

## **ACS HOSTS REGIONAL WORKSHOP AND SYMPOSIUM TO ENHANCE THE ROLE OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN THE TOURISM SECTOR**



Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago (October 17th 2014) - The Association of Caribbean States (ACS) in collaboration with the Regional Port Society of Cartagena and the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism of the Republic of Colombia, with the support of the Office of Tourism and Culture of the Organisation of American States will host a Regional Workshop entitled Entrepreneurial Strengthening in the Tourism Sector: Opportunities for Women in Cartagena de Indias, Republic of Colombia from the 23rd - 24th October, 2014. This workshop is the first phase of a joint initiative developed by the ACS Directorates of Sustainable Tourism and Trade Development and External Economic Relations, to bridge the gaps in the contribution of tourism to local economies as it relates to women's entrepreneurship and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SME) Development.

The workshop is intended to complement efforts to enhance the participation of women in the Tourism sector as service providers and raise awareness of their role and contribution as entrepreneurs and in employment generation. It will facilitate the discussion of issues facing women entrepreneurs who are small business owners operating in the Tourism sector, and provide a platform for an analysis of best practices and lessons learnt from successful women entrepreneurs. A key criteria in this respect will be the identification of leading entrepreneurs and success stories for follow-up activities.

The regional workshop and symposium will consist of four thematic plenary sessions by Regional and International experts over the two day period. These plenary sessions will then be followed by workshops to allow deliberation on key topics. The expected outcome of this event is to identify the needs and challenges of women entrepreneurs, to determine areas for future interventions and to garner support for future national and regional interventions focused on capacity building.

A distinguished panel of High-level speakers and presenters has been assembled for this workshop, and includes representatives from the International Labour Organization (ILO), International NGO 'Creative Learning- Aid to Artisans (CL-ATA)' and the University of Almería in Spain, as well as representatives from the host country's Ministry of Tourism and the Cartagena Port Association.