

# CASE STUDY TEMPLATE

**Tool user guide**

October 2025





## 1. Overview

- **The Case Study Template** is a PowerPoint-based tool that helps technical assistance (TA) funders and their partners present the outcomes, lessons, and strategic value of SME banking programs in a clear and standardized format. By making results visible and actionable, the template can help support strategic communication, advocacy for further funding or partnerships, and internal learning.
- **Intended users:** TA funders and TA providers.

## 2. Use Case & Benefits

This tool addresses the challenge of effectively synthesizing and communicating the objectives, interventions, outcomes, and learnings of an SME banking initiative. It enables funders to:

- Document a program's trajectory, from its initial objectives and intervention logic to measurable outcomes

- Streamline information into a practical format for engaging internal stakeholders, donors, peer institutions, and others
- Showcase the potential of SME banking to drive financial inclusion and unlock business opportunities

The tool is accompanied by a one-page impact case and one-page business case which provides a broader framing of the rationale and value proposition for investing in SME banking. Together, the one-pagers and the template support efforts to advocate for greater resourcing and TA in SME finance.

This template is most effective for programs that have already generated measurable outcomes. In most SME banking initiatives, this usually means programs that have been running for around 3 years or more, allowing sufficient time for outputs to translate into observable outcomes.

### 3. Key Objectives

- Provide a standardized and customizable format for presenting SME banking program results
- Communicate the financial and social impact of SME finance TA interventions
- Support internal learning, external visibility, and stakeholder engagement

### 4. Structure and Components

The **PowerPoint deck** is organized into four pages, with distinct sections. Each section should be completed with program-specific content, using both quantitative results and qualitative insights.

1. **General characteristics.** This section captures the basics of the engagement: the country, key stakeholders involved (e.g., implementing bank, TA providers, or funders), focus areas (e.g., WSMEs, green SMEs), and project timeline. It also provides space for institutional logos, a project title, and optional visuals such as flags or photos.
2. **Problem statement.** This section offers context for the intervention. It includes space to describe the market gap or institutional challenge that the program aimed to address, supported by relevant baseline data.

3. **Theory of Change diagram.** This section allows for a graphical representation of the program's key activities, outputs, outcomes, and intended impact, at the bank, SME, and ecosystem levels. It also includes a space for the assumptions underlying each link. While high-level, this diagram helps clearly articulate the vision and strategic focus of the initiative.
4. **Outcomes.** This section presents the financial and social results of the SME banking program. It includes embedded graphs and customizable placeholders for key figures to expose the program's outcomes and reach. Additionally, it features space for an impact story or quote to illustrate the initiative's social impact.
5. **Learnings.** A dedicated page to reflect on program learnings across three main areas: i) key challenges faced by the bank and funder, ii) success factors (what worked well), and iii) recommendations for similar programs.
6. **References and partner information.** Section that captures the main sources used in developing the case study, such as reports, articles, or evaluations. It also includes space to provide brief descriptions of each contributing organization.
7. **Illustrative example.** For illustrative purposes, the template is followed by a real-world example (KCB) demonstrating how to effectively populate the template.

### Companion documents

- **PDF user guide:** Summary of tool function and instructions.
- **Impact case one-pager:** Pitch document exposing why SME banking matters in terms of its potential, challenges, and potential support strategies to maximize its reach.

## 5. How to Use the Tool

### Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. **Review the materials.** Read through the full template and the sample filled-out version (featuring KCB) to familiarize yourself with the assessment categories.
2. **Gather internal information.** Collect the necessary program details, including general characteristics, the problem the program aimed to address, main

intervention components, data and figures on outcomes, and key lessons learned.

3. **Complete each section.** Use the gathered information to fill out each category. Adjust the categories as needed to better reflect the nature of your program and available data.
  - a. **For the Theory of Change section** include the main TA components and activities. Identify, where possible, the outputs and outcomes resulting from these (even if only preliminary). Clearly outline the intended impact at the bank, SME, and ecosystem levels. Also include any assumptions made during the design of the initiative.
  - b. **Populate the outcomes section.** Customize the suggested indicators to align with your program's priorities or assessment areas. These may include (non-exhaustive):
    - i. **Financial indicators**
      1. SME portfolio size and growth
      2. Overall SME segment revenue and its share of total business
      3. Number of SMEs reached and number of outstanding SME loans
      4. Profitability (e.g., ROI, ROE)
      5. Net Promoter Score (NPS) or other customer loyalty metrics
      6. Portfolio health (e.g., non-performing loans or other measures)
      7. Productivity (e.g., loans per officer or similar metrics)
    - ii. **Social impact indicators**
      1. Expanded access to credit
      2. Business performance improvements
      3. Jobs created
      4. Reach to vulnerable populations
      5. Climate-related outcomes
  - c. **Summarize key learnings.** Reflect on what worked well, the challenges encountered, and the lessons that can inform similar programs. Aim to make this section as insightful and actionable as possible for others.
4. **Customize visuals.** Adjust icons, colors, and formatting to align with your organization's branding and communication style.

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## Tips

- **Align on facts:** Ensure all indicators and statements are validated by both the funder and the implementing bank before finalizing.



- **Prioritize clarity and impact:** The template is not meant to be exhaustive—focus on the most important messages.
  - **Use both quantitative and qualitative data:** Numbers lend credibility; stories create connection.
  - **Keep language accessible:** Avoid jargon and aim for clarity to ensure broad relevance across audiences.
  - **Adapt the format if used ex-ante:** If using the template as a planning tool, reframe the outcomes as intended results and the learnings section as lessons to carry forward from similar past initiatives.
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## 6. Outputs & Interpretation

The final product should be a 3–4 page visual case study that clearly articulates the opportunity, intervention components, outcomes, and learnings of the SME banking program. It can be used in donor reports, investment pitches, internal reviews, knowledge-sharing platforms, or at conferences and events.

It provides a credible, concise, and accessible summary of what the program achieved, how, and why it matters. The goal of this assessment is not exhaustive reporting, but high-impact communication that invites reflection and learning.

## 7. Additional Resources

To support users in selecting appropriate metrics, this section provides links to external resources and indicator lists. These include broader sets of **financial, social, and impact measurement indicators**, as well as established **methodologies for impact assessment** and guidance on building **Theories of Change**. We encourage users to:

- Review these resources to complement the suggested indicators in the template, especially to understand broader **impact measurement** metrics (e.g., gender outcomes, climate metrics).
- Select indicators that are **aligned with their program's objectives and time horizon**, while keeping reporting manageable and focused on the most meaningful results.

## **Indicator & Measurement Resources**

- [Banking for Impact Methodology](#): A bank-focused framework for measuring and managing social and environmental impacts.
- [GPFI SME Finance Impact Assessment Framework](#): A methodological guide for evaluating SME finance programs using rigorous approaches.
- [IRIS+ Catalog of Metrics](#): A comprehensive, globally-recognized repository of impact indicators with ready-to-use Core Metric Sets, including climate, gender, SDGs, sector specific impact, etc.
- [SME Financial Inclusion Indicators Base Set](#): Standard metrics for assessing access, usage, and quality of financial services for SMEs.
- [SME Performance Measurement Toolkit \(ANDE/ILO\)](#): A practical tool offering over 250 SME-specific indicators and measurement guidance.
- [Social Return on Investment \(SROI\)](#): A structured method to monetize social outcomes and evaluate broader impact.

## **Theory of Change Methodologies**

- [Annie E. Casey Foundation ToC Guide](#): Step-by-step tools, templates, and inclusive methods for crafting ToCs.
- [GEF/STAP Theory of Change Primer](#): Practical guidance for ToC in environmental and development-themed programs.
- [Seven Steps to a Theory of Change \(IDS\)](#): Structured method using problem trees and consensus-building for robust ToC design.
- [UNDG Theory of Change Guidance](#): Framework to build evidence-based ToCs, highlighting assumptions, risks, and causal logic.
- [UNICEF/UNDP ToC Methodological Brief](#): Practical brief linking activities to results and indicators across program and organizational levels.