WOMEN AND MOBILE FINANCIAL SERVICES: THE CASE OF ZOONA IN ZAMBIA
60 years and counting...
Inclusive Financial Services
Expanding financial services to poor and rural populations

- **Pioneer** in microfinance, having played a critical role in the development of rural financial institutions in Ukraine, Haiti, Tanzania, Mozambique and Nicaragua since the 1980s.
- **Leader** in market research and client-responsive product development for MFIs and MSME markets in Ghana, Egypt, and Ethiopia, among other countries.
- **Integrator** among multiple actors along the value chain, offering agricultural, business development, gender, and financial services expertise for programs in Ghana, Ethiopia, Ukraine, and Pakistan.
- **Builder** of financial sectors over the last 10 years, as MEDA has provided technical assistance to over 40 MFIs, banks and private sector partner organizations.
Overview of Technolinks Project

- Three-year project funded by the DFATD to reach 235,252 rural women and men in Peru, Nicaragua, and Zambia.
- Improve the ability of farmers and rural entrepreneurs to increase incomes and mitigate risk through expanded access to technology-based agricultural products and financial services.
- In Zambia, the project is increasing access to financial services in partnership with Zoona, a start-up mobile payments service; helping to increase its capacity, expand its agent network and develop additional products designed for rural customers.
Challenges/Opportunities Identified by Gender Assessment

- Assessment focused on the social impact and business case for gender equality in three of Zoona’s business focus areas
- Broad definition of gender looked at factors including age, geographic location and how this impacts customers
- Focused on customers and Zoona Agents as clients
- **Challenges**
  - Competing household challenges for entrepreneurship
  - Less household decision making power and control
  - Lower literacy levels, less self promotion
- **Opportunities**
  - Introducing new data analytics – track gender differences
  - Market segmentation
  - Evaluation and customer surveys
  - Targeted marketing
  - Redesigning the training program for more flexibility, adding business skills training
Zoonia Results and Impact

• Zoonia’s customer outreach increased dramatically
  – 43,000 to over 220,000 customers per month in Q4 2013
• Collection of gender indicators for customers and mobile agents
  – Tracking gender participation of customers began Oct 2012
    • Unique senders in Q4 2013: 32% female, 68% male
    • Unique receiving customers in Q4 2013: 49% female, 51% male
  – Zoonia Agent breakdown
    • 56% female
    • 44% male
• Agent Training Redesign
  – Shortened training sessions and incorporating video
• Quarterly customer surveys
• Management and staff increasingly more comfortable with gender
• Market segmentation part of data analytics
Electronic Voucher

- Product design accounted for low literacy levels of farmer clients by using well established scratch card technology
- Indirect Impacts
  - Households and women reported greater decision-making in interviews and more household cohesion
  - Purchases with vouchers included iron sheets that reduced women’s work
Agent Development

• Many of Zoona’s top agents are women
• Access to non-collateralized finance has helped all agents, including female agents expand
• Female agents have cited their ability to return to school, support their families’ existing income or raise children on their own
THANK YOU

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Question and Answer