DOCUMENT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

BARBADOS

SUPPORT FOR THE PREPARATION AND SUPERVISION OF THE TRANSFORMING FOOD SYSTEMS FOR RESILIENCE PROGRAM

(BA-T1149)

PROJECT DOCUMENT

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Project Summary

Operation Type:	Technical Cooperation
Sector:	TRADE
Subsector:	TRADE FACILITATION, TRADE LOGISTICS AND CUSTOMS
TC Taxonomy:	Operational Support
Project Number under the Operational Support Taxonomy:	BA-L1072
Technical Responsible Unit:	PTI/TIN-Trade and Investment Division
Unit with Disbursement Responsibility (UDR):	PTI/TIN-Trade and Investment Division
Executing Agency:	Inter-American Development Bank

Project Objective

The objective of this Technical Cooperation (TC) is to support the effective preparation and supervision of the Transforming Food Systems for Resilience Program (BA-L1072) in Barbados. The TC will finance technical studies, diagnostics, action plans, training activities, and specialized consultancies required to define priority investments, prepare loan annexes, and strengthen institutional capacities for results-based monitoring and evaluation. In parallel, the TC will support investment planning and budget prioritization processes and ensure adequate supervisory support during the early stages of loan execution, thereby improving readiness, implementation quality, and development impact of the Program.

Financial Information

Financing Type	Fund	Amount in US$
TCN - Nonreimbursable	P3B - OC SDP Pillar 3 - Productive Development and Innovation through the Private Sector	125,000
TCN - Nonreimbursable	P1A - OC SDP Pillar 1 - Strategic Priorities - Regional Programs & Initiatives	300,000
	Total IDB Financing	**425,000**
	Counterpart Financing	**0**
	Total Project Budget	**425,000**

Donors:	N/A
Disbursement Period:	36 months
Execution Period:	36 months

Additional Financial Information

N/A

I. JUSTIFICATION AND OBJECTIVE

1.1 **Diagnostic.** Barbados continues to face structural economic challenges, including a persistent trade imbalance and high public debt, though recent trends show signs of improvement. Merchandise imports continued to rise over January–September 2025, driven primarily by heightened demand for food and beverages, vehicles, and construction-related equipment. Over the same period, export performance weakened as fuel re-exports declined and shipments of beverages and other goods softened. As a result, the merchandise trade deficit widened by US$252.6 million, with total imports expanding by 5.6 percent. While real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by 2.7 percent during the period— driven by tourism, construction and services— households remain burdened by volatile global food prices and limited domestic food system resilience.[1] According to United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) data, around 31 percent of Barbadians experienced moderate or severe food insecurity between 2021-2023.

1.2 The annual inflation rate in Barbados rose to 1.4% in October 2025, marking its highest level since June 2024, following two consecutive months at 1.2%. Over the longer term, inflation has averaged 3.5% since 2006, with peaks and troughs reflecting significant economic volatility, including a high of 11.2% in September 2008 and a low of –2.6% in November 2015.[2] Food inflation remains among the leading pressures on low-income households. The cost of a healthy diet in the Caribbean is estimated at US$5.48 per day[3], the highest in Latin America and the Caribbean, highlighting systemic challenges in food affordability and access that cannot be addressed through production increases alone.

1.3 These dynamics underscore the economy's growing dependence on imported food products and highlight structural vulnerabilities in domestic supply chains, reinforcing the need for targeted interventions to strengthen national food security and reduce exposure to external shocks. Against this backdrop, the Government of Barbados (GoB) recognizes that enhancing food security requires a comprehensive food systems transformation that boosts domestic agricultural productivity while also addressing other key variables, including processing, distribution, consumption, domestic and export market linkages, nutrition outcomes, and climate resilience.

1.4 **Production Systems:** Agriculture, forestry, and fishing together account for approximately 1.5 to 1.8 percent of GDP[4] with less than 2 percent of total employment engaged in agriculture[5]. The sector is largely composed of small-scale farmers (approximately 6,500 farmers, including subsistence and seasonal farmers of whom around 1,400 are part of farming organizations such as the

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[1] Central Bank of Barbados. (n.d.). Central Bank of Barbados Review of the Barbados Economy: January-September, 2025. https://www.centralbank.org.bb/news/economic-reviews/economic-review-january-september-2025

[2] TRADING ECONOMICS. (n.d.). *Barbados inflation rate.* https://tradingeconomics.com/barbados/inflation-rate#:~:text=The%20annual%20inflation%20rate%20in,source:%20Barbados%20Statistical%20Service

[3] According to FAO from the July 2025 SOFI report at PPP dollars per person.

[4] *World Bank Open Data.* (n.d.). World Bank Open Data. https://data360.worldbank.org/en/indicator/WB_WDI_NV_AGR_TOTL_ZS?country=BRB

[5] *World Bank Open Data.* (n.d.-b). World Bank Open Data. https://data360.worldbank.org/en/indicator/WB_WDI_SL_AGR_EMPL_ZS?country=BRB

Barbados Agriculture Society[6]) with limited access to modern technology, infrastructure, or value chain integration. Recent production declines are significant. In 2024, overall livestock production declined by about three percent, with only pork and poultry registering modest growth of roughly three percent each. In contrast, production of turkey and mutton fell sharply—by 36 percent and 31 percent respectively—while milk, eggs, and beef output declined by 22 percent, nine percent, and three percent.[7]

1.5 **Processing and Value Addition:** Critical gaps exist in agro-processing capacity, constraining the development of diverse, nutritious food products from local ingredients. Outdated infrastructure including abattoirs, laboratories, and post-harvest storage facilities challenge compliance with sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards, limiting both quality and marketability of domestic production and exports.

1.6 **Food Safety and Quality Systems:** Food safety systems remain critically underdeveloped, with severely constrained laboratory testing capacity, inadequate inspection protocols, and weak traceability mechanisms. The Veterinary Services Laboratory (VSL) faces challenges that compromise its ability to protect public health. The laboratory's physical infrastructure reached a critical point in 2024 when the main laboratory building—which had housed the VSL for approximately 55 years—was condemned as an environmental hazard due to poor environmental conditions including mold growth and damage from an electrical fire in December 2023. Currently, only the Serology/Immunology, Clinical Pathology, and Food Microbiology sections remain operational, housed in separate buildings from the condemned main facility. The VSL lacks the resources and expertise needed to achieve international accreditation standard ISO 17025, further limiting its capacity to support food safety certification and export market access.

1.7 These infrastructure failures have dire implications for food safety outcomes. Foodborne diseases—particularly Salmonella and Campylobacter—are reported with peaks coinciding with mass gatherings such as festivals, sporting events, and concerts, attributed to both inadequate laboratory testing capacity and low levels of training for food handlers.

1.8 **Trade, Market and Investment Barriers:** According to FAO and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Barbados imports over 80% of its food, resulting in an agricultural trade deficit of more than US$400 million annually[8], leaving the economy highly vulnerable to global price volatility, currency fluctuations, and supply chain shocks. At the same time, distribution and market systems are underdeveloped, with inadequate cold chain infrastructure and weak integration between local producers and institutional markets such as tourism, schools, and healthcare. Domestic producers frequently struggle to meet the volume, quality,

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6 Adaptation Fund (2024).

7 Ministry of Economic Affairs & Investment. (n.d.). Barbados Economic & Social Report 2024. In *https://www.barbadosparliament.com/uploads/sittings/attachments/8e443864f47e417960269fff329457c5.pdf*

8 FAO Regional Office-Latin America-RLC. *Urgent Investment in irrigation for agriculture in the Caribbean takes center stage at the Hand-in-Hand (HiH) Initiative Invest Forum*. (n.d.). https://www.fao.org/americas/news/news-detail/caribbean-hand-in-hand-forum/en

certification, and SPS requirements necessary to supply these buyers, leading tourism and other high-value sectors to rely heavily on imported food, bypassing local agriculture altogether. Limited investment in agri-processing, logistics, and trade facilitation further restricts competitiveness and value addition.

1.9 **Praedial Larceny:** Although recent national statistics are limited, praedial larceny remains a significant and growing challenge in Barbados and across the Caribbean, undermining agricultural productivity, rural livelihoods, and food security. In Barbados, agricultural theft has evolved beyond isolated incidents into a persistent and increasingly organized activity that imposes substantial losses on farmers, including the theft of entire crop harvests and livestock, reducing incomes and discouraging investment in the sector.[9] Evidence from a 2013 Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) regional study[10] estimated that approximately 18% of the value of agricultural output is lost to praedial larceny, while 98% of surveyed producers reported experiencing theft-related losses. More recent reports from Barbados indicate that the problem continues to threaten the viability of farming operations, including for large-scale producers.[12] While Barbados has strengthened its legal framework to combat praedial larceny, additional efforts are needed to improve enforcement, traceability, producer awareness, and community engagement. Addressing praedial larceny is critical to safeguarding investments in food security and climate resilience. Without targeted interventions, productivity gains, infrastructure investments, and market development activities under any program risk being undermined at the farm level.

1.10 **Request.** The government of Barbados, through the Ministry of Public and Private Investment, submitted a request to the IDB on May 8, 2026 (Annex I) that seeks support in the form of technical assistance for the preparation and supervision of the Transforming Food Systems for Resilience Program. In this regard, the Cabinet of Barbados at its meeting of May 7, 2026, agreed to support the TC and its execution by the IDB, working closely with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Nutritional Security and relevant agencies, which will provide in kind support. Additionally, as part of the annual dialogue between the Bank and IDB borrowing member countries to establish the operational program, the operation has been selected to be processed and approved.

1.11 **Objective.** The general objective of this Technical Cooperation (TC) is to support the effective preparation and supervision of the Transforming Food Systems for Resilience Program (BA-L1072). The TC will support technical studies (diagnostics and evaluations), action plans, trainings and consultancies that will make it possible to define priority investments and create the necessary capacities for the monitoring and evaluation of the main results of the Programme, as well as the preparation of the necessary annexes for the loan document. In turn, the TC will contribute to strengthening the capacities of the executing agency for the budget preparation process, by generating products that facilitate the prioritization of investments. The TC will also ensure adequate supervision of the IDB operation in Barbados.

1.12 **Description of the associated Loan.** This TC will support the effective preparation and supervision of the Transforming Food Systems for Resilience Program (BA-L1072)., The general development objective of BA-L1072 is to enhance the resilience and security of food systems in Barbados. The specific development objectives of this operation are: (i) to strengthen production systems and on-farm resilience through research-driven innovation, technology adoption, and farmer training; (ii) to modernize food safety and market systems, reduce import dependence, and expand market and export opportunities for domestic producers; and (iii) to enhance institutional and human resource capacity for data-driven, climate-resilient agricultural policy, research, and implementation. The TC's diagnostic and feasibility work directly supports these trade objectives by generating the evidence base needed to determine which investments will most effectively reduce Barbados' structural food import dependence and prepare domestic producers for regional and international export markets. The loan operation is currently scheduled for pipeline 2027A approval. The project team, in collaboration with the GoB, continues to make progress on technical inputs, which this TC will support.

1.13 **Strategic Alignment.** The TC is consistent with the IDB Group Institutional Strategy: Transforming for Scale and Impact (CA-631) and is aligned with the objectives of: (i) reduce poverty and inequality by accelerating agricultural infrastructure investments benefiting producers through enhanced productivity and market access thereby supporting food security and the protection of livelihoods; and (ii) address climate change through promoting the use of practices and information that increase climate resilience to disasters and reduce losses caused by natural disasters. The Program also aligns with the operational focus areas of: (iii) institutional capacity through hands-on support strengthening execution competencies; (v) productive development and innovation by enabling laboratories to meet international phytosanitary standards; (vi) sustainable, resilient infrastructure through interventions unlocking construction and rehabilitation; and (vii) regional integration by documenting implementation solutions that contribute to the ONE Caribbean vision.

1.14 The TC supports the ONE Caribbean Framework (GN-3201-5), specifically, regional priority (iv) food security by contributing to reducing intra-regional trade barriers for food, strengthening agricultural health systems, and enhancing domestic production capacity, thereby improving resilience to external shocks. The TC also advances priority (i) climate adaptation and resilience through feasibility studies focused on climate-resilient vegetable production, evaluating the suitability of protected agriculture systems and stress-tolerant varieties for smallholder contexts in the Caribbean. The TC contributes to priority (iii) private sector engagement by ensuring diagnostic infrastructure meets certification requirements for export markets. Furthermore, the TC embodies the Framework's institutional strengthening cross-cutting area through practical coordination protocols and knowledge exchange platforms, operationalizing the "whole of Bank" approach that transforms execution barriers into accelerated infrastructure delivery across Caribbean states.

1.15 This Technical Cooperation is aligned with the Ordinary Capital Strategic Development Program's (OC SDP) (GN-2819-25) Pillar 3 - Core Operational and Analytical Work, as it will support project preparation, execution and monitoring in the operational focus area of Productive Development and Innovation through the Private Sector. The TC is also aligned with Pillar 1 – Strategic Priorities – Regional Programs and Initiatives (P1A) [ONE Caribbean], by generating regional public goods supporting regional food security, climate adaptation, and resilience , promoting knowledge exchange, and operationalizing solutions that strengthen institutional capacity and accelerate infrastructure delivery across Caribbean states.

1.16 The TC is aligned to the Bank's Strategy with Barbados (2025-2030) (GN-3280-1). The IDB's strategic agreement with Barbados emphasizes economic revitalization, inclusive growth, and resilience. The agriculture program directly supports these pillars by enhancing food security, creating rural employment and increasing the adequacy of skills, and building climate-resilient infrastructure. The TC is also aligned with the Government of Barbados' national development frameworks, including *Barbados 2035: A Plan for Investment in Prosperity & Resilience and Implementing Mission Barbados: A Roadmap for State Transformation*. In particular, it supports Mission 3, which aims to ensure that every Barbadian has equitable, reliable access to affordable clean water and nutritious food.

1.17 The TC is further aligned with the Bank's long-term strategic priorities in food security and trade facilitation, particularly as outlined in the following Sector Framework Documents: Integration and Trade (GN-2715-11): The food systems interventions supported by this TC are fundamentally trade interventions: by reducing import dependence on a food import bill exceeding US$400 million annually, enabling domestic producers to meet the SPS, quality, and volume requirements of export and tourism markets, and modernizing inspection and laboratory systems to international accreditation standards, the program addresses structural drivers of Barbados' chronic merchandise trade deficit. In this way, improvements in domestic food system capacity directly translate into improved trade balances, reduced external vulnerability, and enhanced export readiness. The program supports trade facilitation by modernizing inspection and quarantine systems, harmonizing sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards, and improving infrastructure for meat processing and agro-processing. These interventions reduce trade costs and enhance Barbados' ability to participate in regional and global value chains. Agriculture (GN-2709-16): The program fosters productivity through climate-resilient technologies, smart irrigation, and protected cultivation systems. It also promotes sustainable resource management by integrating data-driven decision-making and land-use mapping. Food Security (GN-2825-8): The program directly addresses food availability by boosting domestic production, reducing import dependency, and improving rural infrastructure. It also encourages intersectoral coordination and institutional strengthening, which are key pillars of the Food Security framework.

1.18 The TC complements the current work being undertaken in the Regional Technical Cooperation (RG-T4429) (ATN/OC-20947-RG) that is providing insights from diagnostics and contributing to long-term institutional strengthening and knowledge generation for resilient food systems. It also complements similar work implemented in Guyana through GY-L1060 (3798/BL-GY) "Sustainable Agricultural Development Program" that aimed to increase productivity, especially for medium and small farmers. Activities included updating Guyana Food Safety Authority (GFSA) building, rehabilitation of soil laboratory and the construction of a new abattoir. The proposed Barbados program builds on these models with tailored interventions for its small-scale farming context.

II. COMPONENTS

2.1 **Component I (US$150,000): Technical Feasibility Studies and Diagnostics.** This component will finance targeted studies to assess the technical, environmental, and institutional feasibility of proposed investments under the loan program. These studies will inform final design decisions and ensure that interventions are evidence-based, context-appropriate, and aligned with national priorities. Activities will include: (i) a comprehensive feasibility assessment of nutrition-sensitive, climate-resilient vegetable production systems, including agronomic potential, access to inputs, cost-effectiveness, and environmental sustainability. A dedicated study will assess the feasibility of implementing protected agriculture systems and introducing drought-tolerant vegetable varieties adapted to Caribbean conditions; (ii) a rapid diagnostic of the food safety and animal health infrastructure will assess existing capacities and plans in laboratories, abattoirs, inspection services, and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) systems, with recommendations for modernization and compliance with export and tourism market requirements, thereby reducing the SPS-related non-tariff barriers that currently prevent domestic producers from accessing high-value institutional, regional, and export markets; (iii) an institutional capacity and policy review to identify the strengths and gaps of key sectoral stakeholders, as well as a rapid baseline data collection exercise to inform the results matrix and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework of the loan.

2.2 **Component II (US$200,000): Strengthening Prevention and Response to Praedial Larceny.** This component aims to reduce the incidence and impact of praedial larceny by strengthening institutional capacity, improving coordination between farmers and enforcement agencies, and generating transferable operational tools and knowledge applicable across the Caribbean. While activities will be undertaken in Barbados, the component is designed to generate regional public goods that can inform similar interventions in other countries and support the preparation of future loan-financed investments. The activities financed include: (i) a diagnostic analysis of the scale, typologies, and economic impacts of praedial larceny across different agricultural systems, with particular attention to implications for production incentives, farm viability, and food security; (ii) an institutional mapping of roles, mandates, and coordination mechanisms among agricultural agencies, police, and judicial actors along the reporting, investigation, and prosecution chain; and (iii) a review of the legal and enforcement framework, including evidentiary requirements and procedural bottlenecks affecting investigation and prosecution. The analysis will incorporate a comparative regional perspective, drawing lessons from other Caribbean countries facing similar challenges. The component will strengthen institutional capacity and promote regional learning through targeted analytical and knowledge-generation activities. The activities above will create operational guidance materials and standardized reference tools, consolidation and systematization of diagnostic findings and institutional lessons, and regional knowledge products synthesizing lessons from Barbados and comparative Caribbean experiences to facilitate exchange and inform the design of future loan-financed operations. Outputs will be designed as regional public goods to inform future investments.

2.3 **Component III (US$75,000): Preparation of Loan Annexes, Investment Planning Tools, Institutional Support and Supervision.** This component will focus on translating the findings from Component I and II into actionable plans and producing the formal documentation required for loan approval. It will support hiring of a consultant to work with the project team in the preparation of key annexes for the loan proposal, including technical feasibility, economic analysis, results matrix, M&E framework and institutional capacity assessment. These tools will facilitate both investment decision-making and the Bank's internal review and approval process. This component will also finance the hiring of a TC Coordinator to support TC coordination, data consolidation, reporting, and stakeholder engagement.

2.4 **Expected Results.** The TC is expected to deliver concrete and measurable results that directly support the preparation and effective supervision of the Transforming Food Systems for Resilience Program (BA-L1072). Key results include: (i) the completion of evidence-based technical feasibility studies and diagnostics on climate-resilient vegetable production systems, food safety and animal health infrastructure, and institutional and policy capacity, providing a robust analytical foundation for investment decisions; (ii) the development of actionable recommendations and modernization roadmaps for laboratories, abattoirs, inspection services, and sanitary and phytosanitary systems to meet domestic, tourism, and export market requirements; (iii) the generation of standardized diagnostic tools, institutional mapping outputs, and legal and enforcement analyses to strengthen prevention and response to praedial larceny; and (iv) the preparation of key required loan annexes, results framework, monitoring and evaluation tools, and investment prioritization instruments necessary for loan appraisal, approval, and early implementation. Collectively, these outputs will strengthen the technical quality, readiness, and implementation capacity of the associated loan operation.

2.5 **Beneficiaries.** The direct beneficiaries of the TC include the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Nutritional Security and associated public institutions responsible for agricultural production, food safety, animal health, trade facilitation, and enforcement, which will benefit from strengthened technical, analytical, and implementation capacity, improved coordination mechanisms, and decision-support tools. Indirect and final beneficiaries include small-scale and organized farmers, agro-processors, and market actors who are expected to benefit from improved policy design, enhanced food safety systems, and strengthened responses to praedial larceny, as well as consumers and households who will gain from increased food system resilience, improved domestic food availability, and reduced vulnerability to external shocks and food price volatility. The TC also generates regional public goods by producing transferable knowledge and operational tools applicable to other Caribbean countries facing similar food security and institutional challenges.

III. BUDGET

3.1 **Budget.** The TC totals US$425,000, fully financed by the Ordinary Capital Strategic Development Program (GN-2819-25) Pillar 3 - Productive Development and Innovation through the Private Sector (OC SDP-P3B) and by ONE Caribbean, Strategic Development Program - Pillar 1 – Strategic Priorities – Regional

Programs and Initiatives (OC SDP-P1A). Counterpart funding is not contemplated. The indicative budget for the operation is shown in Table 1.

Table 1.

Budget in US$			
Components	**IDB/P3B**	**IDB/P1A**	**Total**
Technical Feasibility Studies and Diagnostics	50,000	100,000	150,000
Strengthening Prevention and Response to Praedial Larceny	0	200,000	200,000
Preparation of Loan Annexes, Investment Planning Tools, Institutional Support and Supervision	75,000	0	75,000
Total	**125,000**	**300,000**	**425,000**

IV. EXECUTION STRUCTURE

4.1 The TC will be executed by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), based on a request by the beneficiary, in accordance with the Bank's TC Policy (GN-2470-2) and the Procedures for the Processing of TC Operations and Related Matters (OP-619-4), through the Trade and Investment Division (PTI/TIN) and the Agriculture and Rural Development Division (PTI/ARD) of the Productivity, Trade and Innovation Sector (PTI/PTI) under the Vice-Presidency for Sectors and Knowledge (VPS). PTI/TIN's lead role reflects the trade dimension of the program: the TC is designed to address the supply-side constraints that drive Barbados' food import dependence and limit its export readiness, placing it squarely within the trade facilitation mandate of the Division. This TC will be executed by the Bank given that the requesting entity does not have the necessary institutional capacity to duly and timely execute the activities in the project.

4.2 **Procurement.** All procurement to be executed under this TC have been included in the Procurement Plan (Annex IV) and will be hired in compliance with the applicable Bank policies and regulations as follows: (a) Hiring of individual consultants, as established in the regulation on Complementary Workforce (AM-650) and (b) Contracting of services provided by consulting firms in accordance with the Corporate procurement Policy (GN-2303-33) and its Guidelines.

4.3 **Execution and Disbursement Period.** The TC will be executed over 36 months from the date of approval, with full disbursement expected within this period. This timeline aligns with the critical implementation phase of the associated loan: The 36-month execution period provides sufficient time for delivering all technical products while ensuring knowledge transfer and capacity building activities achieve sustainable institutional strengthening.

4.4 **Monitoring, Reporting, and Supervision.** The Trade and Investment Division Lead Specialist assigned to the Country Office in Barbados (CBA) will serve as focal point and be responsible for technical execution, in collaboration with the PTI/ARD team based in Washington, DC. Monthly coordination meetings with

MAFNS and IDB will review progress and address challenges. Monitoring of the planned activities in this TC will follow the TC Monitoring and Reporting System–TCM (OP-1385-4).

V. POTENTIAL RISKS

5.1 The primary risks facing this TC stem from the lack of sufficient qualified personnel, technicians, etc. to work together with the IDB on execution. Despite this, we have seen significant institutional and political commitment to food security, mitigating the institutional risk. In addition, cooperation with other development partners and institutions based in Barbados will ensure institutional gaps are limited.

5.2 **Intellectual Property.** Knowledge products derived from this TC will be published under a Creative Commons IGO 3.0 license. However, at the specific request of the beneficiary and in accordance with the provisions of document AM-331, the intellectual property rights to such products may also be licensed through specific contractual agreements to be drafted with the guidance of the Legal Department.

VI. EXCEPTIONS TO BANK POLICIES

6.1 No need for exceptions to the Bank's policy has been identified.

VII. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ASPECTS

7.1 This TC is intended to finance pre-feasibility or feasibility studies of specific investment projects and the environmental and social studies associated with them; therefore, the terms of reference and products of this TC will be consistent with the applicable requirements of the Bank’s Environmental and Social Policy Framework (ESPF).

REQUIRED ANNEXES:

- Annex I: Request from Client
- Annex II: Results Matrix
- Annex III: Terms of Reference
- Annex IV: Procurement Plan