

## **First Steps in Implementing SPM**

### **Partner's Experience**

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"Partner is a mission-driven organization..." This is the way we promote the institution and we have a good reason for doing so: The mission that exists has been born from an idea that actually moves staff. To help the poor and improve their lives and help them run micro business in 1997 – this was a challenge to all participants in the process, for our clients and our staff.

Nine years on, in a country where 3.8 million citizens are served by 55 MFIs and 30 banks and where several of them have a goal to partake in a market niche that has been served by MFIs only, Partner has not changed its mission and primary focus. The success we have experienced in the past decade has helped us achieve significant growth in the number of clients that we serve, to expand our network and to continuously employ new staff. All of this would not have been possible without excellent financial results. At the same, the new Law on Microcredit organizations has been established, enabling MFIs to transform into either for-profit or non-profit organizations.

In addition, MFC has launched a project called "Social Performance Management". Partner realized that SPM would enable us to prove to ourselves that we are still working according to our mission. Second, we wanted to be able to demonstrate to a wider audience that we are making a positive impact not only on microcredit clients but also to local communities. Given all this - a large network of field offices, a substantial number of talented staff and a highly competitive market - Partner wanted to take on a challenge and open up an honest discussion with staff regarding target clients and achieving and understanding the mission. At the same time we wanted to find the best possible way to allow us to balance sound financial results with significant social impact.

After MFC's first training, Partner decided to go a step further and to adopt Social Performance Management as a business process within the organization. A multifunctional team of 10 people was created and their participation has been crucial to the overall process, especially in its initial phase. All team members have a mutual understanding of the importance of the process itself, which will definitely help them to execute the process more smoothly. The team recognized that communication with staff is an extremely important factor in order to implement the process in the near future. In the meantime, we have provided all staff with information on SPM, why it is important, what role each of us play, and how our clients and potential clients can benefit from it. The reactions have been positive, first of all, in providing staff with an understanding of mission, and secondly, they see the implementation of SPM as a great help in terms of better serving our target clients.

Partner is currently involved in setting up indicators and targets that will take us to the next step, which is defining reporting formats and performing pilot tests in the coming month.

