



Product and Market Design

Low utilization of gender-disaggregated data (GDD)

This barrier refers to the limited use of gender-disaggregated data (GDD) within financial, policy, and regulatory institutions, which weakens their ability to identify, monitor, and respond to women customer segments. While many providers now collect gender data, it is often underutilized—not only in identifying and serving women but also in monitoring product performance, tailoring offerings to women’s needs, and refining risk assessments.

Why is this barrier important?

The stakes of underutilizing GDD are significant on both the commercial and policy level. For FSPs, the absence of gender data means institutions cannot accurately assess women’s creditworthiness, identify distinct financial behaviors, or build a credible internal case for serving female customers — despite growing evidence that women tend to present lower default rates and higher customer loyalty than men. What appears as a data gap is, in practice, a missed market opportunity.

Policymakers also face challenges when GDD is not systematically collected, managed, used, and shared, as this limits their ability to set evidence-based regulations, track progress on financial inclusion, and design inclusive policies.

Connected Barriers



Entry & Capability

Low data footprint among women



Digital & Physical Infrastructure

Poor digital & foundational ID infrastructure
Lack of inclusive instant payment systems



Women's Participation in the Workforce

Connected Barriers



Policy & Regulation

Policies that discourage healthy financial sector competition



Institutional Norms and Practices

Lack of women in policy or financial institution leadership



Product & Market Design

Low scalability of products
Inflexible product terms
Poor understanding of women’s financial needs

Most Relevant Segments

1

Excluded, marginalized

2

Excluded, high potential

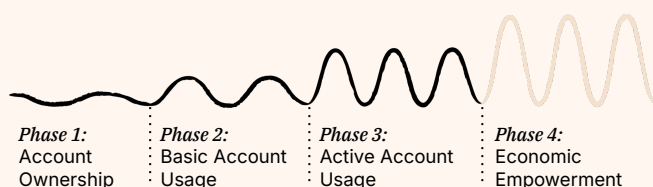
3

Included, underserved

4

Included, Not underserved

Customer Journey Relevance





Key evidence relevant to this barrier

Dozens of countries have embedded gender targets into their national financial inclusion strategies (NFIS), but struggle to measure progress against those commitments without reliable and standardized GDD. For regulators, this creates a credibility problem: inclusion goals cannot be monitored, adjusted, or enforced without the underlying data to track them.

Across the financial sector, GDD is chronically undervalued, inconsistently collected, and poorly standardized. This leaves FSPs unable to build a credible business case for serving women or design products informed by women's real financial behaviors and needs.

- The low utilization of GDD can make it difficult for FSPs to assess the risk of lending to women-owned SMEs, limiting their access to credit and financial services. This low utilization of data also makes investors hesitant to invest in women-owned businesses or digital financial inclusion services for women. Even where there is a desire to cater to women consumers, providers may not be able to identify and target women segments in need of DFS without GDD, limiting the effectiveness of their outreach efforts. ([World Bank, 2025](#))
- A 2025 survey of financial services providers found that a third of institutions either do not collect GDD or are unaware of whether they collect it. Only 57% of institutions apply a gender lens when using this data, and just 43% share it with regulatory bodies. ([Women's World Banking, 2025](#))
- Qualitative interviews with FSPs reveal that without GDD, institutions struggle to build a strong business case for serving women and designing women-centric products and services. Moving beyond compliance-based collection to conduct profitability and customer lifetime value analyses through a gender lens can unlock this case — connecting gender intelligence directly to evidence of market opportunity and return on investment. ([Women's World Banking, 2025](#))
- As some financial institutions find it challenging to track GDD, regulators can use a consultative approach to encourage cooperation before mandating the collection of such data. ([UNSGSA, 2020](#))
- The absence of standardized reporting templates and clear baseline indicators hampers consistent collection and analysis of GDD. Without common frameworks, financial institutions and regulators struggle to track progress or compare results across institutions and markets. A coordinated, multi-stakeholder approach — bringing together FSPs, regulators, industry associations, and data analytics firms to harmonize definitions and reporting frameworks — is essential to closing this gap and enabling sector-wide accountability. ([Global Banking Alliance for Women, 2019](#))
- Many financial institutions do not fully recognize the business value of GDD, leading to its low prioritization in internal systems and strategies. Even when data is collected, it is often underutilized in product design, risk assessment, and monitoring. Securing leadership commitment — and framing GDD as a decision-making tool rather than a compliance output — are the two most critical levers for changing this dynamic. ([Global Banking Alliance for Women, 2019](#))
- Some institutions report inconsistent tagging of individual accounts due to staff lack of skills or understanding of data quality. In one bank in Latin America and the Caribbean, staff confused the 'M' tag in the MIS — believing it stood for 'mujer' (woman in Spanish) rather than 'male' — resulting in systematic misclassification. ([Global Banking Alliance for Women, 2019](#))
- Joint accounts present a classification challenge: some banks only track primary account holders, while others rely on MIS systems that automatically assign men as primary and women as secondary, regardless of actual account control. ([Global Banking Alliance for Women, 2019](#))
- Some banks are not yet using customer relationship management (CRM) systems to link their product data to customer demographic data. This means that banks are tracking data based on products and not by customer, which makes it impossible to track product use by sex of customer. ([Global Banking Alliance for Women, 2019](#))



Key evidence relevant to this barrier

Country-level examples illustrate that regulatory frameworks for data collection do not automatically produce usable gender data.

Without gender-specific mandates and standardized implementation, women remain largely invisible in national financial data systems.

- In Indonesia, although regulations exist for the collection of GDD, their implementation remains non-standardized. Presidential Regulation No. 39, 'One Data Indonesia,' for example, aims to establish a nationally accurate, integrated, and shared data system but does not include a clear directive for the systematic collection of GDD, making it difficult to design gender-responsive financial products. Fintech lending reporting also presents GDD in bulk and is not yet utilized to understand the different needs and behaviors of men and women. ([Women's World Banking, 2024](#))
- The National Bank of Rwanda has implemented gender-focused initiatives, including the Guidelines on Deepening Women's Financial Inclusion and mandating the use of GDD by all banks and micro-financial institutions to monitor and improve access to finance for women-led businesses. ([OMFIF, 2025](#))

FSPs need internal governance structures and real-time data infrastructure to make GDD operationally useful on an ongoing basis.

- FSPs should create a multi-level gender data task force that frames GDD as a business opportunity, linking improved women's acquisition and retention to profitability, market expansion, and customer lifetime value. The task force should have representation from the board, senior executives, and product teams and be mandated to regularly review gender performance across products, identify gaps, and recommend adjustments and the product and institutional strategy level

- Develop dashboards that track gender-disaggregated indicators — account uptake, product usage, repayment rates — in real time. Integrate these into regular management reviews so that gender performance is monitored as consistently as financial performance.