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BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM PROJECT FACT SHEET

WHAT IS THE BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM PROJECT?

Launched in 2017, the USAID Business Ecosystem Project (BEP) increases productivity, revenues, and jobs for micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) through building a responsive and sustainable business ecosystem. It works in partnership with business associations, chambers of commerce, consultants and training centers to improve the services available to MSMEs for accessing new markets, finding qualified workers, accessing relevant information and obtaining necessary documentation. It also works with financial institutions and financial consultants to help MSMEs access commercial financing. The project partners with government institutions, such as the Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Labor and the State Innovation Fund, to better promote their programs to support competitiveness, innovation, entrepreneurship and workforce development and adapt to the needs of MSMEs. Finally, the project fosters partnerships with lead firms to jointly finance the development of their subcontractors.

WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED?

- BEP engaged eleven business support organizations (BSOs) and assisted them in strengthening their service offering and membership base. The assisted BSOs introduced four new and upgraded 25 existing services such as workforce development, lobbying, access to markets, and access to information, and increased total membership by 192 companies.
- During its first year of implementation, BEP launched eight proof-of-concept private sector engagement initiatives across a range of sectors (agriculture, apparel, workforce development). It engaged with 12 lead companies that invested \$144,404 to support the development of 54 MSMEs in their supply chains.
- A total of 40 financial facilitators supported by BEP helped 229 MSMEs prepare bankable proposals and 148 have already received a loan or grant adding up to \$44 million (\$36 million from financial institutions and \$8 million from their own resources) in funding accessed.
- Throughout all three objectives, BEP trained 464 people in new skills, assisted a total of 71 MSMEs in improving their management practices or technologies and helped 48 MSMEs to develop linkages to new buyers.