Long-term Assistance and SErvices for Research Partners for University-Led Solutions Engine

The Long-term Assistance and SErvices for Research (LASER) Partners for University-Led Solutions Engine (PULSE) program hosts a global network of researchers at higher education institutions and development practitioners from government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. This dynamic network collaborates on research-based solutions to critical development challenges in USAID partner countries.

CORE COMPONENTS

Capacity Strengthening

By working directly with research teams and development actors, LASER strengthens and sustains their capacity to conduct development research and research translation, contributing to the long-term impact of a research project.

Funding for Research

LASER PULSE funds research in two ways:

1. Buy-In Funding: Working with USAID Missions/Bureaus/Independent Offices to refine development challenges and to assemble and support research teams from its network to carry out USAID-requested research projects.

2. Core Funding: Issuing Requests for Application based on identified research needs and making awards that bring together collaborative teams of researchers and practitioners to carry out research in USAID partner countries for 1-2 years. The intention is that this work will lead to changes in practice or policy and address important global development challenges.

Embedded Research Translation

The LASER PULSE program's approach to research translation, Embedded Research Translation, is an iterative co-design process among academics, practitioners, and other stakeholders in which research is intentionally applied to a development challenge. Core to this approach are four pillars: partnership, process, product, and dissemination. Additional toolkits and frameworks are available to assist in designing an effective research translation approach.

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CASE STUDY: EVALUATING DIGITAL READINESS

The LASER PULSE program worked with researchers in Nepal to understand the role of digital technology in empowering rural women micro-entrepreneurs.

The team identified barriers and enablers to the adoption of digital technology and tested strategies to create an enabling environment through workshops and training with the communities that would allow the entrepreneurs to access market information and services to improve their businesses.

Local government authorities and private sector partners have also incorporated the team's research into new programming, enabling access and use of digital technologies to enhance green enterprises and agricultural practices.

THE CONSORTIUM

LASER encourages academics, practitioners, and other stakeholders to work together in an iterative co-design process where research is purposefully applied to a development problem.

The LASER Consortium includes:

- ❏ Purdue University
- ❏ Catholic Relief Services
- ❏ Indiana University
- ❏ Makerere University
- ❏ University of Notre Dame