

State of Practice: Savings Groups and the Role of Government in Sub-Saharan Africa



This state of practice report was developed by the SEEP Network in partnership with Financial Sector Deepening Africa (FSDA), Itad and CARE International.

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27. Bank of Tanzania
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36. Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Republic of Uganda
37. Ministry of Community Development, Republic of Zambia
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SEEP is a global learning network. We support strategies that create new and better opportunities for vulnerable populations, especially women and the rural poor, to participate in markets and improve their quality of life.

Founded in 1985, SEEP was a pioneer in the micro-credit movement and helped build the foundation of the financial inclusion efforts of today. In the last three decades, our members have continued to serve as a testing ground for innovative strategies that promote inclusion, develop competitive markets, and enhance the livelihood potential of the world's poor.

SEEP's 120 member organizations are active in more than 170 countries worldwide. They work together and with other stakeholders to mobilize knowledge and foster innovation, creating opportunities for meaningful collaboration and, above all, for scaling impact.

For more information, visit www.seepnetwork.org or follow us on Twitter @TheSEEPNetwork

About FSD Africa



FSD Africa is a non-profit company which aims to increase prosperity, create jobs and reduce poverty by bringing about a transformation in financial markets in SSA and in the economies they serve. It provides know-how and capital to champions of change whose ideas, influence and actions will make finance more useful to African businesses and households. It is funded by UK Aid from the UK Government.

Through access to finance initiatives, it seeks to build financial inclusion. Through capital market development, it looks to promote economic growth and increase investment. As a regional programme, it seeks to encourage collaboration, knowledge transfer and market-building activities – especially in fragile states. FSD Africa also provides support to the FSD Network.

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About CARE International



CARE International is one of the world's leading humanitarian agencies, delivering life-saving aid and long-term solutions to poverty in more than 80 countries.

We put women and girls at the centre of our work, because they are hardest hit by poverty, discrimination, injustice, and inequality – and because the best way to overcome poverty is to ensure all people have equal rights and opportunities.

CARE's flagship Village Savings and Loan Association programme was launched in 1991 in Niger, known locally as Mata Masu Dubara. Today CARE directly supports nearly seven million members of Village Savings and Loan Associations across 45 countries – 81 percent of participants are women.

For more information about CARE, visit www.care.org

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Executive Summary

Savings Groups are community-based financial service providers that deliver basic financial services to millions of members in underserved markets worldwide. Traditionally, the promotion of Savings Groups has been led by national and international NGOs and a large extension network of community-based trainers. In recent years, governments across Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) have deepened their engagement with Savings Groups, recognizing the potential of the community-based microfinance model to contribute to national financial inclusion strategies and development agendas. **This state of practice report provides a comprehensive overview of government interventions in the sector across Sub-Saharan Africa.**

In 2018, the authors conducted an extensive desk review and interviews with 46 government representatives from 22 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. This report identifies and describes **74 government initiatives in the Savings Group sector, across 20 countries¹ in Sub-Saharan Africa.**

Savings Groups are commonly integrated into public policy to promote financial inclusion; an expected finding given public sector awareness regarding the role of Savings

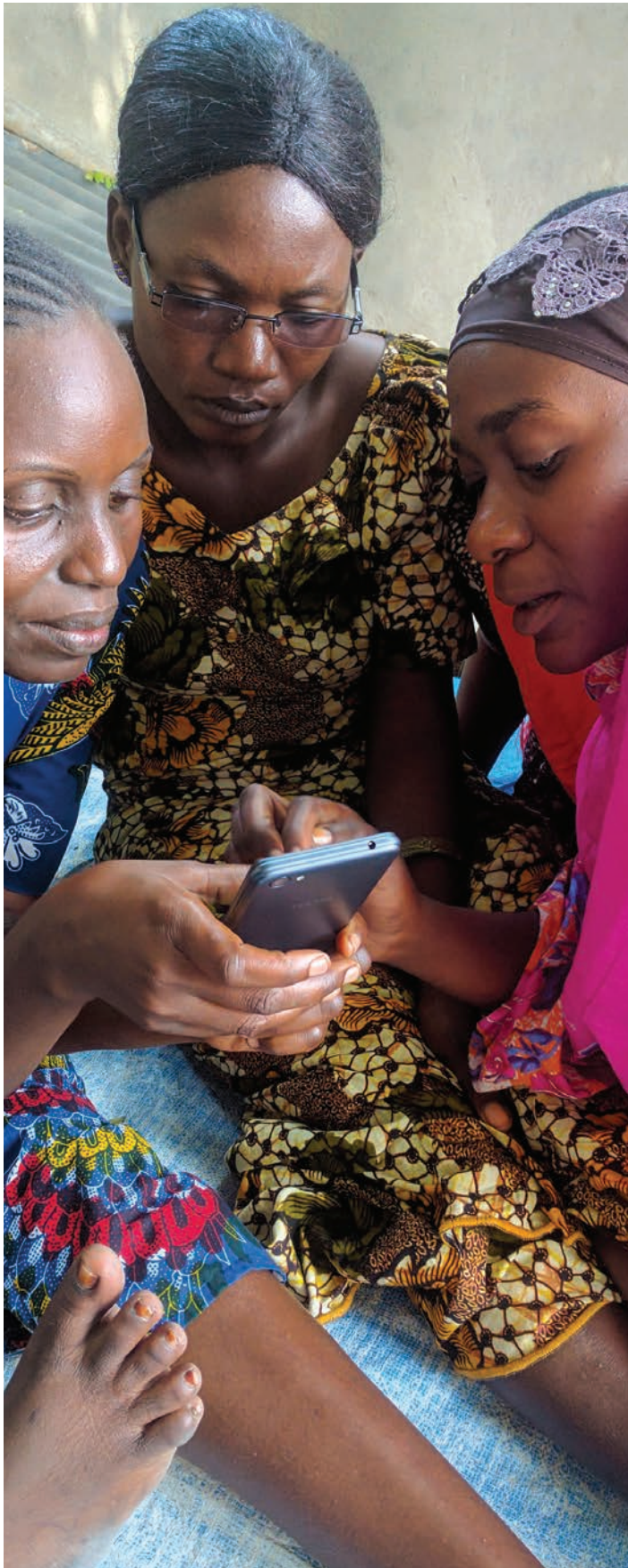
Groups in the extension of basic financial services within low-income markets. The report identifies a greater than expected adoption of Savings Groups in social protection programs, particularly within national social safety nets. There are few examples of women's economic empowerment policies and funds that explicitly reference or promote Savings Groups, an unexpected finding given that women comprise about 80 percent of Savings Group members worldwide.² The report also identifies emerging regulation and government-led coordination in the sector.

The government representatives surveyed conclude that national governments can contribute to the scale, impact and sustainability of the Savings Group sector by:

- Creating an enabling environment
- Improving sector coordination
- Collecting more and better data and evidence
- Facilitating access to formal financial services
- Prioritizing Savings Groups within government interventions

¹ Burkina Faso, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda and Zambia.

² The Savings Groups Information Exchange (SAVIX), VSL Associates



Introduction

This report provides a first mapping of government interventions in the Savings Group sector across Sub-Saharan Africa – including policies, regulation and programming. Section 1 provides an overview of the main findings, followed by policy considerations from policymakers (Section 2). Section 3 provides a country directory, with an overview of past, current and planned government initiatives in the Savings Group sector across 20 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa; and the annex includes a list of all identified initiatives, categorized by type.

Purpose of the report

The primary audience for this report is national governments in Sub-Saharan Africa that are – or planning to – leverage Savings Groups to advance national financial inclusion or development objectives. The report provides a comprehensive overview of how Savings Groups are being integrated into public policy by governments within the region.

The secondary audience is the wider Savings Group sector including development and market actors. The report aims to expand awareness with regards to the priorities and types of government interventions in the sector, and improved opportunities for partnerships, including the promotion of Savings Groups as well as the delivery of complementary financial and non-financial services.

What are Savings Groups?

A Savings Group is comprised of 15-25 self-selected individuals who save together and take small loans from those savings. Savings Groups provide members the opportunity to save frequently in small amounts, access to credit on flexible terms, and access a basic form of insurance. They are owned, managed and operated by their members; they are, by design, financially and institutionally sustainable. On average, each group manages total assets of about USD 1,200, representing an important safety-net that supports low-income households to meet consumption, investment and emergency needs (Allen and Panetta 2012).

Almost 90 percent of (I)NGO supported groups continue to operate more than five years after receiving training, set up costs average USD 22 (and as little as USD 8) per member, and women comprise 78% of the membership (VSL Associates, 2018).

Savings Groups and the Role of Government

Governments serve an important role in the promotion of Savings Groups. Regulators set rules that affect how groups operate and transact with formal service providers; national policies influence and direct investments from development actors; and diverse ministries are beginning to prioritize Savings Groups in their strategies and programs – and, in some instances, allocating technical and financial resources to group formation and training, with direct impacts on scale and sustainability in national markets.

The enactment of public policies related to Savings Groups contributes to both national financial inclusion and development goals, including economic development, health and gender equality. A recent systematic review of the evidence (Gash 2017) found that, across 53 studies, participation in Savings Groups has a consistently positive impact on member's savings, access to credit, business investment, food security, resilience, solidarity with fellow members, asset accumulation and consumption. The Secretary General's United Nations High Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment 2016 and 2017 reports recognize Savings Groups as a pathway to women's economic empowerment. Studies show that women's participation in Savings Groups leads to increased savings, access to credit, business investments, and in combination with other interventions, a reduced incidence of gender-based violence and child marriage (Vandergaag et al. 2017; Gash 2017; IPA 2012).

Since 1991, the formation and training of SGs has been predominantly led by development organizations, supported by development agencies and foundations, such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the FSD Network and the Mastercard Foundation. Today, there are at least 17 million active SG members across 76 countries, formed

and trained by development partners (VSL Associates, 2018). Many more groups are established organically, without external assistance, and there are possibly up to four times as many informal savings groups worldwide.³ Yet the market opportunity for Savings Groups is far greater than current supply. The estimated demand for Savings Groups by women and girls alone may be as high as 600 million (CARE 2018). Ledgerwood and Johnson (2018) concludes that to reach significant numbers of poor people in a sustainable manner, market actors including governments must undertake a more prominent role in group formation, training and continued support.

By mapping government interventions in the sector, this study aims to contribute to a better understanding of the current – and potential – role for national governments in the sector.

Methodology

This report is based on primary and secondary research conducted in 2018, including a review of the literature, panel and plenary discussions, calls for contributions, and individual interviews with 48 government officials from 22 countries.

For the purpose of this report, *Savings Groups* refer to all derivations of the model identified in public policy, which includes Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA), Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC), Community Financial Groups, Community Savings and Investment Promotion (COMSIP) groups, Community Savings and Credit Groups, and Village Economic and Social Associations (VESA), as well as informal rotating savings and credit associations (ROSCA) and accumulating savings and credit associations (ASCA).

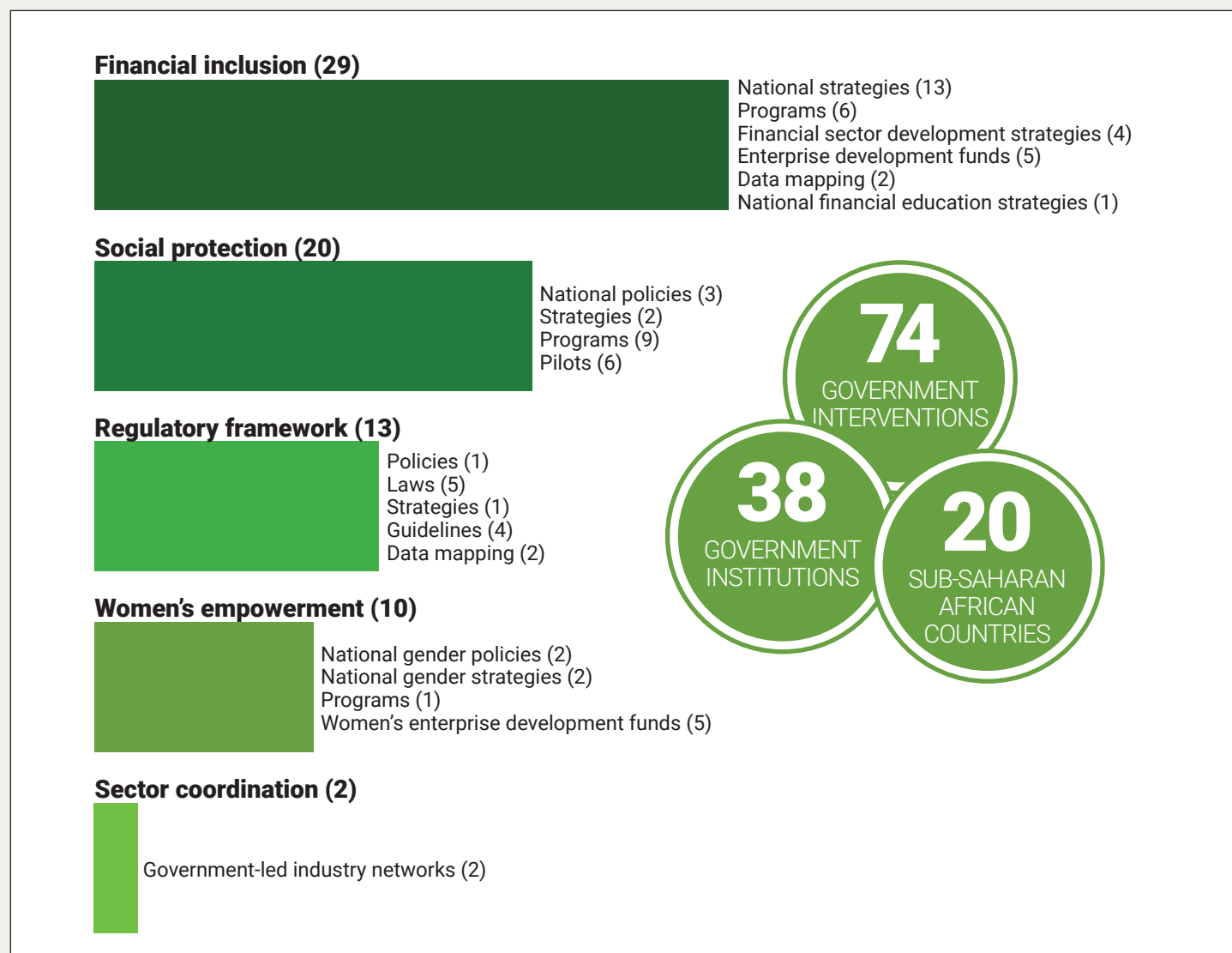
³The Global Findex database (World Bank 2017) reports that over 477 million people worldwide save in a savings club, or with a person outside the family.

SECTION 1: Overview of Savings Groups and Public Policy

This report has identified 74 government interventions in the Savings Groups sector, by 38 government institutions, across 20 countries⁴ in Sub-Saharan Africa. Interventions are diverse and include national strategies, legislation,

regulations, policies and programming, related to financial inclusion, social protection, women's empowerment, registration, regulation and sector coordination.

Figure 1: Savings Groups and public policy in Sub-Saharan Africa



⁴ Burkina Faso, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda and Zambia. Benin and Chad were included in the sample though no SG initiatives through public policy were identified.

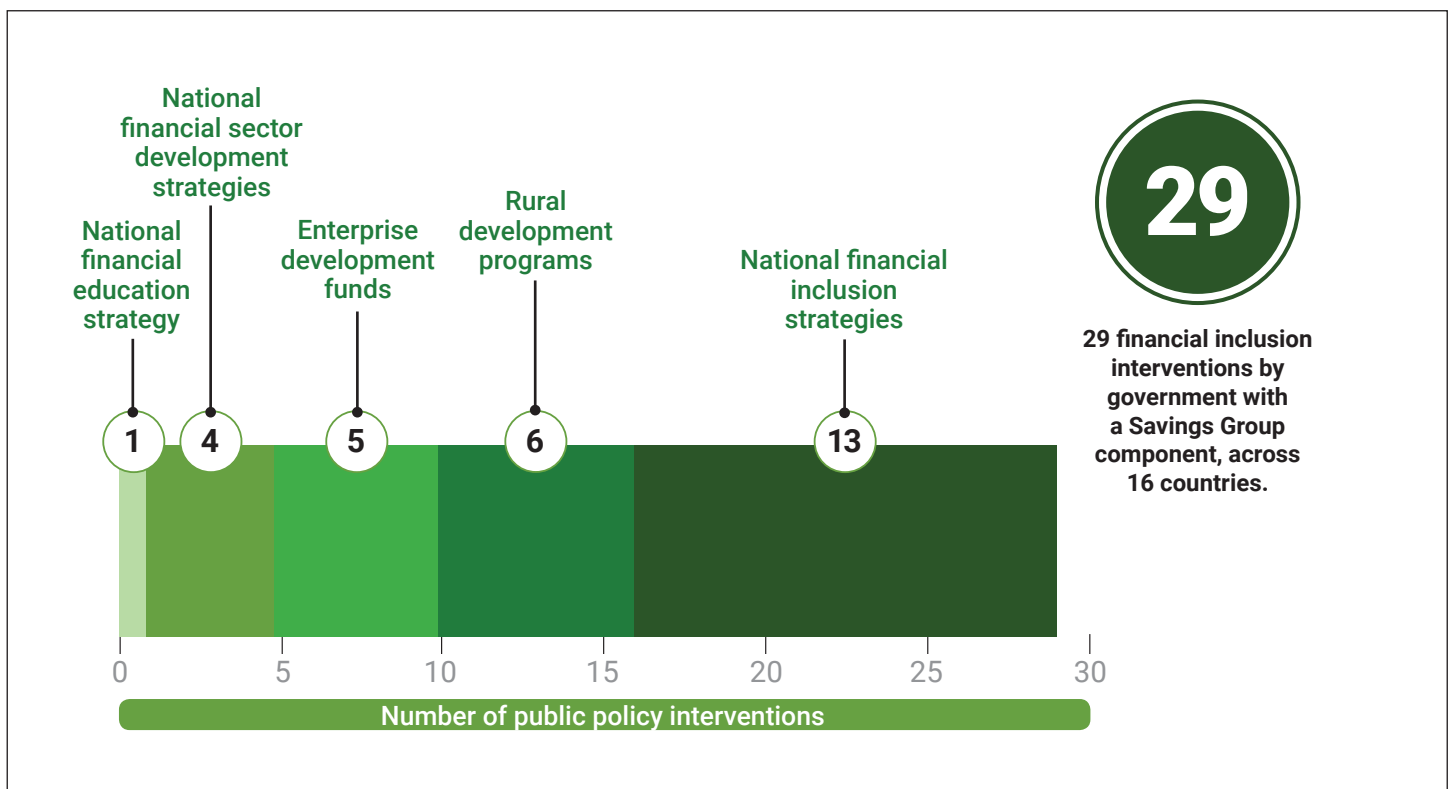
Financial Inclusion

The research identified 29 financial inclusion interventions by government with a Savings Group component, across 16 countries. National financial inclusion strategies in Burundi, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zambia all explicitly include goals, indicators or targets related to Savings Groups. Meanwhile, the Governments of Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Togo are in the process of adopting Savings Groups within their forthcoming national financial inclusion strategies. Less commonly, Savings Groups are integrated into national financial sector development strategies, related to increasing the mobilization of domestic savings and to promote basic financial services in underserved market segments. Rwanda has also incorporated Savings Groups into their National Financial Education Strategy.

In the past decade, governments across Sub-Saharan Africa have increasingly adopted Savings Groups within their financial inclusion strategies with objectives including the extension of financial services to mostly rural, low-income populations and other underserved markets, a pathway to financial institutions, the promotion of a savings culture and the mobilization of domestic savings, and improved access to finance for smallholder farmers and micro-entrepreneurs to strengthen the base of value chains.

Non-governmental organizations continue to lead group formation and training, and facilitate access to extension services. In some cases, they are directly contracted by government.

Figure 2: Financial Inclusion and Savings Groups



Malawi's National Strategy for Financial Inclusion

'Expanding savings through Savings Groups' is one of the six priorities of Malawi's National Strategy for Financial Inclusion (NFIS). The government recognizes the role of Savings Groups for increased savings and investments, especially for women. NFIS 2016-2020 sets detailed objectives and actions for all stakeholders to: enhance participation in Savings Groups by women, men and youth; deliver business training; promote group product development and linkage to formal financial services; and develop a supportive policy environment.

"TO ME, [THE] MUSHROOMING OF THESE SAVINGS GROUPS [IS] A BIG OPPORTUNITY TO THE COUNTRY, AND SOMETHING WE CAN LEVERAGE ON TO HELP THE RURAL PEOPLE GET THE FINANCIAL SERVICES THEY ARE LACKING."

– SOPANI GONDWE, CHIEF EXAMINER, POLICY & REGULATIONS, RESERVE BANK OF MALAWI

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Social Protection

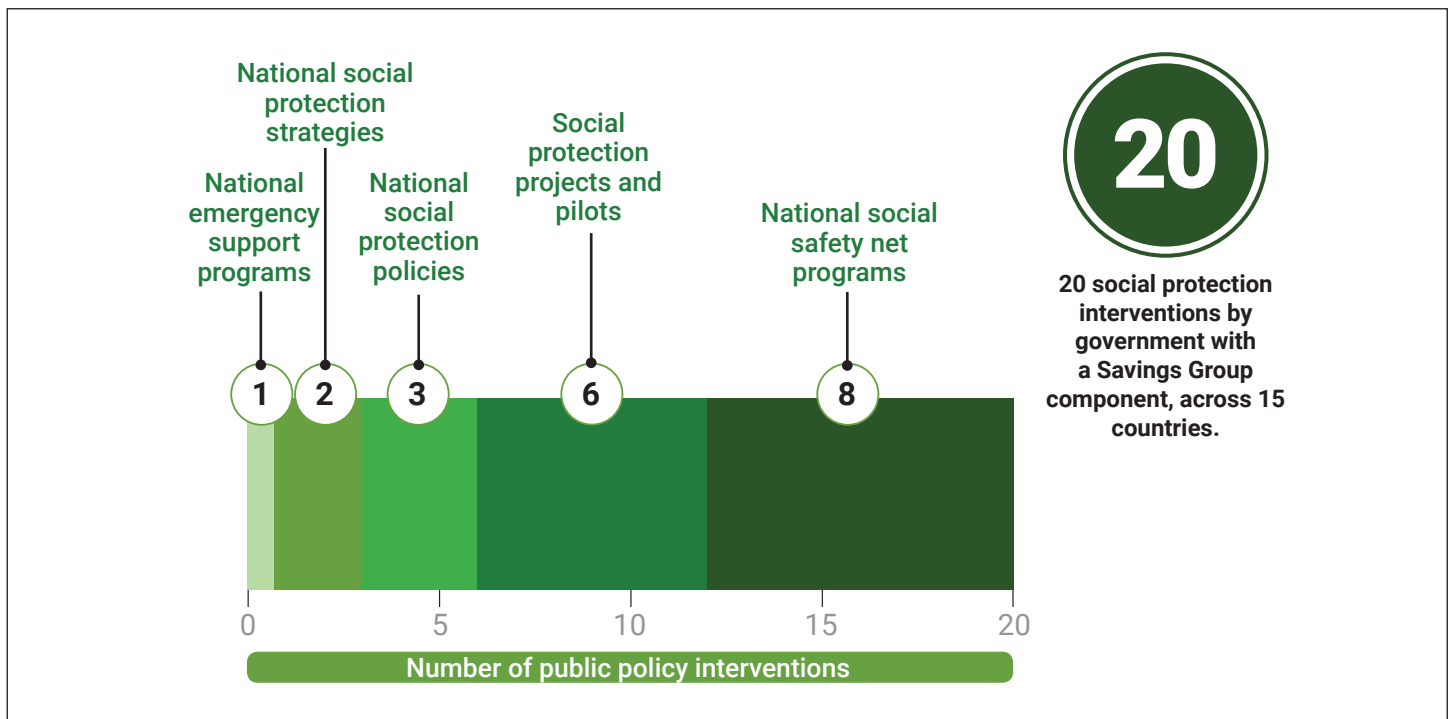
The research identified 20 social protection interventions by government with a Savings Group component, across 15 countries. The Governments of Ethiopia, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Zambia have all adopted Savings Groups as a ‘livelihood enhancement’ component of their national productive social safety net programs.

Among all social protection initiatives identified with a Savings Group component, almost half are forthcoming. The Governments of Uganda, Kenya and Mozambique are currently considering how and whether to integrate Savings Groups into their social safety net programs, and the regional World Bank-funded Sahel Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) program is currently expanding Savings Group programming across Burkina Faso, Niger, Mauritania, Senegal, Chad and Mali. The Government of Mozambique is exploring the promotion of Savings Groups among aid recipients, within their national Direct Emergency Support Program. The Kenyan Director of Social Development in the

State Department of Social Protection Pensions and Senior Citizen Affairs noted that her government is “trying to get all future social safety nets to implement a Savings Group component” in order to promote “a culture of saving.” Across the region, Savings Groups are increasingly prioritized by national governments as a component of social protection policies and programs.

Savings Groups are most commonly promoted as a graduation pathway to support recipients of the national safety net to save, improve their standards of living, build resilience and, ultimately, for some to transition away from dependence on public support. Tanzania’s Productive Social Safety Net Program, for example, identifies Savings Groups as the main graduation component of its ‘Livelihoods Enhancements Initiative’; the program is also one of the few examples of direct group formation and training by government actors.

Figure 3: Social Protection and Savings Groups



Ethiopia's National Productive Safety Net Programme 4

In Ethiopia, the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) 4 is the rural national safety net program providing food and cash transfers and services to eight million food insecure people annually. At the outset of the project, PSNP 4 set an indicator target for 50% of safety net households to save by 2020 and the program implementation manual called for beneficiaries to join 'Livelihood Groups', at their choosing, to participate in savings and lending activities. Over time, various levels of Government have increasingly recognized the contribution of Savings Groups in instilling a savings culture and practice in PSNP households. The Government is considering taking a more active role in Savings Group formation and is consulting Savings Group promoters around providing 'training of trainers' on Village Savings and Loan Association methodology to government officials across PSNP districts. Non-governmental organizations continue to contribute to Government objectives through group formation, training, and facilitation of access to extension services.

"TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE
OF SUSTAINABILITY AND
PREVENT CHRONICALLY
FOOD INSECURE
HOUSEHOLDS FROM
BACKSLIDING, THE
SAVINGS GROUPS PLAYED
A CRITICAL ROLE."

– BERHANU WOLDEMICHAEL,
FOOD SECURITY DIRECTOR, ETHIOPIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND
LIVESTOCK RESOURCES



Regulatory Framework

The research identified 13 initiatives to support a conducive regulatory environment for Savings Groups. The Governments of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda have approved or pending microfinance policies and laws for tiered regulation, and the registration or legal recognition of Savings Groups. The Government of Malawi has launched new guidelines for reporting, registering and monitoring of groups, and Tanzania and Uganda are in the process of doing the same.

These initiatives allow Savings Groups to continue to operate in the informal sector, and intend to support Savings Groups transition to – or transactions with – the formal sector. In Rwanda and Madagascar, group registration is not required; instead groups can seek legal recognition from a local government office, which facilitates access to extension services, financial institutions and additional government support.

Creating a conducive regulatory environment for Savings Groups in Uganda

The Tier 4 Microfinance Institutions Act and Money Lenders Act 2016 regulates the microfinance sector in Uganda. The Act exempts Savings Groups from regulation by the Bank of Uganda or the microfinance regulator, and protects their organic nature and right to self-govern. The law provides formal recognition of Savings Groups through their registration with local governments, and the granting of legal status upon application by groups facilitates access to formal financial services.

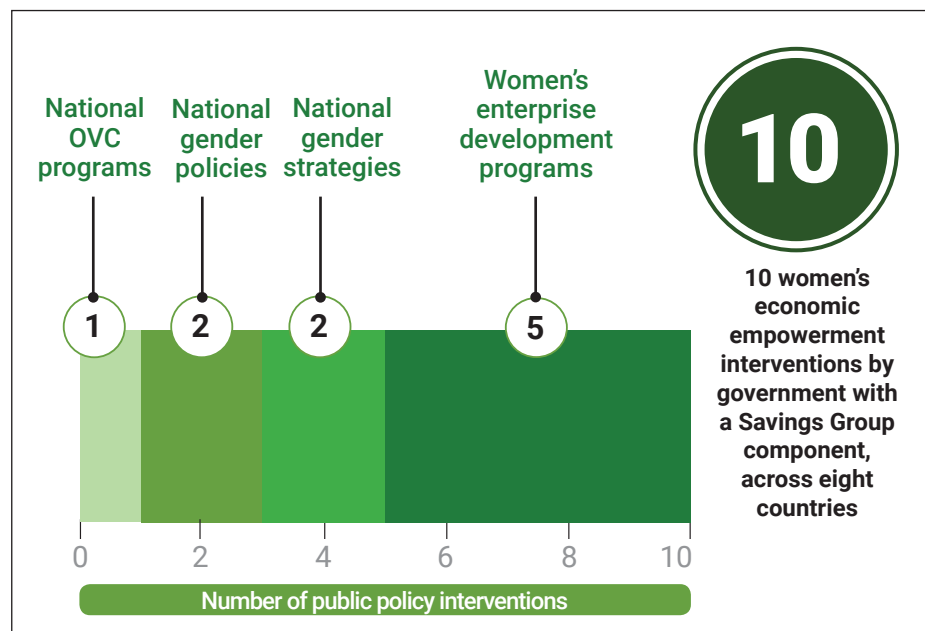
According to the Uganda Microfinance Regulatory Authority (UMRA), the solution is not to change the organic nature of Savings Groups, but allow them to operate informally, in a more supportive enabling environment. To address knowledge and data gaps in the sector, and promote industry operational standards, the Tier 4 Act introduces new Savings Group registration and reporting operational guidelines. Community Development officers will register, monitor and compile annual reports on Savings Groups and submit that data to the microfinance regulator. The required data includes the number of groups, members (disaggregated by sex, age and location) and affiliated NGO. Local governments levy a modest annual registration fee for all groups. The Uganda Microfinance Regulatory Authority hopes the guidelines will help mitigate against mismanagement of the groups and other illegal activities such as theft and fraud. According to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, registration facilitates the transition of Savings Groups to the formal sector.



Women's Empowerment

The research identified 10 women's economic empowerment interventions by government with a Savings Group component, across eight countries. National gender policies and strategies in Burundi, Mali and Niger include a Savings Group component to promote women's empowerment and support national gender policy objectives. In Burkina Faso, Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia, public women's enterprise development funds are designated for women SG members. In Côte d'Ivoire, SGs have been incorporated into the National Program for the Care of Orphans and Children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS; and in Kenya the Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs is incorporating Savings Groups into its upcoming national gender plan.

Figure 4: Women's Empowerment and Savings Groups



Niger's National Strategy for Women's Economic Empowerment (2017-2021)

In Niger, the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Children has integrated Savings Groups into their National Strategy for Women's Economic Empowerment (2017-2021). The role of Savings Groups with the strategy extends beyond women's economic participation. Under Pillar 2, Savings Groups are promoted as a means to achieve women's economic empowerment and "contribute to equality in rights and opportunities between women and men."

Uganda National Financial Inclusion Strategy (2017-2022)

The Uganda National Financial Inclusion Strategy recognizes the underlying constraints to women's empowerment and integrates Savings Groups to address these barriers. Pillar 5 of the strategy pledges a commitment for sector stakeholders to work closely with Savings Groups to better understand the societal barriers for women's financial inclusion, increase women's property rights, increase women's control over assets, and increase women's decision-making power.

Sector Coordination

The research identified two government-led networks for sector coordination, in Uganda and Rwanda. The Uganda Savings Group sub-Committee of the National Microfinance Forum is hosted by the Ministry of Finance; the chair rotates and membership includes Savings Group promoters, Government and the private sector. In Rwanda, the Ministry of Finance hosts the National Savings Group Forum, established with the support of Access to Finance Rwanda. Both platforms are intended to support industry standards

and enhance quality and scale of SG promotion.

Other platforms for sector coordination were identified in Benin, Cameroon, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo and Zambia. While these associations and fora of national stakeholders are led by non-governmental organizations, they interface with government on public policy in the sector and enable improved coordination with government.

Mali Savings Group Network of INGOs

In Mali, the Savings Group Network of INGOs was established in 2016 to “strengthen SG programming for the socio-economic and political empowerment of women and girls.” Members include Oxfam, CARE, Grameen Foundation, World Vision, Mercy Corps, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the Aga Khan Foundation, the International Rescue Committee (IRC), Plan International, the Association du Sahel d’aide à la femme et à l’enfance (ASSAFE), and the Association Malienne pour la Promotion du Sahel (AMAPROS). The network meets regularly to share experience, foster alignment and develop joint advocacy activities with the aim to influence the Government of Mali to adopt and promote Savings Groups in public policies. The network also meets regularly with the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Gender.

Key achievements of the network include: collaboration with the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children and the Family to support Savings Groups, including the provision of loan funds to female members through the Government’s Support Fund for the Empowerment of Women and Child Development (FAFE); the inclusion of Savings Group in the 2018 National Financial Education Strategy; the mapping of promoters to avoid overlap and identify gaps in coverage; development of training material used by several member institutions to promote networking among groups based on CARE’s Muso ka jigiya ton (MJT) gender-transformative Savings Group model.

SECTION 2: Reflections from Policymakers

This section summarizes the main reflections and policy considerations related to Savings Groups, from the 38 public institutions from 22 countries surveyed in this report.



① Create an enabling policy environment for Savings Groups

A conducive policy environment is important for the growth of Savings Groups. Key policy considerations:

- **Tiered microfinance laws** recognize Savings Groups while supporting their organic nature and right to self-govern. Tiered Microfinance Laws promote or require group registration, which can enable access extension services, such as formal financial services or public funds (examples: microfinance regulatory frameworks in Rwanda and Uganda).
- **Reporting** can promote industry standards. Key data metrics include the number of informal groups, members (disaggregated by sex, age and location), volume of savings and credit, and institutional affiliations.
- **New guidelines for registration** can increase sustainability; and a modest annual registration fee for all groups may sustain the system.

“YOU CAN’T REGULATE WHAT YOU CANNOT SUPERVISE. IF YOU FORMALLY REGULATE [SAVINGS GROUPS] YOU MIGHT NOT HAVE THE CAPACITY TO DO IT. THE BETTER WAY IS TO RECOGNIZE THEM. ENCOURAGE [SAVINGS GROUPS] TO REGISTER FOR RECOGNITION. THEN CREATE LINKAGES BETWEEN THEM AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS. REGISTRATION PROVIDES CERTIFICATION WHICH CAN BE USED FOR KYC [REQUIREMENTS] WITH BANKS AND MFIS. WHEN REGISTERED, IT IS VERY SIMPLE FOR THE BANKS TO KNOW WHO THE CLIENTS ARE.”

—KEVIN KAVUGIZO, DIRECTOR OF MICROFINANCE DIVISION, NATIONAL BANK OF RWANDA



“LET’S NOT TAMPER WITH THEIR DNA. DO NOT TAMPER WITH THEIR NATURE OF BEING A SAFE SPACE FOR THE MEMBERS. LET’S REALLY TRY AND SEE HOW THEY’RE STRUCTURED NATURALLY, ORGANICALLY, AND TRY AND SEE HOW TO AUTOMATE THAT WITHOUT DESTROYING THE WHOLE FABRIC OF SAVINGS GROUPS.”

—DR. MONIQUE NSANZABAGANWA, DEPUTY GOVERNOR, NATIONAL BANK OF RWANDA

“ALLOW [SAVINGS GROUPS] TO OPERATE AS THEY ARE OPERATING AND REFRAIN FROM BRINGING IN REGULATION. KEEP A REGISTER OF SAVINGS GROUPS – THEIR NAMES, THEIR NUMBER, THEIR MEANS OVER TIME. HAVE DATA AND BUILD FROM THERE.”

—SOPANI GONDWE, CHIEF EXAMINER, POLICY & REGULATIONS, RESERVE BANK OF MALAWI



② Improve sector coordination

The government officials surveyed overwhelmingly reported that sector coordination is fundamental for improved outcomes. Officials reported duplication and disjointed efforts by development organization, private and public actors. Key policy considerations include:

- **National association, network or forum for sector coordination**, with which governments can more easily engage (examples: industry networks in Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Uganda).
- **National guidelines** for the promotion and training of Savings Groups can support industry norms and quality standards.

"THERE ARE SO MANY NGOS PROMOTING SAVINGS GROUPS, WE WOULD LOVE TO SEE A CONSORTIUM COME TOGETHER AND BUILD AN ADVOCACY PLATFORM OR AN ASSOCIATION FOR THIS INDUSTRY SO THAT GOVERNMENT CAN INTERFACE WITH THAT BODY."

—GOLOOBA LWANGA, SENIOR ECONOMIST,
UGANDA MINISTRY OF FINANCE, PLANNING AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

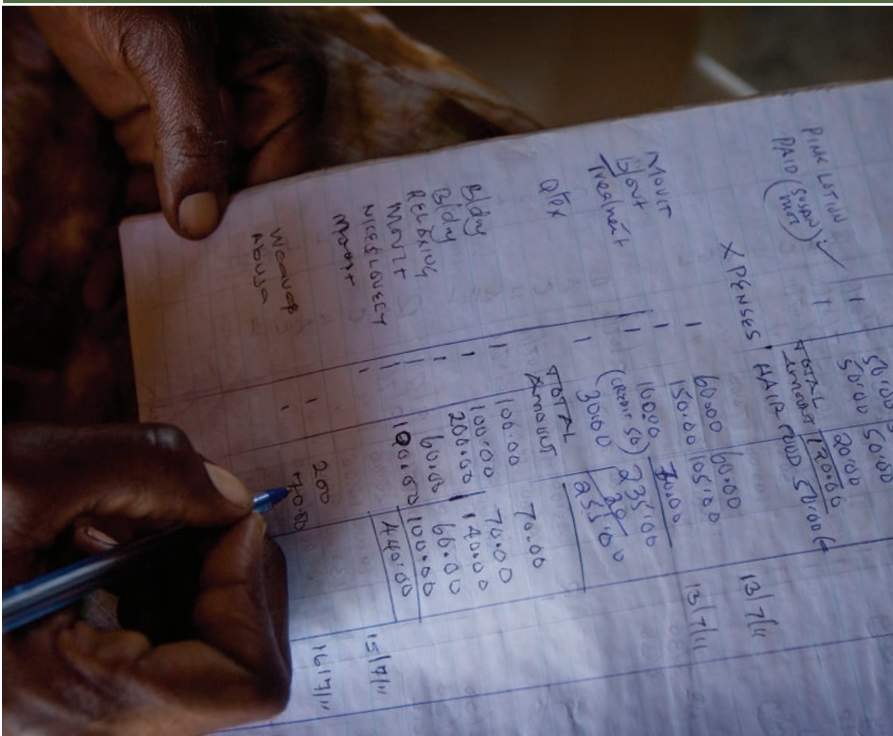


"[TO NGOS AND POLICYMAKERS] PROTECTING YOUR NICHE LIMITS YOUR GROWTH; COOPERATE INSTEAD OF COMPETE. LOOK AT THE BIG PICTURE, AND BASED ON THAT CREATE PARTNERSHIP. THEN TOGETHER LOOK AT SCALE AND OUTREACH."

—MUSAPENDA J PHIRI, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FINANCIAL SECTOR DEVELOPMENT, BANK OF ZAMBIA

“WE HAVE MANY ORGANIZATIONS FOCUSING ON THE YOUTH. HOWEVER, THERE IS LACK OF CLEAR PROFILING BASED ON WHO DOES WHAT AND WHERE THEY CAN BE FOUND FOR EASY REFERRALS AND PARTNERSHIP. WE NEED CLEAR PATHWAY OF UNDERSTANDING: WHO DOES TRAINING AND SPECIFIC INITIATIVES? IF THIS IS DONE, THEN WE WILL BE ABLE TO REACH AND EMPOWER A WIDE NUMBER OF YOUTHS.”

—BERNARD OCHOLLA, FIELD OFFICER, YOUTH ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT FUND, KENYA



“DEMAND [FOR SAVINGS GROUPS] IS HUGE. SO WE ARE GRAPPLING WITH THAT. WE DON'T HAVE A LOT OF STAFF. WE WOULD LIKE TO PARTNER WITH AS MANY STAKEHOLDERS AS POSSIBLE.”

—KENNEDY MUMBA, DIRECTOR
FOR DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL
AFFAIRS, ZAMBIA MINISTRY OF
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT,
MOTHER AND CHILD HEALTH

③ Collect more and better data and evidence on Savings Groups

Various government representatives reported a need for the collection of more and better evidence. Key policy consideration:

- **Comprehensive data collection** on Savings Groups can support more evidence-based policymaking, including more strategic geographic targeting (example: national mapping of Savings Groups in Rwanda and Zambia).

“WE NEED TO
AVOID OVERLAP,
DUPLICATION AND
INEFFICIENCIES.”

—DR. MONIQUE
NSANZABAGANWA,
DEPUTY GOVERNOR,
NATIONAL BANK OF RWANDA



“THERE IS NEED FOR CLEAR
GUIDELINES ON SAVINGS
GROUPS. AND A NEED
FOR MORE GENERATION
OF EVIDENCE [AND]
RECORDING WHAT THEY
ARE DOING.”

—KENNEDY MUMBA, DIRECTOR FOR
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS,
ZAMBIA MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT, MOTHER AND
CHILD HEALTH

④ Facilitate access to formal financial services

Most national development plans aim to increase financial inclusion, and Savings Groups are commonly viewed as a stepping stone. Governments overwhelmingly recommend the active facilitation of relationships between Savings Groups and formal financial institutions. Key policy considerations:

- **More customized product offering** by financial institutions, tailored to the needs and dynamics of Savings Groups.
- **Digitalizing Savings Groups** and extending the agent banking model to overcome proximity issues, reduce operating cost, and achieve scale (examples: the integration of Savings Groups into National Financial Sector Development strategies in Ghana, Mozambique and Rwanda).

“FINANCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS SHOULD DEVELOP AND DESIGN APPROPRIATE PRODUCTS FOR THE SAVINGS GROUPS, ESPECIALLY RELIGIOUS-BASED SAVINGS GROUPS.”

—DR. MUHAMMED GARZALI, DATA ANALYST,
FINANCIAL INCLUSION SECRETARIAT, CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA

“CONVINCE [FINANCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS] THAT SAVING GROUPS SERVE AS INCUBATOR TO FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.”

—TIANA RAMPARANY RAMANARIVOSA,
NATIONAL COORDINATOR FOR
FINANCIAL INCLUSION, MADAGASCAR
MINISTRY OF FINANCE



“PROMOTE THE SPREAD OF INSTITUTIONS THAT CAN COLLECT MONEY – LIKE MOBILE MONEY, AND BE ABLE TO WORK OFFLINE WHEN THERE’S NO NETWORK. WE NEED FACILITIES TO BE SPREAD SO THAT ONCE PEOPLE WANT TO SAVE OR DRAW THEIR MONEY THEY CAN. BRANCH BANKING SERVICES, MICROFINANCE INSTITUTIONS, SACCOS HAVE THOSE FACILITIES.”

—STEPHEN KASAIJA,
HEAD OF PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT UNIT,
UGANDA MINISTRY OF GENDER LABOUR AND
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

“A DIGITAL PLATFORM ALLOWS MAKING MONEY FROM EVERY CORNER OF THE COUNTRY WITHOUT HAVING THE NEED FOR A PHYSICAL PRESENCE. CONSIDER THE POTENTIAL!”

—MUSAPENDA J PHIRI,
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FINANCIAL
SECTOR DEVELOPMENT,
BANK OF ZAMBIA

5 Prioritize Savings Groups within public policy and programming

The research confirms the increasing engagement of government ministries and public institutions in the sector; some governments, including Malawi, Niger and Rwanda have identified Savings Groups as a national priority. The policymakers survey in this report recommend:

- **Ongoing technical support** to government from sector stakeholders. Specific examples include technical support for the design and delivery of financial education to group members, the integration of Savings Groups into cash transfer programs, mainstreaming gender across the promotion of Savings Groups, and the direct promotion of Savings Groups by the public sector (examples: social protection programs in Ethiopia and Malawi; Niger's National Strategy for Women's Economic Empowerment; and Uganda's National Financial Inclusion Strategy).
- **Continued mobilization** of financial resources for the promotion of Savings Groups by non-governmental actors.

"ALL OTHER COUNTRIES SHOULD ORGANIZE SAVINGS GROUPS AS PART OF THEIR NATIONAL PRIORITY."

—DR. MOHAMMED GARZALI,
DATA ANALYST, FINANCIAL INCLUSION
SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL
BANK OF NIGERIA



"EMBED SAVINGS GROUPS PROGRAMS AS A CORE COMPONENT ALONGSIDE CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMS, TO ENSURE THAT THE MONEY CAN BE POOLED AND INVESTED INTO MEDIUM AND LONG TERM SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS OPTIONS THAT CAN LIFT PEOPLE OUT OF POVERTY."

—TATU MHANDO MWARUKA, LIVELIHOODS ENHANCEMENT MANAGER, TANZANIA SOCIAL ACTION FUND

"WE NEED TO INVEST MORE IN FINANCIAL LITERACY SO THAT PEOPLE CAN UNDERSTAND HOW TO SAVE MONEY. ILLITERACY IS STILL HIGH. WE NEED NGO PARTNERS TO COME IN AND ASSIST."

—STEPHEN KASAIJA, HEAD OF
PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT UNIT,
UGANDA MINISTRY OF GENDER LABOUR
AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

"MANY PRACTITIONERS GO THROUGH PROJECT CYCLES, BUT WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THEY LEAVE? HOW CAN WE MAKE SURE THAT EXISTING GROUPS ARE SUPPORTED SO THAT THEY KEEP GROWING?"

—DR. MONIQUE NSANZABAGANWA,
DEPUTY GOVERNOR,
NATIONAL BANK OF RWANDA

SECTION 3: Country Directory of Government Strategies, Legislation, Policies and Programming related to Savings Groups

This section provides a description by country (in alphabetical order) of government interventions in the Savings Group sector across 20 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Initiatives are categorized by theme: financial inclusion; social protection; women's economic empowerment; and regulatory framework. Each country profile contains an overview of the government's priorities and initiatives related to Savings Groups, and a summary of each initiative.



BURKINA FASO

“Savings Groups are an effective channel that will enable the Ministry of Finance to reach a majority of the population and provide them with financial services and products.”

–Karfa Fayama, Permanent Secretary Promoting Microfinance, Ministry of Economy, Finance and Development

Burkina Faso's upcoming National Financial Inclusion Strategy recognizes and includes Savings Groups as a key pillar of its strategy. Additionally, the Support Fund for Women's Remunerative Activities (FAARF) is exploring the integration of Savings Groups as an entry point for its work with women's groups.

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2018-2022

About: The purpose of the strategy, to be launched in 2018, is to extend access to appropriate financial services that meet the needs of the entire population. Pillar II of the strategy focuses on linking Savings Groups with formal financial institutions.

Government commitment: Once the strategy is adopted, the Ministry of Finance will coordinate with organizations implementing the SG model to ensure effective integration of Savings Groups in the implementation of the strategy.

Lead institution: Ministry of Finance (development of the strategy supported by the United Nations Capital Development Fund)

Status: Future

Timeframe: 2018-2022

References: For more information, contact the Ministry of Finance at www.finances.gov.bf

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Support Fund for Women's Remunerative Activities

About: The Support Fund for Women's Remunerative Activities (FAARF) was established in 1990 to reduce poverty and support the growth of women-led income-generating activities. The FAARF provides credit, at annual interest rate of a 10% to women and women's groups. A compulsory savings deposit of 10%, of the loan amount is also required, which serves as a guarantee fund. The FAARF also supports beneficiaries of the Ministry of Women's social safety net program with basic financial education. The FAARF does not work directly with Savings Groups but recognizes them as a potential entry point to achieve the objectives of the Fund.

Government commitment: The FAARF is committed to exploring different entry points for the integration of Savings Group's into its activities.

Lead institution: Ministry of Finance

Status: Current

Timeframe: 1990-present

Target: Women, girls, young Mothers and people with disabilities

References: For more information, contact the Ministry of Finance at www.finances.gov.bf



BURUNDI

“The contributions of the rural women to Burundi’s development are not ignored. She remains the irreversible pillar in the national economy.”

–Félix Ngendabanyikwa, Permanent Secretary Burundian Ministry of Social Affairs, on the Nawe Nuze project

The Government of Burundi has recognized Savings Groups within two national strategies: the five-year action plan of the National Gender Policy of the Ministry of Human Rights, Social Affairs and Gender; and the National Financial Inclusion Strategy of the Ministry of Finance. A new microfinance law also encourages voluntary registration and reporting of Savings Groups.

WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT

National Gender Policy 2012-2025

About: The National Gender Policy 2012-2025 promotes gender equality and serves as a policy framework for all development actors in the country. Savings Groups are integrated within the policy’s Five-Year Action Plan (2017-2021). Decentralized structures – Family and Community Development Centres (CDFCs) at the provincial level and Social Workers of the CDFCs at the communal level – mobilize, train and support Savings Groups. The vision of the Ministry of Human Rights, Social Affairs and Gender is to establish an active and supportive base, in each community, to strengthen national poverty reduction efforts.

Government commitment: The Ministry is committed to the promotion and monitoring of Savings Groups through decentralized structures at levels of the province, commune and hills.

Lead institution: Ministry of Human Rights, Social Affairs and Gender

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2012-2025

References: www.presidence.gov.bi/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/politique_nationale_genre_png__2012-2025.pdf

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2015-2020

About: The purpose of the National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS) is “to provide the population with increased and permanent access to financial services and products and conditions ensuring their access to the use of these services/products” and recognizes Savings Groups as a pillar of the strategy.

Government commitment: The Ministry of Finance aims to form 20,000 groups and link them to formal financial institutions.

Lead institution: Ministry of Finance and Economic Development Planning

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2015-2020

References: www.rimburundi.org/sites/default/files/strat%C3%A9gie%20nationale%20d%27%20inclusion%20financi%C3%A8re.pdf



REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

National Microfinance Law, 2018

About: In 2018, a new law was introduced by the Bank of the Republic of Burundi (BRB) to regulate the microfinance sector in Burundi under four categories. ‘Community Financial Groups’ are classified under the fourth category, which exempts Savings Groups from prudential regulation by the BRB.

Government commitment: The law encourages the voluntary registration of Savings Groups through local administrative authorities. Legal recognition enables Savings Groups to open group accounts with financial institutions.

Lead institution: Bank of the Republic of Burundi (BRB) in coordination with local government authorities, responsible for group registration and recognition

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2018-present

References: www.brb.bi/sites/default/files/circulaires/Circulaire%20n%C2%B002M18.pdf

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

“The state must play its role in combating poverty and Savings Groups will help to achieve this goal.”

–Dr. Amethier Solange, Director, National Program for the Care of Orphans and other Children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS

The Government of Côte d'Ivoire has integrated Savings Groups in its National Program for the Care of Orphans and Other Children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS (PNOEV) as a mechanism to empower economically vulnerable families. More recently, the Ministry of Finance is exploring the recognition of Savings Groups within the forthcoming Financial Inclusion Strategy.



CÔTE D'IVOIRE

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

National Program for the Care of Orphans and Other Children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS

About: The Ministry for Women, the Protection of the Child and the Family coordinates the National Program for the Care of Orphans and Other Children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS (PNOEV) and the national policy of the same name. Savings Groups are recognized in the policy and program as a key approach to the economic empowerment of families made vulnerable through HIV; and the program is implemented through social centers and non-governmental organizations.

Government commitment: A review of the national policy on care and support of orphans, other children and their vulnerable families because of HIV was initiated in June 2017 and the revised document continues to recognize the role of Savings Groups. PNOEV also intends to influence the Ministry to promote Savings Groups within wider national policies and strategies.

Lead institution: PNOEV, Ministry for Women and the Protection of the Child and Family Funders: Ministry for Women, the Protection of the Child and the Family and the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)

Implementation partners: International Rescue Committee, Save the Children, local NGOs and social workers

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2013-present, Savings Groups were adopted in 2016

Target: Vulnerable families, women, girls and young people and people with disabilities

References: For more information, contact the Ministry for Women and the Protection of the Child and Family at www.famille.gouv.ci

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2019-2024

About: Building on the 2013-2017 National Financial Inclusion Strategy, the Ministry of Finance initiated the development of its forthcoming strategy this year and established the Agency for the Promotion of Financial Inclusion (APIF-CI) to coordinate the development of the strategy and its implementation. A scoping workshop was held in 2018 and produced a financial inclusion strategy roadmap of priorities, including the recommendation to recognize Savings Groups in the forthcoming strategy.

Government commitment: The Ministry's participative approach for the development of the strategy involves consultations with civil society organizations and the national network of Savings Group promoters.

Lead institution: Ministry of Economy and Finance, through the Financial Inclusion Promotion Agency (APIF-CI)

Funders: Ministry of Finance, Alliance for Financial Inclusion, CARE International

Status: Future

Timeframe: 2019-2024

References: For more information, contact the Ministry of Finance at www.finances.gouv.ci/contacts

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

“Saving Groups are the best tool to create a wider base for financial inclusion.”

—Thierry Ngoy, General Coordinator of the National Microfinance Fund, Ministry of Finance

The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo aims to strengthen and expand the coverage of Savings Groups, and link them to financial institutions, through the National Microfinance Fund (FNM) and support from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

National Microfinance Fund

About: In Tanganyika province, the National Microfinance Fund (FNM), in collaboration with the FAO, the Ministry of Gender and provincial authorities, supports the formation of Savings Groups and the facilitation of relationships with financial institutions. The objective of the project is to connect 10,000 households to the formal financial sector by 2019, for the improvement of household wellbeing.

Government commitment: The Government aims to draw lessons from this project to inform relevant national policies, particularly the financial inclusion strategy.

Lead institution: Ministry of Finance

Coordination: FNM and FAO

Implementation partners: Provincial authorities, local representatives of the Ministry of Gender

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2011-present

Target: Women, youth, micro-enterprises and small-scale farmers

References: For more information, contact the National Fund for Microfinance at www.microfinance.bcc.cd/contact/



ETHIOPIA

“To resolve [the] issue of sustainability and prevent chronically food insecure households from backsliding, the Savings Groups played a critical role.”

—Berhanu Woldemichael, Food Security Director, Ethiopia Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Resources

Savings Groups are recognized in the Ethiopian National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2017; and are an integral component of the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), GRAD and the Livelihood for Resilience Project as a graduation mechanism from social safety nets.

SOCIAL PROTECTION

Productive Safety Net Programme

About: The current phase of the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP-4) provides food, cash transfers and services to 8 million chronically food insecure people annually. The livelihoods component of the PSNP links beneficiaries with services, including Savings Groups, to build resilience, incomes and assets, to support graduation from PSNP.

Government commitment: PSNP-4 aims for 50 percent of safety net households to save by 2020. Although the program primarily promotes savings through rural savings and credit cooperatives (RUSACCOs) and microfinance institutions (MFIs), the program implementation manual also calls for the formation and promotion of Savings Groups, by non-governmental organizations. Recognizing the contribution of Savings Groups to expanding access to basic financial services by PSNP households, the

Government is considering a more active role in group formation and is consulting with NGOs on providing technical assistance across PSNP districts.

Lead institution: Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Funders: World Bank, USAID, DFID, European Commission, Netherlands Development Association, US Children’s Fund, SIDA, Government of Ireland, Government of Canada, DANIDA.

Implementation partner: CARE International

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2014-present

Target: Food insecure households and women across 349 districts

Resources: www.amharabofed.gov.et/Channel_ONE/PSNP4/PSNP%20IV%20Programme%20Implementation%20Manual.pdf



ETHIOPIA

SOCIAL PROTECTION

Graduation with Resilience to Achieve Sustainable Development and Feed the Future Ethiopia – Livelihoods for Resilience Activity

About: In the first phase of the project, from 2011 to 2016, GRAD worked with 63,000 chronically food insecure households in 16 districts to build resilience and support graduation from the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP). Project interventions led to household incomes increasing by USD 353 per year, and 80 percent of households graduated out of poverty and off the national safety net. In the follow-on project, Feed the Future Ethiopia – Livelihoods for Resilience Activity (GRAD 2), an NGO consortium aims to form nearly 5,000 groups, pilot 350 youth Savings Groups and deliver financial literacy and business skills trainings to group members by 2022.

Government commitment: The Government recognizes the contribution of the project to the livelihoods component of the PSNP and the improved resilience of chronically food insecure rural populations.

Lead institution: Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Implementation partners: Consortium led by CARE International, with REST, ORDA, Agriservice Ethiopia, and SNV

Funder: USAID

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2011-2022

References:

- GRAD: www.care.org/work/world-hunger/graduating-families-out-poverty
- GRAD2: www.care.org/sites/default/files/documents/livelihoods_for_resilience_activity_2-april_2018.pdf

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Ethiopian National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2017-2025

About: The National Financial Inclusion Strategy sets the priorities for stakeholders to deliver universal access to, and use of, a range of affordable and high-quality financial services in Ethiopia by 2025. It has a cooperative focus and the SG component is limited to research.

Government commitment: The strategy includes a commitment by the National Bank of Ethiopia Economic Research team to conduct a study to devise mechanisms to “link informal savings mechanisms to the regulated financial sector.”

Lead institutions: Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation, and the National Bank of Ethiopia
Coordination: Financial Inclusion Secretariat, National Bank of Ethiopia

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2017-2025

Resources: www.nbe.gov.et/pdf/service/Ethiopian%20National%20Financial%20Inclusion%20Strategy.pdf

GHANA

“Savings Groups are obviously a very good vehicle to drive financial inclusion; as bridges they lift the poor and vulnerable from informal to formal financial system, from obscurity to visibility; empowering them through financial literacy awareness, safe custody of funds, and prospects for access to micro-credit if properly managed and supervised to ensure sustainability. Their very existence is a manifestation of a need and if properly harnessed and integrated into the formal system, would definitely improve the local economies within which they operate.”

–Clarissa Kudowor, Financial Inclusion Head Desk, Central Bank of Ghana

The Ministry of Finance integrates Savings Groups as an avenue for financial inclusion, within its Financial Sector Development Project, and intends to recognize Savings Groups in its forthcoming National Financial Inclusion and Development Strategy.



GHANA

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Financial Sector Development Project

About: The Financial Sector Development Project, established by the Government of Ghana in 2018, aims to promote financial sector soundness and expand access to finance by individuals, particularly women and the most excluded regions. Savings Groups are a key component of the project related to “increasing the outreach of Rural and Community Banks (RCBs) and MFIs and linking VSLAs to formal financial service providers.”

Government commitment: The project allocates more than USD 3 million to linking Savings Groups to the formal financial system, providing groups and their members access to credit, housing finance, informal pensions and microinsurance.

Lead institution: Financial Sector Division, Ministry of Finance

Design and implementation partners: World Bank, United Nations Capital Development Fund

Status: Future

Timeframe: 2018-2022

References: For more information, contact the Ministry of Finance at www.mofep.gov.gh/contact

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2018–2022

About: The National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2018-2022 is pending cabinet approval, with its launch scheduled for September 2018. The strategy aims to foster the stability of financial institutions, the development of financial infrastructure, consumer protection and improved financial literacy for the most excluded and poorest regions in Ghana.

Government commitment: The strategy recognizes Savings Groups a central element in the achievement of the strategy’s objectives.

Lead institution: Ministry of Finance

Funder: Ministry of Finance (development of the strategy supported by the World Bank)

Status: Future (approval scheduled for September 2018)

Timeframe: 2018-2022

References: For more information, contact the Ministry of Finance at <https://www.mofep.gov.gh/contact>

KENYA

“A culture of saving is what we are trying to introduce.”

–Josephine Muriuki, Director of Social Development, State Department of Social Protection, Pensions and Senior Citizen Affairs

The Women, Youth, and Uwezo development funds of the Government of Kenya provide accessible and affordable credit to Savings Groups. Savings Groups also feature in the upcoming Kenya Economic Inclusion social safety net program and existing Programme for Rural Outreach in Financial Innovations and Technologies, and are central to the upcoming Community Groups Registration Bill – a forthcoming regulatory framework for the mobilization, registration, coordination and management of Savings Groups – and the national Gender Strategic Plan 2018-2022.



FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Youth Enterprise Development Fund

About: The Youth Enterprise Development Fund aims “to increase economic opportunities for, and participation by Kenyan youth in nation building through enterprise development and strategic partnerships” and provides loans to youth-owned enterprises. Since 2007, the Youth Enterprise Development Fund has dispersed USD 64.5 million loans to over 200,000 youth enterprises, for projects including brick making, greenhouse farming and artwork.

Government commitment: The Youth Enterprise Development Fund offers loan products for registered Savings Groups with at least 70 percent youth membership. Individual and group-based loans are available for both start-ups and established businesses; and the fund facilitates

access to business training and extension services.

The Youth Enterprise Development Fund, Women Enterprise Development Fund and Uwezo Fund will be merged to form the Biashara Fund – managed by the Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs and the National Treasury.

Lead institution: Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs

Funder: National Treasury

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2006-present

Target: Youth-owned enterprises

References: Youth Enterprise Development Fund (www.youthfund.go.ke); Women Enterprise Development Fund (www.wef.co.ke); and Uwezo Fund (www.uwezo.go.ke)

KENYA

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Programme for Rural Outreach in Financial Innovations and Technologies

About: The IFAD-funded national Programme for Rural Outreach in Financial Innovations and Technologies (PROFIT) provides credit to smallholder farmers and micro-entrepreneurs as well as conditional cash transfers to low-income women and unemployed youth, mobilizing and encouraging beneficiaries to join Savings Groups. The aim of the SG component is to support income-generating activities and promote access to formal financial services.

Government commitment: Ongoing discussions with non-governmental organizations to support the formation and training of Savings Groups among safety net beneficiaries.

Lead institution: National Treasury

Design partners: CGAP and BRAC

Funder: International Fund for Agricultural Development

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2011-2019

References: <https://www.microfinancegateway.org/sites/default/files/mfg-en-paper-republic-of-kenya-programme-for-rural-outreach-of-financial-innovations-and-technologies-may-2010.pdf>

SOCIAL PROTECTION

Kenya Social Protection Policy 2011 and upcoming Kenya Social and Economic Inclusion Project

About: Savings Groups were first included in the Kenya National Social Protection Policy in 2011 as a graduation pathway out of poverty and social assistance; and Savings Groups will be promoted through the upcoming Kenya Social and Economic Inclusion Project.

Government commitment: The Kenya Social Protection Policy 2011 commits to “strengthen self-help groups” and mobilize social assistance beneficiaries to join Savings Groups. In practice, Savings Groups will be promoted by the Kenya Economic Inclusion Project, whereby cash transfer beneficiaries will be required to form and register a Savings Groups as a pre-condition for groups to receive extension services.

SOCIAL PROTECTION

Kenya Social Protection Policy 2011

Lead institution: Ministry of Labour and Social Protection

Implementation partner: Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2011-present

References: www.socialprotection.or.ke/images/downloads/kenya-national-social-protection-policy.pdf

SOCIAL PROTECTION

Kenya Economic Inclusion Project

Lead institution: State Department of Social Protection Pensions and Senior Citizen Affairs

Funders: World Bank, DFID

Target: People with disabilities, vulnerable or orphaned children, older persons (60+) and women

Status: Future (scheduled launch in December 2018)

Timeframe: 2018-2023

References: www.projects.worldbank.org/P164654?lang=en

KENYA

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Community Group Registration Bill

About: Certification provides Savings Groups with credibility and recognition as established entities, and is a pre-condition for opening group accounts with financial institutions in Kenya, and for accessing government small-scale enterprise funds. The upcoming Community Group Registration Bill will formalize and standardize the practice under law, and it is hoped this will increase access to formal financial services by Savings Groups and their members. The cost of group registration will remain KSh 1,000 (USD 10).

Government commitment: The bill provides new guidance for group formation, governance structures and registration processes; and the Government hopes to develop a new centralized data management system known as the Community Development Management Information System (CDMIS) to capture basic group information at the moment of registration.

Lead institution: State Department for Social Protection Pensions and Senior Citizen Affairs

Implementation partners: Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs, NGOs, financial institutions

Status: Future – approval expected by December 2018

References: www.dokeza.mzalendo.com/bills/draft-bill/

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

State Department for Gender Affairs Strategic Plan 2018-2022

About: The upcoming Strategic Plan 2018-2022 outlines the national approach to gender responsive services, and includes an SG component to promote women's economic development.

Government commitment: Mobilize women to form Savings Groups, to support women entrepreneurship and income-generating activities.

Lead institution: Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs

Status: Future

Timeframe: 2018-2022

References: For more information, contact the Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs at www.psya.go.ke/



MADAGASCAR

“Saving Groups are a nursery for formal financial inclusion.”

–Tiana Ramparany Ramanarivosa, National Coordinator for Financial Inclusion, Ministry of Finance and Budget

The National Financial Inclusion Strategy of Madagascar recognizes Savings Groups as a pathway to support the Government’s financial inclusion objectives.

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2018-2022

About: The National Financial Inclusion Strategy (SNIM) was adopted in 2018 with the goal to increase access to formal financial services to 45% of the adult population by 2022 (compared to 29% in 2016). The strategy has three strategic pillars: financial education and consumer protection; access to and use of financial services; and reinforcing politics, legal, institutional, regulatory framework. The strategy recognizes Savings Groups with respect to the objective of “widening access and usage of a large range of financial services adapted to the needs of all categories of the Malagasy population.”

Government commitment: The Ministry of Finance and Budget recognizes the national Network for the Promotion of Savings Groups – an industry network composed of non-governmental organizations that promote Savings Groups – and its key role in ensuring the quality of group formation and training; and the Ministry established a Code of Ethics for member institutions of the network.

Lead institution: Directorate of Financial Operations/ National Coordination for Financial inclusion, Ministry of Finance and Budget

Design partners: Alliance for Financial Inclusion, United Nations Development Program, Southern African Development Community, the National Research Institute, financial institutions, technical implementing partners, the Network for the Promotion of Savings Groups, the Central Bank and the Ministries for Industry and Development of the Private Sector, National Education, Higher Education and Population, Social Protection and the Promotion of Women.

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2018-2022

Review cycles: Annual, with semi-annual monitoring of performance

References: For more information, contact the Ministry of Finance at www.mefb.gov.mg/



MALAWI

“Mushrooming of these Savings Groups are a big opportunity to the country, and something we can leverage on to help the rural people get the financial services they are lacking.”

–Sopani Gondwe, Chief Examiner, Policy & Regulations, Reserve Bank of Malawi

Savings Groups are one of the six priorities of the National Strategy for Financial Inclusion 2016-2020. Equally important has been the integration of Savings Groups into the Malawi National Social Support Programme.



FINANCIAL INCLUSION

National Strategy for Financial Inclusion 2016-2020

About: The National Strategy for Financial Inclusion recognizes the role of Savings Groups in increasing savings and investments, especially for women, and identifies the expansion of Savings Groups as one of its six priorities.

Government commitment: The strategy sets detailed objectives and actions for stakeholders to expand participation in Savings Groups, provide business training, develop group-based financial products for Savings Groups, and develop a supportive policy environment.

Lead institution: Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development and the Reserve Bank of Malawi

Design and implementation partners: World Bank, Finmark Trust, financial institutions, NGOs, government ministries.

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2016-2020

References: For more information, contact the Ministry of Finance at www.finance.gov.mw/index.php?option=com_contact&view=contact&id=1&Itemid=100

MALAWI

SOCIAL PROTECTION

Malawi National Social Support Programme II

About: Under the 'Resilient Livelihoods' pillar of the current phase of the Malawi National Social Support Programme (MSSP II), Savings Groups are promoted as a poverty graduation pathway for beneficiaries. The Government aims to promote savings for increased resilience to shocks, and investment in long-term livelihood strategies.

Government commitment: The Government is committed to "the expansion of the coverage of savings and loan groups" by linking social cash transfer and public works program beneficiaries to Savings Groups, registering Savings Groups at the district level, providing guidance on skills development, and the strategic timing of share-outs during times of increased need to smooth consumption.

Lead institution: Ministry of Finance Economic Planning and Development

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2018-2023

Implementation partners: CARE (formation and technical assistance to the ministry), local NGOs (group formation and training), and the Ministry of Civil Education, Culture and Community Development (community mobilization).

Target: 120,000 SG members

References: For more information, contact the Ministry of Finance at www.finance.gov.mw/index.php?option=com_contact&view=contact&id=1&Itemid=100

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Savings and Loan Groups Best Practice Guidelines

About: The purpose of the guidelines (SLG BPGs) is to establish national standards for the implementation of Savings Groups in Malawi. The guidelines address recognized needs and gaps in the sector, including: absence of a policy framework or regulation in the sector, limiting government facilitation and supervision; improved coordination and collaboration at national and district level; inadequate record keeping and reporting; improved program design; and increased linkages with formal financial services.

Government commitment: The guidelines were developed in 2016-2017 by the national SLG technical working group under the guidance of the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, and the Ministry of Civic Education, Culture and Community Development, in collaboration with the main promoters of Savings Groups in Malawi.

Lead institution: Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development and Ministry of Civil Education, Culture and Community Development

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2017-present

References: www.keepandshare.com/doc18/18016/savings-and-loan-group-best-practices-for-malawi-pdf-4-5-meg?da=y

MALI

“The unique added value of good structuring and the rigor of these groups lies in the fact that they can ensure sustainability because they are context-specific and ensure better impacts across all segments of socio-economic empowerment.”

–Bernadette Haïdara, Technical Advisor, Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children and the Family

Through the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children and the Family, the Government of Mali is gradually integrating Savings Groups to support the implementation of its National Gender Policy.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

National Gender Policy 2014

About: The National Gender Policy is the framework which guides the work of the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children and the Family. Since 2017, the Ministry has been integrated Savings Groups into three priority programs: the Fund for Support to Women's Empowerment and Child Development (FAFE), the Shea Butter Programme, and the Multifunctional Platform Programme.

Government commitment: Based on the experience of these programs, the Ministry is committed to promoting the integration of Savings Groups across other Government policies, in collaboration with the Mali Savings Group Network of INGOs, an informal industry network of national and international non-governmental organizations.

Lead Institution: Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children and the Family

Design and implementation partners: Local branches of the Ministry, women's organizations and other civil society organizations

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2014-present

Target: Women's groups, vulnerable children, people with disabilities

References: For more information, contact the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children and the Family at www.mpfef.gouv.ml



MOZAMBIQUE

"We expect our beneficiaries to understand the importance of saving, as a mechanism from which they can make investments, in order to improve their standard of living."

–Syra Maloa, Head of Social Assistance Division, National Institute of Social Action

Savings Groups are recognized in the National Strategy for the Development of the Financial Sector 2013-2022; and a component of the Pro-Poor Value Chain Development Project in the Maputo and Limpopo Corridors (PROSUL). The Government is also currently exploring the integration of Savings Groups within the National Social Protection Programme (ENSSB 2).



MOZAMBIQUE

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Strategy for the Development of the Financial Sector 2013-2022

About: The strategy sets the priorities for strengthening the financial sector and recommends the formation of Savings Groups in rural development programs.

Government commitment: Savings Groups are recognized as a “necessary action” to promote a savings culture amongst low-income populations, as part of the strategy’s broader savings campaign. A reference group on rural finance, coordinated by the National Directorate of Rural Development is leading the savings campaign and the coordination of Savings Groups activities.

Lead institution: Ministry of Finance

Implementation partner: Ministry of Land, Environment and Rural Development

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2013-present

References: https://www.firstinitiative.org/sites/default/files/FIRST%20CGM%202015_Mozambique%27s%20Experience%20with%20Implementation%20of%20FS%20Reforms.pdf

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Pro-Poor Value Chain Development Project in the Maputo and Limpopo Corridors

About: PROSUL aims to strengthen the livelihoods of farmers at the base of the cassava, red meat and horticulture value chains. The project promotes Savings Groups to improve access to finance by smallholder farmers.

Government commitment: The Government contracts service providers to form Savings Groups, deliver financial literacy training, and facilitate relationships with formal financial institutions.

Lead institution: Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security

Implementation partners: Service providers including market actors and non-governmental organizations

Funders: IFAD (primary funder), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Spanish Trust Fund, United Nations Capital Development Fund and the private sector

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2012-2019

Target: 1,200 new Savings Groups consisting of 20,000 members (66% female), with savings of USD 1 million and investments of USD 1 million in PROSUL value chains, across 19 districts

References: www.ifad.org/en/web/operations/project/id/1618/country/mozambique

SOCIAL PROTECTION

National Basic Social Security Strategy 2016-2024

About: The Government is exploring the integration of Savings Groups within two programs under the National Basic Social Security Strategy (ENSSB 2), to support the overall objectives of the strategy to reduce poverty, build resilience, and protect the rights of the poorest and most vulnerable households and individuals.

Government commitment: The Government is considering how to promote the voluntary mobilization of beneficiaries of the Direct Emergency Social Support Program (asset transfer) and the Social Productive Action Program (conditional cash transfers) into Savings Groups to support graduation from the social protection programs. The National Institute of Social Action (INAS) is identifying potential partners in the promotion of Savings Group – for both group formation and training of Government staff.

Lead institution: National Institute of Social Action, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Action

Funders: World Bank and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Action

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2016-2024

References: www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---africa/-ro-addis_ababa/---ilo-lusaka/documents/publication/wcms_532757.pdf

NIGER

“The Government can only [build on] what is done by development partners to scale Savings Groups. It is the responsibility of the government to ensure that the majority of the population benefits from Savings Groups and their impact.”

—Hachimou Abdul Karim, General Secretariat, Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Protection of Children

The Government of Niger recognizes the contribution of Savings Groups to women's economic empowerment, manifested within the National Strategy for Women's Economic Empowerment 2017-2021.



WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

National Strategy for Women's Economic Empowerment 2017-2021

About: The strategy, the reference framework at the national level for women's economic empowerment, aims “to promote the economic empowerment of women in Niger through the development and consolidation of income-generating activities, entrepreneurship and culture, and to contribute to equality in rights and opportunities between women and men.” Savings Groups are cited extensively in the strategy as a benchmark for enhancing women's access to and control over their means of production and access to markets, and for mobilizing women's collective action, political participation and management of capital.

Government Commitment: The Ministry for the Promotion of Women and the Protection of Children encourages NGOs

and other stakeholders to continue the promotion of Savings Groups and advocate for the recognition and adoption of Savings Groups by other governments institutions.

Lead institution: Ministry for the Promotion of Women and the Protection of Children

Design partners: NGOs and various sector stakeholders, including the United Nations Population Fund and CARE International

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2017-2021

Target: Girls, adult women, elderly women, women with disabilities, women living with HIV, and poor women

References: For more information, contact the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Protection of Children in Niger at (+227) 20 72 23 30

NIGERIA

“The Central Bank of Nigeria aims at eradicating poverty. Savings Groups are one of the best channels for sustainable change, [and] I encourage all other countries should organize Savings Groups as part of their national priority.”
—Dr. Mohammed Garzali, Data Analyst, Financial Inclusion Secretariat, Central Bank of Nigeria

Savings Groups are central to the poverty reduction efforts of the Central Bank of Nigeria, in the Agriculture Credit Guarantee Scheme Fund, the Rural Finance Institution Building Program and the National Financial Inclusion Strategy.

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Agriculture Credit Guarantee Scheme Fund

About: The Agriculture Credit Guarantee Scheme Fund (ACGSF), managed by the Central Bank of Nigeria, provides loan guarantees for credit facilities extended to farmers by banks. The Self-Help Group Linkage Programme, launched under the ACGS in 1991, encourages farmers to organize themselves into small groups (between 5 to 20 individuals) with a common purpose, and open an account with a partner bank of their choice.

Government commitment: The credit guarantee scheme is supported by current investments of nearly USD 10 million by the Central Bank and the Ministry of Agriculture.

Lead institution: Financial Inclusion Secretariat, Central Bank of Nigeria

Status: Current

Funders: Central Bank of Nigeria (40 percent) and Federal Ministry of Agriculture (60 percent)

Timeframe: 1978-present (Self-Help Linkage Programme established in 1991)

References: www.cbn.gov.ng/devfin/selfhelp.asp



NIGERIA

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Rural Finance Institution Building Programme

About: The Rural Finance Institution Building Programme (RUFIN) is a loan agreement of USD 27.2 million between IFAD and the Federal Government of Nigeria. Its objective is to develop and strengthen Microfinance Banks (MFBs) and member-based microfinance institutions (MFIs), to improve agricultural productivity and micro- and small rural enterprises. A key element of the program is the mobilization of Savings Groups and the delivery of financial education and business training.

Government commitment: The Government of Nigeria promotes this fund to Savings Groups, to support access to formal financial services rural farmers and link them to MFIs. Since 2010, the program has established 49,000 Savings Groups; and Savings Groups totaling over 700,000 members have benefited from various capacity-building initiatives of the program.

Lead institution: Finance Department, Central Bank of Nigeria

Target: Youth, women and the physically challenged

Status: Current

Timeframe: 1992-2018

References: For more information, contact the Central Bank of Nigeria at www.cbn.gov.ng

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2012-2020

About: The National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS) identifies Savings Groups as one of the strategies to advance the target for 60% of the population to be saving by 2020.

Government commitment: While Savings Groups are mentioned in the strategy, the Central Bank recognizes the need to have clearer targets with respect to Savings Groups, Under the review process of the strategy – scheduled to be completed by December 2018 – such targets will be incorporated.

Lead institution: Financial Inclusion Secretariat, Central Bank of Nigeria

Implementing partner: Financial Inclusion Secretariat, Financial Services Regulation Coordinating Committee (FSRCC)

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2012-2020

References: www.cbn.gov.ng/Out/2013/CCD/NFIS.pdf

RWANDA

“The reason we really care for Savings Groups is within the context of Rwanda having had a genocide 24 years ago, during which one million people lost their lives and the social fabric of our economy and infrastructure were destroyed. Rwanda managed to recover fast and is a country that is improving fast. We owe all of that to the politics of inclusion. Savings Groups play a crucial role in [the] politics of inclusion, especially contributing to women’s economic empowerment.”

–Dr. Monique Nsanzabaganwa, Deputy Governor, National Bank of Rwanda

The Government of Rwanda is deeply committed to mainstreaming Savings Groups into national policy. Savings Groups are central to the Government’s financial inclusion efforts: Savings Groups are one of the priorities of the National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2017 and are key components of the National Financial Education Strategy 2013 and the Financial Sector Strategy 2013-2018. Savings Groups are also included in the National Social Protection Strategy (EDPRS2) and the Long Term Savings Scheme (LTSS); and the National Bank of Rwanda supports sector coordination through a national Savings Groups Map.

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2017

About: The upcoming National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS) establishes the priorities for all Rwandans to have access to financial services that meet their needs by 2020. The NFIS definition of financial inclusion encompasses the use of formal and informal financial services. The strategy identifies Savings Groups as one of its 10 priorities, recognizing the role of groups in the provision of financial services to low-income and rural households.

Government commitment: NFIS sets detailed actions for stakeholders to “build on the success of [Savings Groups],” which include developing links between Savings Groups, financial institutions and digital money platforms, developing standardized reporting frameworks and fostering the increased economic activity of groups.

Lead institution: Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning

Status: Drafted but not yet launched

References: For more information, contact the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning at www.minecofin.gov.rw



RWANDA

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

National Financial Education Strategy 2013

About: A key component of the NFIS is the National Financial Education Strategy (NFES) of a national financial education strategy (NFES), aimed at deepening and broadening the financial literacy of Rwandans. Savings Groups are identified among many delivery channels for the implementation of the strategy.

Government commitment: The strategy targets Savings Groups to receive NFES basic education on budgeting, savings, debt management and financial services – delivered by Savings Group promoters.

Lead institution: Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
Implementing partners: Ministry of Local Government and partner NGOs, including Plan International, CARE International and PAJER

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2013-present

References: www.minecofin.gov.rw/fileadmin/templates/documents/National_Financial_Education_Strategy.pdf

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Rwanda Financial Sector Strategy 2013-2018

About: The strategy sets the priorities for the financial sector to support the overarching National Vision 2020 goal to transform Rwanda into middle-income country by the year 2020.

Government commitment: The strategy directs the financial sector to deepen its work with Savings Groups and identifies the National Savings Group Forum as a key platform to engage financial institutions to serve Savings Groups.

Lead institution: Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2013-2018

References: www.minecofin.gov.rw/fileadmin/templates/documents/sector_strategic_plan/Financial_Sector_Strategic_Plan_June2013.pdf

SOCIAL PROTECTION

National Social Protection Strategy 2013

About: The National Protection Strategy (EDPRS2) promotes the sustainable graduation out of poverty and states that “linkages to Informal Financial Channels such as [Savings Groups] shall be supported given their ability in providing a stepping stone to formal financial inclusion for the poor.”

Government commitment: The Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC) promotes the voluntary mobilization of beneficiaries into Savings Groups and delivers financial literacy training, as per the National Financial Education Strategy.

Lead institution: Ministry of Local Government

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2013-present

References: www.minecofin.gov.rw/fileadmin/templates/documents/sector_strategic_plan/Social_Protection_Strategy_July_2013.pdf

SOCIAL PROTECTION

Long Term Saving Scheme

About: Previously called the Informal Sector Pension Scheme (ISPS), the Long Term Saving Scheme (LTSS) is an upcoming voluntary government pension scheme targeting Rwandans, especially those in the informal sector.

Government Commitment: The LTSS intends to use Savings Groups as a platform for promotion and the mobilization of deposits for retirement savings.

Lead institution: The Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs

Status: Future

References: www.afr.rw/focus-areas/informal-sector-pension-scheme/

RWANDA

REGULATION FRAMEWORK

National Microfinance Law 2008

About: The National Microfinance Law, adopted in 2008, regulates the microfinance sector in Rwanda and created new categories for microfinance regulation. Informal financial services, including Savings Groups, fall into Category 1. The law states they must register with the nearest local administrative entity; but in practice, registration is voluntary.

Government commitment: The Government promotes group registration for several reasons: for statistical purposes and monitoring of financial inclusion trends; for consumer protection, as registration helps to resolve conflicts; for formal sector participation, as registration provides certification and legal recognition which can be used to satisfy KYC requirements at financial institutions; and for the implementation of government programs, as registrations enable the Government to locate groups and deliver services more efficiently.

Lead institution: Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning

Design partner: Access to Finance Rwanda

Status: Currently being reviewed

Timeframe: 2008-present

References: http://minecofin.gov.rw/fileadmin/templates/documents/National_Microfinance_Policy_Implementation_Strategy.pdf



REGULATION FRAMEWORK

Savings Groups Map

About: The purpose of the Savings Groups Map is to improve sector coordination, identifying the location and volume of group activity.

Government commitment: The map is hosted by the National Bank of Rwanda, which seeks to increase and deepen the usage of formal financial services in underserved areas through partnerships between Savings Group promoters and financial institutions.

Lead institution: National Bank of Rwanda

Implementing partner: Access to Finance Rwanda

Status: Current

References: www.sg.bnr.rw

SAHEL REGION

“Savings Groups occupy a central place in this program because they provide an entry point for the implementation of the other measures included in the package focusing on raising awareness on social norms and aspirations.”

–Kadi Aboubacar, Head of Cash Transfer and Accompanying Measures to the Social Nets Cell, Prime Minister’s Office

SOCIAL PROTECTION

Sahel Adaptive Social Protection Programme

About: The Sahel Adaptive Social Protection Programme (ASPP) is a regional safety net program operating across six countries in the Sahel region: Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal. As a component of the ASPP since 2017, Savings Groups support income diversification and smoothing for safety net recipients, and contribute to the program’s overall objective to improve the living conditions of poor and vulnerable households, increase their resilience and brace against shocks.

Government commitment: Under the ASPP, participating governments aim to have at least three-quarters of beneficiaries enrolled in Saving Groups.

Lead institutions: Social Safety Net Department, under the responsibility of the Prime Minister (Niger); Burkina Social Net Project, under the supervision of the Ministry in Charge of Social Action (Burkina); Social operators (4 partner NGOs), under the responsibility of Senegalese Presidency (Senegal); two NGOs that report to the Presidency (Mauritania)

Implementation partners: Trickle Up, World Bank

Funder: DFID

Status: Current

Timeframes: 2014-present (Savings Groups incorporated in 2017)

Target: 70,000 poor and vulnerable women in program countries. At least three quarters of the safety net beneficiaries will be members of Savings Groups, including about 21,000 members in Niger, 18,800 in Burkina Faso, 12,000 in Senegal and 2,665 in Mauritania.

References:

- www.worldbank.org/en/programs/sahel-adaptive-social-protection-program-trust-fund
- www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/Feature%20Story/social-protection/Sahel%20ASP%20Summary%20Note%20Public%20EN.pdf
- For more information, contact Trickle Up at www.trickleup.org/contact



SIERRA LEONE

“Saving Groups will be key in helping us achieve our goal to transform the financial sector to serve the underserved and unserved segments of Sierra Leone and contribute to a more inclusive, resilient and economically vibrant country.”
–Momoh Sesay, Senior Manager, Financial Inclusion Secretariat, Bank of Sierra Leone

While the current National Financial Inclusion Strategy does not explicitly reference Savings Groups, there is a strong commitment from the Bank of Sierra Leone to promote Savings Groups as a vehicle to support universal access to financial services.



FINANCIAL INCLUSION

National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2017-2022

About: The National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS) aims to increase the rate of financial inclusion among adults from 20 to 35 percent, over the period from 2017 to 2022. While the current strategy does not include Savings Groups, the Government is exploring its role in the sector and has requested the support of the Platform of VSLA Implementers to support the Bank of Sierra Leone in this reflection.

Lead institution: Bank of Sierra Leone

Coordination: Three working groups on digital financing, financial literacy and SME financing

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2018-2022

References: www.bsl.gov.sl/SL%20FI%20Strategy%202017%20-%202020.pdf

SOUTH SUDAN

Government policy supports Savings Groups in South Sudan to register with the Directorate of Cooperatives and Rural Development, a requirement to access formal financial services, extension services and other support from public programs. With development partners, the Government is currently exploring opportunities to facilitate relationships between Savings Groups and financial institutions.



REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

National Cooperatives Strategy 2012

About: The National Cooperatives Strategy set the priorities for the promotion of cooperatives, as a key approach in the Government's objective to "transform [the] South Sudan economy to a market economy." The strategy promotes the registration of Savings Groups, providing groups a legal identity, a requirement to open an account at a financial institution and access support from public programs.

Government commitment: The Directorate of Cooperatives and Rural Development manages the registration and certification of Savings Groups, and facilitates further extension support. Registration costs SSP 2,000 (less than USD 20) per group. The Cooperative Bank of South Sudan is currently exploring the development of products for registered groups.

Lead institution: Directorate of Cooperatives and Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Cooperatives and Rural Development.

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2012-present

TANZANIA

“Savings Groups, regardless of the names or models, have been promoted at different levels of the government. Saving Groups have been prioritized as core contributors of economic development and lifting people’s economic conditions, particularly for the ultra-poor.”

–Tatu Mhando Mwaruka, Livelihoods Enhancement Manager, Tanzania Social Action Fund

Savings Groups have long been promoted by the Government of Tanzania to achieve financial inclusion and poverty reduction objectives. The focus is now on improving industry standards and coordination, and the development of guidelines for the formation, registration and reporting of Savings Groups. Tanzania’s Productive Social Safety Net Program was designed to include Savings Groups as the main graduation pathway within the Livelihoods Enhancements Initiative. Savings Groups are also a component of the Women’s Development Fund (WDF), Mwananchi Empowerment Fund (MEF), Youth Development Fund (YDF), Presidential Trust Fund (PTF), SELF Microfinance Fund, UTT Microfinance and National Microfinance Policy 2017.



REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

National Microfinance Policy 2017, National Microfinance Act and new Savings Group Guidelines

About: The National Microfinance Policy coordinates and regulates the microfinance industry. Savings Groups are not regulated by the Bank of Tanzania; but group registration is required, and Savings Groups are supervised under tiered regulation which will be further defined in the upcoming National Microfinance Act. The measures were introduced to improve stakeholder coordination, standardize registration practice and support access, by Savings Groups, to formal financial services and government funds.

Government commitment: New guidelines are being produced for district government authorities to register

Savings Groups with an affiliated NGO, manage a group database, and produce quarterly sector reports. To date, 150,000 Savings Groups have been registered; registration costs up to TSH 30,000 (USD 13) per group.

Lead institution: Ministry of Finance and Planning

Implementation partners: National Economic Empowerment Council; Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Children and Elder; and partner NGOs

Status: Current

Timeframe: The policy was adopted in 2017; and the National Act is expected to be approved by December 2018.

References: [http://www.mof.go.tz/docs/Policy%20-%20Fedha%20English%203%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.mof.go.tz/docs/Policy%20-%20Fedha%20English%203%20(2).pdf)

TANZANIA

SOCIAL PROTECTION

Livelihoods Enhancement Initiative

About: Tanzania's Productive Social Safety Net program (PSSN) has three main components: conditional cash transfers; public works; and livelihoods enhancement. The Livelihoods Enhancement component includes basic skills training on household economic activities, coaching and mentoring, provision of a productive grant and Savings Group formation, as the main graduation pathway component of the PSSN.

Government commitment: Beneficiaries first receive a conditional cash transfer and some participate in public work programs; and beneficiaries are then encouraged to join a Savings Group. Local facilitators form and train Savings Groups, and facilitate access to livelihood enhancement grants. PSSN aims to reach 1.1 million households and organize them into Savings Groups; there are currently over 150,000 members in PSSN Savings Groups.

Lead institution: Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF)

Implementation partners: President's Office Regional Administration and Local Government (PORALG)

Funders: Government of Tanzania, World Bank, DFID, SIDA, ILO, UNCDF and UNICEF

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2013-2022 with mid-term reviews every 2.5 years

References: www.tasaf.go.tz/index.php/tasaf-components/supported-interventions/livelihood-enhancement

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT Women's Development Fund and

FINANCIAL INCLUSION Mwananchi Empowerment Fund

About: The Mwananchi Empowerment Fund (MEF) guarantees and issues loans to Savings Groups, at concessionary interest rates with relatively simple conditions, through partner financial institutions. The Women's Development Fund (WDF) provides interest-free loans directly to women's Savings Groups; to qualify, Savings Groups must have at least one year of internal lending experience with a 95 percent loan repayment rate.

Government commitment: The WDF is facilitated by Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly, and Children; the MEF is facilitated by the National Economic Empowerment Council (NEEC) and its NGO partners.

Lead institutions: Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly, and Children and the National Economic Empowerment Council

Status: Current

References:

- WDF: www.equal-futures.org/country/tanzania
- MEF: For more information, contact NEEC at www.uwezeshaji.go.tz

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Guidelines for Mobilizing Women to Form and Join Savings Groups

About: The Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly, and Children has identified Savings Groups as a vital tool in the promotion of health insurance, women's and youth rights, women's economic empowerment and community development. In 2017, the Ministry designed and tested new guidelines for the promotion of Savings Groups in the regions of Morogoro and Kilimanjaro. The guidelines intend to standardize group formation within the Government's safety net program, mobilize more women to join and form groups, and strengthen women's economic participation.

Government commitment: The Government aims to roll out the guidelines at the national level in 2018.

Lead institution: Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly, and Children (MoHCDGEC)

Implementation and funding partner: CARE International

Status: Current

References: For more information, contact MoHCDGEC at <http://www.mcdgc.go.tz/>

TOGO

“The experiment [promotion of Savings Groups] is taking place in Togo’s five economic regions, including Lomé, with the ambition to be able to raise and sell the Savings Group experience as a strategy that works, and will allow the State to reach the objectives of inclusive development.”

–Alao Brandao Hyacinthe, Director of Operations, National Local Development Agency, Ministry of Local Development, Youth, Handicraft and Youth Employment

The National Financial Inclusion Strategy recognizes Savings Groups as a channel for financial inclusion; and the National Local Development Agency promotes Savings Groups in all five regions of the country.

The SEEP Network



FINANCIAL INCLUSION

National Development Agency

About: The National Local Development Agency (ANADEB), mandated to implement the Government’s policy for local development, identifies Savings Groups as a strategy to ensure that all citizens have a reasonable standard of living.

Government commitment: ANADEB is piloting the mobilization of Savings Groups across all regions; based on this experience, the agency aims to promote the strategy across public programs, as a model for inclusive development.

Lead institution: National Development Agency

Implementation partner: Plan International

Status: Current, with quarterly and annual review cycles

References: For more information, contact ANADEB at www.anadeb.org

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2019-2023

About: The National Financial Inclusion Strategy of Togo aims to increase access to and use of a diverse range of formal, affordable financial products and services, from 60 to 80 percent of the adult population. The strategy identifies Savings Groups as a key element to achieve its objectives, by bridging the gap between low-income rural populations and financial institutions.

Government commitment: The strategy is now in the process of development, and the Directorate for the Promotion of Financial Inclusion has invited Savings Group promoters to provide comments and input on how to better integrate Savings Groups in the forthcoming strategy.

Lead institution: Directorate for the Promotion of Financial Inclusion, Presidency of Togo

Coordination partner: State Secretariat for the Presidency of the Republic

Design partner: United Nations Capital Development Fund

Status: Future

References: For more information, contact the Presidency of Togo at www.presidence.gouv.tg

UGANDA

“We know what we are giving for social protection is not adequate. Through saving and investing we believe people can generate more resources. And we have already seen that. We are giving USD 7 a month - when they save from the year, the investment they made [through Savings Groups] generates much more than you get. It multiplies social protection and creates more social protection.”

–Stephen Kasaija, Head of Programme Management Unit, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development

There is a strong Government commitment to and sense of ownership for the promotion of Savings Groups – within both the formal and informal sector – in Uganda, as demonstrated in the National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2017-2022 and the Project for Financial Inclusion in Rural Areas. To protect the informal nature of Savings Groups and promote an enabling environment, the regulator is introducing new reporting and registration guidelines under the Tier 4 Microfinance Institutions Act Money Lenders Act 2016. Savings Groups are also being supported under the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development through the Uganda Youth Livelihood Programme, the Uganda Women Enterprise Programme, Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment, and the National Social Protection Policy 2015.

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2017-2022

About: Savings Groups are a key component of two pillars of the National Financial Inclusion Strategy: Pillar 1, to reduce financial exclusion and barriers to access financial services; and Pillar 5, to empower and protect individuals and communities.

Government commitment: Under Pillar 1 of the strategy, the Government commits to promote linkages between Savings Groups and the formal financial sector; under Pillar 5, the Government recommends that stakeholders work with Savings Groups to better understand the societal barriers for women's financial inclusion, and increase their property rights and control over assets.

Lead institution: Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development

Design and implementation partners: Inter-Institutional Committee on Financial Inclusion multi-sector group, the Central Bank of Uganda, financial sector regulators, and partner NGOs

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2017-2022

References: https://www.bou.or.ug/bou/bou-downloads/publications/special_pubs/2017/National-Financial-Inclusion-Strategy.pdf



UGANDA

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Savings Group sub-committee of the National Microfinance Forum

About: In 2011, the Government established a multi-stakeholder Savings Group sub-committee within the National Microfinance Forum. The sub-committee is mainly composed of local and international NGOs promoting Savings Groups in Uganda, and reports to the Inter-Institutional Committee on Financial Inclusion, within the Ministry of Finance of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

Government commitment: The Savings Group sub-committee is consulted by Government with respect to the integration of Savings Groups into public strategies, policies and programs.

Lead institution: Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development

Members: Non-governmental organizations (including CARE International, Catholic Relief Services, Plan International and the Stromme Foundation) and academic and research institutions (including the Economic Policy Research Centre and the Makerere Business School)

References: For more information, contact the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development at <https://www.finance.go.ug/>

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Project for Financial Inclusion in Rural Areas

About: The Project for Financial Inclusion in Rural Areas (PROFIRA) supports access to financial services by smallholder farmers and micro-entrepreneurs through strengthening and building the capacity of two delivery channels: Savings Groups and SACCOs (Savings and Credit Cooperatives).

Government commitment: The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development contracts partner NGOs to form and train new Savings Groups, strengthen existing groups, and facilitate access to financial institutions.

Lead institution: Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development

Implementation partners: Contracted service providers including CARE International and the South Eastern Private Sector Promotion Enterprise Ltd (SEPSPEL)

Funder: International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) loan to the Government of Uganda

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2015-2021

Target: Establish 15,000 new Savings Groups with 375,000 members, and strengthen 3,000 existing Savings Groups with 75,000 beneficiaries, comprising at least 70 percent female and 15 percent youth membership

References: www.profiraug.org

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Uganda Youth Livelihood Programme and Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme

About: The Uganda Youth Livelihood Programme provides credit to established and registered rural youth Savings Groups at concessionary rates of interest rates, to support the creation or expansion of youth-led enterprises. The Uganda Women's Enterprise Programme provides interest-free credit to women's Savings Groups on the basis of a revolving fund.

Government commitment: Ministry staff facilitates loan applications by Savings Groups and provide business training. Loans disbursements are up to Ush 20 million (USD 5,200) per group. To qualify, groups must meet the respective youth and female membership criteria of the funds, and the group-based loan is guaranteed by the group.

Lead institution: Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development.

Status: Current

References:

- Uganda Youth Livelihood Programme: www.nebbi.go.ug/youth-livelihood-program
- Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme: www.uwep.mglsd.go.ug/

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Tier 4 Microfinance Institutions & Money Lenders Act, 2016

About: The Tier 4 Microfinance Institutions & Money Lenders Act recognizes Savings Groups registered through District Local Governments, while exempting the groups from prudential regulation by the Bank of Uganda or Uganda Microfinance Regulatory Authority (UMRA). To address knowledge and data gaps in the sector and promote industry standards, the Tier 4 Act will also introduce new registration and reporting guidelines.

Government commitment: Community Development officers register, monitor and compile annual reports on Savings Groups and report to the microfinance regulator. The required data includes the number of groups, members (disaggregated by sex, age and location) and affiliated NGO.

Lead institution: Uganda Microfinance Regulatory Authority

Implementation partners: District Local Governments

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2016-present, new registration and reporting guidelines in 2019

References: www.ulii.org/system/files/legislation/act/2016/4/Tier%204%20Microfinance%20Institutions%20%26%20Money%20Lenders%20Act%202016-GAZETTED.pdf

UGANDA

The SEEP Network



SOCIAL PROTECTION

Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment Programme

About: The Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment Programme (SAGE) piloted, between 2012 and 2014, two cash transfer grants: one for senior citizens and one for vulnerable households paid to women heads of households. Savings Groups were integrated into the safety net mechanism, and the Government pursued further group promotion, recognizing that Savings Groups helped beneficiaries to save, developed income-generating activities, and improved social inclusion and overall resilience.

Government commitment: The experience of the pilot informed the development of the National Social Protection Policy, which recognizes Savings Groups as a valuable traditional social protection mechanism.

Lead institution: Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development

Implementation partner: CARE International (group formation and training)

Funders: DFID, Irish Aid, UNICEF and Government of Uganda

Status: Past

Timeframe: 2012-2014

References:

- Expanding Social Protection Programme Management Unit: www.socialprotection.go.ug
- National Social Protection Policy 2015: www.socialprotection.go.ug/newwebsite2/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/National-Social-Protection-Policy-uganda.pdf

ZAMBIA

“We have seen [that Savings Groups] have promoted strong networks. It’s the old traditional way of dealing with communal problems and challenges. We’ve seen them grow...it has encouraged government to give them support and build capacity.”

**–Kennedy Mumba, Director, Department of Department of Social Affairs,
Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health**

‘The long-term goal is to link Savings Groups to formal institutions.’

–Musapenda J. Phiri, Assistant Director, Financial Sector Development, Bank of Zambia

Following the success of the SCALE project, Savings Groups have been integrated into the Government’s cash transfer programs as a key component to improve the resilience of beneficiary households. The objective of the Ministry of Finance is to transform Savings Groups into Savings to cooperatives, as reflected in the National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2017-2022. Savings Groups are also embedded in the Rural Finance Expansion Programme and the Women Empowerment Programme.



The SEEP Network

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2017-2022

About: The vision of the National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS) is to achieve universal access to and usage of a broad range of quality and affordable financial services, with the objective to increase financial inclusion from 59 to 80 percent by 2022. The strategy recognizes Savings Groups as an effective model for improving access to informal financial services, especially for women, and there is a focus on increasing linkages to financial institutions.

Government commitment: The strategy includes specific indicators related to the provision of formal financial services to Savings Groups and Chilimbas (informal savings

groups); and the Government is also committed to working with SaveNet Zambia, an industry network composed of Savings Group promoters, the Bank of Zambia and other stakeholders.

Lead institution: Ministry of Finance

Status: Current

Timeframe: 2017-present

References:

- National Financial Inclusion Strategy: www.boz.zm/National-Financial-Inclusion-Strategy-2017-2022.pdf
- SaveNet Zambia: www.zcgs.co.zm/savenet

ZAMBIA

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Rural Finance Expansion Programme

About: The Rural Finance Expansion Programme (RuFEP) facilitates access to financial services by smallholder farmers and micro-entrepreneurs across the country. The program enhances the capacity of financial service providers to deliver demand-driven services in rural areas, and includes a Savings Group component as a measure to “stimulate demand for financial services.”

Government commitment: RuFEP directs implementers to support SG members to access savings and credit services, build their financial history, establish a ‘social fund’ for consumption or emergencies and access digital financial services.

Lead institution: Ministry of Finance

Funders: IFAD loan to the Government of Zambia, and co-financed by the Spanish Fund

Timeframe: 2013-2021

References: www.ifad.org/web/operations/project/id/1650/country/zambia

SOCIAL PROTECTION

Strengthening Cash Transfers for Access to Finance, Livelihood and Entrepreneurship

About: From 2013 to 2016, the Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health tested Savings Groups as a graduation pathway for recipients of government social cash transfers out of poverty, off the safety net and into sustainable livelihoods. Under the Strengthening Cash Transfers for Access to Finance, Livelihood and Entrepreneurship project (SCALE), 60,000 members of cash transfer beneficiary households joined Savings Groups, improving food security, and access to finance and extension services.

Government commitment: Based on the experience of SCALE, the Government has now integrated Savings Groups within cash transfer programs across 50 districts. Findings from the pilot also informed the National Social Protection Policy 2015, which includes a commitment to promote and support Savings Groups for the livelihoods and empowerment of the most vulnerable.

Lead institution: Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health

Implementation partner: CARE International (group formation and training)

Funder: European Union

Status: Past

Timeframe: 2013-2016

References: www.carezam.org/scale

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Women Empowerment Programme and Village Bank Programme

About: The Government's Women Empowerment Programme provides small grants to Savings Groups for the purpose of income-generating activities, and the Village Bank Programme supports vulnerable women through the provision of collateral free loans.

Lead institution: Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health

References:

- Women Empowerment Programme: www.mcsw.gov.zm/women-empowerment-programme
- For more information about the Village Bank Programme, contact the Ministry of Community Development Mother and Child at www.mcdmch.gov.zm/

SECTOR COORDINATION

Savings Groups Map

About: The purpose of the national Savings Group Map is to provide stakeholders a better understanding of the location and volume of SG activities across the country. It is estimated that there are about 20,000 active Savings Groups across the country, with 400,000 members, total savings of approximately USD 50 million, and outstanding loans valued at about USD 30 million.

Government commitment: FSD Zambia, in partnership with the Bank of Zambia, undertook the national mapping exercise.

Lead institution: FSD Zambia and the Bank of Zambia

References: For more information about the Savings Groups Map and access to the data, contact FSD Zambia at info@fsdzambia.org

ANNEX: Savings Groups and the Role of Government in Sub-Saharan Africa – List of Initiatives Categorized by Type

Key: Past (P); Current (C); Future (F)

Regulatory framework

Policies, laws, registration, reporting, certification, guidelines and data mapping related to Savings Groups

Policies and laws

1. Burundi National Microfinance Law (C)
2. Kenya Community Group Registration Bill, 2018 (F)
3. Rwanda National Microfinance Law, 2008 (C)
4. South Sudan National Cooperatives Strategy 2012 (C)
5. Tanzania National Microfinance Policy 2017 (C)
6. Tanzania National Microfinance Act (F)
7. Uganda Tier 4 Microfinance Institutions and Money Lenders Act, 2016 (C)

Guidelines

8. Uganda registration and reporting guidelines (F)
9. Tanzania Guidelines for standardization of Savings Group formation, Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children (F)
10. Tanzania registration and reporting guidelines (F)
11. Malawi Savings and Loan Groups Best Practice Guidelines (C)

Data Mapping

12. Rwanda Savings Groups Map (C)
13. Zambia Savings Groups Map (C)

Financial Inclusion

Financial inclusion strategies, programs and projects related to Savings Groups

National Financial Inclusion Strategies

14. Burkina Faso National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2018-2022 (F)
15. Burundi National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2015-2020 (C)
16. Côte d'Ivoire National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2018-2022 (F)
17. Ethiopia National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2017 (C)
18. Ghana National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2018-2022 (C)
19. Madagascar National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2018-2022 (C)
20. Malawi National Strategy for Financial Inclusion 2016-2020 (C)
21. Nigeria National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2012-2020 (C)
22. Rwanda National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2017 (F)
23. Sierra Leone National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2018-2022 (C)
24. Togo National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2018-2022 (F)
25. Uganda National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2017-2022 (C)
26. Zambia National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2017-2022 (C)

Financial Sector Development Strategies

27. Ghana Financial Sector Development Project (F)
28. Mozambique Strategy for the Development of the Financial Sector 2013-2022 (C)
29. Rwanda National Financial Sector Strategy 2013-2018 (C)
30. Togo National Development Agency 2017 (C)

Financial Education Strategy

31. Rwanda National Financial Education Strategy 2013 (C)

Rural Development Programs

32. Uganda Project for Financial Inclusion in Rural Areas (C)
33. Mozambique Pro-Poor Value Chain Development Project in the Maputo and Limpopo Corridors (C)
34. Zambia Rural Finance Expansion Programme (C)
35. Nigeria Rural Finance Institution Building Programme (C)
36. Democratic Republic of the Congo National Fund for Microfinance (C)
37. Kenya Programme for Rural Outreach in Financial Innovations and Technologies (C)

Enterprise Development Funds

38. Kenya Youth Enterprise Development Fund (C)
39. Kenya Uwezo Fund (C)
40. Tanzania Mwananchi Empowerment Fund (C)
41. Uganda Youth Livelihood Programme (C)
42. Nigeria Agriculture Credit Guarantee Scheme Fund (C)

Social Protection

Social protection strategies, policies, programs and projects related to Savings Groups

National Social Protection Strategies

- 43. Mozambique National Basic Social Security Strategy 2016-2024 (C)
- 44. Rwanda National Social Protection Strategy 2013 (C)

National Social Protection Policies

- 45. Kenya Social Protection Policy 2011 (C)
- 46. Malawi National Social Support Policy 2012 (C)
- 47. Zambia National Social Protection Policy 2015 (C)

Social Protection Programs

- 48. Ethiopia Productive Safety Net Programme IV (C)
- 49. Malawi National Social Support Programme I (P)
- 50. Malawi National Social Support Programme II (C)
- 51. Mozambique Direct Emergency Social Support Program (F)
- 52. Mozambique Social Productive Action Program (F)
- 53. Rwanda Long Term Saving Scheme (F)
- 54. Adaptive Social Protection Programme in the Sahel (C)
- 55. Tanzania Productive Social Safety Net Programme II (F)
- 56. Tanzania Livelihood Enhancement Initiative (F)

Social Protection Projects

- 57. Ethiopia Graduating out of Social Assistance and into Long Term Food Security (P)
- 58. Ethiopia Livelihood for Resilience (F)
- 59. Kenya Social and Economic Inclusion Project (F)
- 60. Uganda National Social Protection Policy 2015 (C)
- 61. Uganda Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (P)
- 62. Zambia Strengthening Cash Transfers for Access to Finance, Livelihood and Entrepreneurship (P)

Women's Empowerment

Gender strategies, programs and funds for women's economic empowerment related to Savings Groups

National Gender Strategies

- 63. Kenya State Department for Gender Affairs Strategic Plan 2018-2022 (F)
- 64. Niger National Strategy for Women's Economic Empowerment 2017-2021 (C)

National Gender Policies

- 65. Burundi Implementation of the National Gender Policy 2012-2025 (C)
- 66. Mali Implementation of the National Gender Policy 2014 (C)

Women's Empowerment Program

- 67. Côte d'Ivoire National Program for the Care of Orphans and Other Children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS (C)

Women's Enterprise Development Funds

- 68. Burkina Faso Support Fund for Women's Remunerative Activities (C)
- 69. Kenya Women's Enterprise Fund (C)
- 70. Tanzania Women's Development Fund (C)
- 71. Zambia Women's Empowerment Programme (C)
- 72. Zambia Village Bank Programme (C)

Sector Coordination

Government-led industry networks

- 73. Rwanda National Savings Group Forum (C)
- 74. Uganda Savings Group sub-Committee of the National Microfinance Forum (C)

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