OEA/Ser.W

 CIDI/INF.403/21

 28 January 2021

 Original: English

**PRESENTATION OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY FOR INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT, MRS. KIM OSBORNE, SUMMARIZING KEY ELEMENTS OF THE**

**DRAFT 2020 ANNUAL REPORT OF SEDI TO CIDI**

(Made during the regular meeting held January 26, 2021)

**PRESENTATION OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY FOR INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT, MRS. KIM OSBORNE, SUMMARIZING KEY ELEMENTS OF THE**

**DRAFT 2020 ANNUAL REPORT OF SEDI TO CIDI**

(January 26, 2021)

Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

In representation of the hardworking and dedicated staff of the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development, I am pleased to present a summary of key elements contained in the draft annual report of SEDI to this Council. The report covers the period January to December 2020.

In 2020 the member states of the Organization of American States confronted unprecedented challenges. The public health crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic exploited and amplified structural weaknesses to generate economic, social, and political turmoil that upended progress towards all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI), in its role as the development arm of the Organization, pivoted in its execution of activities under the OAS 2016 Comprehensive Strategic Plan to reposition existing programs and initiatives to meet the emergent needs of member states in their response to the complex challenges occasioned by the pandemic. This work was supported by the development and leveraging of strategic partnerships that expanded the resources available to respond to the crisis.

Given that the written report has been distributed, I shall mention briefly some of the highlights identified by each area.

**STRATEGIC LINE 1: PROMOTING INCLUSIVE AND COMPETITIVE ECONOMIES**

The region’s small and medium enterprises were among the most heavily impacted by the pandemic. In order to boost SME participation in e-commerce new partnerships were established with what’sapp business, E-bay and Facebook. The Facebook and WhatsApp Business initiatives and the Caribbean Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) program have provided MSMEs and policymakers with capacity building opportunities and business tools to aid their response, recovery, and resilience building. Under, The Caribbean Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) Program a total of 3960 entrepreneurs were provided with training on tools and strategies to help them respond to the changes brought about by the pandemic. In very specific terms, our measurement of the economic impact from the support provided by the SDBC program indicates the following:

* In 2020, 977 new business started; 5,717 small businesses served; 2,220 women entrepreneurs/ women-owned businesses served; over 684 jobs created and 12,391 jobs supported through SBDC interventions; $67,257,990.76 in sales revenue and $7,112,695.22in profit generated; 96 business expansions; and $1,121,028.60in Capital Infusion leveraged through loans and equity in six Caribbean member states.

The publication of eight (8) special editions of the OAS MSME Newsletter has supported knowledge sharing on measures adopted by the member states to mitigate the pandemic's economic impact on MSMEs. Other initiatives, such as the OAS-MSME Chile Fellowship Program and the MSME Clearinghouse, have continued strengthening the MSME ecosystem in member states.

In the area of competitiveness, The Inter-American Competitiveness Network (RIAC) shared over 240 initiatives from 23 countries in the RIAC COVID-19 Ideas Accelerator on tech-driven tools, health solutions, business support initiatives, and economic response and recovery plans being implemented by member states in response to the pandemic.

At the Sub-national level the Group of Experts on Subnational Competitiveness launched the Inter-American Certification for good practices on construction permits with Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico at the Annual Permitting Meeting of GTECs, hosted by the Government of Mexico and shared the 20 good practices on advancing regulatory reform construction permits with federal, state and municipal authorities of member states.

**Science and Technology**

* In collaboration with the government of Mexico and the Technical Secretariat of the COMCYT, the second edition of Prospecta Americas under the theme "Technology Foresight in the Americas: Challenges of a New Reality" to expand initiatives on emerging technologies in the region and leading collaborative projects in the areas of technology foresight and future studies between public, private sector, and research centers of the OAS Member States.
	+ We Hosted our first virtual "HUB on Technology Transfer and Commercialization for the Americas" program, which provided support to entrepreneurs and innovators with the acceleration of technologies "from idea to market," development of innovative businesses, and technology-based solutions to address specific community problems. We trained 35 entrepreneurs in the Dominica under the first Hub for Innovation and Entrepreneurship in the Caribbean and 45 technology transfer leaders from universities in Ecuador.

**Culture and Tourism**

* In partnership with the Convenio Andrés Bello Organization, a Methodological Guide for the implementation of Culture Satellite Accounts in the CARICOM region to support the measurement of culture's contribution to the economy and data-driven policy decision-making.
* Likewise in collaboration with the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs and George Washington University, the First Indigenous Tourism Forum of the Americas in October 2020, which facilitated dialogue between community, business, and government leaders on development challenges impacting Indigenous people, the role of tourism in driving sustainable economic development, and Indigenous leaders plans for the post-pandemic reality.
* In response to the Pandemic two meetings of the Inter-American Committee on Tourism were convened to address issues related to the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the tourism and hospitality sectors. 2 working working groups were established to treat treat with the response to the pandemic, Biosanitary travel and tourism protocols geared towards standardizing protocols across the region Chaired by Chile and a working group to develop an action plan for the recovery of the airline and cruise industry- chaired by Jamaica

The Inter-American Committee on Ports has continued work on expanding member state access to training opportunities for institutional and human resource capacity building in areas such as over safety and security, digitalization and automation, trade, disaster risk management, dredging, cruise ports, port-city relation, and logistics. Through its 12 online certified courses 401 scholarships were awarded to port officials in 29 member states, while over 3200 port officials from 27 member states were exposed to good practices in 15 technical webinars.

CIP has also commenced implementation of capacity building project on Disaster Risk Management for Port and Maritime Authorities of the Caribbean, approved for execution. The intent is to strengthen disaster preparedness response and recovery of Caribbean ports through the development of a model Emergency response plan, among other things

**STRATEGIC LINE 2: STRENGTHEN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE 2016-2021 INTER-AMERICAN PROGRAM FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (PIDS)**

In the Sustainable Development area, SEDI mobilized new sources of funding for projects for our various initiatives under the Intergrated Water Resources program including Caribbbean Revolving Fund for Wastewater Management in the Greater Caribbean(CREW) as well as for the Rio Bravo Basin, the Plata River Basin and the Trifinio Region as we speak funding for the Pantanal is under consideration

In the energy sector, SEDI facilitated intra-sectoral dialogue between 29 energy ministers and high-level officials, 15 private sector executives, three international financial institutions, and two regional organizations on "Energy Resilience and Investment Opportunities" at the IV Ministerial Meeting of ECPA held in Montego Bay Jamaica .

Under the ECPA direct technical assistance was delivered to energy directors in 30 member states through workshops, exchange missions, and targeted expert advice to encourage the use of reliable, scientific, and empirical data in energy management, renewable energy development, and air quality monitoring.

**STRATEGIC LINE 3: PROMOTE EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
IN THE AMERICAS.**

**Education**

SEDI programs and initiatives under the Inter-American Education Agenda have also helped member states respond to the largest disruption of education systems in history. A webpage sharing over 15,000 resources on educational programs, free training courses, videos, and other tools on issues of priority for member states, together with good practices adopted by Ministries of Education across the region was launched in an effort to promote educational continuity.

The Inter-American Teacher Education Network’s (ITEN) webinar series “COVID-19: Teaching STEM in Quarantine” improved the capacity of over 117, 000 educators from 34 member states to provide quality STEM education.

* Under the ITEN ITEN-University of the West Indies Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Art, and Math (STREAM) 210 pre-service and in-service teachers were trained on closing the gender gap in early childhood experiences and teaching STREAM through virtual seminars delivered by ITEN Teacher Fellows.
* The ProFuturo Educational Program provided technological equipment technological equipment, including laptops, tablets, projectors, and routers, to 36 primary schools, supplied academic digital content in innovation and ICT integration in education, and trained 1,212 teachers in The Bahamas and Saint Lucia under the ProFuturo Educational Program.
* Expanded the ProFuturo Educational Program to all member states, which enabled over 11,700 teachers from 26 member states to access 40 online teacher training programs to improve the capacity of teachers to deliver quality education virtually within the contexts of the COVID-19 pandemic. By the end of the year Over 3,530 participants have completed at least 10 hours of training.

A total of 5,983 needs-based scholarships for higher level education and professional development were awarded under the OAS Scholarships and Training program, while under the Rowe Fund 101 interest-free loans were awarded to citizens in 21 member states, plus 63 emergency scholarships totaling $126,000 to international students in the U.S. to offset the financial challenges created by the pandemic. The introduction of the fundraising campaign, Give to Education, will support the award of other emergency scholarships in 2021. We encourage all member states and partners to contribute to this cause

Under the OAS Chile Scholarship program for CARCIOM new Certificate program on innovation and entrepreneurship within the context of Climate Change was launched with Universidad de Desarollo of Chile. A total of 28 Caribbean entrepreneurs successfully completed the program with projects on solutions to climate change in their communities leading to the attainment of the world renowned D-LAB certificate.

**STRATEGIC LINE 4: PROMOTE DECENT, DIGNIFIED,**

**AND PRODUCTIVE WORK FOR ALL**

In the area of labor, SEDI’s programs and initiatives focused on the challenges and opportunities of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) as they shape the future of work and accelerate changes in the labor market. Following the pandemic's onset, SEDI´s work on labor and employment has pivoted to helping member states address its labor impacts. Over 400 measures adopted by member states to protect workers, employment, and income were complied and shared on the RIAL websites while the The “Repository of Deconfinement and Return to Work Guides and Protocols,” also published on the website, provides ministries of labor of the Americas with information on the actions taken by countries within and outside the region to ease confinement measures, return to the workplace, and ensure the safety and health of workers. The IACML Working Group meeting held in September 2020 focused on telework and the platform economy, the gender dimension of the crisis, expanding social protection coverage, reinforcing social dialogue, and upholding occupational health and safety.

**STRATEGIC LINE 5: FOSTER DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION**

**AND ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIPS**

Implementation of the 17 DCF programs across the region in the three priority areas of the Inter-American Education Agenda (IEA) was disrupted to varying degrees with the onset of the pandemic. As member states have put in place response mechanisms, the implementation deadline has been extended to December 31st, 2021. The programs, which have impacted over 5,000 educators, students and institutions to date citizens, have also been adapted to reflect the current local conditions and align with emerging national priorities.

The Inter-American Cooperation Network (CooperaNet), SEDI’s online platform for development cooperation, has provided a consolidated space for the optimization of partnerships, building alliances and networks, and leveraging of development assistance, and meeting the need for more demand-driven technical cooperation in the Americas. In 2020, 226 cooperation offers, and 8 cooperation needs in the “Cooperation Exchange” were published on the platform. The platform also serves as an online hub for interaction and sharing knowledge and experiences among cooperation authorities on their response to the pandemic. An “Open Call for COVID-19 Offers and Needs” has been launched on the platform. I urge member states to utilize this tool.

Chair,

At this pivotal moment in time, the development agenda of the OAS requires our full and resolute attention. Our member states policy reactions to the pandemic have been bold, but further action will be needed as we emerge from the containment and lockdown measures. As President John F. Kenney so aptly stated “In a crisis, be aware of the danger, but recognize the opportunity.”

How we emerge from this crisis will be determined by our capacity to meet these challenges and opportunities it presents.

Through the policy dialogues sustained in this esteemed body, we must redefine the social pact to ensure that our citizens are supported by stronger social safety nets, better healthcare, more robust and inclusive public finances, and inclusive development strategies. We must also design and innovate solutions that deliver on that pact through robust programs and initiatives.

This, I am sure distinguished member states know, is not the work of any one country or institution. It is a cause around which we all must unite. Collaborations and partnerships that encompass all actors, as we have seen, strengthen us, enabling us to be much more than the sum of our parts.

The key to this path forward will be the reprioritization of the development pillar, reflected in real terms in the sustainable and adequate financing of the organization's development work. The extent to which we continue to evolve in relevance and meet our citizens' current and emerging needs rests with the resolve of our member states and the dedication of our Secretariat staff. I am confident that we are equal to the task.

In closing, I express my deepest gratitude to the member states that hosted meetings or chaired inter-American committees as well CIDI Committees and subsidiaries organs, shared experiences and good practices and provided funding support to the programs and projects of SEDI. Your efforts and the commitment of all our member states and the SEDI staff steadied us even as the situation rapidly evolved, and we worked our way to a “new normal,” Our goal remains to continue working hand in hand with you towards an inclusive and sustainable Americas.

Chair, we must keep up the momentum.

Thank you.

CIDRP03074E01