

**Supporting National and Regional Networks in social performance
A Coherent Framework for Strategy Development
(May 2010 – April 2011)**

Minutes of the first workshop (June 24-26, Bern, Switzerland)

Project Note N°1 – July 2010

Project background

This project¹ is a collaborative effort between Cerise and the Imp-Act Consortium. Its aim is to increase the scale and effectiveness of network-led initiatives in social performance through the development of a coherent framework for strategy development. The collaboration represents an opportunity to develop comprehensive guidance for national and regional networks to support their members in assessing, managing and reporting on social performance. It will also facilitate coordination among different initiatives supporting networks.

Expected outputs

The project will consolidate SPM experience of Cerise and the *Imp-Act* Consortium . A decision tree will be developed that will guide the networks (using it directly or with light support of a technical assistance provider) to choose their own strategies and tools and provide support to their members. It will also help support organizations to provide more cost-effective and coordinated support on SP to the networks.

The final product will cover the following:

- Assessment of network needs and capacity (based on context, social objectives, structure, capacities, level of awareness, stakeholder and member interest, etc.)
- Highlights of good practices, based on concrete experience from networks
- A “menu” of options for a customized network strategy on SP
- Guidance to identifying appropriate strategy and resources for a network – supporting different entry points
- Reference to case studies, resources and available tools

¹ This project is funded by the Ford Foundation, and the workshop has been sponsored by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

The tool will be complementary to the SPM Practice Guide for MFIs and will document the experience of networks in implementing SP.

First workshop: brainstorming on a “decision-tree”

On June 24-26, the initial project workshop brought together key “tools developers” from the *Imp-Act* Consortium (Imp-Act secretariat, MFC, MISION-CRS, Grameen Foundation, EDA-MCrl) and from Cerise, the Social Performance Task Force, as well as experienced networks from Africa (AEMFI Ethiopia), from Latin America (Copeme, RFR and Foro Lac Fr) and from Asia (MCPI²). The Smart Campaign for client protection was represented by one of its Steering Committee member (MFC). The workshop was moderated by Sharon D’Onofrio, from the SPTF/SEEP network working group.

The workshop produced several important inputs to the project:

- Identified drivers and good practices of networks in advancing social performance: integrated approach (social lens in performance management), gradual implementation, strategic and demand driven fundraising, quality control of SP data, network capacity with full understanding of the global SPM framework, clear identification of the main drivers for SPM (members, industry, government, etc.)
- Mapped out the most important strategic and tactical decisions in a network’s social performance strategy (see annex)
- Identified the principal social performance tools appropriate for networks at different points in strategy implementation.

Next steps / How to be involved

- Any interested network can share its contact with Cerise and ImpAct/MFC during the SPTF meeting (pilot-testing the tool or being interviewed for case studies)
- A working document will be shared early September with the interested initiatives (networks and support organizations) to share and get input on a draft decision tree
- Two networks will pilot the decision tree with direct support from Cerise and MFC (September-November)
- Finalized framework and communication materials will be available for a free download and widely disseminated in the microfinance industry (early 2011)

Contact

If you would like to get involved in the project activities please contact:

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² Excused for visa reasons

ANNEX : A DRAFT DECISION TREE FOR STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT OF NETWORKS

