

Exchange Visit Guide

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Overview

The numerous innovations taking place in microinsurance and the tremendous amount of local experiences are increasingly documented through publications. Yet, learning from first-hand experience and discussing concrete issues with others who are doing business in a similar setting may be an efficient way to gain new insights. One approach to do so is the exchange visit: intense discussions and field visits during a short trip to an organization that can offer practical lessons from its experience implementing and operating a microinsurance program.

Full benefits of an exchange visit can be gained when an institution or individual is already moderately knowledgeable about microinsurance, clear about what issues they face and if these issues are not too specific. If, for example, the real issue of an organization is a dysfunctional IT system, then an exchange visit might not be the optimal approach to tackle this. In any case, an exchange visit requires a thorough preparation. This guide may help in doing so.

Purpose of this Guide

Embarking on an exchange visit can be a powerful learning experience and may help to quickly transfer know-how from one part of the world to another. At the same time, participants may struggle to explain why such a tour is beneficial and why it should be considered as work, not vacation. The purpose of this guide is to offer some suggestions and thoughts on how to prepare an exchange visit, how to fully benefit from it and what to do once back home in order to translate the observations made into concrete actions. It is primarily written for microinsurance practitioners with already some experience.

An exchange visit will be all the more successful if thoroughly prepared and structured. Not all organizations are ready to benefit from an exchange visit and sometimes no suitable counterpart to exchange with can be found. Therefore, a thorough self assessment, a clear definition of learning objectives and a careful evaluation of the prospective partner organization¹ to be visited should be the first step.

Then, keeping a clear focus on the learning objectives during the time with the exchange partner may prove challenging. A rush of novel information and impressions in a new environment can easily distract from initial intentions. Precise learning objectives set in advance and a framework to classify observations and new insights are a prerequisite to achieve the goal of such a tour: to learn from practical examples and translate these lessons into concrete actions that can help the exchange visit participants improve their own microinsurance programme.

Lastly, documenting insights, ideas and suggestions for change will help to memorize details, to reflect on observations and to share findings with management and colleagues. A well-structured report that includes creative solutions could demonstrate the value of such learning activity by setting out how the observations made abroad can translate into improvements.

How to use the Guide

This guide includes modules structured along the main steps proposed for planning, undertaking and evaluating an exchange visit. The guide provides practical guidance on:

¹ In this guide, the term 'partner' or 'partner organization' is used to designate the institution that is visited, the receiving party so to speak.

Institutional self assessment: can your organization really benefit from an exchange visit? Exchange visits are only one way of bringing new ideas to an organization. This section helps to assess whether an exchange visit holds significant potential to advance your organization along the path towards successful microinsurance operations.

Learning agenda: what do you expect to learn on the exchange visit? A clearly articulated learning agenda will greatly help to select the right partner to visit, to concentrate on the core issues while on the tour and also to evaluate the lessons.

Selecting a partner: what are the key characteristics of a partner that can help fulfil the learning agenda? Identifying possible partners, evaluating their suitability for the precise purpose of the exchange visit and reaching an agreement on the modalities of the exchange visit may prove challenging.

Structured observations: how to keep afloat the torrent of new information and impressions in a new environment? Once the learning agenda is clearly set, observations while on the tour should be linked to these learning goals. A learning grid could help to structure this process.

Translate observations into actions: how to translate new insights into improving changes? The ultimate goal of an exchange visit is to broaden the participant's horizon and enable him to bring home fresh ideas to improve microinsurance operations. However, each context is specific and thus most solutions cannot simply be replicated; they need to be adapted to the given environment.

Documenting lessons learnt and developing a plan for implementing changes: what are the main findings from the exchange visit and how could this benefit the organization? A report of the tour will help to assimilate insights and disseminate observations and new ideas among colleagues and higher management. Further, it will be the basis for discussing proposed implementations, changes or innovations. Finally, the report will help to justify the resources mobilized for the exchange visit.

Institutional Self-Assessment

The goal of the institutional self-assessment is to provide higher management a basis for any decision regarding institutional learning activities. The focus is clearly on the organization, not on individual employees. Therefore, a team of senior staff should review the assessment.

Why do a Self-Assessment

The strategic importance of microinsurance for an institution should critically drive the decision process regarding the exchange visit. To prepare and organize an exchange visit, to go abroad, report lessons learnt and ultimately translate observations made in a different context into practical solutions for local implementation takes a lot of time, efforts and financial resources. The partner organization that receives visitors for an exchange visit must also expend considerable time and resources. Therefore, it is crucial to assess the value of such an endeavour to both institutions.

A self assessment helps the institution to determine the level of organizational commitment to microinsurance, to formulate the main motivation drivers and to review its strategy. The assessment touches on areas such as reputation and trust in the market place, financial capacity and resources dedicated to the microinsurance project. The institutional assessment is a necessary first step, but by no means sufficient: individuals going on an exchange visit must be selected carefully so that the expected value of the exchange visit can be realized. Both evaluations help to ensure that resources are wisely spent.

How to do a Self-Assessment

The intention of the self assessment is to help an institution determine whether and in what dimensions it might benefit from an exchange visit. **Annex A** provides a simple tool to map key dimensions of an institution interested in microinsurance. Based on some 20 questions and statements, a spider chart (see below) can easily be drawn. Spider charts allow for grasping an institutions unique position at a glance.

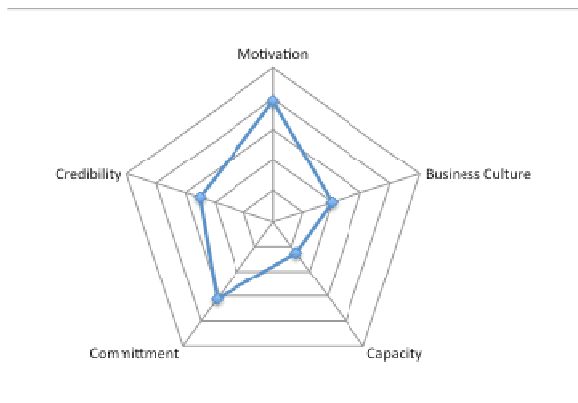


Figure: spider chart, showing high scores for the dimensions Motivation and Commitment, while in Capacity and Business Culture there is some room for improvement.

A note of caution: the self assessment proposed in Annex A is by no means scientifically robust. The questions and statements are by intention very clear and straight forward so that it is obvious which answer will give the highest score. Also, a potential candidate for an exchange visit should not expect to be perfect in all dimensions mapped – otherwise there would be little need to go on an exchange visit.

Preparation: Learning Agenda and Partner Selection

Each institution operates in a specific environment, market and cultural context and thus faces very specific issues with microinsurance. A clearly defined learning agenda and objectives, together with the self assessment, form the basis for deciding whether an exchange visit will benefit the institution. The learning agenda will also help to define necessary key characteristics of a suitable partner and its microinsurance program.

Once the learning agenda is defined, the option of going on an exchange visit should be critically evaluated against other alternatives such as desk research, internal staff brain storming, hiring external experts, corresponding with organizations that have implemented similar projects or forum discussions.

Defining Core Learning Objectives

Defining learning objectives depends on the particularity of given circumstances and requires intimate knowledge of the institution as well as the skill set of key personnel. In some cases, discussions with external experts may help to distil the very essence of the knowledge or experience gap. Yet, many institutions struggle with rather similar issues.

Below and in **Annex B**, some common areas of concern in microinsurance are briefly discussed. The list is by no means exhaustive, but aims at stimulating reflection on the

part of the reader. Most of these points could be debated endlessly and no universal solution has yet been found. Examples of possible areas for examination are:

Efficient client information and education: how to design educational promotion activities?

Customer Service: selling insurance is not enough, customers require points of contact, ongoing information and simple, quick claims processes.

Marketing and Sales Training: what does it take to allow the sales staff to be more efficient when selling microinsurance?

Incentives and cost structure in the value chain: which partner incurs which costs? Are incentives aligned with the institution's objectives? Are unintended side effects (mis-selling, neglect of core business etc) reduced?

Administration and Business Processes: could processes be organized in a simpler, faster way without compromising quality? How far should documents be traceable? Which organization or position should have how much decision rights?

Anti-selection and Fraud: evergreens in insurance – how to tackle them efficiently in the context of microinsurance?

Monitoring, Evaluation and Improvement of Products: are feedback loops in place and working? Within the institution? From customer to the service provider?

The learning objectives should lead to guiding questions to be studied and hopefully answered while on the tour. Communicating the learning objectives to the partner in advance will help him prepare and thus maximises benefits for all.

A clear focus on a couple of key learning areas may yield better results than an extensive catalogue of open questions. Concentrating on crucial issues and formulating precise questions relevant to immediate improving actions once back home will help all parties involved to benefit from the exchange visit.

One-way or Two-way Learning Experience

When preparing an exchange visit and starting to evaluate potential partners, a key question for the partner organization will be: what is the benefit for them? Even though many organizations show some degree of openness and solidarity within the microinsurance community, the burden of partnering with an exchange visit team is huge.

Where the design of the exchange visit allows for at least some form of mutual exchange of experience, the partnering organization may be more willing to accept participation in such a scheme. Other partners may simply ask for a fee to cover at least part of the incurred costs.

Selecting the Partner

The identification of a suitable partner for the planned exchange visit may prove challenging: not only should it allow to meet the institution's learning objectives, but also possess similarities in critical aspects such as institutional setting, market environment or microinsurance product. Often, organizations connected to large parts of the microinsurance world, such as the ILO's [Microinsurance Innovation Facility](#) or the [MicroInsurance Network](#) to name a few, may prove highly beneficial to identifying the right partner. In such cases, a clear profile of the ideal partner will greatly facilitate the search.

Profiling the ideal partner should include several dimensions, such as:

Institutional arrangement: does the potential partner offer microinsurance through a model similar to your own (e.g. an MFI working with a licensed insurer)?

Target market/clients: do clients belong to a specific trade union or profession? Are they mainly rural or urban? Is gender an important characteristic?

Product type: which line of business (accident, hospitalization, comprehensive health, term life, educational saving, livestock etc) is under study? Should the product be mandatory or voluntary?

Cultural and religious setting: what should the socio-cultural setting look like? do religious beliefs play an important role when making financial decisions (e.g. takaful insurance)? Is saving for education a major concern? In case of life insurance: are funerals very costly?

As noted above, in most cases a prospective partner will be more willing to agree on an exchange visit if the visiting party can also offer some interesting insights to them. The partner profile template in **Annex C** may help to describe what type of partner would be most interesting to exchange with

While on the Exchange Visit

Going on an exchange visit is a unique opportunity to spend several days together with microinsurance practitioners from a different organization. This time should be used to learn a maximum on the product, the processes and organization, the difficulties encountered and successful solutions developed in this specific context. A structured way of taking notes will help to synthesize key lessons learnt, that form the basis for changes at home.

Getting Started

A thorough desktop study on the partnering organization, the market environment it is working in and the products it is offering is a must before going on the tour. Not only allows a careful preparation for concentrating on the learning objectives while with the partner, but it is also a sign of respect towards the partner and interest in the organization.

At least a brief study of the culture and customs prevalent in the visited country should also be part of the preparation. In most places, foreigners will not behave exactly as expected by locals and also encounter some benevolent tolerance. However, showing respect towards the local culture and knowing the basics about how to behave in public, at religious sites and when invited is more than welcomed. Most tourist guidebooks or internet resources such as wikipedia.org provide sufficient information on such topics.

In order to keep afloat of the richness of new insights, to prepare a tour report and also to make sure that all learning objectives are met, it may prove very helpful to prepare a grid for effective note-taking while on the tour. The detailed list of learning objectives and guiding questions (see chapter 3.1) should serve as a basis for such a form. To note observations continuously (and not only at the end of the visit) has multiple advantages, such as higher accuracy, the opportunity to clarify open questions while in the country and a control of covering all relevant topics.

The note-grid should help to relate observations to learning objectives and leave room for instant thoughts on the meaning of the observation made for the microinsurance operation at home. Thus, an evolving list of observations, remarks, thoughts and follow-up questions will develop during the tour. **Annex D** provides an example of such a note-grid.

Asking Questions

One of the great advantages of going on an exchange visit is that questions can be instantly asked and new ideas be discussed with a knowledgeable partner. The challenge will be to find the right balance of concentrating on the learning objectives while keeping an open ear for new ideas and insights.

Through appropriate questions, a comprehensive understanding of the situation can be achieved, especially if they lead to insights into the reasons why something is done the way it is. A good way to get a rounded up picture is to ask different stakeholders the same or related questions: what is the client's view on the product, the processes etc? What does the actuary say? What the back-office staff?

Asking questions may appear trivial. Yet, to get the information relevant for answering the learning objectives in an efficient and respectful way is not always easy. There is abundant literature on how to ask questions in an effective way, describing different approaches for specific situations such as:

Ask probing questions in case your partner gets vague (e.g. "we don't know"; " we can't say") or expresses words of judgement ("that's not possible"; "they wouldn't accept"). Questions such as "why do you say/believe that?" can help to find out why it's impossible to say (e.g. because they simply don't know, because they never asked for it, because they are not allowed to etc).

Ask for clarification in case the situation seems unclear or confused: "what exactly...?"; "how specifically...?"; "could you tell me more about...?"; "why is that relevant to...?". Of great value are often examples: "sorry, I don't understand – could you give me an example, please?". In case giving examples is not possible, it may help to ask the same question in a different way, in other words.

Ask evaluation questions to better understand the significance of critical statements, processes etc: "how good do you think does this work?"; "what are the pros and cons of doing this?"; "how do you know it is worthless?"

In any case it is crucially important that the interviewed person feels at ease and not aggressed. Creating a situation that makes it easy to answer questions can be achieved through certain attitudes, such as being nice and casual, or always taking the blame of not understanding on oneself: "sorry, I can't follow, that was too quick for me. May I ask you to explain this in more detail once again?" is often better received than "this doesn't make any sense!"

Closing the Visit

To sit together with your partner at the end of the visit in order to discuss the joint learning experience is more than just a sign of courtesy. A mutual exchange on new insights gained, on inspiration for change and suggestions for the future is an excellent opportunity to summarize key lessons. Further, during such a discussion last open points could be addressed and gratitude for the hospitality expressed.

Translate Observations into Action

The whole purpose of going on an exchange visit is to stimulate solution oriented learning from others and to prepare improvements at home. Observations and experiences made while abroad have to be analyzed in the light of the local context, translated into different environments and discussed with partners. Simply copying will not lead to success. Yet, the exchange visit should generate new ideas to tackle old issues.

Lessons for the Local Context

In some cases it may be quite easy to distil helpful lessons learnt from all the observations while on the exchange visit. In other cases it may be more difficult to translate the local experience into meaningful recommendations for a different microinsurance operation.

When studying a successful microinsurance project during an exchange visit, a couple of simple questions can lead to decisive insights:

What is fundamentally different here? What would have to be adapted or changed in order to make it work at home?

Which important factors are the same or at least similar to the ones at home?

Has a similar approach already been tried at home or neighbouring countries?

What were the results, what can be learnt from it?

What works in the foreign environment, but would certainly not work at home?

Why is that?

Are there any fundamental changes required that would affect the whole organization and/or the partnership with other stakeholders? If yes, how easily can they be implemented?

The following five steps could help in the process of isolating the right conclusions:

Start to think about key lessons learnt and changes to recommend while on the tour. A discussion about these points with colleagues and learning partners may also help to pinpoint the key factors and promising modifications.

Take notes while on the tour. Reasons for writing down observations while abroad are firstly to memorize details that may turn out to be crucial. Secondly, while reading notes and preparing a report, often new questions arise. These questions can easily be clarified while on the tour, but it may be more difficult to get answers once back home.

Translate the learning agenda and notes into a formal report. An annotated report template can be found in **Annex E**. Though writing a report may appear cumbersome, having one bears many advantages: sharing of information with colleagues and higher management, briefing project partners, supporting grant requests for future activities to name but a few. The report will be an important asset to engage colleagues and partners in a stimulating discussion. Further, such a report may serve as a spring board to a project plan for implementing changes. Note: it is advisable to at least draft the report while on the exchange visit as a pile of work will wait back home.

Debrief colleagues and organize brain storming. The purpose is twofold: on the one hand, colleagues who couldn't go on the exchange visit should benefit from the experiences made, and on the other they are likely to generate new ideas when involved in the discussion. The goal of brain storming should be to develop new approaches. This could be achieved when answering the questions: i) which operational areas should be changed? ii) how could such changes be implemented? iii) are all required resources available? In summary, a set of concrete recommendations for improving changes and actions that can be implemented should emerge.

Involve project partners in developing new approaches. Most microinsurance projects include several organisations that have to work closely together. Thus, all these stakeholders should be included when developing new approaches.

Plan Implementation

Project and change management is an art in itself and much broader a topic than what can be described within this guide. Yet, answering the following four key questions could help to move in a structured way into the right direction:

What is required in order to successfully implement changes? There are several dimensions to be looked at, such as resources (both financial as well as human), support from top management, buy-in from colleagues, willingness to do business in a different way, knowledge and skills in project management etc.

What can be done without further assistance? It is critically important to recognize an organisation's strengths and capacities, but also its limitations. Often, a lot can be done without external resources, while for specific tasks it might be more cost and time effective to buy the services from external sources (e.g. actuarial claims data analysis, business process optimisation, IT infrastructure adjustments).

What type of external assistance would be required – and why? As discussed above, bringing in external experts for specific tasks may lead to better results and prove a cheaper, quicker way to success than doing everything in house.

What are the main challenges for implementation – and how can they be overcome? A thorough analysis of the situation, including institutional culture and motivation drivers of all stakeholders should help identify potential road blocks. To identify them in advance is the first step to get around them.

In any case, leaving the beaten track and implementing new ideas requires a clear goal, hard work and a lot of patience with involved stakeholders. While some changes can be implemented quickly, others may take longer until everybody has adapted to the new situation. Open communication, early involvement of concerned staff and the willingness to fine-tune the project during the implementation phase are some of the ingredients leading to success.

Annex A: Institutional Self Assessment

(see separate excel file)

Annex B: Examples of Key Issues and Related Learning Objectives

A. Client Information and Education

Insurance is a powerful, but difficult to sell financial service. As insurance is intangible and based on a long-term relationship, trust and mutual understanding is essential. For most people it is difficult to accept that they should pay premiums without immediate material benefits. And the prospect of getting no return in case an insurable event does not occur is a strong deterrent. Peace of mind and the feeling of being protected may not be a strong selling argument. In the past, too many people have had negative experience with either bogus or financially insolvent schemes

Lack of trust and limited understanding of the basic principles of insurance are frequently major hurdles to massive product uptake. Therefore, microinsurance provider often have to invest in client information and education activities if they aim for sufficiently large client numbers. Only informed clients will be happy and loyal clients.

Possible Learning Objectives and Research Questions:

- How to educate low-income people about core insurance principles in a cost-effective manner? E.g: radio spots, group meetings, written materials, others?
- How to inform potential clients about all the aspects of the proposed product in order to ensure high levels of understanding?
- How to ensure that people don't lose their insurance knowledge? Are periodic updates necessary?

B. Marketing and Sales Training

Selling insurance is a hard and difficult job. Most people do not buy insurance spontaneously. During the sales process, a considerable amount of education on financial matters and specific insurance principles has repeatedly to be delivered. And as microinsurance is often sold through people with limited to no experience in insurance, they have to be trained properly. For the long-term success it will also be important to ensure a uniform, consistent message from all sales people. Otherwise the clients get confused and trust is quickly lost.

Even before training sales people, they have to be selected. Insurance is a business based on trust and sales people have to be trustworthy, too. Potential customers should feel comfortable to discuss financial matters as well as personal issues with the sales staff, as microinsurance is designed to alleviate substantial stress (both financial and emotional) in case of a crisis.

Possible Learning Objectives and Research Questions:

- What are appropriate selection criteria for sales people?
- How to train the sales staff and ensure quality sales process?
- Which incentives and monitoring has to be in place in order to enforce appropriate consumer information and ethical sales?
- What type of materials could assist the sales staff during the selling process while making sure that a consistent message is delivered to all customers?
- How to inform potential clients about the advantages of products on offer?
- Which arguments are the most 'selling' ones for microinsurance?
- How to use recent real claims cases to promote insurance uptake and the reputation of the company?

C. Incentives and Cost Structure in the Value Chain

As selling microinsurance is a tough job, sales people can be motivated through incentives. However there are at least two main issues to be solved: firstly, generated premiums are low and thus commissions on insurance premiums are low in absolute amounts, too. In consequence it will be difficult for most sales people to achieve sales volumes that allow for a decent income based on their commissions. Secondly, microinsurance clients often need substantial education and information efforts. It is critical that customers fully understand the product at subscription, as otherwise renewal rates will be low. Therefore, initial sales are not the only criterion upon which incentives should be based.

Costs have to be minimal if a high-value for money product shall be offered to the client. Delivery of insurance services is a major cost factor. This has let many microinsurance providers to opt for partnerships with business organisations that have already a work relationship with low-income people. Yet, in most cases these partners require some form of compensation. Administration of clients and claims is another important cost factor.

Possible Learning Objectives and Research Questions:

- How to set optimal incentives that provide sufficient stimulus for sales people to actively sell insurance, while keeping overall costs down?
- Incentives beyond commissions: what could be offered? (additional training, excursion, motorbike, school fees etc)
- Should incentives be set at the level of individual sales people or on a higher level (group of sales agents – if yes, how large a group?)?
- Which indicators besides numbers of new clients can be used for setting incentives properly?
- What are good benchmark values for cost blocks in the value chain (commissions, administration, marketing)?

D. Customer Service

An efficient customer service is essential for keeping customers happy. This is key for building and maintaining a good reputation. Many people prefer a direct, personal relationship with representatives of financial service providers. However, this is often associated with high costs. Therefore, a high-quality customer service offering convenient and inexpensive ways of communication is vital.

However, communication alone is not sufficient: claims have to be processed in a timely manner, policy documents and membership cards should be delivered to the client in time and customer requests answered promptly.

Possible Learning Objectives and Research Questions:

- What types of communication channels are best offered to clients for general inquiry: call centre, letter box, personal exchange with specific information agents, others?
- How to capture spontaneous feedback from customers, analyze and translate into improvements?
- How to ensure completeness of application and claims forms?
- How to deal with incomplete application or claims forms?
- What is a good benchmark time to rectify incomplete forms?
- What is a good benchmark time to settle a claim?
- How can claimants be notified about the disbursement of a claim?

- Is it advisable to proceed to partial claims payment in case of death? Does this help to address the client's immediate financial needs without opening the door to massive fraud?

E. Administration and Business Processes

By its nature, microinsurance is a low-margin, but high volume business: a large customer base, but small amounts and generally low profits. In order to be successful in such a business environment, lean structures and efficient processes are a must. This is especially challenging, as in most microinsurance projects several partners are involved. A clear division of labour, efficient interfaces and eventually common IT systems can help to achieve these goals.

Possible Learning Objectives and Research Questions:

- What is the optimal balance between controls and efficiency in customer enrolment and claims settlement?
- To which extent can technology help to reduce costs in client administration (MIS, common customer database, smart cards for client identification and claims settlement, portable devices, POS) and reduce transaction cost and processing time?
- How to speed up customer registration, the delivery of insurance policy documents and claims settlement? What are good benchmark values?
- Which process steps have to be in place in order to maintain sufficient control?
- Which documents are really needed for enrolment and claims settlement?

F. Anti-selection and Fraud

Anti-selection and fraud are two generalized issues in insurance. What makes combating them in the field of microinsurance especially difficult are the limited possibilities for underwriting activities and claims investigations due to the high costs associated with both of them. Yet, both areas need close attention and especially fraud has to be kept at bay, otherwise the financial sustainability of a whole scheme may be threatened. Combating fraud right from the beginning is essential, as otherwise customers will quickly learn that unjustified claims are easily paid.

Possible Learning Objectives and Research Questions:

- How can product design increase uptake by all client categories and not only by highly exposed?
- What are appropriate waiting periods for health, accident and death claims?
- Which easily verifiable client information would help to better exclude high-risk clients – and is it a good strategy to exclude them or should the effort lie on including as much customers as possible?
- Which balance of claims verification and quick processing is best suited to keep fraud rates low?
- What are the most common cases of fraud and how can they be countered?
- Is it advisable to inform clients about the claims verification processes?

G. Monitoring, Evaluation and Improvement of Products

Microinsurance is still a fairly new phenomenon and far from a standard business. Therefore, products are often specifically designed to the needs of a regional target client base. As a consequence, only limited information about optimal product design beyond generic characteristics (such as simplicity of policy wording and limited to no exclusions)

is available. This makes microinsurance a thrilling venture into uncharted territory, but calls also for continued monitoring, evaluation and improvements.

Possible Learning Objectives and Research Questions:

- How is customer feedback best generated, collected and fed into the product development and improvement process?
- In which intervals should customer surveys be conducted in order to ensure best product development combined with market stability? (frequent product changes may create confusion among existing clients and undermine credibility)
- Apart from customer feedbacks: which other information sources could be tapped? E.g. sales staff, claims administrators, actuaries etc
- Which business structures facilitate free information flow from the customer base to the product development team?
- In which intervals should customer surveys be conducted in order to ensure best client satisfaction levels and product adaptation cycles?

H. Partnerships

Most microinsurance projects operate in a network of partnerships involving different organisations such as a commercial insurer or mutual, delivery channel, service provider (e.g. hospital) and maybe a broker. Partnerships hold the potential for each stakeholder to concentrate on what he knows best to do and thus gain on efficiency. The downside of partnerships can be considerable frictional costs and substantial coordination efforts required.

Possible Learning Objectives and Research Questions:

- Who should control the whole partnership arrangement? Is a clear leader required?
- How to evaluate potential partners?
- Should partners sign a service level agreement, detailing clear roles and responsibilities, performance indicators as well as sanctions in case service is below expected levels?

Annex C: Ideal Profile of Exchange Visit Partner

Type of non-profit organisation:

- Mutual or cooperative insurer
- International NGO
- Local NGO
- Self-help group
- Cooperative
- Labour Union
- Other, please specify:
.....

Type of for-profit organisation:

- Insurance company
- Bank or non-bank financial institution
- Broker
- Other, please specify:
.....
.....

Institutional Arrangement

Describe the institutional arrangement how insurance products are offered to the market (e.g an NGO offering microinsurance products from a commercial insurer or a trade union working with a broker etc):

.....
.....
.....
.....

Target market:

Describe key characteristics of the target market, such as members of a specific profession or trade union, whether they are mainly rural or urban, income pattern over the year, gender etc:

.....
.....
.....
.....

Product Type:

Which line of business is under study?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health, comprehensive | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture, crop |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health, in-patient only | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture, livestock |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health, hospital cash | <input type="checkbox"/> Natural disaster, conventional |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accident / Disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Natural disaster, index |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Term-life | <input type="checkbox"/> Property |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life with savings | <input type="checkbox"/> Composite |

Other:

.....
.....

Cultural and religious environment:

Describe cultural and religious key elements that may influence insurance take-up, such as religious constraints on insurance or funeral costs:

.....
.....
.....

Annex D: Note-grid

Learning Objective	Key Questions A	Observation	Areas for consideration	Implication for own operation	Follow-up questions
Monitoring, Evaluation and Improvement of Products	How is customer feedback best generated, collected and fed into the product development and improvement process?	a) at each branch office, a letter box as well as a pin-board is reserved for microinsurance issues. Customers can drop notes of suggestion, complaints etc into the box. The box is emptied weekly and answers given either directly to the customer or publicly through a note on the pin-board.	Solicit verbal customer feedback during monthly group meetings, as most customers are illiterate.	Special training required to ensure comments are taken seriously and reported honestly. Follow-up has to be guaranteed.	How many comments, suggestion etc do customers voice over this channel? Are they satisfied with this option or would they prefer something else?

Annex E: Annotated Report Template

The annotated report outline below may serve as a guideline for composing a report for higher management and other microinsurance programme stakeholders.

Executive Summary

A short overview of the report's main highlights. Preferably, this holds on one single page. The executive summary should allow the reader to capture the very essence of the report, including the most important recommendations.

Table of Contents

For reports larger than 10 pages, lists the main chapters and corresponding page numbers.

Programme Description

This chapter should give a good introduction, describing the situation, circumstances and challenges. The reader should get a clear picture of the specific situation, the issues and why an exchange visit was undertaken.

Learning Objectives

Presentation of the learning objectives defined before going on the exchange visit.

Exchange Visit

Description of the partner and the microinsurance project visited, the main highlights, the challenges the partner faces, customer feedback etc.

New Insights

Discussion of the main take-aways from the exchange visit and what they may imply for the local context.

Recommendations

Presents a clear set of actions to be undertaken as well as discusses caveats. An action plan with concrete steps and sequencing should be outlined here.

Conclusion

Reviews the whole activity, from preparation of the exchange visit, to the actual exchange visit and its results. Further, key points from the recommendations should be taken up here again.

Annex

Interview protocols, the set of learning objectives, supporting data etc that are too large to incorporate into the core part of the report.