

U.S. EMBASSY NAIROBI, KENYA

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION

PRESS RELEASE



Ten Local Enterprises Receive KSH 380 Million in Grants for Innovations to Improve Livelihoods and Food Security

NAIROBI, Friday, May 26, 2016 –The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has granted KSH 380 million to Kenyan innovators as part of its Feed the Future Kenya Innovation Engine (KIE), an effort to reward and improve agriculture-based innovations. To date, more than 57,000 rural households have benefitted from KIE-supported innovations and attracted nearly \$1.4 million in public and private sector investment.

At a launch held yesterday in Nairobi, the Agency granted funds to ten local firms to transform simple agriculture initiatives into valuable projects in Kenya. Such projects have played key roles in improving incomes in individual households while at the same time, reducing poverty levels and improving food security among communities.

“Following a vetting process, six of these pilot roll-out grants have already been awarded, and the Innovation Engine is poised to grant funding and technical assistance to an additional four advanced innovations,” said Karen Freeman, the Mission Director USAID Kenya and East Africa.

KIE is a five-year program, implemented in collaboration with USAID partner Land O’Lakes International Development, that identifies, nurtures and brings to scale innovative, private sector-oriented solutions to food security, under-nutrition and poverty.

The Innovation Engine collaborates with entrepreneurs who design new concepts, products and services to maximize their commercial value. The initiative was launched in 2012 with funding from USAID; KIE has so far provided seed funding and technical expertise to 22 innovations with a promise of more support for food security and social support initiatives.

“This initiative has contributed substantively to building the businesses and institutions involved in these areas,” stated Ms. Freeman.

The companies that have benefitted from this initiative are: Lachlan Kenya Ltd., Wanda Organic Ltd., the Arid Lands Information Network (ALIN), Indicus East Africa Ltd., Takaful Insurance of Africa Ltd., Value Farms Ltd., Kenya Biologics Ltd., Amtech Technologies Ltd., Kenya Livestock Marketing Council (KLMC) and iProcure Ltd.

KIE achievements

- Of the more than **57,000 households** reached by new technologies during the proof-of-concept stage, **30,000 farmers** made a repeat purchase of the innovation.
- Smallholders have recorded **\$6.7 million in incremental sales** since adopting these innovations.
- The private and public sector have **provided \$1.4 million in additional funding**, and **23 strategic partnerships** with sector players have been established. These include partnerships with Amiran Kenya, Syngenta Foundation, Meru Greens, Barclays Bank of Kenya, and Faulu Kenya. KIE has also partnered with the USAID-funded Kenya Agricultural Value Chains Enterprises Project (KAVES) and Once Acre Fund to scale these innovations.
- Enterprises created **1,458 jobs** at the proof-of-concept (innovation testing) stage. The number of jobs created is expected to increase significantly in the current pilot roll-out stage.

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