

TERMS OF REFERENCE

MONITORING AND EVALUATION CONSULTANT

SUPPORT FOR WOMEN-OWNED AND LED MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CARIBBEAN SHE-TRADES HUB

1. BACKGROUND

1.01 A recent World Bank study found that many women-led entities are recorded as being informal, home-based micro-enterprises that are often categorised into low technology/knowledge-intensive sectors such as retail, hospitality, and tourism, and are widely associated with cottage-type industries such as food, craft, and beauty^{1/}.

1.02 Despite both the substantial economic and social contribution that women-led MSMEs make to societies, many multi-dimensional obstacles and barriers to entry exist when attempting to start or advance their businesses. It is approximated that 65% of women-led MSMEs in developing economies are underserved, resulting in the slowing of growth potential of women entrepreneurs^{2/}. Coincidentally, when attempting to access financial and technical assistance (TA) for their businesses, women-owned MSMEs can face further constraints such as a low perception of competence to start a business and other socio-cultural stigma.

1.03 Additionally, the Covid-19 pandemic has further amplified the widening gaps of gender bias and inequality as it relates to the disproportionate impact of women in business compared to their male counterparts. As a result of their informal nature and tendency to work in vulnerable sectors most affected by the Covid-19 crisis such as hospitality, travel, and tourism, many MSMEs owned by women suffered greater exposure to risks such as temporary and permanent closure, reduction of staff and inability to fund their businesses for growth. With the emergence of these disrupting factors, women were recorded to experience lower levels of productivity, be more susceptible to both physical and sexual abuse and show signs of stress and heightened signs of mental health issues^{3/}.

1.04 With the closure of gender gaps at the policy and decision-making level, the untapped potential of women can be more widely explored as a means of revitalising the global economy. A recent publication from the International Trade Centre (ITC) addresses the vital role that women can play in post-pandemic recovery and goes on to suggest that women entrepreneurship can be key to a social and economic rebuilding strategy that creates more equal and sustainable societies. However, the article further underscores the crucial part that global cooperation and strategic stakeholder support will play in building a more gender-equal environment that results in greater sustainable resilience^{4/}.

1.05 The Caribbean Development Bank's (CDB) mission is to transform lives by contributing to the sustainable economic growth and development of its Client Countries. In that regard, the Bank, through its MSME TA programmes, including the Caribbean Technological Consultancy Services (CTCS) Network

^{1/} Jobs, Gender and Small Enterprises in the Caribbean: Lessons from Barbados, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago (Series on Women's Entrepreneurship Development and Gender in Enterprises - WEDGE), Carol Ferdinand (ed.), 2001.

^{2/} International Financial Corporation, Women Owned SMEs Report, 2014.

^{3/} Keisha N Blades, Gender Equal Resilience and Recovery, Train of thought. An economic way of thinking, 2022. <https://keishablades.wixsite.com/trainofthought/post/gender-equal-resilience-and-recovery-1>

^{4/} International Trade Centre (ITC), Women have a vital role to play in post-pandemic recovery, 2020.

and the Cultural and Creative Industries Innovation Fund (CIIF) is committed to providing capacity-building support to MSMEs within various sectors. In addition, the Bank's TA support to MSMEs seeks to enhance technical/managerial knowledge and skills, as well as operational practices using new/improved technology.

1.06 Amidst CDB's core priorities, gender equality and social inclusion are also notably entrenched in its operations. Through policies such as its robust Gender Marker Analysis Framework and Gender Equality Action Plan (2020–24), CDB demonstrates its responsibility by addressing both gender and socially constructed obstacles that are potentially discriminative to vulnerable and marginalised groups. Regionally, the Bank's focus on mainstreaming women-led MSMEs aims to increase awareness of issues of gender inequality among senior policymakers and other trade support institutions under its Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF)^{5/}.

1.07 Furthermore, The International Trade Centre (ITC) supports a multi-stakeholder approach when addressing the issues of gender equality and purports that the promotion of a women-inclusive business ecosystem requires a global, multi-pronged approach. Among the various development programmes that focus on the economic empowerment of women, the She-Trades initiative, established by the ITC, acts as an advocator to address the barriers women face when trying to access economic opportunities. Through its global decentralised platforms, called hubs, in-country interventions are executed with the objective of promoting local ownership and alignment with national and sectoral priorities. Using this sustainable model, the programme yields long-term community impact after the lifetime of the project which further helps to strengthen local institutions. With representation in 18 hubs across 36 countries, She-Trades operates to achieve several goals that sit under the following seven global actions:

- (a) Champion: Quality Data
- (b) Enact: Fair Policies
- (c) Secure: Government Contracts
- (d) Strike: Business Deals
- (e) Enable: Market Access
- (f) Unlock: Financial Services
- (g) Grant: Ownership Rights

1.08 These actions are further broken down into various outputs to ensure that all She-Trades projects are driven by core components such as creating avenues for networking by connecting millions of women entrepreneurs, creating trade opportunities, providing access to markets and financial services, and offering direct technical support such as coaching and mentoring for women to improve their skills^{6/}.

1.09 It is against this background that CDB and the ITC, are collaborating to leverage CDB's resources to support women's economic empowerment by providing technical assistance to women-owned and women-led MSMEs in CDB's Client Countries. In this regard, the Bank approved four hundred, and fifty thousand United States dollars (USD450,000), from resources of CDB's Special Development Fund (SDF) to assist in financing the implementation of the Project through the SheTrades Caribbean Regional Hub. The Hub was established in September 2023 as an agreement between CDB and ITC to fulfil their mutual objectives.

1.10 The expected impact of the project is inclusive economic growth in CDB's Client Countries through increased participation of women-led MSMEs in Trade.

^{5/} CDB, 2013. CDB: Embarks on Gender Mainstreaming Training Programme

<https://www.caribank.org/newsroom/news-and-events/cdb-embarks-gender-mainstreaming-training-programme>

^{6/} ITC She-Trades: <https://www.intracen.org/itc/women-and-trade/SheTrades/>

1.11 CDB is the host institution for the Hub with responsibility for administrative, and operational support for the Bank's Client Countries in collaboration with focal point institutions. In this regard, the Bank is seeking an individual consultant to perform the duties of a monitoring and evaluation specialist for the Hub.

2. OBJECTIVE

2.01 The objective of this assignment is to support the monitoring and evaluation of the Caribbean She-Trades Hub project in accordance with the bilateral agreement between CDB and ITC.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

3.01 The Monitoring and Evaluation consultant, reporting to the MSME Coordinator, or other designated Officer through the Project Coordinator SheTrades Hub (PC), is responsible for developing and implementing a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and plan for the She-Trades project. While the specifics and deliverables will be detailed for each assignment, the scope of work is understood to cover all the activities necessary to accomplish the stated objective, whether a specific activity is cited in these terms of reference.

3.02 The main tasks are as follows:

- (a) Working closely with the PC and in-country focal point institutions and the ITC, develop and implement the monitoring and evaluation framework and plan (including the relevant evaluation tools) for activities of the She-Trades Caribbean Regional Hub.
- (b) Conducting quarterly and periodic evaluations of project activities and developing reports consistent with the Bank's and ITC's reporting requirements.
- (c) Assisting the PC with the development of project documents to ensure adequate M&E considerations and development of SMART indicators.
- (d) Consulting with ITC and CDB designated representatives to ensure objectives are fully included in all projects and interventions designed.
- (e) Developing and administering survey instruments to accurately capture relevant information on participants of activities to properly assess the impact of the project.
- (f) Supporting the PC and SheTrades Caribbean Network to capture baseline information on specific indicators.
- (g) Participating in review meetings with CDB and its key partner institutions to discuss implementation and progress of various project activities and status of the work plan.
- (h) Assisting with compiling of project information to populate monthly/periodic reports to the CDB and its key partnering institutions.
- (i) Producing templates for project quarterly progress reports.
- (j) Preparing and presenting a final monitoring and evaluation report on the project.

4. DELIVERABLES AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

4.01 The Monitoring and Evaluation Consultant will report to the Coordinator, MSME Development through the Project Coordinator She-Trades Hub, in accordance with CDB reporting procedure, at the end of each month. The monthly reports addressing section 3 above, should highlight the activities undertaken each month, progress to date, and challenges encountered using CTCS monthly Progress Report template. The Consultant's draft Final Report shall be delivered by September 1 , 2025.

Performance will be appraised at the mid-point of the tenure.

4.02 The progress reports should be submitted electronically to the Project Coordinator at Kayanne.anderson@caribank.org and michel.thomas@caribank.org in Microsoft Word format.

5. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

5.01 The Consultant should have a minimum of the following qualifications and experience:

1. a Bachelor's degree or equivalent in Economics, International Trade, Business Management or Finance with specialisms in Evaluation Methods, Research Methods, or similar disciplines.
2. five (5) years administrative experience performing similar functions.
3. a minimum of three (3) years working in a similar capacity with MSMEs and other organisations in the Caribbean region with demonstrated experience in conducting development project monitoring and evaluation.
4. awareness of the regional business climate.
5. be computer literate and proficient in use of Microsoft PowerPoint, Excel, and Word programmes as well as generative AI to collect and curate data as well as to conduct data analysis.

6. DURATION

6.01 The duration of this assignment is from November 15, 2024 to September 30, 2025.