



## USAID-SKOLL INNOVATION INVESTMENT ALLIANCE

### OVERVIEW

The Innovation Investment Alliance (IIA) is a funding and learning partnership between the Skoll Foundation and USAID's Global Development Lab, with support from Mercy Corps, that has invested almost \$50 million in eight proven, transformative social enterprises to scale their impact. Together, IIA partners aim to create systems-level change across sectors and geographies and draw out lessons on scaling that are applicable to the social enterprise community and inform the ongoing conversation on how to create sustainable impact at scale.

### THE PARTNERS

The partners believe that collaboration between government, foundations, and enterprise is fundamentally important to solving the world's most pressing challenges. Each partner brings a distinct perspective and expertise to the Innovation Investment Alliance:



Drives large scale change by investing in, connecting, and celebrating social entrepreneurs and the innovators who help them solve the world's most pressing problems. Skoll brings an expertise in identifying and cultivating social entrepreneurs.



The U.S. Global Development Lab (The Lab) increases the application of science, technology, innovation, and partnerships to achieve, sustain and extend USAID's development impact to help hundreds of millions of people lift themselves out of extreme poverty. The Innovation Investment Alliance is supported by The Lab's Center for Transformational Partnership.



Empowers people to survive through crisis, build better lives and transform their communities for good. Mercy Corps brings its experience in developing field-based programming in over 40 countries and investing in disruptive start-ups to the selection, evaluation and management of organizations selected for funding.

## THE FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

Organizations were selected for funding at the recommendation of USAID and the Skoll Foundation. Funded organizations were required to meet the following conditions:

- **Systems-level change:** Look beyond immediate problems and apply resources in new ways to address underlying causes and effect wide-spread, positive transformation
- **Scalability:** Have the ability to reach millions of people and/or cover a significant geography within five years
- **Impact:** Address a significant development challenge such as poverty, conflict, or climate change
- **Cost-effectiveness:** Generate an acceptable cost/benefit ratio relative to other solutions addressing similar development challenges
- **Entrepreneurial leadership:** Be led by an experienced social entrepreneur
- **Sustainable:** Be capable of operating without future funding from the Innovation Investment Alliance
- **Proven:** Demonstrate evidence linking the innovation to impact
- **Location:** Operate in USAID- and Skoll-eligible geographies

## THE LEARNING COMPONENT

What does it take to scale social impact? As we seek to create solutions to widespread, seemingly intractable problems, such as poverty and climate change, answering this question is as urgent as ever. To inform the actions of social entrepreneurs and the strategies of other funders who support them the IIA is evaluating its portfolio of scaling organizations to create a series of knowledge products. This series, titled Scaling Pathways, will distill critical lessons learned that cut across geographies and sectors and provide information vital to enterprises and funders trying to unlock impact at scale. Download the series at [www.scalingpathways.com](http://www.scalingpathways.com).

## MORE INFORMATION

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