

BREAKING BARRIERS, EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES

11th EDF EPA & CSME PROGRAMME

PROJECT CLOSEOUT REPORT 2026

Strengthening regional Capacity for Trade & Development



CARIFORUM



INTRODUCTION

Over a period of five years, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) implemented the European Union (EU)-funded 11th European Development Fund (EDF) Economic Partnership Agreement Programme (EPA) and CARICOM Single Market And Economy (CSME) Standby Facility for Capacity Building, in partnership with CARIFORUM.

This programme, under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF), implemented projects across 15 countries, with access to over EUR350,000 each in assistance and expertise to enhance each country's ability to increase the sale of goods and services to Caribbean and European markets.

It spanned a wide range of areas ranging from trade facilitation to value chain support and export development, technical and vocational education capacity building, quality infrastructure, and food safety and certification standards.

This publication brings together the highlights, achievements, successes and even some recommendations coming out of more than 20 projects implemented across the CARIFORUM region, during the 11th EDF Standby Facility's existence

Beneficiaries

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

Trade Facilitation | Quality Infrastructure | Agri-Value Chain | Food Safety | Exportable Services



EUR350,000
per
country



15
beneficiary
countries



23
projects
implemented

Why it matters

Trade performs better when standards, testing, logistics and enquiry systems work together with strong capacity.

Competitiveness starts at home

Local certification, food safety and quality services help firms meet market requirements faster and at lower costs.

Skills and systems must align

The strongest results came when infrastructure, technical training and digital tools advanced together.

Building Regional Competitiveness Through Quality & Trade

Agri-value chains | Food safety | Market readiness

Agro-processing, cold-chain systems and standards compliance helped producers improve quality, reduce losses and move closer to higher-value markets.

Achievement

1

From Cacao Beans to Value-Added Chocolate



Through the acquisition of new bean-to-bar equipment, Belize is moving closer to advancing up the cocoa value chain.

48 tonnes/year capacity

Lesson Learned

Infrastructure works best when paired with hands-on training and food safety support.



Achievement

2

Export Readiness at Scale



Training improved SMEs, producer and institutional understanding of export readiness, marketing, traceability, food safety, residue limits and market requirements.

600+ people impacted, including support for more than 300 women, 30 SMEs, 4 associations and 10 enterprises in Suriname, along with people trained in the Dominican Republic.

Lesson Learned

Equipment, facility design, business models and user readiness need to advance together.

Achievement

3

Stronger Farm-to-Market Systems



Planning, cold-chain upgrades, packhouse improvements and training strengthened agriculture value chains across countries.

3 countries, one chain

70+ consulted in Dominica; 3 trucks procured in Grenada; 200+ farmers and 600+% sales increase in Saint Lucia.

2



Quality Infrastructure, testing and certification

Accreditation, metrology, certification and technical training improved the quality systems businesses depend on to trade confidently.

Achievement

1

Accredited and Better Equipped



Belize strengthened metrology services and achieved ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation for its Fine Mass Laboratory.

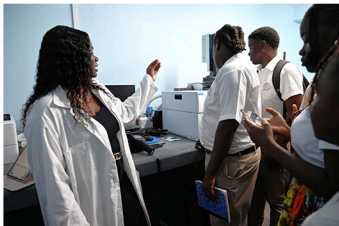
ISO/IEC 17025 achieved

24 trained in auditing; 15 trained in ISO/IEC 17025.

Lesson Learned

Testing and calibration capacity matter most when institutions can use and maintain them locally.

1



Achievement

2

Institutional Capacity with Sustainability



Haiti strengthened technical capacity through standards training, ICT upgrades and a train-the-trainer approach.

141 certificates issued

19 participants supported through trainer development.

Lesson Learned

Haiti's coaching model shows how projects can leave durable institutional knowledge.

Achievement

3

National Quality Systems Expanded



Certification services, analytical testing capacity and quality awareness systems were all strengthened through targeted support.

5 countries advanced

30 trained in Jamaica; US\$120,000 machine in St. Kitts and Nevis; sensitisation in Trinidad and Tobago; metrology advanced in Barbados and Dominica

2



Building Regional Competitiveness Through Quality & Trade

Trade facilitation, digital systems and response targets

Digital coordination, stronger border intelligence and responsiveness in trade enquiries were among targets to increase speed and transparency in trade-facing systems.

Achievement 1

Integrated Border Systems for Trade



Passenger and cargo information systems were upgraded to support risk-based screening and smoother movement of legitimate trade.

83 access points added

6 customs departments connected;
16 analysts trained.

Lesson Learned 1

Better data access and workflow tracking improve coordination and response time.

Achievement 2

A Better Trade Facilitation Enquiry Point



A more coordinated and trackable enquiry service was built through operational frameworks, case management and learning tools.

7-day response target

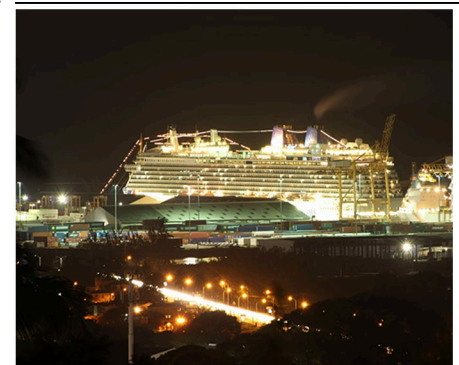
A hub-and-spoke model supports quicker routing and follow-up.

Lesson Learned 2

Certification strengthens professionalism, portability and market confidence.

Achievement 3

International Recognition after Systems Improvement



Accessibility for public and private stakeholders create avenues to reduce delays and increase efficiency in cargo handling.

Barbados Port Community System improvements lead to international recognition.



PROGRAMME AT A GLANCE



**TRADE FACILITATION |
QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE
| AGRI-VALUE CHAIN | FOOD SAFETY
| EXPORTABLE SERVICES**



TRADE FACILITATION

Trade systems became more coordinated, transparent and responsive.

83 access points added

6 OECS customs departments connected

7-day response target introduced



QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Accreditation, testing and certification capacity improved.

ISO/IEC 17025 achieved in Belize

191 registrants, 141 eligible in Haiti

US\$120,000 machine added in St. Kitts and Nevis



AGRI-VALUE CHAIN

Value addition and export readiness were strengthened.

48 tonnes/year capacity in Belize

567 people trained & impacted in the DR

70-80 stakeholders consulted in Dominica



FOOD SAFETY

Cold-chain and handling systems improved produce quality.

3 refrigerated trucks delivered in Grenada

40 trained in post-harvest handling

200+ farmers trained in Saint Lucia



EXPORTABLE SERVICES

Certification strengthened workforce credibility and mobility.

20 spa therapists trained

28 security professionals trained

15 housekeeping workers trained

PROGRAMME AT A GLANCE



**IN-COUNTRY CAPABILITY |
MARKET ACCESS |
DIGITAL SYSTEMS |
TRAINERS & ASSESSORS |
INCLUSIVE IMPACT**



IN-COUNTRY CAPABILITY

Projects reduced dependence on external services.
More internal calibration capability in Belize
ICT systems strengthened in Haiti
Unique on-island testing capacity in St. Kitts and Nevis



MARKET ACCESS

Training and certification improved readiness for trade.
4 associations + 15 enterprises supported in the DR
Product certification capacity advanced in Jamaica
Belize laid groundwork for higher-value chocolate exports



DIGITAL SYSTEMS

Digital tools were embedded across multiple projects.
Border information systems upgraded in the OECS
Case management & LMS built in Trinidad and Tobago
Website and database tools advanced in SVG, Haiti and Belize



TRAINERS & ASSESSORS

Local people were prepared to carry the work forward.
19 trainers supported in Haiti
20 assessors and verifiers prepared in SVG
24 stakeholders trained in Belize



INCLUSIVE IMPACT

Benefits reached producers, workers and institutions.
275 women reached in the Dominican Republic
15 all-female housekeeping participants in SVG
200+ farmers trained in Saint Lucia

Funded by the European Union and implemented by the
Caribbean Development Bank, in partnership with CARIFORUM



CARIFORUM

