**Progress Report on SDF activities.**

**Date report prepared: 19th October 2016**

1. **Background**

The Government of Uganda has received credit from the World Bank towards implementation of the Uganda Competitive Fund for employer-led short term training (Uganda Skills Development Fund –USDF). The Uganda competitive fund for employer-led short-term training is part of the Skilling Uganda Project addressing prevailing skills imbalances and shortages in Uganda. An important element of the initiative is to facilitate collaboration between training providers and industry to promote demand driven skills development with special attention to innovative modes of training. The Usd 18 Million matching grant facility – SDF is managed by the Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU).

1. **Project Effectiveness**

The Project has met all the conditions for effectiveness which include recruiting of all the core staff and finalizing of the Project Operations manual. An effectiveness letter from IDA is expected by latest 29th October 2016.

1. **SDF Staff recruitment**

There following staff were recruited and started working:

i) Project Manager,

ii) Project Accountant

iii) Three Grant Specialists (one is reporting on 7th November 2016)

The newly recruited staff were oriented and started working

**Staff recruitments still in pipeline**

i) Procurement Officer - Interviews were held on 19th October 2016

ii) Accounts Assistant - Short listing to be done during the week of 24th - 28th 2016

iii) Project Administrator, Clients Relations Officer - Adverts to run in Monitor news paper on Friday 21st October 2016.

iv) Driver(s) - Pending till project vehicle is procured. This is to avoid redundancy of the recruited driver(s)

**d) Procurement of consultancy services**

i) Due Diligence Consultants - Request For Proposals was submitted to World Bank and awaiting for approval

ii) Activity Monitoring and Results Measurement Consultants - RFP submitted to World Bank and awaiting for approval

iii) Independent Verification Consultants - Submitted ToR and Procurement method to Contracts Committee for approval. Feedback expected on Thursday 20th October 2016

**e) Other procurements:**

i) Office set-up and partitioning - Presented to Grants Committee on 13th October 2016

ii) Office furniture and computers - Pending, still working on the documentation

**f) Progress on the Granting making process:**

i) Grants Committee:

Grants Committee members were officially appointed. Awaiting for Grants Committee inauguration.

ii) SDF Bank Accounts

A Board resolution for opening up a Bank Accounts in Bank of Uganda was submitted to Accountant General's office and Bank of Uganda on 12th October 2016.

iii) Project Operational Manual

Project Operational Manual has been cleared by IDA. A formal submission of the Projects Manual by the Government through MoFPED is expected to be done by 20th October 2016.

iv) Work plan and Budget

Amendments in the SDF budget were done and the updated version submitted to MoES for consolidation

v) SDF Information Pack

Draft SDF flier, brochure and logo have been done. To initiate formal procurement process .

vi) Application templates:

Draft templates for funding widows 1 and 2 have been developed. Development of application templates for windows 3, 4 and internship forms is still undergoing.

vii) Communication strategy:

In collaboration with Manager Public, Relations & Communication office, a draft communications strategy is being developed.

viii) Standard SDF Power Point Presentation has been developed and is currently ready to be presented to various target groups when ever required.

**g) Outreach**

The SDF Team has been engaged in a number of meetings with various stakeholders and potential SDF Grantees. Some of the key meetings held include:

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| **Stakeholder** | **Purpose / outcome of the meeting** |
| MoFPED | Presenting SDF status. Project Operational Manual was submitted and feedback is expected soon |
| Project Coordinators Meeting | Discussing funds disbursement modalities, according to funds allocations |
| Belgium Technical Cooperation (BTC) and Word Bank officials | BTC has a similar project as PSFU. Meeting was to work out ways of harmonizing the two projects. Second meeting is scheduled for 19th October 2016 |
| 2016 UMA Show exhibitors | To create initial awareness of the SDF program to potential grantees and stakeholders. 50 companies were presented too and have already expressed interest in the program to apply for SDF grants. |
| **Upcoming Scheduled meetings**: | |
| BTC | Second technical meeting for harmonizing the BTC and PSFU SDF similar projects. Scheduled for 19/10/16 |
| UGAPRIV | Briefing on SDF implementation modalities. Scheduled for 20/10/16 |
| PSFU- SME Board Committee | Briefing on the SDF. scheduled for 20/10/16 |
| Buganda Government | Discussing on the partnership modalities in the SDF project implementation. Scheduled for 21/10/16 |
| UMA | Briefing on SDF implementation modalities. Scheduled for 25/10/16 |