



CROWN AGENTS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

INTRODUCTION

The Latin America and the Caribbean (LATAC) region, especially the small island development states, are extremely vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters. Limited human resources, small domestic markets, and underdeveloped institutional infrastructures are also harsh realities for many states in this region.

Through our long-term engagement in the Caribbean and established relationships with governments and regional organisations, Crown Agents has an excellent understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing LATAC today. As evidenced by our programmes transforming the lives of over 120 million people across the globe, Crown Agents is one of the world's leading procurement agents. We have been active across the Caribbean for almost two centuries, responding to major natural disasters, health emergencies, and system reforms.

For example, extreme weather events are common – the region experienced nine hurricanes at Category 3 and above in 2019-2020, and a staggering 175 natural disasters were recorded in 2022. When a hurricane strikes, it can wipe out more than the entire annual GDP of a small island, and it is often the poorest that suffer the most.

Major hurricanes including Irma, Jose, and Maria in 2017 left a trail of destruction. Crown Agents' operational team mobilised an astounding 827 tons of aid via air and sea freight, with cargo including 3,000 shelter kits, medical supplies and 5,000 solar lanterns.

Utilising our wealth of experience, knowledge, and understanding, we support governments in the region to reform public procurement. We do this through introducing systems and processes to boost economic growth, retaining our understanding of local customs and procedures, and always remaining at the cutting edge of innovation. We support a collective, pooled procurement approach with regional agencies such as the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and combine resources across the Caribbean to ensure cost effectiveness, resilience to vulnerabilities and sustainability.



**A TRUSTED PARTNER
THROUGH OUR WORK
PROVIDING:**



**Procurement services across
28 countries within LATAC**



**End-to-end supply chain of PPE for the
Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)
and UK Foreign, Commonwealth and
Development Office (FCDO) during the
COVID-19 pandemic**



**Health systems strengthening for
Ministries of Health in Guyana,
Turks and Caicos, Suriname and
the OECS Regional Health Project**



**Project management
for Barbados Port Inc**



**Training and professional
development with DIT Barbados**



**Humanitarian response
to natural disasters**

A strong procurement system built on sound ethical principles is fundamental to the efficient and transparent use of funds, as public procurement activities are usually executed with taxpayer money, public interest must be protected. Efficient procurement systems support safeguarding, where funds are used for operational or capital expenses, health and educational services or high-impact infrastructure projects. Governments must ensure that the correct products are obtained with key priorities, such as quality, value for money, and sustainability in mind, particularly when resources are scarce.



OPERATIONAL PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY CHAIN



PROCUREMENT MODERNISATION



SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT



PROCUREMENT PROFESSIONALISATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING



ePROCUREMENT



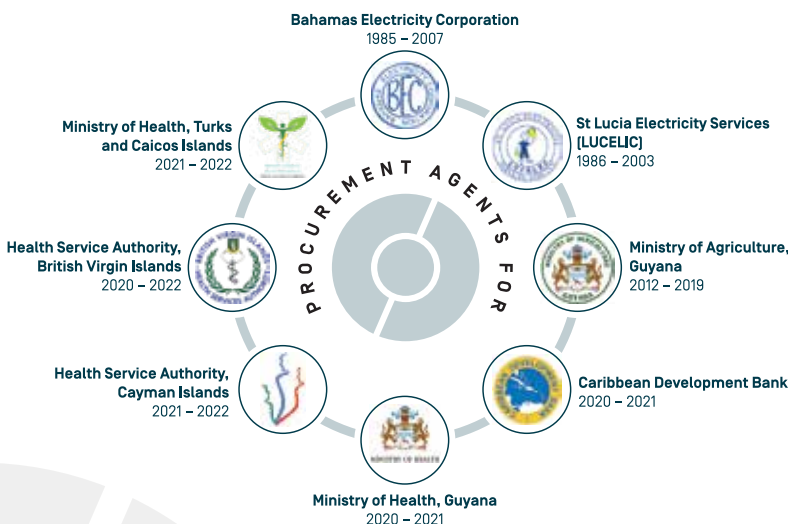
MONITORING AND EVALUATION FOR ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEARNING



OPERATIONAL PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY CHAIN

We **source, supply, inspect** and **ship** to any destination, including some of the most challenging and fragile environments in the world. We design tailored solutions to meet individual needs, connecting with a global network of suppliers and manufacturers and creating a competitive procurement environment that drives efficiency, innovation, sustainability, and value for money.

Operational procurement is an essential tool for governments and organisations to realise efficiencies, quality, and value-for-money in their procurement processes. As one of the world's leading procurement and supply chain organisations, Crown Agents are a trusted partner to ministries, governments, institutions, and international donors in over 100 countries providing high quality procurement services based on international best practices and to the highest standards of ethics, integrity, and transparency.



We follow strict Procurement Operational Procedures while still providing flexibility and agility, adapting our work to specific donor guidelines or public-sector procurement regulations.

Our 2021 Supply Chain Excellence Award in the category of 'Healthcare and Pharmaceutical Supply Chain Excellence' for our work for the UK Government during the COVID-19 pandemic, is testimony to our global reputation for excellence in the field of healthcare procurement.

CASE STUDY

Ministry of Health Turks and Caicos – Procurement Agent for COVID-19

When the USA introduced an export ban on their COVID-19 related products in April 2020, some hospitals in the Caribbean suddenly lost access to essential medical equipment. Crown Agents quickly stepped in to support the procurement of critical hospital equipment, PPE, and laboratory items for PCR testing.

Crown Agents was approached directly by the Turks and Caicos Government to take on the procurement of biomedical equipment, non-biomedical equipment and consumables urgently required for the fitting out of a new Nightingale Covid ward located on the islands. We were provided with a budget of USD 2 million to undertake the sourcing, procurement, and freight of over 300 line items. This included critical hospital equipment such as beds, oxygen concentrators, and vital sign monitors to expand their high-dependency unit and keep their health system response running and operational during the crisis.



CASE STUDY

Ministry of Health Guyana – Procurement Agent for the provision of emergency COVID-19 services

In April 2020 the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana (GCRG) through the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) funded Mother and Children Health Improvement Project (MCHIP) of the Ministry of Health, entered discussions with Crown Agents regarding the provision of fast, transparent, and accountable procurement services for the sourcing, purchasing and delivery of the following:

**COVERALLS • FACE MASKS • GOGGLES • SHOE COVERS • FACE SHIELDS • THERMOMETERS
RADIOGRAPHY MACHINES • PATIENT MONITORS AND ACCESSORIES • CARDIO BED
PULSE OXIMETERS • CRASH CARTS • PCR TESTS • SWABS • VIRAL SAMPLE KITS • COVID-19 TESTS**

Crown Agents were provided with a budget of USD 1 Million to undertake sourcing, procurement, training on equipment use, and freight to support efforts during the pandemic. We navigated challenges of sea freight costs unexpectedly increasing, and container shortages through our dedicated freight forwarder and were able to maintain sea freight prices quoted throughout.



PROCUREMENT MODERNISATION

We work with governments, institutions and development organisations around the world to strengthen their procurement systems to act as a foundation for cost-effective service delivery. Through our experience of supporting clients in over 20 countries to implement reforms, we have the skills to effectively navigate this journey. Our experts work closely with a range of stakeholders to understand the key objectives to be accomplished. By breaking the procurement system down into manageable component parts, we establish a cohesive road map to guide the process, effect a seamless transition, whilst ensuring that reforms survive any change of leadership or government.



CASE STUDY

Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Pooled Procurement & Supply Chain Management

As global temperatures rise, the Caribbean is facing an unprecedented period of change. From 2020 to 2022, the region recorded over 175 natural disasters, with 71% of economic losses because of climatic instability. For citizens living in the Caribbean, natural disasters have become a way of life. Through providing support aimed at boosting economic growth and development, we are utilising our experience in the region to mitigate the challenges presented by climate change.

In 2021 Crown Agents partnered with the Organisation for Eastern Caribbean States Commission (OECS) to help better prepare their procurement systems for when natural disasters strike. By identifying the most common disaster relief items across the Commission's eleven member states, we developed an emergency procurement operational framework which supports internal processes in the OECS and assists in achieving suitable emergency readiness to best serve populations during a crisis. Throughout the delivery of the project, our team supported the OECS to build a proactive and strategic approach to disaster supply chain preparedness. This included reviewing and updating the Procurement Manual, process strengthening by the roll out of a Framework Agreement for 'common' post crisis items, logistics mapping and building the capacity of staff.

The results of this programme mean the OECS is confident in knowing they have the necessary preparation for faster and safer means of procurement in a crisis, and more effective planning and risk mitigation in place to build resilient supply chains.

Following the success of this project, Crown Agents has continued to work with the OECS and is currently supporting a World Bank / The Canada, Caribbean Resilience Facility funded programme to create a self-sustaining pooled procurement mechanism extending beyond pharmaceuticals and to the wider CARICOM region.

“ An immense thank you again to the entire Crown Agents team for your sterling effort in executing this consultancy. It has been a pleasure working with you.”

Faith Harry-Jn Baptiste - Project Manager - OECS Regional Health Project



SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

With the imminent target of Agenda 2030, governments and organisations around the world are striving to find new and innovative ways of reaching their SDG's. This has led to a surge of interest in Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) as a means of ensuring that procurement policies and practices generate benefits not only for the organisations involved, but also for the environment, society and the economy.

Sustainable Public Procurement promotes practices that are sustainable and in accordance with national policies and priorities. It's the process by which public authorities seek to achieve the appropriate balance between the three pillars of sustainable development - **economic, social and environmental** - when procuring goods, services or works. SPP allows organisations to purchase what they need, while at the same time using the procurement process to support their strategic development goals.

At Crown Agents, we work with both our clients and our suppliers to integrate sustainability through our procurement practices. As procurement agents, we play a pivotal role in bringing together our clients' sustainability objectives with sustainable solutions from the market, as well as by integrating various tools and resources, asset management, lifecycle costing and the use of non-price criteria in the procurement cycle.



CASE STUDY

SIDA Sustainable Public Procurement

Working with policy makers, legislators, buying and academic institutions, we are supporting the acceleration of sustainable procurement in their procurement practices. Under The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) funded **Sustainable Public Procurement Capacity Building Programme**, in collaboration with FCG Sweden, we are providing support in nine countries, including Guatemala, Bolivia and Colombia. **We are supporting** the increased use of sustainable procurement practices globally, ensuring purchasing decisions reflect broader goals linked to resource efficiency, climate change, social responsibility and economic resilience.

The overall objective of the programme is for sustainable public procurement to be used as a strategic tool for sustainable development and the achievement of Agenda 2030. We develop strong relationships with stakeholders and provide hands-on support and mentorship to reform processes in the following ways:

- **professional training to increase the practical knowledge of the partner organisations of tools and methods to implement and build commitment to SPP**
- **change process, mentorship and technical support customised and contextualised for hands-on support to partner organisations and their implementation of change processes linked to SPP practices**
- **peer-to-peer learning as a means to support exchanges of experiences of SPP**
- **outreach and partnership to foster a broad commitment for an increased deployment of SPP practices and to explore cooperation with different procurement initiatives and platforms.**

The design of the programme, including the reform processes, support, and working methods used, is personalised and takes a case by case approach between the countries and partner organisations engaged in the programme. For each regional programme, an inception phase will be used to assess needs and propose strategic change processes, partner organisations, working methods and implementation arrangements for the subsequent regional programme.



PROCUREMENT PROFESSIONALISATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Working with public and private sectors, international donors and NGOs worldwide, we support capacity building efforts to ensure maximum efficiency, quality and value for money is achieved. We support skills development at all levels; whether it is writing national procurement training and professionalisation strategies, developing tailored procurement curricula, preparing training materials, or providing on-the-job coaching and mentoring - we have the skills and expertise to build capacity, ensuring sustainable change and improvements are achieved.



“ The training provided by Crown Agents...was very detailed, engaging and provided a great introduction into the world of procurement.”

Sherry-Ann Blackett,
Senior Trade & Investment Officer/Country Lead,
DIT Barbados

CASE STUDY

Effective and Transparent Procurement: Global Best Practice and Innovation Training in Barbados

The UK Department for International Trade supports UK companies across the region, while also contributing to the prosperity of host countries.

Each year billions of dollars' worth of funding is invested into development projects in the LATAC region by International Financial institutions (IFI) such as the Caribbean Development Bank, World Bank (WB) and Inter-American Development Bank. However, despite this wide range of potential opportunities for private sector stakeholders, there can be barriers.

Consultations revealed that international private sector entities who bid for tenders at times experienced the following challenges:

- **the slow dissemination and limited access to tender bidding documents**
- **navigating complex payment systems that limit the pursuit of fee-protected bidding documents (lack of online payment options)**
- **difficulty in obtaining the status of the tender selection process.**

To address these challenges, DIT Barbados contracted Crown Agents to deliver an online training course for 63 delegates from a range of Government Departments and Regional Organisations in the Eastern Caribbean to cover the following:

- **transparency of public procurement processes;**
- **effective dissemination of bidding opportunities and bidding documents;**
- **effective payment models - applicable to Eastern Caribbean reality;**
- **effective communication with bidding stakeholders.**





ePROCUREMENT

As eProcurement becomes increasingly important in the modern digital marketplace, governments and organisations are keen to explore how Information Communication Technology (ICT) can be used to optimise procurement performance. In partnership with our clients, we develop specifications for eProcurement platforms and assist with their implementation. We enable government reform through the provision of our IT technical expertise, strategic advice and training. By successfully navigating the challenges of eProcurement implementation, our experts work with donors and governments to support the transition from transactional to strategic procurement by exploring the best suited technology and assisting with the planning, design and build out of eProcurement.

Whilst technology is an important factor in transitioning to an eProcurement system, it is also about building a new, more efficient and cost-effective way for governments and stakeholders to do business. To address this, our services focus on:

- technical elements of eProcurement and the roadmap to implementation
- change management
- people sensitisation and training
- processes for a successful transition

By doing so, we ensure that the recommended solution is appropriate for the maturity of the procurement environment.



ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT



CASE STUDY

Assessment of Electronic Procurement [Information] Systems for the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, Barbados, 2012

With the goal of transitioning to a more competitive economy, the Government of Barbados initiated a project to modernise its national procurement system. The overall objective of this programme was to improve the effectiveness of public procurement, save money through competitive prices and reduce process time, while ensuring the transparency and integrity of the system.

Crown Agents was appointed to advise on the selection of an e-Procurement package which would manage all government procurement objectives. This e-procurement system reduced the overall cost of purchased goods and services by:

- **gaining the best possible value items**
- **eliminating unnecessary and unsuitable purchases**
- **ensuring only accurate invoices were paid**
- **improving the efficiency of everyone involved in the purchasing process**

The implementation of the system was ongoing with the Government's aims to mitigate risks in the supply chain of maintaining transparency of the sourcing process, properly qualifying new suppliers, and effectively monitoring supplier performance and compliance continuing to be realised.





Monitoring and Evaluation for Accountability and Learning (MEAL)

The MEAL approach aims to emphasise the importance of reviewing procurement activities and using the resulting data to support decision making, accountability and continuous improvement. A key challenge faced in the procurement process is the ability to successfully monitor and evaluate reforms once changes have been implemented. To support this, Crown Agents provides monitoring and evaluation services to help aid improvements in efficiency, effectiveness and transparency, resulting in cost-effective public procurement programmes.

Our expertise covers a broad spectrum, including:

Pre-Contract

Value-For-Money Assessments

Assessing contract forms and terms, evaluating the technical elements and scrutinising prices to measure compliance and risk.

Recommendations are then made for improvement before the contract is placed to ensure transparency and value for money.

Parallel Bid Evaluations

Providing independent bid evaluations alongside that of the public procurement evaluation team. These focus on preliminary, technical and financial evaluations, as well as featuring bidder rankings and suggested negotiation strategies to reduce the potential for corruption before the bid is placed.

Contract Progress Audits

Carried out during contract implementation to ensure that the supplier or service provider contracted is fulfilling their obligations. These can include a review of costs incurred or an assessment of the actual value of work delivered based on physical examinations of sites and/or equipment, its quality and compliance with the contract specifications.

CASE STUDY

Barbados Port Inc (BPI) – Waste to Energy project

Crown Agents is playing a critical role in supporting BPI with their vision to be the most innovative, green maritime hub in the world by 2030. We do this by combining our:

- extensive experience
- global network
- first-class technical procurement,
- sustainable public procurement and
- project management expertise

We are currently working with BPI to update their waste management facilities, building their capacity in managing waste and construction projects.

Utilising our institutional expertise in managing complex sustainable public procurement programmes, we are supporting the development of a more efficient, environmentally friendly waste-to-energy facility. This will align with the evolving needs of the port and the citizens living and working around it. The new facility will reduce pollutant emissions at the port in addition to producing cleaner energy which will be sold back to the national grid.

The efficient energy conversion facilities in the new incinerator will lead to a reduction in pollution and the creation of approximately 6,000 MWH of electricity per year, offsetting energy that would otherwise be sourced from fossil fuels.



Montserrat

In 1997, when the Soufriere Hills volcano erupted, we developed an evacuation plan and coordinated the transport of burns victims off the island for treatment. Following the explosion, Crown Agents instated water transport to re-connect supply lines to neighbouring islands.

Haiti

In 2010, Haiti suffered an earthquake measuring 7.1 on the Richter scale, killing an estimated 300,000 and displacing millions. Our operations team established a field office and implemented a programme to procure food, water, shelter and medical supplies to around 380,000 survivors.

Guyana

From 2012-2018, we worked with the East Demerara Water Conservancy to provide the procurement of works to build sea wall defences to prevent flooding and damage from natural disasters.

Regional Hurricane response

In 2017, we procured and mobilised 827 tons of critical humanitarian supplies across the worst affected countries.

COVID19 pandemic response

Since 2020, we have procured and shipped over 850,000 kg of medical supplies and PPE around the world, as well as delivered 22.8 million vaccines to 43 countries and British Overseas Territories.



We ensure that the **highest standards of honest, ethical and transparent behaviour** are engaged in and adhered to **across all Crown Agents operations**, from design to delivery.

CONTACT US

If you would like to discuss our procurement offering based on your unique needs, please contact our growth team based in Barbados:

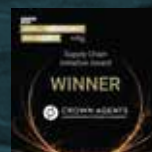
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Crown Agents operate a documented Quality Management System registered with the British Standards Institution to the international quality standard BS EN ISO 9001:2015. The provision of services in economic growth, governance, health, humanitarian and stabilisation, training, professional development, procurement and supply chain services including management of third-party quality assurance and inspection services related to the supply of manufactured, processed products and international freight forwarding and verification services.