

TradeCom II Support to the CARIFORUM

PRESS RELEASE

Press release: “Targeted Support to Enhance the Implementation of the CARIFORUM-EU EPA”
Location: The geographical area to be covered by the Project is the CARIFORUM member states namely: Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago
Date: Scheduled implementation starting date – November 2016
Duration: 12 months
Web: www.tradecom-acpeu.org

Background

TradeCom II is a Programme financed by the UE at the request of ACP Group. It is designed to facilitate the integration of ACP Countries in the global economy and value chains by improving, *inter alia*, their capacity:

- to formulate and implement suitable trade policies,
- to participate effectively in multilateral Trade negotiations under the WTO and to implement the trade agreements to their benefit, and
- to strengthen their competitiveness.

TradeCom II Programme has translated the needs of ACP beneficiaries into a number of relevant and implementable projects.

Support to the CARIFORUM

“Targeted Support to Enhance the Implementation of the CARIFORUM-EPA” is a project designed by TradeCom II Programme in collaboration with the CARIFORUM EPA Unit of the CARIFORUM Directorate. It is designed to support the EPA Unit and CARIFORUM Members to strengthen their capacity to implement the CARIFORUM-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA).

The CARIFORUM-EU EPA, signed in October 2008, forms the basis of a mature trading relationship between the two Parties, encompassing not just a Trade in Goods regime, but also Trade in Services, Trade-related Issues and Development Cooperation.

The Agreement is aimed at establishing a trade partnership consistent with the Millennium Development Goals (presently the SDGs) and the Cotonou Agreement; promoting the gradual integration of the CARIFORUM States into the world economy, in accordance with their political choices and development priorities, and strengthening the existing relations between the Parties on the basis of solidarity and mutual interest.

Implementation of the CARIFORUM-EU EPA remains a top priority for CARIFORUM States and the EU. However, CARIFORUM faces a number of obstacles, namely, in the form of institutional and operational capacity constraints. The main constraints relate to the lack of financial and human resources to accommodate the increased demands related to the implementation of the Agreement. Therefore, technical support to the CARIFORUM Directorate-based EPA Implementation Unit is vital to achieve a number of deliverables to effectively facilitate EPA implementation.

The EPA Implementation Unit of the CARIFORUM Directorate provides direct hands-on technical and legal services support to assist CARIFORUM States with the implementation of the CARIFORUM-EU EPA. Complementary actions are, however, required by the EPA Implementation Unit to complete the technical work assigned to it by CARIFORUM States.

Project outputs

The Project contributes to:

- enhance the legal and regulatory framework of CARIFORUM States;
- strengthen the capacity to monitor the effective implementation of the CARIFORUM-EU EPA EPA; and
- enhanced knowledge sharing on the opportunities and benefits of the CARIFORUM-EU EPA

Intervention areas

One of the purposes of this project is to enhance the legal and regulatory framework of CARIFORUM States in the light of the CARIFORUM-EU EPA. Under this purpose, the activities will promote:

- the enactment of new Model Bills on key service sectors (Temporary Entry and Stay of EU Services Providers, Professional Services, Maritime Transport Services and Telecommunication) into domestic law; and
- the preparation of a Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) for CARIFORUM (the CARIFORUM MRA) and related implementing legislation.

The second purpose is to strengthen capacity of the EPA Implementation Unit to monitor the effective implementation of the CARIFORUM-EU EPA. Under this purpose, the activities will promote:

- the development of an effective, user-friendly, sustainable and cost effective Monitoring System based on internationally accepted monitoring and evaluation principles that can be effected at the national and regional levels; and
- a review of the CARIFORUM-EU EPA Implementation Roadmap and recommendations on its revision.

The third purpose of this project, concurrently with the foregoing actions, is to promote awareness activities, in particular knowledge sharing regarding the opportunities and benefits of the CARIFORUM-EU EPA, through the preparation of public education material in consultation with the CARIFORUM Directorate.