



# FactSheet

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## Establishment of the Unit

The Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) Implementation Unit of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat was set up by the Secretary-General of CARICOM to facilitate the implementation of the Caribbean Forum of African, Caribbean and Pacific (CARIFORUM)-European Union (EU) EPA, signed by fourteen CARIFORUM States in October 2008 and by the fifteenth CARIFORUM State, Haiti, in December 2009. The Agreement provisionally entered into force on 29 December 2008.

The Unit was established on 16 February 2009. Its operation is supported, in part, by funds provided under a Grant Agreement between the Caribbean Development Bank, as Administrator of the United Kingdom Government's Caribbean Aid for Trade and Regional Integration Trust Fund (CARTFund), and CARICOM.

## Mandate and Function of the Unit

The EPA Implementation Unit is mandated to assist CARIFORUM States in the implementation of the provisions of the CARIFORUM-EU EPA, in keeping with a directive of the Heads of Government of CARICOM.

In this regard, the Unit is tasked with providing CARIFORUM States direct "hands-on" (sometimes in-country) technical guidance and assistance in meeting the commitments and enjoying the benefits outlined in the Agreement. To focus the implementation effort of CARIFORUM States and to effectively schedule the activities of the EPA Implementation Unit, an *EPA Implementation Roadmap* has been drawn up, in chronological order of the obligations in the Agreement.

## The Unit's Location and Reporting

The EPA Implementation Unit is located in the CARICOM Secretariat's headquarters, in Georgetown, Guyana, and falls under the day-to-day management of the Assistant Secretary-General, Trade and Economic Integration (TEI).

## Structure of the Unit

Provision has been made for a core group of professionals in the EPA Implementation Unit, namely: the Head of Unit (who also serves as the Trade in Goods Specialist), the Trade in Services and Investment Specialist, the Legal Officer, the Private Sector Specialist, the Information and Public Education Specialist and the Administrative Officer.

Where in the execution of the functions of the Unit specialized expertise is required, short-term consultants may be recruited. In addition, on an as-needs basis, the Unit will engage specialists in disciplines which are not provided by the core group of Specialists, such as Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS), Trade-Related Issues, Innovation and Intellectual Property Rights. The Unit can also draw on relevant expertise within the CARICOM Secretariat.

## Assistance Provided by and Activities of the Unit

EPA Implementation Unit Specialists provide expert guidance and assistance to CARIFORUM States, with respect to the implementation of the CARIFORUM-EU EPA, in the areas of their competence. This support involves the holding of briefing sessions (and in some cases training exercises) for stakeholders, who include traders, government officials, professionals and other Service providers and legal officers in the States.

In addition, the Specialists offer technical guidance and advice to stakeholders in CARIFORUM States on the approach to implementation of the various provisions of the CARIFORUM-EU EPA. In this latter regard, the Unit is committed to collaborating closely with national EPA implementation units established in the CARIFORUM States.

The Unit also promotes wider appreciation of the provisions of the CARIFORUM-EU EPA, by way of a Public Education Programme. It provides for the preparation and publication of targeted material, for the information of public and private sector individuals as well as members of the general public interested in the Agreement, and other efforts in the several modes available.