

# PROJECT STATUS REPORT

JULY 2013 - DECEMBER 2013

## SECTION 1: PROJECT SUMMARY

**PROJECT NAME:** Improving performance of SMEs through the application of ICT

Project Number: TT-M1009 - Operation Number: ATN/ME-12200-TT

**Result:** Increased awareness, use and leverage of ICT by 80 SMEs in the food and beverage and in the printing and packaging sectors in Trinidad and Tobago

**Country Administrator**  
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

**Beneficiary Country**  
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

**Group**  
SME - Small and Medium Enterprise  
Development

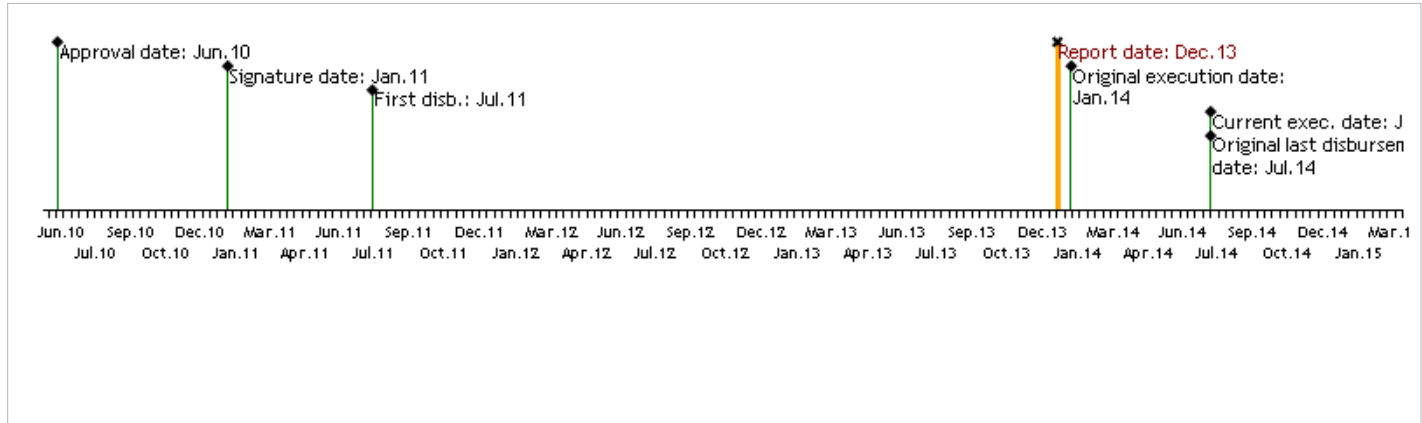
**Subgroup**  
TECH - Technology for Business  
Development

**Executing Agency:** Caribbean Industrial Research Institute

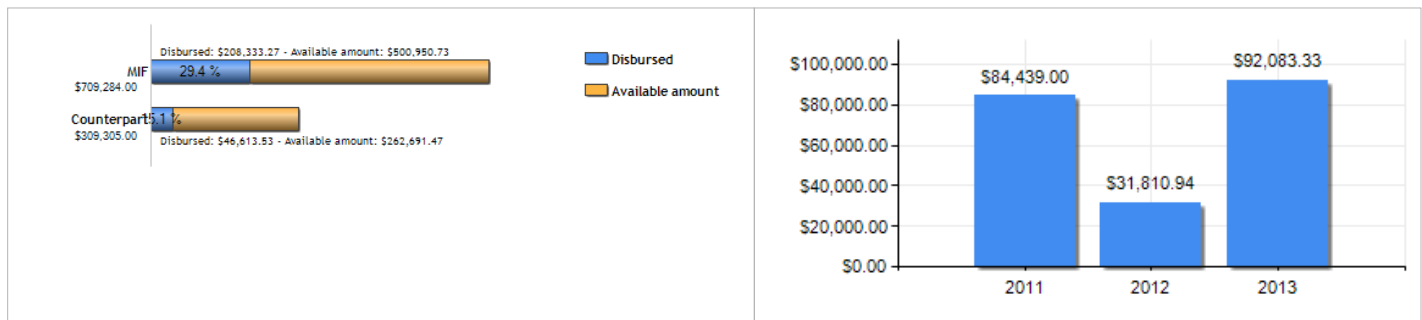
**Design Team Leader:** Dookiesingh, Vashtie

**Supervision Team Leader:** Dookiesingh, Vashtie

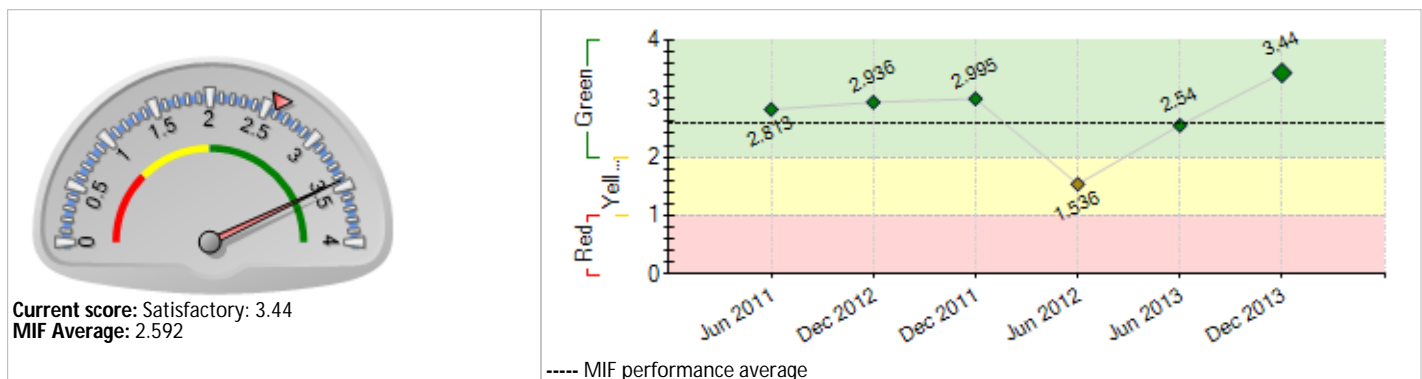
### TIMELINE



### FUNDS



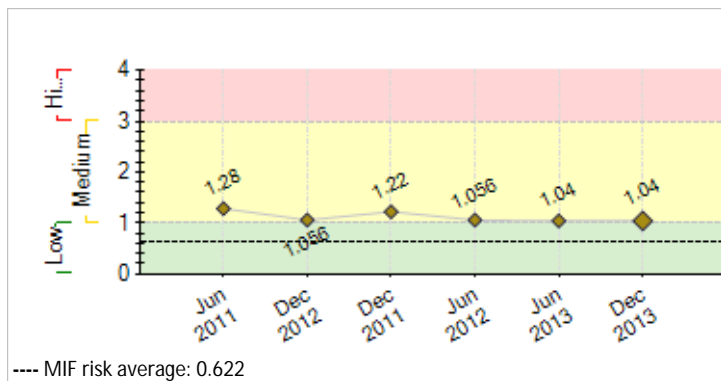
### PERFORMANCE SCORE



### EXTERNAL RISKS

#### INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

**Risk**  
**Financial Management:** Low  
**Procurement:** Low  
**Technical Capacity:** Low



## SECTION 2: PERFORMANCE

### Summary of project performance since inception

#### Summary:

Achievement of the sensitisation and diagnostic targets in full, with 60% of the ICT interventions completed

#### Aggregated Achievements:

- A] A PEU that is more skilled in working with SMEs and in ICT implementations.
- B] Sensitised SMEs via 17 awareness forums throughout Trinidad and Tobago.
- C] Recorded in excess of 1000 web portal page views and over 90 likes on Facebook.
- D] Conducted diagnostic studies on 80 SMEs.
- E] Completed interventions on 30 SMEs in Trinidad and Tobago.
- F] Supported women entrepreneurs and promoted use of ICT in their businesses.
- G] Deployed cluster-based solutions.
- H] Developed software products within PEU.

#### Key Challenges:

- A] Managing implementation expectations for all stakeholders.
- B] Ensuring high quality intervention reports fully capture business improvement and not just technical/ ICT.

#### Actions taken:

- A] Establish clear implementation goals and objectives, in discussion with stakeholders.
- B] Creation of an intervention reporting template with clear guidelines and annotations.

#### Prospect:

A very high likelihood of project achieving its objectives, because:

- A] The valuable experience gained by PEU staff in delivering the project, and
- B] The interest shown by target SMEs during the diagnostic phase.

#### Moving forward:

- A] Complete the remaining 40% of interventions (20 companies).
- B] Begin collating data and reports for final dissemination workshop.
- C] PEU to continue developing and implementing ICT solutions focused on common needs of SMEs.

#### Comments from the Supervision Team Leader

Agree with the Executing Agency comments

### Summary of project performance in the last six months

#### Summary:

This semester saw the completion of all sensitisation forums and diagnostic studies, and deployment of innovative clustered ICT solutions supporting women entrepreneurship.

#### Key Milestone Achievements:

- A] "Completion of initial 10 ICT Interventions"
- B] "Sensitisation of final 200 SMEs from Target Sectors"
- C] "Completion of final 40 Diagnostic Scoping Studies"
- D] "Completion of second batch of 20 ICT Interventions"

#### Key Accomplishments:

- A] Deployed Association-level ICT solutions in the sister island of Tobago.
- B] Partnered with 12 target associations in rural and urban areas to sensitise their memberships on benefits of ICT.
- C] Implemented ICT platforms for rural SMEs to improve product marketing and online branding.
- D] Executed a 2-tiered cluster-based solution: an "outer cluster" where multiple SMEs share web spaces within an umbrella association website, and an "inner cluster" where SMEs with similar products share same "Feature Product" web portals.

**Key Challenges:**

- A) Managing implementation expectations for the SME.  
 B) Commitment of the SME to work with consultant to complete implementations.

**Action taken:**

- A) Establish clear implementation goals and objectives, in discussion with entrepreneur.  
 B) Closer interaction with the entrepreneur to elicit inputs within stipulated time frames

**6 Month Forecast:**

- A) Complete the remaining 20 interventions.  
 B) As far as practical, implement solutions that are new to the project, but have wide applicability among target SMEs.

**Comments from the Supervision Team Leader**

Agree with the Executing Agency comments

**SECTION 3: INDICATORS AND MILESTONES**

Indicators		Baseline	Intermediate 1	Intermediate 2	Intermediate 3	Planned	Achieved	Status
<b>Result:</b> Increased awareness, use and leverage of ICT by 80 SMEs in the food and beverage and in the printing and packaging sectors in Trinidad and Tobago	<b>R.1</b> 80 SMEs realize 10% improvement in (a) sales revenues and volumes, (b) increase in sales to new markets (c) increased sales in existing export markets or (d) profit margins	0				80	0	
		Feb 2011				Aug 2015		
<b>Component 1:</b> Awareness Building <b>Weight:</b> 20% <b>Classification:</b> High Satisfactory	<b>C1.11</b> 4 Awareness Forums convened	0	2	3		4	4	
		Jan 2011	Feb 2013	Feb 2014		Dec 2014	Dec 2013	
	<b>C1.12</b> SME representatives' maturation on the business potential of ICT investment	0	150	250		350	350	
		Jan 2011	Dec 2012	Nov 2013		Dec 2014	Dec 2013	
	<b>C1.13</b> Launch of an interlinked web portal to disseminate information and facilitate dialogue among SMEs operating in the targeted sectors	0				1	1	Finished
		Jan 2011				Jul 2012	Aug 2011	
<b>Component 2:</b> ICT Diagnostic Scoping Studies <b>Weight:</b> 30% <b>Classification:</b> High Satisfactory	<b>C2.11</b> Diagnostic scoping studies completed for 80 SMEs	0	25	65		80	80	
		Jan 2011	Dec 2012	Dec 2013		Dec 2014	Dec 2013	
<b>Component 3:</b> Implementation and Monitoring of ICT Interventions <b>Weight:</b> 30% <b>Classification:</b> Satisfactory	<b>C3.11</b> Development and implementation of ICT solutions to improve business performance of 50 SMEs	0	10	40		50	30	
		Jan 2011	Dec 2013	Jul 2014		Dec 2014	Dec 2013	
<b>Component 4:</b> Dissemination of Results <b>Weight:</b> 20% <b>Classification:</b> Satisfactory	<b>C4.11</b> Dissemination of information on project results in a special purpose SME forum	0				1		
						Jan 2015		

Milestones	Planned	Due Date	Achieved	Date achieved	Status
<b>M0</b> Contracting of a Technical Co-ordinator	1	Apr 2011	1	May 2011	Achieved late
<b>M1</b> Conditions Prior	6	Jul 2011	6	Jul 2011	Achieved
<b>M2</b> Completion of first ICT awareness forum	1	Jul 2011	1	Jul 2011	Achieved
<b>M3</b> Completion of initial Diagnostic Scoping Studies for 20 SMEs	20	Jan 2012	20	Jan 2013	Achieved late
<b>M4</b> Completion of second batch of 20 diagnostics of SMEs	20	May 2013	20	May 2013	Achieved
<b>M5</b> Sensitization of 150 SMEs on the business benefits of ICT adoption	150	May 2013	154	Apr 2013	Achieved
<b>M6</b> [*] Completion of initial 10 ICT interventions	10	Jul 2013	10	Jul 2013	Achieved
<b>M7</b> [*] Completion of final 40 Diagnostic Scoping Studies	40	Dec 2013	40	Dec 2013	Achieved
<b>M8</b> Sensitization of an additional 200 SMEs on the business benefits of ICT interventions	200	Dec 2013	200	Dec 2013	Achieved
<b>M9</b> Completion of an additional 20 ICT interventions (cumulative total 30)	20	Dec 2013	20	Dec 2013	Achieved
<b>M10</b> [*] Completion of final 20 ICT interventions	20	May 2014			
<b>M11</b> [*] Completion of dissemination materials	1	Jul 2014			

[\*] Indicate that the milestone has been reformulated

**CRITICAL ISSUES THAT HAVE AFFECTED PERFORMANCE**

[None reported in this period]

**SECTION 4: RISKS****MOST IMPORTANT RISKS AFFECTING FUTURE PERFORMANCE**

	Level	Mitigation action	Responsible
1. Lag times between the completion of sensitization, diagnostics and interventions could lead to loss of interest by the SMEs and potentially unwillingness to continue in the project.	Medium	Execute project components in repeating cycles specifically designed to reduce the lag time between delivery of project components to individual SMEs.	Project Coordinator
2. Changes in macroeconomic conditions negatively impact SME performance	Medium	Executing Agency must make business case for ICT investment explicit to sustain interest and commitment to investment by SMEs in the event of deterioration of macroeconomic conditions	Project Coordinator
3. Participating SMEs do not provide access to business data to facilitate measurement of results. This can undermine the Executing agency's ability to present locally based real world business cases and results on the business value of ICT investment	Medium	Include formal agreement between Executing Agency and beneficiary outlining need for and consent to sharing/access to business records to facilitate building of business case for ICT implementation and measurement of project results. Appropriate privacy and confidentiality clauses can be included here	Project Coordinator
4. Commitment of the entrepreneur to complete implementations	Medium	Work closely with the SME to elicit inputs. Establish firm timeframes for completion. If timeframes cannot be met, PEU to make decision to discontinue intervention.	Project Coordinator
5. SMEs are not willing to participate in diagnostic scoping studies or ICT intervention	Low	The awareness forums have been designed to use actual business results of local firms to encourage participation and increase buyin. Beneficiaries for component 2, diagnostic scoping studies, are self selected to ensure participating firms are committed and engaged in the process of change	Project Coordinator
<b>PROJECT RISK LEVEL:</b> Medium <b>TOTAL NUMBER OF RISKS:</b> 6 <b>IN EFFECT RISKS:</b> 6 <b>NOT IN EFFECT RISKS:</b> 0 <b>MITIGATED RISKS:</b> 0			

## SECTION 5: SUSTAINABILITY

**Likelihood of project sustainability after project completion:** HP - Highly Probable

### CRITICAL ISSUES THAT MAY AFFECT PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

*[None reported in this period]*

#### Actions related to sustainability which will be or have been implemented:

A] Two (2) ICT tools have been developed internally which have wide applicability to SMEs, including those outside the target sectors. These tools will facilitate deployment of similar solutions in future interventions.

B] A cluster-based approach has been adopted and this allows very small enterprises to implement ICT solutions as a group that would not have been possible on an individual basis.

C] The cluster-based approach also promotes the take-up of ICT technology solutions by other cluster members as the benefits to early adopters become clear.

D] The Project will actively elicit testimonials from participating SMEs as a means of demonstrating the benefits of ICT Interventions and to promote the take-up of ICT services among SMEs.

## SECTION 6: PRACTICAL LESSONS

	Relative to Implementation	Author
1. The cluster-based approach has demonstrated an effective means for ICT adoption among small enterprises. The SME can also share common benefits with its fellow members.		Joseph, Jade
This approach has, through its demonstration effect, promoted the use of ICT by companies within the cluster which initially did not see the benefits.		