Justification and Plan of Implementation

Activity: English and Computer Training for MoC Staff

Project: Strengthening MoC Core HR functions through the Department of Personnel Institutional and Individual Capacity Development

MoU No.:   MOU TDSP-2010-014 dated December 29, 2010.

Original Project Budget: USD234,540.00   **Revised Project Budget:** USD234,540.00

Project Start Date: 01 January 2011   **Extended End date :** 31 March 2015

1. Strategic Context of the Project

Several capacity assessments were carried for MoC departments in recent years that were geared towards determining the gaps between existing skills and knowledge of officers and staff versus the required skills and knowledge to perform their duties as civil servants of the Ministry of Commerce. It was noted in several TNAs conducted that majority of the department officers and staff are under equipped with knowledge of basic communication skills in English and the use of basic computer software such as Microsoft Office package.

This proposed activity has been developed with all of those results of assessments in mind, in order to bring concrete yet easy to implement and sustainable solutions to improve HR management in MOC, starting with English and computer training.

It was noted in the current project document (concept note) that due to MoC officers and staff's limited capacity of the English language, they are unable to attend training courses, both local and overseas, wherein trainings are conducted in English.

Likewise it was also noted that most of MOC staff's knowledge on IT is limited, specifically on the use of internet, electronic mails, and Microsoft Office software package (i.e. Word, Excel, etc.)

As provided for in project Concept Note, the staff working for MoC's departments and provincial offices are the main beneficiaries of this addendum to the previous MOU. MOC's officers and staff are unable to fulfill some of their roles because of the limited capacity to communicate in basic English and the use of computer software.

The proposal fits in the Trade SWAp Pillar 3 (capacity development for trade) work programs. The proposal fits primarily in component 3 on Institutional and Human Capacity, and some aspects it fits under component 4 too.

2. Activity Description:

The main impact of this addendum to the existing concept note is that will support the Ministry of Commerce on various aspects in trade and development activities brought about by a more efficient communication capability and better packaged reports.

The project will have two main results:

1. Improved Communication Skills in English

   (a) At least 30 officials successfully completed English Course for Beginners (Elementary); and

   (b) At least 60 officials successfully completed English Course for Advanced Learners (Intermediate)

2. Strengthened Computer Literacy

   (a) 60 officials completed training on Microsoft Office, Internet, and Email

Results	Activities/step
1. Improved Communication Skills in English	- Select training firm - Conduct placement testing for applicants sent by each department and select students (For first term, only 30 students for elementary). - Develop attendant and performance standard - Develop training materials (by trainers) - Organize the Launching Workshop presided over by SM - Start English classes for elementary class. The term is for three months. - Manage attendants and weekly reporting - Conduct exit-testing exam - After completing elementary course, Intermediate will start for students who passed the elementary test and also for new student who are qualified for Intermediate level based on results of placement test.
2. Strengthened Computer Literacy (Word, Excel, PPT, outlook, Email & Internet)	- Select training firm and conduct procurement of computers - Review and select applicants sent by each department for computer literacy course. - Develop training materials (by trainers) - Start computer classes for first round (30 students for three months) - Manage attendants and weekly reporting - Conduct exit-testing exam. - After the first round, the second will be provided for other 30 new officials.

The proposed activities will address the current problem at a number of levels.

- **English for Beginners (Elementary English).** Majority of the officers and staff at the Ministry of Commerce are unable to write and speak English, however modern education and technology have made it easier for people to learn English as a second language. Before the officers and staff at MoC are allowed to take the course in Elementary English, they take a test that sets a baseline and determines where they will be starting from. Once the officer and staff pass the battery of tests in English, they will be assigned an instructor. The instructor will assist the officers and staff by providing him or her with exercises and correcting mistakes. After that, they will join the class with other students who will be learning English as a second language. Upon completion of the beginner level courses, a person will have a consultation with the facilitator of the course. After the consultation, the staff or officer will be eligible to move up and take an intermediate English course.

- **English for Advanced Learners (Intermediate English).** This course is for the officers and staff who are already familiar with the English language and wanted to develop their accuracy in both speaking and writing, as well as extend their vocabulary range. The aim of this course is to develop every aspect of the officers and staff's English by offering a balanced approach to listening, speaking, reading and writing. On the course, the officers/staff will: (1) review and extend their language to better respond to more challenging texts and authentic audio material; (b) develop their vocabulary; (c) communicate with more confidence and fewer errors; and (d) improve their pronunciation. During the course program, the course facilitator will continually assess the officers/staff based on the core aims of the course. They will be encouraged to reflect on their own performance with their teacher's assistance. This will help them identify their strengths and areas for development, allowing their teacher to give them informed advice.

- **Computer Software Literacy in Microsoft Office and Internet/Email Software Package.** Because of the increasing requirements of the formulation of trade policies and in trade negotiations, there is a need to have extensive learning and capacity building in the use of computers, specifically in the use of Microsoft software package. The following are some of its rationale: (1) To build a resource of people at the Ministry of Commerce who are highly skilled in the use of information technology. Where governments see information technology as a means of strengthening the economy, and want to develop a workforce with vocational skills for computer-related activities, computer-education programs have been set up to develop a cadre of people with specialist skills. (2) To equip all MoC officers and staff for a future in which technological awareness and basic computer skills will increasingly be important for greater numbers of citizens. (3) To use the technology to enhance the existing curriculum that will be implemented in the MoC Trade Training and Research Institute and to improve the way in which it is developed. (4): To promote change in trade education by moving towards a more relevant curriculum and a new definition of the teacher's role. Some computer projects have been designed to shift the curriculum in the direction of practical learning of information-handling and communication skills rather than concentration on memory. (5) To allow learners at the various departments of MoC to seek information from databases, especially through the Internet, and use computer technology to communicate with other schools, colleges and learning communities. This rationale opens up new learner-initiated opportunities.

3. Resources requested from TDSP

With this addendum to the existing MOU, the following resources are required:

- Computer Laboratory classroom with a seating capacity of at least 30 people complete with desktops, LCD projector, screen, overhead projectors, printers, white board, markers, etc.
- English language classrooms with a seating capacity of at least 30 people complete with desktops, LCD projector, screen, overhead projectors, printers, white board, markers, etc.
- Instructors of English and Microsoft Office.
- Microsoft Office software package (original copies).
- Office supplies and other equipment listed in the Work Program and Budget.

Note: The computers and other equipment will be transferred to MoC Trade Training and Research Institute when it is functioned.

In ensuring that the course program does not provide any conflict to the office schedule of the participants, the following schedule will be followed:

- English training to be done in two levels: (1) Elementary English for first term; and (2) Intermediate English in second term;
- English training sessions will be: Afternoon (4 pm to 5 pm); and
- Microsoft Office: together in one course in Afternoon (4 pm to 5 pm).

The inputs needed are as follows:

- financial resources to start upgrading and converting some of the existing office facilities in MoC as classroom facilities (one for English training and one for Computer laboratory).
- provision of classroom equipment for computer laboratory and English training.
- support for the establishment of partnerships with regional and international institutions to sustain operation of the training institute.

Two training firms will be selected to provide training services for English classes and Computer Skills. The training firms will have following responsibilities:
- Propose student book and develop training materials
- Provide students with training documents including textbooks, exercise book, and other relevant documents
- Conduct placement testing to select students (for English) and set baseline of student language capability
- Manage student attendants and make weekly reporting to DoP on individual performance

- Implement training plan to improve student capacity through daily homework and exercises
- Conduct mid-term and final exam.
- Provide MoC with class completion report highlighting performance of individual students

4. Project Implementation Arrangement

The Director Department of Personnel of the Ministry of Commerce is responsible for the day-to-day functioning of the Ministry of Commerce. Its mandate is to ensure that appropriate financial and human resources are available in the Ministry for it to implement its mandate.

The existing structure at the Department of Personnel will handle the training programs outlined in this proposed activity as an addendum to the existing project, together with the implementation of the MoC Trade Training and Research Institute.

The Training Programs will be under the Department of Personnel, but will have coordination with the MoC Trade Training and Research Institute. For issues pertaining to project operations, selection of trainors and other logistics, the coordination will be shared with the Department of International Cooperation

For M&E purposes, the addendum to the activities of the existing MOU will work closely with the M&E Unit located in the Department of International Cooperation (DICO), and will adhere to the main principles of M&E used in SWAp and TDSP.

5. Annex:

1. Revised Budget Plan

2. Revised Work Plan