

Leveraging Economic Opportunities (LEO)



Leveraging Economic Opportunities (LEO) is a new three-year contract to support USAID programming that fosters **inclusive growth** through markets. Building on USAID's value chain approach, LEO focuses on

- (1) **a systems approach** to markets, acknowledging the complex inter-relationships among market actors, market and household systems, climate change, nutrition, the policy environment, and socio-cultural factors, including poverty and gender; and
- (2) **inclusion**, recognizing the role that a spectrum of actors—from resource poor households and small-scale enterprises to larger and more formal firms—play in catalyzing market change and growth that benefits the poor.

Missions can buy-in to LEO for services to support relevant current or future programming, including:

- **value chain and/or market systems development** integrating gender, nutrition, climate change, and 'pathways out of poverty' activities
- local and regional **private sector engagement** to catalyze investments that benefit the poor
- **innovative business models** for expanding access for poor households, women, youth and marginalized groups to inputs, information and services
- **smallholder-to-'lead firm' models** focused on linking small-scale farmers to markets and increasing their access to inputs, extension advice, and business development and financial services
- **resilience** activities, including productive safety nets, asset building, livelihood diversification, micro-insurance and microfinance
- **'pathways out of poverty'** activities focused on the very poor that create pathways to market participation and financial inclusion

LEO at a glance:

- Oct 2013 – Sept 2016
- \$21 M ceiling
- Broad range of services
- Simple buy-in process
- Fixed MOBIS rates

LEO provides services that meet a variety of Mission needs, including but not limited to

- **Research** on market system-related topics relevant to mission programs
- **Analytics:** end-market analyses, value chain analyses, meta-analyses focused on regional value chains or on USAID's push/pull strategies aimed at inclusive growth

- **Implementation support:** technical assistance and/or training in facilitation approaches; integration of Collaborating, Learning and Adaptation (CLA); strengthening knowledge management systems to inform implementation
- **Capacity development:** how to facilitate sustainable interventions; how to strengthen inclusion; how to integrate gender, nutrition and climate change into value chain and market system development
- **Practitioner network development:** organizing practitioner networks and communities of practice, and facilitating collaborative learning; aligning USAID monitoring systems with good implementation practices (e.g., facilitation)
- **Local systems development:** technical assistance, strategies and intervention designs for strengthening local systems
- **Inclusion:** technical assistance, strategies and intervention designs to improve the inclusion of the extreme poor, women, youth and other vulnerable groups into market-related activities
- **Evaluations:** assistance in identifying indicators for capturing systemic change and aligned with USAID M&E requirements; design and implementation of evaluations based on best practice methodologies in measuring systemic change; integration of CLA into implementation and M&E

Accessing LEO project services *does not* require a procurement action—USAID Missions can simply submit a Scope of Work. Once approved by the project COR, Kristin O’Planick, the Mission need only transfer funds to the LEO task order under the MOBIS schedule.

LEO is implemented by **ACDI/VOCA** with subcontractors:

Accenture Development Partnership—market analytics, marketing strategies

Adam Smith International—market systems development, learning networks

EcoVentures International—at-risk and marginalized groups

Entrepreneurial Solutions Partners—venture capital, entrepreneurship training

Grameen Foundation—technological innovations with the very poor

Impact LLC—research, impact assessment, evaluation

MarketShare Associates—M4P, DCED Standard, gender

Mennonite Economic Development Associates—business solutions to poverty

Practical Action Consulting—market systems development

The SEEP Network—collaborative learning, practitioner networking

LEO accesses a wide range of thought leaders, including:

Ruth Campbell (project manager)

Mike Field (learning, facilitation)

Margie Brand (capacity development)

Elizabeth Dunn (evaluation)

Meg Brown (agricultural development)

Gary Gereffi (global value chains)

Andrew Shepard (poverty, labor)

Pamela Fergusson (nutrition)

Linda Jones (impact investment)

For more information on LEO, contact:

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