## Customer protection is essential, especially for most disadvantaged clients

**Key messages: Why is Customer Protection important for private sector businesses?**

- Customer protection means ensuring clients are **treated fairly and transparently, their data is kept private, and they have access to redress mechanisms**, so people can **confidently and safely use financial services**. Strong **customer protection measures** are key to maintaining trust and ensuring financial services are accessible and beneficial to all clients, including those in vulnerable situations.

- Effectively addressing risks such as fraud, misuse of funds and data privacy concerns strengthens **compliance with legal regulations** and long-term business outcomes. **Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)** is a critical component of responsible cash. Proactive measures to identify, report, and respond to SEA risks are essential to protect customers and maintain trust.

- Strong customer confidence and trust reinforces a **positive brand image**, attracting/retaining customers. Loyal customers are more likely to explore additional **product and services** (increased 'cross-/on-selling').

### How to get started?

☐ **Assess organization's current capacity -** To support these efforts, we've put together a **Customer Protection Checklist**. Providers should always build on what is already in place (e.g. fraud management mechanisms). You may also want to review the CERISE-SPTF Client-protection standards.

☐ **Develop or strengthen the organization's Code of Conduct (CoC):** Involve leadership, compliance teams, and frontline staff in drafting/adapting it to ensure buy-in.
  - See this example Code of Conduct setting out minimum standards.
  - Ensure staff sign the CoC as part of their contract; link adherence to performance review and introduce rewards for ethical behaviours/excellent customer service.
  - Tip: Use simplified and audiovisual versions: Translate key principles into local languages and use posters, infographics, and digital reminders.

| **8 Principles of Code of Conduct** |
|---|
| **1** TREAT ALL CLIENTS WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT |
| **2** ENSURE FAIRNESS TOWARDS ALL CLIENTS |
| **3** PREVENT AND COMBAT ALL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE |
| **4** RESPECT LAWS AND POLICIES |
| **5** PRESERVE CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY |
| **6** REJECT BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION |
| **7** ENSURE INTEGRITY AND RESPONSIBILITY |
| **8** REPORT CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS |

*Download the Code of Conduct Templates **HERE***

☐ Conduct **mandatory customer protection training sessions for all staff/sub-contractors**, using real-life cases studies focusing on respectful service. Here are other tools and resources to help the provider get started.

☐ Establish **accessible and strong complaint and redress mechanisms, including clear referrals and reporting procedures** to report violations.

☐ **Monitor** staff and contractor performance (e.g. through unannounced spot checks & 'mystery shopping').

☐ **Sanctions & Rewards:** Set clear sanctions for violations, recognize agents who consistently uphold high standards.



You can use this video to promote agent appropriate behaviour in English, French, Arabic, Spanish and Kirundi.

I explain to clients they don't have to cash out everything on the same day : electronic money is safe.

For more check this overview: What can we do to work more effectively with Financial Service Providers.

You may also consider **external certification**, e.g. GSMA Mobile Money certification.