

Press Release



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USAID Facilitates Regional Forum to Attract Investors to The Ethiopia's Livestock Sector

Four Regional Meetings Connect 100 Ethiopian Businesses, Potential Investors, and Sales Partners

Mekelle, Tigray, October 21, 2014 – The U.S. Government, through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID's) Agricultural Growth Program-Livestock Market Development project (AGP-LMD), today held the fourth of four regional livestock investment forums in Mekelle. The forums connect foreign and local investors with 100 pre-selected local companies that have lucrative investment opportunities in dairy, meat and live animal business.

Dr. Mebratu Meles, State Minister, Ministry of Industry, addressing participants noted: "The opportunity is huge and the government is ready to support as much as necessary."

The discussions with government officials and industry experts focused on the existing challenges and opportunities in the sector. Investor-investee round table discussions established links among foreign and local investors and pre-selected, high potential investee companies.

Gary Robbins, a USAID Ethiopia official, said, "The competitiveness of the livestock and related industries in Ethiopia can grow when the private sector actively participates. Our objective is to connect investors with opportunities that also will benefit small holder farmers whom we support."

The Mekelle forum was the fourth regional livestock investment forum organized by USAID's Agricultural Growth Program-Livestock Market Development (AGP-LMD). Three others were held in September and early October in Adama, Oromia, Bahir Dar, Amhara and in Hawassa, Southern Nations Nationalities and People (SNNP) region.

A promising outcome of the exchanges, 18 businesses so far have attracted the interest of nine local and three international investor companies. A social investment fund and a private equity investment consulting firm from the U.S. were among the investor companies at the forums. The meetings also provided 26 livestock businesses with opportunities to make initial contacts for sales relationships with others in their respective dairy, meat, and live animal value chains.

Dr. Gebregziabher Gebreyohannes, State Minister of Agriculture, indicated the importance of the livestock sector for Ethiopia's Growth and Transformation Strategy: "Our government has dedicated great resources and effort to resolve various challenges that have been hampering the development of the livestock sector. I would like to reassure current and potential investors in the sector that the government will continue to extend its support to them and to improve the investment climate to ensure profitability and sustainability of the sector."

USAID's Agricultural Growth Program-Livestock Market Development (AGP-LMD) is funded by the U.S. Government's [Feed the Future Initiative](#), as part of USAID's contribution to the Government of Ethiopia's Agricultural Growth Program. The project works to connect middle-of-the-value chain businesses with higher-value, and/or higher-capacity markets.

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