

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Economic Growth



For over 50 years, RTI International has supported entrepreneurs, communities, and governments in developing and implementing economic growth interventions that create jobs; foster private sector growth; link local, regional, and global markets; and raise standards of living for all citizens. Our holistic approach recognizes that no two economic environments are the same, ensuring purposeful interventions that address the unique challenges that our clients face.

Expertise

- Promoting workforce development
- Conducting subnational competitiveness analysis and economic development strategies
- Fostering business-enabling environments
- Strengthening development and frontier finance
- Facilitating entrepreneurship and private sector development
- Supporting postconflict economic growth
- Performing agriculture and value chain analysis

RTI's Economic Growth Principles

Our technical approach for economic development is based on several essential principles:

- **Knowledge to practice.** RTI harnesses the power of knowledge through evidence-based research and applies practical solutions—derived from this research—in our international projects. Our distinct status as a nonprofit organization allows us to reinvest funds into cutting-edge research. RTI's specialists draw from a wealth of domestic and international experience to connect relevant research with critical economic challenges.

- **Subnational focus.** Private sector growth and job creation take place locally—in towns and surrounding regions where businesses and markets function. However, investments and job creation here are far less dynamic and often stagnant, resulting in economic disenfranchisement, increased public dissatisfaction, and instability. RTI works with local partners to achieve their economic development priorities and incorporates subnational initiatives into central reform efforts for greater sustainability and impact.
- **Strategic partnerships.** Our thoughtful partnerships with local organizations center on building capacity. RTI leverages its experience in local governance, education, and training to infuse partners with the knowledge transfer needed to sustain economic development.
- **Innovation.** As a research institute, RTI is committed to discovering and disseminating innovative solutions to pressing economic problems. Applying a scientific rigor, we have uncovered paths to solve problems of investment, job creation, and finance.



RTI's Economic Growth Initiatives

We actively apply our key principles through the following research and practice areas:

Leadership Works

Nothing truly transformational is achieved without leadership. Through a dynamic partnership with the internationally acclaimed Center for Creative Leadership, RTI is pioneering a program that uses rigorously researched models and tools to integrate leadership into an economic development framework. This program targets economic opportunities—and the constraints that block them—in stakeholders' backyards. We combine this experiential approach with capacity building in regional economic literacy, economic growth building blocks, and critical individual and team leadership skills.

Workforce Strategies for Global Value Chain Upgrading

RTI and Duke University's Center on Globalization, Governance, and Competitiveness are exploring how governments and their partners can best deploy workforce development strategies to provide businesses, employees, and job seekers with the right skills to compete in the rapidly changing global economy. We are working to analyze how workforce development initiatives can support and enable improvements in developing country participation in the global value chains of key agricultural, manufacturing, and service industries. Case studies illustrating the workforce dimensions of industry upgrading help inform the development of a framework that links economic and social upgrading and workforce development.

Harnessing the Power of Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurs lie at the core of private sector development. Nine out of ten jobs in the developing world are found in the private sector. Supporting a vibrant market economy populated by dynamic companies is the most effective way to create a long-term source of jobs and income for the poor. RTI works on multiple fronts to support entrepreneurship—from developing new business incubators in regions across the United States to building the capacity of young entrepreneurs in Senegal, as well as conducting ongoing evidence-based research about entrepreneurship.

Smart Regulations: Improving Subnational Business Environments

RTI's smart regulation methodology assesses the ways rules and regulations constrain those economic activities most important to a local economy. The assessment produces specific, feasible recommendations that feed into strategies for incentivizing productivity increases. Local government, the private sector, and community leaders implement these strategies to increase economic activity, bringing new opportunities to economic actors.

Frontier Finance: Sustainable Debt and Equity Solutions for Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) in Frontier Markets

RTI's evidence-based research on financial inclusiveness and innovation helps bridge the financial divide and mobilize capital to reach SMEs in low-income and postconflict countries. RTI examines the modalities for supporting frontier SMEs, develops specialized SME financing vehicles, and helps identify the best practices and mechanisms needed for achieving systematic and sustainable growth in these enterprises.

Local Growth Diagnostics

RTI is one of the first organizations to adapt growth diagnostics methodology to the subnational context. Our innovative research in Local Growth Diagnostics (LGD) provides an analytical tool for identifying the binding constraints that prevent local economies from achieving higher growth. We design efficient interventions targeted at reducing the identified constraint and apply LGD methodology to foster inclusive growth and unleash the dynamic potentials of local economies worldwide.

More Information

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RTI International is one of the world's leading research institutes, dedicated to improving the human condition by turning knowledge into practice. Our staff of more than 2,800 provides research and technical expertise to governments and businesses in more than 40 countries in the areas of health and pharmaceuticals, education and training, surveys and statistics, advanced technology, international development, economic and social policy, energy and the environment, and laboratory and chemistry services. For more information, visit www.rti.org.

RTI International is a trade name of Research Triangle Institute.

