

## Strengthening Mobility and Entrepreneurship:

### A Case for the Middle Classes

RG-T1989 & RG-T1924

The role of the middle class in economic and social development has attracted considerable attention in recent years, and scholars have offered a variety of sometimes conflicting assessments on the importance of the middle class in entrepreneurship and economic growth. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the increasing prominence of the middle classes in many countries has brought new urgency to these issues. Even though members of all social classes view entrepreneurship as an important component of development, the evidence to date suggests that the region's wealthy, rather than the more numerous middle classes, are more likely to become entrepreneurs.

In order to ensure that policies are based on an accurate understanding of the Latin America and the Caribbean's middle classes, studies in this project will characterize middle class entrepreneurship along dimensions pertaining to the individual and the firm. Selected studies will additionally undertake at least one of the following objectives: i) assess the role of entrepreneurship in social and economic mobility; ii) identify the main constraints facing middle-class entrepreneurs; and iii) identify the type of economic and social policies that middle-class entrepreneurs support as a means to improve the chances of survival and success of their firms. With respect to firm size, this study will focus on small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), defined as firms with between 10 and 50 employees, and 51 and 250 employees, respectively.

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