Access to financial services in Haiti

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Project Description :

The low rate of banking and the exponential increase in the use of cellphone and internet are pushing financial institutions and mobile network operators to develop financial services in order to respond favorably to the needs of people who are underserved by the banking service.

According to the FinScope 2018 survey, approximately 11% of Haitians have access to banking services; 33% turn to decentralized financial services and 11% use unregulated financial services. This data reflects the fact that exclusion from banking services is mostly related to income inequality in Haitian society, where approximately 70% of the population lives on less than two dollars a day.

It is undoubtedly true that, until now, bank accounts and electronic money systems are only available to a part of the population. However, with the help of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), a competition was held in 2010 to push financial institutions and mobile network operators (MNO) to set up alternative solutions through mobile money to enable financial inclusion in a post-earthquake context. However, few digital financial services have been able to stay alive like Digicel's MonCash, which currently plays an important role in providing financial services (person-to-person transfers, payments, etc.).
It is important for financial institutions in collaboration with startups to develop innovative and alternative solutions to allow the Haitian population to benefit from financial products and services adapted to their real needs.

The objective of this project is to determine if machine learning algorithms can help classify individuals in Haiti. Financial Services providers can use the model's prediction for data-driven decisions on marketing strategies like boosting and promoting to better target their audience, or developing better financial products for their potentiels clients based on demographics and socio-economics drivers .

What is the selected issue or question that your project will address?

- *Since high school, I have always been passionate about finance and technology. That's why I chose to study finance at university. Following closely the evolution of technology and payment methods in the world, I wondered why it was so difficult to implement these new payment methods in Haiti. Financial inclusion is the ability for individuals and businesses to access a range of useful and affordable financial products and services (transactions, payments, savings, credit and insurance) from reliable and accountable providers. In Haiti, it is clear that the majority of the population is financially excluded. Do the reliable and responsible providers in Haiti (BRH, commercial banks, cell phone operators) have difficulty targeting the people in Haiti?*

Who is the audience?
- *The target audience of this project is the Central Bank, the commercial banks , mno's and other fintech companies in Haiti.*

What is the source of data you have in mind?
- *The dataset I will be working on is from the [The Finscope 2018 survey](). I have asked Finmark Trust to provide me with all the data by email.*
- *I am also looking for a dataset about the mapping of all the financial services providers in Haiti. Waiting for the BRH Financial Inclusion Unit to respond to my mail.*

What are the goals of your analysis?
- *Analyse the financial inclusion in Haiti to provide a model that can accurately classify an individual.*
- *Establish whether or not demographic and socio-economic variables exist that can help us better classify an individual if he has access to formal or non-formal finance services or is he banked or excluded from the financial system.*