

ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES (ACS)

DIRECTORATE OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

ACS PROJECT CONCEPT DOCUMENT (ACS PCD)
TRAINING FOR CAREERS IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
PROJECT

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACS: Association of Caribbean States
AFD: Agence Française de Développement
CARICOM: Caribbean Community
Competency-based education and training (CBET)
CHTA: Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association
CPLC: Centre for the Promotion of Languages and Cultures
CTO: Caribbean Tourism Organization
DST: Directorate of Sustainable Tourism
GDP: Gross Domestic Product
ILO: Model of the International Labour Organisation
ICT's : information communication technologies
MDT: Multi-Destination Tourism
MSME: Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
OAS: Organisation of American States
PCD: Project Concept Document
RTSSN: Regional Tourist Security and Safety Network
SCST: Special Committee on Sustainable Tourism
SITCA: Secretaría de Integración Turística Centroamericana
ST: Sustainable Tourism
STWP: Sustainable Tourism Work Programme
STZC: Sustainable Tourism Zone of the Greater Caribbean
TVET: Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNWTO: United Nations World Tourism Organization

I. PROJECT OVERVIEW	
A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION	
1.1 Project name	Training for Careers in Sustainable Tourism Project
1.2 ACS Focal Area	<u>Focal area:</u> Sustainable Tourism (ST)
1.3 Objectives and Justification	<p>Overall Objective:</p> <p>This initiative seeks the commissioning of Research Publication and related activities to document the needs and priorities for Professional Training in the Tourism Sector in the Greater Caribbean, with the aim of developing a Framework for the development and implementation of a comprehensive technical and vocational education and training (TVET) Capacity-building Programme.¹</p> <p>Specific Project Objectives :</p> <p>Specifically the project seeks to enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the Regional Tourism Industry through knowledge enhancement in the area of human resource development as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the specific needs and areas for Training and Human Resource Development in the Tourism Sector in the Greater Caribbean. • Determine existing gaps and challenges in relation to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and Capacity-Building. • Provide recommendations to address identified needs, challenges and priorities. • Develop a Directory of Tourism and Hospitality Training Institutions and courses offered in the Greater Caribbean. • Develop a Framework for the implementation of a Comprehensive Program to deliver Training and Capacity building to the Tourism Sector to enhance human resource competencies and productivity. • Improve proficiencies in various aspects of the Tourism Product and Services delivery with particular emphasis on cross-cutting areas related to priorities of the ACS Member and Associate Member States as outlined in the Sustainable Tourism Work Programme.
	<p>Justification:</p> <p>The Tourism industry is now widely recognised as a driver for social and economic development. Widely publicised as the most tourism-dependant Region in the world, the Caribbean has been engaged seriously in this sector since the 1950s. Persistent turbulence in other economic sectors has served to enhance the relative importance of tourism not only as a key economic activity in itself, but one that has enormous potential to contribute to the region’s economic development goals. For many countries in the region tourism is the principal economic activity.</p> <p>Tourist expenditures represented approximately 33 percent of GDP in the islands of</p>

¹ Professional in this context is to distinguish the Technical and Certification programs which will be the focus of the research and intervention, from the more Academic Degree based programs.

Antigua and Barbuda and St. Lucia, and 52 percent of GDP in The Bahamas. (Source: World Tourism Organization, 2011). For the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the OECS sub region, tourism has become the most important industry with the greatest potential for future economic growth, as the income earning capacity of other sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing continue to diminish. Tourism has become increasingly crucial for the economic survival of local economies both as a means of employment and as a source of foreign direct investment and foreign exchange earnings. In this regard, equipping the human resource of the sector with training and skills will positively impact employability, wage level, opportunities for promotion, tax contribution and by extension purchasing power and contribution to the wider economy.

The Tourism Industry is intrinsically linked to the human factor. People are the immediate consumers of the Tourism Product and the extent of their experience is often significantly impacted by human interaction at the destination, accommodation or service facility. A qualified, competent and highly trained human resource has a direct correlation with the quality of service provided, which in turn influences customer perception, repeat visits and word-of-mouth recommendations; in short the overall competitiveness of the Destination.

Modern technology has altered the way people are informed and travel is purchased, with online Travel Blogs and the various forms of Social Media having more influence as demand drivers, than the previously popular traditional Travel Agent. Given this reality countries are correctly exploring new and innovative ways to improve market penetration and influence purchase decisions. In this regard, the importance of the quality and calibre of service received and its relationship to maintaining and growing market share cannot be overstated. In today's competitive global market place, providing quality service to guests is an important aspect of product differentiation, which remains critical to the success of the industry.

As it relates to Tourism related jobs and careers, industry restructuring, organisational re-engineering and quality concepts (in terms of service provided to the guest and quality of work for the employee) are, rapidly changing the workplace "map". Information technologies are also transforming the travel and tourism industry requiring more highly skilled workers. Increasingly, all tourism operators are providing cross-training for their employees, to empower them with multiple skills. The lack of skilled workers in the industry at all levels has been cited by the Regional Agencies the Caribbean Tourism Organisation and the Central American Tourism Integration Secretariat, as a weakness and one of the factors contributing to the increasing loss in revenue and tourist arrivals to the Region's destinations. Therefore, positive impacts on employment and more generally on the competitiveness of the Caribbean destination will depend on the skill level and professionalism of the workforce.

This project is designed as a proactive approach to produce documentation and provide recommendations for strategies and procedures to strengthen Regional human resource capacities in **cross-cutting areas** necessary for a sustainable and competitive industry. More particularly, research will focus on strategic sectors aligned to the ACS Sustainable Tourism Work Program (STWP), which have been identified and approved by the Association's Member and Associate Member States. Within the context of the execution of this project it is therefore proposed that the identification of Training and Capacity-building needs and subsequently development of a Framework to implement training should focus primarily on these strategic areas

of the ACS STWP, to be complemented by the needs and priorities identified in the research.

The following outlines the 4 Programmatic Areas that comprises the STWP indicative of the specific interest and focus for Training and Development:

1. Establishment of the Sustainable Tourism Zone of the Caribbean (STZC)
Emphasis on Environmental Stewardship; Sustainable Destination Management, Niche Markets.
2. Visitor Safety and Security
Emphasis on Tourism Policing; Food Safety and Security; Health and Wellness.
3. Promotion of Language and Cultures of the Greater Caribbean
Emphasis on Language Learning; Business skills development for Artisans.
4. Promotion of Multi-Destination Tourism
Emphasis on Tour-guide Training, Customer-Service Training.

The ACS also has a special interest in contributing to skills building and knowledge enhancement of vulnerable groups, therefore the Training needs and priorities of these groups, should also be addressed in the research. These include *Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME's), Women, Youth and Tourism sector livelihoods for Rural, Ethnic and Indigenous communities.*

In consideration of the preponderance and rapid development of Tourism in the Greater Caribbean, as more and more countries are turning to the Sector, due to its role as a significant contributor to social and economic development, it is clear that quality of the human resources in the tourism sector will impact on the competitive advantage of the Region as a whole. Therefore, education and training play a vital role in the development of personnel with the professional skills needed to ensure that the Region meets expected international standards for productivity and services delivery. It is expected after implementation of this initiative, to have clearly identified skill requirements and related gaps in strategic sectors and further promote the importance of education and training in the industry.

<p>1.4 Outputs / Components</p>	<p>Component 1 – Assessment of Training initiatives in the Tourism Sector</p> <p>The first phase in the execution of the project will focus on data collection and will entail an assessment of the availability, status, levels, accessibility including cost and the main actors providing Professional Tourism Training Programs in the Region. Training programs offered in ACS Member and Associate Member States, by public and private sector institutions as well as regional entities will be collated and analysed utilising interviews, survey and research methods, as well as select site visits. A key component of this activity will be the identification of the challenges, needs and priorities at the country, institutional, and Regional levels.</p> <p>Component 2 – Study and Regional Framework on Tourism Training in the Greater Caribbean Region</p> <p>The second phase is the development of a study that documents the findings of the data collection and assessment activities, inclusive of presentation and analysis of country specific and organisational case studies and best practises. For the execution of this component, the consultant will work with focal points in ACS Member and Associate Member States and Regional partners. In the presentation of case studies, the aim will be to profile a best practise of at least one country from each ACS sub-grouping: CARICOM, Central America, the non-grouped countries, G-3 and the Associate Members.² The focus of the Study will be to document the current state of Education and Training in the Tourism Industry and provide recommendations on ‘How to strengthen regional training institutions’. Additionally, a Directory of Tourism and Hospitality Training Institutions and courses offered in the Greater Caribbean that can be uploaded in a digital/ online format will be compiled.</p> <p>In this regard the Study will firstly document the information, data and statistics collected on Tourism Training. The Study will secondly, outline existing gaps and challenges in relation to Training and capacity-building, with particular focus on cross-cutting areas and ACS priorities, aimed at identifying the specific needs and areas for Professional Training and human resource development in the Tourism Industry. Thirdly, the Study will provide recommendations to address existing needs as well as the gaps, challenges and priorities identified in relation to Training needs of the Industry, as well as on an institutional level.</p> <p>Lastly, the Study will present a Regional Framework for a comprehensive technical and vocational education and training (TVET) Capacity-Building Program and suggest a public-private partnership approach to implementation. The Framework will include a Training curricular that suggests the central themes and topics for training and instruction, with the objective of enhancing human resource competencies and productivity in strategic areas aligned to the Sustainable Tourism Work Programme of the ACS, and respond to the needs, gaps and priorities identified. The framework should be based on the Competency-based education and training (CBET) Model of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The framework should also include in a time-tabled format an implementation plan with the requisite guidelines and indicators for successful implementation.</p>
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² **CARICOM:** Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, The Bahamas and Trinidad and Tobago,

Central America: Costa-Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Honduras.

Non-Grouped: Cuba, Dominican Republic and Panama.

G-3: Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela.

Associate Members: Aruba and the French overseas Departments of French Guiana, Guadeloupe and Martinique.

	<p>Component 3 – Presentation, Dissemination and Outreach</p>
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The third phase will focus on activities to develop a multi-stakeholder approach to the promotion and development of professional training programs in the tourism industry, through engagement of the public and private sectors as well as Regional and International stakeholders. Based on the recommendations of the study and utilising modes of information communication technologies (ICT's), activities will include presentations to relevant stakeholders and dissemination via mail and email.

1.5 Estimated Cost and Duration	Duration: 6 months Cost: Euro (€75,000)
1.6 Project current status	<p>This project is being presented to address an identified need to elevate and enhance the quality, standard and delivery of service in the Regional Tourism Industry, by addressing the issues of Education and Training in the Sector. The study will be a Regional Bench-mark given that no such knowledge product currently exists.</p> <p>It is foreseen that the successful implementation of the project will create awareness among Regional Policy makers; drive development and implementation of Training and capacity-building activities; and ultimately strengthen the competencies and productivity of the Regions human resources. The project is further expected to contribute to the development of coordinated and integrated training mechanisms and strategies in priority areas and strategic sectors of the industry. In this regard, the ACS will fulfil its mandate as a regional platform for “consultation, cooperation and concerted action” for its member countries, within the context of addressing areas of common interest and concern and identifying solutions through drafting specific plans of action at the regional, national and institutional levels.</p> <p>Implementation and project execution are envisaged through joint-collaboration between the ACS Secretariat and designated representatives of AFD.</p>
B. STAKEHOLDERS	
1.7 Responsible Agency	<p>Agence Française de Développement (AFD) ACS Secretariat, Directorate of Sustainable Tourism</p>
1.8 Beneficiaries	<p>The principle beneficiaries would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Governments/National Authorities related to Tourism and Education in ACS Member and Associate Member States – Regional Organizations engaged in Tourism Training and Capacity-Building Activities – Travel & Tourism Industry Stakeholders – Residents of and visitors to the Greater Caribbean – Researchers and Academicians
1.9 Collaborating Institutions	<p>Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO) Secretaría de Integración Turística Centroamericana (SITCA)</p>
1.10 Executing Institutions	<p>Agence Française de Développement (AFD) Directorate of Sustainable Tourism, ACS Secretariat</p>
1.11 Financing Institutions	<p>Agence Française de Développement (AFD): Euro (€) 75,000 Directorate of Sustainable Tourism, ACS Secretariat: <i>Technical Assistance in-kind contribution</i></p>