USAID’s Private Sector Development Project Signs MOU With HNB To Expand Financing To MSMEs



(L–R): Juan Forero, Activity Lead (Interim), Catalyze PSD Sri Lank; Sanjay Wijemanne, Deputy General Manager Retail, and SME Banking HNB; Jonathan Alles, Managing Director/CEO HNB; Reed Aeschliman, Mission Director, USAID Sri Lanka and Maldives; Reneera Paul, Project Management Specialist, USAID Sri Lanka and Maldives; and Jude Fernando, Director of Financing, Catalyze PSD Sri Lanka at the MoU signing ceremony.

The U.S. Agency for International Development’s (USAID) Private Sector Development project signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Hatton National Bank (HNB) to expand financing to micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Sri Lanka.

“Partnerships like this can dramatically enhance economic and social impact more than any of us could achieve on our own,” said Reed Aeschliman, USAID Mission Director for Sri Lanka and Maldives.

“Through this partnership with HNB, we are fostering the next generation of successful businesses in Sri Lanka and, ideally, helping families and communities thrive.”

“Through this initiative, USAID’s Private Sector Development project will work with HNB staff to improve their skills in serving MSME clients by better understanding their unique needs and constraints. It will help HNB develop products and processes that make it easier for MSMEs to access finance”.

“Over a span of more than 30 years, HNB has played a pivotal role in Sri Lanka’s vital MSME sector. In that time, we have worked in close partnership with entrepreneurs at the grassroots of our economy and gained a deep understanding of the challenges they face.

Crucially, HNB also has a wealth of first-hand experience working with a large number of MSMEs, to understand what these enterprises need to accelerate their growth to strengthen the export economy of the country,” said Jonathan Alles, Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, HNB.

“Educating entrepreneurs and ensuring they have the knowledge to make informed choices strengthens their resilience and growth potential. Through our continuing partnership with USAID to support several programs for the benefit of this sector, we have seen the fruits of this labor manifest through better access to finance for our MSME customers. Therefore, we are delighted to be the first to join USAID on this empowering initiative, and we invite MSMEs to make use of this golden opportunity to strengthen and grow their businesses”; Alles concluded.

USAID’s Private Sector Development project will help MSMEs find and finance new

business opportunities to
strengthen their resilience to market changes and global economic shocks. By connecting businesses with advisory services, associations, and financial institutions, the project will help them to use technology, accelerate innovation, and access new domestic and international markets.

This project is one component of the longstanding partnership between the U.S. and Sri Lanka to support self-reliance, strengthen stability, and promote economic growth.

USAID’s program in Sri Lanka, totaling more than USD two billion since 1961, promotes a healthy, educated, as well as an employed population.