



AfPI
African Financial
Inclusion Policy Initiative



PIRI
Pacific Islands
Regional Initiative

VICTORIA CONSENSUS

ADVANCING RESPONSIBLE
AND INCLUSIVE
INNOVATION FOR
FINANCIAL INCLUSION



The global digital economy is growing quickly. This is creating a need for inclusive and resilient digital infrastructure which can effectively promote sustainable digital financial inclusion.

Innovation will be key to driving low-cost adoption and distribution of digital financial services, promoting efficiency, and developing the skills, tools, knowledge, practice, and regulatory interventions needed to develop and implement smart policies.

But for innovation to work, it must be truly inclusive and responsible, complementing stability and integrity objectives.

AFI defines “inclusive innovation” as promoting and supporting responsible digital solutions and technological approaches, to enhance financial inclusion, while considering the specific needs and circumstances of unserved and underserved populations, ensuring equitable access, meaningful usage, and affordability of financial services for all.

Responsible and inclusive innovation is at the heart of AFI’s mandate and commitment to the pursuit of financial inclusion for all. It will be fundamental to delivering non-exclusionary, high-quality, gender-transformative financial services to underserved populations including women, youth, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), persons with disabilities, and the elderly.

For more than a decade, AFI member institutions have been leading and promoting the financial inclusion agenda for 85% of the world’s population, through supporting and implementing collective principles along specific thematic priorities. These include the Sochi Accord on Inclusive FinTech, decisions on addressing exclusion of significant populations through the Denarau Action Plan on Gender Inclusive Finance, and the Kigali Statement: Accelerating Financial Inclusion for Disadvantaged Groups.

Around the world, including across Africa and the Pacific, AFI members are actively exploring the transformative power of inclusive innovation, recognizing the need to balance the risks and uncertainty they might present. They are embracing it to effectively respond to challenges, and to capitalise on opportunities, in the global financial sector.

They identify its relevance as a tool to push financial inclusion to the last mile across all regions.

Recognizing the transformative potential of responsible and inclusive innovation and the positive net gain when harnessed as a collective body, to create a brighter future for our people and deepen financial inclusion, we, the members of the Alliance for Financial Inclusion from Africa and the Pacific Islands jointly commit to:

- V** **Viable and sustainable solutions:** We embrace, with a shared vision, a vigilant and proactive forward-thinking mindset that transcends geographical barriers, to situate safety and accountability in the creation of a conducive regulatory environment for inclusive innovation to flourish, while minimizing consumer risks, ensuring financial stability, promoting ethical behaviour, and advancing the resilience of society.
- I** **Inclusion at the forefront:** We shall redouble our efforts and prioritize inclusion to ensure that everyone, regardless of circumstance, background, or location, has equal and unhindered access to the benefits of responsible innovation, while through our initiatives and policies, ensure that inclusion complements financial stability and integrity objectives.
- C** **Collaborate for impact:** We commit to forging strategic partnerships and collaborations by leveraging the power of our collective intelligence to address potential systemic risks, emerging sovereign and cross-border regulatory and supervisory challenges, and other precipitating concerns associated with innovation, by sharing knowledge, best practices, and resources.
- T** **Technology-first approach:** We shall encourage research and development by embracing experimentation, and innovative regulatory approaches to emerging technologies such as blockchain, big data analytics and artificial intelligence, with a strong focus on responsible product design and development, prioritizing technology-based supervisory tools, as we balance the mitigation of risks, regulatory compliance, and security within our financial systems.
- O** **Optimize skills and resources:** We commit to reimagining talent and skills development by investing in building capacity, peer learning and network-wide knowledge exchange, that equip our most valuable resource - our people - to exemplify authority through competence and demonstrate technical capability via responsible practices.
- R** **Responsible Innovation:** We commit to championing cooperation amongst all stakeholders across regions to advocate publicly and signal our unequivocal commitment to responsible, safe, and inclusive innovation that targets and addresses the barriers of the weakest links, with the aim of leaving no one behind.
- I** **Invest in resilient infrastructure:** We commit to prioritizing investments in robust, scalable, and resilient digital infrastructure, and to promoting a collective risk-conscious approach to shared utilities, while promoting integration, interoperability, connectivity, and corporate governance principles that mitigate against operational risks with digital infrastructure.
- A** **Adapt regulatory approaches:** We shall proactively adapt our regulatory frameworks, in tandem with the rapid evolution of technologies, safeguarding against risks, and exclusionary effects, to accommodate inclusive innovation and unlock opportunities in cutting-edge technologies, while taking the necessary measures to ensure responsible use of the derived solutions.

