

## Case study: SDG 8 Decent work and economic growth

### SDG 8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances, and in particular at least 7% per GDP growth in the least-developed countries

8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services

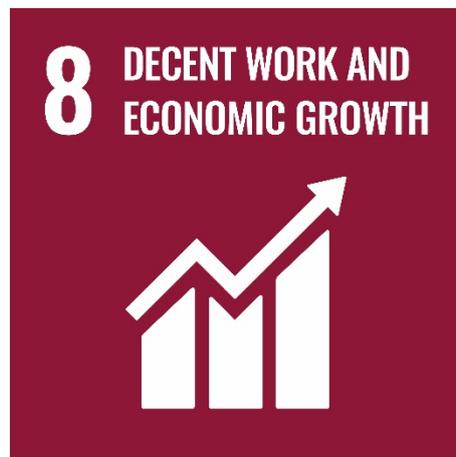
8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value

8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training

8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all

For a list of all targets of SDG 8, see [globalgoals.org/8-decent-work-and-economic-growth](https://globalgoals.org/8-decent-work-and-economic-growth).

SDG 8 aims to “promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”. Credit Suisse contributes to at least five of the twelve targets underpinning this goal (see table on the left).



#### Why this matters

According to the World Bank, nearly half of the world's population lives on less than USD 5.50 a day. Sustainable and inclusive economic growth can drive progress, create decent jobs and improve living standards. To be successful, societies must create the conditions that allow people to have quality jobs that stimulate the economy without harming the environment. Increased access to financial services – allowing people to manage incomes, accumulate assets and make productive investments – also contributes to sustainable economic growth.

#### How we contribute

Credit Suisse wants to build a more inclusive future where all people can access the resources and develop the financial, entrepreneurial and other skills they need to thrive in the economy and society. We regard education (see case study on SDG 4) and access to financial services as key drivers of growth and an effective means of empowering people. While not an SDG in itself, financial services are often key in accessing many other essential needs and services in the formal economy (e.g. education, health care, nutritious food, etc.), which in turn benefit society.

For nearly two decades, Credit Suisse has been a leader in the field of financial inclusion and microfinance, which encompass the provision of small or very small loans, savings accounts and other financial services to microenterprises and individuals in emerging and developed economies. We collaborate with specialized asset managers to offer a range of microfinance investment funds. In addition, Credit Suisse has been pioneering the development of new funds and products in-house, as well as participating in IPOs and bond issuances to finance microfinance institutions, through our capital markets businesses.

In addition to capital, microfinance institutions and fintechs need talent and knowhow to responsibly scale their activities through more diverse products and services. Established in 2008, the bank's philanthropically-funded technical assistance and capacity building program, the Financial Inclusion Initiative (FII; formerly the Microfinance Capacity Building Initiative), aims to strengthen the financial inclusion sector

by providing financial and human resources to train the management of microfinance institutions and to drive further market development. Here, the focus is on enabling product and service development and innovation across sectors. Examples include financing for access to clean energy, the construction and improvement of homes, the provision of financial services tailored specifically to women and the funding of education. Using risk-tolerant grant capital, we aim to test new approaches and business models, make them sustainable and strengthen their investment-readiness – either to access Credit Suisse funds or other private or commercial capital.



To achieve this, the FII works together with carefully selected partner organizations, including Opportunity International (OI), providing grant capital and employee knowledge and expertise. Through our current support for the organization, we seek to address the shortage of financial products designed to improve access to education. As early funders of OI's Education Finance work, we have been helping to strengthen and expand their efforts to scale the availability and use of school improvement and school fee loans in Africa, Latin America and Asia. As a result, over five million children across the globe were able to access an affordable, quality education in 2019. A further example is Credit Suisse's longstanding partnership with Accion. With Credit Suisse's support, the organization launched the Center for Financial Inclusion (CFI) at Accion in 2008, which engages the industry through research, stakeholder dialogue and advocacy for client protection, as well as the Accion Venture Lab in 2012. The Accion Venture Lab is an investment initiative that provides seed capital and support to early-stage fintech start-ups in the area of financial inclusion. Credit Suisse funding has enabled the Accion Venture Lab to support more than 30 start-

ups using fintech to reach the underserved. This support also helped generate USD 130 million of follow-on investments in financially inclusive fintechs in 2019. Overall, Accion has helped develop 65 microfinance institutions in 32 countries across four continents.

In addition to enabling product and service development and innovation, the FII aims to foster strong industry partnerships and knowledge sharing. To this end, Credit Suisse is a member of the European Microfinance Platform, a network of about 130 organizations, as well as the Swiss Capacity Building Facility, a public-private partnership between the Swiss financial sector and the Swiss Agency for Development Collaboration.

The FII effectively leverages Credit Suisse's skills, expertise and social capital. Through our skills-based volunteering programs, we offer our employees around the world opportunities to apply and develop their talents and leadership capabilities while building the capacity of our partner organizations. For example, through the Global Citizens Program, which we launched in 2010, Credit Suisse employees have completed over 400 assignments on location in more than 60 countries around the globe. Our Virtual Volunteering program, which was established in 2011 in collaboration with the CFI, allows employees to support our partner organizations remotely without having to take extended leave from personal or professional commitments.

### Our impact

We believe that financial services have a pivotal role to play in enabling people living at the base of the income pyramid to access a broad range of resources to meet their basic needs, such as healthcare, housing and education, thus facilitating economic growth and empowering women. Strengthening the capacity of economically active people by giving them access to finance is a market-based approach that contributes to SDG 8. Moreover, extending financial services to address other needs, such as education and housing, contributes to a number of other SDGs, including 1 (No poverty), 2 (Zero hunger), 4 (Quality education), 5 (Gender equality) and 12 (Responsible consumption and production). Our comprehensive combination of investment, capacity building and partnership also embodies elements of SDG 17 (Partnerships for the goals).

### Further information

[credit-suisse.com/financialinclusion](https://credit-suisse.com/financialinclusion)

## Our contribution to SDG 8

Topic	Financial Inclusion Initiative	Opportunity International Education Finance
<b>Objective</b>	Strengthening the capacity of microfinance institutions and fintechs	Strengthening and expansion of education finance through school improvement and school fee loan products in Africa, Latin America and Asia
<b>Impact</b>	<p>In 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support provided to 134 microfinance and fintech start-ups</li> <li>Training of 1,140 local employees of microfinance institutions<sup>1</sup></li> <li>372,200 people gained access to new or improved products and services</li> <li>Accion Venture Lab generated an additional USD 130 million for financially inclusive fintechs</li> <li>Opportunity International's Education Finance team enabled over USD 279 million<sup>2</sup> of education loans for affordable quality education</li> </ul>	<p>Key achievements in 2019 made possible by this partnership include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expanded EduFinance partnerships to a total of 53 financial institutions across 22 countries.</li> <li>Passed a major milestone of 5.2 million in terms of cumulative child impact.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Number of trainers trained through our programs

<sup>2</sup> Accumulated and outstanding in 2019