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Kenyan businessman at a USAID-supported African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) workshop. Photo credit: USAID

## KENYA

### SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

Micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) are critical drivers of economic growth and contribute substantially towards poverty reduction, employment, and income generation. Kenya has an estimated 1.5 million formally registered MSMEs and over 5 million informal MSMEs, which collectively generate 30% of GDP and most of the non-agricultural employment. Kenyan MSMEs operate in all sectors of the economy, with large concentrations in wholesale and retail trade, manufacturing, and food services. The Kenya Small Business Development Centers program strengthens the capacity of Kenyan MSMEs and builds linkages to U.S. counterparts. The program targets MSMEs at any stage of business in the agribusiness (crops, livestock, and fisheries) and apparel and creatives (artisanal, visual arts, cinema, audiovisual, and multimedia) sectors.

#### OUR WORK

The program takes the best practices in business development and advisory services from the U.S. Small Business Development Center (SBDC) model and transfers them to a local network of county-based business centers. This local network of centers, six to begin with, adapts and implements the SBDC's accredited training curriculum and proven methodology for supporting small businesses. The program also builds linkages between Kenyan and American MSMEs. The program helps Kenyan MSMEs more effectively take advantage of local and export market opportunities, gain improved

access to finance, apply market analytics, and benefit from a supportive business-enabling policy environment at the county-level. This strengthens Kenya's economic competitiveness and generates positive impacts (jobs, livelihoods, and incomes) for the Kenyan people.

## ACTIVITIES

The centers provide the following services:

- **Consulting:** Structuring production and pricing of various value chains, business operations, and planning.
- **Training:** Focusing on export market readiness, business governance, management, sustainable business operations, and planning.
- **Advisory on Business Development:** Accessing finance, business planning, technology development, regulatory compliance, marketing, and international trade; and
- **Policy Research and Market Intelligence:** Focusing on consumer market insights, export market trends, and policy briefs.

## OBJECTIVES

- Identify and operationalize an accredited network of county-based small business centers to provide subsidized business support services to MSMEs.
- Establish sustainability mechanisms and support systems for county-based small business centers from national and county governments, private sector, and other stakeholders.
- Increase the awareness and capacity of county-based MSMEs to tap export market opportunities available under U.S.-Kenya trade programs.
- Ensure the effective inclusion and participation of women both in terms of businesses served, as well as women serving in leadership positions at the business centers.
- Build business linkages between U.S. and Kenyan MSMEs and transfer best practices from the U.S. SBDCs network to Kenya.

**BUDGET:** USD \$5 million

**DURATION:** 2021-2026

### ACTIVITY LOCATIONS

Nairobi and 6 Prosper Kenya Counties (Isiolo, Kiambu, Kisumu, Makueni, Mombasa, and Nakuru)

### IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

Strathmore University

### KEY PARTNERS

- The University of Texas at San Antonio
- The Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and Enterprise Development
- County Governments
- Private sector and civil society organizations  
academic institutions

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