



# MAKING A LIVING FROM TEACHING COMMUNITIES TO SAVE

## **Private Service Providers' motivations and income in the Expanding Financial Inclusion in Africa project**

*January 2019*

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## Acronyms

CRS	Catholic Relief Services
EFI	Expanding Financial Inclusion in Africa Project
FA	Field Agent
PSP	Private Service Provider
SILC	Savings and Internal Lending Community

## Executive Summary

This study reports results from research carried out by the Expanding Financial Inclusion in Africa project (EFI) to find out how working as an independent trainer of savings groups, a Private Service Provider (PSP) in Catholic Relief Services' (CRS) parlance, fitted into the lives of the individual doing this work, what motivated them, and what the work contributed to their livelihoods. EFI aimed to recruit social entrepreneurs as PSPs and was keen to see how they negotiated the competing elements of the work – helping people and earning money.

EFI wanted to know more about PSPs because these agents are a critical element in the Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC) model central to the EFI project and CRS strategy. PSPs are recruited from communities, have often only finished secondary school education and tend to be married and settled locally. They mobilise community members to form groups of around 25 members to save regularly, take loans and then receive back their savings plus interest in the share-out every 9 months. PSPs work on a fee-for-service basis, so must balance training groups to become autonomous against earning money from giving technical support to the groups. The EFI project created 20,273 new SILC groups with 543,220 members in four countries in Africa - Burkina Faso, Senegal, Uganda, and Zambia between 2013-17.

The results show that SILC work had become an important source of income for PSPs, that it was often included among their top three income generating activities; and that SILC work earned PSPs between one third and one half of their total cash income. For most PSPs, the work was part time, but at the time of study some worked full time. Most PSPs reported considerable financial benefits from their SILC work and planned to continue despite the challenges of distance, the physical and/or financial cost of travel to groups and the fact that many PSPs had a mixed portfolio of high- and low-performing groups.

The fee-for-service model seemed to work well, with a gradual decline reported in group payments to PSPs from the first to second and higher cycles. The first cycle groups mostly paid PSPs as the model required, but about half of PSPs had problems of non-payment with at least one group. Problems arose either with lack of money due to a major drought (as in Uganda at the time of field research), where groups felt themselves too poor to pay, did not want to pay, or when group rejected the legitimacy of payments due to an erroneous belief that PSPs were paid by the EFI project. Doubts regarding PSPs arose in low trust environments or where there were alternate savings group methodologies providing free goods or services.

PSPs were motivated by a range of factors in their work: they derived satisfaction helping others; appreciated that their technical skills raised their reputation and popularity both in communities and with local authorities and development agencies; and were pleased to be earning money and seeing visible improvement in their standards of living. PSPs defined success as forming groups continuously and those groups adhering closely to the SILC methodology promoted by the project. Nearly all PSPs were motivated by several factors in undertaking SILC work.

The overall picture presented here is of a model that works: PSPs gained status, earned money and had the satisfaction of helping their communities. If more research takes place, a panel survey for the lifetime of the relevant project is recommended to collect data on the PSPs' experiences. Similarly, future SILC programming may want to review whether first cycle training should be extended over two cycles for low-capacity groups that remain dependent on their PSP longer than other groups. And while

the model appears robust enough to function in low-population-density areas with poor markets and infrastructure, there is little doubt that it is in these areas that it is under greatest strain, and PSPs may need a longer period of support.

#### Research questions and main findings

Category	Research Questions	Result
<b>How do PSPs make a living?</b>	How important is the PSP work compared to other livelihoods?	SILC work was found to be a significant livelihood source. SILC work was the most important source of income for half of PSPs and the second most important source for a quarter of PSPs. Twelve PSPs relied entirely on PSP work for income and half of the PSPs interviewed only had one other income generating activity. PSPs had an average of 26 groups each, with a range of 21 to 34.
	What sort of income-generating activities do PSPs undertake?	Sales related to agricultural or livestock production were the next most important area of work. A few PSPs also earned income from petty trade, business and skilled work. We believe most PSPs, or their households, also engaged in subsistence farming.
	Had PSPs given up work to do SILC?	A third of PSPs had given up less profitable work to concentrate on SILC work.
<b>Payment – can PSPs make a living from their PSP work?</b>	Can PSPs make a living from PSP work?	PSP income was the highest source of income for 44% of PSPs and the second highest source for 28%. There was variation between countries and partners with Zambia having the highest number (14) of PSPs who did not put PSP income in their top 3 income sources.
	What proportion of their earnings comes from PSP work?	Median PSPs per country earned 29-54% of their self-reported cash income from PSP work. In-kind payment is negligible.
	How does being a PSP fit into daily life, and how many hours do PSPs work with SILC?	On average, PSPs worked some hours 5 days a week and their hours vary from 17-30 hours. These hours allowed PSPs to visit between 7 and 14 groups. Only a third of PSPs had taken on apprentices or helpers and those who had done so did it for reasons of demand or distance.
<b>Fee-for-service – how well does the model balance PSP earnings versus group autonomy?</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> cycle groups offer PSPs the highest earning potential, what are the issues with payment?	Over three quarters of first cycle groups paid their PSP as per the model Non-payment was because groups were new (36% of non-paying groups); were promising to pay (28% of non-paying groups); whereas 27% were poverty or drought related. Competition from NGOs offering free goods as part of the savings methodology is problematic. According to the PSPs, nearly all first cycle groups would pay in due course (and the model only required payment once groups start saving).

<b>How do payments change over cycles?</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle groups – what levels of autonomy do we see? Are PSPs still visiting and if so, why?	PSPs attended about half the meetings of 2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle groups to provide help. They reported that they were called by the groups to help especially with loans (34%); due to poor capacity on the behalf of secretaries (26%); to collect data (20%); or for monitoring (16%).
	3 <sup>rd</sup> and higher cycle groups – what levels of autonomy do we see? Are PSPs still visiting and if so, why?	Decline in attendance with 80% of meetings attended either not at all or only a few times. Some attendance still required for technical support, to monitor, to support secretaries. Only 8% of groups are attended at every meeting by a PSP. Secretarial capacity is a serious challenge in Burkina Faso.
<b>Benefits and challenges of PSP work</b>	What is good about being a PSP? What are the benefits?	PSPs said that earning money (68%), being recognized for their work (51%) and helping people (33%) were all positive aspects of their work. Linkages with local authorities and development initiatives, recognition, earning and learning were all benefits of the work.
	What are the challenges?	Distance, hours, competition from subsidized models, non-payment, group capacity and enforcing compliance with SILC rules were all negative features of PSP work.
<b>Motivation - what motivates PSPs? Money, helping people or gaining recognition</b>	What motivated individuals to become Field Agents?	To help (82%), to earn (39%) and to learn (29%) were all motivations to become an FA.
	How do PSPs describe motivation in their own words?	Helping (42%), earning (34%) and recognition (18%) is what the PSPs said motivated them.
	How do PSPs weigh motivation through a defined exercise?	Bean ranking gave helping a score of 4.4, reputation 2.8 beans and earning 2.7 beans.
	How do PSPs view the motivations of other PSPs?	When asked to score other PSPs, most were felt to be working for the money with 4 beans, with helping allocated 3.3 beans and reputation 2.7 beans
<b>What makes a successful PSP?</b>	How do PSPs define PSP success? How do project managers define PSP success?	Number of groups (68%), proper adherence to the model (56%) and being paid (50%) along with improved PSP living standards (12%) were how the PSPs defined their success. Managers rated earnings, group formation and group quality as the critical signs of success.
<b>Changes in PSPs' lives</b>		The changes were predominantly positive with 63% saying that they earned from the work, 46% saying they received recognition for their efforts, 30% noting the knowledge they had gained and a further 25% saying that they had invested in IGAs.

		Few negative reports. Where PSPs had given up activities these were by preference.  Time away from the family and household tasks was the major negative change.
<b>The future</b>	Are PSPs planning to continue with the work? Is the model sustainable?	Nearly all the PSPs said they would continue with the SILC work.
	What are supervisors' views on PSP continuation?	Supervisors estimated that maybe 1/3 of PSPs would struggle to continue and might even give up the work. The reasons were mostly to do with difficult market conditions and environmental contexts. Some PSPs suffered from low motivation or did not get paid enough. Managers also all mentioned the importance of PSP earnings as a criterion for success along with forming enough and quality groups.

## Introduction

### Background

From 2013 to 2017, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) – with support from the MasterCard Foundation – implemented the Expanding Financial Inclusion in Africa (EFI) project. The goal of EFI was to provide financial inclusion to vulnerable households to improve their resilience through the promotion of Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC). SILCs are user-owned, self-selected, and self-managed groups that provide members with opportunities to save frequently and flexibly, and to access loans quickly and conveniently. The EFI project created 20,273 SILC groups with 543,220 members in four countries in Africa - Burkina Faso, Senegal, Uganda, and Zambia. The methodology helps members build useful lump sums through savings and loans, and end-of-cycle share-outs, in which members receive their savings and a share of group profits. CRS' principal strategy for creating and training SILCs is to train and certify fee-for-service Private Service Providers (PSPs). PSPs are recruited from communities and initially serve as project-paid field agents, mobilising community members to form SILCs while training to certify as PSPs. Once certified, PSPs work on a fee-for-service basis, paid by SILC members.

As part of the EFI program, CRS developed a monitoring and evaluation plan to learn about three components: poverty outreach, operations, and financial behavior. The methodologies employed include a Financial Diaries study in Zambia, a series of PPI® surveys, the regular collection of group savings data through the MIS, ethnographic research and in-depth surveys. The focus of this report is on the second component – operations – and explores the livelihoods and motivations of the men and women who worked as PSPs during the EFI project, forming savings groups on a fee-for-service basis.

### Objectives

The objective of this study was to understand better how the SILC/PSP model works. More precisely, the objective was to understand what motivated the EFI PSPs to work with SILC, how the PSPs balanced their SILC work with other income-generating activities, whether and how they were paid by group members and what challenges PSPs faced in their work. The findings of the analysis will be used to see where opportunities might lie to improve the model. The research questions are summarized in Table 1 below.



Table 1 Research questions guiding PSP livelihoods and motivation study

Category	Research Questions
<b>What sort of work do PSPs do in addition to SILC work to make a living</b>	What sort of income-generating activities do PSPs undertake?
	How important is the PSP work compared to other livelihoods?
	How does being a PSP fit into daily life, do PSPs work full time or part time?
<b>Payment – can PSPs make a living from their PSP work?</b>	Can PSPs make a living from PSP work?
	What proportion of their earnings comes from PSP work?
<b>Fee-for-service – how well does the model work? How does it change over cycles?</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> cycle groups offer PSPs the highest earning potential, what are the issues with payment?
	2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle groups – what levels of autonomy do we see? Are PSPs still visiting and if so, why?
	3 <sup>rd</sup> and higher cycle groups – what levels of autonomy do we see? Are PSPs still visiting and if so, why?
<b>Challenges and benefits</b>	What is good about being a PSP? What are the benefits?
	What are the challenges?
<b>Motivation - what motivates PSPs? Money, helping people or gaining recognition?</b>	What motivated individuals to become Field Agents?
	How do PSPs define PSP success? How do project managers define PSP success?
	How do PSPs describe motivation in their own words?
	How do PSPs weigh motivation through a defined exercise?
	How do PSP view the motivations of other PSPs?
<b>Apprentices</b>	How many PSPs have taken an apprentice?
	Why have they done so?
<b>Changes in PSPs' lives</b>	Are the changes in PSPs' lives because of their SILC work positive or negative?
<b>The future?</b>	Are PSPs planning to continue with the work?
	What are supervisors' views on PSP continuation?

## The PSP model

CRS developed the PSP model to create independent service providers to form savings groups whilst operating on a market-led basis. The details are summarised below, in Table 2. In this model, agents are recruited from communities, and paid by the project for a limited period. After 7 months of supervised operation, agents undergo a rigorous examination process by the supporting project to assess the quality of their work and readiness to work independently from the project. Agents who complete this process successfully are certified as PSPs and can offer training and support services to communities at a fee. These PSPs continue forming and supporting groups through the project period and beyond.<sup>1</sup> In this way, the PSPs leverage the initial investment made in them through training and supervision.

Table 2 The PSP model – fundamentals and benefits

Fundamentals of the PSP Business Model	Benefits of the PSP Model - Sustainability
----------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------

<sup>1</sup> 94% of a representative sample of SILC groups in East Africa continued operations after three years.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Designed to achieve scale and poverty outreach<sup>2</sup> by leaving behind a local, affordable technical structure (PSPs, Apprentices, Networks) that will saturate the market well beyond the project timeframe.</li> <li>2) Achieves high quality groups through tailored trainings and individual assistance to SILC groups.</li> <li>3) Requires PSPs to deliver training and assistance where people live, thus reducing the opportunity cost (time and transport cost) for members.</li> <li>4) Ensures incentives to create new groups because PSP income is mainly derived from 1<sup>st</sup> cycle groups and so they are motivated to continue forming new groups.</li> <li>5) Provides an exit strategy for the project and its partners.</li> <li>6) Leverages PSP delivery channel. Projects can use the PSP delivery channel to bring other services to the groups.</li> </ol>	<p>CRS' approach hopes to foster sustainability at three levels:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) At the <b>group</b> level: Sustainability means that SILC groups continue to function and to offer their members savings and borrowing services.</li> <li>2) At the <b>agent</b> level: Sustainability means that agents continue forming and support new SILC groups and therefore earning an income.</li> <li>3) At the <b>area</b> level: Sustainability means that there are enough agents operating to satisfy the local demand for SILC services.</li> </ol>
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### Previous experience with PSPs and SILC

CRS pioneered PSPs in the predecessor to EFI, the Gates Foundation-funded SILC Innovations. SILC Innovations staff monitored PSP earnings to understand what kind of living the PSP could make from charging their groups; what the patterns of group payments might be and how PSP incomes compared to the stipends earned by FAs, based on what CRS' local partners were paying for similar work in other sectors. EFI's research into PSPs takes the SILC Innovations findings a step further by looking in depth at the working lives of the PSPs in terms of time commitment, payment, motivations, how SILC work complements or replaces other livelihood strategies.

### Research Methodology

The researchers developed a mixed-methods survey that included multiple choice questions, short answers in the respondent's own words, and a ranking exercise. For a majority of the multiple choice and the ranking exercise questions, further explanations were elicited. For this report, a quantitative analysis was performed on the multiple-choice data while the qualitative questions were coded by theme.

The researchers randomly sampled 160 PSPs from 8 of the 10 EFI implementing partners – 2 partners per country – for interviews for the Income, Livelihood, and Motivation survey. The researchers included EFI Regional staff and project implementing organization staff members. In total, five staff members administered interviews in Uganda, and three in Burkina Faso, Senegal, and Zambia.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Analysis of more than 20,000 PPis in Burkina Faso, Senegal, Uganda, and Zambia showed that groups formed later in a village had higher poverty likelihoods than those formed earlier.

<sup>3</sup> To ensure quality control, one of the lead researchers administered the first survey with each partner with the other staff members were present. The lead researchers then observed one of the other staff members administer an interview before they continued to interview PSPs independently.

To provide a different perspective on the PSP experience, the project manager and five supervisors from each partner were also interviewed.

### Summary Statistics

While the goal was to interview 160 PSPs – 20 per partner and 40 per country – not all PSPs were available during the field research period, so 155 PSPs were interviewed across the four countries. The distribution across partners and countries is shown in Table 3.

*Table 3 Sample of PSPs Interviewed by country and partner*

Country	Partner	PSPs interviewed
Burkina Faso	Koudougou	18
	Manga	22
	<i>Burkina Faso Total</i>	40
Senegal	Caritas Kolda	15
	Ndeyi Jirim	20
	<i>Senegal Total</i>	35
Uganda	Eaden	21
	Socadido	20
	<i>Uganda Total</i>	41
Zambia	Mansa	20
	Mpika	19
	<i>Zambia Total</i>	39
Total		155

### Number of groups PSPs manage

The PSPs we interviewed had formed a total of 4,494 groups, of which 1,737 were still in the first cycle (Table 4). The highest median number of groups per PSP was found in Senegal, where the median PSP had 34 groups, and the lowest in Zambia, where the median PSP had just 21; median PSPs in Burkina Faso and Uganda fell evenly in between these figures.

*Table 4 Median number of groups formed per PSP*

Country	1 <sup>st</sup> Cycle Groups	Higher Cycle Groups	Total Number of Groups
Burkina Faso	6	17	26
Senegal	14	16	33
Uganda	8	16	27
Zambia	10	11.5	21
<b>Overall median</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>26</b>

## Results

### 1. PSP Income sources

Table 5 How do PSPs make a living?

<b>How do PSPs make a living?</b>	How important is the PSP work compared to other livelihoods?	SILC work is a significant livelihood source. SILC work is the most important source of income for half of PSPs and the second most important source for a quarter of PSPs. 12 PSPs relied entirely on PSP work for income and half of the PSPs only had one other income generating activity. PSPs had an average of 26 groups each with a range of 21 to 34.
	What sort of income-generating activities do PSPs undertake?	Sales related to agricultural or livestock production were the next most important area of work. A few PSPs also earned income from petty trade, business and skilled work. We believe most PSPs, or their households, also engaged in subsistence farming.
	Had PSPs given up work to do SILC?	A third of PSPs had given up less profitable work to concentrate on SILC work.

#### Income-generating activities

To understand how PSP earnings compared to other income-generating activities, we asked the PSPs to tell us about their three highest income-generating activities. We were keen to understand what tradeoffs PSPs face regarding their other IGAs, and to understand how significant PSP work was for them.

The results show that PSP work was an important source of income but not sufficient to be the sole source for the majority: only 12 PSPs said SILC work was their only form of income. The remainder combined PSP work with some sort of trade, usually related to agricultural such as crop or livestock sales. The highest income generating activities are shown in Table 6 PSPs' highest income-generating activity. Nearly half of the PSPs (N = 68) said that PSP income was their highest source of income, followed by crop sales (N = 65). Meanwhile, few PSPs (N = 2) said that formal salary or wage work was their primary income source.

Table 6 PSPs' highest income-generating activity

Highest Income Source	PSPs
PSP related activities	68
Crop Sales	65
Other	14
Livestock Sales	6
Formal Salary/Wages	2

Petty Trade	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>

A further 44 PSPs said that PSP income was their second-highest source of income, with crop sales, petty trade and livestock also mentioned Table 7. Forty-five had a second income source related to agriculture (crop or livestock sales) while 17 were also petty traders. A further 8 were artisans and 8 had medium to large businesses. Very few PSPs (N=7) mentioned salaried work.

*Table 7 PSP's second highest income-generating activity*

Second Highest Income Source	PSPs
PSP related activities	44
Crop Sales	31
Petty Trade	17
Livestock Sales	14
Other	14
Skilled Artisan/Trade	8
Med/Large Business	8
Formal Salary/Wages	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>

Out of the 155 PSPs, nearly half (N=58) said that they did not have a third income-generating activity which suggests a high dependence on PSP work (Table 8). Of those that did, the income sources were either crop sales, the PSP work itself, petty trade, livestock related activities or skilled work.

*Table 8 PSPs' third highest income-generating activity*

Third Highest Income Source	PSPs
Only have two income sources	58
Crops Sales	25
PSP related activities	23
Other	19
Petty Trade	11
Livestock Sales	10
Looks after cattle	8
Skilled trade/artisan	6
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>155</b>

When all the first, second and third income-generating activities are joined together into one table (Table 9) we see that 102 PSPs earned income from selling crops, 14 from selling vegetables, and 31 from selling livestock. Some sort of commercial activity came next in prevalence, with 11 PSPs having a medium or large business and 30 engaged in petty trade. Fourteen PSPs were artisans while only 9 earned a salary.

Table 9 Income generating activities for PSPs (combined 1st, 2nd, and 3<sup>rd</sup> highest sources)

Income-Generating Activities	PSPs
PSP-related activities	136
Crop Sales	116
Other	31
Livestock Sales	30
Petty Trade	30
Skilled Trade/Artisan	14
Medium/Large Business	11
Formal Salary/Wages	9
Cattle Herder	8
Charcoal	3
Casual non-agriculture labor	2
Remittance	2
Fishing	1
General worker	1
Labor	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>395</b>

### Giving up livelihood activities

Because SILC work can be time- and energy-consuming, PSPs were asked if they had given up any livelihood activities since beginning their work with SILC. Around 37% of PSPs had stopped some livelihood activity, with most such responses coming from Burkina Faso (N=24), whilst the other three countries had 11-12 responses (Table 10).

Table 10 Livelihood activities given up by PSPs because of SILC work

Change	Burkina Faso	Senegal	Uganda	Zambia	Total	% Of PSPs
<b>Gave up another livelihood activity</b>	24	12	11	11	58	37

However, as Table 11 below shows, those livelihood activities given up were either arduous ones that PSPs were glad to relinquish, jobs they were happy to pay others to do, or activities that were less profitable than working on SILC.

Table 11 Activities willingly given up by PSPs - in their own words

Reduced agricultural production because insufficient time.

PSP Burkina Faso

My co-wives say I go out and do not stay at home. I have decreased visits to my parents; and I have abandoned the sale of fish.

PSP Senegal

My diet has improved and I feel much more healthy. My lifestyle has changed – if I'm patient with the groups they always pay the 100SH and with that money I use it wisely. Sometimes now, I even eat breakfast now. At times I'm able to use the money from the PSP fund to hire people to help weed in the garden. In the past, I use to have to borrow money from the relatives, but at this time I don't have to do some things. I can't be called a teacher and then be begging, so it's made me make sure to work hard. It has helped me be known in the district, when you are doing community work, when you are entering a certain office, you have to introduce yourself. I am known.

PSP Uganda

I have a small stipend now, so some things have changed at home. Everybody knows me in the community – they know where I stay. I've learned how to manage my time better; I was a volunteer at the clinic – I worked at the registry. Since I started working as a PSP I quit going and volunteering so often as a volunteer; I don't go fishing as often – most of the fishing occurs at night and I sleep during the day, but since I'm working as a PSP I don't fish as often.

PSP Zambia

Having established what livelihood activities most frequently accompanied PSP work in the EFI countries, the next step in the research was to establish what proportion of income PSPs earned from their PSP work and to quantify approximately how much PSPs earned from SILC and other income.

## 2. Income and hours

Table 12 PSP Income and hours

<b>Payment – can PSPs make a living from their PSP work?</b>	Can PSPs make a living from PSP work?	PSP income was the highest source of income for 44% of PSPs and the second highest source for 28%. There was variation between countries and partners with Zambia having the highest number (14) of PSPs who did not put PSP income in their top 3 income sources.
	What proportion of their earnings comes from PSP work?	PSPs' median earnings constituted between 29-54% of their cash income from PSP work (note that we did not try and assess overall household income or own production). The average median was 51% of cash income. In-kind payment was negligible.
	How does being a PSP fit into daily life, do PSPs work full time or part time?	For most PSPs, SILC work is still part time but a few PSPs in each country work full time on SILC. On average, PSPs work some hours 5 days a week and their hours vary from 17-30 hours. These hours allow

		PSPs to visit between 7 and 14 groups. Only a third of PSPs had taken on apprentices or helpers and those who had done so did it for reasons of demand or distance.
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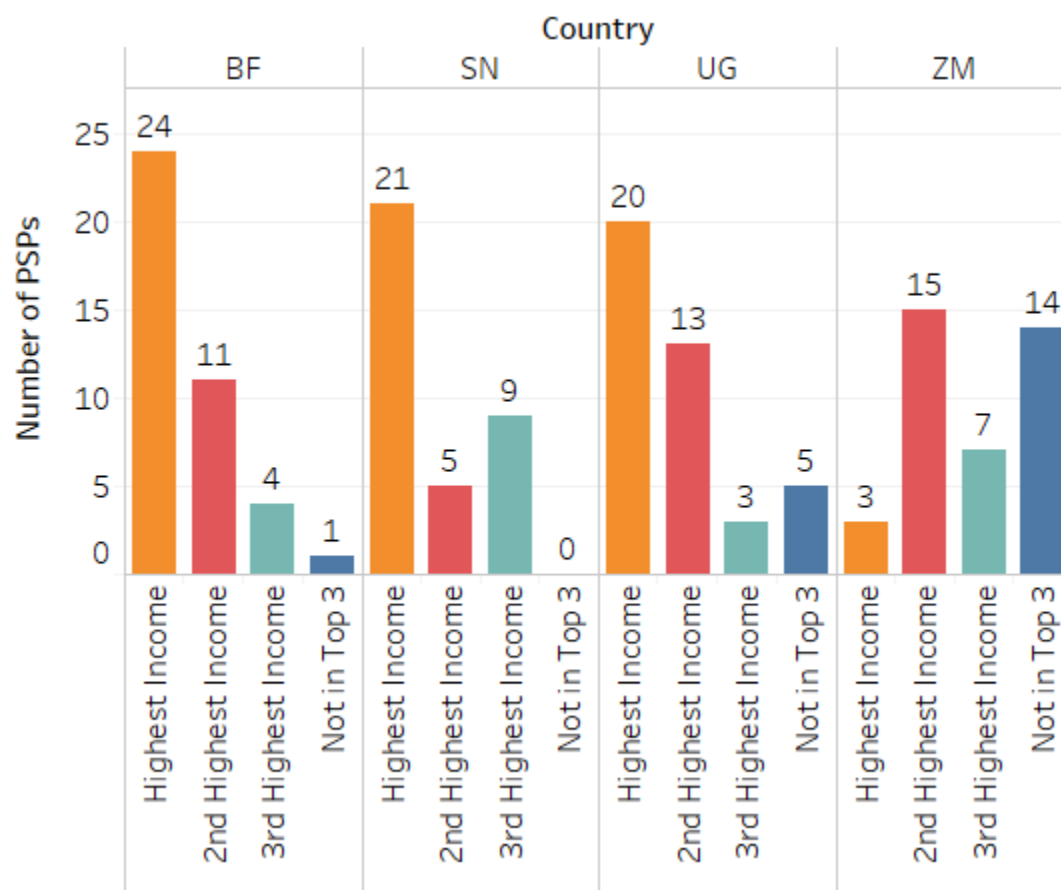
In this section, we analyze PSPs' income to see how much they earned, and what percentage of their income came from SILC.

### Top three income-sources

This analysis looks at the three most important income sources the PSP mentioned and counts how many said PSP income was their 1<sup>st</sup>-, 2<sup>nd</sup>-, or 3<sup>rd</sup>-highest source of income, and how many did not among their top income sources at all. For 68 PSPs (44%), PSP work yielded their highest source of income and for a further 44 (28%), it was their second highest source. Twenty-three (15%) said it was their third highest source of income and only 20 (13%) did not include PSP income among their top 3 sources.

There were differences across countries: in Senegal, PSP income was not commonly the second most important source for PSPs as it was elsewhere; while in Zambia, PSP income (N=14) did not figure in the top three sources of income as frequently as in the other countries (Figure 1). These results suggest that PSP income makes a significant contribution to the livelihoods of many PSPs which contributes to the model's sustainability, but that country and other contextual variations matter.

Figure 1 How PSP income compares to other income sources





## Quantifying Income

We asked PSPs to tell us about their cash income from all sources and then their cash income from their PSP work (Table 13). The methodology used for recording overall and PSP income was to ask the PSPs to estimate their SILC income monthly, and to estimate other sources of income (among which agriculture dominates) over a year. The year's estimates were then divided by twelve to estimate monthly averages. This method relies on PSPs' recall over the previous 12 months, and we do not have great confidence in the precise amounts quoted, so whilst the estimates reported are provided below, the data is too unreliable to be discussed in detail.

Table 13 PSP's income: median monthly income and income from PSP work

Country	Monthly median income in USD (including PSP income)	PSP monthly median income from PSP work in USD
<b>Burkina Faso</b>	73.6	52.4
<b>Senegal</b>	167.8	87.9
<b>Uganda</b>	112.0	56.0
<b>Zambia</b>	118.0	33.7
<b>Overall median</b>	112.0	51.2

A close look at income by partner shows as much variation within country as between countries (Table 14). This variation between partners is likely to be due to different poverty levels and market opportunities in different regions. Differences are stark between Koudougou and Manga in Burkina Faso; between Caritas Kolda and Ndeyi Jirim in Senegal and between Mansa and Mpika in Zambia; but less marked between the Ugandan partners.

Table 14 Income by partner

Country	Partner Name	Monthly total median income in USD (including PSP income)	PSP monthly median income from PSP work in USD
<b>Burkina Faso</b>	Koudougou	113.8	83.0
	Manga	69.9	49.0
	<i>Burkina Faso median</i>	73.6	52.4
<b>Senegal</b>	Caritas Kolda	167.8	69.9
	Ndeyi Jirim	465.9	155.6
	<i>Senegal median</i>	167.8	87.9
<b>Uganda</b>	EADEN	120.4	98.0
	Socadido	101.5	45.6
	<i>Uganda median</i>	112.0	56.0
<b>Zambia</b>	Mansa	132.2	33.7
	Mpika	89.9	33.7
	<i>Zambia median</i>	118.0	33.7
<b>Overall median</b>		<b>112.0</b>	<b>51.2</b>

We have more confidence in examining the proportion of earnings that come from PSP work compared to other sources of income as an indication of the importance of PSP income overall to the PSP. Table 15, below, shows the proportion of total cash income the PSP estimated they earned from PSP work using the average mean figures. Most PSPs appeared to earn between just under one third to just over half of their income from PSP work; these figures suggest that PSP income constitutes a respectable contribution to total earnings.

There is variation in PSP income's contribution to total income both across countries, and across partners within a single country. Note the large variation in average country incomes between Zambia (43%) and Burkina Faso (68%), and an even greater variation between the lowest Zambian scorer of Mansa (28%) and Burkina Faso's Koudougou and Senegal's Ndeyi Jirim (both 70%). Within countries, only Burkina Faso PSPs were doing equally well irrespective of partner, with around 70% of all their earnings coming from PSP work. In Senegal, PSPs working for Ndeyi Jirim were earning on average a greater percentage of their income from PSP work (65%) than those working for Caritas Kolda in the Casamance region (49%). Casamance is the poorest area of Senegal, the PSPs of Caritas Kolda have more difficult terrain to cover, and market opportunities are limited compared to the area around Ndeyi Jirim. In Zambia, there is a large difference between Mpika and Mansa, with Mpika PSPs close to the four-country average with 59% and Mpika trailing in with only 28% of earnings coming from PSP work.

*Table 15 Average percent of total income from PSP work per country and partner*

Country	Partner	Average percent total estimated income from PSP work
<b>Burkina Faso</b>	Koudougou	70%
	Manga	67%
	<i>Burkina Faso average</i>	68%
<b>Senegal</b>	Caritas Kolda	49%
	Ndeyi Jirim	65%
	<i>Senegal average</i>	59%
<b>Uganda</b>	Eaden	70%
	Socadido	48%
	<i>Uganda average</i>	59%
<b>Zambia</b>	Mansa	28%
	Mpika	59%
	<i>Zambia average</i>	43%
<b>Overall average</b>		<b>57%</b>

Variations in earnings reflect differing market opportunities, which are closely related to population density, poverty and travel times. The more scattered and sparse a population, the harder it is to get the numbers required for group formation and the more time a PSP spends travelling to groups rather than training them. A similar situation holds when the PSP must cover long distances or face difficult travel conditions (e.g. hills, mud, or sand) or when the PSP has no form of transport.

Certainly, there are important differences between countries and partners in terms of the proportion of income contributed by PSP work, but PSP work never falls below one quarter of PSPs' total income and is more likely to account for close to half.

## In-kind payments

Very few PSPs reported being paid in kind, and the few that did lived in Zambia, and received little in-kind payment (Table 16 and Table 17). 'In kind' denotes anything from groups giving produce as payment, to group members working the PSPs' fields or vegetable garden.

Table 16 PSPs on payment in-kind

They say that they have no money - some go and dig in her farm. PSP Zambia
Agreement that will pay after harvest – all will bring in kind as there is no money. PSP Zambia

Table 17 Percent of groups that pay in kind

Country	Percent of total groups that pay in kind
Burkina Faso	1.6%
Senegal	0%
Uganda	0%
Zambia	3.6%
Overall	1.2%

## The working lives of PSPs

With respect to PSPs' working lives, we wanted to know the relationship between hours of work and groups visited, as this ratio is a key determinant of income for PSPs and varies from place to place according to population density and ease of travel. To ensure good recall consistently across the four countries, researchers asked PSPs to detail how much SILC work they had done during the previous week.

The results show PSPs carried out SILC work on a similar number of days per week, but that they varied considerably by country in terms of hours worked or travelled and groups visited (Table 18). In the week prior to the research, Burkina Faso's PSPs spent an average of 30 hours on SILC work and travel and visited 14 groups compared to just under 18 hours and 7 groups visited for Zambia. The two West African countries had similar patterns in terms of work and groups visited and aided: Senegal PSPs worked fewer hours (26) but visited more groups than the Burkinans, while Uganda and Zambia resembled each other in having visited on average 7 groups and spent 18-22 hours on PSP work.

Table 18 Average hours worked and groups visited

Country	Days Worked Last Week	Hours Worked Last Week	Groups Visited Last Week
Burkina Faso	5.2	30.0	14.0
Senegal	5.5	26.0	16.0
Uganda	5.3	22.0	7.5
Zambia	4.8	17.5	7.0
Overall average	5.2	22.0	11.0

When we calculated the hours spent to visit one group, a big difference between countries emerged. In Burkina Faso and Senegal, it took about 2 hours to visit and train a group, while in Uganda and Zambia, it took closer to 3 hours (Table 19).

*Table 19 Time required to visit one group*

Country	Average hours spent to visit one group
Burkina Faso	1.9
Senegal	1.9
Uganda	2.7
Zambia	3.0
<b>Overall</b>	<b>2.4</b>

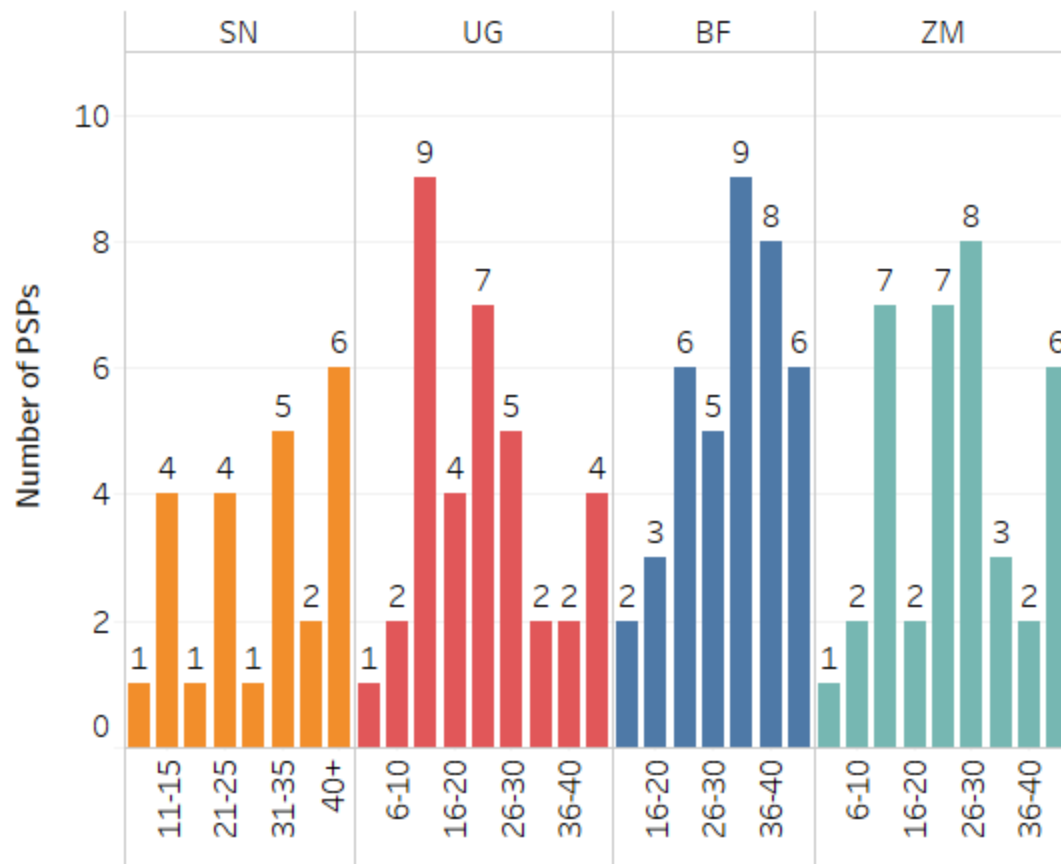
Table 20 shows what PSPs reporting their hours said about how these hours fitted their normal pattern: About 35% PSPs said that they had worked fewer hours than normal the previous week, and 12% said they had worked more hours than normal.

*Table 20 Hours reported previous week in comparison to normal working hours*

Working hours reported last week compared to other weeks (% of respondents)			
Country	Less	About the Same	More
Burkina Faso	17.5%	37.5%	45.0%
Senegal	25.7%	28.6%	45.7%
Uganda	4.8%	68.3%	26.8%
Zambia	0.0%	76.9%	23.1%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>11.6%</b>	<b>53.5%</b>	<b>34.8%</b>

Figure 2, below, shows that across all countries it is rare for PSPs to work more than 40 hours per week, with only 4-6 PSPs working such hours in each country. Looking at weeks of fewer than 21 hours, weeks of 21 to 30 hours, and weeks of 31 to 40 hours, some patterns emerge. In Senegal, 6 PSPs worked fewer than 21 hours a week, 5 PSPs worked 21 to 30 hours and 6 PSPs worked 31 to 40 hours. In Uganda, PSPs worked shorter days on average than in other countries: 16 PSPs worked fewer than 21 hours, 12 worked 21 to 30 hours and 4 worked 31 to 40 hours. In Burkina Faso, PSPs seem to spend more time on PSP work than elsewhere: only 5 PSPs worked fewer than 21 hours, 11 PSPs worked 21 to 30 hours and 17 worked from 31 to 40 hours. In Zambia, working hours were also somewhat lower, with 12 PSPs who worked fewer than 21 hours, 15 who worked 21 to 30 hours and only 5 worked 31 to 40 hours. Burkina stands out as the country where PSPs had the longest working hours in the previous week, but this could be explained by the fact that 45% of them said that they had worked more hours than usual the previous week.

*Figure 2 Pattern of working hours*



### Apprentices

In considering hours spent on PSP work, it is relevant to look at which PSPs had felt the need to take on an apprentice. Apprentices are an integral part of the PSP model, but the EFI project's training of PSPs in how to choose and train apprentices took place at different times in the four countries. The upshot was that some countries were ahead of others in terms of taking apprentices. Some PSPs had in the meantime found themselves either helpers or trainee PSPs. At the time of the research, of the PSPs interviewed, 67 had taken apprentices but 83 had not (Table 21). There may be a difference in how the apprentice was trained or how their tasks were viewed depending on whether the PSP took on the apprentice before or after the formal apprenticeship training given by EFI. The PSPs in Burkina Faso had taken the fewest apprentices (7), whilst Uganda led the way with 23 apprentices, and Zambia and Senegal had 18 and 19, respectively.

Table 21 Number of PSPs taking on an apprentice

Country	No Apprentice	Apprentice
Burkina Faso	33	7
Senegal	11	19
Uganda	18	23
Zambia	21	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>67</b>

Of the 67 PSPs who had taken on one or more apprentices, the majority were recruited to help meet demand (N=42) for group formation and Zambia, Uganda and Senegal dominated in terms of demand with 9, 14 and 13 PSPs, respectively, giving this as the main reason (Table 22). Distance was the other important factor and was cited more in Uganda (N=8) and Zambia (N=7) as apprentices were usually chosen to help manage demand, mobilization and training in villages at some distance. We believe that some of these apprentices were not full apprentices, that is, were not to be trained to certify as PSPs, but were rather assistants helping with specific tasks.

Table 22 Reasons for taking on an apprentice (number of PSPs)

Country	Demand	Distance	Other	Helpers	Task
Burkina Faso	6	1	2		1
Senegal	13	3	2	1	
Uganda	14	8	3		1
Zambia	9	7	5		
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

### 3. The Fee-for-Service Model

<b>Fee-for-service – how well does the model balance PSP earnings versus group autonomy?</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> cycle groups offer PSPs the highest earning potential, what are the issues with payment?	Over three quarters of first cycle groups paid their PSP as per the model. Non-payment was because groups were new (36% of non-paying groups); were promising to pay (28% of non-paying groups); whereas 27% were poverty or drought related. Competition from NGOs offering free goods as part of the savings methodology is problematic. According to the PSPs, nearly all first cycle groups would pay in due course (and the model only required payment once groups start saving).
<b>How do payments change over cycles?</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle groups – what levels of autonomy do we see? Are PSPs still visiting and if so, why?	PSPs attended about half the meetings of 2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle groups to provide help. They reported that they were called by the groups to help especially with loans (34%); due to poor capacity on the behalf of secretaries (26%); to collect data 20%); or for monitoring (16%).
	3 <sup>rd</sup> and higher cycle groups – what levels of autonomy do we see? Are PSPs still visiting and if so, why?	Decline in attendance, with 80% of meetings attended by PSP either not at all or only a few times. Some attendance still required for technical support, to monitor, to support secretaries. Only 8% of groups were attended at every meeting by a PSP. Secretarial capacity was a serious challenge in Burkina Faso.

Irrespective of their personal motivations, PSPs must be paid enough for it to be worth their while to undertake the PSP duties. PSPs charge SILCs for services rendered and most of these services are given during the first cycle. First cycle groups are not supposed to pay the PSP until after the 6<sup>th</sup> training session (6-9 weeks). Groups, according to capacity (including how well they understand the rules, and whether their office holders deliver properly on their responsibilities) and how much members trust their office holders, should become steadily more independent. Mature SILCs should rely less than young groups on the PSP, and correspondingly pay the PSP less. So, if PSPs regularly attend higher cycle group meetings, it is important to understand the reasons they do so, and to determine if the groups require such attention, or if the PSPs might be exploiting the groups in question by providing and charging for unnecessary services.

### First cycle groups not paying the PSP

The PSPs interviewed had between them 1,737 first cycle groups, of which 73% (N=1,271) were paying their PSP and 27% (466) were not. To allow for the distorting effect of any outliers in terms of non-payment, and to see the country program perspective, we calculated the median percentage of 1<sup>st</sup> cycle groups not paying the PSP per PSP; this required calculating the percent of groups not-paying *each* PSP and taking the median of that percentage. The results in Table 23 show that the highest median share of non-payers was in Zambia with 39%, followed by Uganda and Burkina Faso, where the median PSPs had about one third of their groups not paying (in Senegal the median PSP had 100% of her 1<sup>st</sup> cycle groups paying).

*Table 23 Median percentage of 1<sup>st</sup> cycle groups not paying the PSP (% of PSPs who reported not being paid by at least one group)*

Country	Median % of 1 <sup>st</sup> Cycle Groups not paying the PSP
Burkina Faso	29.1%
Senegal	0.0%
Uganda	33.3%
Zambia	39.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>23.2%</b>

### Reasons for non-payment

The reasons given by PSPs as to why groups might not be paying are summarized below in Table 24.<sup>4</sup> In the table, 'new' groups are those that are recently formed but not yet at the point where the SILC/PSP model requires them to start paying the PSP; because these groups are simply too new to begin paying the PSP, they are considered certain in terms of future payment. 'Promised' denotes groups that should be paying, had not yet done so but had 'promised' to pay, sometimes at the share-out; clearly in such cases, future payment is uncertain.

*Table 24 Reasons for non-payment given by PSPs*

Reasons	Burkina Faso	Senegal	Uganda	Zambia	Total	Share of non-paying groups

<sup>4</sup> The number of responses in Table 24 is greater than the number of PSPs because sometimes PSPs had more than one group not paying, and not paying for different reasons.

New	10	2	8	7	27	36%
Promised	10		5	6	21	28%
Drought			11		11	15%
PSP chosen deferment	2	2	1		5	7%
No Money				4	4	5%
Not Willing	1			3	4	5%
Sporadic				1	1	1%
Funerals			.	1	1	1%
Free		1			1	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Country level payment trends

About half of the 155 PSPs (N=75) told us that they had at least one group not paying but at country level this varied from 5 PSPs in Senegal to 22 in Burkina Faso. New groups that were expected to pay ranged from about a third to half of the cases and can be discounted as a problem. Of the remaining 230-350 groups, some were not paying for good reason. The main reason in Uganda for non-payment was a serious drought that had caused widespread harvest failure and income collapse; PSPs were likely to be suffering more in this context because many of their groups were affected by the drought. In contrast, in Senegal, where there was no drought, only 5 PSPs reported they were not paid by at least one group. However, Zambia seemed to face more intransigent problems of groups under normal seasonal conditions refusing to pay: 4 PSPs said that they had groups with no money (at least one due to funeral expenses) and a further 3 PSPs had groups that were refusing to pay.

Five PSPs told the researchers that they had asked their groups to wait to pay, because the PSPs wanted to be paid in either one or two lump sums during the cycle. The remaining groups were new and were not supposed not supposed to pay until they started saving. A further 21 PSPs had groups that had promised to pay later. The text box below (Table 25) gives some representative reasons why PSPs who were not being paid expected payment.

*Table 25 PSPs expecting payment*

I have blocked the group paying until share-out, I prefer to have a large sum money at once.  
PSP Senegal

Sometimes they don't have money - they're farmers - sometimes they do pay.  
PSP Zambia

### PSPs with groups that might not pay

Twenty PSPs told us that they had more intransigent problems with their groups; these intransigent issues ranged from the impoverishment caused by the drought in Uganda, to groups that were unwilling to pay (Table 26). Eleven PSPs reported nonpayment from the drought-affected areas of Uganda and said that households really were struggling to manage and had no spare money for saving or paying the PSP. A further 9 PSPs said that they had groups which were either refusing to pay because they had no money or were unwilling to pay; sometimes groups did not believe that they were supposed to pay, and suspected that the PSP was cheating them.



Table 26 Groups unwilling or unable to pay.

<p>The executives in the groups aren't performing well and aren't serious about the PSP payments. If the executive committee emphasized it more the group members would be more likely to pay. I've explained the process of SILC and the fee-for-service model and they still haven't paid me. I can't force them to pay me, but I still teach them.</p> <p>PSP Zambia</p>
<p>I used to be paid by the project, now people do not accept that they must pay me. I am sure that if they give them time to understand, they will pay.</p> <p>PSP Burkina Faso</p>
<p>Six of the eight groups are not paying because they were formed during a drought period where many of the group members are having a hard time with cash. They have told me that they will pay me at the end of the year.</p> <p>PSP Uganda</p>
<p>They are promising to pay me in February – starting harvesting the early beans. Some people did not believe they had to pay me. Others say that they don't have enough cash to pay the savings, the social fund and me. They are sharing these ideas with other groups.</p> <p>PSP Zambia</p>
<p>The supervisor advised me to make a group for free in this village.</p> <p>PSP Burkina Faso</p>

### PSPs' expectations of payment

To those PSPs reporting that all or some of their groups were not paying, we asked if the PSP ever expected to be paid by the non-paying groups (Table 27). The PSPs' responses were positive: 66 of 69 PSPs who answered this question anticipated that their groups would pay them. Only 3 of 69 PSPs said that they had groups from which they did not expect to receive any payment. In Burkina Faso and Uganda, all relevant PSPs anticipated payment from all non-paying groups, and only two PSPs in Senegal and one in Zambia had groups from which they did not expect payment.

Table 27 PSPs' expectations of payment from currently non-paying groups

Country	PSPs expecting payment from Non-Paying Groups	PSPs not expecting payment
Burkina Faso	14	0
Senegal	3	2
Uganda	26	0
Zambia	23	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>3</b>

### PSPs and higher cycle groups: balancing earnings and group autonomy

An important question for the PSPs was the nature of their relationship with groups in the higher cycle, because the PSP fee-for-service model expects a gradual reduction in the contact between PSPs and

higher cycle groups because the training given in the first cycle should equip groups and their management committees to work alone in higher cycles. But PSPs have incentives to make money by charging fees – through visits to give technical advice and/or group formation – and groups have incentives to save and earn money, and not pay the PSP unnecessarily. These incentives can foster tension between PSPs and SILCs. It is therefore important to ask if and why PSPs visit higher cycle groups, and what services they provide.

The researchers asked the PSPs how frequently they attended meetings for higher-cycle groups. The data was disaggregated into two groups: 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle groups and groups that were in the 3<sup>rd</sup> or higher cycle. The PSPs told the researchers how many groups they had in each cycle and then how frequently they attended meetings: five choices were given - all, most, half, few, or none of the meetings. For example: a PSP could have 12 second-cycle groups and attend meetings for 6 of the groups all the time, 4 of the groups half of the time, and 2 of the group few times. We calculated these results using the information previously provided on the PSPs' total groups to calculate the percentage of groups in each cycle for which a PSP visits all, most, half, few, or none of the meetings. This analysis was done for each of the 155 PSPs. Next, this data was used to estimate how frequently 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> or higher cycle groups were being visited.

### Meeting attendance by PSPs - 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle group

The data shows that PSPs still give 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle groups a considerable amount of attention. About half (46%) of all 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle groups have the PSP in attendance either fortnightly, approximately 3 weeks out of 4, or weekly. Forty-seven of the 155 PSPs have at least one 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle group for which they attend all meetings. Further, 34 of the 155 PSPs (including those with at least one group for which they attend all meetings) have a 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle group that they visit most of the time, and 66 of the 155 have a 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle group that they visit at least half the time.

When asked about reasons for visiting in the second cycle, respondents focused on supporting the technical elements of the SILC PSP model (Table 28). SILC Secretaries with low literacy or numeracy skills, or who were not serious about their work, were a frequent problem for PSPs in Burkina Faso, while elsewhere PSPs attended SILC meetings simply because they were called (especially in Zambia), to collect data required by EFI or to monitor groups. Loans, particularly the process of issuing loans, was particularly important in Burkina Faso (which is also related to secretary quality) and trying to sort out noncompliance with SILC rules. Monitoring appeared to represent a decision by the PSP to visit the group to ensure that the proper procedures were being followed, and we do not know whether these visits were needed, or if the groups paid for such visits. We are inclined to think a PSP would not attend 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle SILC meetings regularly without asking for payment, and we know that some PSPs agreed to a quarterly payment plan with 2<sup>nd</sup> and higher cycle groups in return for providing services when required.

*Table 28 Reasons given by PSPs for their visits to group meetings – 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle (number of mentions of reason)*

2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle reasons to visit	Burkina Faso	Senegal	Uganda	Zambia	Total	% of responses	% of PSPs
Secretaries	27	7	7	1	42	26	27
Called	3	4	9	19	35	21	23
Data collection form	6	4	9	12	31	19	20
Monitoring	4	5	13	4	26	16	17
Loans	10	9	2	1	22	13	14
Non-Compliance		1	3	1	5	3	3

Other		1		1	2	1	1
Share-Out				1	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>100%</b>	N/A

Below we present, in their own words, principal reasons PSPs gave for visiting 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle groups. The main reason for visiting (26% of responses), was due to low-skilled group secretaries, and Burkina Faso had the greatest challenge in this respect (Table 29).

*Table 29 Low skilled secretaries as a reason for visiting 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle groups*

<p>Visits when called which is usually monthly as things often go wrong or members request and especially at time of share-out – the three weeks before I have to be there almost weekly because need to motivate people to get the [loan] money back in. PSP Uganda</p> <p>[Visiting groups] depends on the level of the secretaries; I am rotating apprentices to follow up with the groups. PSP Burkina Faso</p> <p>Departure of certain secretaries; secretaries [in general]. PSP Burkina Faso</p> <p>Had a problem, only had one person who could do the recording, had one man who was doing this and he was cheating them. I am there all the time to train up a secretary. PSP Uganda</p> <p>I go once a month. Secretaries may record, but not all can [calculate to] pay the amounts. But they understand the steps. PSP Senegal</p>
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The second most common reason given by PSPs was that the groups called the PSPs to help them with problems. These responses were most prevalent in Zambia (Table 30). The need to fill out the project-required data collection form was the next most common response but is not of much interest here as the EFI project has since closed.

*Table 30 Called for help as a reason for visiting 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle groups*

<p>I visit these groups when they call on me for assistance; in addition to this I'll visit them when I get the DCFs once every three months. PSP Zambia</p> <p>I go once in a while for example when collecting data and when they call me in case of any challenges to address. PSP Uganda</p>
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Finally, monitoring (17% of responses given) emerged as the next most prevalent concern, as PSPs described the need to keep an eye on the management of the records and adherence to procedures (Table 31).

*Table 31 Monitoring as a reason for visiting 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle groups*

They master, but we must see from time to time if they have no problem. PSP Senegal
I normally go and see these groups once every two weeks; I go to monitor them. If I continue monitoring them weekly they will not learn – they will become dependent on me. They need to learn on their own how to implement the constitution. PSP Uganda
I visit twice a month – I check the ledger books, how they are inputting, look at the cash books, how this is recorded. Most important thing is to ask if they are having any difficulties and if so, where. I need to sort out the challenges. PSP Zambia

Ensuring that the loans were correctly administered was the next most commonly cited reason to visit (Table 32).<sup>5</sup>

*Table 32 Supporting loan calculations or share-out as reasons for visiting 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle groups*

I mostly go to loan meetings. PSP Senegal
I want to monitor how the groups are working, they need more training on loan repayment. PSP Uganda
I can't recall the number; visits them monthly during the loan meetings. PSP Zambia

Non-compliance with SILC norms (Table 33) was the most serious issue requiring PSP attention – loan defaulters, non-adherence to rules such as loan multipliers – but only accounted for 3% of responses, which suggests that non-compliance was a minor issue. PSPs may also have visited to resolve disputes within the group or between the members and the management committee.

*Table 33 Member non-compliance with SILC norms as a reason for visiting 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle groups*

I still visit 10 second cycle groups. The secretaries, chairmen connive, steal from members, so they need my help with this. Or there are loan defaulters – we must discipline per constitution. Other groups are okay. PSP Uganda
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<sup>5</sup> Loans might have been included with monitoring here as making sure loans are correctly calculated is one of the two complex procedures in the SILC process (share-out being the other), but so many PSPs mentioned loans as a reason to visit that we have kept loans in a separate category.

Some members do not want to reimburse [their SILC loans].  
PSP Senegal

Interestingly, share-out was not mentioned as a reason for visiting 2<sup>nd</sup>-cycle groups. We believe this is because share-out support is not part of the normal routine but a critical end-of-cycle event. Our formulation of the question about meetings implied attendance at the regular group meetings. Usually, not only does the PSP attend the share-out meeting, but this is normally an opportunity to invite other PSPs and local government officials and notables, since it is an excellent opportunity to recruit new SILC members by showing them the benefits of membership.<sup>6</sup>

#### Meeting attendance by PSPs – higher-cycle groups

By the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle the PSPs' responses suggested a real shift away from group dependence, reflected in reduced attendance by PSPs at meetings for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and higher cycles.<sup>7</sup> About 8% of the SILC groups had PSPs (N = 10) attend all or most of the meetings. For over 80% of groups, meetings were attended by PSPs only a few times, or not at all. We counted only 13 of the 155 PSPs (8%) as having at least one group for which they attended all the meetings. Only 3 PSPs attend most meetings while 2 attend at least half of the meetings.

Results show that the overall reason for visiting was that technical support was still required (Table 34). Almost half (44%) of PSPs visited when problems arose and groups called, a further 13% because they were substituting for – or supporting – struggling secretaries, 9% to monitor or collect project data, and 7% to support loans or the share-out.

*Table 34 Reasons for PSP visits to group meetings – 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle and above<sup>8</sup> (number of mentions per reason)*

Higher cycle reasons to visit	Burkina Faso	Senegal	Uganda	Zambia	Total	% of responses	% of PSPs
Called	10	9	18	21	58	43	44
Data Collection form	9	2	8	7	26	19	20
Secs	12	4	1		17	13	13
Monitoring	1	1	5	5	12	9	9
Loans	4	4	1		9	7	7
Share-out	1	1	2	5	9	7	7
Non-Compliance	1		2		3	2	2
Loved		1	1		2	1	2
<b>Totals</b>	38	22	38	38	136	100	N/A

<sup>6</sup> At the share-out meeting, most groups have a party with celebrations and food, speeches are made, gratitude is expressed, and gifts exchanged.

<sup>7</sup> There were 22 PSPs who reported 'not applicable,' which we interpret to mean that they did not have 3<sup>rd</sup> or higher cycle groups.

<sup>8</sup> Loans and share-outs could have been classified under the 'called' reason and would have increased the percentage of 'called' to nearly 60%. But we kept these categories separate to show the decline from cycle 2 when 14 PSPs reported helping with loans compared with only 7 PSPs for the higher cycles.

The PSPs described how they were called to meetings and how groups still required support at different levels (Table 35).

*Table 35 PSPs called by groups in higher cycles*

<p>If you do not come, they call. They do not want to do their meeting without PSP. Some secretaries do not come to the group meetings. PSP Uganda</p>
<p>Once per month: usually, I go to check methodology is not being followed due to illiteracy challenges. If I take too long, groups still call me so I just go each month to check on them PSP Zambia</p>
<p>I go just when there is a problem PSP Zambia</p>
<p>Every 3 months. The groups call for us to come and see them. ‘They do not want to be abandoned’ PSP Burkina Faso</p>

The project-required data collection forms (DCF) were the second reason for PSPs to visit their higher cycle groups and likely served as an opportunity to monitor the groups’ records and progress (Table 36). Some PSPs who monitored their groups still felt that a monthly visit was necessary even for more autonomous groups.<sup>9</sup>

*Table 36 PSPs monitoring groups in higher cycles*

<p>[I go] monthly: they have mastered SILC. PSP Uganda</p>
<p>Monthly just for monitoring group functioning-there is rarely any issues with these groups. PSP Zambia</p>
<p>I go to the groups about once per month; if they don’t call on me to assist them with a problem then I’ll visit them once per month. I spend more time working with the first cycle groups. PSP Zambia</p>
<p>They have had 2 years already, but I cannot abandon them. Without the PSP’s [attendance], they will not come, they will not repay loans. PSP Senegal</p>
<p>Autonomous therefore once a month. PSP Senegal</p>
<p>Secretaries are nearly autonomous, but need my support on the day of PSP credit / refund.</p>

<sup>9</sup> One PSP explicitly stated that he visited because the groups loved him, and he explained that this reflected the friendship and trust that was frequently described as developing between the ‘teacher’ and the ‘pupils’.

PSP Burkina Faso

Once per month: usually, I go to check methodology is not being followed due to illiteracy challenges. If I take too long, groups still call me so I just go each month to check on them.

PSP Zambia

Share-outs were mentioned by 7 PSPs (Table 37). We did not collect data on PSPs' attendance of higher-cycle groups' share-outs, so this figure should not be taken as representative of PSP attendance at share-outs – which we believe to be frequent.

*Table 37 PSPs attending higher cycle group share-outs*

Are very experienced so [they] just call if there is a problem and they like me to check the share-out and they invite me to attend the share-out.

PSP Uganda

Mostly I do not go unless called except during the share-out.

PSP Zambia

Just the day of sharing the group's funds.

PSP Burkina Faso

The problem with secretaries continued among higher-cycle groups in Burkina Faso and Uganda; these problems ranged from secretaries possessing low literacy and numeracy skills, to secretaries missing or resigning, or failing to attend meetings (Table 38).

*Table 38 PSPs visiting higher cycle groups because secretaries lack capacity*

I take on the role of secretary for this group in my village which is without a secretary.

PSP Burkina Faso

No secretary, or the secretary can fill in some of what is required and I come every 2 weeks to update the register.

PSP Burkina Faso

Some secretaries do not come to the group meetings.

PSP Uganda

I visit them twice in a month, once at the beginning and once at the end of the month. I sit near the secretary to make sure that he/she is filling out the book correctly.

PSP Uganda

The 6 subsidised groups: by request. The others: every 2 months. It depends on the level of the secretaries.

PSP Burkina Faso

There were two reports, both from Uganda, of anxiety amongst higher-cycle groups regarding their management committee, which led them to call the PSP (Table 39).

Table 39 PSPs visiting higher cycle groups due to problems with the management committee

They are anxious about their savings; the lack of literacy drives this - they fear they are being cheated. PSP Uganda
There is a tension, groups fear that there will be corruption by the management committee, so they want supervision but the rules of SILC say that the mature groups should be left alone. PSP Uganda

#### 4. Benefits and challenges of PSP work

<b>Benefits and challenges of PSP work</b>	What is good about being a PSP? What are the benefits?	PSPs said that earning money (68%), being recognized for their work (51%) and helping people (33%) were all positive aspects of their work. Linkages with local authorities and development initiatives, recognition, earning and learning were all benefits of the work.
	What are the challenges?	Distance, hours, competition from subsidized models, non-payment, group capacity and enforcing compliance with SILC rules were all negative features of PSP work.

##### Benefits

When asked what was good about their work, PSPs gave a range of responses, of which three dominated (Table 40): earning money, gaining recognition and helping people. Fully 118 PSPs said that earning money and improving their living standards were important. A further 79 told us that they valued the recognition that they received from the work and 51 said that helping people was a positive aspect of the job, and 17 mentioned that they had expanded their social network.

Table 40 Benefits of being a PSP – PSPs' own words

Good aspects	Burkina Faso	Senegal	Uganda	Zambia	Total responses	Percentage of total responses	Percentage of PSPS
Money	25	21	29	30	105	35	68
Recognition	19	18	23	19	79	27	51
Help	13	19	7	12	51	17	33
Linkages to government or other development organizations	12	2	7	4	25	8	16
Social Network	1	4	7	5	17	6	11
Living Standards		2	5	6	13	4	8



Solidarity	1	1		1	3	1	2
Attitude		2	1		3	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>100%</b>	

PSPs usually gave the enumerators a list of the positive aspects of the work including helping, earning and meeting people (Table 41).

*Table 41 Positive aspects of PSP work in PSPs' own words*

What is good? Experience during training, earning money, the appreciation of the community and development of the locality. PSP Senegal
Being self-employed, meeting friends, reasonable earnings. PSP Uganda
To lead the groups to live [better] with their families, to save, to make loans to help each other. Fight against poverty. PSP Burkina Faso
People respect you, so you respect yourself; you have an improved reputation and status in the community – people call me a teacher, a problem-solver, and so now I think about myself in that way too; you have the opportunity to mentor other people in the community and teach them about finances and ways to improve their lives. PSP Uganda
The lives of people in the community has changed: people are buying assets and property, children are being sent to school. There is progress in short; help end the practice of going to loan sharks which bound many in debt for years. PSP Zambia

Benefits were first addressed early in each interview, and later revisited in case the intervening questions had brought out new thinking on the topic. Not all PSPs had something to add at this point (134 commented) but more respondents thought about possible linkages with other development organizations or government bodies than they had at first, whilst others returned to the themes of recognition, earnings and knowledge. The Ugandan and Senegalese PSPs had the most to say about further benefits and stressed the usefulness of linkages, recognition and earnings (Table 42).

*Table 42 Other benefits from being a PSP*

Benefits	Burkina Faso	Senegal	Uganda	Zambia	Total	Percentage of responses
Linkages to government or other development organizations	1	12	12	3	28	21

Recognition	4	11	9	3	27	20
Money	2	6	13	3	24	18
Knowledge	1	4	5	8	18	13
Help	2	3	6	3	14	10
Social network	2	3	7	1	13	10
Living Standards	1			3	4	3
Experience	2	1			3	2
Other			1	1	2	1
Gifts				1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>134</b>	

### Negative aspects and challenges

After asking about the benefits of PSP work, we turned to bad aspects of the work (Table 43). The most frequently stated problem was distance: 54 PSPs said that they had to travel too far. The second most frequently identified problem was long hours, mentioned by 36 PSPs. It is likely that for many of our PSPs distance and time were correlated, as populations in some areas are sparse, scattered or both, and infrastructure and access to affordable transport limited. Although the EFI project supplied bicycles at the beginning of the project, these required constant maintenance (which offset earnings) or broke down beyond repair. Competition from other organizations promoting savings groups, often accompanied by free equipment or start-up grants, was cited as a problem by 36 PSPs. A further 34 PSPs mentioned non-compliance by groups and 16 mentioned low earnings. Difficulties in mobilization due to suspicion of the PSPs' or agency's motives was also mentioned by 12 PSPs. Ten respondents confessed that they faced considerable temptations as PSPs including dealing with money and women.

Table 43 Negative aspects of PSP work

Bad aspects	Burkina Faso	Senegal	Uganda	Zambia	Total	% of PSPs
Distance	12	15	9	18	54	35%
Hours	6	12	7	11	36	23%
Competition	6	7	13	10	36	23%
Non-Compliance	6	6	12	10	34	22%
Earnings	1	4	4	7	16	10%
Suspicion	1	6	3	2	12	8%
Temptations	1	6	1	2	10	6%
Rain		1	2	3	6	4%
Security	1			2	3	2%
Misbehavior		2		1	3	2%
Drought			2		2	1%
Dependency				1	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>N/A</b>

PSPs describing what was difficult often mentioned more than one issue, as shown in Table 44 below.

Table 44 Negative aspects of PSP work – in PSPs' own words

If the groups do not understand, they do not pay, and it is difficult to maintain my family. PSP Burkina Faso
Time spent on SILC. Problems with transport. Payment problem (especially when have secretaries who also ask for payment). PSP Senegal
Time of the loan repayment, many difficulties, defaulters - people run away and I have to find [them] and persuade to repay. Transport - there is no help with this, the groups see the PSPs as rich people. PSP Uganda
If you are not careful, you can neglect personal businesses; there is an issue of distance where one has to travel long distances. Un-learning for people with experiences in other methodologies can be a challenge. PSP Zambia

We also asked PSPs about challenges they faced (Table 45). The phrasing of challenges, rather than 'bad aspects,' allowed us to approach the issue from a less negative angle and provide respondents with the opportunity to discuss challenges they faced that they did not necessarily consider 'bad.' Distance and transport challenges again accounted for half the responses, with time constraint a distant second (11% of responses). Non-payment by groups, competition from other organizations, and low group capacity accounted for about 7-8% of responses. Overall, PSPs faced similar challenges across countries.

Table 45 PSP Challenges ranked first

Challenge no 1	Burkina Faso	Senegal	Uganda	Zambia	Total	% of responses	% of PSPs
<b>Transport/Distance</b>	19	16	16	21	72	49	46
<b>Time Constraint</b>	3	8	2	3	16	11	10
<b>Non-Payment</b>	3	2	5	2	12	8	8
<b>Competition</b>	3	1	3	4	11	7	7
<b>Group Capacity</b>	5	5		1	11	7	7
<b>Drought</b>	1		7		8	5	5
<b>Defaulters</b>		1	6		7	5	5
<b>Other</b>			1	3	4	3	3
<b>Low Income/Population</b>			1	2	3	2	2
<b>Mobilisation</b>	2			1	3	2	2
	36	33	41	37	147	100	N/A

The second most challenging issues were similar to the first: transport (29% of responses) dominated again, with non-payment by groups coming in with 15% of responses, and 10% mentioning time constraints (Table 46). Group capacity accounted for 8% of responses, as did low income due to the lack of sufficient population in PSPs' coverage areas (primarily a Zambian and Ugandan challenge).

Table 46 PSP Challenges ranked second

Challenge no 2	Burkina Faso	Senegal	Uganda	Zambia	Total	% of responses	% of PSPS
Transport/Distance	11	13	6	11	41	29	26
Non-Payment	8	2	3	8	21	15	14
Time Constraint	6	4	1	4	15	10	10
Group Capacity	6	6	1	0	13	9	8
Other	1	1	4	3	9	6	6
Low Income/Population		1	2	6	9	6	6
Mobilisation	3	3	2	1	9	6	6
Seasonal Issues			4	4	8	6	5
Drought			7		7	5	5
Competition			6	1	7	5	5
Apprentices		2			2	1	1
Defaulters			2		2	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>N/A</b>

Among the third most highly ranked challenges (for which 64 PSPs gave no response), seasonal issues appeared along with group capacity as more significant issues of concern, while transport and distance remained significant, along with group non-payment and time constraints (Table 47).

Table 47 PSP Challenges ranked third

Challenge no 3	Burkina Faso	Senegal	Uganda	Zambia	Total	% responses	% PSPs
<b>Seasonal Issues</b>	1	2	5	7	15	15	16
<b>Group Capacity</b>	2	5	1	6	14	14	15
<b>Transport/Distance</b>	3	4	5	2	14	14	15
<b>Non-Payment</b>	2		4	4	10	10	11
<b>Time Constraint</b>		3	6	1	10	10	11
<b>Competition</b>		1	5	1	7	7	8
<b>Mobilisation</b>	2	1		1	4	4	4
<b>Drought</b>			2		2	2	2
<b>Defaulters</b>			1	1	2	2	2
<b>Low Income/Population</b>			2		2	2	2
<b>Apprentices</b>		1			1	1	1
<b>Other</b>	3	3	6	4	16	16	18
	13	20	37	27	97	100	N/A

## 5. PSP motivation

<b>Motivation - what motivates PSPs?</b>	What motivated individuals to	To help (82%), to earn (39%) and to learn (29%) were all motivations to become an FA.
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<b>Money, helping people or gaining recognition</b>	become Field Agents?	
	How do PSPs define PSP success? How do project managers define PSP success?	Number of groups (68%), proper adherence to the model (56%) and being paid (50%) along with improved PSP living standards (12%) were how the PSPs defined their success. Managers rated earnings, group formation and group quality as the critical signs of success.
	How do PSPs describe motivation in their own words?	Helping (42%), earning (34%) and recognition (18%) is what the PSPs said motivated them.
	How do PSPs weigh motivation through a defined exercise?	Bean ranking gave helping an average score of 4.4, reputation 2.8 and earning 2.7.
	How do PSP view the motivations of other PSPs?	When asked to score other PSPs, most felt others worked for the money (average 4 beans), then helping (3.3 beans) and reputation (2.7 beans).

This section summarises the findings of the parts of the survey that explored what motivated PSPs, that is, what made them carry on working as PSPs. PSPs had already said that the main benefits of being a PSP were that one earned money, had a good reputation and helped others. The researchers anticipated that the EFI PSPs would have a range of motivations but that helping others would feature as well as the desire to earn money. Experience from previous SILC projects suggested that the reputation and respect gained through PSP work might also feature as a significant motivation.

We collected information about motivation and job satisfaction through several different types of questions: we asked PSPs

- Why they had wanted to become field agents
- How they know if a PSP is successful
- What they would tell others is good and bad about the work
- What other benefits and challenges of PSP work might be.

### Becoming a Field Agent (FA)

When we asked PSPs to think back to why they had wanted to become Field Agents, that is, what had initially attracted them to SILC work (Table 48), most (82%) said that they had wanted to help their community. Other important reasons given were to earn money (39%), gain knowledge (29%), and be recognized or gain a reputation (18%) – and some mentioned the importance of gaining work or training experience (10%) or developing broader social networks (10%). No clear pattern emerged by country.

*Table 48 Why the respondents had wanted to become Field Agents*

Motivation	Burkina Faso	Senegal	Uganda	Zambia	Total	% responses	% PSPs
Help	35	28	30	36	129	44%	82%
Earn	17	21	17	6	61	21%	39%

Knowledge	16	10	15	5	46	16%	29%
Experience	5	4	4	2	15	5%	10%
Recognition	12	7	7	2	28	9%	18%
Social network	1	6	8	0	15	5%	10%
Solidarity	2	0	0	0	2	1%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>N/A</b>

## History as volunteers

Most (N=131) PSPs became FAs after responding to advertisements or being recruited by the local EFI partner. Only 24 of the 155 told us that they were previously community or project volunteers (and 12 of those who had been came from Zambia) (Table 49).<sup>10</sup>

Table 49 Numbers PSPs who were volunteers prior to becoming FAs

PSPs Experience in Community Volunteerism	
Country	Number of PSPs
Burkina Faso	1
Senegal	7
Uganda	4
Zambia	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>

## Motivation to work as a PSP

We then asked the PSPs to tell us in their own words (Table 50) the reasons that they were motivated to work in mobilizing and training SILC groups: 65 PSPs (42%) said that they wanted to help people, 53 (34%) to earn money or improve living standards and 28 (18%) to gain recognition in their community.

Table 50 Motivation to work as a PSP – PSPs' own words

Motivation	Burkina Faso	Senegal	Uganda	Zambia	Total responses	% responses (180)	% PSP responses (155)
<b>Help</b>	14	20	14	17	65	36%	42%
<b>Earn</b>	13	3	21	16	53	29%	34%
<b>Recognition</b>	10	5	8	5	28	16%	18%
<b>Project</b>	3	3	5	1	12	7%	8%
<b>Knowledge</b>	2	2	3	4	11	6%	7%
<b>Social network</b>	1	2	1		4	2%	3%
<b>Living standards</b>			2	1	3	2%	2%
<b>Other</b>	1	1			2	1%	1%
<b>Women</b>	1				1	1%	1%

<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that volunteering in these countries can often carry a small cash stipend or other benefits, and links individuals with bigger organizations, often local government structures or the church.

<b>Demand</b>	1				1	1%	1%
<b>Total</b>	46	36	54	44	180	100%	N/A

The PSPs described what motivated them in their own words in Table 51 below.

*Table 51 what motivates PSPs – in their own words*

When the population calls us "we have seen the work, we want you to come". PSP Burkina Faso
Solidarity created between people. PSP Burkina Faso
Helping the community in the savings culture. Respect and appreciation of the community. PSP Senegal
[A PSP is] popular, known, is heard. PSP Senegal
Likes being called teacher, makes him so happy, is known in the community and can do something. Deals with educated people – he has really raised his status. PSP Uganda
Payment motivates me "so much." PSP Uganda
Seeing people use money better after learning SILC. PSP Zambia
Through the CRS SILC trainings I'm learning things that I didn't know before I was a PSP – I've also seen improvements in my own livelihoods; the way I budget and use money now is different than how I had used it in the past. PSP Zambia

### Ranking motivation: exercise with beans

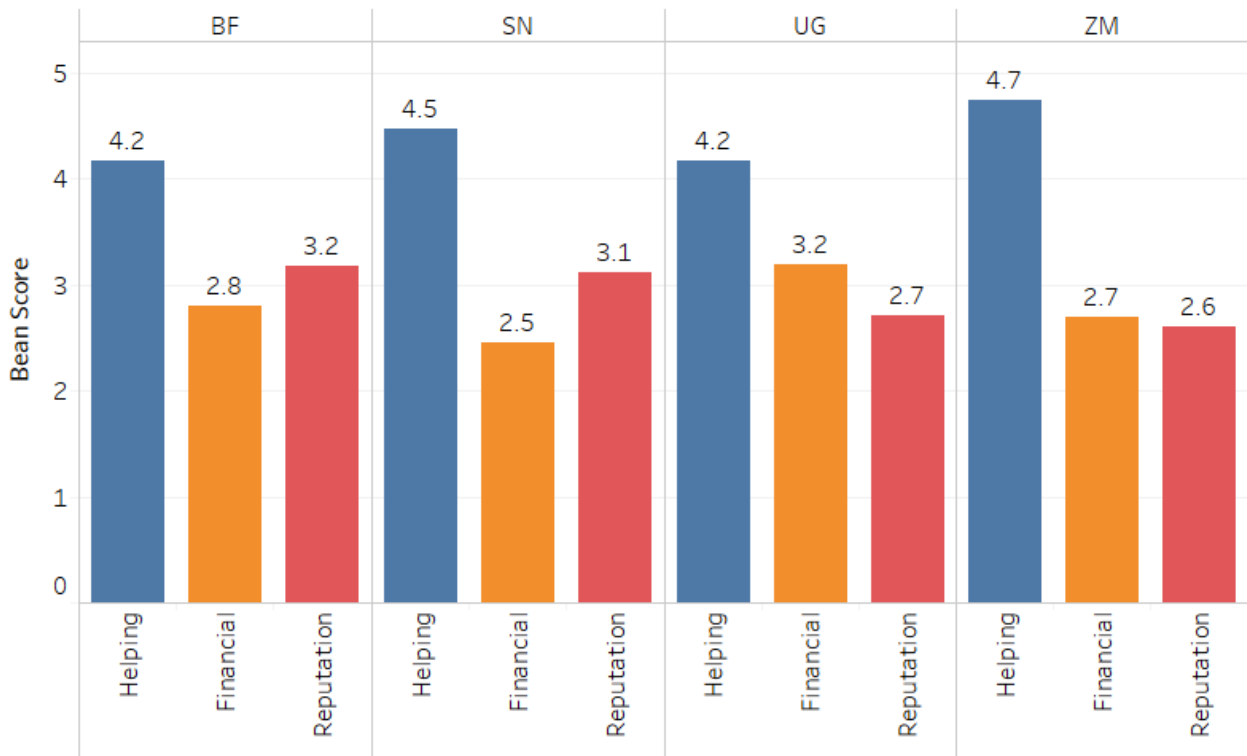
Finally, we investigated the PSPs' own motivation using a structured exercise for overall comparability. The exercise required PSPs to think about the three types of potential benefits, or rewards, to being a PSP – helping, financial, and reputation. They were told, '**Helping** would be helping others in the community; **financial** would be the income you earn; and **reputation** would be your reputation and status in your community.' The PSPs were asked which motivation was **most important** to them as a PSP, which was **least**, and which was in the **middle**.

We then placed three cards in front of the respondent, that read 'helping,' 'financial,' and 'reputation;' and gave the respondent 10 beans to distribute across them. PSPs assigned the most beans to their primary motivation among the predetermined three, fewer to their second, and the fewest to the third. Finally, we repeated the bean exercise, but asked PSPs to rank what they thought motivated *other* PSPs.

Our intention here was to give PSPs opportunities to attribute motivations to others that they might not want to admit pertained to themselves.

The results matched well with what the PSPs said in their own words about their motivations (Figure 3): PSPs in all four countries placed helping (average 4.4 beans) as their primary motivation with reputation coming second (average 2.9 beans) and financial third (average 2.8 beans). There was some variation between countries, but it was minor.

Figure 3 How PSPs weighted their own motivations – Average bean counts



**The motivations of the PSPs’ peers**

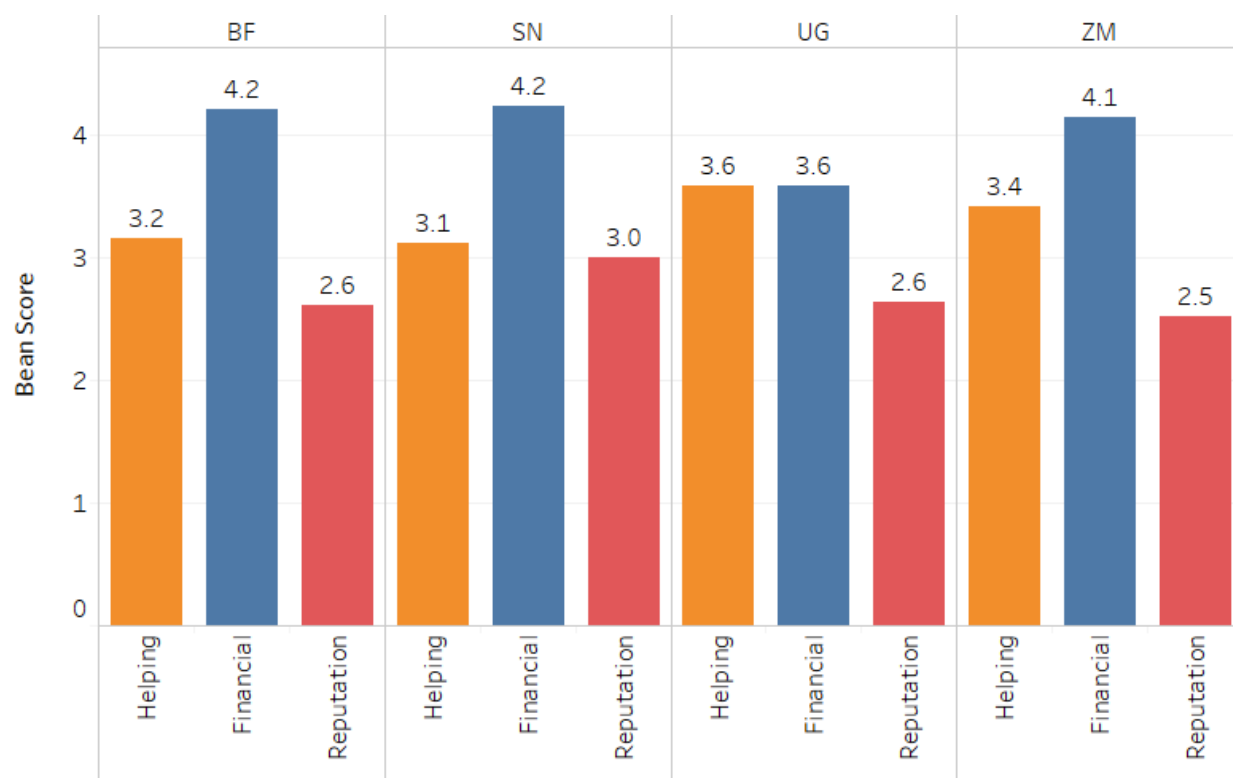
Finally, we asked PSPs what they thought motivated their peers, the other PSPs. Some said, quite sensibly, that they could not tell what motivated others, but most were willing to guess, and a consensus emerged that other PSPs were motivated primarily by money, with bean counts averaging 4 for ‘financial.’ ‘Helping’ and ‘reputation’ averaged 3.3 and 2.7 beans, respectively (Figure 4). Although the PSPs were likely guessing when it came to their peers’ motivations, it cannot be the case that everybody is motivated primarily by helping while everybody else is motivated primarily by money. It is hard to say without more evidence, but this finding – that PSPs consider their peers to be more financially motivated than they themselves are – does cast some doubt regarding the veracity of PSPs’ ranking of their own motivations.

While the motivations PSPs assigned to their peers cannot be reconciled with their ranking of their own motivations, the results do fit with what PSPs said about the benefits of working as a PSP – in order of decreasing importance: earning money, having a good reputation and helping people. CRS wants PSPs to be able to earn a sufficient living from their SILC work but also to be interested in improving the lives of



SILC group members and to enjoy any enhanced reputation from being a local ‘professional’ in rural worlds where there are few opportunities for increasing knowledge and status. After all, being a PSP takes time and energy, may generate costs for transport, and reduces the time PSPs have to dedicate to other means of income generation. Most EFI PSPs were farmers who sold some produce; meaning many needed their PSP work to generate additional income, at least to cover their costs, however much they may also have wanted to help fellow community members. The positive PSP feedback loop of helping communities, commanding respect and generating income implies that PSPs need not be viewed as driven by only one motivation, but rather that multiple motivations reinforce each other.

Figure 4 Other PSPs’ motivations



### Motivation in a virtuous circle

PSPs often said that it was hard to distinguish their primary motivations from secondary ones, because they reinforced each other: by helping SILC groups to learn the methodology, save and take loans, one gained a good reputation as a teacher and only by doing good work could one expect to be paid. The better a PSP’s reputation, the more people wanted to join SILC groups and the more money the PSP earned. A comment made by one PSP supervisor in Burkina Faso may reflect another process: agents began PSP work motivated by the idea that they can help others but were unable in advance to anticipate that they would earn as they did or be as respected as they became. Once the PSPs began to earn and found themselves commanding a new level of respect, these motivations became more important. Table 52, below, shows that PSPs themselves perceived the relationship between the motivations.

Table 52 PSPs see rewards as intrinsically interconnected

Earn more money. Work for oneself. Have the community trust me more.

PSP Burkina Faso

After help and respect, the money is earned.

PSP Senegal

Helping and financial should be equal – most PSPs are doing this job because they want to help people, but they wouldn't do it if it was completely voluntary. The money that we earn also improves our lives. That's why I put them as equal.

PSP Uganda

To make good money, one needs to work first. When you help people well, and they know you are a good person, then you will make money.

PSP Zambia

## 6. Views on PSP success

The next question asked PSPs to define 'PSP success' (Table 53). Nearly two-thirds of PSPs (68%) identified the number of groups formed as the clearest sign that a PSP was successful, whilst 88 (56%) and 79 (50%) PSPs, respectively, mentioned adherence to the methodology of SILC and being paid as signs of success. These responses indicate that the PSPs saw success as measured in delivering the correct SILC method to as many groups as possible and being paid for the effort.

Table 53 What makes a successful PSP?

Country	Burkina Faso	Senegal	Uganda	Zambia	Total	% of responses	% of PSPs
Number of groups	31	18	27	31	107	32%	68%
Group adherence to SILC norms	21	19	23	25	88	26%	56%
Payment of fees	28	15	22	14	79	24%	50%
Improved living standards	2	9	3	5	19	6%	12%
Help	4	3	4	6	17	5%	11%
Attitude		4	5	6	15	4%	10%
Demand	1	1	2	3	7	2%	4%
Apprentice	1	1		1	3	1%	2%
Totals	88	70	86	91	335	100%	N/A

However, while aspects of success are presented separately above, the answers given by PSPs illustrated nuanced views of success, ranging across several spheres: from the quality and number of the group, to payment of the PSP and satisfaction of members, and embracing the wider socio-political network of the community, the local authorities and the host project (Table 54).

Table 54 What makes a successful PSP – in PSPs' own words

Creates many groups. Compliance with the SILC methodology. Earn lots of money.  
PSP Burkina Faso

Has lots of groups [and these are well] performing groups (apply the principles, work as expected). The members have results. Are satisfied with the work of the PSP. PSP receives congratulations in the community.

PSP Senegal

Work together with community leaders; work well with the community members; consult other PSPs when you are not sure about what to do; interaction with project management and field supervisors; commit yourself. Many groups; good reputation in the community; group payments to the PSP – if all of the groups are paying you, you can see that they are a successful person.

PSP Uganda

Number of groups formed, productivity; receiving payments; has demand to train groups from community members; is well known and has a good reputation in the community; Is developing him/herself and improving his life.

PSP Zambia

## 7. Changes PSPs see in their lives from SILC work

<b>Changes in PSPs' lives</b>	What changes, positive or negative, do PSPs see in their lives?	<p>The changes were predominantly positive with 63% saying that they earned from the work, 46% saying they received recognition for their efforts, 30% noting the knowledge they had gained and a further 25% saying that they had invested in IGAs.</p> <p>Few negative reports. Where PSPs had given up activities these were by preference.</p> <p>Time away from the family was the major negative change.</p>
<b>The future?</b>	Are PSPs planning to continue with the work? Is the model sustainable?	Nearly all the PSPs said they would continue with the SILC work.
	What are supervisors' views on PSP continuation?	Supervisors estimated that about 1/3 of PSPs would struggle to continue and might even give up the work. The reasons mostly pertained to difficult market conditions and environmental contexts. Some PSPs suffered from low motivation or were not paid enough. All managers mentioned the importance of PSP earnings as a criterion for success, along with forming enough groups of sufficient quality.

We asked the PSPs to tell us about the changes, both positive and negative, that they had seen in their lives from working as a PSP (Table 55). The discussion can be divided along material, social and political

lines. Materially, working as a PSP does seem to bring rewards. On the purely financial side, when we combined the responses which mentioned increased earnings, investment in income-generating activities, assets or improved living standards, 128 of 155 (82%) PSPs reported increased income. More than 60% (N=97) of PSPs mentioned an increase in earnings as a major change, 25% (N=39) mentioned a new income-generating activity, 21% (N=32) said that they had invested in assets, and 12% (N=18) said that they now ate better and had improved household food security.

The changes were not exclusively material: 46% (N=72) of PSPs talked of the recognition that they now received through their work, 30% (N=47) mentioned the skills or knowledge they had gained and 10% (N=16) spoke of having a wider social network.

*Table 55 Changes in PSPs' lives*

Change	Burkina Faso	Senegal	Uganda	Zambia	Total	% of responses	% of PSPs
Earns	27	25	24	21	97	21	63
Recognition	21	19	18	14	72	16	46
Skills or knowledge	11	12	9	15	47	10	30
Income generating activity	5	2	17	15	39	9	25
Assets	7	8	11	6	32	7	21
Position	6	8	4	10	28	6	18
Behavior	5	10	6	2	23	5	15
Food security	3	3	8	4	18	4	12
Social network	2	6	7	1	16	4	10
Character	3	5	1	1	10	2	6
Time	1	3		3	7	2	5
Health	2	2	1		5	1	3
(Helps) extended family		3		1	4	1	3
Total	117	118	117	104	456	100	N/A

The quotes below in Table 56 show the range of experience reported by PSPs, from mildly to glowingly positive. No PSP had a negative opinion about being a PSP, though the lack of negativity may be because respondents were talking to project staff and feared consequences from complaining. The only significant negative change mentioned was less time with family and/or in doing chores at home. We do know from talking to supervisors (discussed below) that not all the PSPs were doing uniformly well in their work, and we will discuss this finding in the next section.

*Table 56 Changes PSPs experienced because of SILC work*

<p>All good. His standard of living has improved, his children's education too, they are going to better schools; he can care for his parents; he is renting fields for agriculture. He is respected as a teacher and is quite famous. He now hires people to do his ploughing.</p> <p>PSP Uganda</p>
<p>She has more money now, is able to pay for education, buy things; she is active in the community and within the parish and the sub-county. She is known as a trainer, is much respected and is well known.</p>

PSP Uganda

[My] way of life has changed, I used to solely cultivate my own field which was a hard job, now am able to pay people to help me cultivate; I managed to buy roofing sheets in preparation for the new house I will be building a new house this year; A lot of people in the community want me to hold positions, am secretary for helping the vulnerable in my village for a program under social welfare.

PSP Zambia

Positive: livelihood has changed for the better, I utilize resources better. I plan well for my expenses. I am well known and respected in my community.; Negative: Too much personal time dedicated to SILC for inconsistent pay. Obligated to work for fear of having bad groups.

PSP Zambia

[I have] a better reputation in the community; more self-confidence; more ease of expression [but only a] slight increase in income.

PSP Senegal

Negative: Not enough time. Rarely sees the family.

PSP Senegal

[I have] financial resources; [having] relationships with people and with the authorities diminishes the concerns of life; I have a certificate and I believe in the community. I belong to something. I feel that I have an occupation. I stopped working on the agricultural survey after 3 years in a row (too painful and not profitable). I spend less time on farm work.

PSP Burkina Faso

More knowledge, more money that allows me to meet my needs; I bought chicken for breeding; have paid now my credit at the shopkeeper.

PSP Burkina Faso

Making money: studying children, helping the husband at home, [paying for] daily expenses, prescriptions for the mother. Can pay the health insurance. Is going to take a loan to enlarge her house.

PSP Senegal

### The future: will you still be a PSP in 3 years' time?

When asked whether they planned still to be a PSP in three-years' time, the PSPs interviewed overwhelmingly responded 'yes' (Table 57). 151 of 155 (97%) planned to continue their PSP work for the next three years, and only four said that they did not know or that they would not.

Table 57 Future as a PSP

Continuing PSP Work	Don't know	No	Yes	Total	% of PSPs
Burkina Faso		1	39	40	26
Senegal	2		33	35	23

Uganda			41	41	26
Zambia		1	38	39	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100</b>

PSPs told us in their own words how they viewed their futures (Table 58). Although most said they would continue, there was some anxiety about life without the project or realism about other opportunities that might arise.

*Table 58 PSP views of their futures (next 3 years)*

Yes, the work is beneficial, and I have the confidence to create many other groups and recruit an apprentice. PSP Burkina Faso
Everything will depend on the project. "Without accompaniment, it will not be easy". If there is no more data collection, what impact on people? PSP Burkina Faso
Yes - unless other projects come. PSP Senegal
Will still be working as a PSP, earning a living. Very proud of being a PSP. PSP Uganda
I think a PSP will live forever. By that time [3 years] I will have apprentices. There are VSLA groups, there are Build Africa groups, but when they're doing their share-out they invite us because they think we are the most trusted and have the most knowledge about SILC. Even if they aren't doing SILC, they still want our expertise. PSP Uganda
Yes: am benefiting financially and I am well known in my community and further. PSP Zambia
Yes: community members still seek my advice and demand increases each time; so I have no intention in stopping. PSP Zambia

### **Supervisors' views of PSP continuity**

In addition to the PSPs, five supervisors from each project partner were interviewed. Supervisors were employed by partners to manage 8-15 PSPs each, and they had a broad perspective on the SILC model as they worked with all the key project stakeholders and knew the markets and the terrain. The 40 supervisors to whom we spoke managed a total of 432 PSPs. Overall, 37 of the supervisors believed that the SILC PSP model was a sustainable one that would carry on post-project because the project's PSPs were established, independent and making a living; where there were functioning networks of PSPs, these were considered to be important sources of support and continuity in the long run.

We asked the supervisors how they thought ‘their’ PSPs would do post-project, if the PSPs were earning enough to continue.<sup>11</sup>

Overall, the supervisors thought that about one-third of their PSPs might struggle to continue with the work (Table 59). Supervisors were clear about PSPs whom they thought were not sufficiently interested or active or who were struggling with their groups, markets, or competition. Reasons varied from partner to partner and country to country. Supervisors thought in Burkina Faso, Senegal and Zambia that around 40% of their PSPs were not earning ‘enough’ to continue PSP work in the long run; in Uganda just over 20% were considered not to be earning enough. These views may reflect different market conditions or result from the supervisors’ experiences trying to manage the performance of struggling individuals.

*Table 59 Supervisors’ opinions on adequacy of PSP earnings and future work*

Country	Partner	Total PSPs mentioned	Not earning enough	% PSPs not earning enough
<b>Burkina Faso</b>	Koudougou	32	12	38%
	Manga	16	8	50%
	<i>Burkina Faso Total</i>	48	20	42%
<b>Senegal</b>	Caritas Kolda	25	11	44%
	Ndeyi Jirim	46	19	41%
	<i>Senegal total</i>	71	30	42%
<b>Uganda</b>	Eaden	54	12	22%
	Socadido	69	16	23%
	<i>Uganda total</i>	123	28	23%
<b>Zambia</b>	Mansa	36	13	36%
	Mpika	45	20	44%
	<i>Zambia total</i>	81	33	41%
<b>Total</b>		<b>323</b>	<b>111</b>	
<b>Overall Average</b>				<b>34%</b>

The main structural reason for why some PSPs might not last in the long run, given by 11 supervisors, was that the PSPs worked in a difficult area with high poverty and weak markets (Table 60).

*Table 60 PSP in poverty-stricken areas with weak markets*

8/10 earn enough. 2/10 have bad zones, very low savings amounts. If they [the PSPs] earn little, they continue because that’s their only source of income.  
Supervisor Senegal

<sup>11</sup> We realized retrospectively that by fixing on sufficient income, we may have introduced a bias and would, in further surveys probably ask first if PSPs were likely simply to continue prior to investigating their income.

Groups are just very poor – their savings are really low. One PSP lives in is a farming bloc arrangement. The population is very low. Just not enough people to make the numbers. Another – her situation is similar, the people do nomadic farming, they shift to other sites so makes group meetings difficult and during that period, she is not paid anything – for 3 to 4 months. So very unreliable groups.  
Supervisor Zambia

Dependency could also be a challenge with populations unused to paying for services that came via NGOs or that were dependent on NGOs (Table 60).

*Table 61 Community resistance to paying fees to PSPs*

Geography is the same between the high 9 and low 3. But the 3 are in a landslide area – people are used to free services. This lowers these three [PSPs] morale.  
Supervisor Uganda

One PSP, her area is unique, mountainous, groups are far flung. There is a resistance to SILC ideology. They are not saving much and not paying her much and [then] infrequently e.g. once a quarter.  
Supervisor Zambia

One PSP lives in a missionary area where there is a culture of dependency and people don't think that they should pay.  
Supervisor Zambia

Finally, nine supervisors mentioned low performance and lack of motivation as the main reason why PSPs would not continue with group formation and training (Table 62).

*Table 62 Low-performing PSPs*

Of my PSPs, 12 of the 15 would continue; from what I've seen the [other 3] PSPs wouldn't do the work on their own; if you don't monitor them they relax; if you don't push them they won't report – the three are low-performers; The three that I've mentioned haven't been motivated from the beginning – even paying them the stipend for their reporting you still have to push them.  
Supervisor Zambia

## Discussion - a successful model

### **PSP work is an important income generating activity**

The research showed that SILC work is a significant income generating activity for PSPs: for 68 of 155 PSPs (44%) interviewed, PSP work was their most important income generating activity and for another 44 (28%) it was the second highest source of income. For twelve PSPs (10 of whom lived in Burkina Faso), PSP work was their *only* source of income and 58 PSPs had only PSP work and one other income source.

In rural areas, PSP work conjoined with agricultural income generating activities. The other sources of income on which PSPs relied were crop and livestock sales, petty trade, medium to large businesses and



salaried employment. Most PSPs interviewed sold crops (N=136) and around 30 in each country were engaged in petty trade or livestock sales. In contrast, only 14 PSPs were artisans and 9 had salaried positions.

### **PSPs make between one third and one half of their income from SILC work**

Looking at estimated income suggests that a healthy proportion of EFI PSPs' income came from SILC work: by country, PSP earnings ranged from 29% to 54% of respondents' total income. There were country- and partner-level differences: Zambian PSPs were the least likely to list PSP work among their top three income sources and the partner Mansa in Zambia was an outlier, with only a quarter of PSPs' earnings from SILC-related work. Almost no PSPs were paid in kind, and the few that were came from Zambia.

### **Markets differ – distance and population density**

Earnings reflect market opportunities, which are closely related to population density, poverty and travel times. The more scattered and sparse a population, the harder it is to get the numbers required for group formation and the more time a PSP spends travelling to groups rather than training them. A similar situation holds when the PSP must cover long distances or face difficult travel conditions (e.g. hills, mud, or sand) or when the PSP has no form of transport. Certainly, there are important differences between countries and partners in terms of the proportion of income contributed by PSP work, but the fact that PSP work's share in total income never falls below one quarter – and is more likely to be around 50% – suggests that PSP work is viable in many contexts.

### **PSPs mostly work part-time**

The PSPs interviewed worked an average of 22 hours per week, ranging from 17-30 hours by country. But within-country variation was considerable: whilst only a few PSPs worked more than 40 hours and even fewer less than 10 hours, PSPs in Burkina Faso were more likely than their counterparts in other countries to spend over 30 hours on PSP work. Only 67 of the 155 PSPs interviewed had recruited an apprentice to help them in their work, suggesting that they found their current work load manageable; of those who had taken an apprentice, the main reasons given for doing so were to cope with demand and distance.

### **The fee-for-service model is working, and PSP payments decline steadily over the cycles**

PSPs work on a fee-for-service model, and ideally PSPs should train groups to operate independently. If a PSP regularly attends higher-cycle group meetings, it is important to understand the reasons they do so.

The model appears to be working as designed during the first cycle, as most PSPs interviewed were being paid: nearly three quarters (73%) of first cycle groups were paying their PSP at the time of the research and only half (N=75) PSPs not being paid by at least one group. Most PSPs reported that non-paying groups were likely to pay in future, and that they had not paid yet because they were new. Only 20 PSPs had one or more groups with more intransigent issues such as poverty – induced by the drought in Uganda – or a reluctance to pay. Overall, the PSPs were confident that they would ultimately receive payment, with only 3 saying that they thought it unlikely that some of their non-paying groups would eventually pay.

PSPs were still attending a large share of second cycle meetings but the reasons for doing so fitted well with the design of the SILC/PSP model. PSPs reported that they attended half or more of all second cycle

meetings either fortnightly or more frequently and it is likely that they were paid for attendance. The reasons for the PSPs' presence at 2<sup>nd</sup>-cycle group meetings seemed to be legitimate, as groups still needed technical support. The technical support needs varied from aiding low-skilled secretaries in Burkina Faso, to PSPs monitoring groups and providing support on the more difficult processes such as loans.

By the third cycle, there was a shift away from frequent attendance at meetings, which suggests that the groups had learnt the SILC methodology well enough to work without high levels of supervision and support. Only 8% of higher-cycle group meetings were attended by PSPs either all or most of the time, and 80% of groups were only visited for a few or no meetings. When PSPs did attend meetings, they did so mostly because the groups had called them to the meetings or the PSPs had to assist low-capacity secretaries or support more complex loan processes.

### **Benefits of SILC work**

Most PSPs (68%) said that the most important benefit of their work was earning money, followed by recognition by the community (51%) and helping (33%). The fact that earnings were such an important benefit (along with reputation) supports the sustainability of the PSP model.

### **Challenges**

The biggest challenge faced by PSPs was that they had to travel considerable distances, often through difficult terrain, without transport. Time spent travelling meant long hours, which were also reported as a critical challenge. Competition from non-SILC savings groups was a problem, as was ensuring group members' compliance with SILC norms. Sometimes PSPs faced difficulties in convincing groups that the PSPs' requests for payment were legitimate, as groups erroneously believed that the PSP was still being paid by the project. Only a third of the PSPs interviewed had taken an apprentice to help them with their work.

### **Motivation**

PSPs' responses to questions on benefits and the main activity on motivations (their own and those of their peers) suggest that PSPs are motivated by earnings, reputation and the desire to help others. It is likely that this mixture of motivations and reasons for doing the work reflect the changes that being a PSP makes to the life of the individuals who do the work. The combination of reasons for working also helps the model to be robust in a range of market contexts. Most of the PSPs interviewed would have struggled to find any other work that would have brought them not just income but also status and their communities' respect. Those PSPs who earn less do so in with few alternative opportunities for those who are not wealthy and lack higher education - and so they are willing to accept lower earnings than their peers elsewhere. And the three motivations – money, reputation, and helping – are interlinked in practice: if the PSP is not motivated to do the work well, she will not form competent, paying groups and will not earn money or a local reputation as a technical expert in SILC. As most of the PSPs interviewed planned to continue with their work, we can conclude that this model works.

The importance of the market in which the PSP works shows through in this report. Wherever populations are scarcer and poorer, and more time is spent travelling rather than training groups, the PSPs struggle more to make a living. That the PSP is part of the same communities and faces similar market and infrastructure challenges in their other livelihoods – so will accept smaller overall income than elsewhere – partly compensates for this struggle. The fact that motivation comes from respect and helping others also persuades PSPs in more difficult areas that their work is worthwhile. Finally, while the model appears robust enough to function in low population density areas with poor markets and

infrastructure, there is little doubt that it is in these areas that it is most under strain and a longer period of support might be necessary for PSPs. Future projects may want to adjust the time spent supporting PSPs and to review any opportunities for increased assistance around transport or travel that is possible.