

INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

PROGRAM OPERATIONS MANUAL
GLOBAL SERVICES PROMOTION PROGRAM (TT-L1038)
FOR TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF PROGRAM'S OPERATING MANUAL

This Program's Operating Manual (POM) and its Annexes establish the main governing regulations related to the functions, activities and processes, legal and organizational structures, administrative and working proceedings that must be followed and applied by the individuals, institutions and agencies that participate in the execution of the Global Services Promotion Program in Trinidad & Tobago.

Any changes made to the POM to adapt it to new conditions or circumstances that may arise during execution of the program must be agreed to the Bank prior to them taking effect. In that event the Project Coordinator of the PEU, after consultation with MPSD and the program's Advisory Board shall propose the change formally in writing, identifying the specific article(s) to be changed and the proposed changes, which must be approved in writing by the Bank.

If situations that were not conceptualized or catered for arise during the execution of the program and are not provided for in this POM, or that require treatment as exceptions, the Project Coordinator shall communicate in writing to the Bank and seek a lack of objection from the Bank in writing, for approval of the proposed action or solution.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

The IDB's Trade and Investment Unit (TIU) has designed a loan program with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago (TT) aimed at promoting exports and investment in the global IT-enabled services sector in the country, through sector-specific training and support services, investment promotion and branding, and regulatory updating (TT-L1038).

The objective of the program is to support the establishment of Trinidad & Tobago as a world renowned location for global provision of IT-enabled services. The expected impacts are increased exports and employment in the sector. This will be accomplished through sector-specific training and support services; investment promotion and branding; business climate improvement and regulatory updating.

The direct beneficiaries of the program are students, the unemployed and underemployed who receive training in the Services Internationalization Hub; exporting ITeS companies who require additional qualified labor to scale their exports; and SMEs who wish to increase their export capacity, based on the Program Components

The program will have three components:

Component I. Global Services Internationalization Hub. This component will finance the establishment of a global services export hub, which will offer the following services: (a) export readiness training and support services to companies and entrepreneurs in the ITeS industry; (b) targeted short-term technical trainings for students in ITeS industry, designed in partnership with onsite companies to meet their skilled labor requirements; (c) technological infrastructure enabling plug-and-play operations by new investors; (d) workspaces for students, local service providers and government agencies designed to foster networking, collaboration and joint R&D.

Component II. Investment Promotion and Sector Branding. This component will support the implementation of innovative methods of promotion for the ITeS industry, including: (a) a sector branding campaign; (b) the organization of global services promotion forums in TT and abroad to attract FDI in the sector, and public and private participation in trade fairs and events; and (c) innovative methods to engage the TT's diasporas, such as mentorship and exchanges.

Component III. Regulatory Framework Update. This component will support efforts to update TT's regulatory framework for the ITeS industry, including: (a) consultancy services to identify gaps and bottlenecks in the existing regulations, in key areas such as intellectual property, electronic payments and financial regulations; (b) know-how exchanges with countries that have implemented effective promotion policies and regulations; and (c) capacity building for the relevant agencies in charge of implementing ITeS policies.

ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE, FUNCTIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Ministry of Planning & Sustainable Development (MPSD) shall be the executing agency for this program. MPSD will establish a dedicated Project Executing Unit (PEU) that will have direct responsibility and hands-on administrative duties to manage all the administrative aspects of the program for all the program components. A private sector entity representing the ITeS sector (hereinafter, "PSE") will work with MPSD to deliver the first component and MPSD will also collaborate closely with the Ministry of Trade, Industry & Investment (MTII) to assist with the delivery of the program's other two components, namely through the two agencies of InvesTT and ExporTT.

LEGAL STRUCTURE

The program shall be governed by the loan agreement signed by GORTT and the Bank. It is expected that through the medium of Cabinet Notes GORTT will establish the approval and

standing for MPSD and MTII to execute (as in the case of MPSD) and support/coordinate (as in the case of MTII) the program components. GORTT will also execute a Memorandum of Understanding with PSE detailing the activities, functions and responsibilities for PSE, as outlined in this POM below¹. The roles and responsibilities for MTII's agencies, InvesTT and ExporTT are also detailed in this POM and will be incorporated / referred to in the relevant Cabinet Note(s) authorizing the engagement of these agencies.

- 1.1 Internationalization training and support services. These services are directed to companies and entrepreneurs in the ITeS industry who are currently exporting and wish to expand, or to local companies who wish to internationalize. Based on the surveys conducted in preparation for the program, the services to be offered are of five types: (i) quality control and productivity improvements, including management systems required by the potential target markets, such as quality control processes (e.g. ISO 9001, eSCM-SP, CMMI); (ii) partnerships, supply chains and joint ventures for export, to strengthen the supply chains; (iii) technology skills maintenance and upgrading, including participation in specialized conferences and events, and access to specialized equipment and software licenses; (iv) market development for exports, to support companies in the prospect, penetration and consolidation of international markets, including commercial visits to target markets and organization of visits from foreign businessmen, marketing and branding; (v) development of soft skills, such as negotiation, customer service and languages.
- 1.2 Finishing Schools. The program will survey the ITeS companies operating in TT and those foreign companies who express an interest in investing in the country, and conduct a gap analysis to determine the specific needs for short-term technical training to increase the availability of qualified human capital. The MPSD, together with PSE, will administer these trainings, and will assist the students with career advising and job placement upon successful completion. In order to select the courses that will be administered each year, priority will be assigned based on the demand from the companies surveyed, their capacity to create the largest number of jobs, and the commitment expressed by the beneficiary companies to make job offers to successful graduates.
- 1.3 Collaborative Physical and Technological Infrastructure. The GSI Hub will offer technological infrastructure enabling plug-and-play operations for investors, and workspaces for students and local service providers designed to foster networking,

¹ A Memorandum of Understanding that establishes the respective roles of all the Technical Coordinating Agencies, InvesTT, ExporTT, PSE can be executed between MPSD and MTII once there is no legal bar to two government ministries executing a MOU between themselves.

collaboration and research and development. In addition, the GSI Hub will synergize with another IDB program – ConnectAmericas – a platform in process of development by the IDB that is expected to be launched in 2014, and will offer SMEs from LAC an online ecosystem where they will be able to establish business links with clients, suppliers and investors from the rest of the region and the world, access relevant information and training tools to facilitate international trade transactions, and obtain information about trade finance opportunities. This collaborative physical and technology infrastructure is expected to promote new ideas and business opportunities for users.

PROJECT EXECUTING UNIT

As the executing agency, the MPSD will have broad oversight responsibility for all matters related to the Program and direct responsibility for the administration of resources and the procurement processes. For the execution of the Program, the MPSD will hire with loan resources a Program Coordinator and a group of specialists that will form the Program Execution Unit (PEU). The PEU will be comprised of:

1. One (1) Program Coordinator/Project Manager
2. One (1) Procurement Specialist
3. One (1) Financial Specialist
4. One (1) Project Assistant
5. Four (4) project consultants on behalf of the coordinating agencies, PSE, ExporTT, InvestTT and ConnectAmericas.

The above will comprise the total project implementation team and will be located and work out from at the Hub.

The specific responsibilities of the PEU will include:

- (i) preparation, implementation and coordination of the Annual Operating Plans (AOPs)
- (ii) preparation of budgets, project accounting, including disbursements and reimbursement of Project funds
- (iii) preparation of the Program's Procurement Plan, the procurement of works, goods and related services and consulting services for the Program
- (iv) coordination of the preparation of technical reports, progress and financial reports
- (v) monitoring of the progress of Program activities and analysis of variances of actual results against plans

- (vi) hiring the external audit and ensuring that the approved recommendations are implemented
- (vii) facilitation of external evaluations of the Program and ensuring, in collaboration with the participating entities, that the approved recommendations are implemented
- (viii) serving as a liaison for the Program with the Bank
- (ix) preparing and managing the lease of office spaces in the GSI Hub under Component I
- (x) coordinating the activities of PSE, InvestTT and the MTII for the execution of the program
- (xi) hiring the consultants for PSE, InvestTT, MTII and the ConnectAmericas program that will carry out the activities described in MOUs that the MPSD will sign with each of them.

Hiring Process for PEU Team

- 1) Develop job descriptions and specifications for i) Program Coordinator, ii) Procurement Specialist, iii) Financial Specialist and iv) Project Assistant. (See Below for description of each function.)
- 2) Advertise widely in all available media – newspapers, business and industry journals, inter-government agencies and websites, IDB website, and relevant social media.
- 3) Interview selected short-listed applicants.
- 4) Interview panel selected from MPSD (committee chair), coordinating agencies, PSE, InvesTT, ExporTT, MTII, and Advisory Board members.
- 5) Offer successful applicants 3-year contracts with the option for renewal for an additional 2 years, based on performance appraisals benchmarks.
- 6) Start hiring process for the coordinating consultants after Program Coordinator is selected.

For the execution of the works comprised in component I, the MPSD through the PEU will hire a contractor and a supervision firm, pursuant to terms of reference agreed upon with the Bank. In addition, the administration of the GSI Hub is expected to include the rental of space to companies of the ITeS industry, and suppliers of services that the GSI Hub will offer, including a cafeteria, a childcare facility and a lactation room for nursing women.

The MPSD will have to immediately locate and select a building in order to be ready for the expected start of the program in April 2014. Given the very tight timeline, it is recommended that MPSD pursue a leasing arrangement with the possible option to purchase after three (3) years if GORTT determines that is the most economically viable strategy to pursue. Activities required include:

- Locate building based on specifications outlined in feasibility study done by AREA (TT's Real Estate Association) i.e. size of 30,000sq ft, location and ease of accessibility
- Hire contracting firm/project manager (supervisory firm) to customize, retrofit and install equipment and connectivity. (Start process of short-listing as building is identified)
- Begin formal process by MPSD – Cabinet Note outlining the program objectives and proposed structures
- Inform and engage Property & Management Division from Ministry of Housing (Finance)
- Identify owner(s) of the building
- Obtain at least two (2) independent valuations externally and one from GORTT's Valuation Department
- Conduct negotiations with owner and Permanent Secretary-appointed team from MPSD
- Submit follow-up Cabinet Note that includes particulars of building acquisition, i.e. leasing costs, building specifications, valuations, purpose of use and start date of program

Should the MPSD decide not to exercise the purchase option referred above, before the end of the third year from the date of the loan contract, the loan resources allocated for the exercise of such option shall be utilized to continue to lease the building until the expiration of the disbursement period of the loan, and to the extent that the amount of said resources exceed the amount necessary for the continuation of the lease, such resources shall be utilized to finance eligible activities comprised in Component I

Retroactive Financing: With the consent of the Bank, up to the equivalent of \$5,000,000 TT Dollars of the resources of the Loan may be used to reimburse expenditures incurred in the Project for the formation of the project execution unit and the securing of the GSI Hub's building. Said expenditures shall have been incurred before the date of Loan approval but after October 18, 2013, provided that requirements substantially similar to those set forth in the Loan Contract have been fulfilled.

FUNCTIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES OF PEU TEAM

Program Coordinator

1. Provide leadership and direction for project planning, implementation processes and program budget. Is the overall Project Manager with full accountability to MPSD and the Bank.

2. Oversee the preparation of all required technical and financial reports, including work plans, action plans, progress reports, etc.
3. Supervise the preparation of bidding documents, terms of references, technical specifications, and all relevant documents required for the procurement of goods, works and services for the project.
4. Review and evaluate the submitted documents for the procurement of goods, works and services.
5. Oversee the implementation and execution of the program, including any modification or refinement to achieve the program's goals.
6. Manage all the administrative and operational activities of the program, including the day-to-day activities at the GSI.
7. Ensure the coordination between the various agencies (InvesTT, ExporTT, PSE), consultants, contractors and program outputs for the delivery of all the program components.

Financial Specialist

1. Prepare the justification of expenses from previous disbursements, according to component activities. This should be according to the financial plan and the advance of funds requested;
2. Coordinate and administer the program's financial system specifically for the program's budget control;
3. Keep updated financial statements and audit reports to support disbursement requests to the Bank and to MPSD
4. Prepare payments, reports and other documents necessary
5. Prepare financial statements as per the Bank's requirements.

Procurement Specialist

1. Ensure all procurement activities of the program are in compliance with the Bank and MSPD's procurement policies.
2. Preparation of the project's Annual Procurement plan and the procurement of goods, works and services for the project.
3. Preparation of bidding documents, terms of references, technical specifications, and all relevant documents required for the procurement of goods, works and services for the project.

Project Assistant

1. Provide intake and disseminate information to the direct beneficiaries of the program.
2. Assist the PEU team with daily and recurrent administrative tasks.
3. Maintain records and disseminate information to relevant stakeholders upon request as well as to the wider public.

Executing Agencies

Technical Coordinating Agencies. In order to assist the MPSD in the execution of the program and the attainment of the objectives and expected results, there will be coordinating agencies that will provide expertise to inform all of the program's technical decisions. In this sense, PSE, as the body representing the ITeS private sector companies, will act as the coordinating agency for Component I. PSE will support the PEU in: the sector surveys that will help identify the Finishing School courses; the delivery of these courses (selecting the instructors, preparing the syllabi, etc); the promotion and management of the GSI Hub. For Component II, the coordinating agency will be InvestTT, the country's investment promotion agency. InvestTT will support the MPSD on the strategy to design and implement the sector branding campaign and the Diasporas engagement strategy, and it will assist in the organization of the services promotion forums. Finally, ExportTT will support the MPSD in the implementation of the ConnectAmericas program in the GSI Hub.

The program will support the functions of the Technical Coordinating Agencies with consultants who will be specifically assigned to assist the Agencies in the technical decision-making process. In addition, both the Project Execution Unit and the Technical Coordinating Agencies will be provided space within the GSI Hub to perform their functions.

As the Technical Coordinating Agency for Component 1, the PSE will have a very hands-on role from very early on. PSE will be the primary liaising agency to the private sector where the beneficiaries of the program will be drawn from. PSE also has the mandate to actively manage the training and support consultants in areas of scheduling, curriculum development, student placement activities, coordination of the employment process, as well as to assist with the promotion of the GSI to anchor tenants, employing ITeS firms and beneficiaries, while ensuring that the physical space is appropriately customized for the relevant services provided over the five year period of the program. There will be obvious benefits to the GSI Hub for a sustained occupancy of PSE on location together with the rest of the PEU. There seems to be sufficiency of consideration for both parties (MSPD and PSE) if the latter were to be provided rent-free accommodation at the Hub in addition to coordinating consultant that will be provided space

and compensated from the proceeds of the loan on its behalf. (* PSE will have to provide its estimate and analysis of the extra resources it will have to commit on a daily basis for a factoring of the physical space it needs and a quantitative analysis of the exchange.) It must be clear and easily manageable to ensure that this arrangement is included in the accounting system and processes, in that all non-hub activities and associated expenses by PSE is borne wholly by TTSCI, and that there are no inherent conflicts in such other activities.

There will be an Advisory Board comprising a mix of public and private sector stakeholders. This board will meet twice a year to oversee the development of the program, and counsel the MPSD on the program's general strategy and execution. The Committee will be chaired by MPSD, and will include representatives from the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Investment (MTI); InvestTT; the TT International Financial Centre; the E-Business Roundtable; the Caribbean Industrial Research Institute; the ICT Society; ExportTT; PSE; the TT Tourism Development Company; Anima Caribe, and the TT Animation Board. The Advisory Board will oversee the coordination among the participating entities mentioned above, monitor overall performance of the operation, and facilitate the work of the PEU.

The eligibility criteria to allow the use of the GSI Hub's premises are based on the following general guidelines:

- 1) Beneficiaries will be companies, students and professionals from the ITeS sector who are seeking to expand their export capacity.
- 2) Students who wish to learn the skills required to obtain a job in the ITeS sector;
- 3) SMEs who are users or have the potential to become users of the ConnectAmericas program.

The criteria for eligibility for access to the services, training and physical space at the GSI hub will include, but not limited to, individuals and SMEs with a background in ITeS in the following areas:

- Applications creation and development
- Mobile technology
- Programming and coding
- Website development
- Animation services
- System analysis
- Software development
- Hardware manufacturing and repairs

This shall be evidenced by either formal training at least through the secondary school level of education; certificates of participation and achievement; demonstrated expertise and/or experience; and in the case of SMEs, companies that are either already in the exporting space in some capacity; or those that plan to do so in the immediate future (at least within two years of registration).

Training services to the beneficiaries shall be rendered by individual consultants and/or consultancy enterprises . The main functions of these suppliers of services are:

- (i) To render specialized technical advisory services and/or training, in keeping with the quality, costs, and schedule established in the contract entered into with MSPD.;
- (ii) To abide by the due professional ethics and confidentiality of the information provided by the entrepreneur(s) and that are obtained through the services developed;

In order to contract for the services of suppliers the following requirements shall be met:

- a) The services of the program shall be executed by means of contracts entered into by MSPD and the respective supplier of services.
- b) The suppliers of services shall be qualified by the PEU to take part in the program through an agile and simple selection process, which will be based essentially on the capacity of the Suppliers of Services to transfer knowledge, abilities, and skills to the SMEs through technical assistance and training in ITeS, entrepreneurial development, export support advisory services activities, curriculum development, evaluation and appraisals, etc. as detailed in the Itemized Budget Component for the GSI attached in the annex of the POM.
- c) The PEU shall produce a system of accreditation and quality control of the suppliers of services based, among other elements, on the evaluations to be carried out based on the direct beneficiaries, anchor tenants and other ITeS firms involved in the hiring.

SELECTION OF CONSULTANTS & CONTRACTORS

Under the IDB procurement requirements, there are two options for consultant selection: (a) Individual Consultants, or (b) Consulting Firms

Requests for Consultants to submit the Firm's Qualifications and Experience should contain a brief description of the project assignment, scope of services, expected project deliverables, submittal deadline, submittal contact and address, and time frame for project start and

completion. The request should specify the following minimum requirements for qualified consultants and sub consultants, in the case of a firm:

- General information about the firm and organizational structure.
- Name of authorized officer of the firm.
- Relevant Experience.
- Proposed project manager, project team and organizational chart
- CVs of proposed key personnel.
- Description of similar projects performed by the firm in the past 10 years.
- Financial statement.
- At least three (3) client references from the list of similar project experience.

In the case of an individual consultant, requests for individuals to submit their curriculum vitae (CV); description of the past relevant project assignments including scope of services and expected project deliverables; submittal deadline; submittal contact and address; and time frame for project start and completion. The specified minimum requirements for qualified individual consultants include:

- Education level.
- Academic work history.
- Degrees and certifications,
- Project experience by geographical location and dates of relevant work assignments.
- Description of role of the consultant on each work assignment listed.
- Three client references from the list of work assignments.

Steps to Hiring a Contractor/Consultant

1. Publication of Request for EOI in the widest possible mediums – newspapers, the Ministries and Agencies websites, as well as the IDB's website.
2. Receive Request for Price Proposal (RFPP) from short-listed candidates.
3. Evaluation of the proposals received and development of short-list of three or four candidates within a maximum 30 calendar day period.
4. Develop and submit a Procurement Evaluation Report that includes the list of candidates that made the short list, and ranking of candidates with the best technical qualifications and price.
5. Obtain a no objection from the Bank.
6. Initiate negotiations with the candidate that has the best technical qualifications and price.

7. If negotiations with the preferred candidate do not prosper, then the Procurement Officer and IPD Team will go back to the next candidate based on the Evaluation Report produced.
8. If no agreement is reached with any of the short-listed candidates, then the process restarts from the beginning.

PROCUREMENT & APPROVAL PROCESSES

The procurement of works, goods and consulting services will be conducted in accordance with the Bank's procurement policies and procedures for the Procurement of Goods and Works (GN-2349-7) and for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants (GN-2350-7). The PEU will be responsible for the procurement of all goods, works and services, in accordance with the practices and procedures agreed to with the Permanent Secretary and the generally accepted policies of the MPSD and the Central Tenders Board.

Procurement Plan

The procurement of goods, works, and services will be in accordance with the Program's Procurement Plan which shall be prepared by MPSD and approved by the IDB.

This plan contains the following information:

- The threshold of the PEU approval limits.
- Description of the goods, works and service required to execute the project
- The estimated amounts of the different tenders for bids, under which the procurements will be grouped.

IDB retains the right not to finance any contract for the procurement of goods and services or contracting works when, in the Bank's judgment, the procedures established in the loan contract and its annexes were not observed during the Loan Contract and its annexes were not observed during the procurement process.

The Bank has the authority to audit the project documents at anytime during the term of the Loan Contract. If, during this audit, the Bank determines that all or portions of the goods or services were not procured in accordance with the agreed procedures in the Loan Contract, the Bank will declare it "Mis-procurement". (See Para. 1.12 of the IDB Guidelines on Procurement). In such a case, the Bank may cancel that portion of the loan allocated to those goods or services procured in non-compliance of the Guidelines.

Procurement of goods, works and consulting services will be reviewed using ex-ante methodology (to ensure that the documents and selection procedures satisfy the IDB's policies

and basic principles, the relevant clauses of the loan contract, and the approved procurement plan). This review methodology will be periodically assessed through procurement inspection visits and performance reviews. Procurement plan activities may be amended accordingly, by agreement between PEU and the Bank's Country Office in Trinidad and Tobago, provided the executing agency is in compliance with Bank requirements for the specific review method. The executing agency will update the procurement plan in the course of its semiannual reports and the AOP.

Procurement processes are also subject to audit by the Bank, in order to ensure that the Project has fulfilled all the procurement procedures stipulated in the Loan Contract. In order to ensure that the reviews and audits reflect the process used, the Project Coordinator and the other members of the PEU, will maintain adequate procurement records to reflect, in accordance with sound procurement practices (including related supervision, review, and auditing), the procurement activities of the Program, and ensure that all such procurement records evidencing such procurement activities are retained until at least three (3) years after the five-year period of the program is completed. For the purposes of this POM, Procurement Records mean:

(a) *With respect to procurement of goods and non-consulting services*: public notices of bidding opportunities; bidding documents and addenda; bid opening information; bid evaluation reports; formal appeals by bidders and outcomes; signed contracts, addenda and amendments; records on claims and dispute resolution; and records of time taken to complete key steps in the process; and

(b) *With respect to selection of consultants*: public notices for expressions of interest; requests for proposals and addenda; technical and final evaluation reports; formal appeals by firms and related outcomes; signed contracts, addenda and amendments; records on claims and dispute resolution; and records of time taken to complete key steps.

The service providers, as well as consultants and any other institution that performs activities with IDB resources and administered by MPSD, must agree to the following obligations, which will be included in the contract documents:

- Allow the Executing Agency, the Auditor General and the Bank to examine the procedures for buying or contracting works, goods and services financed with Loan resources
- Provide assurance that all works, goods and services financed with Loan resources will be used exclusively for the purpose of the Program.
- Present complete and accurate financial information required by the Bank regarding use of resources from the Loan;

- Present complete and accurate financial information and results to consultants hired to evaluate the Program or for other studies as required
- The firm is legally established in a country member of the IDB or the Consultant is a citizen or a bona fide resident (non-diplomatic) of a Bank member country

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT & ACCOUNTING

Accounting system needs to be procured, implemented, customized and reviewed by the Bank in time to satisfy the conditions prior to first disbursement.

The PEU Project Coordinator is responsible for implementing project economic and financial guidelines that are in full compliance with the IDB Loan requirements, and providing full supervision over the financial and accounting processes. This includes working with the Financial Specialist to:

- Establish and maintain adequate financial, accounting, and internal control systems.
- Manage and update an accounting system that allows the identification of the sources and uses of project funds.
- Maintain documentation to verify transactions, disbursements, and contracts.
- Prepare annual audited financial statements on project expenses according to Bank policy. These statements should be submitted within 120 days of the close of each fiscal year, and should be audited by a selected external auditor, the IDB's identified Fiduciary personnel and the Auditor General department.

The Financial Specialist shall also:

- Develop cash flow projections and statements for the estimated rental income to be derived from the anchor tenants.
- Work with Project Coordinator in preparing quarterly financial statements to be distributed to the Permanent Secretaries of MPSD & MTII, the Advisory Committee, and IDB. The PC and FS will also generate semi-annual financial reports to be submitted for internal and external auditing by the assigned IDB Fiduciary personnel, selected external auditor, and the Auditor General department.
- Track the contractors and service providers' invoices and the procedures and time cycle required for payments. The PM must approve all payments.
- Establish and control project expense budgets.