**Project: Trade capacity building**

In any international grouping, trade is always a major player in the success of any such association. It’s no different with the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), which from its inception has regarded trade and trade negotiations as a primary plank in forming sustainable relationships.

The strengthening of capacity and knowledge in regional and international trade issues is of great importance with the Greater Caribbean Region. Many countries within the region do not possess the needed trained human capital, institutional knowledge and necessary capabilities to adequately and effectively participate within the international trading system.

The immediate need therefore, is the development of strategies to create an E-learning platform and the offer of online courses and webinars have been considered by the Directorate of Trade Development and External Economic Relations, as one of the most suitable modalities of transfer of knowledge and capacity building for the Member and Associate Member States of the ACS.

As an adjunct to this, there needs to increase knowledge and understanding of existing trade agreements, the benefits and strategies to take advantage of these instruments, which can stem directly from improved analytical and negotiating skills, which can be very useful in addressing priority trade policy issues at all levels – national, regional, sub-regional and international.

The success factor in trade negotiations will also be impacted by the effective use of relevant information and documentation on trade-related issues via the internet and the WTO and ITC.

***General Objective:*** *Promote capacity building in trade negotiations, and other relevant trade-related issues, of the Member and Associate Member States of the ACS through specialised seminars, e-courses, and webinars.*

***Specific Objectives:***

*• To develop a good understanding of all aspects of the international trading system, including negotiation of free trade agreements, and integrate more fully into the multilateral system and globalization initiatives related to trade.*

*• To increase knowledge and understanding of existing trade agreements, benefits and how to take advantage of these instruments*

*• Improved analytical and negotiating skills (improvement of skills);*

*• Learning how to effectively use relevant information and documentation on trade-related issues available in the internet (ITC, WTO, etc.)*

*• To strengthened capacity to work in teams and in an international environment;*

*• To establish and/or strengthen a network of contacts with participants and the trainers/experts (network).*

*• Build and enhance institutional and human capacity in the field of trade, and address constraints;*

*• Address priority trade policy issues at all levels (national, regional, sub-regional, international);*

*• Fully participate in multilateral trade negotiations*

*• Analyse the impact of alternative trade policy options*