

Written by Media

Friday, 16 July 2010 08:51 - Last Updated Friday, 16 July 2010 09:07

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Castries July 15TH 2010— A World Bank team recently visited St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines , to conduct the Supervision for the OECS E-Government for Regional Integration Program (EGRIP) in Castries and the Launch of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines project under the program (EGRIP-SVG). The mission comprised Mr. Juan Navas-Sabater (Team Leader, CITPO), Mr. Gurcharan Singh and Ms. Kashmiri Daruwalla (Procurement, CITPO).

The main objectives of the mission were to: (i) meet the newly appointed staff of the Regional E-Government Unit (REGU), in particular the procurement specialist and the country-based specialists for St. Lucia and Grenada; (ii) review the status of project implementation, including updating the procurement plan and discussing a number of TORs (*Terms of Reference*) for activities to be launched shortly; (iii) discuss the methodology for monitoring and evaluation and initial results with the newly recruited M&E consultant; (iv) provide training to the REGU and OECS Secretariat staff related to the project, particularly in the area of Procurement; (v) participate in the Project Launch event for St. Vincent and the Grenadines and (vi) discuss and agree on next steps for swift project implementation



During the mission, an official project launch event was conducted in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Hon. Dr. Jerrol Thompson, Minister for Telecommunications, Science, Technology & Industry in St. Vincent and the Grenadines told the launch EGRIP has his full support and is confident the programme will contribute significantly to the ICT Programme in St. Vincent and the Grenadines:

***“The transformation of the Public Service with the application of ICT and the provision of E-Government services is vital to the economic sustainability of the island within the context of the global financial crisis”.***

The REGU organized an official project launch event on May 6 in St. Vincent and the

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Grenadines which was attended by approximately fifty persons. During the project launch an overview was presented on project components and activities. The launch highlighted the importance of the project for the region as it moves towards creating an Economic Union and provided an opportunity for the government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to officially mark the beginning of project implementation in its territory. The event brought together all project stakeholders and was therefore an opportunity to clearly communicate to all the parties involved the project objectives, activities, processes, timetable, as well as the expected role each stakeholder to ensure the successful implementation of EGRIP.

The mission was also an opportunity for Ms. Daruwalla to pass the baton to Mr. Singh as the World Bank Procurement Specialist assigned to EGRIP. Ms. Daruwalla has a long history with the OECS Secretariat. She was the Procurement Specialist for the OECS Telecommunications Reform Project and provided valuable support which resulted in the successful implementation of the Project. In a meeting with the World Bank team, Mr. Randolph Cato recalled the difficult negotiations which led to the liberalization of the telecommunications sector and the formation of ECTEL. He thanked Ms. Daruwalla for her kind assistance and wished her well in her new assignment. The OECS Senior Director said Ms. Daruwalla demonstrated sterling service and dedication to the region: ***“She provided excellent guidance in difficult and challenging times during the implementation of the Telecommunications Reform Project. I have also watched her conscientiously attending to the needs of EGRIP and the Telecommunications and ICT Project being implemented by ECTEL. We will certainly miss her but owe her a wealth of gratitude.”***



Ms. Daruwalla expressed the likeness she has for the OECS region: ***“The OECS region has a very special place within my heart. Thorough my tenure as the Procurement Specialist assigned to the OECS, I have had the distinct privilege of working with brilliant minds and have seen the significant achievements of the collective efforts of the islands. My most memorable moment is the liberalization of the telecommunications sector. I feel very honoured to have experienced this significant feat with Mr. Cato and the OECS team.”***

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The World Bank mission also held technical discussions about the status of implementation with the Project Manager and staff of the REGU, including newly appointed staff, Chamberlain Emmanuel, Procurement Specialist, Dianne Francois, Administrative Assistant, Kervyn Tobias, Country-Based Specialist for St. Lucia, and Alice Bain, Country-Based Specialist for Grenada. Procurement training was provided to the REGU staff and also a few members of staff of the OECS Secretariat. Mrs. Milva Edmunds-Jerome, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, made a presentation on the methodology and findings of the Baseline and Monitoring Data Collection Consultancy. The mission had a working session with the consultant and was satisfied that the proposed approach was satisfactory.

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