

PROJECT PROFILE

Supporting Private Sector Strategy and Relationship Development for the USAID Bureau for Resilience and Food Security



PROJECT NAME

PSE Support for USAID/RFS

CLIENT

USAID/Bureau for Resilience and Food Security (RFS) [formerly known as the Bureau for Food Security (BFS)]

PRIME CONTRACTOR

Resonance Global

COUNTRY

Global

TIME PERIOD

August 2018 - April 2022

Challenge

Today's global development challenges cannot be solved by governments, donors, and civil society alone. Instead, they demand fresh approaches, new collaboration models, and meaningful engagement from the private sector, to leverage the power of global markets and companies. In 2018, USAID launched its Private Sector Engagement (PSE) Policy as a clear guide for how the Agency will engage with the private sector to shape solutions that achieve sustained impact, carrying forward long after USAID support ends. The Bureau for Resilience and Food Security (RFS) has a longstanding history of engaging the private sector and is seen as an Agency leader in private sector-led development. However, at the time of the PSE Policy's launch, the Bureau was undergoing an organizational transition and lacked institutionalized procedures for PSE. RFS decided to use this period to think through new PSE systems and priorities while still advancing key relationships with multinational corporations.

Solution

Under the Promoting Excellence in Private Sector Engagement (PEPSE) project, Resonance has helped RFS to create a comprehensive strategy and implementation plan for private sector engagement; institutionalize private sector engagement and relationship management across the Bureau; and design and develop priority corporate relationships that directly advance global efforts in RFS's focus areas of agriculture-led growth, resilience, nutrition, and water.

Within RFS, private sector engagement and coordination are led by a multi-sectoral PSE Community of Practice (CoP), which is backed by a small team of full-time, dedicated PSE specialists (the PSE Secretariat). Resonance provides technical guidance and strategic support as well as an embedded team of full-time PSE experts and Relationship Managers for the PSE Secretariat. Through the PSE Secretariat, Resonance helps USAID catalyze private sector resources to address food security challenges. Our Relationship Managers within the RFS PSE Secretariat support USAID by:

- Co-designing an overarching RFS PSE strategy, and developing new tools, resources, and approaches to help RFS and other USAID teams more effectively implement high-impact PSE;
- Supporting relationship management, partnership design, and partnership implementation for high-priority private sector partners;
- Facilitating collaboration across key moments of the partnership lifecycle, including: aligning on partnership priorities and objectives, articulating the partnership business model and shared value, assessing market opportunities, and operationalizing partnerships through key milestones and clear partner roles;
- Engaging private sector partners to speak and participate in key events to demonstrate shared value through public-private partnerships, showcase lessons learned in private sector engagement, and highlight innovations and opportunities for further collaboration; and
- Overseeing and conducting feasibility studies to identify financing facilities; orchestrating collaborative investment approaches; and facilitating engagement with potential investors to advance productive, sustainable, and equitable food systems.

Key Results

- We helped design and develop an RFS-specific **PSE strategy and implementation plan**. The success of this approach later inspired a new PSE implementation strategy for the USAID PSE Hub and became a framework for Missions and Bureaus in developing their own PSE plans.

- Under PEPSE, Resonance has helped develop two high-profile partnerships for RFS:
 - **John Deere.** In October 2019, USAID signed a global memorandum of understanding (MOU) with John Deere – facilitated by Resonance’s embedded Relationship Manager – to expand smallholder farmer access to capital, mechanization, and digital tools and technologies.
 - Resonance then facilitated a whiteboarding workshop with John Deere and USAID Missions in Ethiopia and Nigeria to analyze business model options, assess market opportunities in both countries, and identify resources to support field implementation for country-specific collaboration. From this workshop, USAID and John Deere developed key milestones and timeframes to **operationalize new partnerships in Nigeria and Ethiopia** to address food security challenges and unlock sustainable business opportunities for smallholder farmers.
 - **Mars, Inc.** USAID signed a global MOU with Mars, Inc. in November 2019, facilitated by Resonance’s embedded private sector advisor. The partnership will increase farmer incomes, foster safer food systems, and prioritize women’s economic empowerment in Mars’s global supply chains.
 - As part of this global partnership, Resonance’s embedded private sector advisor also facilitated a Women’s Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) Initiative-funded collaboration between Mars and USAID/Ghana to promote women’s economic empowerment through Mars’s shea supply chain in northern Ghana.
- Resonance PSE experts and Relationship Managers have advanced or initiated more than 20 private sector relationships on behalf of RFS for deployment in the field.
- We’ve helped to create new, standardized PSE engagement tools and processes, including a new **MOU engagement framework** for RFS and a novel **account team model** for managing high-level corporate partnerships, ensuring Mission buy-in, and connecting new Missions to private sector partners.
- We launched a monthly, collaborative **Private Sector Engagement Learning Series** to share practical insights, case studies, methods, and lessons from PSE practitioners across RFS on how to engage the private sector. These sessions pull in audiences from across USAID and emphasize practical, actionable insights that USAID staff and partners can apply in day-to-day work.