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### Newly launched Enterprise Go Digital to help strengthen the resilience of SMEs



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**GIS – 04 March 2022:** The Enterprise Go Digital (EGD) project, spearheaded by the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council (NPCC) with financial assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Government of Japan, was launched this evening during a ceremony held in Ebène. The Minister of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives, Mr. Soomilduth Bholah was present on the occasion.

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan, Mr. Shuichiro Kawaguchi, the Officer in Charge of UNDP for Mauritius and Seychelles, Dr. Tony Muhumuza, as well as the Executive Director of the NPCC, Mr. Ashit Gungah, were also in attendance.

The aim of EGD is to strengthen the resilience of SMEs in the current COVID-19 crisis and support them in their recovery phase by providing funding for the implementation of digital solutions.

In his address, Minister Bholah underlined that Japan's unwavering support in various fields including Disaster risk reduction, training and technology and highlighted that the UNDP continues to be a key partner for Mauritius. He commended the NPCC for the development of projects to support economic needs of the country and instill productivity and quality.

The project, he added, is aligned with the requirements of a solid economic architecture and digitalisation is a key driver of economic growth. All companies need to move in tandem with technology and market changes, he remarked.

The Minister recalled that Government has provided various forms of support to SMEs to adapt to the pandemic but asserted that digital transformation is key for surviving the current and future crises.

Digitalisation and digital tools will help them reduce costs, standardise and reduce manpower and enhance competitiveness, reach a larger market and understand consumer behaviors, he informed.

According to Minister Bholah, SMEs need to rethink and redesign their business with a refocus on how to leverage social media, mobile connectivity and data analytics and incorporate these in their

how to leverage social media, mobile connectivity and data analytics and incorporate these in their business model to deliver value to customers and ensure business continuity.

Besides, Mr. Ashit Gungah expressed gratitude to the UNDP and the Japanese Government for having believed in the 'Enterprise Go Digital project' and providing the financial assistance and emphasised that the project marks another important milestone in our relationship with both UNDP and the Japanese Government.

According to him, the pandemic has turbocharged the move to a digital future and people and organisations all over the world have had to adjust to new ways of work and life. In the current environment, digitalisation can provide unprecedented opportunities for economic growth, he said.

He pointed out that the NPCC has embarked on an 'Enterprise Transformation Programme', the objective of which is to provide business and technology advisory services to enterprises. We will support them to reimagine their business and improve their capability and capacity to scale up, produce more quality value-added products and services, be more resilient, agile and flexible to face uncertainties, he indicated.

On his part, Dr. Tony Muhumuza said that he is pleased with the timely implementation of the project that essentially aims at enhancing productivity in the wake of the disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic on the economy. We are operating in unique time, and this calls for enterprises to reorientate themselves and harness the capacity to adapt to be in a better position to recover.

He reiterated UNDP's commitment to sustain the engagement of providing a platform for the benefit of SMEs' recovery and resilience.

As for the Japanese Ambassador, he stated that the Embassy has been working closely with the NPCC in various projects aimed at promoting productivity and efficiency. He added that Japan is mindful of the impacts of Covid-19 on Mauritius and stressed that threats can be turned into opportunities. There is an absolute need for SMEs to adopt digitalisation so that they increase their competitiveness and productivity, he observed.

This project, he further added, will play a key role in enhancing the sustainability of SMEs. He also renewed his determination to work for the prosperity of both Mauritius and Japan as well as his commitment to strengthen both countries' relations.

### **Objectives of Enterprise Go Digital**

The project shall address pressing issues to create a level of playing field for the SME ecosystem; bring the right information to aid decision making and empower human resources to boost business velocity.

It also seeks to create awareness about the need of SMEs to digitalise, assess the digital maturity and provide a digital roadmap for 10 enterprises and link digital solution providers to SMEs and implement digital projects in each enterprise.

### **Comments**

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