

Partner Profile: Small Enterprise Foundation



An estimated 5.2 million adults in South Africa lack access to formal financial services, and only 8% of women have borrowed from a formal financial institution.¹

Small Enterprise Foundation NPC (SEF) is a partner within GP's Women-Centered Finance with Education initiative. SEF is a South African microfinance institution that provides credit and education for low-income female microentrepreneurs.

WHO IS SERVED:

SEF's client base is comprised almost entirely of women, the majority of whom live in poverty. Of SEF's 214,000 clients, 99% are women and approximately 78% live under the \$5.50 per person, per day international poverty line.² Most of their financial services and education are conducted via the group lending methodology.

WHAT IS DELIVERED:

SEF provides working capital loans alongside ongoing financial literacy and business development education to all clients. Education is delivered twice per month during group meetings. SEF's curriculum, originally developed by Grameen Foundation, has been adapted to address local needs by SEF's in-house research team. The organization also facilitates savings to enable financial resilience.

WHY IT IS IMPACTFUL:

Access to working capital loans and related education enables SEF's clients to make more informed decisions, better deal with economic shocks, and sustain and eventually grow their microenterprises, resulting in improved economic resilience and food security for their households. SEF estimates that the value of their clients' businesses grows by approximately 50% within 3-5 loan cycles with SEF.³

1. Source: World Bank population data 2019 & World Bank Global Findex 2017
2. \$5.50 PPP/person/day (PPP stands for purchasing power parity)
3. Source: SEF <https://www.sef.co.za/social-performance/>