

# Strengthening Enterprise Support Organizations

As the world strives to create more jobs, expand opportunity, and nurture sustainable business models, strengthening enterprise support organizations (ESOs) is one of the smartest bets we can make. By supporting the local ecosystem actors who provide entrepreneurs with critical skills and connections, we can greatly scale our reach and ensure lasting impact.

## The Challenge

Strong entrepreneurship ecosystems are fundamental to business growth and job creation. Our focus is on ESOs that provide diverse business development services to micro and small growing businesses (MSGBs), including acceleration, incubation, technical assistance, consulting and other forms of non-financial services. These local ESOs—which can be based out of universities, government agencies, and for-profit and nonprofit organizations—play a vital role, but often lack adequate technical knowledge and sufficient financial capacity<sup>1</sup>. As a result, their capacity to accelerate business growth and generate jobs is limited.

## Our Solution

Over the last decade, TechnoServe has worked with partners to support more than 270 local ESOs across nine countries in two ways: building their capacity to deliver effective programming and strengthening the enabling environment in which they operate. We project that by 2030 we will support +200 ESOs leading to 19,790 MSGBs benefited with increased revenues of \$44.5 million.

**TechnoServe ESO Academy:** Our methodology identifies and addresses the specific needs of local ESOs. It includes:

- 1. Building ESOs' critical capacity through Organizational Capacity Assessment (ESO OCA):** ESOs evaluate over 50 key practices across eight areas to identify and prioritize capacity gaps, which are then addressed through a blended approach that combines customized e-learning, 1:1 consulting, in-person training, and practical tools aligned with SCALE principles.
- 2. Business Incubation and Acceleration Methodology Transfer:** TechnoServe has packaged sets of proven tools to meet the specific needs of a range of entrepreneurship segments, which local ESOs can learn to deliver and adopt with our support.
- 3. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) System Transfer:** TechnoServe's Impact Intelligence Platform

(TIIP) is a highly configurable CRM-style platform built around effectively delivering MSGB support, reporting, and amplifying impact through better use of data. ESO partners are provided training and support in using the platform which is eventually handed over to enable sustainability.

**Enabling Environment for ESOs:** TechnoServe also helps develop local ecosystems in which ESOs can thrive and deliver the greatest possible impact. We have worked with governments to identify supportive policies, created spaces for collaboration and learning between ESOs, and helped to establish local networks and industry associations.



The Mozambique TechnoServe team. (TechnoServe / Evelin Rincán)

## Why TechnoServe

We create scalable and lasting impact by utilizing a systems approach, ensuring that entrepreneurs are surrounded by an enabling environment that is conducive to their success. What makes us unique:

- **Local Knowledge, World-Class Expertise:** Our experience spans 30 countries. Our staff have deep knowledge of sectors, segments, and local actors, while forming part of a global entrepreneurship practice that pilots best practices and scales proven approaches.
- **Tailored Approaches:** We work with our partners to adapt our methodology to create impact for the specific sectors, entrepreneurial profiles, and ecosystem actors they want to reach.
- **Focused on Sustained, Measurable Impact:** We are recognized as an impact-driven organization. After innovating, testing, and refining our delivery models for MSGBs, we increased the financial impact by 7.8x and improved our ROI from 3 to 12.65 (2017 vs 2023).

<sup>1</sup> How to fulfill the potential of Business Development Services using SCALE, Argidius Foundation, 2021

## Our Experience Strengthening ESOs and Ecosystems

TechnoServe is building on the expertise of multiple active and closed projects which effectively strengthened local ESOs and their enabling environment. By bringing their lessons together, we have made our solution more scalable and cost-effective.

### Highlights from our work with ESOs

