USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT LEARNING AGENDA
Latin America and the Caribbean Environment
November 2020

PHOTO: THOMAS CRISTOFOLETTI FOR USAID

Purpose and Context

Private sector engagement (PSE) is a key element of USAID's policy framework to further its development objectives and sustain investments and outcomes. There is increasing recognition that the private sector's strengths, such as agility, links to markets, and customer focus, can complement donors' abilities to deliver development results. The Agency emphasizes PSE in the Effective Partnering and Procurement Reform, a key component of the Acquisition and Assistance Strategy, and is developing new resources and products to assist USAID staff in all sectors with appropriate and productive engagement. Still, information on PSE in the environment sector is scarce, and alignment between environment and private sector goals can be challenging. LAC Environment Officers still struggle with determining when and how to collaborate with the private sector for better long-term environment and development outcomes.

With USAID increasingly using PSE to achieve development results, a current priority is building the evidence base and sharing knowledge and information about effectively using this engagement to meet its environment objectives. Additionally, it is necessary to understand how to apply and use the Agency's existing PSE resources and tools in the LAC environment context.

The goal of the LAC Environment Learning Agenda for Private Sector Engagement is to generate and share evidence to **inform USAID efforts to engage the private sector to achieve environment outcomes, including biodiversity conservation and sustainable landscapes.** It defines **learning questions**¹ and then develops specific **activities** to address those questions.

The Learning Agenda will contribute to and complement USAID's Private Sector Engagement Policy, PSE Evidence and Learning Plan, and the Self-Reliance Learning Agenda.

---

1   The Office of Management and Budget defines a learning agenda as "a set of broad questions directly related to the work that an agency conducts that, when answered, enables the agency to work more effectively and efficiently, particularly pertaining to evaluation, evidence, and decision-making." Learning questions should be useful, focused, feasible and inclusive.
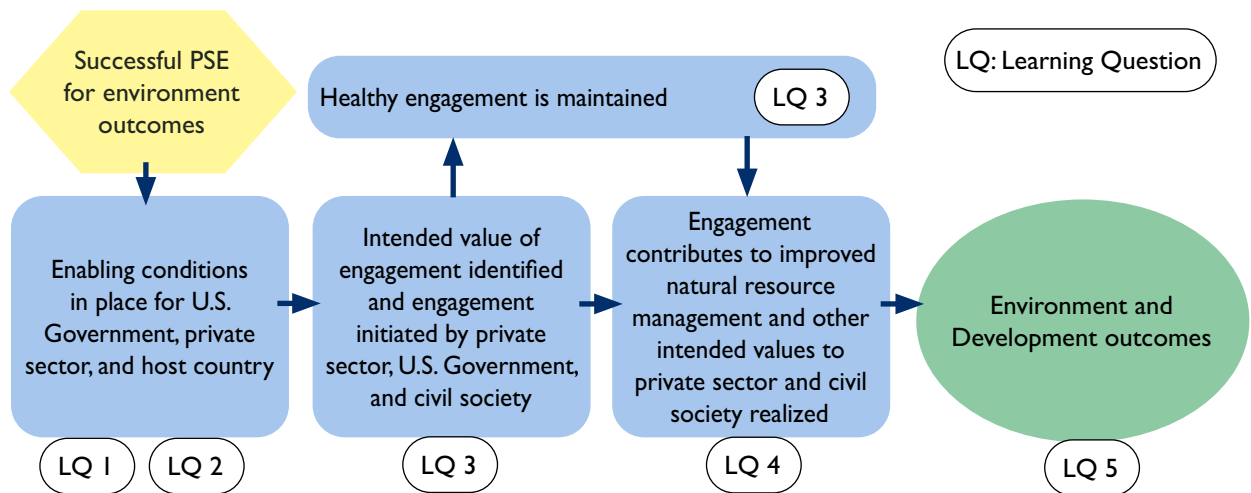
PHOTO: JASON HOUSTON FOR USAID

Framework: Theory of Change

The Learning Agenda is framed by a theory of change that presents a hypothesis of expected results leading from USAID's engagement with the private sector, both formally and informally, to improve environment outcomes. The theory of change and its associated learning questions are a framework to help teams plan for, learn about, and adapt their engagement with the private sector to enhance environment programs. The learning questions seek to test the assumptions, understand the context, and define key characteristics of an expected result. View the full theory of change here.

PSE for Environment Learning Questions

Category	Question	Alignment with other USAID Learning Agendas, Questions, Activities
Enabling conditions	**1. What are the barriers and incentives for the private sector to engage with USAID on environment programs?** **2. What enabling conditions are essential for PSE?** • 2.1 What USAID investments in enabling conditions increase PSE for the environment? • 2.2 When does it make sense to invest in enabling conditions instead of individual engagements?	PSE: What context-specific factors drive effective engagement with the private sector?
Engagement/ relationship	**3. What characteristics lead to an effective and sustainable relationship and environment outcomes?**	PSE: What PSE relationship qualities influence results? PSE Decision tree tool (in development) PSE Hub Partnership Enduring Results Study
Implementation	**4. How and to what extent does engaging with the private sector affect environment behaviors and practices of targeted actors?** • 4.1 Do the benefits of engaging the private sector to address environmental problems outweigh the costs?	J2SR: How can PSE support countries in advancing on the Journey to Self-Reliance?
Environment Outcomes	**5. How and to what extent does engaging with the private sector lead to improved environment outcomes?** • 5.1 What approaches to engage the private sector lead to sustained, large scale environment outcomes? Possible approaches: Jurisdictional/ policy, landscape management, commodities, and markets, etc. • 5.2 How can we measure the added value and impact of PSE on environment outcomes?	PSE: How and to what extent does PSE improve development and humanitarian outcomes? USAID partnership health indicator resource (in development)

PHOTO: USAID-ACCESO/FINTRAC, INC.

Learning Activities and Products

This program will respond to Mission learning needs by fostering an accessible environment for staff to connect with experts and each other to build and share evidence. Based on Mission feedback, the program will prioritize a few products and activities each year to address one or more of the learning questions.

How to Engage

To access learning activities and products, provide input, or sign up for the LAC Environment Learning newsletter, visit https://rmportal.net/biodiversityconservation-gateway/learning-groups

This document was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Environmental Incentives for the Measuring Impact II (MI2) Contract.