KENYA

LEGEND Leveraging Equality for Gender-Inclusive Economic Development

LEGEND will build on the foundations laid by the GAC-funded M-SAWA program while strengthening its focus on gender equality and environmental sustainability. Using a Lead Firm approach and applying MEDA’s experience in Gender Lens Investing (GLI), LEGEND will contribute to improved economic prosperity for over 30,000 women and youth in Kenya.
Quick Facts

- **Duration**: 6 years
- **Target Regions**: Lake Zone (Busia, Siaya, Kisumu, Homa Bay, Migori) and Coast (Taita Taveta, Kilifi, Kwale)
- **Target Sectors**: Horticulture, aquaculture and poultry
- **Client Targets**: 250 SMEs; 30,000 small entrepreneurs; 100 associations and organizations

entrepreneurs (SE) gain access to the information, inputs, technologies, financing, and markets.

LEGEND is committed to improving socio-economic prosperity for women, with attention to young women. SEs in rural Kenya have limited access to finance, land, and technical support; exacerbated for women who lack control over time and resources. LEGEND will work in Lake Zone and South Coast given high incidences of poverty, and gender and human rights constraints. These geographies present as opportunity to assist women to overcome barriers in targeted sectors of horticulture, poultry, and fisheries.

**Key Approaches**

**Lead Firm Approach**

Lead firms (LFs) are private-sector enterprises who are “market makers.” This means these businesses are willing to invest in their own business growth, as well as investing in market opportunities that improve the capacity of their business partners – suppliers, service providers, buyers and/or customers.

Building on the successful implementation of this model through the previous M-SAWA project, MEDA will provide matching grants to LFs in the horticulture, aquaculture and poultry sectors. Funds will be used to support initiatives benefiting both the LF and the SEs and SMEs within their supply chains and place a strong focus on engaging with women SMEs and SEs, while integrating gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) and promoting environmental sustainability and climate change adaptation (ECC).

**Gender Lens Investing**

Gender lens investing (GLI) is the practice of investing for financial return while also considering the benefits to women, both through improving economic opportunities, and through securing the social well being of girls and women. While investment in Kenyan businesses has been growing rapidly in the past five years, gender-lens investing (GLI) is in the nascent stage. MEDA identifies the importance of a GLI ecosystem for fostering gender balance and equity to expand, not limit, inclusive economic growth.

**Anticipated Outcomes**

Key outcomes for the project include:

- Increased business capacities, access to finance and GESI/ECC capacity of SMEs
- Increased business and financial capacities; strengthened alliances; and enhanced leadership on GESI, ECC and HR for SEs
- Increased capacity of the enabling environment to support women and youth-led SMEs
- Increased awareness and improved capacity in GLI

**Project Overview**

LEGEND will be key in MEDA’s long-term commitment to contribute to Kenya’s economic development. By assisting small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to reach technical, business, and financial services, hundreds of profitable, growing, agri-SMEs can build robust value chains where tens of thousands of small