

A decorative graphic consisting of a grid of squares. The top row has three blue squares. The second row has a blue square, a white square, and a blue square. The third row has a blue square, a white square, and a blue square. Below this is a large black rectangle containing the text.

Interview Instruments

**Understanding the saving behaviors and
usage of digital tools for savings by
Women**

March 2023

About the document:

This document contains three interview instruments. The first is designed to understand savings behavior and patterns among women in low-middle income households in Delhi NCR, India. Additionally, we have two instruments for Key Informants to understand the challenges faced for the previously scoped version of this project as well as the general research climate & ground realities in the realm of individual or household finances.

There are multiple instruments designed to involve different stakeholders that understand the ecosystem as tabled below.

Designed for	Purpose	Page no.
Target audience - Women that fit the study criteria.	To understand the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. General savings patterns and behaviors of low to middle-income married women in India affected by couple dynamics and agency. b. Key barriers and enablers surrounding the uptake and usage of digital savings products. c. Demand/room for behavioral solutions like digital mental accounting and whether married women in India find such savings-enabling solutions useful. 	3
Key Informant group 1 - Research and on-ground fellows from institutions that work towards financial inclusion in India.	To understand the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Interaction with digital finance, particularly savings among women. b. Differences between uptake of or behaviors around digital savings and digital credit for All clients; women. c. The perception around whether the volume of demand for savings or demand for credit has shifted and in what capacities- especially through a gender lens + preparedness to adapt to shifting towards DFS for savings and credit. d. Barriers to uptake and sustainability in the usage of DFS, with a focus on 	9

	savings and digital credit.	
Key Informant group 2 - Field Officers that recruit the target audience (women) to understand their savings patterns through survey instruments	To understand the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Challenges in recruiting/barriers to participation b. Gender differences in recruitment c. Successful strategies or approaches to recruit women for financial inclusion related research studies 	11

INSTRUMENT 1: FOR WOMEN FROM LOW-MIDDLE INCOME HOUSEHOLDS

Research Questions:

1. What are the general savings patterns and behaviors of low to middle-income married women in India?
 - a. How much agency do they have on savings decisions? What factors influence agency?
 - b. How does intra-couple communication work out in financial decision-making?
2. What are the key barriers and enablers surrounding the uptake and usage of digital savings products? How can these barriers be overcome?
 - a. How do we improve trust among our target population of married women in India and how do we sustain this trust?
 - b. How can onboarding and take-up be improved?
3. Is there a demand/room for behavioral solutions like digital mental accounting and would married women in India find such savings-enabling solutions useful?

Survey:

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey. We are conducting research to understand the general savings patterns and behaviors of low to middle-income women in India. Your participation is voluntary and your responses will be kept confidential.

Age	
Occupation (woman only)	
Average Monthly Income in Last Year (woman only)	
Average Monthly Income in Last Year (Household)	
Years since Marriage	
Number of Children	

General savings patterns and behaviors

“You are invited to complete a story of Karan and Teju who have been married for X years and live in ____ [parallel to participants’ demographics]. Karan works in ____ and Teju is a _____. They have a son and a daughter. I am going to introduce different parts of a story and I want

you to tell me what happens next. There is no right or wrong way to complete the story, I am just curious how you think this couple manages their finances.

1. Imagine the couple just received their monthly salary. They have Rs. 10000 at the beginning of the month. How would they allocate this money to different expenses? [Note to FO: Wait for the participant to answer this themselves, only if they are struggling to think of categories you can provide examples such as food, medical bills, rent, child education, festivals, jewellery]
 - a. Who is responsible for this allocation?
 - b. How does this change as the month goes on?
 - c. What part of money allocation does Teju manage/is she involved in?
 - i. How involved is Teju in planning the allocation of funds?
 - ii. If both partners are working: do Karan and Teju pool their resources?
 1. If not, how do they assign roles of who contributes what?
 - d. What expense would Karan consider the most important?
 - e. What expense would Teju consider the most important?
 - f. What happens at the end of the month if Karan and Teju have money leftover?
2. If Karan and Teju were to encounter an unexpected expense, such as a large medical bill, how do you think they would cope with that?
3. Do Karan and Teju have any monthly financial goals? What are they? [probe: savings goals]
4. Do Karan and Teju have any longer-term financial goals? What are they? [probe: savings goals]
5. What challenges do you think Karan and Teju might face when trying to achieve their financial goals?
6. How do Karan and Teju handle any disagreements about finances? [Probe: is there a compromise or does one party get their way]
7. Would Karan and Teju typically have savings?
 - a. If so, where would they save their money?
 - b. Would Teju have her own savings, separate from the savings for the two of them?
 - i. If not, why not?
 - c. How likely is Karan to ask Teju to hand over her savings to him? What would Teju do in this situation?
 - d. How comfortable is Teju with Karan knowing about her separate savings?

Mind mapping with Cards

1. Start by drawing a large circle in the center of a piece of paper. Inside the circle, write the main topic: "Savings."
2. Draw several lines or branches radiating out from the main circle, each representing a category for saving money. Some examples of categories might include "Emergency Fund," "Jewellery," or "Children's Education Fund." Write the name of each category on a separate branch.
3. From each category branch, draw smaller branches to represent the factors that influence savings decisions within that category. For example, under the "Emergency Fund" category, you might have branches for "Unexpected Expenses," "Insurance Coverage," or "Job Insecurity." Write the name of each factor on a separate card that you can stick on each branch. Here are some prompts to help you:
 - a. How to ensure you have enough money for each category? In cases where you do not have enough money for each category, how do you prioritise categories? (tag branches by priorities)
 - b. How often do you face expenses under each category? (tag branches by frequency)
 - c. How difficult is it to find money for each category? (tag the branches by difficulty)
4. Continue adding branches and sub-branches as necessary to map out the processes involved in savings behavior.
5. You can also use colours or symbols to help organise the branches and make the mind map more visually appealing.

Key barriers surrounding uptake and usage of digital financial products

1. How often do you use your smartphone? What are the main purposes you use it for?
2. How comfortable are you with trying out new technologies (this could be new applications, new devices, new features on your smartphone, etc) (Probe: Can you describe an experience where you tried out a new technology or aspect of your smartphone)?
3. What are your thoughts on the security of your personal data on your smartphone? (Probe: have you thought about this before?)
4. Have you ever used any digital financial products such as mobile banking, digital wallets, or online payments?
 - a. If yes, can you tell me about your experience? [Probe: Which product(s) did you use? How long did you use it for, are you still using it, what features do you like, and what features do you dislike?]
 - i. How did you first learn about this product?
 - ii. What did you hear about it? What did you think about it at first? (Probe: first information exposure, information filters, concerns)

- iii. Did you learn how to use the product on your own or did you receive any help?
- b. If not, what challenges have you (or someone you know) faced with digital financial products? [Probe: Is it because of digital literacy or smartphone accessibility? Is it due to lack of knowledge of how these products work? Is it because of limited trust in digital financial products? Do they have access to smartphones as well as agency to make these decisions?]
 - i. What can be done to make you more willing to use such a product?

Improving trust among the target population of women in India

1. What is your experience with financial institutions in your area? (e.g. banks, MFIs)
 - a. What types of financial institutions are available in your area?
 - b. Are you currently involved with any financial institutions?
 - c. How many and what are they?
 - d. If you were in the past but not anymore, why did you stop the involvement?
2. Do you have any experience with digital savings institutions in particular? (Probe: Are you currently involved with them? If you were in the past but not anymore, why did you stop the involvement?)
3. [If they had experience with a digital savings institution, ask this question for that digital savings institution.] How do you feel about these financial institutions? [Probe: positive, negative, probe why?]
4. Do any of these institutions have a digital product?
 - a. If yes, were you satisfied with the level of support you received through the digital platforms?
 - b. If not, if one of these financial institutions was to have a digital product, would you be willing to try using it?
5. [If they had experience with a digital savings institution, ask this question for that digital savings institution.] What could a financial institution in your community do to try to gain trust among their female clients?
6. Do you feel like you need to ask anyone or get permission from anyone to access these products?

Digital mental accounting and its usefulness

1. We would like to know if you would be interested in a digital savings product that allows you to save money into different buckets for different purposes. We would like to show you an example of what this looks like. [Show Dvara money goal-setting screen or similar prototype]
2. Would you find such a savings product useful?
 - a. Why or why not?
3. Do you feel like such an app would impact your savings?

- a. Why or why not?
4. How likely would you be to use this product?
 - a. If very likely, why?
 - i. How would you use this product?
 - b. If unlikely, why?
5. What features would you like to see in such a product?
 - a. How would these features impact your ability to save?

Photovoice (any one)

Here is a photo I have [Surveyor shows them a photo that has money in it, such as a photo of money being locked in a closet, passed from one woman to another, or a photo of a big expenditure, such as a wedding or construction of a house].

- 1) Tell me more about this photo.
- 2) Have you ever been in a similar situation?
- 3) How do people in your community / family perceive people in this situation?

Now, I am going to ask you to take one picture based on different photo prompts. It is important to remember that you will be taking the pictures, and not just using someone else's photos. The purpose of you taking the photo is to enable us to see your unique perspective and lived experiences. We encourage you to take a picture in whatever way you interpret the question; but, ensure that you are not taking photos of people's faces. After taking this picture, send this photo at least 1 day before the session with a short description of what this picture shows and why you captured this moment/object.

I'd like you to take a picture on [one off]:

- 1) something that represents the last big financial decision you had to make
- 2) something that represents a resource that you and your spouse disagreed about spending money on

Please take a picture in whatever way you interpret the questions; but, remember that you are not taking photos of people's faces. [repeat the topics again, and have the interviewee repeat them back to you to ensure they remember]

FOR TOPIC 1: Something that represents the last big financial decision you had to make

1. Tell me more about this picture.
2. What was the last big financial decision you had to make? What were you deciding to sell or purchase?
3. What was the motivation for the expenditure?
 - a. Did you involve your partner in the decision-making process?

- b. At what point in the process did you involve your partner? (i.e. identifying the need, budgeting, making the purchase decision, etc)
4. Who introduced the conversation?
 2. What were the key points in the discussion (when you were deciding to make this purchase)?
 - a. Can you share an example of the conversation/ types of topics that were discussed?
 - b. Were there any pain points in those conversations? Can you please describe it?
 3. How many times did you talk about or revisit the decision?
 - a. Were you satisfied with the decision?
 - b. What, if anything, did you or your spouse have to compromise on?
 4. Was anyone else consulted for their opinion? If yes, whom?
 - a. If not, was there ever a time when you consulted a person about the financial decision?
 - b. Why (at what point) did you engage them?
 - c. How did you approach this person, together or separately from your partner?

FO: Thank you for helping me understand!

FOR TOPIC 2: Something that represents a resource that you and your spouse disagreed about spending money on

1. Tell me more about this picture.
2. Has there been a time/times when you wanted to buy something for yourself, or for the house, and your spouse disagreed/didn't allow it?
 - a. What did you not see eye-to-eye on?
 - b. Was this something outwardly communicated or did you just have a feeling?
 - i. If outwardly communicated: What was said?
 1. How was this discussed? In what tone???
 - ii. If just a feeling/not explicitly expressed: What led you to believe that your spouse would feel this way?
 1. Possible probes: prior experience, your relationship dynamic, tough financial situation overall, etc?
3. How did you resolve the disagreement?
 - a. Is this how disagreements are typically handled?
 - b. When might it be handled differently?

**INSTRUMENT 2: KEY INFORMANT GROUP 1 -RESEARCH AND ON-GROUND FELLOWS
FROM INSTITUTIONS THAT WORK TOWARDS FINANCIAL INCLUSION IN INDIA.**

Name of Respondent	
Name of Organization	

A. Interaction with digital finance among women:

1. What are the attitudes of women around traditional borrowing methods such as through SHGs versus using digital methods to save?
2. Are these savings generally goal-oriented or are they a way of accumulating money for an undefined purpose to come in the future?
3. What determines the choice of traditional vs DFS for these women?
4. How independently are women in your reach able to gain access to/ operate DFS services?

B. Differences between uptake of or behaviors around digital savings and digital credit for a. All clients; b. Women. [Their specific apps - Tala/Spark,etc.]

1. What are some levers that enable digital savings habits among the users of DFS in general?
2. What are some levers for women specifically?
3. What are some levers that enable the uptake of digital credit among the users of DFS in general?
4. What are some levers for women specifically?
5. Given your experience with Tala, what's the user profile - challenges with recruiting women?

C. Perception around whether the volume of demand for savings or demand for credit has shifted and in what capacities- especially through a gender lens.

1. How has demand for savings through DFS changed through the years?
2. If demand hasn't seen a positive shift, why would you say it isn't popular among these women?
3. Do we expect this demand to change in either direction in the near future?
4. How has the demand for credit shifted through the years?
5. Do you think the costs and benefits of saving or borrowing digitally versus physically are clear to the users?

6. What do you think are the levels of preparedness and willingness to adapt to shifting towards DFS for savings and credit?

D. Barriers to uptake and sustainability in the usage of DFS, with a focus on savings and digital credit.

1. What are the most common barriers to uptake generally?
2. What are the most common barriers to uptake for women?
3. Have you observed dropouts from this system of savings and credit? What are the typical reasons? What are the typical characteristics of people who opt out?
4. What are the factors that could potentially ensure sustained use? (Probe: continuous hand-holding in terms of online comfort, ease in accessing smartphones in the household, shift in social norms in the house around finance being the husband's responsibility, etc.)

E. Additional wrap-up questions

1. What are the questions you would ask to address challenges in this space? What are the questions that spark your curiosity or engage your thoughts?

INSTRUMENT 3: KEY INFORMANT GROUP 2 - FIELD OFFICERS THAT RECRUIT THE TARGET AUDIENCE TO UNDERSTAND THEIR SAVINGS PATTERNS THROUGH SURVEY INSTRUMENTS.

Name of Respondent	
Name of Organization	

1. From your experience, what were the primary motivations of women for participating in financial inclusion (savings/credit) related research studies beyond incentives?
2. From your experience, what were the primary challenges in recruiting women for financial inclusion (savings/credit) related research studies?
3. How would you identify and engage with potential female participants for savings/credit related research studies? What are some successful strategies or approaches that you have used to recruit women for financial inclusion related research studies?
4. Do you see differences in recruiting men versus women for talking about finance related topics?
5. In your opinion, what can be done to improve the recruitment and retention of women in savings/credit related research studies?
6. Did you encounter any cultural or societal barriers that prevent women from participating in these research studies? If so, how would you address these barriers?