



In the aftermath of the global financial crisis, CapitalPlus Exchange launched the Small Business Banking Network (SBBN) in 2010 with ten members. SBBN was the first global network dedicated to expanding financial institutions' capacity, competence and willingness to serve small businesses in emerging economies. With the launch, CapPlus pioneered the use of peer learning and industry building to increase access to SME finance.

By 2015, SBBN had grown to over 60 member financial institutions from 28 countries in Africa, Asia, MENA and Eastern Europe. Over 2,000 individuals completed in-person or online training courses, and 2,300 documents were downloaded from SBBN's members-only Knowledge Bank of tools, detailed manuals, and policy guides.

SBBN's signature event was its annual CEO Roundtable convening senior leaders from member financial institutions along with regulators, innovators, and other stakeholders. Roundtable sessions focused on cutting-edge developments in SME finance and sharing case studies and connections amongst participants.

Network members also attended regional workshops

where CapPlus' facilitators delivered practical courses on best practices in credit risk, customer relationship management, serving women entrepreneurs, and human capital management. Peer learning was an integral part of the courses, which contributed to participants leaving the workshops feeling well-equipped to make positive changes upon their return.

As the network evolved, CapPlus began partnering with the SME Finance Forum, which was established by the G20 in 2012 to promote SME finance around the world. The partnership, combining the reach of the Forum (managed by IFC) with CapPlus's expertise, represented an exciting opportunity benefiting both organizations.

In 2015, the Forum launched a member network built on the model CapPlus piloted and scaled. SBBN was merged into it and CapPlus is the Forum's strategic partner for providing peer learning to its members.

Today, CapPlus delivers its services and innovations, including its core capacity building work, to a wider range of financial institutions than ever, further magnifying its impact in developing economies. As CapPlus directs its innovations to new horizons, it remains committed to its ultimate goal of reducing poverty by increasing financial services to SMEs.

Over 2,000 trained



SBBN members on SBBN

“The SBBN Roundtable in Dubai was excellent and an eye opener to me and a turning point in my personal life and also of my institution. As a team we learnt a lot and will implement what we learnt.”

“The SBBN portal provides a unique opportunity for us as a bank that operates across 13 countries, an opportunity to get best practices, tools, thought leadership and networking opportunities to our heads of SME and teams in those countries.”

“No matter what challenges we go through in lending to SMEs, we should not give up, but should instead equip ourselves with adequate knowledge, especially through SBBN sharing and forums.”

“[The workshop was] a fantastic experience...Learnt a lot, not only from the distinguished trainers, but also from the fellow participants.”