CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME)

Students Engaging the CSME through Field Promotion

"The student missions project is extremely valuable. It made me realize that there were trade opportunities within the region and it was easier to do business than I previously thought. And it dispelled certain myths about the CARICOM Single Market."

Lacey-Ann Bartley

Context

CARICOM countries are small economies, highly exposed to natural disasters and economic shocks with high and rising debt to GDP ratios that jeopardize prospects for medium-term debt sustainability and growth. The CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) is a response to some of these challenges.

The aim of the project Students Engaging the CSME through Field Promotion is to engage the next generation in identifying career opportunities in the field with respect to wage employment, self-employment or establishing a business within the CARICOM Single Market and Economy. As they take advantage of these opportunities, the next generation of Caribbean nationals will be contributing to the social and economic development of Member States.

Objectives

- Young nationals of CARICOM Member States participating in the CSME have an in-depth and practical appreciation of the options available to them via the CSME arrangements pertaining to employment and entrepreneurship
- Active use by Caribbean nationals of the relevant CSME arrangements as their first choice when they embark on their career

Impact

- A cadre of over 280 young CARICOM nationals well informed on the workings and benefits of the CSME and equipped to take advantage of the opportunities of a single economic space
- Information sharing via a series of public events including approximately 30 media engagements executed by tertiary students in CARICOM Member States to exchange experiences in the host countries and how it affected their perceptions of regional integration
- 12 country reports prepared by the students containing their diagnosis, recommendations for how to improve CSME implementation and how to further engage tertiary students/youth
- Over 20 sensitization sessions held by the students on the CSME in each Member State post-mission in their respective educational institutions. These sessions focused on sharing the regional integration focus with colleagues and show the opportunities within the CSME.

For more information:
http://csmeonline.org/news/project-students-engaging-csme
Breaking down the barriers, creating opportunities: 
Promoting CARICOM Nationals’ Ownership of the CSME

Lacey-Ann Bartley is the young and enterprising Managing Director of Bartley’s All in Wood, a Jamaican company that designs, manufactures and sells quality 100% handmade wooden traditional and contemporary furniture, jewellery and home accessories. Born in the rural parish of Manchester, Jamaica, Lacey-Ann grew up in her father’s furniture business and learned the trade from an early age. It had always been her dream to take over the family business.

As a Social Science student at the Mona Campus of the University West Indies in Jamaica, Lacey-Ann participated in the student mission to Grenada from August 31 – September 6 2009 under the Students Engaging the CSME through Field Promotion Project which was developed and implemented by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat and executed with assistance of the European Union under the 9th European Development Fund. That was Lacey-Ann’s first visit to Grenada and it opened her eyes to the world of regional trade because prior to this she said, “I did not know that the region was so advanced in trade”. On the mission, she learned a great deal from the Grenadian trade officers and other personnel about the provisions of the CARICOM Single Market (CSM). Lacey-Ann was impressed with the officers’ wealth of knowledge and she was enlightened on the ease of doing business within the CSM. For example, she was exposed to the processes for gaining a Certificate of Origin which is a key step for a CARICOM manufacturing enterprise to export within the CARICOM. The sessions dispelled many myths about the CSM and doing business in the region generally.

Due to this mission and the knowledge gained, Lacey-Ann was inspired to write her Master’s thesis on the impact of the CSM on Jamaican manufacturing. But even more significantly, she began to see the possibilities for exporting to the region. While in Grenada, Lacey-Ann realized that there was a love for what she calls ‘Brand Jamaica’ where Grenadians were attracted to things Jamaican. The mission shed light on how she could take advantage of this observation and create a viable business opportunity. After completing her Master’s, Lacey-Ann decided to fulfil her dream of taking over the family business and in 2011, Bartley’s All in Wood, became a registered company which not only has a local market but is exporting to Antigua and Barbuda. Lacey-Ann says that the company is also pursuing entering Trinidad and Tobago quite vigorously. She has won major awards such as the Jamaica Business Development Corporation Entrepreneur of the Year 2014 and the National Baking Company Bold One 2014. Lacey-Ann is also a part of the Branson Centre of Entrepreneurship in the Caribbean.

In Lacey-Ann’s words, “Maybe Bartley’s All in Wood would not exist without the tertiary students’ mission to Grenada”. She describes the CARICOM Secretariat initiative as an excellent project which is extremely valuable and one that breaks down barriers.