



# FINANCIAL INCLUSION FOR GENDER AND WOMEN

DESPITE OVERALL PROGRESS IN FINANCIAL INCLUSION, WOMEN ARE STILL DISPROPORTIONATELY EXCLUDED FROM THE FORMAL FINANCIAL SYSTEM.

ACCORDING TO 2017 GLOBAL INDEX DATA, 65 PERCENT OF WOMEN HAD AN ACCOUNT COMPARED TO 72 PERCENT OF MEN. THIS GENDER GAP HAS REMAINED PERSISTENT AT 9 PERCENTAGE POINTS FOR DEVELOPING ECONOMIES SINCE 2011. GLOBALLY, WOMEN ALSO MADE UP MORE THAN HALF OF THE WORLD'S UNBANKED.

AFI's global membership endorsed the Denarau Action Plan to advance women's financial inclusion and drive gender diversity during the 2016 Global Policy Forum (GPF) in Nadi, Fiji. Since then, 28 AFI members have made at least one Maya Declaration commitment related to gender and women's financial inclusion.

Taking the opportunity at the 2017 AFI GPF held in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt, the Gender and Women's Financial Inclusion Committee (GWFIG) called on AFI members to halve the gender gap in each of their countries by 2021 – setting specific targets on gender diversity and women's financial inclusion, in line with the Maya Declaration.

Established to champion the agenda and provide strategic guidance on initiatives undertaken by the Network, the AFI Gender and Women's Financial Inclusion Committee (GWFIG) supports the AFI Board of Directors in providing leadership on advancing and promoting women's financial inclusion in the AFI Network. Committee members are: Bank of Zambia, Central Bank of Egypt, Central Bank of Lesotho, National Bank of Rwanda, National Bank of Cambodia, Banco Central de Reserva de El Salvador and Da Afghanistan Bank.



> 1/2

of the world's unbanked are women



65%

of women have an account compared to 72% of men



9%

gender gap has remained persistent for developing economies since 2011

## THE DENARAU ACTION PLAN CONTRIBUTES TO WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND THE UNITED NATIONS' SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDG) SPECIFICALLY GOAL 5 – GENDER EQUALITY.

The Action Plan reflects the commitments of AFI members in accelerating financial inclusion for women by promoting smart policies and leveraging on the success of AFI peer learning and sharing platform. The Action Plan calls for, amongst other things:

- > **To incorporate gender considerations in the AFI Network's core activities**, with each Working Group to promote peer learning and develop appropriate knowledge products relating to gender and women's financial inclusion between 2016-2018
- > **To encourage AFI members to set specific financial inclusion objectives and targets for women's financial inclusion** within the framework of Maya Declaration and their national financial inclusion strategies
- > **To collaborate and coordinate** with key stakeholders in taking concrete steps to better understand the women market segment, advocate the business case, encourage effective data collection and implementation of sound gender-sensitive policies and creating an enabling and supportive environment.

As a cross-cutting issue that requires policy intervention in all work streams of AFI, gender and women's financial inclusion has been incorporated into all AFI thematic work streams. AFI focused on how to successfully integrate policies for women's financial inclusion into each stage of national financial inclusion strategy (NFIS) design and implementation through its Financial Inclusion Strategy Peer Learning Group (FISPLG). A focal point is appointed for each of the AFI working groups to coordinate with FISPLG and lead on issues and knowledge products relating to gender and women's financial inclusion, according to each of their mandates.

A special sub-group of the Financial Inclusion Data (FID) Working Group has also been established to develop tools, build capacity and promote best practices in collecting and using sex-disaggregated data. AFI is part of the Data2X Women's Financial Inclusion Data (WFID) partnership, which encourages the collection and use of supply- and demand-side sex-disaggregated data on women's access to and use of financial services.

In 2018, the Consumer Empowerment & Market Conduct (CEMC) Working Group created a gender sub-group to better address consumer protection for women. During the same year, FISPLG also formed a gender sub-group to continue to drive the momentum for gender initiatives within the AFI Working Groups.

During 2018, AFI co-chairs the Women 20 (W20) Financial Inclusion Group under the Argentinian presidency of the G20, alongside the Global Banking Alliance for Women (GBA). As a co-chair, AFI supports the content development to inform W20's policy recommendations as well as advocacy, and outreach on gender and women's financial inclusion.

IN 2018, AFI LAUNCHED A SPECIAL REPORT ON GENDER DIVERSITY WITHIN AFI MEMBER INSTITUTIONS, AS FIRST STEP TO DRIVE GREATER GENDER DIVERSITY WITHIN MEMBER'S OWN INSTITUTION AND ITS INITIATIVES AND STRATEGIES, AS COMMITTED UNDER THE DENARAU ACTION PLAN.

During the year, Women's World Banking and AFI signed a Memorandum of Understanding to collaborate in developing and delivering a Leadership and Diversity for Regulators programs in 2019 and 2020. The objective of the programs is to equip participants with leadership tools and skills to advance financial inclusion policy initiatives for women as well as build more gender-diverse teams and leaders within the institution.

## MEMBER INSTITUTIONS HAVE SET SPECIFIC TARGETS IN THE MAYA DECLARATION COMMITMENTS TO SUPPORT WOMEN'S FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND BRIDGE THE GENDER GAP:



### BANK OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA

**1 million**

more unbanked low-income people in Papua New Guinea reached, 50% of whom will be women.

### CENTRAL BANK OF SOLOMON ISLANDS

**160,000**

people in Solomon Islands will have access to appropriate and affordable services by 2017 and at least 50% should be women.

### RESERVE BANK OF FIJI

**130,000**

more adults have access to formal financial services, of which 50% are women

### RESERVE BANK OF VANUATU

**76,000**

Enable availability of relevant financial services for at least 76,000 unbanked people in Vanuatu (at least 38,000 to be women) by December 2016.

Other countries have set quantitative targets:

### BURUNDI

**48.7%**

Women clients will make up 48.7% of the total clientele of financial institutions.

### GHANA

**65%**

Increase women's access to financial services from 57% to 65% by November 2020

### MALAWI

**60%**

Increase the number of women clients to 60%.