



# M-KOPA SOUTH AFRICA

IMPACT REPORT

2025

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# A message from our General Manager



South Africa faces a national unemployment crisis that demands collective action. As an impact-led business, M-KOPA South Africa takes this challenge seriously. Since 2023, we've focused on creating tangible impact, opening pathways to the digital economy, income generation, and financial inclusion for our customers and our people. Today, we've unlocked over ZAR 370 million in credit for more than 100,000 customers, transforming lives across South Africa.

## Local economic development

Addressing unemployment requires everyone to lean in. M-KOPA South Africa is making a significant contribution, directly employing over 150 people and creating income opportunities for **1,300 sales agents** who are building better futures for themselves and their families.

The impact is tangible: **62% of surveyed agents said M-KOPA was their first income-earning opportunity**, and 73% report higher earnings since joining. For many South Africans facing barriers to formal employment, working with M-KOPA represents a critical pathway to economic participation.

We've increased female representation among agents from 49% to 84%, the highest across all M-KOPA markets. Through initiatives like our AURA panic button partnership for safety and flexible working arrangements that accommodate childcare, we're ensuring that women can thrive as entrepreneurs.

Beyond direct job creation, in 2024 we contributed **over ZAR 24 million in annual tax revenue** and **over ZAR 155.5 million in local procurement spending**. Our progress is built on partnerships with leaders like Vodacom and Telkom, strengthening South Africa's economy through regional sourcing and local operations.

## Pioneering smartphone financing and going beyond

M-KOPA South Africa pioneered formal smartphone financing which requires no collateral or salary slip, opening digital inclusion and access to the digital economy for those locked out by existing credit opportunities. By turning connectivity into opportunity, we're driving meaningful impact. 2025 marks a significant milestone for M-KOPA South Africa: we've reached 100,000+ customers. More than just a number, this achievement represents 100,000 pathways to financial inclusion, 100,000 doors opened to the digital economy, and 100,000 stories of progress. For 31% of customers, their M-KOPA phone was their first smartphone (36% among women customers), marking a critical first step into the digital economy. Our products are essential tools for economic participation: 63% of customers use their M-KOPA smartphone to generate income, enabling them to access digital economic opportunities that were previously out of reach, and 35% say they are earning more as an M-KOPA customer. With these tools to transform their livelihoods, 84% report improved quality of life.

As we expand access responsibly, we're also ensuring that progress is inclusive. Women comprise 49% of our South African customers, the highest proportion across all M-KOPA markets, reflecting our progress in reaching underserved communities and promoting inclusive access to opportunity. 36% of our female customers are first-time smartphone users (vs. 24% of male customers), and 88% report that their quality of life has improved since becoming an M-KOPA customer (vs. 82% of male customers).

## Protecting consumers

Trust is earned through action. At M-KOPA South Africa, **customer protection is the foundation of everything we do**. We've cracked the code traditional credit providers couldn't: how to successfully serve South Africa's Every Day Earners. Our fair, flexible, and affordable financing model matches payment plans to real income patterns, requires no collateral or credit scores, and allows customers to pay when they can without penalties, turning barriers into entry points while protecting against over-indebtedness.

Our robust compliance framework ensures transparency and accountability through specialized training, independent

oversight, and strong data safeguards. As smartphone financing scales, we're proving that **responsible lending and sustainable growth aren't mutually exclusive, they're inseparable**.

## Climate-responsible growth

We're embedding climate responsibility as we scale financial inclusion. We plan to roll out refurbished smartphones in South Africa in 2026, extending these environmental and affordability benefits locally. We are proud to be advancing toward science-based emission reduction targets informed by our first comprehensive global carbon footprint assessment, completed in 2024.

## Looking ahead

In the coming years, we'll expand coverage to all nine provinces, strengthen value-added services, and continue building pathways to prosperity for Every Day Earners, ensuring digital and financial inclusion reach every corner of this diverse nation.

*Cameron Perumal*

**Cameron Perumal**  
M-KOPA South Africa General Manager


# Our approach

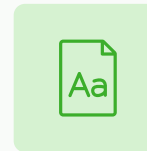
## Our inclusive and responsible finance model

### Our financing model is built around inclusion, flexibility, and long-term progress.

With only a small deposit and no collateral or credit history required, customers can immediately access essential tools like smartphones. Daily repayments align with their cash flow and can be paused at any time. Customers may even return the product with their full deposit refunded and no further obligation. As customers repay, they build a credit history and unlock additional services such as digital loans and insurance, turning first-time access into lasting financial progress.

Access alone isn't enough. Customers must also feel protected and respected throughout their journey. That's why we embed consumer protection into every step of our credit model. As a customer-centred fintech in emerging markets, our responsibility is to protect our customers, uphold ethical practices, and build public confidence. Safeguards against indebtedness are embedded into our credit journey – from pricing to privacy – to ensure fairness, transparency, and support at every step.

 **94%** of M-KOPA South Africa customers say our loan terms are fair and transparent



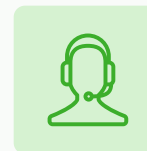
#### Clear and fair terms

Pricing and repayment details are shared up front and reinforced through onboarding calls and easy-to-access materials. There are no hidden fees.



#### Flexible and risk-reducing

Customers who can't continue payments can return the device, receive a deposit refund, and be released from obligation.



#### Support when it's needed

Customer care is available 24/7, with all staff trained to deliver respectful, equitable service.



#### Data responsibility

Our strong culture of protecting customer data is supported by a dedicated privacy team, customer-centric policies, and continuous mandatory ongoing staff training in lawful and fair data use.



#### Product quality

All devices are tested to meet regulatory and customer standards in each market.

Our approach

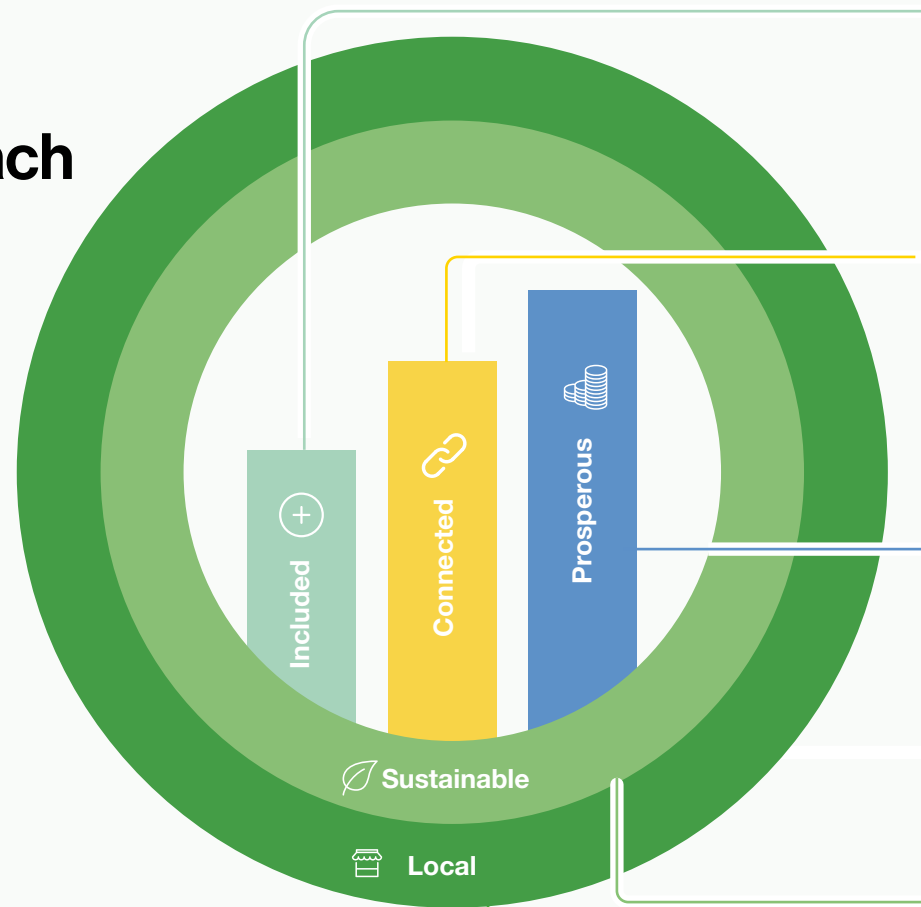
# Our impact approach

## Every journey starts with financial access.

For the majority of our customers, a smartphone is the entry point to the digital economy. From there, we build long-term financial relationships that support stability, opportunity, and income growth.

Our impact reaches beyond individuals, extending to families, communities, and the wider systems they rely on.

Our impact framework captures how M-KOPA products advance inclusion, connection, and prosperity – while building sustainability into everything we do and contributing to local market ecosystems.



### Included

We unlock financial and digital inclusion for Every Day Earners who are traditionally excluded through a fair, flexible, and customer-centric financing model.

### Connected

We connect people to the mobile internet and the digital economy. This access builds digital skills and confidence and opens new possibilities for work, education, skills, and connection.

### Prosperous

We unlock progress for our customers through progressive digital financial inclusion. Breathing room from daily pressures and improved ability to manage unexpected costs create new opportunities for quality-of-life improvements and economic advancement, giving people space to build stability and move forward with purpose.

### Sustainable

We embed climate thinking into how we grow: decarbonizing our operations, refurbishing devices to reduce waste and improve affordability, and financing e-motorbikes that cut emissions by 90%, helping riders earn more and contributing to cleaner air for all.<sup>1</sup>

### Local

We invest in local economies by sourcing and assembling close to where we sell, strengthening supply chains, creating jobs, and partnering strategically to make essential services simpler, more affordable, and easier to reach.

<sup>1</sup> E-motorbikes financed through M-KOPA are currently only available in Kenya.



## Impact measurement approach

Our impact measurement methodology follows the highest industry standards. We partner with specialist external measurement agencies who independently collect, measure, and quality assure our impact data. This year, we partnered with Caribou, a leading global consultancy working with ambitious organizations to accelerate and deliver impact in a digital age.

Caribou and the survey firm HOPAWI surveyed a random representative sample of **452 M-KOPA South Africa customers and sales agents** from May to June 2025.

Surveys were conducted in local languages by trained third-party enumerators. Caribou also conducted **13 interviews with M-KOPA team members** and supported the gathering of in-depth qualitative insights from **2 customers and agents**.

This primary data collection was complemented by data and analysis from our business intelligence platform and public industry insights and reporting, with all data valid through August 2025.

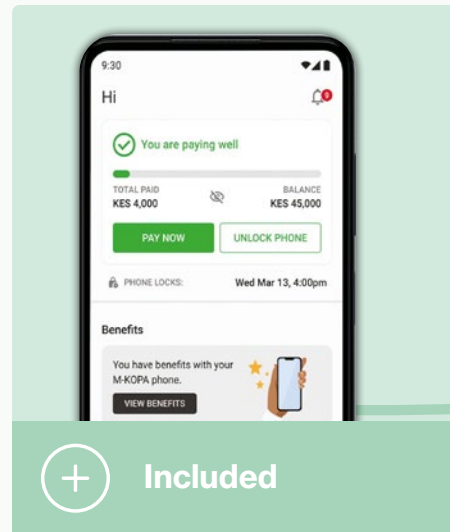
Our approach

# Our customer journey

Our customer journey begins with inclusion: affordable smartphone financing repaid in small daily amounts through the M-KOPA app.

From day one, customers access the digital economy through mobile internet, unlocking benefits like affordable data bundles and device protection. As customers build strong repayment records, they gain access to loans and insurance, providing capital to invest in their businesses, households, and futures.

Globally, M-KOPA provides a range of value-added services, and we tailor offerings by market. In South Africa, our services include affordable data bundles and device protection.



**+ Included**

↑ **With financial access through M-KOPA**

↓ **Without financial access**

For low-income earners in sub-Saharan Africa, a basic smartphone costs 99% of monthly income. **GSMA 2024**

77% of adults in sub-Saharan Africa don't own a smartphone. For one in three, cost is the main barrier. **Findex 2024**

**Affordable data bundles**

Affordable data  
**4GB Data**

**Device protection**

Device protection  
**Stolen phone replaced**

Device protection  
**Broken screen replaced**

**🔗 Connected**

In sub-Saharan Africa, 1GB of data costs 2.4% of monthly income – rising to 5% for the poorest 40%. **GSMA 2024; Findex 2025**

**Cash loans**

Digital loans  
**Congratulations, loan approved!**

**Health and life cover\***

Health cover  
**1 year cover**

**🏦 Prosperous**

88% of adults in sub-Saharan Africa are uninsured. **Findex 2024**

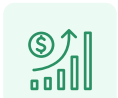
88% of adults in sub-Saharan Africa have never borrowed formally. **Findex 2024**

\*Offering differs per market

# Our impact in 2025

## Our customers

### Included



**ZAR 370 million+**  
credit unlocked

cumulative since 2023



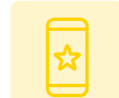
**49%**  
female  
customers



**105,000**  
total customers

cumulative since 2023

### Connected



**33,000**

first-time  
smartphone users

cumulative since 2023

**31%**

first-time  
smartphone users

### Prosperous



**84%**  
report improved quality of life



**64%**  
use their product for  
income generation



**35%**  
are earning more now



**66%**  
report improved ability to meet  
household goals

## Our impact in 2025

### Our agents

 **1,300**  
livelihoods created  
for sales agents

 **84%**  
women

 **73%**  
earning more since  
starting with M-KOPA


### Our employees

 **155**  
employees

 **55%**  
women

### Local impact

 **ZAR 24 million+**  
taxes contributed,  
2024†

 **ZAR 155.5 million+**  
local procurement,  
2024†



Jabulile, M-KOPA Agent

# Social impact

M-KOPA's impact begins with people: customers, young agents earning their first income, and employees powering our operations. By expanding access to financial services, digital products, and skills development, we help people build stability and economic opportunity.

Thando, M-KOPA Agent

## Our customers

M-KOPA South Africa connects people to the solutions that shape modern life.

Through flexible smartphone financing and affordable data bundles, customers gain access to the mobile internet and digital economy. Our customers are predominantly urban (77%), and earn around ZAR 185 per day, reflecting strong demand for accessible digital tools in cities and growing reach in rural areas. To date, M-KOPA has **unlocked more than ZAR 370 million in credit for over 100,000 customers** across South Africa, helping thousands take their first step into the digital economy.

For many, that first step means being connected for the very first time. In our 2025 impact survey, 31% of customers said their M-KOPA phone was their first smartphone (36% among women customers). In a market where overall smartphone penetration is high but many low-cost devices offer limited functionality, M-KOPA South Africa bridges the gap by providing affordable smartphones with full internet and app access: 65% of surveyed customers say they couldn't afford a smartphone before M-KOPA. This ensures that more people – including women entrepreneurs and underserved communities – can participate fully in the

## Our customers

digital economy, unlock new opportunities, and grow their livelihoods.

The impact is clear. Before joining, 35% of customers said they struggled financially or couldn't afford essential expenses. Since purchasing their smartphone, 84% report an improved quality of life, and 39% are now able to invest in their children's education. For many, that first smartphone has become a pathway to earning and empowerment: **64% of customers use their M-KOPA devices to generate income and grow their businesses**, and 35% report earning more since joining. Connectivity now enables them to run businesses, find work, market services, and receive payments, unlocking learning, efficiency, and entrepreneurship in ways that were previously out of reach.

**Women are central to this progress, making up 49% of M-KOPA South Africa's customer base – the highest share across all M-KOPA markets.** 36% of our female customers are first-time smartphone users (vs. 24% of male customers), and 88% report that their quality of life has improved since becoming an M-KOPA customer (vs. 82% of male customers).

This year, M-KOPA South Africa **celebrated a milestone of more than 100,000 customers.** Each represents a story of access, resilience, and progress. Behind every device is a person unlocking new opportunities, improving their life, and growing their businesses. Together, these 100,000 journeys reflect a growing movement toward digital and financial inclusion – and the promise of a more connected and equitable South Africa.



## Customer spotlight

**Sbongile, a wig maker and seller, heard about M-KOPA from a sales agent who set up a kiosk near her business.**

“I run a small wig-making and selling business. Day-to-day, I'm usually busy styling wigs, taking photos of my work, chatting with clients on WhatsApp, and posting my products online, mostly on Facebook. I manage everything from my phone, and it's helped me grow my customer base a lot over time.”

**Sbongile**, wig maker and seller, customer

# Our agents

M-KOPA South Africa's network of 1,300 sales agents is driving growth and creating dignified income opportunities across the country.

For many, M-KOPA represents their first step into formal work: **62% of surveyed agents, including 65% of female agents, said this is their first income-earning opportunity.** The impact is clear: 73% report earning more, 87% can now afford more essential expenses, and 90% say their overall quality of life has improved since joining.

Empowering women through flexible, safe, and rewarding work has been central to this success. **In 2024–2025, female representation among agents increased from 49% to 84% – the highest across all M-KOPA markets.** M-KOPA's unique model empowers women through flexible earning opportunities, enabling them to balance work and caregiving

responsibilities, and through safety measures such as operating in pairs or small groups, and using a panic button app through our partnership with AURA.

This inclusive approach also deepens our connection and impact to the communities we serve. By recruiting agents locally, we leverage their knowledge, relationships, and credibility to build trust with customers. Agents earn sustainable incomes through a commission structure aligned with the cost of living and are celebrated through recognition, rewards, and community-building events, from branded gear and upgraded smartphones to public celebrations and town halls that honor their success.



## Agent spotlight

Thando, now an M-KOPA South Africa Sales Executive, first learned about M-KOPA when an agent told her sister the company was recruiting sales agents in the community.

“Before M-KOPA, I was unemployed. I started as an agent, moved into cluster leader, and now I’m a sales executive. When I started, I was surviving on my child support grant, I had just moved out of my mom’s home, and I was sleeping on the floor with my kids. Now, I can afford to do everything for my kids. It has brought peace in my life because now I’m able to provide for my kids without having to ask anyone.”

**Thando, M-KOPA Agent**

# Our employees

**M-KOPA South Africa continues to invest in employee growth and engagement for our team of 155 employees, 55% of whom are women.**

In 2025, we launched our inaugural learnership program, selecting top-performing sales agents for a comprehensive 12-month development program that combines structured learning with hands-on experience. Participants gain nationally recognized sales qualifications, advanced customer service skills, mentorship support, and clear pathways to leadership roles. To further strengthen workplace culture, we also established employee engagement and wellness committees focused on supporting well-being, promoting collaboration, and creating open channels for feedback across all functions.



## Employee spotlight

**Thando, a Collections Customer Care Representative, has worked with M-KOPA South Africa for a little over one year.**

“Working for M-KOPA has had a positive personal impact on me. It has strengthened my skills, increased my confidence, and given me a greater sense of purpose by contributing to meaningful work that improves customers’ lives.”

**Thando Tshabalala**, M-KOPA South Africa Collective Customer Care Representative

# Sustainable impact

Africa's climate vulnerability and unequal financial access demand solutions that serve both people and the planet. M-KOPA is building a different path by scaling clean mobility and device circularity to reduce emissions, extend access, and support a resilient future.

Jabulile, M-KOPA Agent

# Circularity

**A new smartphone generates an average of 85 kilograms of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in its first year.<sup>1</sup>**

The vast majority (around 95%) comes from manufacturing, including raw material extraction and shipping. A **refurbished phone generates up to 11 times lower emissions** than a new one.<sup>2</sup> Refurbished devices also cost **25% to 50% less**, making digital adoption more affordable for first-time users. GSMA estimates that, globally, there are around **10 billion dormant phones** that could be refurbished or repaired.<sup>3</sup>

We're extending smartphone lifespans through repair and refurbishment. Our device protection service offers low-cost repairs, helping customers stay connected to what matters most. We plan to roll out refurbished smartphones in South Africa in 2026, providing an opportunity for customers to trade-in and upgrade, or purchase a refurbished phone at a discount.

<sup>1</sup> [Deloitte \(2021\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [ADEME \(2022\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [GSMA \(2025\)](#)

# Decarbonization

**We see the reality of the climate crisis, both globally and in South Africa.**

That's why we're intentionally embedding decarbonization into how we design, build, and deliver. Last year, we completed our first comprehensive carbon footprint assessment across scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions for our global operations, establishing 2024 as our baseline year.<sup>4</sup> Our total baseline footprint is 120,660 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (scope 1 and 2: 760 tCO<sub>2</sub>e; scope 3: 119,840 tCO<sub>2</sub>e). We will be setting science-based emissions reduction targets aligned with a 1.5 °C global pathway and tailored to our operating realities, ensuring that as we grow our business and impact, we simultaneously reduce our environmental footprint.

<sup>4</sup> **Scope 1** emissions are direct emissions from company-owned sources. **Scope 2** are indirect emissions from purchased electricity. **Scope 3** are all other indirect emissions in the value chain, including production, transport, and end use.

# Local impact

M-KOPA drives value into local economies by anchoring operations in local markets and strengthening economic infrastructure through regional sourcing, manufacturing, and strategic partnerships.

Sbongile, wig maker and seller, customer

## Creating value

In a country where access to stable work remains a challenge, M-KOPA South Africa is contributing to economic participation through job creation, entrepreneurship, and financial access. **In 2024, we contributed over ZAR 24 million in tax revenue**, unlocked more than ZAR 370 million in credit for Every Day Earners, and employed more than 150 people. Beyond direct employment, we've created livelihoods for 1,300 sales agents (84% women), with 62% entering the workforce for the first time and 73% earning more through M-KOPA.

At the customer level, our smartphones and digital services are enabling people to participate in the digital economy – 64% now use their devices for income generation and 35% report earning more as M-KOPA customers. We also invest locally, spending over ZAR 155.5 million in procurement in 2024, reinforcing our commitment to inclusive growth and long-term economic development in South Africa.

## Governance for responsible growth

Strong governance underpins M-KOPA's ability to innovate with integrity. Guided by transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct, our governance framework applies both UK and local standards across the group. Independent Board and Committee oversight ensures financial integrity and risk management, while a compliance team of nearly 30 professionals supports policy implementation across markets.

We foster an ethical culture through annually updated policies on anti-bribery, safeguarding, customer protection, fair recruitment, and more, reinforced by over 30 specialized compliance trainings in 2024.

As we scale, strong internal governance and external accountability help ensure that every product, service, and partnership reflects the care and responsibility our customers expect.

## Strategic partnerships

Achieving sustainable development requires collective effort. Expanding opportunity at scale depends on strong partnerships with government, civil society, telecommunications providers such as Vodacom and Telkom, and community organizations. As South Africa advances its inclusive growth agenda, M-KOPA is committed to deepening these collaborations.

## Consumer protection

M-KOPA is committed to building trust with customers, employees, and sales agents through responsible lending and strong data protection. Our policies prioritize transparency, fairness, and long-term relationships, supporting progress rather than indebtedness. In line with NCR requirements, we uphold APR caps and conduct thorough affordability assessments to ensure every customer can sustainably manage their payments. Our deposit-based loan model, combined with a flexible cancellation policy, allows customers to exit their loan at any time and receive their deposit back – reinforcing financial safety and responsible lending. We also go beyond regulatory standards by not charging any late payment fees or penalties, ensuring that lending remains fair and customer-centred. Across all markets, staff receive mandatory training on data privacy and responsible conduct, maintaining full compliance with regulatory standards. Guided by our Core Consumer Protection Principles – transparency, responsible sales and pricing, product quality, fair treatment, and strong data protection – we strive to deliver access with integrity and ensure every customer interaction reflects our values.

# Looking ahead

In the coming years, we'll expand coverage to all nine provinces, strengthen value-added services, and continue building pathways to prosperity for Every Day Earners, ensuring digital and financial inclusion reaches every corner of this diverse nation.



**With gratitude**

We're deeply grateful to our customers, employees, and partners whose trust, dedication, and collaboration make our impact possible.



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### Report contributors

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This report was made possible through the dedication of our Impact, Communications, Marketing, and Research teams and partners at Caribou. We extend our sincere thanks to the M-KOPA staff, agents, and customers who shared data, insights, and stories throughout its development.

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