DOCUMENT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

HAITI

SUPPORTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DIGITAL CROSSCUTTING SOLUTIONS AND INFRASTRUCTURE ENABLING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

(HA-T1360)

PROJECT DOCUMENT

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PROJECT SUMMARY

Operation Type:	Technical Cooperation
Sector:	REFORM / MODERNIZATION OF THE STATE
Subsector:	E-GOVERNMENT
TC Taxonomy:	Operational Support
Project Number under the Operational Support Taxonomy:	HA-J0010, HA-J0017
Technical Responsible Unit:	IFD/ICS-Institutional Capacity of the State (ICS) Division
Unit with Disbursement Responsibility (UDR):	CID/CHA-Country Office Haiti
Executing Agency:	Inter-American Development Bank

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The general objective of this TC is to support the Government of Haiti in implementing digital crosscutting solutions and infrastructure enabling digital transformation of public management. The specific objectives of the project are to support the implementation of: (i) e-signature legal, regulatory, institutional, and operational framework; and (ii) complementary digital crosscutting solutions and infrastructure.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Financing Type	Fund	Amount in US$
TCN - Nonreimbursable	P2C - OC SDP Pillar 2 - Low-Income Country Support	200,000
TCN - Nonreimbursable	P3A - OC SDP Pillar 3 - Institutional Capacity, Rule of Law, and Citizen Security	50,000
	Total IDB Financing	**250,000**
	Counterpart Financing	**0**
	Total Project Budget	**250,000**

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

ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL INFORMATION

N/A

I. Justification and Objective

1.1 **Diagnostic.** Digital transformation of public management is a key means to improve effectiveness of policy design and implementation, efficiency, quality and inclusiveness of service delivery, and transparency and integrity of public administration. And this is especially important for Haiti, as digital government could help provide a tailored response to its Fragility, Conflict, and Criminal Violence (FCCV) situation by increasing government effectiveness while improving the resilience of public sector operation. However, Haiti presents severe shortcomings in all the digital transformation enablers that are crucial to foster and leverage digital government: (i) digital governance and institutions; (ii) digital legal and regulatory framework; (iii) digital talent, and iv) digital infrastructure and tools. In 2024 Haiti ranked 186 out of 193 countries in the United Nations (UN) e-Government Index, reflecting a persistent trend among the lowest-ranked countries globally.[1] The country's gaps in this digital transformation enabling framework prevent it from developing this agenda in a coherent, sustained and inclusive way.[2] The inability to leverage digital government in turn exacerbates public sector management challenges, with extremely weak institutional capacity and rule of law compounded by pervasive usage of paper transactions and in person interactions as well as lack of resilience of public sector operation, causing enormous inefficiencies and a drain of public resources[3] and adding to the ineffectiveness of policies and services.

1.2 Regarding digital infrastructure and tools, Haiti presents pervasive gaps in both key infrastructure and digital crosscutting shared services and solutions. The country faces a critical connectivity deficit. In 2024 just 39% of the population used internet, compared to a regional average of 84%,[4] reflecting connectivity issues in terms of access, quality and affordability, which are exacerbated by deficient access to electricity. In the public administration, connectivity and energy issues are compounded by a very limited and deficient cloud infrastructure. Haiti also presents a widespread lack of technological enablers for the digital transformation of the public and the private sector. Thus, the public administration presents severe gaps in key digital crosscutting tools, including interoperability, digital identity, electronic signature (e-signature), digital payments, online services, data governance, and cloud-based digital workplace solutions, among others.

1.3 Some of these gaps are particularly pressing given the country's critical need to improve the public administration's operational resilience and business continuity amidst the complex security context, which makes it urgent to develop capabilities to operate remotely and in hybrid format. This requires addressing gaps in digital workplace solutions, and the basic connectivity and devices that are preconditions for the operation of such solutions. The public administration, including key center of government institutions such as the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF), lacks cloud-based integrated digital workplace solutions providing secure remote

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1 In 2024, Haiti e-government index was 0.2117 (0 indicates nil development, and 1 high development). See: UN e-Government Knowledgebase.

2 Cubo et al (2022). Government digital transformation guide.

3 Roseth et al (2018). Wait no more: Citizens, Red Tape, and Digital Government.

4 ITU & datareportal data.

access, robust communication and collaboration, digital document management, digital approval workflows, and intranet, under a centrally managed environment. This is compounded by the connectivity issues above described, as well as lack of laptops and other complementary devices aligned to the requirements of digital workplace solutions.

1.4 Likewise, the country presents important gaps limiting the implementation of e-signature at national level. While there has been progress with the core legal and regulatory framework, including the *Décret* adjusting the 2017 e-Signature Law and the *Arrêté* operationalizing the law, both recently approved by Haiti's Council of Ministers and whose enhancement was directly supported by the IDB,[5] the country's legal, regulatory, institutional, and operational framework needs to be further developed to enable the piloting and adoption of e-signature solutions. In particular, priority gaps that need to be addressed include: (i) lack of regulations enabling the operationalization of the recently approved e-signature *Décret* and *Arrêté*; (ii) lack of e-signature governance and institutional arrangements clearly establishing the roles of key stakeholders such as the Statistics and Information Technology Institute (IHSI), National Telecommunications Council (CONATEL), and National Identity Office (ONI), and providing them with the means to fulfil their mandates; and (iii) absence of assessments of optimal and feasible solution architecture for the three types/levels of assurance of e-signature to be implemented, namely Simple e-Signature (SES), Advanced e-Signature (SEA), and Qualified e-Signature (SEQ).

1.5 In addition to these issues, there are gender digital gaps. Women in Haiti tend to have less access to internet and cellphones than men (10-20 p.p. difference depending on the age group),[6] resulting in less access to information and lower opportunities for upskilling and reskilling in an increasingly digital labor market.

1.6 **Request.** In this context, the government of Haiti (MEF) has requested the IDB's technical assistance. Annex I presents the referred request from the beneficiary country. 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.

1.7 **Objective.** The general objective of this TC is to support the Government of Haiti in implementing digital crosscutting solutions and infrastructure enabling digital transformation of public management. The specific objectives of the project are to support the implementation of: (i) e-signature legal, regulatory, institutional, and operational framework; and (ii) complementary digital crosscutting solutions and infrastructure. The expected (qualitative) outcome associated with the specific objectives is increased technical and operational capacity of public agencies responsible for the implementation of e-signature and complementary digital crosscutting solutions and infrastructure. To achieve these objectives, the project has been structured into two components: Component 1, supporting the implementation of e-signature legal, regulatory, institutional, and operational

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[5] IDB technical assistance was provided mainly through operations 4820/GR-HA and 5889/GR-HA.

[6] World Bank (2023). Haiti's Untapped Potential: An Assessment of the Barriers to Gender Equality.

framework; and Component 2, supporting the implementation of complementary digital crosscutting solutions and infrastructure.

1.8 **Description of the associated Grants.** This TC will directly support the implementation of the Program "Strengthening the Foundations of Digital Transformation of Public Management to Improve Government Effectiveness" (5889/GR-HA, US$16 million, in execution). The program's general development objective is to improve policy implementation and service delivery to citizens by increasing effectiveness of public management through digitalization; and its specific development objectives are to: (i) increase the institutional capacity of the digital government agency; (ii) increase efficiency of core management systems run by the Central MEF through digitalization of Central MEF internal management; and (iii) increase cybersecurity monitoring and management capacity of priority public agencies. The TC will provide key inputs for the implementation of 5889/GR-HA, particularly its Components 1 (Public sector digital governance) and 2 (Digital transformation of Central MEF internal management) as it will inform the assessment of gaps and the development of strategies to address gaps, focusing on key digital crosscutting solutions and infrastructure, including e-signature, cloud-based digital workplace tools, and basic connectivity. 5889/GR-HA faces implementation challenges to speed up the execution of Components 1 and 2, mainly due to the executing agency's lack of technical expertise to carry out in-depth diagnoses, identify alternative solutions, and design solutions' architecture. Hence the importance of the role of this TC in addressing this gap to expedite program execution.

1.9 The TC will likewise directly support the design of the upcoming Program "Haiti Digital Transformation: Boosting Connectivity and Enabling Digital Government" (HA-J0017, US$70 million, in design, Pipeline 2027). HA-J0017's Component 2 will increase efficiency and effectiveness of policy implementation and service delivery to citizens through strengthened digital identity and e-signature as key digital public infrastructure (DPI) enabling digital government and digital economy. To this aim, this program will: i) increase ONI institutional capacity as the lead national digital identity public sector agency and trusted identity service provider through improvements in digital infrastructure and technical capacity as well as identity verification services enabling framework; and ii) increase efficiency of public sector operations through improvements in e-signature legal, regulatory, institutional, and operational framework allowing e-signature pilot implementation in the public administration. This TC will directly support program design by providing key inputs for the development of the enabling framework for digital identity and e-signature as strategic digital crosscutting solutions to be pilot implemented at country level.

1.10 The TC will also support, complement and leverage the implementation of the Program to "Strengthen Public Management to Improve Service Delivery in Haiti" (4820/GR-HA, US$55 million, in execution), whose objective is to improve service delivery by enhancing the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of human resources and salaries management.[7] 4820/GR-HA's Component 2 fosters the

[7] 4820/GR-HA has three components: (i) strengthening wage bill control and efficiency through a payroll audit and the design of a retirement program (Component 1); (ii) enhancing efficiency through the implementation

digital transformation of MEF administrative and financial management systems. Thus, this TC will contribute to leverage and scale up 4820/GR-HA innovations.

1.11 **Complementarity.** This TC complements other Bank interventions in the digital government and public management sectors, particularly the above-mentioned Haiti programs 5889/GR-HA and 4820/GR-HA, as well as the TC projects supporting the execution of these operations ATN/OC-19722-HA (US$200,000, 98.1% disbursed, 0.3% committed, 1.6% available) and ATN/OC-20532-HA (US$600,000, 26.2% disbursed, 32.9% committed, 40.9% available). ATN/OC-19722-HA is about to finish execution, it was focused on supporting 4820/GR-HA including the design of digital solutions to be piloted at Central MEF level, and therefore this TC will allow continuing this line of work now in the context of implementation of 5889/GR-HA and design of HA-J0017. ATN/OC-20532-HA is focused on supporting both 5889/GR-HA implementation and HA-J0017 design (50% of ATN/OC-20532-HA resources are oriented to products informing the design of HA-J0017's Component 1 on digital connectivity infrastructure). Thus, this TC will allow giving continuity to technical assistance supporting 5889/GR-HA, while also providing inputs for HA-J0017's Component 2. The proposed project is therefore aligned to and will contribute to the sector strategic vision, particularly the priority lines of action of the Thematic Framework Documents on "Digital Transformation and Artificial Intelligence" and "Institutional Capacity and Rule of Law for State Effectiveness".

1.12 **Strategic Alignment.** The project is consistent with the IDB Group Institutional Strategy "Transforming for Scale and Impact" (CA-631) and is aligned with the objective of reducing poverty and inequality, by contributing to improve Haiti's public management effectiveness through digital transformation thus improving policy implementation and service delivery to citizens. The project is also aligned with the operational focus areas of: (i) Institutional Capacity, Rule of Law, and Citizen Security, by fostering the digital transformation of public management and contributing to build state institutional capacity for effective policy design and implementation, and efficient, quality and inclusive service delivery to citizens and firms, thus strengthening overall government effectiveness; and (ii) Gender Equality and Inclusion of Diverse Population Groups, by fostering digital tools and digital skills of women public sector employees, thus reducing gender digital gaps. The project is likewise aligned to the IDB Group Impact Framework 2024-2030 (GN-3195-8), through the indicator "Agencies with strengthened digital technology and managerial capacity".

1.13 The project is consistent with the IDB Group Country Engagement Note for Haiti 2024-2026 (GN-3255-1), particularly its pillar "Strengthen key public systems through digitalization". And given Haiti's condition of fragile country, the project is also aligned with the IDB Group Framework to Support Populations in Situations of Fragility, Conflict, and Criminal Violence, 2024 – 2027 (GN-3199-2) (herein FCCV Framework), and the Operational Guidelines on the Implementation of the

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and use of digital technologies in administrative and financial management systems with focus on civil service human resources management systems (Component 2); and (iii) improving effectiveness and efficiency of human resources in the MEF and line ministries through the implementation of a retirement program (Component 3).

FCCV Framework (GN-3199-3). The project is also consistent with the objectives of the Ordinary Capital Strategic Development Program (OC-SDP) (GN-2819-25), particularly: (i) Pillar 2 - Rapid & Reliable Response Programs, Area of Low-Income Country Support (P2C), by providing direct support to operations 5889/GR-HA and HA-J0017 in Haiti -a FCCV, low income country; and (ii) Pillar 3 - Core Operational and Analytical Work, Area of Institutional Capacity, Rule of Law, and Citizen Security (P3A), by fostering the digital transformation of public management and contributing to build state institutional capacity for effective policy design and implementation, and efficient, quality and inclusive service delivery to citizens and firms, as described in paragraph 1.12.

II. COMPONENTS

2.1 **Component 1. Supporting the implementation of e-signature legal, regulatory, institutional, and operational framework (US$150,000)**

a. The **objective** of this component is to support the development and implementation of the country's e-signature legal, regulatory, institutional, and operational framework.

b. The component's major **activities** are to support the following: (1.1) review of "As-Is" environment (i.e. review of current environment); (1.2) scenario analysis for the three types/levels of assurance of e-signature -Simple (SES), Advanced (SEA), and Qualified e-Signature (SEQ); (1.3) design of SES, SEA and SEQ solution architecture, and preparation of solutions' procurement processes; (1.4) development and implementation of governance and institutional arrangements; (1.5) development and implementation of legal and regulatory framework; (1.6) development of e-signature adoption and inclusion strategy; and (1.7) pilot implementation of SES, SEA and SEQ solutions in key public sector institutions.

c. Activities will be focused on the public sector agencies comprising the government's Task Force on Electronic Signature (TFES), which are in turn the main actors of the country's digital governance: the MEF, who leads the Digital Governance Coordination Council (the *Conseil National de Statistique et d'Informatique*-CNSI); IHSI, who is the CNSI Technical Secretariat; CONATEL, who is the telecommunications regulator and should assume roles as e-signature supervisory body; and ONI, who is the National Identity Office and should assume roles as trusted provider of identity verification services.

d. **Procurement**: the TC will hire individual consultants as well as consulting firms (via Competitive Selection) to perform the activities described above.

e. The component will have the following **outputs**: (1.1) reports on gap assessments and scenario analysis as well as roadmaps and strategies, in consistency with the activities described above; and (1.2) knowledge dissemination events.

2.2 **Component 2. Supporting the implementation of complementary digital crosscutting solutions and infrastructure (US$100,000)**

a. The **objective** of this component is to support the implementation of complementary digital crosscutting solutions and infrastructure enabling digital transformation of public management, such as cloud-based digital workplace solutions and basic connectivity.

b. The component's major **activities** are: (2.1) gap assessment of key digital crosscutting solutions and infrastructure, including cloud-based digital workplace tools and basic connectivity; and (2.2) technical assistance to support the implementation of strategies to address the identified gaps, including assessment of functional needs, design of solutions architecture, definition of technological specifications of solutions architecture, procurement of digital solutions, piloting and validation of solutions, production and operation of solutions, competence transfer of solutions' operation and maintenance to relevant government actors, and audit of solutions' quality.

c. Activities will be focused on strategic public sector institutions, particularly center of government ministries and agencies such as the MEF, in consistency with the scope of programs 4820/GR-HA and 5889/GR-HA.

d. Gap assessments and deployment of cloud-based digital workplace tools and basic connectivity will be done with a gender equality perspective, fostering digital tools and digital skills of women public sector employees.

e. **Procurement**: the project will hire individual consultants as well as consulting firms (via Competitive Selection) to perform the activities described above.

f. This component will have the following **outputs**: (2.1) reports on gaps assessments and strategies to address gaps, in consistency with the activities described above; and (2.2) knowledge dissemination events.

2.3 **Expected Results**. The expected result associated with the specific objectives of (i) supporting the implementation of e-signature legal, regulatory, institutional, and operational framework, and (ii) supporting the implementation of complementary digital crosscutting solutions and infrastructure, is increased technical and operational capacity of public agencies responsible for the implementation of e-signature and complementary digital crosscutting solutions and infrastructure.

2.4 **Beneficiaries**. This project will directly benefit: (i) public sector agencies by deploying key, crosscutting technological enablers for the digitalization and automation of processes and transactions, particularly the agencies that will be targeted by Component 1 -MEF, IHSI, CONATEL, and ONI, and Component 2 - MEF. The project will also indirectly benefit: (i) the citizens of Haiti by contributing to more efficiency, quality and inclusiveness of public services, and by providing digital tools reducing citizen-government transaction costs; and (ii) firms operating in the country by providing digital tools reducing transaction costs and improving productivity.

III. BUDGET

3.1 **Budget.** The total funding of this TC is US$250,000 financed by the Ordinary Capital Strategic Development Program (OC-SDP), specifically (i) Pillar 2 - Rapid & Reliable Response Programs, Area of Low-Income Country Support (P2C) (US$200,000); and (ii) Pillar 3 - Core Operational and Analytical Work, Area of Institutional Capacity, Rule of Law, and Citizen Security (P3A) (US$50,000). The budget details are provided in the table below.

Budget in US$			
Components	**P2C - OC SDP Pillar 2**	**P3A - OC SDP Pillar 3**	**Total**
Component 1: Supporting the implementation of e-signature legal, regulatory, institutional, and operational framework	120,000	30,000	**150,000**
Component 2: Supporting the implementation of complementary digital crosscutting solutions and infrastructure	80,000	20,000	**100,000**
Total	**200,000**	**50,000**	**250,000**

IV. EXECUTION STRUCTURE

4.1 **Executing Agency.** The beneficiary country has requested that this TC be executed by the IDB. Thus, the executing agency will be the IDB, through the Institutional Capacity of the State Division (IFD/ICS). IFD/ICS has a long track record in supporting Latin American and Caribbean countries' digital government reforms, and Haiti's public sector management and digital transformation. Experience in Haiti includes the implementation of programs such as 4820/GR-HA and 5889/GR-HA. Also, consistent with Annex II of OP-619-4 (Section II-C), Bank execution is justified as the requesting entity does not have the necessary technical, operational and institutional capacity to duly and timely execute the project activities.

4.2 **Procurement.** All procurement to be executed under this Technical Cooperation has 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.** A three-year (i.e. 36 months) execution and disbursement period is estimated for project execution.

4.4 **Monitoring, Reporting, and Supervision.** In accordance with the Technical Cooperation Monitoring and Reporting System (TCM) (OP-1385-4), the TC Team Leader will be responsible for supervising and monitoring the appropriate execution of the TC, with support from the project team members from IFD/ICS and CID/CHA. Monitoring and reporting frequency will be determined by the TCM reporting cycles.

V. POTENTIAL RISKS

5.1 The main risks identified are:

a. Limited appropriability and adoption of policy recommendations, digital solutions, and capacity building mechanisms fostered by this project. This could have effects on cost, time, and quality of activities of Components 1 and 2. This risk will be mitigated by conducting change management throughout project execution with the objective of: (i) fostering MEF and all digital governance stakeholders' appropriation and accountability; (ii) improving coordination and communication among all public agencies involved, and leveraging synergies among them; (iii) addressing resistance to change issues at individual and organizational levels; (iv) identifying and engaging reform champions within public sector key stakeholders and leveraging their role; and (v) fostering consensus and political support for reforms.

b. Limited coordination among and within key public sector stakeholders -MEF, IHSI, CONATEL, and ONI- affecting the implementation of recommendations. This could have effects on cost, time, and quality of activities of Components 1 and 2. This risk will be mitigated by leveraging 5889/GR-HA and 4820/GR-HA Project Management Committee (PMC) as a key project governance, coordination, and appropriation body. The PMC is led by the MEF and has IHSI, CONATEL and ONI as key members. The PMC is thus a well-established project governance body that allows timely identification of implementation barriers -including those derived from interinstitutional coordination issues, generate consensus on measures to address barriers, and assign responsibilities to materialize them.

5.2 **Intellectual Property.** In accordance with policy AM-331 and with respect to the intellectual property of documents and products generated under this Technical Cooperation Agreement, all knowledge products generated within the framework of this technical cooperation will be the property of the Bank and may be made available to the public under a Creative Commons license or as provided in the Bank's policies.

VI. EXCEPTIONS TO BANK POLICIES

6.1 No exceptions to Bank policy are envisioned.

VII. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ASPECTS

7.1 This Technical Cooperation is not intended to finance pre-feasibility or feasibility studies of specific investment projects or environmental and social studies associated with them; therefore, this TC does not have 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