

AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC TRADE

PROSPECTS FOR STRONGER
PERFORMANCE AND COOPERATION



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AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC TRADE

PROSPECTS FOR STRONGER
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The paper analyses the export structure of the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries by region covering both products and services trade, with a focus on the structure of the exporting sector by company sizes; assesses product and market diversification, and the development of transformation activities; discusses trade integration in regional vs. global markets; concludes that lower barriers to trade could facilitate trade by SMEs and the development of transformation activities. The discussion of trade performance is complemented by an analysis of trade policy frameworks within the ACP group to help identify areas where increased cooperation among ACP Member States has the potential to contribute to greater trade performance and stronger sustainable growth.

Descriptors: **ACP, Regional Integration, Exports, SMEs, Competitiveness, International Cooperation, Sustainable Development.**

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Foreword

Trade is an important trajectory to growth, development and job creation. But for trade to fulfil this potential, two important elements must be addressed: ensuring that policymakers have the most accurate and up to date information and data on trade and that there is the capacity available to assist countries and their private sector to benefit from the opportunities that trade can provide. The International Trade Centre (ITC) hopes to provide part of the solution to both of these priorities in this publication, African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Trade: Prospects for Stronger Performance and Cooperation.

ITC has been a partner to the ACP Group of States since ITC was created 50 years ago. With its focus on fostering sustainable economic development and building the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), ITC has made ACP countries a priority in delivering its capacity-building programmes and integrated solutions. ITC will continue to deliver on the priorities of the ACP Group of States through delivering solutions in the following areas:

- Trade and market intelligence for SME competitiveness;
- Supporting regional economic integration and South-South links;
- Connecting to value chains;
- SME competitiveness, diversification and links to export markets;
- Strengthening trade and investment support institutions;
- Promoting and mainstreaming inclusive and green trade;
- Building a conducive business environment.

The Cooperation Agreement signed between the ACP Secretariat and ITC in March 2014 is a formal reflection of this continued partnership. This study reflects this strengthened cooperation and has been produced by ITC on the request of the ACP Secretariat on behalf of the ACP's Eminent Persons Group (EPG). It is intended to inform the EPG's work on the future strategic direction of the ACP Group of States. Key factual data and analysis provide a snapshot of the ACP states' position in the global trading system.

I am confident this study will be an important contribution to identifying new ways that ACP countries can cooperate to enhance the inclusiveness of trade and sustainable development. ITC will continue to partner with the ACP Group of States to support its members by supplying the data and analysis they need for better-informed decision-making.



Arancha González
ITC Executive Director

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