

TERMS OF REFERENCE
CONSULTANCY SERVICES TO SUPPORT THE EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS
RECEIVED UNDER THE SHETRADES CARIBBEAN GROW AND GO GRANT FACILITY

1. BACKGROUND

1.01 The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) serves as host institution for the SheTrades Caribbean Regional Hub in partnership with the International Trade Centre (ITC) with the objective of building the capacity of women entrepreneurs in the Bank's Borrowing Member Countries (BMCs). The Hub was officially launched in September 2023 and was initially envisioned to support the delivery of training and capacity building to entrepreneurs in topics such as logistics, global trade, e-commerce, management, finance and supply chain management and the provision of market access opportunities through participation in trade fairs. Since its launch, the Hub has amassed a membership of over 1,000 women entrepreneurs from across the Region as of July 2024.

1.02 A recent analysis of the results of the assessment survey completed by Hub members upon registration revealed that the primary need identified was to access trade finance, closely followed by business linkages and enterprise development. To address these needs, the Hub has facilitated the participation of members in several online courses through the ITC SME Trade Academy on areas such as Raising Funds for Your Business; Introduction to Business Plans; Considering Export Markets; Export Sales and Negotiation; and Creating Quality E-Commerce Content. In seeking to create opportunities for further business linkages, women entrepreneurs in the Hub have benefited from participation in the Ambiente Consumer Goods Trade Fair in Frankfurt, Germany as well as the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Gender Equality Marketplace in Antigua and Barbuda.

1.03 However, access to finance remains a critical component in ensuring that micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) survive and thrive. Informal discussions with Hub members on the Project's current scope as well as consultations with Business Support Organisations (BSOs) in BMCs have pointed to the need for a more impactful approach to addressing the access to finance challenge - beyond the provision of theoretical courses - which will help women entrepreneurs to grow resilient, competitive businesses and access new markets, largely through direct financing and investment. Providing these entrepreneurs with appropriate funding opportunities to grow and scale their businesses and diversify their products and services is key in addressing some of the existing gender disparities and promoting their integration into global markets.

1.04 It is against this background that CDB is implementing a non-reimbursable Grow and Go Grant Facility to assist in improving the capacity of women entrepreneurs in the SheTrades Caribbean Regional Hub to scale and export.

1.05 The objectives of the SheTrades Caribbean Grow and Go Grant Facility are to:

- (a) provide funding for women entrepreneurs who demonstrate the readiness and capacity to scale or improve their businesses;

- (b) enable women entrepreneurs to take advantage of commercial opportunities in regional and/or global markets through trade and export; and
- (c) provide funding to support women entrepreneurs with viable business concepts to study and test the market in relation to products and services for trade and export.

1.06 The facility will provide a non-reimbursable grant to cover technical assistance (TA) and capacity building for firms registered and operating in the Bank's BMCs. The grants will cover up to 100% of eligible cost or a maximum USD25,000 per grant. Under the Project, the Hub will target at least 20 registered women owned/led (WMSMEs) across all exporting sectors.

1.07 The expected impact of the project is increased operational and technical capacity of members of the SheTrades Caribbean Regional Hub to access markets within and outside the Caribbean region. There are two main components for the provision of the SheTrades Caribbean Grow and Go grants to the WSMES in the Regional Hub. These are:

- (a) **Component 1: Grow Stream (USD200,000)** under which grants will be provided to women owned and women led businesses that are currently offering innovative and competitive products and services in sectors which are best placed to take advantage of current and emerging opportunities to trade and export at the global (including regional) level; and
- (b) **Component 2: Go Stream (USD200,000)** under which market ready grants will be provided to women-owned and led companies at different stages of their export journey. The grants would be made available to new exporters and export-ready companies which require financial or technical catalyst for international expansion. Funding will also be accessible by WSMES who are already exporting and seeking to scale up their presence in desired target markets or to diversify the products and services already on offer.

1.08 In order to support the implementation of this project, the SheTrades Regional Hub is seeking the services of an independent evaluation consultant to ensure the efficient and timely completion of the SheTrades Caribbean Grow and Go Grant Facility evaluation process.

2. OBJECTIVE

2.01 The objective of this assignment is to conduct an in-depth review of the applications submitted to CDB under the SheTrades Caribbean Grow and Go Grant Facility Call for Proposals and submitting the scores to the SheTrades Caribbean Hub Project team utilising the evaluation grid provided.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

3.01 The tasks will include, but not be limited to:

- (a) attending a training session and on-boarding meetings with the SheTrades Caribbean Hub Project team on the SheTrades Caribbean Grow and Go Grant Facility on the evaluation methodology;
- (b) reviewing and evaluating applications received under the SheTrades Caribbean Grow and Go Grant Facility Call for Proposals;
- (c) submitting the scores for each evaluation completed;
- (d) attending Evaluation Committee meetings as and when required; and
- (e) any other duties relevant to the SheTrades Caribbean Grow and Go Grant Facility evaluation process as may be assigned.

4. DELIVERABLES AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

4.01 Prepare and submit to CDB through the SheTrades Project Coordinator, the following:

- (a) a signed copy of all evaluations completed for projects under review; and
- (b) monthly Progress Reports as detailed below.

4.02 Additionally, the consultant shall prepare and submit the following:

- (a) in accordance with CDB reporting procedure, at the end of each month, progress reports addressing the Scope of Works, highlighting the activities undertaken each month, progress to date, and challenges encountered using CTCS Monthly Progress Report template. The Progress Reports should be submitted electronically to michel.thomas@caribank.org copied to Kayanne.anderson@caribank.org in Microsoft Word format.
- (b) a Final Report which outlines all completed activities listed in the above Scope of Works. The Report should be submitted electronically to michel.thomas@caribank.org copied to Kayanne.anderson@caribank.org in Microsoft Word format within 15 days upon completion of the deliverables.

5. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

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

- (a) a degree in Economics, International Trade, Business Management, Finance or related areas.
- (b) three (3) years' private sector development experience, including working with Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)MSMEs in CDB's BMCs.
- (c) Demonstrated awareness and understanding of the Caribbean business environment and the issues affecting the competitiveness and export potential of the Region's private sector.
- (d) Proven awareness and understanding of the issues affecting Women-owned Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (WMSMEs), especially in the Caribbean.
- (e) proven experience in evaluating grant proposals for MSME, including an ability to assess project's viability, alignment with strategic objectives and potential for impact.
- (f) proficiency in computer applications, particularly Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, and PowerPoint)

6. DURATION

6.01 The assignment will be performed over a period of three (3) months between February 15, 2024, and May 31, 2025.