



Ministry of Finance and Planning  
Jamaica

**COUNTRY REPORT**

**TENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE INGP**

October 27<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Asuncion, Paraguay

**Name of the Director of Government Procurement: Mrs. Cecile Maragh**

**1. Short Description - Principal characteristics of the procurement solution.**

An agenda for the development and reform of public procurement has arisen partly from within the Procurement and Asset Policy Unit under the Ministry of Finance and Planning, which has recognised the need for a more efficient system with greater transparency. Jamaica has laid out its public sector procurement policy<sup>1</sup> based on the ten fundamental guiding principles, which include (i) economy; (ii) competition; (iii) efficiency; (iv) equity; (v) integrity; (vi) fairness; (vii) transparency; (viii) accountability; (ix) reliability; and (x) value for money. The public procurement regime is a high priority area for the Government of Jamaica due to its significant impact of bolstering the local, national and regional economy. Since it accounts for approximately 30% of GDP, improving the transparency, integrity and efficiency of the public procurement process is at the fore of current policy reform.

**2. Accomplishments-2013-2014.**

- i. **Electronic Tendering Project:** The journey towards e-Government Procurement (e-GP) started in 2005 with the appointment of IGS to conduct an *E-Procurement Readiness Assessment*. This assessment found the country to be at a sufficient overall level of readiness to implement an e-procurement system. In 2007 a follow-up e-GP Roadmap Study was carried out and an *Electronic Government Procurement (e-GP) Roadmap and Implementation Strategy (2007 and updated in 2009)* was developed. Following the roadmap and implementation strategy, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) approved a *Program to Implement*

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<sup>1</sup>Government of Jamaica Public Sector Procurement Policy, Nov 2010

*Electronic Government Procurement in Jamaica*, which provides resources to finance the contracting of consulting services and procurement of goods necessary for the execution of the programme. The system will provide a single portal to the Government Purchasing and Tendering Authorities and Suppliers and automate activities performed by the parties by integrating them on a single electronic network. During the period the Request for Proposal was finalized and issued. The deadline for submission of proposals was August 30, 2013. The Government of Jamaica completed the contract award and finalized contract signing on May 31, 2014 for the Implementation of Electronic Tendering Project and negotiation with selected vendor, European Dynamics. An Inception Visit and Analysis meeting was conducted during the period June 30 to July 4, 2014 during which consultations were had with the Ministry of Finance and Planning and the five pilot entities slated for the e-Tendering Project rollout. This was a forum to review and finalize stakeholders' comments and recommendations regarding specific functionalities required for the e-GP system needed to design the system prototype. Dialogue with European Dynamics via conference calls is ongoing to clarify, review and finalize specifications with approval and sign-off of project deliverables/ project timeplan at regular intervals. The Electronic Tendering system will be launched on July 1, 2015.

- ii. **Public Procurement Law (PPL):** The Government of Jamaica, through its Procurement and Asset Policy Unit, Ministry of Finance and Planning (MOFP), has developed a comprehensive Bill and attendant Regulations covering major best practice procurement principles and binding public entities to specific standards of procurement practice. This initiative was borne out of the absence of a comprehensive law covering major best practice procurement principles and binding public entities to specific standards of procurement practice. This created a high risk perception of the Jamaican procurement environment held by both multi-lateral development and financing agencies and private contracting interests. The PPL will establish the Public Procurement Commission (the National Contracts Commission will be renamed and separated from the Office of the Contractor General), which will establish the independent Commission with its own regulations, location and staff compliment. The Discussion Draft of the PPL was reviewed by a Technical Working Team constituted by the MOFP. The MOFP then issued final drafting instructions to the Chief Parliamentary Counsel (CPC) and received endorsement from the Legislative Committee of Parliament. The Public Procurement Bill was tabled in Parliament on July 29, 2014 and a Joint Select Committee of Parliament has been constituted by to review the Bill and have it passed in the Senate.
- iii. **The Mandatory posting of Procurement Plans:** Through a national training initiative, GoJ through the Ministry of Finance and Planning's website has facilitated the mandatory submission and publication of Procurement Plans for all procuring entities.
- iv. **Launch of the inaugural GoJ National Public Procurement Conference** during the period March 18-21, 2014. Under the theme, "Public Procurement: A Mechanism for Economic Growth", over Two hundred and sixty (260) Public Procurement practioners from all GOJ procuring entities participated in dialogue,

exchange and training in public procurement procedures and best practices. This is intended to be an annual event and is modeled from the InterAmerican Network of Government Procurement (INGP). Arising from the conference, **the Jamaica Network of Public Procurement Practitioners (JNOPP) was established.** This body is the Public Procurement Professionals' Association and will enhance system efficiency and responsiveness through a corporate governance approach. A Steering Committee with an elected President, Vice President and Secretary has been established to create the institutional and operational framework of the Association.

- v. **The publication of a Government of Jamaica Public Procurement Page in the print media:** Since **November 1, 2013**, the Ministry of Finance and Planning through the Jamaica Information Service (JIS) has commenced this initiative which merges all public procurement opportunities into a single platform for disseminating public procurement information nationwide and reduces the cost of advertising tender opportunities. The Government of Jamaica Public Procurement Page has resulted in significant savings for GOJ public expenditure, an increase in accessibility of public procurement opportunities and therefore more competitive tender proposals.
- vi. **Public Procurement Capacity Strengthening Programme:** The Ministry of Finance and Planning as mandated to manage the delivery of the Government's Procurement training and certification programme has commenced comprehensive public procurement training and certification. These programmes will be designed to strengthen the capacity of public procurement practitioners by establishing standardized and structured procurement training at each level in the procurement system with robust certification in all areas of procurement. Given the dynamic and evolving nature of procurement, strategic training in public procurement will harness the much needed skill set and operational application in congruence with international best practices and the upcoming new legislative and regulatory framework.

It is envisioned that upon successful completion of these programmes, the public service will have a cadre of procurement professionals who are knowledgeable on various aspects of public procurement are able to execute both simple and technical procurement processes. This will enhance the overall value for money, accountability and efficiency of public procurement.

- 1) Twenty-five (25) public procurement specialists, analysts and practitioners have been certified in the Osgoode Certificate Course in Public Procurement Law and Practice in **May 2014**. This training initiative was delivered by an expert faculty organized by the Osgoode Law School, York University, Toronto, Canada, in key concepts of Public Procurement Law and Practice to underpin the tabling of Jamaica's first stand-alone Public Procurement Law.
- 2) Twenty-nine (29) critical stakeholders and Procurement practitioners were trained and certified in e-GP System training in **August 2014** with Crown Agents Limited, United Kingdom.
- 3) Three Hundred (300) procurement practitioners have completed Level 1 of a revised mandatory 4 Level GOJ Procurement Training & Certification Programme with the INPRI Jamaica Limited to strengthen capacity. The programme is divided into 4 levels

and will cover approximately 6 broad essential topic categories in Public Procurement per level. At the end of each level, participants will be appraised with a certificate.

3. Please indicate the role/contribution of the INGP in the previously mentioned accomplishments.

Through the application of technology in member countries and the sharing of those experiences within the INGP, Jamaica is utilizing best practices and lessons learned for promoting public procurement policy reform.

4. Goals 2014-2015

The following public procurement reform initiatives are currently being pursued:

1. Comprehensive revision of the current Government of Jamaica Handbook of Public Sector Procurement Procedures and Standard Bidding Documents.
2. Establish the GOJ Public Procurement Website.
3. Conduct a Career Path Assessment for Public Procurement Practitioners by establishing a Public Procurement Professionals' Stream with a reclassification and establishment of a discrete grade/scale for procurement professionals under the Civil Service Establishment (General) Order.
4. Comprehensive revision of the GoJ Insurance Placement Regime.
5. Finalization of an MSME Policy by the Ministries of Finance and Planning and the Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce, to encourage the participation of Micro Small and Medium Size Enterprises (MSMEs) in public procurement opportunities and thereby facilitate the growth of our embryonic domestic industries.
6. Development and launch of an islandwide public education media campaign regarding Public Procurement reform initiatives.
7. Implement a fair and robust contractor performance assessment system to sanction and/or de-register underperforming contractors for defined periods, and give recognition to contractors who continuously deliver projects within time and budget.
8. Training and Certification Programme;
  - The development and delivery of a Level 1 Programme Fundamental Course in Public Procurement by the Management Institute of National Development (M.I.N.D)
  - The design and delivery of an international certification programme in public procurement by the International Procurement Institute Jamaica (INPRI)

- The design and delivery of an Insurance Placement training programme with the College of Insurance and Professional Services (CIPS)