

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Execution of MSME Perception Survey

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND JUSTIFICATION

1.1 Relevant Background

The Caribbean region, characterized by its Small Island Developing States (SIDS) status, faces numerous challenges, including high dependence on imported fossil fuels, small market sizes, limited economies of scale, and vulnerability to external shocks. These constraints impact economic resilience, business competitiveness, and sustainability efforts, particularly in the context of energy consumption and efficiency. Recognizing these challenges, the Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export), in collaboration with Business Support Organizations (BSOs), with support from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to advance energy efficiency (EE), Resource-Efficient Cleaner Production (RECP), and Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) across the region.

The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed structural weaknesses within Caribbean economies, particularly the reliance on foreign tourism and commodities. Economic activity in the region declined by 9.9% from 2019 to 2020, surpassing the 6.8% contraction experienced by Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) as a whole. For instance, in Barbados, the tourism sector's contribution to GDP plummeted from 17.5% in 2019 to just 2.8% in 2021. The hardest-hit sectors included tourism, retail, and services, disproportionately affecting women-led businesses and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). These economic vulnerabilities have reinforced the urgency for Caribbean nations to adopt strategies that reduce dependence on imported resources, create resilient jobs, and add value through local manufacturing and services.

Access to affordable and clean energy, energy efficiency, and sustainable resource use are critical enablers of business competitiveness. The integration of resource-efficient practices and circular production methodologies can significantly lower costs, enhance productivity, and align Caribbean businesses with global environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards. Notably, EE standards are being developed under the CARICOM Regional Organization for Standards and Quality (CROSQ), covering buildings, appliances, and lighting. However, the uptake of EE, RECP, and VSS strategies remains limited due to technological gaps, lack of access to finance,

and insufficient awareness, particularly among MSMEs. Many businesses perceive these measures as complex and financially burdensome, hindering widespread adoption. To address these challenges, this initiative aims to develop and implement an online energy audit tool and training programs to support MSMEs in adopting EE, RECP, and VSS strategies and technologies. The project will focus on enhancing awareness, facilitating access to information, and providing technical support to businesses, helping them transition towards sustainable and cost-effective operations. By doing so, the initiative seeks to transform MSMEs' perception of sustainability measures from burdensome obligations into viable business opportunities.

The initiative will also include advocacy efforts to promote EE, RECP, and VSS adoption, fostering a more resilient and competitive Caribbean business ecosystem. The digital platform established under this project will serve as a scalable solution, offering iterative upgrades, sector-specific insights, and country-level business cases to ensure long-term impact beyond the project's implementation phase.

Given the region's heavy reliance on imported fossil fuels and its susceptibility to climate-related disasters, transitioning to renewable energy and energy-efficient practices is both an economic and environmental necessity. Natural hazards such as hurricanes, which are increasing in frequency and intensity due to climate change, pose a significant threat to energy infrastructure. Without resilient energy solutions, these events can result in severe disruptions and financial losses.

Through this initiative, Caribbean Export and its partners aim to bridge the gap in MSME support, fostering a more sustainable, resource-efficient, and competitive private sector in the Caribbean.

1.2 The Team's Mission

Caribbean Export is committed to bridge the gap in knowledge, financing, and technological capacity that prevents MSMEs from leveraging EE, Resource-Efficient Cleaner Production (RECP), and Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) as business enablers. Recognizing the role of digitalization in driving these transitions, Caribbean Export aims to provide MSMEs with the necessary tools, strategies, and support services to integrate sustainability into their operations.

To achieve this, Caribbean Export, in collaboration with its partner Business Support Organizations (BSOs), is establishing a digital platform that will serve as a hub for knowledge, best practices, and business cases related to EE, RECP, and VSS. This platform will be complemented by country-level helpdesks that provide targeted advisory services to MSMEs. The initiative also seeks to stimulate a market for specialized EE and RECP services, which are currently only accessible to larger firms.

Within this context, Caribbean Export is seeking an individual consultant to develop comprehensive policies and strategies for energy efficiency, sustainability standards, and circular economy adoption in MSMEs. These policies will be designed for implementation by national governments, BSOs, and Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) to enhance the competitiveness and resilience of Caribbean businesses while fostering sustainable economic growth.

1.3 Contracting Authority

The contracting authority for this assignment is the Caribbean Export Development Agency (*hereinafter* Caribbean Export/the Agency).

1.4 Beneficiary Countries

IDB Caribbean Countries: Belize, Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

2. OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE AND EXPECTED RESULTS

2.1 Overall Objectives

The overall objective of this consultancy is to execute a perception survey among Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the beneficiary countries to assess their awareness, attitudes, and challenges related to energy efficiency (EE), Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS), and Resource-Efficient Cleaner Production (RECP). The findings will establish a baseline for the project, inform the marketing strategy, and contribute to the project's Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) framework.

2.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the Consultancy are:

- Design and develop the survey instrument creating a structured questionnaire that captures MSME perceptions, knowledge, and adoption of EE, VSS, and RECP practices.

- Administer the survey across the target MSME population in The Bahamas, Barbados, Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Trinidad & Tobago.
- Conduct a comprehensive analysis of survey responses, identifying key trends, challenges, and opportunities.
- Provide recommendations, develop insights for shaping marketing strategies, awareness campaigns, and targeted interventions to promote EE, VSS, and RECP adoption.

2.3 Scope of Work

The consultant will:

Task 1: Survey Design & Methodology

- Develop the survey structure, including quantitative and qualitative questions.
- Define sampling methods to ensure representative participation across industries and MSME sizes.
- Develop an implementation plan, including an outreach strategy for survey administration.

Task 2: Survey Execution

- Distribute and administer the survey through digital platforms, phone interviews, and/or in-person interviews where feasible.
- Ensure a statistically significant response rate across all target countries.
- Address language and cultural differences in survey administration.

Task 3: Data Analysis & Reporting

- Process and clean survey data for analysis.
- Identify patterns and trends in MSME perceptions and readiness for EE, VSS, and RECP adoption.
- Generate visual representations (charts, graphs) to support findings.
- Develop a final report summarizing key insights, policy recommendations, and suggested marketing strategies.

2.4 Purpose of consultancy

This consultancy will provide evidence-based insights into MSME perceptions regarding EE, VSS, and RECP adoption. The findings will shape outreach strategies, influence capacity-building efforts, and guide interventions to encourage sustainable business practices. The survey results will also serve as a benchmark to measure the impact of subsequent project activities.

2.5 Expected Results

- A comprehensive perception survey executed across MSMEs in the five beneficiary countries.
- A cleaned and analyzed dataset with key trends and insights on MSME knowledge and attitudes toward EE, VSS, and RECP.
- A detailed final report with actionable recommendations for shaping project outreach and engagement strategies.
- Integration of findings into the project's Monitoring & Evaluation framework.

3. ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS AND MITIGATION

3.1 Assumptions

- MSMEs recognize the value of energy efficiency and sustainability in improving their operations.
- BSOs and policymakers actively support the integration of EE and sustainability policies into national and regional frameworks.
- The Online Energy Audit Tool is technically sound, user-friendly, and accessible to MSMEs across the region.

3.2 Risks & Mitigation

| Risk | Mitigation |
|---|---|
| Low survey response rate from MSMEs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage BSOs, industry associations, and chambers of commerce to encourage MSMEs to participate. - Offer incentives (e.g., exclusive insights, participation in energy efficiency programs) to boost response rates. - Use multiple outreach channels (social media, email, direct calls). |
| Language and cultural barriers in survey administration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure survey materials are available in English, Spanish, and French as needed. - Hire local enumerators for phone or in-person surveys in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. |
| Limited digital access among MSMEs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide alternative data collection methods such as phone interviews or in-person surveys where feasible. |
| Data reliability and accuracy issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use structured and validated survey instruments. - Conduct pilot testing before full deployment. - Implement quality control checks and cross-validation of responses. |
| Difficulty in analyzing and interpreting data s | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use automated data analysis tools and employ experienced data analysts. |

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| | - Ensure clear survey design and structured responses to minimize inconsistencies. |
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4. DELIVERABLES

4.1 Deliverables

The consultant will be responsible for the delivery of the following products:

| Deliverable | Description | Timeline | Payment % |
|------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Inception Report | Detailed methodology, survey design, sampling strategy, and implementation plan. | 2 weeks after contract signing | 10% |
| Survey Administration Report | Summary of outreach activities, response rates, and data collection challenges. | Week 6 | 20% |
| Draft Survey Analysis Report | Initial findings, data insights, and preliminary recommendations. | Week 8 | 20% |
| Final Survey Report | Full analysis with recommendations for marketing strategy and policy interventions. | Week 10 | 25% |
| Presentation of Findings | PowerPoint summary of results for stakeholders. | Week 11 | 25% |

5. PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

5.1 Management structure

The Manager - Technical Programmes will retain overall responsibility for the overall project. Day-to-day supervision of this project is the responsibility of the Project Assistant who will communicate progress to the Manager.

5.2 Reporting

Report outlining key activities undertaken, progress made and results achieved must be submitted to Mr. Wayne Elliott, Manager-Technical Programmes at welliott@carib-export.com and copied to Mr. Christopher Richards, Project Assistant – Technical Programmes at crichards@carib-export.com.

6. Payment timeline:

Payments will be made upon delivery and acceptance of each report.

7. REQUIREMENTS

7.1 Qualifications and Work Experience

A qualified expert, with the following qualifications and experience:

- A master's degree or higher in Economics, Business Administration, Environmental Studies, Energy Management, Statistics, Social Sciences, or a related field.
- At least 5-7 years of experience in survey design, data collection, and analysis, particularly in the fields of energy efficiency, sustainability, and MSME development.
- Proven experience in conducting perception surveys and using quantitative and qualitative research methodologies.
- Prior work experience in the Caribbean region and understanding of MSME challenges and energy efficiency adoption barriers is highly desirable.
- Experience working with international development organizations, government agencies, or private sector business support organizations (BSOs) is an advantage.
- Proficiency in survey tools and data analysis software (e.g., Python, SPSS, STATA, R, NVivo, Qualtrics, or similar).
- Expertise in statistical sampling methods and survey methodologies, including online and telephone data collection.
- Strong analytical and data visualization skills for presenting survey results in a clear and actionable manner.
- Working knowledge of Spanish and/or French (for administering surveys in the Dominican Republic and Haiti) is an asset.
- Previous experience conducting research in the Caribbean region and working with regional business support organizations, governments, and international agencies.

7.2 Contract Duration

The consultancy will be completed within 4 months, with milestones aligned with deliverables.

7.3 Location

The Consultant can complete the tasks virtually.

7.4 Required Documentation

Interested candidates should submit the following:

- A detailed CV highlighting relevant experience.
- A technical proposal outlining the approach and methodology for the consultancy.

- A financial proposal detailing the consultancy fees, in USD.
- Contact information for at least two professional references.
- Signed Application Declaration in Clause 10.

All applications must be submitted by email to greenenergy@carib-export.com , no later than 4:00pm AST, September 30, 2025

8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Consultancy will be monitored and evaluated by Caribbean Export over the duration of the project. Performance on the project will be measured by satisfactory completion and timely submission of the deliverables outlined in Sections 4, and as outlined within the work plan submitted. Feedback, other than acceptance, on each submitted deliverable is not a requirement for the continuation of the project. However, in some instances the Consultant may need to integrate any feedback into the subsequent deliverables. The Contracting Authority will provide feedback to the consultant within ten (10) working days of receipt of the final report.

9. PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION

To participate in any activity executed or supported by Caribbean Export, you hereby agree that any information and personal data that you share and is collected by the Agency will be processed for the purpose of reporting the outcomes and impact of your projects and/or participation. Please note that Caribbean Export reserves the right to publish the Contractor's/Participant's name and address, the purpose and nature of the activity, and financial arrangements, in accordance with Caribbean Export's Personal Data Protection Policy. [Personal Data Protection Policy](https://content.carib-export.com/download/personal-data-protection-policy/). (<https://content.carib-export.com/download/personal-data-protection-policy/>). Derogation from publication of this information may be granted if it could endanger the Contractor/Participant or harm his/her commercial interests.

10. DECLARATION

To participate in any procurement undertaken by Caribbean Export, all applicants must complete and submit to the agency the Applicant Declaration Form. <https://content.carib-export.com/download/applicant-declaration-form/>