

# The UK helps entrepreneurs develop innovative financial solutions in Mexico

In Mexico, important gaps in financial inclusion mean only 68% of adults use at least one financial product, even though internet access is at 75.6%. The UK's Financial Services Programme sponsored the Sandbox Challenge (SC), which helped increase financial inclusion in Mexico. It did this by helping Fintech entrepreneurs develop their offerings of digital and innovative financial solutions. The second edition of the SC initiative attracted 200 participants from the United States, Taiwan, Peru, Colombia and Ecuador.

To help SC winners develop their business models, they obtained bespoke support covering legal advice, business-consulting mentoring, financial modelling, cyber security advisory, and programming services, among others.

MoneyWays, a Venezuelan firm, provides a digital alternative to the high costs associated with cross-border fund transfers, which disproportionately affect migrant workers sending money to their families back home. MoneyWays solution consists of a platform providing money transfers, remittances, prepaid cards services, and payments through a real-time wallet system. According to MoneyWays, the support they received allowed them to accelerate the development of their services and have a presence in the Mexican market, which, in turn, helped them reduce the financial burden on remittance beneficiaries.

Plataforma 9.9% devised an innovative solution to help women and informal workers access home ownership through a collective, circular form of financing. Plataforma 9.9% recognised that participating in the Financial Services Programme gave them an opportunity to build their methodology whilst at the same accessing professional advice that guided them in structuring their services to comply with official regulations. Sagrario Gutiérrez, member of Plataforma 9.9%, shared:

We were provided with skills, tools, guidance, structure, transparency and certainty; it has been an outstanding experience to help build our solution.

Escrivan helps consumers regularise their real estate assets, which is critical given that over 50% of homeowners in Mexico currently have "irregular" property status. By resolving this issue, more consumers are able to access equity on their property, increase their purchasing power and credit opportunities, and thus contribute to a more financially inclusive market.

Another seven winners of the SC initiative received similar benefits and were

able to advance their offerings of digital and innovative financial solutions. With support from the UK's Financial Services Programme, they too are contributing to the expansion of Mexico's Fintech sector and to the financial inclusion of some of the country's most vulnerable populations.