DHL creates new jobs through investing in BPO technology and upskilling of staff

MDF partnered with DHL Express (Fiji) to invest in modern call-centre technology and staff training, designed to grow its capacity to offer locally-based Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) services for its international logistics business.

The Company

DHL Express (Fiji) is part of DHL Express, a division of Deutsche Post DHL - the world's largest logistics company. The principal activity of the business involves providing international express mail services by sea and airmail. Fiji operations commenced in 1976 with its head office in Suva and a gateway operations facility at Nadi International Airport. Recently, it opened a branch in Labasa with agencies in Savusavu and Levuka. DHL currently employs around 100 staff.

The Context

Fiji is well positioned to be the hub in the Pacific to offer competitive BPO services to markets such as Australia and New Zealand. Fiji offers 'near-shoring' benefits, including geographical, time zone, linguistic and cultural ties, as well as economic advantages in the form of lower labour costs.

DHL (Australia) operates BPO services in Australia and outsources part of its operations to India and Malaysia and is gradually shifting certain BPO functions to Fiji.
The Challenge

Despite its potential, Fiji faces certain limitations such as lack of skilled labour and availability of appropriate technology. While DHL (Fiji) operated some BPO functions for their Australian office, the call service quality had been an ongoing issue. The old telephone operating system that was in place limited DHL's ability to offer cost-effective and efficient services, causing this segment of the business to stagnate. To address this, DHL needed to move to a new cloud based PABX (telephone management system) to improve its product quality and carry out specialised training to build local capacity.

The Solution

MDF partnered with DHL to introduce new technology and upskill staff to help demonstrate the comparative advantages of Fiji as an attractive location for Business Processing Outsourcing operations. To implement this, MDF connected DHL to Digicel Fiji who offered the new cost-effective PABX system with cloud-based technical support. DHL was also able to engage trainers from DHL New Zealand to upgrade the skills of its staff in Fiji.

Insights gained from DHL and a number of other BPO companies in Fiji indicate that there is still a skills shortage in the local market. This prevents companies from taking full advantage of BPO opportunities. To address this, MDF has reframed its Urban Industries portfolio to include specialised skills development, partnering with enterprises and service providers interested in upskilling current and potential BPO staff. With a larger work-ready BPO labour force, it is envisaged that international and local companies directly involved or using BPO services will look to establish and grow their business in Fiji, much like DHL.

The Results

- Created **22** new jobs, mostly for women
- Investing in advanced PABX technology and capitalizing on Fiji’s advantages, this initiative has **generated an additional USD 350,000**
- Emboldened DHL Fiji to take up more functions