

FACES BEHIND DCA



CHRIS LEE

Head, Strategic Transactions Group

Q. What do you do for USAID?

A. I lead the Strategic Transactions Group within DCA. In this role I am fortunate to work alongside a set of sharp and imaginative investment officers. We are seeking to address global development problems from new angles through the creation of novel capital markets products and innovative partnerships.

Q. What part of your job do you find most inspirational?

A. I am constantly inspired by the perseverance and ingenuity of the small business owners we aim to support. Despite their limited resources – something we seek to change – and a host of external factors working against them, they find ways to move forward and achieve their goals. It's a vivid reminder of the strength of the human spirit.

Q. What is your favorite part of the job?

A. I enjoy having the daily opportunity to work with incredibly committed people, and to be creative with an urgency of purpose. We're trying to find capital markets solutions for some of the world's most critical, even existential, challenges such as food insecurity and climate change. It's really rewarding to use your energy with those types of problems in mind.

Q. How did you end up at USAID?

A. While I was working in investment banking I vacationed in Ethiopia to visit a friend who was working for an NGO. At a jazz concert one evening I met some USAID employees who enlightened me about ways I could use my skills to actually help people! That set the wheels in motion to explore a career at the intersection of finance and development.