TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Consultancy to undertake a firm level study of the extent to which CARIFORUM Commercial Operators are able to take advantage of trade in goods market entry opportunities in the United Kingdom within the framework of the CARFORUM-UK Economic Partnership Agreement**

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# BACKGROUND INFORMATION

## Beneficiary country

The Caribbean Forum of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (CARIFORUM).

## Contracting Authority

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

## Country background

CARIFORUM is comprised of the following States: Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, The Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

The Economic Partnership Agreement between the CARIFORUM States and the United Kingdom (CARIFORUM-UK EPA) was concluded in 2019 and. is currently being provisionally applied by the Parties pending its entry into force. The Agreement covers trade in goods and a host of other disciplines including trade in services, trade related issues such as competition, innovation and intellectual property, transparency in public procurement and trade and sustainable development. Development cooperation is an integral part of the Agreement and areas for cooperation are set out in the Agreement. This scheme of provisions underpins the role of the CARIFORUM-UK EPA as an instrument designed to promote the achievement of sustainable development in the CARIFORUM States.

The specific objectives of the CARIFORUM-UK EPA are to:

* Contribute to the reduction and eventual eradication of poverty;
* Promote regional integration, economic cooperation and good governance, enabling an effective, predictable and transparent regulatory framework for trade and investment;
* Promote the gradual integration of the CARIFORUM States into the world economy;
* Improve the CARIFORUM States' capacity in trade policy and trade related issues;
* Support the conditions for increasing investment and private sector initiative and enhancing supply capacity, competitiveness and economic growth in the CARIFORUM region; and
* Strengthen the existing relations between the Parties based on solidarity and mutual interest; enhancing commercial and economic relations; reinforcing, broadening and deepening cooperation in all areas relevant to trade and investment.

The CARIFORUM Directorate serves as the Secretariat of CARIFORUM. Among others, it coordinates the implementation and operation of the CARIFORUM-UK EPA.

## Strategic Approach to Implementation (Key actions required)

The development objectives of the EPA can only be realised if CARIFORUM stakeholders are able to take advantage of the commercial opportunities created by this Agreement. This means that both Parties (CARIFORUM and the UK) must ensure that not only are the provisions of the Agreement supportive of an enabling framework for bilateral trade, but that the obstacles identified by commercial operators in the respective markets of the Parties are effectively addressed. Such obstacles will prevent closer integration of the economies of the Parties to the Agreement.

The ability of the CARIFORUM States to require that the Parties cooperate in developing joint initiatives to address identified barriers to trade, is dependent on *inter alia*, the extent to which market surveillance and stakeholder generated data enables a precise identification of such barriers. In this context, the CARIFORUM Directorate is required to commission such studies as may be required to generate data that will enable an analysis of the support measures required by CARIFORUM commercial operators in order to be able to make effective use of the EPA as a strategic tool for UK market entry.

# OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE & EXPECTED RESULTS

## Overall objective

The overall objective of the consultancy is to strengthen the ability of the CARIFORUM Directorate to effectively support CARIFORUM stakeholders in benefitting from the EPA.

## Purpose

The deliverables of this consultancy will support the achievement of Results 3.1-3.5 outlined in the CARIFORUM Directorate’s Work Plan for the CARIFORUM-UK Technical Coordinator Support Programme during 2023:

*3.1 Provision of technical information and advice to CARIFORUM States on EPA implementation.*

*3.2 Monitor the status of implementation of the EPA in CARIFORUM States and in the UK.*

*3.3 Designing specific Plans of Action to resolve specific EPA Implementation issues.*

*3.4 Dissemination of EPA-related information from/to Focal Points (EPA Coordinator, Customs Authorities etc.,)*

*3.5 Provide targeted support to CARIFORUM States for the implementation of the EPA*

## Results to be achieved by the Project Coordinator

The Contractor is to achieve the following results:

Result 1:

Collection of relevant market entry data from the following 2 sample groups of CARIFORUM commercial operators that export goods to the United Kingdom:

1. Micro, small and medium sized enterprises; and
2. Large commercial operators

Result 2:

An identification of the obstacles encountered by CARIFORUM commercial operators in exporting goods to the United Kingdom

Result 3:

An analysis of the effectiveness of the EPA in facilitating increased trade in goods between CARIFORUM and the United Kingdom; and

Result 4:

An identification of the nature of the support required at a governmental level to support efforts by CARIFORUM commercial operators to increase trade with the UK.

# ASSUMPTIONS & RISKS

## Assumptions underlying the Consultancy

##

The assumptions underlying this consultancy are:

1. The results of this project will in fact be able to support the ability of the Technical Coordinator to achieve Result 3 of the Work Plan through the development of appropriate plans of action to advance EPA implementation and the provision of relevant assistance to the CARIFORUM States to support EPA implementation.
2. Private sectors stakeholders in CARIFORUM are sufficiently invested in exploiting the EPA as a tool for promoting economic development in the CARIFORUM States and will therefore cooperate with the data collection activities envisaged in the project.
3. The CARIFORUM Directorate will remain tasked with the responsibility of coordinating the overall implementation and operation of the CARIFORUM-UK EPA.
4. CARIFORUM and the UK will be willing to constructively engage in developing joint initiatives to address identified obstacles to trade and deficiencies in the implementation of the EPA.

## Risks

1. Unavailability of a suitable Consultant at the required time.
2. Time challenges: Given the need for activities under this consultancy to conclude before the conclusion of the CARIFORUM-UK EPA Technical Coordinator Support Programme it may be difficult for the Consultant to effectively engage relevant commercial operators in all 15 CARIFORUM States
3. The Consultant will not receive an appropriate degree of support from CARICOUM private sector stakeholders so as to be able to obtain relevant data and develop relevant analyses.

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# SCOPE OF THE WORK

## General

### Description of the assignment

The objective of the consultancy is to support the development and implementation of a plan of action to effectively address the challenges being experienced by CARIFORUM commercial operators who seek to take advantage of market opportunities in the UK. This objective is to be achieved by the Contractor collecting and analysing data from CARIFORUM private sector stakeholders regarding their trade with the UK, reviewing the provisions of the CARIFORUM UK EPA which have an impact on this trade and developing appropriate recommendations to address identified challenges and deficiencies in the actions being taken by the Parties to implement the Agreement.

### Geographical area to be covered

The following CARIFORUM States: Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Belize, Barbados, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

### Target groups

The direct beneficiaries of this consultancy are, *inter alia*,

1. Members of the CARIFORUM private sector that engage in the trade of goods with the UK; and
2. The CARIFORUM States.

Indirect beneficiaries of this consultancy are citizens of the CARIFORUM States and the United Kingdom and its citizens.

## Specific work

The Consultant will be required to carry out the following specific tasks:

1. Using an appropriate and justifiable data collection methodology, identity a sample group comprising of no less than 20 CARIFORUM stakeholders from all CARIFORUM States at different levels of development (micro, small and medium sized enterprises and large commercial traders) that engage in the export of goods to the UK.

2. Collect such relevant data from the sample group of CARIFORUM as will enable a precise identification and analysis of:

1. The obstacles encountered in exporting goods to the United Kingdom;
2. The effectiveness of the EPA in facilitating increased trade with the United Kingdom; and
3. The nature of the support required at a governmental level to support efforts to increase trade with the UK

3. Develop a comprehensive written report containing:

1. An identification and analysis of stakeholder perceptions of the obstacles which exist in relation to UK market entry;
2. At least 3 case studies which highlight the successes, challenges and lessons learnt by specific exporters;
3. An analysis of the overall effectiveness of the EPA as a mechanism for supporting the interests of CARIFORUM exporters;
4. The implementation deficits which exist in relation to the EPA which prohibits the ability of the Parties to create an enabling environment for CARIFORUM market entry in the UK; and
5. Recommendation to support the development of a plan of action to support the interests of CARTIFORUM private sector stakeholders in their efforts to enter the UK market

## Project Management

### Responsible body

The CARIFORUM Directorate will be the Project Manager for the Consultancy.

### Management structure

The Director General, CARIFORUM will manage the consultancy and will be supported by the Technical Coordinator, in their day-to-day administration.

### Facilities to be provided by the Contracting Authority and/or other parties

The Contracting Authority will provide access to relevant information which it has at its disposal which is required by this consultancy.

# LOGISTICS AND TIMING

## Location

The operational base for this consultancy is Georgetown, Guyana. The Contractor shall work remotely from his/her home country and conduct all consultations with stakeholders remotely.

## Start date & Period of implementation of tasks

The intended start date is 15 November 2023, and the period of implementation will end on 31 December 2023.

# REQUIREMENTS

## Qualifications and Experience

**Expert in International Trade**

*Qualifications and skills*

1. Minimum of a Masters Degree in International Trade, Trade Policy, Economics, Business Studies, International Relations or or a closely related field.

*General professional experience and skills*

1. At least seven (7) years of working experience in the field of international trade, trade policy, business or international trade law working on external trade matters at a senior or policy level in a Ministry of a CARIFORUM State and/or in a regional, sub-regional or international organisation.

*Specific professional experience*

1. Sound knowledge of trade policy.
2. In-depth knowledge and understanding of the CARIFORUM-UK EPA, including the institutional framework.
3. Experience in the interpretation and analysis of trade agreements and identification of issues related to the specific interests of developing countries, particularly in the area of trade in goods.

All experts must be independent and free from conflicts of interest in the responsibilities they take on.

# REPORTS

## Reporting requirements

The Contractor will submit the following reports in English:

1. An Inception Report within two weeks of the start date of implementation of tasks. This

Inception Report should detail inter alia:

* The members of the proposed sample group and the data methodology utilized for identifying the sample group;
* The proposed methodology to be used for data analysis; and
* An outline of the tasks undertaken during the inception period;
1. A detailed post-Inception Work Plan

3. Draft final report to be submitted no less than two weeks before the end of the period of

implementation of tasks. This draft report must address the matters set out at para 4.2.3.

4. Final report to be submitted not later than 7 days before the end of the period of implementation

of tasks. The final report shall have the same specifications as the draft final report and shall incorporate

any comments received from the Contracting Authority on the draft report.

## Submission and approval of reports

The reports must be submitted to the Project Manager identified in the contract. The Project Manager is responsible for approving the reports.

The Project Manager will provide comments to the Contractor within seven (7) days of receiving the reports.

# MONITORING AND EVALUATION

## Definition of indicators

At the level of the contract, of which these TOR forms an integral part, the reports shall be the basis on which the performance is monitored and evaluated. Their timely delivery and quality will be monitored closely by the CARIFORUM Directorate.

The following criteria shall be used to assess the performance of the Contractor:

* **Quality of output documents**: The quality of output documents shall be judged by their clarity and the depth to which they comprehensively cover the subject.
* **Format**: These reports shall be completed in the standard formats used by the CARICOM Secretariat.
* **Meeting of deadlines** for outputs.

### Special requirements

None foreseen.