

## PRODUCT UP-SCALING SUPPORT – FACTSHEET

<b>Product Up-scaling Support</b>	<b>SCBF 2014-08: Building Capacity to expand Housing Microfinance in the Great Lakes Region</b>
<b>Country / Region</b>	<b>Great Lakes Region: Rwanda and DRC</b>
<b>Partner Financial Institution/s</b>	<b>Urwego Opportunity Bank Ltd in Rwanda and IMF Hekima SC in DRC</b>
<b>Grantee</b>	<b>Nadacia Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI), Europe, Middle East and Africa Area</b>
<b>Overall Budget</b>	CHF 185'069 (30% self-contribution)
<b>SCBF Contribution</b>	CHF 130'334 (70% SCBF funding share)
<b>Date of Approval</b>	19.09.2014 & 13.04.2015
<b>Duration</b>	05.2015 until 04.2016, extended to 9.2016, and again to 9.2017
<b>Context</b>	<p>In Sub Saharan Africa, changes in policies and regulations related to the microfinance sector are increasing financial inclusion among the population at the Base of the Pyramid (BOP). Financial institutions are implementing strategies such as being more flexible in loan requirements and ensuring that guaranties are aligned to the needs, preferences and capabilities of the target population and access channels.</p> <p>Through this intervention, demand-driven products will be taken up by the target market, which will enable the acquisition of improved shelter and the accumulation of durable shelter assets, therefore improving their quality of life. SCBFs support will enable Habitat's Center for Innovation in Shelter and Finance (CISF) to provide the needed technical assistance required by the identified financial institutions to design/redesign their Housing Micro Finance (HMF) products, and increase the potential of taking these products to scale in a sustainable manner.</p>
<b>Current Status of the MFI</b>	<p>Urwego Opportunity Bank LTD (UOB), is a licensed commercial bank headquartered in Kigali, Rwanda. UOB has been serving economically-active Rwandans whose banking needs are largely underserved. UOB was created as the result of a merger between Urwego Community Banking, SA (Urwego), and Opportunity International Bank of Rwanda, SA (OIBR) in July 2007. Opportunity International is an international microfinance network (OI Network) dedicated to the development of transformational, commercial microfinance banks in developing countries around the world. The core existence of UOB, the Christian microfinance institution, is to provide not only economic opportunities to those living in poverty, but also to holistically support them to transform socially and spiritually. The bank expressed its drive to continue expanding its financial product offerings and opening new branches in order to efficiently and effectively reach-out to the economically active poor Rwandans.</p> <p>Hekima aims to serve the economically active poor with quality services, giving special attention to female entrepreneurs and its products are focused on the group lending methodology, which allows for disbursement of loans to clients lacking conventional collateral. Hekima's mission is to contribute to the transformation of the economic, social, and spiritual lives of the economically active poor of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) as a sustainable, innovative microfinance institution of the highest quality. By offering women the opportunity to be entrepreneurs and leaders within their Solidarity Groups, Hekima is empowering them to become change agents in their community. They choose to also work in rural Kavumu in order to serve poor women farmers. Targeting these geographies has allowed them to reach their intended clientele; 100% fall below the \$1 a day poverty line and 94% of them are women.</p>
<b>Objective and Main Activities</b>	<p>This intervention aims to build capacity in two financial institutions in the Great Lakes Region (one in Rwanda and one in the DRC) already serving the poor. Globally, the CISF has trained over 100 financial institutions in HMF product development, has provided technical assistance to more than 45 partner financial institutions and has helped more than 35 institutions develop HMF products. HFHI and the CISF have implemented other projects through grants from the SCBF including projects in Cambodia, Honduras and El Salvador. Upon completion, the financial institution should be in a position to diversify their products by the design, pilot test, and roll-out of HMF products with non-financial housing support services according to the needs, preferences, and capacities of the BOP.</p>