p>Did you receive the Bangladesh country study on migrant insurance and pensions, prepared by UNCDF?</p> <p>How did you appreciate it? How good and truthful is it?</p> <p>How will it help the Ministry?</p>	<p><i>This docs sits in "6. Research and Analysis", under "10. Country studies".</i></p>
For each country, the UNCDF paper has	<i>(Only if read the country study)</i>

highlighted possible interventions to be undertaken. Do you agree? Could it be possible to point out a shortlist of priorities to be addressed (especially for SDC/UNCDF phase two)?	
To what extent has UNCDF shared with you other research on insurance and pensions for migrants? How did you appreciate it?	<i>(Only if applicable)</i>
Did you take part in UNCDF webinars and events?	
How has the above-mentioned knowledge development influenced your work?	
What could be improved by UNCDF in knowledge development and sharing?	

Guideline KII private sector partners Financial Resilience project

Note 1: this interview guideline is meant for the private sector partners in the Financial Resilience project

Note 2: make sure you have reviewed all relevant information on the private sector partner and innovative project(s) piloted. Some questions may need to be adjusted in view of the specificity of the project. Many answers you can research and partly answer beforehand. No need to ask what you could already know.

Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of interviewer • Introduction of evaluation and its scope • General discussion • Interviewers are independent • All interviews are confidential, no quotes will be put into the report without prior approval
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Date of interview	
Names informant(s) + function(s) + contact detail(s)	

Name of the private sector partner	
Name of the sub-project	
General discussion and remarks by the interviewer	<i>(insert key information from the desk research here)</i>
Key information from desk review	

On insurance / pension services	
Open discussion on insurance and pension services for migrant communities (sender and receiver). Through what channel do you distribute the insurance and pension service? What is your competitive position on the insurance and pension market?	<i>(in part already known from the desk study)</i>
What is the core constraint to (you) developing insurance and pension services for migrant communities? (EQ1.2)	
What is the core constraint to migrant people <u>accessing</u> insurance and pension services? (EQ1.2)	

On the Request for Applications process	
How were you made aware of the RfA for grants and TA to develop insurance and pension services?	<i>Direct contacts, events, UNCDF website...</i>

<p>How was the RfA process? To what extent and how UNCDF staff intervened in the project development process?</p> <p>How responsive have UNCDF staff been to your questions and demands?</p>	
<p>How long did it take from initial contact to a positive decision from UNCDF?</p>	
<p>Did you understand why the project eventually did not go ahead?</p>	
<p>What is your overall assessment of the RfA process and the role of UNCDF?</p>	
<p>What would you advise them for the future?</p>	
<p>What support did you receive from other development partners related to migrant insurance and pensions?</p>	

FRP-supported project	
<p>What innovation was FRP grant and TA meant to help you undertake?</p> <p>(EQ4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4)</p>	<p><i>Product design, client onboarding, distribution method,...</i> <i>Or digital / financial literacy</i></p>
<p>In what way is this innovation useful to clients? How precisely does it benefit your customers? How did you determine your clients require this?</p> <p>(EQ4.2, 4.3, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4)</p>	

<p>In what way is this innovation unique on the market?</p> <p>How would the innovation strengthen your competitive position on the market?</p> <p>(EQ4.2, 4.3, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4)</p>	
<p>Is the innovation specifically targeted to women? How?</p> <p>(EQ1.4, 5.10)</p>	<i>(see desk research)</i>
<p>To what extent do you already provide to the market similar migrant insurance and pension services?</p> <p>Do you consider it a (commercial) success?</p>	
<p>Considering that the FRP support did not start, did you launch the innovative project anyway?</p>	
<p>Are you still open to work with UNCDF on this project in subsequent phases of the project?</p>	<i>(if SDC accepts to finance a next phase)</i>

Knowledge development and sharing	
<p>To what extent has UNCDF shared with you research on insurance and pensions for migrants?</p> <p>How did you appreciate it?</p> <p>Have you participated in webinars?</p>	<i>(if applicable)</i>

Did you take part in UNCDF webinars and events (other than to promote the RfA)?	
How has the above-mentioned knowledge development influenced your work?	
What could be improved by UNCDF in knowledge development and sharing?	

Guideline KII General Stakeholders and Resource persons Financial Resilience project

Note 1: this interview guideline is meant for general stakeholders, mainly those who were consulted by UNCDF in the process.

2: make sure you have reviewed all relevant information on the private sector partners and innovative project(s) piloted. Some questions may need to be adjusted in view of the specificity of the project. Many answers you can research and partly answer beforehand. No need to ask what you could already know.

Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of interviewer • Introduction of evaluation and its scope • General discussion • Interviewers are independent • All interviews are confidential, no quotes will be put into the report without prior approval
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Date of interview	
Names informant(s) + function(s) + contact detail(s)	
General discussion and remarks by the interviewer	<i>(insert key information from the desk research here)</i>
Key information from desk review	

On insurance / pension services	
Open discussion on insurance and pension services for migrant communities (sender and receiver). How are / were you involved?	<i>(in part already known from the desk study)</i>
What is the core constraint to the private sector developing insurance and pension services for migrant communities? (EQ1.2)	

What is the core constraint to migrant people <u>accessing</u> insurance and pension services? (EQ1.2)	
Has your organization previously worked with UNCDF on migrants' social protection/financial inclusion?	
What stakeholders' governance do you see to promote/develop migrants' <u>social protection</u> and financial resilience (especially at country level)? What is the role and added value you see in the UNCDF contribution to inquiring on migrants' social protection/financial inclusion?	
Who are the main stakeholders that could be mobilized to address and improve <u>wage digitalization</u> (in relationship to improving migrants' social protection and financial inclusion)?	
To what extent does the market already provide similar migrant insurance and pension services?	

Knowledge development and sharing	
To what extent has UNCDF shared with you research on insurance and pensions for migrants? How did you appreciate it?	<i>(If applicable)</i>

What is the added value and original contribution of the UNCDF research documents compared to existing literature and studies (on the topic)?	
Is the “canvas” tool to assess the maturity of a system (for migrants social protection) a useful instrument that you/your organization employed?	<i>(Only if applicable)</i>
For each country, the UNCDF paper has highlighted possible interventions to be undertaken. Do you agree? Could it be possible to point out a shortlist of priorities to be addressed (especially for SDC/UNCDF phase two)?	<i>(Only if read a country study)</i>
Did you take part in UNCDF webinars and events?	
How has the above-mentioned knowledge development influenced your work?	
What could be improved by UNCDF in knowledge development and sharing?	
Different UNCDF studies highlighted the vulnerability of women in accessing social protection/financial inclusion; at the same time these studies hardly identify gender-sensitive interventions to put in place. What priority actions could you recommend?	

On UNCDF relevance	
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<p>Has your organization previously worked with UNCDF on migrants' social protection/financial inclusion?</p>	
<p>What stakeholders' governance do you see to promote/develop migrants' social protection and financial resilience (especially at country level)?</p> <p>What is the role and added value you see in the UNCDF contribution to inquiring on migrants' social protection/financial inclusion?</p>	
<p>Who are the main stakeholders that could be mobilized to address and improve wage digitalization (in relationship to improving migrants' social protection and financial inclusion)?</p>	

Guideline KII Evaluation Committee RfA private sector partners Financial Resilience project

Note 1: this interview guideline is meant for the evaluators in the RfA for private sector partners in the Financial Resilience project

Note 2: make sure you have reviewed all relevant information on the private sector partners and innovative project(s) piloted. Some questions may need to be adjusted in view of the specificity of the project. Many answers you can research and partly answer beforehand. No need to ask what you could already know.

Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of interviewer • Introduction of evaluation and its scope • General discussion • Interviewers are independent • All interviews are confidential, no quotes will be put into the report without prior approval
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Date of interview	
Names informant(s) + function(s) + contact detail(s)	
General discussion and remarks by the interviewer	<i>(insert key information from the desk research here)</i>
Key information from desk review	

On insurance / pension services	
Open discussion on insurance and pension services for migrant communities (sender and receiver). How are / were you involved?	<i>(in part already known from the desk study)</i>
What is the core constraint to the private sector developing insurance and	

pension services for migrant communities? (EQ1.2)	
What is the core constraint to migrant people <u>accessing</u> insurance and pension services? (EQ1.2)	

On the Request for Applications process	
How were you invited to take part in the evaluation of the RfA? In what capacity?	<i>Direct contacts, events, UNCDF website...</i>
How was the RfA process? To what extent and how UNCDF staff intervened in the project development process? How responsive have UNCDF staff been to your questions and demands?	
How long did it take from initial contact with private sector to a positive decision from UNCDF?	
Did you understand why the projects eventually did not go ahead?	
Were you asked to give special attention to projects reaching out to women migrants and family-members? How? What priority actions were supported to reach out to women migrants?	
What is your overall assessment of the RfA process and the role of UNCDF?	

What would you advise them for the future?	
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FRP-supported projects	
To what extent were the selected projects truly innovative? Compare to existing services. (EQ4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4)	<i>Product design, client onboarding, distribution method,... Or digital / financial literacy</i>
In what way are these innovations useful to clients? How precisely does it benefit customers? (EQ4.2, 4.3, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4)	
In what way are these innovations unique on the market? (EQ4.2, 4.3, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4)	
Are the innovations specifically targeted to women? How? (EQ1.4, 5.10)	<i>(see desk research)</i>
To what extent does the market already provide similar migrant insurance and pension services?	
Considering that the FRP support did not start, do you expect partners to launch the innovative projects anyway?	

Knowledge development and sharing	
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<p>To what extent has UNCDF shared with you research on insurance and pensions for migrants?</p> <p>How did you appreciate it?</p>	<p><i>(If applicable)</i></p>
<p>What is the added value and original contribution of the UNCDF research documents compared to existing literature and studies (on the topic)?</p>	
<p>Is the “canvas” tool to assess the maturity of a system (for migrants social protection) a useful instrument that you/your organization employed?</p>	<p><i>(Only if applicable)</i></p>
<p>Did you take part in UNCDF webinars and events?</p>	
<p>How has the above-mentioned knowledge development influenced your work?</p>	
<p>What could be improved by UNCDF in knowledge development and sharing?</p>	
<p>Different UNCDF studies highlighted the vulnerability of women in accessing social protection/financial inclusion; at the same time these studies hardly identify gender-sensitive interventions to put in place. How could this be explained and commented?</p>	

<p>On UNCDF relevance</p>	
<p>Has your organization previously worked with UNCDF on migrants’ social</p>	

protection/financial inclusion?	
<p>What stakeholders' governance do you see to promote/develop migrants' <u>social protection</u> and financial resilience (especially at country level)?</p> <p>What is the role and added value you see in the UNCDF contribution to inquiring on migrants' social protection/financial inclusion?</p>	
<p>Who are the main stakeholders that could be mobilized to address and improve <u>wage digitalization</u> (in relationship to improving migrants' social protection and financial inclusion)?</p>	

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