



## 2016 OPIC IMPACT AWARDS RECOGNIZE SEVEN LEADERS IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

*The U.S. Government's development finance institution celebrates successful partners' accomplishments in developing countries*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), the U.S. Government's development finance institution, today hosted the 2016 Impact Awards at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, recognizing seven partners for their exceptional achievement in international private-sector development.

These awards are given to partners that have proven to successfully operate and overcome challenges in developing countries and have a positive development impact. OPIC provides financing, political risk insurance, and support for private equity investment funds.

“OPIC is proud to showcase our clients who exemplify the transformative impact that the U.S. private sector can have in the developing world,” said Elizabeth L. Littlefield, OPIC's President and CEO. “The projects represented by our 2016 OPIC Impact Award winners have, with OPIC support, resulted in increased opportunity for thousands of people across Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean.”

“The Chamber recognizes OPIC's unique role in private sector-led development, and is happy to host the agency's 2016 Impact Awards,” said Thomas J. Donohue, President and CEO of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. “OPIC has supported more than \$200 billion of investments in over 4,000 projects throughout developing countries. As foreign direct investment rapidly outpaces aid dollars, there's no question that OPIC will remain an indispensable player in advancing development.”

The OPIC Impact Awards, now in its third year, recognizes the important work OPIC's partners are doing to advance development in emerging markets around the world.

The 2016 OPIC Impact Award Recipients:

- **Development Impact: American Wool and Cashmere, Inc. of Beltsville, Md.,** for establishing a delivery infrastructure so that wool produced by small herders in Western

Afghanistan could reach major export markets. OPIC financing of \$5.7 million helped ensure that the region's herders earned steady income and created employment for more than 1,500 people.

- **Renewable Resources - Energy: BMR Energy, LLC**, for creating the largest private-sector renewable energy project in Jamaica – a 36-megawatt wind farm that will help Jamaica reduce its dependence on imported fossil fuels. OPIC political risk insurance coverage of \$34 million, along with a direct loan of \$43 million, will help Jamaica move toward its goal of generating 20 percent of its electricity from renewable energy by 2030. This project has the capacity to provide power to 36,000 Jamaican households.

- **Access to Finance: Habitat for Humanity's MicroBuild I, LLC, of Atlanta, Ga.**, for providing lending to microfinance institutions that expand opportunities for low-income families in need of decent housing through a combination of capital and housing support services. OPIC committed its first \$45 million loan to MicroBuild in 2012. OPIC financing and support enabled MicroBuild to help tens of thousands of families construct or improve their homes in 19 developing countries.

- **American Small Business: QuantumID Technologies Inc., of Cambridge, Mass.**, for developing handheld, cloud-based cargo tracking technology that has helped make air transport more affordable and reliable. The company used OPIC financing to introduce this state-of-art technology in India, where it has enabled small airline businesses to transport cargo at a lower cost, more efficiently and more safely. Quantum is now using a second OPIC loan to introduce the technology to the Philippines and surrounding regions.

- **Innovation: Westrock Coffee Co., Inc., of Little Rock , Ark.**, for modernizing Rwanda's coffee sector by investing in facilities, training, and sustainable farming and business practices, and by connecting farmers with international buyers. Small coffee farmers constitute the majority of Rwanda's agriculture sector. OPIC political risk insurance coverage of \$19.4 million has helped generate income for thousands of rural family farmers.

- **Critical Infrastructure: Hamma Water Desalination, SpA**, for building a water desalination facility that supplies clean drinking water to hundreds of thousands of families in and around Algeria's capital city. The facility was built with \$200 million of OPIC financing, along with financial support from the Government of Algeria. Hamma embodies the effectiveness of public-private partnerships to build major infrastructure projects. The plant uses a reverse osmosis technology and delivers up to 200,000 cubic meters of potable water to Algiers each day.

- **President's Award: Sambazon Inc., of San Clemente, Calif.**, for creating an innovative, small business that uses sustainable processes and distributes açai juice to the U.S and beyond. OPIC financing of \$3.7 million helped Sambazon generate income for 10,000 family farmers in Brazil, while making trees in the rainforest too valuable to cut down. Sambazon works with more than 30 different communities in the Amazon and supports them by building schools, community centers, and medical centers.

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*OPIC is the U.S. Government's development finance institution. It mobilizes private capital to help address critical development challenges and in doing so, advances U.S. foreign policy and national security priorities. Because OPIC works with the U.S. private sector, it helps U.S. businesses gain footholds in emerging markets, catalyzing revenues, jobs and growth opportunities both at home and abroad. OPIC achieves its mission by providing investors with financing, political risk insurance, and support for private equity investment funds when commercial funding cannot be obtained elsewhere. Established as an agency of the U.S. Government in 1971, OPIC operates on a self-sustaining basis at no net cost to American taxpayers.*

*All OPIC projects adhere to high environmental and social standards and respect human rights, including worker's rights. By mandating high standards, OPIC aims to raise the industry and regional standards of the countries where it funds projects. OPIC services are available for new and expanding business enterprises in more than 160 countries worldwide.*