



USAID Jordan Local Enterprise Support Activity

Overview

The USAID Jordan Local Enterprise Support activity (LENS) is a \$49.5 million, five-year project that will assist micro and small enterprises (MSEs) to grow their businesses and create job opportunities, while developing an inclusive enabling environment for economic development in selected municipalities.

Support to MSEs, particularly among underserved populations, will promote their ability to:

- ▶ Identify and capitalize on business opportunities.
- ▶ Recognize and meet market demand.
- ▶ Contribute to more inclusive networks.
- ▶ Benefit from economic growth.

Local Economic Development (LED) initiatives will:

- ▶ Increase clarity in the institutional, legal and financial aspects of municipal governance.
- ▶ Improve municipal government capacity to promote economic growth.
- ▶ Enable municipal leadership to effectively pursue development plans.



The LENS approach will combine rapid implementation of initiatives that build trust with local partners and municipalities with the establishment of an evidence-base to set the stage for long term, sustainable change.

LENS will also include a \$10 million grant fund that will:

- ▶ Promote innovative activities.
- ▶ Encourage new institutional collaborations.
- ▶ Strengthen business service providers and local industry/trade associations.
- ▶ Foster entrepreneurship.
- ▶ Enhance local businesses ability to participate in mature value chains.

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To ensure the achievement of LENS goals, the activity is organized to work in the following two components:

Promote growth and job creation among Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs)

MSE Policy – supporting a conducive policy environment that facilitates the ability of micro and small firms to produce, transport, market, and sell efficiently and at competitive cost.

MSE Competitiveness - driving activities based on end market demand and concrete economic opportunities to strengthen horizontal and vertical linkages between firms, while improving the ability of stakeholders to implement investments.

MSE Access to Finance – enhancing MSE access to a wide variety of financial products and services tailored to their needs, through increased provision of products and services by financial service providers and improved MSE awareness of them.

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Build the capacity of local governments to develop and implement competitiveness strategies that result in economic growth and increased investment

National Policy - improving policies, regulations, and administrative procedures to strengthen the ability of municipalities to facilitate the growth of micro and small enterprises.

Local Government Planning - strengthening capacity of local government leaders to implement economic development initiatives, through streamlined communications with national government actors, clearer lines of authority, and improved abilities to value and market the assets and investment opportunities in their municipalities.



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The activity will immediately begin operations in East Amman and throughout Year 1 will expand into underserved municipalities within Irbid, Zarqa and Aqaba. The program may identify additional Governorates and municipalities to receive support by the end of this first phase. LENS will seek to leverage activities across the USAID portfolio and with other donors sharing similar development objectives. The LENS team brings expertise in implementing pilot projects for near term demonstration effects and long term scale-up, establishing effective dialogue and engagement with local partners, and the tailoring of international best practices to the local context. Through a commitment to Collaboration, Learning, and Adapting, LENS will continuously review performance, assess impact, and revise course as necessary.

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