Promote Inclusive and Competitive Economies

SEDI supports the economic growth, competitiveness and innovation of member states through programs and projects which enhance the productivity of economic actors and improve their ability to participate in domestic and international markets. Emphasis is placed on micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) as engines of job creation, poverty reduction and social inclusion.

- Enhance the capacity of institutions in Member States that support the design and implementation of policies and programs that encourage productivity, entrepreneurship, innovation and internationalization of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), as well as cooperatives and other production units.

- Increase regional cooperation, exchanges of knowledge, transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms and conditions, and intersectoral collaboration among and within Member States in the areas of competitiveness, productivity, and innovation.

- Increase cooperation for strengthening Member States’ institutional capacities to incorporate innovation and transformative technology in order to generate added value and diversification in their economies in a sustainable and inclusive way.

- Support Member States in strengthening the capacities of institutions that foster the generation of sustainable economic activities in the tourism and culture sectors.
Strengthening MSME Ecosystems

MSMEs comprise 99% of all enterprises and employ 75% of all workers in OAS member states. In Latin America and the Caribbean they account on average for 25% of the gross domestic product (GDP) in contrast to developed countries in which 60% of the output is produced by MSMEs.

MSMEs face significant obstacles that impede their ability to contribute to the human, social and economic development goals of the region. The Inter-American Dialogue of High-Level MSME Authorities provides a unique space for high-level policy dialogue and the sharing of good practices to strengthen the MSME ecosystem of these small economic units through the identification of concrete opportunities for horizontal cooperation that enhances the competitiveness, innovation, and internationalization of MSMEs in the region.

Virtual seminars held in 2018 shared good MSME ecosystem development practices with government officials from across the region.

35 good MSME practices shared with 100 MSME government officials from 26 member states in four (4) virtual seminars

“Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) and their evolution in the Americas”
• Shared the experience of 22 member states on generating economic opportunities to improve MSME productivity

“The Experience of German SMEs: Upgrading Skills and Apprenticeship Programs”
• The Government of Germany committed to further its partnership with OAS member states and share its Apprenticeship Programs in the framework of the 9th Americas Competitiveness Exchange on Entrepreneurship and Innovation held in Berlin in June 2018

“Government Procurement as a Tool for the Development of the MSME Sector”
• Enhanced collaboration between ministries of OAS member states responsible for the MSME portfolio and the Inter-American Network on Government Procurement (RICG)

“Eco-Innovation and Circularity: Working with SMEs and their Value Chains”
• Shared UN Environment methodology to assist MSMEs grow demand for their products through eco-innovation with member states
Fostering MSME Competitiveness in CARICOM Member States

In the CARICOM member states, where MSMEs have been targeted as an integral part of their economic growth and competitiveness strategy, the Caribbean Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) Program has focused on five (5) priority areas to improve their MSME ecosystem:

1. Adjusting the regulatory framework to more efficiently address the needs of MSMEs
2. Developing human capital
3. Fostering MSME competitiveness and entrepreneurial spirit
4. Developing regional MSME support structures
5. Developing public/private partnerships to support the development of the sector

In 2018, the specialized human and institutional capacity development services provided to entrepreneurs and small business owners supported the creation of new businesses, expanded employment, and improved the local economies in which they operate.
1 Neo Serra data reported by five (5) Member States: Barbados, Belize, Jamaica, Saint Lucia and St. Kitts and Nevis

The technical assistance provided under this program also strengthened the MSME legal and regulatory framework of beneficiary countries.

- **5 policy guides developed** to support the elaboration of an MSME framework to underpin the adaptation of the SBDC model (Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis)
- **110 MSME support stakeholders trained** in the use of the Global Value Chain methodology to identify challenges to integration and upgrading within local, regional and international values chains (Barbados, Belize, Jamaica and Saint Lucia)
- **163 small businesses and policymakers trained** in the design of business continuity plans for building disaster resilience (Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Jamaica, and Saint Lucia)
- **10 Global Value Chain studies completed** in priority sectors such as tourism, Business Process Outsourcing (BPOS), cocoa and coffee (Barbados, Belize, Jamaica, Saint Lucia)

“This Small Business Development Centre will provide a resource for all Bahamians to receive advisory and technical support when seeking to open a business or expand their operations. It will steer entrepreneurs to available funding opportunities through government or private means. It will also assist business owners in navigating the regulatory and tax registration requirements for a new business.”

The Honourable Hubert Minnis
Prime Minister of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas
Address at the Bahamas Chamber of Commerce and Employers’ Confederation’s Power Breakfast
February 1, 2018

SBDC Bahamas “Pitch night”

Participants in a business communications workshop practice their sales pitch.
Expanding Access to Trade and SME Policy Information

Trade increasingly involves small businesses trading directly with each other or participating in supply chains. Shifts in manufacturing and services in which small players can design and produce products that could only previously be produced by large companies has opened new doors and opportunities to small businesses empowered by electronic commerce and platforms for trade in services.

The OAS Foreign Trade Information System (SICE), the most widely consulted online portal on trade policy in the Americas, provides access to over 25,000 official documents, including the full texts of trade agreements signed by OAS member states and their MSME provisions.

In 2018, SEDI undertook the creation of an online database (clearinghouse) of MSME laws and successful policies, programs, and practices of all OAS Member States. The database, which will also be hosted on the SICE, will be launched at the Sixth Inter-American Dialogue of MSME Authorities.

Driving Innovation, Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship

Science, technology and innovation (STI) are critical elements for the realization of integral development, prosperity, and social inclusion in the Hemisphere. As such, the Latin American and Caribbean region, in order to meet the goals of the 2030 Agenda, must increase its investment in training human capital, and in strengthening the use of scientific, technological, and innovative capacities.

In order to address this challenge, SEDI, mandated by the Declaration of Medellin and the Plan of Action of Guatemala 2016-2020, has promoted the exchange of good practices and provided opportunities for capacity building to over 2000 professionals and strategic partners from across the hemisphere in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Key results of the work undertaken by SEDI in 2018 include:

In 2018 the SICE had over 14 million views.
Entrepreneurs and technology transfer professionals in the Latin American and Caribbean region are trained in key theoretical and practical aspects of developing the market of readiness of their innovative technologies.

HUB on Technology Transfer and Commercialization for the Americas
Santiago de Chile, Chile
August 27 - September 7, 2018
Promoting Competitiveness, Connecting Talent and Networks

Over the course of 2018 the **Inter-American Competitiveness Network (RIAC)** strengthened the human and institutional capacity of member states in areas related to:

- State-of-the-art technology
- Innovative models
- Entrepreneurship and sme development
- Subnational competitiveness agendas and indicators

The **Americas Competitiveness Exchanges (ACE)** program brings together competitively selected decision makers from the public, private and academic sectors to gain first-hand experience of good practices in innovation, entrepreneurship and innovative approaches to urban and rural economic development.

The two (2) editions of the ACE program implemented in 2018 explored successful economic development models in Germany, Israel and Northern California, United States.

"Entrepreneurship and innovation are not only the roots of our countries’ relative wealth and our citizens’ living standards. They are also the ultimate problem solvers to any challenges that our societies face. Hence, exchanging best practice and seeking opportunities to advance innovation and entrepreneurship together is a mandate of common sense."

Peter Altmaier  
Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy  
Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy  
Germany

"ACE 10 proved to be an excellent opportunity to learn best practices on entrepreneurship and innovation to support local economic development. It was immensely useful to learn some of the methodologies used by cities in the northern California to attract and generate investment. It was also great to network with colleagues from the Americas to learn and share experiences."

Kwesi Roberts  
ACE 10 Participant  
Business Development Officer  
Organization of the Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)
which facilitate the sharing of experiences and knowledge, also support the building of networks between the local and visiting stakeholders, and the establishment of long-term collaborative partnerships. Through the 10 editions of this program, the ACE has succeeded in building *the largest innovation and entrepreneurship network in the region*, which has resulted in the implementation of several initiatives that have strengthened the innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystems of the Americas and beyond.
Over 270 Partnerships and Projects on Science, Technology, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Developed through 10 Editions of the ACE Program

**IthaKa Center of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Uruguay**

Strengthens the connection between the university community and the entrepreneurial ecosystem, and promotes innovation and creativity for the development of ventures that contribute to the development of a more prosperous, just and humane society.

**SciGirl Saturday, Belize**

Encourages girls to engage in STEM subjects and introduces them to new ways of learning outside of the classroom through workshops on basic theory and practical experiments.

**“ALPHA Haiti” Technology Incubator Center, Haiti**

Stimulates the adoption of innovative approaches to persistent local economic development challenges by providing young entrepreneurs with comfortable, well equipped and inspiring works spaces, specialized training, and mentorship.

**Center for Innovation and High Impact Entrepreneurship in Hidalgo, Mexico**

Supports business development by providing entrepreneurs and MSMEs with training, prototype testing facilities, co-working spaces and a FabLab creation space.
The ACE program has also continued to embrace gender equality as a core part of its focus. As such, emphasis has been placed on the inclusion of women as participants and as speakers, and the incorporation of specific program activities related to women and youth in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) and small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

**Promoting the Development of Public Policies for Economic Development and Competitiveness**

In 2018, the **Group of Experts on Subnational Competitiveness (GTECS)** focused on key topics such as competitiveness indicators, modalities to support local governments and models to advance regulatory reform to improve the business climate and facilitate economic activity, in particular of SMEs.
Leading the Sustainable Development of the Culture and Tourism Sector

The diverse cultural assets, geography, products, goods and services that form the tourism product of this region have made the Americas a global leader in destination tourism.

As one of the region’s largest economic sectors, tourism, and the associated cultural and creative industries, drives social inclusion, employment, economic development and competitiveness in the Americas. Notwithstanding the strong performance of the industry, innovative policies, programs, and investments that address the challenges, threats and risks to the future of tourism are necessary to ensure that the sector remains competitive and sustainable.

Programs and initiatives implemented by SEDI in 2018 enhanced awareness of the contribution of tourism to the Sustainable Development Goals and strengthened the framework for the development of a Heritage Economy in the Caribbean.

Travel and tourism account for 8.5% of GDP and nearly 10% of employment in the Americas.
Highlights of 2018 include:

Published report “Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: Good Practices in the Americas” with the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

- Enhanced awareness and understanding of the contribution of sustainable tourism to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals through joint publication with the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) of report highlighting 14 good sustainable tourism practices in the Americas

Strengthened capacity of Caribbean Member States to develop the socio-economic contribution of their Cultural Heritage

- Commenced training of 22 culture and tourism government officials from Jamaica and Barbados in the establishment/reorganization of National Registers of heritage places and trained 7 culture and tourism government officials from Guyana, Jamaica and Saint Lucia in the Baseline Assessment of Heritage Tourism opportunities for sustainable economic development
- Created multi-agency working groups in Jamaica and Barbados to design and implement standardized instruments, procedures and vocabulary for the development of national heritage registries
- Created Regional Legal Taskforce to provide technical input for upcoming meeting on the development and promotion of effective heritage protection legislation

“My government believes that Cultural Heritage must play a critical role in the transformation of Barbados’ current economic fortunes. We acknowledge the need to engage in smart-partnerships with the OAS and other international stakeholders to access the resources and technical assistance necessary to develop a viable and sustainable Heritage sector.”

The Hon. Mia Amor Mottley, QC, MP
Prime Minister of Barbados

The “Declaration of Georgetown on Connecting the Americas through Sustainable Tourism” was approved at the XXIV Inter-American Congress of Ministers and High-level Authorities of Tourism hosted by the Government of Guyana on March 21-22, 2018.
Among other things, the declaration encourages the establishment and strengthening of public-private partnerships between the different actors of the tourism sector; urges the development of coordinated policies in the transport sector; and mandated the formulation of a sustainable community tourism development model for the Americas.

The 2018-2021 Work Plan of the Inter-American Committee on Tourism (CITUR), based on the guidelines contained in this Declaration, establishes initiatives to strengthen tourism management in member states and enhance tourism cooperation and competitiveness in the Americas.

A key project which emerged from the meeting is the “Building the Resilience of Small Tourism Enterprises in the Caribbean”, to be funded by the Permanent Mission of the United States to the OAS. Another initiative announced was the “Sustainable Community Tourism Development Management Model for the Americas”. Both projects, which will be implemented over a two to three year period, are expected to strengthen and diversify the tourism product of member states.
Building Capacity in the Port Sector

“The continuing and longstanding partnership between the US Coast Guard and OAS-CIP perpetuates the sharing of best practices that strengthen maritime safety and security. By cultivating key relationships across the Americas, we jointly enhance crucial maritime partnerships that are essential to balancing security with commerce leading to economic prosperity and regional security.”

LCDR Donald Davis
International Port Security Liaison Officer United States Coast Guard

The OAS Inter-American Committee on Ports (CIP) is the only permanent Inter-American government forum that brings together the National Port Authorities of all OAS Member States to facilitate competitive, sustainable, secure and inclusive port development. The CIP monitors the dynamic maritime and port sector in order to identify gaps in the six (6) priority areas identified by member states and deliver concrete solutions:

1. Logistics, Innovation and Competitiveness
2. Sustainable Management and Environmental Protection
3. Port Protection and Security
4. Public Policy, Legislation and Regulation
5. Tourism, Inland Ports, Waterways, Ship Services and Navigation
6. Social Responsibility, Gender Equality, and Empowerment of Women

Hemispheric Conferences, technical seminars, workshops and courses, offered in collaboration with strategic partners have enhanced human and institutional capacities in the port sector across the Hemisphere. The CIP provides educational and training opportunities on port operations and logistics, sustainable management, competitiveness, security and gender issues. Special attention has been given to train-the-trainer models that trigger a multiplier effect for sustainable capacity building in the sector.
In 2018 SEDI realized the following accomplishments:

**Strengthened Institutional and human capacities in the port sector of the Americas**
- Developed public-private partnerships with 13 donors and strategic partners to offer a variety of in-situ and online course, regional workshops, technical seminars, and hemispheric conferences to address member states training needs and share good practices on CIP Priority Areas and Port Management
- 611 port officials sponsored to attend 5 hemispheric conferences and technical seminars
- 239 port officials trained in 12 professional development courses

**Supported the full and equal participation of women in the port sector**
- Promoted equal access and participation of women in all CIP capacity building programs through gender specific financial aid awards and implemented a gender mainstreaming approach to all CIP activities
- Awarded 3 scholarships for participation in the "Women in Port Management" course held in France
- Recognized outstanding women professionals with CIP Maritime Award of the Americas
- Co-organized the Second Hemispheric Conference on Corporate Social Responsibility and Gender Equality, "Creating a Competitive and Inclusive Port Sector" with the National Port Authority of Peru.
- 210 Participants from 18 Member States shared good practices and recommendations on socially responsible and inclusive strategies for port development that, inter alia, promoted a cultural shift in the male dominated industry to provide equal access to labor for future generations

**Encouraged environmentally sustainable port management and operations**
- Offered advanced 4-week training courses on Sustainable Port Management and Environmental Protection in partnership with Ports of Spain in Santander, Spain on sustainable port management and protection of the marine environment
- Encouraged strong focus on “green logistic operations” and environmental protection a driver of competitiveness in international trade in all port operation courses and dredging seminars
- Implemented the RightShip initiative to reduce Green-House Gas Emissions of ships while in the port of member states through identifying demands, and facilitating the signature of MoUs as well as Service Agreements with the involved parties
"I am responsible for concession contracts in Puerto Valparaíso, and participating in a program as prestigious as the Master in Port Management and Intermodal Transport (MGPT) - offered through OAS-CIP - has allowed me, not only to obtain knowledge about other valuable expertise, but also have a first-hand view of port governance through those who are directly involved."

Enrique Piraino
Port of Valparaíso, Chile
27th Edition of the Master in Port Management and Intermodal Transport

The 11th Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Ports (CIP) of the Organization of American States (OAS), hosted by the Government of Mexico in Mexico City on August 1-3, 2018, was convened under the theme of “Sustainable Management for Port Competitiveness”.

Representatives from 28 National Port Authorities, as well as participants from international organizations, private sector, and civil society, engaged in high-level dialogue on policies, practices and technical solutions to promote the sustainable development of ports, including the development of 4th Generation ports that are faster, smarter, cleaner and more interconnected.

The Resolution of Mexico City and the 2018-2020 Plan of Action adopted at the meeting support public-private collaboration to drive a multidimensional approach that encompasses environmental, social and economic aspects of sustainable port development.