

# Strategic Plan Fiscal Years 2022- 2026

















# TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Contents

MISSION STATEMENT 3	
AGENCY OVERVIEW3	
Strategic Goal 1: Support U.S. Jobs by Supporting Exports of American Goods and Services for Priority Infrastructure Projects in Emerging Economies 5	
Objective 1.1: Lead the U.S. government's infrastructure project development and preparation activities in emerging economies.	5
Objective 1.2: Prioritize funding for activities in markets and sectors with strong American export opportunities and where U.S. industry expertise can address the infrastructure priorities of partner countries.	6
Objective 1.3: Level the playing field for U.S. industry in overseas markets by developing strategies and programs to align with the needs and priorities of the U.S. private sector	7
Key External Factors	8
Performance Targets	9
Strategic Goal 2: Foster Opportunities for U.S. Small Businesses through Significant Involvement in USTDA's Programs10	)
Objective 2.1: Engage in significant and direct outreach to educate small and medium-sized enterprises on USTDA's export-promotion program1	
Objective 2.2: Rely on small businesses to provide technical expertise and guidance on USTDA investments1	1
Performance targets1	1
Strategic Goal 3: Support the Engagement of the U.S. Private Sector in Climate Action in Emerging Economies12	
Objective 3.1: Promote climate mitigation and adaptation projects that have a high likelihood of utilizing U.S. goods and services1	2

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Objective 3.2: Promote exports of U.S. technology and services that support climate mitigation and adaptation in developing and middle-income economies	13
Key External Factors	_ 14
Performance Targets	14
Management Foundations: Provide Innovative Customer Solutions and Increase Internal Efficiency	
Foundation 1: Utilize innovative solutions to deliver quality customer service.	15
Foundation 2: Improve efficiency of internal processes while maintaining high standards diligence.	
Congressional and Interagency Coordination	_ 17
Congressional Consultations	17
Interagency Coordination	17

### THE AGENCY

#### MISSION STATEMENT

The U.S. Trade and Development Agency helps companies create U.S. jobs through the export of U.S. goods and services for priority infrastructure projects in emerging economies. USTDA links U.S. businesses to export opportunities by funding project preparation and partnership building activities that develop sustainable infrastructure and foster economic growth in partner countries.

USTDA achieves its mission by funding feasibility studies, technical assistance and pilot projects that integrate U.S. private sector innovation into infrastructure projects at the critical early stages when design choices and technology options are determined. The Agency also connects overseas project sponsors with U.S. partners through its reverse trade missions, industry conferences and expert workshops.

USTDA's dual mission of facilitating overseas economic development and U.S. exports is unique among federal agencies. In carrying out its mission, the Agency places particular emphasis on vital economic sectors including clean energy, information and communications technology, transportation, healthcare infrastructure, and agriculture.

#### AGENCY OVERVIEW

USTDA was created with a specific mission "to promote United States private sector participation in development projects in developing and middle-income countries, with special emphasis on economic sectors with significant United States export potential." USTDA's dual Congressional mandate is unique among federal agencies in requiring that the Agency simultaneously undertake to provide foreign assistance for the development of sustainable infrastructure in emerging economies while supporting U.S. jobs through the export of U.S. goods and services to the infrastructure activities that USTDA develops.

The Agency accomplishes its mission by providing grant assistance to overseas sponsors for project preparation support for priority infrastructure projects in their countries. The funding may be used to perform a feasibility study, provide technical assistance, or launch a pilot project. USTDA also connects project developers with U.S. businesses by sponsoring conferences and technical workshops, as well as reverse trade missions specifically tailored

<sup>1</sup> 22 U.S.C. § 2421(a).
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### THE AGENCY

to bring top foreign decision-makers to the United States, to observe the unique design, manufacture and operation of U.S. products and services, thereby informing and impacting future procurement decisions. This unique project preparation and partnership-building toolkit is why USTDA is often referred to as the overseas project preparation agency of the U.S. government.

These activities have produced dramatic results and tangible benefits for both U.S. industry and USTDA's partners in emerging economies: U.S. companies are provided access to the lead infrastructure project developers around the world, while foreign partners gain insight into advanced and most applicable U.S. technologies and services to meet development needs. As a result, the Agency consistently and reliably achieves a unique portfolio of targeted foreign assistance, support of U.S. trade, advancement of economic development priorities, and support U.S. jobs.

This strategic plan is accompanied by an Agency learning agenda, which can be found on USTDA's website: https://ustda.gov/reports-and-resources/

# Strategic Goal 1: Support U.S. Jobs by Supporting Exports of American Goods and Services for Priority Infrastructure Projects in Emerging Economies

USTDA's unique Congressional mandate requires the Agency to engage the U.S. private sector in development projects at the critical early stages when technology options and project requirements are being defined.<sup>2</sup> Consistent with that mandate, USTDA's primary strategic goal is to support U.S. jobs by supporting exports of American goods and services for priority infrastructure projects in emerging economies.

Supporting American jobs is a longstanding policy priority for our government, and a continuing critical imperative as U.S. companies face increasing competition for the export of U.S.-manufactured goods, technologies, and services. In response to this challenge and recognizing that supporting American jobs remains a paramount priority now and into the future, USTDA has strategically expanded its export promotion activities. This will level the playing field for U.S. industry in overseas markets, increasing opportunities for exports, and creating jobs at home.

In executing this goal, USTDA employs a detailed, evidence-informed approach to identify markets and sectors with the strongest likelihood of export success. This ongoing, rigorous analysis and evaluation process ensures that the Agency remains responsive to timely and emerging opportunities, the unique expertise of U.S. industry, and the economic development needs of overseas partners. The Agency will continue to evaluate all completed activities at least once per its Monitoring and Evaluation Policy.

# Objective 1.1: Lead the U.S. government's infrastructure project development and preparation activities in emerging economies.

Throughout the Agency's history of linking U.S. businesses to export opportunities, USTDA has generated more than \$76 billion dollars in U.S. exports<sup>3</sup> and emerged as a leading agency for project preparation within emerging economies. With more than 30 years of experience serving as the U.S. government's premier infrastructure project preparation facility, USTDA's

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> 22 U.S.C. § 2421(b)(2).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> As of the beginning of fiscal year 2022.

methodology for developing projects and its overall success rate have proven the Agency to be unique in a growing field of competing infrastructure project preparation facilities (IPPFs).

USTDA has been able to effectively use its experience and ever-growing body of evidence to guide investments into areas of greatest mutual return both for the American taxpayers as well as the Agency's overseas partner countries. To achieve its dual mission, the Agency has prioritized the leveraging of its unique relationships with technical experts and trusted financiers from the U.S. government, multilateral development banks, regional development banks, and the private sector to help unlock financing for infrastructure projects in emerging economies. USTDA will continue to prepare projects for these financial institutions in furtherance of its mission to advance overseas infrastructure projects using U.S. commercial capabilities and solutions.

Objective 1.2: Prioritize funding for activities in markets and sectors with strong American export opportunities and where U.S. industry expertise can address the infrastructure priorities of partner countries.

USTDA has long recognized that an evidence-based approach enables the Agency to efficiently budget for activities that provide a return for U.S. taxpayers. USTDA continuously evaluates its program tools to determine the Agency's overall effectiveness on behalf of U.S. industry, foreign policy priorities, and emerging economy needs, in alignment with the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018.<sup>4</sup>

The Agency will maintain its use of evaluation and research data for, as described in the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) guidance, "the systematic collection and analysis of information about the characteristics and outcomes of the program, including projects conducted under such program, as a basis for making judgments and evaluations regarding the program; improving program effectiveness; and informing decisions about current and future programming."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Per section 101(a) of the Evidence Act, "[t]he term 'evaluation' means an assessment using systematic data collection and analysis of one or more programs, policies, and organizations intended to assess their effectiveness and efficiency." 5 U.S.C. § 311(3).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> OMB Memorandum M-18-04, "Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines for Federal Departments and Agencies that Administer United States Foreign Assistance," January 11, 2018, p. 2.

On an annual basis, USTDA will analyze past performance by country and sector, review the proven success and ongoing challenges of its program, and identify the most effective and innovative tools to leverage funding. In addition to USTDA's record of results, the Agency will continue to monitor U.S. export growth and forecasted trends in its key markets. This comprehensive methodology allows the Agency to prioritize the number of markets and sectors, targeting resources for activities with a higher probability of success. USTDA's ongoing use of evaluation and performance data will inform each of its programmatic funding decisions.

Before each new fiscal year, the Agency develops a strategic plan to identify priority countries and key infrastructure sectors most likely to support increased U.S. exports and development around the world. This process outlines with evidence the Agency's success allocating its resources and provides clearer direction to make future adjustments. This outcome-based strategic planning process will continue to inform USTDA's annual performance plan as well as the development of its long-term strategic goals.

In addition to analyzing the overall effectiveness of USTDA's ongoing programs, the Agency will also maintain its data-driven approach by identifying and analyzing U.S. export growth and general market trends in its key industry sectors. The Agency realizes the importance of studying the sectors where it has achieved past success, as well as clearly evaluating future markets to best plan future opportunities. USTDA's sector teams will continue to strengthen their expertise in key industries to understand global demand and to identify the sectors that represent the greatest opportunity for U.S. export growth.

Objective 1.3: Level the playing field for U.S. industry in overseas markets by developing strategies and programs to align with the needs and priorities of the U.S. private sector.

USTDA continually seeks ways to enhance its cooperation with U.S. companies and to level the playing field and ensure access to infrastructure opportunities for U.S. industry in overseas markets.

One of USTDA's most defining characteristics is its robust partnership with the U.S. private sector. Every project proposal the Agency receives undergoes careful review and analysis, thoroughly evaluating export opportunities for American companies.

The Agency has also enhanced its programmatic tools and has pioneered select activities to open markets to U.S. industry and break down barriers to free and fair competition.

Global Procurement Initiative (GPI): Understanding Best Value: Launched in 2013, this initiative educates officials in emerging economies about the benefits of structuring public procurements that integrate life-cycle cost analyses and best-value determinations. The GPI is an essential USTDA strategy to improve foreign governments' capacity to make more transparent qualitative procurement decisions by adopting these practices. This in turn levels the playing field for U.S. companies and leads to the procurement of high-quality, sustainable infrastructure with overall savings to the partner government. USTDA maintains the capability to deliver tailored assistance, often in collaboration with other U.S. government agencies, to enhance the trade environment of foreign markets and increase U.S. industry competitiveness abroad.

U.S. government and multilateral financier relations: USTDA has also established strong relationships with U.S. government and multilateral financiers to help unlock capital for infrastructure projects that offer opportunities for U.S. industry participation. USTDA leverages its partnerships with multilateral and regional finance institutions – including the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, CAF-Development Bank of Latin America, The Eastern and Southern African Trade and Development Bank, the Development Bank of South Africa, and many others – to prepare projects for their funding consideration. USTDA's partnership with these institutions enhance the likelihood of project implementation and the export of U.S. goods and services to the infrastructure projects that USTDA supports. USTDA will continue to work closely with multilateral financiers and local and regional development banks to increase U.S. company engagement in the projects financed in USTDA's priority countries and sectors.

USTDA's Making Global Local initiative: Making Global Local connects towns and cities across the country with USTDA's export promotion program. This initiative will continue to develop new essential relationships and strengthen existing partnerships to increase the number of U.S. companies that benefit from USTDA's activities with the ultimate goal of supporting U.S. jobs through increased exports. Making Global Local initiative helps to extend USTDA's ecosystem of opportunity to every U.S. company that shares its mission. This especially includes companies that have been historically underserved, including small, woman-owned, minority-owned, and disadvantaged businesses. In this regard, Making Global Local helps to ensure that opportunity is inclusive and shared among the diverse spectrum of companies that exist in this country.

#### **KEY EXTERNAL FACTORS**

USTDA's ability to achieve its goals may be impacted by political and economic events in the countries where it operates and economic factors that may impact the domestic economy. This

includes economic downturns and the graduation of countries eligible for USTDA assistance. USTDA will monitor these events and do its best to mitigate the resulting impacts by directing funding towards activities in the markets and sectors with the greatest potential for return.

#### **PERFORMANCE TARGETS**

In each fiscal year from 2022 through 2026, the Agency will strive to generate, at a minimum, an average of \$136 in U.S. exports for every appropriated dollar programmed.

### SG 2 | FOSTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR U.S. SMALL BUSINESSES THROUGH SIGNIFICANT INVOLVEMENT IN USTDA'S PROGRAMS

# Strategic Goal 2: Foster Opportunities for U.S. Small Businesses through Significant Involvement in USTDA's Programs

Historically, small businesses play a leading role in driving U.S. economic growth and job creation. Specifically, small businesses are the primary source of American jobs. Since the Agency's inception, USTDA has been a catalyst for engaging U.S. small businesses in targeted international arenas. As of the beginning of fiscal year 2022, USTDA has generated more than \$76 billion in U.S. exports since 1992. These exports have benefited U.S. companies across the country, including small businesses from more than 370 communities.

USTDA remains committed to executing a significant domestic outreach program to inform the U.S. private sector about USTDA's mission and resources, and to help identify and encourage U.S. firms, particularly SMEs, seeking to expand overseas. The Agency remains a partner in the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC), an interagency effort that includes the Department of Commerce, the Export-Import Bank of the United States (Ex-Im), and the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Office of International Trade, among others, to educate U.S. businesses on the U.S. government's various export assistance programs. Moreover, USTDA is committed to awarding direct contracts to small businesses for activities that inform the Agency's programming decisions. By providing opportunities for these companies to apply their expertise in an international context, USTDA gives small businesses valuable international experience that is often difficult to obtain. As a result, numerous small businesses with successful international portfolios first gained international reach working with USTDA.

# Objective 2.1: Engage in significant and direct outreach to educate small and medium-sized enterprises on USTDA's export-promotion program.

USTDA's signature domestic outreach program – Making Global Local – was launched in 2012 and has helped small businesses across the country realize the benefits of USTDA's export-promotion program. Under the Making Global Local banner, USTDA has formed strategic partnerships with numerous regional, state and local trade-promotion organizations, which, in turn, educate partner businesses about USTDA and host Agency-funded reverse trade missions in cities across the country. Making Global Local is a proven and effective tool for engaging with SMEs, who frequently learn about USTDA's program through its Making Global Local partners and then register to participate in Agency-funded activities.

### SG 2 | FOSTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR U.S. SMALL BUSINESSES THROUGH SIGNIFICANT INVOLVEMENT IN USTDA'S PROGRAMS

USTDA also regularly collaborates with the regional and district offices of the SBA, as well as the Department of Commerce's U.S. Export Assistance Centers and District Export Councils, to increase awareness of the Agency's export-promotion program. USTDA staff frequently participate in interagency domestic outreach panels and conferences pertaining to small business engagement. The Agency will continue to educate small businesses on the U.S. government's trade and export-promotion tools, and to collaborate with public and private sector partners to open foreign markets and create opportunities for U.S. businesses to export their goods and services overseas.

# Objective 2.2: Rely on small businesses to provide technical expertise and guidance on USTDA investments.

Direct contract awards under the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) also provide a critical avenue to support U.S. small businesses. In this context, USTDA will maintain its reliance on small businesses, as defined by the SBA, to provide technical guidance and recommendations that inform the Agency's investments. USTDA draws extensively on the expertise of carefully evaluated consulting and engineering firms to provide independent technical and financial analysis during the critical early stages of a project's definition. These direct contracting opportunities position small businesses to succeed by showcasing their technical expertise in the global marketplace.

USTDA's objective is to exceed the requirement for U.S. government agencies to award 23 percent of procurements to U.S. small businesses<sup>6</sup> – a requirement consistently surpassed by the Agency. USTDA is committed to exceeding this benchmark by maintaining its ambitious outreach efforts to U.S. small businesses.

#### **PERFORMANCE TARGETS**

Exceed the SBA's target for U.S. government agencies to award 23 percent of the total
value of all prime contract FAR procurements to U.S. small businesses.

6 15 USC 644(g)(1)(A)(i)

# SG 3 | SUPPORT THE ENGAGEMENT OF THE U.S. PRIVATE SECTOR IN CLIMATE ACTION IN EMERGING ECONOMIES

# Strategic Goal 3: Support the Engagement of the U.S. Private Sector in Climate Action in Emerging Economies

In his Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad,<sup>7</sup> President Biden placed the climate crisis at the center of U.S. foreign policy and national security, and called on agencies engaged in extensive international work to develop strategies and implementation plans for integrating climate change into their work. The National Security Strategy identifies the climate crisis as "the existential challenge of our time" and underscores the importance of immediate global action to reduce emissions, affirming that the United States is mobilizing financing to speed investments in adaptation and the energy transition.<sup>8</sup>

USTDA will join its U.S. government partners in "implementing — and building upon — the Paris Agreement's three overarching objectives (a safe global temperature, increased climate resilience, and financial flows aligned with a pathway toward low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development)" to "promote a significant increase in global climate ambition to meet the climate challenge." Reflecting its mission, USTDA will promote the engagement of the U.S. private sector in low- and zero-carbon and climate-resilient infrastructure projects in emerging economies to reduce carbon pollution and assist our overseas partners to prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change across all our priority regions.

# Objective 3.1: Promote climate mitigation and adaptation projects that have a high likelihood of utilizing U.S. goods and services.

As an agency focused on the early stages of project development, and as a bridge between the United States' innovative private sector and emerging economies, USTDA is well-positioned to drive progress in tackling climate change. USTDA will advance climate action and maximize its impact by investing in the development of bankable climate mitigation and adaptation

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Executive Order 14008, January 27. 2021

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> The White House, *National Security Strategy*, October 2022.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> E.O. 14008.

# SG 3 | SUPPORT THE ENGAGEMENT OF THE U.S. PRIVATE SECTOR IN CLIMATE ACTION IN EMERGING ECONOMIES

projects. These projects can play an important role in stabilizing the climate and managing the impacts of climate change because they have potential:

- to drive or achieve emissions reductions or adaptation benefits at large scales;
- to catalyze, unlock or enable further actions or investment needed to support climate action; and/or
- to demonstrate or deploy at scale innovative and sustainable business models or key technologies that will make it easier to achieve climate mitigation or adaptation goals.

USTDA will expand its investments in preparation of such projects, using its array of tools.

# Objective 3.2: Promote exports of U.S. technology and services that support climate mitigation and adaptation in developing and middle-income economies

A key priority for the United States is to maintain its technological leadership in cutting-edge technologies to protect our economic and national security and ensure that our domestic economy remains robust and productive. As President Biden has said, "The United States must renew its enduring advantages so that we can meet today's challenges from a position of strength." The race to bring global emissions to net zero will entail massive innovation.

The United States is a major innovator. Through its exports of clean technologies, it can contribute to advances in climate mitigation and adaptation in developing and middle-income economies. In line with its mission, USTDA will harness its infrastructure development expertise and experience partnering with the private sector to facilitate the export of U.S. technologies and services that can help emerging economies deploy climate-resilient infrastructure to support low- and zero-carbon development and adaptation to the impacts of climate change. In addition, USTDA will continue to support the rapidly evolving technologies that accelerate decarbonization and innovative approaches to climate adaptation, strategically investing in key opportunities to support U.S. exporters providing these solutions.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Remarks of President Biden at the 2021 Virtual Munich Security Conference, February 19, 2021.

# SG 3 | SUPPORT THE ENGAGEMENT OF THE U.S. PRIVATE SECTOR IN CLIMATE ACTION IN EMERGING ECONOMIES

#### **KEY EXTERNAL FACTORS**

USTDA's ability to achieve these objectives may be affected by political and economic events in the countries where it operates and by a range of factors that may impact the domestic economy. This includes economic downturns, changes in host country or global political conditions, USTDA's ability to work in specific countries due to local conditions, and the graduation of countries eligible for USTDA assistance to high-income status. USTDA will monitor these events and do its best to mitigate the resulting impacts by directing funding towards activities in the markets and sectors with the greatest potential for return.

#### **PERFORMANCE TARGETS**

➤ In each fiscal year from 2022 through 2026, the Agency will exceed 35 percent of new programmatic obligations in support of climate mitigation and adaptation in emerging economies. <sup>11</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> The target refers to the combined amount of climate mitigation and climate adaptation activities. Activities that support both objectives are counted once.

## MANAGEMENT FOUNDATIONS

# Management Foundations: Provide Innovative Customer Solutions and Increase Internal Efficiency

USTDA is committed to remaining a lean, highly effective agency. The Agency's structure promotes an environment that fosters innovation and efficiency, both in external engagement with stakeholders and in its internal operations. USTDA's highest management imperative is to foster a staff and environment that encourages exceptional service and increased operational efficiency to fulfill the Agency's mission and support U.S. government priorities.

# Foundation 1: Utilize innovative solutions to deliver quality customer service.

USTDA has long been an agile, responsive partner to U.S. companies seeking export opportunities and to valuable project sponsors in emerging economies. To that end, the Agency is committed to identify innovative, creative methods to streamline the delivery of its assistance and improve its ability to respond to U.S. industry and host country needs.

The Agency will also look to expand its use of online platforms, and leverage the quickly evolving technology enhancements, to further increase customer engagement and meet customer demand. Increased social media outreach and amplified media identification will continue to educate companies on USTDA services and help disseminate useful business development information. USTDA also frequently hosts sector-focused webinars and online workshops, often in collaboration with its Making Global Local partners, to provide a "how-to" guidance for companies interested in working directly with the Agency.

# Foundation 2: Improve efficiency of internal processes while maintaining high standards of diligence.

As part of its ongoing efforts to maintain its standard of internal efficiency and external response, USTDA embraces continuous process improvement and routinely initiates both short- and long-term internal process improvement efforts. The Agency is committed to "managing through data" and continually strives to leverage data to further refine its business processes, gain efficiencies in operations, improve customer service, and reduce unnecessary labor costs.

For example, USTDA's Project Management Database System has standardized the management of current open obligations across the Agency. The consistent recording and

## MANAGEMENT FOUNDATIONS

monitoring of these open obligations enable standardized reports to enhance decision-making. These internal improvements have increased internal efficiency and improved the speed with which USTDA responds to and collaborates with the private sector.

USTDA has also long sought arrangements with Shared Service Providers (SSPs) to take advantage of the specialized expertise and technical capability of the SSPs, while maximizing the Agency's budgetary and staffing needs and minimizing redundancies across the federal government. This approach has benefitted USTDA and is responsive to OMB's guidance to increase the utilization of SSPs.<sup>12</sup>

Finally, the Agency will continue to innovate in the human capital development arena, to recruit and retain the best and brightest talent to USTDA. For example, USTDA has implemented a hybrid work schedule to allow maximum flexibility. Moving forward, the Agency will also ensure that it continues to provide a robust training program to augment the staff's programmatic expertise.

The above efforts contribute to the Federal Government priority goals of financial, IT and human capital management as required by section 1120(a) of title 31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> OMB Memorandum M-17-22, Comprehensive Plan for Reforming the Federal Government and Reducing the Federal Civilian Workforce

## CONGRESSIONAL AND INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

### Congressional and Interagency Coordination

#### **Congressional Consultations**

USTDA actively engages its Congressional Appropriations and Authorizing Committees on the full breadth of the Agency's programs and activities, including its overall budget, strategic plan, and signature initiatives. This consultation includes regular meetings on Capitol Hill, as well as at USTDA's headquarters, to foster a broad discussion with a wide range of USTDA staff on the Agency's priorities. In addition, USTDA frequently engages Members of Congress when the Agency hosts events in their states or districts. This engagement includes inviting the Member and his or her staff to attend the event and meet with representatives from USTDA, the local business community, and the foreign delegation. These direct interactions provide firsthand engagement with USTDA's program and demonstrate how the Agency's activities are impacting the local economy.

Through direct consultation, USTDA has shared its current evaluation and monitoring practices, as well as the Agency's ongoing efforts to strengthen them, with Congressional stakeholders. This consultation has helped to provide USTDA's Authorizers with a better understanding of the ways the Agency collects the information that enables Congress and U.S. taxpayers to measure its success.

#### **Interagency Coordination**

The Agency has experienced great success building its relationship with USG trade promotion partners. Many of the Agency's export successes would not be possible without implementation financing from agencies including Ex-Im and the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC). Working with the SBA and the Minority Business Development Agency, USTDA has increased private sector outreach for its feasibility studies, technical assistance, reverse trade missions and other business matchmaking initiatives. USTDA collaborates with its TPCC colleagues on numerous projects and committees. The Agency plans to enhance its cooperation with the U.S. Department of Commerce's Advocacy Center, as well as continue its support and participation in overseas missions led by the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Energy, and State.

Additionally, USTDA uses the full array of its assistance tools to support America's foreign policy objectives. The Agency participates in the interagency policy committees coordinated by the National Security Council, to develop, coordinate, and review foreign policy objectives.

## CONGRESSIONAL AND INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

USTDA also coordinates with the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Energy, State, and Treasury, as well as with the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, to facilitate strategic dialogues between the United States and its key trading partners. In fact, USTDA activities are often employed and highlighted as examples of on-the-ground, practical implementation of broader policy objectives.

USTDA has also worked closely with key government technical agencies to launch initiatives in priority overseas markets that engage U.S. industry. For example, the U.S. Departments of Energy and Transportation are both founding members of USTDA's Global Partnership for Climate-Smart Infrastructure. In addition, USTDA's U.S.-Southeast Asia Aviation Cooperation Program includes the active participation of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration, and Transportation Security Administration.