
EPA Implementation Stakeholder Analysis: The CARIFORUM Context

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***Project: "Support to regional institutions in the implementation of the
Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) in the Caribbean"***

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Table of Contents

<u>TERMS OF REFERENCE</u>	<u>4</u>
METHODOLOGY	4
<u>EPA IMPLEMENTATION STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS: AN OVERVIEW</u>	<u>5</u>
MAIN STAKEHOLDERS AND ROLES.....	5
STAKEHOLDER INTERESTS.....	5
CO-ORDINATION ISSUES	6
BUDGETARY ALLOCATIONS FOR EPA IMPLEMENTATION	7
DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE.....	7
ACCESS TO INFORMATION	8
HUMAN RESOURCES CAPABILITIES.....	8
EPA SENSITISATION ACTIVITIES	8
ENHANCING COMPETITIVENESS	8
<u>BARBADOS STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>DOMINICAN REPUBLIC STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>GRENADA STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>GUYANA STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS.....</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>JAMAICA STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS.....</u>	<u>24</u>
<u>ANALYSIS OF REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS</u>	<u>31</u>
CARICOM SECRETARIAT	32
CARIBBEAN HOTEL AND TOURISM ASSOCIATION (CHTA)	32
OECS SECRETARIAT.....	34
CARIBBEAN EXPORT DEVELOPMENT AGENCY	34
THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION (DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION IN BARBADOS AND THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN).....	36
<u>INTERVIEW SCHEDULE.....</u>	<u>38</u>
<u>LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS INTERVIEWED</u>	<u>40</u>

Terms of Reference

The main objective of the report is to provide a comprehensive picture of the key stakeholders involved in the implementation of the EPA in CARIFORUM and give a summary overview of their mandate, responsibilities, positions and interests as well as of perceived needs in terms of technical assistance.

The key guiding questions for the stakeholder analysis are:

- Who are the main stakeholders in the EPA implementation process (roles, responsibilities, and mandates)?
- How does coordination among CARIFORUM stakeholders (e.g. supranational and national level; public and private sector) happen? What are the mechanisms?
- Which are the organisations and networks that possess financial power in the EPA implementation process?
- Which are the organisations and networks that possess expert power in the EPA implementation process?
- Which are the organisations and networks that possess political position power in the EPA implementation process?
- What interests do the key stakeholders have in the issues at stake?
- How congruent are these interests with the overarching objectives of the EPA?

Methodology

The stakeholder analysis involved two (2) phases of research. The first phase focussed on desk research, telephone interviews and travel to and research in Signatory CARIFORUM States (Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, Grenada, St. Lucia and Barbados). Phase two involved the preparation of an overview report summarizing the main observations and findings. This includes an overview of the structures/institutions in place regionally and nationally for the EPA implementation process, and an evaluation of the technical assistance that may be required by these stakeholders to fulfil the mandate. To this end, the consultancy team conducted interviews among a number of national and regional level stakeholders. Organisations surveyed included agencies in the private sector and the public sector as well as non-governmental agencies and inter-governmental agencies.

The report is structured such that the overview section provides a synopsis and analysis of the overarching themes and experiences garnered from the interview and research process. This section is followed by summaries of the country assessments. These assessments are based on a structured interview instrument which was informed by the guiding questions identified in the terms of reference.

EPA Implementation Stakeholder Analysis: An Overview

Main Stakeholders and Roles

The main stakeholders in the EPA implementation process were considered to be the business community and their business support organisations which ranged from industry associations, government agencies which deal with trade and trade-related issues such as the Ministry of Trade, customs authorities and standards setting agencies; government agencies with responsibility for the executive ministries such as the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Tourism; statutory bodies such as those responsible for investment and trade promotion; regional integration agencies such as CARICOM and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS); trade unions and other non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

In relation to the roles assigned in the EPA implementation process, some countries already have a highly evolved division of labour which spans a number of government agencies. For example, in Jamaica, the Office of the Prime Minister is responsible for capacity building for the private and public sector, the Jamaica Trade Adjustment Team (JTAT) assists with trade policy formulation, Jamaica Trade and Invest is responsible for issues related to trade and investment under the EPA and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade hosting the Trade Agreements Implementation Unit. Some countries, such as Guyana, opted for a more simplified structure and identified only the Ministry of Trade as having a formal role in the EPA implementation process with the role of the private sector being more informal. Other countries such as Barbados and the Dominican Republic have formal roles assigned to both private sector and public sector actors. In the case of the former, the Ministry of Trade is charged with co-ordinating the implementation process, while the Barbados Private Sector Trade Team (BPSTT) has a formal role in the trade policy formulation and implementation. In the case of the latter, the Private Sector Commission for International Negotiations deals with the negotiation and implementation of trade agreements and the Ministry of Trade and Industry is charged with responsibility for EPA implementation and administration.

Stakeholder Interests

The main interests of the organisations were diverse in accordance with their specific mandates. The main interests ranged from simply understanding the overall implementation process in the case of Grenada to the more sophisticated provision of support for the implementation of a private sector strategy in the Dominican Republic. However, some broad areas of convergence were identified in terms of communications, business development, development co-operation and the actual implementation of commitments. Among the main interests articulated were:

- Understanding and communicating the substance of the EPA to the business community;
- Accessing technical assistance to develop industries;
- Enhancing the competitiveness of industries and addressing supply-side constraints;

- Facilitating/understanding how to take advantage of the market access opportunities.

For the regional agencies, the main interests understandably mirrored the national interests of the stakeholders with a few additions. Their interests included trade and investment promotion (Caribbean Export), assisting the signatory member states in implementing their commitments under the Agreement (CARICOM Secretariat); accessing development assistance and funding (OECS Secretariat and Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association [CHTA]); and completing the in-built agendas within the EPA such as the Mutual Recognition Agreements (CHTA).

In terms of strategic interests of national level stakeholders, these were closely aligned to the main interests of the agencies. The strategic interests ranged from ensuring the effective contestation of the new and enhanced market access; building export capacity and improving competitiveness; attracting investment; developing the overall business climate and taking advantage of the provisions for development co-operation. These interests were recurrent themes in the discussions with the CARIFORUM stakeholders. From the regional perspective, the strategic interests related to strengthening the competitiveness of regional firms, industries and countries and attracting EU investors and ensuring market access (Caribbean Export, CHTA and the OECS Secretariat).

Co-ordination Issues

The overall co-ordination of the EPA implementation in most cases has been entrusted to the Ministry responsible for Trade. National level mechanisms put into place to implement the EPA include the completion of EPA Implementation Plans and the establishment of mechanisms such as EPA implementation units. With the exception of the Dominican Republic, all Member states reported that they had established an implementation unit. Many of these mechanisms are established by the Governments to assist the private sectors, but in the case of Jamaica there is an additional mechanism - the JTAT- which includes the private sector and business support agencies. At the regional level, the OECS Secretariat is working through its Trade Policy Unit/ Hubs and Spokes Project with the implementation units in OECS Member States and CARICOM Secretariat has established an EPA Unit to assist CARIFORUM member states in implementing their commitments. In addition, while discussions are on-going, it is envisaged that the CARIFORUM co-ordinator will be the overall co-ordinator.

The mechanisms for co-ordinating national business support organisations vary. Some business organisations have formal structures for co-ordination. For example, the Barbados Private Sector Association, which is the umbrella body for the major business associations, has the capacity to co-ordinate the majority of the business support organisations. A similar situation seems to be the case in the Dominican Republic. In other countries, more than one mechanism exists- in the case of Jamaica, national business support co-ordination takes place through the Jamaica Chamber of Commerce, JTAT and the Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica; and also through the Private Sector Development Programme. Some respondents such as Trinidad and Tobago reported that there were no mechanisms developed to date, but that there is

collaboration between business support organisations while Grenada indicated that there were plans to create such a mechanism.

The co-ordination with the regional business support organisations appears to be mainly informal to national private sector stakeholders and in their view co-ordination with regional organisations such as CAIC could be improved. There are initiatives from regional agencies to develop strategies to engage regional business support organisations. Two of the regional organisations already have a mechanism to co-ordinate with other regional organisations. Caribbean Export has CARIBISNET and the CHTA co-ordinates closely with the Caribbean Tourism Organisation as well as other regional actors such as CAIC and it also has communication links to CARICOM. Within the OECS, a Business Council was launched to co-ordinate with regional business support organisations. It was also indicated that a number of agencies are developing strategies to engage regional business support agencies.

The co-ordination between the private sector and the government is taking place in some countries through a social partnership arrangement which is a consultative mechanism that includes representatives of the private sector, government agencies and civil society. This is the case in Barbados, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic. Trinidad and Tobago's co-ordination takes place through a Technical Co-ordinating Committee under the Ministry of Trade and Industry. In Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados, there is also evidence of *ad hoc* co-ordination. Only in Guyana was it reported that there was no mechanism for co-ordination.

Budgetary Allocations for EPA Implementation

In terms of funding, for the most part, only government agencies have budgets specifically for EPA implementation. In one case, a private sector stakeholder - the BPSTT- has concluded an agreement with an international agency to undertake an EPA related projects. However, the general pattern observed was that the private sector does not have funding specifically allocated for EPA implementation. By contrast, regional agencies such as CARICOM and Caribbean Export appear to have budgetary outlays specifically for EPA implementation. The CHTA has indicated that it does not have allocated funds for EPA implementation and has an interest in seeking funding assistance for implementing programmes.

Development Assistance

The list of financial and technical assistance required to enhance competitiveness in the context of EPA implementation is understandably extensive and in most cases it relates to the building of industrial, institutional and human resource capacity both at the regional and national level. For example, one area for assistance that was highlighted by representatives from the Dominican Republic was the need for strengthening the legal/ administrative relationship between CARICOM and the Dominican Republic.

Success in accessing EU funding seems to be limited mainly to the public sector and the regional agencies (CARICOM and Caribbean Export) and regional business support organisations (CHTA). In some cases where the private sector has attempted to do so,

they eventually gave up as they considered the process to be overly time-consuming and cumbersome.

With specific reference to the ways to access development co-operation, there appears to have been some initiatives to provide a general overview of the development co-operation provisions, but there have not been initiatives aimed at assisting stakeholders in accessing development funding. In a number of instances, it was signalled that the task ahead will be to provide more in-depth guidance/ training to accessing funding. In other words, the stakeholders *know* of the development co-operation provisions, but do not understand clearly *how to access* it. This is clearly a priority area for improvement as businesses will need assistance in adjusting to new market conditions on account of trade liberalization as well as develop capabilities to contest new market opportunities.

Access to Information

Questions relating to the availability of information on the EPA elicited a number of highly interesting responses. While many stakeholders pointed to the ready availability of the information particularly on the CRNM website, there appears to be difficulty in understanding the information. This is suggestive of a need to make the materials provided less technical and to translate it into a language that can be grasped readily by the average businessman.

Human Resources Capabilities

While a few organisations appear to have sufficient technical expertise to assist in the EPA implementation process, generally, at the national level, there appears to be a shortage of trade policy and formulation expertise. The regional organisations appear to be satisfied with their human resources complement or possess the capacity to sub-contract these skills on an as needs basis.

EPA Sensitisation Activities

EPA sensitisation activities have been undertaken in several member states such as Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, the Dominican Republic and Guyana through various forms such as workshops, seminars, national consultations, panel discussions, publications and series of articles in newspapers. In the OECS, these activities have been undertaken through the CRNM, the OECS Hubs and Spokes Project and the Ministries of Trade.

Enhancing Competitiveness

Only Grenada reported that there were no mechanisms available to enterprises to permit them to be more competitive. Guyana has a National Competitiveness Strategy which helps to co-ordinate with businesses to access aid. Trinidad and Tobago's mechanisms range from training to a development programme which focuses on growing and developing industries. Jamaica provides access to funding institutions and government assistance for a better understanding of what the EPA means to businesses and there is a Target Group Competitiveness Committee.

Barbados Stakeholder Analysis

The main stakeholders in Barbados regarding the implementation of the EC-CARIFORUM Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) are the private, public sector and NGOs (Civil Society). Businesses (both merchandise and services exporters), business support organisations (such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Coalition of Services Industries, the Manufacturers' Association, the Agricultural Society, the Private Sector Trade Team (PSTT) and the Small Business Association the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation, Invest Barbados. Also the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade other ministries, and Caribbean Policy Development Centre.

The assessment of the institutional landscape in Barbados related to the implementation of the EPA has shown that like other Signatory CARIFORUM States an EPA implementation and coordination unit has been established. The question that arises here is whether this unit is actually operational. The main functions/assigned role of this unit will include:

- Advising the private sector on the development cooperation aspects of the Agreement
- Assisting the private sector in developing and identifying viable projects and programmes for funding and other assistance under the Agreement
- Advising on institutional strengthening of private sector entities and organizations
- Encouraging increased competitiveness among economic operators, and assisting in the fostering of a more attractive environment for investors.
- Working with other Ministries and entities in developing and maintaining an appropriate regulatory framework and enabling environment to permit the private sector to effectively exploit the benefits under the EPA.
- Advising and working with the private sector to enable the sector to exploit the trade/economic benefits under existing bilateral trade and economic cooperation agreements.

Pertaining to the private sector the PSTT', as the organisation that represents the interests of the private sector in external trade negotiations, the organization takes the lead in EPA implementation from the private sector's perspective, and where necessary, partners with other institutions such as the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM) and Caribbean Export in driving the EPA implementation process forward.

For Barbados in the EPA implementation process there are assigned roles and responsibilities. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade is charged with coordinating the EPA implementation. With regard to the private sector the organisations responsibilities in performing this function includes keeping their membership aware of the nature and pace of implementation and facilitating their involvement in the activities of government, the CRNM and other institutions concerned with EPA implementation. As it pertains to the NGO's their main responsibility is to be vigilant that the requirements for implementing EPA do not take precedence of other national budgetary and legal priorities. The organizations mandate in this regard include the evaluation of the competitiveness of Barbadian businesses, the impact of

the EPA on businesses, identification of opportunities, promotion and facilitation of the development of Barbados' international trade, particularly its export trade thereby strategically positioning Barbados to operate in, and derive the maximum trade benefits from a new liberalized global economy. Other mandates include facilitating access to technical assistance and export promotion through implementation and to conduct research, advocate, lobby and educate members and the public on policy matters.

The organisations main areas of interests include the successful implementation of the EPA there by the realization of the benefits promised there under. That all the benefits provided for and expected are realized particularly in the areas of services, market access for goods and aid for trade, development cooperation. Particular mention was made of access to the EU markets to market the products & services of Barbados and access to funding to assist in developing services export sectors/industries. Another area of interest stated was the timely review of implementation and the participation of civil society in this review

The strategic interests of the organizations in the EPA implementation process are to strengthen the Country's competitiveness & ensure market access and to identify opportunities for non-traditional exports to benefit from market access gains. In addition access for funding to develop export capacity. Monitoring the pace and impact of implementation to ensure that it is done at a pace that is in the interest of CARICOM was also noted as a strategic interests. In order for this to be achieved, it was stated that the implementation of the EPA can facilitate by securing and maintaining effective market access for Barbados' goods and services. Also through encouraging/expanding exporting opportunities and utilizing the Agreement as a platform to gain international competitiveness.

In terms of accessing EU funding, most of the stakeholders interviewed stated that they had done so, but noted that the process was too time-consuming. It was stated that to enhance Barbados's competitiveness within the context of the EPA implementation there is a need for financial and technical assistance to:

- Remove the constraints to trade and development in particular, hindrances to private sector access, and to help capitalize on the trade provisions in the EPA.
- Build institutional capacity in a number of areas, for example standards, sanitary and phytosanitary measures and small businesses.
- Formulate benchmarks for monitoring the development impacts of EPA
- Assistance in developing certain export service industries – e.g. Music, film, fashion.
- Train staff and key stakeholders
- Acquire additional technical staff

As it pertains to budgeting both the government and the PSTT through the Barbados Private sector Association have a budget for EPA implementation.

It was noted that organizations are not specifically briefed on ways to access the development cooperation as provided for under the EPA and that there is lack of sufficient technical expertise in the Country to assists organisations in the EPA implementation process.

Pertaining to the issue of access to information, it was stated that generally information available was moderate. It was noted that the information is available and can be gotten from such sources as the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM) website, however but its being able to analyse and understand what is there. In this regard it was noted that there has been sensitisation activities. In particular the PSTT has engaged in sensitisation activities for some sectors. These activities included the preparation and distribution of briefs on the impact of the agreement on specific products as well as workshops aimed at heightening awareness of market opportunities for specific sectors. PSTT has programmed a number of other awareness building initiatives for the coming year.

In terms of the mechanisms in place for coordinating the implementation, it was stated that in addition to the mechanism in place through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade some of the stakeholders plan to coordinate monitoring; including recording and popularizing any positive impacts. Pertaining to coordinating with national business support organizations it was noted that there are several support organizations where membership coordinate through formal committees and also informally. The BPSA is the umbrella organisation for the major business support organisations (the Manufacturers Association, the Bankers Association, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Hotel and Tourism Association, the Small Business Association, the International Business Association and the Agricultural Society). This mechanism can be used for coordinating EPA implementation. However, there are some business support organisations that are not a part of this structure and mechanisms for coordination with such organisations need to be worked out.

Also regarding coordinating between the government and the private sector there is a mechanism particularly with the statutory bodies. In addition there is a formal mechanism in place for the PSTT to consult with the Ministry of Foreign Trade on trade-related issues such as EPA implementation. This committee meets on an as needs basis. At times other stakeholders are sometimes contacted by the Ministry of Foreign Trade to be informed of what is taking place. For coordinating with regional business support organizations, it was noted that there is the OECS Business council which was recently launched and also the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce (CAIC).

In order to become more competitive, in one case there is a product development committee, Joint Policy Working group – all look at environmental issues in need of change, innovative competitive products, new legislation required, etc. Feedback from international business community clients helps formulate go-to-market strategies.

Dominican Republic Stakeholder Analysis

The key stakeholders interviewed were the Secretaría de Industria y Comercio; Santo Domingo Chamber of Commerce; Consejo Nacional de Competitividad (CNC) & Centro para el Desarrollo de la Empresa - Caribbean Regional Office.

The main stakeholders in the Dominican Republic regarding the implementation of the EC-CARIFORUM Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) are the Government: Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Trade, Agriculture and the Customs Department, the National Council for Private Enterprises (NCPE), other sectors associations, Chambers of Commerce and Dicoex

The assessment of the institutional landscape related to the implementation of the EPA in the Dominican Republic it was stated that the Secretaría de Industria y Comercio is charged with responsibility for implementation and administration of the matters pertaining to the EPA: including handles complaints. While this must be considered, it was also stated that the government is awaiting the establishment and operation of the mechanism in CARICOM, before they begin the implementation process. It was noted that a framework of cooperation is being used that includes CNC, the CERD, the “Direccion General de Normas y Sistemas” (helps companies to build capacity in order to export) – “Digenor” y “COMEX”.

In the Dominican Republic there are assigned roles and responsibilities in the implementation process. The Chamber in collaboration with the NCPE presides over the Private Sector Commission for International Negotiation. They liaise with government and address matters on negotiations and implementation of trade agreements including providing recommendations and position paper. The CDE has a key role to play to help ACP enterprises to face the opening of the borders and improve their competitiveness. The organisations such as the Chamber of Commerce, responsibilities in the implementation of the EPA include coordinating work for working groups. These working groups/work programme are based on agreements that exist. e.g. ROO working group the technical secretariat is resident here. It was stated that the Secretaría de Industria y Comercio should be the first port of call/point of enquiry for matters pertaining to the EPA.

The organisations main areas of interest include ability to access technical assistance and meet commitments and to address supply side constraints particularly towards diversification of products and services. Other interests include implementation to increase the competitiveness of our exporter, particularly through innovation and building capacity and to get support for the implementation of private-sector development strategies.

The strategic interests of the organizations in the EPA implementation process are to strengthen the Country’s competitiveness & ensure market access. Strategic interests also include:

- “Encouraging cooperation and partnerships between ACP and European businesses;
- Support for the provision of non-financial services to the private sector;
- Assistance for the promotion of investment in the ACP countries;
- Support for initiatives that encourage the transfer of technology and practical knowledge;
- The distribution of information to ACP businesses (particularly as concerns aspects of technical regulations and standards in international exchanges) as well as to European businesses (as concerns business opportunities in ACP countries);”
- Strengthening competitiveness, Market access; especially as it pertains to services as well as development cooperation and boost our ability to meet international standards, esp. technical standards (SPS, environmental);
- Building the capacity of our firms and increase their ability to export; and
- Maintaining market access into the EU.

In order for this to be achieved it was stated that the implementation of the EPA could facilitate if it is accompanied by the Development Cooperation provisions, which will assist firms to achieve international standards. Also more flexible ROO and greater market access can create increased investments as it provides a more transparent and predictable legal framework for FDI. Implementation can also result in new opportunities for trading in professional services. In addition implementation can result in the improvement of the business environment for private sector development and provision of the necessary instruments to facilitate cooperation and partnerships between CARIFORUM and European businesses.

In terms of accessing EU funding, the stakeholders interviewed stated that they had done so. It was stated that to enhance the Dominican Republic’s competitiveness within the context of the EPA implementation there will be a need for financial and technical assistance to:

- Address the strengthening of the legal/Administrative relationship between CARICOM and the Dominican Republic towards deeper integration. In particular the identification and establish of a body in charge of administration.
- Address institutional strengthening and to carry out specific programs to allow companies to secure market access. e.g. certification, quality, market profiles.
- Perform market analysis towards meeting demand and creating niche products for the EU market thereby increasing the quantity and quality of products exported from the Dominican Republic.
- Build capacity; especially in terms of training new officials and staff.

It was noted that there was no specific budget assigned to EPA implementation, but funds were received from the EU to assist with the EPA implementation.

Some organisations have been briefed through collaborating with other bodies, while others stated that they have not received formal instructions on how to go about accessing the Development Cooperation provision. It was also stated that in some organisations there are persons with the professional experience in collaborating with Donor Agencies. Generally access needs to be improved as well as capacity in terms of availability of technical expertise.

With regard to the issue of access to information, for some the access is good, but the problem is being able to select what is useful to you. For others it is not very good. It was also noted that while some information is available on the Internet, most people do not have Internet access and the majority of information is in English. Organisations in the Dominican Republic have engaged in EPA sensitisation activities mainly through consultations between the public and the Private Sector and students: and there is a plan to continue this process.

There is a mechanism called “Mesa de Cordinacion para promocion de exportaciones” which addresses matter including EPA related issues, which can coordinate the overall implementation. This body is chaired by CERD. In addition the CDE could play a role to initiate a regional donor coordination committee responsible for coordinating and planning assistance for the EPA. The mechanism in the Dominican Republic for coordinating with national business support organisations is informal. The Private Sector Commission for International Negotiations: they coordinate with orgs about negotiation, implementation. In relation to coordinating with regional business support organisations, it was stated that there is a relation with the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce (CAIC), but this can be improved, particularly as it pertains to the dissemination of information. A virtual mechanism is necessary to coordinate activities. Generally CDE shares its work programme and information with Caribbean export or other EU funded programmes.

Also regarding coordination between the government and the private sector, several mechanisms exist: The Economic, Social and Institutional Consultative Council, National Council for trade Negotiations, Presidential Table for Export Promotions. It was stated that these mechanisms need to be further improved.

In order for the Dominican Republic to become more competitive there are several mechanisms available. Theses include:

- The “Consejo Nacional de Competitividad” aims to increase the competitiveness of Dominican enterprises. The “Centro de Exportacion e Inversión de Republica Dominicana” also serves the private sector in this regard.
- The CNC, CERD, COMEX – DICOEX, but usually the scope is limited to a number of activities and these can be improved. This is necessary to facilitate diversification.
- The “Plan Nacional de Competitividad Sistema de la Republica Dominicana” provides the framework to increase/enhance competitiveness under the plan there are 2 mechanisms to be mentioned here:

- Mesa de Coordinacion de la Competitividad with: the Government, the private sector and international/external funding agencies.
- Mesos sectores, with SMEs, Agro-Businesses, Government: Comex, CERD et al, Trade Facilitation: Customs, Transport and Infrastructure.

Grenada Stakeholder Analysis

The main stakeholders in Grenada regarding the implementation of the EC-CARIFORUM Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), like all other Signatory CARIFORUM States include the private sector (manufacturers, exporters, service providers, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry etc.) and the various Ministries.

The assessment of the institutional landscape in Grenada related to the implementation of the EPA has shown that while there is an EPA coordinator and an implementation unit to be fully established, there is still much to be done. In addition the private sector which plays a critical role is of the view that they are not informed and therefore not as organised as they should be to implement the Agreement. It can be said that generally, that at present Grenada do not have the institutional or financial capacity to implement the EPA.

For Grenada in the EPA implementation process there are assigned roles and responsibilities of an EPA coordinator and the President of the Grenada Chamber of Industry and Commerce (GCIC). The EPA Coordinator is responsible for the implementation of the Agreement and the president of the GCIC has the responsibility of bringing the private sector together, encouraging the members to attend sensitization sessions and disseminate information particularly, when informed of relevant activities pertaining to the implementation. The mandate of the EPA implementation unit is to organize, coordinate and ensure effective implementation of obligations.

The organizations main areas of interests included understanding the advantages, opportunities and challenges in the implementation of the Agreement. Also understanding what are all the changes that must be made legally or administratively and the financial implications for the Country. In addition it was also stated that awareness of how to meet the adjustment cost, the sourcing of funding to build capacity and ensuring sustained development were also some of the main areas on interests.

The strategic interests of the organizations in the EPA implementation process is to ensure that this implementation facilitate the strengthening and enhancement of the Country's level of competitiveness, ensure market access for particular goods and services, and to also ensure a reduction of poverty and increase sustained economic growth. It was stated that this can be done by ensuring that that the development assistance promised and stated in the Agreement is actually received with much less difficulty than previous experienced in trying to access EU funding.

In terms of accessing EU funding, only the government indicated that it had done so previously. It was states that to enhance Grenada's competitiveness within the context of the EPA implementation there will be a need for financial and technical assistance to:

- Launch the Coalition Services, which will facilitate the development of the services sector through the development of adequate regulatory frameworks etc.
- Train/employ a focal point technical person to organize the information and workgroup activities for the transfer of knowledge on EPA

- Write proposals that would be acceptable for drawing down EU funding
- Technical and financial assistance to improve technology in order to be competitiveness
- Train in such areas as standards, to develop the mechanisms to be come more competitive(HR, technology)
- EU market assessment to advise on opportunities
- Get information regarding the regulations in EU
- Collect data/statistics to help guide the sectors in its planning

In order to implement the Agreement the Government of Grenada is establishing an EPA Implementation Unit. In this regard the private sector is of the view that presently too little is being done and too slowly. It is considered that one of the main hindering factors is having an assigned budget or the lack of funding. As it pertains to budgeting, while a budget was submitted by the implementation unit, the Government is seeking financial support from the EU to execute the process. On the other hand the private sector organizations in Grenada like most other interviewed in this project do not have a budget specifically assigned for the EPA implementation. It was stated that they have no resources, human or capital, to focus on EPA and as such we are way behind in all aspects.

It was noted that organisations are not briefed on ways to access the development cooperation as provided for under the EPA and that there is lack of sufficient technical expertise in the Country to assists organisations in the EPA implementation process?

Pertaining to the issue of access to information, it was stated that much more information is needed, particularly by the private sector. It was noted that the information is available and can be gotten from such sources as the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM) website, however from the private sector's perspective there is need for the information to be structured in a more comprehensive manner and disseminated in manageable quantities consistently, until they are at a point where we could tackle the debriefing on their own.

In this regard it was noted that there have been sensitization activities through the CRNM, OECS Hubs and Spokes Project and the Ministry of Trade. This is critical for as stated before, the private sector do not have the expertise to tackle this. There are plans for the relevant department of the Ministry to meet with all stakeholders

In terms of the mechanisms in place for coordinating it was stated that presently there are no mechanisms (either formal or informal) in place for coordinating with national business support organizations, but there are plans to establish a formal one. Regarding coordinating between the government and the private sector there is a mechanism and for coordinating with regional business support organizations, it was noted that there is the OECS Business council which was recently launched and also the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce (CAIC).

Guyana Stakeholder Analysis

The key stakeholders interviewed were the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade and the Private Sector Commission of Guyana.

In Guyana the main interest of the key stakeholders is to better understand the overall requirements for EPA Implementation and to identify the key opportunities and challenges. They are particularly interested in the Services & Investment chapter of the agreement given that this is an area for growth in the Guyanese economy. The main goal is to strengthen competitiveness and increase the quality of goods and services that Guyanese firms export to the EU.

It is also envisaged that implementation of the EPA would assist in attracting investment into the goods and services sectors as well as allow improved market access for traditional Guyanese exports like rum and sugar. Another important aspect is being able to access funding through the development dimension of the EPA. From a strategic standpoint the stakeholders are of the view that the EPA will provide an incentive for firms to improve standards and enhance competitiveness. Respondents also suggested that the implementation of the EPA could aid in moving the integration process forward.

The Government of Guyana has established an EPA Implementation Unit within the Ministry of Foreign Trade: to coordinate implementation in the private and public sector. This unit is comprised of technical officers – each with specific areas of specialization, e.g. services, market access, etc.

The main stakeholders in the EPA implementation process are: the Guyana Revenue Authority/Guyana Customs and Trade Administration, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Legal Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Private Sector Commission, Trade Unions, Guyana Bureau of Standards, the CARICOM Secretariat.

There is a division of labour among the main stakeholders. Formally the Ministry of Foreign Trade is the focal point for EPA implementation. The Ministry acts as an enquiry point and coordinating centre. EPA implementation was identified as a key activity in 2009 so there is a budget. For the private sector it is a more informal process. The private sector through the Commission liaises with other stakeholders in order to represent the Private Sector in trade matters. However, there is no budget for EPA implementation in the Commission

Marketing intelligence on specific EU markets will be essential to enhance the competitiveness of firms. There is need for the development of a database on the EU market in terms of issues like standards as they relate to labelling, packaging and hygiene.

In the past EU funding has been accessed through the ACP-EU TradeCOM Technical Assistance for EPA Implementation. The aim was to assist local firms in the development of business projects for technical assistance. Additionally, funds have been accessed through the Project Management Unit for Public Awareness

Programmes. This was largely focused on a Public Awareness Campaign. Another example is the Linden Economic Advancement Programme which provided funding for private sector projects in that part of the country.

The Ministry responsible for Foreign Trade has made information available to stakeholders as much as possible. Public consultations have been conducted as well as documentation has been developed to sensitize the public. However, it is still viewed as extremely poor as documents are not generally understood by the private sector and the general public. As such it can be argued that there is insufficient expertise to assist organizations in the EPA implementation process.

The plan for improving this process involves the establishment of an EPA Implementation Unit in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade. It is also suggested that other agencies can play a critical role. For example, the National Advisory Committee on External Negotiations in which the Private Sector is represented could act as a support organization in terms of EPA implementation. There are also 14 individual sector support organizations in the country. However, there is limited coordination or planning between the public and private sector agencies. There is sometimes periodic correspondence between the local private sector organizations and regional agencies, but this tends to be sporadic.

There are few institutional mechanisms in place to improve Guyana's competitiveness. There is a National Competitiveness Strategy that coordinates with businesses to access donor aid for the private sector. Consequently, interaction with Donor Agencies is one of the key stimuli for upgrading as firms need to meet certain criteria to receive funding. Another key mechanism is the role of the Bureau of Standards in terms of monitoring quality control.

Jamaica Stakeholder Analysis

The key stakeholders interviewed were the Jamaica Chamber of Commerce, Office of the Prime Minister – Planning and Development Division & Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Foreign Trade.

In regards to EPA Implementation the key stakeholders noted that their aims are to ensure that obligations under the EPA are met; supply-side issues are addressed; capacity building for SMEs is facilitated; and development cooperation for capacity building is accessed. The goal is to graduate into branded and high-value products and develop innovation systems as a strategic tool.

Enhancing competitiveness is a key objective that has been facilitated by funding in the amount Euro 11.25 million which was used to improve the quality of production for selected companies that export to the EU. An area of interest is trade facilitation and improved market access especially in niche manufacturing as well as services. Another potential benefit is the zero for zero treatment of EU agricultural exports. The EU eliminates export subsidies on all agricultural products that CARIFORUM liberalizes. In broad terms the strategic interests of Jamaican stakeholders in EPA implementation have the following goals:

- To ensure market access and to boost and build supply capabilities;
- To ensure that key stakeholders benefit from the agreement – especially the services sector;
- To remove non-tariff barriers, attract EU investors, remove (if possible) MFN clauses;
- To build capacity building in export ready sectors

Key stakeholders are of the view that the EPA can facilitate organizations in achieving their strategic objectives through capacity building assistance in the Development Cooperation element of the EPA. They were also of the view that the EPA would facilitate local and foreign direct investment, joint ventures and PPPs thereby diversifying investment and export promotion to emerging markets in the EU. The EPA was also seen as having the potential to facilitate the export of professional services to the EU.

The aim of business support organizations and governmental agencies are to ensure that trade agreements actually benefit the private sector and so bring the provisions of the agreement to life.

The International Relations and Trade Committee (IRTC) is a Cabinet body which gave birth to a Technical Working Group (TWG) on EPA Implementation. The TWG is comprised of key stakeholders, administering bodies and business support organizations. The mandate of this body is to expand the capacity of domestic stakeholders to exploit the benefits of the trade agreements that Jamaica is party to. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFA&FT) holds the secretariat for the TWG and the Minister chairs the IRTC.

The Jamaica Trade and Adjustment Team (JTAT) also has a role to play in implementation, as their mandate is private sector development and the coordination of business support organizations.

A series of sensitization sessions in conjunction with various Ministries and private sector organizations have been held. The main stakeholders in the EPA implementation process include a wide array of ministries and business support organizations (see list below). The Private Sector organizations with a potential interest in the EPA implementation process include approximately 21 Trade Associations.

Ministries and governmental agencies	Business support organizations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Foreign Trade ▪ Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) ▪ Jamaica Trade and Invest ▪ Customs Department ▪ Ministry of Industry Investment & Commerce ▪ Ministry of Agriculture ▪ Ministry of Finance & Planning ▪ Ministry of Mining & Telecommunications ▪ Ministry of Health ▪ Ministry of Energy ▪ Ministry of Labour ▪ Planning Institute of Jamaica ▪ Bureau of Standards ▪ The Trade Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jamaica Exporter Association ▪ Jamaica Manufacturers Association ▪ Private Sector Organization of Jamaica ▪ And other trade facilitation actors

There is a division of labour in terms of the EPA implementation process. The OPM is responsible for Capacity Building for the private (and public) sector. Jamaica Trade Adjustment Team (JTAT) assists with Trade Policy formulation. Jamaica Trade and Invest is responsible for trade and investment under the EPA (contained in Articles 60-118), particularly market access and competitiveness issues. The MFA&FT host the Trade Agreements Implementation Unit (TAIU) whose goals are to:

- Ensure that obligations are fulfilled and coordinates trade policy formulation with other relevant agencies;
- Conduct regular meetings between the MFA&FT and the private sector in the preparation of Position Papers on trade agreements;
- Develop expertise on EPA implementation and issues related to investment, trade, trade facilitation and export promotion that can be disseminated to stakeholders and other Ministries;
- Establish initiatives to ensure that the private sector benefits from the Trade Agreement that is to be realized through the following mechanisms:

- Establishment of the TWG by cabinet and Members selected by the MFA&FT which includes private sector organizations.
- Securing additional funding (sources) for implementation of the EPA in collaboration with other bodies to the benefit of the private sector.
- Ensuring that negotiations are informed by the private sector; and
- Investment promotion and exporter registration.

In financial terms the only organizations that have a budget for EPA implementation are the OPM and the TAIU, both of which have small budgets. Financial and technical assistance is required to enhance competitiveness through capacity building in key organizations like the TAIU (e.g. additional staff, electronic equipment, and training seminars); training in economic and marketing intelligence to develop, for example, Business Opportunity Profiles using tools like the Investment Map, the Product Map & the Market Access Map from the International Trade Centre.

The Jamaican government has accessed EU funding through programmes such as the Trade Development Fund and the Private Sector Development Programme (PSDP). However, it is considered to be a very cumbersome process. Funds have already been allocated to assist with capacity building but more technical assistance is required on how to access the provisions on Development Cooperation. For example, Key business support organizations have not been briefed on ways to access the Development Cooperation provisions of the EPA.

In general terms access to critical information on the EPA and market entry is inadequate. While there have been a number of Workshops, Seminars, national consultation and the development of Position Papers the problem is that it is difficult to understand the key elements of the agreement and to translate that into ways that the public and the private sectors can understand the opportunities in the EPA. What is really needed is a “Layperson’s Guide to the EPA” that provides nuts and bolts information to business-persons etc.

At the national level the plan for EPA implementation involves coordination among the Jamaica Chamber of Commerce, the Jamaica Trade and Adjustment Team (JTAT) and the Private Sector Organization of Jamaica. In terms of regional coordination the OPM is in the process of developing strategies to engage regional business support organizations such as the Caribbean Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (CAIPA), the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce and the Caribbean Export Development Agency. The national private sector organizations do not have regional coordination mechanisms in place but there are efforts to link related industries and sectors such as the Brewing Industry, Paint Manufacturers, Poultry Providers etc. These efforts are seen as a further unification of the CARICOM market. The private sector will be able to implement its initiatives through the TWG, which enables consultations between the Private Sector, Government Agencies, Civil Society and the Labour movement.

It is envisaged that the EPA implementation process can be improved through access to funding Institutions like the EIB, IADB, CDB, and the PSDP, as well as through Government assistance. Funds made available to Jamaica under the 10th EDF to

implement the Jamaica Country Strategy Paper (11.25 million Euro) has been allocated to boost efforts of firms that are 'market ready' – the Government has hired consultants to develop selection criteria for such firms.

These initiatives will aid national programmes such as the Target Group Competitiveness Committee which is a mechanism to improve PPP and to advocate for global competitiveness for the MSME sector by increasing research and advocacy capabilities. The programme has achieved many of their targets aimed at making Jamaican SMEs more competitive globally.

The firms that will be selected are those that already show potential for export – i.e. in this case, those in the EU or 'on the brink'. Funds are meant to assist these firms not only to be more competitive but also to meet international and EU standards such as Hazard And Critical Control Points (HACCP) and Global GAP. Assistance would be used to boost the ability of these firms and their critical suppliers along the supply value chain.

Additionally, one project of the OPM - PDD is the Business Development Unit and its work plan includes enhancing competitiveness. In fact, a plethora of committees already exist that deal with competitiveness (about 10 of them).

Trinidad and Tobago Stakeholder Analysis

The key stakeholders interviewed were the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers Association, Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Trinidad and Tobago Film Company and the National Carnival Development Foundation

The areas of interest identified by the various respondents were wide and varied. The key points can be captured in terms of general interests, the interests of manufacturers and that of the creative sector.

General interests:

- To ensure market access is achieved into EU markets; especially in terms of regional preference
- Ensuring Trinidad and Tobago meets its obligations under the Agreement.
- Facilitating the realisation of potential benefits and opportunities under the EPA.
- Assisting manufacturers and service providers in penetrating the markets of the Dominican Republic and the EU.
- Monitoring breeches and deviations to what was agreed to under the EPA, and where possible facilitate resolution.
- Developing and creating awareness of civil society organisations on the contents and benefits of the EPA.
- Support from European partners in developing the industry and training policy

Manufacturers interests:

- Communication of impacts to manufacturers
- Identifying opportunities for Manufacturing sector to build upon
- Facilitating the process. The Trade Unit has been involved in the process with the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Customs and Excise Division to sanitize the liberalization schedule and the conversion from Tariff HS2002 to HS2007.

Creative sector interests:

- To benefit fully from the advantages/opportunities available to provide cultural services in the EU, to insert diasporic carnivals into European festivals.
- Enabling persons in the audio visual field of work to have access to job opportunities, training, co-productions, funding and distribution within the EU.
- Access to concessions with regard to the importation of audio visual equipment or temporary exportation to the EU for film contracts
- Promoting T&T as a destination for international film projects

In general the key respondents were all of the view that the strategic importance of the EPA implementation process relates to the expansion of Trinidad and Tobago's non-energy sector through the realization of investment, business and export-led trade to achieve sustainable growth and development. In more specific terms, stakeholders' strategic interests in EPA implementation were identified along the following lines:

General comments:

- Existing exporters want to increase their market share in current EU markets as well as penetrate new EU markets;
- New exporters want to penetrate the EU market for both traditional and non-traditional exports;
- Service providers want to take full advantage of opportunities available under the services chapter of the EPA;
- Governmental agencies are interested in attracting more foreign direct investment that can assist the country's growth, development and industrialization goals;
- There is interest in accessing development support to assist government in providing infrastructural support for business and trade related institutions;
- Greater regional integration within CARICOM and between CARICOM and the Dominican Republic.

Manufacturers and Service Providers:

- Increase support for development of the business climate.
- Ensuring manufacturers remains competitive, protect its local market share and facilitate exports in light of the implementation of the EPA;
- Lobbying with Government to permit the private sector's interest to be properly represented;
- Ensuring that manufacturers are able to remain viable and utilize the benefits conferred upon by the agreement;
- Predictable and reliable market access for goods and services suppliers;
- Strengthening competitiveness in the services and manufacturing sectors;
- Ensuring market access for locally produced goods and services to be distributed in the EU.

Creative sector:

- Ability for Trinidad and Tobago to access funding and opportunities for major co-productions that would have the financial backing to facilitate mass distribution and commercial viability;
- Facilitating audiovisual co-productions coming to Trinidad and Tobago;
- Training and cultural exchange opportunities with the EU;
- Enhancement of creative industry entrepreneurship and local audiovisual production capacity;
- To provide masquerade services to EU countries wishing to have Carnivals.
- To promote globally the country's creative industries and festival exports

There was a general consensus among those interviewed that the EPA has the potential to achieve strategic objectives of the various industries and sectors by promoting the goal of diversification in non-energy activities. There was a predominant view that the EPA implementation process was leading to the recognition of the role and contribution of non-traditional sectors as well as an appreciation of their specific trade facilitation needs. At the enterprise level EPA implementation was encouraging firms to use international benchmarks and achieve international best practices. There was also interest in accessing technical support, information on EU policy, particularly for the development of the creative industries. There was specific interest in the removal of administrative obstacles to provide cultural services and the facilitation of market entry.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has approved an EPA Implementation Plan which outlines the obligations under the Agreement and the Ministries and Agencies with responsibility for implementation. The overall responsibility for coordinating the implementation lies with the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI). The MTI is in the process of formulating a coordinating mechanism, which it is envisioned will involve the creation of an EPA Implementation Unit, whose role will be to:

- Ensure that all national obligations are met within the agreed timeframe;
- Co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of obligations by other government departments and agencies;
- Act as a clearing house for the submission of all EPA-related information to the CARIFORUM EPA Implementation Secretariat;
- Monitor and provide feedback on the implementation of EPA obligations;
- Liaise with MTI Communications Unit to ensure that activities related to the public information and awareness programme are undertaken;

- Coordinate and monitor initiatives geared towards accessing market opportunities for goods and services in the European Community, viz:
 - Upgrade of technology
 - Research and development
 - Market information and intelligence
- Serve as the national contact point for regional cooperation projects arising from the Agreement; and
- Undertake any other function as deemed necessary regarding EPA Implementation.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has begun implementing critical features of the EPA. For instance, the Customs and MTI are currently in the process of finalising the liberalisation schedule that sees over 85% of goods with their rate of duty being reduced annually to 0% over a 10-25 year period. They have also been involved in the conversion of Tariff HS2002 to HS2007. Consultations and stakeholder meetings have been held to ensure stakeholders are informed of the new context for trade facilitation.

The main stakeholders in the EPA implementation process include a wide array of ministries and business support organizations (see list below). The Ministry of Trade and Industry has overall responsibility for coordinating the activities with respect to the implementation of the EPA, and has specific responsibilities for certain assigned areas. The TTMA has the role of ensuring that the manufacturing sector's recommendations are heard and paid attention to from the negotiation to the implementation phases. The Association also takes to responsibility to inform its members of critical changes, duties, occurrences and possible implications as a result of the EPA implementation process. It also liaises with the Government on critical aspects of the agreement and the need to sensitize manufacturers.

The TTCSI does have an informal role in educating its members in the services sector and the wider public through seminars. Similarly, the TTFC has an informal role in educating its stakeholders about the EPA and how they can avail themselves of it and potentially create opportunities for creative industry and audiovisual exports.

Governmental agencies	Business support organizations and other organizations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) ▪ Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources ▪ Customs and Excise Division ▪ Ministry of Finance ▪ Ministry of Planning, Housing and the Environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Services Industries (TTCSI) ▪ Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers Association (TTMA) ▪ Chamber of Industry and Commerce ▪ Trinidad and Tobago Film

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chief Parliamentary Counsel ▪ Ministry of National Security ▪ Ministry of Tourism ▪ Ministry of Culture ▪ Ministry of Science, Technology & Tertiary Education ▪ Ministry of Legal Affairs ▪ Ministry of Public Administration ▪ Business Development Company 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Company (TTFC) ▪ The National Carnival Development Foundation ▪ The National Carnival Commission ▪ The Labour movement ▪ NGOs and CSOs
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In addition to the approved EPA implementation plan, under the National Development Plan entitled “Vision 2020”, the strategic pillar of “enabling competitive businesses,” is facilitated through the Ministry of Trade and Industry which has as its primary role, to:

- Develop and grow the country’s Trade- particularly exports;
- Develop and grow Investment- both foreign and domestic;
- Develop and grow Businesses - both internal and external of Trinidad and Tobago (i.e. the internationalization of Trinidad and Tobago’s businesses);
- Development of industry and support to the stakeholders;
- Revenue generation and creating of opportunities that would help to advance and promote the interests of the local industry, re: employment, investment, and market access or trade opportunities.

None of the organizations interviewed had a budget specifically for EPA implementation. The areas of technical and financial assistance that were identified varied by sector. For the manufacturing sector the key concern was about re-tooling and capacity building to allow firms to meet international best practices. For services sector the main focus was on building market intelligence about the EU economy. The Ministry of Trade and Industry spoke of the need to develop a comprehensive support programme for trade development, for example, through the strengthening of the trade and investment support network domestically. Specific interests included:

- Funding for collaborative Research and Development
- Development of Centres of Excellence
- Create an Innovative Partnering Programme
- Create an Enterprise Network Programme
- Establish a Cluster Development Programme
- Develop fund to facilitate consultancy services for, inter alia, consultancy to update/inform Trinidad and Tobago National Technical Assistance Development Plan, and Consultancy for the Identification of specific targeted projects to build capacity
- Establish a CARICOM-wide coalition for trade development and investment attraction
- Enhanced market intelligence and research on EU markets
- Development of an EU Business Programme

- Training and other activities for implementation of national plan
- Guidance at the Government level with respect to registration and certification of Service providers
- Guidance regarding how to access the opportunities that are available in the EU and to successfully bid on them
- For industries to be in a position to provide services / or to find out about creating demand in Europe.
- To allow meeting between business-persons to negotiate joint ventures.
- To establish a body responsible for handling movement of Caribbean nationals in Europe.
- Funding for European festival leaders to be educated about Carnival;
- For developing and enforcing relevant intellectual property regulations.
- A co-production treaty with individual EU countries would be of great benefit to audiovisual producers in Trinidad and Tobago in terms of content regulation and access to funding.

Trinidad and Tobago has accessed funding under the European Development Funds (EDF). During the period 2003 to 2007, approximately 16 million Euros have been accessed with the majority going toward projects under the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education. Funds have also been accessed through Pro-Invest for private sector related projects. One of the projects included a trade portal project. It must be noted that most of the stakeholders interviewed stated that they have never accessed EU funding. In tandem, most stakeholders indicated that they have not been briefed while others stated that they have benefited from general information, however, more in depth guidance/training is required to enable the organizations to advise its stakeholders accordingly.

Generally the stakeholders indicated that there is not sufficient technical expertise and that training is needed. In one interview it was stated that the organization possessed an expert on trade and international relations who has been pivotal in the implementation process.

Some stakeholders stated that access to information on the EPA was readily available either due to their involvement in the process or that information could be retrieved from CARICOM and the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM) website. Other stakeholders stated that there was either no access or limited information available even though there have been the following activities and initiatives:

- Many articles, publications and other information has been provided within some organizations to their membership;
- A Stakeholders Forum was also held on June 4th 2008;
- Several appearances by government officials on local television channels;

- A series of articles in local newspapers;
- Press releases inclusive of background material released to all media houses;
- Roundtables and panel discussions.

In terms of future activities it is envisaged that the private sector, through business support organizations like the TTMA, TTCSI and the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, will continue to monitor and be involved in the process of implementation to ensure that its members interests are properly represented. The Government will also continue to be engaged through the EPA implementation unit which falls under the Ministry of Trade and Industry. Outside of these two arenas there are no formal mechanisms targeting other sectors or stakeholders. Respondents believe that it is imperative that a broad range of stakeholders are fully incorporated into the EPA implementation process to ensure a cohesive, collaborative and coordinated approach. As it now stands there are mainly informal relationships which must be further developed.

The Technical Coordinating Committee under the MTI brings stakeholders together to discuss trade-related issues. Some organizations are recognized by the Government as being representative of certain sectors and as such there has been collaboration on the development of recommendations by those organizations.

The key mechanisms to improve competitiveness are related to human resource development. At the enterprise level there has been the implementation of incentives and concessions some of which are quite restrictive based on company size and therefore restricts SMEs from being able to access available grants and loan facilities.

A research and development fund has been established under the auspices of the Business Development Company. The development programme focuses on developing industries in the non-energy manufacturing and services sectors and attracting investment both local and foreign to generate economic growth.

There has been some institutional strengthening of trade-related institutions that assist in the development of quality standards (Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards) and the protection of intellectual property rights (Intellectual Property Office).

Another key development has been the establishment of the University of Trinidad and Tobago with a mandate to discover and develop entrepreneurs, commercialize research and spawn companies for wealth generation and sustainable job creation. These initiatives fall in line with proposals for the development of an export promotion strategy.

There is a strong commitment by the Government to improve the business environment specifically through increases efficiency of the ports, regulatory bodies and specifically the Customs and Excise Division with the implementation of the ASYCUDA system.

Analysis of Regional Organizations

CARICOM Secretariat

The CARICOM Secretariat is charged with assisting the Member States in implementing their national EPA commitments. The organization is also focusing on coordinating Member States in terms of their regional EPA commitments.

The CARICOM Secretariat has established an EPA Unit to promote implementation in the Member States. This unit will have the services of; inter alia, a specialist in trade in goods, a specialist in trade in services and a private sector liaison officer. This unit will assist the Member States in implementing their EPA commitments. There is a budget for the EPA Unit. Given that CARISEC has a Resource Mobilisation facility it is able to source funds to run this programme.

The organization has accessed EU funding before. There is sufficient expertise to organize the implementation. There is the staff of the EPA Unit in addition to resources which can be utilised from CRNM as well as other regional organisations such as CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ). In addition, where the requisite expertise is still lacking, the Secretariat is willing to procure these skills.

Like other regional organizations, the Secretariat was of the view that access to information was good. It was indicated that it could be better as the information had taken the form of debates on the merits of the agreement. It is now time to focus on the substance of the agreement.

In terms of a mechanism to coordinate national and regional business support organizations, it was stated that the new EPA unit has a private sector liaison officer. The process for coordination is its early stages and the officer is developing her work programme and formulating initiatives.

Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA)

Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) main areas of interests in the EPA implementation process is to follow through with agreements within the tourism chapter e.g. mutual recognition issues, standards issues etc, as well as accessing development assistance and technical cooperation relative to tourism. The organization's strategic interest in the EPA implementation process are:

- a) Improving competitiveness of Caribbean tourism stakeholders in the EU market relative to other destinations.
- b) Market access for Caribbean tourism stakeholders to operate in the EU market.
- c) Attraction of EU investors to the Caribbean tourism industry.

d) Overall enhancement of the Caribbean tourism sector via a) – c) above.

It is of the view that the EPA facilitate the organisation in achieving its strategic objectives, if the words of the agreement are actually put in to action. While the Government of Barbados has stated it will establish an EPA implementation unit, more specific and important to the CHTA is the regional perspective. It was noted that there does not appear to be a coordinated regional approach to implementation, which is of great concern to CHTA.

The CHTA do not have an assigned role in the EPA implementation process, but it wishes to be involved in the implementation process. The problem that arises here is the ability to determine how to be kept informed or become involved either formally or informally with any of the activities on implementation.

As the voice of the regional tourism private sector the CHTA feels it has an obligation to continue to defend the interests of our stakeholders and members with regards to EPA implementation, but as stated above, it has been difficult to determine how to be involved. There is no a budget specifically assigned for the implementation of the EPA, but CHTA is looking to seek funding assistance for implementation programmes.

The CHTA has accessed funding through the 8th EDF as well as Proinvest and the CDE. The organisation has not been briefed on ways to access the development cooperation provisions of the EPA, and will welcome such a briefing. In addition there is not sufficient technical expertise to assist the organisation.

With regard to access to information pre-signing, access to information was good. Post-signing, access to information has been poor. The CHTA has engaged in fairly intense sensitization to its members and stakeholders during the negotiation process. Since the signing we have not had much to report with regard to implementation because it has been difficult to stay included in the process.

There is a mechanism in place for coordinating with national business support organizations. The CHTA's membership is composed of 32 national hotel and tourism associations across the region with which we are in direct and frequent contact.

There mechanism in place for coordinating with regional business support organizations is through the CHTA coordinating closely with the CTO on many matters as well as other regional organizations such as CAIC and others. With regard to coordination with government the CHTA does have communication links with CARICOM.

In order to become more competitive, as private sector organisation much of what CHTA does is lobby for action or changes by governments or industry players that can trigger improved competitiveness e.g. removal of barriers to travel, addressing unfair competitive practices etc. Aside from advocacy CHTA is

involved in marketing efforts to improve regional competitiveness, but more funding is required.

OECS Secretariat

The OECS Secretariat's main interest in the EPA implementation process is technical support for implementation. The organisation's strategic interest in the EPA implementation process is to strengthen the sub-region's competitiveness, ensure market access, and obtain development support for companies in the Member States. The EPA should facilitate achieving these objectives.

The Trade Policy Unit (TPU)/ Hub and Spokes Project works with the implementation units in the Member States. While the organisation only has an informal assigned role, its responsibilities in performing this function are to provide advice, information and support. The mandates of the organization are issued from time to time by the OECS Ministers.

There is no budget specifically assigned to EPA implementation. Through participation in the Regional Preparatory Task Force information was obtained on ways to access the Development Cooperation provisions of the EPA. Similar to other regional institutions it was stated that there good access to information and also sufficient technical expertise to assist the organisation in the EPA implementation process.

The Secretariat has engaged in sensitisation activities in relation to the EPA, particularly National EPA sensitization seminars on goods, agriculture, services and investment, and more can be done upon request

In terms of a mechanism to co-ordinate the overall implementation of the EPA it was stated that the expectation is that the CARICOM Secretariat and Member States will prepare the plan. Via the Export Development Unit and through the OECS Trade Negotiations Group there is a mechanism for coordinating with national and regional business support organizations.

Caribbean Export Development Agency

Caribbean Export main area of interests in the EPA implementation process is trade and investment Promotion. Their strategic interest is to increase the competitiveness of Caribbean Firms and Countries by providing quality trade and investment development and promotion services. The EPA can facilitate this process as the organisation being responsible for trade promotion will use the EPA as a tool to promote and enhance the level of exports from CARIFORUM to the European Union.

Some of Caribbean Export's main objectives are:

- Greater Integration of CARIFORUM Firms in the Global Economy through awareness of trade agreements and technical assistance
- Enhanced competitiveness of Firms
- Strengthened institutional Capacity for business support organizations
- Coordination and strengthening of regional Networks.

Caribbean Export as the regional Agency responsible for trade and investment promotion is expected to continue to perform this function within the EPA implementation process. In carrying out this function Caribbean Export is currently managing the Caribbean Trade and Private Sector Development Programme. This is an EU funded project with the aim of increasing the participation of CARIFORUM Member States in the Global Economy and to increase the competitiveness of firms through direct support as well as through support to Business Support Organisation.

The expected results from this programme are:

- Increased competitiveness of firms through market expansion and export diversification
- A vibrant Caribbean Business and Investment Support Network with Strengthened Business and Investment Support Organisations
- Greater cooperation between the CARIFORUM Member States and the French Caribbean Outermost Region as well as the Other Countries and Territories of the European Union.
- Improvement of the regulatory environment for private sector development.

These responsibilities will remain under the EPA implementation process.

While there is no specific budget presently assigned to EPA implementation, it is anticipated that Caribbean Export will implement the trade and investment promotion functions under the EPA implementation framework and will be allocated the necessary budget.

Caribbean Export has benefited from EU development assistance since LOME IV. Also working through agencies such as CDE they have accessed EU funding. The organisation is currently implementing the Caribbean Trade and Private Sector Development Programme which is funded under the 9th EDF framework. Caribbean Export

Discussions are ongoing regarding further information on ways to access the Development Cooperation provisions of the EPA. It was also stated that the organisation's access to information about the EPA is good and that it has sufficient technical expertise to assist in the implementation process.

Caribbean Export has engaged in sensitisation activities on the EPA and presently trade awareness workshops are being planned to discuss with Business Support Organisations (BSOs) and the private sector about the potential implication arising from the Agreement. Caribbean Export will also publish trade awareness material (TRADE WINS) that will address some of the major highlights within the Agreement.

With regard to the establishment of a mechanism to co-ordinate the overall implementation of the EPA, it was stated that discussions are ongoing, however it is envisaged that the CARIFORUM Secretariat will be the overall coordinator. In terms of the e mechanism for coordinating national business support organizations, Caribbean Export works with National Business support organizations to implement its programmes. One of the main goals of the Agency is building the capacity of Business Support Organisations through technical assistance and training.

The mechanism in place for coordinating with regional business support organizations is CARIBISNET. Caribbean Export's work programme also works with other BSO in the following areas: ICT, Spa and Wellness, Professional Services and Cultural Industries. Caribbean Export takes its directives from its Board of Directors as well as from CARIFORUM Ministers. The Board of Directors is comprised of government and private sector representatives of the CARIFORUM Member States; therefore there is a mechanism in place for coordinating with government.

The European Commission (Delegation of the European Commission in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean)

As it pertains to EPA implementation, the Commission's primary areas of interest are to implement external assistance, present, explain and implement EU policy, and analyse and report on the policies and developments taking place within CARIFORUM Member States. It is important to note that the role of the Delegation in the implementation of external assistance was expanded as a consequence of the devolution policy decided by the Commission in 2000, in order to provide EU external assistance more rapidly and more efficiently. As such, since 2004, each Delegation to the Commission has operated under this system. As a consequence the Delegation manages projects directly from start to finish, in close contact with the EuropeAid Co-Operation Office and local governments. Based on the above therefore the Barbados delegation's interest as regards EPA implementation is to carry out the EC's policy, lend assistance during this phase and report on any developments in the countries in the Eastern Caribbean to which the office is accredited. This includes inputs into the regional integration roadmap (including EPA implementation) and national initiatives.

In the view of the Commission, the main stakeholders in the EPA implementation process are CARICOM, the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery, other regional bodies such as the Caribbean Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality, the Caribbean Export Development Agency, the Caribbean Development Bank and the CARICOM Development Fund, national organizations dealing with trade (services and goods) and Business Support Organisations.

The Commission also possesses a budget specifically geared towards the implementation of the EPA. The Caribbean Regional Indicative Program (CRIP) has allotted €165 million for regional integration including EPA implementation under the 10th EDF. Interestingly, the Commission did note that none of the territories for which the Barbados delegation has responsibility have chosen to use their funds for EPA implementation as their focal sector under the 10th EDF. Notwithstanding this, the Commission noted that under the 9th EDF CRIP there is funding remaining which will be used to support EPA implementation. Even further, as it pertains to the 10th EDF CRIP (€165 million, as aforementioned), it was decided that the region has to develop a roadmap which sets out in detail

the steps for regional integration, and identifies the tools and the level and source of funding necessary for effective implementation, including EPA implementation.

The Barbados delegation also sought to make it clear that they have been engaged in sensitization activities in relation to the EPA including:

- *Preparing and publishing a newspaper supplement in the Barbados Daily nation newspaper on the 14th October 2008 providing general information on the EPA.*
- *Commissioner Louis Michel has written a booklet on the EPAs entitled, "Economic Partnership Agreements: drivers of development".*
- *The Head of Delegation and other delegation officials sensitizing the public on the EPA when giving public addresses at conferences and other events*
- *Sensitization projects done with the CRNM and via other trade-related projects funded under BizClim, TradeCom, Proinvest and other facilities.*

Interview Schedule

1. What are your organization's main areas of interests in the EPA implementation process?
2. What are your organization's strategic interests in the EPA implementation process? (For example, to strengthen competitiveness, ensure market access for particular goods and services, etc)
3. Can the EPA facilitate your organization in achieving its strategic objectives?
4. What mechanisms have government put in place to implement the EPA?
5. Which are the main stakeholders in the EPA implementation process?
6. Are their assigned roles (either formal or informal) in the EPA implementation process?
7. What are some of the organizations' responsibilities in performing this function?
8. What are some of the mandates in performing this function?
9. Does your organization have a budget specifically for the implementation of the EPA?
10. What financial / technical assistance does your organization require to enhance its competitiveness within the context of the EPA implementation process?
11. Has your organization ever accessed EU funding?
12. Have organizations been briefed on ways to access the Development Cooperation provisions of the EPA?
13. Is there sufficient technical expertise available to assist your organization in the EPA implementation process?
14. How would you rate access to information about the EPA?
15. Has your organization engaged in sensitization activities in relation to the EPA? Does it plan to offer such activities?
16. Is there a plan to establish a mechanism to co-ordinate the overall implementation of the EPA?
17. Is there a mechanism (either formal or informal) in place for coordinating with national business support organizations? If is it envisaged that one will be created?

18. Is there a mechanism (either formal or informal) in place for coordinating with regional business support organizations? If not, do you envisage that one will be created?
19. Do you have a mechanism (either formal or informal) in place for coordinating with your government? If not, do you envisage that one will be created?
20. What mechanisms are available to enhance national competitiveness?

List of Organizations Interviewed

ORGANISATION	Role/Responsibility/Mandate	Contact Information
Regional Organisations		
The Caribbean Community - CARICOM	To improve standards of living and work; the full employment of labour and other factors of production; accelerated, coordinated and sustained economic development and convergence; expansion of trade and economic relations with third States; enhanced levels of international competitiveness; organisation for increased production and productivity; achievement of a greater measure of economic leverage and effectiveness of Member States in dealing with third States, groups of States and entities of any description and the enhanced co-ordination of Member States' foreign and foreign economic policies and enhanced functional co-operation.	Tel: (592) 222 0001-75 Fax: (592) 222 0171 E-mail: info@caricom.org
Caribbean Export Development Agency	A regional trade and investment development and promotion organisation of the fifteen (15) CARIFORUM Member States (The Dominican Republic and CARICOM save Montserrat)	Tel: +1(246) 436-0578 Fax: +1(246) 436-9999 E-mail: info@carib-export.com
The Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery - CRNM	Is responsible for developing and maintaining a cohesive and effective framework for the coordination and management of the Caribbean's external trade negotiating resources and expertise.	Tel: (246) 430-1670 /71 Fax (246) 228-9528
Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States	Our mission is to be a major regional institution contributing to the sustainable development of the OECS Member States by assisting them to maximise the benefits from their collective space, by facilitating their intelligent integration with the global economy.	Tel: (758) 452-2537 / (758) 455-6327 Fax: (758) 453-1628 E-mail: oesec@oeecs.org
The University of the West Indies	Provide the population of the region with access to high quality academic programmes that are effectively delivered and that help to build strong individual, national and regional capacities in	Tel: (868) 663-1334 Tel: (246) 417-4000 Tel: (876) 927-1660-9

	response to changing human resource needs.	
National Organisations		
Barbados Coalition of Service Industries - BCSI	To develop, strengthen and diversify the local services industry in spite of the many challenges and opportunities that lie within the global marketplace.	Tel: (246) 429-5357 Fax: (246) 429-5352
Barbados Private Sector Trade Team - BPSTT	To provide professional contributions to Barbados and regional trade negotiations on behalf of the Barbados private sector.	Tel: 246-430-6541 / 228-8901 Fax: 246-228-8902 E-mail: tradeteam@caribsurf.com
Grenada Chamber of Industry and Commerce		Phone: (473) 440-2937 Fax: (473) 440 6621
The Private Sector Commission of Guyana		Tel: (592) 225 0977 Fax: (592) 225 0978
Santo Domingo Chamber of Commerce		
Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce		
CARIFORUM Governments' Ministries with responsibility for Trade (CARIFORUM - EU EPA Enquiry Points)		
BARBADOS: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and International Business		Tel: (246) 431-2200 Fax: (246) 228-7840 Email: trade@foreign.gov.bb
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC Secretaría de Estado de Industria y Comercio		Tel: 809-567-7192 Fax: 809-381-8076, 809-381-8079
GRENADA: Ministry of Economic Development and Planning		Tel: (473) 440-2731 Email: gndtrade@yahoo.com

GUYANA: Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation		Tel: (592) 226-1606-9, ext. 234 Fax: (592) 226 8426 Email: minister@mofitic.gov.gy
JAMAICA: Jamaica Trade and Invest		Tel: (876) 978-7755 Fax: (876) 946-0090 Email: info@jti.org.jm
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO: Ministry of Trade and Industry		Tel: (868) 624-4885; 623-2931- 4 Ext. 2326 Fax: (868) 627-8488 Email: library@tradeind.gov.tt
International Organisations / International Donor Organisations		
Center for the Development of Enterprises	An Institution dedicated to support private sector development in ACP countries. The Center provides non-financial services to ACP companies and to joint initiatives of ACP and EU economic operators in various economic sectors, with the main aim to increase competitiveness of ACP enterprises.	Tel: + 32 2 679 18 11 Fax: + 32 2 675 26 03 E-mail: mln@cde.int
Non – Governmental Organisations		
The Caribbean Policy Development Centre – CPDC	A coalition of Caribbean non-governmental organizations. To sensitize NGOs and the general public on key policy issues and to impact policy makers on decisions which put the interests of Caribbean people at the center of the Caribbean development strategy.	Tel: (246) 437-6055 Fax: (246) 437-3381 E-mail: cpdc@caribsurf.com
National Industrial Development Corporations / Investment Authorities		
Barbados Investment and Development Corporation - BIDC	Has special responsibility for promoting and facilitating the establishment and expansion of business enterprises in Barbados, and for promoting the export of Barbados' goods and services.	Tel: (246) 427-5350 Fax: (246) 426-7802 E-mail: bidc@bidc.org

Centro de Exportación e Inversión de República Dominicana	The promotion of the Dominican exports and the investments, in order to facilitate the competitive insertion of the country into the international market for goods and services.	Tel: 809-530-5505
Jamaica Trade and Invest (JTI)	To stimulate, facilitate, and promote the development of trade and industry, and export and investment activities in all sectors of Jamaica economy.	Tel: +1 876 978 7755; 978-3337 Fax: +1 876 946 0090 E-mail: info@jti.org.jm