

Responsible Inclusive Finance Working Group, Convening #8

Hosted via WebEx

March 27, 2014, 8:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.

Participants

- Frank Ballard, Grameen Foundation
- Isabelle Barres, Smart Campaign
- JD Bergeron, Truelift
- Laurence Bottin, Planet Rating
- Bonnie Brusky, CERISE
- Laura Foose, SPTF
- Katie Hoffmann, SPTF
- Emmanuelle Javoy, Consultant
- Cécile Lapenu, CERISE
- Karin Malmberg, PIIF
- Kasia Pawlak, MFC (representing the SP Fund for Networks)
- Julie Peachey, Grameen Foundation
- Micol Pistelli, MIX
- Tony Sheldon, SPTF
- Lucia Spaggiari, MicroFinanza Rating
- Sebastian von Stauffenberg, MicroRate

I. Meeting Overview

The eighth convening of the Responsible Inclusive Finance (RIF) Working Group focused on two main agenda items: (i) a review of the joint RIF concept note on capacity building, including a potential pilot program and (ii) discussion on using Salesforce as a platform for furthering coordination through shared contacts. The RIF Working Group will convene again in May 2014. The recording can be found here: <https://sptf25.webex.com/sptf25/ldr.php?RCID=6b770ba95e8b09a5295d8e6ef07b56b0>

II. Next Steps

The RIF Working Group identified the following action items:

- Katie Hoffmann will edit the joint RIF concept note to include the group's input and will send the revised note to the group. Group members will read the revised note and send back edits.
- J.D Bergeron, Bonnie Brusky, Laura Foose and Katie will meet to discuss next steps in creating a shared Salesforce platform.
- RIF Working Group members will send Katie any questions or details on how they would like MIX to house and display social performance indicators.

III. Summary of Dialogue on Agenda Items

i. Joint RIF Concept Note on Capacity Building

- Katie Hoffmann walked the group through the current draft of a Joint RIF Concept Note, which included input from last meeting's discussion.
- According to the draft:
 - The proposed activities would support various stages of the responsible finance path: from *Learn* (through workshops) to *Assess* (through trainings and assessments) to *Plan* and *Implement* (through supporting TA providers).
 - Support Learning: Conduct introductory sessions on responsible inclusive finance.
 - Support Assessment and Planning: Build out skills of trainers who can conduct external assessments or help MFIs perform self-assessments. Specifically, the group would build out skills for the SPI-4, Smart Assessment and Truelift Assessment.
 - Support Transparency: Fund MIX upgrades to house indicators collected by SPI-4.
 - Support Implementation: Build out skills of TA providers for the Universal Standards for Social Performance Management, Client Protection Principles, Truelift Pro-Poor Principles and the Progress out of Poverty Index.
 - An administrator will run the capacity building training. The administrator, who will have experience across the responsible inclusive finance initiatives and tools, will:
 - Oversee a centralized consultant database, which will allow MFIs to search providers by region and skills, as well as make it more cost-effective to conduct trainings.
 - Oversee Responsible Inclusive Finance Officers, who will coordinate activities and train institutions on responsible inclusive finance in a given region.
- After walking the group through the current draft, the group discussed the section on MIX.
 - The information from MIX was taken from a January conversation with Micol Pistelli. Bonnie Brusky noted that CERISE has recently been in talks with MIX regarding how they would house and collect the indicators for SPI-4, and she thinks it is different than what is in the draft of the proposal. She said that MIX is fine with collecting any profile data, but that there are about 24 quantitative results indicators that they say they would not collect for the SPI-4. CERISE created SPI-4 so that MFIs can create their own report to send to the MIX, but there's a certain number of indicators that may not be included.
 - Katie asked if the section on MIX should be taken out of the proposal, given that it is not confirmed and it also does not necessarily fit with the rest of the proposal. Tony Sheldon agreed that it could be taken out, given that it looks like it's giving MIX special treatment. However, he noted that it could be a good point to have for funders.
 - Laura Foose asked where the group would house all the data for SPI-4. Originally, the group said it would be great to have the data at MIX on a separate page to collect all the data, and then initiatives could analyze it. MIX is interested in housing a subset of data, but they would need funding to update their platform for 2015 and to have an analyst that can follow up on quality of data reported.
 - Laura said the proposal is trying to cover the cost of having a platform to cover the full set of indicators. She noted that the group needs to have a platform for

researchers, for the industry to be able to analyze the data. There's a much broader set of indicators that the group really shouldn't lose.

- Julie Peachey asked if everyone who completes the SPI-4 knows what is public information and what is not. Bonnie noted that information would be available for benchmarking but would be anonymous.
- Cécile Lapenu noted that it's important to have one place to store the data to do benchmarking and profiling. It doesn't mean that all the information is public if the MFIs don't want it to be public. This could be done with the MIX, but the group should remain open to other platforms.
- Isabelle Barres noted that this is such an important discussion that it may be worthwhile to have a separate conversation with MIX about what the group ideally would want to see on MIX and whether that would be feasible. She also noted that, given the changes at MIX, it would be good to check in on their strategic decisions to make sure the group is not making assumptions that are no longer correct.
- Micol Pistelli joined the discussion later in the call. She noted that she had received different requests from different people about what they wanted from MIX regarding the SPI-4.
 - She said that if MIX gets the funds, it will collect and display a subset of CERISE SPI information. MIX would then have to determine how the information would look. With enough fundraising, the information could be displayed on a public site. If additional analytics are needed, that would fall under a different MIX model.
 - For next steps, the group said they would send Katie specifics on what they ideally would want from MIX on the SPI. Katie will compile the list and organize a time to discuss them with Micol.
 - Cécile noted that she would like to explore how the RIF can manage and analyze the data collected for benchmarking and research.
- After the discussion on MIX, the group discussed the concept note more broadly.
 - Isabelle noted that it's good to move forward on coordination. However, she thinks the group is moving too quickly and that the proposal is moving past coordination and closer to merging. It's important to figure out, what part of the market is looking at the group's combined products? What is the demand? And then therefore what is the capacity needed to meet that demand? She also noted that the proposal is making assumptions that the initiatives are at the same level of implementation, which she doesn't believe is true.
 - Isabelle also wants the proposal to highlight that this project will not cover all capacity building needs for all initiatives. Initiatives may need a flexible approach by region or by countries, or they may need to take specific, innovative approaches to capacity building. She thinks we need to be clear on that so funders don't think that funding this proposal means no other initiatives need additional funding for capacity building.
 - J.D. Bergeron noted that it could be good to frame the proposal as individual initiatives focusing on complementary efforts.

- Cécile noted that we could say that the proposal is testing different ways of providing technical assistance to different MFIs and that the group is trying to integrate the Client Protection and social performance vision into broader technical assistance.
- Laura noted that it would be good to get joint trainings out to the CGAP and the Frankfurt School of Management. The Administrator and the RIF Officer could be systematic about going out and doing this with all of the current providers. Right now, the group does this on an ad hoc basis, not in a coordinated way. The idea is for this to be someone's job. We could be taking the time to update the skills in the field. She noted that this is more of a vision building exercise for the group: Ideally, what would we want?
 - Cécile noted that for trainings for CGAP and Frankfurt, the group could work together on key messages to convey to participants.
- Laura noted that she not been fundraising for SPTF. Rather, she's only been fundraising for RIF. She said if the group is not interested in the broader, global proposal, then she'll shift focus.
- Isabelle reiterated that she thinks it's good to coordinate and that it would be good to frame the proposal as coordinating efforts and also as something that evolves. She stressed that it's not a turf issue but more a question of how can the group be most impactful. There are advantages to having initiatives that coordinate but are still separate.
- Cécile agreed that the group doesn't need a superstructure. She said the vision is positive and for now, should coordinate and test the best way to provide efficient technical assistance to MFIs.
- Laura asked if we're trying to mainstream trainings, should it be coordinated? If so, who would do that?
 - Isabelle said the need for coordinated trainings depends on the audience's interests. For example, if someone were interested in a Client Protection training, she would always start with an overview of the RIF framework but then move into more specifics on Client Protection. In other cases, it may require a joint training. In terms of who should deliver coordinated trainings, she said the group should start by determining the common trainers, and then the group could accredit those people to deliver the joint presentations.
- Katie noted that the group could test the proposed structure through a pilot program. Javier Vaca of RFR in Ecuador, has agreed to house a RIF Officer at the network. He also has identified a potential candidate – Andrea Merino, who is trained in the Smart Campaign, SPI and the Universal Standards. Creating a pilot program in Ecuador would help work through these other questions we have about the structure of the proposal, such as how the group would manage the officer and how the officer would prioritize trainings.
 - Andrea is interested in the position, pending more information about travel time, responsibilities and salary. Katie told her that there would be a minimum of 10 trips a year.
 - Laura added that SPTF and the Smart Campaign have each been asked to give a full-day training at Emprender in Bogotá in May. This is an example where having a full-time RIF Officer in the region would prevent the initiatives from having to fly people out for

trainings. The group needs someone proactively reaching out to the networks and training them. Then, when there are MFIs asking for certification, this person could coordinate with regional trainers. Laura also noted that Javier is on the board of Truelift and is very involved with MIX, so he is connected the initiatives.

- Cécile said it could be a good test of the RIF officer, how we control quality, how we share trainings. They could also work with the local consultants to integrate the SPM. They could train on the different initiatives, do some trainings locally, and then also contact the consultants and TA providers. She also said it's important to test the administration/management of the concept, particularly how RIF Officer costs can be taken in from fees of the trainings.
 - Under the current draft of the proposal, the basic RIF workshops that the RIF Officer would be free and then more specific trainings would charge a fee, which would help fund the Officer's salary.
- J.D. said it would be good to have a pilot test in Ecuador but noted that lessons learned may not be applicable elsewhere, given regional disparities. He suggested doing a pilot in Latin America and Africa at the same time.
- Other regional RIF Officers:
 - Isabelle suggested that the Pakistan Microfinance Network would be a good place to house a RIF Officer. Laura noted that she reached out to Mehr Shah.
 - Julie noted that she could suggest some candidates for Africa.
- The group decided that the next step would be to have Katie incorporate this input into a revised version and share it with the group for further edits.

ii. Salesforce

- J.D. Bergeron started the conversation with a quick summary of how the group can use Salesforce to connect information.
 - He noted that Salesforce is free for 501c3 non-profits. He proposed the group either share a linked set of Salesforce databases or have one purely shared database. He noted that having use the shared platform could help build on the RIF mappings completed last year.
 - Salesforce can be programmed to notify users of specific changes to an organization's record, such as when an MFI gains Smart Certification, completes the CERISE SPI-4, or is participating in a pilot project with MFC.
 - Using Salesforce could be one way to deepen coordination between our initiatives, particularly around sharing calendars and contacts. MIX, Truelift, Grameen Foundation and others already use Salesforce as their CRM database. For example, Truelift could be notified when a new organization reports objectives to MIX and includes poverty reduction.
 - Each participating initiative would have their own set of logins for users of the database. Those could be set up with differing levels of access and permission.
 - The TA database could easily be included in the Salesforce database, which would

- allow us to track connections better.
- Sensitive information is protected by the initiative that submits it, unless they choose to share it
 - In terms of setting it up, one member from each participating initiative would need basic training and they would be the point person to support their colleagues. For those that already have accounts, they could be linked.
- Bonnie Brusky added that the group could use Salesforce to put SPI-4 online. It would be much more modular than what the current Excel file is.
 - Isabelle Barres said that Accion has its own account, but the Smart Campaign is not yet using it. She said they need to identify the best way to use it and to identify the limitations and specific rights that can be managed. For Smart Campaign to move forward with this, it would need to make sense for us internally.
 - Cécile Lapenu said the added value would come in terms of data collection. It would be great if we could simplify the work of the MFIs.
 - Bonnie noted that, given the modularity of the SPI tool, using Salesforce would make it much easier to make changes and to update the questionnaire itself. As PPI changes, Truelift changes, the Universal Standards and Client Protection Principles get updated, it would be much easier to update them on an online platform.
 - Laura Foose noted that there could be a good use for Salesforce and the TA database. Right now, in order to be listed on the TA database, a consultant has to have at least two referrals. It does not have a Trip Advisor function, where someone can go and give a scathing review because we did not want people to be discouraged from joining the database. If we had something in the backoffice where we could each share our experiences with consultant, that would be a good way to do quality control in a less public way.
 - Laura asked if we should build the Salesforce from an organization that would be starting from scratch, like SPTF, or from an organization that has a larger Salesforce platform already. J.D. said Truelift and SPTF could be a test case for a shared platform.
 - For next steps, J.D. Bergeron, Bonnie Brusky, Laura Foose and Katie Hoffmann will meet to discuss concrete next steps.