



Advancing Women's Economic Empowerment through DIGITAL FINANCIAL INCLUSION

35% of women worldwide – approximately 980 million – remain excluded from the formal financial system.¹

THE OPPORTUNITY

Digital financial services empower women to earn more and build assets. This greater financial power fuels gender equality and economic growth.



CHALLENGES*

Women are **7% less likely to be involved in the formal economy** than men, reducing their ability to control their own finances.²

Women-owned small businesses face a **credit gap of \$1.7 trillion globally**, limiting their ability to grow their businesses.⁵

The **lack of sex-disaggregated data** hinders policymakers and financial service providers from designing policies and products that meet the needs of women.⁶



SOLUTIONS*

Digital financial services give women **greater control over their own finances**, including safe, convenient, and discreet access to banking accounts.^{3,4}

Digital channels help collect instructive data on women business owners, leading to a **better understanding of their needs** and **more comprehensive creditworthiness assessments**.

Digital financial services help collect sex-disaggregated data, which helps policymakers to **develop female-friendly policies**, and providers to design **better digital financial products** for women.



“Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.”

NIGER Women who received social transfers via their mobile phones **were better able to control this income and reprioritize household spending.** As a result, their families had more diverse diets and their households were more likely to grow cash crops than those who received social transfers in cash.⁷

INDIA In a government workfare program reaching over 100 million people, women who received benefits paid digitally into an account led to **increased employment** compared to those paid in cash. The biggest impact was on women whose husbands had expressed the most opposition to their wives working.⁹

SOUTH AFRICA The use of digital cards for government safety net transfers enhanced women’s decision-making power in the household and led to a **92% increase in women’s likelihood of participating in the labor market.**¹¹

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC One-third of low-income women who were previously rejected for loans **were considered creditworthy** using alternative data and a gender-differentiated credit scoring model.⁸

KENYA When **women-headed households** adopted mobile money, the country saw a **22% plunge in extreme poverty and a 20% increase in savings** between 2008 and 2014. In addition, 185,000 women left farming jobs for better, more stable jobs in business or retail.¹⁰



* These represent only a few of the many important challenges and solutions. They should not be read as an exhaustive list.



UNSGSA

BETTER THAN CASH
ALLIANCE



THE WORLD BANK

SEPTEMBER 2018