FINDEV CYBERLETTER

48TH EDITION

COMPILED AND DESIGNED BY NIHA NAZAR, RESEARCH EXECUTIVE AT GALLUP PAKISTAN

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EDITOR'S NOTE

WELCOME TO GALLUP PAKISTAN'S FINDEV CYBERLETTER!

THE PRINCIPAL PURPOSE OF THIS CYBERLETTER IS TO INFORM ITS READERS OF THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FINANCIAL INDUSTRY ACROSS THE GLOBE, PARTICULARLY IN THE REALMS OF FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND DIGITAL FINANCIAL SERVICES (DFS), WHERE EFFORTS ARE BEING UNDERTAKEN BY BOTH PRIVATE AND GOVERNMENT SECTORS. THIS IS THE 48TH ISSUE OF THE FINDEV CYBERLETTER SERIES (FOR OCTOBER). EACH ISSUE OF THE FINDEV CYBERLETTER WILL FOCUS ON A PARTICULAR THEME WITHIN THE BROADER AREA OF FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND RELATED TOPICS. THIS NEWSLETTER IS DIVIDED INTO THREE MAIN SECTIONS. THE SECTIONS ARE:

1. NEWS ROUNDUP – THIS SECTION WILL COVER THE LATEST HAPPENINGS IN THE FINANCIAL SERVICES INDUSTRY IN PAKISTAN AND AROUND THE WORLD.
2. INITIATIVES – CONSTANT WORK IS BEING UNDERTAKEN BY EXPERTS, GOVERNMENTS AND RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS IN ORDER TO ENHANCE THE UNDERSTANDING OF,AND TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO THE CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED WITHIN THE FINANCIAL SERVICES INDUSTRY. THIS SECTION WILL AIM TO COVER SOME OF THESE RESEARCH INITIATIVES, BOTH LOCALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY.
3. DATA VISUALIZATIONS & STATISTICAL FIGURES – RESEARCH BACKED BY DATA NOT ONLY INCREASES ITS CREDIBILITY BUT ALSO HELPS PAINT AN ACCURATE PICTURE OF THE SITUATION AT HAND. THIS SECTION WILL CONTAIN GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF DATA ON VARIOUS RELEVANT TOPICS.

A DILIGENT EFFORT HAS BEEN MADE TO ENSURE THAT THE CONTENT EXTRACTED FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES HAS BEEN CITED AND GIVEN DUE CREDIT. IN SOME CASES, EXCERPTS FROM THE ORIGINAL SOURCES HAVE BEEN EXTRACTED. TO ACCESS THE ORIGINAL SOURCES, PLEASE CLICK ON THE LINK PROVIDED AT THE END OF EACH ARTICLE.
IN CASE OF ANY ERRORS OR OMISSIONS, WE WOULD LIKE TO APOLOGIZE AND WOULD BE EAGER TO RECTIFY THE CHANGES AT THE EARLIEST. FOR FEEDBACK, COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, FEEL FREE TO WRITE TO US AT CAF@GALLUP.COM.PK.
WARM REGARDS,

THE GALLUP PAKISTAN FINANCIAL INCLUSION TEAM
LED BY BILAL I GILANI (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GALLUP PAKISTAN

HIGHLIGHTS

BNI AWARDED FOR DRIVING FINANCIAL INCLUSION AMONG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

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CIRCLE PARTNERS WITH COINS.PH TO DRIVE FINANCIAL INCLUSION VIA REMITTANCES IN THE PHILLIPINES

NEWS ROUND UP

THIS SECTION COVERS THE LATEST HAPPENINGS FROM THE REALM OF FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND DIGITAL FINANCIAL SERVICES ACROSS THE GLOBE

BNI AWARDED FOR DRIVING FINANCIAL INCLUSION AMONG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

STATE-OWNED BANK BNI RECENTLY TOOK HOME AN AWARD THAT RECOGNIZED ITS EFFORTS TO HELP DRIVE FINANCIAL INCLUSION FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

THE AWARD, WHICH WAS GIVEN BY THE FINANCIAL SERVICES AUTHORITY (OJK), RECOGNIZES BNI'S INITIATIVES TO HELP MICRO, SMALL, AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (MSMES) OWNED BY PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES THROUGH FINANCING. THIS AWARDING CEREMONY IS ALSO PART OF THE FINANCIAL INCLUSION MONTH PROGRAM.

THE BANK ALSO HAS THE BNI AGEN46 TO SERVE THOSE IN REMOTE AREAS THAT ARE UNREACHABLE BY PHYSICAL BRANCHES.

PHOTO CREDITS: JAKARTA GLOBE

SOURCE: PUBLISHED BY WWW.JAKARTAGLOBE.ID OCT 31, 2023. CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL ARTICLE

FINANCIAL INCLUSION: COVA TRIUMPHS IN CATAPULT

COVA AFRICA, A CUTTING-EDGE INSURTECH FIRM FROM DOUALA, CAMEROON, EMERGED TRIUMPHANT AT THE SIXTH EDITION OF CATAPULT: INCLUSION AFRICA – TOGO EDITION. THE EVENT, HELD RECENTLY IN LOMÉ, TOGO, WITNESSED TEN LEADING AFRICAN FINTECH COMPANIES CONVERGING FOR AN INTENSE ACCELERATOR PROGRAMME FOCUSED ON FINANCIAL INCLUSION.

COVA AFRICA'S GROUND-BREAKING SOLUTIONS IMPRESSED THE JURY, SECURING THEM THE COVETED PRIZE, PRESENTED BY GENEVIÈVE HENGEN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF BILATERAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION.

PHOTO CREDIT: VENTUREBURN

SOURCE: PUBLISHED BY WWW.VENTUREBURN.COM OCT 29, 2023. CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL ARTICLE

EMPOWERING WOMEN IN PAKISTAN: FINANCIAL LITERACY AS A CATALYST FOR INCLUSION

IN PAKISTAN VAST PARTS OF THE POPULATION, ESPECIALLY WOMEN, ARE EXCLUDED FROM FORMAL FINANCIAL MECHANISMS. AS THE DIGITAL AGE DAWNS, THERE IS AN INCREASING URGENCY TO BRIDGE THIS GAP AND BRING ABOUT GENUINE FINANCIAL INCLUSION.

THE GENDER DISPARITY IS PARTICULARLY GLARING AS WOMEN MAKE UP MORE THAN HALF OF THE UNBANKED POPULATION, THEREFORE AGGRAVATING THE EXISTING SOCIAL AND GENDER INEQUALITIES, BY LIMITING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FEMALE EMPOWERMENT THROUGH ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION.

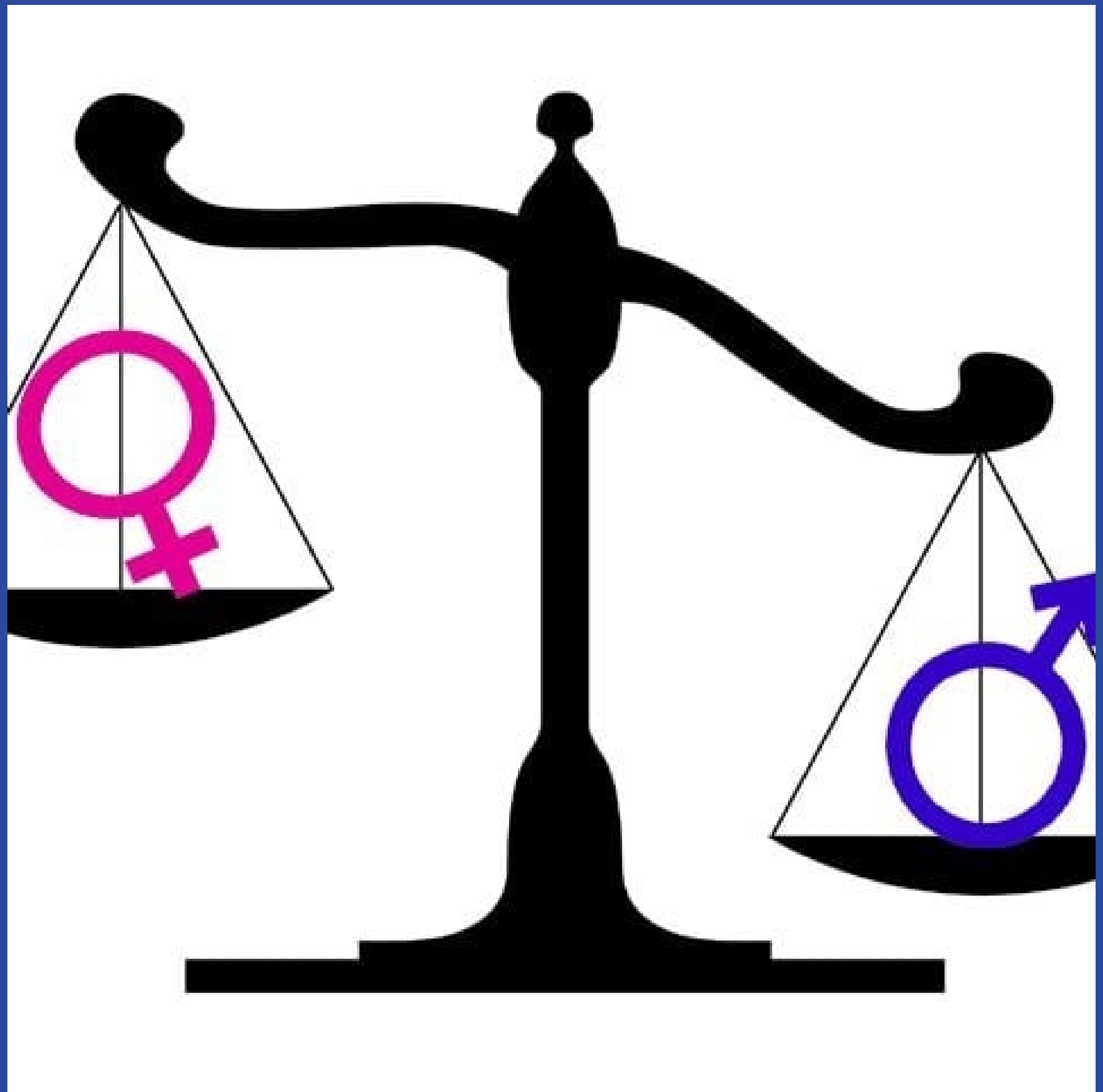

PHOTO CREDIT: TRIBUNE

SOURCE: PUBLISHED BY WWW.TRIBUNE.COM.PK OCT 27 2023. CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL ARTICLE

PRODUCT LAUNCH: INTRODUCING OUR EMBEDDED PAYMENTS INFRASTRUCTURE FOR PAKISTAN'S BUSINESSES

AS A BANKING-AS-A-SERVICE PLATFORM, WE ARE DEDICATED TO RESOLVING THESE CHALLENGES AT THE INFRASTRUCTURE LEVEL. IN TACKLING THE ISSUE OF FRAGMENTED AND INEFFICIENT PAYMENTS SYSTEMS, AND LIMITED ACCESS TO DIGITAL FINANCIAL SERVICES FOR UNDERSERVED PEOPLE AND BUSINESSES, WE EMBARKED ON A MISSION TO ESTABLISH A ROBUST PAYMENTS INFRASTRUCTURE.

THE PAYMENTS INFRASTRUCTURE ALSO ENABLES DIGITAL PLATFORMS TO INCREASE THEIR USER BASE ALTOGETHER BY SEAMLESSLY TAKING FINANCIAL SERVICES TO PREVIOUSLY UNTAPPED CONSUMER SEGMENTS

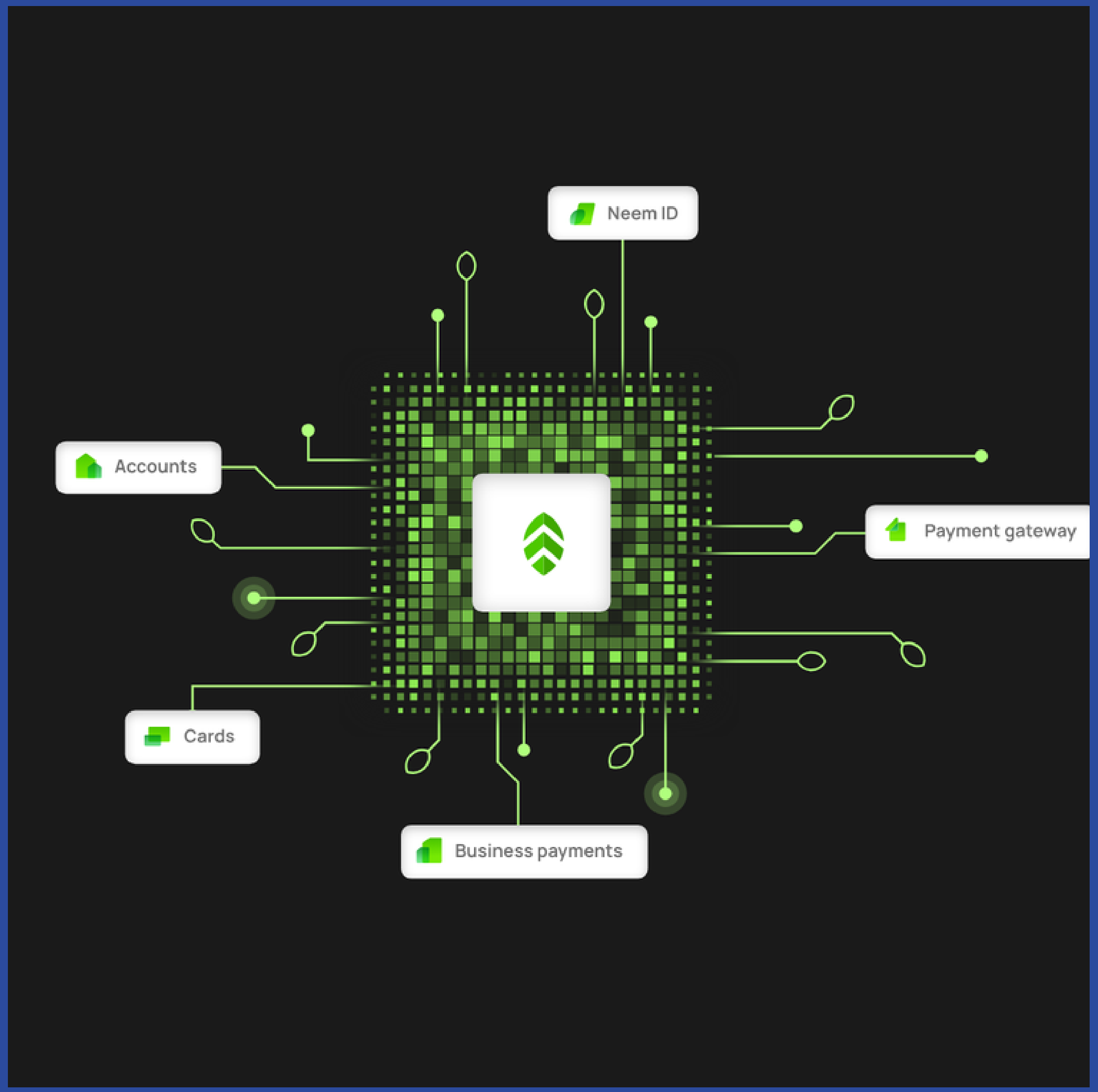

PHOTO CREDIT: NEEM

SOURCE: PUBLISHED BY WWW.NEEM.IO SEPT 25, 2023. CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL ARTICLE

INITIATIVES

CONSTANT WORK IS BEING UNDERTAKEN BY EXPERTS, GOVERNMENTS, AND RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS TO ENHANCE UNDERSTANDING AND FIND SOLUTIONS TO CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED WITHIN THE FINANCIAL SERVICES INDUSTRY. THIS SECTION COVERS SOME OF THESE RESEARCH FINDINGS

OPTASIA EMPOWERS JS BANK'S "ZINDIGI" APP TO ELEVATE FINANCIAL INCLUSION IN PAKISTAN

OPTASIA, A LEADING FINTECH SERVICES PROVIDER, ANNOUNCES THAT ITS AI-LED PLATFORM'S DECISIONING CAPABILITIES ARE EMPLOYED BY JS BANK, A MAJOR COMMERCIAL BANK IN PAKISTAN, TO POWER THEIR MICRO LENDING SOLUTION WITHIN THEIR DIGITAL BANKING INITIATIVE.

THE SOLUTION ENABLED BY OPTASIA'S AI PLATFORM IN PAKISTAN IS PROVIDED UNDER THE COMMERCIAL NAME OF "ZINDIGI", A DIGITAL BANKING INITIATIVE BY JS BANK. THE DIGITAL BANKING APP OFFERING RANGES FROM DIGITAL LOANS, REMITTANCES, DIGITAL PAYMENTS, STOCK, MUTUAL FUNDS AND PREMIUM DEBIT CARD POSITION. ZINDIGI HAS ALSO GARNERED PARTNERSHIPS TO BECOME A LEADING BANKING AS A SERVICE (BAAS) AND OPEN BANKING SOLUTION PROVIDER.

PHOTO CREDIT:CISION

SOURCE: PUBLISHED BY WWW.PRNEWSWIRE.CO.UK NOV 2, 2023. CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL ARTICLE

KARANDAAZ PAKISTAN PARTNERS WITH GBRSP AND NIBAF TO EMPOWER YOUTH THROUGH FINANCIAL LITERACY TRAINING

KARANDAAZ PAKISTAN, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF BANKING AND FINANCE (NIBAF) AND GILGIT BALTISTAN RURAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME (GBRSP), SUCCESSFULLY CONDUCTED A COMPREHENSIVE SERIES OF FINANCIAL LITERACY TRAINING SESSIONS ACROSS FIVE DISTRICTS IN GILGIT BALTISTAN. THESE IMPACTFUL TRAINING SESSIONS WERE HELD IN NAGAR, GANCHAY, KHARMANG, SHIGAR, AND GILGIT, EDUCATING A TOTAL OF 2000 PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS, WITH AN ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION OF 52% GIRLS. THE INITIATIVE AIMED TO EDUCATE THE YOUTH ON KEY FINANCIAL CONCEPTS FOR FINANCIAL WELL-BEING.

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AN ENABLED DFS ECOSYSTEM CAN ONLY BE AS GOOD AS ITS ADOPTION. THE LACK OF FINANCIAL LITERACY HAS PROVEN TO BE A PRIMARY BARRIER TO FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND IT IS FULLY RECOGNIZED THAT FINANCIAL INCLUSION CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED WHEN THE USERS OF FINANCIAL SERVICES NOT ONLY HAVE ACCESS TO A RANGE OF FINANCIAL SERVICES BUT ARE ABLE TO USE THEM REGULARLY.

MR.SHARJEEL MURTAZA,DIRECTOR DIGITAL FINANCIAL SERVICES, KARANDAAZ PAKISAN

SOURCE: PUBLISHED BY WWW.KARANDAAZ.COM.PK AUG, 10 2023. CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL ARTICLE

USAID, UNDP, KP LAUNCH STRATEGY TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO FINANCE FOR SMES

THE US AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (USAID), UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP), AND THE GOVERNMENT OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA (KP) LAUNCHED A STRATEGY TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO FINANCE FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (SMES) IN THE MERGED DISTRICTS OF THE FORMER FEDERALLY ADMINISTERED TRIBAL AREA (FATA), ACCORDING TO A NEWS RELEASE ISSUED ON TUESDAY.

STAKEHOLDERS FROM THE BANKING SECTOR, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (SMEDA), AND THE KP CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE PARTICIPATED IN THE LAUNCH AND EXCHANGED IDEAS.

PHOTO CREDIT:USAID

SOURCE: PUBLISHED BY WWW.APP.COM.PK OCT 31, 2023. CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL ARTICLE

COINS.PH AND CIRCLE TO PROMOTE FINANCIAL INCLUSION THROUGH REMITTANCES IN THE PHILIPPINES

COINS.PH, THE PHILIPPINES' LEADING CRYPTOCURRENCY EXCHANGE AND DIGITAL WALLET PROVIDER, TODAY ANNOUNCED A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH CIRCLE INTERNET FINANCIAL (CIRCLE), A GLOBAL FINTECH FIRM AND ISSUER OF USDC, TO DRIVE AWARENESS OF USDC-DENOMINATED REMITTANCES AS A SECURE, LOW-COST AND NEAR-INSTANT SOLUTION FOR INTERNATIONAL MONEY TRANSFERS FOR THE 18 MILLION FILIPINO USERS OF COINS.PH.

USDC IS A REGULATED, FULLY-BACKED DIGITAL DOLLAR, OR STABLECOIN, THAT IS AVAILABLE 24/7, MOVES AT INTERNET SPEED AND IS ALWAYS REDEEMABLE 1:1 FOR U.S. DOLLARS. BECAUSE USDC RUNS ON GLOBAL BLOCKCHAINS – WHICH HAVE LOW BARRIERS TO ENTRY AND MINIMAL TRANSACTION COSTS – IT IS PLAYING A GROWING ROLE IN FACILITATING CROSS-BORDER PAYMENTS AND REMITTANCES WORLDWIDE.

PHOTO CREDIT: TECHSTORY

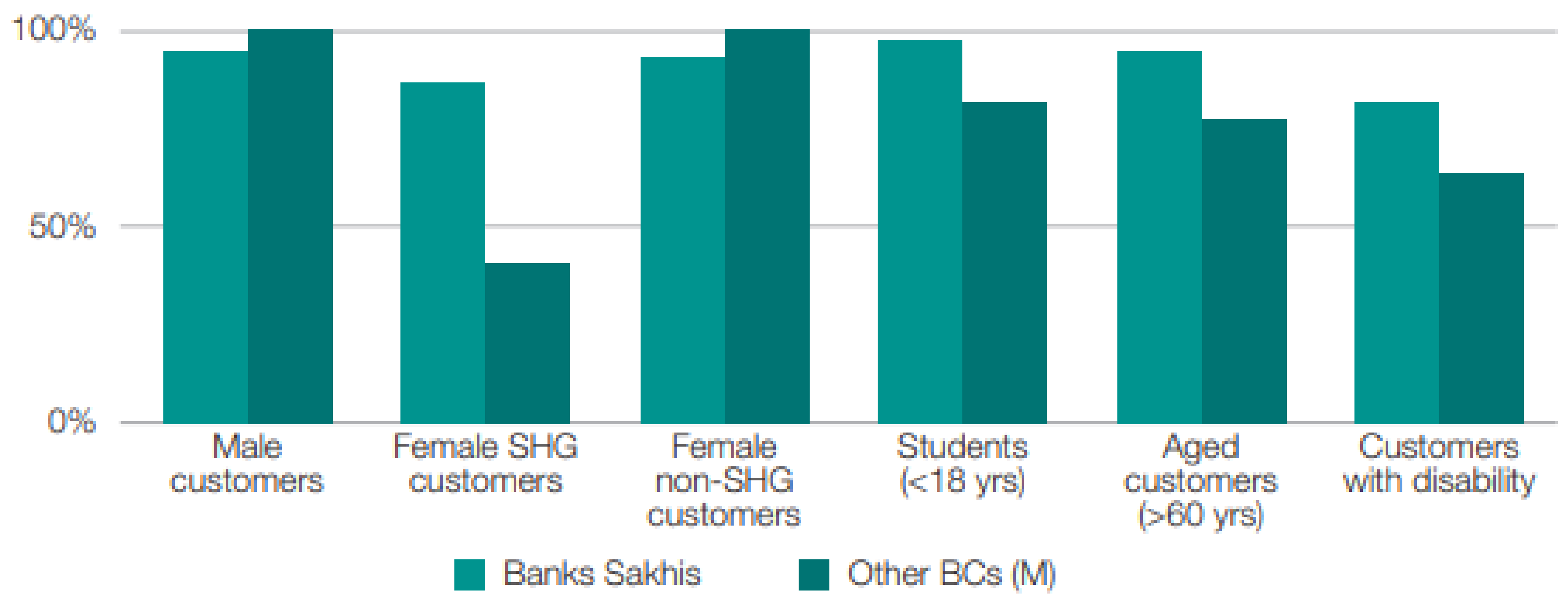
SOURCE: PUBLISHED BY WWW.CIRCLE.COME OCT 10, 2023. CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL ARTICLE

DATA VISUALIZATIONS

WOMEN AGENTS BRING BENEFITS TO WOMEN AND OTHER MARGINALIZED CUSTOMERS, WHO ARE TYPICALLY UNDERSERVED GLOBAL EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THAT WOMEN AGENTS REACH MORE MARGINALIZED CUSTOMERS THAN MALE AGENTS

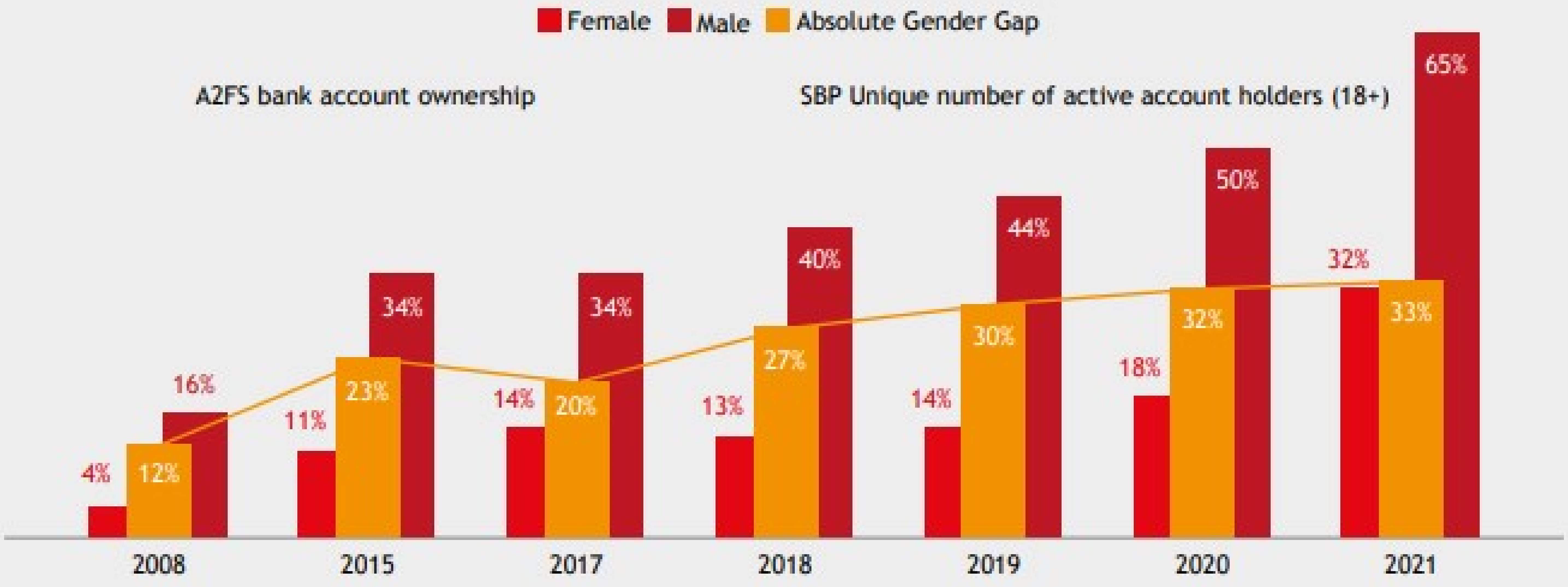
FOR EXAMPLE, IN BIHAR STATE, INDIA, BANK SAKHIS DO NOT SERVE MORE WOMEN IN GENERAL COMPARED TO MALE AGENTS (SEE GRAPH BELOW). HOWEVER, THEY DO SERVE MORE WOMEN WHO ARE LOWER-INCOME (MEMBERS OF SHGS) AND VULNERABLE CUSTOMER SEGMENTS LIKE STUDENTS, ELDERS AND PWD.

FIGURE 1. **Percentage of Bank Sakhis vs. other agents, also known as Business Correspondents (BCs), serving different customer segments**



SOURCE: WWW.CGAP.ORG OCTOBER 2023. CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL ARTICLE

FIGURE 2: BANK ACCOUNT OWNERSHIP BY GENDER



Source: A2FS 2008-17 and SBP 2018-21

WOMEN'S ACCOUNT OWNERSHIP HAS BEEN STEADILY GROWING, FROM 4 PERCENT IN 2008 TO 32 PERCENT IN 2022, MAINLY DUE TO BRANCHLESS BANKING OFFERINGS. HOWEVER, MEN ARE BECOMING MORE INCLUDED THAN WOMEN AND THE GENDER GAP IN ACCOUNT OWNERSHIP HAS MORE THAN DOUBLED ACROSS THE LAST DECADE, FROM 12 PERCENTAGE POINTS IN 2008 TO 35 PERCENTAGE POINTS IN 2022

SOURCE: WWW.AFI-GLOBAL.ORG JULY 7, 2023. CLICK HERE TO ACCESS FULL ARTICLE

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