

AID-FOR-TRADE: CASE STORY

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS)

Professional Masters in International Trade Policy (MITP) at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados

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BACKGROUND

The MITP was designed in collaboration with the University of the West Indies under the OAS Trade Capacity Building Project for the Caribbean, and with funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The program is representative of the commitment of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States to the CARICOM region.

Other initial international partners, who have contributed to the successful implementation of the MITP, include the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the European Union (EU). The OAS, the University of the West Indies, the Government of Barbados and other regional governments have provided scholarships for the MITP. The OAS also provided the services of Mrs. Pamela Coke-Hamilton on loan to the University to serve as the then Program Manager for the start up phase. This mix of partners is indicative of the broad commitment to trade capacity building in the region.

OBJECTIVE

The Masters Program has as its primary objective the creation of a cadre of young professionals specifically trained to assist in the specific areas of vulnerability unique to the sub-region.

DESCRIPTION

The MITP Program officially commenced on August 4, 2004 with a matriculation of twenty-eight (28) students from thirteen (13) CARICOM countries.

- Thus far over 425 applications have been received, close to 150 persons have enrolled, and over 100 have been matriculated.
- The range of students have included, among others, a Senator from Barbados and head of the

Barbados Small Business Association, the head of the largest Caribbean Civil Society body, the CPDC and now a member of Parliament; a Comptroller and Deputy Comptroller of Customs; Directors of Foreign Trade divisions from several CARICOM countries; diplomats who have represented their governments throughout the world; heads of private sector organizations; lawyers; and representatives of regional bodies.

- The MITP is structured to include a three-month practical attachment and has impacted almost immediately on the human resource needs of its constituency.
- In addition, specialized modules in the Masters Program have been made available to the general public

ASSESSMENT OF OVERALL OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED RESULTS

The MITP has been created as a unique program offering comprehensive training in critical areas of trade policy theory and practice, within the context of Caribbean needs and realities. It is delivered in collaboration with international trade institutions and recognized academic partners specializing in the field of trade policy and law. It has achieved its expected results with regard to strengthening the institutional capacity of the University of the West Indies to deliver training essential for trade policymakers and negotiators. It has provided training on the technical skills and know-how required in the various specialized disciplines related to trade policy and trade negotiations. The program is now sustainable.

The number of applicants attests to the demand for the program.

The program has served as a basis for expanding training opportunities by offering modules to the general public as well as a certificate course for private sector representatives in the region. In fact, the utilization of the MITP modules as a method for expanding the outreach to the wider community through offering single modules for enrolment has been very successful and has also provided an added income stream to assist in the sustainability of the MITP program in the long term.

The MITP has also been quite successful in helping graduates find a job. Graduating students have been hired by ministries, government agencies, and regional organizations working on trade-related issues.

As a result of the reputation of the program, other countries have expressed an interest in learning from the program and a presentation on the Masters was made to the Association of Colombian Universities in response to a request for assistance to develop a similar program.

PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUALITY

Training opportunities have been made available to both men and women under all the programs. There has been a significant level of women participants in training programs. In all academic years, the participation of women in the MITP has exceeded that of the men.

Status of the Program: Ongoing

For more information:

http://www.shridathramphalcentre.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=26&Itemid=34