

**CARIBBEAN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROJECT – ST. VINCENT AND THE
GRENADINES**

TERMS OF REFERENCE INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT

**DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY FOR ST. VINCENT AND THE
GRENADINES**

SVGCARDTP-C-IC-2

PROJECT BACKGROUND

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is considered a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) and comprises the mainland of St. Vincent along with 32 islands and cays, which make up the Grenadines, of which the largest seven are inhabited. These are Bequia, Canouan, Mayreau, Mustique, Prune (Palm) Island, Petit Saint Vincent and Union Island. The total country area is 150 square miles (389 square kilometres).

The economy of St. Vincent and the Grenadines displayed signs of acceleration in its growth momentum in 2018. The economy grew by 2.16 percent in 2018, over the 1.0 percent experienced in 2017. The improved performance was based on growth in construction, fisheries, manufacturing, and tourism-related services. The growth rate slowed to 0.53 percent in 2019. The economy registered a – 3.25% growth rate in 2020 consequent upon the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the global economy.¹

As with other SIDS, the country faces a series of social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities and challenges that conspire to constrain the development processes. The country does not have a broad base of resources available and thus does not benefit from cost advantages that can be potentially generated from such. Coupled with small domestic markets, there are also difficulties in profiting from globalization and trade liberalization and a crippling reliance on external and remote markets with limited opportunities for the private sector. The cost of providing energy, developing and maintaining infrastructure, transport, and communication is high and creates increased pressure.

The economy of Saint Vincent has been chiefly agricultural. There is a growing fishing industry that produces for local consumption and export to other Caribbean islands and the United States, particularly to locations on the Eastern seaboard, such as Miami and New York City. Lobster, conch, tuna, and swordfish are the main seafood exported.

Tourism has assumed a more significant role in the economy within the last 15-20 years, especially with greater accessibility of the Grenadines through the airports established throughout the islands and the use of larger and more modern boats. Noted for their coral reefs and fine beaches, the Grenadines serve as the focus of the country's tourism sector. They are particularly favored by those interested in yachting and sport fishing, and lend themselves to Caribbean tourism's traditional emphasis on sun, sea and sand. Ecotourism is being encouraged on the main island,

¹GDP Growth Rate extracted from the ECCB Statistics – Selected Macroeconomic and Financial Indicators -St. Vincent and the Grenadines – 2017 -2020.

Saint Vincent. With the opening of the new Argyle International Airport, there has been greater access for direct international flights to the island.

The country's economy has been setback further by the explosive eruption of the La Soufriere volcano over two weeks, April 9-22, 2021.

To boost economic activity and growth, mitigate against threats to livelihood and build overall resilience, the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines (GoSVG) has invested in building several pieces of key infrastructure including a high-speed fiber-optic based Government Wide Area Network (GWAN) through the World Bank funded Caribbean Communications Infrastructure Program (CARCIP). The project was completed in December 2020 with the GWAN connected to two hundred and thirty-two (232) Government Office locations across St. Vincent and the Grenadines. However, gaps in terms of in-building connectivity remain that limit the ability of GoSVG to utilize the digital infrastructure developed as well as its ability to adopt digital services and tools within government and to deliver public services digitally. While Government connectivity needs will be largely met after filling Local Area Network gaps, access to and adoption of high-speed broadband connectivity among the general public and businesses remains a challenge. Additionally, with increased connectivity and potential to develop and adopt digital services, there is a need to boost capacity of the central Information Technology Services Division (ITSD) to be able to serve Government needs and skilling of the broader civil service to use the digital tools that will be available, enabling effective digital public service delivery

The Government has identified the development of citizen-facing digital government services as a key priority, to improve the user experience for citizens accessing public services and to improve the efficiency of internal government operations. Given SVG's geographic context as an archipelago, digitization of citizen-facing services can have a significant impact on the quality of life for citizens, particularly those living in the Grenadines, enabling citizens in remote locations to access services and information without time consuming and costly physical journeys. The GoSVG is also seeking to mitigate the impact of climate change and natural disasters by putting in place resilient policies and systems that promote government business continuity in the event of natural or other disasters. These priorities follow from the strategic goals identified in the National Economic and Social Development Plan 2013-2025. These goals are as follows:

1. Re-engineering Economic Growth
2. Enabling Increased Human and Social Development
3. Promoting Good Governance and Increasing the Effectiveness of Public Administration
4. Improving Physical Infrastructure, Preserving the Environment and Building Resistance to Climate Change
5. Building National Pride, Identity and Culture

The plan which outlines several ICT strategic interventions and outcomes, and identifies ways to achieve the aforementioned goals, was also buttressed by the ICT Strategy and Action Plan 2010-2015 and subordinate strategies for e-government network services development.

Improving digital public service delivery and modernizing government operations will require a number of cross-cutting enablers to be put in place – namely an enterprise architecture and

interoperability framework, digital identification, authentication infrastructure, and a government payment platform. As the Government's digital footprint expands, and citizens' use of internet increases, so will the vulnerability to cyber threats. Cybersecurity is a shared concern in the region, and the need for necessary national and regional level capacity to mitigate against these threats is highlighted.

The Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines (GoSVG) has received financing from the World Bank Group to implement the Caribbean Digital Transformation Project (CARDTP or the Project). The CARDTP comprises four components that address key bottlenecks and harness opportunities to develop the Eastern Caribbean Digital Economy as a driver of growth, job creation and improved service delivery.

The CARDTP's development objective is *“to increase access to digital services, technologies, and skills by governments, businesses, and individuals in the participating Eastern Caribbean countries. It leverages public sector modernization and digitization to improve service delivery and drive a digital culture across the region.”* As such, the CARDTP will finance the cross-cutting enablers of digital government, digitize specific priority services, fill existing infrastructure gaps, and contribute to the expansion of the benefits of public sector modernization to citizens and businesses. To support the improved management of digital risks, the project will bolster cybersecurity policy, capacity, and planning tools in the region. It will facilitate technology adoption to improve the productivity of flagship industries and create demand for digitally enabled jobs. It also aims to foster regional integration and cooperation to capture the economies of scale and scope required to increase impact and value for money of the project interventions and create a more competitive, seamless regional digital market to attract investment and provide room for growth of digital firms.

The CARDTP includes activities to be implemented at the regional and national levels.

National-level activities will be financed through an IDA credit to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in the amount of US\$30 million.

The Project is also financed through a regional IDA grant and implemented by a Regional Project Implementation Unit (RPIU) housed at the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). RPIU will work with other regional institution stakeholders as relevant depending on the technical area being supported. Regionally implemented activities will focus on strengthening the enabling environment to promote investment, competition, and innovation in telecoms and digital financial services, regional cybersecurity collaboration, and a modernized and harmonized data protection and privacy regime across the region. It will also be complemented by a regional level advanced digital skills program open to high potential digital specialists from Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

PROJECT COMPONENTS

The following provides a brief description of the national-level project components:

Component 1: Digital Enabling Environment

This component will support the development of a positive enabling environment in the St. Vincent and the Grenadines digital economy that drives competition, investment and innovation while promoting trust and security of online transactions. It will focus on legal, regulatory and institutional reforms to support modernization of the telecommunications and digital financial services sectors while mitigating growing risks of a digital economy, including cybersecurity and data protection and privacy.

The project will also support the development of national level cybersecurity capability to monitor, identify, protect against, and respond to cyber threats and support for requisite enabling environment and capacity improvements at national level. The Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) will be established using a regionally compatible design and frameworks developed as part of the regionally implemented activities under the subcomponent.

The subcomponents are as follows:

1. Subcomponent 1.1: Telecommunications: Legal and Regulatory Environment, Institutions and Capacity
2. Subcomponent 1.2: Digital Financial Services: Legal and Regulatory Environment, Institutions and Capacity
3. Subcomponent 1.3: Cybersecurity, Data Protection and Privacy

Component 2: Digital Government Infrastructure, Platforms, and Services

This component will support public sector modernization, resilience and delivery of digital public services to individuals and businesses. It will aim to ensure that St. Vincent and the Grenadines put in place the core infrastructure, platforms, institutions and human capacity needed to manage internal government operations efficiently and effectively, and to build on these core enablers to make public services widely accessible online from anywhere within the country, region or across the globe. It will also prepare the GoSVG for deeper interconnectivity and interoperability of data and information systems across borders to smooth administration of regional trade, immigration and other services between countries. Finally, it will aim to ensure continuity of government operations and services, enable real-time data driven decision making, facilitate remote working for civil servants, and ability to rapidly target and deliver payments and social services to citizens and businesses in the event of natural disasters and external shocks. The subcomponents are as follows:

1. Subcomponent 2.1: Cross-Cutting Enablers of Digital Government Operations and Services
2. Subcomponent 2.2: Government Productivity Platforms and Citizen-Centric Digital Services

Component 3: Digital Skills and Technology Adoption

This component aims to better equip individuals and businesses in St. Vincent and the Grenadines for the jobs and economy of the future and to spur innovation and productivity growth. It aims to create a pool of advanced digital talent to better position St. Vincent and the Grenadines to attract

investment by digital firms. It takes a comprehensive supply and demand side approach, supporting greater technology adoption and utilization of digitally enabled business models to drive demand for newly skilled employees as well as making connections with global employment opportunities through online working platforms. The subcomponents are as follows:

1. Subcomponent 3.1: Workforce-Ready Digital Skills
2. Subcomponent 3.2: Technology Adoption

Component 4: Project Implementation Support

This component supports the national Project Implementation Unit (PIU) with management and implementation of the project and associated activities. The project will support capacity building initiatives, as well as PIU staffing through hiring of expert consultants for key areas such as project management, technical advisory and implementation support, procurement, financial management, environment and social safeguards, monitoring and evaluation and strategic communications.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The GoSVG, recognizing the cross-cutting as well as technical nature of the activities being implemented has proposed a multi-layer implementation structure, with an independent PIU housed in the Ministry Finance, Economic Planning, and Information Technology. The PIU will utilize existing procurement and financial management capacity within the Ministry to augment the PIU capacity. The project implementation arrangements account for cross-government coordination at strategic and operational levels, as well as regional coordination through participation of the responsible line ministry official in the regional project oversight committee.

The implementation arrangements take into account lessons learned from prior project implementation experiences and will include full-time technical expertise at the PIU to support project implementation and oversight, procurement, contract management, change management and quality assurance for specific activities, as well as capacity building of implementation staff. The PIU is also supported by eight (8) technical working groups (TWGs) which address the major activities to be executed under the Project.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of this consultancy is to develop a national digital economy transformation strategy for St. Vincent and the Grenadines for five (5) years.

CONSIDERATIONS TO INFORM APPROACH

This shall also include an assessment of the existing digital economy ecosystem including institutional mechanisms and capacity within the Government. The recommendations emerging

that would be included in the strategy developed by the consultant shall include the institutional requirements, required reforms, and human resource capacity that may be needed to deliver the digital economy transformation strategy for St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

In assessing the digital economy ecosystem in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the Consultant shall examine the most appropriate digital transformation frameworks used by multilateral development institutions such as the United Nations, in particular the UNDP, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank. A review of assessment frameworks used by the various development agencies to assess the digital economy ecosystem and a holistic assessment framework (see Annex 1) proposed by Hanna² shall serve as a guide in this assessment.

The strategy shall take into account the macro-policy and infrastructure foundations, policy and regulatory digital framework, digital foundations and the digital adoption/transformation requirements across key sectors. The assessment shall also consider the level of digital literacy in the society as well as determine how the poor and vulnerable can successfully participate in the digital economy.

It is expected that the strategy will take into account the successes and/or failures of previous strategies in this regard, in particular the National ICT Strategy and Action Plan 2011-2015, the e-Gov development and network services strategies, and the strategic ICT interventions contained in the National Economic and Social Development Plan 2013-2025.

The developed strategy must contribute to the five (5) strategic goals identified in the National Economic and Social Development Plan 2013-2025 and must be a key enabler where digital technologies are required in realizing the sector priorities as it relates to the Sustainable Development Goals.

The assessment and strategy must take into account the planned activities under the Caribbean Digital Transformation Project as key inputs to the process and their potential role in the transforming the economy.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The project is seeking to engage consultancy services to assess the status quo of the digital economy ecosystem and develop a national digital economy development strategy for St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The strategy will be guided by the areas outlined above and will provide support taking the following approach:

- 1. Consultations and Visioning Workshops to assess the digital economy ecosystem in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and define priority areas and key sectoral opportunities for digital transformation.**

The digital economy encompasses several key foundations as outlined above, which include digital infrastructure, digital platforms, digital payments and financial services, digitally enabled businesses, and digital skills. Digitalization is also playing a key role in driving the delivery of broader solutions in the context of COVID-19 recovery –

²Assessing the digital economy: aims, frameworks, pilots, results, and lessons: <https://innovation-entrepreneurship.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s13731-020-00129-1>

such as in digital public services, digital payment platforms, e-learning and digital skills, and digital healthcare systems. In this context, there is a need to identify and assess the digital innovations that would best support the priorities of the Government. Utilizing the proposed digital assessment framework by Hanna, the consultant will leverage insights into actionable results through stakeholder interviews, visioning workshops and human-centered design consultations to assess the priorities and key sectoral opportunities for St. Vincent and the Grenadines, to ensure a strategy that is responsive to the key interests of the government as well as private sector imperatives required for the digital economy. Key stakeholders will include government officials from various Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), the Caribbean Digital Transformation Project team, academia, civil society groups, academia and private sector including Digital/ICT-led businesses and startups.

2. **Mapping of digital government systems requirements and opportunities across pillars** that can be directly or indirectly related to the Digital Transformation Strategy. This inventory will provide an analysis of existing government online services opportunities to be built into Digital Public Goods (DPGs) and the ability to establish existing DPGs in various Ministries, and/or lead in the production of new DPGs. The review will also provide an initial assessment of the structural gaps across each of the pillars, covering issues such as infrastructure, procurement, staffing inclusive of a capacity assessment of the ITSD to determine capacity gaps as well as the optimal deployment of IT staff across the Government service, regulatory policies, private sector engagement and digital literacy training.
3. **Drafting of National Digital Economy Development Strategy inclusive of recommendations on the appropriate institutional framework within Government to successfully implement the strategy.** Drawing upon the above, the consultant will distil results into a draft National Digital Economy Development Strategy, outlining the vision, core pillars and priority areas along with the roadmap/action plan for implementation to set the trajectory for the multi-year duration of the strategy. This will be an iterative process in consultation with key stakeholders, receiving and incorporating their inputs, at each stage of drafting: outline, first draft and final draft.
4. **Consultation and finalization of the draft national digital economy development strategy** with government officials on the pillars and main components included in the strategy. Through interactive workshops the consultant will present the final draft of the strategy for validation. This stage should give final acceptance of the draft strategy developed by the consultant and progress the process towards the formal adoption of the digital strategy.

DELIVERABLES

A. List of Deliverables and Milestones

Deliverables	Timeline
1. Inception Report & Workplan	Contract Signing Date + 4 Weeks
2. Report on visioning workshop and stakeholder consultations	Contract Signing Date + 9 Weeks
3. Outline of Strategy shared with core stakeholder group and Mapping of Sectoral Opportunities and digital government system requirements, in alignment with proposed Framework	Contract Signing Date + 13 Weeks
4. First Draft of Strategy with roadmap/action plan shared with core stakeholder groups in interactive workshop	Contract Signing Date + 18 Weeks
5. Final Draft Strategy and stakeholder validation workshops	Contract Signing Date + 22 Weeks
6. Submission of Final Strategy	Contract Signing Date + 24 Weeks

A. Submission and Approval of Deliverables

The Consultant will report to the PIU who will be responsible for the approval of the deliverables and invoices.

All reports and deliverables shall be in English. All draft and final reports and documents shall be submitted electronically in MS Office applications.

All deliverables will be submitted by the PIU to the World Bank for the necessary no objections.

Within twenty-one (21) calendar days from the date of the reports and deliverables receipt, the Project Implementation shall review in consultation with PSC, relevant MDAs, TWGs and other stakeholders as may be necessary and:

- (a) approve the reports and deliverables; or
- (b) notify the Consultant of any respects in which the PIU considers that the reports and deliverables do not comply with the contract provisions. The reports and deliverables shall be revised and submitted to the PIU by the Consultant within two (2) weeks following the receipt of PIU's comments unless otherwise agreed by the parties.

QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE

The Consultant must have minimum requirements hereunder:

- Masters in Information Science, Information Management Systems, Computer Sciences, Public Administration, Law, Economics or related field;
- Minimum of 8 years of experience reviewing and assessing digital economy ecosystems, technology policy and/or providing advisory support to public sector on digital transformation strategies, including review of legal and regulatory frameworks.
- Previous work in the Caribbean Region is an asset;
- Experience working with Multilateral Development agencies such as the World Bank and the UN will be an asset;
- Language: English at a working level.

CONTRACT DURATION AND ESTIMATED TIME INPUT

The duration of the contract is estimated to be for six (6) months.

CLIENT'S CONTRIBUTION

The PIU will facilitate and make available to the Consultant all relevant documents, reports and data required to successfully complete the contract and will act as a liaison between the Consultant, the World Bank, PSC, MDAs, TWGs and other Project stakeholders.

Access to the Internet, and conference and meeting facilities in St. Vincent and the Grenadines for experts working on the Contract will be provided by the PIU.

Additionally, the MDAs will provide suitably qualified and experienced staff for each area with which the contract is concerned to work with the Consultant.

The PIU will facilitate consultations with public and private sector stakeholders in St. Vincent and the Grenadines as well as in the wider Eastern Caribbean region, if deemed necessary by the consultant.

ANNEX 1 - A Holistic Assessment Framework for Assessing the Digital Economy Ecosystem

“The proposed assessment framework covers the digital sector, the digital and non-digital foundations, and to varying degrees, digital adoption and transformation in the government, private and citizen sectors. Put differently, the assessment framework can be composed of three

levels: macro policy foundation (competition, trade, finance, governance, etc.), digital enablers (digital sector, leadership, infrastructure, platforms, policies, skills, finance), and sectoral transformation (vertical ICT applications in key economic sectors, like public services, education, and agriculture). It could be complemented by a modular assessment of key components or subcomponents like digital commerce, digital finance, and digital platforms.³”

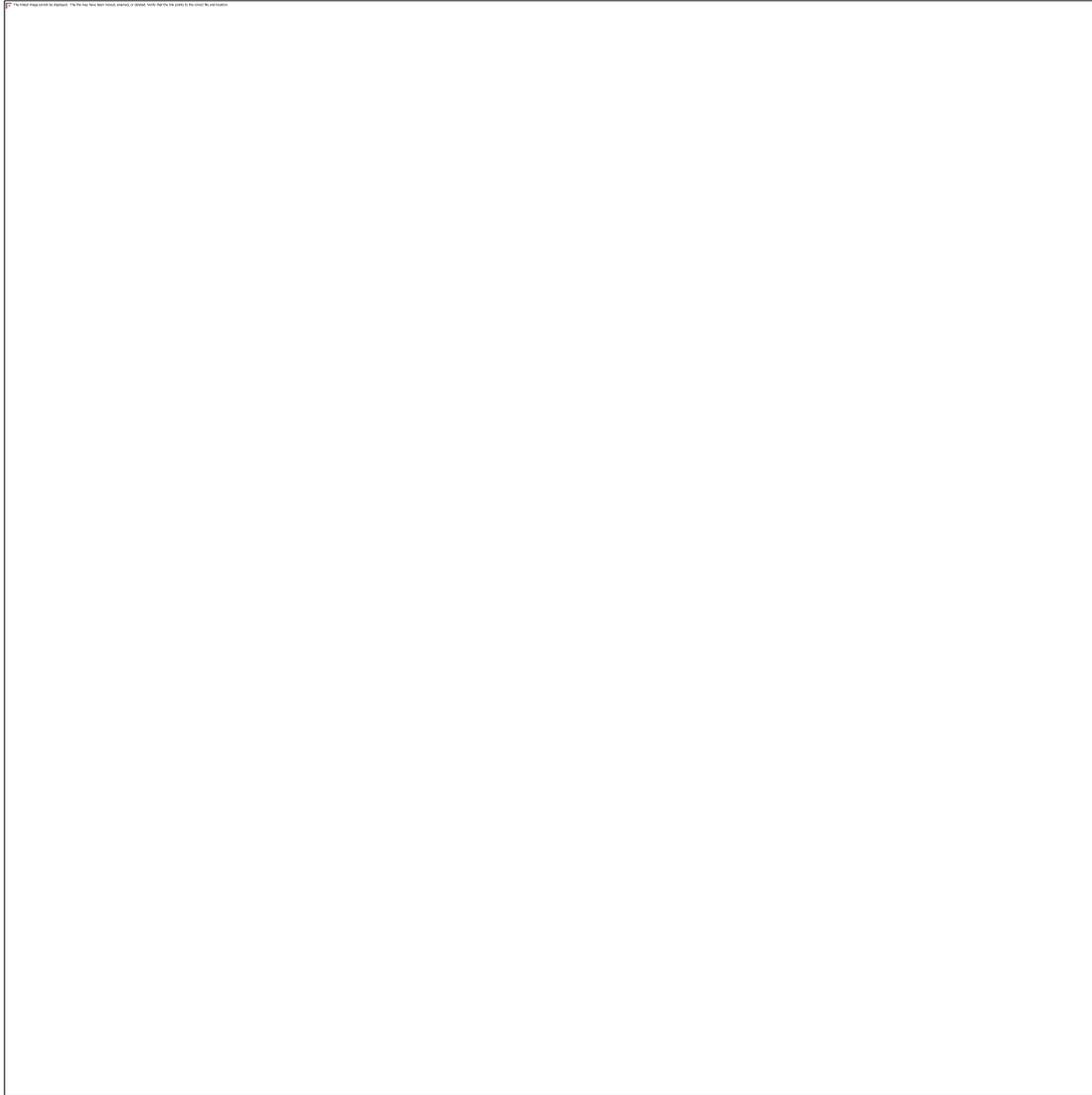


Fig. 1. Digital Economy Ecosystem

³ Extracted from Hanna, N.K. Assessing the digital economy: aims, frameworks, pilots, results, and lessons. *J Innov Entrep* **9**, 16 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13731-020-00129-1>