

# **Main Report**

## **MIF Project Cluster on Skills-Based Standards and Certification For the Tourism Sector**

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# Executive Summary

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The IDB – Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) has approved several occupational skills standards, certification and credentialing projects including five for the Caribbean and one each in Peru and Brazil. The Caribbean cluster includes three national programs (Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica and Bahamas), together with two regional projects. All are being executed through tourism associations or related private sector entities. Consistent with the need for mid-term evaluations, MIF determined to conduct a cluster evaluation involving all projects and with the following objectives:

- to assess project progress and to incorporate a tourism perspective on project need and project progress;
- to identify lessons learned – both individually and as a “cluster” of occupational skills standards and certification projects; and
- to provide an assessment of the cluster of projects in addition to individual project assessments and to identify mid-course corrections as appropriate.

A performance measurement approach was used to guide the assessment activities to ensure the development of a clear picture of what has been done and accomplished and on the identification of lessons learned.

The MIF occupational skills standards and certification projects are all focused on human resources development in the tourism sector. Occupational skills standards and certification systems are relatively new for the tourism sector. In keeping with MIF objectives to pilot new, innovative approaches to strengthen human resources capital, the intent of all projects is to develop a formal occupational skills standards, certification and credentialing system for the tourism sector. Unlike many economic sectors, the tourism sector has historically not embraced occupational standards in a comprehensive fashion. This is certainly the case for the Caribbean and South America. Other than standards that may have been promulgated by individual hotels or hotel chains, there is little in the way of skills- based standards related to employment in the tourism sector. The project is therefore timely in terms of attempting to strengthen the sector (and particularly small operators) and increase overall tourism sector competitiveness.

A summary of MIF project content is shown in Exhibit 1. All projects include a mandate to develop occupational standards, an associated certification process and training. They also provide for management information systems including internet access to support the implementation of the occupational standards and certification process. Innovative approaches have been added to some of the projects. For Jamaica and two regional Caribbean projects, extension services have been included to facilitate standards and certification implementation as well as general human resource development and related assistance for small tourism operators. Credentialing has also been introduced, most notably in the Caribbean regional credentialing project. The intent is to develop a model which can be used as the basis for proceeding to implementing adequate credentialing system for the region.

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**Exhibit 1: Summary MIF Project Cluster Content**


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Project	Standards	Certification Process	Credentialing	Training (primarily related to Standards attainment)	Extension Officers	MIS
Jamaica	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bahamas	✓	✓		✓		✓
Trinidad & Tobago	✓	✓		✓		✓
Caribbean Regional Credentialing	✓	✓	✓ (Framework)	✓	✓ (OECS)	✓
Caribbean Health, Safety and Resource Management *	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Peru	✓	✓		✓		✓
Brazil	✓	✓		✓		✓

\* Unlike the occupational standards focus of the other projects this regional project focuses on certifying the tourism “product”.

In conducting the assignment, the emphasis was placed on the Caribbean project cluster as it has proceeded well into implementation. References were made to the Peru and Brazil projects as it relates to project design responsive to the needs for an occupational standards and certification.

A generalized logic model for the Caribbean project cluster is shown in Exhibit 2. Although not originally conceived as a region-wide project, the introduction of the regional credentialing project was motivated in part by the opportunity to build on the outcomes of the country projects in terms of standards and certification, as well as the credentialing results from Jamaica. (The second regional project on health, safety and resource management was designed to respond to specific product development needs in hotel operations in the region.)

The projects are designed with 3-year terms commencing after approval of the projects by the MIF Board and any conditions incorporated in the project design that the beneficiary organization must meet. In all cases, the projects included provision for the creation of a project unit for execution, established by the beneficiary organization.